

# Kids' Chronicle

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BY CINDY BASSETT

## A plot is hatched against the new church

"Have you told our new followers about Jesus' promise to return someday?" Peter asked his brother, Andrew.

Andrew sighed with weariness. "No, I haven't done anything except organize the gifts people have donated to us."

Peter's forehead creased into a worried frown. "I am grateful to everyone. But we seem to be losing sight of the most important thing."

James came up during their conversation and added, "Yes, the most important thing is to tell the story of Jesus. And I haven't done much of that lately."

Andrew nodded. "Peter, we're all feeling like that. What should we do? We can't ignore those who have given up everything to join our church. And there are widows and orphans who need food and clothing."

"Let's choose some helpers to take over some of our daily tasks," Andrew continued. "Then we'll have more time to pray and to teach."

The next day, Peter called a meeting of the new believers. Afterward, seven helpers, known as deacons, were elected.

Stephen, one of the new deacons, had so much faith in Jesus that he performed healing miracles. Although he risked arrest, he told everyone he met about Jesus.

Stephen's teaching was so powerful that even some of the Hebrew priests believed in Jesus. But there



Illustrations by Kathy Welsh

were others who were furious because when they argued with Stephen, they couldn't prove him wrong. So they met secretly to hatch a plot to get rid of him.

"Stephen must be silenced!" Simon, a teacher of the law, told the others. "Everyday he is convincing more people to join this Jesus movement. I was sure that these followers would scatter after Jesus' crucifixion and death."

"Even jail and arrest doesn't seem to stop them," Eli added. "The two ringleaders, Peter and John, were released by our own high priest because he feared trouble from their supporters."

"The Council was deadlocked in their case," Benjamin, a wealthy attorney, reminded them. "They had to let them go because no charges were found that would stick."

Simon suddenly changed his sour expression and grinned. "Then we must accuse this Stephen of something that will hold up in court, right?"

Eli agreed. "If he has broken our

law, there will be no deadlock this time. A guilty verdict will be handed down."

"How about cursing God?" Simon suggested, still smiling. "When Stephen is convicted, he could get the death sentence."

"Wait a minute, I've never heard Stephen or any of these Jesus followers cursing God," Benjamin said.

"For an intelligent man, you're not following me too well," Simon replied. "How much do we have in our treasury?"

Eli laughed heartily before he answered. "Enough to do what you're suggesting."

Right after the meeting, Simon took treasury money and bribed two witnesses to testify in court before the Hebrew Council. They both promised to swear under oath that they had heard Stephen cursing God.

Read More About It: Book of Acts, Chapter 6.

## Q & A

1. Why were some of the Hebrews so furious with Stephen?
2. The apostles chose seven deacons to help in the work of the new church. What can you do to help in your own church?

## The Bible Times

35 A.D.

Jerusalem — Temple police have arrested another follower of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Police took the man, known as Stephen, into custody as he preached to a crowd in a city square about the Way, the movement that has rapidly spread since the crucifixion death of Jesus Christ several months ago.

His arrest follows that of Peter and John, two former disciples of Christ, several weeks ago. The two men were released the next day, however, after the Hebrew Council became deadlocked during their trial.

Asked about Stephen's arrest, Caiaphas, a high priest, said, "I cannot discuss the case until after the trial. However, we have two witnesses for the prosecution who will testify to some very serious charges. If Stephen is found guilty, he can expect the death sentence."

But another member of the Way commented about the charges against Stephen, "We believe in a religion of love and forgiveness. What law would that be against?"

### King Solomon's Wisdom



"Some people enjoy cheating and lying, but the cake they buy with this ill-gotten gain will turn to gravel in their mouths!" *Proverbs 20:17*

### Talking to God

Dear Lord,  
"Help me to lead a blameless life;  
You will silence anyone who tells lies about his neighbor; And no one who speaks falsely will ever dwell in your house or stand in your presence."  
*Psalm 101: 2, 5, 7.*

## Bible Trivia

What were the names of the six other deacons chosen with Stephen to help the new church?

Send answers to *Catholic Courier Bible Trivia*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your name and address with your entry.

All entries must be received by Aug. 6, 1992. A winner will be selected at random from all the correct entries submitted. The winner will be notified by mail and receive a gift courtesy of Logos.

Last month's winner was Sheila Mason, who correctly estimated 5,000 as the number of people who joined the new church after Jesus' Ascension.

### Attention all Kids

Fill in the Crossword. There's no Answer Key, but you can find clues in the past issues of *KIDS' CHRONICLE* or in your Bible. Those who send in the first 15 correct entries will be mailed an award. Send in your entries to Cindy Bassett, c/o *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

Deadline for all entries is Aug. 6. Be sure to include your address and zip code. GOOD LUCK!

**ACROSS**

1. When Jesus forgave sins, his critics charged him with this crime.
2. Wise sayings of King Solomon.
3. God made this everlasting agreement with the Hebrews as they journeyed to the Promised Land.
4. God's special messenger.
5. The number of years it took the Hebrews to travel to the Promised Land after they left Egypt.
6. This apostle denied Jesus three times.
7. Name for special prayer songs written by King David.

**DOWN**

1. Pilate released this criminal to the Hebrews instead of Jesus on Good Friday.
8. Name of the mountain where God gave Moses the Ten Commandments.
9. This apostle didn't believe that Jesus had risen from the dead until he saw him.
10. Name for the collection of stories written about the life of Jesus.
11. This special box was crafted by the Hebrews to symbolize God's presence.

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