# A PRAYER FOR THESE FIRE FILLED DAYS

Eloheinu velohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, Our God and God of our fathers and mothers, As the flames burn, wreaking havoc upon our forests, our homes, our fire fighters, our sense of security, We turn to You for comfort and support. Help us to differentiate between flames of destruction and light that shows us Your way.

We know that flames can destroy. A people decimated once, twice and more, Having passed through infernos set by humans filled with hate, we remember the destructive abilities of these flames. Remembering now that humans set these fires too, we lay blame at their feet, not Yours. Keep us far from apocalyptic thoughts, for we know that You ask us to care for this world, an awesome responsibility.

We also know that we can seek You in the flames. We recall Your Loving Hand, guiding us in our infancy: In a burning bush, You spoke to Moses, sending him to lead our people out of slavery, In a pillar of fire, You led our people each day through the wilderness to the Promised Land, With black fire on white fire, You wrote the Torah, our guide for living in this world. Through Your light, we found our way.

Be with us now, these smoke and fire-filled days. Draw us close to those harmed by these flames, hearing their cries, responding to their needs. Lead us to support those who fight the fires, who care for the displaced, who bring healing to those suffering. Though our attention spans seem so short, may we be slow to forget those who were in danger.

And may we all embrace at least one lesson spoken aloud by so many who - facing the flames - rushed to pack up their valuables:

That memories of love and of time spent with family and friends are priceless, holy and sacred. This can never be taken away. As we rush to meet the challenge of living in this imperfect world of ours, May we slow down enough to cherish those who are truly valuable, kadosh/holy - to us.

Baruch Ata Adonai, Hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol. Blessed are You, O God, who differentiates between the truly valuable and everything else.