

Blessing for the Chanukiah

Place candles in Chanukiah each night from right to left (as you look at it) but light them from left to right.

Light each candle (or oil wick) with the SHAMASH (the server candle) and recite the following blessings:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו
להדליק נר של חנוכה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam Asher Kidshanu Bimitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Chanukah.

Praised are You Adonai, our God, Source of the Universe who makes us holy with mitzvot and commands us to kindle the Chanukah lights.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שעשה נסים לאבותינו ולאמתנו
ההם בזמן הזה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam sheasah nisim l'avoteinu ul'imoteinu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Source of the Universe who made miracles for our ancestors in days of yore at this season.

On the first night only recite:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam shehechyanu, v'kimanu, v'higianu lazman hazeh.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Source of the Universe who has given us life, sustained us and brought us to this joyous time.

Reading for each night

1. The first light of this festive night pierces the darkness of a winter's eve. As the Maccabees rebuilt and rededicated the Temple for goodness, holiness and to God so may I/we dedicate ourselves this night to goodness, holiness and serving God and the Jewish people. "What does God require of you? Only to do justly, and to love compassion and walk humbly with Your God (*Micah 6*)."

2. The shamash lights tonight's two wicks. It transfers its flame and shares its warmth, light, and hope. On this second night of Chanukah may we learn to share our own warmth, inner light, strength and hope with others. "Not by might, not by Power but by My Spirit alone (*Zechariah 4*)."

3. This holiday is the first to commemorate a fight for religious liberty. Judah Maccabee and his followers liberated the Temple from those who sought to destroy Jewish life. We light these three candles on this night of Chanukah to remind us that religious freedoms must be protected and we are thankful to live in a society where we can be free to practice our Jewish heritage. "Proclaim liberty throughout the Land (*Lev. 25*)."

4. Hannah and her seven sons became martyrs, sanctifying God's holy name rather than worship other gods and goddesses. We remember Hannah and her children's commitment to each other and to the Jewish way of life and pledge tonight to open our hearts to a Jewish way of life. "You shall love Adonai Your God with all your heart, your strength and all your soul (*Deut. 6*)."

5. The Talmud teaches that the eternal flame was rekindled from a single cruse of oil. Enough oil remained for eight days when it

should have only lasted for a short while. A great miracle happened there. Teach us God, on this fifth night to continue to find miracles not only there but here. "Who is like you Adonai, among the Gods, that are worshipped? Who is like You, Awesome and Holy, doing wonders? (*Ex. 15*)."

6. We give thanks on this sixth night for the community of the Jewish people. We are linked not only by a common past but by shared observances. As we light this chanukiah, we know that other Jews around the world light their chanukiot in celebration of this festive time. "And God shall turn the heart of the parents to the children and God the heart of the children to their parents (*Malachi 3*)."

7. These lights of Chanukah serve only one purpose. That is to remind us of and proclaim the miracle of the holiday. The miracle is that a small group of Jews made a difference, fought for what they believed in and preserved the Jewish people. These Chanukah lights may have no other purpose but to inspire us to do the same, speak up when there is injustice, make a difference, and never be deterred in our efforts to keep Jewish life renewed. "Justice, Justice shall you pursue (*Deut. 16*)."

8. On this final night of Chanukah, with flames aglow, we pray for peace. As once this festival of rededication proclaimed a time of peace for our people, may we work for the day when all shall know shalom. May there be peace throughout the world and may I/We help to bring it to others. "Oseh Shalom Bimromav hu Yaaseh Shalom... May the one who makes peace in the heavens above help us to make peace with one another. Amen.