

On the evening of Sunday, October 24, 2021, we gathered to explore the profound narrative within the Book of Acts, chapters 6 and 7. This session, dedicated to reading and listening, unearthed timeless truths and inspiring accounts of faith, leadership, and divine providence. Let us delve into the key moments that resonated with us.

Acts 6: Multiplication and Ministry

As the number of disciples multiplied (Acts 6:1), a challenge arose concerning the daily distribution of resources. The apostles, recognizing the importance of both spiritual nourishment and practical care, made a pivotal decision. 'It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables' (Acts 6:2). Instead, they proposed that the community select seven men, full of the Spirit and wisdom, to oversee this vital ministry (Acts 6:3-4).

This decision highlights the importance of **delegation** and the need for diverse gifts within the church. It also reminds us that effective ministry involves both spiritual and practical dimensions. The passage concludes with Stephen, one of the chosen seven, appearing before the council, his face shining like that of an angel (Acts 6:15), foreshadowing the powerful defense he was about to deliver.

Acts 7: Stephen's Defense - A Retelling of History

Stephen's defense before the council is a masterful retelling of Israel's history, revealing God's unwavering faithfulness throughout generations. He begins with Abraham's call (Acts 7:2-3), highlighting God's promise to give him the land, even though he had no possession in it (Acts 7:5). God also foretold Abraham's descendants' sojourn in a foreign land, where they would be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years, after which God would bring them out (Acts 7:7).

Stephen continues by recounting Joseph's journey to Egypt, sold into slavery by his own brothers (Acts 7:9). Yet, God was with him, delivering him from all his troubles and granting him favor with Pharaoh (Acts 7:10). During a severe famine, Jacob and his entire family migrated to Egypt (Acts 7:11, 14), where the Israelite nation grew and multiplied exceedingly (Acts 7:17).

He then tells the story of Moses, born at a time when the Israelites faced great oppression. Moses was 'beautiful in God's sight' (Acts 7:20) and 'educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians' (Acts 7:22). Driven by compassion, Moses defended one of his people who was being mistreated, striking down

the Egyptian (Acts 7:24). Stephen’s masterful recount sets the stage for his powerful declaration about Jesus, which ultimately leads to his martyrdom.

Reflections from Our Community

During our session, readers and listeners shared their personal reflections on the passages. Here are some of the themes that emerged:

Participant	Chosen Theme
Evangelist Mullings	The Glory of the Lord
Evangelist Dobney	Stephen's Defense
Sister Carisa	Patience is Key
Sister Taedra	Divine Providence in Joseph's Life
Sister Donna	Moses' Compassion
Minister Marjorie	Delegation and Teamwork

Summary

Our reading and listening session illuminated the timeless truths embedded within Acts 6 and 7. From the practical wisdom of delegation to the powerful narrative of God's faithfulness throughout history, we were reminded of the importance of both spiritual growth and practical ministry. Stephen's story, a testament to unwavering faith and bold proclamation, continues to inspire us to live courageously for Christ.