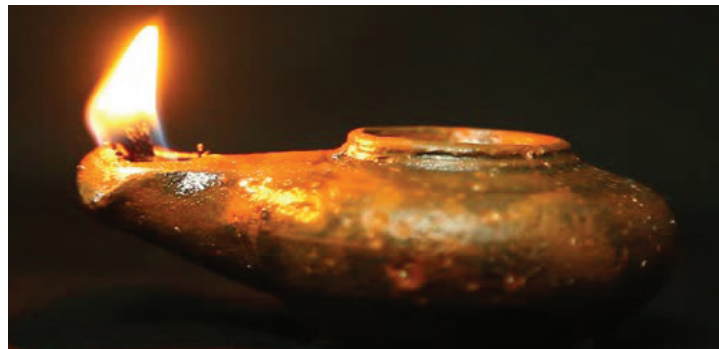


Hanukkah:
THE BIG IDEA

Hazzan Tisser's Two Shekels



Hanukkah is one of two ancient holidays which do not originate anywhere in the Tanakh! Historically, we observe eight days of this festival as the Hasmoneans were forced to celebrate the festival of Sukkot almost two months late, in Kislev, due to the war to save Jerusalem.



We also tell the story of the jug of oil, which only had enough oil to light the Menorah for one day, but which lasted for eight.

Every day we are blessed with small miracles, like the sun rising and setting. Let's use the eight days of Hanukkah to reflect on the small miracles that make each day a blessing as we light the candles with those we love.



This holiday models the Jewish response to darkness: **LIGHT**. During winter nighttimes – when daylight is most scarce – we light one candle each night for eight nights.

We do so to recall the miracle of Judah Maccabee leading the outnumbered Jews to defeat the mighty Greeks in battle. And we reenact the miracle of the little oil sustaining the Menorah for eight days.

Hanukkah reminds us to never give up no matter how much darkness surrounds us. For one little light drives away a roomful of darkness, *Bayamim Hahem UVazman Hazeh*, then and now.

TABLE TALK

Food for Thought

DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN



1. What are your favorite Hanukkah foods?
2. What is another example of a miracle?

3. The Maccabees fought back and won. When is it good to fight back against something?



DISCUSSION WITH ADULTS

1. Hanukkah celebrates the miracles publicly. When should our Judaism be public? Private?



2. Are there still miracles in our day? If so, what?
3. How much of Hanukkah's miracles should be credited to G-d? People? What does that mean?

DIRECTIONS:

Stand your “Table Talk” up, and tape the open ends together to form a triangle. Put in the center of your dinner table to prompt a great discussion!

