

ACTS CHAPTERS 6 AND 7

The Holy Spirit's Work in Stephen's Life



6

April 17, 2005
2.ACT06

Lesson Goal

Students will understand the role of the Holy Spirit in Stephen's life.

Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain the Apostle's key role.
- Tell the teacher how Stephen was selected to serve and what qualified him to serve.
- Explain why the Sanhedrin were so angry with Stephen.
- Explain why Stephen was so bold in telling the people about Jesus even though it meant death for him.
- Explain why we don't often have the same boldness that Stephen did in telling people about Jesus.

Memory Verse

Acts 7:60a ~ *"Then he fell on his knees and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.'"*

Application

- Devote yourself to God's word and to prayer.
- How do you respond to God's word?
- Pray! Ask God to give you the boldness to tell people about Jesus.
- Serve the lord faithfully.

TEACHER PLANNING SHEET

Prepare Your Heart

- Read and study through the passage meditatively.
- Prayerfully seek how God would have you personally apply this passage to your own life. Write these down.

Prepare the Lesson

- Choose from the various ideas in the lesson plan.
- Write down an approximate time frame for each.
- List the materials needed.

HOOK

Time

BOOK

Time

LOOK

Time

TOOK

Time

Materials Needed:

ACTS CHAPTERS 6 AND 7

The Holy Spirit's Work in Stephen's Life



6

1st–3rd Grade
April 17, 2005
2.ACT06EL

MEMORY VERSE



“Then he fell
on his knees
and cried,
‘Lord, do not
hold this sin
against
them.’”

Acts 7:60a



MISSION MOMENT

Adopt A Missionary. Talk to your students about the missionary you have adopted, and remind them of ways they can pray for the missionary with their families. Suggest and encourage the students to:

1. Pray daily
Have a consistent time to do this.
Keep a picture in a place where it will remind you to pray for them.
Keep a list of specific requests to pray for them.
2. Give weekly (Some classes in the past have taken an offering and bought a gift for their missionary)
3. Write monthly (Please contact the church office for some suggestions that are in print for this.)
4. Send a package quarterly (but keep these small and light, to keep the expense down)
5. Care continually

Teachers please decide what is best for the class—sometimes it is not practical to try to do all the steps.

A poster is available for every class that wants to adopt a missionary, so the students can see who it is they are praying for. Please let the church office know.

SHOOK

Stoning (Discussion). Discuss the different dictionary meanings of stoning and what is meant here. Discuss what happened when someone was stoned. Bring in rocks like the ones thrown so students see these were not mere pebbles, **2.ACT06EL.GF1.**

Stoning Review (Activity). This activity can be done as a HOOK or TOOK. For this activity, you will need a couple of bags of large marshmallows (to use as the “stones”), and review questions (at least one per student) from the study of Acts. Aim questions from previous lessons may be used. If a student answers the question incorrectly, he is designated a “false witness,” and sent to one side of the room. If he answers correctly, he is designated “Stephen,” and sent to the opposite side of the room. After you have asked each student a question and they are in their designated area, line the “false witnesses” up like in a firing line and have them stone the “Stephen’s” by throwing marshmallow stones at them. Tell the students that in today’s lesson they will learn about a man named Stephen who was stoned for speaking the truth.

To Die For (*Discussion*). Ask the students how many of them feel that they would rather die than give a speech in front of the class or a large group of people. Of what are they afraid? Let the students share their stories. Lead into today's Bible Adventure about Stephen, who was stoned to death after his speech.



Presentation Ideas

Laying on of Hands (*Illustration/Coloring Page*). Acts 6:6, **2.ACT06EL.GF2.**

Stoning of Stephen (*Illustration/Coloring Page*). Acts 7:54-60, **2.ACT06EL.GF3.**

Stephen Outline (*Illustration/Overhead*). Acts 6:1-7:30, **2.ACT06EL.GF4.** Use this as a review at the end of the lesson, moving into LOOK time, or fill in the blanks as you tell the story.

F.B.C. Morning News (*Scripted Role-play*). There are nine characters. This play is intended mainly just to be read in class by students assigned to each part. But it would be fun and profitable for an older class to rehearse it quickly and perform it for a younger Bible school class. Or teachers could combine classes and perform it for their students. It could be performed by only 3 or 4 people using puppets. In any case, it would be unnecessary to memorize the lines. More of Stephen's sermon could be included if desired, **2.ACT06EL.GF5 Pgs. 1-3.**

Bible Adventure for 1st- 3^d grades

Have you ever thought much about the meaning of the word "bold"? Today we tend to think of it as being pushy, insensitive, or rude. However, most dictionaries have the number one definition of bold as being courageous or fearless. That word describes the Apostles as we've been looking at the book of Acts. God has given His Apostles the boldness needed, through His Holy Spirit, to take His message to an unfriendly world.

As we've already learned, the early church was growing rapidly, and God was blessing it. There were new believers, mostly Jews, of many different backgrounds. There were those who spoke the languages of Palestine and who followed Jewish customs and culture. There were also the Hellenistic Jews, who were born in other lands outside Jerusalem and who spoke Greek. The Apostles became aware of some complaints from the Hellenistic Jews. They felt that the Hellenistic widows were being overlooked when food was given out, and the Hebrew Jewish widows were not. After listening to these complaints the Apostles called all the believers together and came up with a solution to the problem. They felt that God had chosen them to do the work of preaching God's words to the people and were concerned that if they had to also deal with problems like this in the church, it would pull them away from preaching. They asked all the believers to choose seven men from among them who were wise and full of the Holy Spirit. These seven men would oversee the giving out of the food and make sure everyone was treated fairly.

The believers all agreed this was a good plan. They chose Stephen, Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas. The Apostles prayed for these men and laid their hands on them. At least two of the seven, Stephen and Philip, went on to do great things in the early Church. Today we will learn about Stephen.

The sixth chapter of Acts tells us that Stephen was a man full of God's grace and power. After the Apostles laid hands on him, he did "great wonders and miraculous signs among the people." Not everyone in Jerusalem was happy about Stephen, though. A group of Jews from several synagogues around the city began arguing with Stephen concerning the things he was telling others about Jesus. They soon found that their arguments could not stand up against the wisdom Stephen had been given by God. Since they could not stop him with their arguments, these men tried something more secretive and evil. They convinced some other men to say they had heard Stephen saying horrible things about Moses and about God. They stirred up the people and the leaders and teachers of the Law. They grabbed Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. They found false witnesses, just as they had with Jesus, who said, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the Law. For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us." Now, these witnesses were painting a picture of a very evil man, but when everyone in the room looked at Stephen, his face was like the face of an angel. Stephen was so filled with God's Spirit that his face shone with God's glory.

The high priest asked Stephen, "Are these charges true?" This was all the open door Stephen needed, and he made the most of it. The false witnesses had accused him of saying evil things about Moses, so Stephen started with that charge, but not with a simple, "I didn't do it." He took them back through their own history, from God's promise to Abraham to make him the father of a great nation through Abraham's descendants, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and finally Moses. Moses was the man God chose to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. He thought that his own people would realize God had sent him to help them, but they didn't. They challenged him saying, "Who made you ruler and judge over us?" Moses told the people that God would send a prophet to them. This prophet would be their Messiah. Just as the people would someday reject their Messiah, they rejected Moses and God who had sent Him.

The false witnesses had also accused Stephen of saying things about the temple, so he spoke about that next. God had given the plans for the tabernacle to Moses, and it had been built and brought with the people into the Promised Land. Then God allowed David's son, Solomon, to build the temple. Stephen understood the awesomeness of God the way the false witnesses and the Sanhedrin never would. They thought they could keep the God of the Universe inside a building. Stephen pointed out the error of this kind of thinking. God is too big to dwell in a temple. The temple was not holy in itself, God was.

I'm sure the Sanhedrin must have been squirming by now, being reminded of the rebellion and stubbornness of the Jewish people. Stephen finally laid it on the line for them, calling them "stiff-necked people" with hearts and ears that were unresponsive to God. They had murdered the prophets God sent to them, and then finally murdered God's own Son. They took pride in having the Law, but they had not obeyed it.

You can imagine the effect Stephen's words had on these proud men. Stephen's words stung them right in the center of their pride. He had exposed them for the hypocrites they were, and instead of showing sorrow, they were furious with him. Then an amazing thing happened. Stephen looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God as well as Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Jesus had stood to show His concern for Stephen, and also because He knew what was about to happen. As Stephen told the room full of men what he was seeing, they totally lost control in their rage. They rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Some of them piled their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul, about whom we will hear more later.

As this angry mob pelted Stephen with stones, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." As he was dying, he fell to his knees and asked God not to hold his death against those responsible. Stephen was the first person to die for placing his faith in Jesus Christ. The fact that he died was not a defeat, it is a victory, because it is such a wonderful example to us. Stephen's total devotion to God was obvious to anyone who spent time with him. Even his enemies knew it. Is that kind of devotion possible in the lives of ordinary people? Yes, it is, but not if we are casually committed to Christ. Stephen had complete confidence in God's control over all things, including his life, and even his death. His confidence allowed him to be a bold witness and to face death bravely in the end. If Stephen could trust God with his life, we can trust Him for the words to speak to others about Christ. We want the words to be God's words, not ours. Only His words can cut men's hearts and show them their need for Christ. Boldness is a choice we can make in our lives. If we trust the message of Christ and that God leads our words and deeds, the boldness will be there, just as it was for Stephen.

Aim Questions:

1. **How was Stephen selected to serve? What was his original job?** *He was chosen by the people. Meeting the needs of the believers.*
2. **What was the Sanhedrin arguing with Stephen about?** *They argued that the things Stephen said were against God and Moses.*
3. **Tell something about the sermon that Stephen preached to the Sanhedrin. How did they respond?** *They were "cut to the heart" or very angry.*
4. **Do you personally know anyone who has been rejected by people for believing in Jesus Christ?**
5. **Why do you think you may be afraid or unwilling to stand up for Jesus around other people who do not believe? What would Stephen say to us when we are afraid?**



A.C.T.S. 6:1-7:60 (Worksheet). Who was the first person to die for his faith in Jesus Christ? *Stephen*; In what city were the Apostles? *Jerusalem*; Of what was Stephen being accused? *Blasphemy against Moses and God*; What happened to Stephen? *He was stoned to death*; What enabled Stephen to perform great signs and wonders? *God's grace and power*; What were Stephen's surroundings and thoughts as he was being stoned? *Thoughts were toward heaven and to Jesus*
2.ACT06EL.GF6.

You Did It! (Worksheet). The trial of Stephen was very unusual. After charges were brought against him, he defended himself by accusing his “judges” in return! Teachers, do this worksheet together as a class. Read each charge/accusation out loud, and have the students place a check mark in the correct column for each accusation. Then have the students indicate whether the verdict was guilty or not guilty by writing “G” or “NG”. Who should have been found guilty at this trial? **2.ACT06EL.GF7.**

Throwing Stones (Activity). Draw a picture of Stephen on a large piece of butcher paper and tape it to the wall. (You might consider letting one of the teachers be Stephen.) Let the students throw nerf balls at Stephen as though throwing stones. The students can yell, “Stop preaching about Jesus” or “You did not see Jesus!” Try making a contest out of it by seeing who gets the closest to the forehead. Explain to the students that the stone throwers were wrong when they said that Jesus was not alive in heaven. Stephen saw Jesus in heaven and he was happy to go be with Jesus.

Stephen was Full of... (Worksheet). Read Acts 6:3-10. Have the students fill in the puzzle by placing the bolded words in each verse in the correct boxes. The stars signify spaces for answers with more than one word. **Answers:** *wisdom, faith, grace, power, Holy Spirit, great wonders, signs*, **2.ACT06EL.GF8.**

Stone Door Stopper (Craft). You may want to start this craft during HOOK time to allow the paint to dry. For this craft, you will need:

- plastic drop cloths (to protect the carpet or grass outside)
- 1 Large River Rock for each student (you can buy these from most landscape companies)
- acrylic Paints (several different colors)
- paintbrushes for each student
- sponge (to sponge paint the verse onto the rock)
- post it notes (for the student’s name)
- some masking tape (to tape the stencil onto the rocks)
- one verse stencil **2.ACT06EL.GF9**, copied onto transparency film and precut using an exact-o knife

Please be considerate of the church and its grounds. Always lay plastic drop cloths down, and paint in a way that does not affect the classroom, grass, plants or the building. Have the students pick a rock and paint the top a solid color of their choice. After the paint has dried, have the student write their name on a post-it-note, place it on the rock, and take his rock over to the designated area to have the stenciled verse painted onto his rock. A teacher or helper will tape the stencil onto the rock and sponge paint the verse. Tell the students to use this rock as a door stopper and a reminder that we’re to forgive those who wrong us, just like Stephen asked God to forgive the people who falsely accused him and stoned him. **NOTE TO TEACHERS:** Sponge painting is suggested, because the surface of the rocks may not be completely smooth. However, if you decide to use black spray paint for the stenciled verse, be sure to set it up outside. It would be helpful to use a Xerox box top to place the rock on before spray painting. Another idea is to use black permanent markers to write the verse on the rock using the stencil, or if you have good penmanship, just freehand it.

Acts 7:60a (Memory Verse Exercise). Have the students use the key to fill in the blanks to find out what Stephen’s prayer was, **2.ACT06EL.GF10.**

Aim Questions (Worksheet). Have the students answer the Aim Questions about today's Bible Adventure, **2.ACT06EL.GF11**.



TOOK

More Like Jesus (Discussion). How was the death of Stephen like that of his Lord Jesus? List these categories on the board: #1 Accusations and Trial, #2 What Stephen Said, and #3 What Stephen Did. Brainstorm the similarities between Jesus' trial and Stephen's, and write them down. Stephen was an ordinary man, but through the power of the Holy Spirit he faced death in a Christ-like way. If we are bold in our witness, we may face hostility and rejection. Can we be like Jesus as Stephen was?

Stephen (Poem). Read this account of Stephen's bold witness to the students. Discuss with them how God took care of him in the end. Are we willing to be as bold as Stephen? Do we truly believe God will take care of us even when things look really bad? **2.ACT06EL.GF12**.

Up-Down Stoning (Game). For this game, you will need a couple of bags of large marshmallows. Divide the class up into two teams (targets and throwers or A and B). Line up one team (A) to be targets. Opposite them, the other team (B) throws marshmallow stones at the targets (team A). The target students must keep their feet on the floor as if they were glued down. They can move up and down and sideways, but they cannot move their feet. The throwers (team B) try to hit the target students, and if they do, the target student who has been hit says "I forgive you," and they trade places. Talk about how Stephen did what was right and didn't dodge the stones. Stephen didn't let anything hinder him from sharing the good news about Jesus.

Future Boldness (Current Events/Discussion). Recently in the newspaper, we heard of a particular incident where a bold young man trusted in God to protect himself and others. He began talking to an armed fourteen-year old boy who had just opened fire on a prayer group at his school. He convinced the boy to stop firing. His boldness saved lives. The fourteen-year old boy had already killed three girls and wounded five others as they stood in the hallway praying.

The bold young man later spoke at the funeral of the three slain girls. This was a time of sadness, he said to them, but also a time to rejoice, because the girls were now in heaven and they had died while talking to God in prayer. They were waiting in heaven, he said, "just a little bit sooner than the rest of us."

The fourteen-year old gunman attributed his actions to a violent movie he had seen that impressed him. The young man who talked to him is being hailed as a hero. His faith and trust in God brought comfort to the grieving families and community.

Have the students discuss what they may see as their future, i.e. college, career, marriage, ministry, etc.

What kind of boldness might they need to achieve it? What kinds of situations might they find themselves in that may require them to not only be bold but extremely brave? What are they doing today to prepare for the course ahead? Are they taking their training seriously? Boldness comes from the Lord,

but we need to be prepared or we may miss important opportunities to be that witness.

Teacher Note: *Some other resources for different and possibly more current stories are:* www.persecution.com – Voice of the Martyrs web site; www.gfa.org – Gospel for Asia Web site; [Fox's Book of Martyrs](#) by John Foxe.

Obedience to God, Not Man (Poem/Color Page). Read the poem together as a class or read out loud as they color the pictures of the Apostles being released and what they might have looked like after they were beaten, **2.ACT06EL.GF13**. Use the time to ask leading questions that might lead to greater understanding of the lesson. Some good questions to use for this discussion might be the AIM questions.

This workbook is not available at this time.

A.C.T.S. Action Cards (Workbook). Continue to help students recall the main events of Acts using the Apostle "action cards." The following stats are from Acts 6:1-7:60:

- A. Apostles appoint Stephen.
- C. In the city of Jerusalem.
- T. Stoning of Stephen.
- S. Shows Stephen heaven.

Stoning Information Sheet

Some definitions of stoning are:

STONING

n : pelting with stones; punishment inflicted by throwing stones at the victim (even unto death)
[syn: [lapidation](#)]

[Source](#): WordNet ® 2.0, © 2003 Princeton University

a form of punishment (Lev. 20:2; 24:14; Deut. 13:10; 17:5; 22:21) prescribed for certain offences. Of Achan (Josh. 7:25), Naboth (1 Kings 21), Stephen (Acts 7:59), Paul (Acts 14:19; 2 Cor. 11:25).

[Source](#): Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary

These definitions are obtained through www.dictionary.com.

Examples of what happens in Biblical stoning are difficult to find. There are many examples of stoning that happens in Islamic countries today, but to find the details of stoning in biblical times are sketchy at best. Here are some examples that will be useful in painting an accurate picture for older students.

Stoning is a form of [capital punishment](#) in which a human is killed by

1. having [stones](#) thrown at them repeatedly
2. having a single stone of sufficient size placed upon them so as to prevent their breathing
3. having a large door placed upon them and laden with stones
4. being thrown from a height onto a large stone or rock outcropping.

This form of execution is still practiced in some [Islamic](#) countries governed by [Sharia](#) law, namely: [Afghanistan](#), [Iran](#), [Pakistan](#), [Saudi Arabia](#), [Sudan](#), and the [United Arab Emirates](#). The person to be killed is wrapped in a sheet and buried from the waist down. The mob then pelts the culprit repeatedly with rocks. The stones are small enough so that a single stone cannot cause death. In some places, if the criminal manages to become free, and escapes, further punishment is canceled.

(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stoning>)

Stoning (ספייה): With reference to two offenders subject to this penalty, the Pentateuch says, "Thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people" (Deut. xiii. 10 [A. V. 9]), and again (*ib.* xvii. 7), "The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people." Rabbinic law follows this injunction literally, but confines its consummation within narrow limits. The convict having been placed on a platform twice his height, one of the witnesses throws him to the ground. If the concussion does not produce instant death, the second witness hurls a heavy stone at his chest; and only when this also proves insufficient to end his misery, the bystanders throw stones at the prostrate body until death ensues (Sanh. vi. 4; 45a *et seq.*; Sifra, Emor, xix.; Sifre, Num. 114; *ib.* Deut. 89, 90, 149, 151).

(<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com>)

Laying on of Hands



Stoning of Stephen



Acts 6:1 – 7:60

Stephen

Chosen:

Stephen was chosen to _____

Bears Witness:

Stephen was full of God's grace and power, and he witnessed by doing great _____ and _____.

Speech:

Stephen was on trial for blasphemy against Moses and God. In his speech, he told the Sanhedrin how they have always resisted God.

Joseph – They _____ him. 7:9

Moses – They _____ him with the words, "Who made you ruler and judge?" 7:35

David & Solomon – They showed you that the _____ was too small for _____. 7:49 – 51

Stoned Stephen:

Stephen was the first _____.

Table Work:

Make a sentence (or sentences) with the highlighted letters.

Using the first letter of the sentence, tell what was discussed in the lesson.

Example: **C**an **B**ill **S**ay **J**ill **M**akes **D**elightful **S**alads?

Draw a picture on the back of this sheet of what Stephen saw in Acts 7:55.

The F.B.C. Morning News Presents: THE STORY OF STEPHEN

Characters: Announcer (unseen)
Mary Reasoner - Anchor
David Blinkey - Reporter
Apostle I
Apostle II
Witness I
Witness II
Stephen
Saul

Props: Microphone (pretend)
News desk

Extras: Apostles and church leaders
Sanhedrin and crowd

Announcer: Coming to you live from Palestine, this is the F.B.C. morning news with Mary Reasoner and David Blinkey in Jerusalem.... And now, the news.

Mary: (seated at news desk to the side of 'stage' area) Our headline story tonight takes place within the Christian community in Jerusalem. The church is a new phenomenon in our city and is made up of those who follow the late Jesus of Nazareth, who is sometimes called the Christ. The number of these followers has been growing rapidly, but now it seems that there is a disagreement among them. The Greek-speaking Jews have complained that their widows were being overlooked by the Hebrew Christians when food was distributed to those in need.

Our correspondent, David Blinkey, was at the scene earlier today. (David enters in front. Apostles, church leaders, and Stephen enter behind him.)

David: Thank-you, Mary. We are at the meeting of Church leaders where the disciples are discussing the food distribution problem. Let's listen:

Apostle I: It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the Word of God in order to wait on tables.

Apostle II: Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word. (Everyone murmur agreement.)

Apostle I: Stephen is a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit. I think he should be our first choice.

Apostle II: I also appoint Philip, Procorus, Nicanor and Timon.

Apostle I: We need two more men. Let's see... Parmenas and Nicolas from Antioch are also wise and full of the Spirit of God.

Apostle II: Let's lay our hands on these men and pray for God's blessing on their ministry.

David: It appears that the men who were just appointed are members of the Greek minority. This should ensure that the widows will be treated fairly. The Christians seem to have found a satisfactory solution to their first problem. And now, back to you, Mary. (clear the stage)

Mary: That was David Blinkey, reporting from Jerusalem. This is not the first we've heard of the man called Stephen. He has already become known for his good deeds. Some say he can do miraculous things. (shuffle papers)

Later today, trouble for the Christians began to come from a different source. Jews from Cyrene and Alexandria, as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia, came to oppose the followers of Jesus Christ. These men began to argue with Stephen, but most witnesses say they could not stand up against his wisdom as it seems he speaks by the Spirit of God. We go live now to David who is still at the scene in Jerusalem. David?

(David enters front. Witnesses, Stephen, Saul and Sanhedrin, enter behind).

David: Thank you, Mary. Stephen's bold witness to the Jews may have gotten him into some serious trouble. The elders and teachers of the Law are all stirred up over Stephen's statements and have brought him here to the Sanhedrin for trial. This is all happening very quickly. Witnesses are now beginning to testify against him. Let's listen.

Witness I: We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God...

Witness II: We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us.

David: As the witnesses testify against him, I can't keep my eyes off of Stephen himself. It's his face. I've never seen anything like it. It almost glows; like the face of an angel.

The High Priest just asked Stephen whether the charges against him are true. He is approaching his judges as if he is about to make his defense. Let's listen...

Stephen: Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran. "Leave your country and your people," God said, "and go to the land I will show you." So he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After the death of his father, God sent him to this land where you are now living. He gave him no inheritance here, not even a foot of ground. But God promised him that he and his descendants after him would possess the land, even though at that time Abraham had no child...

David: It sounds as if Stephen will be able to handle these accusations without much trouble. All he needs to do is tell the Sanhedrin what they want to hear. I'll go back to you for now, Mary, and keep watching for further developments.

Mary: Thank you, David. It looks as if the Christian phenomenon is here to stay. In spite of efforts from the Jewish establishment to suppress it, the word about Jesus is continuing to spread in a powerful way. The number of converts is rising daily, and we have reports that a large number of priests have even become obedient to the faith... Wait! We have word from our correspondent in Jerusalem. What's happening out there David?

David: Stephen's defense has taken a surprising turn. Listen...

Stephen: However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men. As the prophet says, "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is My footstool. What kind of house will you build for Me?" says the Lord. "Or where will My resting place be? Has not My hand made all these things?" You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered Him. You have received the Law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it.

(Crowd and High Priest appear very upset and murmur against Stephen).

David: It looks as if order has been lost. Stephen has certainly NOT told the Sanhedrin what it wanted to hear.

Stephen: Look! I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!

(Crowd covers ears and yells, rushes at Stephen and drags him out).

David: (speaking to Saul) Sir, excuse me, sir, may I ask you a few questions? Who are you, and what do you think of the events we've just witnessed?

Saul: I am Saul, one of the youngest Jewish leaders and soon to be a Pharisee. I am very satisfied with what happened here today. Stephen was a dangerous man. These Christians have to be stopped before their message spreads any further. It could disrupt all our old traditions and turn the people against our authority.

David: Thank you, Saul. Well, Mary, I'm stunned. Stephen seemed to be a good man, but he is being stoned to death as I speak. His words have left me with a lot to think about, and I'll never forget his shining face. What a day.

Mary: Thank you David. What a day, indeed! And that's the news.

Announcer: This has been the F.B.C. morning news with Mary Reasoner and David Blinkey in Jerusalem.

A.C.T.S

6:1 - 7:60

Apostles – Who was the first person to die for his faith in Jesus Christ?

City – In what city were the Apostles?

Trials/troubles – Of what was Stephen being accused? What happened to Stephen?

Spirit – What enabled Stephen to perform great signs and wonders? What were Stephen's surroundings and thoughts as he was being stoned?

“Then he fell on his knees and cried out, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’”
Acts 7:60a

You Did It!

The trial of Stephen was very unusual. After charges were brought against him, he defended himself by accusing his “judges” in return! Mark the correct column for each accusation. Then indicate whether the charge was guilty or not guilty. Who should have been found guilty at this trial?



You are just like your fathers. Acts 7:51

You speak blasphemy against Moses and against God. Acts 6:11

You always resist the Holy Spirit! Acts 7:51

You never stop speaking against this holy place and against the Law. Acts 6:13

You have betrayed and murdered the Righteous One. Acts 7:52

You said that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us. Acts 6:14

You have received the Law but have not obeyed it. Acts 7:53

The Jews accused Stephen of this	Stephen accused the Jews of this	Guilty or Not Guilty

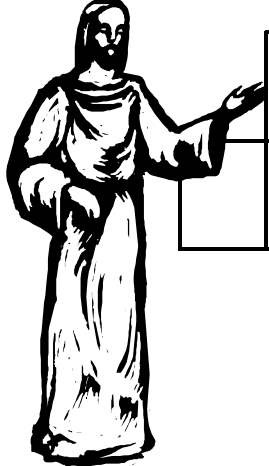

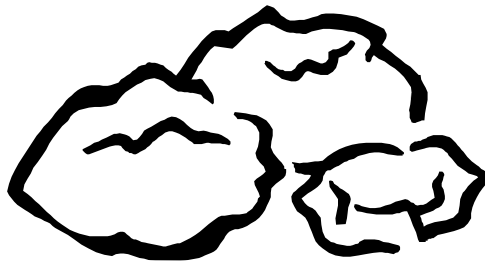
Stephen Was Full of ...

Read the verse at the bottom of the page to find the words to solve the puzzle.

What was he full of?

		S									
		T									
		E									
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		H		*							
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What did he do?

Acts 6



Verse 3: Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the spirit and **wisdom**.

Verse 5: They chose Stephen, a man full of **faith** and of the **Holy Spirit**...

Verse 8: Now Stephen, a man full of God's **grace** and **power**, did **great wonders** and miraculous **signs** among the people.

Verse 10: But they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke.

Learn, do not hold
this sin against
them.

Acts 7:60a

Learn, do not hold
this sin against
them.

Acts 7:60a

Aim Questions

Answer the following questions about today's Bible Adventure.

1. How was Stephen selected to serve? What was his original job?
2. What was the Sanhedrin arguing with Stephen about?
3. Tell something about the sermon that Stephen preached to the Sanhedrin. How did they respond?
4. Do you personally know anyone who has been rejected by people for believing in Jesus Christ?
5. Why do you think you may be afraid or unwilling to stand up for Jesus around other people who do not believe? What would Stephen say to us when we are afraid?

The Holy Spirit gave Stephen the boldness to speak the truth of Christ to the ruling Council of Israel.

**Acts
Chapters
6 and 7**

"Then he fell on his knees and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.'" Acts 7:60a

Stephen

Acts 6:1-8:1

The twelve Apostles gathered the disciples
And asked for some special men
To help them in their ministry,
And their first choice was Stephen.

Stephen, a man full of power from God,
Full of grace and faith and the Holy Spirit,
Had much to tell the Jews that day,
But they did not want to hear it.

There were Jews from Alexandria and Cyrene,
From Cilicia and Asia, too.
They argued with Stephen, got others to lie
About him and what he would do.

“He blasphemes against Moses and God,”
They were persuaded to say,
And Stephen was brought to answer
To the Sanhedrin priests that day.

More people lied and told that Stephen
Was dangerous to their holy place,
To their customs and their laws,
Then they looked up and saw his face.

His was not the face of a man;
He appeared to be different somehow.
And then they realized that Stephen
Had the face of an angel now!

But they could not find fault in his wisdom
Or the Spirit by whom he was speaking,
So they stirred up the leaders and elders
And the people to whom Stephen was teaching.

The high priests asked, “Are the charges true?”
And no defense did Stephen say.
Israel’s history and God’s plan for them
Were what he spoke about that day.

The priests were furious at his words,
Gnashing their teeth, their faces grim.
Stephen looked up to heaven and saw
God’s glory and Jesus beside Him.

Stephen spoke about what he was seeing.
The people screamed and covered their ears
And dragged him away to stone him,
For he had shown them their fears.

They had persecuted the prophets, Stephen said,
But this was not the worst they had done.
In their stiff necked and hard hearted pride,
They had killed their Righteous One!

The stones are falling and Stephen prays.
“Receive my spirit, Lord Jesus,” he pleads,
“Lord don’t hold this against them,”
And he falls down to his knees.

The Scripture says, “He fell asleep.”
And as he took his last earthly breath,
Saul was there, giving approval
To the manner of Stephen’s death.

Maybe you will face lies and jail
When God asks you to speak one day.
Remember His words in Matthew 10:19
That you will be given what to say.

And it won’t be you yourself that speaks
But the Holy Spirit through you.
God is with you, for you,
No matter where you are or what you do.

Obedience to God, Not Man

The twelve teaching Apostles were jailed one night
By the jealous priest and Sadducees.
An angel of the Lord came and opened the doors
So they could teach as they pleased.

The Twelve were called for next morning
But they were not in the cell.
The guards reported the doors were still locked
And to the priests, nothing to tell.

In the temple courts at sunrise,
The new life message was told to all there.
The puzzled high priest was informed
that the twelve men were teaching and where.

The Twelve were brought to the high priest
Who said, "I ordered you not to preach."
"Obedience to God, not man," they said,
"We must continue to teach."



He had the Twelve flogged that day,
But they rejoiced all the same,
Because they had been found worthy
Of suffering for the Name.

In the courts, the city, every home,
The Twelve proclaimed the Good News.
Being jailed and flogged hadn't stopped each one,
And they certainly had an excuse.

The Good News hasn't changed at all,
It is still the leading news story.
Persecution, flogging, trouble or jail,
Should not keep us from telling of His glory.