

## ***But God is With Me!***

### ***International Bible Lesson***

**Acts 7:1-3, 8-10, 17, 33-34, 45-48, 53**

**Sunday, September 27, 2015**

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*“Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him” (Acts 7:9—NIV).*

Before the first Christian martyr Stephen was stoned to death by a furious crowd, he reminded them of God’s work in the lives of their ancestors and their response to God. His speech showed how big the little word “but” can be when followed by the words “God was with him.” He told them how Joseph’s older brothers treated him and sold him as a slave into Egypt. The Book of Genesis reports many of Joseph’s hardships as a slave, and how it seemed his life went from bad to worse, from slave to prisoner. “But God was with him,” and Joseph rose to serve God as a ruler over Egypt under Pharaoh. “God was with him,” and through Joseph God saved thousands from starvation. Likewise, Jesus came to save lives. He told all of His followers through the ages to make disciples and “teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Then Jesus gave all of His followers this precious promise: “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). Stephen did as Jesus’ commanded, but before he finished his message the crowd began to stone him to death. “But God was with him” as Joseph experienced and Jesus promised. As the stones struck him, Stephen proclaimed, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:56). God was with him because the Holy Spirit indwelt him, and Jesus stood waiting to receive him into God’s heavenly kingdom. In all times of trouble, believers can always say, “But God is with me!” — © Copyright 2015 L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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## **Thinking Further**

1. What might you say to someone who said, “It is a waste of time to study the Old Testament”?
2. Give some reasons why Abraham was important.
3. Why did Joseph succeed in Egypt? How might this reason encourage others?
4. From what kind of slavery did Moses and Jesus save God’s people?
5. Why is it important sometimes to study more than one English translation of the Bible?