

Acts 6:1 to 8:3

Winter 2023-2024

Acts 6:1-7 Highlights:

- 6:1 - The _____ Jewish widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.
- *How might a church today face a problem of unequal treatment of two ethnic groups or socio-economic groups in the congregation? Give an example.*

- 6:4 - The apostles needed to focus their attention on _____ and the ministry of the _____.
- *Who did the Twelve think they were? Were they too good to “wait on tables” (take care of getting food to the church’s widows)? Why did they give this responsibility to others? Did they do the right thing or not?*

- The 7 men chosen in 6:5 all happen to have _____ names.
- *What does the selection of these men—men of their particular cultural background—tell us about the church’s priorities? What was the church concerned about here, and why?*

Acts 6:8 to 8:3 Highlights:

6:9 — Stephen was opposed by members of the Synagogue of the _____.

6:10 — *What did the Holy Spirit do for Stephen? Was this a good thing or a bad thing? It seems to have gotten Stephen into trouble...*

from class discussion — What might Stephen have been saying that sounded blasphemous to non-Christian Jews (6:11)? Why might Stephen have said such things?

6:12-14 — What hints does Luke give us that the men who seized Stephen and put him on trial were not acting with justice and good intent?

- 6:13-14 - The official charge against Stephen was that he spoke against the _____ and the _____ of Moses.

STEPHEN'S DEFENSE SPEECH

Throughout his speech, Stephen highlights the work of God through people honored by Jews everywhere:

Abraham, Joseph, and Moses. But Joseph and Moses had faced opposition from their own people...

7:2-8 — *from Genesis 12-35* — setting the stage with how God called _____ to go to the promised land and began to make him the father of Israel (the Jewish people)

7:9-16 — *from Genesis 37, 39-50* — _____ was sold as a slave by his own brothers, but God used him to save his family (the ancestors of the Jews) from a _____.

7:17-29 — *from Exodus 1-2* — _____ was brought up in the household of the Egyptian pharaoh, but when God began to use him to rescue his fellow Israelites from slavery, his own people rejected him.

7:30-43 — *from Exodus 3-32, plus references from throughout the history of Israel* — Beginning at the burning _____, God sent _____ to be Israel's leader; this man led Israel for _____ years...but the Israelites still turned away from him and from God!

7:44-50 — The early Israelites had the _____ and the later Israelites had God's _____ (the temple)—but God doesn't live in houses made by human hands!

7:51-53 — Like their ancestors, the current Jewish leaders are resisting the Holy Spirit by betraying and murdering _____ and by refusing to believe in him (though Moses himself had foretold his coming, Acts 7:37 quoting Deuteronomy 18:15).

THE KEY TO STEPHEN'S DEFENSE SPEECH is a warning from Israel's history: As the Jews' ancestors had rejected their God-chosen leaders in the past (Joseph's brothers rejected him, the Israelites rejected Moses), so the Jews had now rejected God's chosen Messiah, Jesus. In doing so, they were resisting the work of the Holy Spirit himself! On top of this sinful act, the Jews were valuing the temple of God over God himself: they were accusing Stephen of speaking against the temple (6:13-14), but they themselves were standing against Jesus the Messiah! Though they have the temple, they "have betrayed and murdered" Jesus the Righteous One (7:52-53). Stephen's implication here is that it is not he who has blasphemed God, but his opponents, through their rejection and killing of Jesus.

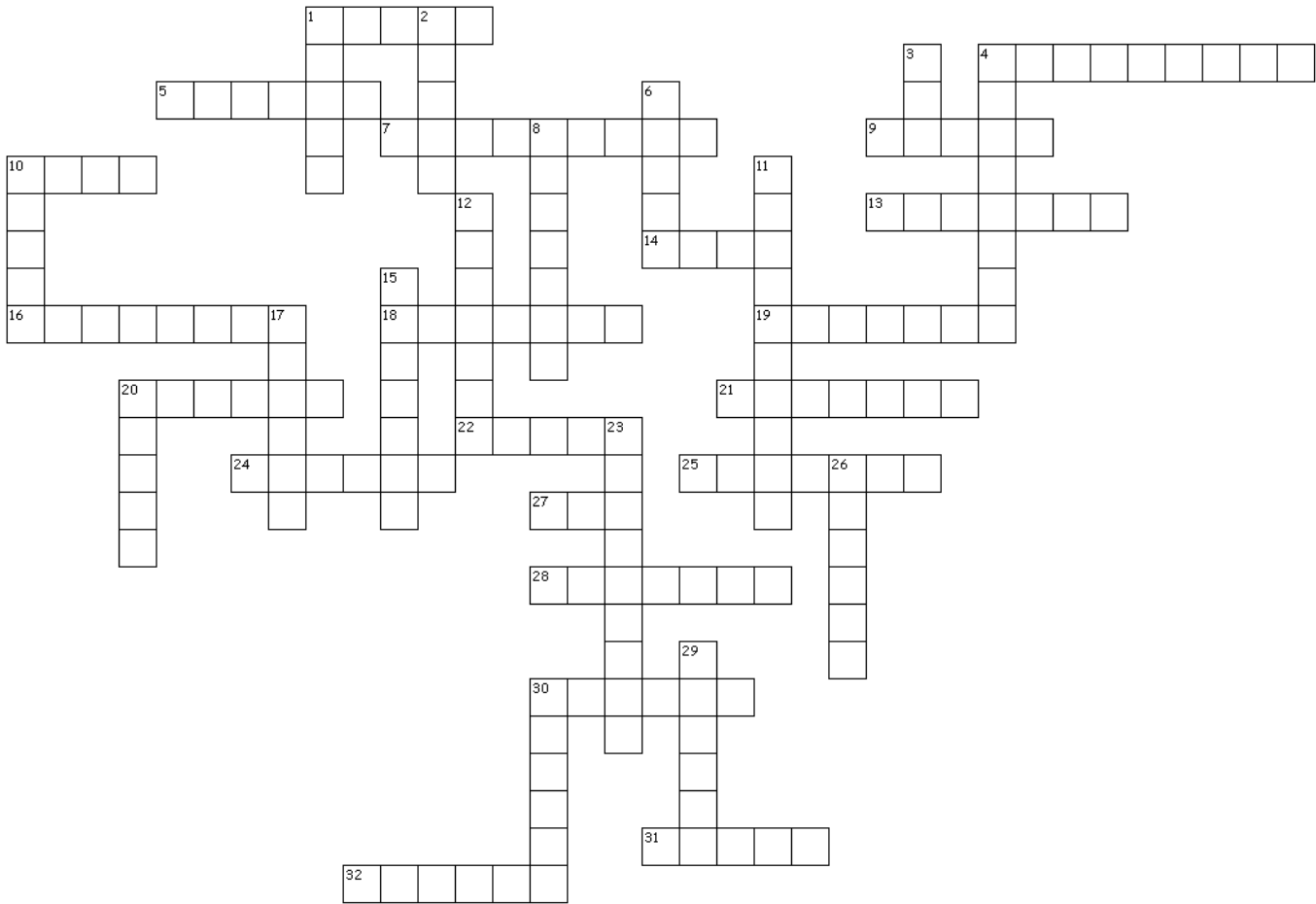
STEPHEN'S DEATH

- 7:55-56 — What did Stephen see before he died?
 - the _____ of God
 - _____ (the Son of Man) standing at the right hand of God
 - _____ open
- 7:58 — How was Stephen killed? And who killed him?
- *What do you think so enraged Stephen's listeners that they executed him on the spot?*
- 7:58 — The witnesses at Stephen's execution laid their coats at the feet of _____.
- 7:59-60 — What two things did Stephen ask Jesus for as he died?
- 7:60 — What does it mean that Stephen "fell asleep"? Why does Luke use that phrase to describe what happened?
- 8:1 — What began to happen to the church that day?
 - 8:3 — Who led this effort? How did he go about destroying the church?
- 8:1 — What happened to the people of the church (all except the apostles)? Where did they go?

Key Line in Acts 6-7:

Acts 7:51 — "You stiff-necked people!... You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit!"

Acts 6:1 to 8:3 (NIV)



Across

1. an angel spoke to Moses on Mount ____
4. the earth is God's ____
5. name for the apostles in 6:2
7. persecution broke out against the church in this city
9. no ordinary child when he was born
10. Israelites made an idol in the form of a ____
13. God told Moses, "Take off your ____"
14. witnesses of Stephen's death laid their coats at this young man's feet
16. Pharaoh's ____ raised Moses as her own son
18. an angel appeared to Moses in a ____ bush
19. built a house (the first temple) for God
20. was sold as a slave into Egypt
21. was a convert to Judaism
22. God does not live in houses made by human ____
24. a famine struck Egypt and this region
25. a large number of them became obedient to the faith
27. Stephen said, "Lord, do not hold this ____ against them"
28. first of the chosen men listed in Acts
30. second of the chosen men listed in Acts
31. son of Abraham
32. place to which Moses fled

Down

1. number of men chosen to take care of the widows
2. Stephen's face looked like that of an ____
3. number of Israelites whom Moses saw fighting
4. members of the Synagogue of the ____ opposed Stephen
6. Stephen saw him standing at the right hand of God
8. the church was scattered throughout Judea and ____
10. God promised Abraham descendants even before he had a ____
11. Stephen said, "You always resist the ____!" (2 words)
12. title of the king of Egypt
15. God appeared to him in Mesopotamia
17. sinful Israelites worshiped the star of this god
20. son of Isaac
23. council before which Stephen was brought for trial
26. Stephen was killed with these
29. Hellenistic (Greek-speaking) women being overlooked in the distribution of food
30. Saul dragged off Christian men and women and put them in here

KIDS' PAGE

Questions from Acts 6:1 to 8:3

1. How many men were chosen to help the church's widows? _____
2. Who was killed for teaching people about Jesus? _____
3. Who was the ancient Israelite who heard God speak to him through a burning bush? _____
4. Who was the young man who began to persecute the church after Stephen was killed? _____
5. What did Stephen see just before he died?
 - the glory of _____
 - _____ standing at the right hand of God

People & Places in Acts 6:1 to 8:3

M J O S E P H H D P C S
E G Y P T B I U N H A E
L A S E U J G E D A N S
A B I A V W H D L R A O
S P O P U P P P D A A M
U I Z C E L R K D O N V
R L F T A G I A J H A M
E I S Z M J E E C W F Z
J H I A N I S T N U O M
G P V F I U T C A A S I
D N N S S N O M O L O S
S Y A B R A H A M U I O

ABRAHAM	JOSEPH
CANAAN	MOSES
EGYPT	MOUNT SINAI
HIGH PRIEST	PHARAOH
ISAAC	PHILIP
JACOB	SAUL
JERUSALEM	SOLOMON
JESUS	STEPHEN