

SURVEY OF THE BIBLE

Acts: The Beginning of a New Kingdom

Challenges to the Church – Within and Without

Quarter Four, Lesson Three

Focus Text: Acts 4. 32 – 8. 1

CONTENT

1. What attitude did Christians show toward one another in the early days of the church? How did they show it?
2. Whose example of generosity is singled out for mention near the end of chapter 4?
3. What did Ananias do? Was his wife aware of it?
4. Of what did Peter say Ananias was guilty?
5. What happened to Ananias and Sapphira, and what was the impact on the church?
6. How important – and how effective – were miracles in the early days of the church?
7. Why were the apostles imprisoned, how were they released, and what did they then do after their release?
8. When the apostles were brought back before the Jewish council (in 5. 26), what was the charge against them?

How did Peter and the other apostles answer the charge?

9. What advice did Gamaliel offer the council?

Lesson continues. . . .

What did the council do to the apostles?

10. According to chapter 6, what problem arose within the church, and how was it resolved?
11. Why was Stephen arrested and taken before the council?
12. What general approach did Stephen take in his defense?
13. Was the history Stephen recounted positive, negative, or mixed?
14. What in Stephen's speech made the council angry enough to stone him?
15. What did Stephen see just before his stoning, and what did he say as he was dying?
16. Who stood by and approved Stephen's stoning?

CONNECTIONS

1. In what ways does Stephen relate the Old Testament events he recounts to the charges against him (in 6. 13 – 14)?
2. How is it that the council here stoned Stephen, but had to appeal to Pilate before putting Jesus to death?
3. Compare the responses of those who were "cut to the heart" when they heard Peter and the other apostles on Pentecost (in Acts 2), with the reaction of those who heard Stephen in Acts 7.