

ORDER OF SERVICE

WELCOME

SONG: Jesus!

CHILDREN'S TALK

CONFESION

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
We have sinned against you
And against our fellow men,
In thought and word and deed,
In the evil we have done
And in the good we have not done,
Through ignorance, through weakness,
Through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
Who died for us,
Forgive us all that is past;
And grant that we may serve you
In newness of life
To the glory of your name. Amen.

Common Worship, © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England,
2000-2006

NOTICES (Children leave for Sunday School and Crèche)

INTERVIEW (Morning service)

RESPONSES

SONG: Cornerstone

SONG: Oh Lord My Rock And My Redeemer

READINGS: Acts 7:1-17, 18-39 (pg. 914-915)

SERMON

PRAYERS

Q&A: Text questions to 07520 632 065

SONG: He Is Lord

BLESSING

NOTICES

Vision Evening: 2nd March, 8pm

Join us upstairs in the King William Building, Greenwich, as we give thanks to God for the past year and pray through our vision for the year ahead. If you have particular questions about why we do what we do, please email them to jono.pick@greenwich.church. There will be *no Bitesize Theology or Christianity Explored* this week, but food will be available from 7.30pm.

Jesus: A Sceptic's Guide: 20-27th March

Glen Scrivener will be presenting the good news of Jesus on both Sundays. In addition, please consider whether you might be able to host or invite friends to an event midweek.

Giving

Grace Church is funded wholly by the donations of its members. To support our work and give tax efficiently please email treasurer@greenwich.church (40-52-40 / 00027789) or give through our website at www.greenwich.church/give

Spring Weekend Away: 6th-8th May

Bookings for our next weekend away at Ashburnham Place are open! David Shaw will be speaking on the topic of Power. To book your place, scan the QR code or go to www.greenwich.church/weekend-away. Booking closes 10th April.



Don't want to miss anything? Why not subscribe to our Google calendar: www.greenwich.church/calendar

Next Sunday, 6th March: *Acts 7:39-53*

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 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Grace Church takes the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults seriously.

If you have any concerns, please email our safeguarding officer, Sarah Wilde, at safeguarding@greenwich.church, or contact the Southwark Safeguarding Team (020 7939 9423). See www.greenwich.church/safeguarding.



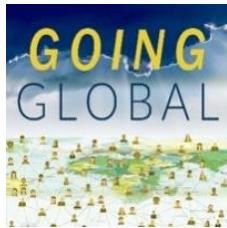
Welcome!

Sunday 27th February 2022

*'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.'*

Psalm 118:22-23 (ESV)

Acts 7:1-39



“Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father **Abraham** when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,³ and said to him, ‘Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.’⁴ Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living.⁵ Yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot’s length, but promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him, though he had no child.⁶ And God spoke to this effect—that his offspring would be sojourners in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and afflict them four hundred years.⁷ ‘But I will judge the nation that they serve,’ said God, ‘and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.’⁸ And he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

⁹ “And the patriarchs, jealous of **Joseph**, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him¹⁰ and rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him favour and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household.¹¹ Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food.¹² But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first visit.¹³ And on the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph’s family became known to Pharaoh.¹⁴ And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all.¹⁵ And Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers,¹⁶ and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

¹⁷ “But as the time of the promise drew near, which God had granted to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt¹⁸ until there arose over Egypt another king who did not know Joseph.¹⁹ He dealt shrewdly with our race and forced our fathers to expose their infants, so that they would not be kept alive.²⁰ At this time **Moses** was born; and he was beautiful in God’s sight. And he was brought up for three months in his father’s house,²¹ and when he was exposed, Pharaoh’s daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son.²² And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and deeds.

²³ “When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel.²⁴ And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian.²⁵ He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand.²⁶ And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarrelling and tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?’²⁷ But the man who was wronging his neighbour thrust him aside, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?²⁸ Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’²⁹ At this retort Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

³⁰ “Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush.³¹ When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and as he drew near to look, there came the voice of the Lord:³² ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and did not dare to look.³³ Then the Lord said to him, ‘Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.³⁴ I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.’

³⁵ “This Moses, whom they rejected, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge?’—this man God sent as both ruler and redeemer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush.³⁶ This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in Egypt and at the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years.³⁷ This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, ‘God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.’³⁸ This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us.³⁹ Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt...

Allegation: Christianity is new-fangled

- not an issue of anti-Semitism
- but an allegation that Stephen speaks “blasphemous words against Moses” (6:11) and “never ceases to speak words against … the law” (6:13) and “Jesus of Nazareth will … change the customs that Moses delivered to us” (6:14)
- plus an allegation that Christians don’t care enough about the temple (come back next week)

1) The Old Testament tells the story of a promise-making, promise-keeping, saving God

- i.e. the whole Bible is about the Christian gospel

2) The Old Testament tells the story of a people who reject the promised Saviour

- Out of ignorance? (compare v9 with v13; v25, v35; 3:17)
- Persistently: “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.” (7:51–53)

Application: Jesus is vindicated. Jewish unbelievers are indicted but invited!

COFFEE QUESTIONS:

- How does Stephen’s defence give you greater confidence in the gospel?
- How does it motivate you to reach out to Jewish friends?