



Light One Candle for Freedom, Dignity & Justice



A Chanukah reading for family, friends and community

We invite you to dedicate one night of Chanukah to the millions of people across the world struggling to live with freedom, dignity and justice. Remembering our own experiences of persecution—throughout history and today—we stand in solidarity with those who share our yearning for a more just and equitable world. Together we will shine a light for those finding their way through darkness.

Read aloud:

Our tradition recounts that when the ancient Greek army invaded Judea, the Jews ran for their lives, retreating into caves to practice their religion in peace. Tragically, this pattern has repeated itself throughout the ages—both for Jews and for so many other persecuted minorities around the world.

Tonight, as we light our candles in the relative safety and warmth of our homes, we bear witness to all those who yearn for safety and comfort. We know that all should have the right to live free from persecution and fear. No one should be forced to flee because of who they are or what they believe.

We dedicate these candles to all people around the world who seek shelter from persecution today. And we kindle our flame to signify the courage of all who, like the Maccabees, rise up to defend human dignity, justice and freedom.

To the refugees who bravely journey in search of food, water, shelter and survival.

To the women and girls forging a world where all have equal choice and equal opportunity.

To the LGBTQI people defending their right to live and love with pride.

To the local communities protecting themselves from droughts, famines, floods and other effects of climate change.

To the children hoping for a future without fear.

To the courageous activists who are fighting for equality, dignity, expression and peace.

May the light that we kindle tonight shine bright, illuminating our pursuit of justice. May it be a reminder that each of us has the capacity to dispel darkness and bring light and hope.

Proceed with the candle lighting blessings below.

BLESSING FOR LIGHTING THE CANDLES

ברוך אתה ה', אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו, וצונו להדליק נר של חנוכה.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel chanukah.

“Praised are You, Our God, Ruler of the universe, Who made us holy through Your commandments and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah lights.”

BLESSING FOR THE MIRACLES OF CHANUKAH

ברוך אתה ה', אלהינו מלך העולם, שעשה נסים לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, she'asa nisim la'avoteinu ba'yamim ha'hem ba'zman ha'ze.

“Blessed are You, Our God, Ruler of the universe, Who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time.”

Looking for more Jewish Justice resources?

Visit our website to download a wide range of original rituals for the Jewish holidays that inspire action to build a better world: www.ajws.org/holidays.