

November 2017 Message from Rabbi Dubin

Dear Friends,

We all have moments in life that are forever burned into our memories. For some, it is the birth of a child. For others, it's the day we pass a professional exam. And for others still, it may even be the day our favorite sports team finally wins a long-awaited championship. As for me, I have memories etched permanently into my brain from all three categories. During the month of November, however, I always come back to one memory in particular.

It was November 4, 1995. I was in Philadelphia for the wedding of a graduate school roommate. As I started getting ready to meet some friends so we could travel together to the ceremony, I flipped on the TV for no particular reason. And then it hit me like a ton of bricks. The news was pouring in from Tel Aviv that Prime Minister Rabin had just been shot. The reports were confused and harried. No one seemed to have a clear idea of exactly what had happened, but everyone feared the worst-case scenario might actually play itself out. And then, a few hours later, it did.

A radicalized twenty-five-year-old right wing Jewish law student, convinced of the perverse notion that Rabin's dogged pursuit of peace was somehow in violation of Jewish law, had taken matters into his own hands. After attending a massive peace rally in Tel Aviv where the Prime Minister had been the marquis speaker, this depraved deviant waited until after the participants had joined together in a final singing of the classic Israeli song, "A Song of Peace." He then took position by the Prime Minister's car, waited for his opportunity, and fired three shots, two of which hit his target.

The Prime Minister's security detail rushed the wounded leader to the hospital, but it was too late. Yitzhak Rabin died that night.

Two days later, on November 6, when the Prime Minister was laid to rest on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, I, and most everyone I knew, found ourselves glued to the television. Though we knew it was true, still, none of us could actually believe it.

I will never forget those two days. By the actions of a single evil person, our world lost one of the last best hopes in our lifetime for Middle East peace, and I lost one of my most beloved personal heroes. The fact that we are so much farther away from true peace today than we were on the eve of his death twenty-two years ago is a tragic source of endless sorrow. At the same time, we Jews don't give up easily. No matter how discouraged we may become at times, when foundational principles such as the imperative for peace are at stake, we rethink, regroup, and find new hope.

May it be God's will that Yitzhak Rabin's vision of peace will be realized in the not too distant future. And if members of the current generations of leadership fail to achieve that dream, may the next generation stand taller than we. Yes, we will do what

we can, but should we fall short, may we maintain faith that the next generation will continue on and achieve that which we ourselves are unable.

It is no accident that Nancy chose the middle name that we did for our fourth child. Ari's full name, Ari **Yitzhak** Dubin, is one of hope and perseverance. May he, and all in his generation, live up to the responsibility that comes with such a name, and may we never give up until peace is finally announced across the land.

L'Shalom ("In Peace"),
Rabbi Dubin

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