

## THEY ALL CAME

At three o'clock in the afternoon on Wednesday, Nov. 1, 1978, Rosh Chodesh Marcheshvan, 5739, the Sanctuary of the Taylor Road Synagogue was filled to overflowing, with many of the crowd standing in the auditorium. There had been very little time within which to inform people about the time or place of the service. But they all came. From all walks of life, from all segments of the community, they came. No, they did not just come. They were pulled, pulled by their heartstrings. Some came because they loved him. Others came because they admired him. But all came because they respected him. They came to pay their final tribute to Arthur Jaffe, who was snatched so prematurely from the world of the living, out of their profound affection and regard for him.

Their eyes were filled with tears, their hearts were broken, their spirits were crushed. They listened in muted silence as Cantor Jacob Frankel chanted the opening Psalm with broken heart and choked voice. A pin could be heard as Rabbi Engelberg delivered the heartfelt eulogy. But the silence of the congregation was the greatest tribute that could be paid to Arthur's memory. It symbolized the awe and reverence in which they held him, as his purified soul was elevated to its eternal rest. It was a silence that said more than a million words.

And yet people don't just come. There was a reason why they were there. Almost everyone in that vast multitude of people knew that his life had been touched in one way or another by Arthur. Certainly a large number of the assemblage were members of the Taylor Road Synagogue. They came to pay final honor to their president who had served them for over three years — a president who was blessed with a natural capacity for leadership and a rare degree of dedication. More than that, a president who epitomized in his personal life the complete Torah ideal that the Synagogue strives to create. They came because they appreciated the Solomonic wisdom he used in solving organizational problems. They loved him as a friend, for his kindness, his considerateness, his passionate desire to avoid all forms of personal friction. They admired him for his gracious generosity.

They came as representatives of the outstanding organizations in the community. His friends were there from the Bnai Akiva and the Religious Zionists. For he grew up in their ranks, as did his children. He was a former president of the Bar Ilan Religious Zionist group. He gave generously in support of the Yeshiva Kerem B'Yavneh, the outstanding Bnai Akiva Yeshiva in Israel that his sons attended. His co-workers of the Cleveland Mikvah Association were heart-broken to lose their president, who strove with might and main to maintain the beauty and the dignity of the community Mikvah. His many admirers of the Young Israel were there to pay tribute to his memory, and console his wife and family. The Hebrew Academy, Telshe Yeshiva, Yeshiva Adath were all represented in the assemblage. Dedicated as he was to Torah Study, Arthur served all of these organizations well. They came from the Bureau of Jewish Education where he was a board member; from Hillel Foundation at Case Western Reserve University where he had served as treasurer; and the Jewish Community Federation where he had served as head of the chaplaincy committee. All felt an overwhelming sense of bereavement.

Then, of course there were the many personal friends who had enjoyed the rare hospitality of the Jaffe home. Arthur, of blessed memory, and his loving wife Miriam were ideal hosts. Their home was always open, and rare indeed was the Shabbos or Holiday that the Jaffe home was not filled with guests. They came too, heartbroken that their genial host had so prematurely been called to his eternal rest.

Yes they all came. But it didn't just happen. All of those people were a reflection of the richness and many sidedness of Arthur's life. But what made Arthur a truly outstanding person was not what he did, but rather what he was. He was a totally dedicated Torah observant Jew, a truly noble and sensitive soul, a very warm, genuine, down to earth human being. Yes, he has departed this world in a physical sense. But spiritually he remains amongst us to inspire us to emulate the noble example he has set for us all. "Tzadikim Bemeesawsam Keruim Chaim" — the righteous even in death are called living. May his memory be for a blessing and an inspiration.

*Rabbi Louis Engelberg*