

**learned
in all
the
wisdom**

Acts 7:1 – 60

~ The account of the martyr Steven in Scripture demands extensive prayer and consideration to completely process. I urge you to pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment – and then read this section of Scripture in your own Bible – and then pray again for those things – and then read this report. This leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God will review Steven’s defense before the Sanhedrin. He is answering the charges that will ultimately result in him being executed by stoning. A recitation of the history of the nation Israel was his only defense against a mob of angry, lying religious leaders.

Two Bible facts are persistent throughout the history of Israel: (1) they were stubborn, rebellious and resistant to God (2) there was but a small remnant of Israelite’s who actually believed God. Well, ever since the time in which we are studying, God has been calling out a remnant to worship Him. Some people today are being called out from false teachings and outright cults. Some of you readers think you are Christians, but you don’t know the first things about the Word of God. Many – if not most – are materialistic, proud and competitive. Quite frankly, you shouldn’t be in a church. You should be studying the Bible before you get to church. Does studying the Bible actually transform your life? Do you truly and honestly believe God? If you don’t understand your Bible properly, correctly and completely, then you cannot honestly answer yes to either of my questions.

In our previous report, Steven began to recite the history of the nation Israel as a defense to the false charges brought against him by the religious leaders. Steven began with Abraham because Abraham believed God and obeyed God. Faith ALWAYS leads to obedience – but it doesn’t work the other way around. If faith doesn’t lead to obedience, it just doesn’t happen to be genuine saving faith in Christ as our Savior....

1 Then said the high priest, Are these things so?

2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran (Haran),

3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Haran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.

6 And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

8 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 twelve patriarchs.

~ Abraham was raised in a home of rank idolatry down in Mesopotamia. We learned that any history of the nation Israel MUST begin with Abraham; or you cannot attain an accurate record. Well, that's where Abraham came to believe God – in an idolatrous home. God promised Abraham a child and a land. At that time, Abraham had neither; but he still believed God. So, Steven moves to the patriarchal period of the twelve sons of Jacob. We examined thoroughly the selling of Joseph into slavery when we were in Genesis. We saw how God over-ruled their evil deed and later used Joseph to save them from utter annihilation in famine. This is the interpretation of

the Holy Spirit regarding the Old Testament. That makes our reading a remarkable section of Scripture. I'm afraid most Bible readers skim over this without a clue as to what it really means....

9 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,

10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

11 Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance.

12 But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

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

14 Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.

15 So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers,

16 And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem.

~ The deliverance of Israel from the slavery of Egypt is the third historical period Steven delves into. Of course, that's when God made Moses the deliverer. When Moses first came on the scene, the children of Israel refused to follow him. After that, we know Moses had trouble all the way to the Promised Land – which he was not permitted to enter. The statements made by Steven in this passage confirm literally everything I wrote about Moses during our safari consideration of the Pentateuch. For example, I said Moses would have been the next Pharaoh – and here it is –

confirmed. You see friends, I have taken the time to learn the Bible BEFORE I deigned begin teaching it; I don't guess at the Word of God. I wish most so-called pastors would actually learn the Bible BEFORE they go off attempting to teach what they do not know, and insisting on a shameful ignorance....

17 But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

18 Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

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

20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

21 And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

~ Moses was well educated in the Temple of the Sun; which was university in that day. Being sold down the river and ending up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter gave Moses an extreme advantage in education. I suppose we could call it a TSU doctorate degree. The wisdom of the Egyptians was not and is not to be despised – even in our so called advanced technological state. They knew the distance to the sun. The Egyptians were extremely advanced. Today, we feel like we know everything and, as a result, we have never given the Egyptians full credit for most of what we know in this modern age. In fact, I think most people today feel early civilizations were completely ignorant. Frankly, I see they were far more advanced and reasonable than we are as I type this report and as you read it. Anyone who feels a superiority over previous generations should really look into a mirror sometime and behold a truly ignorant person.

The Egyptians developed higher mathematics, superior chemistry and advanced engineering feats. Architecture and astronomy were specialties developed around the time in which we are studying that we still adhere to in terms of the basic rules and fundamentals. All fields of study had been developed to a very fine point by this time. Actually, the scientific advances made in ancient Egypt were simply remarkable. Consider the pyramids, or the colors in the tombs that have endured thousands of years. Consider the embalming techniques we cannot reproduce today. Moses was learned in all of those things, my friends.

Even so, such fine education did not prepare Moses to lead God's people! In fact, all the science and education in the world would not have equipped Moses to lead Israel – just as some post doctorate degree you might obtain can NEVER prepare you to lead God's people. A proper, correct and complete understanding of the Word of God cannot be bought, friends. The natural man receives NOT the things of the Spirit of God. They are foolishness to the natural man; so, man cannot know them of his own volition – not under any circumstances. The things of God are spiritually discerned; and if God doesn't give you said discernment, then you'll never have it. The only way to obtain discerning wisdom is to pray for it – and then actually study the Bible. So, God placed Moses out on the backside of the desert of Midian and gave him another degree – a BD degree – meaning backside of the desert degree. That was a forty-year program, too, by the way....

23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian:

25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.

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

27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?

28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou diddest the Egyptian yesterday?

29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons.

30 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 a bush.

31 When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him,

32 Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold.

33 Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.

34 I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.

~ God heard the groaning of His people and saw their afflictions in slavery; and that's why God saved them. That's why God saves you and me today, too, friends. No other reason. If you don't cry out to God, He isn't going to save you. We aren't great and wonderful little Sunday School boys and girls like most of you think you are. The children of Israel were NOT loving and faithful to God; they were not kind and sweet little children of His. Oh, no, they were just like you and me! They were corrupt and rotten sinners who desperately needed a Savior and who cried out to God. Only our totally lost

and depraved condition appeals to God's mercy. God loving us in that state reveals His true intentions toward us. There's no other explanation. Even after Israel was delivered from bondage in Egypt, they continued in willful rebellion....

35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

~ Notice an emphasis on the ministry of angels in the life of the nation Israel. The ministry of angels was very prominent in the nation; the law was given by angels, you may recall. When God came down to Moses and Joshua, He did so as an angel. However, there is NO CONNECTION of angel ministry with the church today. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. That's better than an angel watching over me. I see a lot of talk about angels around this forum on which I teach and, quite frankly, it's all perfect nonsense. Ask yourself who the angels appeared to and for what purpose. There haven't been any angels around my place, and they haven't been around yours, either. I can make that statement because I just happen to know. I know because the Word of God clearly explains their ministry and function within the spiritual realm today. If you're seeing angels, go see the best psychologist you can afford. Angels have NO CONNECTION to the ministry of the church after the Day of Pentecost....

36 He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

38 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

~ Here, Steven begins to recount the wilderness experience. The word "church" in verse thirty-eight does NOT mean a church as we know it nor

as we have learned about so far in the Book of Acts. This means “Ecclesia” – which means “called out.” If you are in a group that has been called out to write rock and roll songs, then you are in a church. It’s not a church of God; it’s a church of you – but still a church, nonetheless. As you construct it, you will fill it with all your favorite gods and idols and bow down before them and to them each day. Any body called out for a particular purpose is an ecclesia. That’s very important to understand and note....

39 To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt,

~ They went back to Egypt in their hearts, my beloved. They did that many, many, many times, too, by the way. Many so-called saints deplore certain sins of the flesh and of the world today. Dr. G Campbell Morgan said, “.... it’s easy to condemn Samson’s sin of the flesh; and it’s easy to point our fingers at others today and shake our heads at them. You may not live down there but, would you like to?” I believe most would. Where, exactly, is your heart right now tonight, friends? These people went back to Egypt in their hearts. They had no desire whatsoever to follow God out there in the wilderness. The church today literally handles Scripture with total and complete error because the modern church has returned to Egypt in its heart....

40 Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him. And they didn’t care about Moses, either.

41 And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Continually rebellious were they.

42 Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?

43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

44 Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen.

45 Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Joshua into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David;

46 Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.

47 But Solomon built him an house.

48 Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,

49 Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

50 Hath not my hand made all these things?

51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

~ Well, that is pretty strong language by Steven; and the religious crowd certainly hated Steven for saying these things. As we just read, they executed him as a result. I don't think we need to argue about the "right hand of God," either. God is a spirit; and I'm not sure where the right hand of a spirit is, to tell the truth - as I always do tell you dear readers the truth. What we know for sure is this indicates the place of prominence and honor! God glorified and exalted Christ and God gave Him a Name above all names. That's what it means to stand at the right hand of God, my beloved. Christ was there to receive Steven before the first rock was thrown, making Steven the first martyr we have examined on safari.

Well, a Pharisee named Saul is standing by as we conclude this leg of our Spiritual Safari. Saul of Tarsus thought he had everything figured out and held the world by the tail. How tragically wrong he was. This is the only time Steven and Saul came together at the same time – and they are enemies. This is where Steven sleeps and Christ accepts him and receives him. Steven looked up into Heaven and saw Christ's Face. Saul looked up and saw nothing. Saul, later as Paul, will tell us he would have liked to have

seen something; because he knew Steven did see something – and Saul knew Saul had a very empty heart! Paul will recount this incident and wish he had seen what Steven had seen at this time. Have you prayed for wisdom, judgment and spiritual discernment? We'll just leave it at that in this report ~
