



חזכה On:

**על הנסים** ועל הפרקן, ועל הגבורות, ועל התשועות, ועל המלחמות שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם ובזמן הזה.

בימי מתתיהו בן יוחנן כהן גדול חשמונאי ובניו, כשעמדה מלכות יון הרשעה על עמך ישראל להשפיתם תורתך ולהעבירם מחקי רצונך, ואתה ברחמך הרבים עמדת להם בעת צרתם, הבת את ריבם, דגת את דינם, נקמת את נקמתם, מסרת גבורים ביד חלשים, ורבים ביד מעטים, וטמאים ביד טהורים, ורשעים ביד צדיקים, ויודים ביד עוסקי תורתך. ולך עשית שם גדול וקדוש בעולמך, ולעמך ישראל עשית תשועה גדולה ופרקן בהיום הזה. ואחר כן באו בגיף לדייר ביתך ופנו את היכלך, וטהרו את מקדשך, והדליקו נרות בחצרות קדשך, וקבעו שמונת ימי חנכה אלו יהודות ולהלל לשמך הגדול.

פזרים On:

**על הנסים** ועל הפרקן, ועל הגבורות, ועל התשועות, ועל המלחמות שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם ובזמן הזה.

בימי מרדכי ואסתר בשושן הבירה, כשעמד עליהם הקון הרשע, בקש להשמיד, להרג ולאבד את כל היהודים, מנער ועד זקן, טף ונשים, ביום אחד בשלשה עשר לחודש שנים-עשר, הוא חודש אדר, ושללם לבזו. ואתה ברחמך הרבים הפרת את עצתו, וקלקלת את מחשבתו, והשבות לו גמולו בראשו, ותלו אותו ואת בניו על העץ.

**על הנסים** — for the miraculous deliverance. The Modim blessing, into which this prayer is inserted on Hanukkah, Purim, and Israel Independence Day, speaks about “Your miracles that daily attend us.” Mention is therefore made here of each of the so-called “minor” holidays, those added after the time of the Torah, since each has a miraculous deliverance connected to it. Each commemorates the deliverance of Israel from its enemies under difficult circumstances. The miracles referred to are not supernatural interferences in nature, but rather God working through history. We experience the ability to overcome adversity as a divine act.

**ובזמן הזה** — until our time. The wonders of deliverance are not confined to ancient times. They have occurred in modern times as well. In recent times a third holiday, Yom Ha-atzma’ut, Israel Independence Day, has been added to the two ancient ones. Here too we see a wonder, in the establishment of the State of Israel and its ability to overcome its adversaries. The prayer for Yom Ha-atzma’ut does not appear here since this service is intended for Friday afternoon before Shabbat; Yom Ha-atzma’ut is never commemorated on Friday, in order to avoid possible desecration of Shabbat.

**בימי מתתיהו** — In the days of Mattathias. The revolt against the Syrians was also an internal conflict between Jewish Hellenists and those remaining true to Judaism. The priest Mattathias and his sons led the struggle and gained control of the Temple in 164 B.C.E.

**להשפיתם תורתך** — abandon Your Torah. Under the rule of the Syrians and the Hellenists, the Torah, which was the official law of Judea, was first made optional and then outlawed altogether.

**והדליקו נרות** — and kindled lights. The Menorah, a seven-branched candelabrum representing the universe and also the Tree of Life, is the ancient symbol of Judaism. See Exodus 25:31–40. It was kindled every evening and burned continually through the night in the Sanctuary. Rekindling this light was one of the major features of the rededication ceremony of Hanukkah by the Maccabees, and is commemorated by the lighting of lamps each night of the festival in our own day.

**בימי מרדכי** — In the days of Mordecai. The story of Purim is related in the biblical Book of Esther, which is set in Persia, probably during the reign of King Xerxes I (486–465 B.C.E.). Many scholars believe that Esther was written some-

time in the second century B.C.E. and is historical fiction, weaving together several traditions of various events that were typical of the life of Jews in the Persian diaspora.

**המון הרשע** — the wicked Haman. Haman, the villain of this melodrama, is a descendant of the Amalekites, the traditional enemies of God and Israel. In this way he represents all the enemies who have tried to destroy us.

**בשלשה עשר ... אדר** — the thirteenth of Adar. The planned slaughter did not take place, however, since the Jews were allowed to defend themselves. Purim itself is celebrated on the following day, as a victory banquet would be.