



Acts Chapter 7 Continued

As we saw last week.. Stephen is giving this “Brood of Vipers” as our Messiah calls them, a bit of a history lesson. And we also saw that a few of the things that Stephen says in his discourse to the Temple authorities are in direct opposition to the Hebrew Torah.

And as we also learned last week.. that there are a few hints in Stephens speech that hints to his probably being a Jew born in Samaria because of the many different things he says to the Temple authorities in his speech. Several hints that Stephen gives would have surly led the Jerusalem Temple authorities to know, or at least to suspect Stephen of being a Jew born Samaritan.

And as we've said before in our study through out the book of Acts.. the Samaritan Jews were one of the most hated factions of Jews by all other Jews, and if you don't understand that I would invite you to go back and listen to this teaching from the beginning so that you're better equipped to follow along up to this point.

The Samaritan Jews had built their own Temple at Mount Girziam, and they held very strictly to their own version of the Pentateuch which is the first five books of Moses that they themselves had modified to fit their own traditions.

So it's pretty easy to see why the Jerusalem Temple authorities were so angry with Stephen and why they hated him the way that they did. Stephen was a Hellenistic Samaritan Jew and that automatically meant to them that he was a heretic, and so was this Messiah of his that they had already murdered on a steak just about a month earlier.

Now I want us to also notice what Stephen says in verse 30 of Acts chapter 7.

Act 7:30 "Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush.

This also is not found anywhere in the Hebrew Torah. No where will you find that the Torah says that Moses was 40 years old when he encountered God in the burning bush. This was part of the “Oral Law” of the Pharisees and the Synagogue.

The closest Torah reference that we find concerning the age of Moses is found in Exodus 7:7 when we're told that Moses was 80 years old the first time he confronted Pharaoh. So once again Stephen is now quoting the Pharisees own "Oral Law" not found anywhere in the Torah itself.

And so we have Stephen quoting from the Samaritan Pentateuch, we have him quoting from the Greek Septuagint, and we have him quoting from the Oral Traditions of the Pharisees themselves, so it's pretty easy to see what Stephen learned as a young man in the Samaritan tradition, and what he learned later as he became older in the Jewish Synagogue traditions, never the less in the eyes of the Pharisees he was a Samaritan.

I want us to also see the parallels that Stephen draws from the Torah. He talks about Moses who was an important mediator between God and his people. Notice how Stephen mentions the fact that their Hebrew fathers would not listen to Moses who was sent by God either in verse 25:

Act 7:25 He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand.

And again he likens these Temple authorities, or these "Brood of Vipers" as our Messiah called them to their fathers that refused to obey Moses in verse 39:

Act 7:39 Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt,

Act 7:40 saying to Aaron, 'Make for us gods who will go before us. As for this Moses who led us out from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'

What Stephen was saying to them is look.. your fathers rejected the last mediator who was Moses and your rejecting the better mediator that has come to bring you salvation just like your fathers did.

Even after their fathers knew that Moses was sent from God... they still willfully refused to obey him. So in other words it wasn't because they didn't know that Moses was sent from God because they did know.. they saw him perform all of these miracles and signs and wonders, and yet they chose to reject him through their own willful rebellion against God, just like the Pharisees themselves were doing right then and there at that moment.

I want us to notice how Stephen uses the "golden calf" as an illustration of the willful, knowing, and intentional refusal of Aaron the High Priest to obey God. Stephen was drawing a direct parallel between Aaron the High Priest and Caiaphas the High Priest who had him on trial.. and this is where Stephen begins to turn the tables on these "Brood of Vipers".

Stephen through scripture begins to convict the Judges themselves for rejecting their own

Messiah. As Stephen gets down to verse 51 he's got his foot to the floor and the throttle wide open as gets in their faces and calls them a "stiff necked People" who can't see or hear, and who are always in opposition to the Ruach Hakodesh.

And he even goes farther to ask them which of the Prophets did your fathers not persecute and murder, just as they themselves had just murdered their own Messiah! And this of course is what drove the proverbial nail in the coffin of Stephen.

There was nothing that this "Brood of Vipers" could do but kill him just as they had done to their own Messiah. There was no doubt in their minds that this heretical Samaritan had no respect for their authority, and that he was not going to stop saying these things out in public.

And so it was that they murdered Stephen just like they murdered his Messiah, but I want you to notice.. that both God and his son had come to take Stephen home at that point in time. Stephen was far from alone, and as we can clearly see.. he had no fear of death or what man could do to him. Notice what he says in verses 55 and 56:

Act 7:55 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.

Act 7:56 And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

So Stephen had turned this court upside down, and went from being the accused to the accuser. And with out hesitation he condemned this "Brood of Vipers" for murdering their own Messiah just as their forefathers had murdered every prophet that God had ever sent them.

And just as Solomon once said.. "there is nothing new, under the sun".

The Parallels:

Now it's important for us to understand the parallels that Stephen was making in his discourse to the Temple authorities, and I really want to drive home the parallel not only between David and Joseph but the parallel between the Temple authorities and Moses.

Remember... that Moses prophesied about the coming of Yahshua Messiah way back in the book of Deuteronomy. Lets revisit that prophecy of Moses:

Deu 18:15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—

Deu 18:16 just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any

more, lest I die.'

Deu 18:17 And the LORD said to me, 'They are right in what they have spoken.

Deu 18:18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

Deu 18:19 And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

Now... just to reconfirm that this is indeed a prophecy about our Messiah... I want us to pay close attention to what our Messiah said about this very prophecy himself.

Joh 5:45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope.

Joh 5:46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.

Joh 5:47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

So there shouldn't be much doubt in our minds that Moses knew exactly what he was talking about, and notice what our Messiah says in John 5:47.. he asks them "if you wont believe the words of Moses then how will you believe my words?"

And I want us to understand that just as the Israelite's of Moses time had made grave errors in their judgment concerning Moses, we have made the same grave errors in our judgment today.

Remember when Moses whet up mount Sinai to receive the Word of God the people down below grew restless. And after some time they began to turn back to their old ways, and they formed a golden calf and began to worship it, and even Aaron the brother of Moses had a hand in doing this.

They had already turned away from Moses and had lost faith in him even after all of the miracles, and signs and wonders that they had seen him do in the name of Yahovah God the Father. And yet still they drifted back into trusting their own reasoning and their old doctrines began to take them over and to turn them from Moses and the things of God.

Yahshua our Messiah also went up to be with the Father for a time before returning and what have Christians today done? We've set up for ourselves other holidays, and festivals, and we've turned back to our own understanding and our own reasoning. We've created our own doctrines and created our own temples, our own Sabbaths, and our own feast-days.

Have we not built for ourselves a proverbial golden calf to worship?

Many have turned from the faith because our Messiah has not returned in time to meet the standards by which so many false prophets and false prophetesses have prophesied.

Just like the Israelite's had written off Moses who was the mediator between God and men.. many Christians today have written off the Son of God who is the mediator between God and men. Just like the Hebrew Israelite's had turned back to their pagan ways and traditions so too has Christianity turned back to it's pagan ways and traditions.

And don't you find it strange that many of our modern day pagan holidays, traditions, and myths come from the same pagan holidays, traditions, and myths of ancient times?

You see our adversary just keeps teaching his same old tricks over and over again from generation to generation. Much of what we practice today in our Easter, Christmas, Valentines Day, and even Halloween come from ancient Babylonian, Greek and Sumerian antiquity.

The Roman Catholic Church alone has overwritten the appointments of God, they have stolen his Sabbaths, they have changed his Ten Commandments, they have murdered millions of his followers for not obeying their demonic Popish imitation of our Messiah, they have the blood of the myrtners all over their hands, and to this day practice the ancient rituals and myths of antiquity.

And they don't even try to hide it. Even the pagan vestments that they wear give them away and the statues of Zeus who's feet they kiss as they walk by, and their golden monstrance and their demonic transubstination, all give them away.

It's so plan, and they are so right out in the open with what they do, it's all right in your face all the time and yet billions of professing Christians follow the pide piper like lost sheep following the Judas goat right into the slaughter house.

They rape and murder the children of their congregations, they steal the faith of those who trust them, they are not only like the “Brood of Vipers, the White Washed Tombs, the Blind Guides, and the Two Fold Children of Hell” that our Messiah called the Saducees and Pharisees of his time, they're a thousand times worse!

They have become the devils seed, the henchmen that seek to destroy the faith of those who would believe through their web of lies and deception. They are an abomination to the one true God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob.

Pastors today tiptoe, around them and flirt with this whore of Babylon as though she were one of them because she is one of them. She is the mother of today's protestant churches who say that they have nothing to do with her and yet still keep her first day of the week Sunday Sabbath, her pagan festivals, and her pagan rituals, and her pagan Easter, Good Friday, Advent, Lent, Christmas, Valentines Day, and even her “All Saints Day” also known as.. “Halloween”.

They keep a whole host of her lies and deceptive myths...teaching and preaching the doctrines

of what they call their “Church Fathers” instead of keeping the God given scriptures that God gave to men to live by.

“Oh Pastor you can't say that about your brother!”... Oh yes I can! And those who teach and preach against my Father are NOT MY BROTHERS!

1Co 5:11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.

1Co 5:12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?

1Co 5:13 God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

How many Christian denominations today will “Purge the evil person from among them”? You see today it's all just one big country club. How many of today's Christian denominations even know what a “brother” even is?

So how should we handle such men who say that they are men of God and who are not? How should we handle those who teach and preach what is clearly not found anywhere in scripture?

Tit 1:7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain,

Tit 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

Tit 1:9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Tit 1:10 For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party.

Tit 1:11 They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach.

Tit 1:12 One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."

Tit 1:13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,

Tit 1:14 not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

Tit 1:15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled.

Tit 1:16 They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

You know just this week I watched a true life movie that was about the Boston Globe. A well known newspaper that had written an article several years ago about the Roman Catholic

Church and her many Priests raping and engaging in pedophilia with the children of it's congregations and I was so appalled, so sickened, so distraught... that it made me want to throw up. I actually wept... it shook me to my core.

You can watch that same move right now on "Netflix" it's called "Spotlight". And if you want to get a good close look at the Roman Catholic Church at it's finest, it's a good movie to sit down and watch but I warn you.. it's adult content may not be suitable for your children. But I would suggest that every parent take the time to sit down and watch this true story about how the Boston Globe uncovered the blatant and outrages sick and twisted demonically inspired works of the Roman Catholic Church.

And let me say this openly my friends. If you have anything to do with the Roman Catholic Church, or if you're allowing your children to go to a Roman Catholic Church with a friend.. get them away from them and get them away from them now!

One of the most sickening facts about this whole movie was how the parents openly and willingly fed their children to the beast, and then didn't even have the resolve, or the backbone or the compassion... to stand up against this despotic Church so that other children would not be the next victim.

Because "blind guides" had led them into the Devils layer... they too became "blind guides" who were helping to lead other children right into the clutches of these demonic Catholic Priests.

You know our Messiah said the same exact thing to the Saducees and the Pharisees and the Popish leaders of his time he said this in Matthew chapter 23:

Mat 23:15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.

And make no mistake about it my friends this was no isolated incident. These Catholic Priests AROUND THE WORLD.. are well known for their pedophelism and their sexual atrocities, and many of it's Priests and so called "church fathers" are up on charges in more than one country for the crimes of Pedophilia and the rape, and even the murder of young boys and girls that serve in their congregations.

Now you would think with knowing that fact alone that people would be running from this despotic demonically led harlot of a church... and yet there are billions of victims lining up with their children to kiss the ring of this Anti Christ Pope, and to hand their children over to follow this Judas Goat right into the slaughter house.

“Oh Pastor you can't say that!”.. Well I just did. Let he who has the ears to hear... hear.

And so my point is this.. that nothing has changed today my friends. And even as we speak.. the doctrines and laws of men are being written against us as the people of God who truly take his Word as truth and are willing to stand for whats right and against the god of this world.

Those of us who are willing to contend for the faith. Those of us who are willing to endure to the end. Those of us who are willing to rebuke sharply those who teach contrary to the truth.

To be kind and to be patient does not mean to follow along with. To be loving to your brother does not mean to allow him to fall into the clutches of the devil himself. If you love... if you truly love.. then speak the truth of God the Father and have the wherewithal to stand for the things of God and to contend for the faith.

Stephen had not only the full armor of God.. and the sword of truth that is the Word of God.. but he had the spine required to use it. Here's what the Apostle Paul says:

Eph 6:16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one;

Eph 6:17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,

Eph 6:18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

Eph 6:19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,

Eph 6:20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

It's time for today's modern day Christians to come out from underneath of their beds... to pull their heads out of the sand... to use the spine that God has given them, and to proclaim the truth from the rooftops.

It's past time for today's modern day Christians to contend for the faith instead of being to afraid to offend someone. It's time to understand that if you truly love someone you'll be honest and tell them the truth. It's time to declare the gospel **BOLDLY** and as the Apostle Paul says.. to pray for the words that may be given to us to open our mouths **BOLDLY** and to proclaim the mystery of the gospel.

And the Gospel is a mystery to many my friends. They have been lied to, and tricked, and twisted into believing every wind of doctrine that comes out of the mouth of a man never even considering what they were commanded by their own Messiah that they say that they believe in and have faith in.

*Mat 23:8 But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers.
Mat 23:9 And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven.
Mat 23:10 Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ.
Mat 23:11 The greatest among you shall be your servant.
Mat 23:12 Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*

Pastors, and Shepherds, and Teachers are given for one reason and one reason only, and that's to build the body of the Messiah up for the work of ministry so that they are not carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning and by craftiness in deceitful schemes!

*Eph 4:11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,
Eph 4:12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
Eph 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,
Eph 4:14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.*

You see Stephen understood this. He understood who these men were and he understood that they needed a history lesson. They needed to be reminded of their own history, and they needed to hear the truth. Notice again what he called them in the beginning of his discourse in verse 2.. he calls them “brothers and fathers”, because being Jews by blood they were his earthly brothers and fathers. And he knew they needed to hear the truth.

The truth can set you free but it can also condemn you. You see the truth is a double edged sword. In the case of the Pharisees and the Saducees it condemned them. We have to understand that the truth is like a fork in the road. After hearing the truth we must decide whether to follow the path of truth to the right... or the path of lies and deception to the left.

The truth of the Gospel message puts before us a fork in the road. If we choose to follow the truth it will lead us to everlasting life.. a life that's more abundant and fulfilling, but if we choose the path of this world.. it will lead us destruction.. and our children and our childrens children to destruction.

It's really just that simple and yet so difficult for so many to see, and that's why it's written that “straight is the gate and narrow is the path and few there be that find it”.

You see the world wants nothing to do with the truth, and that's why they cover up the truth, because they say it's politically incorrect. They cover up the truth because they say they don't want to offend anyone (no one except God of course). They cover up the truth because they say it's hate speech. They cover up the truth because they say “that's not what my favorite Pastor

says, or that's not what my denomination believes”.

They cover up the truth because their grandma or their grandpa went to that church for over twenty years. They cover up the truth, because they would rather make the Word of God void in order to hang onto their own traditions.

Do you.. cover up the truth that's found in scripture because of your political correctness, or because you don't want to offend anyone? Do you cover up the truth because someone may think it's hate speech, or because your favorite Pastor or Denomination chooses not to accept the truth?

Do you cover up the truth because grandma or grandpa went to that church there for over twenty years?

Well let's listen to what our Messiah has to say about those kinds of things in Matthew 10:34 through 42:

Mat 10:34 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

Mat 10:35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

Mat 10:36 And a person's enemies will be those of his own household.

Mat 10:37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Mat 10:38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Mat 10:39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Mat 10:40 "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.

Mat 10:41 The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward.

Mat 10:42 And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

Stephen was well aware of these things. Stephen had no problem professing his faith in his Messiah. Stephen had been taught all kinds of things from many different factions of Judaism, and yet through it all he knew who his Messiah was, and where he was going and it doesn't surprise me that the last thing that Stephen said before they murdered him was exactly what his Messiah had said before they murdered him:

Act 7:60 And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Even while they were stoning him to death Stephen still held out hope for them, that somehow, some way, through some miracle of God the Father.. they would repent and be baptized in the name of Yahovah God and his Son Yahshua the Messiah and in the Ruach Hakodesh.

Stephen knew that even after stoning him they could be forgiven if it was the Fathers will, and if they would somehow find it in their hearts to accept Yahshua their Messiah as the Son of God into their hearts.

Stephen was a man of God indeed, and there are many lessons that can be learned from what Stephen did, and what he said, and who he was, and what he believed.

When we read about Stephen we read about courage, we read about faith, we read about how to endure to the end, we read about how to overcome the spirit of fear, we read about how to overcome deception, we read about the truth found in Scripture alone, we read about forgiveness

And even as Stephen stood in front of this “Brood of Vipers” and called them a stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart with ears that could not hear.. even though Stephen said that they always resisted the Ruach Hakodesh, and that they had murdered their own Messiah just as their fathers had murdered every prophet ever sent to them.. it was out of love that he spoke these things to them.

Love my friends is not always whispered. Love does not always tickle our ears. Love is not always a pleasant poem, or an uplifting song.

Love is often mistaken for giving someone all the desires of their heart, but love is not the possession of material things my friends.

Love is the bedrock of truth. Love is often times saying uncomfortable things to the people that we love so that they can hear the truth and take hold of it, and regain the power of that truth in order to take control of their lives. Truth is what people need to hear in order to get their legs back under them and to properly navigate their lives through the storm that they're in.

You see Stephen wasn't worried about political correctness, or what some would call hate speech, or offending them.. Stephen wasn't worried about how they were going to take it, or what they might say about him or what they might do to him.

Stephen was worried about speaking the truth to them out of the love that he had for them even though he knew that they would surly kill him for it. You see he wasn't going to allow them to go with out hearing the truth no matter what the cost.

That my friends.. is contending for the faith... that my friends, is enduring to the end, and that my friends... is how to wear the full armor of God and how to wield the double edged sword of truth, and that my friends... is true love.