

Stephen, filled with the power of God's Spirit, did marvellous work among the Jewish people in Jerusalem who had come from North Africa and Asia.

Many of them were in Jerusalem on pilgrimage. Some of them tried to argue with Stephen but they found it too difficult. Stephen was very wise and the Holy Spirit was with him. They were angry and told lies about Stephen.

They turned the scribes and elders against him as well as some of the people. Stephen was arrested. When Stephen stood up in court he spoke for a long time about the ways in which they had refused to listen to God and to God's messengers.

He told the judge and the people about Jesus but they did not want to listen. They put their hands over their ears.

Then they charged at him and dragged him outside the city. There they threw stones at him until he was dead.

A young man called Saul watched. He was taking care of their cloaks. Before he died Stephen said: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Do not blame them for what they have done."

**Based on Acts 6: 6-7: 6
God's Story 3**

Think about the answers to these questions and discuss with someone at home.

Why were people finding it too difficult to argue with Stephen?

Why and how did Stephen remain strong?

Stephen said "Do not blame them for what they have done."
What example is Stephen setting by saying this?

In the Scripture reading it says 'they put their hands over their ears'. Why do you think they did this and what did it show?

What do you think about Saul's action?

What do Stephen's last words remind you of? (Hint: Jesus words of forgiveness as he was being crucified.)

Choose one task

1. Research and discuss the work that Stephen had to undertake, look up Acts 6: 1-6. Consider the kind of person who would be asked to do this service and why they would do it. What do you think about the fact that the Greek speaking Jewish widows were left out?

Present your findings however you choose. e.g. PowerPoint, newspaper article etc.

2. Hot-seat Stephen. Question him about his beliefs and values, his feelings and experiences, and what gave him such courage. Record it using a video camera or digital photos with captions or a written interview.

3. Find out how deacons serve in the Church today. Research and find out about the role of deacon. Decide how to present your findings.