

**WHEN INNOCENT
PEOPLE ARE
MURDERED**

ACTS 6:8 - 7:60

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**ATROCITIES ARE A RESULT OF
THE FAILURE TO STOP
PROGRESSING SINFUL CHOICES**

Acts 6:8-15; 7:54-58



HEATED DISAGREEMENTS

^{6:8} And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and **disputed** with Stephen.

FRUSTRATED BY FAILURE

¹⁰ But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

MOB MOTIVATION

¹¹ Then they **secretly instigated men** who said, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.” ¹² And they **stirred up** the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council,

UNTRUTHFUL ACCUSATIONS

¹³ and they set up false witnesses who said, “This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, ¹⁴ for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us.”

POWERLESSNESS TO CHALLENGE INTELLECTUALLY AND SPIRITUALLY

¹⁵ And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

HYSTERICAL RAGE

7:54 Now when they heard these things they were **enraged**, and they **ground their teeth** at him.

IGNORING GOD

⁵⁶ And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” ⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice and **stopped their ears and rushed** together at him.

HURT NOT SOLVE

⁵⁸ Then they cast him out of the city and **stoned** him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

God Overcomes Our Atrocities

ACTS 7:1-53 |

GOD OVERCOMES OUR ATROCITIES

Passage	Parallel	Person(s)	Purpose
1-8	Genesis 1-36	Patriarchs	Enemies Enslave And Afflict, God Judges
9-16	Genesis 37-40	Joseph	Jealousy Imprisons, God Rescues
17-41	Exodus - Leviticus	Moses	Disobedience Destroys, God Delivers
42-44	Numbers – Deut	Israel	Idolatry Rebels, God Corrects
45a	Joshua – Ruth	Joshua	People Wander, God Settles
45b-47	1 Sam – 2 Chron	David, Solomon	People Aspire, God Fulfills
48-53	Ezra – Malachi	Jesus	Sinners Suppress The Messiah, God Still Sends A Savior

Dying With Forgiveness Is A Triumph Over Atrocities

ACTS 7:54-60 |

LOOK TO JESUS OUR ASCENDED SAVIOR

⁵⁴ Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

COMMIT YOUR SOUL TO JESUS

⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. ⁵⁸ Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

FORGIVE YOUR ATTACKERS

⁶⁰ And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

LUKE 23:24

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”

FORGIVENESS IS A CANCELLATION OF A DEBT RESULTING FROM AN INJURY

Colossians 2:13-14 ¹³And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

FORGIVENESS GRANTS A FULL PARDON, NOT A PROBATION

2 Corinthians 2:7 So that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.

CONCLUSION

The results of man's sin are horrifying.
Our ultimate hope is not through sinners,
but our Savior from sin.

CONCLUSION

Reform and legislation are good, but limited. Our ultimate help is from God saving and transforming us from sin's power and effect.

CONCLUSION

Evil and death are ugly realities. Our ultimate healing comes through giving forgiveness and receiving forgiveness.

DISCUSSION

How does this passage help explain to children the reality of evil and sin and the hope of salvation and forgiveness?

How does Christ's forgiveness from the cross transform the way we deal with evil in the world today?

How can we prepare ourselves to forgive, even if our treatment and/or death is unjust?