

## HANUKKAH CANDLE BLESSINGS AND READINGS for each night of Hanukkah

A tradition we follow is to place the candles in the menorah from right to left, but light them from left to right, then sing Ma'oz Tzur/Rock of Ages.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתַי, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה.

*Baruch atah Adonai, elohenu melech ha'olam, asher kiddshanu b'mitzvotav v'tsi vanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.*

We Praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You hallow us with Mitzvot, and command us to kindle the Hanukkah lights.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בַּיָּמֵן הַזֶּה.

*Baruch atah Adonai, elohenu melech ha'olam, she'asah nissim lavotenu, bayamim hahem bazman ha-zeh.*

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe: You showed wonders to our ancestors in days of old, at this season.

### First Night Only:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֲחַיֵּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַיָּמֵן הַזֶּה.

*Baruch atah Adonai, elohenu melech ha'olam, she-he-che-yanu, v'ki-ye-manu, v'hi-ge-yanu lazman ha-zeh.*

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

### 1st Night Prayer

We kindle these Hanukkah lights in memory of the dedication and courage of the Maccabees. Believing that they should be free to worship God as their hearts and minds dictated, they willingly gave their lives for freedom. Now, kindling these candles we rededicate ourselves to work for the equal rights of all people, and for the realization of a society of democracy and freedom.

### 2nd Night Prayer

Tonight as we celebrate Hanukkah together, we are conscious of our precious gift of family. So often we take one another for granted, forgetting to express our love and devotion. Let us now, as we kindle these festive lights rededicate ourselves to sharing our interests and time with one another. Like the Maccabees of old, let us always face the tribulations and the joys of life united by our family bonds. Kindling these lights we pray that through kindness and thoughtfulness our love for one another will increase from strength to strength.

### 3rd Night Prayer

On this third night of Hanukkah, we rededicate ourselves to the study of our tradition. As the Maccabees courageously fought to preserve our faith, we, too, are duty-bound to sustain our heritage by deepening our understanding of it through study. By increasing our knowledge of Judaism, we become more sensitive to its abiding values and more aware of our responsibility to realize these values in our society. Study opens our minds and fortifies us against tyranny. Learning secures our freedom. Let us, then, as we kindle these candles rededicate ourselves to the study of our tradition.

#### **4th Night Prayer**

Our ancestors have taught us that in hope a person's future is illumined and made creative. Ours are times when many people live in fear and great despair. Like the Maccabees, we need to build our lives on hope: hope that ultimately truth will triumph over falsehood and confidence, knowledge and understanding will finally depose superstition and tyranny. Now as we kindle the Hanukkah lights, may our lives be strengthened by the highest hopes and visions of our faith.

#### **5th Night Prayer**

Our tradition tells us that during the Maccabean war for freedom, all Jews, both children and adults, contributed charity toward the cause of defeating the oppressor. There are many forms of oppression still existent in our world today. There are people afflicted by sickness, hunger, ignorance and prejudice. Tonight, we, like our ancestors, put aside gifts of charity in order that we, too, may help bring an end to oppression. We pray that the humble gifts we offer will provide food for the hungry, medicine for the sick, knowledge for the ignorant, and equal opportunity for those afflicted by prejudice. Now as we kindle our Hanukkah lights, let us rededicate ourselves to the ideal of Tzedakah, charity, found in Jewish tradition.

#### **6th Night Prayer**

The candles of Hanukkah remind us of our chosen mission as Jews. Like the Maccabees, we seek to rededicate ourselves to the service of God. Today, one of our foremost tasks is to secure peace in our troubled world. When we end disagreements through mutual understanding, when we seek to mend hurt and wounded feelings, we are doing our part in making peace a living ideal. Let us, as we kindle our Hanukkah candles, rededicate ourselves with renewed strength to the task of securing peace.

#### **7th Night Prayer**

Judaism is dedicated to the complete respect for the liberty and freedom of all people. The Maccabees of old sought to protect themselves when their rights were violated. Our Hanukkah lights serve as a reminder that respect of others is secure only when we honor the precious liberty and property of our fellow human being. As we kindle these lights, let us rededicate ourselves to the cause of brotherhood and sisterhood which alone can bring dignity to all.

#### **8th Night Prayer**

Tonight we kindle all the candles of our *hanukiyah* (Hanukkah menorah). Throughout the centuries the menorah has been a symbol of our faith. Like the Maccabees, when they celebrated this festive holiday, we rededicate ourselves to the living of a more meaningful Jewish life. We pray that throughout the coming year we may fulfill the ideals of freedom, charity, family, study, hope, peace and brotherhood, all of which are symbolized by the candles of our menorah.

#### **Ma'oz Tzur - Rock of Ages**

Ma-oz tzur y'shu-a-ti,  
L'cha na-eh l'sha-bei-ach,  
Ti-kon beit t'fi'la-ti,  
V'sham to-da n'za-bei-ach.  
L'eit tash-bit mat-bei-ach  
Mitzar ha-m'na-bei-ach,  
Az eg-mor, b'shir miz-mor )  
Cha-nu-kat ha-miz-bei-ach. ) 2X

Rock of ages, let our song  
Praise Your saving power;  
You, amid the raging foes,  
Were our sheltering tower.  
Furious, they assailed us,  
But Your arm availed us,  
And Your word broke their sword )  
When our own strength failed us. ) 2X