

Acts 7:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

Analysis

The Sanhedrin's response - 'cut to the heart' and 'gnashed on him with their teeth' - reveals rage rather than repentance. Being 'cut to the heart' here produced fury, not conviction (contrast Acts 2:37). Their violence confirmed Stephen's indictment of persistent rebellion.

Historical Context

Teeth-gnashing expressed murderous rage (Psalm 35:16, 37:12). The council's loss of judicial composure showed Stephen's speech hit its mark - they couldn't refute his argument, only silence him.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Why did the same phrase 'cut to the heart' produce repentance at Pentecost but rage here?
2. What distinguishes conviction that leads to repentance from that which hardens?

Interlinear Text

Ακούοντες	δὲ	ταῦτα	διεπρίοντο	ταῖς	καρδίαις	αὐτόν
they heard	When	these things	they were cut			him
G191	G1161	G5023	G1282	G3588	G2588	G846
καὶ	ἔβρυχον	τοὺς	όδόντας	ἐπ'	αὐτόν	
and	they gnashed	G3588	with their teeth	on	him	
G2532	G1031		G3599	G1909	G846	

Additional Cross-References

Acts 5:33 (Parallel theme): When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

Psalms 35:16 (Parallel theme): With hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.

Job 16:9 (Parallel theme): He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

Matthew 25:30 (Parallel theme): And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:50 (Parallel theme): And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Luke 13:28 (Parallel theme): There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

