

Stephen's Masterful Defense of the Gospel

Acts 7

PART FIVE

Introduction

Get their attention, sit them down, keep them still, and confront their idolatry.

Leviticus 26:14-28;

Numbers 14:11;

Deuteronomy 28:15, 20-22

Historically, the Jewish people have been 'homeless' wanderers, a transient people.

Abraham (7:4-7); Joseph (7:9; it took a famine to get his family down to Egypt v11f)

They rejected Moses at first. The second time he came to deliver them from Pharaoh, they followed him.

"This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with an angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us" v38.

God instructed Moses to build Him a tent/tabernacle in the wilderness.

The tent was temporary, collapsible, movable. Read **7:44-50**

As believers, we are the *assembly in the wilderness*.

Our bodies are "the temple of the Holy Spirit"; our hearts, the *holy of holies* where King Jesus dwells.

2 Corinthians 3:12-17;

John 8:31-37

We believers who temporarily remain on earth are the gathered, moving, *assembly in the wilderness*.

2 Timothy 2:3-4

When Jesus called His very first disciples He said, "***Follow Me.***"

The call is the same today:

- 1) Seek God. Listen to Him. Follow Him.
- 2) Don't lay down roots so deep that God has to pull them up. God is moving, so are His people.
- 3) Don't wrap your heart so tightly around the things in this world, nor invest so heavily in the cares of this life that you shudder at losing any of it to the point of utter surprise, shock, bitterness, and resentment toward God for taking it away. That is idolatry (see 1 John 5:21).

“Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will keep it.” Luke 17:32-33

Stephen's scorching indictment: vv. 51-53

Jesus exposes and excoriates the lies and hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees:

Matthew 23:29-35

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16

The Stoning of Stephen: vv. 54-60

The light of Truth, ignited by the Spirit, sparked a raging fire in the dry, dead lumber of false religion.

“enraged, and they ground their teeth”

Psalms 35:15-16

Psalms 37:12-13

Hell has no provision for remorse or humble conviction, or contrition.

Psalms 112:6, 9-10

Since there is no provision for reconciliation in hell, the sins of its occupants are perpetually compounded eternally with no relief, ever.

Stephen and his accusers: *a study in contrasts*

Matthew 13:42-43

Matthew 13:49-50

“Judgment doesn't produce repentance when grace is refused” (MacArthur).

Revelation 9:20-21

After the 4th and 5th Bowl Judgments:

Revelation 16:8-11

By stark contrast, Stephen remained calm and peaceful, possessing “a face like an angel” in the face of the violent rage and fury of his killers.

1 Peter 4:14

Stephen's Glorious Vision: vv. 55-56

Luke 22:69

When Jesus ascended to heaven, he took His rightful place permanently seated at the right hand of God.

1 Corinthians 15:54-55