

ACTS

Death, Persecution and a Scattered Church

Acts 7:54-8:3

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1. The _____ reaction of the Sanhedrin to Stephen's biblical challenge resulted in his death and in the persecution of the Jerusalem Church.

- a. Though their conscience was convicted by Stephen's words, the stubborn sinfulness of the Sanhedrin _____ through their hearts and they were filled with rage.
- b. The Sanhedrin rejected Jesus as the risen Christ. In their unbelief, they _____ Stephen to be guilty of blasphemy and stoned him to death.
- c. In their sinful unbelief, the Sanhedrin organized an aggressive _____ of the church in Jerusalem.

2. God, in His great glory and mercy, sovereignly ruled over everything that happened in this difficult trial.

- a. The Lord granted Stephen a _____ of the Holy Spirit to enable him to endure martyrdom as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

b. God revealed to Stephen His _____ and Jesus at His right hand, as the Sanhedrin prepared to murder him.

c. Stephen saw the Son of Man standing.

1) He was standing to indicate the _____ of God because of the rejection of Stephen's witness.

2) He was standing as an expression of His _____ and compassion as the Great High Priest.

"Your _____ can never exceed His mercy." - Thomas Goodwin

d. The Lord used the Sanhedrin's aggressive persecution of the church to cause the gospel to _____ to the regions of Judea and Samaria.