**Acts 7:1**

\*Deacon Stephen began showing why he was an excellent choice for the office by the congregation! He not only took care of widows and preached biblical truth, but he was also a bold Baptist that was ready spiritually for the hard stare down and brutal consequences of the sinful Sanhedrin!

 \*Filled with the Spirit and ready for potential martyrdom, he answered the priest in the affirmative.

\*Recognizing that he was in a pre-determined set-up and under duress by the hardened council, he rehearsed the *Tanak*, affirmed the majesty of the Law, the sanctity of the Temple, and then condemned the council (vv. 2-53).

\*He organized his impromptu but informed apologetical answer around Abraham (vv. 2-8), Joseph (vv. 9-16), Moses (vv. 17-43), the Tabernacle (vv. 44-50), and the complicity of the Sanhedrin (vv. 51-53). This mighty man was ready to preach, to pray, to die!

**Acts 7:2**

\*Stephen started at the beginning with the beloved Abraham of the Jews (Gen. 11:27-12:7). The expression *“the glory of God”* would have brought thoughts of the glory of the Lord on his four Tabernacles/Temples (cf. Ex. 40:34; I Ki. 8:10-11; Zech. 1:16; 2:5).

**Acts 7:3**

 \*The LORD called Abraham from Babylon and his kindred to a choice piece of geographical real estate

 named *Canaan* (Gen. 11:31) which the Lord shewed him (Gen. 12:1). > See Heb. 11:8-10.

**Acts 7:4**

\*Obedient Abraham left Babylon and dwelt in Charran (Haran) in the area of Babylon. Upon his father’s death, he moved to Canaan (Gen. 12:5-7). Abraham was 75 when he left Haran, being born when his father was 130 years old (Gen. 11:32; 12:4 [205-130 = 75]). You are never too old to obey the Lord!

**Acts 7:5**

\*Abraham was a pilgrim (Heb. 11:9, 13). The Lord did not promise him an inheritance in the Land of Canaan. He promised the land to the seed of Abraham which seed he did not have at that time since Sarah was barren (Gen. 11:30; 25:21; 29:31).

**Acts 7:6**

\*To further challenge the life of faith about the promise of the Land, Abraham’s seed would be in bondage in a strange land (Egypt) for four hundred years.

\*Moses stated that the children of Israel sojourned for 430 years (Ex. 12:40-41), which sojourning included the 30 years that Abraham was in Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20).

**Acts 7:7**

\*The LORD promised Abraham that He would judge the nation (Egypt) and then deliver the Jews and put them in the Promised Land to serve the Lord. Judgment came upon the Egyptians through the 10 plagues (Ex. 7-14; 19:1 ff.).

Acts 7:8

\*Stephan gave the background on the controversial practice of circumcision (Gen. 17:7 ff.) when the Lord covenanted with Abraham about his seed. He circumcised Isaac on the 8th day and Isaac begat Jacob who begat the twelve patriarchs of the 12 tribes (Gen. 29:31 ff.).

\*Circumcision was a perpetual problem since the Jews perverted the meaning and attempted to foist it on Gentiles for their salvation (Acts 15:1 ff.). The Baptist church disannulled the rite for salvation?

**Acts 7:9**

\*The *“holy place”* and “the law” were the focal points of apostasy leveled toward the Baptists (6:13-14). Jehovah was *“with him”* even though Joseph was out of the Land, before the Law and the Temple.

\*The patriarchs sold Joseph to Egypt (Gen. 37:1-36).

\*Joseph pre-figured Jesus: both began ministry at 30, were loved by their father, were hated, conspired against, and stripped by brethren. They were tempted without sin, unrecognized by brethren, sold for silver, falsely charged, condemned with 2 miscreants, and suffered for the salvation of others.

**Acts 7:10**

\*Being with Joseph, God delivered him, gave him favor, and made him governor over Egypt (Gen. 39:21 ff.; 41:40; Heb. 11:21-22).

**Acts 7:11**

\*Stephen continued with the blessing of faith in the LORD and not pride in the Land, he focused on the famine (Gen. 41:37 ff.).

\**“Our fathers”* found no blessing in the Promise Land of Canaan but in Egypt (Gen. 41:54 ff.)!

**Acts 7:12-13**

\*The deacon mentioned reference to the *“first”* of two visits before the patriarchs received Joseph as their “deliverer” (Gen. 45:5; 50:20).

\*Paul revealed that since the Jews rejected Jesus at His first coming, He would come again for believing Jews: *“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation”* (Heb. 9:28).

\*Joseph revealed himself to his brethren and revealed his brethren to Pharaoh (Gen. 45:1, 16-17).

**Acts 7:14**

\*Stephen revealed in this discourse that the Jacob, the seed of Abraham and inheritor of the Promised Land, left the Promised Land and went Egypt with his household.

\*Supposedly Stephen made an error by quoting the *LXX*. Moses recorded, saying, *“All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins,* ***besides Jacob's sons' wives****, all the souls were threescore and six; And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were* ***threescore and ten****”* (Gen 46:26-27) = **70 souls!**

\*Stephen said, *“Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred****, threescore and fifteen*** *souls”*= **75 souls!** **Was it 70 or 75 or does it matter?**

\*Moses recorded that **sixty-six** came from Jacob’s loins to enter into Egypt. Jacob, Joseph and Joseph’s two sons were not included. With nine daughters-in-laws, excluding those of Judah, Simeon, and Joseph, Stephen counted the sixty-six offspring and nine outsiders to total seventy-five kindred. \*Conservative critics nevertheless argue that this is an error in the Bible. The daughter-in-laws did not come out of Jacob’s **loins** but were part of the **kindred** of Jacob.

**Acts 7:15-16**

\*Jacob and the patriarchs died in the will of God but outside of the Promised Land! Joseph buried Jacob in Machpelah in Canaan (Gen. 50:5, 13). Likewise, the Jews buried Joseph in Shechem (Gen. 50:25).

\*By faith the patriarchs wanted to be buried in the Promise Land. The issue is faith and not objects!

\*They were ultimately buried in the Promised Land that was not Abraham’s since he had to purchase the cave for 400 shekels of silver (Gen. 23:16).