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EULOGY FOR NATHAN RAGOSIN

THERE IS AN IMAGE THAT REPEATS ITSELF AGAIN AND AGAIN DURING THE HIGH HOLY DAYS, OUR PEOPLE ARE ABOUT TO CELEBRATE. IN THE LITURGY OF ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR, WE SPREAD ^K OF A ** ²²⁰ ; A BOOK. IT IS SOMETIMES CALLED ** ^{P "D D 220} THE BOOK OF LIFE, IN OTHER PASSAGES WE READ OF ** ^{N J D D S D 220} THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE. THE DEEDS OF EACH HUMAN BEING ARE WRITTEN IN ^{THIS} THE BOOK. EACH OF US HAS HIS OR HER OWN VOLUME. EACH OF US SIGNS HIS NAME. ~~THE~~ SIGNATURE OF EACH HUMAN BEING IS FOUND IN ^{17 2310 S 31 P A D I} HIS/HER BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE.

IT IS KNOWN TO US NOW, THAT NATHAN RAGOSIN WAS NOT WRITTEN INTO THE BOOK OF LIFE LAST ROSH HASHANAH. WHAT WE HAVE INSTEAD IS HIS ** ^{N J D D S D 220} HIS BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE. IT IS OUR TASK ON THIS SAD DAY TO OPEN HIS BOOK, TO REMEMBER HIM FOR WHAT HE WAS, TO TELL HIS STORY.

THE METAPHOR OF THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE IS PARTICULARLY APPROPRIATE TO THE LIFE OF NATHAN. HOPEFULLY, WHEN WE OPEN THE BOOK OF ANOTHER LIFE, WE LEARN LESSONS FOR OUR OWN LIVES.

THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WE LOVE CAN BE SEEN AS A TEACHING TOOL. A BOOK THAT WE CARRY IN OUR HEARTS WITH US BEYOND THIS SAD DAY OF MOURNING, BEYOND ROSH HASHANAH AND BEYOND YOM KIPPUR.

NATHAN'S BOOK OR REMEMBRANCE WILL GUIDE THOSE WHO LOVED HIM AND CARED FOR HIM ALL THEIR LIVES. HIS WAS THE LIFE OF A TEACHER; AND IN THE TABLE OF CONTENT OF HIS BOOK WE WILL FIND MANY VALUABLE LESSONS .

WE ARE APPROACHING ROSH HASHANAH, WE ARE ALSO ENTERING INTO THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR. SO LET US ALLOW NATHAN, THE TEACHER, TO GIVE US SOME READING ASSIGNMENTS IN HIS BOOK OF LIFE.

OUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT WILL BE TO READ THE CHAPTER CALLED FAMILY. NATHAN WAS A CARING HUSBAND TO HIS BELOVED MILDRED. A GIVING FATHER TO DAVID AND ESTHER AND A DOTING GRANDFATHER TO HIS 4 GRANDCHILDREN.

DAVID REMEMBERS HIS DAD AS A WARM GENEROUS, UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTIVE MAN WHO TOOK AN INTEREST IN HIS CHILDREN. DAVID REMEMBERS, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT WHEN HE JOINED THE BOY SCOUTS, HIS DAD BECAME A CUB MASTER, PERHAPS THE FIRST STEP OF A LIFETIME OF BEING A LEADER OF CHILDREN.

ESTHER RECALLS THAT DAD WAS A MR. MOM BEFORE HIS TIME. HE WAS A MAN WHO ALWAYS HAD TIME FOR HIS CHILDREN. BOTH DAVID AND ESTHER FONDLY RECALL THEIR TIME AT THE CABIN AT THE LAKE: FISHING, GOING ON PICNICS, TELLING GHOST STORIES, BONDING AS A FAMILY.

MILDRED SPEAKS OF NATHAN AS A LOVING, CARING HUSBAND. HE WAS A MAN OF SURPRISES, A ROMANTIC. HE WOULD ALWAYS BRING HER SPECIAL GIFTS OR FLOWERS. "ONLY A FEW WEEKS AGO, WE WENT TO ISRAEL", SHE RECALLED. "IN ISRAEL, WE PARTICIPATED IN FAMILY ** *IN 2* , IN DONNA'S BAT MITZVAH. BUT NATHAN WAS TRYING TO CONVINCING MILDRED TO GO AGAIN THIS

SUMMER. THOSE WEEKS IN ISRAEL WERE A VERY SPECIAL TIME FOR THE FAMILY. IT WAS THIS SUMMER, NATHAN WAS A PICTURE OF HEALTH, ENJOYING HAVING HIS 4 GRAND-CHILDREN ALL IN ONE PLACE. IT WAS AS IF HE WAS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO THE FAMILY THAT MEANT SO MUCH TO HIM. IT WAS AS IF HE WAS GIVEN A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ^{close} ~~CHOOSE~~ THAT CHAPTER.

HAVE WE COMPLETED OUR HOMEWORK? DONE OUR ASSIGNMENT? WELL WE CAN'T REST HERE. TEACHER NATHAN HAS A NEW CHAPTER FOR US TO READ. A CHAPTER ABOUT FRIENDSHIP AND CARING AND ^{commitment} COMMITMENT.

THE HOUSE OF NATHAN AND MILDRED WAS ALWAYS OPEN. THEY WERE A COUPLE WHO ALWAYS WERE THERE TO SHARE THEIR HAPPINESS. ESTHER RECALLS THAT WHEN SHE LEFT HOME, SHE WAS REPLACED BY SANDY # ^{flatter} ~~flatter~~ ^(now she's married), WHO RESIDED IN THEIR HOME FOR 3 YEARS WHILE SHE ATTENDED UNIVERSITY, ^{she} ~~WITH~~ ^{became a member of the family} ~~NATHAN AND AUNT MILDRED.~~ ^{, Esther recalls,} DAD LOVED THAT ~~HE~~ HE LOVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE. AND LATER IT WAS DAVID AND SANDY'S KIDS THAT WERE ALWAYS WELCOMED INTO THEIR HOME.

THE FAMILY RECALLS HIS DEVOTION TO THE SPACE SCIENCE CENTER AFTER HE RETIRED. DAVID TELLS THE STORY THAT SHORTLY AFTER ^{his} ~~HE~~ RETIREMENT HE TOOK HIS GRANDCHILDREN TO THE MUSEUM AND PICKED UP A PAMPHLET THAT CALLED FOR RETIRED TEACHERS TO VOLUNTEER. FROM THAT INNOCENT PAMPHLET, A NEW LIFE BEGAN. NATHAN FOUND A NEW WAY TO DEDICATE HIS LIFE TO OTHERS. HE BECAME A STAR VOLUNTEER, PUTTING IN MANY HOURS INTO HIS NEW PROJECT.

NATHAN WAS AN OUTGOING MAN, AS GOOD A FRIEND AS A PERSON COULD WANT. HE WAS ALWAYS WILLING TO HELP. ALWAYS READY TO LEND A HAND.

THE NEXT ASSIGNMENT IS A VERY IMPORTANT ONE, ESPECIALLY APPROPRIATE DURING THIS SEASON OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE HIGH HOLIDAYS. ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR ARE BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT HUMAN BEINGS CAN GROW, THAT WE ARE NOT STUCK TO A TREADMILL, DOOMED TO REPEAT OUR MISTAKES, ROSH HASHANAH TEACHES US THAT WE CAN CHANGE OUR LIVES FOR THE BETTER, THAT WE HAVE THE CAPACITY TO MATTER TO OUR FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS, IF WE HAVE THE COURAGE TO UNDERGO TRANSFORMATION.

Nathan was a man who had the courage to grow

NATHAN WAS A MAN OF COURAGE, HE WAS A MAN UNFULFILLED ~~IN~~ BUSINESS DURING THE FIRST 20 YEARS OF ADULT LIFE. IN THE 60'S THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS. THE GOVERNMENT OFFERED A 6 WEEK COURSE THAT CULMINATED WITH AN APTITUDE TEST FOR THE PROFESSION.

HOW MANY OF US HAVE THE COURAGE IN THEIR MID 40's TO LEAVE THE SAFETY OF A COMFORTABLE JOB AND START ANEW. HOW MANY OF US HAVE THE CAPACITY FOR CHANGE ^{to} ~~SO THAT WE CAN~~ DO SOMETHING THAT REALLY MATTERS. MILDRED BECAME THE PRIMARY BREAD-WINNER AS NATHAN TOOK 3 YEARS OFF TO ATTEND UNIVERSITY AND EARN HIS TEACHING CREDENTIALS. IT WAS A CHOICE HE NEVER REGRETTED. HE LOVED TEACHING AND HIS KIDS LOVED HIM.

LATER, PEOPLE WOULD STOP HIM IN THE STREET WITH RECOLLECTIONS OF HIM AS THEIR FAVOURITE TEACHER. THE WAITER WHO SAID WHILE SERVING HIS TABLE, "YOU WERE A GOOD TEACHER, I WAS A BAD STUDENT." THE POLICEMAN WHO STOPPED HIS SEARCH WHEN HE RECOGNIZED HIS TEACHER. THE LETTERS OF GRATITUDE FROM STUDENTS, ^{were} WE ALL SOURCES OF PRIDE AND AFFIRMATION THAT HE MADE THE RIGHT # choice.

WE CANNOT ON THIS DAY READ THE DETAILS OF EVERY CHAPTER IN NATHAN'S LIFE. THERE IS A CHAPTER OF COURAGE AND # ^{patriotism} OF A MAN WHO WAS REJECTED BY THE CANADIAN ARMY AND HAD THE COURAGE TO JOIN THE AMERICAN SERVICE DURING WORLD WAR II.

THE CHAPTER OF A DEVOTED SON WHO TOOK CARE OF HIS MOTHER DURING HER OLD AGE AND JOINED HER ALMOST EXACTLY ONE YEAR AFTER SHE DIED.

ALL THOSE CHAPTERS REMAIN FOR THE FAMILY TO READ AND REMEMBER DURING YIZKOR ON YOM KIPPUR, ^d DURING THEIR WHOLE LIVES.

WE ^{began} ~~BEGIN~~ BY REFERRING TO TWO BOOKS SPOKEN OF DURING THE HOLY DAYS THAT ARE ABOUT TO ^{commence} ~~BEGIN~~. THE BOOK OF LIFE AND THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE.

NATHAN'S BOOK OF LIFE IS CLOSED, BUT THOSE WHO KNEW HIM AND LOVED HIM, HIS BELOVED WIFE AND HIS CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN. ; THOSE WHO WERE TOUCHED BY HIS LIFE: HIS FRIENDS, HIS STUDENTS, HIS FELLOW VOLUNTEERS AT THE SCIENCE CENTER, YOUR BOOKS OF LIFE ARE STILL OPEN. YOU ARE STILL WRITING CHAPTERS. YOUR INK IS NOT YET DRY ON THE PAGE.

AS YOU LIVE YOUR LIVES, AS YOU EXPERIENCE YOUR JOYS AND SORROW,
DURING MOMENTS OF EXULTATION AND TRIUMPH, DURING ^{Times} LIVES OF PAIN, OPEN
NATHAN'S BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE. HE WAS A TEACHER AND HE CAN TEACH YOU
TO GO THROUGH LIFE WITH DIGNITY, WITH LOVE AND TO LIVE A LIFE THAT REALLY
MATTERS.