

A Note on the Electric Hanukkiah

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Is the electric hanukkiah (Hanukkah menorah) kosher?

To translate this question into the language of *halakhah*: does one fulfill the *mitzvah* to kindle the Hanukkah lights - *hadlakat hanerot*, להדליק נר של חנוכה – by using electric lights, as opposed to the more traditional oil or wax candles? For many, of course, it's hardly a question at all. Especially if our earliest memories of the festival involve gathering around the hanukkiah and gazing at the flames flickering on the multicolored candles, it's difficult for us to imagine fulfilling the *mitzvah* by screwing in a light bulb. But the issue is potentially relevant for many people. For example, open flames are usually prohibited in hospital rooms; may patients and their families use an electric hanukkiah to perform the *mitzvah*? What about those who are travelling, or who worry about fire hazards in crowded apartments? Or who simply don't have oil lamps or wax candles but do have access to an electric light? It's a question worth exploring.

Let's begin with the current state of Orthodox halakhic opinion – you know, the opinion that many folks identify as the *halakhah*. Rabbi Eliezer Melamed summarizes the issue in his popular [P'ninei Halakhah](#) 12:8:

למעשה, דעת רוב הפוסקים שאין יוצאים ידי חובת המצווה בנורות חשמל.

As a matter of practical *halakhah*, most *poskim* [Orthodox halakhic authorities] rule that one cannot fulfill the obligation of the *mitzvah* (of Hanukkah) with electric lights.

So the consensus Orthodox answer is “no.” But notice that Rabbi Melamed says that this is the view of רוב הפוסקים, “most authorities” (our emphasis – FI). Hmm – sounds like there’s a *maḥloket*. As Rabbi Ovadyah Yosef writes at the conclusion of his lengthy discussion of this question (*Resp. Yabi`a Omer 3, Oraḥ Ḥayyim*, no. 5):

המורם מכל האמור שדעת רבים וכן שלמים מאחרוני דורינו שאין יוצאים ידי חובת נר חנוכה בהדלקת נרות חשמל. ויש פנים הנראים בהלכה לדבריהם. ולא יהא אלא ספק, אין להכנס בספק ברכה לבטלה.

What emerges from our discussion is that many leading recent *poskim* hold that one does not fulfill the obligation of the Hanukkah lamp by means of electric lights. There are good halakhic arguments to support their view. At worst, the matter is in doubt, and one should not risk a possible *b`rakhah l`vatalah*¹ [an improper or unnecessary blessing] in a case of doubt.

This tells us two things: 1) most – but not all - Orthodox *poskim* hold that an electric light does not fulfill the *mitzvah* of Hanukkah, and 2) as a matter of theory and substance, the arguments of those *poskim* are not entirely persuasive and therefore do not resolve all doubt. All of which leads Rabbi Ovadyah to recommend that the best course of action is to play it safe and to follow the majority opinion, even if it’s not certain that the majority are correct.

For our part, we are definitely *not* persuaded by the view of the Orthodox majority. As we’ll see, their arguments against the electric Hanukkah light are “creative” ones – forced, artificial, and not well rooted in the classical halakhic sources. This doesn’t mean that we *should* use an electric hanukkah or that it is the preferred way to perform the *mitzvah*. But it does mean that we have more options available to us than the consensus Orthodox opinion would have us believe.

Let’s begin with the Talmud’s discussion of the *ner shel Hanukkah*, the Hanukkah light or lamp. The *sugya* occurs near the beginning of chapter 2 of Bavli tractate Shabbat, which talks about another *mitzvah* involving the kindling of a flame.² The very first *mishnah* of that chapter is found in *B. Shabbat 20b*.

במה מדליקין ובמה אין מדליקין?

With which wicks and oil are we to kindle (the Shabbat lamp) and with which wicks and oils are we forbidden to kindle it?

The Rabbis, as we know, require the kindling of a lamp prior to the onset of Shabbat.³ The Mishnah and Talmud set forth the specifications of the lamp, namely the materials that may or may not be used to make the flame. Why is this important? R. Ovadyah of Bartanura explains in his comment on the *mishnah*:

¹ An improper or unnecessary blessing. If one *cannot* properly perform the *mitzvah* of Hanukkah by kindling electric lights, the *b`rakhah* “who has commanded us to kindle the *ner shel Hanukkah*” would be an improper one.

² Hanukkah apparently is not the sort of holiday that demands its own tractate. But we do find a kind of “mini-tractate” that collects the Rabbinic discussions of *Hilkhot Hanukkah* in *B. Shabbat*, beginning on 21a and stretching for several pages.

³ Rambam *Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Shabbat 5:1*.

שמנים ופתילות שאמרו חכמים אין מדליקין בהם, מה טעם? מפני שהאור מסכסכת בהם, כלומר שאין האור נכנסת תוך הפתילה [אלא] סביב מבחוץ. ושמנים שאמרו חכמים אין מדליקין בהם? לפי שאין נמשכים אחר הפתילה, ומתוך שאין הנר דולקת יפה חיישינן שמא יטה השמן על פי הנר ונמצא מבעיר. א"נ שמא יניח הנר ויצא, ואנן קיימא לן דנר של שבת חובה.

Why did the Sages prohibit certain wicks? Because the flame nibbles at them, that is, it catches around the edges of the wick but does not enter the wick itself. And why did the Sages prohibit certain oils? Because they tend to separate from the wick, and since the flame does not burn well there is concern that people will tilt the lamp (to adjust the flame), which would violate the prohibition against lighting a fire on Shabbat. Another reason: one might not attend to the lamp (and the flame may die), and we hold that it is an obligation to have a (functioning) *ner shel Shabbat*.

Our Shabbat light must be constructed from the highest quality oils and wicks, first of all, because we don't want the flame to die on Shabbat, when we are forbidden to rekindle it. The second concern, "that people will tilt the lamp" to adjust the flame, is based upon the rule that it is permitted to use the light of the Shabbat lamp for illumination. Indeed, that's its whole purpose, so that we will eat our meal in a lighted atmosphere rather than in darkness. If so, we'll be sitting around that lamp in close quarters and may absentmindedly reach out to tilt it should the flame start to sputter. Since we're not allowed to do that – adjusting or "fixing" a flame is tantamount to lighting a fire – we must use those oils and wicks that make for a good flame, to ensure as best we can that the flame remains strong.

The Talmud (*B. Shabbat 2a-b*) asks whether the strictures that govern the *ner shel Shabbat* also apply to the *ner shel Hanukkah*. There are three opinions among the Amoraim.

אמר רב הונא: פתילות ושמנים שאמרו חכמים אין מדליקין בהן בשבת - אין מדליקין בהן בחנוכה, בין בשבת בין בחול. אמר רבא: מאי טעמא דרב הונא - קסבר: כבתה זקוק לה, ומותר להשתמש לאורה.

Rav Huna said: it is forbidden to use for the Hanukkah lamp those wicks and oils that the Sages prohibited for the Shabbat lamp, either on Shabbat [Friday afternoon] or on weekdays.

Rava said: Rav Huna says this because 1) he holds that should the Hanukkah lamp be extinguished one is obligated to rekindle it, and 2) it is permitted to make use of its light.

Rav Huna requires Shabbat-quality oils and wicks for all eight nights of the *ner shel Hanukkah*. As Rashi explains:

זקוק לה – הלכך צריך לכתחלה לעשות יפה, דילמא פשע ולא מתקן לה.
ומותר להשתמש לאורה – הלכך בשבת אסור, שמא יטה לצורך תשמיש.

one is obligated to rekindle it – therefore one should be sure to make a good flame from the beginning, lest one negligently forget to rekindle it.

it is permitted to make use of its light – therefore it is forbidden (to use these materials) for the Hanukkah lamp on Shabbat, lest one tilt the lamp to make a better flame.

Rav Huna holds that we are obligated to keep the lamp burning for its specified period – presumably to fulfill the requirement of פרסומי ניסא, “to proclaim/publicize the miracle” to passers-by. This obligation would not apply to Shabbat, since we are forbidden to rekindle the light once Shabbat has begun. But on weekday evenings we may be busy with household chores and may out of negligence fail to rekindle the lamp. Thus, we should make sure to use for the Hanukkah lamp those high-quality oils and wicks that make it less likely that the flame will go out. He also holds that we are permitted to make use of the Hanukkah light as with the *ner shel Shabbat*; hence, the concern over “tilting” remains.

ורב חסדא אמר : מדליקין בהן בחול, אבל לא בשבת.
קסבר : כבתה אין זקוק לה, ומותר להשתמש לאורה.

And Rav Ḥisda says: it is permitted to use them on weekdays but not on Shabbat. He holds: 1) should the Hanukkah lamp be extinguished one is *not* obligated to rekindle it, and 2) it is permitted to make use of its light.

Rav Ḥisda holds that הדלקה עושה מצוה, that our obligation is fulfilled once we have kindled the Hanukkah light; we don't have to make sure that it keeps burning for a specified time.⁴

אמר רבי זירא אמר רב : פתילות ושמנים שאמרו חכמים אין מדליקין בהן בשבת -
מדליקין בהן בחנוכה, בין בחול בין בשבת.
אמר רבי ירמיה : מאי טעמא דרב - קסבר : כבתה אין זקוק לה, ואסור להשתמש
לאורה.

R. Zeira said in the name of Rav: it is permitted to use for the Hanukkah lamp those wicks and oils that the Sages prohibited for the Shabbat lamp, both on Shabbat and on weekdays.

R. Yirmiyah said: Rav says this because 1) he holds that should the Hanukkah lamp be extinguished one is not obligated to rekindle it, and 2) it is *forbidden* to make use of its light.

If it is forbidden to use the Hanukkah lamp for illumination, we won't be sitting around it at close quarters. Instead, we'll place it at the doorway of the house or in the window, because the purpose of the *ner* is purely ritual and symbolic: it is meant only to be seen, so as to publicize the miracle.

Rav's viewpoint becomes the codified *halakhah*.

⁴ The Gemara makes this clear further down page 21b.

Shulhan Arukh Orah Hayyim 673:1

כל השמנים והפתילות כשרים לנר חנוכה, ואף על פי שאין השמנים נמשכים אחר הפתילה ואין האור נתלה יפה באותם הפתילות.
הגה: ומיהו שמן זית מצוה מן המוצהר, ואם אין שמן זית מצוה בשמנים שאורן זך ונקי; ונוהגים במדינות אלו להדליק צנר של שעוה, כי אורן זלול כמו שמן.

All wicks and oils are permitted for the Hanukkah lamp, even if the oil doesn't attach to the wick and the flame does not catch well on the wick.

Isserles: However, the best way to fulfill the mitzvah is with olive oil,⁵ though if one does not have olive oil one should use oils that make a bright flame. The custom in these lands is to use wax candles, since their flame is clear like that made by oil.

In theory, then, the material used to construct the Hanukkah lamp is irrelevant. Thus, to return to our question: if even the poorest quality oils and wicks are permitted, why not electric lights, which if anything give off “a bright flame”? True, R. Moshe Isserles's comment about olive oil being “the best way to perform the *mitzvah*” (*mitzvah min hamuvhar*) adds another element to consider. As the *Mishnah B'rurah* tells us in his comment on this point (his note #4):

ומ"מ מצוה בשל שמן טפי מנרות של שעוה דע"י השמן נעשה הנס.

But it is still preferable to use oil rather than wax candles, because the miracle took place by means of oil.

So the *preferable* practice, the “best” way to do it - *mitzvah min hamuvhar* – is to use olive oil, given its connection to the Hanukkah story. Still, the *standard* Ashkenazic practice remains, as Isserles has it, wax candles, even though wax has no obvious connection to the events commemorated at Hanukkah. From this we learn that, as far as the *halakhah* is concerned, the historical consideration (we might call it the *aggadic* consideration) is not a *sine qua non* for the performance of the *mitzvah*: as the *Shulhan Arukh* puts it, “All wicks and oils are permitted for the Hanukkah lamp.”⁶ Why then do electric lights not pass halakhic muster?

One of the first authorities to weigh in on this question is Rabbi Yitzhak Shmelkes (Galicia, d. 1905), *Resp. Beit Yitzhak, Yore De'ah* 1:120:

ובדבר אם יכול לברך על גאס ליכט או על עלעקטערישעס ליכט להדליק נר של שבת, נלפע"ד דיכול לברך ויוצא ידי חובת המצוה. ולדעתי יכול לומר להדליק נר דכל מאור הדבוק בשמן או בפתילה מיקרי נר, וכאן ג"כ המאור דבוק בהכלי...

⁵ The first reference to this is apparently *Sefer Rokeah* (R. Eliezer of Worms, 12th century), *Hilkhoh Hanukkah* ch. 226.

⁶ There's at least one objection to this otherwise consensus view. The Maharal of Prague is quoted as *requiring* the use of olive oil for the hanukkiah, for two reasons: 1) the miracle was performed on an olive oil-fueled light, and 2) a wax candle is not a “light” (*ner* but rather a “torch” (*avukah*) and therefore doesn't qualify for the *mitzvah*. This remains a minority opinion – indeed, as far as we know a *da'at yahid* – but it shows just how strongly the preference for olive oil is rooted in halakhic thinking.

On the question whether one may recite the blessing “to kindle the Shabbat lamp” over a gas light or an electric light, it seems to me that one may say the blessing and fulfill the obligation. For any light that attaches by way of oil [fuel] and wick is called a “lamp” [*ner*], and in these cases the light does attach...

אך לענין הדלקת נר חנוכה אינו יוצא לא בעלעקטרישעס ליכט ולא בגאסליכט. חדא ששמן זית מצוה מן המובחר. ועוד כיון שנעשים להדליק בכל ימות השנה לא הוי פרסומא ניסא.

But one does not fulfill the obligation to kindle the Hanukkah lamp with a gas light or an electric light. For one thing, “the best way to fulfill the *mitzvah* is with olive oil.” Moreover, since we use these lights the rest of the year, they do not serve to “publicize the miracle” of Hanukkah.

While the *Beit Yitzhak* continues to distinguish between the “best” standard of ritual practice (*mitzvah min hamuvhar*) with the minimally acceptable standard, he clearly stacks the deck in favor of the former, what we have called the “aggadic consideration”: one *ought* to use olive oil, though the *posek* does not go so far as to forbid the use of wax candles. But by that token his second argument, that electric lights do not meet the requirement of *pirsumei nisa*, the “proclamation of the miracle,” is problematic. Since Jews had for centuries used oil lamps and wax candles for illumination “the rest of the year,” by his logic those lights would have been too “everyday” to be recognized as the *ner shel Hanukkah*. At any rate, his argument would not seem to apply to the sorts of electric *hanukkiyot* that are available today and that are clearly recognizable as Hanukkah lights.

Our next *posek* is Rabbi Mordekhai Yehudah Winkler (Hungary, d. 1932), who writes the following in his *Resp. L'vushai Mordekhai* 3, *Orah Hayyim* no. 59:

ולענין דבר פשוט שאינו יוצא, דאם כי יוצא בכל השמנים ורק שמן זית מצוה מן המובחר בין לנר שבת ובין לנר חנוכה, אך עכ"פ צריך להיות דומיא דשמן, דהיינו שיש בו שמנונית דהשמנונית עצמו גורם שידלק, ואפי' נר שעוה וחלב ידוע דרק השמנונית גורם הדלק והאורה... וכמוה העלעקטע"ר שאינו רק כח האש הנטמן בתוכה, אבל אין בו שמנונית אם אין זכר לשמן כלל ולא שום רמז.

It is obvious to me that one does not fulfill the obligation [to kindle the Hanukkah lamp with an electric light]. True, all oils are permissible, and olive oil is simply “the best way” to fuel either the Shabbat lamp or the Hanukkah lamp. But in any case, the fuel must resemble oil, that is, its substance must be oily. Even a candle made of wax or fat feeds the flame with its oil-like substance... (whereas) electricity is the power that feeds the flame but has no oily substance whatsoever.

R. Winkler upholds the long-standing Ashknazic practice of using wax candles, though the oil lamp remains *mitzvah min hamuvhar*. Butiwax is acceptable precisely because it is “oil-like,” i.e., it qualifies as one of the “oils” (שמנים, *sh'manim*) acceptable for the Hanukkah lamp. Electricity and gas, which lack this physical quality (שמנונית, “oiliness”), are unacceptable. That’s an interesting idea (*s'vara*), but one is entitled to point out that the Talmud itself speaks

not of “oiliness” but of *oils*, presumably because oil was the type of fuel commonly used at the time for illumination. Electricity has now supplanted oil as the most common mode of illumination today, and this suggests that the Talmud would similarly approve of electric “fuel.”

Next up is R. Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Israel, d. 1995), *Resp. Minḥat Shlomo* 2:58:

דגם בשעוה חשיב השעוה עצמה כמו שמן, אבל עכ"פ... באלקטריא הלא כל האור הוא רק מחמת החוט המלובן שהזרם העובר דרך בו הוא מחמם אותו עד כדי ליבון בכה"ג נראה דכ"ש הוא שהוא ספק גמור, דאטו אם ילבן אדם ברזל שהוא מאיר ויניחנו כדי לקיים בו את המצוה וכי יצא הוא בזה, ודאי דספק גדול הוא כיון דלא קרי כלל נר... נלעני"ד כיון דעיקר הטעם דאמרינן הדלקה עושה מצוה כתבו הראשונים משום דבעינן דומיא דמנורה שבמקדש.

Wax itself is [i.e., functions] like oil, but... with electricity, the light is the result of a heated thread through which the electrical stream flows and causes it to become heated. And precisely here lies a serious doubt. After all, were someone to heat a piece of iron until it glows and then set that iron in such a way as to perform the *mitzvah*, can we imagine that they fulfill the obligation thereby? The doubt is that such can hardly be called a “lamp”... It seems to me that the rule “the *mitzvah* is performed by kindling” means, as the *rishonim* have written, that the hanukkiah must resemble the *menorah* in the Temple.

R. Auerbach’s argument allows us to distinguish between wax (acceptable) and electricity (unacceptable): wax candles, like oil, at least make a flame, while electric lights do not. And why do we require a flame? Because “the hanukkiah must resemble the *menorah* in the Temple” (דבעינן דומיא דמנורה שבמקדש). He attributes this requirement to unnamed *rishonim*, “early” (pre-*Shulḥan Arukh*) authorities. We do not know of any *rishonim* who impose this requirement, which does not appear in the Talmud or the major codes, and its application here (namely, that the *ner* must be an actual flame) is very much Rabbi Auerbach’s *hidush*.⁷

The comparison between the *ner shel Hanukkah* and the Temple *menorah* figures prominently in the thinking of other authorities as well. It underlines the major distinction between the Hanukkah light and the *ner shel Shabbat*, its Talmudic analog. As Rabbi Melamed tells us on *P’inei Halakhah* (see above):

ואמנם לעניין נר שבת, דעת רוב הפוסקים שבשעת הצורך אפשר לקיים את המצווה בברכה בהדלקת נורה חשמלית, מפני שעיקר תפקידו של נר השבת להאיר. אולם נר חנוכה נועד להזכיר את הנס, לפיכך עליו להיות דומה לנרות המקדש, וכיוון שנורה חשמלית אינה דומה לנר, אין יוצאים בה ידי חובה.

When it comes to the *ner shel Shabbat*, most *poskim* hold that, when necessary, one can perform the *mitzvah* with and recite the *b’rakhah* over an electric light, since the primary purpose of the Shabbat lamp is to give off light. But the Hanukkah lamp is meant to remind us of the miracle; therefore, it must resemble

⁷ Specifically, he cites Numbers 8:2, בהעלתך את-הנרות, “when you light up the lamps.” Why does the Torah use a word based on the root עלה, “to rise,” rather than, say, בהדלקתך, “when you kindle”? See Rashi, ad loc.: a flame “rises.” This is a lovely *drash*, but Auerbach’s effort to derive *halakhah* from it is obviously forced.

the Temple lamp. Since an electric light does not resemble that lamp, it does not fulfill the obligation.

An electric lamp may be defined as a *ner*, but it does not resemble the sort of *ner* that burned in the Temple. Again, though, we might argue that if the electric lamp is recognizable as a reminder of the miracle, it should be acceptable. Why must the hanukkiyah be fueled in the same way that the ancients fueled their lamps? Perhaps to answer this objection, Rabbi Melamed cites Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hakohen Kook (*Mitzvat R'iyah, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 673) to the effect that since electric lights had not been invented during the time of the Sages, they were not included in the Rabbinic *takanah* that established the *mitzvah* of Hanukkah. The logic of this statement escapes us; did the Rabbis consciously intend to exclude all future technological developments from the terms of their *takanah*? And again, there is no evidence in the Talmud or the codes to support such an assertion.)

Our questions are reinforced when we look at the opinion of the one notable Orthodox *posek* who permits the electric hanukkiyah. He is Rabbi Yosef Mesas (Algeria-Israel, d. 1974), in his *Resp. Mayyim Ḥayyim, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 1:279:

וצעיר אני לא ידעתי מדוע צ"ע, ולא יהיה ההיתר פשוט, אם משום הפתילות, הלא כל הפתילות כשרות לנר חנוכה, אפילו פתילות שאין האור נתלה בהן יפה, כמ"ש בסימן תרע"ג ס"א ע"ש, וכאן יש חוטי נחשת תוך הגביע שהאור נתלה בהם יפה יפה ... ואם מפני שהנס נעשה בשמן, גם זה אינו, שהרי במדינות אשכנז נהגו להדליק בנרות של שעווה, מפני שאורן צלול כמו שמן, כמ"ש שם בהגה, ע"ש.

I don't see any doubt⁸ as to the permit [for the electric hanukkiyah]. Is the objection to the wicks? *All* wicks are acceptable [according to the Talmud], even those on which the flame doesn't attach well. In this case, the light attaches quite well on the copper wires... Is the objection that the miracle took place by means of oil? This, too, can be refuted, for the Ashkenazic custom is to use wax candles because their light is as clear as that thrown off by oil (see Isserles in *Shulḥan Arukh Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 673:1)

וא"כ העיקר הוא שיהיה אור צלול, ויהיו הנרות מונחים על הפתח, שיהיו ניכרים שהם לפרסומי ניסא דחנוכה. ובנידון דידן אין לך אור צלול יותר ממנו, וגם יניחם על הפתח, ואי משום דהדלקה עושה מצוה, גם פה יש הדלקה וכבוי, ולכך אסור להדליק ולכבות בשבת ויו"ט. וא"כ לדעתי המעט נר' דשרי לעשות ממנו נרות חנוכה, ואחר שיעור זמן הדלקתה, אם ירצה לכבותה, הרשות בידו...

The fundamental requirement, therefore, is that the light should be clear, that the lamp should be placed in the doorway, and that it should be recognizable as proclaiming the miracle of Hanukkah. There is no light clearer than that of the electric Hanukkiyah, which can be placed in the doorway. Is the concern the rule that “the *mitzvah* is performed by kindling”? An electric device is subject to the

⁸ Literally, “although I am young [i.e., a formal protestation of humility in the face of all those other scholars], I don't know why there is any doubt as to the permit.”

definition of “kindling”⁹ and “extinguishing,” and it is forbidden to perform either of those actions on Shabbat or festivals. Therefore, in my humble opinion, it is permitted to use an electric Hanukkiah for the Hanukkah lights...

Rabbi Mesas easily refutes all the major objections that the other *poskim* raise against electric Hanukkah lights.¹⁰ He shows those objections to be, as we’ve suggested, *artificial*, manufactured in order to justify a prohibition against electric Hanukkah lights, a prohibition that has little if any explicit support in the sources.

We agree with Rabbi Mesas. His may be a minority view, but it certainly makes more sense than all those other opinions that create reasons to support their prohibition. And, *contra* the opinion of Rabbi Ovadyah Yosef (above), we progressive halakhists don’t feel the need to go along with the majority simply because they *are* the majority. Rather, we adopt the interpretation that represents the best, most persuasive reading of the texts and the tradition. In this case, that interpretation coincides with the arguments of Rabbi Mesas. The electric hanukkiah meets the Talmudic requirements for the *ner shel Hanukkah*: it is “kindled” and recognizable as the Hanukkah lamp, thereby fulfilling the goal of *pirsumei nisa*.

To repeat: our position does not mean that one *should* use electric lights for the Hanukkah *mitzvah*. There are, as we’ve noted, “historical,” or “*aggadic*” reasons – not to mention aesthetic reasons - to *prefer* the use of oil lights or wax candles. Our point is that there is no *requirement* that we do so; no *prohibition* of the electric hanukkiah can stand the scrutiny of the sources. Thus, those who cannot or are not permitted to light a fire may use an electric hanukkiah and recite the blessings over it.

⁹ Here R. Mesas differs from R. Benzion Meir Hai Ouziel (*Resp. Mishp’tei Ouziel* 1, *Orah Hayyim* no. 7), who holds that opening an electric light is not an act of “kindling” but of the completion of an electrical circuit. For the same reason Ouziel also holds that one does not fulfill the requirement to kindle the Shabbat lamp with electric lights, even though most other Orthodox *poskim* accept electric lights for the *ner shel Shabbat*.

¹⁰ True, he does not mention the “requirement” that the *ner shel Hanukkah* resemble the Temple *menorah*. Perhaps that is because, as we’ve said, the Talmud and the major codes also do not mention any such requirement.