

## Power to Witness in Word and Deed

*The Book of Acts*

**Acts 7:44—8:1a**

**Review Acts 7:1–43. Read Acts 7:44—8:1a.**

1. Throughout redemptive history God has met with his people and has been worshiped by them in various locations. What places does Stephen refer to in his speech in Acts 7? (vv. 2, 9, 29–33, 44–45)
2. Wherever his people are—from the time of Moses to beyond the time of Solomon—God has had the same desire. What is it? (Ex. 29:42–46; Lev. 26:11–12)
3. Read the accusations against Stephen in 6:13–14. Behind these accusations is the belief that the temple is the only place to meet with God.
  - a. Based on these accusations, what do you think the Sanhedrin (the Jewish ruling council) fears?
  - b. In verses 49–50, Stephen quotes the prophet Isaiah. How does this challenge the Sanhedrin’s view of the temple? (📖 \* 1 Kgs. 8:27–30; 2 Chr. 2:5–6)
4. The members of the Sanhedrin put Stephen on trial so they could accuse him and find him guilty. Instead, it is Stephen, full of the Spirit, who accuses them and finds them guilty.
  - a. What sins of their fathers are they repeating? (vv. 51–52b; 📖 Lk. 11:47–51)
  - b. What ultimate sin are they guilty of? (v. 52c)
5. Peter also accused his listeners of crucifying the Lord (Acts 2:22–24).
  - a. How is the response of Peter’s listeners dramatically different from that of the Sanhedrin? (v. 54; Acts 2:37, 41)
  - b. Why do you think there is such a difference?

\*The 📖 symbol indicates verses for further study.

6. Stephen is in the midst of enraged religious leaders who are seeking to kill him.
  - a. What vision does the Spirit give him? (v. 55)
  - b. How does Stephen describe what he sees? (v. 56)
  - c. What does this description remind the Sanhedrin of? (Dan. 7:13–14; Mt. 26:63–66)
  - d. How do they respond? (vv. 57–58)
7. Stephen is brutally killed.
  - a. What does Stephen pray for as he is being killed? (vv. 59–60)
  - b. How could Stephen possibly pray these prayers at such a time? (vv. 55–56)
  - c. How does God answer Stephen's prayer for himself (v. 59)? (v. 60b)
8. Throughout the history of the church, and even in many countries today, God is calling believers to suffer and die for his name.
  - a. How do you respond to the possibility that you too may be called to give up your life for him?
  - b. How does having your eyes fixed upon Jesus change your view of personal sacrifice?