

acts chapter 7 questions and answers

Acts chapter 7 questions and answers provide a profound insight into the early Christian church and the foundational narratives of Judaism. This chapter is pivotal as it represents Stephen's defense before the Sanhedrin, where he recounts the history of Israel and the rejection of God's messengers. His speech culminates in a powerful indictment of the Jewish leaders, leading to his martyrdom. This article will explore key questions and answers related to Acts chapter 7, helping readers understand the context, themes, and significance of this chapter.

Understanding the Context of Acts Chapter 7

Before diving into the questions and answers, it is essential to understand the context surrounding Acts chapter 7. This chapter follows the appointment of the seven deacons, including Stephen, to address the growing needs of the early church. Stephen was full of faith and the Holy Spirit, performing signs and wonders among the people. His activities sparked opposition, leading to accusations of blasphemy against Moses and God, which set the stage for his speech before the Sanhedrin.

Key Themes in Acts Chapter 7

1. **Historical Narrative:** Stephen provides a sweeping review of Israel's history, highlighting key figures such as Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David.
2. **Rejection of God's Messengers:** A recurrent theme is the rejection of prophets and leaders sent by God, culminating in the rejection of Jesus.
3. **Divine Presence:** Stephen emphasizes that God does not dwell in temples made by human hands, suggesting a more profound understanding of God's presence.
4. **Martyrdom and Faith:** Stephen's ultimate fate illustrates the cost of discipleship and the power of faith in the face of persecution.

Questions and Answers on Acts Chapter 7

1. Who was Stephen, and why was he chosen as a deacon?

Answer: Stephen was one of the seven deacons chosen by the apostles to help manage the distribution of food to widows in the early church (Acts 6:1-6). He was selected because he was known to be full of faith and the Holy Spirit, indicating his strong character and spiritual maturity.

2. What were the main accusations against Stephen?

Answer: The main accusations against Stephen included blasphemy against Moses and God (Acts 6:11). He was accused of speaking against the holy place (the temple) and the law, suggesting that Jesus would destroy the temple and change the customs handed down by Moses.

3. What is the significance of Stephen's address to the Sanhedrin?

Answer: Stephen's address is significant because it serves as a historical overview of Israel's relationship with God. He connects the history of the Jewish people to the rejection of Jesus, asserting that the leaders are repeating the mistakes of their ancestors. His speech is a defense of his faith and an indictment of the religious authorities.

4. How does Stephen recount the history of Israel, and what key figures does he mention?

Answer: Stephen recounts Israel's history by highlighting key figures:

- Abraham: He discusses God's promise to Abraham and the covenant made with him (Acts 7:2-8).
- Joseph: He narrates Joseph's betrayal by his brothers and how he ultimately saved them during famine (Acts 7:9-16).
- Moses: Stephen emphasizes Moses' early life, his calling to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, and their subsequent rejection of him (Acts 7:17-43).
- David and Solomon: He mentions David's desire to build a temple and Solomon's construction of it, concluding that God does not dwell in houses made by human hands (Acts 7:44-50).

5. What point does Stephen make about the temple and God's presence?

Answer: Stephen argues that God does not dwell in physical temples made by human hands, quoting the prophet Isaiah to support his claim (Acts 7:48-50). This point emphasizes that God's presence transcends physical structures and is found in His relationship with His people.

6. How does Stephen conclude his speech, and what impact does it have?

Answer: Stephen concludes his speech by accusing the Sanhedrin of resisting the Holy Spirit and betraying and murdering Jesus, the Righteous One (Acts 7:51-53). This bold confrontation incites rage among the council members, leading to his stoning, making him the first Christian martyr. His death marks a significant moment in early Christian history, as it catalyzes the spread of the church beyond Jerusalem.

7. What was the reaction of the Sanhedrin to Stephen's speech?

Answer: The Sanhedrin reacted with intense anger and hostility to Stephen's speech. They were enraged by his accusations and ultimately dragged him out of the city to stone him (Acts 7:54-58). Their fury was evident, as they covered their ears and shouted loudly to drown out Stephen's words.

8. How does Acts 7 describe Stephen's death?

Answer: Acts 7 describes Stephen's death as he sees a vision of heaven, where he witnesses Jesus standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55-56). As he is being stoned, he prays for the Lord to receive his spirit and asks forgiveness for his attackers, mirroring Jesus' words on the cross (Acts 7:59-60). This moment underscores Stephen's faith and grace even in the face of death.

9. What is the significance of Saul's presence during Stephen's martyrdom?

Answer: Saul, who later becomes the Apostle Paul, is present at Stephen's stoning and holds the coats of those who are executing him (Acts 7:58). His presence indicates the beginning of a significant transformation, as Saul is later converted and becomes one of the most influential figures in early Christianity. This juxtaposition highlights the theme of redemption and the power of faith.

10. What can modern readers learn from Acts chapter 7?

Answer: Modern readers can glean several lessons from Acts chapter 7:

- Faithfulness in Persecution: Stephen's unwavering faith amidst persecution serves as a model for believers facing challenges.
- The Importance of History: Understanding the historical context of faith can strengthen one's belief and witness.
- God's Presence: Recognizing that God is not confined to physical spaces encourages a deeper, more personal relationship with Him.
- Forgiveness and Grace: Stephen's prayer for his persecutors exemplifies the call to love and forgive, even in the face of adversity.

Conclusion

Acts chapter 7 stands as a powerful testament to the early church's challenges, the profound faith of its leaders, and the continuity of God's plan through history. Stephen's speech encapsulates the struggles and triumphs of God's people, highlighting themes of rejection, divine presence, and the cost of discipleship. As readers reflect on this chapter, they are invited to consider their own faith

journeys and the implications of standing firm in their beliefs, even when faced with opposition. Through the lens of Acts chapter 7, the stories of the past continue to resonate, encouraging believers to live boldly and faithfully in the present.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of Acts Chapter 7?

The main theme of Acts Chapter 7 is Stephen's defense before the Sanhedrin, where he recounts the history of Israel and highlights the rejection of God's messengers, ultimately leading to his martyrdom.

Who is Stephen and why is he significant in Acts Chapter 7?

Stephen is one of the seven deacons appointed by the apostles. He is significant because he becomes the first Christian martyr, boldly proclaiming his faith and recounting the history of Israel in his defense.

What historical figures does Stephen mention in his speech in Acts Chapter 7?

In his speech, Stephen mentions several historical figures, including Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and David, to illustrate God's faithfulness and Israel's repeated rejection of His chosen leaders.

How does Stephen describe Moses in Acts Chapter 7?

Stephen describes Moses as a significant leader who was chosen by God to deliver the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, but he was initially rejected by his own people.

What accusation does Stephen face from the Sanhedrin?

Stephen faces accusations of blasphemy against Moses and God, claiming that he spoke against the temple and the law.

What vision does Stephen have at the end of Acts Chapter 7?

At the end of Acts Chapter 7, Stephen has a vision of Jesus standing at the right hand of God, which he shares with the Sanhedrin just before his execution.

How do the members of the Sanhedrin react to Stephen's speech?

The members of the Sanhedrin react with rage and hostility to Stephen's speech, ultimately dragging him out of the city and stoning him to death.

What role does Saul play in the events of Acts Chapter 7?

Saul, who later becomes the Apostle Paul, is present at Stephen's stoning and approves of the execution, marking the beginning of his persecution of the early church.

What significance does Stephen's martyrdom have in the early Christian church?

Stephen's martyrdom is significant as it marks the first recorded instance of Christian persecution, which leads to the scattering of believers and the spread of the Gospel beyond Jerusalem.

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