

Where's Your Chair?

Acts 7 51-8 1



They draw near that in malice persecute me, who are far from your law.
You, O Lord, are near at hand, and all your commandments are true.
Psalm 119:150-151

Praising:

For Stephen, your first martyr,
your name shall be adored;
he suffered persecution for
trusting in his Lord;
he prayed for those who killed
him, when by them he was
stoned,
and asked for their forgiveness
from you, the Lord enthroned.

Reading:

Acts 7:51-8:1
Stephen forgives and dies

Stephen saw in Jesus none other than the character, love and being of Almighty God – all the things Israel had been charged by the Lord to demonstrate to the world in the first place. Yet once again, it's not just that Stephen sees what he sees, it's that he says what he sees. We can only guess at the consolation that

snapshot of eternity must have been to a man who was about to die. That said, what he relayed so spontaneously that day has proved a reassurance and an inspiration to Christian believers approaching death ever since. Especially when it gives way to Stephen's dying prayer for forgiveness for those who are killing him. And it was a prayer answered in the life of the young man who was looking after the coats: Saul who became Paul.

Listening:

Praying:

In humility, we honour you Lord for those who have gone to their death for Christ

- holding firm to the pain of the cross and the joy of the tomb, right to the end
- praising and praying in simple faith, because that's what they have always done
- believing that to die with you is better than to live without you

Father: I pray for your grace, that by the time my last moments come, my heart would be drained of all resentment and bitterness, and flooded instead with acceptance and trust. Amen

Doing: