

¹ Now in those days, when *the number* of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

HELLENIST Hel'lenist (*Grecian*), the term applied in the New Testament to Greek-speaking or "Grecian" Jews. The Hellenists as a body included not only the proselytes of Greek (or foreign) parentage, but also those Jews who, by settling in foreign countries, had adopted the prevalent form of the current Greek civilization, and with it the use of the common Greek dialect. [Acts 6:1](#); [9:29](#)
Smith's Bible Dictionary: Comprising Antiquities, Biography, Geography, Natural History, Archaeology and Literature.

Hebrew is the proper antithesis to *Hellenist*. A man was Ἰουδαῖος, a Jew, who traced his descent from Jacob, and conformed to the religion of his fathers. He might speak Greek and be a Hellenist. He was Ἑβραῖος, a Hebrew, only as he spoke Hebrew and retained Hebrew customs. The distinction between Hebrew and Hellenist was a distinction within the Jewish nation, and not between it and other nations. Thus Paul calls himself a *Hebrew of Hebrews*; i.e., a Hebrew and of Hebrew parents ([Philippians 3:5](#); compare [2 Corinthians 11:22](#)).
Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament.

² Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.

³ Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of *good* reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

⁴ but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

⁵ And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,

⁶ whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

⁷ Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

Romans 10:17, Romans 1:16-17, Acts 2:37, James 1:21-22, Acts 8:4, Romans 1:5 & Romans 16:26

⁸ And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.

⁹ Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen.

Acts 6:9 (KJV) "... called *the synagogue* of the Libertines, . . ."

LIBERTINES Lib'ertines. This word, which occurs once only in the New Testament—[Acts 6:9](#)—is the Latin *libertini*, that is, "freedmen." They were probably Jews who, having been taken prisoners by Pompey and other Roman generals in the Syrian wars, had been reduced to slavery and had afterward been emancipated, and returned, permanently or for a time, to the country of their fathers.
Smith's Bible Dictionary: Comprising Antiquities, Biography, Geography, Natural History, Archaeology and Literature.

Acts Chapter 6

¹⁰ And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.

Stephen did not back down when disputers arose ---- Jude 3

¹¹ Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God."

¹² And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon *him*, seized him, and brought *him* to the council.

¹³ They also set up false witnesses who said, "This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law;

¹⁴ for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us."

¹⁵ And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel.

Questions Acts 6

1. Describe the problem that occurred within the church and how was this problem handled?

2. What do we learn about the character of Stephen in this chapter?

3. How did those who disputed with Stephen react?