

Acts 7-9

Ch 7

Theme – Stephen’s Defense, part 1 of Stephen’s defense (the history of Abraham, Joseph, & Moses/ how Abraham had to wait for the promise to be fulfilled/ how both Joseph & Moses were rejected the 1st time they were presented to the people); Part 2 of Stephen’s Defense (the God of the Temple is much greater than the Temple); the current religious leaders are just like the previous generations who killed the prophets who foretold the Messiah, only worse, for the current religious leaders crucified the Messiah who was foretold (Matt 23:29-33); the Sanhedrin is furious at Stephen; the eyes of Stephen are fixed on the Lord & sees the Lord standing to receive him; the religious leaders literally cover their ears in order to stop hearing him; Stephen is stoned outside the city by the “witnesses” (false obedience to Deut 17:7, but really a display of the “form of godliness, but denying its power” from 2Tim 3:5); like the Lord on the cross, Stephen’s commits his spirit to the Lord (Lk 23:46) & intercedes on behalf of those who are murdering him (Lk 23:34); the death of the First Martyr

Ch 8

Theme – Persecution of Saul begins against Jerusalem church; except for the Apostles, Christians flee to Judea & Samaria (fulfillment of Acts 1:8 to be the Lord’s witnesses beyond Jerusalem); Philip the deacon goes to Samaria & preaches the Gospel; many Samaritans believe & are saved; Simon the magician “believes” (unclear if saved, but seems unlikely); Peter & John are sent down to confirm movement is truly from God (expression of the Apostolic Authority given to the Apostles in Matt 18:18 & Eph 2:20); Peter & John pray for the Samaritan Christians & lay hands on them (showing their identification with the Samaritan Christians & their affirmation that this is a true work of the Holy Spirit); Simon the magician tries to buy Apostolic Authority for himself; Simon the magician is strongly rebuked by Peter & told to repent; Peter & John return to Jerusalem & preach the Gospel to the Samaritans; Philip commanded to go to the desert & encounters an Ethiopian Eunuch who is religiously Jewish; Philip prompted by the Holy Spirit to go to the Eunuch & overhears him reading Isa 53:7-8; Eunuch expresses his need

for guidance & Philip teaches from the Scriptures; Eunuch wants to be baptized; as they came out of the water, the Holy Spirit snatched Philip away bodily (picture of the Rapture?); Philip in Azotus on Med. coast; Philip heads north & preaches the Gospel until he settles in Caesaria

Ch 9

Theme – The conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus; Saul confronted with the reality that he to persecute Christians is to really persecute the Lord Jesus; blinded, Saul is lead into Damascus where he fasts from food/ water & prays for 3 days; Ananias told to go to Saul & lay hands on him, but Ananias has concerns; Lord repeats the command & expresses that Saul is a chosen instrument of the Lord for a specific purpose (will be echoed in Acts 10:41 when Peter explains that the Apostles were chosen to be witnesses of the Lord Jesus); Ananias is faithful & scales fall from the eyes of Saul; Saul is immediately baptized (outward sign of the inward change); Saul preaches in Damascus and people are shocked by the radical change; after “many days” (possible reference to the 3 yrs in Arabia in Gal 1:17), Saul is in Damascus & there is a plot to kill him; Saul is smuggled out of Damascus in a basket through a hole in the wall; Saul goes to Jerusalem, but is distrusted by the Christians; Barnabas stands by Saul & puts his reputation on the line for Saul; with Barnabas’s endorsement, Saul is able to associate freely with the Christians in the Jerusalem church; Saul speaks out boldly in the name of Jesus; 2nd plot to kill Saul, now in Jerusalem; Saul is sent to Tarsus (his hometown in modern day Turkey); church in Israel has a time of peace and continue in the fear of the Lord & comfort of the Holy Spirit; Peter’s ministry outside of Jerusalem; the healing of Aeneas in Lydda; Tabitha (Dorcas in Greek) is raised from the dead on Joppa, Peter stays in Joppa for a while in the house of Simon the tanner
