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Thesis Design
A Synagogue.
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Course 4.

A Synagogue

This building is designed as a place of worship for a small congregation of Jewish people in an important suburb of a large city in the South. As it is situated at the end of a broad boulevard on a slight eminence its mass is necessarily simple, direct and monumental. The material is pure white marble with sparkling mosaics, stained glass and green bronze, lamps, doors and braziers. It is conceived in a spirit of reserve, quietness and unaffected sincerity which reflects the form of the services, the character of the worshippers and the history of the Jews. The detail is gathered from the

examples of Romanesque, Byzantine and Moorish Assyrian architecture together with what what few pieces of ornament that could be found which was Jewish.

The Synagogue is entered through three large bronze portals which swing back into a small outer vestibule just wide enough to receive them. The vestibule proper is spacious and at the ends in the two towers are the monumental staircases which give access to the organ-loft and choir gallery over the vestibule and also to the galleries over the side circulation passage-ways. The upper part of the towers are for utility purposes as store-

rooms, quarters for the janitors, stairs, etc.

The auditorium seats seven hundred and fifty people comfortably while three hundred more can be accommodated in the three galleries making a capacity in all of about one thousand persons. In the two back towers are the minister's study and library. These two rooms have direct access to the pulpit which is of comparatively minor importance not being nearly so large as the space given to the ceremonies in a Catholic cathedral. In front of the stage is a speakers desk while in back is a curtain wall some fifteen or twenty feet in height in which is built the crowning

glory of the Synagogue, the Ark. In this Ark rests the scrolls which are read during the service. The stained glass windows of the rear are visible over this curtain wall.

Behind the pulpit is a space entered from the sides reserved for the wedding processions, confirmation classes etc. These collect here through these side doors and when all is ready march to the pulpit in any way convenient.

Below in the basement are the various rooms for the Sunday school classes, plant for heating, storerooms, lavatories, committee rooms etc, which are accessible by stairs in the towers and in back of the pulpit and also from the outside.

The whole interior is schemed to have a quiet religious feeling pervade. The wall surfaces are covered with mosaics, the openings are filled with stained glass, and the carving is rich but the color scheme is kept a dull warm tone. Gold inscriptions are placed in a few bands.

The auditorium is surmounted by a Byzantine dome carried by four-arched pendentive construction. It is pierced by small windows filled with stone grills and there is a small passage way running all around through it.

The building as viewed in side elevation is designed for the same symmetrical effect as from the front so that the whole may



not lose any of its monumental character no matter where the person stands. The Synagogue stands on a raised platform of stone surrounded by ~~appropriate~~ monuments with inscriptions, lamps of bronze designed after the bronze column found in the great Temple of Solomon, Sabbath lights in the form of two braziers to be lighted on holidays, monumental staircases from all directions and with no statues.