

FALL QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2015

THEME: ACTS – EXPOSING GOD’S CHURCH COMMUNITY IN ACTION!

UNIT ONE – “The Gains of their Actions”

UNIT TWO – “The Pains of their Actions”

UNIT THREE – “The Fame of their Actions”

“STEPHEN DECLARES GOD’S HISTORICAL TRUTH AND FAITHFUL PROMISES WORTH DYING FOR”



Sunday School Lesson No. IV – September 27, 2015

Rev. Frank A Davis, III - Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: Acts 7:2-4, 8-17, 33-34, 45-55

Required Reading: Acts 7:1-60

Motto Text: Acts 7:55, *“But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.”*

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Standard Lesson Commentary; UMI Precepts for Living; Word-Search 10 Electronic Library; The Book of Acts by E. C. Gillentine; The Book of Acts in 24 Lessons by E. L. Bynum; Acts, the Church in Action by David Jeremiah

Lesson Introduction:

According to the Bible Knowledge Commentary, “Acts 7:2-53 is the longest recorded message in Acts, which shows the importance Luke attached to it. Stephen, a Grecian Jew, by his life and words prepared the way for the gospel to reach outside the pale of Judaism. But what did Stephen say in this powerful discourse that resulted in his death? Though he touched on the accusations made against him, Stephen did not give a legal defense of himself. Rather, he set forth Israel’s past history and God’s past workings in order to vindicate Christianity.”

Stephen was willing to declare God’s faithful historical truths with Israel to demonstrate that God’s Word and promises are worth living for or even dying for! Beloved, do you have that kind of steadfast faith in the plain simple Word of Christ?

Stephen was not a pulpit preacher as we know, but a great faithful witness and servant of Christ’s Church. He was faithful, available and teachable. Praise God for his knowledge of God’s workings and Christ’s promises.

Let us examine my **Anticipated Power Points:**

- **A Covenant with Abraham.** Acts 7:2-4, 8
- **A Comparison of Joseph and Jesus.** Acts 7:9-16
- **A Committed Leader in Moses.** Acts 7:17, 33-34
- **A Commitment that became Careless in its Worship.** Acts 7:42-50
- **A Clear View of the Biblical Christ.** Acts 7:51-55

LESSON OUTLINE

“Stephen Declares God’s Historical Truth and Faithful Promises Worth Dying For”

I. A Covenant with Abraham. Acts 7:2-4, 8

According to Dr. Warren Wiersbe, “This covenant is recorded in Genesis 13:14-18, as well as Chapters 15 and 17. It included the ownership of the land of promise by his seed, and the promise of a multiplied seed in the ages to come.

The seal of this covenant was circumcision. This covenant with Abraham is the foundation of the Jewish nation. God did not make this covenant with the Gentiles, nor does it apply to the Church... This covenant with Abraham still stands and will be fulfilled when Christ returns to set up His kingdom on earth.”

II. A Comparison of Joseph and Jesus. Acts 7:9-16

According to Wiersbe: “Stephen’s argument here is that the Jews have treated Christ the way the patriarchs (sons of Jacob) had treated Joseph, but he does not bring this out until the end. Just as Joseph suffered to save his people, so Christ suffered to save Israel and all mankind; yet the Jews did not receive Him.” E. L. Bynum declared concerning the comparison of Joseph and Jesus: Both were “(1.) Victims of a terrible crime. (2.) Instruments of a wondrous deliverance.”

Finally, there are at least 5 wonderful ways in which Jesus and Joseph mirror each other. “Both were beloved of their fathers (Gen. 37:3; Matt. 3:17). Both were hated of their brothers (Gen. 37:4-8; John 15:25). Both were sold for the price of a slave (Gen. 37:28; Matt. 26:15). Both were falsely accused (Gen. 39:16-18; Matt. 26:59-60). Both were receivers of a Gentile Bride. (Gen 41:45; Acts 15:6-18).”

III. A Committed Leader in Moses. Acts 7:17, 33-34

According to the Expositor and Illuminator of Union Gospel Press: “While in Egypt, Jacob’s family multiplied greatly. When it came time for the Israelites to leave Egypt (Gen. 15:13-14), God appointed Moses to lead them out. Before the burning bush, God revealed Himself to Moses and told Moses He was aware of their mistreatment. God told Moses, *‘I will send thee into Egypt’* (Acts 7:34; Ex. 3:10). He then demonstrated His faithfulness to His people by using Moses to lead the people out of the country.”

IV. A Commitment that became Careless in its Worship. Acts 7:42-50

Wiersbe: “Here Stephen refers to Amos 5:25-27 and Isa. 66:1-2. The Jews thought that because they had their Temple, they were safe from harm and God had to bless them. The prophets all warned them that the temple would not assure them of blessings if their hearts were not right. How can God, who fills all heaven and earth, be confined to a temple made with hands? Israel’s religious life was but superstition; they had the outward forms of religion, but their hearts were not right with God. They rejected the voice of the prophets, even persecuting them and killing them (see Mt. 23:29-39); and when the Prophet (Christ) appeared (vs. 37), they rejected His Words and crucified Him!” Beloved, may we not make the same error by worshipping the religion, ritual and rule and not worship Christ the Lord!

V. A Clear View of the Biblical Christ. Acts 7:51-55

As our lesson title suggests, “**Stephen Declares God’s Historical Truth and Faithful Promises Worth Dying For**” we come to the closing presentation of Stephen before a deceitful, religious mob. These men really found no fault in Stephen’s presentation which highlighted the very facts of Israel’s laws and prophetic history. He truly exposed the Light of God’s truth, but now he goes on to apply the truth to his hearers. It was more than they could stand, and though the message gave a clear view of the Biblical Christ, the foul spirit of the council caused them to reject and execute Stephen. Jesus said, *“Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven...”*

What greater reward than for Stephen to see the risen Messiah Jesus Christ stand on the right hand of the Father’s Throne to receive him home with honors! When you and I have a clear view of Christ, then we are able to see above the stones and keep our eyes and soul anchored in the Lord!

Closing:

God’s Word is a lamp, light, anchor, hammer, shield and so much more. **Please let us hide it in our hearts, that we might not sin against God!**

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Looking Ahead:

October 4, 2015

Acts 8:9-24



The Sunday School Lesson is taught each Wednesday at noon at Bibleway. All are welcome!