

THE MAN WHO LOOKED INTO HEAVEN

Acts 6:1-15; 7:54-60.

LESSON 125 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: "I will not fear what man shall do unto me"
(Hebrews 13:6).

BIBLE TEXTS

Acts 6:1-15;

1 ¶ And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 ¶ And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

11 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council,

13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law:

14 For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.

15 And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

Acts 7:54-60.

54 ¶ When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

NOTES

The face of an Angel

A good man named Stephen started out to work for Jesus. He had great faith, and with God's help he did many miracles. No doubt many sick people were made well when Stephen prayed for them. He told many people about Jesus.

Some of the bad people did not like Stephen and wanted him to stop doing this good work. They told lies about him and cause other people to hate him, too. Finally they took Stephen before the council, or rulers of the people. They told things that were not true about him. There in the council sat the men who acted as

judges to decide whether or not Stephen was guilty of all the things the bad people said about him. These men watched Stephen very closely. As they looked at him, they saw his face light up with the glory of God, and he looked just like an angel. He had Jesus in his heart and the power of God on his life. He was “a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost”.

His Last Sermon

The high priest asked him if these things were true that had been spoken against him. Now it was Stephen’s time to speak. He preached a wonderful sermon to the people that day. He told about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and about many things that God had done in the past. He told these people that their hearts were not full of love for God. Stephen was trying to teach them to love God. He wanted them to be saved and have their sins forgiven. The people became very angry with Stephen.

What He Saw

Stephen looked away from the angry crowd of people and lifted his eyes to Heaven. As he looked to God and prayed, what do you suppose he saw? He saw something way, way beyond the blue sky, the white clouds and the sun. He looked right into Heaven. He saw God, and Jesus, His Son, standing at God’s right hand. What a wonderful day for Stephen! He said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.”

This made the people more angry than ever. They did not want to listen to Stephen. They put their fingers in their ears so they could not hear what he was telling them. They shouted with loud voices and refused to listen to his kind words. They took him out of the city and threw stones at him.

Praying for His Enemies

Stephen was bruised and hurt by the stones as they fell upon him, but the wicked people were hurting only his body. They were not touching his soul. He prayed to Jesus and asked Jesus to take him to Heaven. Perhaps as Stephen looked into Heaven he saw the crown that he should soon wear. He may have seen the golden streets where he should walk very soon. Or perhaps he saw the tree of life, which bears twelve kinds of fruit. We are not told how much of Heaven he saw, but he saw God the Father, and Jesus Christ at His right hand. Stephen wanted very much to go to Heaven where there would be no more suffering or sorrow. He knew that all would be joy and peace in Heaven. We are sure that if we could get just one glimpse into Heaven we would no longer wish to stay in this old world either.

Stephen did not feel bad toward the people who were saying such wrong things to him – he had only good thoughts for these people. He knelt down among the falling stones and asked Jesus to forgive them for what they did. He surely had the love of God in his heart, for he loved even his enemies. We believe that Jesus sent the good angels to carry Stephen home to Heaven.

Love and Forgiveness

When Jesus lived upon earth He taught the people that they should love their enemies. We need to be saved in order to be able to do that. Before we are saved we might want to turn around and do something hurtful to those who harm us. When Jesus saves us He helps us to be kind to those who are mean to us.

One day when Jesus was talking to His followers, one of them, named Peter, asked Jesus, “Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” Jesus told him that he must forgive not only seven times, but seventy times seven, or at least 490 times. You know when Jesus was on the cross where the wicked people had placed Him He loved His enemies who had caused him to be put there. He prayed for them and asked His Father in Heaven to forgive them. He said, “They know not what they do.”

Jesus wants us to be kind, even to those who are unkind to us. He wants us to forgive and love one another. Let us ask Him to give us more love in our hearts, and forgiveness for others. If we love Jesus we will love one another, too.

QUESTIONS

1. What did Stephen’s face look like? Acts 6:15.
2. What did he see when he looked up? Acts 7:55.
3. What did the people do when he told them what he saw? Acts 7:57-59.
4. For whom was Stephen’s last prayer? Acts 7:60.
5. Should we pray for our enemies? Matthew 5:44.

LESSON RESOURCES

TITLE

THE MAN WHO LOOKED INTO HEAVEN

Lesson 125

Acts 6:1-15; 7:54-60

I Will Lift Mine Eyes To The Hills

WATCH & PRAY 32



m; f, s: s: s: l; t, d` :-: t; d`, r` :-: d`; r`, m` :-:

m; f, s: s: s: l; t, d` :-: m`: r`: d`: t: l: s:-:

s: m` :. m`. r`: d`: l:-: l: f` :. m`. r`: d`: t:-:

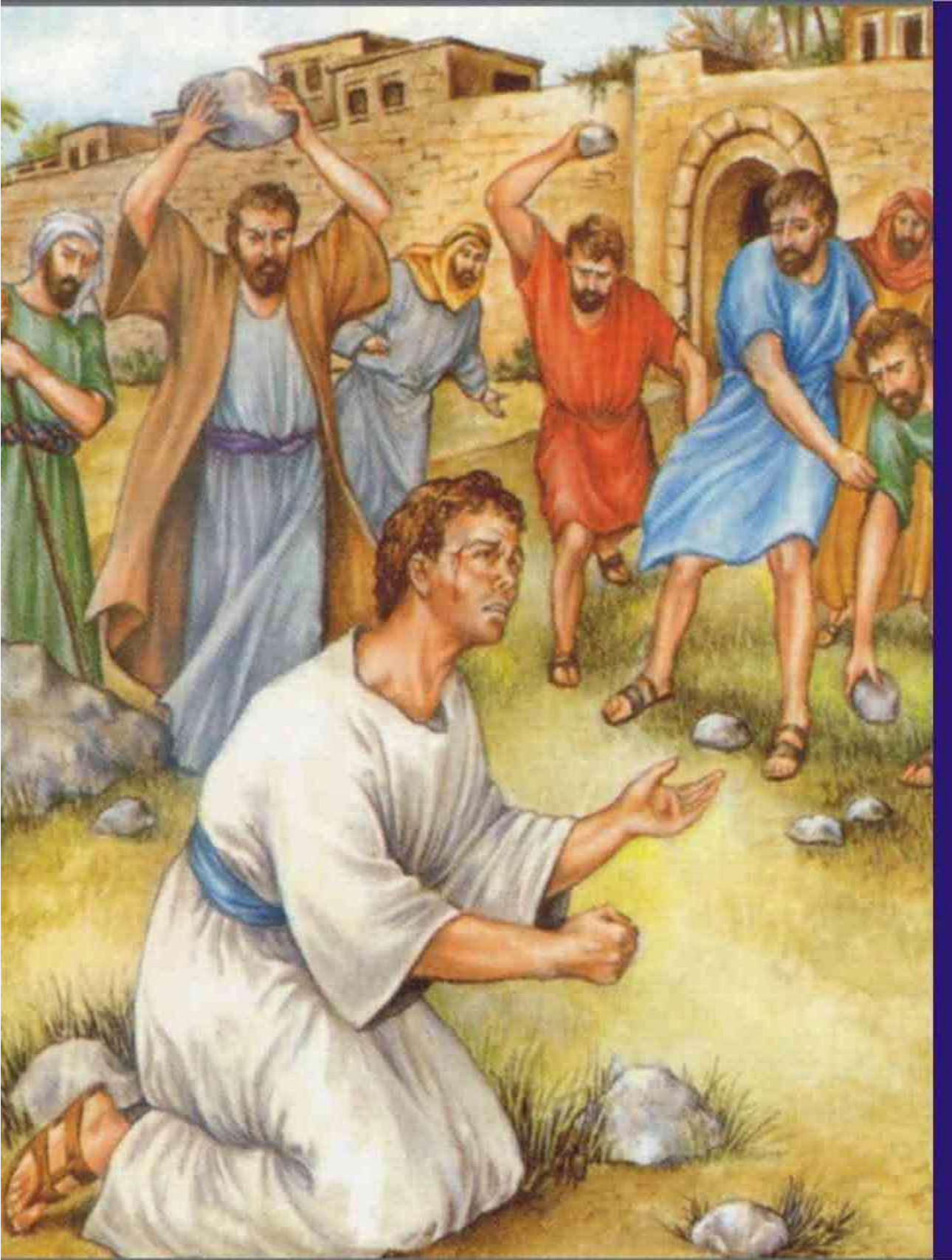
s: s` :. s`. f`: m`: r`: d`: l: f`: m` :- r` :- d` :-:

SONG

I Will Lift Mine Eyes To The Hills

I will lift mine eyes to the hills
To the hill, to the hills,
I will lift mine eyes to the hills
From whence doth come my help
It cometh from the Lord,
It cometh by His word,
It cometh from the Mount of God;
From Zion's Hills.

PICTURE 1



PICTURE 2

