DISCIPLESHIP-BIBLE STUDY | THE BOOK OF ACTS

THE OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM ACTS 7:1-16 | (MATTHEW HENRY)

• **KNOW YOUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE: STEPHEN RECOUNTS ISRAEL'S HISTORY FROM ABRAHAM TO MOSES TO SHOW GOD'S CONTINUOUS FAITHFULNESS ACROSS GENERATIONS. UNDERSTANDING OUR ROOTS HELPS US TRUST GOD IN THE PRESENT.**

BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS AND SHARE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. **PROVIDE SOME EXAMPLES OF DISCIPLE STEPHEN'S RECOUNT OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY WITH OUR A.M.E. HISTORY?**

2. **HOW DO YOU SHARE GOD'S CONTINUOUS FAITHFULNESS TO YOU IN THE CHURCH, YOUR WORK AND YOUR MINISTRY?**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28th READ ACTS 7:17-32 | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE | DISCUSSION / REFLECTION / IMPLICATION

ACTS 7:17-32 | STEPHEN SPEAKS ABOUT THE GOD OF MOSES

17 "THE PROMISE GOD HAD GIVEN ABRAHAM WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN. AT THIS TIME MANY MORE OF OUR PEOPLE WERE IN THE COUNTRY OF EGYPT. 18 THEN ANOTHER MAN BECAME KING IN EGYPT. HE WAS A KING WHO DID NOT KNOW JOSEPH. 19 HE WAS HARD ON OUR PEOPLE AND NATION. HE WORKED AGAINST OUR EARLY FATHERS. HE MADE THEM PUT THEIR BABIES OUTSIDE SO THEY WOULD DIE.

20 "AT THAT TIME MOSES WAS BORN. HE WAS BEAUTIFUL IN GOD'S SIGHT. HE WAS FED IN HIS FATHER'S HOUSE FOR THREE MONTHS. 21 THEN HE WAS PUT OUTSIDE. PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER TOOK HIM AND CARED FOR HIM AS HER OWN SON. 22 MOSES WAS TAUGHT IN ALL THE WISDOM OF THE EGYPTIANS. HE BECAME A POWERFUL MAN IN WORDS AND IN THE THINGS HE DID. 23 WHEN HE WAS FORTY YEARS OLD, HE THOUGHT HE SHOULD VISIT HIS BROTHERS, THE JEWS. 24 HE SAW ONE OF THE JEWS BEING HURT. MOSES HELPED THE JEW AND KILLED THE MAN FROM EGYPT. 25 HE THOUGHT HIS PEOPLE WOULD UNDERSTAND. HE THOUGHT THEY KNEW GOD WOULD LET THEM GO FREE BY HIS HELP. BUT THE PEOPLE DID NOT UNDERSTAND.

26 "THE NEXT DAY MOSES CAME TO SOME JEWS WHO WERE FIGHTING. HE TRIED TO GET THEM TO STOP. MOSES SAID TO THE JEWS, 'SIRS, YOU ARE BROTHERS. WHY DO YOU HURT EACH OTHER?' 27 ONE WAS BEATING HIS NEIGHBOR. HE PUSHED MOSES AWAY AND SAID, 'WHO MADE YOU A LEADER OVER US? WHO SAID YOU COULD SAY WHO IS GUILTY? 28 DO YOU WANT TO KILL ME AS YOU KILLED THE MAN FROM EGYPT YESTERDAY?' 29 WHEN MOSES HEARD THAT, HE WENT AS FAST AS HE COULD TO THE COUNTRY OF MIDIAN WHERE HE WAS A STRANGER. WHILE HE WAS THERE, HE BECAME THE FATHER OF TWO SONS. 30 FORTY YEARS PASSED AND MOSES WAS NEAR MOUNT SINAI WHERE NO PEOPLE LIVE. THERE HE SAW AN ANGEL IN THE FIRE OF A BURNING BUSH.

REV'S DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY

THE OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

31 HE WAS SURPRISED AND WONDERED WHEN HE SAW IT. HE WENT UP CLOSE TO SEE IT BETTER. THEN HE HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD SPEAK TO HIM. 32 'I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHERS, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND OF ISAAC AND OF JACOB.' MOSES SHOOK! HE WAS SO AFRAID HE DID NOT LOOK AT THE BUSH.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM ACTS 7:17-32 | (MATTHEW HENRY)

- **RECOGNIZE THE PATTERN OF RESISTING GOD: STEPHEN POINTS OUT THAT ISRAEL'S ANCESTORS REPEATEDLY REJECTED GOD'S CHOSEN LEADERS LIKE MOSES, AND THE CURRENT RELIGIOUS LEADERS ARE DOING THE EXACT SAME THING BY REJECTING JESUS.**
- **STAND BOLDLY FOR TRUTH: EVEN ON TRIAL FOR HIS LIFE, STEPHEN DID NOT BACK DOWN OR DEFEND HIMSELF OUT OF FEAR. HE USED THE MOMENT TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL WITH COURAGE.**

NOVEMBER DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY

REV'S DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY

DISCIPLESHIP-BIBLE STUDY | THE BOOK OF ACTS

THE OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH RE-READ ACTS 7:1-32 | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE | DISCUSSION / REFLECTION / IMPLICATION

- **CHECK-IN: MINISTRY PRINCIPLE OF PEACE (STRENGTH & STRUGGLE)**
  - **FAITH**
  - **HOPE**
  - **LOVE**
  - **COURAGE**
  - **UNITY**
  - **FORGIVENESS**
  - **JUSTICE**

BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS AND SHARE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1) DO YOU ACKNOWLEDGE WHEN YOU ARE RESISTING GOD'S PATTERN?
2) IF SO, WHAT DO YOU DO TO GET BACK IN LINE?
3) DO YOU RECOGNIZE WHEN YOU AND OTHER'S ARE REJECTING GOD'S LEADERS?

REV'S DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY

- **CHECK-OUT: MINISTRY TOUCHSTONE**

- COME TO WORK WITH 100% OF OURSELVES.
- PRESUME WELCOME AND EXTEND WELCOME.
- BELIEVE THAT IT'S POSSIBLE TO EMERGE REFRESHED, SURPRISED, AND LESS BURDENED THAN WHEN WE CAME.
- THERE IS ALWAYS INVITATION, NEVER INVASION; ALWAYS OPPORTUNITY, NEVER DEMAND.
- NO FIXING, NO SAVING, NO ADVISING, AND NO CORRECTING EACH OTHER.
- WHEN THE GOING GETS ROUGH, TURN TO WONDER.
- SPEAK FOR YOURSELF.
- LISTEN TO THE SILENCE.
- OBSERVE DEEP CONFIDENTIALITY.
- LET THE BEAUTY WE LOVE BE WHAT WE DO.

SOURCE: COURAGE & RENEWAL NORTHEAST WWW.COURAGENE.WORDPRESS.COM

DISCIPLESHIP-BIBLE STUDY | THE BOOK OF ACTS

THE OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH READ ACTS 7:33-43 | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

NO BIBLE STUDY | BLESSED VETERAN'S DAY

DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE | DISCUSSION / REFLECTION / IMPLICATION

ACTS 7:33-43 | STEPHEN SPEAKS ABOUT THE GOD OF MOSES

33 "THEN THE LORD SAID TO HIM, 'TAKE YOUR SHOES OFF YOUR FEET! THE PLACE WHERE YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND. 34 I HAVE SEEN MY PEOPLE SUFFER IN THE COUNTRY OF EGYPT AND I HAVE HEARD THEIR CRIES. I HAVE COME DOWN TO LET THEM GO FREE. SO COME NOW, I WILL SEND YOU BACK TO EGYPT.'

35 "THE PEOPLE HAD PUT MOSES ASIDE. THEY SAID, 'WHO MADE YOU A LEADER OVER US? WHO SAID YOU ARE THE ONE TO SAY WHAT IS RIGHT OR WRONG?' BUT GOD MADE THIS MAN A LEADER. MOSES WAS THE ONE WHO BROUGHT THEM OUT OF THE COUNTRY OF EGYPT. THIS WAS DONE BY THE HELP OF THE ANGEL WHO WAS IN THE BURNING BUSH. 36 THIS MAN LED THEM. HE DID POWERFUL WORKS IN EGYPT AND AT THE RED SEA. FOR FORTY YEARS HE LED THEM IN THE DESERT.

37 "MOSES SAID TO THE JEWS, 'GOD WILL GIVE YOU ONE WHO SPEAKS FOR HIM LIKE ME FROM AMONG YOUR BROTHERS.' 38 THIS IS THE MAN WHO WAS WITH THE JEWISH NATION IN THE DESERT. THE ANGEL TALKED TO HIM ON MOUNT SINAI. MOSES TOLD IT TO OUR EARLY FATHERS. HE ALSO RECEIVED THE LIVING WORDS OF GOD TO GIVE TO US.

REV'S DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY

39 "OUR EARLY FATHERS WOULD NOT LISTEN TO HIM. THEY DID NOT OBEY HIM. IN THEIR HEARTS THEY WANTED TO GO BACK TO THE COUNTRY OF EGYPT. 40 THEY SAID TO AARON, 'MAKE US GODS TO GO BEFORE US. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THIS MOSES WHO LED US OUT OF EGYPT.'

41 "IN THOSE DAYS THEY MADE A CALF OF GOLD. THEY PUT GIFTS DOWN IN FRONT OF THEIR GOD IN WORSHIP. THEY WERE HAPPY WITH WHAT THEY HAD MADE WITH THEIR HANDS. 42 BUT GOD TURNED FROM THEM AND LET THEM WORSHIP THE STARS OF HEAVEN. THIS IS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE EARLY PREACHERS, 'NATION OF JEWS, WAS IT TO ME YOU GAVE GIFTS OF SHEEP AND CATTLE ON THE ALTAR FOR FORTY YEARS IN THE DESERT? 43 NO, YOU SET UP THE TENT TO WORSHIP THE GOD OF MOLOCK AND THE STAR OF YOUR GOD ROMPHA. YOU MADE GODS TO WORSHIP THEM. I WILL CARRY YOU AWAY TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COUNTRY OF BABYLON.'

•THE CORE THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT OF STEPHEN'S SPEECH IS THAT THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF HIS DAY WERE ACTING EXACTLY LIKE THEIR ANCESTORS. HE ILLUSTRATES A REPETITIVE CYCLE WHERE ISRAEL CONSISTENTLY REJECTED THE DELIVERERS GOD SENT THEM.

•THE ISRAELITES INITIALLY REJECTED MOSES, ASKING, *"WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE OVER US?"* THE ISRAELITES EVENTUALLY TURNED BACK TO IDOLS LIKE THE GOLDEN CALF IN THE WILDERNESS.

•STEPHEN CONCLUDES THAT JUST AS THEIR ANCESTORS PERSECUTED AND KILLED THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS; THE COUNCIL MEMBERS BETRAYED AND MURDERED JESUS CHRIST.

DISCIPLESHIP-BIBLE STUDY | THE BOOK OF ACTS

THE OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH READ ACTS 7:44-60 | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE | DISCUSSION / REFLECTION / IMPLICATION

ACTS 7:44-50 | THE PLACE OF WORSHIP AND THE HOUSE OF GOD

44 "OUR EARLY FATHERS HAD THE TENT TO WORSHIP IN. THEY USED IT IN THE DESERT. GOD TOLD MOSES TO MAKE IT LIKE THE PLAN WHICH HE HAD SEEN. 45 THIS WAS RECEIVED BY OUR EARLY FATHERS. THEY BROUGHT IT HERE WHEN THEY WON THE WARS WITH THE PEOPLE WHO WERE NOT JEWS. IT WAS WHEN JOSHUA WAS OUR LEADER. GOD MADE THOSE PEOPLE LEAVE AS OUR EARLY FATHERS TOOK THE LAND. THE TENT WAS HERE UNTIL THE TIME OF DAVID. 46 DAVID PLEASED GOD AND WANTED TO BUILD A HOUSE FOR WORSHIP FOR THE GOD OF JACOB. 47 BUT SOLOMON WAS THE ONE WHO BUILT THE HOUSE OF GOD FOR HIM. 48 BUT THE MOST HIGH DOES NOT LIVE IN BUILDINGS MADE BY HANDS. THE EARLY PREACHER SAID, 49 'HEAVEN IS THE PLACE WHERE I SIT AND THE EARTH IS THE PLACE WHERE I REST MY FEET. WHAT HOUSE WILL YOU BUILD ME?' SAYS THE LORD. 'OR WHAT IS MY PLACE OF REST?
50 DID NOT MY HANDS MAKE ALL THESE THINGS?'

THE EVOLUTION OF WORSHIP: STEPHEN CONTRASTS THE TEMPORARY WILDERNESS TABERNACLE WITH THE PERMANENT TEMPLE BUILT BY SOLOMON. MATTHEW HENRY EMPHASIZES STEPHEN'S POINT THAT THE MOST HIGH DOES NOT DWELL IN TEMPLES MADE WITH HANDS, ILLUSTRATING THAT TEMPLE SERVICE WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO EVENTUALLY GIVE WAY TO SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

REV'S DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY

ACTS 7:51-54 | THE JEWS ARE HURT

51 "YOU HAVE HARD HEARTS AND EARS THAT WILL NOT LISTEN TO ME! YOU ARE ALWAYS WORKING AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT. YOUR EARLY FATHERS DID. YOU DO TOO. 52 WHICH OF THE EARLY PREACHERS WAS NOT BEATEN AND HURT BY YOUR EARLY FATHERS? THEY KILLED THOSE WHO TOLD OF THE COMING OF THE ONE RIGHT WITH GOD. NOW YOU HAVE HANDED HIM OVER AND KILLED HIM. 53 YOU HAD THE LAW GIVEN TO YOU BY ANGELS. YET YOU HAVE NOT KEPT IT."

THE REBUKE: ACCORDING TO MATTHEW HENRY, STEPHEN WAS PREPARED TO CONTINUE HIS DISCOURSE ON HOW THE TEMPLE SERVICE MUST END. HOWEVER, PERCEIVING THAT THE COUNCIL'S HEARTS WERE HARDENING:

- **HE CALLS THEM "STIFF-NECKED" RESISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**
- **MATTHEW HENRY EXPLAINS THAT WHILE THEY COULD PATIENTLY LISTEN TO OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY, THEY COULD NOT BEAR THE TRUTH OF THEIR OWN WICKEDNESS—SPECIFICALLY, THAT THEY HAD BECOME THE BETRAYERS AND MURDERERS OF GOD'S SON, JESUS CHRIST.**

ACTS 7:54-60 | STEPHEN IS KILLED

54 THE JEWS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS LISTENED TO STEPHEN. THEN THEY BECAME ANGRY AND BEGAN TO GRIND THEIR TEETH AT HIM. 55 HE WAS FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. AS HE LOOKED UP TO HEAVEN, HE SAW THE SHINING-GREATNESS OF GOD AND JESUS STANDING AT THE RIGHT SIDE OF GOD.

DISCIPLESHIP-BIBLE STUDY | THE BOOK OF ACTS

THE OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

56 HE SAID, "SEE! I SEE HEAVEN OPEN AND THE SON OF MAN STANDING AT THE RIGHT SIDE OF GOD!"
57 THEY CRIED OUT WITH LOUD VOICES. THEY PUT THEIR HANDS OVER THEIR EARS AND THEY ALL PUSHED ON HIM. 58 THEN THEY TOOK HIM OUT OF THE CITY AND THREW STONES AT HIM. THE MEN WHO WERE THROWING THE STONES LAID THEIR COATS DOWN IN FRONT OF A YOUNG MAN NAMED SAUL. 59 WHILE THEY THREW STONES AT STEPHEN, HE PRAYED, "LORD JESUS, RECEIVE MY SPIRIT." 60 AFTER THAT HE FELL ON HIS KNEES AND CRIED OUT WITH A LOUD VOICE, "LORD, DO NOT HOLD THIS SIN AGAINST THEM." WHEN HE HAD SAID THIS, HE DIED.

THE STONING AND DISCIPLE STEPHEN'S VISION: WHEN THE COUNCIL BECOMES ENRAGED AND PREPARES TO STONE HIM, STEPHEN IS GRANTED A VISION OF THE HEAVENS OPENING.

- **JESUS STANDING: MATTHEW HENRY UNDERSCORES THE BEAUTY OF STEPHEN SEEING JESUS *STANDING* AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, READY TO RECEIVE AND PLEAD FOR HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT.**

- **A PATTERN FOR PRAYER: HENRY EMPHASIZES STEPHEN'S FINAL CRIES: *"LORD JESUS, RECEIVE MY SPIRIT"* AND *"LORD, DO NOT HOLD THIS SIN AGAINST THEM."* HENRY EXPLICITLY HIGHLIGHTS THIS AS EVIDENCE THAT BELIEVERS ARE TO PRAY DIRECTLY TO CHRIST IN THEIR FINAL MOMENTS, MIRRORING JESUS'S OWN FORGIVENESS OF HIS EXECUTIONERS ON THE CROSS. STEPHEN THEN PEACEFULLY "FALLS ASLEEP" IN DEATH**

BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS AND SHARE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1) **SHARE A TIME WHEN YOU EXTENDED FORGIVENESS.**
2) **WAS IT EXCEPTED?**
3) **HOW DID YOU FEEL AFTER YOU EXTENDED FORGIVENESS.**

PLEASE DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

THANKSGIVING SERVICE | IN-PERSON AND DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY ZOOM @7:00PM