

Theo 210, Week #09:
Questions about the Acts of the Apostles
(ANSWER KEY)
The University of St. Francis

According to the Acts of the Apostles

True/False

1. True Luke states the organizing principle for the Book of Acts in Acts 1: 8, in which the risen Jesus states that his disciples will be witnesses for him “to the ends of the earth.”

2. True Luke is the only New Testament writer to describe the risen Jesus’ ascent to the spirit world.

3. False In Acts 18, Paul’s lengthy missionary work in the city of Ephesus resulted in religious competition for the worshipers of the goddess Isis, to whom the Ephesians had dedicated a huge temple. (Acts 18)
The claim of the Jews against St. Paul were levied to the proconsul Gallio as they stated, “This man is inducing people to worship God contrary to the law.” (Acts 18: 12)

4. True Some scholars claim that Luke ends the Book of Acts abruptly after portraying Paul’s arrival in Rome because Paul’s arrival there signals the accomplishment of Luke’s purpose for writing the Book of Acts.

5. True According to Luke, even though Paul was arrested and spent some three years in a Roman prison, two different Roman governors personally absolved the apostle of any illegal activity.
(see Acts 24 and 26: 30-32)
6. True St. Paul's full Roman & Jewish name was Saulos Paulos.

Multiple Choice

1. This Roman emperor was the stepson of Augustus and ruled over Rome during the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth.
- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| a. Caligula | c. Claudius |
| b. Nero | d. Tiberius |
2. This was the name shared by both the Emperor of the Roman Empire and the general who captured Jerusalem and burned the Jewish temple there in 70 AD.
- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| a. Judas Maccabeus | c. Vespasian |
| b. Titus | d. Nero |
3. Who was one of the most important sources of information about the Jewish revolt against Rome, a Jewish historian who was eyewitness to many of the events in the Revolt?
- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| a. Flavius Josephus | c. Herod Agrippa II |
| b. Judas Maccabeus | d. Herod Archelaus |

4. After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD, the center of rabbinic Judaism moved to what coastal town where an academy of rabbis continued to develop Jewish beliefs about the contents of the Bible and Judaism's relationship with Christianity?
- a. Jamnia
 - b. Caesarea
 - c. Masada
 - d. Petra
5. What was Luke's name for the early Christian movement?
- a. *The Way.*
 - b. The Light.
 - c. The Gospel of Truth.
 - d. The Synagogue of Jesus.
- Twelve verses in Acts refer to "The Way," including 9: 2, 17, 27; 18: 25, 26; 19: 9, 23; 21: 11, 24; 24: 14, 22, 25; 3 and 26: 13.*
6. While the Book of Acts is commonly called the "Acts of the Apostles," only two apostles actually serve as major characters in the book. Which two early church leaders appear as major characters in Acts?
- a. Peter and Paul
 - b. Peter and James
 - c. John and Paul
 - d. James and John
7. In what way did Acts present the *earliest* Apostles?
- a. Eager to share the gospel with Gentiles (non-Jews).
 - b. Reluctant to extend the gospel to Gentiles.
 - c. Unconcerned with the status of Gentiles in relation to God.
 - d. Committed to killing any Gentiles who believed in God.
8. Who was this book addressed to as found in Acts 1: 1?
- a. Theophilus
 - b. Pilate
 - c. Caesar
 - d. Peter
- The Gospel of Luke is also addressed to Theophilus. It means "one who loves God," and there has been some discussion whether this means it was directed*

toward a general audience, anyone who loves God, or a particular individual. Some put forth the theory that Theophilus was a patron or publisher. In any event, the address seems to show that the book of Acts was a sequel to the Gospel of Luke.

9. Who took the office formerly held by Judas at the end of the first chapter of Acts?

- a. Matthias c. Barsabbas
b. Philip d. Stephen

After the Ascension and community prayer, Peter announced the need to have one replace Judas, quoting Scripture. Two men were put forward as qualified candidates, Matthias and Barsabbas. The group then prayed before casting lots, which fell to Matthias.

10. When the Holy Spirit fell upon the believers on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, the Spirit's presence was indicated when the believers began to do what?

- a. Raise the Dead. c. Heal the Sick.
b. Walk on Water. d. *Speak in Tongues.*

11. For what apparent reason did the eleven remaining apostles elect Matthias as a replacement for Judas Iscariot?

- a. Judas had decreed that Matthias should be his replacement
- b. Matthias was on “standby” to become an apostle in the event one of them died.
- c. Matthias was the only candidate for the job who was from Galilee.
- d. *The number twelve represents the twelve tribes of Israel, so the apostles represented a kind of “new Israel.”*

12. What Jewish festival was occurring at the time the Holy Spirit appeared in the second chapter, giving the disciples the ability to speak in tongues?

a. Pentecost

c. Passover

b. Purim

d. Feast of Tabernacles

Pentecost was the fiftieth day after the Sabbath of Passover week. It is also called the Feast of Weeks. According to Deuteronomy 16: 9-12, the feast was celebrated with a freewill offering in accordance to what the Lord had given them. On this particular day of Pentecost, people were bewildered, because the disciples were Galileans. Galileans were not known for being educated.

13. Beginning in Acts 6, Luke distinguishes two different groups in the early Jerusalem church: Aramaic-speaking Jewish Christians and Greek-speaking Jewish Christians whom Luke calls what?

a. Sovereigns.

c. Antiochenes.

b. Hellenists.

d. Alexandrians.

14. What controversy at the beginning of the sixth chapter caused men to be specially chosen to care for the widows?

a. The disciples were neglecting their preaching duties.

b. The Hebrews' widows were neglected.

c. *The Hellenists' widows were neglected.*

d. Money was missing from the fund.

Hellenists were Jews born in lands outside of Palestine and took many of their cultural characteristics from the Greek world. Hebrews maintained the cultural traits and customs of the Jews. When this issue was raised, the apostles suggested finding other men among the believers so they would not neglect their preaching duties. Seven were chosen, including Stephen and Philip.

15. How did Stephen die at the end of the seventh chapter of Acts?

- a. Crucifixion
- b. Stoning
- c. Drowning
- d. By the Sword

Stephen is considered the first Christian martyr. He was first mentioned as one to care for the widows in the daily distribution. He was charged with blasphemy and brought before the council, and they were enraged by his speech. While Saul is not recorded as being directly involved, he was given his first mention here as guarding the coats of the participants.

16. Saul of Tarsus was...

- a. The governor of Tarsus when Paul arrived there
- b. One of Paul's co-workers
- c. A leader of the synagogue at Thessalonica
- d. The same person as the apostle Paul

17. On the road to Damascus, Saul suddenly saw a light and was confronted by a voice. Finish the quote from Acts 9: 4. "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting _____?"

- a. Me
- b. My Church
- c. My People
- d. The Truth

Saul was described as "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9: 1) as he received permission to go to Damascus. After his confrontation with Jesus on the road, he was blind. Ananias was sent to Saul so that he would see again. Saul was baptized and later had to be secretly sent out of the city. Saul based his interaction on the road as his qualification for being an apostle, since he had seen the Lord.

18. The book of Acts tells of a life-changing event that happened to Paul on his way to Damascus. What happened?

- a. He saw a vision of the risen Messiah.
- b. He was arrested by the Judean authorities.
- c. He heard Peter preaching.
- d. He announced his upcoming death.

19. Who was Saul's first missionary companion? (Acts 13)

- a. Barnabas
- b. Silas
- c. Apollos
- d. Matthias

In chapter thirteen, Barnabas and Saul were set aside by the church at Antioch to go on a mission journey. Back in chapter eleven it was mentioned that Antioch was also the place where members of the new church were called Christians. Barnabas was mentioned as the disciple who brought Saul to the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 9: 26-27). The apostles had been afraid of Saul due to his previous actions against the church. Later he was instrumental in finding Saul in Tarsus and bringing him to Antioch for a full year. (Acts 11: 25-26)

20. When the apostle Paul and his associate Barnabas confronted Jewish Christians in a conference in Jerusalem, what was the issue of debate? (Acts 15)

- a. Whether Jesus' resurrection was bodily or spiritual.
 - b. Whether the Hebrew Scriptures were indeed divinely inspired.
 - c. Whether Gentiles could become Christians.
 - d. Whether Gentiles could become Christians without being circumcised.
- This was a turning point for the early church. The earliest members of the church were Jews or converts to Judaism. Circumcision was a requirement. However, more and more Gentiles were believing in the Gospel, and some were teaching that circumcision was a requirement for salvation. Paul and Barnabas were outspoken opponents of this teaching. The final conclusion of the council was that they should not put needless barriers upon the Gentiles*

for coming to faith.

21. Why did the author of Acts concentrate so much on the missionary work of the apostle Paul?
- a. *Paul's work in Gentile areas represents the transition of Christianity from a Jewish to a Hellenistic environment.*
 - b. Paul was the only Jewish Christian missionary.
 - c. Luke and Paul were blood relations.
 - d. Paul had been the leader of Jesus' disciples when Jesus ministered in Galilee.
22. According to the Book of Acts Paul made three missionary journeys before being arrested and transported to Rome. Which of the following best represents the way critical historians view this arrangement?
- a. That author of Acts was attempting to write an objective history of the period and is probably correct in his assessment of the number of missionary journeys Paul made.
 - b. *Acts is related to one of the synoptic Gospels and probably uses order the way it is used there, intending it more as a form of commentary on the significance of Paul's work than objective history, so we should ask why he has chosen to talk about only three journeys, when Paul may have actually made others.*
 - c. The book of Acts should be viewed more as religious fiction than objective history, so we should not expect to find any historical reliability in what it says.
 - d. The book of Acts is more of a symbolic text about how we should live the life of Christ.

23. While in this city, Paul and Silas established the first Christian church in Europe. While there, they were wrongfully flogged and imprisoned without a trial. (Acts 16)
- a. Corinth
 - b. Jerusalem
 - c. Vienna
 - d. Philippi
24. Why did Paul travel to Rome near the end of the Book of Acts?
- a. He claims to have relatives there.
 - b. He received an invitation from the Roman emperor to discuss his religious views.
 - c. *As a Roman citizen, Paul has the right to stand trial before the Roman emperor.*
 - d. Paul hopes that a trip to Rome will improve his failing health.

Essay

1. What does it mean to say, "Acts is the first and most important interpretation of Luke's Gospel?"

The prophetic structuring of Luke's work is seen in the relationship between his two volumes... First, the Book of Acts both continues the story of the Gospel and fulfills/confirms it. What is found only by way of implication in the story of Jesus is made explicit in the story of the apostles. The pertinence of this for the reader is that, in Acts, Luke provides the first, authoritative interpretation of his Gospel. For understanding the specific shape of Luke's Gospel, the perspective given by Acts is even more important than that given by Synoptic comparison. Second, the two volumes are parts of a two-stage prophetic model, ...moving from a consideration of the prophetic image of the main characters in Acts to the implications of the theme of a "prophet like Moses."

2. How would you describe the geographical structure of Luke-Acts?

Luke uses geography as a literary and theological instrument. The center of his story is the city of Jerusalem. The whole movement of the Gospel is toward Jerusalem. Thus, the infancy account leads to the presentation of Jesus in the temple (Luke 2: 22) and to his discovery there after being lost (2: 41–51). The Lukan temptation account reverses Matthew's order for the last two temptations, so the climax is reached in Jerusalem (4: 9). The transfiguration at the end of the Galilean ministry explicitly prepares for the journey to Jerusalem and Jesus' death (9: 31). The journey itself begins with a solemn announcement (9: 51), followed by multiple references, during the journey, to Jesus' destination (13: 22, 33–34; 17: 11; 18: 31; 19: 11, 28). After Jesus' resurrection, all his appearances take place in the environs of Jerusalem, the last of them ending with his instruction "Stay in the city" (24: 1–49).

The movement of Acts is away from Jerusalem. Jesus says in Acts 1: 8, "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." This is fulfilled by the narrative: the ministry centered in Jerusalem (chaps. 1–7) is followed by the evangelization of Judea and Samaria (chaps. 8–12), then Asia Minor and Europe (chaps. 13–28). Each outward movement, in turn, circles back to Jerusalem before reaching out still further (see Acts 12: 25; 15: 2; 18: 22; 19: 21; 20: 16; 21: 13; 25: 1).

Jerusalem is therefore the center of the narrative.

3. Why is the retelling of the Moses story in Acts 7: 17–44 important for grasping the structure of Luke-Acts as a whole?

Both Jesus and the apostles are described in terms reminiscent of Moses. The connection, moreover, is made even firmer in the description of Moses found in Stephen's speech (Acts 7: 17–44). His discourse at first sight appears to be a straightforward retelling of the biblical version. Closer examination shows that Luke has selected and structured the Moses story so that it matches exactly the story of Jesus and his witnesses.

... The pattern of the Moses story provides the fundamental structure for Luke's two-volume work. In the Gospel, we read the story of God's first sending of the prophet Jesus to "visit" his people for their "salvation" (Luke 1: 68; 7: 16; 19: 44); of their initial rejection of the salvation, out of ignorance; and of Jesus' being "raised up" from death. In Acts, we find his establishment in power signified by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the sending of his witnesses filled with that Spirit, and the second offer to Israel of salvation "in his name" (Acts 4: 12; 5: 31). This time, the cost of a refusal is separation from God's people. The pattern also shows us the precise reason the Jerusalem narrative is so dominant and critical: it is in Jerusalem that the first rejection, the empowerment, the second offer, and either acceptance or rejection by the people all occur.

4. What is the importance of the baptism of Cornelius and his family (Acts 10) for Luke's story?

The gospel is carried to Antioch on the Orontes and preached to Greeks by those who were scattered because of the Stephen persecution (11: 19–26). Barnabas, who had shown himself doubly submissive to the authority of the Twelve (he had placed his possessions at their feet and had received a new name from them, 4: 37), is sent to confirm the Antiochean mission (11: 22), a certification all the more important because Paul will come from that church. In the meantime, Peter works wonders in the coast towns of Lydda and Joppa (9: 32–43), ending up in Caesarea. In his conversion of the centurion Cornelius (chap. 10), we have the first narrative description of gentile conversion and its consequences.

5. Why does Luke retell the "call" of Saul/Paul three times in the narrative of Acts? Are different aspects emphasized in each?

Paul was not alone in bringing the "good news" to the Gentiles, nor even the first. For Luke, however, he was preeminent in that mission. It was a ministry, furthermore, carried out in obedience to Jesus' command, which is emphasized in Luke's three versions of Paul's apostolic call. The first is found in direct narrative (Acts 9: 1–9), the others in Paul's speeches of defense (22: 6–21; 26: 12–23). All three versions tell the same story, with some

variations: his companions, for example, hear the voice but see nothing in 9: 7, while in 22: 9 they see the light but are deaf to the voice. The element of shining light is constant in all three accounts and is connected to his commission to be a light to the Gentiles. The climax of each version is reached with the command to go to the Gentiles (9: 15; 22: 21; 26: 23). In the defense speeches, this creates a negative response (22: 22; 26: 24). As with the rejection of Jesus in Nazareth, the Jewish refusal of the prophet's message has something to do with its universal scope.