

# Acts Week 21

7:42-

Instead of going all the way through the history of what took place from the Covenant of Circumcision to coming out of Egypt we are going ahead toward the end of chapter 7 and picking up at verse forty-two, God was addressing Israel and who they worshiped while in the desert. This begins just after the making of the golden calf, verses 7:40-43. The lead into where we pick up again is God's looking to the misplaced loyalty versus true faith during Israel's time in the desert. Stephen goes after those persecuting him and addresses their fathers and all they did, almost as a strong conviction of how Israel has had some extremely bad times of which some they seemed willing to accept and perform.

**Verse 7:42; "Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: 'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, And the star of your god Remphan, Images which you made to worship; And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.** The host of heaven was idol worship, and as we find in Romans chapter one we find the same here, that God takes so much and then He gives those who refuse to honor and worship Him He turns over to their reprobate minds and desires. This incident began with the golden calf and the people continued to stray after other gods. The host of heaven as Stephen addresses would be the pagan god Remphan, and the star said to be his.

**2 Chronicles 28:3; 2Ch 28:3 KJV - 3 Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.**

**Jeremiah 7:32 KJV - 32 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place.** It only seems appropriate that this place of horrible sacrifice would be later referred to as the valley of slaughter. It was once called the Valley of the Sons, Joshua 15:8

Matthew Henry makes notes that indicate there was an immense hardship on the parents when having to sacrifice their own babies in the arms of Moloch. How much has our God put up with as we look back, how repulsive were the practices they fell into no matter how difficult it was for them. Romans 1:24-25; Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

**Amos, 5:25; "Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? 26 You also carried Sikkuth your king And Chiun, your idols, The star of your gods,**

**Which you made for yourselves. 27 Therefore I will send you into captivity beyond Damascus,” Says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts.**

Israel would perform sacrifices but it was intermittent and often to other gods. After the second year in the desert Israel stopped keeping the Passover. Had they failed to honor God for bringing them out of Egypt by serving other gods, even as it says here, the tabernacle of Moloch. The complaints came to Moses and yet it would be Moses in Exodus Chapter 32:33 who would plead to God to strike his name from the Book of Life that the other nations would think Israel’s God could not even control His own people.

Israel was said to be a stiff-necked leaning toward other gods, worshiping them and foregoing even the Passover. All God was wanting from His people was obedience, **Hosea 6:6; For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. Hebrews 10:8; 8 First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them” —though they were offered in accordance with the law.** Sin brings death, are we to believe that our God who knows when a swallow falls that God does not know or cares? How much more are you thought of.

**Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Matthew 19:29-31.** Jesus describes the Father caring about every small thing, from the innocent sparrow to the number of hairs on your head the Father cares about all life and creation. Sacrifices He did not desire, but through them we learned about Jesus, the only sacrifice that was once and for all brings with it the offer of salvation. People come into a place of despair often in life, the breaking up of a marriage, the death of a family member, injuries and many other issues that we face. But none of it happens without God knowing it. God was never pleased with the sacrifices of His creation, but man was as a wild beast at times and turned away from God’s desire for him. Obedience is all He wants from us. We find in Acts the obedience of the apostles and many others, how hard is it for us to walk in obedience?

**Verse 7:44-46; “Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen, “which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David, “who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob.** Let us never forget that the tabernacle was a representation of our Christ, the place in which the ordinances came from and where the judgment seat of God resided. On the top of the ark is the picture of our Christ covering the law and our sin allowing us the privilege to accept or reject salvation.