

Dedication

On October 28, 2015, my father, Professor Alexander Z. Guiora, passed away in Jerusalem.

In honor of his 90th birthday (June 13, 2015), my mother and I published a book of his writings with commentary by friends who graciously agreed to contribute to that effort.

For me, there is a direct link between that book and the present volume: Both address issues related to the Holocaust, the human condition, and individual responsibility or accountability.

It would be a gross exaggeration to suggest my writings build on my father's; however, it is correct to say that my father profoundly influenced me.

If there is a word more powerful than “profound,” that would be applicable.

In late May 1944, my paternal grandfather, Salamon Goldberg, was murdered in Auschwitz.

He stood in the selection line surrounded by other Jews, but minutes from the gas chambers. There is no way to know his final thoughts. I do not know whether he understood what horrific fate awaited him.

What I do know is that his brave decision to have my father study in Budapest—thereby defying the wishes of his father-in-law, an important Satmar Rabbi in eastern Hungary—spared my father from deportation to Auschwitz.

Although I never met my grandfather, much less have never seen his picture, I owe him my life.

While visiting my grandparent's hometown, Nyíregyháza, I said the Mourner's Kaddish. I felt, simultaneously, overwhelming sadness and profound gratitude. It is difficult to understand the courage required to make the decision he made.

For that reason, my grandfather is truly a hero.