

IN MEMORIAM  
JOY ZITA ROCHWARGER BALSAM  
YOCHED V'ZLATA BAT FULYA FEIGE V'YITZCHAK TUVYA



February 2, 1967-May 21, 2004  
22 Shevat 5727-1 Sivan 5764

## Eulogy delivered by Joy's husband, Jerry Balsam, on May 21, 2004 at Fifth Avenue Synagogue, New York City

As we gather on this literally dreadful day — a day we have dreaded — I lack the theological deftness to justify the unbearable. I am shattered with grief. Joy, with an upper-case “J” and a lower-case “j,” came into my life unexpectedly, and all too soon she is gone.

I want to reminisce about the Joy we love and focus, insofar as I can, on the good times. We will do plenty of weeping today, and I'd like us to smile a bit, too.

The first time I called Joy's phone, in October 2002, she screened the call and didn't pick up. Afterward, I later learned, she called her friend Leah Schlager and said: *I just got a call from this weird guy. Do I have to go out with him?* Somehow, Leah talked her into it. My diary shows that we went out for the first time on October 23, 2002, for dinner at one of her favorite restaurants, Estihana. By November 17, we were having dinner at Haikara, together with Leah and Herbie Schlager. Joy was ready to have her friends check me out. When I had to prepare these remarks, I enjoyed looking back at the diary I kept, a history of how Joy and I fell in love. I can remember the elation I felt as I realized that I had found my soulmate. Joy and I became engaged on our 25<sup>th</sup> date, on December 19, the birthday of her father. On March 13, 2003, a bit less than five months after we met, we were married in Jerusalem. One of the small consolations available on a day like this is the memory of our love, as it grew and matured. The physical presence of my beloved can be taken away; the love itself endures forever, in me, and in the people who knew Joy and me. Feeling and expressing that love made me a better person, and for that I am grateful.

We were as happy as could be during the early period of our marriage. We traveled to Israel, Maui, Newport, Cape Cod, and the San Francisco Bay Area. As we got to know each other better, our love only deepened. Just before Sukkot in the fall of 2003, when we had been married for not quite seven months, we found out that Joy was suffering from a highly fatal form of cancer, metastatic melanoma. Notwithstanding the terrible news, we continued to have good times, especially after Joy initially had such a good response to treatment — a response that surprised her doctors but not Joy. We celebrated the upswing by returning to Hawaii, this time the island of Kauai, and then to Israel for our anniversary. Shortly after those two trips, on Pesach of 2004, the news turned bleak again. We learned that the cancer had returned in an even more ominous form. Even after that, Joy seized as much life as she could during the time that was left to her. Until the last week, when the disease tightened its grip and overcame even Joy's indomitable will, her refrain was *I'm not going anywhere* or *You'll see, we'll have a baby together*.

That she would seize life was typical of the woman I loved, who relished all the blessings around her. Joy was a great friend to so many people all around the world. She never went far without her cell phone, and her friends were always calling or sending an e-mail. Perhaps the most important component of marriage is friendship, and Joy made an ideal friend and companion.

She had an oversized capacity for love, of which I was the primary beneficiary. From the day we were married, her main priority was to make me happy, and in that she succeeded in spades. We could talk for hours. We laughed together all the time. Joy loved the silly moments we shared. For example, in an update of the game “Punch Buggy,” whenever she spotted a PT Cruiser on the road before I did, she was allowed to punch me. Those of you who have seen the digital photos we took on various vacations and other occasions will remember her impish smile and the poses she took for the camera. Though Joy put in a full day at work, and then some, she felt obligated to cook dinner for me night after night. She worried about me constantly. When we first learned she was ill, she begged our friends Lauren and Ezra Merkin, who stood by us in exemplary fashion throughout the ordeal, to take care of me if she were not to survive. It was and is heart-breaking — and, yet, utterly characteristic — that she worried more about me than herself.

Joy was highly intelligent, not only as measured in secular academic achievement but in her curiosity about many topics, her enjoyment of a good novel, and especially her devotion to the study and teaching of Torah. She stayed in touch with her students at Midreshet Moriah and savored their successes.

She was dedicated to the betterment of the world. Her devotion spread from those closest to home, as evidenced by her great concern for me, to her parents and siblings and their families, to the Jewish community at large. She certainly made me a better person. Joy developed an extraordinarily loving relationship with my parents and sisters, thereby bringing me closer to my own family. She was very close to her own parents and her five brothers and sisters and their families. In Joy’s world, you would drop whatever you were doing to help family, and she did so all the time. I need not tell you at length how much Joy did for the Jewish community of Poland, or how dedicated she was to the State of Israel — where she lived for 12 years and to which we had planned to return — and its people. Her relationship with the State of Israel can be captured in one fact: wherever she was, she kept her watch set to Israel time.

Joy was a tiny girl, barely 5 feet tall, and fanatical about keeping her weight down. But her spirit was anything but small. You could never lose Joy in the shuffle, because her presence was always known. She was a bundle of energy, certainly before she took ill and even afterward. She loved to go for long power walks and tried to drag me along; she loved to swim. We did share one athletic passion, which was tennis. Joy would wear a blue skirt that covered her knees, handed down by her friend Zehava Witkin, a T-shirt, and a backward baseball cap. She’d stand at the baseline and swing away, hitting everything hard and flat, with only one hand on the backhand. We spent many a happy hour swatting tennis balls at each other.

When you heard Joy’s voice, there was no mistaking who was talking. I can hear some of her favorite expressions now. When she didn’t like something, it was *horrible* — *horri-BULL*. When she found something frustrating, she had her sing-song *oy oy oy*. For something amazing, she would exclaim *Oh . . . my . . . gosh*. She loved to tease me affectionately, saying: *You’re such a nerd*. Of course, she was right. How many times did I hear her say *I’m not worried* or *It’s not a problem*? So many, and not enough. And the best thing I ever heard from Joy, and was fortunate enough to hear repeatedly, was a sincere *I love you*.

It is customary, not to say trite, to note of those who succumb to cancer that they battled the disease courageously. And still I must say this of Joy, who fought with everything she had, with the caring assistance of her compassionate doctors and nurses. They, like everyone she met, became her friends, and they rooted for her as we all did. Joy nearly defied the odds and escaped with her life, till the disease returned and had the final say. Still, she did not fall into self-pity. Her focus was on doing everything she could to live and to avoid letting me down, if you can believe that.

Joy would not have been the person she was without the love, guidance, and support of her family: her parents and her siblings, Cheryl and Yechiel, Michelle and Laurence, Geoff and Mimi, Cindy and Yehoshua, and Jonathan and Mandy. The Rochwargers are an extraordinarily close family, and they accepted me into their midst graciously and happily. They also stood by us during Joy's illness with a level of concern and self-sacrifice that no one should ever have to display. Whenever I thanked them for their super-human efforts, they didn't even understand what they had done that was so special. As a natural outgrowth of her relationship with her siblings, Joy was a superb aunt. She loved her many nieces and nephews, and they loved her. That she was so good with them was an indication of how well suited she would have been to care for children of her own, which she so wanted to do.

I said at the outset that I was not equipped, either by professional training or disposition, to deal with the theological implications of this awful day. On the Shabbat after Joy and I found out that the cancer had returned and spread to her brain, we read the Torah portion concerning the deaths of Nadav and Avihu. Faced with the tragedy of his sons dying all too young, Aharon was silent. Silence may be all we have. I can say this much, however. If the divine decree, for reasons that we will never understand, was to take Joy from us so soon, then it was my privilege — a bitter privilege, but a privilege all the same — to provide her with aid and comfort in her final days. If I brought happiness into her life before and after her diagnosis, I find this, too, is a consolation, small though it may be in the face of such tragedy.

Joy, if I ever failed to measure up to the standard of the husband you deserved, if I ever hurt or insulted you, I ask your forgiveness now. Go in peace, my sweet angel.

## Eulogy delivered by Joy's sister Michelle Berkowitz on the evening of May 23, 2004 at Eretz Hachaim Cemetery, Beit Shemesh

Strong and smart, deeply sensitive and playful what a powerful combination. These are the qualities I loved most about her. From the earliest times in our lives I remember us always running. In the beginning, most of the time we spent running away from each other. And when we figured it out, that together, we made a much stronger team, we ran towards each other. There we stayed arm in arm, head to head, spirit and soul.

When we were young in school most of the students admired her and kept at a safe distance from her. Even most of her teachers were afraid of her. When they figured out that she was smarter than them, they would suspend her from school from sheer embarrassment that she could run logical arguments around them.

We were the first two girls on the YIQV baseball team. She quickly was accepted as pitcher and a "sure hitter" and quietly explained to me that 88 was not an acceptable number to put on my uniform. Later my father took much pride in teaching her other sports and with his help she quickly mastered. Riding her bike head first in the one way alley in the back of our Queens house, a starting point guard on the Central basket ball team, and an award winning tennis player which later in life she learned was another hobby she and Jerry shared.

Joy and I often remarked that you, mommy and daddy, had done something right to have 6 kids who don't drink, do drugs, or have left the fold. You laid the foundation for Joy to accomplish all she did and Joy would want you to look around and take some comfort in the fact of how many people love and respect her.

She was orderly and clean, read books quicker than a wink, and spent many hours alone in our room. She liked to go to sleep early and I liked to go to sleep late. She liked to read herself to sleep and I liked to chat with my friends. She liked total darkness and I wanted the hall light on. She liked to hang her clothes up neatly in the closet and I liked to throw my stuff on the floor. We would fight all the time and my mother would try to quiet us down as my mother shook her head and said, "One day you will look back on this and laugh because you will be the best of friends."

Things quickly changed between us as she went off to Israel and something new and beautiful began to grow inside her. She learned to direct all of her energy and spirit into her observing Judaism and began her search of self that lasted until her very last minutes. She searched for the truth in her family, in her friends, in her teachers, in her studies, and most of all in God. She befriended giants in Torah like Nechama Lebowitz, Rabbi Aberman, Dr. Leiman, Aviva Zornberg, Dr. David Applebaum and Dr. Bryna Levy who were quick to catch on to her fire and became close confidants with them as well as sharing with them a Chaveirah-talmidah relationship. In the list of heebie geebies that Joy and I collected, stands her relationship with David T'zal who have been connected at the hip both in life and death. She requested from him to be Jerry's and her mesader kedushin because of their closeness and his unique understanding of herself. Joy also firmly be-

lieved that David was her Maleatz Yosher, and if he had any say in her short termed suffering than we owe him even more.

While many students can boast of their sharing Nechama Leibowitz's learning table and files few can also tell the stories of spending every Friday morning with her for years discussing much mundane things like, what it is like to eat this triangle food everyone calls pizza and Nechama Leibowitz asked Joy to accompany her to the pizza store to taste it for the first time. "Nechama", as Joy fondly referred to her, would beg Joy to take her to her to corner Lotto tachana to see if she would get lucky, before returning home from their pre-Shabbat shopping spree.

Joy had a way of attracting people. It was not a mystery on how she did it. Her giggle and inviting smile lit you up and warmed you into a safe place for you to enjoy and share with her. She treated my children as though they were her children and she had a way of making them and all of her nieces and nephews feel special. Amitai would come in laughing and excited to be swept up into Joy's great big bear hug. She always knew how to talk to Ariella and believed that Ariella looked and behaved just like her. Ayelet was someone to tease and laugh with and Joy enjoyed hearing her 4 year old logic and questions. Yair will miss having such a strong personality in his life. They already miss her and with God's help Laurence and I will be strong enough to help them through this loss.

She took her teaching very seriously. She always said she had enough experience to know what *not* to do. This also, by the way, was the basis for her material she used when she starred as Mrs. Hannigin in the camp, end of the year play. She regarded each student as her child and cared for them and spoke with them in a way most of them had not experienced before her. She decorated her office reflecting her style – A collection of Sifrei Kodesh and books, some of them being The Rambam and the Ramban, Rav Hirsh, and her latest passion the *Pachad Yitzchak*, books and novels of interest and self-help materials. She read them all and referred to them accordingly. At a closer look, one could see the delight she took in caring for her tropical fish, her gadgets and toys of all shapes, colors, and sizes and lent them to my kids for a time. I wonder if her students ever figured out that they were around for her enjoyment as well as theirs? Her lesson plans were always built in a way to entice the student to think about the thoughtful material that was placed before them. She was interested in what they had to say and she was pleased when someone came up with a novel idea or an honest critic. She was about being "real." That is the way she lived her life and expected from others to relate to her in the same way. She played hard and studied Torah seriously, and at a very young age it became apparent that she was a talmidah chachama in her own right. She figured every minute of every day was precious and wouldn't waste her time with shtuyot. It was at this time when she taught at Midreshet Moriah that she made some of her closest and dearest friends like Ruthie, Achie, and the Gershinsky clan and Vicki and Rabbi Burglass. Joy constantly spent time with you and needed you in her life even after she moved to N.Y. You constantly gave her support and the chance to fight for her life. We consider you as part of our family and words can not express how much we know Joy loved you and you loved her.

As Joy and I grew up, we learned to laugh at our serious attitudes and about how we saw life and the people in it. We would analyze our relationships and our Judaism till there was nothing left to say and then come back to it an hour later with a new thought or

an old one that needed to be said again. For example, Joy would be leaning into my ear right now and giggly tell me that 75% of the men here, she dated. Then, she would look warmly at Jerry and smile and say, “You know Michelle, I thank God I found him. Where would I be today with out him?”

She was a woman with optimism, hope, and great dreams in her heart. When she was single, she would get quickly annoyed at a comment made to her or about her about her being too choosy and too pickey. She knew she was waiting for the “right one” and when she realized that Jerry was the one, she quickly got used to the idea and planned her life accordingly. Jerry, you were able to bring her Joy in a way that all of her family, friends, and life couldn’t. She admired you and your work, and your need for independence because she shared these values as well. She loved you the way you came to her and felt peaceful that you did not want to change her. She knew you admired her and respected her dedication to Avi Chai, Arthur, Mem, Ezra and Laura and her relationship with the people in the Poland community. She especially loved that you did not like her wearing make-up because you only wanted to see the *real her*. Honestly Jerry, in the beginning I was jealous of the loved you shared and learned to move over and fill my place. I have grown to accept and admire the way she loved you and watch you give her your love and take care of her before and during her illness. Even now you continue to ensure respect and devotion towards her.

During her illness she only wanted you to be with her and felt she could handle anything, even the challenge to live, when you were by her side. She believed that she would live and look back at this period as one of the many challenges she faced in her short but full lifetime. Her death, no matter how shocking to all of us, was, probably the most shocking to her and what I would pay to be the fly on the cloud listening to her argue with God on why He thought that this was her time. She had everyone believing that she would beat it. Even some of her doctors.

Joy and I would talk about food, what to eat and what not to eat and how much to walk if we ate too much. We ate tasty delight till we would throw up, sushi and cold cut wraps. We ate fat free muffins and slipped in some chocolate when no one looked. We walked to Aroma and back and even when she was sick we walked to her office together. She wanted to walk because she was in the business of living life to its fullest and enjoying being out there with the people. She had a taste for fine wine, classical music, clothing, China, furniture and literature. Her biggest passion, besides loving Jerry was her desire to live in Israel. She was the first of the Rochwarger clan to make the move at an early age and set the path for the rest of us. She was known around Yerushalayim as “the walker” and enjoyed seeing the city and its inhabitants evolve and change over the 12 years she lived here. When she moved to New York, she only did so by first making sure that we all understood it was for a brief moment in time because her heart was here and for the Jews who were brave enough to live here. When she walked through Central Park she noticed the leaves turning colors and the cherry blossoms blossoming. She made it a point to tell me these little things and I loved her for it.

Many people know Joy from the “big” things she did. Her building up the Jewish community leftover after the war in Poland when most people would like to believe that there were no Jews left. Many students remember her fondly for her teaching in Shevach, Midreshet Moriah, and Matan. For working in NCSY and JOLT, summer camps and the

like where she affected and infected those around her with her zest and zeal. But the biggest things she accomplished were her most private and devoted work she did on herself and on her relationships with her family members and God. And even though we learned many things together both formally and informally this is the greatest lesson of all she taught me. Live life like it counts. Don't say things that you don't mean but if you do go back and say you're sorry. Say something different and try not to look back and say that you regret.... She was my sister, a mentor, my friend, my confidant, my biggest and most loyal supporter. I was her sister, her friend, her student, and her biggest admirer.

And even though I do not know how I will get through the years ahead without her, I try to believe that she will be right beside me, somehow, guiding me like she always did gently and firmly at the same time. Yehi Zichra Baruch.

Eulogy delivered by Joy's nephew Eli Corn on the evening of  
May 23, 2004 at Eretz Hachaim Cemetery, Beit Shemesh

I would like to tell you a little bit about my Aunt Joy.

For as long as I can remember, from the time I was a young child, I was very lucky to have an aunt as special as my Aunt Joy.

Joy was always so busy – for many years she was a teacher of girls who came to study in Israel for a year. I was very proud that she was helping so many people to learn Torah and to love Eretz Yisrael. She also was in charge of a program teaching Jews in Poland about Judaism and was always flying to Poland to be with them. But even though she was so busy, she always made time for her nieces and nephews. She would often come to visit us for a Shabbat and would always give special attention to each of us, talking to us about things that we were doing, bringing us special and creative presents. We knew Joy was very important in her school because our phone would start ringing on Friday afternoons with people looking for Joy even before she would arrive for Shabbat. Even when Joy was too busy to come and spend Shabbat with us, she would find time during the week to travel and visit us in Beit Shemesh even just for a few hours.

When Joy temporarily moved back to New York, we were so sad to see her go. Even so, she came to visit us many times each year. And between visits, Joy and I used to chat together all the time on the computer, ~~with her~~

We were so happy when she told us that she met a nice man named Jerry who she loved and wanted to marry. The next time Joy came, we had a new uncle to get to know and love. And we were also excited because she told us that in a few years, she and Jerry would move back to Israel.

Though I will miss her very much, I will always remember the good times we had together, and because she will be here in Beit Shemesh, I will be able to visit her whenever I want.

## Eulogy delivered by Joy's father, Irwin Rochwarger, on the evening of May 23, 2004 at Eretz Hachaim Cemetery, Beit Shemesh

Joy, with her keen intelligence and quick wit could explain the most difficult thing in simple terms, and so in trying to remember some of these things, I thought I would start with something that was simply put, but right to the point. We read in *אשת חיל* – I only picked out four *פמוקים* – which relate directly to her personality

*עוז והדר לבושה ותשחק ליום אחרון* – strength and majesty are her raiment, she joyfully awaits the very last day.

*פיה פתחה בחכמה ותורת חסד על לשונה* – she opens her mouth with wisdom, and a lesson of kindness is on her tongue.

Cheryl, Michelle — I tried to put together some of the highlights of the past, and I did this without your consultation, so please forgive me if I may have mixed up one or two of the facts. At nine and ten years of age she was considered a tomboy, she only wanted to play ball with boys. She went to great strides, as one of her big dreams at that time was to play for the Young Israel Queen's Valley Boys' Baseball team, without the Rabbi knowing. Of course, all the boys wanted her on their side, because she always won. Senior year at Central she went to Michlala, where her love for Israel, and more important, a love for learning in Eretz Yisrael, flourished.

During her early age, at about this time she said, "Daddy take me out to the tennis court." At that time I was a mediocre player, and we started to volley. We never played a full game, we volleyed for hours. And I remember yelling, "Higher Joy higher Joy. Harder Joy, hit harder Joy, you're never going to win a game if you don't hit hard." And she hit hard, I could not return them after a short time.

At Barnard she was accepted in the early admissions program, where her private learning intensified and soon she developed into what we call a 'woman's libber'. But what must be remembered, she stressed women's rights in Jewish orthodoxy, she never wavered from halacha. She worked on the Barnard's facility's office, until she secured a whole floor in the Barnard dorm for kosher girls, for Jewish girls. She pushed for strict kashrus in Barnard's cafeteria, and on many occasions she invited me to have lunch with her and she pointed out the various things that she did.

In Barnard, matching with her studies, she entered the tennis intramurals and she was a very good player. And it came the final intramural games, she insisted on wearing her skirt. They said, "We don't know. All girls wear shorts." Joy said, "If I'm to play I'll wear a skirt." She came in number two. In Barnard, and only maybe in the last fifteen, twenty years I realized that Joy tried to do things to make her father happy. So she started out as an engineering student. At the end of six months she came to her father and she said, "Dad, there's too much work going on here, it's not so meaningful." I said, "Okay, Joy, what would you like to pick?" She said, "Math." I said, "Okay, math is a difficult subject." She said, "No matter." I remember when she took a course in linear set algebra. This is a theory that is very conceptual. You don't see many numerals in it. It's all a,b,c,x,y,z. And Joy mastered that equally. She came to me numerous times, I wouldn't even know where to begin. At the end of that year she said, math is not for me. She kept sticking to science subjects. And she said, "I think I'll try computer science, and maybe that's where she got her foundation, because in her last years she was easily sending out a hundred emails a day, streams and streams

of emails all over the world. After computer science she said, “Dad, it’s not for me.” And she calmly told me she was interested in הינוך and she wanted to learn.

But the best that Columbia, Barnard could offer, she took a comparative religion course and of course she mastered that as well. But הינוך was her love and she came to me at the start of her third year and said she would like to go back to Michlala to increase her knowledge in Hebrew subject matter. And so she went back to Michlala and spent her third year in Michala. When she returned to Barnard they did not consider Michlala an accepted thing, which is not true today, and they only gave her credit for half a year which meant she had to go for another six months to Columbia and Barnard. At the end of her college career she organised groups fighting for Soviet Jewry. She and her sisters, Michelle and Cheryl, spent many months in the Soviet Union, travelling all over Russia. The girls managed to arrange it, whenever they were there at the same time, to be in the same city for שבת, so they could be together.

People have already talked about her devotion to Polish Jewry, and how she felt for those נפשות in Poland, who had no identity, and wanted to know if somehow they may have had a slight Jewish identity. And even those that never knew that they had one, they came to her and she put them on the right path. During that time I believe she led, I think it was the OU movement, in the March of the Living. She ran several of those over several years. It got to a point where she was so devoted to Polish Jews that she organised a ‘one man’ in quotation foundation. She named it Atara, after one of Geoffrey’s daughters. Alternatives for Torah Renaissance Abroad. She went out and collected funds. She collected scholars and רבנים in ארץ ישראל and America, and she convinced them to spend a Shabbaton in Poland, teaching. She affected the lives in Poland of psychologists, of artists, doctors, mathematicians, from all walks of life. The shabbaton was filled to capacity. She won the Jerusalem Scholar’s Fellowship, and enjoyed that for two years. Most of that time she taught at Midreshet, and it was during this period that she would bloom as a Torah scholar. It was a funny thing. I would come home at around eight o’clock in the evening. I’d eat dinner, by 9:30 I would maybe open up a gemorah for a half hour or forty-five minutes, until my eyes would close. And Joy would walk around and see me and say, “Daddy what are you looking at?” I would tell her what סוגיה I was reading, and she came back “look at it this way Daddy”. I said, “but Joy how do you know these things?” Joy went to great pains to never let her father know that she studied Talmud, because she thought her father thought that was not the right thing for girls. In תורה, in גיך, in מדרש, I knew she was good, but all of a sudden I saw that there was nothing she did not know. Let me put an end and say this is what I call her resume.

But what about her, what about Joy’s personality. Joy had the most beautiful warm Yiddishe נשמה that I have ever seen. She cared for everybody, especially Jews. She went out of her way to make them comfortable, to explain things to them. Where she found the time I do not know. She loved children, especially her nephews and nieces. She would visit her siblings to see them, but more importantly to play with each and every one. Sitting next to Joy for the last two days she was in a comatose state and yet she lay there in a regal manner. She was stately. Her face was never distorted in any manner. In fact she had a gleam in her face, in her cheeks. The doctors told me it may have been the Decadron that they were giving her for clotting blood. But this was an inner brilliance that shone. She lay there for two days, always straight, always very stately. And all those who saw her could not believe what they had seen. It was a נשמה filled with תורה and מצוות. She believed that whatever she learnt she put into action immediately. There was nothing that kept her down.

When she returned to New York she found Jerry. And after her meal with the Schlagers, Joy brought her mother and father to another restaurant. And when Jerry left the room to go to the men's room, Joy said, "See, how did I do, how did I do?" She did excellently. She had such great love and happiness with Jerry, her luminescence showed even greater than before.

שקר החן והבל היופי אשה יראת ה' היא תתהלל – Grace is false and beauty is vain, a G-d-fearing woman she should be praised.

תנו לה מפרי ידיה ויהללוה בשערים מעשיה – give her but the fruits of her own hand and let her be praised in the gates by her very own deeds.

Joy, your mother and I request מחילה for all the times we did not comprehend what you were trying to tell us.

Hebrew version of eulogy delivered by Joy's nephew Eli  
Corn on the evening of May 23, 2004 at Eretz Hachaim  
Cemetery, Beit Shemesh

הספד מפי אחיך

הייתי רוצה לשתף אתכם בחוויות שלי עם ג'וי.

בארץ ישראל. הייתי מאד גהה שהיא עזרה כל כך הרבה אנשים ללמד תורה ולאהוב את הארץ. ג'וי תמיד היתה עסוקה. במשך הרבה שנים ג'וי היתה המורה של בנות שבאו במשך שנה ללמד תמיד הרגשתי שהיה לי מזל גדול שהיתה לי דודה מיוחדת כל כך כמו ג'וי.

על דברים שאנחנו עושים, ואף פעם לא שכחה להביא את המתנות המיוחדות והיצירתיות שלה. באה הרבה בשבתות ותמיד דאגה לתת מספיק תשומת לב לכל אחד ואחד מאתנו. היא דברה אתנו ולמרות שהיתה כל כך עסוקה, היא תמיד דאגה להקדיש זמן לאחיינים ולאחייניות שלה. היא היתה היא גם נהלה תכנית לאימון יהודים מפולין, וטסה לעתים קרובות לפולין, כדי להיות אתם.

תמיד דאגה למצוא זמן לבקר אותנו באמצע השבוע בבית שמש. גם אם יכלה לבוא רק לכמה שעות. כדי לדבר עתה עוד לפני שהיא היתה מגיעה. אפילו כשג'וי היתה עסוקה מדי כדי לבוא עלינו לשבת שלה, משום שבהרבה שבתות שהיתה צריכה להיות אצלנו, אנשים רבים התחילו להתקשר אילנו, ידענו שג'וי היתה חשובה מאד בבית ספר

היא באה לבקר אותנו פעמים רבות בארץ. ובין ביקור לביקור הייתי מתכתב עתה דרך האינטרנט. כשג'וי עברה לגור בניו יורק באופן זמני היינו עצובים כל כך שהיא עזבה. למרות זאת

התלהבנו עוד יותר כששמענו שהיא וג'רי מתכננים בעוד כמה שנים לעלות חזרה לארץ ולגור כאן. ורצתה להתחתן אתו. בפעם הבאה כשג'וי בא לבקר כבר היה לנו דוד חדש ללמד, להכיר ולאהוב. היינו כל כך שמחים כשהיא ספרה לנו שהיא פגשה איש נחמד שהיא אהבה בשם ג'רי,

לנו ביחד. ובגלל שהיא תהיה כאן כל כך קרוב לבית שמש, אני אוכל לבקר אותה מתי שאני ארצה. ולמרות שאני אתגעגע לג'וי מאד, אני תמיד אזכור את הזמנים הטובים שהיו

יהי זכרה ברוך.

## Eulogy delivered by Rabbi Reuven Aberman on the evening of May 23, 2004 at Eretz Hachaim Cemetery, Beit Shemesh

ויש כאן משפחה יקרה שהגיע מארצות הברית אשתדל להספיד את יוכבד בדרך הנכונה בלשון האנגלית. והיא כתלמידה, למדנו ביחד בעברית, דברנו ביחד בעברית, והשמחה הייתה בעברית. ובכל זאת היות רוצה לדבר בעברית. במפגש שלי עם ג'וי לפני כעשרים שנה, כשהגיע לארץ ישראל, למדנו אני כמורה מתנצל אני שאני אדבר באנגלית. הייתי מאד

In the says as follows: רב יוסף כרו המחבר, שלחן ערוך יורה דעה סימן שדם

– one of the greatest challenges that stands before an individual is to make a proper הספד. The הלכה requires that one weighs every word which he says in his הספד. My relationship with Joy is perhaps best expressed by something which we read in this week's פרשה. The תורה tells us : ואלה שמות בני אהרון : – and the Gemarah tells us in ב"ט עמוד ב – ואלה תולדות אהרון ומשה

אהרון ומשה וסמך לה ואלה שמות בני אהרון לאומר לך אהרון יולד ומשה לימד לפיכך נקרא על שמו. כל המלמד את בן חברו תורה מעלה עליו כאילו ילדו שנאמר ואלה תולדות

No, I cannot compete with her husband, her beloved husband Jerry, the beautiful triangle of the הקב"ה and mother and father, but still חז"ל see the teacher as a kind of a parent, and this is the way the relationship went until I had the specific pleasure of having my student become my colleague together with me at Midreshet Moriah.

We heard some very, very beautiful הספדים, and I have to sum all of this up. How is one to sum up what we want to say.

We are surrounded by counting. Joy passed away on אחד לחדש השלישי באחד לחדש. We begin to count a מחלוקת תנאים between six days or seven days to תורה. This week's פרשה is entirely one of counting because of the ריבונו של עולם's love for the Jewish People, and Joy passed away in the last week of counting, the counting of ספירת העומר. And there is an אבודרהם which he probably received from his teacher, because it is also found in the הערוך הטורים, and, together with my close friend Rabbi Konnofoller, we found that this was actually a statement made by the ר"י הזקן, the great grandson of רש"י, who said that the reason that we count ספירה is as follows. We are harvesting the essence of life, we are harvesting the wheat. Everybody is in the field. Even Boaz, the top man, he himself is out in the field. We know when שבת is because we can count to seven. But there is a מצוה which stands before us, and that is the מצוה of לרגל. We are to go to ירושלים and, say these great ראשונים, that we count the ספירה in order to know when we have to leave the field in order to go to ירושלים. Yes we also counted, we counted and we hoped. Yes, Joy is going to ירושלים – the מעלה של מעלה. Not to the המקדש which has not been built yet, but to the המקדש של מעלה in heaven, where Joy will be together with הוא בריך הוא.

If I were to say in a couple of words who is Joy, I would say that there is a משנה in סוטה which best expresses her life. The one world is גרש – I will explain. All of the קרבנות מנחה were from wheat, the finest kind of flour. The קרבן סוטה of an unfaithful woman, was from barley which is considered an animal food. However, the משנה has

a problem. The משנה says the מנחת העומר, this preparation that begins with פסח to go to שבועות – it is also from barley seeds. Says the משנה –

מנחת העומר אף על פי שהיא באה מן השעורים היא הייתה באה גרש

What did we do with this animal food? We refined it thirteen times. Thirteen activities of making it pure, until we took the animal food and we made fine flour.

This in essence is what we heard from all of the speakers. This is the life of Yocheved. Yocheved's life was dedicated. In Torah we heard about her relationship with Professor Leibowitz. We heard of her relationship in teaching. We heard of her relationship in Atid. We heard of her relationship in Poland. In all of these things the common denominator is גרש refining and refining and refining. This is the secret of her life. And with the short life that she had, this is what she comes to with הקב"ה. נתן. 'ה G-d gave a great diamond to the world, לקח, וה' – we do not comprehend the ways of הקב"ה - He has taken. And then of course we come to the הלכה that says that one has to accept the way of הקב"ה and we say מעתה ועד עולם. יהי שם ה' מבורך. I can only hope that Jerry, her parents, her sisters and her brothers, find the strength necessary to continue in all of the kind of activities that Joy engaged in. And they are all found in that one word גרש.

יש באור החיים הקדוש הדין בביכורים שאומר ככה. על המילים, כי תבואו אל הארץ אשר אני נותן לכם אני רוצה לסיים וכאן המילים בעברית.

You have returned to ארץ ישראל.

מדברים על הביאה לשמים, לארץ, לקדושת השמים. ולפי מה שרכש לעצמו תורה ומצוות ומעשים טובים. איזה ארץ מדברים אליו? ארץ העליונה ששם היא נחלה האמיתית שנוחל כל אחד בישראל לפי מדרגתו. אומר האור החיים

בלע המוות לנצח ומחה ה' אלוקים דמעה מעל כל פנים וחרפת עמו יסיר מעל כל הארץ כי ה' דבר.

## Eulogy delivered by Joy's friend Zev Gershinsky on the evening of May 23, 2004 at Eretz Hachaim Cemetery, Beit Shemesh

Birshut Jerry, birshut Joy's parents, brothers, sisters and the whole family, birshut Midreshet Moriah family, Kahal Kadosh.

Joy entered our family about 11 years ago as a guest, but as time past she became a Bat Bayit. So many times people would ask: "who is she?" and we would all answer: "she's the older sister we never had." Five boys, with one adopted older sister, a sister anyone would wish for himself.

When I tried to understand what was Joy for all of us, and I assume for anybody who knew her, I looked in the Sfarim Joy exposed me to. I remember our first discussion about Torah, when she sat and explained to me Shmonah Prakim. Her knowledge and love of Torah was so obvious when one got to sit and learn with her. Mostly, she opened for me a window to the Pachad Yitzchaq, which she took upon herself the task of translating Rav Hutner's special language of Torah into English, so more and more people all over the world could enjoy and learn it. That was the way Joy did everything. Never keep it to yourself. Always share your Torah with other people. The other Sefer she loved was the Netivot Shalom of the R' Mislomim. That was our wedding gift from her. Looking through the Perush of the Netivot Shalom to Pirkey Avot I came across the Mishna in Perek Sheni:

ר' אלעזר אומר לב טוב. אמר להם רואה אני את דברי אלעזר בן ערך מדבריכם שבכלל דבריו דבריכם".  
ר' אליעזר אומר עין טובה. ר' יהושע אומר חבר טוב. ר' יוסי אומר שכן טוב. ר' שמעון אומר הרואה את הנולד.  
הוא (רבן יוחנן בן זכאי) היה אומר: צאו וראו איזו היא דרך ישרה שידבק בה האדם.

The Netivot Shalom explains each answer of R' Yochanan's talmidim in a way that reflects some of Joy's qualities that we all saw in her. Ain Tova is the ability to be satisfied with Hashem's way of leading us without envying other people. Joy's life was not always easy, but we never heard her say: "I wish I'd had..." always Smecha B'chelka. Always full of Emunah in Hashem that she was blessed with what she had at the time.

Chaver Tov. This was Joy's best character. She was a Chaver Tov to everyone. He explains that every person has to deal in life with different temptations. The way to deal with them is by having a good friend who you could talk to whenever you feel you need to. Whose good advice and wisdom of life you could trust. Someone like Joy.

Shachen Tov. There were times when we were Zoche and Joy was a Shachen Tov, and other times Joy was a Shachen Tov for others, but always close to us, through phone or E-mail. She always gave us a feeling as if she's just around the corner so whenever we need...

Haro'eh Et Hanolad is someone whose actions are carried out after deep thought of their consequences on the closeness to Hashem. I remember different conversations when Joy asked herself "Will this make me closer to Hashem?" It could be different topics such as taking this job or that one, about living here or in the States etc.

The last Tchuna is Lev Tov, which is Taharat HaMidot. Yes, Joy had the wisdom and the skills, but above all she had Taharat HaMidot. Never arrogant, always gentle. There are many more things we have to mention about Joy's qualities, such as her love for Eretz Yisrael, and especially the love for Yerushalaim, the love for her family and her Gadlut

Batorah, but I feel that any attempt to put Joy's character into words and letters will lessen who she really was.

I want to tell you Jerry that you had the Zchut of marrying Joy. You had the Zchut of having her true love and of making her the happiest person in the world. Joy always said: "I don't want to compromise" and she didn't. She felt she got the best. The way she fought the last 7 months is due to you.

Since the last deterioration on Wednesday, when the Gershinsky family kept on updating each other with any new piece of information I felt one thing. I felt proud to have the Zchut of being Joy's second family. Joy, I have to ask Mechila from you if any of us ever showed disrespect to you or offended you in any way. Please go up there to your 2 rebbies, Nechama and David, and urge them to go up to Kisei HaKavod, to ask that we have no more sorrow. May you be a Melitz Yosher for your loving husband, your parents and your entire family, Ima and all of our family, and all Klal Yisrael.