



Acts: Stephen is Seized

March 2

INTRODUCTION: Acts: *Jesus' work, through the Apostles and disciples, by the Holy Spirit, to fulfil Acts 1:8.* In the Jerusalem Church the pattern of sign-sermon-response-picture repeats itself, this time centring around the ministry of Stephen.

KEY POINT: witness and opposition

A.M. SERMON RECAP (Acts 6:1-7)

- How is the body of Christ both organic and organizational?
- What was the problem?
- What was the solution?
- What was the effect?
- What principles can we glean from this passage?

P.M. SERMON RECAP (Jonah 2)

- What is the context of this passage?
- What does it teach us about God/ Jonah?
- What does it teach us about mission?

READ: Acts 6:8-15

QUESTIONS:

1. **V. 8- What characterized Stephen? Where did this come from?**
2. If Luke wrote a history that included us, what would he say?
3. *Stephen is the first, apart from the Apostles, to perform signs and wonders.*
4. *V. 9- There were many synagogues in Jerusalem, places of prayer and preaching. Not unlike ethnic churches today, one synagogue was made up of Hellenist Jews (most likely like Stephen) that represented an international scene of Jews who had been enslaved but were now free.*
5. Since Paul's home was Tarsus of Cilicia, might he have been among them?
6. **Can you share a time when you witnessed a godly Christian undermined by opponents?**

7. **What do you think they disputed with Stephen about?**
8. **V. 10- Why could they not do this? How is this an encouragement to us? (Lk 12:11-12)**
9. *V. 11- "secretly instigated"- put under, a false flag operation*
10. **V. 11- Why do those who cannot prevail against the truth always resort to lies?**
11. **What speech sins are they guilty of?**
12. **What did they accuse Stephen of? (c.f. vv. 13-14). How is this uncanny? (Mk 14:63-64).**
13. **Vv. 11-12- how are their actions slanderous? (c.f. Slander is a criminal offence in Canada).**
14. **Vv. 13-14- How do false witnesses break Ex 20:16? How is this uncanny? (Mt 26:63-64)**
15. **How does Stephen's near parallel of Jesus' experience fulfil Jn 15:18-21?**
16. **Given their supposed concern for the law how are their actions hypocritical?**
17. *V. 15- Stephen's face appears like Moses (Ex 34:29-30) and Jesus (Mt 17:2).*
18. **How is this a sign of God's approval?**
19. **How is it an indictment of their behaviour?**
20. **What lessons can we learn from Stephen as we face opposition?**

NEXT: March 8- Acts 7:54-60, Stephen is Stoned