

# ACTS STUDY GUIDE

## Chapter 7

In Acts 6, Stephen is accused of blasphemy (Acts 6:13-14). To the Jews, nothing was more precious than the Temple and the law. The Temple was God's house and the law was God's word, and to speak against either was blasphemy. In Acts 7, we learn how Stephen responds to these accusations.

Read all of Acts 7

### Acts 7:1-53

1. Certainly the members of the Jewish council were familiar with Old Testament history. Why, then, did Stephen deliver this "sermon" to them?
2. Some readers of the sermon view it as a review of Jewish history and/or an emotional condemnation of the council. Stephen had another goal: to point out that the Jewish people of the Old Testament misunderstood God's purposes in His actions. Likewise, the Jewish council made the same mistake with Jesus. In light of this goal, consider the following prophets mentioned by Stephen. Why would Stephen specifically mention them?
  - Abraham
  - Joseph
  - Moses
  - David

3. Review the verses related to Moses (Acts 7:15-45). Moses wanted to help his people, but was rejected (7:23-28). Yet, Moses became God's appointed ruler and judge (7:35). Even after deliverance, the Jews rejected Moses as ruler and judge (7:39-43). They misunderstood God's purposes in Moses' leadership, the law, and the tabernacle. How is the story of Moses like the story of Jesus? What point is Stephen making to the Jewish council?
  
4. Review the verses related to the church (Acts 7:46-50). What do the verses say about the Temple? What is the true meaning of the word "church"?
  
5. Of what did Stephen accuse the members of the Jewish council and their predecessors (Acts 7:51-53)? What does it mean to be "uncircumcised in heart and ears"?

## **Acts 7:54-60**

- 1.** How did the members of the Jewish council respond to Stephen's sermon?
- 2.** What did Stephen do next?
- 3.** What does this section say about Stephen's character?
- 4.** Why does Stephen say "Lord, do not charge them with this sin" (Acts 7:60)?
- 5.** How do the events surrounding Stephen's death mirror the events surrounding Jesus' death?
- 6.** Note who was watching this event (Acts 8:1).

## **LIFE APPLICATION**

1. Why do people who hold certain convictions often resent the person who shares an understanding they need to consider? Why do we tend to exclude people rather than include people?
2. When are we like the Israelites in the wilderness, tempted to turn our hearts away from God and “back toward Egypt”?
3. In what ways would you like to follow Jesus like Stephen did?