

STEPHEN'S DEFENSE, A HISTORY OF MEN AND METHODS BY WHICH GOD  
BROUGHT TO ISRAEL THE MESSIAH

Acts 7:2-53

Introduction:

- A. Most heresy arises from an improper interpretation and application of the Bible.
    - 1) The Jewish leadership had missed the signs that Jesus had given.
    - 2) They would not listen.
  - B. The defense of Stephen puts together, in a condensation, the intent and plan of God.
    - 1) Stephen begins with Abraham
    - 2) He concludes with David
- I. Our Father Abraham      Vs. 2
- A. God appeared unto Abraham      Vs. 2
    - 1) "appeared" = hoptomai = "to look", "to see"
    - 2) He was not in Harran, but Mesopotamia
  - B. God spoke to him      Vs. 3
    - 1) There were three dimensions to his command
    - 2) Country, kindred, come into a land
  - C. Abraham obeyed God      Vs. 4
    - 1) "He came out of the land of the chaldeans"
    - 2) He removed him to this place
    - 3) "removed" = metoikizo = "to lead to another abode"
  - D. Abraham never received the inheritance      Vs. 5
    - 1) Heb. 11:13, "Not so much as one foot"
  - E. God had a plan foreordained and predestined.
    - 1) Vs. 6, They would live in a strange land
    - 2) Vs. 7, God would judge that nation
- Gen. 17:10
- 3) Vs. 8, The covenant of circumcision was a sign between God and Abraham. It was not a sign that they were subject to the law
- Ex. 31:13
- 4) Their sign of subjection to the law was the keeping of the Sabbath. This was a public sign, the other private.
- II. The Sons of Abraham      Vs. 8b
- A. Isaac begat Jacob
    - 1) Jacob begat the patriarchs
    - 2) Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs

- B. Joseph, sold into Egypt Vs. 9
- 1) "envy" = xeloo = "to be jealous"
  - 2) Emphasis on God's protection Vs. 10
  - 3) God's providence Vs. 11-17
  - 4) "The time of the promise drew near, God multiplied His people in Egypt. Why?"
  - 5) It created a crisis Vs. 18-19

III. Moses Was Born Vs. 20

- A. Moses was born in a time of crisis
- 1) God created the crisis, by multiplying the Jews and Pharaoh's death.
  - 2) At the same time He was preparing the one who would solve it.
  - 3) God is not ignorant of any situation, He prepares men and people for His work.

- B. Moses was cared for providentially Vs. 21
- 1) "Pharaoh's daughter took him up"
  - 2) "nourished him for her own son"

- C. Moses was learned Vs. 22
- 1) "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians"
  - 2) "mighty in words and deeds"

- D. Moses was aware of his people Vs. 23
- 1) "when he was full forty years old"
  - 2) "it came into his heart to visit his brethren"

- E. Moses was aware of his purpose Vs. 24-28
- 1) He saw one of his brethren suffer wrong
  - 2) Moses defended him and killed the Egyptian
  - 3) He thought they knew his purpose Vs. 25
  - 4) They resented and rejected him Vs. 26-28

- F. Moses fled from Egypt Vs. 29
- 1) Moses fled to the land of Midian
  - 2) He began his family there

IV. The Beginning of Moses' Ministry Vs. 30

- A. God appeared to him in the burning bush
- 1) It was in the wilderness of Sinai
  - 2) He had been out of Egypt forty years
  - 3) This gave time for his brethren to forget

- B. God spoke to Moses Vs. 31
- 1) "the voice of the Lord came unto him"
  - 2) "He saw the burning bush"
  - 3) God used, "signs and wonders"

- C. God identified Himself Vs. 32
- 1) "I am the God of thy fathers"
  - 2) Abraham, Isaac & Jacob
  - 3) He was a Holy God Vs. 33

D. God had seen His people suffer Vs. 34a

- 1) "I have seen"
- 2) "I have seen the affliction of my people"
- 3) "I have heard their groaning"

E. God commissioned Moses Vs. 34b

- 1) "And now come and I will send thee to Egypt"
- 2) "to be a ruler and a deliverer" Vs. 35

F. God used Moses Vs. 36

- 1) "He brought them out"
- 2) There were, "signs and wonders"

G. Moses wrote of Jesus Vs. 37

- 1) He was to be like unto Moses
- 2) He would do, "signs and wonders"
- 3) He would be a deliverer and a ruler

H. God gave the law through Moses Vs. 38

- 1) The messenger spoke on Mount Sinai
- 2) "who received the living oracles to give unto us"

V. Israel's Response to the Ministry of Moses Vs. 39

A. They would not accept his work

- 1) "To whom our fathers would not obey"
- 2) "thrust him from them"
- 3) "and in their hearts turned back to Egypt"

B. They took up idolatry Vs. 40-41

- 1) They requested Aaro to lead them
- 2) They made a calf

VI. God's Response to Israel Vs. 42

A. God turned from them

- 1) "Then God turned"
- 2) "And gave them up to worship the host of heaven"
- 3) The prophets wrote of it
- 4) Amos 5:25

B. God carried them into captivity Vs. 43

- 1) "I will carry you away beyond Babylon"
- 2) We have not escaped God's judgment"

VII. Israel Had a Witness to God Vs. 44

A. They had the tabernacle in the wilderness

- 1) They could not say they had no witness
- 2) "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness
- 3) "as he had appointed"
- 4) "according to the fashion he had seen"

B. They had a witness in the promised land Vs. 45

- 1) Joshua brought it into the land
- 2) God drove out the Gentiles

C. Under the Kings they had a witness

- 1) David desired to build the Temple 45b-46
- 2) Solomon built it Vs. 47

VIII. God Did Not Dwell in the Temple Vs. 48-50

A. Hands cannot fashion a dwelling place for almighty God!

- 1) Vs. 48
- 2) God's dwelling is the universe Vs. 49

B. God had prepared all things

- 1) Vs. 50
- 2) How could you possibly believe that God is threatened by what Stephen is preaching? Acts 6:14