

ELIE WIESEL: AN ELOQUENT SURVIVOR

A Final Message From Elie Wiesel

EZRA FRIEDLANDER

Millions of words are being written right now about the late Elie Wiesel, ז"ל, by figures ranging from world statesmen to celebrities of every stripe.

My own brief encounter with Mr. Wiesel and the way it transpired made an indelible, if not haunting, impression on me. It took place at the annual dinner of the Crown Heights-based Bnos Menachem school for girls, where he was the featured keynote speaker.

I noticed him sitting quietly at the reception and decided to approach him. Like so many others, I was familiar with Mr. Wiesel's work but had never met him. Because he had already spoken and written so much about the Holocaust, I felt that to engage him in a conversation about the Holocaust would not yield anything new, and he looked frail and exhausted.

When I approached him to greet him a thought popped into my head and I asked him: "Mr.

Wiesel, what do you think about every day?"

I figured that the answer to this question would let me know what was most important to him. He looked up at me with tired eyes and replied, "I put on *tefillin* every morning and I am a *Vizhnitzer chassid*." His father, he said, had been a *Vizhnitzer chassid* and he therefore had an affinity for the *Vizhnitzer Rebbes* that he knew.

It was clear to me that he was conveying a message. It was a defining statement for Elie Wiesel.

Like many other Holocaust survivors, Elie Wiesel had struggled with his faith following the Holocaust. By telling me that he was a *Vizhnitzer chassid* and put on *tefillin*, he was letting the world know that he had made peace with what he had experienced.

Ezra Friedlander is the CEO of The Friedlander Group, a NYC and Washington, DC, based public policy consulting firm.



Ezra Friedlander with Elie Wiesel.

Bnos Menachem School for girls

IN MEMORIAM

THE MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE
A LIVING MEMORIAL TO THE HOLOCAUST
MOURNS THE LOSS OF ELIE WIESEL ז"ל.
MAY HIS MEMORY BE A BLESSING.

"Enter this place, passerby, and meet those who survived the nightmare.

Meet them and learn from them how they built on ruins.

Where did they find the courage to renew a covenant with society

and invoke hope for humanity's future?

I look at their children — I am moved to tears.

I think of the killers — I am moved to anger.

I think of the victims — I am moved to despair.

But, then I think of our children and I am moved to hope."

— ELIE WIESEL, HONORARY CHAIRMAN OF THE
MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE – A LIVING MEMORIAL TO THE HOLOCAUST,
AT THE DEDICATION OF THE MUSEUM ON SEPTEMBER 11, 1997



A LIVING
MEMORIAL
TO THE
HOLOCAUST

KHAL UNGVAR
HEICHAL ZICHRON KEDOSHIM
5306 16TH AVENUE
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11204



קהל אונגוואר
היכל זכרון קדושים
נתייסד ע"י כ"ק מרן אדמו"ר הגה"ק זצוק"ל
בנשיאות כ"ק אדמו"ר שליט"א

בצער רב משתתפים אנו לבכות אחרי פטירתו בשיבה טובה
של ידיד בית ישראל, איש האשכולות ולב הזהב, הסופר הדגול
שעבר ביחד שנות הזעם בגיא ההריגה "בוכנוואלד"
עם כ"ק מרן רבינו הגה"ק זיעוכ"א
ומאז נשאר דבוק לרבינו בנימי לבבו ונפשו
ה"ה המוכתר בנימוסין ובשם טוב
כמר אליעזר הלוי וויזעל ע"ה ב"ר שלמה הי"ד
Professor Elie Wiesel
שנפטר לעולמו בש"ק פ' שלח
ואשר רבינו זצוק"ל התבטא עליו: "שאינן הציבור יודע
את גודל [מסירתו] לשמירת המצוות"
אבידה גדולה אבדנו

כוס תנחומים

נשגר בזה למשפחתו המכובדת
ולבנו יקירו הנגיד הנכבד והמפואר
כמר אלישע הלוי נ"ו
שבהמשך דרכו באהבת השי"ת ואהבת ישראל ימצא נוחם בפטירתו
והמקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

הכותבים והחותמים בשם כ"ק מרן אדמו"ר שליט"א

תהלת האוסדות והשכאים