

# Bible Workshop:

## Acts of the Apostles 7

### Outline

- v. 1 Restatement of charges
- vv. 2-8 The witness of Abraham
- vv. 9-19 The witness of Joseph
- vv. 20-41 The witness of Moses
- vv. 42-50 The witness of the prophets
- vv. 51-53 Stephen's accusation
- vv. 54-60 Stephen falls asleep

### Discussion points

- 1 What do you think the vision that Abraham saw in Mesopotamia (v. 2) was like? What kind of vision would you require to make you leave everything?
- 2 Compare the promise in verse 5 with the one made in Genesis 12. To whom was the Land first promised? What is significant about this in the light of Stephen's argument?
- 3 How are we to resolve the difference in numbers between verse 14 and Genesis 46:27?
- 4 What is the promise referred to in verse 17? Are there other time periods that God's people wait for expectantly?
- 5 What does it mean that Moses was "exceeding fair" (v. 20)? (Marginal references help.) What does this tell us about his parents?
- 6 Why did Moses flee the land of Egypt? Was it fear or something else (vv. 24-29)? Look at the background in Exodus 2.
- 7 How do the words of the Lord in verse 33 support the treatise that Stephen is making? What made the ground holy?
- 8 Look at the vision that Stephen is given in verses 55 and 56, and note the significance of his Lord's location and posture.

### Details

- 1 Stephen says the nation was in bondage in a strange land for 400 years (v. 6). How do we reconcile this with Exodus 12:40?
- 2 The motivation Stephen sees in verse 9 is envy; Pilate sees the same in Matthew 27:18. By this link Stephen draws the situations together, with similar conclusions.

- 3 Look up the Old Testament references that Stephen quotes in verses 48-50 and see the significance of where God dwells.
- 4 Look at the statement of our Lord in Luke 23:34, when he is crucified, and that of Stephen in verses 59,60. Why are they different? What is the significance?

### Tasks

- 1 As you read through this chapter, recognise and record all the incidents where God revealed himself to His people outside of Israel. What is the lesson Stephen is driving home?
- 2 Itemise the parcels of ground that the Patriarchs bought and the reason for the purchase. Where were the individual Patriarchs buried?
- 3 Look up the Old Testament references where the children of Israel are referred to as "stiff-necked" and "uncircumcised" (v. 51). Note how they parallel the situation with Stephen.

### Information

This is the longest discourse in Acts, and is not delivered by one of the original apostles. The witness of Stephen leads to his murder, but changes the life of Saul of Tarsus for his and our benefit.

### Take-home point

Let us do our best not to manifest the characteristics shown by Stephen's accusers in verse 51, but rather to remain malleable, so that God can shape and mould us to conform to the image of His Son.

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Comments are welcome and will be considered for publication. Please send them to the Publishing Editor, Brother Eric Marshall, address inside front cover.