

Lines on the Twenty-third Psalm.

BY REV. JOSEPH PARSONS.

The Lord is my Shepherd he careth for me,  
 And daily his kindness abundant I see;  
 My food he supplies with hisountful hand,  
 No goodness denies, while I faithfully stand.  
 Protecting from danger he scatters my foes,  
 His mercies attend me, on him I repose.  
 I'll trust him forever, my Shepherd and Friend,  
 He leaveth me never, but saves to the end.  
 He giveth me peace, and he makes me lie down,  
 In beautiful pastures, where pleasures abound.  
 Beside the still waters he leadeth me forth,  
 And blesses with grace of unspeakable worth.  
 My soul he restored from sin's evil way,  
 Prevents me from falling, lest I go astray  
 In righteousness path, for his precious name's sake,  
 He leadeth me gently, his blessings to take.  
 His presence with courage inspires each breath,  
 And dissipates fear in the valley of death.  
 His rod and his staff are a comfort to me,  
 They cause me to triumph, and confident be.  
 Though sorrows dark shadow my way  
 May surround,  
 It shall not dismay me, my joys shall abound.  
 Though darkness encompass my soul for awhile,  
 His presence shall cheer me and cause me to smile.  
 Light, light, in death's valley to me shall be given;  
 My Shepherd will guide me and lead me to heaven.  
 A table prepared in my enemies sight,  
 Gives pleasure and gladness and fits with delight.  
 Thou anointest my head, my cup overflows;  
 The oil of thy kindness dispelleth my woes.  
 Thy goodness and mercy, throughout my life's days,  
 Shall follow and bless me and gladden my days,  
 And I of thy goodness forever will tell;  
 And ever, yea, ever, in thy house I will dwell  
 Petlitcodiac, N.B.

A JEWISH SYNAGOGUE.

We read in our lesson for February 25 that Jesus went into the synagogue and stood up to read. The scene must have been much like that shown above. According to Jewish custom the synagogue should be built on the most elevated ground available, for no house was allowed to overtop it. Where a commanding site could not be found, a tall pole rose from the roof, the rude introduction to our church spires, rendering the building conspicuous. It was also deemed desirable to have the synagogue built outside the town or city, by the river side, that the worshippers might be undisturbed by the noise of the city, and that they might have the use of pure water for immersions and other religious ceremonies. Sometimes they were erected near the tombs of famous rabbins or holy men. The congregation was divided the men on one side and the women on the other—by a low partition five or six feet high running between them. In modern synagogues, as shown in our cut, the separation is made even more complete by placing the women in a low side gallery, where they may hear the service but are often completely screened from view by lattice-work. In oldest times the people probably stood in the synagogues, or sat upon the floor. But armchairs, or seats of honour, were furnished for the elders, the doctors of the law, etc. They were placed in front of the ark containing the law, or at the Jerusalem end. There these distinguished persons sat with their faces to the people, while the congregation stood facing these honourable men and the ark. Beside the rostrum, or platform, there was a reading desk on which the sacred scrolls were laid. The above picture shows the elder unrolling one of these cherished scrolls, while the solemn, dark faces around him wait in reverence for the reading of a section of the Law. Linen or silk wrappers, often adorned with letters or other ornaments of gold and silver were wrapped round these scrolls, and they were kept in the wooden chest or ark. A perpetual light burns in the synagogue, and an alms-box is always to be found near the door. From the time the prayer of its dedication is

uttered, the synagogue is a consecrated place, and regarded with reverence by the Jew, who is not allowed to enter it without first ridding himself of anything that would be defiling, nor may he ever pass through it as a short cut.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

LESSON VIII.

FEBRUARY 25, 1900.

JESUS REJECTED AT NAZARETH.

Luke 4. 16-30. Memory verses, 17-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.—John 1. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. Coming to His Own, v. 16-21.
2. His Own Receive Him Not, v. 22-30. Time.—About the beginning of A.D. 28. Place.—Nazareth.

LESSON HELPS

16. "Brought up"—Trained in youth.

employed to take care of the synagogue; a sort of sexton and class leader and Sunday-school superintendent in one.

21. "Began to say"—Said at length, and with great beauty, what is here put into a single sentence.

22. "All bare him witness"—Every-body acknowledged. "Gracious words" Words of grace, of beauty and eloquence. "Is not this Joseph's son"—Just at this point it is evident that the audience took offence at the Saviour, for his next utterance was a gentle reproof.

23. "Heal thyself"—That is, do for your own people what we have heard you have done for others.

24. "No prophet is accepted in his own country"—"Familiarity breeds contempt."

25, 26. "Elijah"—Elijah. "Of Sidon"—This phrase shows that the widow was a Gentile, not a child of Abraham. Read the full story in 1 Kings 17.

27. Read the story of Naaman in 2 Kings 5.

28-30. Wicked men cannot bear a close application of the moral truths they admire. "The hill whereon their city was built" has one or two steep declivities down which he might have been flung. "Went his way"—Having made his enemies powerless, probably by a glance of his hitherto restrained majesty.

What effect had these words on the people?

What did they do with Jesus? How did he escape?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

What in this lesson are we taught about—

1. The duty of public worship?
2. The fulfillment of Scripture?
3. The power of prejudice?

When Sabbath came Jesus went to the service at Nazareth, just as he always did, and they gave him the book or roll, which Isaiah the prophet had written many years before. Now, this book was nearly all about the Saviour, and told



beforehand what the Lord's work would be. Jesus found the place where some especially beautiful things were said of him, and read them to the people, Isaiah said Jesus was to be sent to the poor the broken-hearted, the captive, the blind, and the bruised.

A lecturer on Colorado asked, "Where else in the world will you find in one spot, outside this State, such products as marble, iron, fire-clay, chalk, copper, lead, slate, fruits of all kinds, hemp, flax, all manner of grains, and—but why enumerate them? Where? I say." To which a man in the audience promptly replied, "In my boy's pocket."

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A JEWISH SYNAGOGUE.

In Nazareth he had worked as a carpenter. Some of his critics in the synagogue may have had in their home utensils which he had made. "As his custom was"—To this very synagogue he had toddled in infancy, and here had he worshipped in youth. "Synagogue"—The Jewish church, or place for Bible study. "Sabbath day"—That is, the Jewish Sabbath; our Saturday.

17. "The book"—A long roll, like one of our modern wall maps, only that it was smaller, and rolled lengthwise, not breadthwise. "The prophet Esaias"—Isaiah. Very likely each prophecy was made up into a book by itself, for the words were written, not printed, and usually were made very large. The reader always "stood up" on a platform in the middle of the room. The congregation also stood while the Scriptures were read.

18. "The Spirit of the Lord"—(See Isa 61 1, 2.) What Jesus read differs slightly from what we have in the Old Testament. Very likely the record here introduces into the text some phrases our Lord used in his sermon.

19. "The acceptable year"—The year of jubilee (Lev. 25, 3-10), which was a type of the true jubilee of Christ's coming.

20. "Closed the book"—Rolled it up again. "Minister"—Not a pastor or preacher, as with us, but a man who was

HOME READINGS.

- M. Jesus rejected at Nazareth.—Luke 4. 16-30.
- Tu. Another visit.—Matt. 13. 53-58.
- W. The text.—Isa. 61.
- Th. Teaching refused.—John 5. 36-47.
- F. The Son rejected.—Luke 20. 9-18.
- S. Folly of rejecting.—Prov. 1. 20-33.
- Su. "Ye would not"—Luke 13. 24-35.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Coming to His Own, v. 16-21. To what city did Jesus journey? Where did he go on the Sabbath? From what book did he read? What were the words that he read? After reading, what did he do with the book? Whose attention had he secured? What did he then say to the people?
2. His Own Receive Him Not, v. 22-30. How were the people affected by what they heard? What question did they ask? What demand did he say they would make? Where is a prophet not honoured? What did he say about the days of Elijah? To whom only was Elijah sent? Who sent the prophet to Sidon? 1 Kings 17. 8, 9. What is said about lepers in Israel? Who only was cleansed? By what means was the Syrian cured? 2 Kings 5. 10, 14.