“RESILIENCE – Learning from the past”

*(Acts 6:8 – 7:53)*

*Those who don’t know history are doomed to repeat it!*

*‘Mistakes – It could be that the purpose of your life is only to serve as a warning to others’*

What we have in Acts 7 is what is known as an ‘apologetic’. From the Greek ‘apologia’ - ‘A speech in defense of something’.

*11So they persuaded some men to lie about Stephen, saying, “We heard him blaspheme Moses, and even God.” 12This roused the people, the elders, and the teachers of religious law. So they arrested Stephen and brought him before the high council.*

**THE ACCUSERS**

*13The lying witnesses said, “This man is always speaking against the holy Temple and against the law of Moses. 14We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy the Temple and change the customs Moses handed down to us.”*

**THE ACCUSATION**

*Acts 7:1 Then the high priest asked Stephen, “Are these accusations true?”*

**THE ANSWER**

*2… “Brothers and fathers, listen to me. Our glorious God appeared to our ancestor Abraham in Mesopotamia before he settled in Haran.*

**History revealed that *God’s PLAN is Progressive***

* ***today’s PRESENT becomes tomorrows PAST!***

Back to the story…

*9“These patriarchs were jealous of their brother Joseph, and they sold him to be a slave in Egypt. But God was with him 10and rescued him from all his troubles.*

*11“But a famine came upon Egypt and Canaan. There was great misery, and our ancestors ran out of food. 12Jacob heard that there was still grain in Egypt, so he sent his sons—our ancestors—to buy some. 13The second time they went, Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers, and they were introduced to Pharaoh.*

* Joseph’s life is a picture of what happened to Christ.

**History revealed their PAST Rejections**

*20“At that time Moses was born-a beautiful child in God’s eyes…23“One day when Moses was forty years old, he decided to visit his relatives, the people of Israel. 24He saw an Egyptian mistreating an Israelite. So Moses came to the man’s defense and avenged him, killing the Egyptian. 25Moses assumed his fellow Israelites would realize that God had sent him to rescue them, but they didn’t.*

*35…Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior. 36And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, he led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for forty years.*

*44“Our ancestors carried the Tabernacle with them through the wilderness. It was constructed according to the plan God had shown to Moses… 46“David found favor with God and asked for the privilege of building a permanent Temple for the God of Jacob. 47But it was Solomon who actually built it. 48However, the Most High doesn’t live in temples made by human hands.*

They had put so much emphasis on the LAW and the TEMPLE – The rules around worship and the facilities – that they had completely missed something far more important…

*37“Moses himself told the people of Israel, ‘God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your own people.’*

**History revealed a PROMISED future**

*51“You stubborn people! You are heathen at heart and deaf to the truth. Must you forever resist the Holy Spirit? That’s what your ancestors did, and so do you! 52Name one prophet your ancestors didn’t persecute! They even killed the ones who predicted the coming of the Righteous One—the Messiah whom you betrayed and murdered. 53You deliberately disobeyed God’s law, even though you received it from the hands of angels.”*

**What can we learn from Stephen today?**

***Resilient People***

* **Embrace God’s PLAN**
* **Learn from the PAST**
* **PREPARE for the future**