Dr. Jose Nessim: In Memoriam

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We sadly record the passing of Dr. Jose Nessim, one of the very impressive Jewish leaders of our generation. A medical doctor in Los Angeles for many years, Dr. Nessim devoted the time and energy to found the Sephardic Educational Center in Jerusalem. Through his tenacity, generosity, and grand worldview, he established this center in historic buildings of the Old City of Jerusalem. Thousands of students and visitors have benefited from the programs of the center in Jerusalem, as well as programs sponsored by the Sephardic Educational Center held in the diaspora.

Dr. Nessim thought big. He wanted to revitalize Sephardic life and to connect new generations of Sephardim to their heritage. An ardent lover of Israel, he wanted young Jews to experience Jerusalem and the land of Israel.

Many people express grand ideas, offer pointed criticisms, but don't have the persistence and skill to realize their goals. Dr. Nessim was one of those rare individuals who not only had a grand vision but who actually worked to turn that vision into a reality.

Dr. Nessim had a classic Sephardic outlook that called for worldliness coupled with respect for tradition; healthfulness; a sense of responsibility for the Jewish people; concern for the wellbeing of humanity.

It was an honor to know Dr. Nessim, and to see the tremendous pride and joy in his eyes as he spoke of the Sephardic Educational Center in Jerusalem. The Jewish world in general, and the Sephardic world in particular, has lost a great man, a man of determination and idealism, a man who made good things happen. May his family be consoled in the many wonderful memories they have of this special man. Min haShamayim Tenuhamu.

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