

Dvar Israel- 27.10

Together: Shabbat Shalom!

Lian: Last Sunday Israel commemorated the death of Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's Prime Minister who was assassinated at a peace rally, 23 years ago.

Rabin began his career during the British mandate period, as a commander in the Palmah, one of the underground elite fighting forces of the Yishuv at the time. He went on to lead the IDF to a magnificent victory in the six-day war in 1967. He also spent time as Israel's ambassador to the United States. But most important of all, Rabin signed the peace treaty with Jordan in 1994, and the Oslo agreements in 1995, all of which were first steps toward a true peace in the area. He was awarded the Nobel peace prize for this extraordinary achievement.

Nir: The assassination of Rabin was a severe shock to Israel's democracy. Someone who did not agree with Rabin's vision decided that the solution was violence.

In Rabin's final speech he said: "Violence is undermining the very foundations of Israeli democracy. It must be condemned, denounced, and isolated." Rabin's vision was that Democracy is not just a way to run a government. For him, he saw democracy as a way of life, a thing that surrounds us in everything we do.

Lian: 23 years has passed since the tragedy of losing Yitzhak Rabin. So much has changed...

We were born in the years immediately following his death. Indeed, we were born into a world without Rabin alive.

However, for us, Rabin has always been there and part of our surroundings. We were born into a culture and society where people often discuss this difficult topic. We have a Memorial Day every year, we've learned about him and his life and about his hopes and beliefs. His name came up every time we learned about democracy, about violence, about incitement and freedom of expression. In the scouts, at

school, at home. Even though we were not around yet when it happened, we feel like we are part of it all.

Nir: 23 years have passed. Unfortunately some people have stopped holding the Memorial Day, even though there is an Israeli law that requires it. It's hard knowing that there are some people that don't find it important enough to be memorialized, but we choose to look at the majority - the people who do remember, and there are a lot of amazing and different ways to do that.

Lian: In the past 4 years, there is a new way to commemorate - "Asefa Israelit" - "Israeli gathering" - a program that has been developed and is led by youth movements, organizations and people from the right and left, Jews and Arabs, religious and secular; all parts of Israeli society come together to have discussions about democracy, Israel, and more. The discussions happen all around Israel and are open to everyone who wants to come. We both took part in it before, and the discussions and experiences we had really made us believe that there is hope for peace.

Nir: We invite you to check out our Luach downstairs commemorating Rabin, and to come talk to us more about it all at Kiddush.

עוד יבוא שלום עלינו

Shabbat Shalom!