



SERMON NOTES

Sunday, March 28, 2021 | Pastor Scott Boerckel

“Stephen’s Speech: The Lesson of the Nation of Israel”

Acts 7:35-53

1. The nation of Israel rejected Moses, his works, his prophecies, and the law of Moses. (Acts 7:35-39)
2. The nation of Israel rejected God and worshiped other gods. (Acts 7:40-43)
3. The nation of Israel rejected the true meaning of both tabernacle and temple. (Acts 7:44-50)

4. Stephen pronounces judgment on the nation of Israel (Acts 7:51-53)

Table Talk

- 1) Why does Stephen make a point of relating that Israel rejected Moses? (v. 35) How does Stephen indicate, without actually saying it, that Moses was a foreshadowing of Jesus? (hint: there are three ways, one each in verses 35-37)
- 2) What are the “living oracles” in verse 38? In what way can God’s law be described as “living”? What is a wrong way to describe it as “living”? How did the nation of Israel respond to Moses and the living oracles of God? (v. 39) Where did they go in their hearts, though not physically? (v. 39) What did they do to express their rejection of Moses and the law? (vv. 40-41)
- 3) What does God do with that rejection of Moses and the law? (v. 42a) What happens when any culture rejects God’s law? Do you think that God has turned away from our own nation? Why or why not?
- 4) Stephen presents three episodes in Israel’s rejection of God—first at Mt. Sinai, then with the northern kingdom of Israel with Amos and then with the southern kingdom of Judah with Jeremiah? Why do you think that Stephen does this? Why does he purposefully change the words of Amos 5:25-27 in verses 42-43? How does thinking about Israel as one long story of rejection of God help us think soberly about our own lives and the life of our church?
- 5) What is the similarity between the “tent” in v. 44 and the “house” in v. 47? What point is Stephen making in verse 48? How does verse 48 address the accusation that Stephen is against the temple. At the time that Stephen was speaking was either the tent from verse 44 or the house from verse 48 existing? What does that say about the false accusation that Stephen wanted to destroy the temple of his day?
- 6) What kind of judgment does Stephen pronounce on the existing nation of Israel as he stands trial before Israel’s leaders? (vv. 51-53) Do you think Stephen finished his speech? Why or why not? Where did Stephen get his courage? Why is it important to consider our own need for courage as followers of Jesus? How does Stephen demonstrate that he is a worshiper maturing in Christ?