
What is Hanukkah?

This is a question that has been asked throughout the ages, and it has many answers. Some Jews embrace the holiday as a celebration of religious freedom. Others see it as a triumph of a pure form of Judaism over foreign influences. And some see it as a simple commemoration of a military victory. Due to its proximity with Christmas, this holiday has, for some, become simply a time to give presents.

The historical episode that Hanukkah commemorates centers on the military victory of the Maccabees, a small clan of Jewish warriors, who defeated the Syrian overlords of ancient Palestine in 167 BCE.

But over the millennia, many rabbis were deeply suspicious of militarism. Instead, they sought to emphasize the spiritual aspect, and so they focused on a miracle: as the Maccabees restored the damaged temple, the small amount of oil used to light the perpetual flame lasted for 8 days even though there was only enough to last for one day.

To the question, "What is Hanukkah?" we in Not In My Name (NIM) answer that it is the time to remember the victory of a small army who fought a war of national liberation against an powerful occupying power. The word "Hanukkah" means "dedication." So today, over 2000 years later, as Israelis are occupiers in Palestine and as Americans are occupiers in Iraq, we dedicate this holiday to all those who are struggling against occupation.

In our view, the modern struggle for Palestinian liberation is comparable to the ancient struggle for Jewish liberation. Israel's Occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem is destroying both Israeli and Palestinian societies. Therefore, we dedicate this Hanukkah especially to those who are actively opposing it.

For the freedom of all people! Happy Hanukkah!

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What is Not In My Name?

Not In My Name is a predominantly Jewish peace group that was founded in November 2000 to organize Jewish opposition to the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. We believe that the Israelis and Palestinians deserve a chance to live in peace but that there are obstacles that prevent this from happening.

The main obstacles include the Israeli Occupation and the U.S. government's support of it. **We believe that the first step toward attaining peace must be for Israel to end its Occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem and for the U.S. to stop using our tax dollars to support it.**

We call ourselves "Not In My Name" because the State of Israel often claims to act in the name and interests of all the Jews in the world. Taking our place within the Jewish community, we offer an alternative voice, motivated first and foremost by a love for peace and justice.

We welcome the active participation of non-Jews who support our work and who want to say "Not in my name, either!"

Not In My Name

PMB 206
2859 Central St
Evanston IL 60201
312-409-4845

Join our Weekly Vigil

Every Sunday
Noon to 1:00pm
Water Tower Park
Michigan and Pearson
(830 North)

www.nimn.org

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