

***“Heaven ... Just A Stone’s Throw Away” - Acts 7:54-8:4***

**INTRODUCTION:** Stephen’s ministry – **6:3, 6:5, 6:8, 6:10**

**7:54** – God’s Word will “*cut to the heart*” – Hebrews 4:12

- You can repent, or fight against it.

- “*gnashed at him with their teeth*” – Luke 13:27-28

**7:55** – “*But*” – A CONTRAST to **6:15** and **6:5**.

- “*gazed into heaven*” – Few had this privilege – 2 Cor. 12:2-4

- There are “*perks*” to being “*filled with the Spirit*” –

2 Kings 6:17 – God will reveal certain things.

- Like Moses, Stephen saw “*the glory of God*” – Ex. 33:22-23

- Stephen saw Jesus “*standing*” – Psalm 110:1

**7:56** – JESUS is the One who has the authority!

- Stephen is proving what he said in **7:52** was true.

**7:57** – See **7:51** (“*heart & ears*”) fulfilled in **7:54** and **7:57**.

- They become a MOB, to kill another Prophet – **7:51-52**

**7:58** – They couldn’t stone him inside the city.

- The “*witnesses*” were the official executioners.

**7:59** – Stephen sounds like Jesus – Luke 23:46

- At death, a Christian goes into the presence of Jesus –

Luke 23:43, 2 Corinthians 5:8.

**7:60** – Stephen sounds like Jesus – Luke 23:34.

- “*asleep*” is used to describe a Christian’s death –

1 Corinthians 15:51, 1 Thessalonians 4:14-15

**8:1** – The Christians were “*scattered*” ... See **1:8**.

- Now, their ministry spreads to the world – **8:4**

- Christians aren’t called to just “*huddle*”, but to go out to get the VICTORY – John 4:35

**8:2** – Stephen was God’s servant, not a criminal.

**8:3** – Saul’s ZEAL was later re-directed.

**CONCLUSION:**

- God sees the whole picture – Isaiah 55:8

- Keep your eyes focused on Jesus ... LOOK UP!

- You don’t have to go through life’s trials alone – Heb. 13:5

- There’s a “*stephanos*” waiting for those who live for Christ.