

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hanukkah Text Study**  
**The *Mitzva* of Lighting Hanukkah Lights**  
Babylonian Talmud, Masekhet Shabbat 21b

Our Rabbis taught: The commandment of Hanukkah is one light per household. For those who want to beautify - one light for each person. For those who want REALLY to beautify - The School of Shammai says: on the first day, light eight and from then on reduce. The School of Hillel says: on the first day, light one and from then on increase.

Ula said: There were two western Amora'im who argue about this subject, Rabbi Yosi bar Avin and Rabbi Yosi bar Zveida. One of them said: the following is the reason for the School of Shammai's opinion: correspondence with the days to come; and the reason for the School of Hillel's opinion: correspondence with the days that have passed. The other one said: the reason for the School of Shammai's opinion: correspondence with the cattle sacrifices of "the" Festival; and the reason for the School of Hillel's opinion: one increases in holiness and does not reduce.

Rabbah bar Bar Hana said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: There were once two elders in the town of Sidon. One followed the custom of the School of Shammai, while the other followed the custom of the School of Hillel. One gave the reason for his opinion - correspondence with the cattle sacrifices on "the" Festival and the other gave the reason for his opinion - one increases in holiness and does not reduce.

תנו רבנן: מצות חנוכה נר איש וביתו.  
והמהדרין - נר לכל אחד ואחד.  
והמהדרין מן המהדרין, בית שמאי  
אומרים: יום ראשון מדליק שמנה, מכאן  
ואילך פוחת והולך ובית הלל אומרים:  
יום ראשון מדליק אחת, מכאן ואילך  
מוסיף והולך.

אמר עולא: פליגי בה תרי אמוראי  
במערבא, רבי יוסי בר אבין ורבי יוסי  
בר זבדא, חד אמר: טעמא דבית שמאי  
- כנגד ימים הנכנסין, וטעמא דבית הלל  
- כנגד ימים היוצאין. וחד אמר: טעמא  
דבית שמאי - כנגד פרי החג, וטעמא  
דבית הלל - דמעלין בקדש ואין  
מורדין.

אמר רבה בר בר חנה אמר רבי יוחנן:  
שני זקנים היו בצידן, אחד עשה כבית  
שמאי ואחד עשה כדברי בית הלל, זה  
נותן טעם לדבריו - כנגד פרי החג, וזה  
נותן טעם לדבריו - דמעלין בקדש ואין  
מורדין.

1) According to the Tanna'im, what is the basic requirement for lighting Hanukkah lights?

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2) What is the purpose of the other two systems/ways for lighting Hanukkah lights?

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3) Why is Ulla telling his story about the two Amora'im?

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4) When the Rabbis say **THE Festival**, to what holiday do you think they are referring? What would the connection between these two festivals be?

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5) In the third paragraph of the text, there are three separate generations of scholars teaching: What are they?

a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_

6) How does this teaching in paragraph 3 serve as proof for the the reasons behind the opinions of the Schools of Hillel and Shammai?

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7) How do you now better understand the history behind our custom for Hanukkah lights?

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