

**New Revised Standard Version**

**International Standard Version**

**God’s Word Translation**

Who was Theophilus? (from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theophilus\\_\(biblical\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theophilus_(biblical)) )

- A Jew of Alexandria according to the tradition of the Coptic church.
- A Roman official because Luke referred to him as "most excellent" in Luke 1:3.
- Not a person but the learned (academic) but unnamed men and women of the era. Theophilus means "Friend of God" and Luke and Acts were addressed to anyone who fits that description.
- Paul's lawyer during the period of his trial in Rome, based upon the formal language in the prologue to the Gospel ("eye witnesses", "account", "carefully investigated", "know the certainty of things which you have been instructed").
- Theophilus ben Ananus, High Priest in Jerusalem from 37-41, or Mattathias ben Theophilus, High Priest from 65-66.
- Titus Flavius Sabinus II, a converted Roman official, former Prefect of Rome older brother of future Roman Emperor Vespasian, and Lord Mayor of Rome who tried to protect Paul while he was under house arrest during his first stay in Rome. Another theory adds that Luke was Sabinus' slave and Luke cured him of an illness. In return Sabinus set Luke free and he travels with Paul to Antioch dedicating the book of Acts to Sabinus.

<sup>1</sup>In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning <sup>2</sup>until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.

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<sup>1</sup>In my first book, Theophilus, I wrote about what Jesus began to do and teach. This included everything from the beginning of his life <sup>2</sup>until the day he was taken to heaven. Before he was taken to heaven, he gave instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles, whom he had chosen.

1. Is the writer identified in the text? Who is the writer commonly assumed to be? Is the “first book” identified in the text? What is the first book commonly assumed to be? What does the writer summarize as the content of the first book?
2. To whom is the writer addressing this book? Do we know who the addressee is?
3. The first book is also addressed to Theophilus (see Luke 1:3). How do these two books together make a complete set?

<sup>3</sup>After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

<sup>3</sup>After he had suffered, he had shown himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during a period of 40 days and telling them about the kingdom of God.

<sup>3</sup>After his death Jesus showed the apostles a lot of convincing evidence that he was alive. For 40 days he appeared to them and talked with them about God’s kingdom.

4. When, and to whom, did Jesus show himself to be alive?
5. Where might we find the “many convincing proofs” documented? Would Thophilus have access to this/these document(s)? How many is “many”?
6. During what timeframe were these proofs given? Why is this timeframe significant?
7. What else did he do during this timeframe? Why?

**Acts 1:1-11****Which promise is for you?****New Revised Standard Version****International Standard Version****God's Word Translation**

<sup>4</sup>While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; <sup>5</sup>for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

<sup>4</sup>While he was meeting with them, he ordered them, "Don't leave Jerusalem. Instead, wait for what the Father has promised, about which you heard me speak, <sup>5</sup>because John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit a few days from now."

<sup>4</sup>Once, while he was meeting with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for what the Father had promised. Jesus said to them, "I've told you what the Father promises: <sup>5</sup>John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

8. What did Jesus tell the disciples to do? Why?

9. What is the promise of the Father? How does the action of this promise mirror the actions of John the Baptizer? How is it different?

10. What might the disciples have understood the Holy Spirit to mean?

<sup>6</sup>So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" <sup>7</sup>He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

<sup>6</sup>Now those who had gathered together began to ask Jesus, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" <sup>7</sup>He answered them, "It isn't for you to know what times or periods the Father has fixed by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you'll receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

<sup>6</sup>So when the apostles came together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you're going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

<sup>7</sup>Jesus told them, "You don't need to know about times or periods that the Father has determined by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes to you. Then you will be my witnesses to testify about me in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

11. What is the promise of the Father? How does the action of this promise mirror the actions of John the Baptizer? How is it different?

12. As what part of speech is the word "so" being used? (*hint: it starts with con and ends with junction*) What two ideas is it joining together? How do these two ideas compare and contrast with each other (Jesus' statement in verse 5 and the disciples question in verse 6)? What does this say about the disciple's expectation of how the Father's promise would be fulfilled?

13. How does Jesus respond? Do you think there is a hint of correction in his answer?

14. What role does Jesus say the disciples will play after receiving the Father's promise? What two places does he mention? What is the significance of these two places? Beyond these two places, where will they play their role? How literally or figuratively should we take these words?

**Acts 1:1-11****Which promise is for you?****New Revised Standard Version****International Standard Version****God's Word Translation**

<sup>9</sup>When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. <sup>11</sup>They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

<sup>9</sup>After saying this, Jesus was taken up while those who had gathered together were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, two men in white robes stood right beside them. <sup>11</sup>They asked, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This same Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you saw him go up into heaven."

<sup>9</sup>After he had said this, he was taken to heaven. A cloud hid him so that they could no longer see him.  
<sup>10</sup>They were staring into the sky as he departed. Suddenly, two men in white clothes stood near them. <sup>11</sup>They asked, "Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking at the sky? Jesus, who was taken from you to heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven."

15. What happens next? How immediate do you think this action was?
16. Limiting yourself to verse 9, how might the disciples be feeling when this event happens?
17. Continue to verse 10, what happens? Is the action of verse 10 sequential or coincidental with verse 9? What do the disciples hear in verse 11?
18. Summary of key actions:
  - a. What does Jesus say will happen?
  - b. What do the disciples ask will happen?
  - c. What does Jesus answer and do?
  - d. What do the disciples see and hear?
19. If you were one of the disciples, without the benefit of hindsight and staying in the moment of the events, what might your understanding of these events be?
20. What are three promises sprinkled through this passage? Are you able to "hang your hat" on any of these promises? If so, how?