Winter 2020 Exegesis Exam

Ministry Context

Acts 8:4-25
As the celebration of Pentecost approaches, you begin planning a Bible study series focusing on the call to be witnesses “in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). As part of this series you decide to include a 60-minute Bible study on Acts 8:4-25.

Section I: Language, Historical Situation, and Scriptural and Theological Context

Language of the Text

Write an essay response to the following exegetical question. This response must focus on the biblical text. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section I.

First Required Response

In your reading of Acts 8:10, you discover various translations describing Simon:

“This man is the power of God that is called Great.” (New Revised Standard Version)

“This man is great with the power of God.” (21st Century King James Version)

“This man is the great power of God.” (Modern English Version)

Based on evidence from early biblical manuscripts and the Greek grammar and syntax, discuss the differences among these translations.

Choose a published translation of Acts 8:10, or provide your own translation, and justify your choice using the evidence discussed above.

Explain how your findings inform your understanding of Acts 8:4-25. Limit your response to 600 words.

Historical Situation

Write an essay response to the following exegetical question. This response must focus on the biblical text. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section I.
Second Required Response

Describe the practice of magic and the role of magicians in the Greco-Roman world of the first century CE. Explain how your findings inform your understanding of Acts 8:4-25. Limit your response to 600 words.

Write an essay response to the following exegetical question. This response must focus on the biblical text. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section I.

Third Required Response

Discuss the geographical, social, and religious relationship between Samaria and Judea in the first century CE. Explain how this discussion informs your interpretation of Acts 8:4-25. Limit your response to 600 words.

Scriptural and Theological Context

Write an essay response to the following exegetical question. This response must focus on the biblical text. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section I.

Fourth Required Response


Explain how your discussion informs your interpretation of Acts 8:15-20. Limit your response to 600 words.

Section II: Careful and Critical Interpretation

Write an essay presenting your interpretation of Acts 8:4-25 based on your full exegetical study of the passage (not just material presented in Section I). Support your interpretation by a careful and critical analysis of the text that reflects the use of scholarly resources. Limit your essay to 1,200 words.

This essay must focus on the biblical text and provide a basis for your application in Section III: Application. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section II.
Section III:

Application

Provide a lesson plan, outline, or summary of themes, for your 60-minute Bible study that addresses the required ministry context. Your work must be based on your careful and critical interpretation of the biblical text presented in Section II. Limit your work to 600 words.

Your response to Section III must address the ministry context.

Works Cited
In the text box below, provide a list of all resources cited in your exam responses. Do not include in this list any Internet link that indicates a seminary library or commercial bibliographic database that is available only through subscription or library account (e.g., https://ezproxy.presbysem.edu/).