

## Hanerot Halalu

The prayer Hanerot Halalu, found in the Talmud Soferim 20:6 is recited as the *hanukkiyah* candles are being lit.



These lights we kindle for the miracles and the wonders and the salvations and the victories that You performed for our ancestors	<i>Hanerot halalu anakhnu madlikin al hanisim ve'al hanifla'ot v'al hateshu'ot v'al hanekhamot she'asit le'imoteynu v'la'avoteynu</i>	הַנֵּרוֹת הַלְלוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מִדְּלִיקוֹן עַל הַנִּסִּים וְעַל הַנִּפְלְאוֹת וְעַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת וְעַל הַנְּחֻמּוֹת שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ לְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ וְלְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ
in their day at this season, through Your holy priests	<i>Bayamim hahem bazman hazeh al yedey kohanayikh hakedoshim</i>	בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזָמַן הַזֶּה עַל יְדֵי כֹהֲנֶיךָ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים
and in every generation of Your people, through all who have kindled lights of inspiration, hope, and peace.	<i>U'v'khol dorot amekh al yedey kol eleh shehidliku nerot hasharah tikvah v'shalom.</i>	וּבְכָל דְּוֹרוֹת עַמֶּךָ עַל יְדֵי כָּל אֵלֶּה שֶׁהִדְלִיקוּ נֵרוֹת הַשְּׂאֲרָה תִּקְוָה וְשָׁלוֹם
All eight days of Hanukkah, these candles are holy. We are not permitted to use their light, but only to look at them and to appreciate and to praise Your great name for Your miracles, Your wonders, and Your salvations.	<i>V'khol shmonat yemey Hanukkah hanerot halalu kodesh hem v'ein lanu reshut lehishtamesh bahem elah lirotam bilvad kedey lehodot ulehalel lishmeh hagadol al nisayikh ve'al nifle'otayikh ve'al yeshuatekh.</i>	וְכָל שְׁמוֹנַת יָמֵי חֲנֻכָּה הַנֵּרוֹת הַלְלוּ קְדֹשׁ הֵם וְאֵין לָנוּ רֵשׁוֹת לְהִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בָּהֶם אֶלָּא לְרְאוֹתָם בְּלִבָּד כְּדֵי לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלֵּל לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל עַל נִסֶּיךָ וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְעַל יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ

### Miracles and wonders... of salvations and of victories:

Hanukkah draws on diverse narratives from Jewish history and legend. Some modern versions of this prayer express thanks for *nekhamot* (comfort) in lieu of *milkhamot* (wars or victories) to emphasize a message of peace. If we choose to acknowledge our military victories, let us consciously commemorate those of both the Macabees and the less well-known heroine Judith.

### Performed for our ancestors:

In Hebrew, the word *imoteynu* (mothers) is added alongside the word *avoteynu* (fathers), to include all of our ancestors.

### And in every generation...and peace:

Traditionally, this prayer highlights only two types of role models: military victors, such as the Macabees and Judith, and high priests, who were involved in the miracle of the oil in the Temple. Kolot's version of the prayer adds, "all who kindled lights of inspiration, hope, and peace" to include a fuller range of role models and miracle-makers from our past.

Lighting candles makes us aware of both the sacredness of light and the mystery of darkness. While the candles burn, we experience a moment of infinite possibility that has been shared by Jewish women and men for two millennia.

## Traditional Hanukkah Blessings

Traditionally, all of Hebrew liturgy uses masculine language when addressing God, whether talking about the God of Israel as creator, liberator, or nursing mother.

We offer you the traditional blessings, which address God with masculine pronouns and corresponding verbs.



*It is customary to recite these blessings before lighting the candles:*

<p>Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who makes us holy through your commandments and commands us to light the Hanukkah candles.</p>	<p><i>Barukh atah adonay eloheyenu melekh ha'olam asher kideshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.</i></p>	<p>בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה</p>
<p>Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who performed miracles for our forefathers in their day at this season.</p>	<p><i>Barukh atah adonay eloheyenu melekh ha'olam she'asah nisim la'avoteynu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh.</i></p>	<p>בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם בְּזַמַּן הַזֶּה</p>

### First night only:

<p>Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who keeps us alive, sustains us, and brings us to this moment.</p>	<p><i>Barukh atah adonay eloheyenu melekh ha'olam shehekheyanu ve'kiyemanu vehigiyanu lazman hazeh.</i></p>	<p>בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהִחְיָנוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזַמַּן הַזֶּה</p>
--	---	--

## Kolot's Hanukkah Blessings



Because Hebrew is a gendered language, God must be addressed and referred to using masculine or feminine pronouns.

Below we offer you the same blessings, replacing the masculine *Melekh Ha'olam* (King of the universe) with *Mekor Ha'Hayyim* (Source of Life). We address God as you (feminine) and change the verbs accordingly.

We invite you to recite the Hanukkah blessings on at least one night this year using the feminine pronouns for God. Does your sense of the Divine shift?

*It is customary to recite these blessings before lighting the candles:*

<p>Praised are You God, Source of Life, who makes us holy through your commandments and commands us to light the Hanukkah candles.</p>	<p><i>Berukhah at yah mekor ha'hayyim asher kidashtanu bemitzvoteyha v'tzivotanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.</i></p>	<p>בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ יְהוָה מְקוֹר הַחַיִּים אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁתָנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ וְצִוֵּתָנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה</p>
<p>Praised are You God, Source of Life, who performed miracles for our forefathers in their day at this season.</p>	<p><i>Berukhah at yah mekor ha'hayyim she'astah nisim l'imoteynu v'la'avoteynu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh.</i></p>	<p>בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ יְהוָה מְקוֹר הַחַיִּים שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ נִסִּים לְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ וְלְאַבּוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזַמַּן הַזֶּה</p>

### First night only:

<p>Praised are You God, Source of Life, who keeps us alive, sustains us, and brings us to this moment.</p>	<p><i>Berukhah at yah mekor ha'hayyim shehekeyatnu vekiyematnu vehigi'atnu lazman hazeh.</i></p>	<p>בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיָּתָנוּ וְקִיּוּמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָתָנוּ לְזַמַּן הַזֶּה</p>
--	--	--

*Produced by Kolot: the Center for Jewish Women's and Gender Studies at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, with assistance from Rabbi David Dunn Bauer, RRC'03.*