

Harold
Rabbi Appel

I have never been more constrained in preparing a eulogy. Harold and I spoke towards the end of his illness and he was very clear on a couple of things. One, that he didn't want the service to be too long. And the second thing he was clear about resulted in the promise that he made me give him, that if I spoke, it would be mostly about Marlene and his two sons, Andrew and Robert, and his family. Having given him my promise, I will try to do my best, as I speak about Rebecca's son, Marlene's husband, Nora's brother, Hal's brother-in-law, Andrew and Robert's father, Kristen and Thalia's father-in-law, and Ethan, Rebecca, Isaac, and Kate's grandfather.

Harold's family was very important to him, as seen in his request to me. The time spent with his children and grandchildren in Key Biscayne was always precious to him. Kristen and Thalia made a book of photographs, many of them from the Key Biscayne trips, describing their husbands as fathers to their own children. The book describes Andrew and Robert as among other things, patient and silly, loving and involved. This book was a gift from the daughters-in-law to Harold, because they thought that he had taught their husbands all the best qualities of being a father.

I can also say that in spending time with Marlene that she has a generosity of spirit, which is seen in the extent of her involvement in KAM Isaiah Israel. KAM Isaiah Israel was important to Harold as well, although he was less likely to join a committee. He shared with me that he among others was surprised when he was asked to be on the rabbinic search committee. Many people, including Marlene, were surprised when he agreed. His agreement came because of the importance that he placed on KAM Isaiah Israel.

As Marlene, Andrew, Robert, and I spoke with Harold in the last few weeks, he explained that there was one principle that guided his life and his choices, to live so that he had no regrets. For other people having no regrets is more personal, whether it is having a family or an accomplishment in one's career. For Harold, having no regrets, meant always choosing to do the right thing, to create methods of changing the world when there were wrongs that needed to be righted. Doing the right thing included his family, but it included the rest of us as well.

Once there was a student who was with a teacher for many years. And when the teacher felt he was going to die, he wanted to make even his death a lesson.

That night, the teacher took a torch, called his student, and set off with him through the forest.

Soon they reached the middle of the woods, where the teacher extinguished the torch, without explanation.

"What is the matter?" asked the student.

"This torch has gone out," the teacher answered and walked on.

"But," shouted the student, his voice plucking with fear, "will you leave me here in the dark?"

"No! I will not leave you in the dark," returned the teacher's voice from the surrounding blackness. "I will leave you searching for the light."

We have lost one of our lights with the death of Harold. But he has taught all of us not only how to find it, but how to make it brighter in the world.