

THE ROLE OF LIGHT IN TANNAITIC HALAKAH

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters and  
Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

March 3, 1966

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## THESIS DIGEST

This thesis examines the role of light in Tannaitic Halakah. The word light is used to mean that lamp or other form of illumination used in the home or synagogue, whether for religious or secular purposes.

An oil lamp made of pottery was assumed. Flames ( *nikur* ) and torches ( *shirak* ) also played a significant role.

Each chapter deals with the role of light in a specific festival. We begin with Sabbath light and continue with Havdalah light, Hanukkah light, light used on Rosh Hodesh, Passover, Sukkoth and the Day of Atonement.

It was the duty of the woman to light the Sabbath lamp at dusk. Specific regulations are found in the Halakah concerning the materials used for the Sabbath lamp. Certain limitations were placed upon the uses of the Sabbath light.

A blessing could not be recited over Havdalah light until one could make use of its light. This blessing was recited after the meal upon completion of "the grace after meals."

The origin of Hanukkah lights is traced to the miracle of the cruse of oil which the Hasmoneans found

in the Temple. These lights were lit for eight days in a prominent place by the door or even outside the door. The householder was not responsible for any fire that this light might have caused.

Flares were lit on the top of hills to announce the New Moon. On Passover, the search for leaven was conducted by lamplight rather than sunlight or moonlight. At the Libation Well Ceremony, the illumination at the Temple was seen in every courtyard in Jerusalem. Pious and renowned men danced with flaming torches in their hands. On the Day of Atonement, where local custom did not permit it, a lamp was not lit in the home. This was done to prevent sexual desire and sexual intercourse which was forbidden on the Day of Atonement. But lights were kindled in the synagogues and houses of study.

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## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to examine the role of light in Tannaitic Halakah. The Tannaitic period corresponds approximately to the first two centuries of the Christian era. The word light is used to mean that lamp or other form of illumination used in the home or in the synagogue, whether for religious or secular purposes. This thesis does not attempt to examine the symbolic role of light, nor does it try to make a comparative study of light in non-Jewish sources of that period. The role of the Menorah and the use of light in the elaborate Temple sacrificial cult are also beyond the scope of this thesis.

While limiting ourselves to the role of light in Tannaitic Halakah we note some significant aspects. An oil lamp was assumed. Such a lamp was made of some form of pottery. It consisted of a flattened sphere with a nozzle or spout at the side which contained the wick and a hole on top for pouring in the oil. (See page 5) Now, besides the use of oil lamps, flares ( *niklan* ) and torches ( *shifur* ) played a significant role in the Tannaitic period. Flares were lit on top of high hills to announce the New Moon while torches

played a significant role in the Libation Well Ceremony of the festival of Sukkoth. Pious and renowned men used to dance with flaming torches in their hands as part of the festivities. (See pages 24-25)

The material for this thesis is drawn primarily from Tannaitic sources, mainly the Mishna, Tosefta and scattered Baraithas. The sources are not quoted directly in the text but appear in Hebrew and English in the appendix.

Each of the chapters deals with the role of light in a specific festival. We begin with the Sabbath light and continue with the Havdalah light, Hanukkah light, light used on Rosh Hodesh, Passover, Sukkoth and the Day of Atonement. In each festival we examine the kind of lamp used and the purpose it served. In case of the light that was used in the ceremony of <sup>עגור</sup> <sup>החודש</sup> <sup>החדש</sup>, the search for the leaven before Passover, we find that lamplight was preferable halakically to the light of the sun or moon.

Certain scattered references to light were not included in the main body of this thesis. We find that in the area of legal testimony, evidence could be given by the light of a lamp or by the light of the moon. (M. Yevamoth 16:6) This meant that a witness could testify that he had seen a certain object or event by lamplight or moonlight. That is, the light of a lamp was considered

sufficiently bright as to warrant its acceptance in legal testimony.

I must thank Dr. Alexander Guttman, my thesis advisor, for his valuable assistance. I am also grateful to my wife Helaine who has typed this thesis and made many suggestions regarding style. For her enthusiasm, encouragement and assistance, I affectionately dedicate this thesis to her.

## CHAPTER I

### THE SABBATH LIGHTS

#### Origins

The custom of kindling lights on the Sabbath was a well know institution in the Tannaitic period. The Mishnah presupposes it as an old and undisputed practice and merely discusses some details, such as what materials should be used for the lamps. Among the Greek and Roman people of the first Christian century it was known as one of the ceremonies characteristic of the Jewish observance of the Sabbath. Persius Flaccus, a Roman satirist, writing between 34 and 62 C.E. mentions it. The Stoic philosopher Seneca (first century) refers to it in a letter in which he wrote: "The lamps on the Sabbath (lit by the Jews) should be prohibited, for the gods do not want light and men do not like smoke." <sup>1</sup> Josephus says: "For there is not any city of the Grecians, nor any of the barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come, and by which our fasts and lighting up lamps and many of our prohibitions as to our food are not observed." <sup>2</sup>

Besides the lamp that was used for ritual purposes, other lamps were also lit on the Sabbath. On the Sabbath, a Jew could not ask a non-Jew to light these lamps for him.



This would constitute a minor prohibition, while lighting it himself is one of the thirty-nine categories of work forbidden on the Sabbath. But, if a non-Jew had lit a lamp for his own use, a Jew could make use of its light.<sup>3</sup> (M. Shabbat 16:8)

#### The Shape of the Sabbath Lamp

The Mishna and Tosefta contain various regulations for the lighting of a lamp. An oil lamp is assumed. There was some controversy as to the shape of this lamp. Some authorities held that the lamp must consist of a single vessel. Thus, one could not pierce an egg shell, fill it up with oil and put it on the opening of the lamp so that the oil may drip into the lamp. This was not permitted even if the lamp was made of earthenware (clay). But, if the potter had joined the two parts, it was permitted because it was actually a single vessel. (M. Shabbat 2:4) Such a lamp must then have consisted of a flattened sphere with a nozzle or spout at the side (which may have contained the wick) and a hole on top for pouring in the oil.<sup>4</sup> This view is supported by an account in the Tosefta. An egg shell was pierced, filled with oil and placed over the opening of the lamp on the eve of the Sabbath when it was dark (so that it would be fitted and lit on Erev Shabbat). This was done in the presence of elders who did not object to the procedure. (Tos. Shabbat 2:5) In a Baraitha, Rabbi Judah relates

his experiences when he spent the Sabbath in the upper chamber of one Nitze's house in Lydda. An egg shell was filled with oil, perforated and placed over the mouth of the lamp. Rabbi Tarfon and the elders were present but did nothing to stop this practice. (B. Shabbat 29b)5

A single vessel with an opening on the top and with a spout or nozzle was probably the shape of the Sabbath lamp. One could not, however, fill a bowl (or dish) with oil, place it beside the lamp and put the end of the wick in it so that it may draw up oil to the flame. (M. Shabbat 2:4) Albeck explains that the egg shell by itself was considered a vessel. The Rabbis did not allow the use of the egg shell because of the fear that one would unwittingly take oil from it. This would not be permissible because the egg shell was considered mukzeh. (See page 9) Further, this procedure would cause a diminishing of the oil in the lamp so that the light would be extinguished before its normal time.<sup>6</sup> We may note that all references in the Mishnah and Tosefta are to a single Sabbath lamp. The custom of using two Sabbath lamps is of much later origin.

#### Time of Kindling the Sabbath Lamps

A Baraita records that six blasts were blown on the eve of the Sabbath: the first for people to cease work in the fields, the second for the city and shops

to cease work, the third for lights to be kindled.  
 (B. Shabbat 35b)<sup>7</sup> Sabbath lamps were lit at dusk  
 when workers were just returning from the fields and  
 merchants from the shops. If there was a doubt whether  
 it was dusk or not, the lamps could not be lit. (M.  
 Shabbat 2:7)

#### Materials for the Sabbath Lamp

Explicit directions were given concerning the material  
 for the wick and the kind of oil that was proper. One could  
 not use cedar fiber, uncarded flax, raw silk, or a wick  
 of willow bast or nettle fiber, duckweed, pitch, wax,  
 castor oil, defiled heave offering oil condemned to  
 be burnt, fat from sheep's tails or tallow. Nachum  
 the Mede allowed the use of boiled tallow but the sages  
 rejected his viewpoint. Whether tallow was boiled  
 or not, it could not be used according to the sages.  
 (M. Shabbat 2:1) Further, one could not kindle with  
 whatever came from a tree, excepting flax.<sup>8</sup> If a wick  
 made from a piece of cloth was twisted but not singed,  
 R. Eliezer declared it susceptible to uncleanness and not  
 to be used for lighting the Sabbath lamp. But R. Akiba  
 held that it could be used since such a piece of cloth  
 was not susceptible to uncleanness. (M. Shabbat 2:3)  
 This view seems to be supported in a Tosefta passage  
 where it is held that one may light with a burnt wick  
 but not with rags (lint). (Tos. Shabbat 2:1)

R. Ishmael prohibited the use of tar for kindling the Sabbath lamps on aesthetic and humanitarian grounds, that is, out of respect to the Sabbath and because of tar's disagreeable smell. But the sages permitted many varieties of oil: sesame oil, nut oil, fish oil, radish seed oil, colocynth oil, tar and naphta. R. Tarfon, however, considered only olive oil as permissible. (M. Shabbat 2:2) There seems to have been a slight disagreement here between R. Ishmael and R. Tarfon. But the normal practice was to use that oil which was least offensive in smell and which was smokeless. On the other hand, a sweet-smelling oil was not permitted. R. Simeon b. Eleazer maintained in a Baraitha that balsam resin could not be used in the lamp because of its fragrant smell and the fear lest one might benefit directly from it. This was halakically forbidden. (B. Shabbat 25b) Another Baraitha forbids the use of naphta and unclean tebel for the lamp.<sup>9</sup> (B. Shabbat 26a)

Materials for the wick and oils were prohibited for three reasons:

1. It was ritually impure, i.e., it could become unclean upon contact with a corpse.
2. Those materials which were offensive in smell or gave off an ugly smoke were avoided out of respect to the Sabbath.
3. A fragrant or sweet-smelling oil was forbidden in

that one could benefit directly from it.

### Uses of Sabbath Light

There were certain limitations placed upon the uses of the Sabbath lamp. We must first explain the term mukzeh (מקזה). The term mukzeh literally means set aside, that is, a lamp that is mukzeh is not to be used for or not to be handled on the Sabbath or Holy Day depending on the type of mukzeh. An old lamp was considered mukzeh because of its physical repulsiveness. Such a lamp could not be moved on the Sabbath whereas a new lamp might be moved. (M. Shabbat 3:6) (Tos. Shabbat 4:13) But R. Simon held that all lamps may be moved except the lamp that is already lit on the Sabbath. (M. Shabbat 3:6) (Tos. Shabbat 4:13) In his commentary to this Mishnah, Albeck reasons that movement of a lamp that is lit might necessitate adjustment of the wick which is forbidden on the Sabbath.<sup>10</sup> For the same reason reading by the light of the Sabbath lamp was forbidden. (M. Shabbat 1:3) It was felt that one might adjust the wicks or tilt the lamp to improve the flow of oil. R. Ishmael supported this view in a Tosefta passage, "I was reading by lamplight and wanted to move it. I said, How great were the words of the sages that they say one should not read by lamplight on the eve of the Sabbath." (Tos. Shabbat 1:13) Raban Shimon ben Gamliel, however, permitted children and their teachers to prepare the

Scriptural portion of the week by the light of the Sabbath lamp. (Tos. Shabbat 1:12)

As we have seen earlier, a vessel could not be put under the Sabbath lamp to collect the oil which might drip out. But this was permissible if it were placed there before dusk on Friday. This vessel could not be used on the Sabbath since it had not been prepared specifically to be used on the Sabbath. A vessel could be placed under the lamp to collect the sparks. But water could not be placed in this vessel since it would extinguish the sparks which was not allowed on the Sabbath. (M. Shabbat 3:6) The oil which collected in the vessel and the vessel itself became mukzeh and could not be used on the Sabbath.

The Sabbath lamp could be extinguished only for extreme reasons. The Sabbath lamp could be extinguished for fear of non-Jews, robbers, an evil spirit, or to enable a sick person to sleep. But if the lamp was extinguished to spare the lamp or save the oil or preserve the wick, it was not permitted.<sup>12</sup> (M. Shabbat 2:5) However, a lamp could be covered with a bowl to prevent it from burning a rafter. (M. Shabbat 16:7) Finally, the lamp could not be left on the ground because it was believed that it disturbed the dead. (Tos. Shabbat 6(7):2) However the Rabbis ruled against such Amorite customs connected with the (Sabbath) lights.



### Role of Women

Women played a major role in lighting the Sabbath lamp. Although the master of the house was responsible for seeing that all preparations for the Sabbath were according to the halakah, the ultimate responsibility for lighting the lamp fell upon the housewife. (M. Shabbat 2:7) The Rabbis stressed the importance of this mizvah which is one of three given to women, the other two being the laws of menstruation and challah. The merits of these laws would be remembered to women in the critical moment of giving birth to a child so that they would have an easy delivery.<sup>13</sup> Those who neglected this duty were in danger of being punished with death at childbirth. (M. Shabbat 2:6)

No reason is given for the role given to women in the lighting of Sabbath lamps.<sup>14</sup> The Mishnah does not record any blessings which are to be recited when kindling the Sabbath lamp. Possibly, the woman's responsibility of lighting the lamps was to give her an important role in the Sabbath home ceremonies. The stringency of this commandment possibly helped much to insure the observance of this ceremony. For, people do not court danger, especially when the ceremony in itself is easily performed.<sup>15</sup>

## CHAPTER II

### HAVDALAH LIGHT

#### Light of Idolaters and Light Used to Honor the Dead

Light played an important part in the Havdalah ceremony. A lamp that was used by idolaters was considered unacceptable as was a lamp that was lit in honor of the dead.<sup>16</sup> (M. Berakhot 8:6) On the general halakic principle that no benefit may be derived from any materials used for idolatry, a lamp used by idolaters was prohibited. (M. Berakhot 8:6) This referred to any lamp that idolaters possessed or placed in front of their idols.

#### Uses of Havdalah Light

A blessing could not be recited over a lamp until one could make use of its light. (M. Berakhot 8:6) This has been interpreted by some authorities to mean that only when the flame was so large and clear that one could enjoy its use or recognize the design on a coin should a blessing be recited.<sup>17</sup> A Tosefta passage supports this point of view. If a person had a lamp hidden in his pocket or within a lantern, he could not recite the blessing until he saw the flame and made use of its light. If he saw the flame and did not use its light or if he used the light



and did not see the flame directly, he could not say the blessing. (Tos. Berakhot 6:9) One had to see and use the light in order to meet the requirements for reciting the blessing over the light.

On the basis of this halakic principle, later authorities instituted the custom of looking at the fingernails at the Havdalah ceremony.<sup>18</sup> Although this custom seems to be implied in Tannaitic halakah, it is not specifically mentioned. Whether it was the custom to look at the fingernails or palms or use the Havdalah light for reading is a matter of conjecture.

#### Havdalah Blessings

The Schools of Hillel and Shammai differed as to the blessing to be recited over the Havdalah light. The School of Shammai maintained that the blessing was as follows:

ברוך אתה ד' אלהינו ה' אלהינו  
ברוך אתה ד' אלהינו ה' אלהינו

Blessed art Thou O Lord our God, King of the Universe who created the light of fire. The School of Hillel offered the following version:

ברוך אתה ד' אלהינו ה' אלהינו  
ברוך אתה ד' אלהינו ה' אלהינו

Blessed art Thou O Lord our God, King of the Universe, creator of the lights of fire. (M. Berakhot 8:5) The latter blessing was accepted as the official benediction. The School of Shammai's benediction, "who created the light of fire" refers to the creation of light in the past tense, probably to light in the creation of the Universe.<sup>19</sup> Also, the blessing refers to *אוֹר*, the power

of the flame and thus *Yifan* in the singular is used.<sup>20</sup> Now the School of Hillel's benediction, "creator of the lights of fire," implies both past and future.<sup>21</sup> It refers to creation of the lights of fire as an ongoing process, that is, God the Creator of these lights renews continually the many kinds of lights that come from fire.<sup>22</sup> For this reason Hillel's blessing was probably more acceptable.

It is also possible that on the basis of Hillel's blessing two different kinds of lamps were used for the Havdalah blessing. Such a lamp could have been similar to the one used on a festival where a wick is placed with its ends in two separate lamps. The middle of the wick was lit and two lamps were thus formed. (M. Bezaḥ 4:4)

According to the Mishnah, the Schools of Hillel and Shammai did not differ as to the position of the blessing over light within the Havdalah ceremony. The blessing over the light was recited first. Thus according to Shammai, if one dines at dusk at the conclusion of the Sabbath and wants to recite the *Grace after meals*, the grace after meals and also recite the Havdalah blessings over the same cup of wine, he first blesses over the lamp whose light he had enjoyed and over which he had recited the appropriate blessings. After this he recites the grace after meals, then the blessing over the spices

and finally the Havdalah blessing. Thus the order of blessings according to Shammai were as follows:

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.     ךך , Light               | 3.     ךךךך , Spices     |
| 2.     /כךך , Grace after Meals | 4.     כךךךך , Havdalah. |

In the Tosefta, we have a slightly different account of the order of the blessings. Rabbi Judah held that the Schools of Hillel and Shammai were not divided as to כךךך  
/כךך , the grace after meals which was at the beginning of the ceremony and the Havdalah blessing which was at the end. But they differed as to the position of the blessings over light and spices. The School of Shammai claimed that the order was first the blessing over the light and then spices. The School of Hillel reversed this order and claimed that first one blessed the spices and then the light. (Tos. Berakhot 6:6)

Thus according to the Tosefta, the School of Shammai considered the order of blessings to be as follows:

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.     /כךך , Grace after Meals | 3.     ךך , Light        |
| 2.     ךךךך , Spices            | 4.     כךךךך , Havdalah. |

The order according to the School of Hillel was as follows:

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.     /כךך , Grace after Meals | 3.     ךךךך , Spices     |
| 2.     ךך , Light               | 4.     כךךךך , Havdalah. |

This order of blessing was accepted by later authorities as the order of the Havdalah ceremony. In any event, whether the School of Hillel or School of Shammai was the accepted viewpoint, the blessing over light was recited after the meal and upon completion of the recitation of the grace after meals.<sup>23</sup>

## CHAPTER III

### HANUKKAH LIGHTS

#### The Festival of Light

The kindling of lights is an important part of the ritual for the eight nights of Hanukkah. The festival itself was instituted in the year 165 B.C.E. by Judas Maccabaeus "and his brothers and all the assembly of Israel," who determined that every year at that season, the days of the dedication of the altar should be observed with gladness and joy for eight days, beginning with the twenty-fifth day of the month of Kislev." (I Macc. 4:59)

The nature of the festival changed in later generations. In the Tannaitic period there is good reason to believe that the festival was called "the festival of lights". Josephus claimed that in his time Hanukkah was called "Lights", a name doubtlessly given to it because of the illumination of houses which was a characteristic feature of the celebration.<sup>24</sup> (Josephus, Antt. xii. 7,7)

#### Origin of Hanukkah Lamps

A Baraitha attributes the origins of the institution of Hanukkah lights to a miracle. The Rabbis claimed that the festival commenced on the twenty-fifth day of the

month of Kislev. The festival was to be celebrated for eight days during which time mourning for the dead and fasting were prohibited. The Rabbis believed that when the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oils therein. When the Hasmonean dynasty prevailed against and defeated them, they searched the Temple and found only one cruse of oil which bore the seal of the High Priest. This cruse contained oil sufficient for one day's lighting. Yet miraculously they lit the lamps with it for eight days. For this reason the Rabbis commemorated these days as a festival. The recital of Hallel and Hodáah was made part of the festival. (Psalms 113-118) (B. Shabbat 21b)

It must be noticed that the emphasis upon light was not characteristic of the celebration of Hanukkah by the Maccabees. It is probable that the Rabbis of the Tannaitic period adapted the familiar custom of lighting candles or kindling fires at the winter solstice as a means of reluming the decadent sun.<sup>25</sup> Dr. Julian Morgenstern traces the origins of Hanukkah light back to a pagan festival of either the autumn equinox or the winter solstice, both of which were marked by illuminations consisting of lights or fires.<sup>26</sup> The Rabbis Judaized this custom and gave a new symbolic meaning to the lights. These lights represented the Temple Menorah which Judah Maccabaeus and his followers had rekindled. What originally

symbolized the mere physical regeneration of the sun, or of nature, from year to year was transformed into a symbol of revival on the spiritual plane. The lights were symbolic of the light which burned in the Temple.<sup>27</sup> It symbolized the struggle within man for religious freedom and survival. The real miracle is that the light is never extinguished.<sup>28</sup>

#### Number of Lights Kindled

Every household was required to light a Hanukkah lamp on every one of the eight nights of the festival. The zealous would kindle a light for each member of his household. (B. Shabbat 21b)

The Schools of Shammai and Hillel were divided as to the number of lights lit on the eight nights of the festival. The School of Shammai maintained that on the first day eight lamps should be lit and then gradually reduced by one each day. The School of Hillel claimed that on the first day one lamp should be lit and then progressively increased by one each day. (B. Shabbat 21b)

#### Some Legal Aspects of Hanukkah Lights

The Rabbis looked upon the institution of kindling lamps on Hanukkah with great pride and joy. They held that it was a mizvah to place the Hanukkah lamp by the door of one's house on the outside. (B. Shabbat 21b) Rashi, in his commentary to this Baraita passage claimed



that this was done to advertise the miracle of the light of Hanukkah. At times, the houses did not open directly on to the street, but into a courtyard. The lamps were then placed in the courtyards just outside the houses.

Those who lived on the upper floors had to place their lamps at the window nearest the street. Only in times of danger, in the event of religious persecution, could the lamps be placed on a table. (B. Shabbat 21b)

This public display of Hanukkah lights raised some halakic problems. Under normal conditions, if a spark flew from under the hammer and did damage, the blacksmith was liable. Now, if a camel laden with flax passed along a public street, and its load of flax intruded into the storekeeper's lamp, thus setting fire to the building, the owner of the camel was liable. If the storekeeper had set his light outside, the storekeeper was considered liable. Rabbi Judah claimed that if a Hanukkah light which when placed outside by a storekeeper set fire to the flax loaded upon a passing camel, the storekeeper was exempt and did not have to pay damages. (M. Bava Qamma 6:6, B. Shabbat 21b) Since it was a *mizvah* to place Hanukkah lamps outdoors, the responsibility lay with the camel driver to watch his overburdened loads of flax. In their commentaries to this Mishnah, Maimonides and Bertinoro claimed that R. Judah's opinion was not the accepted halakah. However, their opinions were based

upon the legal discussions which are found in the Gemara. It is very possible that in the Tannaitic period, R. Judah's authority was respected and instituted into the halakah.



## CHAPTER IV

### FESTIVAL LIGHTS

#### Origins

As on the Sabbath, a lamp was also lit on the eve of each of the festivals.<sup>29</sup> These lamps could not be lit on the day of the festivals. But, even though lamps could not be kindled on the festival, a fire could be made on the ground or on a memorah, whether to warm oneself against it or whether to use its light. The stricture against kindling lamps was enacted only with reference to making wicks for lamps. (Tos. Shabbat 2:2) Now all the strictures that apply to a Sabbath lamp apply likewise to the festival lamp. (Tos. Shabbat 2:1) Thus, one could not hollow out a piece of clay to serve as a lamp for one would thereby make a vessel. But a wick could be placed on two separate lamps. The middle of the wick was lit and two lamps were thus formed.<sup>30</sup> (M. Beza 4:4)

#### Rosh Hodesh

On the eve of Rosh Hodesh, flares were lit on the top of high hills in order to announce the New Moon. This was done in order to communicate the news to those Jews who lived in Babylonia. (M. Rosh Hashanah 2:2)

There was a certain procedure for lighting these flares.

Men would bring long poles of cedar wood and rushes, pine wood and tow flax. A man was appointed to take these poles which were tied together with rope. He went up to the top of a hill and set the poles on fire, waved them to and fro, moved them up and down until he saw his associate doing likewise on the top of the next hill and also similarly on the top of the third hill. (M. Rosh Hashanah 2:3) This relay of signals continued from hill to hill until the flares were visible in Babylonia.

The starting point for these signals was the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Then to Sartaba, a hill about twenty-seven miles north east of Jerusalem. From Sartaba the signals continued on to Agrippina near Caesarea Philippi. Then from Agrippina to Hauran in Trans-Jordan and then to Beth Balin, a mountain peak between Syria and Mesopotamia. They did not go beyond Beth Balin. Here the flare was waved to and fro and up and down until a man could see all of the diaspora before him like a sea of fire. (M. Rosh Hashanah 2:4) From Beth Balin on, people lit torches or flares on the rooftops of their homes. This relay was continued from house to house and from city to city, until the inhabitants of Babylonia saw these flares and got the message that Rosh Hodesh had been declared by the authorities in Jerusalem.

Ingenious as this method of communication might seem, it proved unsuccessful. Towards the end of the Second

Century C.E., in the time of R. Judah Hanasi the Samaritains or other Sectarrians upset the entire communication system. In order to mislead the Jews, they lit flares at the wrong times. They did this out of a sense of revenge in that they were excluded from the Jewish community and treated as aliens. After this major upset of their master plan, the Rabbis enacted that messengers should be sent on foot to announce the New Moon. (M. Rosh Hashanah 2:2)

### Passover

On the night preceeding the fourteenth day of Nisan, one must search for leaven by the light of a lamp. This was done so that all leaven could be eliminated or burned in order to prepare for Passover. (M. Pesahim 1:1)

Lamplight was preferred to sunlight or moonlight on halakic grounds and not because of the quality of its illumination. Even though the light of a lamp was not as bright as the sunlight or moonlight, it was nevertheless aesthetically pleasing. Furthermore, this search for leaven by lamplight was considered a symbolic act for the entire ceremony of *סדר מצות*, the search for the leaven. (Tos. Pesahim 1:1)

According to R. Judah, this search could continue all **through** the festival period. That is, the search which had begun on the night preceeding the fourteenth of Nisan could be resumed or started on the morning of the fourteenth or at the time when the leaven had to be

burned. However, the sages maintained that if one had not searched during the night preceeding the fourteenth of Nisan he could do so on the morning of the fourteenth. In the event that he had not searched on the fourteenth, he could do so during the festival period. Whatever leaven he would leave over, he had to put away in a hidden place so that it would not necessitate another search. (M. Pesahim 1:3) This Mishnah passage indicates that there was no stricture against the lighting of lamps during the intermediary days of the Passover festival. Such lamps were probably used for searching leaven throughout the festival period.

### Sukkoth

On the night of the first day of the festival, there was a great illumination in the Temple. Tall candelabras were set up in the Court of the Women. Each one had four golden bowls on its top and each had four ladders. Four young priests mounted the ladders and poured jars of oil into the hugh bowls. (M. Sukkah 5:2) The worn out drawers and girdles of the priests were used for the wicks which were set alight. The light was so bright that it illuminated every courtyard in Jerusalem. (M. Sukkah 5:3)

As part of the festivities of the Libation Well Ceremony, pious men and men of renown used to dance with flaming torches in their hands, singing songs and praises. (M. Sukkah 5:4) Raban Shimon ben Gamliel is reported to

have been quite an expert torch-dancer. So skillful was he, that he danced with eight flaming torches and not one of them touched the ground when he prostrated himself, touched his fingers to the pavement, bent down, kissed it and immediately leaped up.<sup>31</sup> (Tos. Sukkah 4:4)

### Day of Atonement

Where the custom was to kindle light on the eve of the Day of Atonement, they were permitted to do so. But, where the custom did not exist, it was not instituted. (M. Pesahim 4:4) The lighting of lamps was discouraged on the eve of the Day of Atonement to prevent sexual desire and also sexual intercourse, which was prohibited on the Day of Atonement (see Yoma 8:1). Bertinoro commented that while a lamp remained lit, sexual intercourse was discouraged since sexual intercourse by lamplight was prohibited.

But lights were kindled in the synagogues, the houses of study, in the dark alleys and for the sick. (M. Pesahim 4:4) Bertinoro suggested that in these places of worship and study there was no danger of men and women being alone with each other and so no danger that the illumination would lead to sexual intercourse.

## APPENDIX

### SOURCE MATERIAL QUOTED IN THE TEXT

1. מסיבין פאקד פאר וואס פאקד (מגלה יקמות 16:6)

One may give evidence by the light of a lamp or by the light of the moon. (M. Yevamoth 16:6) (See page )

2. אדאס אדאס פאקד פאר אדאס אדאס (מגלה יקמות 16:6)  
ואם פאקד פאר אדאס (מגלה יקמות 16:6)

If a non-Jew lit a lamp, a Jew may make use of the light, but if (it was lit) for the sake of the Jew, it is forbidden. (M. Shabbat 16:8) (See page 5 )

3. יקוד אדאס פאקד פאר אדאס אדאס (מגלה יקמות 16:6)  
אדאס אדאס פאר אדאס אדאס (מגלה יקמות 16:6)  
אדאס אדאס פאר אדאס אדאס (מגלה יקמות 16:6)  
אדאס אדאס פאר אדאס אדאס (מגלה יקמות 16:6)

One may not pierce an egg shell, fill it up with oil and put it over the opening of the lamp so that the oil may drip therein, and even if it were made of earthenware. But R. Judah permits it. But, if the potter had joined it at first, it is permitted because it is a single vessel.

(M. Shabbat 2:4) (See page 5 )

4. אדאס אדאס פאר אדאס אדאס (מגלה יקמות 16:6)  
אדאס אדאס פאר אדאס אדאס (מגלה יקמות 16:6)

ומצליק קטלי בקח ופיו גם זקנים וטל אחד אחד מהם  
 פקד לתוספתא גמתי קר

They pierced an egg shell and filled it with oil and put it over the opening of the lamp on Sabbath Eve at dusk, so that it would be fitted and lit on Sabbath Eve. Now, there were elders (present) and not one of them said anything. (Tos. Shabbat 2:5) (See page 5)

5. תנא אחר ד' יבוצה בשם אחת גמתי קטליית בית נחמה.  
 קטלי וקטלי קטלי גמתי קטלי וקטלי קטלי וקטלי קטלי  
 וקטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי  
 קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי

It was taught in a Baraita, R. Judah said: "We were once spending the Sabbath in the upper chamber of Nitzeh's house in Lydda, when an egg shell was brought, perforated and placed over the opening of the lamp. Now, although R. Tarfon and the elders were present, they said nothing to us." (B. Shabbat 29b) (See page 6)

6. תנא וקטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי  
 קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי  
 קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי

One may not fill a bowl with oil, place it beside the lamp and put the top of the wick in so that it may absorb; but R. Judah permits it. (M. Shabbat 2:4)

(See page 6)

7. תנא וקטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי  
 קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי  
 קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי קטלי



לחמשים ותשעים (בהם שבת לילה ק)

Our Rabbis taught in a well known Baraitha: Six blasts were blown on the eve of the Sabbath. The first for people to cease work in the fields, the second for the city and shops to cease work, the third for lights to be kindled. That is R. Nathan's view. R. Judah the Nasi said: "The third is for tefillin to be removed." (B. Shabbat 35b)

(See page 7 )

8. סבן חמיכה סבן אין חמיכה ... אין מצליקין את  
הנרות (המנהג שבת ק ג)

If there be a doubt whether it is dark or not, they must not light the lamps. (M. Shabbat 2:7) (See page 7 )

9. הנה מצליקין והנה אין מצליקין אין מצליקין לא בלילה  
ולא בחורבן ולא בשבט ולא בשבת ולא בשבת  
המזבח ולא בירוקה שם בני הבית ולם קצבת ולא קטורת  
ולא קטרת קוק ולא במזון גדיפה ולא קאליה ולא  
בחרם נחום המדי אומר מצליקין בחרם וקובץ וקובץ  
אומרים אחד מקובץ ואחד לאין מקובץ אין מצליקין בו  
(המנהג שבת ק א)

With what may one light and with what may one not light?

One may not light with cedar fiber or with uncarded flax, or raw silk, or willow bast, or nettle fiber, or duckweed, or pitch, or wax, or castor oil, defiled heave offering oil condemned to be burnt, or fat from sheep's tails, or tallow. Nachum the Mede says one may kindle with boiled tallow. But the sages say whether it has been boiled or not, one



may not light with it. (M. Shabbat 2:1) (See page 7)

10. *גם ביודא מן השל אין מצליקין בו אלא בשבת וכל  
ביודא מן השל אינו משמאן שומאן אורעים אלא בשבת  
בתיבה המכא גרפלה ולא בקרבה דהי אליעזר אומר  
שמא דהיא ואין מצליקין בה דהי עוקיה אומר  
סהורה דהיא ומצליקין בה (משנה ג' ע"ב)*

One may not kindle with whatever comes from a tree,  
excepting flax, and nothing that comes from a tree can  
contact pollution, except flax. If a wick made from  
a piece of cloth was twisted but not singed, R. Eliezer  
says it is susceptible to uncleanness and one does not  
light with it. But R. Akiba says that it is clean and one  
may light with it. (M. Shabbat 2:3) (See page 7)

11. *מצליקין בתיבה המהורה ולא בסמדרטין  
(הוספתא ג' ע"א)*

One may light with a burnt wick, but not with rags (lint).

(Tos. Shabbat 2:1) (See page 7)

12. *דמי ימאעל אומר אין מצליקין בסדרן מפני כבוד  
השבת וחכמים מתירין בהם במאמץ קמח שומאן  
קמח אכאזים קמח צמחות קמח פכים קמח פקודות  
הסדרן ובלפט דהי סרפון אומר אין מצליקין אלא  
קמח צית הקד (משנה ג' ע"ב)*

R. Ishmael says that one may not light with tar out of  
respect to the Sabbath. But the sages permit all kinds  
of oil: sesame oil, nut oil, radish seed oil, fish oil,  
colocynth oil, tar and naphtha. R. Tarfon says that one

may light with olive oil only. (M. Shabbat 2:2) (See  
page 8 )

13. תמיד ר' יעקב בן אשכנזי אומר אין מצליחין בקרי  
מ"ס אחר דבר מתוך ברייתו נוסף נצטרך שיהא יסוד  
ממנו (קרי' שבת כ"ב, ב)

It was taught in a Baraitha: R. Simeon b. Eleazer says;  
"Since its smell is fragrant, there is need of a preventi-  
tive measure, lest one draw supplies from it." (B. Shabbat  
25b) (See page 8 )

14. ת"ד אין מצליקין בשבט טמא . . . כיוצא בו אין מצליקין.  
(הנפש שכן (הקב"ה גזרת כוונת)

Our Rabbis taught in a well know Baraitha: One must not kindle with unclean tebel. Similarly, one must not kindle with white naphta. (E. Shabbat 26a) (see page 8)

15. ת"ר כ"ט אלול, שנת ה'תרמ"ו, אין מפעילין קדש קדש אהל  
 שזין מן המדות בין שבת חמשה כנסת בין שבת חמשה  
 פאורד בין שבת קדש בין שבת קדש ואלא אסרו אלמא שבתות מן  
 פתחם פ"ט קדש (הקדש) שבת (בא. א.)

Our Rabbis taught in a well known Baraita: All that which they ruled that one must not light with on the Sabbath, yet a fire may be made of them, both for warming oneself and for using its light, whether on the ground or on the stove. Now, they only prohibited making a wick for the lamp. (B. Shabbat 21a) (See page 45, footnote 9)

16. משפטים נר חפז אהלם ימן רבי במסון אומר בם חרות  
משפטים חסם מן הור הדין בקמת דותן כמי תחת הור  
סקה נצוצות וסא יתן הדין חסם חסם

מכבה (אחד) שבת (א)

One may move a new lamp, but not an old one. R. Simon says, "One may move all lamps, except the lamp that is already lit, on the Sabbath." (M. Shabbat 3:6) (See page 9)

17. מוטעם אין נר חדש אקל פאר נאך יאן פאר די יבוצה די מאד  
אומר כל הנרות מוטעם חוץ נאך נר שבת  
שבת די מאסון אומר כל הנרות מוטעם חוץ נאך  
נר שבת (תוספתא שבת פ יג)

One may move a new lamp, but not an old one. R. Meir says, "One may move all lamps except the lamp that was lit that Sabbath." R. Simon says, "One may move all lamps, except the lamp that is lit on the Sabbath."

(Tos. Shabbat 4:13) (See page 9)

18. פאר יקרא פאר נר (תוספתא שבת א ג)

One should not read by lamplight. (Tos. Shabbat 1:3)

(See page 9)

19. אין קוראין פאר נר... רבן גמליאל אומר  
הנרות ורק מתקין בנרות שבת  
נר (תוספתא שבת א יב)

One does not read by lamplight...Raban Shimon ben Gamliel says, "Children and their teacher may prepare their scriptural lessons by lamplight." (Tos. Shabbat 1:12) (See page 10)

20. אר די יאמאס פאר אמת קראת פאר נר וקראת  
פאר אמת אמת פאר חכמים פאר אומרות  
אין קוראין פאר שבת פאר נר (תוספתא)

(גמ' א' י"ד)

R. Ishmael said, "I was once reading by lamplight and wanted to move it. I said, how great were the words of the sages that they say, one does not read on the eve of the Sabbath by lamplight." (Tos. Shabbat 1:13)

(See page 9)

21. אין נותנין לבי תחת הנר לקבל בו את הצתת ואם נתן  
הקטור יום חותך ואין נותנין תחת הנר לבי גאון מן  
המזבח נותנין לבי תחת הנר לקבל הצתות ואם  
יתן למזבח מים מפני שהוא מכה (מנהג גמ' י"ד)

One must not put a vessel under the lamp to collect the oil, but if it were placed there while it was yet day, it is permitted. But one must not use it, since it is something which had not been prepared for that purpose. One may set a vessel under the lamp to collect the sparks, but one may not put water in it since one would be extinguishing (the sparks). (M. Shabbat 3:6) (See page 10)

22. במכה את הנר מפני שהוא חתירא מפני שהוא  
בוכה. מפני שראים מפני דוח דסה ואם קצת  
החליה גיין פאור כחם על הנר כחם על הצתת כחם  
על הצתת חיה להצנה צמח ק ר

If one extinguishes the lamp for fear of non-Jews, robbers, because of an evil spirit or to enable a sick person to sleep, he is exempt. But if his intention was to spare the lamp or to save the oil, or to preserve the wick, he is guilty. (M. Shabbat 2:5) (See page 10)

23. יובין קעדרה על בני נהר קשהל עלן תאחוז בקורה  
 ואל זוארע על קטן ואל עקרה עלן תיבזק (מגלה)  
 גבת 33 ז

One may cover a lamp with a bowl so that it shall not  
 catch a beam, and over excrement to protect a child,  
 and over a scorpion that it shall not sting. (M. Shabbat  
 16:7) (See page 10)

24. פניחו נר על הארץ כדי שיצטרף החרוץ  
 (תוספתא גבת 7(1) ב)

One must not leave a lamp on the ground so that it disturbs  
 the dead. (Tos. Shabbat 7(6):2) (See page 10)

25. שלשה דברים צריך אדם לומר ביום שבת  
 גבת עם חגיגה שבתא עיבתא נפסקא  
 את נהר (מגלה גבת 3)

Three things a man must say within his house on Sabbath  
 Eve at dusk: have you tithed? have you prepared the  
Eruv? kindle the lamp! (M. Shabbat 2:7) (See page 11)

26. של שלש עבירות נשים נחמות קשות עיצתן על  
 גאון בעירות קצף וקחילה וקפצות נהר (מגלה גבת 3)

For three transgressions do women die in childbirth:  
 because they have not been heedful of the laws of  
 menstruation, in the separation of the dough and in the  
 kindling of the lamp. (M. Shabbat 2:6) (See page 11)

27. אן מקרבין על נהר ואל על גמלים על שכרם  
 ואל על נהר ואל על הקמחים על חטים ואל על נהר ואל  
 על הקמחים על פני אשלי שוקדי כוכבים (מגלה גבת 3)

One may not say a blessing over the light or spices of idolaters, or over the light or spices used in honor of the dead, or over the light or spices of idols. (M. Berakhot 8:6) (See page 12)

28. אין מקריבין על הנר עד שיאיר לאורו כמנהג  
הכבוד ה' (י)

One must not recite the blessing over light until one can make use of its light. (M. Berakhot 8:6) (See page 12)

29. היה לו נר סמון בחיקו או בתוך הפאנס דואה את  
השערה ואלו המתהם לאורו המתהם לאורו ואין דואה  
את השערה אין מקריבין עליה עד שיבא דואה את  
השערה ומהמתהם לאורו (תוספתא ברכות וט)

If he had a lamp hidden in his pocket or within a lantern, if he sees the flame and does not use its light, or if he uses the light and does not see the flame, he does not bless it until he sees the flame and uses its light. (Tos. Berakhot 6:9) (See page 13)

30. בית שמאי אומרים נר ומזון וקציעה וקציעה וקציעה  
הם אומרים נר וקציעה ומזון והקציעה בית שמאי אומרים  
שקרא מאור האש ובית הלל אומרים קורא מאורא  
כמנהג (תוספתא ברכות ח ט)

The School of Shammai says, "Light and Grace after Meals and Spices and Havdalah." But the School of Hillel says, "Light and Spices and Grace after Meals and Havdalah." The School of Shammai says, "Who created the light of fire." But the School of Hillel says, "Creator of the lights of

fire." (M. Berakhot 8:5) (See page 13)

31. אין פותחין את הנר מפני שהוא עושה כלי ואין  
חותכין את הפתילה לשנים דבי יהודה אומר חותכת  
האור לפני נרות (והנה קוצה 33)

One must not open out for a lamp because he thereby  
makes a vessel. One must not make charcoal on a  
festival, nor may one cut a wick into two. R. Judah  
says, "One may sever it with a flame to form two lights."

(M. Beza 4:4) (See page 14)

32. אמר ר' יהודה לא נחלקו ק"ג וק"ד על ברכת המזון  
בהחלתה ועל הבקשה בקטן ועל מה נחלקו על  
פאקור ועל הקטנים בק"ג אחרים על פאקור ואח"כ  
קטנים וק"ד אחרים קטנים ואחר כך אור  
(היוספתא קרבית וי)

R. Judah said, "The School of Shammai and the School of  
Hillel were not divided over the Grace after Meals which  
was at the beginning and the Havdalah which was at the  
end. But over what were they divided? Over the light  
and over the spices. For the School of Shammai says,  
blessing over the light and then spices. But the School  
of Hillel says, blessing over spices and then the blessing  
over light." (Tos. Berakhot 6:6) (See page 13)

33. אמר חמאכר פת"ר ק"ה"ה בספין ואי דחמאכר תמאכר  
אין פלג למספד הפון ופלג לעתידות הפון  
בבבכנסו יונית לעיכס טמא כל הבבכנס בבבכנס



וכשנכנסו חסידיו בית המדרש והציתו נרות וסוף חצאון אולם  
 שם אחד של שמן שהיה מונח בחורו של כהן גדול וסוף היה  
 בו אולם להצית יום אחד נשגב בו גם והציתו ממנו  
 שמונה ימים שלש אחרת קדושה ושלש אחרת ימים טובים גדלים והוציאו (הקדש)  
 (בית כנסת)

What is the reason for Hanukkah? Our Rabbis taught in a well known Baraitha: One 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 over and defeated them, they searched and found only one cruse of oil which lay with the seal of the High Priest, but which contained sufficient oil for one day's lighting only. Now, a miracle was performed there and they lit with the oil for eight days. The following year these days were established a festival with the recital of Hallel and thanksgiving. (B. Shabbat 21b) (See page 17)

34. ת"ר מצות חנוכה לא איש וביתו ובהוצאתו נר עשר  
 אחר ואחר ובהוצאתו מן המהצות ב"ש אחרים יום  
 ראשון מוצת שמונה מכאן ואילך בוחת והיוסך וק"ה אחרים יום  
 ראשון מוצת אחר מכאן ואילך חוסים והיוסך (הקדש בקדש כ"א, ב)

Our Rabbis taught in a well known Baraitha: The precept of Hanukkah demands one light for a man and his household. The zealous kindle a light for each member of the household. The School of Shammai says: On the first day eight lamps are lit and thereafter they are gradually reduced. The



School of Hillel says: On the first day one lamp is lit and they are progressively increased. (B. Shabbat 21b)  
(See page 18)

35. ח"ר נר חנוכה מצות להניחה פתח ביתו המקוץ את ה"ה  
 צד השלישי הניחה בחלון פתחוהו לר"ה וקצת  
 פתחוהו הניחה על שולחן וצ"ל (הקל"ה שבת בא"ה)

Our Rabbis taught in a well known Baraitha: It is a mizyah to place the Hanukkah lamp by the door of one's house on the outside. If one dwells in an upper floor, he places it at the window nearest the street. But in times of danger it is sufficient to place it on the table. (B. Shabbat 21b) (See page 18)

36. על שבת אחת הפסוק והציון חייב שיהיה שבת  
 קריאת הרבים והבנים פתחו עתה ודעו קצת  
 שחמ"ל ופצ"ק את הקיר ה"ה חמ"ל חמ"ל חמ"ל  
 מקוץ החמ"ל חייב ר"ה יהודה אומר קצת חנוכה  
 פסוק (השנה קצת חמ"ל חמ"ל חמ"ל)

If a spark flew out from under the hammer and did damage, the blacksmith is liable. If a camel laden with flax passed along in the public domain, and its load of flax intruded into the store and caught fire from the storekeeper's light, thus setting fire to the building, the owner of the camel is liable. If the storekeeper set his lamp outside, the storekeeper is liable. R. Judah says, "If it were a Hanukkah lamp, he is exempt." (M. Bava Qamma 6:6) (See page 19)

37. חמץ כחמץ על הידא מתחת הפשיט והציק חייב מלא  
 בשבוע פשוט והוא שומר קד"ה ונכנס' פשתו לתוך רחמא  
 ופסקה קדו של חמץ' והציק את הבירה קלם מלא  
 חייב פליח חמץ את נדו מקולס חמץ חייב רבי יעקב  
 אימר קור חמץ כסוד (קקלי גבת באיה)

We learned in another Mishna: If a spark which flies from the anvil goes forth and causes damage, the blacksmith is liable. If a camel laden with flax passes through a street and the flax overflows into a shop, catches fire from the shopkeeper's lamp and sets the building on fire, the owner of the camel is liable. But if the shopkeeper placed the light outside, the shopkeeper is liable. R. Judah says, "In the case of a Hanukkah lamp, he is exempt." (B. Shabbat 21b) (See page 19)

38. כל אילו שאמרו אין מפליקין בהם ביום טוב מותר  
 לעשותן מדורה בין של עבד הארץ בין של עבד המורה  
 בין להחמם כנפם ובין להשתמש לאורן ולא אחר  
 אלא לעשותן כחילוף עבד (תוספתא גבת ב)

All those who say, one does not light a lamp on a festival, permit making a fire, whether on the ground or on a Menorah, whether to warm themselves against it or whether to use its light. They enacted this stricture only for the case where wicks are made for a lamp. (Tos. Shabbat 2:2)

(See page 21)

39. כל אילו שאמרו אין מפליקין בהם ביום טוב מותר  
 בין ביום טוב (תוספתא גבת ב)

All that they said concerning those materials with which one may not light on Sabbath, one may not light with on a festival. (Tos. Shabbat 2:1) (See page 21)

40. קראשאלג פון מאסאן מביאות מקלקלן די כותים  
בתקין זינען געווען יוצאן (מאסא דאס היינט קה)

Formerly, they used to light flares, but after the Samaritans caused confusion, they enacted that messengers should go forth. (M. Rosh Hashanah 2:2) (See page 21)

41. ביז צו פון מאסאן מביאות מקלקלן פלומאסאט גע  
אדז אהאבן וקנים וסצ' גאן וועלדע גע שטען וכוונק  
קאמערע וועלדע ערגע פער ונצית קען אהאב ונחשק  
ומהיא ומסערה ומוריצ עז געוואן דאס אהאב ונחשק  
עוועכ בן קראש דער פער וכן קראש דער פער  
(מאסא דאס היינט קה)

How did they kindle the flares? They would bring long poles of cedar wood and rushes and pine wood and tow flax; and a man tied these together with rope. He went up to the top of the hill and set them on fire, and waved them to and fro and moved them up and down until he saw his associate doing likewise on the top of the next hill; and thus similarly on the top of the third hill. (M. Rosh Hashanah 2:3) (See page 22)

42. מאסאן פון מאסאן מביאות מדר פאמערע עסרעקא  
ומסרעקא עסרעפילא ומסרעפילא עסרעפילא ומסרעפילא  
במסערה ומסערה עסרעפילא עסרעפילא ומסערה  
ומוריצ עז געוואן דאס אהאב ונחשק

והוא (משנה ראשונה ב' ד')

And from where did they kindle the flares? From the Mount of Olives to Sartaba, and from Sartaba to Agrippina, and from Agrippina to Hauran, and from Hauran to Beth Baltin, and from Beth Baltin they did not go further, but waved to and fro and moved up and down, until one saw the whole of the diaspora before him like a mass of fire. (M. Rosh Hashanah 2:4) (See page 22)

43. איך אַרבעטערט ער בויזקין און פאמלען און פאר  
האט ער פאמלען און פאר (האט ער פאמלען און פאר)

On the night of the fourteenth, one must search for leaven by the light of a lamp. (M. Pesahim 1:1) (Tos. Pesahim 1:1) (See page 23)

44. אין בויזקין ער און פאמלען וועט ער און פאמלען  
און פאמלען ער און פאמלען וועט ער און פאמלען  
און פאמלען ער און פאמלען וועט ער און פאמלען

One must not search for leaven by sunlight and not by moonlight, but by lamplight, because the light of the lamp is pretty for the purpose of searching. Even though it is not fitting for the purpose, it is a remembrance of the matter. (Tos. Pesahim 1:1) (See page 23)

45. דאס וועט און און און און און און און און און און  
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כפי שלפני יבא צריך קצותה אחריו (הגנה פסחים א א)

R. Judah says, "One must search on the night preceeding the fourteenth or on the morning of the fourteenth, or at the time when it had to be burned." The sages say: "If one had not searched during the night preceeding the fourteenth, let him search on the fourteenth, if he had not searched on the fourteenth let him search during the festival period, and if he had not searched during the festival period he may search after the festival period. And what one leaves out, he should put away in a hidden place so that it should not be necessary to make another search." (M. Pesahim 1:3) (See page 24)

46. המוצא יום ט"ו הראשון של חמץ ירצו לעשרת השנים  
ומתקנין את תקון מצות ואמרות של צדק בין עם וארמה  
בפסחים של צדק הראשון וארבעה כוסות של חמץ  
ואחד של חמץ וארבעה לוח גבן משימין לכלם ספס  
וספס וארבעה ילדים מפרמי כהונה וקידוהם כצדק  
של חמץ (הגנה בוכה ד ה)

At the close of the first day of the festival of Sukkoth, they went down to the Court of Women where they instituted a major innovation. Now golden candelabras were there, with four golden bowls at their tops and four ladders to each one and four youths from the young priests with pitchers of oil, holding a hundred and twenty logs in their hands, which they used to pour into every bowl. (M. Sukkah 5:2) (See page 24)

47. מפגאי מכנסי כהנים ומכנסי לויים והם היו מקליטין  
וקרבן היו מפליקין ושא פיוג רוצה בירושלים באילת  
מאירי מאיר קירי בשאקרב (מגנה סוכה ד) (פ)

They made wicks from the worn out drawers and girdles of the priests, and with them they kindled. Now, there was no courtyard in Jerusalem that was not lit up with the light of the Libation Well Ceremony. (M. Sukkah 5:3) (See page 24)

48. חסידים ואנשי מעשה היו מרקדים לפניהם  
באקוקות של אור בקיפיהן ואומרים לפניהם דבר  
טובות ותשבחות (מגנה סוכה ד) (פ)

Pious men and men of good deeds would dance before them with flaming torches in their hands and sang before them songs and praises. (M. Sukkah 5:4) (See page 24)

49. מעשה ברקן שמדון בן שמעון גביה מרקד  
במחנה אקוקות של אור ואין איש מהן נוגע לארץ בשביל  
השתחויה מניח אצלו שם כריצפת בונה ונושן  
ווקר מיד (תוספתא סוכה ד) (פ)

It happened that Raban Shimon ben Gamliel was dancing with eight flaming torches and not one of them touched the ground when he prostrated himself, touched his fingers to the floor, bent down, kissed it and immediately jumped up. (Tos. Sukkah 4:4) (See page 25)

50. מקום שנהגו להפליק את המעשים יום  
הכבודים מפליקין מקים שנהגו שלא להפליק אין  
מפליקין (מגנה פסחים ד) (פ)

Where they are accustomed to kindle light on the night preceeding the Day of Atonement, they may kindle.

Where they are accustomed not to kindle light they may not kindle. (M. Pesahim 4:4) (See page 25)

51. יום הכפורים אסור באשירה ובשתיה והרחיצה  
ובסיכה וקנייתם הסנדל והתבשיל והמטה (משנה יחא חא)

On the Day of Atonement eating and drinking and anointing, putting on shoes and sexual intercourse are forbidden.

(M. Yoma 8:1) (See page 25)

52. ואפליקין קמחי כנסיות וקמחי מדרגות וקמחאות  
הבאפלים ושלם דמי החולאים (משנה פכח חא)

But they may kindle in the synagogues, in the houses of study, in the dark alleys and for the sick. (M. Pesahim 4:4) (See page 25)

53. אמרו לו משך ראיה באי בית נחצה צדדין  
כן (הקמח בקמח כחא)

They said to him, from there do you get your proof?

The house of Nitzen is different, for they are heedful.

(B. Shabbat 29b) (See page 45, footnote 5)

54. וכס פיצא מן השעשע אינו נחמא, טוהא אופלים  
אם אבא (משנה גהא חא)

And nothing that comes from a tree can contact pollution except flax. (M. Shabbat 2:3) (See page 45, footnote 8)

55. במכרה ובהקסיר חייב הנותן גזן בר אש  
כי יש בו גזן בר חייב שם שם מקום  
שקום פסול השבול שם צידו ברך זג חייב הין שפני



גמי נרות פולקין מתכוון לכבות את הנר הנז  
וכיבה את כל הנרות (המספח/ גמית יא פורה)

He who extinguishes a lamp and relights it is liable.

He who puts oil in the lamp, even if there was oil in the lamp, he is liable. If he moved it from place to place he is exempt, but if he inclined it to its side he is liable. If there were two lamps burning, if his intention was to blow out one lamp and he blew out the other, he is liable. (Tos. Shabbat 11:4,5) (See page 45, footnote 11)

56. ורבי יוס' בואר הכולן חושין הפתילה משני  
גמית/ גמית פחם (המשנה גמית ב ד)

But R. Jose exempts him in every case except that of the wick for he then makes charcoal. (M. Shabbat 2:5) (See page 46, footnote 12)

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Jacob Z. Lauterbach, Rabbinic Essays (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1951) p. 454.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. pp. 454-455. Lauterbach maintains that Josephus could be referring to either Sabbath or Hanukkah lights.

<sup>3</sup>These lamps were probably used for illumination of the household.

<sup>4</sup>Philip Blackman, Mishnayoth (New York: The Judaica Press, Inc., 1965) II, 29-30.

<sup>5</sup>The sages said to him, "From that case do you derive your proof? The house of Nitzeh is different, because they were most heedful and there was no fear of drawing off oil." (B. Shabbat 29b)

<sup>6</sup>Rabbi Judah permits this procedure. His opinion, however, was not accepted. Hanock Albeck, Six Orders of the Mishnah, Seder Moed (Jerusalem: Bialik Publishing House. Tel Aviv: D'vir, 1958) p. 22.

<sup>7</sup>This was Rabbi Nathan's view. R. Judah the Nasi held that the third blast was for tefillin to be removed.

<sup>8</sup>It was believed that everything that comes from a tree can contact pollution except flax. (M. Shabbat 2:3)

<sup>9</sup>Tebel ( *סעוד* ) fruits of which you are permitted to make a luncheon or improvised meal in the field without separating the priestly or levitical shares.

All the materials which could not be used to kindle the Sabbath lamp may be used to kindle a fire for heat on the Sabbath whether on the ground or in the stove. (B. Shabbat 21a)

<sup>10</sup>Albeck, loc. cit., p.26.

<sup>11</sup>Non-Jews ( *גוים* ) probably refers to the Persian fire-worshippers who on their festivals prohibited the kindling of lights except in their own temples. Blackman, loc. cit., p.95.

A lamp that was extinguished could not be relit. Thus even if there were two separate lamps and if an individual kindled one whereas his intention was to light the other, he is liable. Similarly, if two lamps were burning and he blew out one lamp, whereas his intention was to blow out the other, he is liable. This means that kindling or extinguishing the lamp during the Sabbath were permitted only in very extreme cases. (Tos. Shabbat 11:4,5)

<sup>12</sup>But R. Jose declares him exempt in every case excepting that of the wick, since he then forms charcoal, thereby performing work in that he achieves a desirable end, since the singed end is easier to light the next time. (M. Shabbat 2:5)  
Herbert Danby, The Mishnah (London:Oxford university Press, 1958) p. 102.

<sup>13</sup>Lauterbach, loc. cit., p. 469.

<sup>14</sup>The Rabbis of the Talmud gave special reasons for the performance of this ceremony by women. One of the reasons is as follows: God said to the woman, "I gave you a soul which is called light, נֶפֶשׁ, therefore I command you the duty of kindling the Sabbath light." The Haggadah of the Palestinian Talmud connects this obligation of the women with the offense which is supposed to have been committed by the first woman, Eve. Here we read that Eve extinguished the light of Adam and caused his death by inducing him to eat of the forbidden food. Therefore she must atone for this sin by observing the law of kindling the Sabbath light.  
Lauterbach, loc. cit., p. 462.

None of the above reasons are given by the Tannaim.

<sup>15</sup>George Foot Moore, Judaism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962) II, 36.

<sup>16</sup>Such a lamp was not lit for its light, but for the purpose of honoring the dead.  
Blackman, loc. cit., I, 67.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>18</sup>The custom of looking at the reflection of the fingernails or palms is in keeping with the Mishnaic passage:  
לֹא יִתְּחַלֵּץ אִישׁ מִלְּפָנָיו וְיִתְּחַלֵּץ מִלְּפָנֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ, one should not recite a blessing over a lamp until one could make use of its light. (M. Berakhot 8:6)

<sup>19</sup>Albeck, Seder Moed, loc. cit., p. 29.

<sup>20</sup>Blackman, loc. cit. I, 67.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Albeck, loc. cit.

<sup>23</sup>We have another Tosefta passage which reads:  
"He who enters his house at the close of the Sabbath,  
blesses over the wine and over the light and over the  
spices and says Havdalah." (Tos. Berakhot 5:6) Here  
the order of blessings is as follows:

1.        יין ,wine
2.        נר ,light
3.        סודות ,spices
4.        הבדלה ,Havdalah.

<sup>24</sup>Moore, loc. cit., II 49-50. Moore claims that  
"Josephus, who does not mention the illumination itself,  
surmises that the name "Lights" was given to the festival  
because, contrary to expectation, the power to restore  
the Temple worship had been manifested to the Jews."

<sup>25</sup>Theodor H. Gaster, Festivals of the Jewish Year  
(New York: William Sloane Associates Publishers, 1953),  
p. 248.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 249.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>29</sup>That is, on the New Moon, the three pilgrim festivals,  
Pesach, Shavouth and Sukkoth, Rosh Hashanah and the Day  
of Atonement.

<sup>30</sup>See page 14.

<sup>31</sup>Moore, loc. cit., p. 46.

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