

Logos Class – Acts of the Apostles

On Campus class for July 18, 2021

Acts Ch 7 – Jerusalem...Seeds for Spreading the Gospel

Calendar moving forward

- *July 18, 2021, Acts Ch 7– Martyrdom of Stephen, arrival of Saul*
- *July 25, 2021, Acts Ch 8 –*
- *Put on your calendar Aug 8 – **Special Sunday at FRC***
- *Each week following... we will average a chapter a week until we finish the book*
- *I will be recording and placing slides on the website for those who can't make it each week I teach*

Acts Basic Outline

Six sections, each ending with a summary

- ✓ **Chapters 1-6:7** – Church in Jerusalem and Peter's preaching. Church growing and large number of Priests were coming to the Lord
- ✓ **Chapters 6:8-9:31** – Church spreading and growing in all Roman Palestine, and the martyrdom of Stephen. Churches multiplying in Galilee
- **Ch 9:32-12:24** – Conversion of Saul to Paul, the extension of the church into Antioch and Peter's reception of Cornelius the Gentile into the church
- **Ch 12:25-16:5** – The church is spreading in Asia Minor (Turkey) and the spreading of the Gospel in Galatia
- **Ch 16:6-19:20** – The church crossed the Med and spreads to Europe. Paul is starting churches in Ephesus, Philippi, and Corinth
- **Ch 19:21-28:31** – Arrival of Paul in Rome and his imprisonment. Paul boldly proclaims Jesus Christ, and tells of the Kingdom

Acts Ch 8. Before we start...

Quick Review

- The church has appointed 7 men to serve as under shepherds in the Jerusalem church
- These men were to serve the underserved widows in the fast-growing church plus handle administrative duties related to the food and goods distribution
- All had to be of good report, full of the Holy Spirit, and wisdom
- Stephen is the first one identified and was singled out for Luke's coverage.

Acts Chapter 7: Before we start - *continued*

Stephen was additionally identified as one who was dominated or controlled by:

- The Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3)
- Wisdom (Acts 6:3)
- Faith (Acts 6:5)
- Grace (Acts 6:8)
- Power (Acts 6:8)

We also saw Stephen witnessing and giving testimony to the authenticity of Jesus as the Messiah, he was roughly arrested and taken to the Sanhedrin for trial.

Today we will take a look at his defense for the Sanhedrin

Acts Ch 7:1-5 ...the defense

7 Then the high priest asked Stephen, “Are these charges true?”

2 To this he replied: “Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Harran.

3 ‘Leave your country and your people,’ God said, ‘and go to the land I will show you.’ (Gen 12:1)

*4 “So he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Harran. After the death of his father, God sent him to **this** land where you are now living.*

*5 He gave him no inheritance here, not even enough ground to set his foot on. **But God promised him that he and his descendants after him would possess the land, even though at that time Abraham had no child.***

Acts Ch 7:6-9

⁶ God spoke to him in **this way**: *‘For four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated.*

⁷ *But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves,’* God said, *‘and afterward they will come out of that country and worship me in this place.’* (Gen. 15:13,14)

⁸ **Then** he gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him eight days after his birth. Later Isaac became the father of Jacob, and **Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs.**

⁹ **“Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt.**

Acts Ch 7:10-19 Jacob, the first “redeemer”

But God was with him ¹⁰ and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt. So, Pharaoh made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace.

¹¹ “Then a famine struck all Egypt and Canaan, bringing great suffering, and our ancestors could not find food.

¹² When Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our forefathers on their first visit.

¹³ On their second visit, Joseph told his brothers who he was, and Pharaoh learned about Joseph’s family.

¹⁴ After this, Joseph sent for his father Jacob and his whole family, seventy-five in all.

¹⁵ Then Jacob went down to Egypt, where he and our ancestors died.

*¹⁶ Their bodies were brought back to Shechem and placed in the **tomb** that Abraham had bought from the sons of Hamor at Shechem for a certain sum of money.*

¹⁷ “As the time drew near for God to fulfill his promise to Abraham, the number of our people in Egypt had greatly increased.

¹⁸ Then ‘a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt.’ (Ex 1:8)

¹⁹ He dealt treacherously with our people and oppressed our ancestors by forcing them to throw out their newborn babies so that they would die

Tomb of the Patriarchs

- City of Hebron
- Abraham, Isaac, Rebekkah, Jacob, Leah
- Building built by Herod
- Located in what is called the West Bank or Judah
- Disputed territory
- The second holiest site in Judaism (after the Western Wall in Jerusalem), it is also **sacred** to the other two Abrahamic faiths, Christianity and Islam.



Acts Ch 7:20-29 Moses...the 2nd Redeemer

20 “At that time Moses was born, and he was no ordinary child. For three months he was cared for by his family.

21 When he was placed outside, Pharaoh’s daughter took him and brought him up as her own son.

*22 **Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.***

*23 “When Moses was forty years old, **he decided to visit his own people, the Israelites.***

24 He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defense and avenged him by killing the Egyptian.

*25 **Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not.***

*26 The next day Moses came upon two Israelites who were fighting. He tried to reconcile them by saying, ‘**Men, you are brothers; why do you want to hurt each other?**’*

*27 “But the man who was mistreating the other pushed Moses aside and said, ‘**Who made you ruler and judge over us?***

*28 **Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?**’*

*29 **When Moses heard this, he fled to Midian, where he settled as a foreigner and had two sons. (and married a Gentile Midianite Woman).***

Acts Ch 7:30-36

*30 “After **forty years had passed**, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert near Mount Sinai.*

31 When he saw this, he was amazed at the sight. As he went over to get a closer look, he heard the Lord say:

32 ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.’^[f] Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look.

33 “Then the Lord said to him, ‘Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.

34 I have indeed seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groaning and have come down to set them free. Now come, I will send you back to Egypt.’

*35 “This is the same Moses **they had rejected with the words, ‘Who made you ruler and judge?’** He was sent to be their ruler and deliverer by God himself, through the angel who appeared to him in the bush.*

36 He led them out of Egypt and performed wonders and signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty years in the wilderness.

Acts Ch 7:37-39 ...where are our hearts?

*37 “This is the Moses who told the Israelites, ‘**God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your own people.**’*

38 He was in the assembly in the wilderness, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received living words to pass on to us.

*39 “But our ancestors refused to obey him. Instead, they **rejected him and in their hearts** turned back to Egypt.*

Some turned back, some went forward, and some went forward in physical presence only...because their hearts returned to Egypt.

Acts Ch 7:40-47

40 They told Aaron, ‘Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt—we don’t know what has happened to him!’

*41 That was the time they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought sacrifices to it and reveled in **what their own hands had made**.*

42 But God turned away from them and gave them over to the worship of the sun, moon and stars. This agrees with what is written in the book of the prophets: (Amos 5:25-27)

“Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the wilderness, people of Israel?

43 You have taken up the tabernacle of Molek and the star of your god Rephan, the idols you made to worship. Therefore, I will send you into exile’ beyond Babylon.

44 “Our ancestors had the tabernacle of the covenant law with them in the wilderness. It had been made as God directed Moses, according to the pattern he had seen.

45 After receiving the tabernacle, our ancestors under Joshua brought it with them when they took the land from the nations God drove out before them. It remained in the land until the time of David,

46 who enjoyed God’s favor and asked that he might provide a dwelling place for the God of Jacob.

47 But it was Solomon who built a house for him

Acts Ch 7:48-53. *Corrected Theology...unappreciated*

48 “However, the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands. As the prophet says: (Isa 66:1,2)

*49 ““Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.
What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord.
Or where will my resting place be?*

*50 Has not **my hand** made all these things?’*

*51 “**You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit!***

*52 **Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him—***

*53 **you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it.”***

Acts Ch 7:54-57 *The Reaction is swift*

*54 When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were **furious and gnashed their teeth at him.***

*55 But Stephen, **full of the Holy Spirit**, looked up to heaven and **saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.***

*56 “**Look,**” he said, **“I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”***

57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him,

*58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses **laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.***

Acts Ch 7:58-59...*Persecution arrives*

59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.

Stephen was the first of the Christian Martyrs, but not the last.

All of the Apostles, except John died a martyrs death (history)

Even today, there are modern martyrs dying for their faith

Historical Christian Persecution Statistics

In the 21st century,

- Roughly 100,000 to 160,000 Christians were killed **each year** ([Gordon-Conwell Resources](#) and [World Christian Database](#), respectively).
- Roughly 1,093,000 Christians were martyred, worldwide, between 2000 and 2010 ([World Christian Database](#)).

Modern, Global Church Persecution Statistics

- 322 Christians are killed for their faith every month ([Open Doors](#)).
- 214 churches and Christian properties are destroyed every month ([Open Doors](#)).
- 772 forms of violence (beatings, kidnappings, rape, arrest, etc.) are committed against Christians every month ([Open Doors](#))

This has been largely outside of the US and Canada...but it is here now.

Next week

- *Pray for*
 - *our country and its leaders*
 - *Our state and its leaders*
 - *Our Church and its leaders and Pastors*
 - ***Our brothers and sisters worldwide that are persecuted***
- *Israel in this ever more hostile world*
- *Finally, pray for those in our church family who are sick, and contemplating surgery, or just recovering from grief*
- ***Read Chapter 8 – Persecution and the movement of the Gospel***