

ACTS

# Persecution Breaks Out

Acts 6:8-8:3

## Empowered Witness

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- The Holy Spirit gave Stephen the ability to boldly testify about Jesus.

# False Charges

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- The Jews accused Stephen of:
  - blasphemous words against Moses and against God.
  - speaking against this holy place and against the law.
  - saying that Jesus would destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down.

# False Charges

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- Two main accusations:
  - Speaking against the temple = God.
  - Speaking against Moses = the law.

## Stephen's Response

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- All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen
  - saw that his face was like the face of an angel

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- God was with Joseph in Egypt.
  - Joseph was rejected and ultimately delivered Israel.
- God was with Moses in Egypt, Midian, and the wilderness.
  - Moses was rejected and became their ruler and deliverer by God.

## Stephen's Response

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- God was with the people in the wilderness.
- God was with the people in the promised land.
- God is not confined to the temple.

## Stephen's Response

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- The people consistently rejected God and his prophets.
- They had the outward signs of the covenant but their hearts remain unchanged.
- They rejected Jesus the Messiah.

## Stephen's Death

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- The Sanhedrin refused to receive Stephen's correction.
- Stephen saw God's glory.
  - He entrusted himself to the Lord and prayed for those who stoned him.
- Persecution broke out against the church.

## Persecution Breaks Out

ACTS

- When opposition arises, trust the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom to respond.
- Be on guard against a spirituality or self-righteousness that causes you to miss God.
- Follow Christ's example of mercy in the midst of persecution.