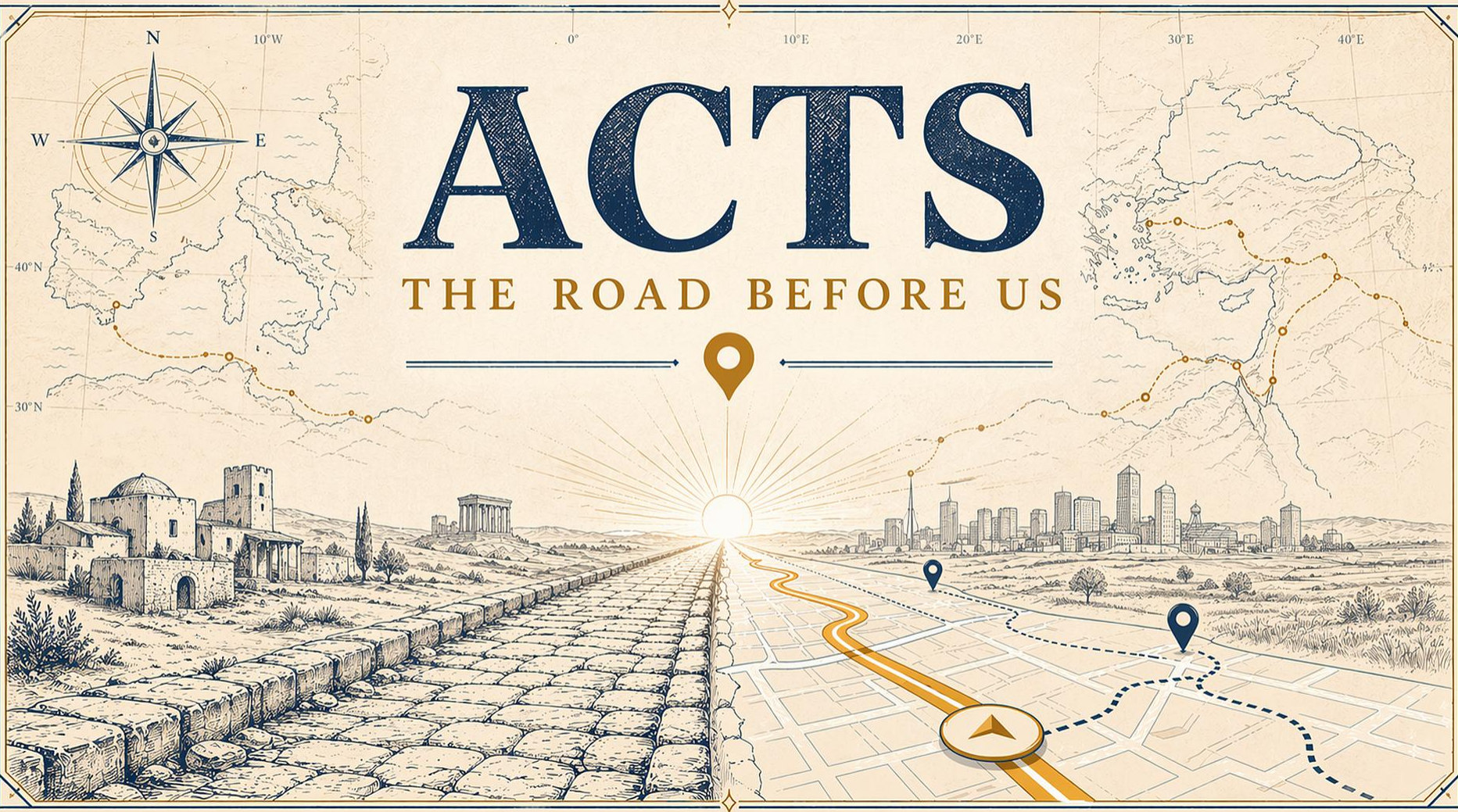


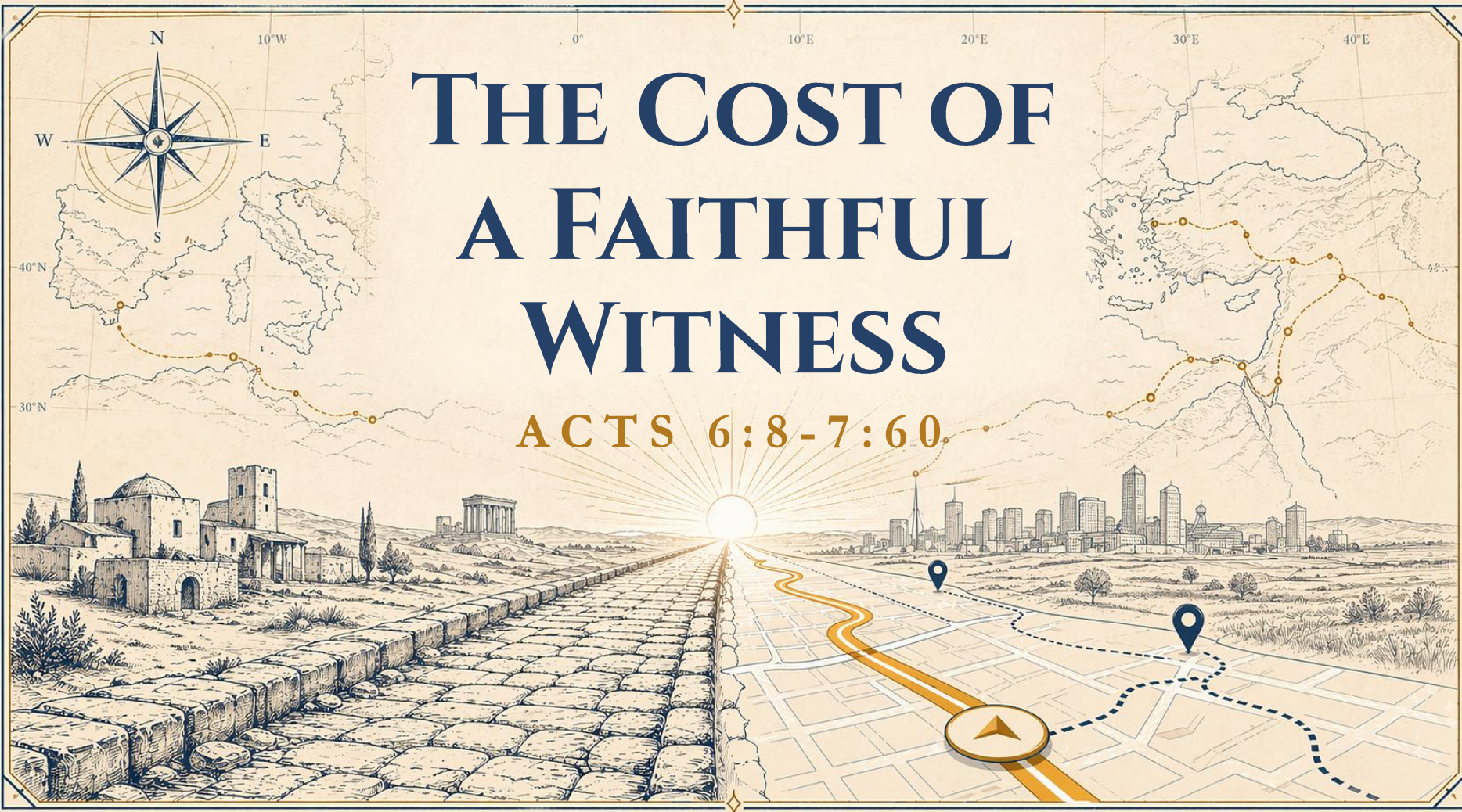
# ACTS

THE ROAD BEFORE US

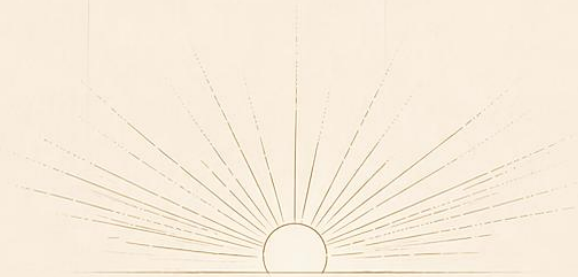


# THE COST OF A FAITHFUL WITNESS

ACTS 6:8 - 7:60



# WHO IS STEPHEN?



# WHO IS STEPHEN?

ONE OF “THE SEVEN”

HE’S A GREAT ADMINISTRATOR

HIS ADMINISTRATIVE WORK MATTERED!

**ACTS 6:7**

So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.



# STEPHEN'S "CRIME"

## ACTS 6:8

Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people.



# STEPHEN'S "CRIME"

## ACTS 6:9-10

Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called) – Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen, but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke.



# STEPHEN'S "CRIME"

## ACTS 6:11-14

Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God".

<sup>12</sup> So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin.

<sup>13</sup> They produced false witnesses, who testified, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law. <sup>14</sup>For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us."



# THE CHARGES

**1. Speaking against the temple**  
 (“...Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place”)

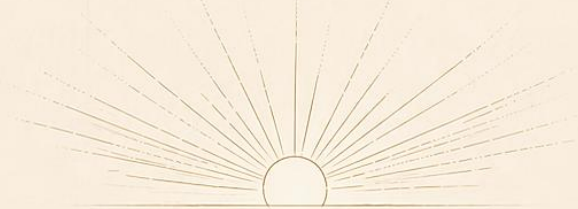
**2. Speaking against Moses**  
 and the law (customs) given by Moses



# IN FRONT OF THE SANHEDRIN

**ACTS 6:15**

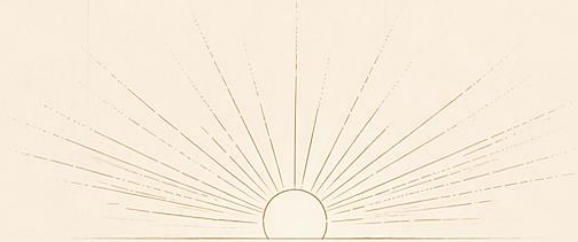
All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.



# IN FRONT OF THE SANHEDRIN

## ACTS 7:1

Then the high priest asked Stephen, “Are these charges true?”



# STEPHEN'S SPEECH

## Key Points

1. God's PRESENCE has never been confined to the temple, or to any place made by men's hands
2. God's PEOPLE have always rejected his messengers, especially those sent to save them



# STEPHEN'S SPEECH

## Key Points - ACTS 7:2-48

1. God's PRESENCE has never been confined to the temple, or to any place made by men's hands  
(Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David)
2. God's PEOPLE have always rejected his messengers, especially those sent to save them  
(Joseph, Moses, the prophets)



# STEPHEN'S SPEECH

## ACTS 7:51-53

<sup>51</sup> “You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! <sup>52</sup> Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him—  
<sup>53</sup> you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it.”



10°W

0°

10°E

20°E

30°E

40°E

# THE SANHEDRIN REACT

**ACTS 7:54**

When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him.



# STEPHEN'S VISION

## ACTS 7:55-56

<sup>55</sup>But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup>“Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”



# STEPHEN'S VISION

## 1 JOHN 2:1

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.



# STEPHEN'S VISION

**1 JOHN 2:1**

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

**HEBREWS 7:25**

Therefore, he [Jesus] is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf.



10°W

0°

10°E

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40°E

# THE SANHEDRIN REACT

## ACTS 7:57-58

40°N

30°N

<sup>57</sup>At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, <sup>58</sup>dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.



# STEPHEN'S PRAYER

## ACTS 7:59-60

<sup>59</sup> While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” <sup>60</sup> Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.



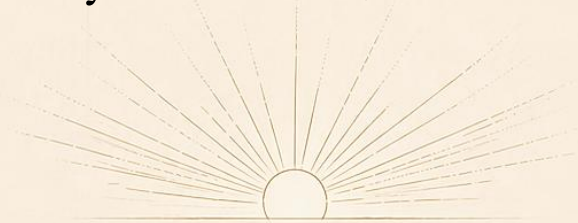
# SPURGEON ON STEPHEN

“We do not find that the appearance of Jesus in the heavens stopped the stones. Stephen’s life is not spared. He dies as certainly as if Jesus had not been there. That is the plan of the present dispensation. The Lord Jesus does not come to us to forbid our suffering, nor to remove our griefs, but he sustains us under them. ... This is the comfort you and I may expect. ...”Tis ours to suffer and yet to conquer, to die and yet to live, to be buried and yet to rise again.”



# APPLICATION

How is God leading you, through the Holy Spirit, to step forward in your faith, even if it seems costly?



# COMMUNION

