

STEPHEN IS KILLED & BELIEVERS IN JESUS ARE PERSECUTED Acts 6:7-8:4

6:7 God's Word spread. In Jerusalem more and more people followed Jesus. And many priests believed in Jesus.

8 (A man named) Stephen was full of Creator God's power and full of God's grace. He did many miracles and amazing things. Many people saw what Stephen did.

9 But a group of Jews did not like Stephen (because he believed in Jesus). This group argued with Stephen. 10 But Stephen was very wise, and God's Spirit helped Stephen speak. So this group could not win the argument with Stephen.

11 Then the group told lies about Stephen. 12 So, many people and the religious leaders got angry at Stephen. They took Stephen to the Jewish Council. 13-14 They told more lies about Stephen. 7:1 The High Priest asked Stephen, "Are these things true?"

2 Then Stephen answered: 51 "Your ancestors (in the Old Testament) did not obey God's Spirit – and you do not obey God's Spirit. You are just like your ancestors. 52 Your ancestors persecuted all God's prophets. Some of God's prophets said, 'The Messiah (God's Son) will come.' But your ancestors killed those prophets. And, now, you have killed Jesus the Messiah."

54 Then the Council and the religious leaders and the people became very angry. 55 But Stephen was full of God's Spirit. Stephen looked up to heaven – and he saw God's glory – and he saw Jesus standing beside God. 56 Stephen said, "Look! I see heaven. And I see Jesus standing by God."

57 The Council and religious leaders and people hated what Stephen said – so they covered their ears. And they ran toward Stephen – 58 and they dragged him out of the city. Then they threw rocks at Stephen to kill him.

59 While they were killing Stephen with rocks, Stephen prayed, "Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then Stephen fell on his knees. And Stephen shouted, "God, forgive these people's sin – forgive them for killing me." Then Stephen died.

8:1 That day, a big persecution started in Jerusalem – the persecution was against the believers in Jesus. So, all the believers in Jesus ran away from Jerusalem. They went to the area around Jerusalem – and they went to the next country, Samaria.

Only Jesus' twelve, main disciples stayed in Jerusalem. 4 The believers went many places – and everywhere the believers went, the believers told everyone about Jesus.

(8:1) (A man named) Paul watched Stephen die. He was happy that Stephen died. 3 Then Paul started to destroy Jesus' people. Paul went from house to house – and he looked for believers in Jesus. And Paul put the believers, men and women, in jail.

CONTENT QUESTIONS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was Stephen full of? (Acts 6:8)
- What did Stephen do? (verse 8)
- Who did not like Stephen? (verse 9)
- Why didn't the group of Jews like Stephen? (verse 9)
- What did they do with Stephen? (verse 9)

What do you think they were arguing about?

- Why couldn't the Jewish group win the argument? (verse 10)
- What did the Jewish group and the religious leaders do to Stephen? (verses 11-14)
- What did the High Priest ask Stephen? (Acts 7:1)
- What did Stephen answer the High Priest and the Jewish Council? (verses 51-52)

What did the Jew's ancestors do (in the Old Testament)? (verses 51-52)

What did the High Priest and the religious leaders do to Jesus? (verse 52)

- How did the Council and religious leaders feel? (verse 54)
- What did Stephen see? (verses 55-56)
- How did the Council and religious leaders feel about what Stephen saw? (verse 57)
- What did the Council and religious leaders do to Stephen? (verse 58)
- What did Stephen shout to God? (verse 60)

What do you think about what Stephen said to God?

- What happened to Stephen? (verse 60)
- Then what happened to believers in Jesus in Jerusalem? (Acts 8:1)
- So where did the believers go? (verse 1)
- But what did the believers do when they ran away? (verse 4)

What do you think?

Was it dangerous to talk about Jesus?

But were the believers afraid to talk about Jesus?

Why do you think the believers talked about Jesus everywhere?

- How did Paul feel about Stephen's death? (verse 1 – last paragraph)
- What did Paul do? (verse 3)

What do you think will happen next? (What will happen in the next story?)

Over 5000 men plus women in Jerusalem had believed in Jesus.

Now, what do you think will happen to the believers in Jesus?