

Encyclopedia of Comedy Gospel

Ventriloquist and Puppet Routines **Book Three**

OLD TESTAMENT STORIES

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2. Rebekah's Story (Genesis 24)
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6. King Saul's Disobedience (1 Samuel 15)
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9. Solomon Establishes His Kingdom (1 Kings 2)
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30. Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1-2)
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NEW TESTAMENT STORIES

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50. STEPHEN'S STORY

(Acts 6-7)

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JIM: In the early days of the church...

SIDNEY: Back when they only had black and white TV.

JIM: They didn't have any TV.

SIDNEY: No TV?! How are they going to waste all those hours each day?

JIM: In those days, many people were becoming Christians every day.

SIDNEY: Probably because they weren't spending their time watching TV.

JIM: The leaders of the church were the apostles.

SIDNEY: They were opossums?

JIM: Apostles. Twelve men had been appointed by Jesus to make sure everyone heard the truth about how Jesus died and rose from the dead. Anyway because so many people were becoming Christians, the apostles didn't have time to take care of all the needs of the people. They needed to spend their time praying for everyone and teaching the people about God's Word.

SIDNEY: And running the foosball tournament.

JIM: The apostles knew that it was important that someone be in charge of caring for people who were old or sick or didn't have enough money to feed their families, so they told the people to choose seven men who loved the Lord and were filled with God's Spirit. One of those who was chosen was a man named Stephen.

SIDNEY: But Stephen was leavin'.

JIM: Stephen spent a lot of time out among the people showing them the power of God to meet their needs and many people were becoming Christians because of Stephen. Now many of the Jews didn't like Stephen.

SIDNEY: Because he kept forgetting to blow his nose.

JIM: No, they didn't like him because he was always telling people about Jesus and these Jews thought that Jesus had only pretended to be God's Son. When Stephen wouldn't stop talking about Jesus...

SIDNEY: They stuffed him in a bag and mailed him to Pittsburgh.

JIM: They did worse than that.

SIDNEY: They mailed him to Afghanistan?

JIM: No. They got some men to tell lies about Stephen. These men said...

SIDNEY: Hey, everybody! Stephen's really a trained monkey.

JIM: Actually they told everyone that Stephen had been saying terrible, insulting things about God. This made the people really angry and the leaders arrested Stephen and put him on trial.

SIDNEY: But they didn't show it on Court TV.

JIM: No, they didn't.

SIDNEY: Because they didn't have TV.

JIM: That's right.

SIDNEY: See? I've been listening. They put it on Court Radio.

JIM: They didn't have radio, either. Anyway, those liars came and spoke against Stephen. They said to the judges...

SIDNEY: We swear he's really a monkey.

JIM: They said, Stephen is telling everyone that Jesus will destroy the temple of God and change the law of Moses!

SIDNEY: Who would believe that? There's no way Jesus is going to change the law of gravity.

JIM: I said the law of Moses. That was one of the most important parts of the Jewish faith. It's very important to Christians as well. The High Priest, who was one of the judges, asked Stephen...

SIDNEY: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck?

JIM: No, he asked if those charges were true. Did Stephen really say these things? Stephen knew that these leaders didn't really want to know the truth.

SIDNEY: They can't handle the truth.

JIM: So Stephen began to go through the history of Israel showing them how the people of Israel never respected God's law. No matter how many good things God did for them, they continued to disobey Him. Stephen said...

SIDNEY: You've been naughty boys.

JIM: Stephen said, when God sent His prophets to tell Israel the truth, your fathers killed them and now you have even murdered Jesus, the one God sent to give you life. When the leaders heard Stephen say this...

SIDNEY: They hopped in their car and made a getaway. **(Zoom out of sight)**

JIM: They didn't make a getaway! But they *were* furious with Stephen for saying they had murdered Jesus. Just then, God gave Stephen a special vision.

SIDNEY: And that's how television was invented.

JIM: Not television. He had a vision. He said to the judges, I see Jesus standing in heaven!

SIDNEY: And He's holding something called television.

JIM: No, Jesus was standing in a position of authority where He could rule over all of creation.

Remember, the leaders didn't want to believe that Jesus was the Son of God so when they heard this, they covered their ears and shouted as loud as they could.

SIDNEY: Three cheers for Jesus!

JIM: They weren't cheering. They were very, very angry. They dragged Stephen outside the city...

SIDNEY: And challenged him to a drag race.

JIM: No, they picked up stones and started throwing them at Stephen.

SIDNEY: But God came to the rescue in the nick of time!

JIM: God didn't come to the rescue. As the stones were hitting Stephen, he knew he was going to be with the Lord. He said, Lord, receive my spirit and do not hold this sin against these people. And then he died.

SIDNEY: Somehow I don't feel like making a joke here.

JIM: Sometimes God allows terrible things to happen to His people. But there is always a good reason.

SIDNEY: How could anything good come from Stephen's death?

JIM: Because of what happened to Stephen, many Christians began to flee Jerusalem. But as they traveled throughout the world, they took something very important with them.

SIDNEY: Television!

JIM: No. They took the good news of how Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead so that anyone who believes in Him could be forgiven of the wrong things they've done and receive everlasting life. Because of Stephen, the good news, the gospel, spread throughout the world and many, many, many people were able to believe in Jesus. And when each of those people died, they met Stephen who was in heaven with Jesus.