

“A Promise, A Covenant, & A Visionary Deliverer!”

Acts 6:12 & 15 & 7:1-16

And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; (House of the Sadducees) and they came upon (armed with intent) **him (Stephen)**, seized **him**, and brought **him** to the **Council (Sanhedrin)** ... And all who sat in the **Council (Sanhedrin)**, looking steadfastly at **him (Stephen)**, saw his face as the face of an angel! Then the **High Priest (Caiaphas)** said, “*Are these things so?*” And **Stephen testified**, “*Brethren and fathers, listen: The **God of Glory** appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said to him, ‘Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.’ Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, **He (God)** moved him to this land in which you now dwell. And **God** gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, **He (God)** Promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him. But **God** spoke in this way: That his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years. ‘And the nation to whom they will be in bondage I will judge,’ said **God**, ‘And after that they shall come out and serve Me in this place.’ Then **He (God)** gave him the Covenant of Circumcision; and so, Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But **God** was with **Joseph** and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, King of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh. Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people in all. So, Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers. And they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.” **Acts 6:12 & 15 & 7:1-16 (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 Begins His Defense By Going Back To God's Prophetic Word
Concerning God's Direct Involvement In The History Of Humanity!**

Stephen Teaches

- 1) That God Is To Be Obeyed At Any Cost.
- 2) That We Need To Be Ready To Respond To God's Leading.
- 3) That We Need To Be Pliable In Mind, Spirit, & Body To Follow His Direction, & Not Tradition Or Our Own Understanding!

Stephen's Defense Of The Gospel Highlights God's Direction, Will, & Intervention With Humanity In History Around A Theme:
"God's Plan & Purpose, Calling & Covenantal Promise To Send A Deliverer, Prophet & Messiah!"

Stephen's Defense Of The Gospel Highlights God's Direction, Will, & Intervention With Humanity In History Concerning:

- 1) Fall, Sin, & Purpose of the Law.
- 2) Role of the Priesthood.
- 3) Purpose Of The Temple & The True Worship of God.
- 4) Mission of The Coming Messiah To Set All People Free!

Now Back To The Atmosphere Before The Trial That Day

And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; (House of the Sadducees) and they came upon (armed with intent) him (Stephen), seized him, and brought him to the Council (Sanhedrin). Acts 6:12

Notice Stephen's Appearance & Demeanor

Stephen Is Anointed By The Illuminated Presence of God Within Him To Speak Divinely Even As His Countenance Without Was Divinely Illuminated!
"And all who sat in the Council (Sanhedrin), looking steadfastly at him (Stephen), saw his face as the face of an angel!" Acts 6:15 (NKJV)

The Trial Now Begins!

The Accusations Are Now Brought To Bear Against Stephen By The High Priest & Council!

Then the High Priest (Caiaphas) said, "Are these things so?" Acts 7:1

Stephen's Defense Focuses On God's Plan & Purpose – "Calling & Promise"

Stephen testified, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of Glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.'" Acts 7:2-3

Stephen's Defense - On Our Faith & Decision – "Obedience & Action"

"Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He (God) moved him to this land in which you now dwell." Acts 7:4

Stephen's Defense - God's Faithfulness & Promise "Provider & Sustainer"

"And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He (God) Promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him." Acts 7:5

Stephen's Defense - On Our Persecution & Suffering – "Faith & Perseverance"

"But God spoke in this way: That his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years." Acts 7:6

Stephen's Defense - God's Strength & Judgement – "Deliverance & Freedom"

"And the nation to whom they will be in bondage I will judge," said God, 'And after that they shall come out and serve Me in this place.'" Acts 7:7

Stephen's Defense - God's Covenantal Promises & Signs – "Proliferation & Prosperity"

"Then He (God) gave him the Covenant of Circumcision; & so, Abraham begot Isaac & circumcised him on the eighth day; & Isaac begot Jacob, & Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. Acts 7:8

Stephen's Defense - On Our Disobedience & Pride – "Downfall & Sin"

"And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt." Acts 7:9

Stephen's Defense - God's Deliverance & Protection – "Grace & Redemption"

"But God was with him (Joseph) and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, King of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house." Acts 7:10

Stephen's Defense - On Our Frailty & Fallenness – "Repentance & Forgiveness"

"Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh." Acts 7:11-13

Stephen's Defense – On God's Deliverance & Providence – "Faithfulness & Provision"

"Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people in all." Acts 7:14

Stephen's Defense - On Our Death & Anguish – "Deliverance & Resurrection"

"So, Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers. And they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem." Acts 7:15-16

Remember The 1st Accusation Brought Against Stephen!

1) Stephen Had Not Spoken Blasphemy Or Heretical Untruth Against God Or God's Word!

Stephen Has Laid Instead The Foundation For

"A Promise, A Covenant, & A Vision Of A Future Deliverer!"

Therefore, Let Us Do The Same Today & Tomorrow!

**"Let Us Rise Now & Pray & Re-Commit Ourselves Today
To Follow The Example Of Stephen!"**