

Acts of the Apostles



Chapter 7



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18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

Stephen's Discourses.

- 1 Then the high priest asked, "Is this so?"
- 2 ^a And he replied, ^{*} "My brothers and fathers, listen. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia, ^{*} before he had settled in Haran,
- 3 and said to him, 'Go forth from your land and [from] your kinsfolk to the land that I will show you.'^b
- 4 So he went forth from the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. And from there, after his father died, he made him migrate to this land where you now dwell.^c
- 5 Yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but he did promise to give it to him and his descendants as a possession, even though he was childless.^d
- 6 And God spoke thus,^e 'His descendants shall be aliens in a land not their own, where they shall be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years;

- 7 but I will bring judgment on the nation they serve,' God said, 'and after that they will come out and worship me in this place.'^f
- 8 Then he gave him the covenant of circumcision, and so he became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, as Isaac did Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs.^g
- 9 "And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into slavery in Egypt; but God was with him^h
- 10 and rescued him from all his afflictions. He granted him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, who put him in charge of Egypt and [of] his entire household.ⁱ
- 11 Then a famine and great affliction struck all Egypt and Canaan, and our ancestors could find no food;^j
- 12 but when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our ancestors there a first time.^k
- 13 The second time, Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh.^l
- 14 Then Joseph sent for his father Jacob, inviting him and his whole clan, seventy-five persons;^m
- 15 and Jacob went down to Egypt. And he and our ancestors diedⁿ
- 16 and were brought back to Shechem and placed in the tomb that Abraham had purchased for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor at Shechem.^o
- 17 "When the time drew near for the fulfillment of the promise that God

pledged to Abraham, the people had increased and become very numerous in Egypt,^p

18 until another king who knew nothing of Joseph came to power [in Egypt].^q

19 He dealt shrewdly with our people and oppressed [our] ancestors by forcing them to expose their infants, that they might not survive.

20 At this time Moses was born, and he was extremely beautiful. For three months he was nursed in his father's house;^r

21 but when he was exposed, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son.^s

22 Moses was educated [in] all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in his words and deeds.

23 ^t "When he was forty years old, he decided to visit his kinsfolk, the Israelites.

24 When he saw one of them treated unjustly, he defended and avenged the oppressed man by striking down the Egyptian.

25 He assumed [his] kinsfolk would understand that God was offering them deliverance through him, but they did not understand.

26 ^u The next day he appeared to them as they were fighting and tried to reconcile them peacefully, saying, 'Men, you are brothers. Why are you harming one another?'

27 Then the one who was harming his neighbor pushed him aside, saying, 'Who appointed you ruler and judge over us?'

28 Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’

29 Moses fled when he heard this and settled as an alien in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.^v

30 ^w “Forty years later, an angel appeared to him in the desert near Mount Sinai in the flame of a burning bush.

31 When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look at it, the voice of the Lord came,

32 ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.’ Then Moses, trembling, did not dare to look at it.

33 But the Lord said to him, ‘Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.

34 I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them. Come now, I will send you to Egypt.’

35 This Moses, whom they had rejected with the words, ‘Who appointed you ruler and judge?’ God sent as [both] ruler and deliverer, through the angel who appeared to him in the bush.^x

36 This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the desert for forty years.^y

37 It was this Moses who said to the Israelites, ‘God will raise up for you, from among your own kinsfolk, a prophet like me.’^z

38 It was he who, in the assembly in the desert, was with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai and with our ancestors, and he received

living utterances to hand on to us.^a

39 “Our ancestors were unwilling to obey him; instead, they pushed him aside and in their hearts turned back to Egypt,^b

40 saying to Aaron, ‘Make us gods who will be our leaders. As for that Moses who led us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.’^c

41 ^d So they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifice to the idol, and reveled in the works of their hands.

42 Then God turned and handed them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets:^e

‘Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings
for forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?^f

43 No, you took up the tent of Moloch

and the star of (your) god Rephan,

the images that you made to worship.

So I shall take you into exile beyond Babylon.’

44 Our ancestors had the tent of testimony in the desert just as the One who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern he had seen.^g

45 Our ancestors who inherited it brought it with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out from before our ancestors, up to the time of David,^h

- 46 who found favor in the sight of God and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob.ⁱ
- 47 But Solomon built a house for him.^j
- 48 Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands. As the prophet says:^k
- 49 ‘The heavens are my throne,
the earth is my footstool.
What kind of house can you build for me?
says the Lord,
or what is to be my resting place?^l
- 50 Did not my hand make all these things?’

Conclusion.

- 51 “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always oppose the holy Spirit; you are just like your ancestors.
- 52 Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They put to death those who foretold the coming of the righteous one, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become.^m
- 53 You received the law as transmitted by angels, but you did not observe it.”ⁿ

Stephen's Martyrdom.

- 54 When they heard this, they were infuriated, and they ground their teeth at him.
- 55 ◦ But he, filled with the holy Spirit, looked up intently to 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 and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."
- 57 But they cried out in a loud voice, covered their ears,* and rushed upon him together.
- 58 They threw him out of the city, and began to stone him. The witnesses laid down their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul.^p
- 59 As they were stoning Stephen,^q he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."^{*}
- 60 Then he fell to his knees and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them"; and when he said this, he fell asleep.^r
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* [7:2–53] Stephen's speech represents Luke's description of Christianity's break from its Jewish matrix. Two motifs become prominent in the speech: (Acts 7:1) Israel's reaction to God's chosen leaders in the past reveals that the people have consistently rejected them; and (Acts 7:2) Israel has misunderstood God's choice of the Jerusalem temple as the place where he is to be worshiped.

* [7:2] God...appeared to our father Abraham...in Mesopotamia: the first of a

number of minor discrepancies between the data of the Old Testament and the data of Stephen's discourse. According to [Gn 12:1](#), God first spoke to Abraham in Haran. The main discrepancies are these: in [Acts 7:16](#) it is said that Jacob was buried in Shechem, whereas [Gn 50:13](#) says he was buried at Hebron; in the same verse it is said that the tomb was purchased by Abraham, but in [Gn 33:19](#) and [Jos 24:32](#) the purchase is attributed to Jacob himself.

* [\[7:55\]](#) He...saw...Jesus standing at the right hand of God: Stephen affirms to the Sanhedrin that the prophecy Jesus made before them has been fulfilled ([Mk 14:62](#)).

* [\[7:57\]](#) Covered their ears: Stephen's declaration, like that of Jesus, is a scandal to the court, which regards it as blasphemy.

* [\[7:59\]](#) Compare [Lk 23:34, 46](#).

a. [\[7:2\]](#) [Gn 11:31; 12:1; Ps 29:3](#).

b. [\[7:3\]](#) [Gn 12:1](#).

c. [\[7:4\]](#) [Gn 12:5; 15:7](#).

d. [\[7:5\]](#) [Gn 12:7; 13:15; 15:2; 16:1; Dt 2:5](#).

e. [\[7:6–7\]](#) [Gn 15:13–14](#).

f. [\[7:7\]](#) [Ex 3:12](#).

g. [\[7:8\]](#) [Gn 17:10–14; 21:2–4](#).

h. [\[7:9\]](#) [Gn 37:11, 28; 39:2, 3, 21, 23](#).

i. [\[7:10\]](#) [Gn 41:37–43; Ps 105:21; Wis 10:13–14](#).

j. [\[7:11\]](#) [Gn 41:54–57; 42:5](#).

k. [7:12] Gn 42:1–2.

l. [7:13] Gn 45:3–4, 16.

m. [7:14] Gn 45:9–11, 18–19; 46:27; Ex 1:5 LXX; Dt 10:22.

n. [7:15] Gn 46:5–6; 49:33.

o. [7:16] Gn 23:3–20; 33:19; 49:29–30; 50:13; Jos 24:32.

p. [7:17] Ex 1:7.

q. [7:18] Ex 1:8.

r. [7:20] Ex 2:2; Heb 11:23.

s. [7:21] Ex 2:3–10.

t. [7:23–24] Ex 2:11–12.

u. [7:26–28] Ex 2:13–14.

v. [7:29] Ex 2:15, 21–22; 18:3–4.

w. [7:30–34] Ex 3:2–3.

x. [7:35] Ex 2:14.

y. [7:36] Ex 7:3, 10; 14:21; Nm 14:33.

z. [7:37] Dt 18:15; Acts 3:22.

a. [7:38] Ex 19:3; 20:1–17; Dt 5:4–22; 6:4–25.

b. [7:39] Nm 14:3.

- c. [7:40] Ex 32:1, 23.
- d. [7:41] Ex 32:4–6.
- e. [7:42–43] Am 5:25–27.
- f. [7:42] Jer 7:18; 8:2; 19:13.
- g. [7:44] Ex 25:9, 40.
- h. [7:45] Jos 3:14–17; 18:1; 2 Sm 7:5–7.
- i. [7:46] 2 Sm 7:1–2; 1 Kgs 8:17; Ps 132:1–5.
- j. [7:47] 1 Kgs 6:1; 1 Chr 17:12.
- k. [7:48] 17:24.
- l. [7:49] Is 66:1–2.
- m. [7:52] 2 Chr 36:16; Mt 23:31, 34.
- n. [7:53] Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2.
- o. [7:55–56] Mt 26:64; Mk 14:62; Lk 22:69; Acts 2:34.
- p. [7:58] 22:20.
- q. [7:59] Ps 31:6; Lk 23:46.
- r. [7:60] Mt 27:46, 50; Mk 15:34; Lk 23:46.



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