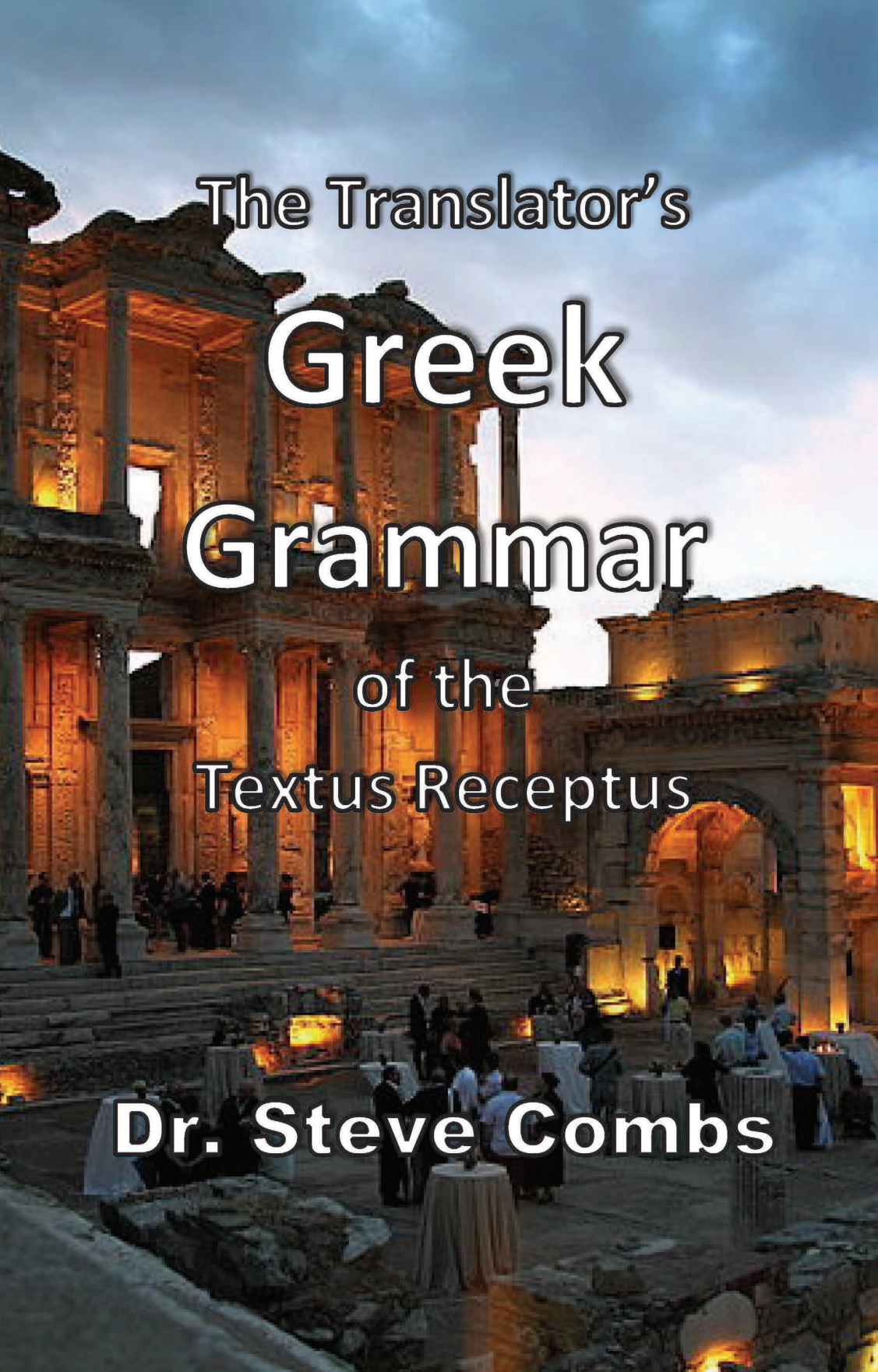
The Translator's
Greek
Grammar
of the
Textus Receptus
Dr. Steve Combs

The Translator's
Grammar
of the
Textus Receptus

SAMPLE PAGES

SAMPLE PAGES

The Translator's Grammar of the Textus Receptus

By
Dr. Steve Combs, Th. D.

Published in the USA by
The Old Paths Publications
www.theoldpathspublications.com
and
Global Bible Translators
www.bpsglobal.org

SAMPLE PAGES

Copyright © 2021 by *Steve Combs*

ISBN: 978-1-7376384-4-5

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from the copyright owner in writing (11-17-2021)

The Author may be contacted by writing:
bpsg.scombs@gmail.org

This grammar of New Testament Greek is based entirely on the Greek Received Text and examples are primarily taken from the New Testament with emphasis on the Gospel of John and the Book of Romans.
English Bible quotations are from the King James Version.

Cover photo obtained from a Wikipedia article on the Library of Celcus in Ephesus. The author is the Austrian Archaeology Institute. Public Domain

Published in the USA by
The Old Paths Publications
www.theoldpathspublications.com
and
Global Bible Translators
www.bpsglobal.org

SAMPLE PAGES

Table of Contents

Chap.	Topics	Page
	Acknowledgments	11
	Author's Preface: The Purpose of this Book	15
	Part 1: Introduction to the Greek New Testament	
1	Inspiration, Preservation, and Authority of the Bible	21
2	History of the Text: The Traditional Text	36
3	History of the Text: The Received Text the KJV, and the UBS	66
4	A Bible Believer Asks, Why Use Greek and Hebrew?	84
5	The Great Need for Bible Translating	87
	Part 2: Introduction to New Testament Greek	
6	The Greek Alphabet, Its Pronunciation, and Accents	96
7	How to do a Greek Word Study in E-sword	101
	Part 3: Basic Greek Grammar	
8	The Gospel of John Chapter 1 in Greek and English	108
9	The Article	113
10	Verbs: Imperfect Active, Middle, and Passive Indicative; The Imperfect of Εἰμί	116
11	Nouns: The Second Declension; Uses of Nominative Case	124
12	Nouns: The First Declension; Uses of the Dative Case	129
13	Prepositions and Conjunctions; Uses of Prepositional Phrases	136
14	Verbs: Present Active Indicative, Present Middle and Passive; Indicative, and Vowel Contraction	143

SAMPLE PAGES

15 Personal Pronouns…….. 150

16 Other Pronouns:
Demonstrative, Interrogative, Indefinite, Reflexive, and Relative …… 155

17 Adjectives of the First and Second Declension;
Agreement of Adjectives; Attributive and Predicate Positions of Adjectives; Use of an Adjective as a Substantive; The Declension of πᾶς, πολύς, μέγας……. 162

18 Comparison Adjectives, Adverbs, and Genitives;
Declension of μειζων; Adverbs of Place; and Use of ἤ…….. 168

19 Verb: First and Second Aorist Tense
First Aorist Endings on Second Aorist Stems; Constructions with πιστευω; Use of the Aorist Tense; The Aorist of Εἰμί…….. 174

20 The Future Active, Middle, and Passive Indicative…… 181

21 The Third Declension;
Adjectives of the Third Declension…….. 188

22 Present Participles;
The Nominative of Appellation; Uses of the Genitive…. 195

23 Aorist Participles; Additional General Uses of Participles;
Genitive Absolute; More Uses of the Genitive Case……. 203

24 The Perfect and Pluperfect Tenses; Perfect Participle…… 212

25 The Subjunctive Mood;
Conditional Clauses; Μη Used as a Conjunction; the Subjunctive and ινα; Subjunctive of εἰμί; Review Jn. 1:6-7; Dative of Possession; Purpose Clauses; Inserted Word…… 218

26 Imperatives and Infinitives
Direct and Indirect Discourse; Review Jn. 1:8-10; Word Order in Translation; Use of Italics in Translation; Διά with the Genitive and the

SAMPLE PAGES

Expression of Agency…… 228

27 General Points of Grammar I:

ὑπό with the genitive, The Dative of Means, The Negatives οὐ and μή, Various Cases with Verbs, Proper Names; Review Jn. 1:11-13; Pronoun Showing Possession, ἴδιος; Polysemy and the Meaning of Words…… 241

28 Μι Verbs; Review Jn. 1:14-16;

The Meaning of Μονογενῆ, Only-begotten; Flexibility of the word γίνομαι…….. 246

29 General Points of Grammar II:

The Second Aorist of γινώσκω; The Article Before μέν and δέ; Aorist Participle and Leading Verb; First Aorist on Second Aorist Stems; ἕως and ἄν with Subjunctive; Review of John 1:17-20; Abstract Nouns; The Preposition εἰς; Attributive and Predicate Positions of Adjectives; Consistency in Bible Translation; Uses of ὅτι…… 254

30 Numbers; Review of John 1:21-24;

Implied Information; The Article as a Pronoun…….. 260

31 Review of John 1:25-30

εἰ verses εἶ, the Importance of Accent; Personal Pronouns Used for Emphasis; Word Analysis-Preferred or Made; The Historical Present; Figures of Speech in Historical Context; Collocational Clash…… 266

32 Review of John 1:31-35

Flexibility in Translation; Uses of ἐν with the Dative….. 270

33 Review John 1:36-40

Uses of the Conjunction δὲ; Grammatical Structure and Meaning; Word Order; παρὰ

SAMPLE PAGES

with the Genitive of Person…… 274

34 Review of John 1: 41-45

The Foundational Method of Bible Translation; Basic Guidelines for Translating Idioms; Figures of Speech; Shifts in Verb Tense; The Word Would…… 279

35 Review of John 1:46-51

Adding To or Taking Away from Scripture; Ambiguities; Cultural Substitutes; Anachronisms; The Role of Teachers…… 292

36 Summary of Greek Grammar…… 305

Abbreviations…… 314
Greek to English Lexicon…… 315
About the Author…… 357
Index…… 358
Notes…… 368

SAMPLE PAGES

4 ὁ δὲ Θεὸς, πλούσιος ὢν ἐν ἐλέει, διὰ τὴν
πολλὴν ἀγάπην αὐτοῦ ἣν ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς,
5 καὶ ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς
παραπτώμασι συνεζωοποίησε τῷ Χριστῷ
(χάριτί ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι),
6 καὶ συνήγειρε, καὶ συνεκάθισεν ἐν τοῖς
ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ· (Eph. 2:4-6)

How deep the Father's love for us?
How vast beyond all measure?
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure

SAMPLE PAGES

SAMPLE PAGES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND A SHORT BIBLIOGRAPHY

In producing this grammar, the author would like to acknowledge his debt to the following teachers and their works.

Aristarhos Matsukas. *Greek A Complete Course for Beginners.* London: Hodder & Stoughton Educational. 1997. Print.

Bagster, Samuel. *The Analytical Greek Lexicon.* London: Samuel Bagster and Sons; New York: John Wiley and Son. 1870. Google Facsimile Edition.

Beekman, John and Callow, John. *Translating the Word of God.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. 1974.

Betts, Gavin. *Complete New Testament Greek.* Google Books Edition: 2012.

Burton, Ernest De Witt. *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek.* Figment Publishing: figmentdigital.com. 2011. Kindle Edition: Amazon.com.

Donegan, James. *A New Greek and English Lexicon.* Boston: Hilliard, Gray, and Company. 1833. Google Facsimile Edition.

Dongell, Joseph R. *Elementary New Testament Greek.* Wilmore, Ky: Firstfruits Press. 2014. Digital Version: The Academic Open Press of Asbury Theological Seminary. Web.

Douglas Q. Adams. *Essential Modern Greek Grammar.* New York: Dover Publications Inc. 1987. Print.

Frederick Blass, Phil. *Grammar of New Testament Greek.* London: Macmillan and Company. 1898. Google Books Facsimile Edition.

G. Abbott-Smith. *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament.* New York: Scribner's Sons. 1936. Print.

Goodwin, William W. *A Greek Grammar.* Boston: Ginn and Company. 1900. Google Books Facsimile Edition.

Green, Thomas Sheldon. *A Greek-English Lexicon to The New Testament, Revised and Enlarged.* Project Gutenberg E-book. 2012. Public Domain.

Hara Garoufalia-Middle. *Conversational Greek in 7 Days.* Chicago: Passport Books. 1991. Print.

SAMPLE PAGES

H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey. *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament.* Ontario: The Macmillian Company. 1955. Print.

Hamilton, Henry R. *An English-Greek Lexicon*. London: John Weale. 1855. Google Facsimile Edition.

Hildebrandt, Ted. *Mastering New Testament Greek Textbook.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic. 2003. Found online at: https://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted_hildebrandt/New_Testament_Greek/Mastering_Books/MNTG_Textbook_2017.pdf

https://www.logosapostolic.org/greek/numerals.htm

Machen, J. Gresham. *New Testament Greek for Beginners.* Ontario: The Macmillan Company. 1951. Print.

Metzger, Bruce. *Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek.* Princeton: The Theological Book Agency. 1976. Print.

Moulton, Harold K., ed. *The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. 1978. Print.

Packhurst, John, M.A. *A Greek and English Lexicon to the New Testament.* London: Thomas Davidson, Whitefriars. 1829. Google Facsimile Edition.

Pappas, John P. *Bible Greek Basic Grammar of the New Testament*. A companion to the video instruction found at Biblegreekvpod.com. 2016. Web.

Pappas, John P. *An Intermediate Grammar for New Testament Greek.* http://www.biblegreekvpod.com/?page_id=77. 2018. Web.

Pickering, John. *A Greek and English Lexicon.* Third edition. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little, and Watkins, 1832. Google Facsimile Edition.

Robertson, A. T. *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in Light of Historical Research*. Kindle Edition. Web.

Rollinson, Shirley J. *Online Greek Textbook*. Portales, NM. Web. 1999. http://www.drshirley.org/greek/textbook02.

Smelser, Jeff. *Three Graduated Courses in New Testament Greek.* Web. ntgreek.net.

Strong, James. Greek in a Nutshell. Kindle Edition: Amazon.com. Originally entered into the Library of Congress 1876. Web.

Strong, James. *Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries.* 1890. Included in E-sword.net free Bible software download, copyright 2000-2019. Web.

SAMPLE PAGES

Taylor, Jim. *In Defense of the Textus Receptus.* Theoldpathspublications.com. 2016. Nook Edition.

Thayer, Joseph Henry. *Thayer's Greek Definitions.* 1889. Included in E-sword.net free Bible software download, copyright 2000-2019.

Turner, Charles V. *Biblical Bible Translating.* Lafayette, In: Sovereign Grace Publishers, 2001. Print.

Vance, Lawrence M. *Greek Verbs in the New Testament and their Principal Parts*. Pensacola: Vance Publications. 2006. Print.

Zodhiates, Spiros. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament.* 2018. Included in E-sword.net free Bible software download, copyright 2000-2019.

And ...

Dr. Robert Gromacki of Cedarville University, Cedarville, Ohio: A great teacher of Greek and the Bible. 1975-1977.

Dr. Jim Taylor, Missionary in Korea, Pastor, Bible Institute Professor, Bible translator, author, and Chief Translation Advisor for Global Bible Translators: for his friendship, his many helpful suggestions, and for reviewing this volume.

SAMPLE PAGES

SAMPLE PAGES

AUTHOR'S PREFACE:
THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

As you may have noticed from the Acknowledgments, many Greek grammars have been written. Those listed are only a few of them. Why would I write one more and further choke an already choked field? In my personal opinion, many grammars were written to turn students into critical scholars or to turn students into pastors who can become critics of the Bibles they preach in their own languages and confidently declare to their congregation, "A better translation would be …" I am not trying to create scholars. I am not trying to create doubt in the student, either in the Greek New Testament or in the English KJV. I am trying to turn students into 1) translators who can confidently, accurately, and skillfully translate the word of God into the many languages of the world, 2) to train students who want to learn the New Testament in its original language, 3) to provide a manual that will help Bible Students understand Greek grammar when they use computer Bible tools such as E-sword. After all, God inspired the New Testament in Greek and those inspired Greek words are also the Word of God.

From the start of this book, you should know some things about my use of Greek and Hebrew. First, I do not use Greek and Hebrew to criticize or try to discredit the KJV, as many do. I use these languages to explain and defend the KJV. Second, I do not believe that a Christian must know Greek and Hebrew to understand the Bible or know the will of God. The English Bible (KJV) is completely sufficient to perfect the Christian. This whole book is based on the idea that every Christian needs the Word of God in his own language and the Greek New Testament can help accomplish that. Third, I believe that the Greek New Testament Received Text and the Ben Chayim Hebrew Masoretic Old Testament are the preserved word of God in those languages. The current and accepted form of these texts is the Scrivener 1881 edition of the Received Text and the Ginsburg edition of the Ben Chayim Hebrew Old Testament. Furthermore, I can confidently say that the KJV is not only the best and most accurate English translation of the Greek and Hebrew texts, but it is a completely accurate translation, and it is, therefore, the Word of God in English.

So, now we can go back to our question. There are many grammars of the Greek New Testament. There seems to be no end to them. So, why write another one? Several distinctives in this grammar make it unique.

1. This grammar is based on the Textus Receptus Greek text and specifically uses the Global Edition (2020) of the Scrivener 1881 text. Many of the current grammars embrace modern textual scholarship,

SAMPLE PAGES

which rejects the Textus Receptus, and their Greek grammars are based on the United Bible Societies critical Greek text or on the Westcott and Hort text.

2. Most grammars focus on the history of the Greek language in their introductions or prefaces. The introductory section of this grammar focuses on the doctrines of the inspiration and preservation of the Bible and the history of the Greek New Testament. It details the history of the Traditional text (the majority of the ancient handwritten copies), the history of the Textus Receptus printed Greek text that came from the Traditional text (it is also called the Received Text or simply, TR), and how the King James English translation is connected to them. The KJV is included for two reasons. First, it is the only completely accurate representative of the Received Text among popular English translations. Second, the last edition of the TR, the 1881 Scrivener edition, was edited based on revisions in the TR that were made by the KJV translators. All this information (and much more) is also in my book, *A Practical Theology of Bible Translating*.

3. This grammar is also based on the translation choices of the KJV. We can learn a great deal from the words chosen and the methods used by the KJV translators. The KJV translation team consisted of 47 outstanding scholars. These men had a level of learning and understanding of the original languages that few can rival in the current day. There is nothing known today about the meaning of Greek and Hebrew words that the KJV translators did not know or could not learn. Following the European Renaissance, the Greek learning of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries came from the Greek speakers of Greek in the Greek Orthodox Church and the inhabitants of Eastern lands, many of whom had fled the invasion of the Muslims into Europe. Knowledge of Hebrew came from the Jews.

4. This grammar includes the entire text of John 1 in Greek and English. The grammar is based on this chapter for the purpose of enabling translators to translate that and the remainder of the Book of John.

5. The lessons start with John 1:1 and explain the topics raised by that and succeeding verses. The topics are drawn from the text of the New Testament, along with any additional grammatical points that apply. This necessitates that the topics are covered in a different order than is often used when teaching Greek. However, the overall teaching

SAMPLE PAGES

will fit together nicely. From time to time, it will be necessary to deviate slightly from this path and we will skip ahead to a verse or verses that bring up topics that need to be addressed before others. Also, sometimes we will look at detailed aspects of Greek that are important but may not fit with a specific verse in John.

6. All aspects of basic grammar will be covered. This method has the advantage of allowing the student to study, understand, and translate words, phrases, and verses in the Greek New Testament quite early in the lessons.

7. Examples and exercises are drawn from the Received Greek Text with only rare exceptions.

8. It is the goal of this text to give the student all the understanding and tools he needs to accurately translate the Book of John. After that experience, he or she will be able to go on to the rest of the New Testament with the help of the Holy Spirit and the advice of the KJB.

9. The book (especially the final chapters) includes instruction on key principles of translating.

Using This Grammar with Computer Programs Such as E-Sword or The Word

One further very important purpose of this grammar is that it can be used without a formal study of Greek. There are many Christians who would like to know how to use Greek but have not and will not have an opportunity or an inclination to study grammar. This book provides them the information and tools they need to do this.

This book provides instruction in the Robinson Morphological Codes that reveal the part of speech of each Greek word in *free* computer programs such as E-Sword, The Word, and My-Sword. This will make the grammar useful to those who have not and perhaps will not attend a formal class on Greek. It will enable the student and the translator to effectively use the Greek tools available in this free software. They will learn the meaning of different aspects of Greek grammar and how they should be translated. They will be able to identify the grammar by the coding system in e-sword. This will enable them to

SAMPLE PAGES

go beyond mere word studies and definitions and make it possible for them to use the grammar itself.

It is easy to obtain these apps. You can get E-sword at www.e-sword.net, The Word at www.theword.net, and, for Android phones, Mysword can be found by searching "mysword Bible app for android". All of these applications are free to obtain, although there are certain additional features with each that can be purchased. The free portion of the applications are extremely robust and sufficient in and of themselves. E-sword is available for PC, I-phone, I-pad, and Mac. Mysword, a very similar product, is available for Android phones and Android tablets. The Word is available for PC and Mac. Of course, all of this is available for these purposes and at these locations at the time of this writing and could change in the future.

This book is based on E-sword, but it can be used with the other two. If the student has not already downloaded E-sword, please do so with the modules that are listed at the end of this preface. E-sword not only includes Robinsons Morphological Codes, but also several lexicons for Greek and Hebrew Words. The Greek text in the Textus Receptus module, Greek NT TR+, appears as follows.

Joh 1:1 εvG1722 PREP αρχηG746 N-DSF ηvG1510 V-IAI-3S οG3588 T-NSM

The Greek word, αρχη, *arche*, means *beginning*. The number, G746, is the Strong's definition of the word. Put your cursor on the number and the definition pops up. The code, N-DSF, means that αρχη is a **N**oun-**D**ative case, **S**ingular number, **F**eminine gender. There are many such codes. The student needs to know and understand what these codes mean and ways they are translated. The student can learn these things with this book.

Pronunciation, Case System, Paradigms, Accents

The usual system of pronunciation taught in Bible colleges and seminaries is a system that evolved from the one used in the early days of printed Greek texts. However, to use the term *system* (singular) may be a misnomer. There are several systems that have been used over the years and they vary in Greek grammars. The system of pronunciation used in this grammar may also be viewed as a variation, but it has a cultural basis. The official and common Greek spoken and written in Greece today is called Demotic Greek. The system of pronunciation in this grammar is based on Demotic Greek. In other words, it is the pronunciation currently used by actual Greeks.

SAMPLE PAGES

There are two case systems taught for Greek nouns: a five-case system and an eight-case system. When I was learning Greek at Cedarville University, I first studied from a grammar by J. Gresham Machen. He taught the five-case system. The authors of my intermediate grammar taught the eight-case system. This grammar embraces the five-case system. You should understand that the eight-case system is based on various uses of the nouns, not on actual grammatical forms. In reality, there are only *five different* grammatical noun forms. For that reason, I teach the five-case system.

Many grammars have a section in the back called "paradigms," which is a section that repeats all the declensions and conjugations without the explanatory text. This often makes it easier to look up all the various forms of Greek words. The present volume dispenses with the section on paradigms. The reason for this is that the table of contents makes it easy to find the chapter that contains the declensions and conjugations. Then, in the chapters, you will find it easy to locate the actual forms. The section on paradigms is considered unnecessary.

Greek words carry accent marks, which will be explained later. Often, grammars spend a lot of time on the rules of accent. This grammar does not. Since the emphasis of this grammar is on translating from Greek to other languages, rather than from those languages *into* Greek, it is not deemed necessary to instruct the student on how to properly accent Greek words. Therefore, only minor attention is given to that subject.

A Short History of the Greek Language

Greek is a very ancient language. Scholars have traced Greek writing back about 3500 years, according to Wikipedia.[1] That is interesting, because Javan, the son of Japheth, the son of Noah, founded Greece. Larry Pierceon, in an article written for Answers in Genesis, gave evidence that Egialeus, king of the Greek city of Sicyon, west of Corinthin Peloponnesus, began his reign in 2089 BC.[2] That was about 261 years after the Great Flood of Genesis 6-8. So, the history of the Greek language actually goes back more than 4000 years.

The form of Greek we call "Classical" was prevalent in Greece from about 500 BC to 300 BC. Classical Greek was the language in which the Greek philosophical literature of men like Plato, Epicurus, and Aristotle was written. Classical Greek was divided into several dialects.

Upon the primary foundation of the Attic dialect, a common form of Greek developed within the army of Alexander the Great, who died in 323 BC. This common Greek was spread from Greece to India in the East and to Egypt in the south. We know this common Greek by the name Koine Greek. By the First

SAMPLE PAGES

Century A. D., it was the dominant form of Greek throughout the Roman Empire and is the language of the New Testament.

About 303 A. D., the Roman Emperor, Constantine, renamed the city of Byzantium (now Istanbul) in Asia Minor to Constantinople. In 359 A.D., it became the capital of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire. Koine was the language of the Eastern Empire at that time. After the fall of the Western half of the Empire about 500 A.D., the Eastern Empire became known as the Byzantine Empire, which lasted until its fall to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 A.D. The Greek of the period 500-1453 AD flowed from Koine and is called Medieval Greek or Byzantine Greek. It was the language of the Government, the people, the Eastern Church, scholarship, the arts, and a common trade language of people of diverse mother tongues. Eventually, Byzantine Greek developed into the current form of common Greek, now called Demotic Greek or Standard Modern Greek.

It is my prayer that this grammar will be a blessing to many and will help produce many excellent translators of the Bible, who also have confidence and trust in the Greek Received Text.

Steve Combs, 2021

SAMPLE PAGES

CHAPTER ONE
THE INSPIRATION, PRESERVATION, AND AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Tim. 3:16)
For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (2 Pet. 1:21)
Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Mat. 4:4)

The very foundation of Bible translating is a firm Biblical conviction about the nature of the Bible itself. God has an extremely high view of Scripture. Every translator must have the exalted view of Scripture that God Himself has. Everything depends on this. The accuracy and clarity of a translation depends on it.

The Bible is a book unlike any other. It gives us the knowledge of God. It is filled with wisdom, it reveals the future, it declares the will of God, and it shows us the plan of God for the salvation of mankind. Its truth makes the philosophies of mankind to appear what they are, foolish. The Bible is the greatest book on psychology ever written. When it speaks of science and history, it is never wrong. The character of the Bible screams to us that it can only come from one source: God Himself. That is what *inspiration* is all about. So, the Bible, the Scriptures, comes to us from God. He has also declared that He will preserve it word-perfect; therefore, the Bible carries the authority of God and we can read it today. This truth was expressed many years ago in the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith and in the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith.

> The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them. [3]

The Scriptures came into the world by inspiration, from that point they were preserved by God's singular care and providence, and they are the final

SAMPLE PAGES

appeal in all matters (authority). When the Scriptures speak, the matter is settled. They are inspired, preserved, and the final authority in all matters.

The Inspiration of the Bible

In the Greek text of 2 Timothy 3:16, the word for *inspiration* is *theopneustos,* and literally means *God breathed*. However, this makes very little sense in English and needs some explanation. It was the Greek's way of saying *inspired by God*. One thing it certainly means is that God is the origin of all Scripture. God is the only author. He used men as His instruments to write the words down, but the words were all from His heart and mind. It has been stated this way: "The perfect author of the perfect Bible is God." [4]

A clear statement of the process and product of inspiration is found in Matthew 4:4: "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*." The words of Scripture proceeded out of God's mouth; they were God-breathed. They may have been spoken by men, they may have been written down by men, but they came out of the mouth of God. Since God is a Spirit (John 4:24), this is a metaphor to help us understand that every word of Scripture comes from God. He is the origin and author of the words, all the words.

We often speak of *verbal plenary* inspiration. That simply means this. *Verbal* inspiration is that God inspired every single individual word. Every separate word is a Word of God. *Plenary* inspiration means all of Scripture, as a whole, is inspired. Nothing in Scripture escapes the label *inspired*. *Every word* of Scripture and the *whole* is inspired.

The words of God were inspired when they were "*given*" (2 Tim. 3:16). Inspiration points to the time when God first gave them to mankind in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. The term does not belong to any time or period of time afterward. It does not refer to the making of copies and it does not refer to translations. Copies and translations have to do with the *transmission* of Scripture *through* history. Inspiration pertains to the *entrance* of Scripture *into* history. If 2 Timothy 3:16 applies to a copy or translation, then *every time* a translation is made, it is inspired, and *every time* a copy was made it was inspired. If *that* is true, then there would be no mistakes in any copy or translation, because God does not make mistakes. However, some copies have errors and some translations have errors, so they cannot be inspired.

I do not want anyone to misunderstand me here. When people talk about the inspiration of a translation, they are usually referring to the King James Bible. So, do not misunderstand me. I believe the KJB is the Word of God without error. Some may still misunderstand me, because they prefer to call the King James an *accurate* translation, rather than inerrant. Indeed, it is

SAMPLE PAGES

accurate. But what does that mean? The word accurate is defined as "free from error especially as the result of care." [5] If the KJB is an *accurate* translation (and it is), then, by definition, it is *without error*. However, it is not the accurate Word of God by *inspiration*. It is the accurate Word of God by *providentially guided translation* of the words that were given by inspiration and then preserved.

Some think that the KJV is inspired because 2 Timothy 3:16 uses the present tense, "*is given*." I presume, they reason that if it refers only to the first giving of Scripture, it would say "was given." Since it says "*is given*" that means *inspiration* applied when the KJB translation was "given." It stands to reason, if that is true, that inspiration applies *whenever any* copy or translation is "given" (see comment above).

However, that is not the reason why the KJB and the Greek text use the present tense. The reason is this. *At the time* Paul wrote 2 Timothy 3:16 *the canon of Scripture was not yet complete.* At the time, inspiration was still occurring. Therefore, the present tense is used. At that time, God was still planning to inspire more Scripture. For example, the Book of Revelation had not yet been written. Inspiration, then, applies to the miraculous work of God whereby He *first gave* the Scriptures in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

How did God give Scripture and how did He use men to do it? God used various methods. The Scriptures themselves give us some additional information and examples of what God did. Foremost among them is 2 Peter 1:16-21.

> *16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*
> *17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*
> *18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*
> *19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*
> *20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*
> *21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (2 Peter 1:16-21)*

SAMPLE PAGES

God started with holy men. The Spirit of God "moved" these men to speak words that He chose. These words were written down by an assistant who was listening. An example of this is found in Jeremiah 36.

> *1 And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,*
> *2 Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day.*
> *3 It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.*
> *4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.* (Jer. 36:1-4)

Even Paul used the speaking method. Romans 16:22 says, "I *Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.*" The letter was sent to Rome from Paul, not Tertius. Paul spoke the words of the letter and Tertius was his assistant writing it down.

However, Paul seems to have written some of his work himself. 1 Corinthians 16:1 tells us, "*The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.*" Paul wrote the greeting himself, otherwise it appears the same procedure was used. "*Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand"* (Gal. 6:11). It has been suggested that Paul wrote the end of the epistle to the Galatians and used large letters because he had eye trouble (Gal. 4:15). Regardless, at times Paul wrote himself and at times he dictated to an assistant.

A similar method was used to give the law in Deuteronomy. Moses spoke all the law to Israel and Moses Himself wrote the words (Deut. 31:9).

When dealing with this subject, commentators usually reject out of hand the so-called dictation theory; that God dictated the Scriptures. Yet, that is exactly what God did for *part* of the Scriptures. For example, God dictated the ten commandments and wrote them Himself on tables of stone (Ex. 34:1). God also dictated the law and commanded it to be written down (Ex. 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Num. 5:23). Much of the Prophecies are written from indirect dictation; dictated by God to the prophets, spoken aloud by the prophets, and written by a secretary. That was the method used in Jeremiah 36.

At other times, especially with narratives of events, God seems to have put into the hearts of the writers the words they should write. "*And Moses*

SAMPLE PAGES

wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD: and these are their journeys according to their goings out" (Num. 33:2).

In whatever way God gave the word, it was given by the miracle of inspiration. The Words were given by God. In whatever way the prophets and Apostles were "*moved*" (2 Peter 2:21), it was the Holy Spirit who moved them. They were led by the Spirit. "*The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue*" (2 Sam. 23:2). Because of this, we must conclude that it is not just the meaning of the words that matter, it is the words themselves. When one is translating the Bible, he must be concerned about the meaning of the text and about the meaning of each word. *God cares about each of His words*.

> **Psalms 12:6** *The words of the Lord are **pure words***
> **Psalms 119:103** *How sweet are **thy words** unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*
> **Psalms 119:130** *The entrance of **thy words** giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.*
> **Psalms 138:4** *All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the **words of thy mouth.***
> **Deuteronomy 4:2** *Ye shall not add unto **the word** which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep **the commandments** of the LORD your God which I command you.*
> **Proverbs 30:6** *Add thou not unto **his words**, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.*
> **John 3:34** *For he whom God hath sent speaketh the **words of God:** for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.*
> **Revelation 17:17** *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the **words of God** shall be fulfilled.*
> **Revelation 22:19** *And if any man shall take away from the **words of the book** of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book*.

Inspiration is the miraculous work of God whereby He gave His Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words to men, through human instruments. He gave His words in various ways, including 1) holy men spoke the words as they were moved by the Holy Spirit and an assistant wrote the spoken words, 2) God dictated some of the words, particularly much of the Law and prophets. Moses and the prophets, who heard the words from God, spoke to them and what they said was written down or, as with Moses and the Law, they wrote the words

SAMPLE PAGES

directly from the mouth of God, 3) God gave some men the words in their hearts and they wrote them down, and 4) God even wrote some of the words Himself. God did all this in such a way that every word he gave is His, a part of Him, perfect, and carries His divine authority.

The Divine Preservation of the Scriptures

The inspiration of the Scriptures would mean nothing, and it would be impossible for mankind to live by the Words of God, if God did not *preserve* His words. This should be self-evident, but many miss it. Nevertheless, the Scriptures make it clear that God has preserved His words.

> *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*.(2 Tim. 3:15-16)

Timothy had the Scriptures, but the copies he had were not the original writings. The original pen, paper, and ink had long since perished. Contrary to what some have said, there is no evidence Timothy was using a Greek Old Testament translation (designated LXX). Timothy had copies of the Hebrew Old Testament. Paul called these copies "holy scriptures" indicating that they had been copied accurately. God had preserved His word.

The Fact of Providential Preservation

Many have long denied that the Bible teaches the providential preservation of Scripture. Nowadays, some have adapted their teaching to include preservation. I suspect this is because of all the Bible believing voices that have been raised in its favor. However, many have limited preservation to the "message" of Scripture and have not applied it to the "words." Following are a few of the verses that teach the Biblical doctrine of the providential preservation of the Word of God.

> **1 Peter 1:23** Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the **Word of God** which **liveth and abideth forever**.
> **Psalm 12:6-7** The **words** of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them **from this generation forever**.

SAMPLE PAGES

Ps. 111:7-8 The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all **his commandments** are sure. **They stand fast for ever and ever**, and are done in truth and uprightness.
Is. 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the **word** of our God **shall stand for ever.**
Ps. 117:2 ... **the truth** of the Lord **endureth for ever**. Praise ye the Lord.
Ps. 119:152 Concerning thy **testimonies**, I have known of old that thou hast **founded them for ever**.
Ps 119:160 Thy **word** is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments **endureth for ever**.
Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but **my words shall not pass away.**
Psalm 33:11 The **counsel** of the Lord **standeth forever**, the **thoughts** of his heart **to all generations**.
Psalm 100:5 For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his **truth** endureth to **all generations**.
Ps 119:89-90 For ever, O LORD, thy **word** is settled in heaven. Thy **faithfulness** is unto **all generations**: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.
Psalms 119:160 ¶Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous **judgments endureth for ever**.
Matthew 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one **jot or one tittle** shall in no wise pass from the law, **till all be fulfilled**.
Isaiah 59:21 As for me this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, **shall not pass** out of the thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever.

These are just a few verses that prove providential preservation is a fact. What do we learn from these verses? We learn His Word is kept for all generations (Psalm 33:11; Psalm 100:5; Ps 119:89-90). His Word has been kept for ***us***, for our good (Is. 59:21). The preservation of the Word of God is a series of supernatural acts by the Lord Himself (Ps. 12:6-7). The Word is alive, with the life of God, which is forever (1 Peter 1:23; Heb. 4:12). Perhaps it would be more easily understood if we viewed in graphical form. Below is a chart that presents the doctrinal foundation of providential preservation in just such a manner.

SAMPLE PAGES

References	What will be preserved?	How long?
1 Peter 1:23; Is. 40:8 Ps. 119:160; Ps. 119:89-90	The Word of God	Forever
Mt. 24:35	Christ's Words	Never pass away
Ps. 12:6-7; Is. 59:21	God's Words	Forever
Ps. 111:7-8	His Commandments	Forever and ever
Ps. 119:152	His Testimonies	Forever
Ps. 33:11	His Counsel	Forever
Ps. 33:11	His Thoughts	To all generations
Ps. 100:5	His Truth	To all generations
Ps.119:160	His judgments	Forever
Mt. 5:18	Every Jot and Tittle	Till all be fulfilled
Ps. 119:89-90	His Faithfulness	To all generations

Fig. 1

Finally, some point to Psalms 119:89, "*For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven*," and say that preservation is only in Heaven. However, Isaiah 59:21 counters that idea by explaining "*my words which I have put in thy mouth, **shall not pass out of the thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed**, nor **out of the mouth of thy seed's seed** saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."* God's Words will not only be in Heaven, but they will be *in the mouth of people* forever. The Words of God are for us to live by. "*And **these words**, which I command thee this day, **shall be in thine heart***" (Deut. 6:6).

The Definition of the Biblical Doctrine of the Providential Preservation of the Word of God

Providential Preservation is a Biblical doctrine, and it is proved by the Scriptures I have listed, along with many others. The Doctrine of Providential Preservation states:

> God has *promised* to *miraculously preserve forever* all of His Word, His individual words, and all His teachings with the words in which they are expressed. He has further promised to make them available to mankind for our good and for our lives. He has determined to do this in His own way depending on Himself alone. (Author)

SAMPLE PAGES

We may not understand how God has done this. We may be confused by all the unbelieving statements made by modern textual critics. Nevertheless, our responsibility is to "*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding*" (Prov. 3:3). We may not be able to see how God has preserved each of His Words, but we can rest assured that He has done so, based on His own statements and promises.

Just as the Bible teaches verbal plenary inspiration, these verses teach *verbal plenary preservation*. Each individual word is preserved and the entire body of the 66 books of Scripture is preserved.

Take special note of *what words* have been preserved. The words that were inspired were Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words. They were not English, German, Spanish, or any other language. When God made the promises of preservation, the words He promised to preserve were Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words. He did not promise to preserve English, Spanish, German, or any other language words. This is evident by the Scriptures themselves: *"Till heaven and earth pass, **one jot or one tittle** shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled"* (Mt 5:18). The jot (yod) is the smallest Hebrew letter, and the tittle is a small part a Hebrew letter. The promise in Matthew 5:18 is to preserve words of Scripture in the Hebrew language. Clearly the Lord's promise is to preserve the Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic words he inspired.

> Jesus taught that the same Divine providence which had preserved the Old Testament would preserve the New Testament … The Holy Spirit providentially guided churches to preserve His Words during the manuscript period. **First,** faithful scribes produced many trustworthy copies of the original New Testament manuscripts. **Second,** these trustworthy copies were read and recopied by true believers down through the centuries. **Third,** untrustworthy copies were not so generally read or so frequently recopied. Although they enjoyed some popularity for a time, yet in the long run they were laid aside and consigned to oblivion. Thus, as a result of this special providential guidance, the true text won out in the end, and today the believer may be sure that the text found in the vast majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts, preserved by the God-guided usage of the Greek churches, is a trustworthy reproduction of the Divinely inspired original. Some have called it the Byzantine text, thereby acknowledging that it was the text in use in the Greek churches during the greater part of the Byzantine period (452-1453). It is much better, however, to call this text

SAMPLE PAGES

> the Traditional Text because this text, which is found in the great majority of Greek New Testament manuscripts, has been handed down … to the present day.[6]

The Authority of the Scriptures

The Word of God came from God. It had its origin in Him. Therefore, it was perfect when it was inspired, because God is perfect and makes no mistakes. Finally, God has preserved it, and because He never fails, it has been preserved perfect. Notice how God exalts the Word.

> *I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: **for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name**.* (Psalms 138:2)

> *O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.* (Psalms 8:1)

If God has exalted His Word above His name, then His view of the Word is so high it is immeasurable. The glory of His name is especially important to God, but His Word is in a higher place. Consider that. His glory is above the Heavens! His Word is higher! How much must we exalt His Word and hold it precious? How much ought we to support efforts to translate His Word into every language?

Consider this. There was a time in history when people held their reputation to be of highest importance. When they gave their word, they kept their word. If they broke their word, their reputation would be lost. *"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches"* (Proverbs 22:1).

Consider this. The glory of God's name depends on Him keeping His Word.

Consider, the nature of God's Word.

> *And **the scripture, foreseeing** that God would justify the heathen through faith, **preached** before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.* (Gal. 3:8)

> *For the scripture **saith unto Pharaoh**, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.* (Romans 9:17)

SAMPLE PAGES