

March 19, 1974

EULOGY FOR MRS. ROSE HUROWITZ

Reciting this farewell for our beloved Rose Hurowitz imposes a double burden upon me. First, there is a natural sorrow and grief at having to take leave of this wonderful woman who, after her long and heroic struggle, has finally succumbed, as indeed all mortals eventually must. And second, this occasion reopens old wounds, as we remember once again how very much we have missed and always will miss her beloved husband, our revered friend Sam Hurowitz, of blessed memory. For the two of them were inseparable.

Indeed, their love for each other and their mutual respect were the most outstanding qualities of this extraordinary couple. It is impossible to think of one without the other.

The classical honorific for such a lady in the Jewish tradition is Eshet Hayyil, which we normally translate as, "a woman of valor." Rose Hurowitz fully deserved this encomium.

She possessed in full measure the three special qualities that some commentators have declared are implicit in this designation. The Hebrew word hayyil (חַיִּיל), valor, has been interpreted as an acronym for three words: חֶסֶד (love), יִרְאָה (reverence), and לִקְוָה (teaching).

Hessed (love) was Rose Hurowitz's most distinguishing characteristic. The love she bore for Sam was unfathomable and immeasurable. She was a loving woman par excellence, her heart overflowing with love for Bill and Monte, for her brother Sam and her Aunt Sylvia, for her daughter-in-law Susan, for members of her family and, indeed for all those fortunate enough to enter into the circle of her friendship. Most especially did she love and adore her two grandchildren, Stephen and Stephanie.

And for Sam, Rose was a queen. Indeed, her deportment was regal. Her carriage and her bearing were those of natural royalty. Her demeanor was aristocratic, her manner princely. In turn, so powerful was Rose's devotion to Sam, that she could not and would not accept his death until her own dying day.

It was no accident, but rather wise judgment, that lead the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies several years ago to designate the Hurowitz family as the "Jewish Family of the Year" -- the first family so to be honored.



Her hessed was evident in her community work as well. Her generosity extended to every worthy cause. A list of the institutions which were the beneficiaries of her largesse is, in effect, a description of the structure of the Jewish community and of deserving organizations of the general community as well. She was a leader of the UJA, Bonds for Israel, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, Mizrachi Women, YU... The list is almost endless.

But her special charity, that upon which she lavished her warmest generosity and her utmost attention, was the Beth Abraham Home. Her attitude to these institutions, and especially to Beth Abraham, was never impersonal or perfunctory. Her work was always characterized by hessed, by the human touch. She had a personal concern for each and every one of these incurables. She acted as their advocate. She read widely in the literature so as to be able to function more creatively. She was able to sustain what appears as a paradoxical combination: maternalism and efficiency.

Together with her beloved Sam, she gave not only to institutions, but also to individuals -- the poor, the unknown, the lonely, the strangers. Her philanthropy was usually implemented in the classical Jewish manner, i.e., she did not know the recipients, the recipients did not know from whom their blessing came.

Her second quality was yirah, reverence. Her identification with the Jewish tradition was never merely nominal. She was spiritually involved in her Jewishness. She was a woman whose home, like her heart, was truly "kosher." She remembered the Sabbath to keep it holy. How wonderful it was to behold her, in the years when her health permitted it, coming to services and praying devoutly at The Jewish Center. To this day, I always look to my left, hoping against hope that I would see Mrs. Hurowitz in her usual spot. In her last years, I used to visit her on the eve of every Yom Kippur, to instruct her on how to observe the holy day in the circumstances of her illness. A child of her times, aware of the tragic history of our people, she knew and appreciated the value of the State of Israel in our lives. She was a distinguished President of the Sisterhood of The Jewish Center. During the last years, whenever I visited her, I had to give her a report of "what's new at The Center." She listened intently, and derived vicarious satisfaction.

The third quality is lekah, teaching -- as in the verse from Proverbs, כִּי נָתַתִּי טוֹב נִתְּנִי לָכֶם, "for I have given you good teaching." Indeed, she was a teacher, but one who taught not only



what she knew, but what she was! Her educational methodology was example rather than rhetoric.

I did not know her parents, but of one thing I am sure -- that she must have been a wonderful, obedient, respectful daughter. Otherwise, I simply cannot understand how it was that her children were so very good to her. There is only one explanation that I find compelling: they must have learned from her the high standards of filial devotion.

The fifth of the Ten Commandments, reads:

כבוד את אביו ואם אביו למען יאריך ימים

"honor they father and they mother, so that thy days be lengthened." I take that to mean that if you honor your parents, then your children will learn, by example, how to honor you; and so your own days will be lengthened, as your children fill them with warmth and love and satisfaction.

I wish to state publicly that in all my experience I have never observed such genuine kibbud av va'em, such love and reverence and honor and attention and concern, as Monte and Bill showed for their parents, and, especially during these last years, their mother. They, with the assistance of devoted physicians and dedicated nurses and aides, literally kept her alive when all others had long despaired of her survival. They "lengthened her days," they gave her respect and honor and love in a measure that taxes credibility. I say this not so much in tribute to Bill and Monte -- although it certainly is that. I say this in tribute to Rose Hurowitz, because she deserved such devotion; because this was her lekah, her teaching, as she instructed her children by the example of her own devotion to her parents and to her husband; because she gave so much of herself in caring for the chronically ill when she was healthy and strong.

So we bid a sad farewell to our beloved Rose Hurowitz, our eshet hayyil, our woman of valor. She exemplified the three qualities of hessed (love) and yirah (reverence) and lekah (teaching). And so our farewell to her is given in love and in admiration and as students of a master of sweetness and goodness.

And we bid her farewell in gratitude too -- gratitude to Almighty God for having planted this beautiful Rose in the garden of our lives.

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