

A SERMON THAT COST A PREACHER HIS LIFE

Acts 7:1-60

Introduction: Stephen had been accused of speaking blasphemy against the law and the Temple because he told the Jews that the Lord Jesus Christ had fulfilled all the types of the law and satisfied all its demands, and that all forms of carnal worship must be obliterated. These words did not sit well with the religious leaders and they stoned him to death.

1. Implied throughout Stephen's sermon is the doctrine of God's Absolute Sovereignty in Providence.

- Beginning with the call of Abraham, Stephen showed how everything in the Old Testament pointed to Jesus Christ and was fulfilled by Him.

2. The Lord God is a God of Purpose.

- God's purpose includes all things and nothing takes Him by surprise.
- God's purpose is fixed and cannot be changed.
- As one recognizes God's immutability, one can trust God.
- Everything God has done or has allowed to be done, is doing or shall be done is for the praise and glory of His own great name.
- Apart from Jesus Christ and His great work of redemption, all that is recorded in the Old Testament would be meaningless.

3. All the events of Old Testament history pointed to the coming of Jesus Christ and redemption by Him. (vv1-47)

- The whole purpose for the Bible being written is to reveal the Grace and glory of God in what He has done through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- All the events of the Old Testament were arranged by Divine providence to reveal God's eternal purpose of Grace in the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ.
- God chose Abraham to start His elected people.
- God sent Joseph into Egypt to preserve His chosen people alive.
- God sent Moses to deliver God's covenant people from bondage.
- God established a temporary house of worship and furnished it in such a way as to be a picture of God's Church.

4. Now that Jesus Christ has come and redemption has been accomplished by Him, all carnal ordinances of the Old Testament are forever abolished. (vv48-50)

- God has forever abolished the old system of worship.
 - Jesus foretold of the day when God would be worshiped in the hearts of men and women, not in a particular place.

5. Continued, willful rejection of divine truth results in eternal reprobation. (vv51-53)

- God will not trifle with those who trifle with Him.
- God's purpose was not affected even though the Jews had rejected His Son, the Lord Jesus.

6. God even overrules and uses the hands of wicked men to accomplish His purpose of Grace toward His elect. (vv54-60)

- Even though the act of stoning Stephen was an inexcusable act of wickedness, God overruled and used it to accomplish His great purpose of Grace.
- Stephen went on to his glory.
- Saul of Tarsus came to know the Lord Jesus Christ whom Stephen preached so boldly about.
- God's Church would have a new apostle to help spread the word about Jesus - Paul.

CONCLUSION:

1. What would happen if this very same sermon was preached in the same place to the descendants of the ones who heard the sermon when it was first preached?
2. God has a purpose for everything He allows or doesn't allow.
3. The Lord Jesus Christ brought in God's New Covenant (Testament) which did away with the Old Covenant (Testament).
4. God will work His will even though Satan and wicked people try to stop Him.
5. Since God does not change nor can His will be altered, it is safe to trust completely in God.