

THE BOOK OF *Acts*

|| Group Discussion Guide ||

Acts 7:1-8

January 28, 2024

STEPHEN'S SPEECH, PART 1: ABRAHAM

1

Stephen has been charged with blasphemy “against Moses and God” (Acts 6:11) and with speaking against “this holy place and the law” (Acts 6:13). When asked “are these things so?” (7:1), Stephen responds with history, going back to Abraham. Why would he take this approach to his defense?

2

If called on to defend our faith, could we also use biblical history to explain our position? How does Stephen’s example point to the need for an emphasis on biblical literacy in the church today?

3

Stephen begins his historical account by reminding his listeners that God called Abraham out from a pagan land (7:2-3). Why might this have been a necessary reminder for the members of the council? How might this touch on their pride in their own pedigrees?

4

Was Stephen drawing a parallel between the calling out of Abraham and the calling to the Christian life? As Christians, do we see our own experience of being called out by God as similar to Abraham’s calling?

5

Stephen recounts the promise God made to Abraham and that this covenantal promise would be marked by the sign of circumcision (7:5,8). Why might Stephen have included a reminder of the covenant in his defense of the Christian faith?

6

Why might God have instituted a sign (circumcision) as a reminder of his covenant with Abraham? Are there parallel signs in the New Testament?

7

God's promise to Abraham involves offspring. How might the Jewish council and this new fellowship of Christians have different understandings of what this promise would mean?

8

Abraham did not see the total fulfillment of God's promise to him—in his lifetime, he had “no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length” (7:5). As believers, how do we rest in God's faithfulness when promises seem unfulfilled?

