

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson may we learn—

1. How a Christian should suffer wrong?
2. How a Christian should meet death?
3. How Christ's cause may be helped by persecution?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school.) 1. What did Stephen see as he looked up to heaven? Jesus on the right hand of God. 2. What did the council do when they heard his words? They stoned him. 3. For what was the last prayer of Stephen? For forgiveness to his enemies. 4. Who took part in the murder of Stephen? A young man named Saul. 5. What did Saul do afterward? He persecuted the Church.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The exaltation of Jesus.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **Jesus and Stephen**, v. 54-56. Why were the council angered at Stephen's sermon. What gave especial power to Stephen in his trial? What especial privilege was granted him? What was his testimony in regard to this? What similar vision did a prophet see?

2. **Stephen and Saul**, v. 57-60. How did the council vent their rage upon Stephen? For what offence did the Mosaic law make this punishment a penalty? Lev. 24. 16. Who were the real blasphemers? What part did Saul take in this service? What words of faith and hope did Stephen utter? In what did he imitate the dying Saviour? To what is his death compared?

3. **Saul and the Church**, v. 1-4. How did Saul regard the death of Stephen? What treatment did the disciples receive? What tribute was paid to Stephen's memory? What part did Saul take in the persecution?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where do we learn—

That heaven may open to the dying Christian?
That dying testimonies may lose their force with sinful men?

That blind zeal may lead men into cruelty and crime?

That the Gospel is spread through the peril and distress of the Church?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

How did Stephen answer his false accusers? Boldly, and without fear. What did he call them? Murderers of Jesus. Did this make them sorry? It made them very angry. What vision did Stephen see? Jesus standing at God's right hand. What did it mean to Stephen? That Christ was ready to welcome him. What happened to Stephen when he spoke of his vision? He was cast out of the city. What sin did the witnesses commit? They stoned him to death. How did Stephen die? He fell asleep, like a little child. What was his last prayer? That his enemies might be forgiven. Who encouraged the murder of Stephen? Saul, of

Tarsus. What was he at this time? An enemy of Jesus. What else did Saul do? He persecuted all who believed in Jesus. What did this lead the disciples to do? To go abroad preaching Jesus. What, then, did Saul's hatred accomplish? It helped to spread the truth. What is waiting for all who love and obey Jesus? Eternal life with him. [Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.]

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

What true faith gives—Peace of heart in outward storms. Eyes that see Jesus at the right hand of God. A spirit of real love for enemies. A willingness to die rather than deny Jesus.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.**The Martyr and the Persecutor.****I. THE MARTYR SPIRIT.**

1. **Courage.** "Heard these things." v. 54. "Be strong in the Lord." Eph. 6. 10.
2. **Insight.** "Saw the glory of God." v. 55.

"Ye shall see heaven open." John 1. 51.

3. **Faith.** "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." v. 59.

"A man full of faith." Acts 6. 5.

4. **Forgiveness.** "Lay not this sin to their charge." v. 60.

"Pray for them which . . . persecute you." Matt. 5. 44.

II. THE PERSECUTING SPIRIT.

1. **Hatred.** "Gnashed on him." v. 54.

"They gaped upon me with their mouths." Psal. 22. 13.

2. **Violence.** "Ran upon him with one accord." v. 57.

"Their feet are swift to shed blood." Rom. 3. 15.

3. **Murder.** "They stoned Stephen." v. 59.

"Some of you shall they . . . put to death." Luke 21. 16.

4. **Cruelty.** "Haling men and women." v. 3.

"Punished them oft in every synagogue." Acts 26. 10.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.**The Dying Saint.**

1. The dying saint's countenance shines with the consciousness of the Spirit's indwelling presence within him.

2. The dying saint enjoys the manifestations of the Spirit, and a special insight into heaven. v. 55.

3. The dying saint enjoys the communion of his spirit with his Saviour, whom he beholds ready to welcome him. v. 55.

4. The dying saint gives a joyous and glorious testimony of his fellowship with God. v. 56.

5. The dying saint looks to Jesus as his Lord, and intrusts his soul to his care. v. 59.