

RABBI NORMAN LAMM

Friends:

Tishah Be'av has come too early for the Schwarzschild family-- too early in terms of days, and much too early in terms of years.

Jewish tradition teaches that man is in many ways symbolized by the Temple, and the Temple by man; for both of them are the abode of God Almighty, and there is therefore an equivalence between them. The Temple possesses a Menorah (a candelabrum), and man must possess enlightenment and wisdom. The Temple possesses a mizbeiach (an altar), and man, if he be truly human, must possess the capacity for self-sacrifice and sacrificial love and loyalty. The Temple possesses the Sefer Torah (the Scroll of Law), and man must be committed to Almighty God and the tradition of his forebearers. The Temple has the kodesh ha kadashim (the Holy of Holies), the inner sanctum, and man must have depth, an inner life, a heart, a reservoir of goodness and charitableness.

And now, but several days before all Israel commemorates the Churban Ha'bayit, the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, we here not only the family, but all of us who loved and admired this man, we at this time, experience Churban. The passing of Dr. Ludwig Schwarzschild is no less a grievous trauma for those who were intimate with him, for those who acknowledged the kind of person he was, than the destruction of the Temple was a tragedy for all the House of Israel, not forgotten and continuously observed by our people for some 2000 years.

Jeremiah, when he witnessed the destruction of the first Temple, composed The Book of Lamentations which we shall read on Tishah Be'av, and which begins with the word Ekhah, "how has it come to pass?" Mrs. Schwarzschild, Marty, Laura: I would like you to know on behalf of all of us who are here, and the many others who couldn't come in time to this sad farewell, that we join you in this Ekhah. We join you fully in it. We grieve at this great loss that

has struck your family. This man was a glorious Temple of wisdom, of culture, of commitment, of love and of warmth. No one will be able to miss him the way you do, but all of us will miss him with you in some significant measure.

Dr. Schwarzschild came from a culturally and religiously rich background, that of German Jewry. His paternal grandfather was a rabbi and a teacher. His maternal grandfather a Jewish educator and an author. He was a devoted son to his own parents, especially to his regal and aristocratic mother, many of whose features he inherited. They must have been quite unusual people to raise a son of this kind. If I had to describe him briefly from my own knowledge of him and of his family, I would say that here was an individual whose multifaceted personality characterized him as a Man of Happy Contrasts. He was a living symbol, a veritable personification, of cultural cross-fertilization. In appearance, manner, and deportment he was still the German-Jewish gentleman of a time that is no more, of the old school; "gemütlich" I think the Germans call it -- slow in gait, dressed just a bit old-fashioned, uncluttered in thinking, unfrenzied in the use of his intellect and his judgment, a man who was warm and dignified and paternal. And yet, at the same time, he was a man who was fully alive and alert in the modern world, a professional whose scientific education and ability and methodology all bespoke a fully contemporary man of today, of the latest hour. Up-to-date scientifically, he was yet traditional in the values he cherished, in his affections, in his commitments, in his life style. Coldly objective as a scientist, he was yet warm and compassionate as a human being. Successful in his chosen profession, happy and content with the lot that life gave him, he was forever learning and always inquisitive. He was a man of penetrating mind. I often would stand in awe of his ability to recall some of the girsas di'yankuta, the Jewish learning that he had imbibed as a youngster in his parental home and which he recollected after decades, almost with total recall -- not only facts, but a whole outlook, with all the sentiment and the emotion and the sweetness that went with it. And yet, despite these gifts, he was a man of

exemplary and unselfconscious modesty. He didn't even realize that he was being humble. Here was a man who received a distinguished academic appointment as a professor in a university and told no one about it until his immediate family discovered it by accident approximately a year later. He was the kind of man who could not bear to say evil of another person, not even to think evil of another human being, who couldn't even suffer another individual's speaking evil of a third one. His contrasts were even apparent in his sense of humor, which was the kind that allowed him to laugh heartily -- and yet revealed subtlety of mind and closeness of thinking.

There were two great loves that he balanced one with the other. The first great love was for his family. He was married to his beloved, wonderful wife for some 45 years. He knew her for half a century. During this time not one cross word was ever exchanged between them. To see them walking together was not only a pleasure and a consolation, but it was an education in domestic peace, in connubial joy and happiness. He was a loving father to Laura, father-in-law to Mark and grandfather to Murray and Jeff, those two wonderful children, and he was exceptionally close to Martin, who reciprocated this closeness by consulting his father at every important step and speaking with him almost every day of his life.

And at the same time that he had this unusual closeness to his family -- unusual not only in our days of family breakdown, but unusual even in the days when families always were close -- he maintained an equally strong commitment to his profession. He lived and breathed medicine. He was utterly loyal to his patients. He had for them almost a paternal concern. He felt for them, suffered with them, was overjoyed with them. He was, one might say, a doctor of the old school, and he was a charitable man who gave of his time and of his wisdom and of his talent: for 25 years as a volunteer in the Hospital for Joint Diseases; for 35 years offering his services in the Skin and Cancer Unit of

University Hospital; for many years he gave of his services as a specialist on the Board of the Workmen's Benefit Fund.

Professionally, his interests centered on the skin; humanly he penetrated to the very depths, able to hear the heartbeat of all who were blessed enough to come into his circle. He was a man who was able to feel deeply, and he was able to judge wisely.

Not only was he a man of contrasts, but a man of happy contrasts. He was able to take these diversities that made up his rich personality and reconcile them, integrate the contrasts in life by means of wisdom. It occurs to me, looking upon Dr. Schwarzschild with only the little perspective of these several days, that he probably was one of the most mature men whom I had ever had the pleasure and the privilege of knowing. He was a man who knew when to strive and when to let go in resignation. He recognized the priorities in life, knowing what comes first and what can safely be left for later. Often when people have to bridge two cultures, they show signs of tension and nervousness, even neurosis. But Dr. Schwarzschild was a remarkable balanced man possessed of inner silence, of equanimity and tranquility. This man of happy contrasts attained true serenity in his life, a serenity that comes from a unity of purpose and affection. Such contentment, such tranquility, is impossible for a man unless he has a helpmate for life who can give him the kind of home, the kind of quietness, the kind of love that Mrs. Schwarzschild gave so unstintingly, so unselfishly of herself. He was a blessed man. His domestic joy, his children, his grandchildren let him lead this full, quiet, happy life that he did.

And it is because he was such a remarkable man and husband and father, so wise and warm, so clever and compassionate, that we all sorrow with the family at his untimely passing. Yet this very fact that you had such a man with you, that in itself must become the source of your strength and consolation.

Our Rabbis said that the lamentation of Jeremiah which we read on Tishah Be'av -- Ekhah, Ekhah, "how has it come to pass?" -- can, by rearranging the vowels of the same letters, read Ayekah, "Where art thou?" "Where are you?" I should like to read that equation in the following manner: Marty, Laura, Mrs. Schwarzschild, the next period is going to be very difficult, one in which you will break down and cry out in the depths of your heart and your anguish, Ekhah, "how has it come to pass?" How is it possible to survive without him? But think only of this: that as time goes on and the sharp edge of grief has been blunted, you are going to remain with something exceedingly precious that very few others have. You're going to have a heritage that he bequeathed to you, a heritage of warmth and quietness and dignity and wisdom and maturity. And in moments of crisis and difficulty, you will be able to turn to his living memory and say Ayekah, "Where are you?" What would you say? What would you do? You will be able to consult that wonderful past that he has left you and it will be with you in the present and guide you with stability into the future.

The same domestic joy and bliss that he enjoyed, you can and must carry on in your lives.

The same derekh eretz you had for father and always for mother, continue to give it doublefold to your beloved mother. The family will continue, and his memory will be your strength. From Ekhah we shall go to Ayekah, and the response will be forthcoming in warmth of memory, in the wisdom he has taught you, in the kind of home he has left you with.

For this, this never dies.

May his blessed soul be bound up in the bond of immortal life.

AMEN