

# The Book of Acts

## Chapter 7

Growth of the New Testament Church

# Quiz

2

- What group of Christians was murmuring in Acts 6?
  - Grecians
- Who were the Grecians?
  - The Grecians were “Jews” who had lived among the Gentiles, and who spoke the Greek language.
- What did the apostles not want to neglect?
  - Continual prayer and the ministry of the Word
- Name one of the seven first deacons.
  - Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicolas

# Quiz

3

- What did the Libertines, Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicians, and Asians all have in common?
  - They were all Grecians. They could not resist Stephen's preaching.
- What religious group was represented by the "council"?
  - Sanhedrin
- What did the Sanhedrin do to condemn Stephen?
  - Hired false witnesses to lie about him.
- What part of Stephen reminded them of an angel?
  - His face

# Stephen's History of Abraham, v.1-8

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- **NOTE:** Stephen's sermon will progress to a logical conclusion.
- He began with Abraham's call to move, v.1-4, **Charran = Haran**
- God's promise to Abraham, v.5, **His seed, Gal 3:16**
- God foretold of slavery in Egypt, v.6
- God foretold of His judgment on Egypt, v.7, **The plagues.**
- God's covenant of circumcision, v.8

# Stephen's History of Jacob, v.9-13

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- The patriarchs [heads of family, sons of Jacob] sold Joseph, v.9
  - His brothers were envious or jealous of him. Partly Jacob's fault.
  - God was with Joseph. When we walk with God, He is with us!
- God delivered Joseph [after 13 years] and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, v.10
- There was a great dearth [famine], but corn [grain] in Egypt.
- On their second visit, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, v.13
  - That is one of the most exciting stories in the Bible, Ge 43-45.

# Stephen's History of Joseph, v.14-19

6

- Joseph called Jacob and family to come to Egypt, v.14
- Jacob died in Egypt, v.15
- Joseph was buried in Shechem, v.16; (Josh 24:32)
  - Joseph here represents the family.
  - Abraham, in his grandson, Jacob, bought it (Gen 33:19)
- Israel multiplied until Joseph was dead and forgotten, v.17-18
- Israel became slaves in Egypt, v.19



# Stephen's History of Moses in Egypt, v.20-28

7

- Moses was born in Egypt, v.20
- As a babe, he was “cast out”, lit. set outside, exposed, v.21
  - Moses was adopted by Pharaoh's daughter
  - Moses received the best education the Egyptians had to offer, v.22
- When Moses was 40, he visited the camp of his people, v.23
- He defended an Israelite and killed an Egyptian, v.24
- He sensed that God would use him to deliver Israel, v.25
- Israel rejected his attempts to help them, v.26-28

# Stephen's History of Moses in Midian, v.29-36

8

- Moses fled to Midian, v.29
- After shepherding for 40 years, God spoke to Moses, v.30
  - He saw the burning bush, v.30
  - God spoke to him, v.31-32
  - God ordered that he put off his shoes, v.33
  - God saw the affliction of Israel, v.34
- God sent rejected Moses to be their ruler and judge, v.35
- God used Moses to bring Israel out of Egypt by wonders, v.36



# Stephen's Mention of Christ, v.37-39

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- Stephen introduced the coming “Prophet” like Moses, v.37
  - He was speaking of the Messiah, Jesus Christ
- Jesus was in the church (i.e., called out assembly) in the wilderness, with the angle who spoke to Moses, v.38
- Our fathers would not obey Him, not Moses, but Jesus, v.39
  - We see here how Stephen is heading towards his conclusion.
  - Israel rejected Jesus with Moses.

# Stephen's History of Aaron, v.40-43

10

- Israel asked Aaron to make them gods, v.40. Direct rebellion!
- They made a golden calf and sacrificed to it, v.41
- At that point, God turned (to turn around as one who no longer cares) and gave them up (to give into the hands of another).
  - If we rebel, God may turn on us and give us over to our sinful desires.
  - This is never God's desire, but He permits it.
  - His chastening will follow. Rebels never really win!
- Israel “secretly” worshipped idols from then on, v.42-43

# Stephen's History of God's Dwellings, v.44-50

11

- Stephen mentions the “tabernacle of witness”, v.44
  - The tabernacle testified to Jehovah and His covenant (Num 17:7).
- The fathers brought it into Canaan with Jesus (i.e., Joshua).
- David desired to build a tabernacle or temple for God, v.46
- Solomon built the temple, v.47
- God does not dwell in manmade temples because He is the Creator of all things, v.48-50

# Stephen's Direct Application, v.51-53

12

- Stephen called them stiffnecked or stubborn and uncircumcised in hear and ears (heathens in heart and mind). This was because they always resisted the Holy Spirit, v.51
  - Your fathers killed the prophets and you have betrayed and murdered the Just One.
  - You have received God's Law from His angels and have not kept it.
  - It is a very dangerous thing to resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit in your life.

# Stephen's Execution by Stoning, v.54-60

13

- Stephen's sermon convicted them. They grit their teeth in anger.
  - They refused to believe the truth about Jesus Christ.
- Stephen was full of the Spirit. He looked up into heaven and said that he saw God and Christ by His side, v.55-56
- The religious mob attacked Stephen and stoned him, v.57-59
- Stephen prayed for his murderers, v.60

# Applications for us today

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- It is good for us to remember that the best thing we can learn from history is to **LEARN** from history and not repeat it.
- During Joseph's 13 years in captivity, **God had not forsaken him.**
  - God uses difficult times in our lives to mould us into something better for His glory.
- **God took 80 years preparing Moses.**
  - Be patient as God prepares you.
- When Israel rebelled, **God turned from them and gave them up.**
  - You will never win if you rebel against God.
  - Rebellion always leads down hill.
- **The tabernacle was God's witness.**
  - We can learn about God's holiness and character by studying the tabernacle.
- **Stephen kept a godly attitude right to the end.**
  - God wants you and me to have a godly attitude even when people hurt us.