



Murder and Birth

In the aftermath of the flood when No'ach saw the destruction around him, with only four human couples surviving, he could have become depressed at the futility of everything. God blessed him with the words P'RU URVU - be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth". Abarbanel says this is to assure him that the world would be repopulated and there is a reason to go on.

This same verse is repeated later by God (9:7) as a command to No'ach and his children to reproduce and "swarm all over the earth." Mankind has a role to play in rejuvenating and repopulating the Earth.

The prohibition of murder was not explicitly transmitted to Adam, but after the flood when the world had been destroyed because of corruption, G-d clearly proclaims this command to No'ach and his offspring.

"Only of the blood of your own lives will I demand an account.

I will demand [such] an account from the hand of every wild beast.

From the hand of man - [even] from the hand of a man's own brother - I will demand an account of [every] human life."

Man's life is important and if it is

taken in any way (suicide, by an animal, by a family member, with witnesses, without witnesses) there must be a punishment. An account will be taken (EDROSH) (9:5).

"KI B'TZELEM ELOKIM ASA ET HAADAM... for G-d made man with His own image" (9:6)

I read all these verses with two opposite events in mind. One was the barbaric, murders of Ari Fuld ארי פולד two weeks ago in Gush Etzion and Kim Yehezkel ארי זקל and Ziv Hajabi זיו חגי, in Barkan, just this week in two different areas of the country that supposedly symbolize coexistence. We can not fathom why other people would want to murder innocent people.

The other event is a happy one, the birth of our new grandson this week to Aura and Moshe Loewenthal. We must not take it for granted that God gives life to a newborn child. One must not take it for granted that parents decide to bring new life into the world. It is no easy feat to carry a baby for 9 months, to go through labor and then spend many days and nights worrying about one's children and the best ways to raise them. But by doing this parents become partners with God. When one murders they abandon the "Image of God" within them.

We must make sure that our society continues to value life, brings more life into the world and makes it difficult for people to take other peoples lives.

CHICKPEAS are served in the house of a mourner. We all mourn

the loss of our brethren, who have been murdered in cold blood.

Chickpeas are also served at a Shalom Zachar, to remind us that life in this world is not simple. So this weeks recipe is with chickpeas.

CHICKPEA SALAD

1 red onion

½ cup oil

2 cups chickpeas (cooked)

¼ cup wine vinegar

Crisp lettuce leaves

Salt & pepper to taste

Cut onion into very thin slices, separate into rings, place in bowl with water. Stir salt, pepper, oil and vinegar in cup. At serving time, combine dressing, chickpeas, and onion rings in bowl. Spoon over crisp lettuce leaves on serving plate or individual serving plates. ♪