

There are times when a rabbi—let alone a true, lifelong friend—questions his faith, and this is certainly one of them. Given the natural cycle of life, relatively young wives shouldn't have to bury their relatively young husbands, my profound, heartfelt condolences to you, Judy.

To Len's children, Adina and Jeremy; Adam and Sarah and Margalit, along with Len's six beloved, adorable grandchildren, young adult children should not have to say farewell to their father, let alone without the opportunity to express a meaningful, interactive goodbye. I offer you my innermost sympathy.

To all of us, it was reasonable to have expected more years of friendship, understanding and guidance from Rabbi Leonard Rosenthal. After 66 years of life, this family and this gathering has come together much too soon, and much too unnaturally, to say farewell to Len.

I met Len back in 1974, when my family and I had just moved to San Diego from Detroit. Len was my confirmation schoolteacher at Congregation Beth Tefilah. I was a Jr. High School student and he was in college. I knew then as I've known later in life; Len was an exceptionally bright, serious, devoted teacher. First and foremost, he cared that his students learn the material, more than he cared about being loved by them. It was around the time he taught confirmation class, that he and Judy began dating each other.

Judy, you gave your dear husband reason to live. You were his fiercest critic and strongest, most ardent advocate. You and Len were always together; you were

always by his side; always loving. He adored you beyond measure. Len wanted nothing but the best for you. He so wanted you to have nice things and a good life; he wanted you to always treat yourself to whatever you wished.

I can't begin to tell you how much we enjoyed when the four of us spent time together, you and Len, Jill and I. The bond we have and the many life-affirming memories we share will continue undiminished.

Len was foremost among my colleagues who taught me early on in my career that when officiating at a funeral it's important to bury the right person.

Sometimes in death the deceased is portrayed as bigger than he or she ever was in life. So allow me to conclude my brief remarks this dreadfully sad afternoon by adding: Rabbi Leonard Rosenthal was a man of high repute. His integrity was steadfast, his honesty was predictable, his intelligence was stellar, his love for Judaism and Israel were balanced and thought out, his interests were varied, his love for his family and friends was inspiring, his lightness of being was made manifest while playing with his grandchildren and his genuine goodness was his hallmark.

In the ultimate analysis we may never know why Len died so abruptly. Most likely his death was the result of a cardiac incident, but Len's heart was never in question; he had a giving, loving, selfless heart.

I spoke to Len over the phone Wednesday night, never suspecting that hours later he would die. He told me of his day out of the house spent with Judy by his side, buying new glasses after his neuro-ophthalmologist wrote him an updated prescription. He sounded like the Len I've always known and loved.

He told me that having survived a stroke changed him foundationally. He mentioned that his perspective on and his appreciation for life had further intensified the result of having had a severe brush with death.

What Len's years on earth bids all of us to affirm—is that life has meaning; that family and friends and faith and productive pursuits are important parts of that meaning. And that the fragile nature of life should enable us to appreciate it more fully, as Len himself did.

Farewell my dear, dear friend. My life and our world is a little less bright the result of your passing. *Zecher Tzaddik Le-bvracha*—May your hallowed soul be bound up in life eternal, and may you forever rest in peace.