



B'NAI DAVID-JUDEA

Shabbat Shorts

Last time on Shabbat Shorts:

We concluded that, just like on Shabbat, in order to make sure we completely fulfill the mitzvah of lighting on Sukkot, we must make sure that we benefit from the light.

This may mean (for safety reasons) lighting on a windowsill that can be seen from the sukkah or, if we light indoors, to make sure to derive benefit from them before they burn out.

It is important to note that those who do have the practice to light in a sukkah may do so, as long as they are safe about it. And in that case, a person may move the candlesticks themselves if needed because candlesticks are not muktzah on Yom Tov (though they are muktzah on Shabbat).

We will conclude our learning about candlelighting with the halacha that limits certain materials from composing the wicks and oils of the lights. The rule of thumb is that the light must provide good illumination. The Mishnah Berurah explains that this is because if the material has a poor illuminating quality (אין יפה מאירין יפה), once Shabbat has started, we may be tempted to tilt the lamp to get the wick to burn better, thereby performing the prohibited melacha of kindling.

This halacha gets at the core value of candlelighting itself: We light because we are supposed to create a beautiful illumination. The candles are a physical manifestation of the light within each of us-- נר ה' נשמת אדם, "The soul of man is God's candle". Shabbat is the day we spend quality time with our family and friends, investing in that light-- the Divine spark that we all have.

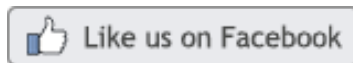
And so, creating light at the beginning of Shabbat signifies what the day is all about. Shabbat makes us see each other more brightly and it inspires us to appreciate God's hand in our lives. And so, to use a material that does not maximize the potential for light, would undermine the purpose of the mitzvah itself.

May we look at the lights we kindle as reminders of the Divine light within us and within others. And may the act of lighting-- and the halachot about it-- inspire us to be people who illuminate.

I love feedback!
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