

The Hanukkah Story from an Energy Conservation and Leadership Perspective

Goal: To explore the relevance of the Hanukkah story in our daily lives.

Duration: 25 minutes

Materials: None needed

Procedure:

1) Have students tell the Hanukkah story, taking turns. Guide them to ensure they cover the following events:

- * Greco-Syrians in control of Jerusalem. King Antiochus in command.
- * Jews were not allowed to practice Judaism and the Temple was desecrated.
- * A group of resistance fighters (Maccabees) led by single family, began to try to remove the rulers. Fighting from the Judean Hills against huge odds, it took three years but they finally won and liberated the Temple.
- * When they went to light the menorah, they found they only had one day's worth of oil. But a miracle happened and the light lasted eight days till they could get more oil.

2) Discuss morals of the story with particular interest to morals that apply to the synagogue "greening" project.:

A. Fight for what you believe in with perseverance

One miracle in the story of Hanukkah is that the Maccabees fought against huge odds for what they believed. For three years, they lived in caves, practiced their religion in hiding and strategized how to effect change. The problems facing our society do not require us to go into hiding, however they do require us to fight for what we believe and to be persistent and patient in that fight.

B. Holiday of Lights

Hanukkah is a celebration of light at the darkest time of year (Winter solstice.) It is a week of appreciating God for light and for survival at the hardest and scariest time of year. Modern technology allows us to escape the darkness of winter, Hanukkah teaches us to take a week to appreciate our homes full of light and safety. Analyze the methods of production of the electricity we use.

C. Energy conservation

The second miracle of Hanukkah was the fact that one day's energy lasted for eight days. Today, technologies exist to reduce the energy requirements of lights, such as compact fluorescent bulbs which use 20% as much energy as incandescent (standard) bulbs and last for up to seven years. If we can reproduce this miracle daily, don't we have an obligation to do it?

Materials developed by [Noam Dolgin](http://www.noamdolgin.com), www.noamdolgin.com.

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