

**THE STORY OF STEPHEN: ACTS 6:1-8:4**  
**By Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. THE APPOINTMENT OF DEACONS: ACTS 6:1-7 .....	5
A. The Timing and the Occasion: Acts 6:1 .....	5
1. The Growth of the Church .....	5
2. The New Testament Terms for Believers.....	5
3. The Internal Problems of the Church.....	6
a. The Murmuring.....	6
b. The Source of the Murmuring .....	6
c. The Reason for the Murmuring .....	6
B. The Advice of the Apostles: Acts 6:2-4.....	7
1. The Need for Deacons .....	7
2. The Qualifications for Deacons .....	7
3. The Responsibility of the Apostles .....	7
C. The Appointment of the First Deacons: Acts 6:5-6 .....	7
1. The Response .....	8
2. The Selection .....	8
3. The Appointment .....	8
D. The Results of the Appointment: Acts 6:7 .....	9
II. THE WITNESS OF STEPHEN: ACTS 6:8-8:4 .....	9
A. The Arrest of Stephen: Acts 6:8-7:1 .....	9
1. The Character and Ministry of Stephen: Acts 6:8.....	9
2. The Disputations Against Stephen: Acts 6:9-10.....	10
3. The Third Persecution of the Church: Acts 6:11.....	11
4. The Arrest of Stephen: Acts 6:12.....	11
5. The Report of the False Witnesses: Acts 6:13-14.....	11
6. The Face of Stephen: Acts 6:15 .....	12
7. The Questioning by the High Priest: Acts 7:1 .....	12
B. Some Observations on Stephen's Sermon .....	13

1. Concerning the Third Persecution of the Church .....	13
2. Concerning Stephen's Sermon.....	13
C. The Defense of Stephen: Acts 7:2-53 .....	13
1. The Patriarchs: Acts 7:2-16.....	13
a. The Story of Abraham: Acts 7:2-8 .....	13
(1) The Call of Abraham: Acts 7:2-3 .....	13
(2) The Journey: Acts 7:4 .....	14
(3) The Promise of the Land: Acts 7:5 .....	14
(4) The Prophecy of Egyptian Bondage: Acts 7:6-7.....	14
(5) The Covenant of Circumcision: Acts 7:8 .....	15
b. The Story of Joseph: Acts 7:9-16 .....	15
(1) The Selling of Joseph: Acts 7:9-10 .....	15
(2) The Famine and its Results Summarized: Acts 7:11-13 .....	15
(3) The Migration to Egypt: Acts 7:14-16 .....	15
2. The Patriarchs Summarized.....	15
3. Possible Solutions to the Discrepancies of Stephen.....	16
4. The Story of Moses: Acts 7:17-43 .....	16
a. The Egyptian Bondage: Acts 7:17-19.....	16
b. The Early Life of Moses: Acts 7:20-22 .....	17
c. A Crucial Decision: Acts 7:23.....	17
d. Israel's First Rejection of Moses: Acts 7:24-29.....	17
e. The Call of Moses, the Exodus, and the Giving of the Law: Acts 7:30-38 .....	17
f. The Second Rejection of Moses: Acts 7:39-43 .....	18
g. The Story of Moses Summarized .....	18
5. A Habitation for God's Presence: Acts 7:44-50 .....	19
a. The Tabernacle From Moses to David: Acts 7:44-46 .....	19
b. The Building of the Temple: Acts 7:47 .....	19
c. God's True Dwelling Place: Acts 7:48-50.....	20
d. The Summary .....	20

6. Stephen's Accusation Against the Sanhedrin: Acts 7:51-53 .....	21
a. Their Resistance to the Holy Spirit .....	21
b. Their Rejection of the Messiah .....	21
c. Their Disobedience to the Law .....	22
d. Summary .....	22
D. An Evaluation of Stephen's Defense .....	22
E. The Stoning of Stephen: Acts 7:54-60 .....	23
1. The Reaction of the Sanhedrin: Acts 7:54 .....	23
2. Stephen's Dying Vision: Acts 7:55-56 .....	24
3. The Death of Stephen: Acts 7:57-60 .....	24
a. The Response of the Mob .....	24
b. The Role of the False Witnesses .....	25
c. Stephen's Response to the Stoning .....	25
d. The Moment of Stephen's Death .....	26
e. A Question Raised by the Death of Stephen .....	26
f. The Rejection of the Second Sign of Jonah .....	27
F. The Third Persecution of the Church: Acts 8:1-4 .....	27
1. The Results of the Stoning of Stephen: Acts 8:1 .....	27
a. The Role of Saul .....	27
b. The Scattering of the Believers .....	28
2. The Burial of Stephen: Acts 8:2 .....	29
3. Saul's Persecution of the Church: Acts 8:3 .....	29
4. The Ministry of the Dispersed: Acts 8:4 .....	30

© 2005 Ariel Ministries. All rights reserved.

No part of this manuscript may be reproduced in any form, except in brief quotation in a review or professional work, without written permission from the publishers. Cover illustration by Olivier Melnick.

Email: [Homeoffice@ariel.org](mailto:Homeoffice@ariel.org) • [www.ariel.org](http://www.ariel.org)