



Gilbert Shoham

July 6, 1930 - April 20, 2012

Loving husband, father, grandfather, and teacher, Rabbi Gilbert Lewis Shoham, 81, of Overland Park, passed away April 20, 2012 at the Mid-America Specialty Hospital in Overland Park. Funeral services will be at 3:00 pm Sunday, April 22 at the Louis Memorial Chapel, 6830 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, MO. Burial will be in Eden Memorial Park, Mission Hills, California. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to Congregation BIAV, 9900 Antioch, Overland Park, Kansas 66212, or the philanthropy of your choice.

Gil graduated from the Talmudical Academy, Baltimore: He earned B.A. in chemistry from Yeshiva College, New York; ordination from Yeshiva University, New York; an M.A. in the philosophy of religion from McGill University, Montreal; a PhD in philosophy from the University of Southern California; and an M.B.A. from Rockhurst College, Kansas City.

Gil was a dynamic and charismatic leader who founded the Shaar Zedek Congregation and the Emek Hebrew Academy in Los Angeles at a time when there were no such Jewish orthodox institutions in the valley. He also served the pulpits of Congregation Beth Hamedrash Hagadol in Montreal, and Kehiliath Israel Synagogue in Kansas City. He served as president of the Rabbinic Council of Southern California, vice president of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, and adjunct professor of philosophy at the University of Missouri at Kansas City and at Rockhurst University in Kansas City. He was a member of the Rabbinic Council of America and the Rabbinic Association of Greater Kansas City.

Gil authored *A Quest for Clarity in Religious Thought: A Case Against Fundamentalism*, Dorrance, 2006, as well as articles in *Jewish Education*, *The Reconstructionist*, *Horizon*, and the *Kansas City Jewish Chronicle*. His father and both grandfathers were rabbis schooled in the yeshiva of Slobotka, Lithuania, for centuries the intellectual capital of Eastern European Jewry. His mentor at Yeshiva University was Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, arguably the greatest Jewish mind of the twentieth century. He understood and appreciated the pragmatic and humane aspects of Jewish law and was dismayed by and never succumbed to the politicized, non-intellectual turn to the right that captured much of

all three Abrahamic religions during the last decades of his life.

Gil felt fortunate to have the love of two good women, Dorothy Cohen Shoham, to whom he was married for forty-seven years, and Sharon Lowenstein Shoham, to whom he was married for ten years. He took great pride in his daughter's, son's and grandson's accomplishments and great joy in his infant foster granddaughter. Physically as well as mentally strong, he survived "terminal" lung cancer in his forties and accepted recent disabilities with humor and grace.

Gil was preceded in death by his parents, Rabbi Jehiel Ber Shoham and Ethel Marcus Shoham, and by his first wife. He is survived by his second wife; his children, Dr. Steven (Susie) Shoham, Los Angeles, and Cynthia Shoham Follick (Joshua), Omaha; four Lowenstein sons: Lon (Cathy), Kansas City; Glenn (Nicole), Houston; John (Amy), Chicago; and Reed (Melanie Hanan), London; three grandchildren in Los Angeles, Daniel Shoham, Deuce Janisch and Stella Tolentino; one foster granddaughter in Omaha; twelve Lowenstein grandchildren; siblings Rabbi Sydney and Jewel Shoham, Montreal; Jake Shoham, Los Angeles; and Faye Mishkin, Brooklyn, NY; his first wife's siblings, Jerry and Jean Cohen Friedman, Los Angeles; Abraham and Hazel Cohen, Montreal; and Esther Cohen and Barry Schwartz, Montreal; and numerous nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews.

Comments



“ Sharon,
So sorry for your loss. My condolences to you and Gil's children.

Sue Stonefield - April 30, 2012 at 03:11 PM



“ Rabbi Gil had a beautiful neshama, and he was one of the smartest people we have ever known. We remember singing at the wedding and sharing meals and great company. Disappointed that we never got to go to Eretz Israel with you, Rabbi. Our condolences and best wishes to you, Sharon.
Andy and BelleAnne

Andy and BelleAnne Curry - April 26, 2012 at 10:10 PM



“ Please accept our sincerest condolences on the passing of your husband. We are truly sorry for your loss.

Sincerely,
Judy and bernie Fremerman

Judith fremerman - April 24, 2012 at 09:08 PM



“ To Rabbi Sydney Shoham;
Sincerest condolences.
Lou Burko

Lou Burko - April 24, 2012 at 07:22 PM



“ I want to express my sincere condolences to Gil's family. Gil's dedication to BIAV and his concern for Modern Orthodoxy in Kansas City was a great asset to our congregation. He will be sorely missed.

Rabbi Morey Schwartz - April 24, 2012 at 03:57 AM



“ My sincere condolences to Sharon, Cindy, Steve and their families.
I love seeing Gill at the JCC. It was always a real pleasure to talk to him.

Larry Haith - April 23, 2012 at 02:53 PM



“ Our condolences to you and all the family.

Linda & Harvey Hyken - April 23, 2012 at 01:18 PM



“ I am shocked and saddened at Gil's passing.
He was a light shining bright that will forever continue to illuminate.
He was an exemplary human being and a pillar of Judaism.
He was my friend.

Reudor Gratch - April 23, 2012 at 11:35 AM



“ Dear Shoham family,
I am sad to receive notice of Gilly's death. I was fond of him and had the opportunity to visit with him when working in KC some years ago, when Dottie was in the hospital. My late mother, Shulamit, loved Gilly very much. Gilly had such a humane approach to life and to Judaism, and an active mind!
I send heartfelt condolences and warm regards to you all,
Yoav Peck, Jerusalem

Yoav Peck - April 23, 2012 at 04:09 AM



“ Our condolences to the entire family. We always enjoyed learning from Gil and will miss his wisdom and insights.

Stan and Carol Edlavitch - April 22, 2012 at 03:24 PM



“ Dear Sharon & Family,

I am so sorry to hear about Gil. You have been in my thoughts and will continue to stay there. May your memories of Gil be a great comfort to you at this very difficult time. Much love, Susan Kivett

susan kivett - April 22, 2012 at 02:36 PM



“ What a privilege to have met this kind, brilliant, truly unique individual. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family during their time of loss.

Lisa Obermeier - April 22, 2012 at 02:29 PM



“ My sympathies to Sharon and Gils entire family. May his memory continue to be a blessing to you. Pam Bercutt

Pamela Bercutt - April 22, 2012 at 10:27 AM



“ I knew Rabbi Shoham from the 1960's when I was involved with Bnei Akiva of Los Angeles. He was one of the kindest men I have ever known. Always willing to help us grow the Bnei Akiva Zionist youth movement in the San Fernando Valley, and doing what he could to assure our success. The photo you chose for his obituary still has that twinkle in his eyes that I so clearly remember.

"Tehei Nafsho Tzrurah B'tzror Hachaim"

SAM WEISSMAN - LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA - April 22, 2012 at 12:47 AM



“ I am saddened to hear of Gils passing. He was a true leader and will be missed in the community. My condolences to his family.

Walter Rosel - April 22, 2012 at 12:05 AM



“ HI, SHARON,

SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT GIL! I AM ALSO SORRY I NEVER GOT TO MEET HIM.HE MUST HAVE BEEN VERY SPECIAL!

RO TABER - April 21, 2012 at 04:14 PM



“ We are sending our deepest condolences to Sharon and all the families. We hope there will be consolation in the many good memories of a fine man.

Sylvia and Marshall LaVine

Sylvia and Marshall LaVine - April 21, 2012 at 02:58 PM



“ This is a loss for all of us. Throughout so many years we learned from Gil, bantered ideas and "what ifs" and just appreciated his friendship. Gil fought every battle with strength that was typical of his will to not let adversity best him. He reveled in his kids' accomplishments and he had the love of two great and strong women. What more can one ask? Only to have had these last many months to have been less harsh. May his memory be for a blessing.

Felicia and Seymour Weiner - April 21, 2012 at 10:50 AM



“ Sharon and family,
So sorry to learn of the passing of Gil. Our sincere condolences to you and his children. May his memory always stay close to your heart.
marlene and stan katz

stanley and marlene katz - April 21, 2012 at 09:39 AM



“ Gil will always be our rebbe. We will remember his wit and wry sense of humor forever. Our hearts go out to Sharon and Cindy and Steve and their families.

Mark and Karin - April 20, 2012 at 08:58 PM