



I. Text: Acts 6:8-7:60⁸ And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.⁹ But some men from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen.¹⁰ But they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.¹¹ Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God."¹² And they stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes, and they came up to him and dragged him away and brought him before the Council.¹³ They put forward false witnesses who said, "This man incessantly speaks against this holy place and the Law;¹⁴ for we have heard him say that this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us."¹⁵ And fixing their gaze on him, all who were sitting in the Council saw his face like the face of an angel. **7:1** The high priest said, "Are these things so?"² And he said, "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,³ and said to him, 'LEAVE YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR RELATIVES, AND COME INTO THE LAND THAT I WILL SHOW YOU.'⁴ "Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. From there, after his father died, God had him move to this country in which you are now living.⁵ "But He gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot of ground, and yet, even when he had no child, He promised that HE WOULD GIVE IT TO HIM AS A POSSESSION, AND TO HIS DESCENDANTS AFTER HIM.⁶ "But God spoke to this effect, that his DESCENDANTS WOULD BE ALIENS IN A FOREIGN LAND, AND THAT THEY WOULD BE ENSLAVED AND MISTREATED FOR FOUR HUNDRED YEARS.⁷ "AND WHATEVER NATION TO WHICH THEY WILL BE IN BONDAGE I MYSELF WILL JUDGE,' said God, 'AND AFTER THAT THEY WILL COME OUT AND SERVE ME IN THIS PLACE.'⁸ "And He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.⁹ "The patriarchs became jealous of Joseph and sold him into Egypt. Yet God was with him,¹⁰ and rescued him from all his afflictions, and granted him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he made him governor over Egypt and all his household.¹¹ "Now a famine came over all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction with it, and our fathers could find no food.¹² "But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers there the first time.¹³ "On the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family was disclosed to Pharaoh.¹⁴ "Then Joseph sent word and invited Jacob his father and all his relatives to come to him, seventy-five persons in all.¹⁵ "And Jacob went down to Egypt and there he and our fathers died.¹⁶ "From there they were removed to Shechem and laid in the tomb which Abraham had purchased for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.¹⁷ "But as the time of the promise was approaching which God had assured to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt,¹⁸ until THERE AROSE ANOTHER KING OVER EGYPT WHO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT JOSEPH.¹⁹ "It was he who took shrewd advantage of our race and mistreated our fathers so that they would expose their infants and they would not survive.²⁰ "It was at this time that Moses was born; and he was lovely in the sight of God, and he was nurtured three months in his father's home.²¹ "And after he had been set outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and nurtured him as her own son.²² "Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.²³ "But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel.²⁴ "And when he saw one of them being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian.²⁵ "And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand.²⁶ "On the following day he appeared to them as they were fighting together, and he tried to reconcile them in peace, saying, 'Men, you are brethren, why do you injure one another?'²⁷ "But the one who was injuring his neighbor pushed him away, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND JUDGE OVER US?'²⁸ "YOU DO NOT MEAN TO KILL ME AS YOU KILLED THE EGYPTIAN YESTERDAY, DO YOU?'²⁹ "At this remark, MOSES FLED AND BECAME AN ALIEN IN THE LAND OF MIDDLE, where he became the father of two sons.³⁰ "After forty years had passed, AN ANGEL APPEARED TO HIM IN THE WILDERNESS OF MOUNT Sinai, IN THE FLAME OF A BURNING THORN BUSH.³¹ "When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look more closely, there came the voice of the Lord:³² 'I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHERS, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC AND JACOB.' Moses shook with fear and would not venture to look.³³ "BUT THE LORD SAID TO HIM, 'TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND.'³⁴ 'I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANS, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO RESCUE THEM; COME NOW, AND I WILL SEND YOU TO EGYPT.'³⁵ "This Moses whom they disowned, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE?' is the one whom God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush.³⁶ "This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years.³⁷ "This is the Moses who said to the sons of Israel, 'GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN.'³⁸ "This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai, and who was with our fathers; and he received living oracles to pass on to you.³⁹ "Our fathers were unwilling to be obedient to him, but repudiated him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt,⁴⁰ SAYING TO AARON, 'MAKE FOR US GODS WHO WILL GO BEFORE US; FOR THIS MOSES WHO LED US OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT-- WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM.'⁴¹ "At that time they made a calf and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and were rejoicing in the works of their hands.⁴² "But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, 'IT WAS NOT TO ME THAT YOU OFFERED VICTIMS AND SACRIFICES FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS, WAS IT, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL?'⁴³ 'YOU ALSO TOOK ALONG THE TABERNACLE OF MOLOCH AND THE STAR OF THE GOD ROMPHA, THE IMAGES WHICH YOU MADE TO WORSHIP. I ALSO WILL REMOVE YOU BEYOND BABYLON.'⁴⁴ "Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern which he had seen.⁴⁵ "And having received it in their turn, our fathers brought it in with Joshua upon dispossessing the nations whom God drove out before our fathers, until the time of David.⁴⁶ "David found favor in God's sight, and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob.⁴⁷ "But it was Solomon who built a house for Him.⁴⁸ "However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands; as the prophet says:⁴⁹ 'HEAVEN IS MY THRONE, AND EARTH IS THE FOOTSTOOL OF MY FEET; WHAT KIND OF HOUSE WILL YOU BUILD FOR ME?' says the Lord, 'OR WHAT PLACE IS THERE FOR MY REPOSE?'⁵⁰ 'WAS IT NOT MY HAND WHICH MADE ALL THESE THINGS?'⁵¹ "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.⁵² "Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become;⁵³ you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it."⁵⁴ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the quick, and they began gnashing their teeth at him.⁵⁵ But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;⁵⁶ and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse.⁵⁸ When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.⁵⁹ They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"⁶⁰ Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep.

What did you learn from Stephen's inspired survey of the Old Testament? How and why did Stephen's use the Old Testament as his defense? What was his main point to his accusers from this large section of Scripture? (read Acts 7:51-53)

II. Introduction: Why should we study the Old Testament? <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/old-testament-important/>
<https://www.gotquestions.org/old-testament.html> The goal of the sermon is for us to better be able to defend our faith (from Scripture) and share our faith (like Stephen)... how equipped or confident are you when it comes to apologetics/defending your faith or evangelism/sharing your faith? What is apologetics?

Apologetics is the study of the defense of the faith. The English word derives from the Greek word *apologia*, which means "a speech in defense of something." In Acts 25:16, it describes an accused person's defense at his trial. Paul gave an *apologia* to the angry mob in Jerusalem (Acts 22:1). To the Philippians he wrote, "I am appointed for the defense [*apologia*] of the gospel" (Phil. 1:16). In verse 7 of that chapter, Paul spoke of "the defense and

confirmation of the gospel." That verse delineates the two sides of apologetics: defending the faith against attack, and presenting truth claims of Christianity to unbelievers.

To reach the world effectively with the gospel, believers must be able to defend their faith. When Paul instructed Titus to ordain as pastors men who were capable of "holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9), it was not only to silence the rebellious, empty-talking deceivers (1:10-11), but also to teach the people so well that they could do the same. Peter instructed believers in general to "always [be] ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence" (1 Peter 3:15). Sadly, many Christians are unable to do that, having little or no understanding of why they believe. Lacking a solid foundation for their faith, they are easily "tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming" (Eph. 4:14). Tormented by doubt and ignorant of the faith, they are ineffective witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ. **MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1994). Acts (Vol. 1, p. 200). Moody Press.**

Stephen's Defense mentions 8 Major OT Heroes and 3 Covenants in Acts 7:1-60

- **Abraham** – (Gen.12-23), Isaac (Gen.24-26), Jacob (Gen.27-36)–Abrahamic Covenant (Gen.12,15,17)
 - Joseph – Preservation of Israel (Genesis 37-50)
- **Moses** – Mosaic Covenant (Law) (Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5) (Ex. 2-Dt. 34)
 - Joshua – Conquest of Canaan (Deuteronomy 31-Joshua 24)
- **David** – Davidic Covenant (Dynasty / Temple) (2 Samuel 7) (1 Sam. 16-1 Kings 2)
 - Solomon – Expansion of the Kingdom (2 Samuel 5 – 1 Kings 11)

Briefly summarize the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic Covenants by reading Genesis 12:1-7, Exodus 20:1-17, & 2 Samuel 7:8-16

III. Outline: Acts 7:1-60:

1. Stephen's Defense (Accused of blaspheming against Moses and God, against the holy place/temple and the law – Acts 6:11,13)

a. God of Glory/ **A** Covenant (Acts 7:2-19)

- Descendants/Mighty Nation (Genesis 12:1-3), Nations (Gen. 17:4-6)
- Land Promises (Genesis 12:7, 13:15-18, 15:18, 17:8)
- Gospel/All Nations Blessed through You/the Seed of Abraham – Christ (Gen. 12:3, 18:18, Gal. 3:16)

b. God of Glory/ **M** Covenant (Acts 7:20-44)

- Law as a Moral Standard/Protection/best way to live (Exodus 20, Deut. 5, Mt. 22:37-39)
- Law as a Tutor/schoolmaster to lead us to Christ/knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20, 28, Gal. 2:16, 3:11, 3:24)
- Law fulfilled by Christ / imputed righteousness (Mt. 5:17-18, Rom. 8:4, 7:12 - the law is holy, righteous, good)

c. God of Glory/ **D** Covenant (Acts 7:45-50)

- The Temple is only a model after the original in heaven (Hebrews 8-9)
- The Temple cannot contain God / God doesn't need it (Isaiah 66:1-2)
- The Temple will be rebuilt by Christ (Mt. 26:61, Mark 14:58, John 2:19, Mal. 3:1, Ez. 40-48, Amos 9:11-15, Is. 56:7, 1 Chron. 17:11-14)

2. Stephen's Offense /Accusation – you have resisted the Holy Spirit, betrayed & murdered the Righteous One/Jesus, and have not kept God's law (Acts 7:51-56)

3. Stephen's Martyrdom (Acts 7:57-60) and vision of heaven (Jesus at the right hand of God the Father)

Stephen knew his Bible (he could quote it, explain it, and defend his faith from it)...how can we practically build a culture at TBC that highly values/prioritizes knowing the Bible (reading, studying/interpreting, explaining, memorizing,) and applying/living out the Bible?

IV: Main Points and Sections in Detail

Acts 6.8-15 Stephen's Opposition (What Opposition Looks Like)

1. (6:9a) Rose up (Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia) ἀνίστημι *anistemi*: to raise up, to rise
2. (6:9b) Argued συζητέω *suzeteo*: to examine together, hence to *dispute* (but unable to cope/withstand the wisdom Stephen had via the Holy Spirit)
3. (6:11) Secretly Induced men to say (stirred up opposition, dissension) ὑποβάλλω *hupoballo*: to throw or put under
4. (6:12a) Stirred up the people συγκινέω *sugkineo*: to move together, fig. to stir up
5. (6:12b) Dragged him away συναρπάζω *sunarpazo*: to seize and carry away
6. (6:12c) Brought him before the counsel ἄγω *ago*: to lead, bring, carry
7. (6:13) Put forward false witnesses ἵστημι *histemi*: to make to stand, to stand (ψευδής *pseudes*: lying, false) (μάρτυς *martus*: a witness)

What opposition are you currently facing in terms of our fight with the world (sinful culture), ourself (the flesh), and the devil (spiritual forces of evil)? How are you currently fighting/resisting/struggling well...or how should you be fighting/resisting/struggling with victory?

Acts 7:1-8 Stephen's Defense - Difficulty yet Faith during ABRAHAM'S Time (Covenant of Circumcision – start of the nation of Israel)

1. (7:3) A Hard Calling – ἐξέρχομαι *exerchomai*: to go or come out of - leave your country (land of Chaldeans / Region - Μεσοποταμία *Mesopotamia* – lit. middle/midst of the two rivers – Euphrates and Tigris, City – Haran) and your relatives (father Terah, brothers Nahor and Haran)
2. (7:4a) A Tough Circumstance – Abraham's father (Terah) dies
3. (7:4b) A Long Journey - from Ur to Haran to Shechem/Oak of Moreh, to the Mountain between Ai and Bethel, to the Negev, then to Egypt, back to the Negev, and then to Cannan (west) while Lot settled in the Jordan Valley (Sodom/Gomorrah).
4. (7:5) A Delayed Promise – initially God gave Abraham no inheritance, no foot of ground, and no child/heir – promise to "descendants after him"
5. (7:6) A Difficult Prediction – Abraham's descendents would be enslaved and mistreated for over 400 years (430 to be exact)
6. (7:7) An ultimate promise – after enslavement in Egypt the nation (Israel) from Abraham would "come out and serve me in this place." (Acts 7:7)
7. (7:8) (Genesis 12:1-7) A Covenant of Circumcision – agreement between Abraham and God that God would make Abraham into a great nation, bless him/make his name great, bless all that families of the earth through him, and give his descendants all the land of Canaan.

What can you learn or apply from the life and example of Abraham? (Read Hebrews 11:8-19)

Acts 7:9-17 Stephen's Defense - Afflictions yet Perseverance during JOSEPH'S Time (Preservation and Expansion of Israel)

1. (7:9) Jealousy – sold by his brothers as a slave
2. (7:10) Salvation – God rescued Joseph from ALL his afflictions (θλίψις *thlipsis*: tribulation, trials, persecutions, anguish, distresses, sufferings – from root "to be pressed")
3. (7:11-12) Famine – 1st Visit – Jacob sends his sons (except Benjamin) (imprisons Simeon)
4. (7:13) Famine – 2nd Visit – Joseph discloses himself to all his brothers
5. (7:14-16) Famine – 3rd Visit – Jacob himself comes to Egypt (the nation is only 75 people at this point), dies in Egypt, but buried in Shechem/Canaan.

6. (7:17) Multiplication – God greatly increases and multiplies the nation as the time of the promise (end of the 400 years) nears.
7. (7:18-19) Genocide – A Pharaoh arose who knew nothing about Joseph and he attempted a generational termination of Israel by killing Israel's male infants. the deliberate killing of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnic group with the aim of destroying that nation or group.

What can you learn or apply from the life and example of Joseph? Read Hebrews 11:22

Acts 7:20-45 Stephen's Defense - A Disowned yet Faithful ruler/deliverer in MOSES' Time (Covenant of Law) (Jesus will be Israel's ultimate ruler/deliverer)

1. (7:20-22) Moses' childhood – nurtured by his parents and Pharaoh's daughter, educated by the Egyptians
2. (7:22) Moses' early manhood - powerful in words and deeds.
3. (7:23-29) Moses' middle manhood/age 40-80 – visits his brethren, defends unjust oppression with vengeance, rejected by his brethren (who made you ruler/judge over us), flees to Midian, marries Jethro's daughter (Zipporah) and has two sons (Gershom and Eliezer).
4. (7:30-38) Moses' later manhood and ministry/age 80-120 – angel appeared to him in the burning bush, he heard the voice of the Lord (I've seen the oppression, heard their groans, I have come down to rescue them by sending you to Egypt). God sent him as a ruler and a deliverer of Israel with the help of the angel who appeared in the burning bush. Moses did wonders, signs (Rea Sea) for 40 years in the wilderness. Moses prophecy of Jesus in Dt. 18:15 "God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren." Moses spoke with God on Mt. Sinai and passed on living oracles to Israel.
5. (7:39-45) Moses' rejection similar to rejection of Jesus - BUT Israel was unwilling, disobedient, and repudiated Moses and in their hearts turned back to Egypt as exemplified by the golden calf (make us gods), idol worship of Moloch/false tabernacle and Rompha/star object that led to the exile of Israel in Babylon, But God was faithful – gave a tabernacle of testimony (testimony of his faithfulness to all His promises) that Israel carried with them in possessing the land of Canaan and dispossessing the evil nations during Joshua

What can you learn or apply from the life and example of Moses? Read Hebrews 11:24-29

Acts 7:46-50 Stephen's Defense - A King & Temple in the time of DAVID & SOLOMON (Covenant of the Kingdom) (Jesus will come & rule FOREVER!)

1. (7:46) David found favor with God (the man after God's own heart – 1 Sam. 13:14, 16:7, Acts 13:22)
2. (7:47) Solomon built the temple for God (likely the wisest & richest man who ever lived)
3. (7:48-50) But God does not need or dwell in a man-made temple
 - a. A God too big/inscrutable and a man-made temple too small/inadequate (Romans 11:33-36)
 - Word picture - heaven is my throne, earth is my footstool (from Is. 66:1-2)
 - Question – what kind of house can you build for God?
 - Logic - God made everything – why would He need man to build a house for Him?

What can you learn or apply from the life and example of David and other O.T. Heroes of the Faith? Read Heb. 11:32-40 Also read Isaiah 66:1-2 – what is God's will and purpose for commanding and allowing an earthly, man-made temple that is a copy of the one in heaven (Hebrews 9:22-28)...but what is its limitation that Stephen identifies through Isaiah? How is the temple of your heart today in general and specifically in terms of humility, contrite of spirit, and trembling at God's Word?

Acts 7:51-53 Stephen's Conclusion and Verdict – Israel is guilty of Ongoing Rebellion and Rejection of the Righteous One/JESUS

1. (7:51) a. Stiff Necked (stubborn, rebellious, resisting/opposing God) b. Uncircumcised in heart (unsaved, not born again, not forgiven and not entering the Kingdom) c. Always resisting the Holy Spirit (not indwelt with the Holy Spirit – rather enemies of God, His Gospel, His Kingdom/Glory), d. Doing just as your fathers did (the history of complaining, rebelling, and idolatry in Israel's past)
2. (7:52) The key verse to understand WHY Stephen was throughout Acts 7 reviewing Israel's history and WHAT his main point is ...**basically this generation that is rejecting Jesus is doing the same thing Israel has always been doing... rejecting/prosecuting their prophets (killing those who announced the coming of the Righteous One/Jesus) and now betraying/murdering the Righteous One/Jesus Himself... not to mention the irony of now murdering Stephen who is also a prophet at the current time proclaiming Jesus.**
3. (7:53) God's judgment/verdict through Stephen on the current unbelieving Jews – you have received the law as ordained by angels (just like the generation in in Moses' time), and yet (similarly) you did not keep it/God's laws (Gal. 3:19-22) so that no one is justified in God's eyes but rather stand condemned/guilty (Romans 3:20, Gal. 2:16, 3:11).

Read Deuteronomy 18:15 – why is Moses' prediction/prophecy of Jesus as the prophet like me to come (the ultimate ruler/deliverer like Moses in the future) so important and why is listening to/obeying Jesus commanded and critically pertinent to Stephen's martyrdom?

Acts 7:54-60 Stephen's Stoning/Martyrdom (the first mention of Saul who would later become Paul)

1. (7:54) Strong Conviction/Guilt - either leads to strong rejection or strong repentance – in Acts 2:37 they were pierced to the heart and overwhelmingly repented, here in Acts 7:54 they were cut to the heart and became so angry they murdered yet another innocent man who passionately was telling them the truth by the Holy Spirit
2. (7:55-56) Strong Comfort/Consolation – Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit in the moments before and even during his murder... here seeing (gazed intently) into heaven and seeing the glory of God/Jesus standing at the right hand of God...saying "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." (Acts 2:33, 5:31, 7:55-56, Romans 8:34, Col. 3:1, Heb. 10:12/Ps. 110:1)
3. (7:57-58) Strong and final Evil Actions/Murder – loudly yelling, covering ears/refusing to listen, rusing at him with one impulse/one passion (one mind/one passion can be good or evil) , driving him out of the city, stoning Stephen to death
4. (7:59-60) Stronger and final Gracious Action/Forgiveness – Stephen calls out to God similarly to how Jesus did on the cross... Lord Jesus receive my spirit... and asking God to forgive his murderers "Lord do not hold this sin against them" before he dies (N.T. likes to call it sleep I think because for the believer death is not final but momentary just like sleep)

Why do you think some who are pierced/cut to the heart respond with repentance leading to salvation like in Acts 2:37, but others like here in Acts 7:54 are equally cut to the heart yet respond in such anger that they murder those telling them the truth? Also discuss the amazing contrast between Stephen's gracious prayer asking God for mercy for his killers vs the murderers actions. **Lastly, do you think God gives a special grace/comfort and power/ability to Christians to die courageously and gracefully if and when they die or get martyred?**

V: Application: 1 Peter 3:8-16 ¹⁵...Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; ¹⁶ and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

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FOLLOWERS OF JESUS SEEKING TO...

LOVE GOD SUPREMELY

Matthew 22:37-38 ³⁷ And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." ³⁸ "This is the great and foremost commandment.

SERVE PEOPLE SINCERELY

Matthew 22:39 ³⁹ "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

John 13:34-35 ³⁴ "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

REACH THE LOST URGENTLY

Matthew 28:19-20 ¹⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Acts 7:1–60

⁵¹ "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did. ⁵² "Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; ⁵³ you who received the law as ordained by angels, and *yet* did not keep it." ⁵⁴ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the quick, and they *began* gnashing their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;



Acts 7:1–60

⁵⁶ and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse. ⁵⁸ When they had driven him out of the city, they *began stoning him*; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They went on stoning Stephen as he called on *the Lord* and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" ⁶⁰ Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep.



Review of 7 Foundations of a Biblical Church:

1. The Foundation of God's Glory (Soli Deo Gloria – Glory to God alone) (1 Corinthians 3:4-15, Romans 11:36)
2. The Foundation of God's Son (Jesus our Cornerstone–100% Deity & Humanity)(Colossians 1:13-18,1 Peter 2:2-7)
3. The Foundation of God's Spirit (Prayer – Power, Perspective, Perseverance) (Colossians 1:9-12, 4:2)
4. The Foundation of God's Gospel (The Good News of Jesus Life, Death, & Resurrection = Righteousness, Forgiveness, & Eternal Life IF one is believing in Jesus through repentance, faith, and Lordship) (Acts 2:22-32, Romans 3:20-26)
5. The Foundation of God's Church (The Body & Bride of Christ – the pillar and support of the truth) (Acts 2:42-47, Ephesians 1:22-23, 3:10-11, 3:21, 4:1-16, 5:23-32)
6. The Foundation of God's Word (The Bible/Canon, revelation from God to measure truth from error, right from wrong, good from evil) (2 Timothy 3:10-17, 2 Peter 1:19-21, Hebrews 1:1-2, 4:12, Romans 15:4, John 8:32, 17:17)
7. The Foundation of God's Shepherds (Preaching) (1 Timothy 4:12-13, 5:20, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, Titus 2:15)

Practical Application:

So How Should a Christian choose a church?

What NOT to do... don't use the typical criteria that many/most Christians unknowingly and unbiblically follow: Do I like the Pastor, do I like the music, do I like the building, do I like the programs, do I like the people (I, I, I, I, I = consumer mentality, but rather pray Lord where do YOU want me, where can I and my family best serve YOU and grow in our faith for YOU, not my will but your will be done)

So LOOK for, TEST and EVALUATE a church on the following criteria:

1. Truth/Doctrine – which church is most in line with Scripture and best believes, teaches, and practices the Bible (High View of God/High View of Scripture). Practically the first thing you should do before visiting a church is read their doctrinal statement online or ask for a printed copy of their statement of faith (if they don't have their doctrine as the first thing on online or onsite – not good)

How Should YOU choose a church?

So look for, test and evaluate a church on the following criteria:

2. Philosophy of Ministry/Priorities – before joining a church ask to meet with one of the Pastors/Elders (if they are too busy to meet – not good) and ask them questions about their philosophy of ministry – what’s the most important, what their priorities are, and how they go about pursuing/accomplishing them (that will tell you a lot of about them and the church). The priorities should be in line with Acts 2:42:

- **Doctrine** (Declaring God’s truth by preaching through books of the Bible learn and live the whole counsel of God’s will)
- **Worship** (Presenting ourselves before God with sincere hearts to gratefully and passionately glorify the One true Triune God)
- **Fellowship** (Practicing of the One Anothers with Selfless Love, Compassion, Kindness, Service to others)
- **Prayer** (Seeking earnestly and regularly God’s Power, Perspective, Perseverance in our lives & ministry)
- **Gospel** (Sharing God’s Gracious Plan of salvation with concern for the Eternity of all people by faithful and fruitful evangelism)

How Should YOU choose a church?

So look for, test and evaluate a church on the following criteria:

3. Personal Example/Biblical Qualifications of the Elders and Deacons.

Also ask them about their personal relationship/walk with the Lord - what I call the Big 5:

1. Their relationship with God (devotional life)
2. Their relationship with their spouse (married life)
3. Their relationship with their children (family life)
4. Their relationship with their sheep/people (church life)
5. Their relationship with the lost (evangelism life)

(If they don't have a healthy/vibrant relationship with God neither will the church...if they don't Biblically lead/manage their own homes well they won't manage the church any better). The spiritual health of the church will usually resemble the health of the Pastor and his family unless the church is apathetic and rebellious against his preaching/example.

1 Timothy 3:5 ⁵ (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)

How Should YOU choose a church?

So look for, test and evaluate a church on the following criteria:

4. Holy Living/Progressive Sanctification and Obedience of the Congregation

Do you see in the church as a whole...

1. The People regularly **WITNESSING** /sharing their faith, evangelizing the lost (new people being saved, baptized, and added to the church – spiritual multiplication/reproduction - Acts 1:8, 2:41,47 5:14, 6:1,7, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5, 19:20)
2. The People regularly **PRAYING** for the lost, praying for each other, seeking God's will - His power, His perspective, His perseverance – Acts 1:14, 2:42, 6:4)
3. The People regularly **FELLOWSHIPPING**, practicing the one anothers, and enjoying their closest friendships within the church – Acts 2:42, Hebrews 13:16.
4. The People regularly **STUDYING** and growing in their knowledge and practice of the Holy Scriptures privately (personal devotions) and corporately (Congregation, Class, Cell, Comrade, and Christian settings) (Goal to learn and live out the truth of God's Word – Acts 6:4, 2 Peter 3:18).
5. The People progressively **OBEYING** the commands of Jesus in the N.T. (Acts 5:29, Mt. 28:18-20) so that others can see a growing Christlikeness/holiness/difference in their marriage, family, conduct at work, service/contribution within the church, and outreach/Christian witness to the unsaved world around them. (Goal to be rounding the bases – 1st base/conversion, 2nd base/baptism, 3rd base/membership & maturity, Home base – death, rapture, Kingdom, Heaven)

How Should YOU choose a church?

So look for, test and evaluate a church on the following criteria:

5. Their overall goals, motives, and mission statement

(how do they define success, who are they trying to please, who are what are they striving for)

Do you see in the church as a whole...

1. A Focus on man vs a focus on God
2. A Focus on money vs Christian maturity
3. A Focus on buildings/facilities vs the true temples (people's souls that last forever)
4. A Focus on success by what man sees/thinks/wants (numbers, buildings, programs, popularity, influence) vs what God sees/thinks/wills (new people saved, new people baptized, new people disciplined/equipped towards Christlike maturity)
5. A Focus on the Culture vs a Focus on Scripture
6. A Focus on the Temporary vs a Focus on the Kingdom/Eternity
7. A Focus on Self vs a focus on the Savior

Reaching the Most Unreachable

(Converting the most Caustic/Opposed to the Gospel)

Acts 6:7 ⁷ The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

- **Truth** (preaching and teaching God's Word, especially the Gospel)

Acts 5:42 ⁴² And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus *as* the Christ.

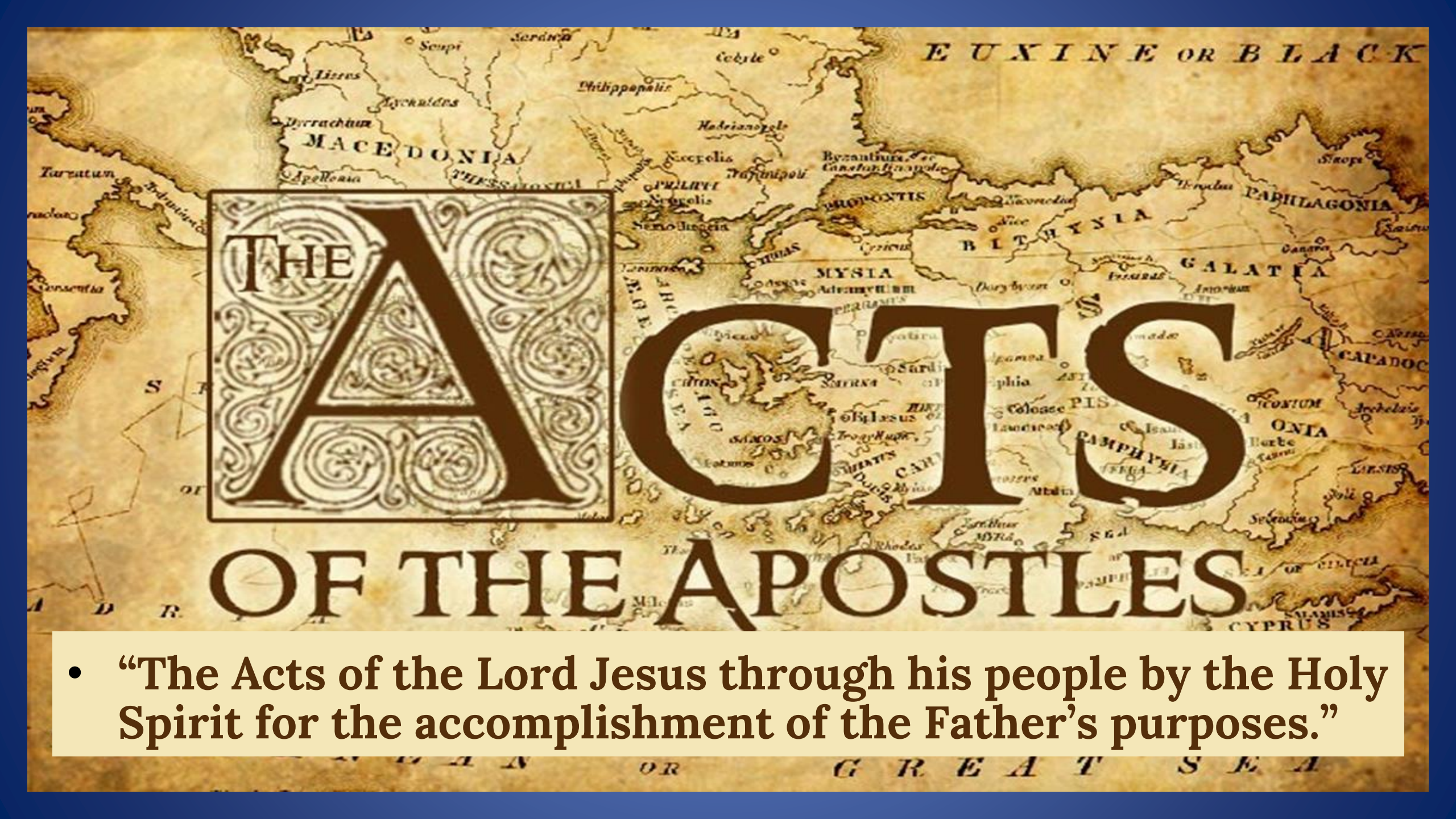
- **Love** (genuine care and compassion among believers)

Acts 2:44-47 ⁴⁴ And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ and they *began* selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. ⁴⁶ Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

- **Power** (changed lives – the miracle of salvation)

Acts 4:14 ¹⁴ And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply.

Acts 5:16 ¹⁶ Also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all being healed.



THE ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES

- “The Acts of the Lord Jesus through his people by the Holy Spirit for the accomplishment of the Father’s purposes.”

How to biblically **serve** and **imitate** powerful men like Stephen

Acts 6:5 Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit ...**Acts 6:8-10** ⁸ And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. ...¹⁰ But they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

Stephen was filled FULL of the Holy Spirit – Acts 6:5, 6:8

- ✓ **Full of Faith** (πίστις *pistis*: faith, faithfulness)
- ✓ **Full of the Holy Spirit** (πνεῦμα *pneuma*: wind) (ἅγιος *hagios*: sacred, holy)
- ✓ **Full of Grace** (χάρις *charis*: grace, kindness) **and power** (δύναμις *dunamis*: (miraculous) power, might, strength)
- ✓ **Full of Wisdom** (σοφία *sophia*: skill, wisdom)

Stephen's Perfect

OLD TESTAMENT

SURVEY

Pt 2

Acts 7:1-60

please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your fathers. Joseph wept when they spoke to him, and said, "Behold, we are your servants." Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for I am in the place of God." 20 As for you, you have done evil against me, but God meant it for good to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. 21 So do not fear, I will provide for you and your families. Thus he comforted them and sent them away to them.

of Joseph

Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his brothers. Joseph lived 110 years. 22 And Joseph's brothers and the children of the third generation of Joseph also came to Egypt.

EXODUS

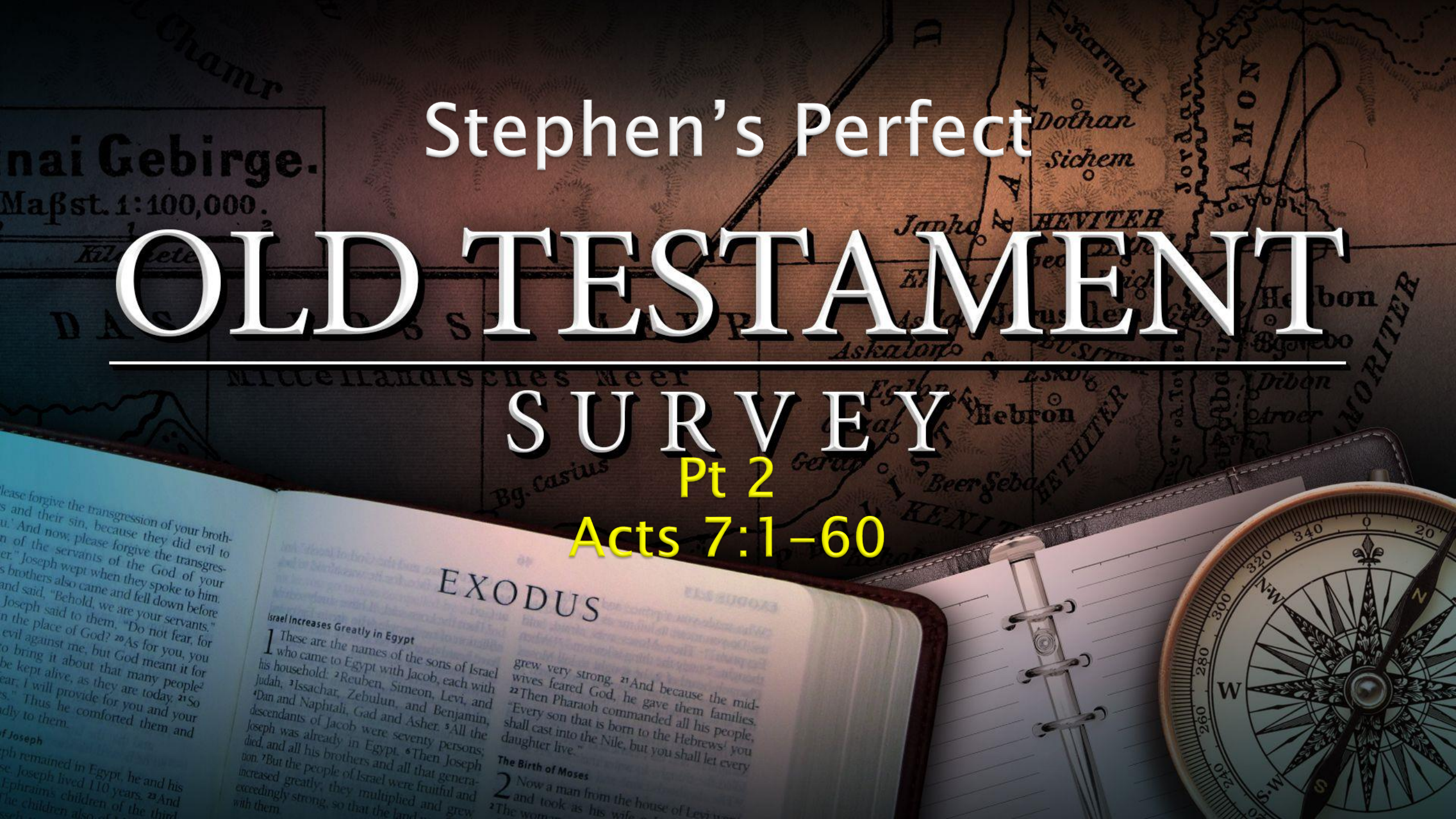
Israel Increases Greatly in Egypt

1 These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: 2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, 4 Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. 5 All the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons; Joseph was already in Egypt. 6 Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation died. 7 But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

The Birth of Moses

2 Now a man from the house of Levi named Amram and took as his wife Jochebed, a daughter of Levi, his aunt. 2 The woman

grew very strong. 21 And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. 22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews I will cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."



Old Testament Summaries

- Jmac: Stephen uses a lengthy historical summation to make his case. His style of reply had its roots in such Old Testament passages as Nehemiah 9:5ff.; Psalm 78, 105, 106. His purpose was to show that Christ and the Christian faith which he preached were the perfect fulfillment of the Old Testament. He traces the line of God's sovereign will from Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and David to our Lord—"the Righteous One" (v. 52).

Apologetics

- To reach the world effectively with the gospel, believers must be able to defend their faith. When Paul instructed Titus to ordain as pastors men who were capable of “holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict” (Titus 1:9), it was not only to silence the rebellious, empty-talking deceivers (1:10–11), but also to teach the people so well that they could do the same. Peter instructed believers in general to “always [be] ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence” (1 Peter 3:15). Sadly, many Christians are unable to do that, having little or no understanding of why they believe. Lacking a solid foundation for their faith, they are easily “tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Eph. 4:14). Tormented by doubt and ignorant of the faith, they are ineffective witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Apologetics

- Apologetics is the study of the defense of the faith. The English word derives from the Greek word *apologia*, which means “a speech in defense of something.” In Acts 25:16, it describes an accused person’s defense at his trial. Paul gave an *apologia* to the angry mob in Jerusalem (Acts 22:1). To the Philippians he wrote, “I am appointed for the defense [*apologia*] of the gospel” (Phil. 1:16). In verse 7 of that chapter, Paul spoke of “the defense and confirmation of the gospel.” That verse delineates the two sides of apologetics: defending the faith against attack, and presenting truth claims of Christianity to unbelievers.

Stephen's Defense mentions 8 Major OT Heroes in Acts 7:1-60

- Abraham (Gen.12-23), Isaac (Gen.24-26), Jacob (Gen.27-36)–**Abrahamic Covenant** (Gen.12,15,17)
 - Joseph – Preservation of Israel (Genesis 37-50)
- Moses – **Mosaic Covenant** (Law) (**Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5**) (Ex. 2-Dt. 34)
 - Joshua – Conquest of Canaan (**Deuteronomy 31-Joshua 24**)
- David– **Davidic Covenant** (Dynasty /Temple) (**2 Samuel 7**) (1 Sam. 16-1 Kings 2)
 - Solomon – Expansion of the Kingdom (2 Samuel 5 – 1 Kings 11)

Abraham's Journey

From Ur to Haran to Egypt



Mt. Ararat

Mediterranean Sea

Paddan Aram

• Haran

Tigris R.

• Nineveh

• Damascus

Arabian Desert

Euphrates R.

Sumer

• Babylon

Ur •

NOT LICENSED
Egypt

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Nile R.

Mt. Sinai



Thou shalt
have no other
gods before me

Thou shalt not
make unto thee
any graven image

Thou shalt not take
the name of the Lord
thy God in vain

Remember the sabbath
day, to keep it holy

Honor thy father
and thy mother

Thou shalt
not kill

Thou shalt not
commit adultery

Thou shalt
not steal

Thou shalt not
bear false witness
against thy neighbor

Thou shalt
not covet



Outline of Acts 7:1-60

1. Stephen's **Defense** (Accused of blaspheming against Moses and God, against the holy place/temple and the law – Acts 6:11,13)

a. God of Glory/ **Abrahamic Covenant** (Acts 7:2-19)

- Descendants/Mighty Nation (Genesis 12:1-3), Nations (Gen. 17:4-6)
- Land Promises (Genesis 12:7, 13:15-18, 15:18, 17:8)
- Gospel/All Nations Blessed through You/the Seed of Abraham – Christ (Gen. 12:3, 18:18, Gal. 3:16)

b. God of Glory/ **Mosaic Covenant** (Acts 7:20-44)

- Law as a Moral Standard/Protection/best way to live (Exodus 20, Deut. 5, Mt. 22:37-39)
- Law as a Tutor/schoolmaster to lead us to Christ/knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20, 28, Gal. 2:16, 3:11, 3:24)
- Law fulfilled by Christ / imputed righteousness (Mt. 5:17-18, Rom. 8:4, 7:12 - the law is holy, righteous, good)

c. God of Glory/ **Davidic Covenant** (Acts 7:45-50)

- The Temple is only a model after the original in heaven (Hebrews 8-9)
- The Temple cannot contain God / God doesn't not need it (Isaiah 66:1-2)
- The Temple will be rebuilt by Christ (Mt. 26:61, Mark 14:58, John 2:19, Mal. 3:1, Ez. 40-48, Amos 9:11-15, Is. 56:7, 1 Chron. 17:11-14)

2. Stephen's **Offense** /Accusation (Acts 7:51-56)

3. Stephen's **Martyrdom** (Acts 7:57-60)

Acts 6.8–15 (What Opposition Looks Like)

- 1. **Rose up** (Synagogue of the Freedmen, *including* both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia) ἀνίστημι *anistemi*: to raise up, to rise
- 2. **Argued** συζητέω *suzeteo*: to examine together, hence *to dispute*
- 3. Secretly **Induced** men to say (stirred up opposition, dissension) ὑποβάλλω *hupoballo*: to throw or *put under*
- 4. **Stirred up** the people συγκινέω *sugkineo*: to move together, fig. *to stir up*
- 5. **Dragged** him away συναρπάζω *sunarpazo*: to seize and carry away
- 6. **Brought** him before the counsel ἄγω *ago*: *to lead, bring, carry*
- 7. **Put forward** false witnesses ἵστημι *histemi*: *to make to stand, to stand*
 - ψευδής *pseudes*: lying, false
 - μάρτυς *martus*: a witness

Acts 7:1–8 Difficulty yet Faith during Abraham's Time (Covenant of Circumcision – start of the nation of Israel)

1. (7:3) **A Hard Calling** – ἐξέρχομαι *exerchomai*: to go or come out of – leave your country (land of Chaldeans / Region - **Μεσοποταμία** *Mesopotamia* – lit. middle/midst of the two rivers – Euphrates and Tigris, City – Haran) and your relatives (father Terah, brothers Nahor and Haran)
2. (7:4a) **A Tough Circumstance** – Abraham's father (Terah) dies
3. (7:4b) **A Long Journey** - from Ur to Haran to Shechem/Oak of Moreh, to the Mountain between Ai and Bethel, to the Negev, then to Egypt, back to the Negev, and then to Canaan (west) while Lot settled in the Jordan Valley (Sodom/Gomorrah).
4. (7:5) **A Delayed Promise** – initially God gave Abraham no inheritance, no foot of ground, and no child/heir – promise to “descendants after him”
5. (7:6) **A Difficult Prediction** – Abraham's descendants would be enslaved and mistreated for over 400 years (430 to be exact)
6. (7:7) **An ultimate promise** – after enslavement in Egypt the nation (Israel) from Abraham would “come out and serve me in this place.” (Acts 7:7)
7. (7:8) (**Genesis 12:1-7**) **A Covenant of Circumcision** – agreement between Abraham and God that God would make Abraham into a great nation, bless him/make his name great, bless all that families of the earth through him, and give his descendants all the land of Canaan.

- Journeys of Abraham
- Journeys of Isaac
- Journeys of Jacob
- Main Roads



Journeys of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

Acts 7:9–17 Afflictions yet Perseverance during Joseph's Time (Preservation and Expansion of Israel)

1. (7:9) **Jealousy** – sold by his brothers as a slave
2. (7:10) **Salvation** – God rescued Joseph from ALL his afflictions (**θλιψις** *thlipsis*: tribulation, trials, persecutions, anguish, distresses, sufferings – from root “to be pressed”)
3. (7:11-12) **Famine** – 1st Visit – Jacob sends his sons (except Benjamin) (imprisons Simeon)
4. (7:13) **Famine** – 2nd Visit – Joseph discloses himself to all his brothers
5. (7:14-16) **Famine** – 3rd Visit – Jacob himself comes to Egypt (the nation is only 75 people at this point), dies in Egypt, but buried in Shechem/Canaan.
6. (7:17) **Multiplication** – God greatly increases and multiplies the nation as the time of the promise (end of the 400 years) nears.
7. (7:18-19) **Genocide** – A Pharaoh arose who knew nothing about Joseph and he attempted a generational termination of Israel by killing Israel's male infants. the deliberate killing of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnic group with the aim of destroying that nation or group.

Exodus Route: Goshen to Tiran



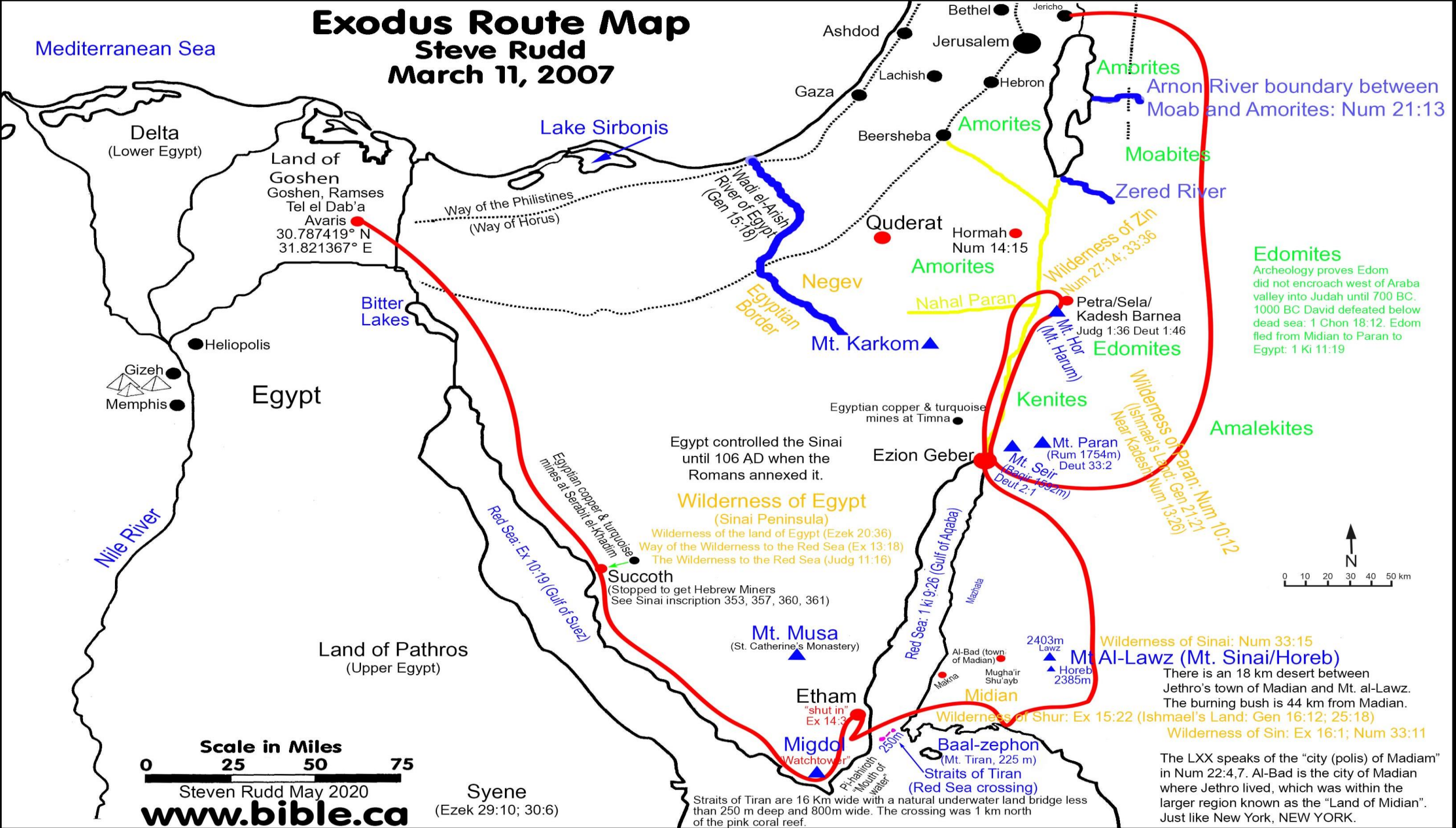
Acts 7:20–45 A Disowned yet Faithful Prophet Like Moses (Covenant of Law) will come (Jesus– he too will be a ruler/deliverer)

1. (7:20-22) **Moses' childhood** – nurtured by his parents and Pharaoh's daughter, educated by the Egyptians
2. (7:22) **Moses' early manhood** - powerful in words and deeds.
3. (7:23-29) **Moses' middle manhood/age 40-80** – visits his brethren, defends unjust oppression with vengeance, rejected by his brethren (who made you ruler/judge over us), flees to Midian, marries Jethro's daughter (Zipporah) and has two sons (Gershom and Eliezer).
4. (7:30-38) **Moses' later manhood and ministry/age 80-120** – angel appeared to him in the burning bush, he heard the voice of the Lord (I've seen the oppression, heard their groans, I have come down to rescue them by sending you to Egypt). God sent him as a ruler and a deliverer of Israel with the help of the angel who appeared in the burning bush. Moses did wonders, signs (Red Sea) for 40 years in the wilderness. Moses prophecies of Jesus in Dt. 18:15 “God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren.” Moses spoke with God on Mt. Sinai and passed on living oracles to Israel.
5. (7:39-45) **Moses' rejection similar to rejection of Jesus** - BUT Israel was unwilling, disobedient, and repudiated Moses and in their hearts turned back to Egypt as exemplified by the golden calf (make us gods), idol worship of Moloch/false tabernacle and Rompha/star object that led to the exile of Israel in Babylon, But God was faithful – gave a tabernacle of testimony (testimony of his faithfulness to all His promises) that Israel carried with them in possessing the land of Canaan and dispossessing the evil nations during Joshua

Exodus Route Map

Steve Rudd
March 11, 2007

Mediterranean Sea



Delta
(Lower Egypt)

Land of Goshen
Goshen, Ramses
Tel el Dab'a
Avaris
30.787419° N
31.821367° E

Bitter
Lakes

Gizeh
Memphis

Egypt

Heliopolis

Nile River

Land of Pathros
(Upper Egypt)

Scale in Miles

0 25 50 75

Steven Rudd May 2020

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Syene
(Ezek 29:10; 30:6)

Lake Sirbonis

Way of the Philistines
(Way of Horus)

Wadi el-Arish
River of Egypt
(Gen 15:18)

Egyptian
Border

Negev

Mt. Karkom

Egyptian copper & turquoise
mines at Timna

Egypt controlled the Sinai
until 106 AD when the
Romans annexed it.

Wilderness of Egypt
(Sinai Peninsula)

Wilderness of the land of Egypt (Ezek 20:36)
Way of the Wilderness to the Red Sea (Ex 13:18)
The Wilderness to the Red Sea (Judg 11:16)

Succoth
(Stopped to get Hebrew Miners
See Sinai inscription 353, 357, 360, 361)

Egyptian copper & turquoise
mines at Serabit el-Khadim

Mt. Musa
(St. Catherine's Monastery)

Etham
"shut in"
Ex 14:3

Migdol
Watchtower

Al-Bad (town
of Midian)

Mugh'a'ir
Shu'ayb

2403m
Lawz

Mt. Al-Lawz (Mt. Sinai/Horeb)
Horeb
2385m

Baal-zephon
(Mt. Tiran, 225 m)

Straits of Tiran
(Red Sea crossing)

Straits of Tiran are 16 Km wide with a natural underwater land bridge less than 250 m deep and 800m wide. The crossing was 1 km north of the pink coral reef.

Ezion Geber

Mt. Seir
(Bani: 1552m)
Deut 2:1

Mt. Paran
(Rum 1754m)
Deut 33:2

Kenites

Petra/Sela/
Kadesh Barnea
Judg 1:36 Deut 1:46

Edomites

Nahal Paran

Amorites

Hormah
Num 14:15

Quderat

Beersheba

Gaza

Lachish

Jerusalem

Bethel

Jericho

Amrites

Moabites

Zered River

Wilderness of Zin
Num 27:14; 33:36

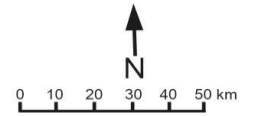
Wilderness of Paran: Num 10:12
(Ishmael's Land: Gen 21:21
Near Kadesh Num 13:26)

Amalekites

Edomites

Archology proves Edom did not encroach west of Araba valley into Judah until 700 BC. 1000 BC David defeated below dead sea: 1 Chon 18:12. Edom fled from Midian to Paran to Egypt: 1 Ki 11:19

Arnon River boundary between Moab and Amorites: Num 21:13



Wilderness of Sinai: Num 33:15
Mt. Al-Lawz (Mt. Sinai/Horeb)

There is an 18 km desert between Jethro's town of Midian and Mt. al-Lawz. The burning bush is 44 km from Midian.

Wilderness of Shur: Ex 15:22 (Ishmael's Land: Gen 16:12; 25:18)
Wilderness of Sin: Ex 16:1; Num 33:11

The LXX speaks of the "city (polis) of Midian" in Num 22:4,7. Al-Bad is the city of Midian where Jethro lived, which was within the larger region known as the "Land of Midian". Just like New York, NEW YORK.

Land of Canaan at Time of Joshua



The Twelve Tribes in Canaan



The foot of Asher to be dipped in oil on the head of Joseph Deut. 33:24

Asher-Menashe License

Zion Oil & Gas Joseph License (Pending)

Acts 7:46–50 A greater King than David or Solomon (Covenant of the Kingdom) will come and rule FOREVER!

1. (7:46) David found favor with God (the man after God's own heart – 1 Sam. 13:14, 16:7, Acts 13:22)
2. (7:47) Solomon built the temple for God (likely the wisest & richest man who ever lived)
3. (7:48-50) But God does not need or dwell in a man-made temple
 - a. A God too big/inscrutable and a man-made temple too small/inadequate (Romans 11:33-36)
 - Word picture - heaven is my throne, earth is my footstool (from Is. 66:1-2)
 - Question – what kind of house can you build for God?
 - Logic - God made everything – why would He need man to build a house for Him?

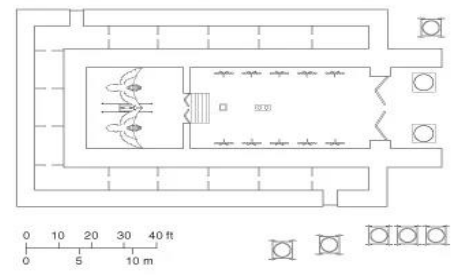
A structure with three levels was built around the walls of the temple. The lower chamber was 7.5 feet (2.3 m) wide, the middle chamber was 9 feet (2.7 m) wide, and the upper chamber was 10.5 feet (3.2 m) wide (1 Kings 6:5–6, 8, 10).

Two ornate wooden doors, overlaid with gold, separated the inner sanctuary from the nave (1 Kings 6:31–32).

The nave had clerestory windows with recessed frames (1 Kings 6:4).

The vestibule was 30 feet (9.1 m) wide and 15 feet (4.6 m) deep (1 Kings 6:3; cf. 2 Chron. 3:4)

Temple Architectural Plan



The hollow bronze pillar on the north was called "Boaz," and the one on the south was called "Jachin" (1 Kings 7:21; cf. 2 Chron. 3:17).

Two ornate wooden, folding doors, overlaid with gold, separated the nave from the vestibule (1 Kings 6:33–35).

The bronze altar for burnt offerings was 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 30 feet (9.1 m) long and wide (cf. 2 Chron. 4:1).

The inner sanctuary (or Most Holy Place) was a 30-foot (9.1-m) cube (1 Kings 6:15–29; 2 Chron. 3:8–14). Such rooms were often elevated in temples of the ancient Near East. Two massive golden cherubim stood on either side of the ark, each 15 feet (4.6 m) tall with 15-foot (4.6-m) wingspans (1 Kings 6:23–28). The ark of the covenant stood between the two cherubim (1 Kings 8:1–11; cf. 2 Chron. 5:2–14).

The nave (or Holy Place) was 60 feet (18 m) long and 30 feet (9.1 m) wide (1 Kings 6:15, 17–18; cf. 2 Chron. 3:5–7). It contained the golden altar of incense; the golden table for the bread of the Presence; and 10 golden lampstands, five on the north and five on the south (1 Kings 7:48–49; cf. 2 Chron. 4:7).

Ten bronze wheeled stands, each holding a large basin, contained water for rinsing off the animal parts that were used for the burnt offerings (1 Kings 7:27–38; cf. 2 Chron. 4:6).

The "sea" was a metal basin 7.5 feet (2.3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) in diameter. It held 12,000 gallons (44,000 liters) of water for the priests to wash in. It was supported by 12 bronze oxen in sets of three, facing in each direction (1 Kings 7:23–26; cf. 2 Chron. 4:2–5).

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Solomon began to build "the house of the LORD" in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah in the spring of 967 or 966 B.C. (1 Kings 6:1; 2 Chron. 3:1–2) and completed it seven years later, in the fall of 960 or 959 (1 Kings 6:38). The temple itself, not including the surrounding chambers on three sides, was 90 feet (27 m) long, 30 feet (9 m) wide, and 45 feet (14 m) high. It stood in the middle of a court with boundary walls.

Acts 7:51–53 The Ongoing Rejection of the Righteous One/Jesus

1. (7:51)

Stiff Necked (stubborn, rebellious, resisting/opposing God)

Uncircumcised in heart (unsaved, not born again, not forgiven and not entering the Kingdom)

Always resisting the Holy Spirit (not indwelt with the Holy Spirit – rather enemies of God, His Gospel, His Kingdom/Glory)

Doing just as your fathers did (the history of complaining, rebelling, and idolatry in Israel's past)

2. (7:52) The key verse to understand WHY Stephen was throughout Acts 7 reviewing Israel's history and WHAT his main point is ...basically this generation that is rejecting Jesus is doing the same thing Israel has always been doing... **rejecting/prosecuting their prophets** (killing those who announced the coming of the Righteous One/Jesus) and now **betraying/murdering the Righteous One/Jesus** Himself... not to mention the irony of now murdering Stephen who is also a prophet at the current time proclaiming Jesus.

3. (7:53) God's judgment/verdict through Stephen on the current unbelieving Jews – **you have received the law as ordained by angels** (just like the generation in in Moses' time), **and yet (similarly) you did not keep it/God's laws** (Gal. 3:19-22) so that no one is justified in God's eyes but rather stand condemned/guilty (Romans 3:20, Gal. 2:16, 3:11).



Acts 7:54–60 The Stoning/Martyrdom of Stephen (and the first mention of Saul who would later become Paul)

1. (7:54) **Strong Conviction/guilt** - either leads to strong rejection or strong repentance – in Acts 2:37 they were pierced to the heart and overwhelmingly repented, here in Acts 7:54 they were cut to the heart and became so angry they murdered yet another innocent man who passionately was telling them the truth by the Holy Spirit
2. (7:55-56) **Strong Comfort/Consolation** – Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit in the moments before and even during his murder... here seeing (gazed intently) into heaven and seeing the glory of God/Jesus standing at the right hand of God...saying “Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” (Acts 2:33, 5:31, 7:55-56, Romans 8:34, Col. 3:1, Heb. 10:12/Ps. 110:1)
3. (7:57-58) **Strong and final Evil Actions** – loudly yelling, covering ears/refusing to listen, rusing at him with one impulse/one passion (one mind/one passion can be good or evil) , driving him out of the city, stoning Stephen to death
4. 7:59-60 **Stronger and final Gracious Action** – Stephen calls out to God similarly to how Jesus did on the cross... Lord Jesus receive my spirit... and asking God to forgive his murderers “Lord do not hold this sin against them” before he dies (N.T. likes to call it sleep I think because for the believer death is not final but momentary just like sleep)



Acts 7:1–5

The Descendants/Nation Promise (age 75)

- ▶ Genesis 12:1–4 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; ² And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; ³ And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed." ⁴ So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

The Land Promise

- ▶ Genesis 12:7 ⁷ The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.
- ▶ Genesis 13:14–17 ¹⁴ The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; ¹⁵ for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. ¹⁶ "I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered. ¹⁷ "Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you."
- ▶ Genesis 15:18 ¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

The Promise of Many Nations (age 99)

- ▶ Genesis 17:1–13 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. ² "I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly." ³ Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, ⁴ "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵ "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. ⁶ "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. ⁷ "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. ⁸ "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." ⁹ God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰ "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ "And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. ¹² "And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. ¹³ "A *servant* who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

Acts 7:6–9

Israel Enslaved for 400 (430 years)

- ▶ Genesis 15:13–15 ¹³ God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. ¹⁴ "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. ¹⁵ "As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age. Genesis 15:16 ¹⁶ "Then in the fourth generation they will return here,
- ▶ Exodus 12:40–41 ⁴⁰ Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹ And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.
- ▶ Galatians 3:17–19 ¹⁷ What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. ¹⁹ Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.

Abraham believed God by faith (the Jewish leaders arresting Stephen have no faith)

Joseph's brothers mistreated Joseph because they were jealous of him, but God was still with him (the Jewish leaders arresting Stephen are mistreating him out of jealousy and God is with Stephen – his face is like an angel to prove it)

Hebrews 11:8–22 ⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, *as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE.* ¹³ All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. ¹⁵ And indeed if they had been thinking of that *country* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better *country*, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them. ¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten *son*; ¹⁸ *it was he* to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." ¹⁹ He considered that God is able to raise *people* even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type. ²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come. ²¹ By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff. ²² By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

Genesis 50:25–26 ²⁵ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here." ²⁶ So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Exodus 13:19 ¹⁹ Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you."

Joshua 24:32 ³² Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the piece of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for one hundred pieces of money; and they became the inheritance of Joseph's sons.

Revelation 7:3–8 "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads." ⁴ And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: ⁵ from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand *were* sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, ⁶ from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, ⁷ from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, ⁸ from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand *were* sealed.

Acts 7:10–15

- ▶ Only 75 persons in all even at the time of Jacob (Abraham didn't get to see the millions of descendants – but he still believed it by faith)
- ▶ **Romans 4:1–5** What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. ⁵ But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,
- ▶ **Romans 4:9–22** ⁹ Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." ¹⁰ How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; ¹¹ and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, ¹² and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. ¹³ For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; ¹⁵ for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation. ¹⁶ For this reason *it is* by faith, in order that *it may be* in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷ (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, *even* God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. ¹⁸ In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE." ¹⁹ Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; ²⁰ yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. ²² Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Acts 7:16–20

▶ Moses

- ▶ Exodus 2:1–10 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. ² The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months. ³ But when she could hide him no longer, she got him a wicker basket and covered it over with tar and pitch. Then she put the child into it and set *it* among the reeds by the bank of the Nile. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him. ⁵ The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the Nile, with her maidens walking alongside the Nile; and she saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid, and she brought it *to her*. ⁶ When she opened *it*, she saw the child, and behold, *the* boy was crying. And she had pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women that she may nurse the child for you?" ⁸ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go *ahead*." So the girl went and called the child's mother. ⁹ Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me and I will give *you* your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰ The child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. And she named him Moses, and said, "Because I drew him out of the water."
- ▶ Acts 3:22–23 ²² "Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you. ²³ 'And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'
- ▶ Deuteronomy 18:15–19 ¹⁵ "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. ¹⁶ "This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.' ¹⁷ "The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. ¹⁸ 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹ 'It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require *it* of him.
- ▶ **Hebrews 11:23–29** ²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. ²⁴ By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶ considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them. ²⁹ By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though *they were passing through* dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.

Acts 7:21–30

- ▶ Moses was rejected initially

Exodus 2:11–15 ¹¹ Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. ¹² So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one *around*, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. ¹³ He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, "Why are you striking your companion?" ¹⁴ But he said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and said, "Surely the matter has become known." ¹⁵ When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.

Acts 7:31–34

- ▶ Moses' ministry (age 80–120)

Exodus 3:2–10 ² The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. ³ So Moses said, "I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up." ⁴ When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵ Then He said, "Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." ⁶ He said also, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. ⁷ The LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. ⁸ "So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. ⁹ "Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ "Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt."

Acts 7:35–38

- ▶ **Deuteronomy 18:15–22** ¹⁵ "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. ¹⁶ "This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.' ¹⁷ "The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well. ¹⁸ 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹ 'It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require *it* of him. ²⁰ 'But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' ²¹ "You may say in your heart, 'How will we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' ²² "When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

Acts 7:39–42

- ▶ Exodus 32:1–4 Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." ² Aaron said to them, "Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring *them* to me." ³ Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and brought *them* to Aaron. ⁴ He took *this* from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."
- ▶ **Amos 5:25–27** ²⁵ "Did you present Me with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel? ²⁶ "You also carried along Sikkuth your king and Kiyyun, your images, the star of your gods which you made for yourselves. ²⁷ "Therefore, I will make you go into exile beyond Damascus," says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts.

Acts 7:43–50

- ▶ **Isaiah 66:1–2** Thus says the LORD, "Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? ² "For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being," declares the LORD. "But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.

SO WHAT?

Application



1 Peter 3:8-16 8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; 9 not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing. 10 For, "THE ONE WHO DESIRES LIFE, TO LOVE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT. 11 "HE MUST TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; HE MUST SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT. 12 "FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL." 13 Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, 15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; 16 and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.