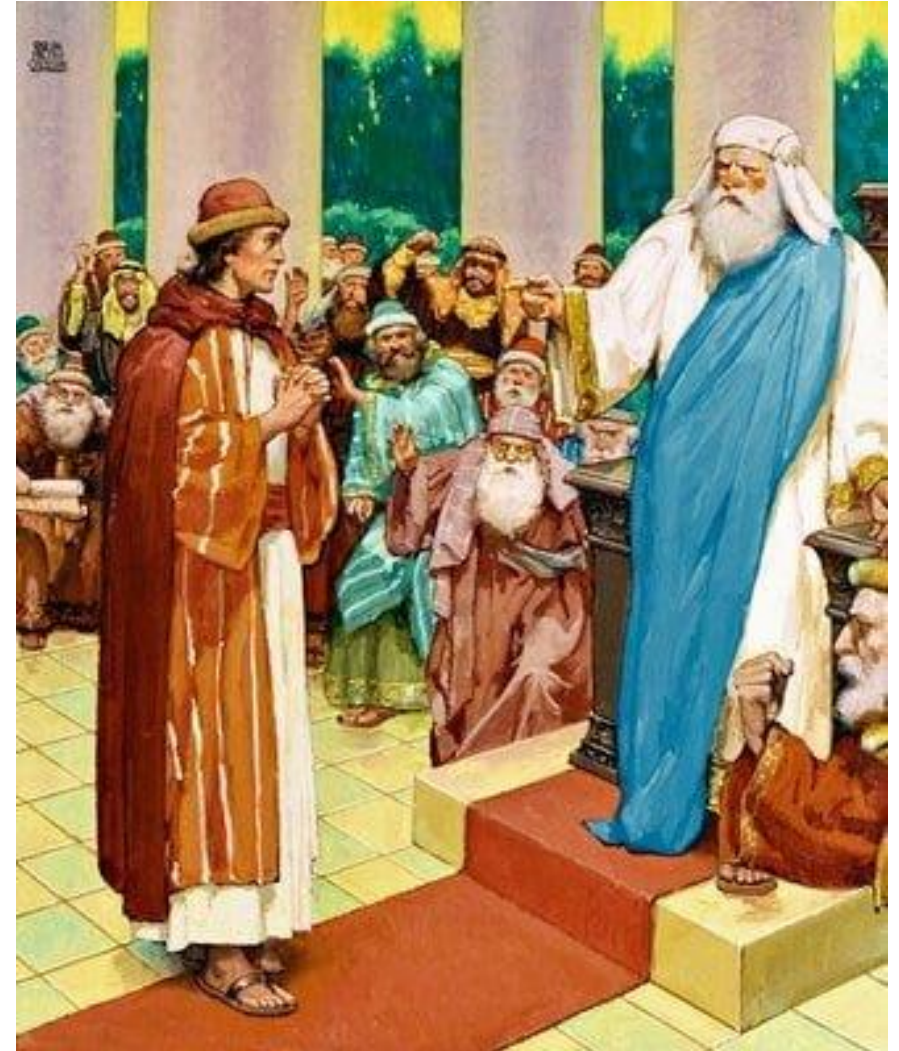


*When Power & Pride Collide
with Promise & Providence*

- *The Stoning of Stephen*
- *ACTS Chapter 6,7*



Backgrounder to the Collision

- *Peter preaches the resurrection of Jesus*
- *Peter & John healing of the beggar*
- *Peter & John arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin for their preaching their rejection of Jesus*
- *The apostles arrested, escaped, but then brought before the Sanhedrin; Peter accuses them all of hanging God's sent One on a tree*
- *Stephen preaching & healing; Synagogue Jews bring him to the Sanhedrin with various charges*

Acts 2

Acts 3

Acts 4

Acts 5

Acts 6

Stephen: An early church exemplar of service

- *Hellenistic Jew in Jerusalem*
- *Chosen as one of the deacons - full of the Spirit & wisdom*
- *Assistance with the equitable distribution of food*
- *Full of faith, God's grace & power*
- *A preacher, healer and debater*
- *Active participant in the growth of Jerusalem church*

Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus
Senate **Military**



Province
ex. King Herod, family

Roman Prefect
ex. Pilate
Military, Tax etc

Great Sanhedrin

High Priest & Priesthood

Police

Local governance:
Sanhedrins, Synagogue, Priests



Three Main Jewish Sects

	PHARISEES	SADDUCEES	ESSENES
General	in the world but not of the world	in the world and of the world	neither in the world nor of the world
Law	valued oral law, also accepted old written law	rejected oral law, accepted only old written law	wrote hidden law, accepted and gave interpretations to old law
Interpretation	accurate, precise	pragmatic, accommodating	creative, adaptive
God	participates in events of world	removed from the evil of world	Messiah will destroy the evil of world
Fate	Fate cooperates in human actions	rejected Fate, emphasized agency	accepted Fate
Society	kind to each other, lenient (Mt 5:46; Acts 5:39)	rude to each other, boorish, punitive (compare Acts 5:40)	great attachment to each other
Main Locations	rural villages and cities	urban centers	remote communes, separate quarters
Gentiles	partially accepted	openly accepted	mostly rejected
Property	lived simply	sought wealth	despised wealth, held goods in common
Pleasure			shunned pleasure
Souls	imperishable, good souls alone go on to another body, wicked souls suffer eternal punishment, believed in resurrection	no afterlife, no eternal rewards or punishments	bodies perishable, souls immortal, liberated upon death

Backgrounder to the Collision

The Sanhedrin



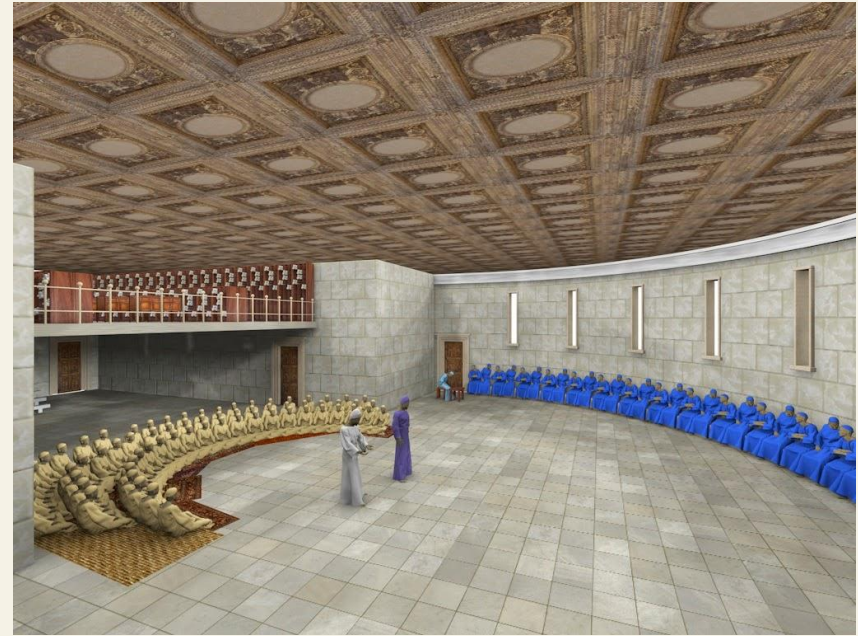
Backgrounder to the Collision

The Sanhedrin



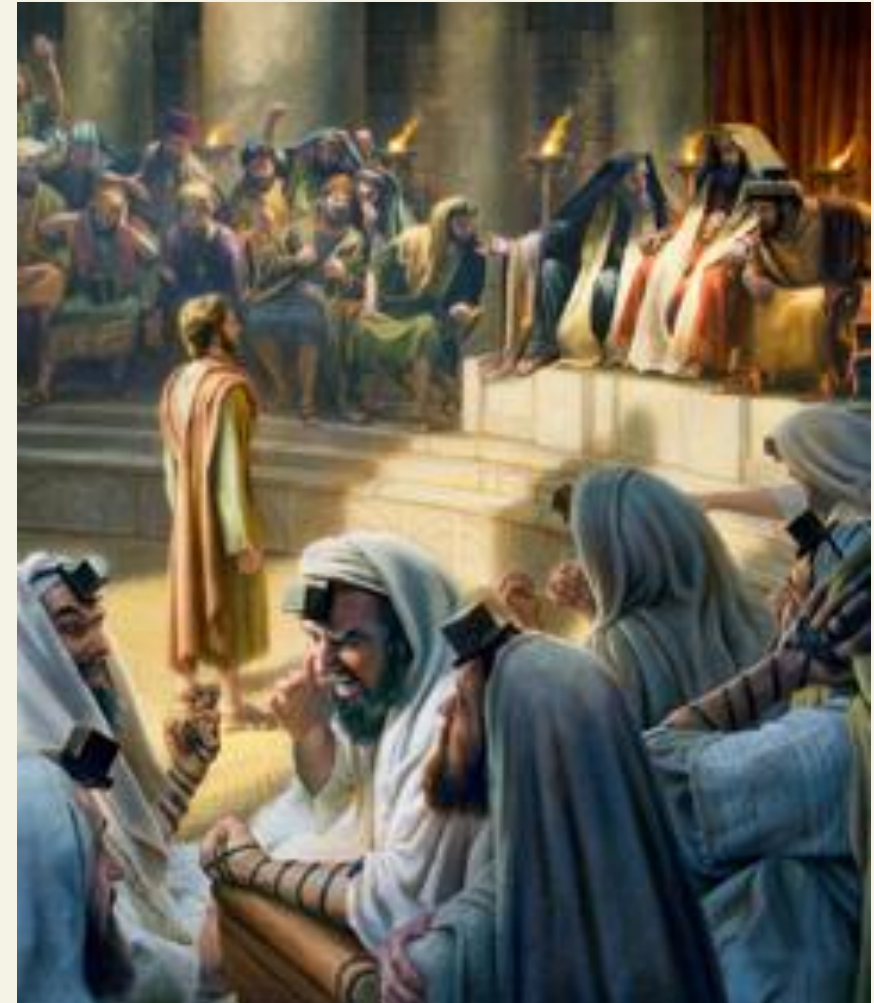
The Accusers & The Charges

- **The Accusers**
 - *Formal by the Freedman Synagogue*
 - *The Sanhedrin*
- **The Accusations**
 - *Speaks against this holy place*
 - *Jesus will destroy it*
 - *Speaks against the Law*
 - *Jesus will change the customs Moses handed down*



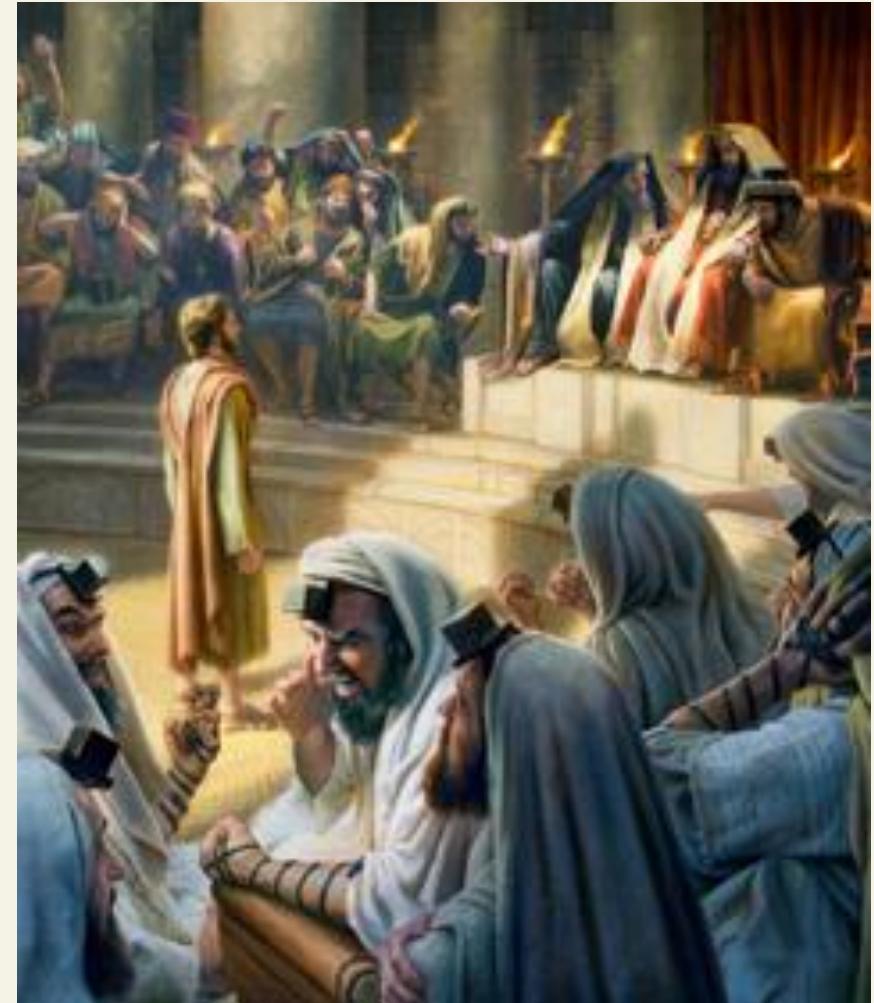
The "Defense" by Stephen

- **Observations**
 - *Opening words of respect for their positions of leadership*
 - *Listen to God*
 - *Defense begins with the God of Glory and ends with the glory of God*
 - *Historiography is that of God's promises, His providence, and the actions and reactions of the leadership of His people*



The "Defense" by Stephen

- ***Observations (cont'd)***
 - *Accusers become the judges*
 - *Accused becomes the accuser of the judges' treatment of God's Law and Dwelling Place*



Charting the Collision

Stephen address the accusations in reverse order

- *Speaks against the Law*

- *Jesus will change the customs Moses handed down*

- *Speaks against this holy place*

- *Jesus will destroy it*

Charting the Collision

	<i>God's Promises</i>	<i>God's Providence</i>	<i>The reaction of the Leaders of God's people</i>		<i>Reference</i>
Abraham	His people, their land	Provided offspring as the nation	The patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, tried to kill him	<i>Defense regarding the Law</i>	v 1-9
Joseph	Will serve as slaves	Protected Joseph in Egypt, famine in Israel	The patriarchs were given a chance at reconciliation with God's chosen	<i>Defense regarding the Law</i>	v 10-16

Charting the Collision

	<i>God's Promises</i>	<i>God's Providence</i>	<i>The reaction of the Leaders of God's people</i>		<i>Reference</i>
Moses first 40 yrs	To fulfill promise to Abraham	No ordinary child, escaped the edict of the king	Who made you ruler over us?	<i>Defense regarding the Law</i>	v 17-29
Moses next 40 yrs	Promise of exile end fulfilled	Protected Moses, trained in desert	They were groaning under slavery to a foreign power, and turned to God	<i>Defense regarding the Law</i>	v 30-34
Moses next 40 yrs	Promise of return from exile	He was sent as ruler and deliverer by God	The patriarchs refused to obey, rejected, turned their hearts away	<i>Defense regarding the Law</i>	v 35-41

Charting the Collision

	<i>God's Promises</i>	<i>God's Providence</i>	<i>The reaction of the Leaders of God's people</i>		<i>Reference</i>
Prophets	Promise of a people to worship God	God provided tabernacle, temples	they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him.	<i>Defense regarding the Holy Place</i>	v 42-54



Lessons from the first martyr

- *Stephen as a follower*
 - *Not pride or power, but a faithful servant*
 - *Ambassador for Jesus-Listen to Him*
 - *Always remember our calling*
 - *Cost of discipleship*
 - *Results may not be in our lifetime*
- *Our law, our place of worship*

