

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE OIL!

When Jews recall the Chanukah story of the day's worth of oil that lasted for eight, we often forget that the miracle was not the extra mileage the Maccabees got from a few ounces of fuel.

The miracle was that the leaders of the newly independent Israel were willing to light the oil to rededicate the Temple — even though there was no guarantee they would realize their goal.

The story of Chanukah is not about the oil; it's about the light. Had the Maccabees not taken those first uncertain steps, the light of their faith would not still be visible, more than 2,000 years later.

Today, in the first era of Jewish independence since the time of the Maccabees, **Shalom Achshav, Israel's Peace Now movement**, is taking the steps that will lead to a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, to the point in which Israel could finally live at peace and security, as a Jewish and democratic state.

When Jews look to that goal, the most difficult question for them to consider is the status of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is woven through our history and our identity as a people. Yet Jerusalem must be part of any peace discussion. Even so, American Jews on the far right and their evangelical Christian allies are urging the Israeli government to refuse to discuss any compromise solution for Jerusalem. They fear it will lead to the "redivision" of the city.

The fact is that Jerusalem is already divided. Palestinians and Jews are separated by a wall of fear and distrust and, in places, by a physical wall: the security barrier that Israel is constructing.

Peace Now believes that allowing a Palestinian flag to fly over their neighborhoods of Jerusalem — in effect

recognizing a division that already exists — is a price worth paying for a lasting peace in the city of peace.

The possibility that the Western Wall or the Jewish Quarter would return to Arab control is unfathomable. Yet Israel must also be free to discuss Jerusalem as part of a peace settlement. Ultimately, there must be a solution to the issue of Jerusalem that both sides can agree to.

Like the Maccabees in the last great period of Jewish sovereignty, Israel must be able to take the steps toward the higher goal: peace and security. It must do so with faith and confidence that it can muster the strength to reach a viable peace agreement just as it can generate the power to win wars.

As the U.S. supporters of Shalom Achshav, Americans for Peace Now works to keep American friends of Israel focused on the goal of peace. Only through peace will Israel have long-term security and stability.

Through your support, you can help influence decision-makers and mobilize grassroots support to keep Israel strong. Because it isn't about the oil.

IT'S ABOUT THE LIGHT!



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