

EULOGY FOR ABRAHAM LANDAU

In bidding farewell to our beloved relative and dear friend, I commend to your attention the words of King David in the First Chapter of the Book of Psalms:

"And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water,
That bringeth forth its fruit in its season,
And whose leaf doth not wither;
And in whatsoever he doeth he shall prosper."

This felicitous simile -- "like a tree planted by streams of water" -- is particularly appropriate for the kind of person that Abraham Landau was, and is especially significant on this eve of Tu Bi'Shevat, the Arbor Day of Judaism. Like a stately tree planted by streams of living water, he too was a man of great dignity in his demeanor and in his manner. In bearing and in ^odepartment he was wholly a gentleman: impressive and earning the admiration and respect of all those with whom he came in contact.

His roots were well nourished. The youngest of a large family, he came from pious and devout parents, who had boasted a long line of sages and rabbis. Though orphaned from both parents by the time he was six years old, Providence granted him the good fortune of an older brother, Tom, may he rest in peace, who was to him a second father, and whom he cherished and loved very dearly indeed. His roots drank in from the streams of the Jewish heritage -- the love of G-d and the love of man.

From the roots there grew the tree itself, strong in spirit, firm in conviction. It was a strong trunk, in which firmness of character was merged with loveliness; principled ~~of~~ personality with goodness of heart and mellowness of expression.

This tree that was Abraham Landau had many branches. What were some of them? First there was the religious branch. He was a man who had deep

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devotion within, a very genuine and heartfelt commitment to the principles of our Jewish faith. We of The Jewish Center shall surely miss him. He was one of our original founders, one of those who drew the charter of our House of G-d. He was the kind of man who deserved his reputation as a pillar of the synagogue, for he was with us and stood by us loyally during our synagogue's hour of crisis.

Then there was the branch of charitableness. He was a leader of the United Jewish Appeal, often representing the U.J.A. in speaking missions at a time when the State of Israel so desperately needed the help of gallant fellow Jews in America. He was actively associated with the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies. And he was valuable indeed in the sacred mission of the Beth Israel Hospital.

A branch of honorableness was prominent in the tree of life that was Abraham Landau. He had a most impeccable reputation for business integrity, for utter honesty, fair play and elemental decency.

And then there was the branch of friendship. He was a man who radiated warmth wherever he went. His outer dignity was complemented by an inner good and kindly disposition. He was loved by all who knew him -- with very good reason.

But if these are some of the branches of his life, then at the very heart of that tree that was Abraham Landau -- was his deeply beloved family. How beautiful to behold was the utter devotion of Mr. and Mrs. Landau for each other: The merging of two souls in a common destiny and for the purpose of principles cherished by both together, as one. How lovely was his relationship with his father-in-law, Mr. Julius Schwartz, may he live and be well. The relationship between them was deep, reverent and a source of admiration.

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Throughout his life he lavished his love upon his brother, Louis, who is with us today. He was a gentle, loving father, who inspired deep confidence and love in his two daughters. He gave their lives stability, warmth, and a feeling of elevation. He deserved and won the respect and the friendship of his son-in-law. And with what overbearing love and gentle affection he adored his three grandchildren.

Our Bible taught us: "For man is like the tree of the field." This then was the tree of life of Abraham Landau. His roots struck deep, they took nourishment from the fresh streams of goodness and love, of decency and Jewishness. The branches of his character and personality spread far and wide, offering shade and rest to the weary of spirit and those hungry for true friendship.

You, those who survive him and who loved him so, are the fruit of the tree. As long as you carry on this kind of heritage, as long as you emulate this kind of life, then we shall be certain that his life will be the kind "whose leaf doth not wither." By carrying on the precious traditions which he developed and carried to the full in his life, you -- the fruit of his tree -- will assure his immortality.

"And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water,
That bringeth forth its fruit in its season,
And whose leaf doth not wither;
And in whatsoever he doeth he shall prosper."

May his soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life. Amen.