

# Week 11—Acts 6:8-8:3 (for Sunday, March 15)

Begin each day of your study by asking the LORD to speak to you through His Word.

*Note: This week is a longer text and will require more time so plan accordingly!*

## Day 1

1. *Read Acts 6:8-8:3.* Summarize this section in your own words and make note of what you find significant. Take your time as this is the only assignment today.

## Day 2

1. *Read Acts 6:8-15.* Why might it be significant that Stephen was described as “a man full of God’s grace and power, [who] performed great wonders and signs among the people” (v. 8) in light of what we’ve seen in Acts so far? What might this mean for us today?

2. What charges did the people bring against Stephen? Were they true? How are these similar to the charges brought against Jesus (see Matthew 26:59-61)?

3. How do you handle it when someone brings false accusations against you? How does Stephen handle it?

*Day 3*

1. Read *Acts 7:1-53*. In Stephen's speech, he takes the time to walk through salvation history. Do your best to trace his argument using the verses below as a guide:

7:2-8—

7:9-19—

7:20-43—

7:44-50—

2. Imagine being in a conversation with someone who didn't know *The Story* of God's redemption (or the Bible) and they were curious about it. Write out how you would explain *The Story* to them below:

3. What did you include? What did you not include? Why do you think that is?

*Day 4*

1. Continuing Acts 7:1-53. Stephen regularly mentions the promise given to Abraham (see Genesis 12:1-3) in this speech (cf. 7:2-8, 17, 32, 34-37). What was God's promise to Abraham? How was this promise relevant to Stephen's views of the Jewish laws? How is it relevant to us?
  
2. How does Stephen use the examples of Joseph and Moses as comparisons to Jesus (see especially 7:9-10a; 7:27, 35, 39 and 7:51-53)? Why is that significant?
  
3. What did Stephen imply was wrong with the Jews' attitude toward the temple (see 7:48-50)? What "good" objects can we tend to worship as idols today?

#### Day 5

1. Read Acts 7:51-8:3. What does Stephen accuse the Sanhedrin of? How is this similar to what they accused him of? How did the Sanhedrin respond to Stephen's speech? Why?

**Glory of God**—Refers to the glowing cloud that was the visible manifestation of the presence of God and hid Him from view (see Exodus 16:10, 24:17, 40:34-35).

**Son of Man**—This was the title Jesus used most often to describe Himself. It is a reference to Daniel 7:13-14: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into His presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed." It was considered a blasphemous claim by Jesus and enraged the Sanhedrin here as well.

2. Who was there “approving” of Stephen’s stoning? Why is that important?

**Laid their coats**—Some have taken this to mean that Saul was in charge of the execution (see Acts 22:20) but we can’t know for sure. What we do know is that he approved of Stephen’s death and this is Luke’s way of introducing one of the main characters of the second section of Acts as the gospel begins to spread onward (8:1).

3. How does this story promote the mission of the church (Acts 1:8)? What can we learn from that in our present culture as followers of Jesus?

### *Conclusion*

1. What most stood out to you as you studied Acts 6:8-8:3 this week? *Why* do you think this was the case?

2. What is the Holy Spirit prompting you to *do* as a result of this? Be prepared to share with your group!