

# Acts 7:51-8:8

## Stephen Martyred

**Scripture:** Acts 7:51-8:8

**Memory Verse:** Acts 8:4 *“Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.”*

**Lesson Focus:** We will first watch the next episode of the Bible Backroads Video Series that will cover all we’ve learned so far in Acts including the Scripture in this lesson. Afterwards, we have a shortened lesson where we will highlight how God is still in control and worthy of our trust even when it seems like everything is going wrong!

**Activities and Crafts:** Stephen’s Prayer Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Craft for 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Pack Your Suitcase

**Starter Activity:** Bible Backroads Video

We will keep all of the kids in the Summit Room immediately after worship for the next video in the Bible Backroads series. We watched the first episode when we introduced the book of Acts and this next episode not only gives a good summary of what we have learned so far but will launch us into our lesson. We will likely watch more episodes of this series as we continue through the book of Acts. If you’d like to preview it, you can find it [here](#) on Rightnow Media. If you don’t have a Rightnow Media account, you can get one free through the church [here](#).

Before you watch the video, have a little bit of discussion.

Q: What book of the Bible have we been studying for the past several weeks? A: Acts!

We introduced this book several weeks ago as a book filled with “action”. And we have seen A LOT of action so far. \* Once the Holy Spirit came in the second chapter the action really picked up and everything changed! We are going to start our lesson with a video that will remind us of a lot of the action that we have seen so far.

START VIDEO. \*

This video brings us right up to where we are at today in Acts! The last two weeks we have learned about Stephen being chosen to serve and then how he “schooled” the Jewish religious leaders with an important Bible history lesson.

So as the video said at the end, let’s open our Bibles and read for ourselves what happens next!

## Bible Study:

**Acts 7:51-53:** After Stephen finishes giving his Jewish history lesson to the religious leaders he looks them right in the eye and tells them they are just as guilty of sin as their ancestors that came before them who also rejected those God sent! \*

**Acts 7:54:** But instead of repenting and listening they responded with anger and hatred \* just like the people did to those God had sent before like the prophets and Jesus Himself.

**Acts 7:55-56:** Stephen on the other hand is full of the Holy Spirit and sees Jesus Himself standing at the right hand of God. His is not afraid for his eyes are not on the gang of bad guys around him but on Jesus Himself who appears to be welcoming him into heaven! \*

**Acts 7:57-60:** And now we have the first martyr of the Christian faith!

Q: What is a martyr? A: Someone who is killed for their faith. Stephen was the first, but he certainly won't be the last. \*

Q: But did you catch what Stephen said as they were murdering him? A: He asked for God to forgive them! \* Wow!

**Acts 8:1-3:** And this guy Saul led a tidal wave of persecution against all of the believers in the church. \* Imagine the early church was a little bit like a nice and tidy ant hill. \*

Q: But what happens when you kick over that ant hill? A: The ants run around crazy and scatter! Well, Saul kinda kicked over the early church "ant hill" and is now chasing after them all trying to stamp them all out! \*

This doesn't look good for the church. One of their leaders was brutally killed, the people are scattering, and Saul is on the hunt for all of them. Is this the end of the church? \*

**Acts 8:4:** NO WAY! While they were scattering, they didn't just run and hide, but they brought the gospel to new places! So far, the church has only been in the city of Jerusalem, but this wave of persecution appears to be what causes the gospel to spread outside of the city just like Jesus said in **Acts 1:8**. \*

**Acts 8:5-8:** One of those guys was Philip who, like Stephen, was chosen by the apostles to serve the widows. He is the first recorded "missionary" as he leaves his hometown to preach the gospel to the people of Samaria. And they believe! \*

And thus begins the spread of the good news of Jesus outside of the city of Jerusalem. Until now all of the "action" has been in Jerusalem, but the rest of the book of Acts takes the "action" to different parts of the world.

**Key Point:** This passage should remind us that God is good and ALWAYS in control! Even when it seemed like the church would be destroyed by this tidal wave of persecution, God took what the guy's like Saul meant for evil and used it for good!  
Q: Are you going through a hard time right now? Let us pray for you and remember that God is good and God is in control! (**Romans 8:28**)

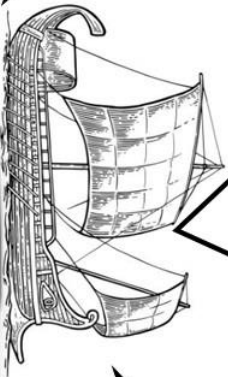
# FIND THE TREASURE

**Mediterranean World**  
Countries or Areas and Islands



**Read Acts 8:3-4**  
What did the believers do when men like Saul were hunting for them?

**PARENT CHALLENGE**  
Who is the first missionary named in the Bible?



**Read Romans 8:28**  
How does this help you as you go thru hard things?