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Dreaming of a
GREEN
HANUKKAH???

Source Materials on Globalization and Environmentalism

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Temple Beth El, Stamford CT
Shabbat Hanukkah 





FROM THE SOURCES: TEXTS ON JEWISH SOCIAL JUSTICE

This publication is designed to facilitate holiday text study around issues of social justice. AJWS is preparing a catalogue of holiday teaching guides for the Jewish calendar. To subscribe to this publication, visit www.ajws.org/holidays.

Chanukah

Development, Globalization and the Miracle of the Maccabees

Introduction

Chanukah commemorates the victory of Jewish sovereignty against the Greek/Hellenistic empire. The Greeks, and later the Romans, brought great advances in science, technology and philosophy that have profoundly shaped Western culture – and influenced Jewish practice and tradition – for millennia. They also brought religious persecution, strict political hierarchy and a foreign elite. Under the Greek king Antiochus IV, many Jewish practices were outlawed and Greek religious symbols were forcibly installed in the Second Temple. Eventually, the Maccabees rose up against the Greeks and reasserted Jewish rule in Palestine. In the 21st century, we are also witness to great advances – medical, technological and economic – that reach to the corners of the world. With these advances, however, come the cultural norms and ideologies of the West. Chanukah offers an opportunity to explore the conflicts and tensions that accompany globalization and development.

Al Hanisim (Liturgical formula incorporated into the Amidah and Birkat Hamazon during Hanukkah)

In the time of Mattityahu, the son of Yochanan, the Hasmonean High Priest, and his children, the evil Greek empire confronted Your righteous people to make them forget Your Torah and to divert them from the laws of Your choosing...

- How does Al Hanisim characterize the encounter between the Greek Empire and the Jewish people?

"Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition," Erich S. Gruen, p.xiv

The degree to which acculturation took place in Judea itself and the time when it began in earnest elude any certainty... "Judaism" and "Hellenism" were neither competing systems nor incompatible concepts. It would be erroneous to assume that Hellenization entailed encroachment upon Jewish traditions and erosion of Jewish beliefs. Jews did not face a choice of either assimilation or resistance to Greek culture... The prevailing [Hellenistic] culture of the Mediterranean could hardly be ignored or dismissed. But adaptation to it need not require compromise of Jewish precepts or practices. The inquiry can be formulated thus: how did Jews accommodate themselves to the larger cultural world of the Mediterranean while at the same time reasserting the character of their own heritage within it?

- How does Gruen characterize this same encounter between Greek culture and the Jewish people?

תלמוד בבלי מסכת שבת דף לג עמוד ב

דיתבי רבי יהודה ורבי יוסי ורבי שמעון, וייתיב יהודה בן גרים גביהו. פתח רבי יהודה ואמר: כמה נאים מעשיהן של אומה זו: תקנו שווקים, תקנו גשרים, תקנו מרחצאות. רבי יוסי שתק. נענה רבי שמעון בן יוחאי ואמר: כל מה שתקנו - לא תקנו אלא לצורך עצמן, תקנו שווקין - להושיב בהן זונות, מרחצאות - לעדן בהן עצמן, גשרים - ליטול מהן מכס.

Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 33b

For R. Judah, R. Jose, and R. Simeon were sitting, and Judah, a son of proselytes, was sitting near them. R. Judah commenced [the discussion] by observing, "How fine are the works of [the Roman] people! They have made streets, they have built bridges, they have erected baths." R. Jose was silent. R. Simeon b. Yohai answered and said, "All that they made they made for themselves; they built market-places to set harlots in them; baths to rejuvenate themselves; bridges to levy tolls for them."

- Mapping this passage onto the current globalization debate, which "works" do you think R. Judah would praise today? How would R. Simeon b. Yohai critique his praise?
- How do these three texts together help us to understand our own experience as American Jews?

“Culture: Cultural Diversity, Cultural Production and Identity,” Fatma Alloo et al., *Another World is Possible*, p.213

The increasing demand by peoples and communities to have their cultural identity preserved comes in a world context we now call globalization, which many perceive as taking us towards a progressive homogenization at a global level...The process of globalization manifests itself as a two-headed creature. One has an unprecedented capacity for communication and exchange on a global scale...The other manifestation, in contrast, is the imposition of a Western socio-economic-cultural model throughout the world.

- In what ways do you see globalization as bringing opportunity? In what ways does it impose homogeneity?
- How does Alloo's assessment of globalization as “two-headed” offer commentary on the views expressed by R. Judah and R. Simeon b. Yohai?

“Global Covenant: A Jewish Perspective on Globalization,” Jonathan Sacks, *Making Globalization Good*, p.224

Globalization, writes Zygmunt Bauman, “divides as much as it unites... What appears as globalization for some means localization for others; signaling a new freedom for some, upon many others it descends as an uninvited and cruel fate” (Bauman 1998: 2). There can be no doubt that some of the economic surplus of the advanced economies of the world should be invested in developing countries to help eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, ensure universal education, combat treatable disease, reduce infant mortality, improve work conditions, and reconstruct failing economies. As with *tzedakah*, the aim should be to restore dignity and independence to nations as well as individuals. Whether this is done in the name of compassion, social justice, or human solidarity it has now become a compelling imperative. The globalization of communications, trade, and culture globalizes human responsibility likewise. The freedom of the few must not be purchased at the price of the enslavement of the many to poverty, ignorance, and disease.

- What argument does Sacks make in favor of globalization? What is the “compelling imperative” that he identifies?
- How does Sacks' view relate back to the traditional telling of the Chanukah story?
- Could we imagine the recipients of even the higher levels of “communications, trade, and culture” that Sacks argues we are obligated to provide writing their own version of *Al Hanisim*? What might they say?
- What do these texts teach us about how to “do development”? How should we support those in the developing world, given our people's historical experience of oppression at the hands of the Greek and Roman globalizers?

Conclusion

For the Jews during the time of the Maccabees, the process of externally imposed development was sufficiently disruptive that they chose to resist it with violence. Now that we, American Jews, are on the other side of the equation – supporting development in the Global South – we should be particularly sensitive to the ways in which we approach those whom we seek to help. We should seek to be partners in improving people's lives and not heavy-handed imposers of our own agendas and values. This Chanukah, let us celebrate the miracle of Jewish survival, adaptation and self-determination by celebrating the rich diversity of people around the world. Let us work toward a better future while supporting the capacity of all people to define their own way of life.

For more information on this and other publications from the AJWS Education Department, please contact Sarah Margles at smargles@ajws.org.

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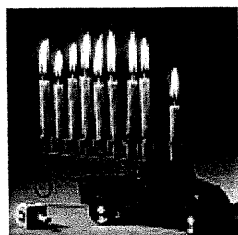
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Holiday Poll



Menorah - 83% will light it daily Photo: Visual/Photos

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Hanukkah: 83% say they will light menorah daily

Vast majority of Jewish public say they plan to light Hanukkah candles daily, seculars associate holiday more with sufganiyot than triumph of Jewish people and why is television a symbol of 'modern Hellenization'?
Koby Nahshoni

Hanukkah remains one of the most celebrated holidays in Israel, but for what reasons?

According to a joint poll conducted by Ynet and the Geshur Institute, 83% of the Jewish public in Israel will gather daily around variously styled menorahs and light the holiday candles accompanied by traditional prayers while 15% said they would make an effort to do so at least once over the course of the holiday. Only 2% said they would not celebrate Hanukkah at all.

A breakdown of the figures reveals that 68% of respondents who identified as secular planned to light the candles daily compared with 91% of religious respondents.

As for what the holiday symbolizes – 40% of the public said Hanukkah is celebrated to commemorate the Jewish victory over the Greeks, 35% said the holiday was about family, 11% identified the holiday's unique culinary dishes as its most important attribute and 7% said Hanukkah revolved around the numerous commercial performance extravaganzas put on for vacationing children during the holiday.

When asked which of the following most symbolized modern Hellenization for them, 23% of respondents said spending an excessive amount of hours staring at the computer screen and surfing the internet, 18% said television and specifically talk-shows and another 18% said Americanization was the new Hellenism.

10% said the justice and democracy systems were symbols of Hellenism, 9% said consumerism and 8% said society's obsession with body image.

The study polled 503 respondents, who constitute a representative sample of Hebrew-speaking Jewish Israelis.

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Eight Actions to Heal the Earth through the Green Menorah Covenant

By Rabbis Arthur Waskow & Jeff Sultar*

There are three levels of wisdom through which Hanukkah invites us to address the planetary dangers of the global climate crisis – what some of us call "global scorching" because "warming" seems so pleasant, so comforting.

We can encode these teachings into actions we take to heal the earth, each of the eight days.

1. The Talmud's legend about using one day's oil to meet eight days' needs: a reminder that if we have the courage to change our life-styles to conserve energy, it will sustain us.
2. The vision of Zechariah (whose prophetic passages we read on Shabbat Hanukkah) that the Temple Menorah was itself a living being, uniting the world of "nature" and "humanity" – for it was not only fashioned in the shape of a Tree of Light, as Torah teaches, but was flanked by two olive trees that fed olive oil directly into it.
3. The memory that a community of "the powerless" can overcome a great empire, giving us courage to face our modern corporate empires of Oil and Coal when they defile our most sacred Temple: Earth itself. And the reminder (again from Zechariah) that we triumph "Not by might and not by power but by My Spirit [b'ruchi -- or, "My breath," "My wind!"]", says YHWH, the Infinite Breath of Life."

We are taught not only to light the menorah, but to publicize the miracle, to turn our individual actions outward for the rest of the world to see and to be inspired by.

So we invite you to join, this Hanukkah, to join in The Shalom Center 's Green Menorah Covenant for taking action – personal, communal, and political – to heal the earth from the global climate crisis.

After lighting your menorah each evening, dedicate yourself to making the changes in your life that will allow our limited sources of energy to last for as long as they're needed, and with minimal impact on our climate.

No single action will solve the global climate crisis, just as no one of us alone can make enough of a difference. Yet, if we act on as many of the areas below as possible, and act together, a seemingly small group of people can overcome a seemingly intractable crisis. We can, as in days of old, turn this time of darkness into one of light.

Day 1: Personal/Household: Call your electric-power utility to switch to wind-powered electricity. (For each home, 100% wind-power reduces CO2 emissions the same as not driving 20,000 miles in one year.)

Day 2: Synagogue, Hillel, or JCC: Urge your congregation or community building to switch to wind-powered electricity.

Day 3. Your network of friends, IM buddies, and members of civic or professional groups you belong to: Connect with people like newspaper editors, real-estate developers, architects, bankers, etc. to urge them to strengthen the green factor in all their decisions, speeches, and actions.

Day 4 (which this year is Shabbat). Automobile: If possible, choose today or one other day a week to not use your car at all. Other days, lessen driving. Shop on-line. Cluster errands. Carpool. Don't idle engine beyond 20 seconds.

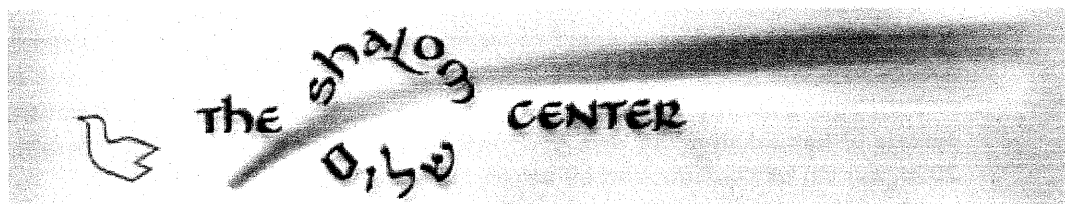
Day 5: Workplace or College: Urge the top officials to arrange an energy audit. Check with utility company about getting one free or at low-cost.

Day 6: Town/City: Urge town/city officials to require greening of buildings through ordinances and executive orders. Creating change is often easier on the local level!

Day 7: State: Urge state representatives to reduce subsidies for highways, increase them for mass transit.

Day 8: National: Urge your Senators to strengthen and pass the Lieberman-Warner "America's Climate Security Act." For easy addressing and a model letter to send them, go to --

http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/602/t/4181/campaign.jsp?campaign_KEY=21544



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The Prophetic Green Menorah

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By Rabbi Arthur Waskow *

On Shabbat Hanukkah, we read the passage from the Prophet Zechariah that envisions the future Great Menorah, taking its sacred place in a rebuilt Holy Temple after the Babylonian Captivity. (We read the same Haftarah for Shabbat Behaalotekha.)

Zechariah, in visionary, prophetic style, goes beyond the Torah's description of the original Menorah (literally, a Light-bearer). That Menorah was planned as part of the portable Shrine, the Mishkan, in the Wilderness.

First Zechariah describes the Menorah of the future that he sees: "All of gold, with a bowl on its top, seven lamps, and seven pipes leading to the seven lamps." It sounds like the original bearer of the sacred Light. But then he adds a new detail: "By it are two olive trees, one on the right of the bowl and one on the left." (4: 2-3)

And then --- in a passage the Rabbis did not include in the Haftarah reading for Shabbat Hanukkah -- -- Zechariah explains that the two olive trees are feeding their oil directly into the Menorah (4: 11-13). No human being needs to press the olives, collect the oil, clarify and sanctify it. The trees alone can do it all.

Now wait! This is extraordinary. What is this Light-Bearer that is so intimately interwoven with two trees? Is the Menorah the work of human hands, or itself the fruit of a tree?

Both, and beyond. In our generation it might be called a "cyborg," a cybernetic organism that is woven from the fruitfulness both of "adamah" (an earthy sprouting from the humus-soil) and "adam" (a human earthling). Just as earth and earthling were deeply intermingled in the biblical Creation story, so the Divine Light must interweave them once again, and again and again, every time the Light is lit in the Holy Temple.

What stirs Zechariah to this uncanny vision? Once we listen closely to the Torah's original description of the Menorah for the wandering desert Shrine, we may not be quite so surprised. For the Torah describes a Menorah that has branches, cups shaped like almond-blossoms, blossoms, petals, and calyxes (the tight bundles of green leaves that hold a blossom). (Exodus 25:31-40 and 37:17-24)

In short, a Tree of Light, a Green Menorah. Small wonder that Zechariah envisioned its receiving oil directly from the olive-trees!

Since Zechariah is seen as a Prophet by Christians and perhaps by Muslims as well as by Jews, his vision may invite all three Abrahamic communities to connect with the Green Menorah Covenant.

And in the more specifically Jewish legend told by the Talmud as the origin of Hanukkah, the Light itself is a miracle. Oil that would normally have been enough only for one day's worth of light lasts for eight days, until more oil can be consecrated.

Please Do

Your gift keeps peace and health



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At the physical level, this is about conserving energy, the triumph of sustainable sources of energy over the Hellenistic Seleucid Empire that guzzled oil and other forms of material wealth. Seen this way, the Green Menorah can become the symbol of a covenant to renew the miracle of Hanukkah in our own generation: Using one day's oil to meet eight days' needs. By 2020, cutting oil consumption by seven-eighths.

If this seems overwhelmingly hard to accomplish against the entrenched power of our own oil empires, Hanukkah also reminds us of the victory of the guerrilla band of Maccabees over the great empire of their generation: Small groups of seemingly powerless human beings can face huge and powerful institutions – and change the world.

But let us not stop at the economic, political, or even ecological levels of meaning. At the spiritual level, since "eight" is the number of "Beyond," the storied eight-day miracle reminds us that the Infinite is always present in the One. It reminds us that conserving oil, or coal, or our planet, is not just a political or economic or even ecological decision. It comes when we take into our hearts the knowledge that addiction to material possessiveness, hyper-ownership, is likely to be a form of idolatry – not of our well-being.

Beyond "every thing" is the Infinite – and the Infinite is always present when we choose to light the Light.

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Rabbi Arthur Waskow is director of The Shalom Center and the author of Down-to-Earth Judaism and many other books on public policy and on Jewish thought, practice, and spiritual life. This article appeared in the Jerusalem Report, which in its "The People and the Book" feature in each issue publishes a comment on Torah, sometimes bearing an unconventional insight.

For more information on the Green Menorah covenant, see –
http://www.shalomctr.org/taxonomy_menu/1/1

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'Green Hanukkia' campaign sparks ire

Gil Hoffman , THE JERUSALEM POST

Dec. 4, 2007

In a campaign that has spread like wildfire across the Internet, a group of Israeli environmentalists is encouraging Jews around the world to light at least one less candle this Hanukka to help the environment.

The founders of the Green Hanukkia campaign found that every candle that burns completely produces 15 grams of carbon dioxide. If an estimated one million Israeli households light for eight days, they said, it would do significant damage to the atmosphere.

"The campaign calls for Jews around the world to save the last candle and save the planet, so we won't need another miracle," said Liad Ortat, the campaign's cofounder, who runs the Arkada environmental consulting firm and the Ynet Web site's environmental forum. "Global warming is a milestone in human evolution that requires us to rethink how we live our lives, and one of the main paradigms of that is religion and how it fits into the current situation."

Cofounder Tom Wegner, who heads the public relations firm Update Marketing Media, spread the campaign via mass e-mails and through social interaction Web sites like Facebook and Hook.co.il. He said no money had been invested in the campaign, but it had already raised awareness around the world and made people realize that they have to consider the environment this Hanukka.

Wegner said he did not consider the campaign anti-religious. The unlit candle could be the shamash, which is not required for the mitzva, he said. But he said he would encourage people who do not keep mitzvot not to light a hanukkia at all for environmental and educational reasons.

"We have many environmental traditions in Judaism like Tu Bishvat and Succot, but there are also traditions like Lag Ba'omer and Hanukka that made sense when they were instituted but are more problematic now in the days of global warming," Wegner said.

"There are many people who just light candles for the tradition and for their children," he said. "To tell a child on the eighth day that we are not lighting the last candle as a sacrifice for the environment is an act that is not only educational but also will prevent the release of a huge amount of carbon dioxide that would hurt the environment."

Shas MK Nissim Ze'ev said he was not convinced by the environmentalists' argument. He warned that the campaign would take away from the light of Torah that each and every candle symbolizes.

"The environmentalists should think about how much pollution is caused by one solitary diesel truck on the road," Ze'ev said. "They should be fighting the trucks instead of Judaism. This is so trivial, so anti-Jewish and so anti-religious that even the worst anti-Semites couldn't think of it. Just like the Helenists, they are trying to extinguish the flames of the Jewish soul."

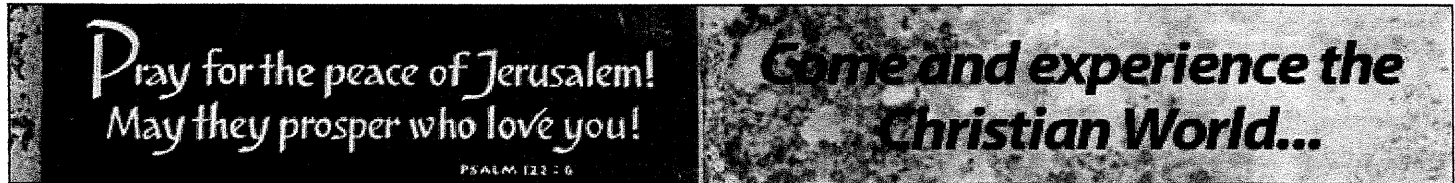
United Torah Judaism MK Avraham Ravitz called the environmentalists "crazy people who are playing with the minds of innocent Jewish people." He said the campaign would only convince people who do not light candles anyway.

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"They should encourage people to light one less cigarette instead," Ravitz said.

Rabbi Benny Lau of Jerusalem's Ramban Congregation, who is himself an environmental activist, praised the good intentions of the people behind the campaign. But he said the environmentalists should be trying to reach out to observant Jews instead of running campaigns that turn them away.

"People in the green movement who have an agenda have unfortunately made it anti-religious," Lau said. "This makes religious people think incorrectly that anything environmentalist is against them. The damage ends up being a thousand times the benefit. *Tikkun olam* [fixing the world] must be done by adding more light and not by adding more darkness."



This article can also be read at <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1195546797524&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

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“Green Gifts”



Help cut down on waste and try some of these environmentally friendly gift ideas this Hanukkah:

1. Save paper and send an e-card. You can design it yourself! There are dozens of on-line sites to do this. You could also make your own card with recycled paper if you're feeling artistic! To create an e-card, visit one of the following Web sties:
<http://www.kidsdomain.com/holiday/chanukah/ecard.html>
<http://www.e-cards.com/catalog/cat-selection.pl?cat=Hanukkah>
<http://www.newdream.org/greeting/servlet/cardCreation>
2. Make your own gifts! Especially from children, homemade gifts are often more special than anything you can buy. Take a photo and design a frame for it, knit a scarf for the winter, or make a set of beeswax candles for someone to burn in their Hanukkiah. In your crafts, you can use empty paper towel or toilet paper rolls, plastic bottles, etc. There are lots of great books about homemade gifts in your library; check one out today!
3. Give Hanukkah *gelt* in the form of Tzedakah to a Jewish or environmental organization of your choice in honor of a friend or relative. “Adopt” an animal, plant a tree or buy an acre of rain forest in someone's honor.
4. Food! Edible gifts are always great for holidays. Bake someone a batch of cookies in Hanukkah shapes, cook *soofganiot* (jelly doughnuts- a traditional Hanukkah treat), or be more creative.
5. Get something that's both useful and reusable: a travel mug, cloth bag, linen napkins, reusable lunchbox, etc.
6. Make your own gift certificate or coupon. You could give someone “a night at the movies,” “one week of walking the dog,” etc. This is a great way to give somebody exactly what they want!
7. Buy someone an environmental book, subscription to an environmental magazine or a membership to a museum or zoo- a gift they can enjoy all year. (See attached bibliography for some great book suggestions.)
8. Instead of regular gift-wrap, use recycled or reusable packaging or a piece of cloth tied with ribbon.

Tikkun Olam Bonus: A different kind of Hanukkah gift

Go through your closets and find old items you can donate to those less fortunate as an act of reducing, reusing, and recycling.



“L’Or v’Or, L’Dor v’Dor” From Light to Light, From Generation to Generation



Created by Barbara Lerman-Golomb

Goal: To have an intergenerational discussion about issues of the environment and energy.

This should take place during Hanukkah between a child and a parent/grandparent/senior citizen friend. The pair should follow this sheet to guide them through the activity. The bullet points mark specific questions or points to address as you read. (You can also adapt this for a larger group of mixed ages.)

Candle lighting:

Before lighting the Hanukkah as usual, find an extra candle to set up separately nearby. (It can be a long burning candle, etc. The important thing is that it isn't part of the Hanukkah; traditionally we don't use the light from the eight ritual candles for functional purposes. The shammash however, may be used, as it is only used to light the Hanukkah.) Light the Hanukkah candles and recite the usual brachot. Then, with the shammash, light the other candle.

Hanukkah is a time where we celebrate the renewal of the eternal flame and rededication in the Temple. In modern times, our Temple is the planet earth and like the Maccabees, we need to defend our right for cleaner, sustainable energy to preserve it. Like the Maccabee, we know it's the right thing to do. And like the eternal flame, renewable energy sources will carry on from generation to generation. This candle, an “Or Chadash” or new light, symbolizes our rededication to this cause.

Recite together the following Yotzer Or prayer from the daily morning service:

(From Spirit in Nature by Matt Biers-Ariel, Deborah Newburn and Michal Fox)

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha'olam, yotzer or uvorei hoshech, oseh shalom uvorei et-hakol. Hamei'ir la'aretz v'ladarim alein'hah b'rahamim.

“Blessed is the one who forms light and creates darkness, who makes peace and creates all things, who with mercy sheds light upon the earth and upon all who dwell on it.”

(You may also want to recite the “Let There Be Light” blessing from this kit.)

Shut off the lights and continue reading by the candle:

(Adapted from “Renewing Creation Daily,” Let the Earth Teach You Torah, Shomrei Adamah, Ellen Bernstein & Dan Fink)

“Illuminator of the world and all its creatures with mercy; in Your goodness You daily renew creation. How bountiful are Your works, Eternal One with wisdom You have fashioned them all. The Ruler Who was alone and exalted before creation, Who is praised, glorified, and upraised since the days of old. Eternal God, with your abundant compassion, be compassionate to us—Master of our power, our rocklike stronghold, shield of our salvation, be a stronghold for us...

Through God's Goodness creation is renewed daily. As it is said (Give thanks) to the One Who makes the great luminaries, for God's kindness endures forever. May You shine a new light on Zion, and may we all merit light speedily. Praise to You, Adonai, Who creates the luminaries."

- ◆ This prayer tells us that God renews creation daily. What does this mean?
- ◆ Does it mean that every day there is a new sun? Such a notion obviously defies our scientific knowledge of nature. So what is this prayer talking about?
- ◆ How can it be realistically applied to nature? How does it relate to the Jewish perspective on the world?
- ◆ In what ways do you experience the renewal of creation in your life?

The Jewish view of creation as an ongoing process that renews itself rather than a completed act makes evolutionary sense. It reveals itself in the cycles of nature that can provide us with clean, sustainable, renewable energy: the energy cycle, the water cycle, the soil cycle, the air cycle. This notion also speaks to us in terms of *tikkun olam* and the work of creation being incomplete—it is not ours to complete the task, but neither ours to desist from it.

The concept of *tikkun olam* relies on a partnership among generations to learn from each other and work together.

- ◆ How was/is Hanukkah celebrated in each of your generations? Were there different traditions in generations past? Share a favorite Hanukkah memory from your childhood with each other.
- ◆ What has changed in our energy use over the generations (e.g. What uses of energy weren't invented in your grandparents' days? What appliances weren't part of their daily life? Was energy conservation an issue?)
- ◆ What do you think you can do in your own life to embrace the task of conserving energy and preserving God's creation?
- ◆ How could your current forms of energy be replaced? How could they conserve electricity in your home? What appliances could you live without or use less?

To celebrate this Hanukkah, make a resolution together to rededicate yourselves to conserving energy in your own lives, identifying specific actions you can take over the next year.

Jewish Texts as Resources on Global Climate Change

Compiled by Rabbi Fred Dobb, COEJL Board member, Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation, Bethesda MD
12/00

1. Judaism has always recognized that **the stakes are high**, and we can't afford to make too much of a mess:
 "God led Adam around all the trees of the Garden of Eden. And God said to Adam: 'See My works, how good and praiseworthy they are?! And all that I have created, I made for you. [But,] be mindful then that you do not spoil and destroy My world – for if you spoil it, there is no one after you to repair it.'" (Midrash Qohelet Rabbah 7:13; ca. 8th Century C.E.)

2. Remember **whose Earth** we're messing up in the first place, and what we're supposed to be doing with it:
 "The Earth is God's, and the fullness thereof, the settled land, and its inhabitants." (Psalm 24:1)
 "The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is Mine; you are strangers and sojourners with me." (Leviticus 25:23)
 "God placed the human in the Garden of Eden, *l'ovdah* (to serve/till) *u'l'shomrah* (and to guard/tend it)." (Gen. 2:15)

3. **Conservation:** Wasting anything is a shame, especially when it's so easy to use less electricity or get better mileage or...
Bal Tashchit: "When you besiege a city...do not destroy (*lo tashchit*) any of its trees..." (Deuteronomy 20:19)
 Rav Zutra said: "Whoever covers an oil lamp, or uncovers a naphtha lamp, transgresses the law of *bal tashchit*."
 (Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 67b, on actions that make fuel burn inefficiently. See energy conservation & emissions standards!)
 "Righteous people ... do not waste in this world even a mustard seed. They become sorrowful with every wasteful and destructive act that they see, and if they can, they use all their strength to save everything possible from destruction. But the wicked ... rejoice in the destruction of the world, just as they destroy themselves." (Sefer HaChinuch 529; 13th Century)

4. **Justice / Equality:** We in the US are 5% of the world's population, yet cause ¼ of all greenhouse gases. And who will rising sea levels and other effects of climate change harm most? Poor people in developing nations.
 "*Tzedek tzedek tirdof* -- Justice, justice, you shall pursue, in order that you may live..." (Deuteronomy 16:20)
 "God loves righteousness and justice; the Earth is full of God's loving-kindness." (Psalm 33:5)
 "Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor ... Love your neighbor as yourself." (Leviticus 19:16, 19:18)

5. **Preserving Life:** Climate change will likely cause the spread of new diseases, longer heat waves, more intense hurricanes, agricultural losses...
 "One is forbidden from gaining a livelihood at the expense of another's health." (R Isaac b. Sheshet, Resp. 196, 14thC)
 "Shabbat, like all the *mitzvot*/commandments, is pushed aside by danger to human life." (Rambam, MT Zmanim 2:1)

6. Saving **Endangered Species:** Everything's part of the plan, yet global warming moves too fast for most of Creation to adapt, threatening many species and whole ecosystems.
 "Even those creatures you deem superfluous in the world – like flies, fleas, and gnats – nevertheless have their allotted task in the scheme of Creation (*seder beresheet*)." (Midrash Exodus Rabbah 10:1)
 "It should not be believed that all beings exist for the sake of humanity's existence ... [rather,] all the other beings, too, have been intended for their own sakes..." (Rambam / Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* III:13; 12th Century, Egypt)

7. The **Precautionary Principle:** Precedents for doing something "drastic" even in an uncertain situation
 "When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, so that you do not bring bloodguilt on your house if anyone should fall from it." (Deuteronomy 22:8 – from which the Rambam deduces, "Similarly with all potentially dangerous objects. Remove them far from yourselves and from the way of the community." [MT Hilchot De'ot], 12th Cent.)
 "A burning coal/object left in a place where the public can be injured by it – one is allowed to extinguish it [even on Shabbat], whether it's of metal or of wood." (Yosef Caro in *Shulchan Aruch*, Orech Hayim 334:27; 16th Century Tzfat)
 "A sick person in danger – we attend to all their needs on Shabbat, at the advice of skilled local healer. If there is a doubt whether or not we need to violate the Shabbat for them – or if one doctor says to, ... but another doctor says there's no need – we violate the Shabbat for them, since [even] doubtful danger to human life pushes aside the Shabbat." (Rambam, MT Zmanim 2:1, continuing the quote above at #5. Replace "doctor" with "scientist," and "Shabbat" with "corporate profits"?!)
 "... We don't need an expert [to save a life by violating other laws like Shabbat], since ... [even] doubtful danger to human life [makes the law] lenient. And it's forbidden to delay the thing [treatment]..." (Tur, 14thC Spain, OH 328 – to which Caro adds, "the one who rushes to do so, look, this is praiseworthy! But the one who [stops to] ask, look, this is a murderer.")

8. In **Conclusion:** "See, I have set before you this day life and death, blessing and curse – and [you should] choose life, in order that you and your children may live." (Deuteronomy 30:19)

(See FJMC energy brief summaries at www.fjmc.org/energy/SH350.pdf for a solar Ner Tamid installation guide.)

Phase II – Take Action in Your Synagogue:

Utilize the Men's Club to conduct an energy audit for the synagogue and present the synagogue Board with the results. Develop a plan to conserve. (Currently 34 states have energy rebate plans as does the Federal Government.) Each club needs to become familiar with the relevant state and local legislation, community resources and various forms of alternative energy that are most suited to its geography.

The synagogue that converts its Ner Tamid to one that runs on solar energy makes a symbolic statement.

The synagogue that implements energy conservation technologies, and uses solar energy, wind energy, or geothermal heat pumps to reduce its electric and fuel purchases, transforms the symbolic into the actual.

Phase III – Document and Promote Your Project:

Install the solar Ner Tamid and coordinate with the rabbi and community for press coverage. Work with your rabbi to develop an appropriate solar ceremony. Keep careful records and apply for a special Torch Award at the FJMC 2009 Convention.

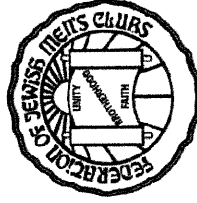
Phase IV – Make a Difference:

It is our hope that every club that dedicates a solar Ner Tamid will be entitled to a voucher to be used to help reduce the energy costs for those at or near poverty level in your community. The funds could be used to purchase high efficiency light bulbs for distribution to the needy, or to reduce the energy costs of a neighborhood church or community service building.

Conclusion:

This initiative has the potential to attract and involve younger people, to provide a meaningful service, to our members, and to exemplify the role that we can play at this moment in time.

We need to do both the symbolic and the actual.



"Involving Jewish Men in Jewish Life"

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Meet the FJMC at www.fjmc.org
November 2007

Shomrei Ha'aretz "Stewards of the Land"

Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs
www.fjmc.org/energy



*Capture the imagination
of your community and
Promote sustainable energy
with a Solar Ner Tamid*

One of the greatest challenges of the
Conservative/Masorti Movement in
the 21st century is how to define who
we are.

The Challenge

One small step in the process of defining who we are is our ability to reclaim the biblical mandate to be "Stewards of the Land", *Shomrei Ha'aretz*. A commitment to explore the utilization of renewable resources in our synagogues, homes, and businesses, can be an important part of this process.

On a daily basis we are bombarded with material about global warming, about the problems associated with the continued use of fossil fuels, and the potential of using renewable resources for our energy needs. However, a gap exists between what is reported in the media, and what we can do in our own communities.

Actions for the "Stewards of the Land", *Shomrei Ha'aretz*

- Every synagogue has an Eternal Light, a *Ner Tamid*, in its sanctuary and chapel. It is time to convert the symbol of God's eternal presence into something that is truly eternal, a solar *Ner Tamid*.
- Once every twenty-eight years a little known ceremony takes place called *ברכת החומר* *Birkat Hachamah*, "The Blessing of the Sun". The next ceremony of the sun will take place Tuesday evening/Wednesday morning (April 7-8, 2009 13 Nisan 5769).
- While the technology exists to produce renewable energy resources for individuals, it is a luxury primarily for the "haves" in our society – we can assist the "have nots."

A tremendous opportunity exists for a Men's Club to construct and celebrate a symbol that demonstrates both the importance of energy renewal and the role the Jewish community can play in using energy wisely. The initiative outlined in this brochure attempts to address each of the above statements. It is our contention that meaningful programming focusing on energy renewal will attract and involve our existing membership as well as the unaffiliated and thoughtful younger generations.

The FJMC recognizes that club activities need to be involving, fun, and in many instances have deeper meaning. Men's Clubs build *sukkot*, run Purim carnivals and perform necessary tasks for our synagogues. Men's Clubs perform "good deeds" in order to enrich both the Jewish and secular communities. We do these things because Judaism teaches us the importance of "repairing the world" (*tikkun olam*).

This initiative is envisioned to help an FJMC affiliate:

1. Reduce synagogue, congregant, and community energy usage;
2. Enhance the image of our synagogues in the Jewish and secular communities;
3. Build stronger ties with the non-Jewish community;
4. Partner with Israeli technology companies to develop joint initiatives;
5. Attract and involve men in the Men's Club;

We encourage institutions to follow this plan and to use our materials as you find them helpful. We know that support by FJMC consultants will make your efforts significantly more effective. For assistance contact us.

Symbols and Ceremonies

Immediate Goals:

1. To sensitize and motivate the community through the symbolic act of installing a solar *Ner Tamid*.
2. To strengthen the role of the Men's club in the congregation.
3. To provide an opportunity for a Men's Club to work with community-based organizations (such as the United Way) in an effort to provide energy-saving technology to a segment of the community that otherwise could not afford it.

Phase I – Build a base and create a symbol:

Gain the support of your Men's Club, rabbi and synagogue Board of Directors to build an organization of *Shomrei Ha'aretz*. These supporters will raise funds and take the lead in installing the solar *Ner Tamid* in time for *Birkat Hachamah*, "The Blessing of the Sun". This process could begin with a demonstration model for youth services, followed by conversion of the chapel *Ner Tamid* with a new bulb, revised wiring and a panel on the roof. This process can be repeated for the sanctuary solar *Ner Tamid* installation.

This Little Light of Mine (American folksong)

The light that shines is the light of love-
 Lights the darkness from above.
 It shines on me and it shines on you,
 Shows what the power of love can do.
 I'm gonna shine my light both far and near.
 I'm gonna shine my light both bright and clear.
 If there's a dark corner in this land,
 I'm gonna let my little light shine!

Chorus: This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine! (3x)
 Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

Some say "It's dark, we cannot see"
 But love lights up the world for me.
 Some say "Turn around and just go hide"
 But we have the power to change the tide.
 Some call life a sad old story
 But we see a world that's bound for glory.
 The real power is yours and mine,
 So let your little light shine!

I Have a Little Lightbulb

(sung to the tune of "I Have a Little Dreidel")

I have a little lightbulb
 It's called a compact fluorescent
 It's better than the usual bulb
 And makes a great Hannukah present

Refrain:

*Oh lightbulb, lightbulb, lightbulb
 It helps save energy
 Oh lightbulb, lightbulb, lightbulb
 Come save the world with me!*

The thing about this lightbulb
 Is that it gives off much less heat
 And therefore uses less electricity
 Wow, now isn't that neat?

Refrain

I have a dream for this lightbulb
 To go in every home and Hebrew school
 Not mention office buildings
 And every single shul

“Let There Be Light*”

A New Prayer to Incorporate into your Celebration of the Festival of Lights

O Source of Light, by Your light we see light. (Psalm 36:10)

"And God made the two great lights...and God set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the Earth...and God saw that it was good."
(Genesis 1:16-18)

Creator God, may we have the wisdom to appreciate the goodness in Your creation.

All: O Source of Light, by Your light we see light.

"Give thanks...to the maker of the great lights, whose lovingkindness extends eternally." (Psalm 136:1,7)

Gracious God, may we experience Your ever-renewing bounty with awe and gratitude, and may we use it wisely.

All: O Source of Light, by Your light we see light.

"With a rising-place at one end of heaven, and a circuit that reaches the other, nothing escapes [the sun's] heat." (Psalm 19:7)

Holy God, may this simple act of harnessing Your eternal light help us escape the global heating that our generation is causing over Your creation.

All: O Source of Light, by Your light we see light.

"Arise, shine, for Your light has dawned -- the presence of the Eternal will shine upon you." (Isaiah 60:1)

Loving God, Your gift of light enables us to shine.
May we, created in Your image, be worthy reflectors of Your glory.

All: Amen.

*Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb, of the Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation, of Bethesda, MD created the blessing.