



**B. Talmud, Shabbat 21b**

Our Rabbis taught:

- The precept of Hanukkah [demands] one light for a man and his household;
- The zealous [kindle] a light for each member [of the household];
- And the extremely zealous:
  - Beth Shammai maintain: On the first day eight lights are lit and thereafter they are gradually reduced;
  - Beth Hillel say: On the first day one is lit and thereafter they are progressively increased.

'Ulla said: In the West [Palestine] two amoraim, R. Jose b. Abin and R. Jose b. Zebida, differ therein:

- one maintains, The reason of Beth Shammai is that it shall correspond to the days still to come, and that of Beth Hillel is that it shall correspond to the days that are gone;
- but another maintains: Beth Shammai's reason is that it shall correspond to the bullocks of the Festival; whilst Beth Hillel's reason is that we promote in [matters of] sanctity but do not reduce.

Rabbah b. Bar Hana said: There were two old men in Sidon: one did as Beth Shammai and the other as Beth Hillel: the former gave the reason of his action that it should correspond to the bullocks of the Festival, while the latter stated his reason because we promote in [matters of] sanctity but do not reduce.

Our Rabbis taught: It is incumbent to place the Hanukkah lamp by the door of one's house on the outside; if one dwells in an upper chamber, he places it at the window nearest the street. But in times of danger it is sufficient to place it on the table.

Raba said: Another lamp is required for its light to be used; yet if there is a blazing fire it is unnecessary. But in the case of an important person, even if there is a blazing fire another lamp is required.

What is [the reason of] Hanukkah? For our Rabbis taught: On the twenty-fifth of Kislev [commence] the days of Hanukkah, which are eight on which a lamentation for the dead and fasting are forbidden. For when the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oils therein, and when the Hasmonean dynasty prevailed against and defeated them, they made search and found only one cruse of oil which lay with the seal of the High Priest, but which contained sufficient for one day's lighting only; yet a miracle was wrought therein and they lit [the lamp] therewith for eight days. The following year these [days] were appointed a Festival with [the recital of] Hallel and thanksgiving.

## **Liturgy**

And [we thank You] for the miracles, for the redemption, for the mighty deeds, for the saving acts, and for the wonders which You have wrought for our ancestors in those days, at this time— In the days of Mattathias, the son of Johanan the High Priest, the Hasmonean and his sons, when the wicked Hellenic government rose up against Your people Israel to make them forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your will. But You, in Your abounding mercies, stood by them in the time of their distress. You waged their battles, defended their rights, and avenged the wrong done to them. You delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the wanton sinners into the hands of those who occupy themselves with Your Torah. You made a great and holy name for Yourself in Your world, and effected a great deliverance and redemption for Your people Israel to this very day. Then Your children entered the shrine of Your House, cleansed Your Temple, purified Your Sanctuary, kindled lights in Your holy courtyards, and instituted these eight days of Chanukah to give thanks and praise to Your great Name.

## **1 Maccabees 4:52-59**

Early in the morning on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, which is the month of Kislev, in the one hundred forty-eighth year, they rose and offered sacrifice, as the law directs, on the new altar of the burnt offering that they had built. At the very season and on the very day that the Gentiles had profaned it, it was dedicated with songs and harps and lutes and cymbals... So they celebrated the dedication of the altar for eight days, and joyfully offered burnt offerings... Then Judas and his brothers and all the assembly of Israel determined that every year at that season the days of dedication of the altar should be observed with joy and gladness for eight days, beginning with the twenty-fifth day of the month of Kislev.

## **2 Maccabees 10:5-9**

It happened that on the same day on which the sanctuary had been profaned by the foreigners, the purification of the sanctuary took place, that is, on the twenty-fifth day of the same month, which was Kislev. They celebrated it for eight days with rejoicing....therefore, carrying ivy-wreathed wands and beautiful branches and also fronds of palm, they offered hymns of thanksgiving to him who had given success to the purifying of his own holy place. They decreed by public edict, ratified by vote, that the whole nation of the Jews should observe these days every year.

## **Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 12.7.323-326**

Now Judas celebrated the festival of the restoration of the sacrifices of the temple for eight days; and omitted no sort of pleasures thereon: but he feasted them upon very rich and splendid sacrifices; and he honored God, and delighted them, by hymns and psalms. Nay, they were so very glad at the revival of their customs, when after a long time of intermission, they unexpectedly had regained the freedom of their worship, that they made it a law for their posterity, that they should keep a festival, on account of the restoration of their temple worship, for eight days. And from that time to this we celebrate this festival, and call it Lights. I suppose the reason was, because this liberty beyond our hopes appeared to us; and that thence was the name given to that festival.