

## 14—Stephen's Speech and Stoning

### Acts 7

1. Before we get into Stephen's speech, consider some background. What is Stephen doing among the people and how effective is he (Acts 6:8-10)? What accusations are made against Him (Acts 6:11-14)?
2. In responding to these accusations, Stephen decides to give a history lesson while concealing his main point until the end. What Bible character does he begin with in his speech (see Acts 7:2-8)?
3. Abraham had to leave his homeland in order to do God's will and obtain the promises (7:2-5). What uncomfortable thing were these accusing Jews going to need to do if they would please God?
4. Though Abraham would go and dwell in Canaan's land, what had God revealed to Abraham about His descendants (Acts 7:6-7)? What key fact does this reveal about the Hebrew's history?
5. Stephen then goes on to discuss another beloved Jewish character, Joseph (Acts 7:9-16). Why did Joseph end up in Egypt? Was this because of any wrongdoing on his part? Did God, ultimately, have a higher purpose for the suffering of Joseph?

## *Sunday AM Bible Study Questions (04.04.2021)*

6. In Acts 7:17-36, Stephen refers to several events during the lifetime of Moses. What are some of the key events he mentions? What happened to Moses when he tried to lead God's people and how might this be connected to the situation Stephen finds himself in with the Jews currently (7:23-29, 36-40)?
7. So far, Stephen has woven a thread of acceptance/rejection into each episode of Bible history he has mentioned (Acts 7:37-39). In Acts 7:40-43, what additional examples of rejection does Stephen cite?
8. One of the accusations the council had made with regard to Stephen was his mention of the destruction of the temple (Acts 6:13,14)? How do his examples in Acts 7:44-53 begin to answer those accusations in a subtle way? Was the tabernacle replaced at one point in time? Yet, even so, does God dwell in physical buildings (Acts 7:48)?
9. After several examples, Stephen ties together his main point as he addresses the Council. What were all of the previous precedents illustrating to the Jewish people (Acts 7:51-53)?
10. How does the hateful mob respond to Stephen's conclusion (Acts 7:54, 57-58)? How does Stephen respond to their vitriol and hatred (Acts 7:55-56, 59-60)? What can we learn from Stephen's example?

## Stephen's Conclusion

"Stephen is now prepared to spring upon his accusers the concealed application of the facts which he had arrayed in the first division of his discourse. The historical introduction had paved the way for the following analogies. As Joseph, the divinely selected saviour of his brethren, had been sold into slavery by these brethren; as Moses, divinely selected to deliver Israel from bondage, was at first rejected by them to become a fugitive in Midian, but was sent back by the God of their fathers to actually deliver them; as Moses, after leading them out of Egypt, was again and again rejected by them; and as all the prophets had met with similar mistreatment; so now, the final prophet of whom Moses and all the later prophets had spoken, sent to deliver them from a far worse bondage, had been rejected and slain by the sons of those persecuting fathers. The force of all these analogies is concentrated in the few words which follow (verses 51-53)" (McGarvey, JW. *Original Commentary on Acts*, pp. 129-130).