

## What the Synagogue Symbolizes

Rabbi Samuel A. Bloom



Rabbi Samuel A. Bloom

“And Let Them Make Me a Sanctuary That I May Dwell Among Them” *Exodus 25:8*

Man's profoundest feelings, deepest sentiments, most cherished experiences are expressed in symbols. What is poetry but a symbol of one's emotions? Music, art, architecture, all these are symbols indicative of man's inner spirit. Symbols are the language through which the heart of the genius speaks. Through them ideals are shared, and thought made visible.

The Synagogue is a religious symbol of and for the Jewish people. There is no Jewish symbol which more faithfully reflects every stage and every phase of Jewish history, which more vividly depicts the development of Judaism, which tells more eloquently of the Jew's loyalty to his God! In a word, the Synagogue, is emblematic of the bond between past and present, heaven and earth, holiness and beauty.

Aldous Huxley once remarked that the life of a person, no matter how long it may be, adds up only to a few special moments. What Mr. Huxley meant was that most of our lives are spent in dreaming, working, and waiting for an event on which we have our hearts set.

A Congregation, too, lives in moments. Many years are spent in planning, working, and dreaming. Then, at long last, the dream is realized. The exciting moment arrives. The great moment for which Congregation Sons of Israel has indefatigably worked is now here.

You longed to see a new Synagogue built. You built it. Your achievement smiles upon you. Your work is done. But your task is also beginning. For the Synagogue is a many faceted symbol. It represents study. This means that the education of our young and of ourselves must be furthered. The Synagogue is a house of prayer. This means that on Sabbaths and holidays, the sanctuary must be filled with worshippers. The Synagogue is a place of assembly. This calls for well planned, carefully organized well attended Sisterhood, Congregation-Youth meetings, functions, and programs.

As God has been with you and among you to this day, May He dwell among you forever more.