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Series D: Education and Rabbinic Career, 1930-1993.

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9

Folder
6

Wise, Stephen S. Memorial service and eulogy. 1949.

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THIS SIDE OF CARD IS FOR ADDRESS



Rabbi Herbert Friedman
Temple Emanuel
1595 Pearl Street
Denver, Colorado

Denver District
ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA

Dear Friend:

A Special Memorial Service for Rabbi Stephen
S. Wise, national Jewish leader and past president
of the A.M.A., will be conducted by Rabbi Herbert
A. Friedman at Temple Emanuel, East Sixteenth Ave.
& Pearl Streets at 8:15 P.M., Friday, April 29, 194

SIDNEY A. EMMSON, President
Denver District

Congregation Emanuel

Founded 1874



16TH AVE. AND PEARL ST.
DENVER 5, COLORADO
Herbert A. Friedman, Rabbi
Joel Zion, Assistant Rabbi

*Make Friday Night
Temple Night*

Religion
OUR MOST
CONSTRUCTIVE
DEFENSE



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Sabbath Services

Friday Evening, April 29, at 8:15 o'Clock



RABBI HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN

will speak on

1874 **Stephen Samuel Wise** 1949

THE ETERNAL JEW

AMERICAN JEWISH

ARCHIVES

as the Nation Mourns for

RABBI STEPHEN S. WISE

one of its greatest champions of democracy, a heavy sense of loss pervades particularly our Jewish household. For, precious as he was to all men, he was especially beloved to Israel, whom he served as a twentieth century prophet.



This Friday evening, there will be solemnly observed, with great sadness, a special service of

MOURNING AND EULOGY

PRAYER

In place of reading from the Hebrew Union Prayer Book, as we customarily do, may we offer a prayer in memory of Rabbi SSW, who died 5 days ago in his 75th year.

"Almighty God one of Thy princes has fallen and we who are left mourn for him. Black and desolate is the sense of loss which overwhelms us. He was one of the strongest champions of righteousness and justice, giving his boundless strength to the cause of the working-men, the struggle of the under-privileged, the fight for equal rights for all men, black or white, Jew or Gentile.

Like Moses, he led his people to the edge of the Promised land but himself never entered it. After spending

his ^{complete} ~~whole~~ life working for Israel.
He was not privileged to set his
foot upon its recreated sovereign soil.
He ~~had~~ ^{went back to Thee} without having visited The new
State of Israel he did so much to
build.

Strong as a lion, swift as an
eagle. ~~Like~~ ^{to} Stephen Samuel Wise
practised a life of which Arrows or
Israel could well be proud. ⁱⁿ
which Thou, O God, can well
rejoice. Most honest of men, fearless
and courageous in his search for truth.
He served Thee and Thy people Israel,
as well as all mankind.

~~Receive him into Thy~~

The ^{great} voice is stilled, the great
heart beats no more. Receive him
unto Thee, O God, who have mercy upon
his soul, for he is truly one of Thy
oldest angels. [42:45] Amen.

JAMES WATERMAN WISE
40 W. 68 ST.
N.Y.C.

recd Fri eve

THE INFLUENCE OF YOUR
BELOVED FATHER REACHED AROUND
THE WORLD. WE IN DENVER
LOVED AND RESPECTED HIM BEYOND
ALL MEASURE. HE WAS THE KING,
THE LION, THE GREAT JEW. A
BLEAK AND DESOLATE SENSE OF
LOSS OVERWHELMAS US. ~~IN THE NAME~~

FROM OUR RABBI, BOARD AND ALL OUR
FAMILIES GO MOST HEARTFELT SYMPATHY.

A PRINCE HAS FALLEN IN ISRAEL
NEVER TO BE REPLACED.

CONGREGATION
EMANUEL
DENVER

Rabbi Edward Klein
~~Rabbi Edward Klein~~

Free Synagogue
40 W. 68 St.
N.Y.C.

~~WISH EXPRESS PROFOUND SENSE~~

DR. WISE WAS MY SECOND FATHER
SPONSORED AND GUIDED ME. INSTALLED
ME IN MY PULPIT LITERALLY SHAPED
MY CAREER. ^{BEGUN TO} CANNOT EXPRESS HOW MUCH
HIS ~~WAS~~ LIFE MEANT. I MISS HIM TERRIBLY.
MY PROFOUNDEST
SYMPATHY TO HIS FAMILY.

RABBI H. F.

STEPHEN SAMUEL WISE - IN TRIBUTE

By -Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman

This is a personal tribute. It is written for a man who inspired and guided me, who helped crystallize my ideals, who shaped the course of my thinking and my career. In that sense, his death has been for me a personal loss, and with his passing those of us who looked to him as our spiritual father feel quite desolate and lonesome.

I feel he was the greatest Jew of the first half of the 20th century. His great capacity for organizational leadership put him in the very forefront of Jewish community life, both in America and all over the world. His role as the first speaker in America against Hitler is well known. His stentorian voice was heard in 1933, the year of the evil one's ascendancy, long before others realized the monstrosity of the Nazi devil. For this he was publicly labeled by Hitler as his No. 1 American enemy.

The part Dr. Wise played in organizing the American and later the World Jewish Congress will be forever recorded in the annals of Jewish history of this era. Through the American Jewish Congress he battled ceaselessly to establish the principle that minority rights must be protected by legislation. He thus led the fight for laws prohibiting discrimination in housing, education, employment and other fields. This public struggle brought him many enemies among other Jewish leaders, whose approach was the silent one, who cringed whenever the "Jewish problem" was brought into the headlines by Dr. Wise's bold, straightforward attacks. Later, the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League came to understand what he, in his wisdom, had perceived earlier, and these two defense groups also adopted the legislative approach.

Through the World Jewish Congress, Stephen Wise attempted the same

thing on an international scale. Many were the Jewish critics who assailed him for convening this world body in 1936, claiming that it would give substance to the bigot's charge that Jews were an international fraternity. With lion's courage, he overrode the objections of the timid and the fearful, calling into being a powerful world-wide body of Jewish leaders, which he charged with the responsibility of protecting Jewish rights in every land. The World Jewish Congress has continued to fulfill the mandate of its creator, and served as a vehicle, during the Nazi years, through which some Jews were enabled to escape the holocaust.

The crowning glory of a long life-time of public service was, of course, his Zionist work. As a younger colleague of Theodore Herzl, Wise was fired by the same dream and ideal. He came home from meetings with Herzl in Switzerland and founded the Federation of American Zionists, which later became the great and powerful Zionist Organization of America. He was the first secretary of the Federation and was president of the ZOA.

While Justice Brandeis, Julian Mack and many others worked with him in the American Zionist movement in the early days, he it was who represented the movement to the teeming masses of Europe's Jews. Even though they didn't know him, he was not remote and aloof. They had the feeling that his heart beat in unison with theirs, and everywhere he travelled in Europe, the magic of his name drew crowds of curious thousands who clustered around the tall figure. At the last World Zionist Congress in Basle in December 1946, I watched with joy the tumultuous ovation he would receive every time he appeared, from Jews to whom he had been only a myth. In the meeting halls and the hotels, on the streets and in the corridors, they would stop him, to have the

honor of shaking his hand, and to ask him whether Palestine would someday be ours, as if he held the destiny of world Jewry in his portfolio. This was hero-worship at its finest and most deserved.

But these aspects of his career are well-known. I would rather speak of the aspects of his work which were perhaps less publicized and less well understood by all. It was in the more intimate personal philosophy of the man that he made his greatest contribution and most lasting impact. For he translated his philosophy into a code of action which lives for all to see and to emulate. He suggested an approach to life and then directed his own work by it which has influenced the thinking and acting of a whole generation of rabbis and communal leaders. Thus, both by precept and example, Dr. Wise may truly be said to have shaped our day.

First of all, he made the pulpit a free instrument, cutting it loose from the restrictions and censorships of Boards and Trustees. Every rabbi in the land must be eternally grateful to him who first cast off the shackles with which monied and vested interests always seek to muzzle the pulpit.

He was offered the pulpit of Temple Emanuel in New York, the so-called ranking Reform Temple in the country. But the offer was accompanied by the condition that the pulpit "shall always be subject to and under the control of the Board of Trustees." He roared his defiance of this curbing of the freedom of thought and expression, refused even to consider the offer, although old Jacob Schiff begged him to take it "and tell the board to go to hell afterwards." Instead, he came to New York from Portland, a year later, ^{in 1907} and founded the Free Synagogue, which was dedicated to "a free and unmuzzled pulpit." From this

tribune, which was under the control only of his powerfully liberal conscience, Dr. Wise blasted away for years at the evils in society which so aroused his ire. He smashed Tammany Hall; fought the U.S. Steel Corporation to obtain shorter hours for the working-man; stumped for woman's suffrage; and became thus the idol of the poor and oppressed. He was Amos re-incarnated, speaking in Carnegie Hall, instead of in Tekoah.

The important effect of this crusade was that in freeing his own pulpit, he also liberated every other rabbi in America. We all recall his visit to Denver, ¹⁹⁴³ when he did me the greatest honor of my life by installing me in my Congregation. Thousands of people were in the Temple that night. I shall never forget the strength of conviction with which he charged them. I was 25 at the time, and frightened at the magnitude of the work before me. His amazing voice rolled forth with these words: "This boy must speak the truth as he sees it! Don't you dare attempt to intimidate him or subvert him. He speaks for justice, for Judaism, in the name of God. Speak freely he shall, or you will account to me!" The Temple was hushed and my freedom born that night, to speak as I will, has never been tampered with.

Secondly, he brought the pulpit into the market-place, and revived the ancient prophetic practice of having the spiritual leader take a stand on all social issues of labor, industry, health, politics - in fact, on all issues which directly affect the lives of people. There were many who said that the rabbi should "stick to religion", but Dr. Wise believed with the prophets that God desired social justice more than He did external religious forms and practices. So we younger rabbis whom he trained in his Jewish Institute of Religion (now

merged with the Hebrew Union College), went forth into the ministry and threw ourselves into the front-lines of the march toward social liberalism. If religion means anything, we learned from our beloved teacher it means that moral and ethical principles must be brought to bear upon the economic and political problems of our day. "Sticking to religion," in its narrowest sense, will mean the death of any broadly religious influence in the community.

And lastly he taught us the self-pride of Judaism. By his own living example he proved that the more militantly and proudly Jewish one was, the more one earned the respect of decent and intelligent Christians. He himself was undoubtedly the best-known Jew in America, as far as non-Jews were concerned. Pullman porters and army officers, union leaders and college professors all knew his name. He had probably spoken to hundreds of thousands of Christians across the land, and always in the same proud awareness of his faith. The lesson of Wise's life gives the fallacy to the assimilationist. He who cringes, fawns, seeks desperately to be accepted in Christian circles is never as welcome as he who is unflinchingly and positively Jewish. So we disciples have learned, as we make our way through the Christian world, and so I know from my personal experience with non-Jews here in Denver.

The great voice is stilled - the great heart beats no more. Rabbi Stephen S. Wise is dead - and yet from the fabric of Jewish life he shall never be eradicated. It will be impossible to work without him in the future - for he shall be present always in the heads and in the hands of every one of the hundreds of leaders he has influenced.

I am partly Stephen Wise, as is every other rabbi he trained,
and as student, disciple, personal friend, I shall always be partly his.

I loved him - and he is gone. Eternal fame he shall have - God
grant him the eternal rest he has earned.

