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HOW REVIVAL ACTS

Acts 7:1-8



FIRED UP

Acts 7:1 Then said the high priest, Are these things so?

2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not *so much as* to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child.

6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil four hundred years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so *Abraham* begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac *begat* Jacob; and Jacob *begat* the twelve patriarchs.

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1. Stephen, the Tremendous Worker, 6:8-15

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Man, 6:12-13

(iii) How They Insulted the
Master, 6:14

b. His Divine Ennoblement, 6:15

Stephen was called before the Council to answer charges made against him.

Acts 6:11 Then they suborned men, which said, **We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God. ...**

13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous **words against this holy place, and the law:**

14 **For we have heard him say,** that this Jesus of Nazareth shall **destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses** delivered us.

As we begin chapter 7, the high priest asks Stephen if the charges are true...

The problem with the religious Jews was a failure to understand the significance of Moses and of their history, along with the role of the Temple.

Mt. 23:16 Woe unto you, **ye blind guides**, which say, Whosoever shall swear by **the temple**, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of **the temple**, he is a debtor!

17 **Ye fools and blind**: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19 **Ye fools and blind**: for whether *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

2. Stephen, the Truthful Witness, 7:1-53

a. His Excellent Approach, 7:1-8

i. He Talks about Abraham's Faith, 7:1-5

(a) The Revelation that Was Made to
Abraham, 7:1-3

Acts 7:1 Then said the high priest, Are these things so?

2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; **The God of glory** appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

Jn. 18:13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.

14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. ...

24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.

Mt. 26:57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

Acts 7:2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; **The God of glory** appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, ...

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,

Stephen begins with **“The God of glory,”** not the glory of man.

- God is the Initiator – “...**The God of glory** appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia...”
- When Abraham was a moon-worshipping pagan, God was gracious in speaking to him.

Summary

- The first section (vv. 2-16) deals with Israel's patriarchal period and refutes the charge of blaspheming God (6:11).
- The second major section (vv. 17-43) deals with Moses and the Law, and responds to the charge of blaspheming Moses (6:11) and speaking against the Law (6:13).
- The third section (vv. 44-50) deals with the temple, and responds to the charge of speaking against the temple (6:13), and Stephen's allegedly saying that Jesus would destroy the temple and alter Jewish customs (6:14).
- Stephen then climaxed his address with an indictment of his hardhearted hearers (vv. 51-53).

In this discourse three ideas run like cords through its fabric:

"1. There is progress and change in God's program. . . .

2. The blessings of God are not limited to the land of Israel and the temple area. . . .

"3. Israel in its past always evidenced a pattern of opposition to God's plans and His men."

Gustaf H. Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, p. 314.

b. The Response that Was Made by
Abraham, 7:4-5

i. The Positive Response, 7:4

Acts 7:4 Then **came he out of the land of the Chaldeans**, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.

Gen. 15:7 And he said unto him, **I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees**, to give thee this land to inherit it.

Josh. 24:3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

Neh. 9:7 Thou ***art* the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees**, and gavest him the name of Abraham;

ii. The Passive Response, 7:5

Acts 7:5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not *so much as* to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child.

2. He Talks about Abraham's Future, 7:6-8

(a) The Government of God, 7:6-7

i. God's Omniscience, 7:6

Acts 7:6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil four hundred years.

ii. God's Omnipotence, 7:7

Acts 7:7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage **will I judge, said God:** and after that shall they come forth, and **serve me** in this place.

(b) The Grace of God, 7:8

i. The Covenant Conveyed to the Pilgrim, 7:8a “And he gave him the covenant of circumcision...”

ii. The Covenant Confirmed to the Patriarchs, 7:8b “...and so *Abraham* begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac *begat* Jacob; and Jacob *begat* the twelve patriarchs.”

The Abrahamic Covenant was yet to be fulfilled, and the religious leaders were too blind to see that the Lord Jesus Christ was their fulfillment to God's promises.

Mt. 21:28 But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir: and went not.

31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Conclusion

Rom. 10:4 For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Gal. 2:16 Knowing that **a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Gal. 3:24 Wherefore **the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ**, that we might be justified by faith.

Phil. 3:9 And be found in him, **not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**