

Calvary Chapel on the Horizon
September 19, 2021
Acts 6:8 – 7:60 “Stephan”

I. Introduction

READ: Acts 6:1-7

- † Today we will look at Stephan...one of the servants picked to wait tables (in essence) by the Apostles.
- † He was full of the Holy Spirit and power and of good report. God can use us no matter where we are if we are walking in His Spirit!
- † We will find today that Stephan is making disciples and using logic that none of the religious leaders can refute...so they get mad!

II. Steven

A. Full of Faith & Power

Act 6:8-10 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. 9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. 10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

- † **2Ti 1:7** For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.
- † **Joh 16:13** Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

B. Accusations

Acts 6:11-15 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. 12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, 13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: 14 For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. 15 And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

- † They couldn't win in arguing with Stephen, so, in essence, they cheated and hired men to lie and make accusations against Stephen.

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with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

- † **We also see that God called Abraham – who was a gentile and an idolater to follow Him. And...Abraham didn't obey completely – he took his father and lived in Haran until his father died...then! He went to the promised land.**
- † **God's plans are not thwarted by our disobedience – just put on hold until we choose to obey.**

Act 7:6-10 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years. 7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place. 8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs. 9 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, 10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

- † **God made the covenant of circumcision with Abraham and by faith Isaac was circumcised, and Jacob and the 12...**

Act 7:11-18 Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. 12 But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. 13 And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh. 14 Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls. 15 So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, 16 And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem. 17 But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, 18 Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

- † **And even though the 11 were “rats” to Joseph...God still protected them by using Joseph in Egypt.**
- † **This is because God is faithful – He never lies and never changes. Regardless of us...God keeps His covenant.**
- † **This is huge to us because this shows us that God will keep the new covenant – that the sacrifice of **Jesus** for our sins will always be sufficient! >> That our hope of Heaven is always real! <<**

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Act 7:19-29 The same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live. 20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months: 21 And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. 22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. 23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: 25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not. 26 And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? 27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou diddest the Egyptian yesterday? 29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons.

† **Moses knew he was destined to deliver the Hebrews out of the hands of the Egyptians...**

† **And so, he stepped out in his flesh and tried – but this was all outside of God's timing and failed miserably.**

† **One of the keys to the walk of faith is to follow and obey in God's timing and not ours!**

Act 7:30-37 And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. 31 When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him, 32 Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. 33 Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground. 34 I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt. 35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. 36 He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years. 37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

† **All of this discourse is leading up to v. 37...**

† **Moses authority and calling has been authenticated – he “WAS” the deliverer and spoke of a coming deliverer:**

† **Deu 18:15** The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

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Act 7:38-43 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: 39 To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt, 40 Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. 41 And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. 42 Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? 43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

† **We see that Stephan didn't blasphemy God, Moses or the law...the people of Israel did as they rejected Moses' authority who was speaking for God and thus they rejected God's authority.**

† **Similarly, Stephan didn't blasphemy the law – the people did by choosing to walk and follow their own ways and not God's...**

Act 7:44-50 Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. 45 Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. 47 But Solomon built him an house. 48 Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, 49 Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? 50 Hath not my hand made all these things?

† **Stephan now deals with the accusation against the Temple...**

† **He reminds them that Moses was told to make a tabernacle and even though Solomon build a Temple...God is outside of the physical when he quotes:**

† **Isa 66:1-2** Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? 2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

IV. Bringing the Indictment

† **Stephen now turns the indictment back onto the religious leaders:**

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Act 7:51-54 Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. 52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: 53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. 54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

- † **Stephan basically tells them they are hypocrites...prideful and arrogant and unwilling to listen to the truth!**
- † **And he tells them that “THEY” killed the Messiah...the “Just One” speaks of the coming prophet from Deut 18:15.**
- † **But the truth hurts and rather than repent and turn back to the truth of God...they lash out in anger!**
- † **There’s nothing like a good dose of reality and truth to set you off when you’ve made a perfect world that revolves around you.**

Act 7:55-60 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

- † **So they killed Stephan. He was martyred for telling the truth.**
- † **When facing persecution, we are told to “Take no thought, in that day, for what you’ll say – the Holy Spirit will give you the words”.**

V. Conclusion

- † **The truth always gives us two choices:**
- † **We can lash out at God, or we can humble ourselves and repent.**
- † **Each person has a choice...ultimately, it is always about receiving or rejecting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.**

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† **When we share the truth we give others the choice. When facing persecution, we also have the choice to stand up for Jesus or sit down and, in essence, deny the One who paid for our sins.**

† **Jos 24:14-15** Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.