



THE VALUE OF LEARNING BIBLICAL GREEK

DEDICATED TO GLEN RIDDLE (1947-2015)



Nebula near NGC 2074: NASA, ESA, and M. Livio (STScI), cropped

TWO EXTREMES TO AVOID

Knowing biblical Greek is...

- of no value in interpreting any passage of Scripture.
- essential for interpreting every passage of Scripture.

THESIS

Learning biblical Greek enhances one's ability to study and interpret the Scriptures correctly.

- Examples from words
- Examples from syntax
- Examples from literary devices



EXAMPLES FROM WORDS

Nebula near NGC 2074: NASA, ESA, and M. Livio (STScI), cropped

PROPITIATION IN ROMANS 3:25

²¹ But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

PROPITIATION IN ROMANS 3:25

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. (Rom 3:21-25; NASB)

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²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation (ἱλαστήριον) in His blood through faith. (Rom 3:21-25; NASB)

HILASTĒRION IN HEBREWS 9:5

Now even the first *covenant* had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. ² For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which *were* the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. ³ Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies,

HILASTĒRION IN HEBREWS 9:5

⁴ having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant; ⁵ and above it *were* the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat (ἱλαστήριον); but of these things we cannot now speak in detail. (Heb 9:1-5; NASB)

THE VALUE OF LEARNING GREEK

Learning biblical Greek...

- Provides direct access to the text behind the translations with the accompanying insights.
- Facilitates comprehension and evaluation of secondary sources that reference Greek.

DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN “SONS” AND “CHILDREN”

¹² So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — ¹³ for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN “SONS” AND “CHILDREN”

¹⁵ For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN “SONS” AND “CHILDREN”

¹⁷ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN “SONS” AND “CHILDREN”

¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope

DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN “SONS” AND “CHILDREN”

²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (Rom 8:12-21; NASB)

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DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN “SONS” AND “CHILDREN”

¹⁵ For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons (υιοθεσίας) by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children (τέκνα) of God,

DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN “SONS” AND “CHILDREN”

¹⁷ and if children (τέκνα), heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

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THE VALUE OF LEARNING GREEK

Learning biblical Greek...

- Forces a good reader to consider and explain details in the text.
- Opens the possibility to legitimate understandings of the text sometimes obscured by translations.
- Increases the demand for quality resources enjoyed by believers around the world.



EXAMPLES FROM SYNTAX

Nebula near NGC 2074: NASA, ESA, and M. Livio (STScI), cropped

CONTRASTING HEIRSHIPS IN ROMANS 8:17

Mark 14:38 (NASB)

Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Luke 10:2b (NASB)

The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few;

CONTRASTING HEIRSHIPS IN ROMANS 8:17

Acts 1:5 (NASB)

...for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit...

1 Corinthians 1:12 (NASB)

“I am of Paul,” and “I of Apollos,” and “I of Cephas,” and “I of Christ.”

CONTRASTING HEIRSHIPS IN ROMANS 8:17

16 αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ
πνεύματι ἡμῶν ὅτι ἐσμεν τέκνα θεοῦ. 17 εἰ
δὲ τέκνα, καὶ κληρονόμοι· κληρονόμοι μὲν
θεοῦ, συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ, εἴπερ
συμπάσχομεν ἵνα καὶ συνδοξασθῶμεν.
(Rom 8:16-17; UBS 4th)

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CONTRASTING HEIRSHIPS IN ROMANS 8:17

16 The Spirit itself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. But if children, *we are* also heirs: on the one hand, heirs of God but, on the other hand, coheirs with Christ if indeed we suffer with *Him* in order that we might be glorified with *Him*. (Rom 8:16-17; Author's translation)

CONTRASTING HEIRSHIPS IN ROMANS 8:17

¹⁶ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*. (Rom 8:16-17; NASB)

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κληρονόμοι (heirs) μὲν θεοῦ (of God),
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Christ), εἴπερ συμπάσχομεν (we suffer with
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USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 2:6-8 (USB 4th)

6 ὃς ἀποδώσει ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ·
7 τοῖς μέν καθ' ὑπομονὴν ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ
δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν ζητοῦσιν
ζωὴν αἰώνιον· 8 τοῖς δέ ἐξ ἐριθείας καὶ
ἀπειθοῦσι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πειθομένοις δὲ τῇ
ἀδικίᾳ, ὀργὴ καὶ θυμός.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 2:6-8 (USB 4th)

⁶ who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: ⁷ to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; ⁸ but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 2:25 (USB 4th)

25 περιτομή μέν γὰρ ὠφελεῖ ἐὰν νόμον
πράσσης· ἐὰν δέ παραβάτης νόμου ᾖς, ἡ
περιτομή σου ἀκροβυστία γέγονεν.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 2:25 (NASB)

²⁵ For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 5:16 (USB 4th)

16 καὶ οὐχ ὡς δι' ἑνὸς ἁμαρτήσαντος τὸ δώρημα· τὸ μέν γὰρ κρίμα ἐξ ἑνὸς εἰς κατάκριμα, τὸ δέ χάρισμα ἐκ πολλῶν παραπτωμάτων εἰς δικαίωμα.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 5:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ The gift is not like *that which* came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment *arose* from one *transgression* resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift *arose* from many transgressions resulting in justification.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 6:11 (USB 4th; NASB)

11 οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς λογίζεσθε ἑαυτοὺς
[εἶναι] νεκροὺς μέν τῇ ἁμαρτία ζῶντας δέ
τῷ θεῷ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

¹¹ Even so consider yourselves to be dead to
sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 7:25 (NASB)

²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 8:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 9:21 (NASB)

²¹ Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 11:22 (NASB)

²² Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 11:28 (NASB)

²⁸ From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of *God's* choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers;

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 14:2 (NASB)

² One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables *only*.

USES OF μέν...δέ (men...de) IN ROMANS

Romans 14:5 (NASB)

⁵ One person regards one day above another, another regards every day *alike*. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

THE VALUE OF LEARNING GREEK

Learning biblical Greek...

- Allows for perceiving, accepting, and defending positions more readily viewed from the Greek.
- Allows for an exciting journey of exploration of the text.
- Allows for investigation, evaluation, and even dissent with others who appeal to the Greek.

PARTICIPLES A PLENTY IN HEBREWS 6:4-6

4 Ἀδύνατον γὰρ τοὺς ἅπαξ φωτισθέντας,
γευσαμένους τε τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς ἐπουρανίου καὶ
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PARTICIPLES A PLENTY IN HEBREWS 6:4-6

⁴ For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame. (NKJV)

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PARTICIPLES A PLENTY IN HEBREWS 6:4-6

⁴ For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame. (NKJV)

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EXAMPLES FROM LITERARY DEVICES

Nebula near NGC 2074: NASA, ESA, and M. Livio (STScI), cropped

ALLITERATION IN ROMANS 1:30-31

1:28 καὶ καθὼς οὐκ ἔδοκίμασαν τὸν θεὸν
ἔχειν ἐν ἐπιγνώσει, παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς
εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν, ποιεῖν τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα,
29 πεπληρωμένους πάσῃ ἀδικίᾳ πονηρίᾳ
πλεονεξίᾳ κακίᾳ, μεστοὺς φθόνου φόνου
ἔριδος δόλου κακοηθείας, ψιθυριστάς

ALLITERATION IN ROMANS 1:30-31

30 καταλάλους θεοστυγεῖς ὑβριστάς
ὑπερηφάνους ἀλαζόνας ἐφευρετὰς κακῶν,
γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς, 31 ἀσυνέτους ἀσυνθέτους
ἀστόργους ἀνελεήμονας· 32 οἵτινες τὸ
δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιγνόντες ὅτι οἱ τὰ
τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες ἄξιοι θανάτου εἰσίν, οὐ
μόνον αὐτὰ ποιοῦσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ συνευδοκοῦσιν
τοῖς πράσσουσιν. (Rom 1:28-32; USB 4th)

ALLITERATION IN ROMANS 1:30-31

30 καταλάλους θεοστυγεῖς ὑβριστάς
ὑπερηφάνους ἀλαζόνας ἐφευρετὰς κακῶν,
γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς, 31 ἀσυνέτους ἀσυνθέτους
ἀστόργους ἀνελεήμονας: 32 οἵτινες τὸ
δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιγνόντες ὅτι οἱ τὰ
τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες ἄξιοι θανάτου εἰσίν, οὐ
μόνον αὐτὰ ποιοῦσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ συνευδοκοῦσιν
τοῖς πράσσουσιν. (Rom 1:28-32; USB 4th)

ALLITERATION IN ROMANS 1:30-31

²⁸ And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips,

ALLITERATION IN ROMANS 1:30-31

³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, ³¹ without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; ³² and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. (Rom 1:28-32; NASB)

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THE VALUE OF LEARNING GREEK

Learning biblical Greek...

- Enhances one's ability to see details in Scripture not necessarily visible in a translation.
- Enhances one's appreciation for Scripture.

INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

5:11 Περὶ οὗ πολλὸς ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος καὶ
δυσερμήνευτος λέγειν, ἐπεὶ νωθοὶ γεγονάτε ταῖς
ἀκοαῖς. 12 καὶ γὰρ ὀφείλοντες εἶναι διδάσκαλοι
διὰ τὸν χρόνον, πάλιν χρεῖαν ἔχετε τοῦ διδάσκειν
ὑμᾶς τινὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ
θεοῦ καὶ γεγονάτε χρεῖαν ἔχοντες γάλακτος [καὶ]
οὐ στερεᾶς τροφῆς. ... (Heb 5:11-12; UBS 4th)

INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

5:11 Περὶ οὗ πολλὸς ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος καὶ δυσερμηνεύτος λέγειν, ἐπεὶ νωθοὶ γέγονατε ταῖς ἀκοαῖς. 12 καὶ γὰρ ὀφείλοντες εἶναι διδάσκαλοι διὰ τὸν χρόνον, πάλιν χρεῖαν ἔχετε τοῦ διδάσκειν ὑμᾶς τινὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ γέγονατε χρεῖαν ἔχοντες γάλακτος [καὶ] οὐ στερεᾶς τροφῆς. ... (Heb 5:11-12; UBS 4th)

INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

6:10 οὐ γὰρ ἄδικος ὁ θεὸς ἐπιλαθέσθαι τοῦ ἔργου ὑμῶν καὶ τῆς ἀγάπης ἧς ἐνεδείξασθε εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, διακονήσαντες τοῖς ἁγίοις καὶ διακονοῦντες. 11 ἐπιθυμοῦμεν δὲ ἕκαστον ὑμῶν τὴν αὐτὴν ἐνδείκνυσθαι σπουδὴν πρὸς τὴν πληροφάναν τῆς ἐλπίδος ἄχρι τέλους, 12 ἵνα μὴ νωθοὶ γένησθε, μιμηταὶ δὲ τῶν διὰ πίστεως καὶ μακροθυμίας κληρονομούντων τὰς ἐπαγγελίας. (Hebrews 6:10-12; UBS 4th)

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INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

¹¹ Concerning him we have much to say, and *it is hard to explain*, since you have become dull of hearing. ¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ... (Heb 5:11-12; NASB)

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INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

¹⁰ For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. ¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (Heb 6:10-12; NASB)

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INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

¹³ For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ² of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. ³ And this we will do, if God permits. (Heb 5:11-6:3; NASB)

INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

... ⁹ But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. ¹⁰ For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.

INCLUSIO IN HEBREWS 5:11-6:12

¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (Heb 6:9-12; NASB)

CONCLUSION

Learning biblical Greek enhances one's ability to study and interpret the Scriptures correctly.

- Through direct access to the text.
- Through informed use of secondary sources.

CONCLUSION

And let us be sure of this: we will not long preserve the gospel without the languages. The languages are the sheath in which this sword of the Spirit is contained; they are the casket in which this jewel is enshrined; they are the vessel in which this wine is held; they are the larder in which this food is stored; and, as the gospel itself points out, they are the baskets in which are kept these loaves and fishes and fragments.

Luther, *To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools*.

¿QUESTIONS?

