Acts 6 Ladies Study Guide

As we **continue in the book of Acts**, we will see as the church increases in number so does the level of persecution. Followers of Jesus must know why they believe what they believe. We all will stumble and at times, struggle with faith assurance as we walk this life (even after our profession of Christ). The level of that stumbling and struggle will be directly related in our time in God's Word and prayer with Him. We cannot have one without the other. We will note, in the book of Acts, how God moved through these common people in order to build His church.

Acts 6 will not only show us how the church begins to divide up into varied supportive roles, but will also lead into the first martyr for Christ (**Acts 7**). It is a short chapter, but a crucial one.

Scriptures in Study Guide:

Scriptures this week are in the CSB (Christian Standard Bible). To make things easier, the actual verses will be included in your daily lessons to help you with the missing words.

Day 1 (Acts 6:1-3)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

6 **1** In those days, as the disciples were increasing in number, there arose a complaint by the Hellenistic Jews against the Hebraic Jews that their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution. **2** The Twelve summoned the whole company of the disciples and said, "It would not be right for us to give up preaching the word of God to wait on tables. **3** Brothers and sisters, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we can appoint to this duty.

Verse 1:

- In _____ days, as the disciples were increasing in _____ there arose a complaint _____ the Hellenistic Jews _____ the Hebraic Jews that _____ widows were _____ overlooked __ the daily distribution.
- **Questions:**
- Who were increasing in number? _____
- What complained against the Hebraic Jews? _____
- What was the complaint?
  _____

Background:

After the Babylonian captivity, there were 2 other empires that effected the Jewish people before Rome. Those empires were the Medo-Persia and Greece. Through history, we learn that Greece influenced much of the Jewish culture. The **Hellenistic Jews** were descendants of the Jewish faith who integrated Greek culture into their lives.
The **Hebraic Jews** were the traditional Jews who adhered to the Jewish laws and customs.

Day 1 (Acts 6:1-3); cont'd

Write out **Deuteronomy 24:19-21**:

_____
_____
_____
_____

- Deuteronomy lists God's commands for His people. Looking back over **what you have written above (Deuteronomy 24:19-21)** , who are these areas left for besides the foreigner, and fatherless? _____
- Looking at **Acts 6:1**, what group of people did the Hellenistic Jews say were being overlooked? _____

Note: As we have noted before, **God uses physical areas to fulfill His spiritual purposes**. There is a physical need that arises as more people are being converted and sharing the gospel. Those widows who were being taken care of are now being daily overlooked. Basically, those who took care of them before are now busy evangelizing.

Verse 2:

- The Twelve _____ the whole company of_____ disciples and said, "It would ____ be right _____ us to give up preaching the word _____ God to _____ on tables.

Questions:

- Who do the Twelve (apostles) summon? _____
- What do they say to this whole company of the disciples (this would be the "church" at this point)?
  _____.

Note: the apostles are the ones tasked by the Lord Jesus to build His church. They know that they can't be the ones that do this. God moves through this need.

Verse 3:

- Brothers _____ sisters, select _____ among you seven _____ of good reputation, _____ of the Spirit and _____, whom we can _____ to this duty.

Questions:

- Who do they address? _____ and _____
  - **Note:** the church is made up of both men and women
- How many men among the church should they select from? _____
  - **Note:** these 7 are specifically specified as men
- What are the requirements of these men?
  _____
- What are they selecting these 7 men to do? (**See verse 1**)
  _____

These are the **first "deacons" of the church**.

Write out **1 Timothy 3:8-13**:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Day 2 (Acts 6:4-6)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." **5** This proposal pleased the whole company. So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a convert from Antioch. **6** They had them stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

Verse 4:

- But we will _____ ourselves to _____ and to the ministry of _____ word.".
- **Question -** What did the apostles say that they would devote themselves to, while the deacons, in **Acts 6:3**, took care of the widows? _____

Note: This is the foundation of what the pastor does at the church.

Verse 5:

- This _____ pleased the _____ company.
- So they chose _____, a man full of _____ and the Holy Spirit, and _____, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a _____ from Antioch.

Questions:

- What did this proposal do to the whole company (the church)? _____
- What was the proposal? (**Look back at Acts 6:3-4 to summarize**)
  _____
  _____
- List the names of the 7 men that they chose:
  _____
  _____
- How is Stephen, out of all of the 7 "deacons" described?
  - 'a man _____ and _____"

Verse 6:

- They _____ them stand _____ the apostles, who _____ and laid their hands _____ them.

Questions:

- Who did these 7 men (deacons) stand before? _____
- What did they apostles do? _____ and _____ _____ _____ on them.

Note: When a person prays over someone, sometimes they will place their hands on them (you will see this sometimes in group prays over a person). For this purpose, it meant a "commissioning for ministry". It was an outward sign that the apostles were giving their approval of the positions that these 7 men would be doing within the early church.

Day 3 (Acts 6:7-10)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

7 So the word of God spread, the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly in number, and a large group of priests became obedient to the faith. **8** Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. **9** Opposition arose, however, from some members of the Freedmen's Synagogue, composed of both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, and they began to argue with Stephen. **10** But they were unable to stand up against his wisdom and the Spirit by whom he was speaking.

Verse 7:

- So the _____ of God spread, the _____ in Jerusalem increased _____ in number, and a _____ group of priests became _____ to the faith..
- **Questions:**
- What spread? _____
- What happened with the disciples in Jerusalem? _____
- What happened to a large group of priests? _____

*Notice that the "disciples in Jerusalem" and the "priests" are separated from each other. This is most likely to indicate that Jewish priests, those who served in the temple and descended from the Levite tribe, were converted. These priests would've lost everything since their way of life and livelihood would've been tied up in their temple priesthood. Now those who serve in the temple are being affected. This will **only increase** the Jewish leader's jealousy, anger and persecution of Jesus' followers.

Verse 8:

- Now Stephen, _____ of grace and power, was performing _____ wonders and signs _____ the people.
- **Questions**:
    - What was Stephen full of? _____
    - What was Stephen doing among the people?
      _____

Verse 9:

- Opposition _____, however, from some _____ of the Freedmen's Synagogue, composed of both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and _____ from Cilicia and Asia, and _____ began to argue with Stephen..
- **Questions**:
- What arose? _____

  Note: Commentaries site that these opposing areas seem to be 3 synagogues. Synagogues were Jewish meeting places for community worship for those who did not have access to the temple.

- Who were those who arose in opposition?
    - Some members of _____
    - and some from _____ and _____

Note: The "Freedman" were descendants from Jewish slaves that were captured by Pompeii (63 BC) and taken to Rome. They were later "freed" and formed a Jewish community there.

- What did the Freedmen's Synagogue members, and some from Cilicia and Asia begin to do? _____.

Day 3 (Acts 6:7-10); cont'd

Verse 10:

- But they _____ unable to stand up _____ his wisdom and _____ Spirit by _____ he was speaking.
- **Questions**:
- What were they unable to stand up against? Stephen's _____ and the _____ by _____ he was _____.

Day 4 begins on the next page:

Day 4 (Acts 6:11-12)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

11 Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, "We heard him speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God." **12** They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; so they came, seized him, and took him to the Sanhedrin**.**

Verse 11:

- _____ they secretly persuaded _____ men to say, "We heard him _____ blasphemous words _____ Moses and God."
- **Questions:**
- What did they secretly do to some men? _____.
- What did they persuade these men to say?
  _____

Write out **Matthew 26:59:**

_____
_____

Verse 12:

They _____ up the people, the _____, and the scribes; so _____ came, seized him, _____ took him to _____ Sanhedrin**.**

- **Questions**:
- Who do they stir up? _____, the elders, and _____
- What do the people, the elders and the scribes do to Stephen? _____ and _____ him to the _____.

Review question from previous chapters: **What was the Sanhedrin?**

_____

Write out **John 15:18**:

_____
_____

Write out **John 15:20**:

_____
_____

Based upon the truths that you have written out from **John 15**, should we be surprised when we are persecuted, mocked, and/or criticized by the world for our faith? _____.

Day 5 (Acts 6:13-15)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.

Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

13 They also presented false witnesses who said, “This man never stops speaking against this holy place and the law. **14** For we heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us.” **15** And all who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at him and saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Verse 13:

- They _____ presented false witnesses who _____, “This man _____ stops speaking _____ this holy place _____ the law.
- **Questions**:
  - What type of witness did they also present? _____.
  - What did this false witness say about Stephen?

    _____

Verse 14:

- For _____ heard him say _____ this Jesus of _____ will destroy this place and _____ the customs _____ Moses handed down _____ us.”
- **Questions:**
- What did these false witnesses say that they heard Stephen say about Jesus of Nazareth?
  - _____ and _____

Background:

Moses:

- was a man of God, who was a patriarch to the Jews (and to us as Christians; we see him in the Transfiguration passage; **Matthew 17;1-3**).
- God used Moses to physically deliver the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage to bring them to the land that God had promised Abraham. Unfortunately, the Israelites chose to trust their eyes rather than their God and disobeyed. As a result, they stayed in the wilderness for 40 years until the next generation could go into the promised land (that land is Jerusalem and surrounding areas).
- God had Moses write down the Law within the **Pentateuch (1st 5 books of the Bible**) while in the wilderness.

The Law:

- Outlined God’s standards and care of His people.
- Jesus fulfilled all the Law and made it complete.
- Even though the law has a purpose (to make a person aware of sin), the Law, on its own, does not save. To a Jewish person, adherence to the Law is equal to salvation.

Verse 15:

- And _____ who were sitting _____ the Sanhedrin _____ intently at him _____ saw that _____ face was _____ the face of an angel
- **Questions:**
- Who did all who were sitting in the Sanhedrin look intently at? _____
- How did they see Stephen’s face? _____