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Funeral tribute to Hilda Krohngold, 1950.

EULOGY TO HILDA KROHNGOLD

By Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

October 29, 1950

Sorrows humanize our race,
Tears are the showers that fertilize this world,
And memory of things precious keepeth warm the heart
That once did hold them.

They are poor that have lost nothing;
They are poorer far who, losing, have forgotten;
They most poor of all who lose
And wish they might forget.

For life is one, and in its warp and woof
There runs a thread of gold
That glitters fair, and sometimes in the pattern
Shows more sweet where there are somber colors.

It is true that we have wept,
But oh, this thread of gold -
We would not have it tarnish.

Let us turn oft and look back upon the wondrous web
And when it shineth sometimes,
We shall know that memory is possession.

Our Kind Father in Heaven, at this hour of great sorrow, we come before Thy throne of mercy, asking for Thy light to guide us through the night, and for Thy strength to sustain us in this hour of tribulation. May it be given, Heavenly Father, unto all those who have loved and lost, to realize that death, when it comes, is not the end, that Thy children, who are light of Thy light and sparks of Thine eternal fire, never die. In death as in life, they partake of deathlessness, of immortality. And may it be given unto all of us, Heavenly Father, unto us, Thy children, whose days are numbered and frequently so full of trouble, to realize that that which is really ourselves never dies, ~~and~~ that which is really ourselves, not our poor tired bodies which are fashioned out of the dust and which must, after a brief moment of time, return unto the dust - bodies which are subject to all the accidents of time and of place, to sickness and suffering and pain and death and decay - but that which

is really ourselves, the essence of us, that which makes up our essential being, our real personalities, our hopes and our dreams and our aspirations, the things we aspire to do in the world and the levels we aspire to reach, and all the loyalties and enthusiasms and consecrations of our days, ⁱⁿ May it be borne in upon us, Heavenly Father, that somehow these do not perish when the body perisheth^s, but that they live on long, long after our poor tired bodies have sought and found the peace and quiet of the grave. They live on like the echo of some beautiful ^{song} psalm which lingers in the memory long, long after the voice of the singer has been silenced, or like the fragrance of some flower which abides and which hovers over our days like a sweet benediction, long after the flower itself has died and the petals have withered and crumbled into the dust.

And so may it be with our dear departed friend, Hilda Krohngold, round whose bier we are now gathered to pay ~~her~~ a last memorial tribute. She lived her life graciously and worthily and well. She was a valiant woman, of character. Now character, my friends, is man's inner coherence, his essential unity, that which enables him to act consistently and predictably in all of life's circumstances. "Character is like an acrostic," said Emerson. "You can read it forward, backward, and across, and it always spells the same thing." Thus, character becomes the inner necessity of one's life. In a sense, character is destiny. Character is also one's challenge to fate. Through character one can defy fate. We do that which is morally necessary in spite of fear or suffering or frustration. A man of character or a woman of character is one whose life has a discernable ~~and~~ constant and dependable pattern. Hilda's life had such a pattern - clear, consistent, undeviating. Whatever befell her, whatever circumstances came to her, the essential genius of her life was never submerged.

She was mild in manner and firm in principle and purpose. There was gentleness in her, much gentleness, and kindness of spirit, and considerateness, but also much strength. And in all her life's relationships - as wife, as mother, as friend, as

citizen - that pattern prevailed. She was gentle and strong, and therefore, wise in leadership. ~~And~~^S she manifested that fine quality of leadership in her administration of the affairs of The Temple Women's Association, an organization she loved so much and to which she devoted so much of the splendid gift of heart of mind, and whose membership loved her so much. She served with a rare quality of charm and effectiveness.

I believe that Hilda found great inspiration for her way of life in her faith, a faith which likewise abounds in tenderness and in sturdiness, in justice and in love, a faith which stresses both duty and compassion.

But there was more to Hilda Krohngold. There was in her - and it was clear and manifest to all her friends and to all who came close to her - an undefeated and indefeasible spirit, a spirit that knew how to rise above the pummeling of fortune, and for years, above the painful bars of an imprisoning body. For Hilda had more than her share of the burdens which life places upon the shoulders of men and women. We do not know why. Life's book is oftentimes very hard to understand and hidden are the ways of God. But her valiant spirit surmounted all things. In a real sense she was transfigured by sorrow and by suffering.

My dear friends, there are things to remember in life and things to forget. It is well to forget the pain and anguish of Hilda's ebbing days. It is well to forget her slow, torturous descent into the valley of shadows. The peace of God has now been vouchsafed unto her, and He has given His beloved sleep. But there are things to remember - many things, glorious things and ⁱⁿ⁻spiriting things; the stout courage of her unwavering heart, the resolute will to face all, not to yield to adversity, not to become embittered. Some people distill only bitterness from tribulation. That is most unfortunate. Others know how to distill from trials and tribulations deeper insights and wider sympathies, profounder love and understanding. Hilda Krohngold knew how to do just that.

There are things to remember about her; how she refused to wear abroad the sad livery of her grief and her pain; how she carried on in sweet composure the business of living. These are things to remember, because to think of them is to drink deep of the cup of consolation. It is to find one's self both enheartened and ennobled.

I remember - and who can forget - that unforgettable evening just a few short months ago when her remorseless ailment had already cast its deep and deepening shadows upon her, how she rose from her sick bed and how, in an ambulance, she traveled down to attend the Centennial celebration of her Temple, and how at that occasion she delivered her magnificent presidential message with such vigor, with such alertness of mind, smiling and gracious. What a revelation that was of spiritual valor, ^{and} fortitude. ~~And~~ I am sure there was not a man or woman there that was not moved and uplifted by what they ^{witnessed and experienced} ~~saw~~. I am sure there was not one there who would wish to forget that unforgettable occasion.

We have much to remember. You have much to remember, Bert and Jimmy, and those closest to ^{Hilda} ~~her~~. There is a proud legacy in all this. There is strength here for your onward way in life. And your own beautiful and sustaining devotion, Bert, to Hilda through the days and the months that try men's souls - that, too, will be remembered by those who loved you both. Both of you knew how to walk together, always the same, in darkness and in light.

Now, my dear friends, such a spirit as that of Hilda Krohngold is not quenched in cold mortality. It abides because it is treasured, because people want it to abide. It abides as a lasting benediction. ~~And that~~ ^{for you} is what our sages meant when they said: "Unto the righteous there is no death." The memory of the good and the noble and the righteous is for an everlasting blessing. Amen.

1) At this hour - we come -

May it be given - not end - thy
children - light - never die -

That which is really ourselves -
- echo - fragrance -

2) So may it be it - Hilda Kristjansdottir

She lived her life -

A valiant woman, character -

Ch. is a ~~person's~~ ^{man's} inner coherence

this essential unity.

that which enables him to act
consistently - predictably

= Ch. is like an acrostic. You
can read it forward, backward and
across and it always spells the
same things.

∴ Ch. becomes the inner necessity
of one's life - Destiny.

His challenges also to Fate.

Defies fate! will do the morally

necessary things in spite of pain or
suffering or other minor discomforts.
= He is of a discernible & constant
and defensible Pattern

3. Hilda Kringsold's life was 1 such
a pattern - clear, consistent
underlying -

Whatever befall her - the essential
genius - was never submerged -

She was mild in manner and firm
in principle & purpose.

There was gentleness in her but
also strength - ~~and~~ ^{which were revealed} in all of
her life's relationships - wife -
mother - friend - and citizen

She was gentle and strong and -
wise in leadership - T.W.A.

charm & effectiveness - (loved)

4). She found inspiration for her way ⁽³⁾
of life in her Faith - likewise full
of Tenderness and Sturdiness, of
Justice and Love - of Duty & Compassion

5). There was more! An undefeated
and indefeasible Spirit - that knew
how to rise above the promulgating
of fortune - & the painful ^{in times} faces of an
imprisoning body

(a) For Hilda had more than her
share of the burdens which life places
upon the shoulders of men

(b) 'Life's book is hard to under-
stand and hidden are the ways of
God.

(c) But her valiant spirit
surmounted them all.

(c) In a real sense she was
transfigured by sorrow & suffering

6) There are things to remember and (4) things to forget.

Forget - the pain & anguish of her ebbing days. - the slow, tortuous descent into the Valley of the Shadow. The Race, God has now been vouch-

safed when

He gives His beloved sleep

Remember - the stout courage of her unweary heart -

- the resolute will - to free all -

- not to yield to adversity

- not to become embittered -

- Sorrow distill only bitterness from tribulation - Others - lost - unlight

- not to wear abroad the sad lining of her grief -

- how she carried on in sweet even power the business of prayer

7/ These are things to remember - (5)
To think of them is to drink cups
of consolation - exalted & sober food.

8/ I remember - who can forget - that
Unforgettable Evening - just a few
short months ago - when her remarkable
achievement had already cost - deep shadows
- how she rose - ambulance -
Centennial - delivered her
magnificent Pres. message -
with such vigor & alertness of mind -
smiling & serene -

What a Revelation of Sp. Valor and
Faith!

Let a man or woman then - move
and uplifted!

We have much to remember
9/ I have much to remember -
(Bert.) - there is a proud legacy
here for you & your family.
Strength in your onward way -

10/ And your own beautiful and (6)
restaining devotion, But to Hilda
these days & months that they meet
will also be remembered
by those who loved you both

* Both of you knew how to walk
together - always the same - in
darkness and in light.

11). My dear friends! Such a
spirit is not quenched in cold
unbelief.

It abides - as a lasting remembrance

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