

**“Evil Indignation vs. Prophetic Glory,
Unrighteous Zealot vs. Forgiving Martyr!”**

Acts 7:54-60

When **They (Council of the Sanhedrin)** heard these **Things (Stephen’s Good News)** **They** were cut to the heart, and **They** gnashed at him with their teeth. But **Stephen** being **Full of the Holy Spirit**, gazed into heaven and saw the **Glory of God**, and **Jesus Standing** at the **Right Hand of God**, and said, *“Look! I see the Heavens Opened and the **Son of Man Standing at the Right Hand of God!**”* Then **They (Religious Authorities)** cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and **They** cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named **Saul**. And **They** stoned **Stephen** as he was calling on God said, *“**Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!**”* Then **Stephen** knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, *“**Lord, do not charge them with this sin!**”* And when he had said this, he fell asleep. **Acts 7:54-60 (NKJV)**

Q: “What Were The Supposed Evil & Crimes That Stephen Had Done?”

A: Blaspheming - Speaking Untruths Concerning:

- 1) Interpretation of Scripture (God’s Word)**
- 2) Title of Prophet (Given By God To Moses)**
- 3) Temple & Traditions (Significance & Sacredness)**
- 4) Commandments (Covenant Of The Law)**

A: Insurrection, Desecration, & Heresy Concerning:

- 1) Temple Mount**
- 2) Religious Authority Of Priests & Sanhedrin Council**
- 3) Heretical & Profane Teaching**
Jesus of Nazareth – Son of Man
Christ / Messiah – Son of God

Stephen’s Defense Had Violated None Of These Supposed Evils Or Crimes!

Instead, Stephen Provided A Prophetic Foundation For Understanding
The Whole History Of God & His People From The Beginning Of Time To The Present!

He Had Shared The Full Good News Of The Gospel!

Recall With Me Stephen’s Appearance & Demeanor

*“And all who sat in the Sanhedrin Council,
looking steadfastly at Stephen, saw **his face as the face of an angel.**”*

Acts 6:15

**Q: “What Had Stephen’s Prophetic Words, Appearance, & Demeanor
Done To The Religious Authorities Hearts, Minds, & Souls?”**

A: Instead Of Producing Repentance - They Were Filled With An Evil Indignation!

A: “When **They (Council of the Sanhedrin) heard these **Things (Stephen’s Good News)**
They were cut to the heart, and **They** gnashed at him with their teeth.” **Acts 7:54****

Q: “What Had Their Evil Accusations & Unrighteous Indignation Against Stephen Done To Him?”

A: He Remained Steadfast In Faith & In The Fullness Of God’s Spirit!

*“But **Stephen** being **Full of the Holy Spirit**, gazed into heaven and saw the **Glory of God**,
and **Jesus Standing at the Right Hand of God**” **Acts 7:55***

**A: He Continued To Prophecy As The Holy Spirit Led Him & Beheld Jesus Christ In His Glory!
He said, “Look! I see the Heavens Opened & the **Son of Man Standing at the Right Hand of God!**”**

Acts 7:56

Q: “What Had Stephen’s Prophetic Words, Appearance, & Demeanor Done To The Religious Authorities Hearts, Minds, & Souls?”

A: Instead Of Producing Repentance

They Were Filled With An **Evil Indignation** & Even **Unrighteous Rage!**

*“Then **They (Religious Authorities)** cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and **They** cast him out of the city and stoned him.”*

Acts 7:57-58a

A: It Has Also Produced An Educated Religious Zealot

Filled With A **Fervent Evil Indignation & Unrighteous Rage**

*“And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named **Saul.**” **Acts 7:58b***
(**Leviticus 24:10-16** Stoning – Blasphemy & **Deuteronomy 13:5-10 & 17:1-7** Stoning – False Gods)

Special Aside From Ancient History Of The Old Testament & Judaism

... “When the Trial is finished, convicted Is brought out of the Temple Courts, ... outside the City Gates, at a distance of 10 cubits from the spot chosen, you shall ask the convicted to Confess or Recant depending, and anyone who does so, shall be spared, ... at a distance of 4 cubits from the spot chosen, a witness of the council shall strip bare the convicted and shame them to cause them to Confess or Recant, ... at the spot chosen another witness of the council shall shove the condemned face forward from a span two lengths of his height and then you shall turn him over face up, ... if he is dead this is sufficient, ... if not another witness from the council shall drop a huge stone onto his chest over the condemner’s heart, ... if he dies this is sufficient, ... if not the condemned is to be stoned by the whole congregation of Israel until dead!”

Q: “But How Did Stephen React?”

Notice – 3# Similarities - Between Jesus’ Death & Stephen’s Death

Notice 1# Similarity

A1: “He Was Mute As A Lamb!” – Isaiah 53:7

He Did Not Confess His Blasphemy,

Nor Did Her Recant His Confession of Jesus Christ As Lord & God!

(**Silent** Before Pilate – **John 19:9** & **Silent** Before Herod – **Luke 23:9**)

Q: “How Else Did Stephen React?”

A2: Stephen Humbly Prepared Himself To Meet His Savior & King As His Obedient Martyr!

*And **They** stoned **Stephen** as he was calling on God said, “**Lord Jesus, Receive my spirit!**”*

Acts 7:59

Notice 2# Similarity

Between **Jesus’s 7th Response From The Cross & Stephens’ 1st Response During The Stoning**

And then **Jesus** had cried out with a loud voice saying,

*“**Father, into Your Hands I commit My Spirit!**”*

Luke 23:46

&

And they stoned **Stephen** as he was calling on God said,

*“**Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!**”*

Acts 7:59

Q: “How Else Did Stephen React?”

A3: Stephen Prayed For The Souls Who Were Martyring Him Asking Jesus To Forgive Them!

Then **Stephen** knelt down and cried out with a loud voice,

*“**Lord, do not charge them with this sin!**”* And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Acts 7:60

Notice 3# Similarity

**Between Jesus's 1st Response From The Cross
& Stephens' 2nd Response During The Stoning**

Then **Jesus** said,

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do!"

Luke 23:32-34

&

Then **Stephen** knelt down and cried out with a loud voice,

"Lord, do not charge them with this sin!"

Acts 7:60

Stephen Overcame Evil Accusations & Unrighteous Persecution!

**Stephen Is A Great Example Of What Jesus Christ
Is Calling Us To Be As His True Obedient Servants & Witnesses!**

So, Let Us Rise & Pray Today To Become More Like Stephen

*"Let Us Today & Tomorrow War Against
Evil Indignation With The Face & Demeanor Of Angels,
And A Spirit Filled Glorious & Prophetic Vision
Of God Reigning In Glory On High!
Let Us Continue To Fight Against
The Unrighteous Zealots Of The Evil One,
By Continuing To Spread Reason & Truth,
& The Good News Of The Gospel Of Jesus Christ!
Let Us Continue To Offer To Everyone We Encounter,
Especially The Lost & Broken-Hearted,
Forgiveness, Grace, Mercy, & Love,
Until Christ Calls Us Home Or Returns Again In Glory!"*