

תחביר; patience

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### EULOGY FOR ISIDORE MOED

Isi – *our* Isi – is gone, and our friendship of about 47 years has come to an end.

During these decades, we and our family have become dear and precious friends. Molly and Isi and my wife and I were together at The Jewish Center's Young Marrieds when indeed, we were "young marrieds." Our children were classmates in Manhattan Day School and in "Central," Yeshiva University's High School for Girls. Throughout the course of our friendship I never had reason to question his loyalty or to criticize him. He was pleasant and kind and warm beyond words, and I always considered it a זכות to know him and consider him a friend.

Isi was born in Antwerp to a warm and compassionate family. His sister Elsa Weinman, long a leader in The Jewish Center, and his brother were prepared by their parents to be responsible members of the community. His father was a loyal member of the Center and "davened" there regularly. His mother was especially sharp, bright, innovative. It was she who saved her family from the Nazi onslaught by insisting that they had to emigrate, to get out of harm's way in Europe. At her urging, they left Antwerp on the last ship out of that Hell, on the Quanza – a ship of 80 passengers who were turned away by Portugal and Cuba. When they came to these shores, they were rebuffed by Virginia. Through the help of Maritime attorney Morowitz, who obtained the intervention of Eleanor Roosevelt, they granted safety and celebrated Isi's Bar Mitzvah at The Jewish Center.

Isi's was an engaging personality; widely popular, he had many good friends. He had a remarkable talent: he loved whatever it was he was doing, whether it was successful or not, whether he was winning or losing. He was a happy man who welcomed a challenge, who was invariably optimistic and, no matter what the provocation, almost never complained.

Isi was a Zionist to the core of his being. He loved Israel – delighted at the chance to visit, and sad at the thought of leaving it. He was a most respectful son who practiced כבוד אב ואם, honoring his parents, in an exemplary fashion. He would visit his mother daily, often twice a day, and was a loyal and respectful son-in-law to Molly's mother, the late Mrs. Fingerhut.

His family was his life. Molly, his loving and beloved wife, proved her mettle and her loyalty in ministering to him with utter devotion during the period of his illness. His daughters – Linda and Susie and Nadine – were his jewels – and he knew jewels... They were lucky to have such parents, and they reciprocated their love and devotion with the unquestioning loyalty and service to them. Elsa was a wonderful sister and sister-in-law in this happy family.

Isi enjoyed a profoundly embedded talent – one might even say "secret life." Permit me to explain.

We Jews are a waiting people. We wait and wait even if sometimes edgy and nervously. Often, our patience is wracked by impatience. Yet we wait for the right

time, confident that ultimately it will come and then the wrongs of the world will be righted, and the righteous victims of injustice will be compensated. Waiting for Messiah is the secret of our strength. And it forms part of the historic Jewish character. We waited close to 2000 years, and finally saw that our patience was rewarded at the emergence of the State of Israel. And we continue to wait for the fullness of redemption, for the גאולה שלימה.

We shall shortly be reciting the Haggada and we shall read the passage of the divine promise to Father Abraham:

וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָם יְדֹעַ תֵּדַע כִּי גֵר יִהְיֶה זְרַעְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם וַעֲבָדוּם וַעֲנֻ אֲתָם  
אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וְגַם אֶת הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ דָן אֲנִי כִי נֵצְאוּ בְּרַכְשׁ גָּדוֹל:

Abraham, God said, be prepared for your children to be exiled for 400 years, after which I shall bring their tormentors to justice, and your children will leave with great bounty. What a prophecy – your descendants will have to exercise inhuman patience, waiting for 400 years until liberation will come! During all that time of back-breaking labor, of humiliation and slavery, they will await the great day of redemption.

That special day, that “appointed time” for the coming of the redeemer, in Hebrew is called מועד, *Moed*. How appropriate to Isi and his capacity to “wait it out,” to exercise his talent for waiting without complaint. Isi had this preternatural talent for identifying a מועד and waiting for it against all odds.

He was a fighter, who held off the מלאך המות, the Angel of Death, until the distant “moed” would arrive – and not a day sooner. Thus, by all medical standards he should have expired during his previous massive illnesses – but he refused. He was not ready to leave, and he knew that the “moed” for surrendering his soul to his Creator had not yet arrived. He was a fighter who knew the secret of patience—active and courageous patience.

Thus too, he resolved that he had to see Israel at least one more time – so he held out, summoned all his strength, and paid his final visit to the Holy Land. And how happy he was! He returned beaming, despite his afflictions.

Isi knew that his “moed” was coming when he would have to take leave of his beloved Molly and their children, of his family and friends and world. But the fighter would not let his ghost go until Susie came back to see her father one more time before he expired.

Farewell, Isi, כי בא מועד, your time has come. For us you were also a מועד in its usual sense of a “holiday,” for knowing you, interacting with you was for me and for all of us – a true Yom Tov. We enjoyed your company, we shared your ideals, we reveled in your family’s mutual love, and we shall miss you terribly.

Molly, you were a living blessing to Isi. And Lind and Susie and Nadine – you were a source of great “nachas” to your Dad. His memory will be a blessing for all of you and for all his loved ones.

May his precious soul be and remain truly immortal.. – תהא נשמתו צרורה בצרור החיים