

# Kids' Chronicle

THURSDAY, August 13, 1992 VOLUME 1, ISSUE NO. 15 BY CINDY BASSETT

## Death on a hillside

Paul was surprised when he saw Stephen, the man charged with cursing God. This crime was worse than murder for Hebrews. But Stephen's face had a child's innocence.

"The Council will come to order," Caiaphas announced in the crowded courtroom. "Witnesses for the prosecution will testify first."

"What do you accuse this man with?" he asked the first witness.

"I heard him preaching in a street near the Temple," the man replied.

"Certainly there is no crime in that," Caiaphas said.

"I heard him cursing God!"

"He deserves to die for saying such a thing," spectators in the courtroom shouted.

The man standing next to Paul disagreed. "He's lying! We who follow Jesus speak only of love and forgiveness!"

"Silence, or I will clear this courtroom!" Caiaphas shouted.

The next witness who spoke seemed uneasy and his gruff voice was barely above a whisper.

"Speak up, please," Caiaphas snapped.

"Yeah, I heard him curse God, too," he stammered. "Can I be excused now?"

Caiaphas nodded and motioned for the Temple police to bring Ste-



Illustrations by Kathy Welsh

phen forward.

Everyone remained silent as Stephen told about the Hebrews from ancient times to the present. He finished his long speech with a question.

"Was there ever a prophet sent by God that your ancestors did not persecute?" Stephen asked the Council members. "And you killed Jesus, God's own Son!"

It seemed as if a flash fire had been ignited. The crowd lunged forward and Stephen was swept away in the fiery rage.

Caiaphas was powerless to extinguish the flames. "Stop! The Council must hand down a verdict!"

"He's guilty! There is no question," a teacher of the law retorted.

Paul followed the mob until they came to an abrupt stop on a hillside just outside the city. Stephen was already on his knees when the barrage of rocks came thundering against him. Even so, he seemed far removed from the assault. His expression was radiant as he faced certain death.

Just before Stephen closed his eyes, Paul clearly heard him say: "Forgive them. Don't charge them with this sin."

Although Paul had not raised a single stone against Stephen, he agreed with the punishment. He believed these followers of Jesus must be stopped once and for all.

Read More About It: Book of Acts, Chapters 6:8-8

## Q & A

1. Why were the Hebrews so against Stephen?

2. Why do bad things sometimes happen to good people like Stephen?

## The Bible Times

35 A.D.

Jerusalem — A follower of Jesus Christ was stoned to death yesterday by a mob on a hillside just outside the city.

Just before the incident occurred, two witnesses testifying before the Hebrew Council accused the man, Stephen, of cursing God. Under Hebrew law, a person found guilty of cursing God usually receives the death sentence.

The Council, however, was unable to hand down a formal decision in this case after angry spectators dragged Stephen from the courtroom after the accused testified on his own behalf.

According to sources at the hearing, Stephen charged the Hebrews with persecuting God's prophets and murdering God's Son, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who was crucified two years ago after he was convicted of attempting to overthrow the government.

Despite Christ's death, his disciples — known as followers of the Way — continue to proclaim him the Messiah.

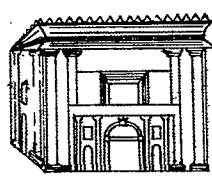
Congratulations to Joy Ann Liberi, soon to be a third-grade student at Buckman Heights School! She is the winner of the \$50 Savings Bond for the best essay in the July Kids' Club contest. Her essay is reprinted below.

July Essay Question: If you had to stand trial like Peter, what would you say about Jesus?

"Religious lawkeepers, this is what happened: The crippled man was sitting at the gate, he asked me for money. I didn't have money, so I healed him in the name of Jesus. Jesus is the man you killed instead of a killer, and don't forget he forgave you. Once He said, 'By my stripes, you are healed.' You say, 'don't preach about Him anymore.' I will tell about Him no matter what you say! Jesus is truth, so I will preach the truth now and for as long as I am alive!"

## Famous Old Testament people

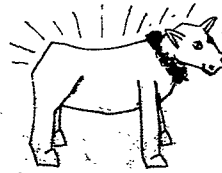
When Stephen was questioned, he told the history of the Hebrews. Using the clues below, name the famous Old Testament people Stephen spoke about. The answers can be found in Chapter 7 of Acts. Answers on page 13.



1. This king built God a Temple.  
2. Pharaoh put him in charge of his entire household.

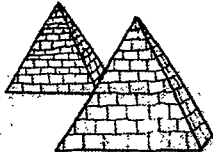
3. He sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain during the famine.

4. He led the Hebrews against their enemies as they journeyed to the Promised Land.



5. After he lost faith in God, he made a golden calf for the Hebrews to worship.

6. The name of Abraham's long-awaited son.



King Solomon's Wisdom

## Talking to God



"If a wise man goes to court with a fool, the fool rages and tempers flare. The godly pray for those who long to kill them."

Proverbs 29:9-10

Dear God,

It's hard to forgive cruel people who make fun of me when I try to do the right thing. Help me to remember your words as you died on the cross for the sins of everyone. Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are doing.

(Luke 23:34)

## Kids' Club

Win a \$50 Savings Bond! What situations exist today in which you might be made fun of for doing what you think is right? How would you handle it?

Write an answer of 100 or fewer words. Include your name, home address, telephone number, school and grade. The winner will earn a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond. The winner will be notified by phone; the essay will be printed in an upcoming edition of *Kids' Chronicle*. Send your entry to: Cindy Bassett, c/o Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Deadline for entries is August 27, 1992.



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