

In Light Of The Door

מצות נר חנוכה להדליק בפתח הסמוך לרשות הרבים משום פרסומי ניסא, וכך היו עושין בזמן המשנה והגמרא. ובזמן הזה שאנו דרים בין האמות מדליקין בבית שהוא דר בו. ואם יש לו חלון לרשות הרבים ידליקם שם, ואם לאו, מדליקם אצל הפתח. ומצוה שיניחם בטפח הסמוך לפתח משמאל, שתהא מזוזה מימין ונר חנוכה משמאל ונמצא שהוא מסבב במצות.



The commandment of the Hanukkah light is to light it in the doorway closest to the public thoroughfare in order to publicize the miracle, for that is what was done in the days of the Mishnah and the Gemarrah. But these days in which we are living among the nations, each lights within one's own dwelling. And if one has a window onto the public thoroughfare, he should light them there, and if not, one should light them next to the door on the left side so that the mezuzah should be on the right, the Hanukkah light on the left, and the one who enters should be surrounded by commandments. (Kitzur Shulhan Aruch)



Threshold Of Consciousness

In the year 5569 [1808], the first night of Hanukkah, after the candle had been lighted:

A guest came into someone's home. He asked the householder, "How do you make your living?" The latter replied that he had no fixed source of income and that he was supported by public funds. The guest then inquired what the householder was studying, and they began to discuss it. Their conversation became intense and personal, and the householder revealed his longing to achieve some true rung of holiness. The guest agreed to teach him, and then the householder was astonished, fearing that perhaps this was no human being at all. But as he saw that they seemed to be having an ordinary human conversation, his trust was restored, and he began calling the other "my teacher." "First," he said, "I want to learn what I should do to treat you with proper respect. Not, of course, that I would really insult you. It is just so hard for a person to take proper care of such things. Teach me, then, how to treat you correctly."

“I have no time for that now,” was the answer. “Another time I will come and teach you that. Now I have to leave you.” The other insisted, “This too is something I should learn about. How far am I expected to accompany you on your way?” “Just past the doorway,” was the reply.

“But how shall I go outside with him?” thought the householder. “Now, too, we are together, but there are other people around. But once I am outside alone with him... who knows who he is?” So, he turned to the guest and said, “I am frightened to go out with you,” to which came the reply, “If I can teach you all these things, who could stop me if I wanted to do something to you right here and now?” So, he went with him out the door, but as soon as they were out the other grabbed him and began to fly with him. He felt cold, but the one with whom he flew gave him a garment. “Take this,” he said, “and all will be well. You will have food and drink and dwell in your home.” And they flew on.

Meanwhile, the householder looked around and found that he was back in his house...

He wondered greatly about all this, not understanding how he was here in one minute but there in the next. He wanted to tell someone about it, but how do you tell people about something as unbelievable as this? Looking out the window, he saw the guest walk by. “Come in,” he said. But the other replied, “I have no time, for I am going to see you.”

“Even this is a shock. I’m right here and you say you’re going to see me?”

In the moment you agreed to go with me, to accompany me to the doorway, I took your soul from you and gave it a garment from the lower rung of paradise. Only the lower parts of your spirit remained with you. That is why you can be there when you turn your thoughts there; you are able to draw illumination into yourself. But when you return here, you are here.”

I do not know what world he was from, though surely it was from the good. The matter has not yet been ended or concluded.

From the “Dream Talks” of Nahman of Bratslav.

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