

Digging Deeper: Acts 6:8–15

Sermon Series: Different

Sermon Title: *The Man, The Message, The Martyr/Stephen the Man*

by Robert Lee

Monday – Pray for God's Grace & Power. Read Acts 6:8–9. In this week's lesson, we read that Stephen the Man was full of God's grace and power which allowed him to perform great wonders and miracles before the people. In verse 9, we discover that opposition rose against Stephen from members of the Synagogue of Freedmen. These men were freed slaves, and in the Roman world, referencing people's social status was usually done for the purpose of differentiating those who had been freed from slavery, from those who had never been enslaved. These freedmen were Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as from the provinces of Cilicia and Asia, and towards the end of verse 9, we find that they began to argue with Stephen.

Tuesday – Pray for Spiritual Strength then read Acts 6:10 where we find that God's grace and power were on full display, as the opposition was unable to stand up against the wisdom and Spirit given to Stephen as he spoke. Also read Luke 21:15 where Yeshua prophesied about things to come as he prepared his disciples for the destruction of the Temple and gave them signs of the End Times.

Wednesday – Pray for Spiritual Obedience then read Acts 6:11 to see the parallel between what is about to happen to Stephen for standing up for God and what happened to Naboth, a citizen of Jezreel who was martyred by two scoundrels that followed the direction of Jezebel, wife of King Ahab (see 1 Kings 21:1–14).

Thursday – Pray for Spiritual Discernment then read Acts 6:12–13 to see the evil that was brought upon Stephen. Can you see how easy it is to be influenced by evildoers? Even the elders and teachers of the law (in this situation) were complicit with this wrongdoing.

Friday – Pray for Spiritual Repentance then read Acts 6:14. Yeshua actually spoke about destroying the temple and changing the customs of Moses that were handed down to the Jews because they were focusing their worship on the creation and not the Creator. Read Acts 15:1; 21:21; 26:3; and 28:17. In my opinion, this idolatry is a repeat of the first sin that was committed by both Eve then Adam in Genesis 3:6. Eve desired the fruit (creation) over Elohim (God the Creator), and Adam desired the woman (creation) over the Creator.

Saturday – Pray for Spiritual Peace and Self-Discipline then read Acts 6:15. Imagine what it felt like to be Stephen in that moment. God's grace and power is available to us today. The question is, are we willing to stand up for truth and speak truth to power?