

Stephen's Defence: Where's God In All This?

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[0 : 00] Thank you for tuning into this message by David Entry. Every true revival is a product of the strong preaching of God's Word. May you receive a word from this message that will spark a revival in you.

Acts chapter 7. I'll read from verse 1 through verse 30. Then said the high priest, Are these things so?

And he said, And God spake on this verse 30.

And he gave him none inheritance in it. And God spake on this wise.

And God spake on this wise. And God spake on this wise. When as yet he had no child. And God spake on this wise.

[1 : 25] God spake on this wise. That his seed should sojourn in a strange land. And that they should bring them into bondage. And treat them evil for hundred years.

And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage. I will judge said God. And after that shall they come forth. And save me in this place.

and he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham begat Isaac and circumcised him the eighth day. And Isaac begat Jacob and Jacob begat the 12 patriarchs.

And the patriarchs moved with envy, sold Joseph unto Egypt. But God was with him and delivered him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

And he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. Now there came a death over all the land of Egypt and Chanan, that's Canaan.

[2 : 32] And great affliction and our fathers found no substance. But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent our fathers first.

And at the second time, Joseph was made known to his brethren. And Joseph's kindred made known unto Pharaoh.

Verse 14. Then sent Joseph and called his father Jacob to him and all his kindred, three score and fifty souls. So Jacob went down into Egypt and died, he and our fathers, and were carried over into Sechem.

And laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Imol, the father of Sechem. But when the time of the promise drew near, which God had shown to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, till another king arose which knew not Joseph.

And the same dealt sadly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers so that they cast out their young children to the end that they might not live.

[3 : 53] In which time Moses was born and was exceedingly fair and nourished up in his father's house three months. And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up and nourished him for her own son.

And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in word and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel.

And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him and avenged him that was oppressed and smote the Egyptians. For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them, but they understood not.

And the next day he showed himself unto them as they strove and would have set them at one again, saying, says, Ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?

But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? Will thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptians yesterday?

[5 : 17] Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons. And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in the bush.

Here ends the reading of God's holy word. Amen. In Acts chapter 6 verse 9, it says that then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians and Alexandrians and of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen.

And they were not able to resist the wisdom by which he spake. Then, verse 11 says that, Then the sobbed man which said, the sobbed man which said, we have heard him speak blasphemous words against one Moses and against God.

They said, we've heard him speak. They called men, they coerced men to come to say, we have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God.

Please take notes of that. And verse 12, And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes and came upon him and caught him and brought him to the council.

[6 : 49] Verse 13 says that, And they set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceases not to speak blasphemous, see again, blasphemous words against this holy place and against the law.

So, they organized men first to say, verse 9, when they couldn't stand the wisdom he was operating with.

Verse 11 says, They sobbed, Verse 11 says, They organized men, sobbed man, Give us an NIV, please. The NIV says that, And they secretly persuaded men to say, We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God.

And that was good enough to stir anger in the hearts of the people, of the scribes, and of the elders, to bring him to the council for him to be judged.

And so, they brought him to the council. And then when they got to the council, they instigated men, got false witnesses to come and claim that we have, this man does, not that we've just heard him, but he doesn't stop.

[8 : 00] He does not stop speaking against the temple and against the law. So, first of all, they said he spoke against Moses, blasphemous words against Moses, blasphemous words against God, and now they brought others to continue further by saying that he doesn't cease speaking blasphemous words against the temple and against the law.

So, four things, four charges. He was brought on account of four charges. Number one, blasphemy against Moses. Two, blasphemy against God.

Three, blasphemy against the temple. And four, blasphemy against the law. And so, the high priest, chapter seven, as he stood, the Bible said, his face looked like an angel, verse 15 of chapter six.

So, chapter seven, verse one, the high priest, this must be the same high priest who presided over Jesus' execution. So, we've gotten rid of Jesus. You two, you are bringing yourself. Come on. So, the high priest said, are these things so?

Look at the question. What are what so? The charges. What were the charges? Blasphemy against Moses.

[9 : 12] Two, blasphemy against three, blasphemy against and four, blasphemy against the law. Moses, God, the temple and the law. The high priest said that, are you really speaking against this?

Are these things so? Stephen must say, these are liars. It's not so. Your highness, it's not so.

They are lying. I don't even know what they are talking about. I've not said anything like that. That's what Stephen should do. But Stephen said, I don't have time to defend myself when I have a message to preach.

Stephen said, I want to take this opportunity to send a message to Israel. The message that can save our people. I am an agent of salvation.

I don't have time for petty things and politics. I don't have time to try and prove a point to anybody. I don't have time to defend myself. I don't have time.

[10 : 16] I won't defend myself, but rather, I will defend the gospel. That is what we have, the word apologia. So Stephen was the first, as it were, to give an exhaustive apologia or apologetics concerning the Christian faith.

The Christian faith was being misrepresented, being misinterpreted, and being misunderstood by the then religious leaders. And currently, it's always like that.

So Stephen had to defend the faith. It's called apologetics. Apologetics is not about being sorry for what you believe.

Oh, sorry. It's not like, I don't like you, but I'm so sorry. No, it's not sorry, an apology. No. Apologetics is different from rendering an apology. Apologetics is giving defense, defending or giving a defensive reason.

So giving a reason to defend what you believe. Now, it is not just good enough to know what you believe. A maturing Christian must know why you believe what you believe.

[11 : 35] We must know why we believe. That's the job of a pastor. The job of a Christian, sound Christian pastor is to help the people to know why we believe what we believe.

So that we don't have a church or Christians full of wishy-washy feelings. Only feelings, feelings-based belief cannot last.

He said, whom having not seen, ye laugh. So your salvation, that does not include your passion, is not true salvation. Salvation gets your passion involved.

So he says that it's okay to have feelings. You must have strong feelings about Jesus and about the word of God. Oh, how love I thy law. It is my meditation.

Wow, verse 97. It is my, it's always on my mind. How love I thy law. Hear, oh Israel. Listen, recently somebody asked me a question that he met somebody who is, he doesn't have feelings.

[12 : 42] He can't feel, he doesn't feel anything. And so, he doesn't have love. And in his Christian life, it's not about love, it's just, he has a lot of facts. And I said, that cannot be the solid Christian life.

Because, what is the greatest of all the commandments? Hear, love the Lord, your God, with all your heart. If our Bible says in first Timothy, the end of the commandments is love.

The end, you can't claim to know God. Now, the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart. You can't say you are worshipping a God you don't love. That's not a Christian God.

Because the Christian God is an object of love. Our affections, Psalm 1, verse 1, blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor sits in the seat of the scornful, standing in the way of sinners, sin in the seat of the God.

But, it says that, verse 2 says that, but it's delight. Delight. Delight. You have to serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness.

[13 : 46] It says, serve him with gladness. It says, 100. Serve him with gladness. So, emotions are part of our worship. But, if all you have in your worship is just emotions I doubt if your devotion will last.

Your devotion will not stand the test of time. It is necessary to feel, but it is critical to know. Even grace is multiplied on the grounds of your knowledge of Christ.

In 2 Peter 1, verse 2, it says that, grace and peace be multiplied unto you. How? How? Know how you feel?

There's something you got to know. You want to increase in grace, you got to know some things. Not anything at all, but the God you know will determine the grace you walk in.

You got to know. Paul spent his entire life for one thing, that I might know him, that I might know him, that I might know him, because no human being can have an exhaustive comprehension of God.

[14 : 53] You can never have an exhaustive comprehension of God. He ceases to be God because it says that his knowledge and his wisdom are past finding. Romans chapter 11, verse 33.

So no human being can have it. So all our lives must be spent pursuing and knowing him, knowing him biblically, knowing him in the way he has revealed himself.

We cannot research him. He reveals himself so we can just know. As we are pursuing him, he's helping us in. You have to have the desire and then God will begin to work with your desire to reveal himself to you bit by bit.

Your entire life can be spent seeking God and knowing him and you can never finish knowing him. And so you never get to a place where you have now arrived. I know everything.

I know, I know. You don't even know yourself. You don't know what your body is about to do to you. You don't know yourself. How can you finish knowing yourself?

[15 : 51] That's why nobody knows when they will die. So, it is necessary for believers to know and for that matter, much, watch this, much of our church gatherings should be spent in discovering Jesus, discovering the God of Scripture from the pages of Scripture, not from the whims of people or not from religious philosophy.

from the pages of Scripture because, as I keep saying, it is natural to import our pre-existing religious ideas into Christianity when you meet Christ. It happens everywhere. It happened in the church of Jerusalem. The early church imported. They migrated into Christianity with Judaism to the extent that Acts chapter 15 verse 1, Christians, people who are Christian, they are believed but they are Jews. They are believed. They went to Antioch where Gentiles who are not Jews have also become believers and started teaching them that unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be... Where did this come from? Genuine guys, well-intended guys, but they were infiltrating the church of God with religious ideologies that were not compatible with what God was doing. [17:10] They were well-meaning by human. Even Peter, James, can you imagine? I think in Acts chapter 21, yeah, Acts chapter 21, James, who was a pillar in the church according to Galatians chapter 2, I think verse 8.

James and Peter, these were pillars in the church. Pillars. When you talk about seniors in the church, sometimes God has seniors in town. Yeah, verse 9, and James and Peter and John, three of them, who seemed to be pillars, they received, when they saw the grace of the Lord, they gave him the right hand of religion.

So James, in Acts chapter 21, convinced Paul that you know what, before you go into the temple, you have to go, since you want to go into the temple, join the Jews and go and start, continue of religious rites.

Go and do some religious rites so we fit in so that at least there's not too much tension. James, James, why are you bringing Judaism to Christianity?

You're a pillar. These are good guys. But you know, it's human. That is why we have to spend our time and our devotion looking for Christ on the pages of scripture.

[18:20] That's what James says, take them and be purified with them. He was talking about some Gentiles who are also believing. Be purified in them and pay their expenses so that they may shave, now I'm saying, can't you imagine?

Shave their head and that all may know that these things are they are saying about. So let them practice Judaism. Let them do, let them, let them, let them do something. James, James, don't bring it. That's why God had to get rid of the temple.

The temple, you know why? The temple. Because the temple had the propensity of actually infecting the church in Jerusalem. So that's why the temple didn't exist. God had to.

Jesus said, this temple, nothing will be, because the temple was an icon of the presence of God amongst them. And so as they have become born again, they will always be going back to the temple and they had this temple approach, which was under the old system and old covenant.

And so they, Stephen had to be called to give an account of what the accusations and rather he gave an Apologia, the Greek word is apologia, apologetics come from the Greek word.

[19:23] Apologia, apologia, like homologia, you see? Homologia, speak the word. Apologia, defend the word. So apologia, he had to give an apologia of what we believe.

So then Stephen, when he was asked, are these things so, naturally, he should have said, no, they are not so. Why are they not so?

Explain why they are not so. He didn't have time. He said, brethren and fathers, that's a very polite way of addressing them. The fact that you have the truth doesn't mean you should talk to people in here.

When we get the privilege to stand before people and congregation, whether they are two or three or they are 20 or 3,000, we must do it with a lot of respect.

Even when we are speaking to people who are accusing us. Stephen was standing before the high priest. The high priest. Is that you guys? No. He said, men. He said, brethren and fathers.

[20:28] He recognized their authority, figures of authority. Like Paul did in Acts chapter 22, verse 1. In Acts chapter 22, Paul said, brethren, fathers, hear my defense before you now.

When Jesus appeared before the Sahindrin, he didn't defend himself. Paul, when he appeared, he defended himself. When Stephen appeared, he didn't defend himself, but he defended the message. Jesus didn't defend anything.

In Isaiah chapter 53, verse 7, Bible said, like a lamb before his share. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep

before his share.

He is silent. He opened not his. Jesus didn't defend himself. Stephen didn't defend himself, but he had something to defend. Jesus needed to go to the cross.

And so he didn't have to defend anything. He had to embrace the cross. Stephen was not concerned about his life. He was concerned about the message. Paul had to defend his life because he had to live to do the mission.

[21 : 31] He had a chair to save. In fact, remember in Philippians chapter 1, verse 21, he said, for me to live is right to die again. Now he said, I'm torn in between, can you use in between, whether to go or to stay.

Because if I go, it's good for me. But if I stay, it's better for you. So for your sake, I will choose to stay. And so he said, oh, should I die or should I live? He lived for the way. Paul was not afraid to die.

Paul was not afraid to die. In Acts chapter 20, verse 24, he said, bones and affliction wait me, but none of these things move me. Neither do I count my life dear to me, that I might finish my course with joy.

So he wasn't afraid to die. In Acts chapter 21, verse 13, he says that, why are you trying to stop me? I'm not only ready to suffer, I'm ready to die for the name of the Lord. So Paul was not afraid to die, but he had to defend himself so he wouldn't die the way they wanted him to die.

He had to live to preach the gospel for some time. Stephen appeared and he had to defend Christianity. That's what Christians in the West, Christians in United Kingdom, Christians in Africa, Christians in this generation, Christians in Asia, and Christians in Palestine.

[22 : 40] Christians everywhere in the world must be able to defend the faith, not with a sword, but with a ways, ways, apologia.

First Peter chapter 3, verse 15 says that, be ready, be ready. Sanctify the Lord in your heart and always be ready. The only way you can be ready is to get ready.

In order to be ready, get ready. He said, be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you for, they're asking for a reason.

A reason. There must be reason behind what you believe. So Stephen, he said, let me give you a defense. Stephen said, brethren and fathers, listen.

Look at, he said, I'm blaspheming against God. Can I, let me take care about God. He said, the God of glory. Shall we all say that together? The God of glory.

[23 : 39] Say it again, please. The God of glory. Say, the God of glory. The God of glory. Some, I think some 93 verse 7. That's the only other time the Bible used that phrase, the God of glory.

He didn't really use that phrase again. The God of glory. The God, the Bible talks about how the God of glory appeared. Stephen said, the God of glory appeared.

This is interesting. He didn't just speak to him. The God, shall we all read the verse together? Acts chapter 7 verse 2. Let's go. And he said, and fathers, Harkin, the God of glory appeared unto our father, Abraham, before he dwelt in Charan.

Now, let's look at the new King James Version so that the Charan can change. See, the Charan is a bit, yeah, but that's okay. It's just where it was rendered.

So, the God of glory appeared. The Bible says, no one has seen God at any time. No one. 1 John chapter 4 verse 12. No one has seen God at any time.

[24 : 45] Jesus himself said that no one has seen God in John chapter 1 verse 18. No one has seen God at any time. But Abraham, God appeared to Abraham. What?

You see, he's not, when, okay, let me show you how to interpret scripture. 1 John chapter 4 verse 12. 1 John chapter 4 verse 12. What does it say? No one has seen God at any time.

When? At any time. So, Abraham didn't see God. Moses never saw God. Jacob never saw God. David never saw God. No one has seen God at any time.

In fact, in Psalm, I think, 96, 92 or 96, David said, I saw the Lord on my right hand. Talking about Jesus Christ. I saw the Lord on my right hand. But, so, now, if Jesus, John chapter 1 verse 18, this is, this is, Jesus, the scripture says that, the scripture says, no one has seen God at any, it's the same.

So, no one, if no one has seen God at any time, I think I got a problem in my hands. Stephen said, God appeared to Abraham. Stephen said it. And David said, I saw the Lord on my right hand. And Moses said, if, let me see your glory.

[25 : 57] And God said, you can't see my face. But I'll just let my back pass, I'll, I'll, is it my backside? I will go. And then I'll cover you after I've passed so you can see just a glimpse of me go.

But he saw him. No, so then, is there contradiction? Because how can one part of scripture say no one has seen God at any time? Another part is telling us that God appeared to Abraham. So, you have to merge the two. Merge the two because none of it is wrong. So, maybe, it is the way you are interpreting it that might be wrong. So, you have to see because scripture never contradicts scripture.

Analogia scriptura, that's the Latin word. Scripture speaks with one voice. So, scripture will not say something here and that's what some people of other religions who will not shut up and contemplate on their religion especially United Kingdom are trying to invade and they are saying that the Bible contradicts itself.

Most of them, when you meet them, that's all they say. Have you noticed that some of the other people in the other religion when they want to challenge you as Christians, they don't challenge you on the grounds of morality. They don't challenge you on the grounds of your songs, your gathering and your numbers.

[27 : 04] They don't challenge you on the grounds of scripture. Trying to challenge scripture, that scripture is not correct. Scripture, in the universities, in the universities in the West, it's going on everywhere.

People, professors are attacking the scripture. They say, leave Christianity alone. Let's go for the scripture. And so, how can you be a Christian and for that matter, a relevant Christian without having an answer to the questions they are asking?

You must know. Even if you are not answering skeptics, you must know the answer they are asking. You can choose whether to answer or not. But you must know. You must know. How can you know if you are not taught? And if you just go and read it by yourself, you will miss some things that you, you see, because Philip asked the Ethiopian, you know, do you understand what you are reading?

Do you understand? And the Ethiopian said in Acts chapter 8, verse 30, how can I accept somebody who explains it to me? And that is the job of preachers. Every preaching must have teaching elements.

[28 : 11] Not every teaching will be preaching. But every, when we are declaring, we must be explaining some things. That's what, so Stephen stood there and made some declarations and explain the text.

Now, the point I'm making, the God of glory appeared to our father Abraham. How did he appear to him? That means there must have been something physical. Something tangible.

Something physical. If God himself didn't appear. But I said the God of glory. Now, what it means is that Abraham saw an aspect of God's glory. God is holy, holy.

Bible says that the angels were in Isaiah chapter 6. They bow and they say holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty. The whole earth is filled with your holiness.

Holiness is who God is. When he manifests himself on earth it's his glory. So, Jesus Christ was the express image of his person.

[29 : 09] The immediate express of his glory. Chapter 1, verse 3. So, then, when God expresses himself, you can't see him. It's just like the sun. The sun doesn't have to come to UK for us to know it's sunny.

It's just the rays of the sun. The rays of the sun. The rays of the sun are not the sun. It's just emanation. It's the expression of sunshine.

Am I communicating something? In the same way, the glory of God is a physical expression of God. Now, are you saying that the glory of God can be seen? In certain extents, yes.

It's had some visible manifestation. Exodus chapter 16. Exodus chapter 24. It's there in scripture. It says that, Exodus chapter 16, verse 10.

It says that, now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked towards the wilderness and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.

[30 : 12] So, they saw something appeared in the cloud. Look at Exodus chapter 24. Exodus chapter 24, verse 16. Exodus chapter 24, verse 16. Now, the glory of the Lord rested on the Mount Sinai and the cloud covered it six days.

And on the seventh day, he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. Verse 17. And the sight of the glory of God was like a consuming fire on the top.

So, there was something, they didn't see God, but his glory appeared. And so, Stephen said, the God of glory appeared. He appeared to Abraham. So, the glory of God had a physical.

In 1st Kings chapter 8, verse 11, when the temple was dedicated, they couldn't even enter. And the priest could not continue ministering because of the cloud. For the glory of the Lord has filled the house and it was like a cloud.

In Exodus chapter 40, verse 35, when the tabernacle was built, we finished building the tabernacle, and Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting. Why? Because the cloud rested on it and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

[31 : 16] Leviticus chapter 9, verse 23. It talks about the glory. We see the glory of God constantly showing up in the glory of Israel. that Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting and came out to bless their people.

Then the glory, someone say glory. Glory. Something appeared. It's not God. The glory of God appears. Then the glory of God appeared. The glory of God appeared to all the people.

The people saw it. So, the glory actually gave, had a physical expression. Let me add just one more. Numbers chapter 14, verse 10. Numbers chapter 14, verse 10.

Is somebody learning something? And all the congregation said to, this is Joshua and his team.

When they went to view Spider-Land, Joshua and Caleb said, we can't take it. They were all afraid.

So, the congregation decided that we are going to stone you. So, then all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now, the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

[32 : 17] So, we saw, we have seen in scriptures evidences of something physical, visible, but it's wonderful. It's, wow. You can tell this is not, this is not normal.

This is excellent, out of the norm. So, Abraham used to live in a place called Mesopotamia. City between two rivers, that's what it means.

Mesopotamia. Hippo, Hippo, Hippo, Hippo is the horse. And then, Tamos is river horse. Okay, so Hippo, Tamos is Hippo horse and Tamos river.

I'm talking Latin. So, Mesopotamia is Meso, a land between two rivers. Abraham used to live in a land, it's not an island, but the rivers.

So, when God called him, he had to cross a river. He had to cross a river. Oh, yes. Some of you know where this is going. So, Abraham used to live in Mesopotamia, he's called also heir of the Chaldeans and where is that geographically?

[33 : 20] You know what I like about Christianity? Christianity is built on history. It's their only religion, apart from Judaism, whose essence is historic. Everything Christian is heavily historic.

So, it's always, you keep hearing names of people who Christianity claimed lived. Historians have never been able to disprove that. Jesus was not an idea.

He was a person who lived. Mary lived. Pontius Pilate. All the names in the Bible to the extent that geographical locations, geographical locations like Syria, Gaza.

I saw it in the Bible, Gaza, in Acts chapter 8. Stephen went to Gaza. Yes. Gaza is in the Bible.

Yeah, Acts chapter 8, 20. Yeah, 20. Now, the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, arise, go towards the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to...

Pharaoh! Many people go to Egypt to go and see the pyramids. And you will see some of the Pharaohs, their tombs.

[34 : 31] These things are real. They are historic. And so, one of the signs of the authenticity of Scripture is that its historicity is unimpeachable.

The historicity of Christianity or the historic claims, the historical claims of the Bible or history claims of the Bible are unimpeachable. You can't deny it.

You can't be a historian and say something the Bible said or some names or some... That doesn't exist. You are bogus historians because the Bible is one of... No, no. In the field of academia, in the field of academia, the Bible is one of the, I think, the foremost, most historic record written.

So, there's no other history record that is as authentic and as sound as the Bible. So, the history about Hitler, the history about Confucius, the history about...

Name them. The Brits. The history of the Roman... Empire. And all those histories. There are historians who have recorded some of these things and yet, none of those records have so much

weight like Scripture because Scripture has different, different things from different sources that have been written and yet, there's no historic record that comes close to the historicity of Scripture. [35 : 53] I'm saying a point that Christianity is built on history. It's built on... Other religions are not built on history. It builds on people's revelations. You can't challenge the revelation.

If I told you I saw a monkey without a tail last night, it's my word against your thinking. It's subject to...

You can't say... You can't say it's not true. When someone is having mental challenges, I hear voices. You can't say, no, there's no voice. Please, you can't say that. They tell you they are hearing a voice.

But if... It doesn't matter whether you are sick or you are well. You come and it says that UK does not have a king. The king, Charles, doesn't exist. I mean, now we have a problem here.

Because we are dealing with facts and statistics. Christianity, that's why you can have reason for your faith. You can have reason for your faith because Christianity is based on facts and statistics but accurately interpreted.

[36 : 53] So the Jews had the facts of the Old Testament which was very, very authentic but wrongly interpreted to their own head.

So Stephen said, let me give you a proper and accurate interpretation of what the Old Testament said. So he said, men and brethren, the God of glory, Abraham was living in an idol worship land. Mesopotamia is modern day Iraq. Mesopotamia. Well, it's almost the same territory of Babylon. Babylon too is the same. So where God called Abraham from, that's the territory of Babylon and that's where the tower, Genesis chapter 11, the tower of Babel is the same territory. Babylon was modern day Iraq a bit more towards Iran and that territory. So God called Abraham to move from Mesopotamia.

[37 : 51] Now look at the text again. And God of glory appeared to this idol worshiper. He didn't call for him. God came to him. God came to him. When he didn't have a child.

So let's look at the text. Listen, the God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Haran. So he was telling them history.

Abraham, they all knew. Abraham used to live in Mesopotamia and then from there he moved to where? Haran. Look at the next verse. Verse 3. And said unto him, get out.

God appeared to him and told him in Mesopotamia, get out of your country and from your relatives and come to a land that I will show you.

When did God tell him Abraham was minding his business then he saw this glory. He saw, what was that? He said, wow, I like this. I like this. This is amazing. Oh, wow, this is amazing.

[38 : 48] Abraham loved it. This is, what he saw he couldn't deny. It was so glorious he was willing to give up everything for it. And God told him, get out from your country, from your father's house or your relatives and come to the land I will show you.

When did God tell him this? When did God tell him that? When he was in before he came to okay, look at the verse 2. It's there. It says that let's go to NIV.

NIV, the English is a bit simpler so for for us all to get it. 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.

Then the next verse says that when God appeared and said so he didn't say to him in Haran he said to him in Mesopotamia get out of your country from your relatives and come to the land which I will show you.

Watch this. Then he came out of the land of the child years and dwelt in Haran. So when God spoke to him he came out of the land of the child years and dwelt in Haran.

[40 : 02] And what happened in Haran? And from there when his father was dead Abraham moved from there and where did he go? came into this land that you are so attached to.

God was working before we ever found this land. That's what Stephen started. This land you are still talking about a temple. God was working before this land.

Abraham even came here. So God spoke to Abraham outside of this territory. You can't say that redemption and the work of God is only pinned to this territory. Stephen was going somewhere.

Stephen was going somewhere. Stephen said God was working outside of this territory. Let me just indulge myself a little bit and go into the matter of Abraham. Because in Genesis chapter 11 verse 26 Genesis look at something interesting.

Give us just yes. Now this is Tara. Okay. A man called Tara lived 70 years and he gave birth when he was 70 years. Wow. He lived 70 years and begat Abraham.

[41 : 03] That's Abraham. Okay. Begat Abraham Nahor and Haran. He had three sons and one of them died. Verse 20. The next verse quickly. This is the genealogy of Tara.

Tara begat Abraham Nahor and Haran. Haran begat Lot. Next verse quickly. And Haran died before his father Tara in his native land. Where was the native land?

Heir of the child. Which is the same area in Mesopotamia. Okay. So that's where Haran died. Now look at the next verse. This is where I wanted to start from. Very interesting text. Look. Then Abraham and Nahor took wives.

The name of Abraham's wife was Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. The daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and father of Esha.

The next verse is getting interesting. But Sarai was barren. He didn't have a child. So her barrenate had not got anything to do with God. Because all this time Abraham had not been called. So he's telling a little bit about the history of Abraham.

[42 : 03] Telling about his background. Then the next verse is where it gets interesting. Watch this. Then Terah took his son Abraham who did. Terah took his son Abraham and his grandson Lot the son of Abraham and his daughter in-law Sarai Abraham's wife and went out from the heir of the child into where?

To the land of Canaan. So where were they going? Canaan. Terah took his son and their wives and then where were they going?

Canaan. So who took, who motivated the move? Terah. And they were going to Canaan. But what happened? And they came to Haran.

So this is Haran. They were going to Canaan. They got to Haran and then they stayed there. They stayed there. They stayed there.

But Stephen, what was he talking about? He said, God, look at Stephen's submission, verse 3, and said to him, get out of your father's house. No, let's go to verse 2 again. Let me just share. God appeared to him when he was living in that land before he came to.

[43 : 15] Before he came to. Where's Haran? Here. That's Mesopotamia. So before they got here, God spoke to him. And what did God tell Abraham? Look at the next verse. Get out of your father's house, your country, and your relatives.

And King James says, let's look at the King James, said, get out of thy country and from thy kindred, your people, and into the land which I will show you. Abraham didn't do it.

Stephen was trying to tell them. God told Abraham he didn't do it. It was from the text, from scripture. If you are scribes, from scripture, it was terror. Abraham, I'm sure when Abraham saw the God of glory, Terah knew this thing is very strange.

And he saw that afterwards, Abraham maybe was not okay. But he didn't want to obey. He also attacked his dad. Oh, he loved his people. Abraham was very patriotic. He loved his people.

He was very family-oriented. He loved his people. And he didn't want to leave. He said, leave your people. He said, no. Leave your country. No. Abraham would not go. But I think Terah realized he knew this thing, Abraham so he was an idol worshiper.

[44 : 20] And this thing, Hassin doesn't come close to his idols. He's bigger and mightier. And he knew idols, if you disobeyed them, something would happen. And you could see that Abraham was not himself. So he himself took Abraham because one of his sons died.

Yes. One of his sons called Haran. He died, lost that. He died. So Terah said, I have enough of this. I can't lose Abraham. He took them. And then he said, let's go to Canaan. But when they got to Haran, he stayed there.

He stayed there. And there he died. Look at Stephen, Stephen, Stephen, Stephen, Stephen, Stephen. Acts chapter 7 again. It says that then he came out.

So Abraham came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, he moved. Watch this. It looks like God was in the picture.

God has always been in the picture. Sometimes you ask, where is God in all this? Where is God in all this? Why am I going through this? Where is God in all this? You open your eyes. God has always been in the picture.

[45 : 25] Because God is a micromanager. God moved Abraham, he moved him to this land, which is the land, the land of Canaan where the Jews were living at the time of Stephen.

So Stephen said, God moved Abraham from Haran after his dad died. God initially told him, leave your people. And he went with his father and Lot. So his father took them.

It was Abraham who obeyed his father. But after his father died, God came back to Abraham. So Genesis chapter 12 was not the first time God had spoken to Abraham. So Genesis chapter 12 verse 1, when you look at the text very carefully, he makes the speaking of God to Abraham pass. He said, now the Lord has said. The Lord has said. So when his father died, the Lord said, move out from that to the land where I will show you.

And Bible says, and Hebrews was so kind. He says that by faith, Abraham obeyed when he was. Initially, his obedience was half hearted. Stephen said, he said, the God of our fathers appeared to Abraham when he lived in the land of Mesopotamia and told him, move out from your father's house and your relative.

[46 : 39] verse 4, Stephen talking. Then he came out of the land of the childies and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, he moved him to this land which we are dwelling.

So the thing didn't start from this land. That's the point he was making. Look at the next verse quickly and I think I'll end with that. And God gave him no inheritance in the land, not even enough to set his...

That's very interesting. They knew the history he was talking about. Not even enough to set this week. But even when Abraham had no child, God told him that I'll give this land to you and your descendants.

At the time, before God called Abraham, don't forget, Sarai was barren. So God didn't do it. It was his already existing condition. So he was childless and God just came to make him landless. Childless and landless because he was going to give him a land and Abraham was going to be the father of the Messiah. Because in Genesis chapter 12 verse 2, verse 2 says that God, when he told him to come out of your father's house, let's start to get a context.

[47 : 47] Verse 1, Genesis chapter 12 verse 1, now the Lord has said to Abraham, get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house to the land which I will show you. Verse 2, and God said if you do that and I will make you a great blessing and I will bless you and make your name great and you shall be a blessing.

Verse 3, I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you. And watch this, this is the gospel. That's the gospel, that's the gospel.

Because Galatians chapter 3 verse 8, it says that the gospel was free to Abraham, the gospel was free to Abraham. The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham.

What was the gospel before saying in you, Abraham, inside you, Abraham, inside you, inside you, inside you, all the nations we blessed, inside you pointing to this Jesus, this whole thing points to Jesus.

So Abraham knew about Jesus, he heard the voice of Jesus, the voice of God concerning Jesus because Abraham, inside you, look at what he said in the verse 3, Genesis chapter 12 verse 3, he said, I bless those who bless you and I curse those who curse you and in you, all the families.

[49 : 02] So when all the families, that's Christ is the basis for all our blessings and Christ was going to be the son, Matthew chapter 1 verse 1, the genealogy of Jesus, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Christ is the son of Abraham and so he said, in you, the man was childless, the man was childless and yet when God was calling him to lose his land, he said, you are losing your land but you are going to gain a land and then the land is not going to just be for you, you will never have, Bible said, he didn't even have enough place to put his feet and yet God said that, where I'm sending you, I'm going to give you to your descendant.

At the time he didn't have a child, at the time he was childless, at the time when he was childless, God gave him a promise of descendants. Gone, gone, God is behind the scenes, where is God in all things, all this, he's working, God has always been working, Jesus said, my father working, he that too, I work, God has always been working, from Genesis he's been working, Exodus, Leviticus, now he's been working to Revelation, God is working.

I want to say to United Kingdom, that it might look like the sun is setting, the sun is setting, but I'm telling you, God is in the picture, God is in the picture, God is in the picture, Stephen, Stephen told them, don't look at it from where you are standing, this thing is bigger than you, it started from a land you never knew, it started from the land of Mesopotamia, Stephen told them, you have to look

at this, subspecies, itenotators, look at things in the light of eternity, and bigger picture, God is in the picture, I don't know who I'm talking to, but sometimes, sometimes, you might be going through some rough times, it's human to go through challenging times, but when God is with you, the story says that they sold Joseph into slavery, but God was with him, Stephen said God was with Joseph, how can God be Joseph, Stephen said it, when he was preaching in Acts chapter 7, he says that the fathers through envy, they sold

Joseph, God, they tried to get rid of him, verse 9, and the patriarchs becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt's backs, God, I don't know who I'm talking to, tell please, tell somebody, God is with you, where is God in all this, where is God in all this, where is God when I'm suffering, where is God when my father abused me, where is God, where is God when I went through all this, where is God when I lost my job, where is God when I lost my mom, where is God when I lost my job, where is God in all these things, where is God, where is God when my husband did this to me, where is God I been serving, he said Daniel, the God whom you serve faithfully, sometimes looks like God has gone on a break on you, it looks like God has gone on silence, it looks like God has gone on a holiday, where is God in all these things, I come to submit to you based on Stephen's apologia, that God is always behind the scenes,

[52 : 19] God is always behind the scenes, but God, let me finish verse 5 again, and God gave him no inheritance in it, what's the meaning of that, you moved me to a land I should go, and you didn't give me any inheritance in it, how, I left my job, I left my company, I left my business, and I came to UK because I believe I heard from you God, and look now, I don't even have babies, where is God in all these things, God is in it, God is in the picture, God is in the picture, why, because he's a micromanager, God is a puppet master, more than anybody can know, in spite of what, Bible says that he never left himself without a witness, he never left himself in the Acts chapter 14, God never left himself, he's actually in the pictures, he's behind the scenes, he's working, he's working, so he said, verse 5, let me finish,

Acts chapter 7, verse 5, and he gave him no inheritance in the land, not even enough to put his foot, but, but even when Abraham had no child, God promised to give it to him for a possession, and not to him alone, his descendants after him, the land, I don't even have enough to put my feet, and now you're also telling me, give me to my descendants, I don't have a child, God, don't you know that, I don't have a child, God, don't you know that, now, Stephen, what are these things, so let me tell you the real picture, Stephen gave them a panoramic view, of panorama of the history, of the Jews, you are questioning me about Abraham, I'm sorry, Moses, said you question me about Moses, you question me about God, you question me about the law and the temple, the God of glory appeared to our father

Abraham before he came to this land where the temple is built, and he told him, get out, and Abraham got out, he didn't give him a land, he didn't give him much space, but God told him, I'll give it to your descendants, verse 6, I have to stop, but God spoke in this way, that his descendants would dwell in a foreign, another foreign land is coming, and that they will bring them into bondage and oppress them, where's God in all this, before Abraham had a child, God said your descendants will come into a foreign land, and they will be oppressed, I don't have, see, if you were in Abraham's you might think, well, no problem, because he didn't think he would even have a child, but God is in behind the scenes, God is in the picture, he said before Egypt became Egypt, God has spoken that the Jews were coming, the

Hebrews, Abraham's descendants were going to be afflicted, he says that I will send them into a foreign land, God doesn't fear working with immigration, he has said, interesting way of using immigrants, or you can call it expatriates, whatever you want, or aliens, and God spoke in this way, that your descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage, and oppress them, for how long?

400, so some of them would be born into it, and die in it, generations of oppression, God, why? But what's the point, God, what are you getting from this?

[56 : 23] What are you going to get from this? What are you going to, God was forming, when we continue next week, you see the text, God was forming his people in oppression, God can work anywhere and with any condition and any situation, so don't be so fixated on what you're going through, put your faith in God, put your faith in God, hold on to his word and know the reason why you believe.

Stephen gave them a reason why the Jewish history existed because the Jewish history existed because of the church, so he was gradually navigating them through their history to land in the original temple which is not the temple built by hands, that is Stephen's submission, but I really do want to go too much.

Today I went into Abraham because he was really living in Mesopotamia. Next week we just brush through the rest because I can't wait to get to Saul. There are two young men mentioned in this text in Acts chapter 7.

One of the young men is called Stephen, the other young man, not old man, young man called Saul of Tarsus and that was where Saul of Tarsus comes into the picture and he becomes an instrumental course for what God is doing in the church after him.

It's going to be beautiful. Did you receive something? God is in the picture. Hallelujah. God is in the picture.

[57 : 59] God is in the picture. In spite of what you are going through, in spite of what is happening in your life, I come to tell you that God is in the picture. You ask me a question, where is God in all this it?

I want you to know that God is in the future. God, if you can trust him, if you can put your hope in him and not just fix your mind and your heart on what your current circumstances look further than where you are staying or where you are because the future is always better than the past if God is with you.

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