Acts 6:1-8:1a

Establishing Deacons (6:1-7)

* Hellenists: Jews who had taken on Greek

customs as a result of Alexander the Great’s

Hellenization (greek-etizing) of the world.

* Hebrews: Jews who rejected Greek culture
* What was the problem?

“The Stoning of St. Stephen” by Rembrandt (1625) (His first known work)

* Why didn’t the Apostles do it themselves?
* What was the result? (v.7)

Stephen Seized (6:8-7:1)

* The synagogue of the Freedmen: likely a Hellenistic synagogue where the service was conducted in Greek. (the cities listed are all Greek cities)
* “They could not withstand the wisdom and Spirit…” (v.10)
* “This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law,” (v. 13)
* “His face was like the face of an angel.” (v.15)
* “Are these things so?” (7:1)
  + what things?

Stephen Speaks (7:2-53)

* What common theme is Stephen emphasizing in his speech? Why?
* Abraham Isaac and Jacob (v. 2-16)
  + “in Mesopotamia”
  + Gen 12:1 quote
  + “yet he gave him no inheritance in it” (v.5)
  + What period of Israel’s history is verses 6-8 referencing?
  + “sold him into Egypt, but God was with him…” (v.9)
  + “and Jacob went down into Egypt” (v.15)
* Moses (v.17-41)
  + “He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand… but they did not” (v.25)
  + “became an exile in the land of Midian” (v.29)
  + “for the place where you are standing is holy ground.” (v.33)
  + “I have come down to deliver them” (v.34)
  + “God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.” (v.37)
  + “and in their hearts they turned to Egypt…” (v. 39)
* Prophets (v.42-43)
  + “gave them over to worship the host of heaven…” (v. 42)
    - i.e. worship the stars and false gods (see Deut 4:19; 2 Kngs 17:16; 21:3; 23:5; Zeph 1:5)
  + “I will send you into exile beyond Babylon”
* Thesis (v. 44-50)
  + “Our fathers had a tent…” (v.44)
  + …same with Joshua…
  + …same with David… and he asked to build a temple…
  + “But it was Solomon who built a house for him. (v.47)
  + “Yet the most High does not dwell in houses made by hands” (v.48)
  + Isa 66:1,2
* Accusation (v. 51-53)
  + “uncircumcised in heart and ears” (v.51)
  + “as your fathers did, so do you.” (v. 51)
    - explanation (v.52-53)

Stephen Stoned (7:54-8:1a)

* “but he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the Glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.” (v.55)
* “*And the witnesses* laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.” (v. 58)
* What do Stephen’s final two phrases remind you of?
  + See Luke 23:34, 46; 2 Chron 24:22)
* “And Saul approved of his execution” (8:1)