

EXPRESSING TIME IN THE GOSPELS

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

With the advent of Gerhard Kittel's multivolume work, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,¹ there has been great interest in the meaning of the vocabulary of the New Testament. Most of the resulting study has been devoted to words having only a theological significance. However, other important areas for word studies remain, such as, words pertaining to the local church, Christian conduct and discipleship. With this type of study in mind this writer has chosen to investigate the area of "time," in order to evaluate its meaning and significance in the Gospels.

Statement of the Problem

Little study has been made of temporal expressions in the Gospels. This is true in grammars, books on syntax, as well as commentaries and special studies in periodicals. However, because the Gospels are history, an accurate understanding of the methods for expressing time in the

¹ Gerhard Kittel, gen. ed., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (8 vols.; trans. by G. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964-). Gerhard Friedrich is the general editor of volumes VII and VIII. "(Hereinafter referred to as TDNT.)"

Gospels is important. To correctly interpret the Gospels it is necessary to make a thorough study of all the temporal expressions in the Gospels.

Though a few writers have expressed interest in a philosophical approach to the problem of time,¹ they draw conclusions that are often far from being Biblically acceptable.

Consequently, there are several reasons why this investigation is a contribution to New Testament studies. (1) This study sets forth a collection and analysis of all the time expressions found in the Gospels. (2) These expressions of time have an important bearing on the exegesis of many passages. (3) An objective analysis can thus be made of those writers of the past and present who have built their exegesis and theology on misunderstandings of time words and grammar.² (4) The life of Christ can be understood more clearly by knowing the meaning of these

¹ Cf. Thorlief Bowman, Hebrew Thought Compared with Greek, trans. by J. Noreau (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960); Oscar Cullman, Christ and Time, trans. by F. B. Filson (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1950), "(Hereinafter referred to as Time.)"; J. A. T. Robinson, In the End, God (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), "(Hereinafter referred to as In The End.)."

² For example, a recent article citing many men who have erred in their interpretation of the aorist tense and consequently their interpretation of Scripture was written by Frank Stagg, "The Abused Aorist, Journal of Biblical Literature, LCI (June, 1972), 222-31. "(Hereinafter referred to as Aorist.)"

expressions of time. (5) Any writer, who asserts that "errors" exist in matters of time in the Gospels, can be answered with confidence.

Background for This Study

Any serious word study in the Greek of the New Testament requires a consideration of both Hebrew and Aramaic. At least three of the Gospel writers were Jewish and their expression of thought though written in Greek would be Hebrew in concept. Since the language of the Jewish part of Palestine in the New Testament era was primarily Aramaic¹ at least three different languages must be considered. (1) The thought concepts had their basis in the Hebrew mind and language. (2) These thoughts were spoken for the most part in the Aramaic language. (3) God chose to record this revelation in the universal language of the Roman Empire, Koine Greek.

It must further be seen that any examination of Greek words in the New Testament must include some study of the Old Testament Hebrew and the Septuagint. These same Greek words also have a history which often can be traced from the Classical Greek down through non-biblical Koine Greek. Any study in the New Testament must include a

¹ However, this is not to argue against the findings of M. Mansoor, The Dead Sea Scrolls (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1964), pp. 177-81, that Greek and Hebrew were also used in this time. Yet, the prominence of Aramaic has long been an accepted fact.

consideration of these areas.

Unless otherwise identified, the translations appearing in this dissertation are those of the author. The Greek Testament used throughout was The Greek New Testament published by the United Bible Societies. In addition the nineteenth edition of D. Erwin Nestle's Novum Testamentum Graece was also used to check for textual variants.

Limitations of This Study

By the title, "Expressing Time in the Gospels," the dissertation is limited to those temporal references in the four Gospels. Yet there must be further limitations to treat the subject properly. Three major limitations are needed. First, this is not a study of the chronological indications found in the Gospels. This has already been the subject of much writing.¹ Second, in Greek a temporal concept can be expressed through verb tenses, but since an investigation of this would be too extensive to treat here, the time indication of verbs will not be included. Third, the significance of the case of these time words will not be studied separately. Such an investigation would entail a study of great length which is not possible in this

¹ This subject is adequately treated by Leslie P. Madison, "Problems of Chronology in the Life of Christ" (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1963).

dissertation.¹

A few minor limitations are also necessary. Though it would be desirable to compare and contrast all the parallel passages containing temporal expressions, this will not be attempted since this could be a separate study. Where it is important to the purpose of the dissertation, the unacceptable views of the liberals will be cited and discussed. There will not be an extensive rebuttal given to the liberal method of interpretation. Because of the subject matter there will not be exegetical elaborations but rather the conclusions from the exegesis process.

Goals of This Study

There are two primary goals of this work. The first is to collect and to classify every word, phrase and grammatical expression pertaining to time in the Gospels. The second is the establishing of the precise meanings of these references to time. Berkley Nickelsen says that the basic objective of every interpreter of the Scriptures should be,

¹ It is accepted that the comments found in Greek grammars concerning case significance of time words are correct. The following distinctions should be maintained unless there are strong contextual reasons not to do so: (1) the genitive case implies the time within which something takes place but states nothing as to duration; (2) the dative case answers the question 'when?' and designates a point of time; (3) the locative case (particularly when *ἐν* occurs) regards the period from the point of view of a point even if it is of some length; and (4) the accusative case when used of time expresses duration over the whole period.

"to find out the meaning of a statement (command, question) for the author and for the first hearers or readers, and thereupon to transmit that meaning to modern readers."¹ This well states the second goal of this study. The end result hopefully will be a wordbook of temporal expressions in the Gospels that will provide a basic tool in the interpreting and understanding of historical and temporal passages in the Gospels.

Method of This Study

The major approach of this study will be a word study. This necessitates, (1) a knowledge of the possible word meanings in the period in which they occur, (2) an examination of the context of each writer to understand the initial reception of the message, and (3) a careful avoidance of fine distinctions of synonyms and etymological determinations unless there is strong contextual support. It must be noted that "linguistically, it is the syntactical complexes, in which the lexical items are used, and not the lexical items themselves, which constitute communication."² Great care must be taken to avoid a lexical structure for

¹ A. Berkley Mickelsen, Interpreting the Bible (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 5.

² James Barr, Biblical Words for Time (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961), p. 155. "(Hereinafter referred to as Time.)"

the Gospels that sets forth the outlines of Biblical thought about this subject since there can be variations between languages and thought patterns of the writers themselves.

More specifically the expressions for time will each be explored in three areas. The use of a word in non-biblical Greek includes several considerations. The etymology of a word is important if it can be ascertained. Then the use of each word has to be examined in Classical, other Koine literature and the papyri. A second area to explore is the use of each word in the Old Testament. This often can be studied from the Greek word through its Hebrew counterpart, as well as the uses of the word in the Septuagint. After this the final area of study can begin. Each use of the word in the four gospels is syntactically and contextually considered. For greater ease of comprehension, the Gospels are discussed separately, Matthew through John, with appropriate conclusions placed in the final paragraph of each discussion.

The last major area of the dissertation consists of a grammatical investigation of the temporal infinitives, participles, adverbs and conjunctions. This second area of study completes the examination of all the expressions for time in the Gospels with the exception of time as is indicated by the verb tenses. This, however, is not a consideration of the dissertation.

Preview of This Study

Following this introductory chapter the first major part of the dissertation, "Word Study," begins. The initial major chapter contains a discussion of the temporal words that were common and popularly used by all Jews. This chapter is not an extensive lexical study but rather the citing of the various meanings for the most frequently used words, such as, "year," "day" and "hour." These common words provide a basis for later discussion. Their variety of meanings establishes early that linguistic dogmatism solely on the basis of a word unscientific.

The next three chapters contain words expressing time. They are divided into "Words Indicating Time Unspecified," "Words Time in a Year," and "Words for Day and its Parts." In each chapter the words will be examined alphabetically as to their use in (1) non-biblical Greek, (2) the Old Testament, and (3) the Gospels.

The second major part of the dissertation, "A Grammatical Study," begins with chapter six. It is a study of "Infinitival Expressions of Time." These are clearly identified in the Gospels and are examined both grammatically and contextually. Chapter seven is an investigation of "Participial Expressions of Time." Primarily this is a study of the grammar because it is too difficult to determine this function of the participle. Only illustrations

of this are cited. The last chapter of this second part is a discussion of the "Conjunctive and Adverbial Words for Time." These are cited alphabetically and in accordance with their recognized major function, adverbial or conjunctive.

A summary and conclusion completes the dissertation setting forth the findings of the investigation.

PART I. WORD STUDY

CHAPTER II
COMMON WORDS FOR TIME
IN THE JEWISH YEAR

Expressions of time in the Gospels are subject to misunderstandings for at least three reasons: (1) the large number of Gospel passages indicating time which often differ in parallel passages, (2) the lack of specific knowledge about certain first century dating practices, and (3) the errant equating of contemporary concepts of time with those of the Gospel era. Much of the confusion can be alleviated by a general understanding of the time expressions commonly used within the Jewish year. The indications of time considered in this chapter are: year, month, week, day, hour and feasts.

Year

The year, שָׁנָה in Hebrew, has been reckoned by many methods at different points in Biblical history. This practice provides a variety of calendars for the New Testament era. Both the length of year and the nature of the calendar year create problems for determining the correct method of Biblical calendation.

The primary system the Hebrews used for indicating chronology was by the year. But even among the Jewish people the principles of chronology varied sufficiently to

give Old Testament scholars great difficulty. Within the past few decades significant efforts have been made toward understanding the chronological reckoning of the Jews both during the period of the Kings¹ and the restoration of Judah back to the land of Palestine.² Although all the conclusions have not been met with universal acceptance they provide the basis for Old Testament time reckoning.

In the Old Testament both a solar, a luni-solar year³ and a lunar year⁴ have been suggested as being followed. Morgenstern writes in support of the luni-solar year, that is, a calendar year based on lunar months with a system of intercalation to harmonize with the sun:

Now it is of utmost significance that, working on altogether independent, astronomical grounds, Charlier reached exactly the same conclusion, that the temple must have been so built that on the two annual equinoctial days the first rays of the rising sun shone directly in through the eastern gate. He has shown further that these two equinoctial days were the 1st of the first month and the 10th of the seventh month,

¹ Edwin R. Thiele, The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965).

² Richard A. Parker and Waldo H. Dubberstein, Babylonian Chronology, 626 B.C.-A.D. 75 (Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 1956).

³ Julian Morgenstern, "Supplementary Studies in the Calendars of Ancient Israel," Hebrew Union College Annual, X (1935), 3-5.

⁴ Henri Daniel-Rops, Daily Life in the Time of Jesus, trans. by P. O'Brian (New York: Mentor-Omega Books, 1962), p. 179. "(Hereinafter referred to as Daily Life.)"

the latter the late Biblical Yom Kippur. . . .¹

Those who accept a lunar or embolistic year actually assert the same basic reckoning of time since an embolistic month, a second Adar, was added about every third year to bring the lunar year into agreement with the solar year.

The beginning of the Jewish year could begin either in Nisan (March-April) or Tishri (September-October) depending on the system followed at a particular time. The first month of the year varied during Jewish history after the division of the kingdom. Later in 1 Maccabees the method of designating the months by name and number indicates that the first month of the Jewish year about 165 B.C. was Nisan. This probably was the case in Palestine during the first century A.D., since it was just before Nisan that any type of correction for the length of the year had to be made in order to make the ripening of the barley correspond to the celebration of the Passover in Nisan. Further, no political events had occurred to force the Jews to change from the practice of the Maccabean times.

Shortly after the time of the Maccabean revolt the Qumran community provided a calendar quite distinct from all others. Found in the Book of Jubilee 6:23-32, this system of dating reckons a year as 364 days. Thus each

¹ Julian Morgenstern, "The Gates of Righteousness," Hebrew Union College Annual, VI, (1929), 18-19.

year was errant one and one-half days with the cycle of the sun unless some method of intercalation was practiced. The year itself is divided into four quarters of ninety-one days with two months being thirty days and one being thirty-one days in each quarter. The advantage of this system is that every feast day was on the same day of the week each year. Feast days came regularly on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.¹ Since the Passover, Nisan 15, according to this system falls on a Wednesday, some scholars have taken liberty to reconstruct the entire passion accounts.² Though this view has created much interest and speculation that Jesus and his disciples may have used this calendar, most scholars do not consider this likely. Perhaps the greatest weakness of this Jaubertian calendar system is the lack of knowledge about the yearly intercalations which must have been made in both the solar and traditional calendars at the time of Christ. An acceptance of this system adds many more problems to the passion week chronology than it solves.³

¹ Jack Finegan, Handbook of Biblical Chronology (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 54-55. "(Hereinafter referred to as HBC.)"

² This is especially true of Annie Jaubert, The Date of the Last Supper, trans. by Isaac Rafferty (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1965).

³ For an excellent analysis and refutation of Annie Jaubert's chronology see Clifford Wood Hardin, "An Examination of Jaubert's Chronology of the Passion Week," (unpublished Th. M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1969).

There is no evidence that this calendar was used outside of the Qumran community nor is it certain how long it was followed there.

By the time of Christ several calendars were in use in Palestine making it more difficult to be dogmatic when asserting dates.

Matters were much complicated, however, by the fact that by no means all the inhabitants of Palestine used the official calendar of the Jewish community. . . . And in a Greek city of the Decapolis there might perfectly well be three concurrent calendars, the Jewish, the Syrian and the Egyptian, quite apart from the Roman.

And lastly it now seems quite certain, since the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls, that some religious groups who were faithful to the tradition of the Book of Jubilees still used the ancient calendar of 364 days, which had four terms of ninety-one days each, and which were each made up of thirteen weeks. This had the advantage of making the great feasts, such as the Passover, fall on a given date.¹

The reckoning of time by the aforementioned calendars could produce different times for both the length of the year and the beginning of the year. For example, the Egyptian calendar after 22 B.C. consisted of twelve months of thirty days or three hundred sixty days with five epagomenal days added after the twelfth month. Every year preceding the leap year of the Julian calendar was an intercalary year and six epagomenal days were added so that the Egyptian yearly calendar averaged 365 1/2 days. The

¹ Daniel-Rops, Daily Life, p. 183.

beginning of the year fell on August twenty-ninth or thirtieth.¹

The Syrian calendar followed the Macedonian which began in October and followed a lunar calendar-system with the probable insertion of intercalary months. Though this dating system seems to be followed in 1 Maccabees² it appears to be of no consequence in the New Testament. Whether the Jewish year began in the fall adopting the Syrian system or in the spring following the Babylonian calendar is not known. However, "at the time of Christ it is quite certain that the lunar year of 364 days was in use."³ That is to say, the lunar year with an intercalated lunar month which permitted the lunar year to coincide with the solar year.

Of course there were other problems of Jewish time reckoning:

There are some interesting facts to learn, as that the Hebrews, in counting an interval of days (or weeks, or months, or years) between two events would probably (though not necessarily) include in the interval both the day (or week, or month, or year) of the first event as well as the second.⁴

¹ Finegan, HBC, pp. 28-29.

² Ibid., p. 121.

³ Daniel-Rops, Daily Life, p. 180.

⁴ John Marsh, The Fulness of Time (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1962), p. 20. "(Hereinafter referred to as Time.)"

This is known as inclusive reckoning and must be considered in matters of chronology (particularly in connection with the use of ἡμέρα). Fortunately, most other words for time are not affected by this principle of chronology. In a subsequent chapter, the two Greek words for year, ἐνιαυτός and ἔτος which translate ἡνῆΰ will be examined in detail.

Month

Twelve months, written μῆν in both the Septuagint and the New Testament, made up the Jewish year. Each month had twenty-nine days and began "when the thin sliver of the new moon appeared in the sky: if it did not appear, then necessarily the month had thirty days."¹ It must be understood that the Jewish month was based totally on visible lunar calculation, as is attested by the two Hebrew words for month, חֹדֶשׁ, meaning "glittering new moon" and לַיָּרֵךְ meaning "moon" or "month."

The decision for determining the new month was the work of the Sanhedrin.

If the members of the court found that the new moon might be visible, they were obliged to be in attendance at the courthouse for the whole thirtieth day and be on the watch for the arrival of witnesses. If witnesses did arrive, they were duly examined and tested, and if their testimony appeared trustworthy, this day was sanctified as New Moon Day. If the new

¹ Daniel-Rops, Daily Life, p. 181.

crescent did not appear and no witnesses arrived, this day was counted as the thirtieth day of the old month, which thus became an embolistic month.¹

This shifting of the month from twenty-nine to thirty days based on the visual sighting of the new moon and the decision of the Sanhedrin to begin a new month makes the certain determination of a new month or a particular day in the month during the first century an impossible task.

There was even a greater difficulty in reckoning time by months. Since a solar year is eleven days longer than a lunar year, every third year an extra month had to be added to the calendar in order to celebrate the feasts at the correct time each year.

This was done by adding a second Adar (the Babylonian name for the twelfth month), February-March, so contrived that the Passover, celebrated on the 14th Nisan (the first month), should always fall after the spring equinox.²

In this way the spring season of the year coincided with the month Nisan and the first sheaf of barley would be fully ripened, ready to be offered on the sixteenth of Nisan. To correlate the beginning of the Jewish year with the Julian calendar would demand knowledge of every intercalation and the decision of the Sanhedrin for all these

¹ Jack Finegan, Light From the Ancient Past (New York: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 578.

² G. Gordon Stott, "Month," HDCG, II (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), 731.

years.

Perhaps the aforementioned difficulties explain why the words for month and year occur only a few times in the Gospels. The names for the months are not used at all. There is actually no evidence that the object now called a calendar and which shows the months, weeks and days at a single glance was known to the average Jew.

Week

The modern method of determining time by weeks was not followed by the Gospel writers. The Hebrew **שבת** from the numeral seven was translated by the Greek **σάββατον**. This seventh day of the Jewish week began Friday at sunset and extended through the daylight of Saturday. This was the Jewish sabbath and was known by that name. On several occasions in the Old Testament various feast days are also called sabbaths.¹ Consequently, the word "sabbath" could refer to a feast no matter which day of the week it was observed or to the seventh day of the Jewish week.

The day prior to the weekly sabbath was the day of preparation for the sabbath and seems to be designated as the **παρασκευή**, the preparation day.² Once in Mark 15:42

¹ An excellent discussion of the meaning of Sabbath in the context of feast days can be found in an unpublished monograph by Homer A. Kent Jr., "The Day of that Sabbath was a High Day," pp. 25-31.

² Josephus Antiquities 16. 6.2. (Perhaps this is also intended in Mt. 27:62; Lk. 23:54; Jn. 19:31, 42).

it is called *προσάββατον* and was also known as "the eve of the sabbath."¹ Six times in the Passion week account *παρασκευή* occurs and may have the function of indicating "Friday," the day before the Sabbath. That *παρασκευή* can refer to Friday of any week is indicated by the *Didache*, ". . . but do ye fast on the fourth day and the Preparation (Friday)."² Josephus writes, ". . . and that they need not give bond (to appear in court) on the Sabbath or on the day of preparation for it (Sabbath Eve) after the ninth hour."³ The meaning of *παρασκευή*, Friday, became so fixed in Greece that to this day Friday is known by this title.

However, *παρασκευή* can also refer to "the day before any feast which required special preparation that could not be made on the feast day itself."⁴ That this can be applied for example to Nisan 14, the day before the eating of the Passover, is illustrated by many passages in Rabbinic literature.⁵ The Septuagint never uses *παρασκευή* in connection with any type of a feast or Sabbath day.

¹ Daniel-Rops, *Daily Life*, p. 184.

² *Didache* 8.

³ Josephus *Antiquities* 16. 6.2.

⁴ Solon Hoyt, "Did Christ Eat the Passover?" (unpublished monograph, Grace Theological Seminary, 1945), P. 34.

⁵ *Babylonian Talmud Pesachim* 4:1, 5, 6; 5:1; 10:1.

Thus, two uses of *παρασκευή* in the New Testament times are possible. It may mean Friday, including the evening of Thursday, which is the day before a weekly Sabbath. Or, it could mean any day before a feast day such as the Passover, Nisan 15. This distinction must be considered in matters of chronology. The other days in the week were named simply by their numerical order, so that "the first of the week (*μὴν σαββάτων*) in Matthew 28:1 is Saturday evening and Sunday until sunset. The word for week, *σάββατον*, occurs often since every Jew was oriented to the sabbath observance on the seventh day of the week.

Day

The most frequently used word expressing time in the Gospels is *ἡμέρα*, day. The Hebrew *יִום* and its translation *ἡμέρα* were popularly used to indicate both a twenty-four hour solar day and the daylight period. The Greek language also had *νοχθημέρον* to indicate the complete cycle of light and darkness but this is used only once in the New Testament, 2 Corinthians 11:25. "Usually, however, the 'day' which includes the nighttime and the daytime is simply designated with the word *ἡμέρα*, and the context makes plain what is meant. . ."¹

The sequence of time in a day was measured by one

¹ Finegan, *HBC*, p. 8.

of four methods: (1) a sunclock, *πόλος*, (2) a sundial, *γνώμων*, (3) a water-clock, *κλεψύδα* (for the night especially),¹ and (4) estimation. It is quite certain that the common people would use the last method.

In the ancient world the day began at dawn in Egypt; at evening in Ancient Mesopotamia, Greece and in the Old Testament; whereas the Roman day began at midnight.²

Bickerman writes concerning the Jewish reckoning:

On the other hand, the complete day, for the purpose of the calendar, is generally reckoned in conformity with the respective calendar systems. The peoples who use lunations as the basic time-measurement (Athenians, Gauls, Germans and Hebrews) counted the twenty-four hour day from evening to evening.³

Though it is not universally accepted, most New Testament scholars accept that the beginning of the day among Jews in Palestine was at sunset. If this is correct, the appearance of the stars was the sign that the day had ended⁴ and a new day begun.

The darkness part of the day is called night, *νύξ*, and can be broken down into several divisions of time. The early evening was designated *ἑσπέρα*. The entire night,

¹ Finegan, *HBO*, p. 12.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

³ Elias J. Bickerman, *Chronology of the Ancient World* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1968), p. 13. "(Hereinafter referred to as Chronology.)"

⁴ *Babylonian Talmud Berakoth* 1:2.

νύξ contained four watches according to both the New Testament and Josephus¹ with each watch representing one-fourth part of the night. This differed from the Old Testament practice of having only three watches. The watches came in the following order: (1) ὄψέ, (2) μεσονύκτιον, (3) ἀλεκτοροφωνία and (4) πρωί.² In fact, in Talmudic literature the word "evening" at times also included the entire afternoon. The afternoon was divided into two periods, 12 to 2:30 and 3:30 to 6:00, called evenings.³ The time for the slaying of the Passover lamb according to Josephus⁴ was between the two evenings.

As light began to dawn in Palestine a new day began. "This was true in Greece and Rome, in Babylonia and Egypt, as it is true for our own usage."⁵ This was an accurate way of speaking even though the twenty-four hour day began at sunset in some countries and mid-night in Rome. According to the Jerusalem Talmud the earliest period, dawn, was divided into four parts: (1) the gazelle of the morning (ἀμέρας βλέφαρον), (2) when one can distinguish

¹ Josephus Antiquities 18. 9.6.

² F. R. Montgomery Hitchcock, "Dates," DCG, I (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906), p. 417.

³ Finegan, HBC, p. 14.

⁴ Josephus Wars 6. 9.3.

⁵ Bickerman, Chronology, p. 13.

blue from white (πρωΐ, σκοτίας ἔτι οὕσης), (3) when east began to grow light (ὄρθρος βαθύς), and (4) twilight (λίαν πρωΐ, ἀνατείλαντος τοῦ ἡλίου).¹ Consequently, πρωΐ and ὄρθρος and their cognates are used of this time period in the Gospels. Rather than reckon time hour by hour the daylight part of the day was often divided into three-periods, the middle of the morning, noon and the middle of the afternoon. These correspond to 9 a.m., noon and 3 p.m.

It seems to me more likely that in spite of the opportunity offered by an hourly nomenclature the ancients found that for many purposes the simpler three-hour interval was sufficiently definite. For the culture represented by the evangelists and in a society without clocks or watches one could often be satisfied with phrases no more specific than our mid-morning, midday (or noon), mid-afternoon together with dawn or sunset.²

Thus it is seen that within a solar day there can be many expressions of time and most are inadequate in indicating a precise moment of time. The more easily fixed points of time during the day would be daybreak, nightfall and midday.

¹ John M'Clintock and James Strong, eds., "Day," CBTEL, II (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1882), pp. 702-703.

² Henry J. Cadbury, "Some Lukan Expressions of Time," JBL, LXXXII (September, 1963), 278. "(Hereinafter referred to as "Time.")"

Hour

Another popular way to speak of time is by the hour, ὥρα. The earliest known use of hours by the Jews came during the Intertestament Period and is recorded in the apocryphal book 3 Maccabees 5:14. This hour had little similarity to modern reckoning. Any hour identification could only be relative since its length depended on the time of the year and the geographical latitude.

The twelve hour system then in use throughout the Roman empire, had of course no relation to ours. Our hours are each the twenty-fourth part of a legal day calculated mathematically; the Roman system was based upon the durations of the sun's presence in the sky: on December 25th, therefore, the winter solstice, when there were but eight hours and fifty-four minutes of possible sunlight in the day, the day-time hour shrank to less than forty-five of our minutes, while each of the night-hours draw out to an hour and a quarter of our time.¹

It is important to notice that every day had twelve hours of relatively equal length and these hours were numbered from daybreak to nightfall (Mt. 20:3-12). Of the method by which time was actually determined in the Biblical period, we know little. The division of time into sixty minute hours was a late refinement, which must have become generally used only when some sort of a sundial or hourglass became readily available.²

¹ Daniel-Rops, Daily Life, p. 186.

² Roger T. Beckwith, "The Day, Its Divisions and Its Limits, In Biblical Thought," The Evangelical Quarterly, XLIII, (October, 1971), 220. "(Hereinafter referred to as The Day.)"

The night likewise was divided into twelve equal parts from sundown to sunrise. Ramsay states:

Though the Roman legal Day began at midnight, yet the hours of the day were counted only as beginning from sunrise; and the hours of the night (in rare cases in which the hours of the night were spoken of) only from sunset. In popular usage probably no night hours were spoken of except the third, sixth and perhaps the ninth, as the beginnings of the second, third and fourth watches; and those expressions were used, not because there was any device in ordinary use for dividing the night into twelve hours, but simply by analogy from the three main customary divisions of the day.¹

From the earliest times the daylight period had to be divided by visual observation rather than any other means, at least by the common people. In the Talmud there is a discussion of the extent of reasonable error about a man's estimate of a given hour appealing to the fact that "in the sixth hour the sun stands in the meridian."² It can be expected that many references to a particular hour in the Gospels would also be based on estimation rather than on mechanical means. The most frequently used hours were the third hour (9 a.m.), the sixth hour (noon) and the ninth hour (3 p.m.).

The Hebrew word for hour שָׁעָה, translated by ὥρα, can also mean an inexactly defined period of time so that in Daniel 3:6 it is best translated "immediately." The

¹ William Ramsay, "Numbers, Hours, Years and Dates," HDB, V. (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1904), 477.

² Babylonian Talmud Pesahim, 11b-12b.

Greek word could be used to refer to time in general, "the time is coming."¹ These various meanings of ὥρα necessitate careful study of this often used word in a later chapter.

Feasts

During the Jewish year several feasts are observed and these are identified in the Gospels by name or by the word "feast," ἑορτή. By itself ἑορτή cannot give a clear meaning and in a given context scholars can disagree as to the identity of the feast.² Although the time of the year for the feasts varies slightly because of the intercalation practice of the Jews, some chronological identifications can be made particularly in John by understanding the time of the feasts. Of the six major feasts--Passover, Unleavened Bread, Weeks, Tabernacles, Trumpets and Day of Atonement--mentioned in the Old Testament only three are found in the Gospels by name. The Passover, Unleavened Bread and Tabernacles together with the later Maccabean festival, Dedication, provide feast time indications.

¹ James Barr, Time (London: SON Press Ltd., 1961), p. 121.

² The feast of John 5:1 for example has been identified with the Passover by Lightfoot and Greswell, with Pentecost by Bengel and Browns, with Tabernacles by Cocceius, Ewald and Zahn, with the Day of Atonement by Caspari, with Trumpets by Westcott, and with Wood-gathering by Edersheim.

The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread occur during the same month, Nisan, and seem at times to be almost interchangeable. Both feasts are found several times in the accounts of the crucifixion. The month Nisan is the time when the first barley was ripening. On the tenth of this month the head of each home set aside a lamb for the paschal offering and groups were formed for the proper celebration. These lambs would be selected from the flocks outside Jerusalem. For each lamb a minimum of ten persons was necessary for the eating of the lamb. On the fourteenth the women removed all leaven from the home and in the afternoon the lamb was slain in the temple by the priests then taken to a home and cooked. That evening, which began the fifteenth, all the lamb would be eaten. If they needed additional meat because of the large number of guests a Chagigah could be offered.¹ It is uncertain how many Old Testament practices were retained at the time of Christ and there are almost as many differing opinions about the first century practice as there are writers on the subject.

It is unfortunate that the word for the Passover feast, πάσχα, which is found a total of twenty-five times within the four Gospels, can be used at least five

¹ Alfred Edersheim, The Temple Its Ministry and Services (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958), pp. 218-19. (Also see his discussion of the Passover on pp. 208-48). "(Hereinafter referred to as Temple.)"

different ways because it greatly complicates chronological reckoning. Theodor Zahn gives four different senses of *πάσχα*. (1) It can refer to the Passover lamb as the object of *θύειν* or *φαγεῖν*. (2) The observance of Nisan 14 with the slaying of the lamb and the feast of the Passover, as distinguished from the Feast of the Unleavened Bread which began on the fifteenth, is called the Passover. (3) The name *ἄζυμα*, Unleavened Bread, refers not only to the seven days following the slaying of the Passover but it is also applied many times in the Old Testament to the fourteenth day which precedes it. (4) Likewise, *πάσχα* can be applied to cover all the days of *ἄζυμα* so that the terms *ἄζυμα* and *πάσχα* are used quite synonymously.¹ Further, it would seem possible that the Passover could refer to the Paschal meal alone on Nisan 15 or to Nisan 14 excluding the feast which began after sunset. Edersheim further maintains that *πάσχα* can mean the *Chagigah* sacrifice offered on the fifteenth.²

Four references to *πάσχα* occur before the Passion Week account.³ Each of these references appear to be general indications of the Passover season without reference

¹ Theodor Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament*, trans., M.W. Jacobus, III (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1953), 296-98. "(Hereinafter referred to as *Introduction*.)"

² Edersheim, *Temple*, pp. 218-19.

³ Luke 2:41; John 2:13, 23; 6:4.

to a more specific time intended. Attempts to be dogmatic concerning the days and nights at the time of the Passover meet with frustration because of the probable existence of more than one way of expressing days.

Consequently, when a day and night or a definite number of days and nights are being set apart from manual labor for religious purposes, it is necessary to decide which nights are being set apart in this way as well as which days. This was especially true of the passover, when the main celebration took place by night, but even in this case the special circumstances made it as natural for Josephus to think of the new day as beginning after the night was over as before it began, since he cannot have failed to see that the lamb connected the night as intimately with the day preceding as the unleavened bread did with the day following.¹

The festival of Unleavened Bread follows immediately after the Passover and lasts seven days, Nisan fifteenth to the twenty-first. It is called by Josephus ἑορτῆ τῶν ἀζύμων and αἱ ἡμέραι τῶν ἀζύμων.² Apparently in popular speech the fourteenth of Nisan was also included in the feast of Unleavened Bread in Mark 14:12. However, the second day of Unleavened Bread was considered to be the sixteenth of Nisan and the time when the first sheaf of barley was offered in the Temple. From this point also began the counting for the seven weeks to Shabuot or

¹ Beckwith, "The Day," p. 226.

² Josephus, Antiquities 3.10.5. and 18.2.2.

Tabernacles.¹ The unleavened bread eaten during this time was a remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt. The time sequence of these two feasts and the events which accompany them further complicate the reckoning of time during the Passover season.

The Mishnah tractate Pesahim brings the entire ritual to a complexity widely removed from the historic night of the Exodus. The dating of the recurrent, commemorative festival is important for Gospel exegesis. The night of the Passover proper (14-15 Nisan) and the feast of Unleavened Bread (15-21 Nisan) are distinguished in Leviticus 23:5f and Numbers 28:16f., but telescoped in Luke 22:1. Doubtless they had long become telescoped in popular thought and practice, as Josephus and the Mishnah bear out. The first day of Unleavened Bread was strictly 15th Nisan, though the 14th was often loosely so called, as in Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12. The preparation of the Passover began at 6 p.m. on 13th Nisan, ending at the same hour on the 14th. This is an analogical extension of the normal weekly Friday or *προσάββατον* (Mark 15:42), when cooking and all laborious preparations for the sabbath had to be performed.²

This complexity is not found in the other feasts.

Tabernacles was celebrated in Tishri (the early fall) fifteenth to the twenty-first. Also known as *Sukkot*, Succoth or *σκηνοπηγία*, it commemorated the period of wilderness wanderings after the Exodus which was during the formative period of the Jewish nation. During these years

¹ Louis Finkelstein, *The Pharisees*, I (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1940), 174.

² Roy A. Stewart, "The Jewish Festivals," *The Evangelical Quarterly*, XLIII (July, 1971), 153-54.

the Jews lived like nomads in temporary dwellings.¹ At this festival temporary dwellings of palm branches and wood sticks, not tents, were made to dwell in. This feast was held in high regard in Josephus' time as is seen by his description of Tabernacles; ἑορτὴ σφόδρα ἁγιωτάτη καὶ μεγίστη² and εἰς τὰ μέλιστα τηρουμένη.³ Though mentioned often by Josephus and in the Septuagint, it is found only in John 7:2 in the Gospels. Most scholars place this event about six months prior to the crucifixion. Following Jesus' teaching at this feast He remained in Judea until the feast of Dedication according to John 10:22.

The festival of Dedication (Hanukkah) or ἐγκαίνια is mentioned only in John 10:22 about three months before the crucifixion. John identifies this as being winter which corresponds with the festival date of Kislev or December. The celebration is actually a memorial to the Maccabean wars of freedom over the Syrians and Antiochus Epiphanes who had desecrated the Temple area. After Antiochus defiled the temple on Kislev twenty-fifth, B.C. 167, the Jews led by Judas Maccabaeus regained the temple cleansed it and restored its worship. The whole festival

¹ Julius H. Greenstone, Jewish Feasts and Fasts (New York Bloch Publishing Company, 1946), p. 60. "(Hereinafter referred to as Feasts.)"

² Josephus Antiquities 8.4.1. VIII, iv, 1.

³ Ibid., 15.3.3.

has particular reference to "the rededication of the Temple and the altar after these had been in the hands of the heathens for two years and were polluted by them with heathen worship and sacrifice."¹ The festival was similar to Tabernacles:

And they kept eight days with gladness in the manner of the Feast of Tabernacles. . . they bare branches and fair boughs, and palms also, and sang psalms unto Him that had given them good success in cleaning His place. They ordained also by a common statute and decree, that every year those days should be kept of the whole nation of the Jews.²

The Festival of Dedication was a national holiday rather than a religious festival.

While the New Testament also uses many words and grammatical expressions for time, the purpose of this chapter was to present the commonly known designations for time and to show that those in the New Testament era could use many expressions of time. These popular methods of reckoning time--by year, month, week, day, hour, and feasts--often had many interpretations which is true of these words in current speech. This diversity of meanings has produced problems in understanding these time designations. For this reason, many occurrences of these time words must be studied at greater length in the following chapters.

¹ Greenstone, Feasts, p. 115.

² II Maccabees 10:6-8.

CHAPTER III

WORDS INDICATING TIME UNSPECIFIED

In the Gospels three words expressing time need special consideration in that the words by themselves specify a concept of time more than an exact expression of time. These words, αἰών, καιρός and χρόνος, are the subject of much discussion especially by current theologians. Since these words occur often in the Gospels this chapter will examine each word in the above mentioned order considering (1) their use in non-biblical Greek, (2) their use in the Old Testament and (3) their use in the Gospels. This last area of examination will also include the substance of the contemporary discussion of the three words.

Αἰών

As a general indication of time, αἰών is used in a number of places and expressions which, when examined, provide the necessary insight as to the correct meanings of this word.

In non-biblical Greek

Regarding etymology Richard C. Trench connects αἰών with ἀώ, and ἀήμι meaning to breathe. He further comments,

Like **κόσμος** it has a primary and physical and then superinduced on this, a secondary and ethical sense. In its primary, it signifies time short or long, in its unbroken duration, often times in classical Greek the duration of a human life.¹

Curtius argues that **αἰών** is from the Sanskrit **ैवास** meaning "course or walk" and in the plural, "habit or custom."² Others connect **αἰών**, with the Sanskrit **ayu** which conveys the idea of life and especially long life. Moulton and Milligan comment more cautiously concerning the etymology and the meaning of **αἰών**:

The word, whose root is of course futile to dig for, is a primitive inheritance from Indo-Germanic days, when it may have meant 'long life' or 'old age' --perhaps the least abstract idea we can find for it in the prehistoric period. . . . In general the word depicts that of which the horizon is not in view, whether the horizon be an indefinite distance. . . or whether it lies no farther than the span of Caesar's life.³

Thus, the basic idea of **αἰών** relates to time especially as it pertains to human life whether it be that of an individual or that of the human race.

¹ Richard C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), p. 217. "(Hereinafter referred to as Synonyms.)"

² Georg Curtius, Principles of Greek Etymology, trans. by A.S. Wilkins and E.B. England, I (London: John Murray, 1866), 354.

³ James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament From the Papyri and Other Non-literary Sources (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 16. "(Hereinafter referred to as Vocabulary.)"

The earliest meanings of αἰών include "lifetime, life, long time, an age and eternity."¹ Consequently, in early times αἰών could signify the duration of human life as being limited to a specific space of time or to denote an age or generation as the space of human life. The expansion from these meanings to the conception of time unlimited was easy.² Some of the Greek philosophers frequently made use of αἰών to indicate the concept of time unlimited. Plato has αἰών as "timeless, ideal eternity" in which there are no specific designations of time such as days, months or years. Plutarch and others have αἰών in the sense of eternity or unending time.³ When the preposition εἰς was linked to αἰών the concept of prolonged time and even the sense of "forever" developed. Prior to the time of the New Testament era αἰών acquired a religious significance inasmuch as Αἰών became the name of the God of eternity.⁴ Interesting examples of these uses

¹ Ernest DeWitt Burton, New Testament Word Studies (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 76. "(Hereinafter referred to as Word Studies.)"

² Hermann Cremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of the New Testament Greek, trans. by W. Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1954), pp. 74, 75. "(Hereinafter referred to as Lexicon.)"

³ For a more detailed study of the philosopher's use of αἰών examine *TDNT*, I, pp. 197-78.

⁴ Hermann Sasse, αἰών, TDNT, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, I (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 198.

can be cited in the early centuries A.D. An athlete claiming to have established a new Olympic record exclaimed **μόνος τῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος νεικήσας Ὀλύμπια**. Another time one who was led off to death is led "from life" **ἀπ' αἰῶνος**. Also the cry to the emperor was heard "the emperors forever," **εἰς τόν αἰῶνα**.¹

From the instances cited above it is clear that **αἰών** had a varied number of meanings in the Greek language ranging from life to eternity. Because of the wide-range of uses only the context itself can determine the best translation.

In the Old Testament

The meaning of **αἰών** in the Old Testament can be seen by two basic means: (1) the meaning of the Hebrew words translated by **αἰών** in the Septuagint and (2) the meaning of **αἰών** in its contextual environment in the Septuagint. These will be considered in the aforementioned order.

There are nine Hebrew words translated by **αἰών**. However, the word **עוֹלָם** almost always the word with its several variations which is translated by **αἰών**, although occurs about sixty times. The seven other words occur from one to five times each and have no real significance on the

¹ Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 16.

understanding of αἰών.¹ Both ָע and ִעֶלֶם have the same basic meanings of "eternity, forever, and eternal." In fact, the word αἰών may derive its meaning from the Assyrian ullu(m) meaning "yonder, remote."² William Rice Hall indicates both words can signify "perpetuity with a distinctive emphasis upon concealment."³ This perpetuity will be indefinite or concealed as to limits in definition though not necessarily in the context. Some of the references to ִעֶלֶם aid in illustrating Hall's comment. In Deuteronomy 15:17 there is mention of a perpetual slave and in Genesis 9:16 a perpetual covenant. Each of these indicate a perpetuity only after a time of inauguration. In fact even the permanence of their perpetuity may be limited. Girdlestone writes:

Eternity is endless; and this idea is only qualified by the nature of the object to which it is applied, or by the word of God. When applied to things physical, it is used in accordance with the revealed truth that the heaven and earth shall pass away, and it is limited by this truth. When applied to God, it is used in harmony with the truth that He is essentially and absolutely existant and that as He is the causa causarum

¹ Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint and the Other Greek Versions of the Old Testament, I (Gratz, Austria: Akademische Druk, 1954), 39-41. "(hereinafter referred to as Concordance.)"

² Frank Herbert Brabant, Time and Eternity in Christian Thought (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1937), p. 238. "(Hereinafter referred to as Time.)"

³ William Rice Hall, "The Concept of Time and Eternity in the Old Testament" (unpublished Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1960), p. 33.

and without beginning, so in the very nature of things it must be held that no cause can ever put an end to His existence.¹

The extent of the perpetuity therefore can be limited depending upon the object and its relation to αἰών. In those cases where God is so related, nothing less than the totality of eternity would be meant.

There may also be עֲלָמַי, perpetuity, in two directions, namely, the past² as well as the future. "These observations are equally true whether the definite article is used with the Hebrew or not."³ Obviously care must be taken to let the context indicate the extent of time intended.

In the Septuagint αἰών translates עֲלָמַי with two meanings: (1) a duration of a definite space of time, and (2) an unending duration of time which could be either past or future depending on the context.⁴ Past time stretching indefinitely backward is seen in Genesis 6:4 "the mighty men that were of old." More frequently the time intended is future and can be limited only by the context as in

¹ Robert Baker Girdlestone, Synonyms of the Old Testament, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Win. B. Eerdmans Company, 1953), P. 317.

² Cf. Joshua 24:2 and Jeremiah 28:8 as good illustrations of perpetuity in the past.

³ James Barr, Time (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961), p. 70.

⁴ Cremer, Lexicon, p. 75.

II Samuel 12:10, "the sword shall not depart out of your house forever (ἕως αἰῶνος). Initially αἰῶν had the idea of hidden or distant time belonging to the remote past or future from the standpoint of the present. Only later did αἰῶν in translating עֲלֵי עֵלְוֵי develop the meaning of endless time or eternity. Cremer substantiates this by saying:

עֲלֵי עֵלְוֵי the Hebrew word meant primarily a remote, veiled, undefined, and therefore unlimited time, past or future, and only secondarily, a definite (especially a future) period whose limits must be ascertained from the context, it was the natural choice to have αἰῶν translate this word.¹

While αἰῶν has several lexical meanings ranging from life, lifetime, an age, a space of time and eternity it is certain that αἰῶν may signify an indefinite period of time either past or future (including the present) whose extent is limited by the context more than by word meaning and may designate only a brief period in one's life or extend as far as eternity (or any point in between). In that αἰῶν was used to translate the Hebrew עֲלֵי עֵלְוֵי primarily it must be understood that the New Testament use αἰῶν has the Old Testament world of thought behind it.²

¹ Cremer, Lexicon, p. 75.

² Alan Richardson, A Theological Word Book on the Bible (New York: NacMillan, 1956), p. 266. "(Hereinafter referred to as Word Book.)"

In the Gospels

Some fourteen different expressions occur in the Gospels where the word αἰών is included. In general two basic ideas seem to be present among these uses: (1) an indefinitely long period, that is a period without assignable limits, and (2) one of the two great periods of the world's history.¹

Regarding the first idea it should be noted that "only in the light of the context can it be said whether αἰών means 'eternity' in the strict sense of simply 'remote' or 'extended' or 'uninterrupted time.'"² Sasse further suggests that the use of the plural "presupposes knowledge of a plurality of αἰῶνες, of ages and periods of time whose infinite series constitutes eternity."³

The two great periods of the world's history are the present time which began with creation and culminates with judgment and the Messianic or Kingdom age. Brabant remarks,

In the NT Aion is used of this life in opposition to the Age of the Kingdom which is called ὁ μέλλων or ἐκείνος ὁ αἰών: from this it comes to mean this World Order under the rule of an evil angel.⁴

¹ Burton, Word Studies, p. 77.

² Sasse, αἰών, I, 198-99.

³ Ibid., p. 199.

⁴ Brabant, Time, p. 43.

The many variations of expression using αἰών are thought to be only an "intensification of the tendency already displayed in the LXX to replace the simple formulae by more complicated."¹

In recent years considerable discussion of αἰών, καιρός an χρόνος has taken place.² These divergent views have developed into two general ideas about these words. The two basic positions concerning αἰών are set forth by Oscar Cullmann and James Barr.

Cullmann argues that αἰών in the New Testament designates a duration of time which may be a limited or unlimited extent of time. Actually his scheme allows for four elements: (1) the entirety of time, (2) the period before creation, (3) the period between creation and the final events, and (4) the period from the final events to infinity.³ When αἰών is used to show a limited duration of time it, should be translated "age." If unlimited duration is indicated the translation "eternity" is preferred. The plural αἰῶνες is preferred when the sense

¹ Sasse, αἰών, I, 200.

² Some of those who reflect this recent discussion are: J. Marsh, The Fulness of Time; A. Richardson, A Theological Word Book of the Bible; J.A.T. Robinson, In the End, God; C. Cullmann, Christ and Time; and J. Barr, Biblical Words for Time.

³ James Barr, Time (London: SCM Press Otd., 1962), p. 74.

"eternity" is intended. However, this "eternity" is not something different than time but the whole of time.¹ To Cullmann "eternity" is, "the linking of an unlimited series of limited world periods, whose succession only God is able to survey."²

In his reply to Cullmann's position James Barr argues against Cullmann's methodology and conclusion that eternity (αἰών) is synonymous with the entirety of earth's limited times. He maintains for example, that αἰών in its popular phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα may be used "firstly for the totality of time and secondly for a perpetuity in some state for the whole of a limited period, and negatively for the continual avoidance of a particular action"³ either for the whole or a limited period. In other words αἰών may have several meanings which are not necessarily parts of the same whole. He further suggests that the use of the plural of αἰών probably can be traced to or influenced by the Hebrew olamim (or similarly the Aramaic),⁴ and not to the combining of time periods. Richardson appears to restrict this meaning of αἰών too severely when he comments:

¹ Oscar Cullmann, Time, trans. by F. Filson (Philadelphia: the Westminster Press, 1950), pp. 45-46.

² Barr, Time, p. 64.

³ Ibid., p. 77.

⁴ Ibid., p. 65.

In this connexion it is important to observe that neither there, nor in any Jewish literature current at the time, was the word aion used to express the view that the history of the world is made up of a number of aions or 'ages', nor even the notion of two aions or ages -- the present and the one to come.¹

Such a conclusion can hardly be supported by the context of many New Testament passages.

In summary, Barr appeals to the syntactic contexts to determine whether $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ should be translated "forever" (which he believes is true in most contexts) with "never" in negative contexts and for the past "from all time" or eternity.² The consideration of the context and the historic uses of $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ to determine the correct meaning of $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ is a much better approach than Cullmann's self-designed system of limited time periods which when compiled extend from the beginning to the end of eternity. With this background in mind an examination of the use of $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ in the Gospels is now possible.

The several uses of $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$, are translated most often by "age," "forever," and in the negative by "never." The time indicated may extend from the time of creation to the eternal state.

Matthew uses $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ with $\tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega$ in a general way to speak of this present age or time of history in contrast

¹ Richardson, Word Book, p. 266.

² Barr, Time, p. 69.

with the coming age which is climaxed by the eternal state (12:32). Similarly αἰών is found in "the worry of the age" (13:22; Mk. 4:19). Perhaps it is best to understand this as the present evil time¹ or world system which culminates in judgment.

The expression συντέλεια αἰῶνος, "end of the age" is found in five places and always with αἰών in the genitive singular.² Although it is found nowhere else in the Gospels, this expression is frequently found in Jewish apocalyptic literature especially in the Book of Baruch. Each reference indicates a future time period of limited duration. It may be the time of spiritual harvest (Mt. 13), the time just prior to the Messianic kingdom (24:3) and the end of this dispensation at the Rapture (28:20). At least two differing points in time are indicated therefore, the expression does not seem to refer to a particular point but a period of time. To the dispensationalist the promise of Matthew 28:20 extends only to the Rapture since there will be no need for the promise after the Rapture. The other occurrences will be fulfilled in conjunction with the Second Coming, with the events of the Tribulation and

¹ Ezra P. Gould, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. 76. "(Hereinafter referred to as Mark.)"

² Mt. 13:39, 40, 49; 24:3; 28:30.

the judgment of all living (Mt. 13). Thus the same expression refers to differing periods of limited duration.

Following the end of this age time continues.

While Matthew does not use αἰών to describe the eternal state he may suggest it in recording the cursing of the fig tree "there shall no longer be fruit from these forever" (21:19). The expression used is the familiar Old Testament phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα or "into perpetuity." Concerning this phrase Lenski writes: "The belief that whatsoever is allowed to see that age will continue to exist, in that age, makes εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα equivalent to forever."¹ And yet in a sense even this use of αἰών may extend only so far as the life of the fig tree. If this is true, the most Jewish of the Gospels has αἰών primarily to indicate time within the existing period which is prior to the eternal state.

Of Mark's four references,² two are parallel to accounts in Matthew. However, Mark 10:30 introduces the coming age (ἐρχομένῳ αἰῶν) which has as its characteristic life eternal. It is clear that this coming age is a distinct future period following "this age" which is qualified as to its nature only by the phrase "eternal life." Its extent of time is unspecified.

¹ Richard C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1964), p. 34. "(Hereinafter referred to as Luke.)"

² Mark 3:29; 4:19; 10:30; 11:14.

In the phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα which occurs in Mark 3:29, "hath not forgiveness forever," it must have the meaning of eternal duration rather than "age." The "forever" indicates the duration of the not being forgiven which must last as long as the individual exists. It is later referred to as an eternal (αἰώνιος) sin. Here only in Mark does αἰών indicate a long period of time including both the present and future ages.

The third Gospel, Luke, incorporates all of the previous uses of αἰών though sometimes with differing expressions. He writes of the sons of the present period of time in 16:8, τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου. The terminus of the present age will not be reached until the coming age (18:30). "This age" (τούτου) in Luke 20:34 is not to be confused with "that (ἐκείνου) age" (20:35). Perhaps more pointedly here than any other place Jesus shows there is a distinction between the present age, a time for marrying, and the future age, a time of resurrection. The periods are distinct and do not overlap. The εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα is found in both the singular (1:55) and the plural (1:33). This is the only plural use of αἰών in the Gospels. The use of αἰών in the singular "toward Abraham and his seed forever" may be indicating that up to the time of Luke's inscripturation only a single αἰών had transpired whereas the plural "reign over the house of Jacob forever" would cite that a multiplication of eons in an indefinite

succession portray the magnitude of eternity.¹ However, it is best to understand the singular or plural uses as optional ways of saying the same thing, "forever," unless there is contextual evidence which would indicate otherwise.

Luke 1:70, "from of old" introduces a use of αἰών which looks backward into time. It is not from an eternal past but a time period being reckoned from the time when the holy prophets began to emerge. Here αἰών indicates a past time within this age but removed from eternity or forever.

In John only two types of αἰών expressions are found. The first expression in 9:32 is ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος "since the world began" and suggests the time as being since the beginning of this age commencing with creation. This is the only such use in the New Testament though it is used freely by non-biblical authors.²

The most popular phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα is found in the singular all eleven times. In John 8:35 Jesus uses an illustration concerning the tenure of a servant and a son in a household. The servant is not remaining "forever" but the son remains "forever." That is, his tenure is not lost

¹ Lenski, Luke, p. 68.

² J. H. Bernard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, II (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1962), 336. "(Hereinafter referred to as John.)"

as long as he lives. Obviously the time of this illustration extends only as far as the life of the servant and the son. Though "forever" may be considered the best translation it can be misleading since the "forever" is limited to a lifetime. The other uses of this phrase in John are translated "forever"¹ or its negative "never"² which is an unending avoidance. Among these are the popular Johannine phrases "never die," "live forever," and "never taste death." In some of these cases the "forever" had a beginning though no end. Yet the same expression is used in referring to the abiding of the Son (12:34) which has no beginning or ending. Correct theology demands that αἰών in these places be understood as an unending period of time. In all these passages αἰών cannot specify the period of time. Only the context can determine this. The comment of A. H. Strong concerning the meaning of αἰών and αἰώνιος is most fitting: "They do, however, express the longest possible duration of which the subject to that which they are attributed is capable."³

By way of summary, αἰών is found in several phrases and designates time that has varying lengths. It may refer to time past, from creation, Abraham or the prophets. In

¹ Jn. 6:51, 58; 12:34; 14:16.

² Jn. 4:14; 8:51, 52; 10:28; 11:26; 13:8.

³ Augustus H. Strong, Systematic Theology (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1907), p. 1044.

other places it indicates the existing world system, this age, or the coming age. The expression, **συντέλεια αἰῶνα**, used only by Matthew, signifies the consummation of the age either at the Rapture or the Second Coming. The most popular expression is **εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα** which is translated "forever."¹ Yet even the "forever" often had a beginning unless it was ascribed to Jesus. It can have an ending at the end of one's life as well. To suggest a common translation for these multiple uses would be impossible. Each context must determine the time and duration signified by **αἰών**.

καιρός

A second important time word is **καιρός** which is often translated "time." However, there are several other translations and uses of this word.

¹ Since **αἰώνιος** is an adjective it was not considered separately. The assertion by Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 1044 that both **αἰών** and **αἰώνιος** have the same basic meaning makes an in depth study unnecessary. Only the nature of its uses need be cited. In the Gospels the adjective **αἰώνιος** has the meaning "eternal." This is also the nuance of **αἰών**. Of the twenty-nine uses of **αἰώνιος** all but five occur with **ζωή** in the expression "eternal" life. The other uses are: (1) "eternal" fire (Mt. 18:8; 25:41); (2) "eternal" punishment (Mt. 25:46); (3) "eternal" dwellings (Lk. 16:9); and (4) "eternal" sin (Mk. 3:29).

In non-biblical Greek

While the etymology of *καίρος*, "time," is uncertain and gives place to several differing conclusions, the early temporal uses of this word suggest two basic meanings: (1) exact or critical time, season or opportunity and (2) time, period or season of the year.¹ Typical of the first meaning is the sentence "the time (*καίρος*) for the delivery of the corn had passed."² In other words *καίρος* refers to a specific point of time. James Barr similarly states, "where *καίρος* has a reference to time in a classical author like Aeschylus the sense is roughly that of opportune time."³ In its second sense it may mean a short space of time, a stretch of time, time of the year or an age.⁴

Generally, *καίρος* is in some way limited or defined by the use, of other words, such as prepositions or words following in the genitive case to indicate the reason why the time is set apart. Delling shows strong preference for the first meaning when he writes "the linguistic development

¹ George Henry Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, I (London: At the Clarendon Press, 1940), 859. "(Hereinafter referred to as Lexicon.)"

² Moulton and Milligan, *Ibid.*, p. 315.

³ Barr, *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁴ Gerhard Delling, *καίρος*, TDNT, trans. and ed., by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, III (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), 457-58.

of the term clearly suggests that the basic sense is that of the decisive or crucial place or point, whether spatially, materially or temporally."¹

In the Old Testament

From the Hebrew several observations can be made. Most often *καιρός* translates *תַּיְ* which "in reference to determining the nature of the concept of time in the Old Testament, it is basic that it refers primarily to the juncture of circumstances, the specific occasion."² Consequently, it can be said that *תַּיְ* refers directly to the occasion itself. It must be stated further that *תַּיְ* is translated by many other Greek words including *ώρα*, *ἡμέρα*, and *χρόνος*. However, *καιρός* also occurs for *דַּיְמוֹ*, "appointment" which is used to indicate natural periods such as feasts and *עֲלֵי־עַד* which refers to remotest time or perpetuity.

The use of *καιρός* in the Septuagint continues the earlier meanings of *καιρός*, namely: (1) a decisive point in time, as in Genesis 17:21 "at this set time in the next year" and (2) a more general indication of time. As a general rule, *καιρός* in the Septuagint signifies a point of time at which something happens though on some occasions it

¹ Delling, *Ibid.*, p. 455.

² John H. Wilch, *Time and Event* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), p. 167.

seems to suggest the meaning of χρόνος, a "period of time."¹

This period of time can be shorter or longer, a regular fixed time or a general statement of time.²

In the Gospels

The use of καιρός in the Gospels is limited to thirty places, three of which occur in the plural. It is generally accepted that καιρός has two or more senses. Often it means a fixed time or decisive point. For this reason it can be thought of as "the right time." A second meaning is more general and is limited or defined by the use of other words or prepositional phrases. This seems to be the general use.³ It is also possible that a third use, that of the plural, occurs to denote periods⁴ of time. Several translations conveying the idea of time, "right, proper time, opportunity"⁵ may result depending on the use involved. However, these several meanings are not accepted

¹ However, Barr, Time, pp. 35-37 lists many illustrations which seem to have just the opposite of their normally accepted meanings.

² E. Jenni, "Time," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, IV (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 645.

³ Cremer, Lexicon, p. 324. ⁴ Ibid.

⁵ William P. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 395. "(Hereinafter referred to as Lexicon.)"

by all the scholars.

Among the recent theologians commenting on the significance of *καιρός* several maintain that it stands for "realistic time," that is, time of opportunity and fulfillment¹ which is in contrast with *χρόνος* meaning "a period of time." More pointedly, Robinson comments " *καιρός* is time considered in relation to personal action, in reference to ends to be achieved in it."² Thus, it always must be thought of as a "point of time defined by its content."³ It becomes a critical or decisive moment. For this reason it is argued that times are "known and distinguished not so much by their place in some temporal sequence as by their content: i.e. they are known realistically, rather than chronologically."⁴ Therefore, it is the sum total of these *καιροί* that provide a line of realistic time. This is of theological importance to Oscar Cullmann for it is his "working out of the series of decisive moments or *kairoi* chosen by God, the joining together of which furnishes Cullmann with his line, so important for his understanding of time."⁵

¹ John Marsh, *Time* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1952), p. 20.

² John Arthur Thomas Robinson, *In the End* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 258.

³ Cullmann, *Time*, p. 39.

⁴ Marsh, *Time*, p. 21.

⁵ Barr, *Time*, p. 63.

That Barr does not accept this limited definition of *καιρός* is clear when he says, "If there is a difference between *χρόνος* and *καιρός* in the New Testament usage it is clear that it cannot correspond to the distinction between chronological and realistic time."¹ Actually, in some of the passages of theological significance "there may be good reason to suppose that there is no real difference between the words."² In many places *χρόνος* and *καιρός* appear to exchange the meanings usually given to them.³ Barr concludes his argument:

But the main point has been abundantly established namely that the correlation of two great conceptions of time with the two Greek words is thoroughly erroneous and that all arguments about time in biblical thought are misleading in such proportion as they depend upon this correlation.⁴

It must be noted that two differing views concerning the meaning of *καιρός* prevail: (1) it points only [emphasis mine] to a specific point in time, or (2) it has in addition to the first meaning the meaning of *χρόνος* which is normally understood to be its opposite. With this in mind the meaning of *καιρός* in the Gospels can better be

¹ Barr, Time, p. 22.

² Ibid., p. 31; see also Caird, The Apostolic Age, p. 694.

³ Barr, Time, cites many illustrations of this from both the Septuagint and the New Testament beginning on p. 35.

⁴ Ibid., p. 44.

explored.

In Matthew on some occasions **καιρός** must indicate a specific point in time. For example, he writes of the demons not wanting to be tormented **πρό καιροῦ** "before the time" (8:29). The omission of the article is not to generalize the statement but it occurs because it is a time designation after a preposition.¹ The time indicated is the appointed time of judgment. Similarly in 24:45 a faithful steward puts food before the household **ἐν καιρῷ** "at the right time." This use of **ἐν καιρῷ** without further qualification seems to be an idiom and can be found with this meaning outside of Biblical Greek.² The sense remains that of a specific point of time though the exact time is unspecified. Jesus indicates this idea also when He remarks near His crucifixion "my time is near" (26:18).

Also in Matthew **καιρός** has the meaning of "season" when connected with the grain (13:30) and fruit (21:34) coming ripe for harvesting. While this is not a single point of time it does convey a very limited expanse of time at the harvest season. It is not so much an exact chronological reference as it is a time to do something. A more

¹ Nigel Turner, Syntax, Vol. III., A Grammar of New Testament Greek, ed. by J.H. Moulton (3 vols; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1919-63), p. 179. "(Hereinafter referred to as Syntax.)"

² Xenophon Anabasis 3.1.39.

general expression, ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ, "at that time" is found in 11:25, 12:1 and 14:1. The context of each usage clearly indicates that this is not a specific time indication. George Ogg remarks concerning this expression, "It may be a mere transition or introductory formula; it may refer to some definite season about the limits of which, however, nothing is known. In neither case can a scientific chronology obtain any help from it."¹ Mark 12:23 which is parallel to Matthew 12:1 has "and it came to pass" which is a general indication of sequence more than time. On two occasions, 16:3 "signs of the times" and 21:41 "proceeds in their seasons," the plural of καιρός is used. In these places καιρός seems more like the chronological reckoning indicated by χρόνος. Time here is presented as periods of eschatological and agricultural reckoning. Therefore, Matthew uses καιρός with three basic ideas: (1) a specific point of time, (2) a limited expanse of time, and (3) a period of time.

Mark's account has καιρός five times always in the singular. Like Matthew it is used to indicate a specific event in time, such as, the coming of the kingdom, "the time is fulfilled" (1:15) and the time of the second coming (13:33). Yet, in each instance the time of the event does

¹ George Ogg, Chronology of the public Ministry of Jesus (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1940), p. 17. "(Hereinafter referred to as Chronology.)"

not appear important, rather the event. In Mark 11:13 **καιρός** denotes that it was not the "season" of figs, but in 12:2 it was the "season" for receiving the produce of the vineyard. The use in Mark 10:30 "he shall receive one hundred fold now in this time" is a general reference to one's lifetime as contrasted with the coming age which is mentioned later in the verse. Here, as in Matthew, **καιρός** has in some of its uses an appeal to a non-specific period of time which is also true of **χρόνος** and **αἰών**.

Luke has **καιρός** thirteen times. In addition to the parallels in the other Gospels, Luke uses **καιρός** to indicate a specific time in 1:20 where Gabriel tells Zacharias that his words concerning the birth of John "shall be fulfilled in their time," the time of John's birth. If, however, the whole prophecy is being indicated here then **καιρός** would be better translated "season" and would include the ministry of John thus becoming a general time indication. Jesus indicates that false prophets will declare themselves to be the Christ and will say, "the time is at hand" (21:8). That is, from time to time the false prophets will declare it is the appropriate time to follow them. The Devil leaves Jesus at the end of the temptation, **ἄχρι καιροῦ**, "until a right or favorable time" (4:13). The word is believed until the "time of temptation" (8:13). Luke seems to stress not the "when" of the event but that it does take place at some point in time.

At times Luke's use of *καιρός* indicates a period of time. It may be the "time of your visitation" (19:44), that is, the "time" of the ministry of Christ to Israel. In addition *καιρός* can indicate a period when, "for a time," there are those who believe the word (8:13). Also found is *ἐν αὐτῷ καιρῷ* (13:1) as a general indication of time which places Luke twelve and thirteen in the same time period though not necessarily indicating immediacy of time sequence. These passages do not suggest an event taking place at a single point in time as do the earlier references in Luke. However, the event seems more important than the time.

In Luke 21:24 the plural occurs, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Theologically it is generally accepted that these times began in Daniel's day and extend until the Second Coming. Here then is a clear passage where *καιρός* must mean what *χρόνος* seems usually to signify, a chronological time indicator.

John adds nothing to what is already stated. His two uses, 7:16 and 7:8, indicate the exact or precise moment for Jesus to manifest His glory in the crucifixion and exaltation.

By way of summary, in the Gospels *καιρός* refers to time that may be (1) a specific moment, (2) a more general span of time, and (3) a period of time which can extend even over two thousand years. For this reason a variety of

translations including "moment, season, time, opportunity and right time" are possible. It is the context rather than the word which conveys the various meanings of the word. It must be remembered that **καιρός** is not normally used to indicate time in its chronological sequences but rather events which occur at some time. In other words, with **καιρός** the event is emphasized as occurring without a specific emphasis as to its time relationships to other events. Therefore, it could be said that **καιρός** indicates time as conceptualized rather than time realized.

χρόνος

The final word considered in this chapter is **χρόνος**. Like **αἰών** and **καιρός** it occurs in a variety of contexts but it has only the one translation, "time."

In non-biblical Greek

The use of **χρόνος** in expressing time is most often contemplated simply as the succession of moments. That is **χρόνος** "embraces all possible **καιροί**, and, being the larger more inclusive term, may be often used where **καιρός** would have been equally suitable, though not the converse."¹ In earliest Greek it expressed time both specific, such as, lifetime, season of the year or some definite time period

¹ Trench, Synonyms, p. 210.

as well as abstract time.¹ These same meanings can also be found in the New Testament era among the papyri literature. Sometimes χρόνος is found with καιρός as in "to say nothing of so long time (χρόνον) having passed and such times (καιρῶν)."² This illustrates well the often suggested difference between these two words, that of a period and an event.

Expressions which include χρόνος, such as, πολὺς χρόνος, a long time, ἴκανος χρόνος, considerable or long time,³ and διαλειπὼν χρόνον, after a while, or διαλειπῶν χρόνον at intervals,⁴ suggest a rather long period of time especially when they occur in the plural.⁵

In the Old Testament

Thirteen differing Hebrew words and expressions are translated by χρόνος,⁶ The most frequent Hebrew word is יום which normally is translated "day." In places where χρόνος is used for יום, whether in the singular or

¹ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, II, 2008.

² Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 694.

³ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 896.

⁴ Herbert Weir Smyth, Greek Grammar (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), 10. 458. "(Herein-after referred to as Grammar.)"

⁵ Jenni, χρόνος, TDNT, IV, 645.

⁶ Hatch and Redpath, Concordance, II, 1476.

plural, it indicates a general or prolonged period of time as in Genesis 26:1, "in the days (time) of Abraham" and Joshua 4:14, "all the days (time) of his life." The other two frequently translated Hebrew words, **תַּע** and **עֵינָי**, are translated by both **καιρός** or **χρόνος**. However, these Hebrew words are not often translated by **χρόνος**. The five times **עֵינָי** is found it is in an **εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον** expression. A perusal of the context of these Hebrew words that are translated by **χρόνος** indicates usually an extended period of time. The time may apply to the time of one's life (Deut. 12:19) or eternity (Isa. 14:20) or any similar period of time.

On some occasions **χρόνος** appears definitely to refer to a specific time as in Jeremiah 49:8, "the time that I shall visit him," though sometimes the time is a more extended period as in the "time (**χρόνος**) of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:8). In Daniel 2:16, "appoint him a time," **χρόνος** also must be interpreted as a specific point in time and seems to convey the idea normally associated with **καιρός**. Yet, later in Daniel 2:21, **χρόνος** appears to refer to a larger period of time. In both places **χρόνος** translates the same Aramaic word, **ܕܝܢܐ**. These considerations certainly suggest that **χρόνος** refers generally to a period of time though it may at times point to a specific time. In such places its meaning seems to overlap that of **καιρός**.

In the Gospels

The translation of χρόνος is "time" which is often qualified by a supporting word, phrase or clause.¹ In each Gospel χρόνος occurs with several expressions. One of the problems with χρόνος is that some see no difference between χρόνος and καιρός. Frame comments, "in Jewish usage the terms are interchangeable."² However, some more contemporary writers believe that χρόνος in the New Testament is the word [emphasis mine] for chronological time,³ that is, measured time or duration.⁴ Robinson elaborates that χρόνος is

time abstracted from such a relation, time, as it were, that ticks on objectively and impersonally, whether anything is happening or not; it is time measured by the chronometer, not by purpose, momentary rather than momentous.⁵

In other words Robinson believes that χρόνος "time," is to be regarded as self-determining. Further, it is held that time expressed χρόνος is not of importance.

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 896.

² James Everett Frame, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1912), p. 180.

³ Marsh, Time, p. 20.

⁴ Alan Richardson, Word Book, p. 258.

⁵ Robinson, In the End, God, p. 45.

We usually think of time as something which can be counted in hours. The New Testament designates this sort of time by the word chronos. Every event has its place in the sequence of time. We then have the tendency to depict time on a straight line with different events as points along this line. We usually ask when this or that event occurred and how long it lasted. . . . Differing from us, however, the Biblical authors concentrated far more on the content of a certain event than on its place in the sequence of time. They did not ask first of all when an event took place, but what happened, what content the event had.¹

While credence can be generally given to this line of thinking, a further observation is necessary. To Barr, χρόνος time most often has reference to some kind of real time "in which something was happening, or some time the elapse of which was important for the understanding of the description of some event."² Yet in some locations χρόνος and καιρός have no significant differences.

In the LXX and NT καιρός keeps the special meaning, in which it shows opposition to χρόνος, of 'right time,' only in certain contexts; and that over a large area of the usage, much larger than the number of the examples we have already cited, the two words mean the same thing; . . . In particular in those theologically important cases which speak of the 'time' or 'times' which God has appointed or promised the two words are most probably of like meaning.³

As in the case of αἰών and καιρός the major views concerning χρόνος are two. The first maintains that χρόνος indicates measured or chronological time. The second view,

¹ Jindrick Nanek, "The Biblical Concept of Time and Our Gospels," New Testament Studies, VI (October, 1959), pp. 46-47.

² Barr, Time, D. 79.

³ Ibid., p. 42.

upheld by Barr, allows for a wider scope of meaning so that it can also have the same meaning as *καιρός*. Thus, only the context can determine whether the word meaning is the same as *καιρός* or refers to an extended period of time.

Of the three references to *χρόνος* in Matthew, two occur in connection with the birth of Christ. Herod inquired exactly of the wisemen "the time" of the appearing star (2:7) that marked the birth of Christ. Later in 2:16 Herod slew the infants two years and under "according to the time which he accurately ascertained from the magi." In both uses a precise reckoning of calendar time was calculated and this became the time basis for Herod's actions. This specific period of time was not over two years. The third reference to *χρόνος* is in Matthew 25:19, "now after much time" in the parable of the talents. The parable itself indicates a lengthy undesignated period of time passed so that *χρόνος* must be used here to indicate a period of time.

Mark 2:19 has *ὅσον χρόνον*, "so long a time (as)" and 9:21 *πόσος χρόνος*, "how long a time." Again the time is unspecified but real calendar time. An undesignated period of time passes between the events described.

Luke, however, has several interesting and varied uses of *χρόνος*. In 1:57 it may have a part of the meaning of *καιρός* when "the time of her (Elizabeth's) bearing" is spoken of. While this is an event in chronological time

it culminated at a "specific moment" rather than over a period. It seems little different from Luke's expression "the time (καιρός) of temptation" (8:13). If, however, the nine months of Elizabeth's pregnancy are in view as a chronological indication, the concept of chronological time rather than a specific moment is intended.

Satan in Luke 4:5 shows to Christ all the kingdoms of the world "in a moment of time" ἐν στιγμή ἡρόνου. That is, all the kingdoms were shown to Christ not in a chronological series but simultaneously.¹ Here, ἡρόνος is qualified by a prepositional phrase to refer to a single moment of time. Normally it is καιρός that expresses this concept. Luke 18:4 "for a time," and 20:9 "for a long time" all indicate periods of time which may even extend into years.

Herod is also said to be desirous of seeing Christ "of (for) a long time" ἐξ ἱκανῶν ἡρόνων (23:8). This use of ἡρόνος with ἱκανός, because of the context must mean "enough and to spare, much." This combination of words is quite frequent in the writings of Luke.² In Luke 8:27 the man possessed with demons "for much (ἱκανῶ) time" had worn no clothes. "For many times" (8:29) the demon had seized

¹ Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1964), p. 111. "(Hereinafter referred to as Luke.)"

² Ibid., p. 199.

him. Here the change to the plural form of χρόνος would show either the demon had been troubling him for a long period of time or it had often times seized him. The difference is between one long seizure and a series of many seizures on different occasions.

John's use of χρόνος adds nothing new. In 5:6 Jesus saw the sick man by the pool and knew he had been there "a long time" πολὺν χρόνον. Later Jesus uses τοσούτω χρόνω "so long a time" (14:9) to speak of His being with Philip. On two occasions (7:33; 12:35) μικρός and χρόνος are used to show that Jesus would be with them a "little time." The first use is six months before the crucifixion and the last a few hours. Both are periods of time with undesignated lengths. Thus, in John χρόνος always means extent and never point of time.

In conclusion it can be stated that χρόνος usually expresses time in its duration. Thus there are the expressions "much time, so long a time" etc. Yet, there are a few instances which may indicate an event taking place at a point in time. In such instances χρόνος seems to parallel the idea of καιρός. One further observation is in order. All the instances of χρόνος in the Gospels occur in contexts that are a matter of history. They are not time conceptualized. These events may have taken place (1) in a moment of time, (2) a period of time, or (3) on several occasions. At least the first two uses are also true of

καιρός. For this reason the differences between χρόνος and καιρός cannot be sought in the duration of time.

Rather χρόνος emphasizes more the time of the event whereas καιρός seems to stress the event which takes place in time.

However, there are some places the words seem to share the same meaning.

CHAPTER IV

WORDS INDICATING TIME IN A YEAR

Assertions have already been made about the meanings of the words for time which were most often used by the common people of Palestine in the first century A.D.¹ During the passing of a year some of these words and other words were used in a variety of ways to indicate time. This chapter is not a duplication of the earlier chapter but an examination of all the appearances of the words in the Gospels. It is necessary to understand the use of each word in the non-biblical Greek, the Old Testament and then the New Testament in order to assert conclusions about their temporal meaning. The words studied in this chapter include expressions for time in a year except for the word "day" and its parts. The order of the words considered in this chapter are: year, month, week, tomorrow and yesterday.

Year (διετής, ἐνιαυτός, ἔτος)

Years were cited by one of three Greek words—διετής, ἐνιαυτός and ἔτος. These words are found in differing contexts and must be examined separately to show the distinctions and similarities of meaning.

¹ See Supra, chapter II for these comments.

διετής

Actually, διετής is an infrequent combination of two words δίς meaning two and ἔτος which is the usual word for year.

In non-biblical Greek.--Only a few uses of this word can be cited and all of these must be translated "two years." This is true whether the word is used by Herodotus¹ or Josephus.² Often διετής is accompanied by χρόνος as in the rental agreement "I will guarantee your tenancy for the period of two years."³

In the Old Testament.--This word is not found in the Old Testament probably because of the Hebrew custom of expressing more than one year with two or more separate words. However, διετής is found once in II Maccabees 10:3, "They brought a sacrifice after two years time" (μετά διετῆ χρόνου). This verse follows the pattern of the non-biblical Greek.

¹ George Henry Liddell and Robert Scott, Lexicon, I (London: At the Clarendon Press, 1940), 351.

² Josephus Antiquities 2.5.4. This is the only place it occurs in Josephus according to Henry St. John Thackeray, A Lexicon to Josephus, III (Paris: Librarie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1945), 174. "(Hereinafter referred to as Lexicon.)"

³ Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 160.

In the Gospels.--The sole use of διετής in the Gospels occurs with the preposition ἀπό, "from two years old and under" (Mt. 2:16). Luke also uses διετής in Acts 24:27 and 28:30 where full two year periods are acknowledged by virtually all commentators. As far as being helpful in establishing an approximate date for the birth of Christ, this expression suggests that Jesus was born at least two years before the death of Herod. This assumption seems reasonable for the following reasons. Herod's decree to slay the infants was based on the time he exactly learned from the wisemen. Further, in Classical Greek the genitive may denote the time "since" an action has happened.¹ Here, the ἀπὸ διετοῦς καὶ κατωτέρω indicates the starting point in time for those infants who fell under the decree of Herod. If Herod extended the time beyond the time learned from the wisemen, the two year time indication is less meaningful. However, by assuming that the two years indicates the approximate age of Jesus at the time of Herod's decree and since Herod died shortly after an eclipse of the moon and before the Passover of 4 B.C. as history seems to indicate,² and since Christ was born before the death of Herod, it can be asserted that the birth of Christ could hardly occur after

¹ Herbert Weir Smyth, Grammar (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 337.

² Jack Finegan, HBC (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 231-33.

6 B.C. unless διετής indicates something less than two years. It should be noted that these are possible variables which could alter the conclusions often stated about the birth date of Christ. The most important reason why it is impossible to be specific as to which year Christ was born from this Scripture reference is that the date of this decree by Herod is not known. It may have been close to his death in 4 B.C. but there is no reason why it could not have been earlier in 5 B.C. etc. Consequently a conclusion as to the date of Christ's birth cannot be dogmatically asserted on the basis of this passage. However, the meaning of διετής must indicate two years since it is not qualified.

ἔνιαυτός

This seldom used word denoting a year occurs only four times in the Gospels though more often in other literature.

In non-biblical Greek.--Throughout all the Greek writings ἔνιαυτός is found with the translation and meaning of a "whole year."¹ For example, in the papyri ἔνιαυτός is found, "for the first year πρωτοῦ ἔνιαυτοῦ she received her wages for nursing."² However, on a few

¹ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, I, 567.

² Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 215.

occasions ἐνιαυτός is used more generally of a period of time. Once Josephus indicates a period that is actually six hundred years by the expression ὁ μέγας ἐνιαυτός.¹

In the Old Testament.--Occurring about one hundred times, ἐνιαυτός is found mostly in the historical sections. In nearly every instance it translates הַיָּשׁוּב which usually means a literal year. Very seldom does ἐνιαυτός occur with a number. For this reason there are only a few times where ἐνιαυτός indicates the length of a king's reign (I Kg. 14: 21). In recording the time of the building of Solomon's temple both ἔτος and ἐνιαυτός are used apparently as synonyms (I Kgs. 6:1), because the four hundred and eightieth year (ἔτος) since the Exodus from Egypt and the fourth year (ἐνιαυτός) of Solomon's reign are the same year.

Several other passages have ἐνιαυτός and ἔτος in the same context. In II Kings 24:18 "Zedekiah was twenty and one years" (ἐνιαυτός) and "he reigned eleven years" (ἔτος). This example could be repeated many times and it suggests that ἐνιαυτός and ἔτος are often identical in meaning.

In some places ἐνιαυτός is a "year" conceptualized rather than historic. Genesis 1:14 says the lights in the

¹ Josephus Antiquities 1.3.9. For other instances where ἐνιαυτός signifies a period see Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 266.

heaven are "for days and for years." Once in the year (ἐνιαυτός) the high priest made atonement (Lev. 16:34) for sins. Also, the children of Israel were commanded to keep a feast unto Jehovah "seven days in the year" (Lev. 23:41).

In the Old Testament ἐνιαυτός occurs with these two nuances. In a minority of places ἐνιαυτός when used with numbers becomes a chronological indication. However, ἐνιαυτός usually conveys the concept of a year such as the "year of Jubilee" (Lev. 25:13) and "all the months of the year" (I Chr. 27:1). In both senses, the meaning indicated is a literal year.

In the Gospels.--The four references to ἐνιαυτός in the Gospels are without the use of numbers just as it often occurs in the Septuagint. Three of the passages state that Caiaphas was the highpriest "that year," τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ ἐκείνου (Jn. 11:49, 51; 18:13). The expression "that year" should probably be understood as "that fatal year" when Christ was crucified rather than the thought that Caiaphas held office for only one year.¹ Since the dates for Caiaphas being the high priest extend from A.D. 18 to 36, he was the high priest both before and after this year but

¹ Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the Gospel of John, trans. by Frederick Crombie (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, Publishers, 1884), p. 357. "(Hereinafter referred to as John.)"

only "that year" is brought into consideration by John.

The other use of ἐνιαυτός occurs in the quotation "the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk. 4:19) which is taken from Isaiah 61:2. Some early commentators such as Clement of Alexandria¹ took this as a literal statement and limited Christ's earthly ministry to twelve months. However, according to the three Passovers mentioned in John 2:13, 6:4 and 11:55 the view of Clement cannot be correct. The only possible solution to this use of ἐνιαυτός is to understand it as figurative of the new era that the Messiah will usher in.² Perhaps, the question should be asked, "Why is ἐνιαυτός used when a literal year is not meant?" This passage is an accurate quotation from the Septuagint and would be inaccurate if altered. The other Gospel passages demand that this be understood as figurative though it is translated "year."

ἔτος

The most frequent word expressing a year is ἔτος in every period of Greek studied.

In non-biblical Greek.--The use of ἔτος, "year," is attested throughout all stages of Greek. It is used to

¹ Clement Homilies 17.9.

² R.C.H. Lenski Luke (Minneapolis: The Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), p. 252.

cite both the year of a king's reign, "τὸ [π]εμπτον ἔτ[ο]ς Δομιτιανοῦ,"¹ as well as the age of an individual, "ἦν ἔτων, ὡς τριάκοντα."² These would be natural and frequent reasons for a common person to reckon anything by years. They usually are written with an accompanying number.

In the Old Testament.--The Greek of the Septuagint uses ἔτος over five hundred times and on almost every occasion it translates ἡνῆμεραν meaning "year." It is found in genealogies (Gen. 5, 11) and in stating the years of a king's reign (I Kg. 15:25; 16:23). The years of reign are helpful in determining the time of prophecies (Hag. 1:1) and important historical events such as the invasion of foreign armies (Dan. 1:1). Some events are dated by the age of people, such as, the time of the flood (Gen. 7:6) and the defeat of Israel by the Philistines (I Sa. 4:15) in the ninety-eighth year of Eli. Even the time of duration of certain events is given in years. Two years pass while Joseph is in prison (Gen. 41:1) and Israel sojourns in Egypt for four hundred and eighty years (Ex. 12:41). A few times ἔτος designates an unspecified number of years, though this is usually reserved for ἐνιαυτός. One such use is found in Proverbs 3:2 "years of life."

¹ Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, D. 258.

² Xenophon Anabasis 2.6.20.

The important aspect to keep in mind is that ἔτος normally is used to indicate a particular number of years.

In the Gospels.--Most uses of ἔτος do not indicate important chronological events. At times ἔτος is used to indicate the number of years a person has been ill.¹ Also, the age of a person may be given for a particular event. Jesus was twelve years when He went to the temple (Lk. 2:42). A damsel that Jesus raised from the dead was twelve years of age (Lk. 8:43). Once Luke uses ἔτος to indicate the duration of the drought in Elijah's day (4:25).

On two occasions ἔτος is used not as a reference to a specific number of years but it indicates an undesignated lengthy period longer than a year. The rich farmer laid up goods "for many years" (Lk. 12:19), just as the elder son served his father "these many years" (Lk. 15:29).

In Luke 2:41 it is reported, "Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem κατ' ἔτος, or yearly."² This construction is a distributive genitive which indicates that this was the habitual annual practice of Joseph and Mary. This is the only New Testament location of this expression though it can be found in the Septuagint.

¹ Mt. 9:20 (Mk. 5:25; Lk. 8:43); Jn. 5:5; Lk. 13:11, 16.

² Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 258.

There are four places where ἔτος expresses time that is important to the chronology of Christ. The first relates that John the Baptist began his ministry in the "fifteenth year of Tiberius" (Lk. 3:1). It is generally agreed that Jesus began His ministry about six months after John so that if the beginning of John's ministry can be established, the time of Jesus' ministry can also be ascertained. The determining of the fifteenth year of Tiberius is a Problem because Tiberius began a co-reign with his step-father on October 23, A.D. 12, from which time he governed the Roman provinces jointly and held the census with Augustus. About two years later, August 19, A.D. 14, Augustus died and Tiberius assumed control of the empire and later was confirmed by the vote of the Senate on September 17, A.D. 14. Adding to the complexity of establishing the beginning year of Tiberius' reign is the uncertainty about whether the accession or nonaccession year method was followed.¹ The monarchs of the Seleucid dynasty in Syria began their regnal year in September-October and it is assumed that this is the pattern followed by Luke.² With these areas of possible interpretation "the

¹ For a full discussion of this problem see Finegan, HBC, pp. 259ff.

² Norval Geldenhuys, Commentary on the Gospel of Luke (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), p. 134.

fifteenth year of Tiberius" could be A.D. 26, 27, 28 or 29 depending on the year used in beginning his reign, 12 or 14 A.D., and the method of reckoning the regnal year, accession or nonaccession. Because the "fifteenth year" has several possible interpretations, it cannot be used by itself to determine a certain calendar date for the beginning of John's ministry.

Luke 2:23 states that Jesus was "about thirty years," ὡσὶ ἔτων τριάκοντα, when He was baptized and began His ministry. Few, other than Irenaeus, interpret this to mean that Jesus had begun but not completed His thirtieth year.¹ The use of ὡσεὶ would suggest several years leeway is possible. Cadbury writes:

Having for many years read the volumes of Greek papyri as they were published, I formed the impression that the ages of adults which were given in them tended to occur for the multiples of five far out of proportion to the other numbers.²

If this conclusion is correct and is applied to Luke's statement, one thing is clear. Thirty was not necessarily Jesus' nearest birthday. This assertion is also suggested by Luke's use of ὡσεὶ. Since the exact year of Jesus' birth is as unspecific as the statement of

¹ Irenaeus Irenaeus Against Heresies 2.22.5.

² Henry J. Cadbury, "Time," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXXII (September, 1963), 275-76.

this verse, it can only be concluded that the birth of Jesus was approximately thirty years prior to the fifteenth year of Tiberius.

A third expression, "forty and six years was this temple built" (Jn. 2:20) is an equally difficult chronological problem for several reasons. First, the word translated temple is *ναός* and this usually but not always means the inner sanctuary. However, the *ναός* could refer to the major temple rebuilding project which began two years later than the construction of the inner area of the temple where the sacrifices were offered. Second, the beginning point for the reckoning of the years could be 19 A.D. when Herod began the sanctuary rebuilding or 17 A.D. when the work on the larger area commenced. Therefore, a two year variation in determining the forty-sixth year results. A third problem is the use of the aorist passive verb *οικοδομήθη*. It may indicate that the length of time since the *ναός* was completed was forty-six years, that the *ναός* was in the process of being built for forty-six years and was still incomplete, or that it had just been completed in its forty-sixth year of building.¹ Depending on the beginning date

¹ An excellent explanation of this expression of time is found in Frank Stagg, "The Abused Aorist," Journal of Biblical Literature, XCI (June, 1972), 228. He states: "The temple had been under construction for forty-six years, there had been interruptions and resumptions of work, and the temple was not yet completed. The aorist indicative

chosen and the interpretation of the *ναός* the forty-sixth year would be either A.D. 27 or 29. The date of A.D. 27 is accepted by most contemporary scholars¹ as the date of the first Passover in Jesus' public ministry, in the "forty and six years" of John 2:20.

The last date is found in John 8:57 where Jesus is said not yet to be "fifty years" old. Irenaeus in taking this literally remarks:

Now, such language is fittingly applied to one who has already passed the age of forty, without having as yet reached His fiftieth year, yet is not far from this latter period. But to one who is only thirty years old it would unquestionably be said, 'Thou art not yet forty years old.'²

For this reason Irenaeus demands a public ministry of more than ten years and a date of birth much earlier than commonly accepted. An incidental remark found in Josephus may better explain why Jesus was categorized as being under fifty. Josephus states that it was the men aged twenty to fifty who had to contribute the half-shekel temple tax.³ The sarcasm of the Jews may have been that since Jesus was still young enough to pay this tax, being

does not here designate a single action of the past. . . . This is a normal aoristic usage, a simple allusion to an action without description, i.e., a-oristic or undefined."

¹ For a more complete discussion of this date see Finegan, *HBC*, pp. 276-80.

² Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 2.22.6.

³ Josephus *Antiquities* 3.8.1.

under fifty, He could hardly have seen Abraham. No one seriously accepts the view of Irenaeus that Jesus ministered until He was nearly fifty.

In summary, ἔτος translated "year" usually is found with a numeral giving the years of events, age of a person or the duration of an event. It also may record an unspecified time of years or a yearly custom by using the distributive genitive κατ' ἔτος. Four times ἔτος is used in connection with Christ's ministry but none of the references are exact enough to give by themselves a certain date on the Julian calendar. All the accompanying information is sufficiently imprecise to make uncertain the exact time intended. Consequently no little discussion could accompany the possible interpretation of these temporal expressions.¹

Month (μήν)

Another familiar indication of time is μήν, "month." Though not occurring too often in the Gospels it is nonetheless a major time indicator.

In non-biblical Greek

It appears that μήν was first used in the sense of a measure and then later referred to the period of time

¹ In Finegan's discussion in HBC he has twenty-three pages devoted to these four expressions regarding the time of Jesus' public ministry.

marked off by the moon, therefore a month.¹ This indication of a period of time being determined by the moon is as natural a consideration as reckoning time by the sun. The cycle of the moon from month to month is calculated as a period of twenty-nine or thirty days. So handy was this for noting the passing of time that the Greeks established contractual agreements by the month and interest rates of two drachma were charged each month (τόν μῆνα ἕκαστου).²

In the Old Testament

About two hundred times μῆν is used as a translation of שָׁרָף and a few times for חַדָּשׁ. Both of these words can be translated moon although שָׁרָף is used to indicate the "new moon," the day on which the crescent reappears.³ For the most part μῆν is used temporally in three similar ways. It is used to indicate the time of certain historic events such as the beginning of the Noachic deluge (Gen. 7:11) and the entrance into Canaan (Jo. 4:19). It also indicates the length of time between two events. For example, the ark was in Philistine hands seven months (I Sam. 6:1) and David reigned in Hebron seven years and six months (II Sam. 2:11).

¹ Gerhard Delling, μῆν, TDNT, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, IV (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 638.

² Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 410.

³ Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, eds., Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros (Leiden: E. L. Brill, 1958), p. 279. "(Hereinafter referred to as Lexicon.)"

Most frequently μήν is used to establish the time of an event during a king's reign (Hag. 1:1) or a prophet's message (Hag. 2:1). This practice greatly aided the reckoning of Old Testament chronology. In each case μήν signified that period of time commonly called a month and most likely included any part of a month as a whole month unless the number of days were also given.

In the Gospels

Three separate incidents in the Gospels have a reference to months. The first occasion has four uses of μήν and they occur in connection with the birth account of John the Baptist. Elizabeth hid herself for five months following conception (Lk. 1:24) and in her sixth month (Lk. 1:26) Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce the conception of Jesus. This last reference indicates that John was six months older than Jesus. This is confirmed by Gabriel's comment that Elizabeth was in the sixth month of her pregnancy (Lk. 1:36) at the time of Mary's conception. Following this, Mary abode with Elizabeth about three months (ὡς μῆνας τρεῖς). This would be approximately until the time of John's birth.

In a second incident Jesus indicates that the length of the drought in the time of Elijah was three years and six months (Lk. 4:25). Thus, every reference to μήν in Luke does no doubt refer to calendar lunar months.

Jesus remarks in John 4:35, "say not ye, there are yet four months and the harvest is coming." Here the number four and μήν are combined in the single word τετράμηνος. There has been much discussion whether this passage is a chronological time indication or only an agricultural proverb.¹ From this statement the time when Jesus passed through Samaria, if it is to be taken as literal, can be calculated as being in December or January since the harvest time in Samaria would normally begin in April or late March. If this is correct then Jesus' early Judean ministry would extend from the previous April through December. Some insist that this statement of time should be taken as a proverb.² Thus, the reference to four months would not indicate a point in time four months prior to the harvest of the fields of Sychar.³ If this is the correct view then no chronology can be established or confirmed by it. Regardless of which view is taken, the use of μήν conveys a concept of four months which are literal cycles established by the rising of the new moon. There is no

¹ For representatives of this view see R.C.H. Lenski, The interpretation of St. John's Gospel (Minneapolis: The Augsburg Publishing House, 19b1), p. 334, and H.A.W. Meyer, John, trans. by Frederick Crombie (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Publishers, 1884), p. 161. "(Hereinafter referred to as John.)"

² This view is clearly presented by George Ogg, Chronology (Cambridge: At the University Press), 1940.

³ J. H. Bernard, John, I (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1962), 155-56.

lexical or contextual reason to take them otherwise..

Week (σάββατον)

A week is comprised of a sequence of seven days.

The New Testament indicates this by σάββατον.

In non-biblical Greek

From the earliest periods of the Greek language nothing has been preserved concerning the formation of days into a "week."¹ By the first century B.C. there is sufficient evidence that there was a seven day week. The days of the week were given the names of gods and perhaps earlier the Egyptians named the seven days after the heavenly planets.² It is also asserted that in the post-exilic period the reckoning by weeks became more frequent so that the week days were often enumerated.³

In the Old Testament

At the time of Creation God established for mankind a six day work week and a seventh day for rest. Later when God instructed Israel as they left Egypt, He identified the seventh day, שַׁבָּת, as a σάββατον. The concept of rest is

¹ References to "week" in Greek lexicons are all directed to references to the Hebrew sabbath in the Septuagint and the New Testament.

² Finegan, HBC, pp. 15-16.

³ "Time," CBTEL, X, 412.

inherent in the word **σάββατον**. On this one day in seven the Jews were told to abstain from work (Ex. 16:26) as a reminder of their covenant with Jehovah (Ex. 31:16). An examination of the uses of **σάββατον** in the Septuagint reveals that it usually refers to the seventh day rather than the whole period of seven days which is a week. Occasionally certain feasts, such as the Day of Atonement, were called a **σάββατον** (Lev. 17:31) even though they did not necessarily fall on the seventh day. The seventh or sabbatical year of rest is likewise called a **σάββατον** (Lev. 25:2). The mention of offering a burnt-offering on the sabbaths, new moons and set feasts (I Chron. 23:31) may be an indication of the practical ways that the passing of days was calculated in the Old Testament. The counting of days in groups of sevens would be easy by the keeping of the **σάββατον**. The months were calculated by the new moon. The division of the year by feasts would be larger divisions than months. A better system could hardly be designed for common people.

There is only one use of **σάββατον** which can legitimately be translated "week" (II Chr. 8:13). Here it is the feast of weeks which was one of the special observances of the year. The other English translation "week" in Genesis 29:27, "fulfil the week of this one," is the number seven, **ἑβδομα** and may just as easily be translated "fulfill the seven (days) of this one."

The majority of Old Testament locations of *σάββατον* refer to the seventh day of the week in the Jewish calendar,¹ whether the word is singular or plural. When plural it can signify one or more sabbaths.² Yet implicit in the use of this word when referring to the Jewish sabbath is the concept that time was reckoned by a period of seven days which climaxed on the seventh day.

In the Gospels

The only word for week in the Gospels is *σάββατον*. As is true in the Old Testament, *σάββατον* does have other meanings in addition to "week." Used most often in the singular, *σάββατον* often refers simply to the sabbath, the seventh day of the week.³ At other times *σάββατον* is combined with *ἡμέρα*, to indicate that the particular day was a sabbath day.⁴ Many passages refer to Jesus teaching on the sabbath day (Mk. 6:2) and the sabbath day controversies⁵ of Jesus with the Jews. On two occasions Jesus identifies Himself as "Lord of the Sabbath" (Mt. 12:8; Mk. 2:28).

¹ William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, Lexicon (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 74

² Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 567.

³ Mt. 24:20; Mk. 2:27 (2).

⁴ Lk. 4:16; 13:14, 16; 14:5; Jn. 5:9; 9:14.

⁵ Lk. 6:1, 5, 6, 7, 9; 13:14, 15; 14:1, 3; Jn. 5:10, 16, 18; 7:22, 23(2); 9:16.

In each of these places *σάββατον* obviously refers to the seventh day of the Jewish week and not to the whole week.

There are several instances where *σάββατον* occurs without a numeral in the plural but the context suggests that it refers to a single sabbath day.¹ At other times the plural probably refers to several sabbath days² as is found in the question, "Is it lawful on the sabbath [days] to do good or harm"? The occasional use of the plural rather than the singular may have arisen from the Aramaic sabbetha which at an early date also gave its name to the entire week.³ Both the plural and singular forms can be found in the same contexts often with no difference in meaning or translation.

There are ten places where *σάββατον* occurs in the passion week description. Four⁴ of these instances have only *σάββατον* and may refer either to the weekly sabbath day or the Passover which, being a feast, is also a sabbath. These two days could be either simultaneous, consecutive or even separated by one day.⁵

¹ Mt. 12:1, 10, 11, 12; Mk. 1:21; 2:23, 24; 3:2.

² Mk. 3:4; 6:2; 13:10.

³ G. Gordon Stott, "Time," HDLG, II, 731.

⁴ Mk. 16:1; Lk. 23:54, 56; Jn. 19:31.

⁵ For this reason various books and articles have been written debating whether the crucifixion took place on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday and the resurrection on Saturday or Sunday.

Several times **μῆ τῶν σαββάτων**, or its equivalent¹ is used to speak of the morning of the resurrection day. It was the usual custom to number the days of the week rather than to name them. The first of the **σαββάτω** would be the first day after the sabbath, "the first of the week." It literally means the first day reckoned from the weekly sabbath day.² In Mark 16:9 **πρώτη** is used with the singular **σαββάτου** instead of **μῆ** but the meaning remains the same even though the expression is altered. Whether the translation of **σαββάτου** should actually be "week" perhaps is questionable. Yet regardless of the translation the meaning is obvious. It must be remembered that each day of the week began at sunset and ended on the following day at sunset.

The sixth day of the Jewish week was the day of preparation for the sabbath. Because of all the necessary preparations for the next day, "preparation day" or **παρασκευή** became the name for Friday. On six occasions **παρασκευή** is used in the Gospels.³ Unfortunately this was also the term applicable to the day of preparation

¹ Mt. 28:1; Mk. 16:2; Lk. 24:1; Jn. 20:1, 19.

² Friedrich Blass and Albert Debrunner, *A Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. and rev. by Robert Funk (Chicago: university of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 129. "(Hereinafter referred to as Grammar.)"

³ Mt. 27:62; Mk. 15:42; Lk. 23:54; Jn. 19:14, 31, 42.

preceding any of the sacred feasts, including the Passover.

This was true no matter what day of the week it was.¹ One other name, *προσάββατον*, was given to this day preceding a sabbath (Mk. 15:42). Because of the, uncertainty as to whether *παρασκευή* and *προσάββατον* refer to the weekly sabbath, the Passover sabbath or both, much question remains concerning the chronology of the passion week.

Only one use of *σαββάτου* remains for examination.

In Luke 18:12 the Pharisee claimed to fast "twice during the week." Here *σαββάτου* must mean a week, the period of seven days that is bounded on each side by the sabbaths. Any other meaning of *σαββάτου* would be unintelligible.² This is the only place in the Gospels where the meaning of *σαββάτου* is a whole week.

In conclusion, a few times when *σαββάτου* is found with a numeral it identifies a day within the week. Usually *σαββάτου* refers to the seventh day of the week which more than anything else reminded the Jews of the passing of time. There is also the possibility that *σαββάτου* sometimes may refer to a feast day regardless of the day of the week when the feast was observed. Only once does *σαββάτου* mean a "week." These multiple meanings of

¹ David Smith, "Preparation," *HDCG*, II, 409.

² Alfred Plummer, *Luke* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1964), p. 417.

σαββάτου and words used with it make exactness in reckoning time during the passion week difficult.

Tomorrow (αὔριον)

In contemporary language the day which follows an existing day is most often designated "tomorrow." This practice, was followed in the Greek language which expressed this by the word αὔριον.

In non-biblical Greek

From earliest times αὔριον meant "tomorrow," and is equivalent to the phrase "on the morrow." It is used this way several times in Josephus.¹ It is to be distinguished from today (σήμερον). On one occasion it is used concerning a boy who each day goes to a seller of barley beer. The seller says "today, tomorrow [αυρ[ε]ιν] (you shall get it), but he never gives it."² At first glance the thought might be to understand this as the next day. However, αὔριον also came to mean "soon, in a short time, now."³ Consequently two different senses developed, (1) the next day and (2) shortly or soon. When found in the time of Homer with the sense of the next day, αὔριον is never used after sunset to refer to the next day. From these it is

¹ Henry St. John Thackeray, Lexicon, II, 93.

² Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 92.

³ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 121.

concluded that the Greek day began at sunset. Consequently, after sunset the Greek always says "in the morning" apparently because αὔριον would have meant a different thing.

In the Old Testament

The Hebrew מָחָר and its variations are translated by αὔριον over fifty times in the Old Testament, usually in the historical sections. Many times the expression is the same as Exodus 9:5, "tomorrow, Jehovah shall do this thing." It is clear in many places by the context that αὔριον must mean the next day following. In Exodus 32:5, Aaron declares, "Tomorrow (αὔριον) shall be a feast to Jehovah." The next verse says, "And they rose up early on the morrow." This meaning is also indicated in Exodus 16:23 where the Jews are exhorted to prepare extra food for "tomorrow is a solemn rest,"

On several occasions αὔριον must mean a future time that is not necessarily the next day. The children of Israel are exhorted to keep the commandments of God so that when a son will ask "in time to come" (αὔριον) why the fathers keep the laws, they can give an answer to their sons. Obviously αὔριον does not refer to the next day but rather refers to a future time.

¹ George Melville Bolling, "Beginning of the Greek Day," The American Journal of Philology, XXIII (1902), 434.

In the Gospels

Only once does αὔριον occur in an historical setting meaning the next day. In the parable of the good Samaritan "on the morrow" (αὔριον) the Samaritan gave the innkeeper two denarii (Lk. 10:35). This came after one night at the inn.

In Matthew 6:30 and Luke 12:28 Jesus refers to a grasslike foliage which exists on one day and αὔριον (tomorrow) is thrown into an oven. Most likely the next day is not meant here since the foliage would not become a burnable fuel in a single night. It must refer to any morrow, an indefinite future day. The same sense is found in "do not worry unto the morrow for the morrow shall worry for itself" (Mt. 6:34). Both verses could translate αὔριον with the sense of "the future or soon."

Two other times αὔριον is found, Luke 13:32, 33, . . . Behold I cast out demons and I perform healings today and tomorrow, and on the third I am being finished. Nevertheless it is necessary for me today and tomorrow and the one coming to go." In these verses αὔριον may mean either (1) tomorrow, (2) a short time, or (3) a long time. Exodus 19:10, 11 has this same expression where it must refer to three literal days. It is probable that αὔριον also should be taken as "tomorrow" here.

Thus, αὔριον follows the pattern of earlier Greek and may mean both (1) "tomorrow," the next day and (2) a

time in the future.

Yesterday (ἐχθές)

A day prior to an existing day is understood as "yesterday." In Greek this is expressed by ἐχθές which had both this and other meanings.

In non-biblical Greek

The adverb ἐχθές, "yesterday," is found in many of the periods of Greek history and is especially frequent in the papyri.¹ It can also be found in the writings of Josephus where ἐχθές has an additional meaning of "the past as a whole."²

In the Old Testament

The Hebrew שְׁמַחַת, and לְמִתְמַח sometimes occurring with a ה prefix and לְמִתְמַח an are translated by ἐχθές. Though the most frequent English translation is "yesterday," לְמִתְמַח, which is the most frequently used word, can be translated by "heretofore, in times past."³ This has the sense of before the present time without a specific past time in view. All these varied meanings can be illustrated from the Septuagint.

¹ Liddell and Robert Scott, Lexicon, I, 748.

² Josephus Against Apion 2.154.

³ Koehler and Baumgartner, Lexicon, p. 1031.

Three times in Genesis¹ ἐχθές refers to an event taking place on the previous evening and is best translated "yesternight." On most occasions ἐχθές refers to a past time event rather than simply the previous day. For example, the Philistines feared the shout of the Hebrews and replied "for there hath not been such a thing heretofore" (I Sam. 4:7). During the early reign of David the tribes of Israel reply, "In times past (ἐχθές), when Saul was king" (II Sam. 5:2). They did not mean the previous day but past time. Consequently the sense of ἐχθές can vary depending on the context.

In the Gospels

Only once, in John 4:52, does ἐχθές occur. A nobleman sought Jesus to heal his son. When the man returned home he was told his son began to be healthy "yesterday at the seventh hour." Obviously, the previous day is intended since not only is there the use of ἐχθές but also the citation of the hour. This is in agreement with the meaning of ἐχθές.

Each of the words when used in the Gospels express a time which in the majority of cases reflects a single obvious meaning. Though some words are capable of several meanings, it is the contexts that specify the meaning. In

¹ Genesis 19:34; 31:29, 42.

a few instances words appear in accounts where some uncertainty of meaning remains. This is due to the fact that words by themselves do not always carry a single exact meaning. They can only be understood by the words used with them. It is the lack of a more complete context that creates the problem of determining exact time. It appears that the Gospel writers did not intend to give a time-centered message but rather a message that took place in time.

CHAPTER V

WORDS FOR DAY AND ITS PARTS

The most frequent reminder of the passing of time to the majority of people in the ancient world was the day. Quite naturally a day was an easy method of relating events to history. Within the period of the day many specific and some general points of time could be indicated. The content of this chapter consists of the words for a day and its parts. The material is considered in the following order: (1) the day, (2) the division of the day, (3) the night, (4) the division of the night, and (5) other indications of time.

Day

The alteration of light and darkness brought about by the apparent rising and setting of the sun marked out the day in every ancient civilization. The day, ἡμέρα had several meanings which varied greatly as to the length of time it indicated. These meanings become very important in interpreting the Gospels because ἡμέρα occurs more often than any other word which expresses time.

In non-biblical Greek

In Greek the "day" was named ἡμέρα. However, ἡμέρα as it then was used developed several meanings: (1) a civil

day of twenty-four hours, (2) a state or time of life, "life of misery," (3) time, (4) in the plural, an "age,"¹ which consists of a number of literal days. To these can be added (5) daytime (the period of daylight).² The length of time indicated by ἡμέρα depends on the context rather than the meaning of the word. For example, in the papyri literature a woman who has been ordered to vacate her house asks for "time," ἡμέρα. The time requested is longer than a single day.³

Many references can be cited to illustrate the use of ἡμέρα when it means a day, whether a civil day of twenty-four hours or daylight. Both Xenophon, "you shall see as soon as day has come,"⁴ and Josephus, "and when day came he went,"⁵ have ἡμέρα, meaning the daylight part of the day. Josephus joins νύξ with ἡμέρα stating that the "high priests pass their nights and days performing certain rites

¹ George Henry Liddell and Robert Scott, Lexicon, I (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940), 770.

² William F. Arndt and Wilbur F. Gingrich, Lexicon (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 340.

³ James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, Vocabulary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1903), p. 280.

⁴ Xenophon Anabasis 7. 2.34.

⁵ Josephus Antiquities 10. 10. 3.

of purification."¹ At times *κάθ' ἡμέρα* is used with the translation "daily" or "every day" as in "and every day saw this war being fanned into fiercer flame."² Numerals are used with *ἡμέρα* by Josephus in the expression, *κιὰ πρὸ μιᾶς ἡμέρας τῆς ἑορτῆς* which is translated, "And one day before a festival the treasurers would go to the commander of the Roman garrison and . . . , would take the robe."³ These illustrations show both variety in meaning and expression and indicate that caution must be observed in translating *ἡμέρα*.

Because a civil day, which is indicated by *ἡμέρα*, began at different times in different countries,⁴ any chronological reckoning could easily be in error even when the translation is accurate. Only the context can determine which of several possible translations is the correct one.

An important note concerning the beginning of the Jewish day is provided by Josephus. It is commonly agreed that the Jewish day in the first century began at sunset. This is illustrated by the eating of the Passover which was

¹ Josephus *Against Apion* 1. 199.

² Josephus *Wars* 2. 13. 1.

³ Josephus *Antiquities* 15. 11. 4.

⁴ Finegan, *HBC* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 8.

slain on Nisan 14 in the late afternoon and was eaten that night, on Nisan 15. All the lamb was to be consumed that night and none could be left until the morning of the fifteenth day. However, in one instance Josephus states that the morning of the "next day" is the fifteenth day.¹ From this comment Beckwith asserts, "This shows that Josephus is equally happy with a second way of reckoning the days of these festivals, according to which they begin and end at daybreak."² In other words at least two systems of reckoning the beginning of the day by the Jews may have existed. One would begin at sunset and the other at sunrise.

In the Old Testament

Over two thousand times ἡμέρα is found in the Septuagint. Of these less than ninety are found as a translation of words other than יום.³ This Hebrew word has the same variety of meanings that ἡμέρα/ does in Greek.⁴ In Genesis 1:5 ἡμέρα refers both to the period of daylight,

¹ Josephus *Antiquities* 3. 10. 5.

² Roger T. Beckwith, "The Day, Its Divisions and its Limits, In Biblical Thought," *The Evangelical Quarterly*, XLIII (October, 1971), 225.

³ Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, *Concordance*, I (Gratz, Austria: Akademische Druck, 1954), 607.

⁴ Koehler and Baumgartner, *Lexicon* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), pp. 372-73.

"and God called the light day," and to the civil day of twenty-four hours, the evening and morning were "one day." The greatest number of uses of ἡμέρα fall into one of these two meanings and they occur in a variety of expressions. Yet, other meanings are also found. According to the genealogy in Genesis 5:5, "all the days Adam lived were nine hundred and twelve years." Though ἡμέρα is translated "days," here it can have the meanings, "time," "lifetime," or "age." The children of Israel passed over the Jordan at "the time (ἡμέρα) of harvest" (Jo. 3:15). Often days and nights are joined by καί in describing the length of an event (Gen. 7:12) but it appears to have no more significance than the mention of days without the nights (Gen. 7:17). The insertion of ὅλην, "all" with day and night (Ex. 10:13) shows the extent of time the locusts plagued Egypt but it cannot be concluded that the absence of ὅλην would indicate a lesser period of time.

One important study of ἡμέρα, is its use with numbers. This, more than any other use of ἡμέρα, affects precise chronological reckoning. Sometimes the reference to days is done simply by mentioning the time in the nominative or accusative case, such as, "I was there three days" (Neh. 2:11), and water prevailed "a hundred and fifty days" (Gen. 7:24). On other occasions the dative case is used apparently to show an event that happened during the days specified. For example, Abraham circumcized Isaac "on

the eighth day," τῆ ὀγδόῃ ἡμέρᾳ (Gen. 21:4).

Sometimes there is a clarification of the length of time given in the same passage. David, following the death of Saul (II Sam. 1:1, 2), abode "two days," ἡμέρας δύο, in Ziklag. And it came to pass "on the third day," τῆ ἡμέρᾳ τῆ τρίτῃ, suggests that the "two days" of verse one are civil days for it was during the third day that the next recorded event took place. A similar circumstance is recorded in Genesis 40:13, 20. Joseph tells Pharaoh's butler, "yet three days," ἐτί τρεῖς ἡμέραι, and he would be restored. This came to pass "on the third day," ἐν τῆ ἡμέρᾳ τῆ τρίτῃ. The three days before the restoration do not mean three complete days but two days with the restoration on the third day. Esther commands all the Jews in Shushan to fast "for three days," ἐπὶ ἡμέρας τρεῖς, night and day and "then I will enter before the king" (Est. 4:16). However, she went before the king (Est. 5:1) "on the third day," ἐν τῆ ἡμέρᾳ τῆ τρίτῃ. From these passages it would appear that a numerical reference to days could include any part of a day as well as the complete twenty-four hour period. Great care must be taken when determining the length of days that are qualified by numbers.

The Old Testament also reveals that the civil day was begun at sunset. This is proven by several Scriptures. The feast days were observed beginning at the evening (Lev. 23:32). The Sabbath began at sunset (Neh. 13:19). For

anyone who was unclean ceremonially, his uncleanness ended at evening (Lev. 11:24). In I Samuel 11:9-11 both the morning watch of the night and the morning of the day are both "on the morrow." These passages prove that the day began at sunset. Yet, there is at least one occasion where a night is reckoned with the previous day. Michal told David, "If you save not your life tonight, tomorrow, you will be slain" (I Sam. 19:11). This seems to indicate that in popular speech the days were sometimes reckoned from daylight. This appears to be the same method as was used in Josephus.¹ If two systems of reckoning the beginning of a day did exist, the reckoning of time by days is made much more difficult.

In the Gospels

There are at least four basic ideas for ἡμέρα found in the Gospels: (1) a day appointed for special purposes, (2) a civil day, (3) daylight and (4) a longer period of time.² Unfortunately the translation for each is most often "day."

Of the days appointed for special purposes Matthew's "day of judgment,"³ ἐν ἡμέρα κρίσεως is a phrase with

¹ Josephus Antiquities 3. 10. 5.

² Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, pp. 346-48.

³ Mt. 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36.

particular temporal meaning. The context of each passage indicates that it refers to the final judgment of the unsaved. Because of the masses of people involved and the nature of the judgment (Rev. 20:12-15), more than one literal day is involved. For this reason a better understanding of ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως would be "in a time of judgment." The length of time indicated by this expression is unspecified but would seem to be longer than a literal day since Scripture suggests there is an individual judgment of all individuals born into this world (Rev. 20:13).

Another use of day that has a special purpose is John's "in the last day," τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.¹ Five times this day is identified with the resurrection of the righteous and once with the future judgment. Since all the righteous will not be resurrected on the same day and since all believers will not be judged on the same day, τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ could be translated "in the last time." Such a translation best preserves the meaning of ἡμέρᾳ when used figuratively of a day which is appointed for special purposes.

When ἡμέρᾳ occurs without any qualifying words it can be used figuratively of an unspecified day (Jn. 8:56; 9:4), of a lifetime (Lk. 1:75), of old age (Lk. 2:36) and

¹ Jn. 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48. Though 7:37 has this expression it is clear by the context that an historical day is in view.

even of years. In this last instance, in Luke 1:7 Zacharias and Elizabeth are advanced in "days," actually meaning "years," just as, Elizabeth is advanced in "years" (Lk. 1:18).

Quite often ἡμέρα is translated "day" with the sense of an unspecified length and point of time. In these instances it could be translated "time" when singular¹ and "time" or "times" when plural.² Among the times indicated is the day (time) of Elijah, of Lot, and of the coming of the Lord.

Several times when ἡμέρα occurs in the singular it refers to the daylight part of the day.³ From this it is learned that there are twelve hours in this daylight period (Jn. 11:9). Men could be hired to work by the hour (Mt. 20). This daylight period is the time for activity.

Most references to ἡμέρα, refer to a civil twenty—four hour day. The day can be in the singular⁴ and the

¹ Mt. 24:42, 50; 25:13; Lk. 9:51; 17:24, 26(2).

² Mt. 2:1; 9:15 (Mk. 2:20; Lk. 5:35); 23:30; 24:37 (Lk. 17:26), 38 (Lk. 17:27); 28:20; Lk. 1:5; 4:25; 17:22, 28; 19:43; 21:6, 22; 23:29.

³ Mt. 20:2, 6, 12; Lk. 4:42; 6:13; 9:12; 22:16; Jn. 11:9(2).

⁴ Mt. 28:15; Mk. 6:21; Lk. 1:20; 80; 4:16; 13:14, 16; 14:15; 17:4, 27, 29, 30; 22:7; 23:54; Jn. 7:37; 9:14; 12:7; 19:31.

plural.¹ The day may be a single unspecified day such as the day when John was beheaded, "a convenient day" (Mk. 6: 21) or a single specific day such as a sabbath day (Lk. 4: 16). Several times feast days are indicated by ἡμέρα (Lk. 22:7; 23:54; Jn. 7:37; 19:31).² The plural form indicates a sequence of continuous days as in "they abode not many days" (Jn. 2:12).

The civil day is qualified on certain occasions by the demonstrative pronoun οὗτος, "this" and in the plural "these." In each instance where it is found whether singular or plural it refers to an historical calendar day³ or days.⁴ Similar to this is the use of ἐκεῖνος with ἡμέρα. It occurs in the singular to point out a specific day on

¹ Mk. 13:20(2); Lk. 1:23, 25; 2:6, 22, 43; 9:51; 15:13; Jn. 2:12.

² Three of these references are important for constructing a chronology of the passion week. Luke 22:7 indicates "the day of unleavened bread came in which it is necessary to slay the passover." This must be construed as Nisan 14 unless the Jews also sacrificed the passover lamb on the thirteenth. The body of Jesus was placed in a tomb on the day of Preparation (Lk. 23:54). Though Friday was the weekly day known as preparation, this could refer to any day of the week preceding a feast such as, the Passover. According to John 19:31, "the day of that sabbath was a great (high) day," when Jesus was crucified. These days were specific civil days but because the customs and terminology of this period are uncertain, the identity of these days is unclear. Thus, three views of the day for the crucifixion--Wednesday, Thursday and Friday--have scholarly proponents.

³ Lk. 19:42; 23:12; 24:13.

⁴ Lk. 1:24, 39; 6:12; 23:7; 24:8.

which something took place.¹ The plural is used to indicate a period of days during which time an event happened.² On several occasions ἐκεῖνος and ἡμέρα are used together in both the singular³ and the plural⁴ to refer to the future eschatological day. This day may refer to the time of tribulation, the second coming, the judgments or the saved being with Christ. Though "day" is the usual translation of ἡμέρα, the context sometimes reveals that "time" is a better translation, especially when the time indicated is clearly longer than a day.

The idiom καθ' ἡμέραν is found seven times⁵ and is translated "daily" or "every day." In this construction καθ' ἡμέραν is used distributively⁶ indicating that the activity occurs day by day.

On seven occasions ἡμέρα and νύξ are joined together by καί.⁷ Of these seven passages three have νύξ

¹ Mt. 13:1; 22:23, 46; Mk. 4:35; Jn. 1:39; 5:9; 11:53; 20:19.

² Mt. 3:1; 24:38; Mk. 8:1; Lk. 2:1; 4:2; 9:36.

³ Mt. 7:22; 24:36 (Mk. 13:32); 26:29 (Mk. 14:25); Mk. 2:20; Lk. 6:23; 10:12; 17:13; 21:34; Jn. 14:20; 16:23, 26.

⁴ Mt. 24:19 (Mk. 13:17; Lk. 21:23), 22(2), 29 (Mk. 13:24); Mk. 1:9; 13:29; Lk. 5:35.

⁵ Mt. 26:55 (Mk. 14:49; Lk. 22:53); Lk. 9:23; 11:3; 16:19; 19:47.

⁶ Arndt and Gingrich, *Lexicon*, p. 407.

⁷ Mt. 4:2; 12:40(2); Mk. 4:27; 5:5; Lk. 2:37; 18:7.

first and four have ἡμέρα. It does not appear that this expression, "night and day" is always the equivalent of a twenty-four hour period. For example, Anna worshipped in the temple "night and day." She did not reside in the temple but rather was present in the temple whenever it was open (Lk. 2:37).¹ In a similar passage, the demoniac was crying always "night and day" (Mk. 4:27) in the tombs. This cannot mean that he cried twenty-four hours each day. In these places νύξ and ἡμέρα seem to express the idea of "daily" or at night and at day unless numerals are used to indicate a specific number of days. It was "forty days and forty nights" that Jesus fasted (Mt. 4:2). Jonah was in the fish "three days and three nights" and Jesus said that he also would be the same length of time in the heart of the earth (Mt. 12:40). While it may seem natural to equate each of the days as twenty-four hours, it must be remembered that the Jews used inclusive reckoning so that any part of a day was counted as a whole day. It is clear that the use of νύξ and ἡμέρα together do not necessarily indicate a twenty-four hour period. This meaning is possible but it must be proven not by any expression but by the contextual evidence in the passage.

A number of passages have numerals with ἡμέρα.

¹ Plummer, Luke (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1964), p. 72

Yet when the number of days is given it is difficult to determine how much time is indicated. For example, a great multitude followed Jesus "three days" and had nothing to eat (Mt. 15:32; Mk. 8:2). This may indicate a period from seventy-two hours to one full day plus a part of the preceding and the following days. This latter method of figuring time is called inclusive reckoning.

This method included in the reckoning of a time interval both the day (or year) in which any period of time began and also that on which it ended, no matter how small a fraction of the beginning and the ending day (or year) was involved.¹

In many passages² it is difficult to ascertain whether inclusive reckoning was followed because so little information is given. Occasionally the length of time is clear. Luke singles out a day in the expression "one of the days."³ Six days were set aside for work each week (Lk. 13;14). However, on the eighth day of a boy's life he was circumcized (Lk. 1:59; 2:11). This could be six full days plus the day of birth and the day of circumcision. It appears that the passing of a full week was indicated by "after eight days" (Jn. 20:26) and "about eight days"

¹ Francis D. Nichol (ed.), Seventh Day Adventist Commentary, V (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1956), 249..

² Mt. 15:32 (Mk. 8:2); 17:1 (Mk. 9:2); Mk. 1:13 (Lk. 4:2); Lk. 2:46; Jn. 2:1.

³ Lk. 5:17; 8:22; 17:22; 20:1.

(Lk. 9:28). That is, seven days have passed and it is now the eighth day, or a week later.

Even when additional information is given, there is difficulty in interpreting the number of days. John says that Jesus abode in Samaria two days (Jn. 4:40) and after two days He went into Galilee (Jn. 4:43). If Jesus arrived about noon, His stay could have been a period of less than twenty-four hours or up to forty-eight hours depending on whether the day of His arrival is considered as the first day.¹

A greater problem exists in the expressions of time in the Passion Week chronology. Jesus arrived in Bethany "six days before the Passover," *πρὸ ἕξ ἡμερῶν τοῦ πάσχα* (Jn. 12:1). The Passover would be either Nisan 14 or 15 depending on whether the slaying of the lamb or the Passover meal is in view. Six days before the Passover could include (1) both days at each extreme or (2) only one of the days at the extreme. Hence the day specified could be Nisan 8, 9 or possibly 10.² The difficulty of determining these more precise expressions is the uncertainty

¹ A similar problem exists in connection with the raising of Lazarus who was in the tomb four days (Jn. 11:6, 17). This time could be a full four days or parts of four days reckoned as whole days.

² The same reasoning may be followed in the expression "after two days the Passover cometh" (Mt. 26:2; Mk. 14:1). The two days mean either (1) the next day or (2) the day after tomorrow.

about what these words meant then and the method or methods of reckoning time.

In the Gospels there are eighteen statements recorded about the length of time between the death and resurrection of Jesus. Eleven of these statements are recorded as being from Jesus. Of these, Matthew has a reference to Jonah with an application to Jesus (12:40). His three other references to the three days are in the dative case without accompanying prepositions.¹ Mark, in referring to the three days in accounts parallel to Matthew has *μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας* (Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:34). Luke follows Matthew (Lk. 9:22; 18:33; 24:46). John 2:19 states that the resurrection would be *ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις*. All of these passages must refer to the same length of time. The preference for the dative and *ἐν* indicates that the resurrection took place not after the three days but that the resurrection "is to take place within that space of time, consequently before its expiration."² The Jewish leaders in referring to this time period prefix the three days with several different prepositions which also must have the

¹ *καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ* Mt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19.

² George B. Winer, A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament (7th ed.; Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1877), p. 386. "(Hereinafter referred to as Grammar.)"

same temporal meaning.¹ They express belief that a guard is necessary ἕως "until the third day" (Mt. 27:63). This "third day" seems to be the terminus ad quem. After the third day the guard is unnecessary. Later the disciples spoke to Jesus late on the first day of the week and they remark, "It is now the third day since all these things came to pass" (Lk. 24:21). It would appear that the three days from the death to the resurrection no matter how they are expressed extend back to Friday if inclusive reckoning is followed or Thursday if a full seventy-two hour period is intended.

In spite of the use of numerals with ἡμέρα to indicate the passing of chronological time, the uncertainty about the manner of counting days makes exactness of interpretation difficult. In addition to indicating chronology ἡμέρα can also be used: (1) figuratively, (2) of daylight, (3) of an extended period of time having a translation "time" or "days," and (4) of a civil day whether a whole or a part.

In the Gospels a "day" can also be expressed by

¹ δία is used in Mt. 26:61; Mk. 14:58; ἐν in Mt. 27:40; Mk. 15:29; and μετὰ in Mt. 27:63. However, Norman Walker, "After Three Days," Novum Testamentum, IV (December, 1960), 261-62, argues that the expression in Mt. 27:63 means the "fourth day." He also postulates that the three day time reckoning should begin with the rejection of Jesus on Thursday (basing this on a supposed two day trial) rather than the crucifixion which he maintains came on Friday. He lists no evidence for this view other than the supposed two day trial.

σήμερον which appears to be a variant of *ἡμέρα*. In the Old Testament *דִּי*, "day," appears about eighteen hundred times and is translated by *σήμερον* 286 times in the Septuagint.¹ Most often *σήμερον* translates *דִּי הַיּוֹם* or *דִּי הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה* "this day." In the Gospels it is found twenty times conveying the meaning "this day" or "today." It is the opposite of *αὔριον*, "tomorrow" (Mt. 6:30). The daylight and what belongs to it,² the entire civil day,³ and the night which belongs to the day⁴ are all a part of *σήμερον*. From these uses it appears that *σήμερον* is more restrictive than *ἡμέρα* and indicates the present literal day or its parts.

Division of the Day

One of the frequently occurring words to record the passing of time is *ὥρα*, "hour." It is this word that was chosen to divide the daylight or the solar day into its parts.

¹ Ernest Fuchs, *σήμερον*, TDNT, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, VII (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), 270.

² Mt. 6:11; 21:28; Lk. 5:26; 12:28.

³ Mt. 6:30; 11:23; 16:3; 27:8, 19; 28:15; Lk. 2:11; 4:21; 13:32, 3; 19:5, 9; 23:43; 24:21.

⁴ Mk. 14:30; Lk. 22:34.

In non-biblical Greek

The early meanings of ὥρα, include (1) a "fitting time," (2) a "season," and (3) "any period fixed by natural laws and revolutions whether of the year, month, or day."¹ This last concept can be understood as including translations such as, "right time," "time,"² as well as "hour." Other meanings include "in one second," "in a moment" and "instantly."³ The use of ὥρα to denote any short span of time seems to have been the earliest meaning and only later, when time was determined by the "hour," did the meaning "hour" develop.⁴

At a time contemporary with the writing of the New Testament, the Jewish historian Josephus uses ὥρα to speak of a specific hour in the day.⁵ On one occasion he writes concerning the Roman war with the Jews:

The ten assenting to these proposals, early next morning he dispatched the rest of the men under his command in the various directions, to prevent any discovery of the plot, and about the third hour called to the Romans from the tower.⁶

¹ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, II, 2035.

² Cremer, Lexicon (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1954), p. 589.

³ Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, ID. 702.

⁴ Cadbury, "Time," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXXII (September, 1963), 276.

⁵ Josephus Wars 6. 1. 7. and Antiquities 6. 14. 6.

⁶ Josephus Wars 5. 13. 2.

From this it can be concluded that to Josephus the third hour was early in the day. This corresponds to 9 a.m. according to the Jewish reckoning of the third hour. A second quotation from Josephus indicates that Josephus reckoned hours from sunrise.

The majority, however were not convinced by these speeches, and a riot would inevitably have ensued, had not arrival of the sixth hour, at which it is our custom on the Sabbath to take our midday meal, broken off the meeting.¹

Josephus clearly indicates that the customary Jewish midday meal on a Sabbath day came at the sixth hour. Being the midday meal, the sixth hour was reckoned from sunrise. Josephus was writing primarily to Romans from the city of Rome and still he uses the Jewish custom of reckoning hours from sunrise. The importance of this will be realized later in the section dealing with ὥρα in the Gospels. It is clear that ὥρα early had a variety of meanings.

In the Old Testament

Although found less than forty times in the Septuagint, the use of ὥρα occurs primarily as a translation for תֵּימָה which is usually translated "time." In a few places ὥρα translates תֵּימָה.² In no place does ὥρα occur with a

¹ Josephus Life 54.

² Dan. 3:6; 4:16; 5:5.

numeral to indicate a specific hour in the day. The only places where ὥρα appears to give the sense of "hour" is in the often repeated phrase "tomorrow about this time" and its equivalents. Even here the sense is more of general period of time than a literal hour. Sometimes ὥρα is translated "time" with the idea of eschatological time (Dan. 11:40), of time for the evening oblation (Dan. 9:21) and time to eat (Ru. 2:14). The sense of "season" is clear in the account of Abraham's promise of a son (Gen. 18:14). The Lord promises to return to Abraham and Sarah "when the season (ὥρα) cometh around." The "season" was the time when Sarah could conceive. Also ὥρα has the translation "season" when referring to the time when rain comes (Deut. 11:14). In Daniel 3:6, "in the same hour cast in the burning fiery furnace," and 5:5, "the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand," ὥρα is usually translated "hour." However, the context does not demand a literal "hour." The translation "at the same time," is equally suitable if not superior. These examples show that the variety of meanings found in the non-biblical Greek were for the most part found in the Septuagint.

In the Gospels

Nearly seventy-five times ὥρα is found in the Gospels. At times the translation "hour" is not the best

rendering. Luke uses ὥρα with αὐτή six times.¹ Most English versions translate this "the same hour" or "that very hour." Matthew Black asserts that this is actually a translation equivalent of two closely related Aramaic temporal conjunctions which convey the meaning "at the same time," "immediately," "forthwith," and sometimes "then," or "thereupon."² All these translations reflect the meaning "time" and contextually are more meaningful translations than "hour." Even if Black's assertion is incorrect, the first three suggested meanings are the same as the earlier historical uses of ὥρα.

Many times ὥρα appears to express "time" in the sense of an "instant of time." This is clear in the healing miracles of Jesus.³ For example, "the servant was healed in that hour" (Mt. 8:13). "The woman was made whole from that hour" (Mt. 9:22). Both of these verses express the same result, an instantaneous cure.

Other places must also have the same sense of "time," rather than "hour." Mark 11:11 has, "the hour (time) already being evening" Jesus went out. At the feeding of the five thousand the disciples announced that

¹ Lk. 2:38; 10:21; 12:12; 13:31; 20:19; 24:33.

² Matthew Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 79.

³ Mt. 8:13; 9:22; 15:28; 17:18; Lk. 7:21; Jn. 4:53.

"the hour (time) is already past" (Mt. 14:15). Jesus tells the Samaritan woman, "the hour is coming and now is" (Jn. 4:23). There was also the promise of a "coming hour (time) of resurrection (Jn. 5:28). There is no reason to believe that a specific hour was in view in these passages. Rather, ὥρα indicates specific "time" without a specified time designation. In Hebrew this is expressed by **שָׂעָה** but in the Greek by ὥρα.

The same idea is present in the eschatological passages which teach of the Second Coming being at an unknown "hour" (time).¹ Likewise, on a few occasions ὥρα refers to a specific time which recurred every day and is similar to the popular expression "dinner time." Luke also speaks of the "hour of incense" (1:10) and the "hour of supper" (14:17; 22:14).

Throughout the Gospels Jesus speaks of "the hour," "my hour" and "this hour."² The meaning of ὥρα in these places cannot be a literal "hour" but rather "time." A survey of the passages indicates that the hour relates to the events of His passion. Since more than an hour transpired during this time, or less if only His death is in

¹ Mt. 10:19 (Mk. 13:11; Lk. 12:12); 14:15; 18:1; 26:55; Mk. 6:35(2); 11:11; Lk. 22:53; Jn. 4:21; 23; 5:25, 28; 16:2, 4, 21, 25, 32; 19:27.

² Mt. 26:45; Mk. 14:35, 41; Jn. 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1.

view, ὥρα could best be translated "time."

In one instance, "Ye were willing to rejoice for a season in his light" (Jn. 5:35), ὥρα is translated "season." The reference is to John the Baptist. The light which he cast was not for a literal hour or for a brief time but for an extended period. While this is the only place this translation is found in the Gospels, it is historically permissible and contextually necessary.

The remaining twenty-one uses of ὥρα occur with numerals. From these passages it is known that there are twelve hours in a day (Jn. 11:9). The ὥρα would vary in length in accordance with the season of the year since every day was divided into twelve equal parts. The first hour of the day began at sunrise and the twelfth hour concluded at sunset. In the parable of the vineyard the third, sixth, ninth and eleventh hours of the day are mentioned (Mt. 20:3, 5, 9, 12). At each of these hours workers were hired to work in the vineyard. The hours mentioned correspond to mid-morning, noon, mid-afternoon and two hours before dark. This was the usual method of reckoning time during the day time and it was done by estimation. In the Garden Jesus reproved the disciples because they could not watch one hour while He prayed (Mt. 26:40; Mk. 14:37). There is also an indication of time in connection with the denials of Christ by Peter. Matthew and Mark indicate that "after a little while" (μετά μικρόν)

Peter denied the Lord a third time but Luke relates that it was "after the space of about one hour" (Lk. 22:59).

Concerning the crucifixion the Synoptists agree that from (ἀπό) or about (ὥσκει) the sixth hour there was darkness.¹ The darkness lasted until (ἕως) the ninth hour (Mt. 27:45; Mk. 15:33). About (περί) the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice (Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34). Shortly after this He died. The time when darkness covered the earth would be from noon to 3 p.m. To this, Mark 15:25 adds, "now it was the third hour and they crucified Him." This would be 9 a.m. reckoning from sunrise.

Before examining John's use of "hour" it must be noted that there is disagreement about the method which John used in reckoning time. Much can be said in favor of adopting the "Roman method" of reckoning time. Finegan writes: "when various hourly notations are considered in the Gospel according to John it is found that they do in fact work out well in terms of Roman reckoning."² David Smith expand; this thought:

The Romans reckoned their sacerdotal and their civil day from midnight to noon and again from noon to midnight. So also the Egyptians counted their hours. Nor is evidence lacking that a like system obtained in Asia Minor. Polycarp was martyred in the Stadium at Smyrna ὥρα ὀγδοῆ, and this must mean 8 a.m. since

¹ Mt. 27:45; Mk. 15:33; Lk. 23:44.

² Finegan, HBC, p. 12.

public spectacles began at an early hour. The Synop-
tists follow the ordinary Jewish method, but it was
natural that John, writing at Ephesus, should follow
the method in vogue in Asia Minor, and so he appears
actually to have done.¹

Perhaps the most convincing evidence that such a
method of reckoning hours did exist is from Pliny, who
wrote saying:

The actual period of a day has been differently kept
by different people: the Babylonians count the period
between the two sunrises, the Athenians that between
two sunsets, the Umbrians from midday to midday, the
common people everywhere from dawn to dark, the Roman
priests and the authorities who fixed the official day,
and also the Egyptians and Hipparchus the period from
midnight to midnight. [emphasis mine]²

Therefore, according to this system, the sixth hour
would be either 6 a.m. or 6 p.m. rather than noon, which it
would be if the Jewish method were followed.

However, many do not believe that such a system ever
existed. William Ramsay points out several important
reasons against reckoning a day beginning at midnight. He
relates that there is no certain historical instance when
Roman hours are reckoned from midnight. Further, even when
the Romans described the civil day they began counting the
hours from sunrise. They called midnight (the beginning of
their twenty four hour day) the sixth hour of the night.

¹ David Smith, The Days of His Flesh (London:
Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), pp. 529-30.

² Pliny, Natural History 2. 79. 188.

And finally, the Greek civil day began at sunset. With his investigation finished, Ramsay firmly asserts that hours were reckoned in only one way.¹ An additional consideration comes from Josephus, the Jewish historian, who wrote to first century Romans. He remarks that on the sabbath the midday meal was "the sixth hour."² This has to be noon. This testimony is from a first century Jew writing to Gentiles in a Gentile country about Jewish customs. These seem to be similar to the circumstances of John who wrote the Fourth Gospel.

The first mention of ὥρα with a numeral occurs at the conversion of John who remained that day with Jesus. John writes, "It was about the tenth hour" (Jn. 1:39), which is about 4 p.m. according to Jewish reckoning or 10 a.m. according to Roman reckoning.

A reference to the "sixth hour" (Jn. 4:6) takes place at Jacob's well near Sychar. This would be noon according to the Jews or 6 p.m. according to the Romans. If this is 6 p.m. as some believe, many events had to take place in a very short period of time in order for this to be completed before dark. This incident probably occurs in winter (4:35) and darkness would come early, perhaps even

¹ William N. Ramsay, "The Sixth Hour," The Expositor, XVIII (June, 1896), 458. "(Hereinafter referred to as "The Sixth Hour.")"

² Josephus, Life, 54.

before the 6 p.m. of Roman reckoning. After meeting the woman the following events took place: (1) the lengthy discourse, (2) the return of the woman to the city, (3) the return to Jesus by the woman and the townspeople at a time of sufficient light for the people to see their way and be seen by the disciples, and (4) the return to the city for all involved. It is possible for these events to take place in this period of time only if some were concluded after dark. Although 6 p.m. is the normal time for drawing water, Josephus indicates that water was also drawn at mid-day.¹

If the sixth hour is noon, all the events of John four have sufficient time to occur. To interpret the sixth hour as being 6 p.m. in this passage appears to have greater difficulties than the noon interpretation.²

The nobleman's son was healed (4:52, 3) at the seventh hour. This is 2 p.m. by the Jewish system and 7 a.m. or 7 p.m. by the Roman system. It could be argued that each of these hours gives plenty of time for the nobleman to return home to Capernaum which is at least a twenty mile journey by the next day. This journey would necessitate an overnight rest during the lengthy trip home. Since a twenty mile journey is longer than an average day's

¹ Josephus Antiquities 2.11.1. and 2.11.2.

² George Ogg, Chronology (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1940), p. 32.

journey the seventh hour may better indicate 7 a.m. or 2 p.m., following the Jewish reckoning. Especially is this true since it appears that the man departed immediately after hearing Jesus' words. If this miracle took place at 7 p.m. he could not travel far before dark. However, it was still possible for him to arrive home the next day. The conclusions drawn from either system of reckoning are equally plausible in light of the evidence which John records. Therefore, on the basis of this testimony alone the seventh hour could be 7 a.m. or 2 p.m. but probably not 7 p.m.

The last reference to ὥρα in John is most difficult to explain. John writes that Jesus was delivered up to be crucified "about the sixth hour" (Jn. 19:14). The other gospel writers indicate that Jesus was already on the cross before the sixth hour. Many attempts have been made to harmonize the accounts. Some claim that the Roman method of reckoning hours from midnight was followed by John.¹ Thus, John's sixth hour would be 6 a.m. Others believe there was a manuscript error through the misreading of the copyists.² However Ramsay, who accepts the Jewish method

¹ Archibald T. Robertson, A Harmony of the Gospels (New York; Harper and Brothers, 1922), pp. 284-87.

² Eugen Ruckstuhl, Chronology of the Last Days of Jesus, trans. by V. Drapela (New York: Desclee Company, Inc., 1965), pp. 47-48.

of reckoning time, acknowledges the differences in the Gospel records but he believes that the times given in the Gospels are reasonable estimates and he "cannot feel anything serious in such difference of estimate between witnesses who naturally would be thinking little about the hour."¹ Thus, according to Ramsay it is possible that the sixth-hour of John is reckoned from sunrise and would correspond to the period of midday.

If the Jewish system is followed, that the sixth hour of John is noon, the following reconstruction appears necessary.

The Synoptists agree that darkness covered the land from the sixth hour to the ninth. The mention of the sixth hour must refer not to the period of time when Jesus was on the cross but the time when darkness began. Each account mentions the sixth hour and immediately after this relates an event about the ninth hour. It is possible that the Synoptists wrote giving the total time of darkness, the sixth to the ninth hour, whereas John wrote setting the time that Jesus was delivered up for crucifixion as about midday. Mark's third hour (Mk. 15:25) or mid-morning would have to be an estimation of the time when it was clear from the proceedings that Jesus would be crucified. John, who wrote his Gospel after the Synoptists, clarifies the time

¹ William M. Ramsay, "The Sixth Hour," 457-58.

by stating that Jesus was not crucified until about midday, the sixth hour. He was an eyewitness (Jn. 19:26, 27) and his testimony concerning the time of crucifixion must be the more exact indication of time.

However, if the Jewish reckoning of the sixth hour is accepted, a careful examination of the four Gospels reveals a hopeless contradiction between the Synoptics and John. Only one point needs mentioning to illustrate this irreconcilable position. In the Synoptic Gospels it is recorded that Jesus was crucified the "third hour" (Mk. 15: 25) and that He had been on the cross and had already uttered several of His sayings by the sixth hour (Mt. 27: 45; Lk. 23:44). However, John places the sentencing in Pilate's Hall at about (ὥς) the "sixth hour." After this Jesus was led away to Golgotha and the crucifixion took place. Either John or the other Gospels are in error if the Jewish method of reckoning hours was used.

However, if the Roman reckoning of hours from midnight was used by John, his sixth hour would be 6 a.m. This would allow for a harmonization of all the accounts. John presents the time, 6 a.m., when Jesus was in Pilate's Hall for judgment, the mockings and scourgings. Mark indicates the exact time of the crucifixion, 9 a.m. Matthew and Luke indicate that from noon until 3 p.m. darkness covered the earth

The question may legitimately be asked, "Why did

John adopt Roman reckoning of hours?" Norman Walker states that

the use of 'modern' or Egyptian hour-reckoning by the author suggests either Alexandria or Ephesus. Precise time-reckoning and knowledge of the stars was all important for navigation, and time-reckoning from midnight was in use among Egyptians, and two and a half centuries before the Fourth Gospel was written, the great astronomer Hipparchus had resided both at Rhodes and at Alexandria, cataloguing the stars and reckoning the hours from midnight, as did the Egyptians. There is also evidence from the recorded martyrdoms of Polycarp and Pionius that the manner of reckoning obtained in Asia Minor.¹

Therefore, if John was influenced by the reckoning of time in Ephesus where he spent much time and if Pliny's comments about the Roman authorities reckoning the day from midnight are correct, it is both probable and logical that, at least in this passage, John followed the Roman reckoning of hours from midnight. The events which he records were acts of a Roman official and these may have been set forth in official Roman records as taking place at the "sixth hour," 6 a.m. It does not necessarily follow that all other references to ὥρα by John must be reckoned by the Roman method.

In reviewing the uses of ὥρα, it can be seen that most often ὥρα should be understood as "time" not in the sense of a literal "hour" but with the idea of "a moment of time." Only once (Jn. 5:35) does it appear that ὥρα,

¹ Norman Walker, "The Reckoning of Hours in the Fourth Gospel," Novum Testamentum, IV (January, 1960), 72.

must be translated "season," which is a lengthy period. When ὥρα occurs with numerals it refers to a particular twelfth part of the daytime if the time is being reckoned by the Jewish method. The first hour commenced at sunrise and the twelfth concluded at sunset. In at least one instance, John 19:14, the hour must be reckoned from midnight to harmonize with the Synoptic Gospels. This Roman time reckoning was practiced then although this was not the common Jewish method of indicating hours. Whether any other hour references in John are also reckoned from midnight is not certain. Either method of reckoning, Roman or Jewish, is possible though the Jewish system appears to be better.

Night

From the beginning of creation the darkness which followed the day provided an easy method of reckoning time. This period of darkness which encompassed half of the civil day was called νύξ.

In non-biblical Greek

The period of time that is opposite to the daylight is the "night," νύξ. When used literally νύξ could occur with prepositional phrases which sometimes qualify the part of the night intended. For example, ὑπὸ νύκταν means "at

dusk," and *διὰ νυκτός* "under the cover of night."¹ Occasionally *νύξ* is figurative of "blindness," "derelection" and "harm."² word used by Josephus to indicate the passing of a whole night is *διανυκτερεύειν*.³

In the Old Testament

The period of darkness, commonly called *νύξ* for the Hebrew *לַיְלָה* had many divisions within it. The earliest part of the darkness, the evening twilight, is called *ὄψέ* (Job 24:15). The time when the stars occur is designated by *ἑσπέρα* or *ἑσπέρινος* (Gen. 49:27). The lengthy period of darkness is *νύξ* (Gen. 1:5) and the time of the morning twilight just prior to the sunrise is *πρωΐ* (I Sam. 31:12).⁴ The night could also be divided into three watches. The first is called the "beginning of the watches" (Lam. 2:19), the second is the "middle watch" (Jd. 7:19) and the third is the "morning watch" (Ex. 12:4). This system of watches was in use also during the intertestament period according to Jubilees 49:10, 12.

The word *νύξ* itself occurs more than two hundred times in the Old Testament. From these references the

¹ Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 432.

² Gerhard Delling, *νύξ*, TDNT, IV, 1123.

³ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 186.

⁴ "Night," A Dictionary of the Bible Comprising Its Antiquities, Biography, Geography and Natural History, p. 626.

Jewish meaning given to **νύξ** can best be understood. The time of darkness is called **νύξ** (Gen. 1:5). It was a time of supernatural revelation for Samuel (I Sa. 15:16) and a time of military maneuvers for Joshua (Jo. 8:3). Some references to the night appear to refer only to a part of the night since the whole night was indicated by the use of **ὄλην** with **νύξ** (I Sa. 28:20; 31:12). Many times **ἡμέρα** and **νύξ** were joined in the same sentence with **ἡμέρα** usually first. This may suggest in popular speech the Jews could reckon their day as beginning in the morning as well as the evening.¹

When "day and night" are combined in a single expression such as forty days and forty nights, it is difficult to determine if this must mean solar days. Some times it could (Gen. 7:4). At other times it appears to mean "daily" or "perpetually." The Levites were employed in their work "day and night" (I Chron. 9:33). The Jews were exhorted by Solomon to keep their eyes open to the temple of God "day and night" (II Chron. 6:20). Joshua challenge Israel to meditate in the law "day and night" (Jo. 1:8). Nehemiah prayed for Jerusalem "day and night"

¹ It is generally accepted that the Hebrews officially reckoned their day from sunset to sunset from the time they became a nation. However, if this were the only system which they used why does the expression "day and night" sometimes place **ἡμέρα** before **νύξ**? It is very possible that this was the result of a popular custom or manner of speaking.

(Neh. 1:6). These references do not indicate a single twenty-four hour period but rather they suggest an activity which should take place during any day, hence the meaning "daily."

It appears to be impossible to prove that an entire twenty-four hour period is meant by a "day and night." For example, Jonah was in the fish's belly "three days and three nights" (Jon. 2:1). A literal interpretation demands one of two interpretations: (1) three twenty-four hour solar days or (2) three days in which one or two may be less than twenty-four hours in length. While Scripture does not indicate which is correct, Esther 4:16 and 5:1 may shed light on the expression. Esther tells Mordecai to gather the Jews of Shushan and command them to fast for "three days, night or day." Then she promises to go in to the king which she does "on the third day." In other words, she does not wait for three solar days to pass but on the third day she enters before the king. Later that same day she broke the fast (Est. 5:4-6). Esther does not appear to have broken her word and gone before the king prior to the right time. This passage suggests that the day in Jewish time reckoning, even if qualified by "night or day," at times can refer not just to the entire twenty-four hour period but any part of a day. Therefore $\nu\acute{\upsilon}\xi$ though it refers to the darkness part of the solar day, may refer to the entire period of darkness, only part of the period, or,

when combined with ἡμέρα, it may indicate either an entire solar day or only a part of the day.

In the Gospels

This discussion of νύξ in the Gospels is limited to those passages where νύξ is not combined with ἡμέρα.¹ In most places νύξ refers to the period of darkness that is a time for sleeping or fishing.² It is also the time of Jesus' betrayal and arrest.³ That the night was divided into four watches is made clear because Jesus walked on the water in the fourth watch of the night.⁴ This is the last fourth of the night immediately preceding the sunrise.

On five occasions⁵ is in the genitive case and must be translated "at night" or "by night."⁶ It was "by night," that is, under the cover of darkness that Nicodemus came to Jesus. Jesus was taken to Egypt "by night." Then the expression διὰ ὅλης νυκτός occurs in Luke 5:5 it is clear that the disciples had fished "through the whole night."

¹ These have already been considered under ἡμέρα.

Supra.

² Mt. 25:6; Lk. 21:37; Jn. 21:3.

³ Mt. 26:31, 34 (Mk. 14:30); Jn. 13:30.

⁴ Mt. 14:25 (Mk. 6:48).

⁵ Mt. 2:14; 28:13; Lk. 2:8; Jn. 3:2; 19:39.

⁶ Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 431.

The figure of the night being a time for stumbling because of the absence of light is applied by Jesus to the spiritual realm. Those without Jesus when He, the spiritual light, would be removed, will be in danger of stumbling in spiritual darkness (Jn. 11:10).¹

On a few occasions *νύξ* is used metaphorically of the time of judgment for the rich farmer (Lk. 12:20) and of the time of Christ's coming (Lk. 17:34). This last passage does not mean that Christ's coming will be at night for there is always night somewhere on earth. In John 9:4 speaks of the time when work is over and the time for rest begins. Here, *νύξ* appears to refer to the "night" of physical death.²

These uses of *νύξ* in the Gospels are quite clear. Most often *νύξ* refers to a part or the whole of the period of darkness when the sun is not shining. On a few occasions it has a figurative or metaphorical sense of "spiritual darkness," though its translation is "night."

Divisions of the Night

The earliest portion of the night was identified as the "evening," *ἑσπέρα*. As darkness settled, the military watches (*φυλακή*) became the method of noting time during

¹ J. H. Bernard, *John*, II (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1962), 377.

² Delling, *νύξ*, IV, 1125.

the absence of the sun. The four watches in order of occurrence were: (1) ὄψέ, (2) μεσονύκτιον, (3) ἀλεκτοροφωνία and (4) πρωΐ. In the latter part of the fourth watch came the "early morning," ὄρθρος. ἔσπέρα.

A most important part of the night was the "evening," ἔσπέρα. It was especially significant to the Jews for the night marked the beginning of a new day.

In non-biblical Greek.--Only two meanings are listed for ἔσπέρα in classical Greek: (1) "evening" and (2) the "west."¹ The second meaning no doubt developed from the fact that the sun set in the west. The first meaning is illustrated by Josephus who states of David's victory over the Amalekites, "David's companions too continued the slaughter from the first hour until evening" (ἔσπέρα)² Here, ἔσπέρα must mean the initial period of dark at the time of sunset. The adjective form, ἔσπερινός, also is translated "evening."

In the Old Testament.--Both of these words are used for the Hebrew word עֶרְבַּיִם. Much importance given to ἔσπέρα resulted from its designation as the period of time for the

¹ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, I, 697.

² Josephus Antiquities 6.14.6.

sacrifices. Each day a burnt offering of one lamb was sacrificed in the "evening," ἑσπέρα. The Hebrew, בין הערבים should be more literally translated "between the evenings" instead of the Septuagint πρὸς ἑσπέραν. If the interpretation of the Mishnah and the accompanying Gemara is accepted, the phrase "between the evenings" refers to three periods of time. The first evening was from noon to two-thirty) and the second evening from three-thirty until 6 p.m. Between these two periods from two-thirty to three-thirty the evening burnt offering was sacrificed.¹ This could make ἑσπέρα, "evening" in some passages equivalent to the entire afternoon and in others only a part of the afternoon. For example, when the children of Israel ate quail "in the evening" (Ex. 16:12), it appears that ἑσπέρα meant the close of the day as darkness set in.

The adjective form, ἑσπερινός, three times indicates the evening sacrifices which take place in mid-afternoon.² It also is the time when Jehovah's Passover began (Lev. 23:5). It is not clear whether darkness or the time for the slaying of the lamb is meant. In Proverbs 7:9 ἑσπερινός occurs in a series of statements about the night, "in the twilight, in the evening (ἑσπερινῶ) of the day, in

¹ Finegan, HBC, pp. 13-14 has an extensive discussion of this.

² II Kg. 16:15; Dan. 9:21; Ps. 141:2.

the middle of the night and in the darkness. Here, **ἔσπερινός** seems to be equated with the early evening before deep darkness.

It can be concluded about **ἔσπερα**, and **ἔσπερινός** that they pertain to the closing part of the daylight hours from Jewish reckoning. This period could include the time of the evening sacrifices which began about noon until the early evening when the stars began to appear.

In the Gospels.--The only use of **ἔσπερα** occurs in Luke 24:29. Jesus had been walking with two of the disciples toward Emmaus and it was "toward evening," **πρὸς ἔσπεραν**. It is also stated that the day was far spent and it was before the evening meal (v. 30). Consequently, **πρὸς ἔσπεραν** appeals to be late afternoon in this passage. It was early enough for the disciples to leave Emmaus and return to Jerusalem (v. 33) before dark.

φυλακή

While **φυλακή** does not indicate a specific time reference, it does occur with numerals to indicate specific watches of the night. For this reason it is important.

In non-biblical Greek.--How early in history the night was divided into watches is not known. It is commonly accepted that the Romans had four watches in the night.¹ However, Josephus in mentioning the siege of Jerusalem makes reference only to three.

Having enclosed the city within this wall and posted garrisons in the forts. Titus went round himself during the first watch of the night and inspected everything; the second watch he entrusted to Alexander, for the third the commanders of the legions drew lots.²

No mention is made at this time of a fourth watch.

In the Old Testament.--The Jews had at least three watches: (1) the beginning of the watches (Lam. 2:19), (2) the middle watch (Jd. 7:19) and (3) the morning watch (I Sa. 11:11). If there was not a fourth it means that the Jews divided the night into three periods of four hours each. The length of each watch varied with the time of the year. The watches were designated by these names and not numbers.

In the Gospels.--Most comments about the watches are predicated on the Roman custom of dividing the night into four watches. In Matthew 14:25 and Mark 6:48 the fourth watch is mentioned. However, in two instances there is an

¹ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, II, 1960.

² Josephus Wars 5.5.10.

allowance that perhaps only three watches are in view. Matthew 24:4 does not enumerate the number of the watches but says, "I the master of the house had known what watch the thief was coming." In Luke 12:38 the master returning late from the marriage feast is said to return perhaps in the "second watch and if in the third." Why is not the fourth mentioned? It is probable that only the three Jewish watches are in view.¹ If this is correct there would be at least two systems of dividing the night that were practiced concurrently in New Testament times.

ὄψέ (ὄψις)

The first watch of the night according to the Romans was identified as ὄψέ. However, ὄψέ usually functioned as an adverb meaning "late" indicating a time late in the day. It also may function as an improper preposition meaning "after" in one passage (Mt. 28:1).²

In non-biblical Greek.--Two basic meanings of this word are found in the Greek. Both the general meaning of "after a long time," "at length," "late" and the more specific "late in the day," "at even"³ are found.

¹ Alfred Plummer, Luke (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1964), p. 33,

² Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 606.

³ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, II, 1282.

In the Old Testament.--The adverb ὄψέ translates עֶרֶב meaning "evening" and חַשְׁמַלְתָּי meaning "late." In one instance, Exodus 30:8, 6; ὄψέ used for the Hebrew phrase "between the evenings." No clear indication exists that this refers to anything other than the late part of the daylight or early evening.

In the Gospels.--Jesus in Mark 11:11 and 11:19 left Jerusalem because ὀψίας ἤδη οὕσης τῆς ὥρας and ὅταν ὄψε ἐγένετο. Either of two interpretations is possible. He may have left when it was late (in the afternoon) or his departure may have corresponded with the coming of the first watch, ὄψέ. Both views place the departure late in the day just before or after sunset.

The remaining usage of ὄψέ is a particular problem because it occurs in a sentence with several words for time. Matthew 28:1 reads, ὄψε δὲ σαββάτων, τῇ ἐπιφωσκούσῃ εἰς μίαν σαββάτων. Several interpretations are possible: (1) ὄψέ could mean "late on the Sabbath day," Saturday afternoon; (2) ὄψέ could mean after the Sabbath day or early Saturday evening;¹ or (3) it may mean, after the Sabbath at the dawning of the first day of the week, "about

¹ Ezra P. Gould, Mark (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. 300. This view assumes that the "dawning toward the first day of the week" (Mt. 28:1) means the beginning of the new day at sunset.

dawn on Sunday." The third possibility which corresponds closely to Mark's account of the resurrection is inconsistent with the other uses of ὄψέ in the Gospels which always designate ὄψέ as a time either late in the day or the first watch of the night.

A related study is in order at this point. The adjective form, ὄψίος, which is not used in the Septuagint, is found fourteen times in the Gospels. It occurs in the expression "when evening was come" and equivalent phrases most often.² The "evening" appears always to have the meaning of the time just before darkness sets in. This idea is found in several passages. Though "evening" was come, Jesus took time for the feeding of the five thousand before He sent the people away (Mt. 14:15). Sufficient daylight must have been available in order for the miracle to take place. The "evening" came at the end of the work day at a time after the eleventh hour since the laborer who went out at that hour did enough work to get paid (Mt. 20:8). It was the time when the sun set in Mark 1:32. When "even" was come, Joseph of Arimathea sought the body of Jesus from Pilate (Mt. 27:57; Mk. 15:42). This was after 3 p.m. when Jesus died but before the beginning of the next day which

¹ This view harmonizes Matthew 28:1 with the resurrection accounts of the other Gospels.

² Mt. 8:16; 16:2; 26:20; Mk. 4:35; 6:47; 14:17; Jn. 6:16.

was a sabbath (Mk. 5:42). In no instance, unless it would be John 20:19, "evening on that day, the first of the week," does ὄψις signify a period after dark. However, this passage does not demand that it was dark. Rather, all the evidence suggests a time in the late afternoon prior to the time of the setting of the sun.

This single meaning of ὄψις suggests that the ὄψέ of Matthew 28:1 would most naturally be translated "late" on the Sabbath day. However, scholars are divided about the meaning of ὄψέ in this passage.

Those who harmonize Matthew 28:1 with the other accounts of the Resurrection translate ὄψέ "after." This allows them to equate Matthew's time reference "after the Sabbath" to "dawn on Sunday." Moulton writes: "This use of ὄψέ =after involves an ablative gen., 'late from.' . . . this seems a natural development, but the question is not easy to decide."¹ The basis for ὄψέ being translated "after" comes from Philostratus, a second to third century A.D. writer who uses ὄψέ τούτων which is translated "last of all." The entire quotation is as follows:

Now those who come to the Pythian festival are, they say, escorted with sound of pipe and song and lyre and are honored with shows of comedies and tragedies; and then last of all [emphasis mine] they are presented

¹ James Hope Moulton, Prolegomena Vol. I of A Grammar of New Testament Greek (3 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1919), 72-73. "(Hereinafter referred to as Prolegomena.)"

with an exhibition of games and races run by naked athletes.¹

The use of ὀψέ μυστηρίων in Philostratus is also cited as evidence for ὀψέ meaning "after."

It was the day of the Epidaurian festival at which it is still customary for the Athenians to celebrate the mystery at a second sacrifice after both proclamation and victims have been offered; and this custom was instituted in honour of Aesclepius, because they still initiated him when on one occasion he arrived from Epidaurus too late [emphasis mine for the mysteries].²

Whether these two quotations adequately prove that ὀψέ can at times be translated "after" remains a problem.

H. A. W. Meyer says ὀψέ "always denotes the lateness of the period thus specified and still current."³ However, Meyer contradicts this conclusion in order to avoid an alleged discrepancy between Matthew and the other Gospels.

We are not to suppose Saturday evening to be intended, . . . but far on in the Saturday night, after midnight, toward daybreak on Sunday, in conformity with the civil mode of reckoning, according to which the ordinary day was understood to extend from sunrise till sunrise again.⁴

In support of this view the last portion of Matthew 28:1, "at the dawning unto the first of the week," is

¹ Philostratus Life of Apollonius 6. 10.

² Ibid. 4. 18.

³ Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew, trans. by F. Crombie (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, Publishers, 1884), p. 519.

⁴ Ibid.

brought into consideration. Goodspeed argues against "late" saying,

But this sense is precluded by the very next phrase, which the King James translates 'as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week,' or, as we would say, 'as the first day of the week was dawning,' for the Sabbath did not last until the dawn of Sunday but ended with sunset or dark Saturday night.¹

By this Goodspeed means, as the daylight of Sunday was about to dawn. Thus it has been concluded: "When both language and context permit interpreting ch. 28:1 in harmony with the unanimous statements of the other Gospel writers, there is no valid reason for doing otherwise."²

Perhaps this is sufficient evidence to translate ὀψέ, "after." However, there is an alternate view that should be considered. In keeping with the other uses of ὀψέ in the Gospels, Matthew 28:1 could read, "late on the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" (NASV). The assumption that "at the dawning" (Mt. 28:1) is the equivalent of sunrise is not borne out in the use of this word in Luke 23:54, "It was the Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to dawn" [emphasis mine]. This can only mean the beginning of a new day (at dusk) was at hand.

¹ Edgar J. Goodspeed, Problems of New Testament Translation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), p. 43.

² Francis Nichol ed. The Seventh Day Adventist Bible Commentary, I (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1956), 554.

It is not at all certain that the evidences cited for ὄψέ being translated "after" prove anything. Thayer writes: "An examination of the instances just cited (and others) will show that they fail to sustain the rendering "after."¹ Rather, ὄψέ when followed by the genitive always appears to be a partitive, signifying "late" in the period specified by the word in the genitive.² For this reason Allen writes, "It is however, very difficult to believe that ὄψέ σαββάτων can mean anything else than either 'as the Sabbath ended,' or 'when it had ended'."³ The implications of this views are indicated by A. T. Robertson:

This careful chronological statement according to Jewish days clearly means that before the sabbath was over, that is before six P.M. this visit by the women was mad 'to see the sepulchre.'⁴

This view would necessitate at least three visits to the tomb by the women. The first came on the day of the crucifixion (Lk. 23:55). A second appears to occur at the conclusion of the weekly Sabbath, Saturday afternoon (Mt. 28:1). At this time the women came "to look at the grave."

¹ Joseph Henry Thayer, Lexicon (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 471.

² Ibid.

³ Willoughby C. Allen, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary of the Gospel According to St. Matthew (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1965), p. 301.

⁴ Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, I (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1950), 240.

The final visit to the tomb is recorded by the other Gospel writers. This time the stone had been rolled away revealing the empty tomb. The major criticism of this view is that it produces an unnatural break between Matthew 28:1 and 28:2-15 in that Matthew does not relate how the women arrived at the tomb on the "third" visit. Both views have merit.

If ὄψέ is translated "late" in every instance except when it refers to the first watch of the night, Matthew 28:1 must refer to the end of the Sabbath. However if ὄψέ can be translated "after" in this passage then it no doubt refers to the dawn of Sunday. Word meaning and grammar are indecisive.¹

ΜΕΣΟΝΥΚΤΙΟΥ

The second watch for the Romans was called **ΜΕΣΟΝΥΚΤΙΟΥ**. Though this is not necessarily an exact hour indication, it serves as an approximate time indicator in the night.

In non-biblical Greek.--Because of its obvious meaning of "midst of the night," **ΜΕΣΟΝΥΚΤΙΟΥ** often had the translation "at midnight." There is no evidence from Greek literature that it indicated a watch of the night.

¹ Archibald Thomas Robertson, Grammar (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), p. 644.

In the Old Testament.--The five uses of **μεσονύκτιον** in the Septuagint are translated "midnight." This is the literal meaning and a suitable translation for הלילה תצוה, its Hebrew counterpart.

In the Gospels.--There is one occasion where **μεσονύκτιον** can be translated "midnight," with the meaning of "the midst of the night." In the parable of the importunate friend, the neighbor was awakened at "midnight" (Lk. 11:5). The translation "midnight" is not to be understood as an exact hour and "the midst of the night" is an equally good translation.

πρωί, πρωΐας

While πρωί is the title given to the fourth watch of the night (Mk. 13:35), it more often has the translation "early," or "morning." The adjective form is πρωΐας.

In non-biblical Greek.--The most frequent use of the adverb πρωί is to indicate the time "early" in the day, "morning." It appears to be the opposite of ὀψέ.¹ The adjective πρωΐας has the same meaning except that it can also indicate "early in the year."²

¹ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, II, 1543-44.

² Ibid.

In the Old Testament.--The Septuagint has πρωῒ usually as the translation of בֹּקֶר, "morning." It is found in the phrase "and there was morning" in Genesis one. In Genesis 22:3 Abraham rose up "early in the morning," πρωῒ. Joseph went in to his fellow prisoners (πρωῒ), "in the morning" after they had their visions (Gen. 40:6). Samuel slept until morning (πρωῒ) and he arose early (I Sam. 3:15). From these uses it is clear that πρωῒ as a translation of had at least two translations: (1) the specific time of early morning when the sun came up and (2) the general time of morning (Gen. 1).

In the Gospels.--The reason for the fourth watch of the night being called πρωῒ (Mk. 13:35) probably occurred because the early morning (πρωῒ) was the concluding time of that watch. With the πρωῒ came the light of day and consequently the translation "early," "early in the morning."¹

A few passages indicate that πρωῒ included the time just before the dawn. In Mark 1:35 a literal translation of καὶ πρωῒ ἔνυσχα λιάν would be "and in the morning, very much at night."² Yet, a similar phrase καὶ λιάν πρωῒ (Mk. 16:2) is used though the sun had already risen. Later

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 732.

² Gould, Mark, p. 28.

in Mark 16:9 the time indicated is $\pi\rho\omega\acute{\iota}$ "early." But John records this same event saying that the women were coming early, "while it was dark" (Jn. 20:1). Evidently, the women left while it was yet dark and arrived shortly after daybreak. The meaning of $\pi\rho\omega\acute{\iota}$ was broad enough to include not only the final hours of darkness each night but also the beginning of the daylight period. This is suggested by the following passages. It was early, $\pi\rho\omega\acute{\iota}$, when the Sanhedrin took council against Jesus (Mt. 27:1; Mk. 15:1). After the meeting it was still $\pi\rho\omega\acute{\iota}$ when they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium (Jn. 18:28). This is the time that John calls the sixth hour which according to Roman reckoning is 6 a.m. It is the time when the fourth watch of the night would end. In John 21:4 $\pi\rho\omega\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ is used to indicate that morning was breaking.

At other times $\pi\rho\omega\acute{\iota}$ indicates the early hour of travel (Mt. 21:18; Mk. 11:20), the time to hire workers for the first hour (Mt. 20:1) and the time for determining the weather for the day (Mt. 16:3). Though the time allotted to $\pi\rho\omega\acute{\iota}$ could extend backward into the fourth watch of the night, it seems in the Gospels to refer more often to the period at dawn. At times it was still dark or just the beginning of the light. This is the time expressed by $\pi\rho\omega\acute{\iota}$.

ἄρθρος (ὄρθρινός)

Another division between the night and day is expressed by ἄρθρος and ὄρθρινός, "dawn, early dawn." Each word is used only once in the resurrection account.

In non-biblical Greek.--Both in early Greek literature and in Josephus ἄρθρος refers to the time just before or about daybreak.¹ The same meaning is given to the adjective form ὄρθρινός.

In the Old Testament.--The Septuagint reveals that ἄρθρος refers to the beginning of the daylight period. Angels hastened to Lot "when morning arose" (Gen. 19:15). Jacob wrestled all night until the angel of Jehovah demanded release "for the morning breaketh" (Gen. 32:26). The citizens of Gaza intended to wait "until morning light" before they killed Samson (Ju. 16:2). In each of these places the time described is early morning and is connected with the dawn of the day.

¹ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, II, 1250.

In the Gospels.--Luke alone uses ὄρθρος (24:1) and ὄρθρινός (24:22) to describe the early morning visit¹ of the women to the tomb. This visit came about daybreak on the first day of the week, Sunday. Instead of using πρωῒ like the other Gospel writers, Luke uses two words that appear to be synonyms of πρωῒ. Thus, he writes that it was "deep" or "early-morning" (24:1). This is the first part of the morning.

Other Indications of Time

There are several words which by themselves or in conjunction with other words express time in the day. These words are considered in the following order: βραχύς, εὐκαιρία, (εὐκαιρός), ἱκανός, ὀλίγος, and προσκαιρός. Because the words are used so seldom, the uses of each word will be discussed in a single paragraph.

βραχύς

While often used to indicate a short distance or shortness of stature βραχύς also indicates "a short time."² Josephus used it many times to indicate a "brief" or "short

¹ The first visit to the tomb appears to have taken place in the late afternoon of the crucifixion day. At this time the women visited the tomb (Lk. 23:54-55), observed His body and returned home to prepare spices for a final preparation of the body. The second recorded visit by Luke occurred on Sunday morning.

² Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, I, 328.

time."¹ In the Septuagint βραχύς translated ἴσθῃ which does not have a temporal meaning. Only in Luke 22:58, "after a short time" does βραχύς occur. This use is found in the midst of Peter's denial of the Lord. Peter first denies the Lord and "after a short time" another person approaches Peter which leads to the second denial. This is the only testimony that Peter's second denial followed close to the first.

εὐκαιρία (εὐκαιρός)

Both words are combinations of εὖ, "good" and καιρός, "time." The translations for εὐκαιρία include "favorable opportunity," "the right moment" or "right time."² For the adjective εὐκαιρός the translations are "well-timed," "suitable"³ and "seasonable time, well timed, suitable to the time."⁴ Both words are translations of תָּיִב in the Septuagint and have meanings related to time.⁵ The two places where εὐκαιρία is found in the Gospels are best translated "right time" (Mt. 26:16; Lk. 22:6). These places are parallel and indicate that Judas Iscariot sought

¹ Josephus Antiquities 10.11.3. and 14.4.5. and 11.3.2.

² Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 321.

³ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, I, 717.

⁴ Cremer, Lexicon, p. 740.

⁵ Dellling, εὐκαιρία, TDNT, III, 462.

for the right or good time to turn Jesus in to the Jewish leaders. The adjective, **εὐκαιρός**, found only in Mark 6:21 is used with **ἡμέρα**, of the day when Herodias decided to have John the Baptist killed. When Herod planned a feast, Herodias knew it was a "right time" (day). This literal translation gives the sense of a convenient, favorable and opportune time.

ἱκανός

Another word, which can designate a portion of time, is **ἱκανός**. This adjective has the meaning of "sufficient," "enough," and "considerable."¹ The word appears to come from the verb **ἵκω**, "to reach," "to attain."² When designating time it refers to a long or considerable length of time.³ Though it is not found in the Septuagint, Luke expresses the sense "a long time" with **ἱκανός** and **χρόνος**. It had been a long time since the demoniac had worn clothes (Lk. 8:27). In the parable of the vineyard, the owner went into another country "for a long time" (Lk. 20:9). Herod Antipas "for a long time" was desirous of seeing Jesus (Lk. 23:8). In answer to the question, "How long a time does **ἱκανός** suggest?," it can only be answered from the

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 375.

² Rengstorf, **ἱκανός**, TDNT, III, 293.

³ Liddell and Scott, Lexicon, I, 825.

basic meaning of the word, "considerable."

ὀλίγος

The various translations of ὀλίγος give the idea of "brevity" when it is used temporally irregardless of the prepositions or nouns used with it. In the Septuagint it is best translated "few" (Gen. 29:20; Ex. 25:52) when it modifies a noun. Used by itself it expresses "a short time," "a little while."¹ It is this last sense which occurs in "come ye apart into a desert place and rest ye a little while" (Mk. 6:31).

προσκαιρός

As a member of the καιρός family this expresses a "temporary," "transitory" time.² It is not found in the Septuagint except in IV Maccabees 15:2, 8, and 23 where the idea of "temporary" is present even though it is translated "present." Both uses in the Gospels³ occur in the parable of the seed which is planted but it is not having root in itself. It lasts only "for a time." Barr remarks concerning προσκαιρός "all the cases in the Bible (3 in 4 Macc. and 4 in NT) have the meaning of 'temporary, lasting only a short time,' which depends on the sense of καιρός

¹ Thayer, Lexicon, D. 442.

² Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 722.

³ Mt. 13:21; Mk. 4:17.

as 'time' or perhaps 'moment.'"¹

These words have temporal meanings that are clear and easily identifiable by the context and the basic meaning of the word. The time expressed is usually not too specific.

¹ Barr, Time (London: SCN Press Ltd., 1961), p. 43.

PART II. GRAMMATICAL STUDY

CHAPTER VI

INFINITIVAL EXPRESSIONS OF TIME

In addition to words for time the Greek language had grammatical expressions which indicated time relationships. One such method of expression is the temporal use of the infinitive. This construction occurs fifty-seven times in the Gospels with sufficient diversity of meaning that it necessitates examination. This chapter sets forth (1) the background, (2) the tenses, (3) the identification, and (4) the occurrences of temporal infinitives.

Background of Temporal Infinitives

While extensive study of the temporal use for the infinitive in the various areas of Greek literature is not available, it is possible to set forth principles concerning its use. The article and a preposition always immediately precede the temporal infinitive.

The infinitive preceded by the article is used, like a noun, as the object of a preposition. The article assumes the genitive, dative or accusative form according to the case required by the preposition, but it is always of the neuter gender.¹

¹ Clyde Votaw, The Use of the Infinitive in Biblical Greek (Chicago: Published by the author, 1896), p. 19. "Hereinafter referred to as The Infinitive.") This study by Votaw is the authority on the use of the Infinitive in (all) Biblical Greek. The only place where copies of this have been located is the University of Chicago.

The article must be preceded by either (1) **μετά**, (2) **πρό**, (3) **πρίν**, or (4) **ἐν**. It is through the use of the preposition with the infinitive that temporal relations are expressed. Antecedent action is indicated by **πρίν** or **πρό τοῦ** and the infinitive.¹ Contemporaneous action is described by **ἐν τῷ** with the infinitive.² Subsequent action is set forth by **μετὰ τό** and the infinitive.³

The use of the temporal infinitive is not confined to Biblical Greek. It also is found among Greek writers. For example, in Polybius **ἐν**, **μετά**, and **πρό** are found with the infinitive in the same approximate frequency and function as these same infinitives in Genesis.⁴ However, this is not necessarily true of other Greek writers.

In the entire Old Testament **ἐν** is found four hundred fifty-five times, **πρό** forty-six times and **μετά** ninety-nine times.⁵ Votaw concludes, "The Hebraistic influence is chiefly of two kinds: it affects the frequency of occurrence

¹ Archibald T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), p. 1091. "Hereinafter referred to as Grammar.)"

² Ibid., p. 1092.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Hamilton Ford Allen, The Use of the Infinitive in Polybius Compared With the Use of the Infinitive in Biblical Greek (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1907), p. 49.

⁵ Votaw, The Infinitive, p. 20.

of the infinitive, and it affects the uses which the infinitive is made to serve."¹ The Hebrew language also expressed a temporal idea with a preposition and the infinitive. Contemporaneous action could be indicated by $\text{עִתְּ} \text{עִתְּ}$ with the infinitive.²

While the temporal idea of the infinitive had early roots in the Greek language, the Hebraic manner of expressing time with the infinitive was a strong influence when putting Hebrew thought into the Greek language. For example, A. T. Robertson writes concerning ἐν τῷ :

Examples of this idiom occur in the ancient Greek (16 in Xenophon, 6 in Thucydides, 26 in Plato) and the papyri show it occasionally. But in the LXX it is a constant translation of בְּ and is much more abundant in the N.T. as a result of the LXX profusion.³

It may well be that ἐν τῷ and the infinitive began to replace the classical Greek genitive absolute as a temporal designation in the New Testament.⁴

¹ Votaw, The Infinitive, p. 55.

² Bruce Waltke, "Advanced Hebrew" (unpublished class notes in Advanced Hebrew, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1963), p. 25.

³ Robertson, Grammar, p. 587.

⁴ John Charles Doudna, The Greek of the Gospel of Mark (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1961), p. 54.

Tenses of Temporal Infinitives

Only two tenses, the present and the aorist, occur with the temporal infinitive in the Gospels. The significance of the tenses is basically the same as is found in the moods. Goodwin inaccurately relates that

The Aorist Infinitive here presents no peculiarity, and that it differs from the Present only in the ordinary way, by referring to a single or momentary act rather than to a repeated or continued act.¹

Votaw makes a very precise distinction between the tenses saying:

The common grammatical distinction between the present and the aorist tenses of the infinitive is here also observed, the present indicating that the action or state denoted by the infinitive is thought of as in progress the aorist indicating that the action or state is thought of indefinitely as regards progress.²

To this Stagg adds concerning the aorist:

It tells nothing about the nature of the action under consideration. It is 'punctiliar' only in the sense that the action is viewed without reference to duration, interruption, completion or anything else.³

He then comments,

The aorist can properly be used to cover any kind of action: single or multiple, momentary or extended, broken or unbroken, completed or open-ended. The

¹ William Watson Goodwin, Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), p. 240. "(Hereinafter referred to as Syntax.)"

² Votaw, The Infinitive, p. 59.

³ Frank Stagg, "Aorist," Journal of Biblical Literature, XCI (June, 1972), 223.

aorist simply refrains from describing.¹

From this it is clear that the tense of the infinitive expresses action not time. The present tense indicates continuing action and the aorist indefinite action. The continuation of action will not be indicated by the aorist infinitive alone.

Identification of Temporal Infinitives

The temporal infinitive is introduced in the Gospels by one of four prepositions and the article. The action of the main verb is either antecedent, contemporary or subsequent to the infinitive. It must be considered that

The infinitive itself is properly timeless, though the time relation is usually suggested by the meaning of the preposition or by this combined with that which the tense implies respecting the progress of the action.²

Antecedent action

The correct formula for showing that the action of the main verb is antecedent to the infinitive is $\pi\rho\acute{o}\ \tau\omicron\upsilon$ and the infinitive. There are nine examples of this in the New Testament and six of these are in the Gospels.³ All

¹ Stagg, "Aorist," p. 223.

² Ernest DeWitt Burton, Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek (Chicago: University Press in Chicago, 1897), p. 49. "(Hereinafter referred to as Syntax.)"

³ Mt. 6:8; Lk. 2:21; 22:15; Jn. 1:48; 13:19; 17:5.

have the accusative with the infinitive except John 13:19. That this construction was not too common is suggested by the Septuagint which according to A. T. Robertson has only thirty-five uses.¹

The function of $\pi\rho\acute{o}$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ with the infinitive is set forth clearly by Burton:

By $\pi\rho\acute{o}$ with the infinitive antecedence of the action of the principal verb to that of the Infinitive is expressed, and the action of the Infinitive is accordingly relatively future. But here also the time relation is expressed wholly by the preposition.²

In other words, both the time of the action in the infinitive and the main verb are in relation to each other with the action of the main verb always preceding the action of the infinitive.

An alternate construction to $\pi\rho\acute{o}$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ is $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ or $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ η . There seems to be no reason for the presence or absence of η after $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$.

The use of η after $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$, which occurs twice in the Iliad, frequently in Herodotus, and rarely in Attic writers, is well attested in three of the thirteen instances in the New Testament in which $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ is used with the Infinitive, and occurs as a variant in other passages.³

Whichever form occurs with the infinitive the

¹ Robertson, Grammar, p. 978. However, Nigel Turner, Syntax, III (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), p. 144 cites nearly fifty uses in the Old Testament.

² Burton, Syntax, p. 49.

³ Ibid., p. 152.

result is the same. "The infinitive, preceded by the temporal adverb $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ or $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu \eta$, is used to indicate an action or state antecedent in time to that denoted by the verb to which it stands related."¹ Thus, both $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ and $\pi\rho\acute{o}$ used with the infinitive indicate that the action of the leading verb is antecedent in time to the infinitival action.

Contemporaneous action

It is the primary function of $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \tau\omega$ with the infinitive to indicate contemporaneous action.

The preposition $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$, which occurs in this construction nearly as many times (through Hebraistic influence) as all others, indicates generally a relation of contemporaneity or attendant circumstance between the act or state denoted by its infinitive and that of the verb to which it stands related.²

That the construction $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \tau\omega$ and the infinitive is a Hebraism can be seen from the high frequency of uses of it in the Septuagint. While it occurs fifty-five times in the New Testament, most of them being in the Gospels, it is found five hundred times in the Septuagint but only twenty-six in Plato, sixteen in Xenophon and six in Thucydides.³

However, of the thirty-nine uses of $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \tau\omega$ with the

¹ Votaw, The Infinitive, p. 16.

² Ibid., p. 20.

³ Turner, Syntax (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), pp. 144-45.

infinitive in the Gospels, many times the aorist infinitive is used by Luke instead of the present infinitive. Zerwick makes the following distinction between the present and aorist infinitive.

Where ἐν τῷ with the infinitive is used temporally, the present infinitive naturally indicates, in general, contemporary action, and the aorist preceding action; not that the forms indicate of themselves any relation of time, but because the aspect which they indicate normally corresponds to these relationships. . . . The present represents action in progress, the aorist represents it simply as posited.¹

Turner says, when ἐν τῷ occurs with the aorist temporal infinitive it indicates "anterior action."² However, Burton argues that this construction relates the time "at which the action expressed by the principal verb takes place. The preposition does not seem necessarily to denote exact coincidence, but in no case expresses antecedence."³

It can be compared to ὅτε with the aorist indicative, "which simply marks in general the time of the event denoted by the principal verb, leaving it to the context to indicate the precise nature of the chronological relation."⁴ A distinction between the two tenses used with ἐν τῷ must

¹ Maximillian Zerwick, Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples, trans. by Joseph Smith (Rome: Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1963), pp. 134-35.

² Turner, Syntax, p. 145.

³ Burton, Syntax, p. 50.

⁴ Ibid.

be observed. The present tense preceded by ἐν τῷ indicates action contemporaneous with that of the main verb. The significance of the aorist infinitive, other than showing indefinite action, must be determined from the context.

Subsequent action

The use of μετὰ τό, To with the infinitive is found five times in the Gospels, fifteen times in the entire New Testament and one hundred eight times in the Septuagint.¹ μετὰ τό always has the resultant meaning of "after" and occurs with the aorist tense in the Gospels. Its function is well expressed by Burton who writes:

By μετὰ with the infinitive antecedence of the action denoted by the Infinitive to that of the main verb is expressed, but this meaning manifestly lies in the preposition, not in the tense of the verb. That the Aorist Infinitive is almost constantly used . . . is natural, since in dating one event by another the latter is usually, conceived as an event without reference to its progress.²

It should be noted that the tense of the temporal infinitive indicates continuing action, if present tense, or an event without reference to its progress if aorist tense. It is the addition of the preposition or adverb that projects the action of the infinitive as being antecedent, contemporary or subsequent to the action and consequently the time of the main verb. Therefore the time

¹ Burton, Syntax, p. 51.

² Ibid., p. 49.

indicated by the temporal infinitive can only be vaguely expressed.¹

Occurrences of Temporal Infinitives

It is important to remember that the time relationship is between the main verb and the infinitive. The main verb may be (1) antecedent, (2) contemporaneous, or (3) subsequent to the action of the infinitive.

Antecedent action

The use of $\pi\rho\delta\ \tau\omicron\upsilon$, or $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ with the infinitive indicates that the action of the main verb precedes the action of the infinitive. In the Gospels on five occasions $\pi\rho\delta\ \tau\omicron\upsilon$ is found with the aorist infinitive. Three times the main verb is also aorist.² A good illustration of the time sequence can be seen in Luke 2:21, "the name given by the angel before he was conceived." Clearly the action of the main verb precedes in time the action of the infinitive. This is also true when the main verb is present³ as in, "the Father knows what you need before you ask" (Mt. 6:8). The tense of the main verb shows the kind of action expressed but the temporal infinitive with $\pi\rho\delta\ \tau\omicron\upsilon$ indicates that the action of the main verb precedes the action of the

¹ Robertson, Grammar, p. 1091.

² Lk. 2:21; 22:15; Jn. 1:48.

³ Mt. 6:8; Jn. 13:19.

infinitive. This is not only true with an aorist infinitive but also a present infinitive (Jn. 17:5).

The nine times that *πρίν* or *πρὸ τοῦ* occur with an infinitive it is always an aorist infinitive which indicates a specific action. In each instance the action of the main verb precedes the action of the infinitive. This is true whether the main verb is present (Jn. 8:58), aorist (Mt. 1:18), perfect (Jn. 14:20), future,¹ or an aorist imperative (Jn. 4:49). A good illustration of the sequence of action between the infinitive and main verb is in Matthew 26:34, "before the cock crows, you shall deny me thrice." While both actions are future, the use of *πρίν* indicates that the denial preceded the crowing of the cock.

There seems to be no functional difference between *πρὸ τοῦ* and *πρίν*. In all instances the translation "before" precedes that of the infinitive and clarifies that the action of the main verb precedes in time the action of the infinitive regardless of the tenses involved.

Contemporaneous action

By far the most frequent use of the temporal infinitive is the use of *ἐν τῷ* with the infinitive. Both present and aorist infinitives are temporalized by *ἐν τῷ*.²

¹ Mt. 26:34; 75; Mk. 14:30, 72; Lk. 22:61.

² The number of occurrences of this temporal infinitive varies with the Greek text used. A. T. Robertson,

When ἐν τῷ occurs with the aorist, the main verb is aorist except in Luke 10:35, "I will repay you when I return." In each context as the following examples show, it is clear that the action of the main verb is contemporaneous with the action of the aorist main verb. "When the parents (Mary and Joseph) brought in the child . . . he (Zacharias) took Him in his arms" (Lk. 2:27). "When Jesus returned, the multitude welcomed Him" (Lk, 8:40),¹ Luke's use of the aorist infinitive appears to be for the purpose of conceptualizing the action expressed by the infinitive into a single point of time. Consequently, the translation of ἐν τῷ must be "when" or possible "as soon as" rather than "while."

The majority of times ἐν τῷ occurs with the infinitive in the present tense. The preposition and the article are translated "while" or "as" and the context clearly demands that the action of the infinitive and the main verb are contemporaneous. The present infinitive is durative expressing action that continues over a period of time.

Grammar, p. 1427, following Westcott and Hort, lists thirty one uses with the present and eight with the aorist infinitive. J. H. Moulton, Accidence and Word Formation, II, A Grammar of New Testament Greek accept Nestle's text and lists twenty-seven uses with the present and ten with the aorist.

¹ The other uses with the aorist infinitive are Lk. 3:21; 9:34, 36; 11:37; 14:1; 19:15; 24:30.

This durative action is illustrated by, "while he sows" (Mt. 13:4), "while men are sleeping" (Mt. 13:25) and "while performing priestly duties" (Lk. 1:8). The translation "while" has the sense of "during the time that." In these same passages the main verb reflects the contemporaneous action. "While he sows, some seed fell beside the road." "While men are sleeping, the enemy came." "While performing priestly duties, he was chosen by lot." The action of the main verb is contemporaneous with the infinitive whether the verb is present,¹ imperfect,² aorist³ or a periphrastic (Lk. 5:1). It is the function of the ἐν τῷ preceding the infinitive which reveals that the infinitive and the main verb are contemporaneous.

Subsequent action

On six occasions⁴ μετὰ τό is used with the infinitive to denote that the action of the main verb follows in time the action of the infinitive. In each instance the infinitives are in the aorist tense. The main verbs may be

¹ Mk. 6:48; Lk. 12:15.

² Lk. 1:21; 5:12; 8:42; 18:35; 24:15.

³ Mt. 13:4 (Mk. 4:4; Lk. 8:5); 13:25; 27:12; Lk. 1:8; 2:6, 43; 8:5; 9:18, 29, 33, 51; 10:38; 11:1, 27; 17:11, 14; 24:4, 51.

⁴ Mt. 26:32; Mk. 1:14; 14:28; 16:19; Lk. 12:5; 22:20.

present (Lk. 12:5), future,¹ or aorist² tenses but the action always follows in time the action of the infinitive. This is the pattern whether the time of the action is past, "after John had been taken into captivity, Jesus came" (Mk. 1:14) or future, "after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee" (Mt. 26:32). It is the preposition that conveys the temporal idea and not the infinitive.

Perhaps this chapter would more accurately be titled the use of prepositions with infinitives to indicate the temporal relationships between an infinitive and its main verb. Only four prepositions convey a temporal relationship. When $\pi\rho\delta\ \tau\omicron\upsilon$ or $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ are found with an infinitive they indicate that the action of the main verb precedes the action of the infinitive. Contemporaneous action is described by $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\hat{\omega}$. The use of $\mu\epsilon\tau\grave{\alpha}\ \tau\acute{o}$ reveals that the main verb action follows the action of the infinitive. Though these uses are not startling in their significance they do have importance in determining time relationship between the infinitive and its main verb.

¹ Mt. 26:32 (Mk. 14:28).

² Mk. 1:14; 16:19; Lk. 22:20.

CHAPTER VII

PARTICIPIAL EXPRESSIONS OF TIME

There remains yet another grammatical method of expressing time in the Gospels. Like the temporal use of the infinitive there is a temporal use of the participle. This construction is not easily recognized nor is there agreement about its frequency in the New Testament. Since it would be impossible to locate and prove all the temporal uses of the participle, this chapter will cite only examples of this use.¹ The content of the chapter consists of (1) the possibility, (2) the background and (3) the tenses of temporal participles.

Possibility of Temporal Participles

The attitude of grammarians toward the temporal participle varies from Moulton's minimizing of its existence,² to Machen, who seems to indicate that all participles have a temporal idea. He writes,

¹ The frequency ratio of temporal participles to the total number of adverbial participles is impossible to determine. However, in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers according to H. B. Robison, Syntax of the Participle in the Apostolic Fathers, p. 41 there are 1252 adverbial uses of the participle. Of these 271 are temporal and are about evenly divided between present and aorist. "(Hereinafter referred to as Syntax.)"

² James Hope Moulton, Prolegomena, Vol. I (3 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1919), 230.

It is necessary, therefore, to give up all attempts at translating the participle 'literally.' Instead we must express the idea which is expressed by the Greek participle in an entirely different way--by the use of a temporal clause.¹

The view of most grammarians is somewhere between these two extremes. A. T. Robertson, who reflects the majority opinion of Greek scholars, states that a participle at times may have a temporal function.

It may be said at once that the participle has tense in the same sense that the subjunctive, optative and imperative have, giving the state of the action as punctiliar, linear, completed. In the beginning this was all that the tense meant in the participle. The participle was timeless. . . . But the tenses of the participle may be used for relative time. In relation to the principal verb there may be suggested time. . . . The relative time of the participle approximates the indicative mode and is able to suggest antecedent (aorist, present, perfect tenses), simultaneous (aorist, present tenses) and subsequent (present, future tenses) action.²

Whenever a participle has a temporal function it is anarthrous, adverbial and circumstantial. That is, it does not have an article and it gives an additional statement which is not an essential part of the verbal notion of the principal verb. One further indication is needed to determine whether or not it is a temporal participle. "The point more exactly is whether a given circumstantial

¹ J. Gresham Machen, New Testament Greek for Beginners (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), p. 105. "Hereinafter referred to as New Testament Greek.")

² A. T. Robertson, Grammar (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), p. 1111.

participle occurs in a context where the temporal relation is the main one rather than that of cause, condition, purpose, etc."¹ An alternate form of the adverbial temporal clause is the use of the genitive absolute which is found in each of the Gospels and is fairly regular in Mark.² There is no need to treat these participles separately since they are a type of regular adverbial temporal participles.

Background of Temporal Participles

In Classical Greek the tenses of the participle express

. . . only continuance, simple occurrence, and completion with permanent result. Whether the action expressed by the participle is antecedent, coincident, or subsequent to that of the leading verb (in any tense) depends on the context.³

The writings of Hesiod provide fifty examples where the participle seems to be used to indicate the time of one action with relation to another. The consciousness of this use of the participle is greatest when temporal adverbs are used with the participle.⁴ The aorist participle most often

¹ Ibid., pp. 1125-26.

² Nigel Turner, Syntax (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), p. 322.

³ Herbert Weir Smyth, Grammar (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), D. 419.

⁴ George Melville Bolling, "The Participle in Hesiod," Catholic University Bulletin, III (October, 1897), 433.

denotes time prior to that of the main verb and the present participle reflects contemporary time.¹

Without clear indication from the context and temporal adverbs, such as, ἄμια and νῦν it would be difficult to determine the temporal participle in direct popular speech. In fact, Jannaris indicates that the indefiniteness of the temporal participle would often be resolved into a finite temporal clause or a prepositional infinitive.² During this time of Classical Greek the present participle set forth action that is generally coincident (rarely antecedent or subsequent) to that of the leading verb. The aorist participle reflects action that is generally antecedent to the leading verb. On a few occasions it may be coincident to the verb or nearly so.³

During the period of Koine Greek, the time aspect of the adverbial participle was not determined from the participle. Rather the context and at times added particles indicated the time relationship. In fact, the Koine "does not on the whole favor this method but prefers a prepositional phrase, a true temporal (etc.) clause, or a further

¹ Ibid., 435.

² A. N. Jannaris, An Historical Greek Grammar (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1897), p. 501. "(Hereinafter referred to as Grammar.)"

³ Smyth, Greek Grammar, pp. 419-20.

co-ordinate sentence.¹

When the Apostolic Fathers made use of the temporal participle it is indicated "by the facts revealed by the context taken in association with the indication of the tense as respects progress."²

Some general conclusions appear evident from this brief historical summary. (1) The temporal use of the participle was never a very clear method of indicating time relationships. (2) The context and temporal adverbs are always needed to locate and interpret temporal participles. (3) Though many other ways of expressing time always existed in Greek, the temporal participle continued in use after the New Testament was written. (4) From the historical evidence it is clear that the aorist participle preceded in time the leading verb and the present participle denoted action and consequently time contemporaneous with the main verb.

Tenses of Temporal Participles

The participle occurs in four tenses in the New Testament--the present, aorist, future, and perfect--but only the present and aorist tense need close examination.³

¹ Turner, Syntax, p. 153.

² Robison, Syntax, p. 11.

³ The future participle is rare and is always

The present participle

The present participle is both timeless and durative. The time comes from the principle verb and this may be either a past, present, or future tense of the verb in any mood.

The present participle, therefore, is used if the action denoted by the participle is represented as taking place at the same time as the action denoted by the leading verb, no matter whether the action denoted by the leading verb is past, present or future.¹

This is not to say that the present participle must refer to present time. Rather, "it usually refers to action in progress at the same time as the action of the main verb"² regardless of the tense of the main verb. For example, "walking by the sea of Galilee, He (Jesus) saw two brothers" (Mt. 4:18). This verse has an aorist main verb with the present participle. The participle and the context indicate that the actions were simultaneous, that is, "while walking, Jesus saw." In Luke 23:5, "He stirs up the people . . . beginning from Galilee until here." Both the participle and verb are present and indicate contemporaneous

subsequent in time to the principal verb (i.e. Mt. 27:49) according to A.T. Robertson, Grammar, p. 1118. The action of the perfect participle will always be antecedent unless the tense has lost its true force. Ibid., p. 1117. Therefore, there is no need to examine participles in these two seldom used tenses.

¹ Machen, New Testament Greek, p. 105.

² Eugene Van Ness Goetchius, The Language of the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 19b5), p. 178.

action.

Sometimes the present participle denotes the same action which is expressed by the leading verb of the clause in which it stands. In John 6:6 "He was saying this, testing him," has an imperfect verb and a present participle. The participle is the identical action of the verb but it is described from a different point of view.¹ In John 21:9, "they saw a charcoal fire and fish and bread placed on it," a present verb is used with a present participle indicating simultaneous action. Therefore, it means that the disciples saw the fire, the fish and the bread at the same time.

It is also possible when a present participle is used that only antecedent action is indicated. In John 9:25 the man just healed of his blindness says, "being (ὄν) blind now I am seeing."

On other occasions the present participle shows a continued action which is both antecedent and simultaneous to that of the main verb. In Mark 5:25 a woman "being (οἶσα) with the issue of blood for twelve years . . . touched His garment." She had been and still was afflicted when she touched the garment.

While there are other examples of the present

¹ Ernest DeWitt Burton, *Syntax* (Chicago: University Press in Chicago, 1897), p. 55.

participle in the Gospels, these illustrations suffice to show the temporal uses of the present participle. It is clear that durative action is expressed. It is also true that simultaneous action is usually shown whether the main verb is past, present or future. However, when the context demands it, the participle can express identical action or antecedent action. Only the context can determine whether the participle should be translated as an English participle or should be supported by the helping prepositions or conjunctions, "since," "as," "when," "after," and "while."

The aorist participle

Like the infinitive the participle originally had no temporal function but rather indicated "kind of action." Burton writes,

It is very important . . . that it be borne in mind that the proper and the leading function of the tense is not to express time, but to mark the fact that the action of the verb is conceived of indefinitely, as a simple event. The assumption that the Aorist participle properly denotes past time from the point of view of either speaker or of the principal verb, leads to constant misinterpretation of the form.¹

In the writings of the Apostolic Fathers the aorist participle indicated action thought of as a simple event. "This is its constant and only function. . . It denotes neither the time of the action, nor its progress nor the

¹ Burton, Syntax, p. 59.

existence of a result."¹

Consequently the time of action in relation to the action of the main verb can only be inferred from the context. Robertson asserts that the original use of the aorist participle was that of simultaneous action. "From this was developed quite naturally, by the nature of the various cases, the antecedent notion."² Often only exegesis can decide between antecedent and simultaneous action. Subsequent action is not expressed by the aorist temporal participle in the New Testament.³

Machen maintains that the aorist participle normally denotes action prior to the action denoted by the leading verb regardless of the time of the leading verb's action. To this he adds that the translation "when" or "after" normally should be used in translating the participle.⁴ This is correct when the aorist participle shows antecedent action. However, the aorist participle does not of itself mean antecedent action.

The use of the aorist participle to indicate action antecedent to the leading verb is easily illustrated. In

¹ Robison, Syntax, p. 16.

² Robertson, Grammar, p. 1112.

³ Ibid., p. 860.

⁴ Machen, New Testament Greek, pp. 116-17.

Mark 1:31, "after coming to her, He (Jesus) raised her up." Of Judas Iscariot it is written, "after going away, he hung himself" (Mt. 27:5). The leper "after stretching out his hand, touched him" (Mt. 8:3). In each context it is clear that the action of the participle precedes the action of the main verb consequently the participle can be called a temporal participle. This is the most frequent use of the aorist participle. Ballentine concludes, "when a writer wishes to assert by a participle, in addition to the leading action, another action which, by even the shortest interval, preceded it, he always uses the aorist participle."¹

The most often occurring illustration of an aorist participle citing simultaneous or identical action with the action of the leading verb is "when answering, he said" or its equivalent. Usually, the verb and the participle describe the same action from a different point of view.² It may be that Matthew 2:8, "when seeing the star, they rejoiced" is a good illustration of two different but simultaneous actions. Many contexts, and only the context can decide if it is antecedent or simultaneous action, are not sufficiently clear to give indisputable illustrations. Consequently, the general idea that the aorist participle

¹ William G. Ballentine, "Predicate Participles with Verbs in the Aorist," *Bibliotheca Sacra* CLXIV (October, 1884), 787.

² Burton, *Syntax*, p. 65.

indicates action antecedent to the action of the leading verb is usually true. However, the aorist participle can also indicate simultaneous action in some instances. For example, Herod, "when sending them unto Bethlehem said" (Mt. 2:8). Obviously, Herod spoke to them at the time that he sent them. This simultaneous action is also seen in the common phrase ἀπεκρίθη εἰπών. It can occur also when the main verb is future (Lk. 9:25), or present (Mk. 8:29).

The use of the participle to show time relationships is no doubt often misunderstood. The only time that can be indicated is suggested by the context and other temporal words. The participle itself indicates "kind of action" which has a time relationship to the action of the main verb. The present participle shows simultaneous action unless the context may demand that it be identical or even antecedent action. The aorist participle reflects antecedent action although simultaneous or identical action may at times be inferred from the context. This temporal use of the participle is a very frequent use of the adverbial participle. The choice of "while," "since," "after," "when" or "as" to aid in translating the participle is determined by the context and the preference of the translator.

CHAPTER VIII

CONJUNCTIVE AND ADVERBIAL WORDS FOR TIME

Another method of expressing time is through the use of conjunctions, adverbs and improper prepositions functioning as adverbs. Though time thus specified is not necessarily as specific as that indicated by other temporal words, conjunctions are implemented to show the time relationship which exists between clauses. Two methods of indicating time within a clause are by the use of adverbs or improper prepositions. The subject matter of this chapter consists of (1) conjunctions and (2) adverbs and improper prepositions.

Conjunctions

In expressing time, temporal conjunctions introduce dependent temporal clauses. These clauses may be either definite or indefinite depending on whether the indicative or a non-indicative mood is used. The time may be simultaneous, subsequent, or prior to that of the main verb. It may be that this preference for temporal conjunctions, as against the genitive absolute is due "to the frequency with which temporal clauses are introduced by כִּי or כֵּן in

Aramaic."¹ For ease in locating the conjunction, in this chapter they are examined in alphabetical order.

ἀφ' ἧς, ἀφ' οὗ

After the manner of Classical Greek, Luke has ἀφ' ἧς and ἀφ' οὗ, translated "from (the time) when," or "since" or "after."² When used with the indicative mood these expressions always convey a definite or a fixed time.³ In Luke 7:45 ἀφ' ἧς occurs, "but she since the time I came in." This is its only temporal use in the Gospels. The same preposition and pronoun are translated "from which" in Luke 8:2 but the context demonstrates that this is not a temporal conjunction.

The kindred expression ἀφ' οὗ occurs three times temporally. In Luke 13:7 and 24:21 it occurs with the indicative mood fixing a definite time, "three years since," and "the third since." Archibald T. Robertson says it provides the "terminus a quo."⁴ In both places "since" or "after" are good translations. The passage in Luke 13:25 has ἀφ' οὗ ἄν ἐγερθῆ. This occurrence with the subjunctive mood and

¹ Nigel Turner, Syntax (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1919-63), p. 321.

² A. N. Jannaris, Grammar (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1897), p. 421.

³ Ibid., 465.

⁴ Archibald T. Robertson, Grammar (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), p. 977.

the particle ἄν indicates an indefinite, potential or a conditional futurity.¹ The best translation would be "anytime" or "whenever." The other places in Luke where the preposition and pronoun are found together they do not have a temporal function or translation.

The classical ἀφ' ὧτου translated "since," "ever since" and ἐξ οὗ or ἐξ ἧς translated "after," "since," both denoting time usually prior to that of the principal verb, do not occur in the Gospels in a temporal sense.

ἄχρι

The word ἄχρι (s) found six times in the Gospels is used in two ways and never is found in the Gospels with the final sigma. In Luke 4:13 and Matthew 13:30 it is an improper preposition meaning "until." As Thayer states, it is "a particle indicating the terminus ad quem,"² the point of time up to which an event will take place. This preposition appears with the relative pronoun and is written ἄχρι ἧς Luke 1:20 and 17:27 (Mt. 24:38). In each instance it has the same function and translation of ἄχρι in the previously cited uses.

On one occasion, Luke 21:24, "until the times of the

¹ Jannaris, Grammar, p. 466.

² Joseph Henry Thayer, Lexicon (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 91.

Gentiles would be fulfilled," ἄχρι οὖν is a subordinating conjunction meaning "until," "to the time that." Used with the aorist subjunctive verb it has the force of a future perfect.¹ The Septuagint has few certain readings of ἄχρι which cause difficulty in citing historical illustrations of its use and meaning. Perhaps this is the reason why some grammarians state that both ἄχρι and μέχρι have in general the same construction and force as clauses introduced by ἕως, ἕως οὖν and ἕως ὅτου.²

ἐν ᾧ

The preposition ἐν is combined with the relative pronoun ὅς in the dative case to function as a temporal subordinating conjunction. It is translated "as long as" in Classical Greek³ and "while" or "during the time that" in Koine.⁴ While the function of the dative case is to indicate a point of time, the addition of ἐν demands duration of time.⁵ Translated "while" in English, the sense

¹ Robertson, Grammar, p. 974.

² Ernest DeWitt Burton, Syntax (Chicago: University Press in Chicago, 1897), p. 129.

³ Jannaris, Grammar, p. 465.

⁴ George B. Winer, Grammar (7th ed.; Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1877), pp. 385-86.

⁵ Friedrich Blass and Albert Debrunner, Grammar (ed. and rev. by Robert W. Funk; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 107.

includes a duration of time. There are four uses of this construction in the Gospels, one of which is a parallel passage. In each passage the meaning is clear. Luke 5:34 (Mk. 2:19) reads, "while (during the time that) the bridegroom is with them." Luke 19:13 has, "trade ye while (during the time that) I am coming." "While (during the time that) I am coming another steps down before me," is found in John 5:7.

ἐπᾶν

There are three uses of ἐπᾶν in the New Testament and all are in the Gospels. The only suggested citation in the Old Testament occurs in Esther 5:13, however, the accepted text reads ὅταν. In other Greek literature three translations are suggested: (1) "when" he attains legal age, (2) "as long as" there is no higher offer, and (3) and "as soon as" my orders have been carried out.¹ Lexicographers cite as suitable translations "after," "when"² and "as soon as."³

This conjunction is found once with the present

¹ James Hope Moulton and Wilbert Francis Howard, Accidence and Word Formation, Vol. II. A Grammar of New Testament Greek (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1929), p. 228. "(Hereinafter referred to as Grammar.)"

² Thayer, Lexicon, p. 228.

³ William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, Lexicon (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 282.

subjunctive (Lk. 11:34) and suggests an "iterative-action, indefinite, in the past or future."¹ Matthew 6:22, 23 which is parallel to Luke 11:34 uses ἐάν twice to introduce the subordinate clauses. Luke here uses first ὅταν "whenever" and then ἐπεί, "The lamp of thy body is thine eye: whenever (ὅταν) thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when (ἐπεί) it is evil, thy body also is full of darkness." In the context Jesus was exposing Pharisaism using the illustration of a lamp to emphasize the truth. The present tense and subjunctive mode suggest he was referring to a possible existing condition. His choice of ὅταν, "when," is a frequently used word that would have little significance. However, the use of ἐπεί with the present subjunctive, which is a rare construction, emphasizes both the existing condition and the point of the illustration. That is, "as soon as" evil enters the body, the entire body is full of darkness.

The use of ἐπεί with the aorist subjunctive indicates a definite action taking place in the future which precedes the action of the main verb.² The two uses in Matthew 2:8 and Luke 11:22 clearly speak of a specific act in the future both subordinate and prior to the action of

¹ Turner, Syntax, p. 112.

² Ibid.

the main verb, "and after you would find (him) you shall bring," and "after a stronger than he . . . he shall overcome." This translation "after" best expresses the grammatical purpose of ἐπὶ.

ἐπεὶ, ἐπειδή

There are eight uses of ἐπεὶ, "after," in the Gospels. Only in Luke 7:1, "after He had ended all his sayings," is the temporal idea showing sequence. In the oldest manuscripts and Nestle's text ἐπειδή is found instead of ἐπεὶ. In the Septuagint ἐπεὶ is used with γίνομαι in a temporal sense but this pattern is not followed in the Gospels unless it is possible that ἐπεὶ is used this way in Mark 15:42, "Because it was the Preparation." The ἐπεὶ would be translated "after" it was the Preparation. However, this reading and translation is not adopted in any version or commentary examined.

The conjunction ἐπειδή, "when now," "after that," is often interchanged with ἐπεὶ in Daniel, Luke and Acts,² but it has the temporal idea only in Luke 7:1, "After that He had ended all His sayings." This subordinating conjunction with the temporal idea "after that" can be found more often in the Greek Old Testament.

¹ Thayer, Lexicon, p. 229.

² Edwin A. Abbott, Johannine Vocabulary (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1905), pp. 111-12.

ἕως

A frequent word in the Gospels is ἕως which is used as a temporal conjunction, an improper preposition and an adverb of time. Its translations include "until," "till," "as long as," "while," "until now" and "how long."¹

As a conjunction ἕως introduces a subordinate clause functioning as a relative clause which is subsequent in time to that of the main clause.

The idea of a clause with until is that the action (or negation) of the leading clause continues to a time at which that of the dependent clause takes place. That the former action then ceases is an inference generally made, but not positively implied in the language, and not necessary.²

Burton explains that ἕως in introducing a temporal clause

. . . is properly a relative adverb which marks one action as the temporal limit of another action. It does this in two ways, either (a) so that the beginning or simple occurrence of the action of the verb introduced by ἕως is the limit of the action denoted by the principal verb, or (b) so that the continuance of the, former is the limit of the latter. In the former case ἕως means until, in the latter, while, as long as.³

The subordinate clause introduced by ἕως has a verb either in the indicate or subjunctive mode. When used with

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, pp. 334-35.

² William Watson Goodwin, Syntax (New York: Martin's Press, 1965), p. 234.

³ Burton, Syntax, p. 126.

the present indicative¹ the idea is "while," or "as long as," but not "until," and "it is either a contemporaneous event as in (Mk. 6:45) . . . , or a lively proleptic future expressed in terms of the present (Jn. 21:22f)."²

The use of ἕως with the future indicative³ occurs most often with πότε and adverb of time, answering the question "how long?" It seems natural to use the future tense since ἕως is used of a "punctiliarly conceived future event preceded in time by the action of the main clause."⁴ Here ἕως indicates the end of a period of time, that is, "where something is spoken of which continued to a certain time."⁵ The correct translation is "till" or "until."

When an actual past event is recorded, the aorist indicative is used as in the ordinary relative clause referring to past time.⁶ As with the future indicative ἕως and the aorist indicative denotes the end of a period of time. Most of the occurrences are combined with adverbs or pronouns and will be examined later. However, Matthew 2:9 "till it came and stood," "until the flood . . . took them

¹ Mk. 6:45; Jn. 9:4; 21:22, 23 (and perhaps Mt. 1:17 with an understood verb).

² Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 975-76.

³ Mt. 11:23(2); Lk. 10:14(2); Mt. 17:17(2); Lk. 9:19 (2); Lk. 9:41; Jn. 10:24.

⁴ Turner, *Syntax*, p. 111.

⁵ Thayer, *Lexicon*, p. 268.

⁶ Burton, *Syntax*, p. 128.

all away" (Mt. 24:39) both illustrate the end of a period of time in the past and the translation "until."

In the subjunctive mood only the aorist tense is used with ἕως in the Gospels. The action is conceived as a simple event and ἕως is translated "until." The ἕως clause further denotes that that "commencement of an event is dependent on circumstances."¹ The statement itself is only a conception or representation.² Whether the subjunctive occurs with³ or without⁴ the particle οὐκ, the clause refers to "a punctiliarly conceived future event preceded in time by the action of the main clause."⁵ There appears to be no real difference in the meaning of the constructions. The same author in passages which are similar in meaning, such as Matthew 10:23 "until the Son of Man may come" and 16:28 "until they may see the Son of Man," uses first one construction and then the other. Even in parallel passages such as Matthew 5:26 and Luke 12:59 the ἄν is used in one

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 334.

² Raphael Kuhner, Grammar of the Greek Language, trans. by B. B. Edwards and S. H. Taylor (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879), p. 539.

³ Mt. 2:13; 5:18(2); 26; 10:11 (Mk. 12:36); 12:20; 16:28; 22:44 (Lk. 20:43); 23:39; 24:34 (Lk. 21:32; Mk. 6:10; 9:1 (Lk. 9:27).

⁴ Mt. 10:23; 18:30; Mk. 14:32; Lk. 12:59; 15:4; 17:8; 22:34.

⁵ Turner, Syntax, p. 111.

place but not the other. Apparently, during the first century, a transition was being made from ἕως ἄν to ἕως as is suggested by Turner.¹ In both cases the ἕως is translated "until" and the verb in the subordinate clause is either conceived or represented as having a future fulfillment which must be preceded in time by the action indicated in the main clause.

In the New Testament ἕως is occasionally combined with οὖ or ὅτου. Though ἕως is a preposition when used with the genitive of the neuter relative pronoun, the combined phrases ἕως οὖ or ἕως ὅτου function as conjunctions and have the same use as the simple ἕως. They should be translated "till" or "until."² They are never followed by ἄν. The use of ἕως οὖ in this same way is frequent in the Septuagint. In the Gospels the aorist indicative is used in a subordinate clause when the event is seen as having already taken place.³ The aorist subjunctive⁴ is found in a context where the action in the subordinate clause is viewed as a future unrealized event as in John 13:38, "The cock shall not crow till thou has denied me thrice." That ἕως οὖ is

¹ Ibid.

² Burton, *Syntax*, D. 128.

³ Thayer, *Lexicon*, p. 268.

⁴ Mt. 1:25; 13:33 (Lk. 13:21).

really not different in function or translation than ἕως with the aorist tense can be seen by comparing Matthew 26:36 ἕως οὖ with its parallel Mark 14:32 which uses only ἕως. In both places the verb tenses, mode and context are the same.

The ἕως ὅτου conjunctions are six in number and occur with the present indicative (Mt. 5:25), the aorist indicative (Jn. 9:18) and the aorist subjunctive.¹ There is no functional distinction to be made between ἕως οὖ and ἕως ὅτου or the simple ἕως. The only time that a present indicative occurs with ἕως ὅτου it is translated "while" indicating a contemporaneous event as does the simple ἕως. The uses of the aorist, whether indicative or subjunctive, are identical with ἕως οὖ and are translated "until" or "till."

John² combines ἕως with ἄρτι, which together are translated "until now," meaning "up to this time." This construction remains a temporal adverb indicating the terminus ad quem.

Another adverb construction ἕως πότε,³ "how long?" is used a few times in the Gospels. This same construction

¹ Lk. 12:50; 13:8; 22:16, 18.

² Jn. 2:10; 5:17; 16:24.

³ Mt. 17:17(2); (Mk. 9:19(2); Lk. 9:41); Jn. 10:24.

is found often in the Septuagint and needs no explanation.

The large number of uses of ἕως that do not occur with a subordinating clause are prepositional¹ occurring with the genitive of a noun or its equivalent which usually is a word for time. The proper translation is "until" or "unto" and in function it also expresses the terminus ad quem.

In summary, ἕως and the combinations ἕως οὗ and ἕως οὗτου, found with several verb tenses and mood, serve as temporal conjunctions to denote, usually, the end of a period of time or occasionally contemporaneousness. A few times ἕως is used as an adverb of time, and also as a preposition.

καί

On a few occasions the co-ordinating conjunction appears to have a subordinating temporal use. Several English versions translate καί "when" rather than "and." A good illustration in the Septuagint is found in Tobit 1:18 "Because my father left me an orphan when (καί) he died."

The times if any that καί functions in this manner in the Gospels are difficult to discern because the form is the same and the translation "and" also makes good sense. Yet, there may be at least one use of καί in each Gospel

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 334.

that possibly is a temporal sense. Matthew 26:45 says "Behold the hour is at hand when (καί) the Son of Man is being betrayed." Mark 15:25 states, "And it was the third hour when (καί) they crucified Him." Luke 19:43 reads, "For the days shall come upon you when (καί) your enemies will throw up a bank before you." John says, "And it was near the Passover of the Jews when (καί) Jesus went up to Jerusalem (Jn. 2:13). While other examples might be cited, these will suffice to show that καί could have been and probably was used with a temporal sense.

Though this temporal use of καί is found in earlier Greek,¹ it seems likely that if it is actually used in the Gospels it is a Greek method of expressing the Hebrew circumstantial waw which can be used to indicate a temporal idea. An examination of the aforementioned passages shows that the καί could subordinate its clause to the main clause and thereby indicate the time when the action happens.

μέχρι

Usually found as a preposition of time in the Gospels, μέχρι has the meaning, "up to the point of."² Thayer delineates the distinction between ἄχρι and μέχρι when he comments, "by the use of the former particle the

¹ Moulton and Howard, Grammar, II, 421-22.

² Robertson, Grammar, p. 975.

reach to which a thing is said to extend is likened to a height, by the use of μέχρι, to a length; ἄχρι, indicating ascent signifies up to; μέχρι, indicating extent, is unto, as far as."¹ Matthew has three uses, all of which are translated "until" (today, 11:23; 28:15; the harvest, 13:30). Luke 16:16 uses μέχρι Ἰωάννου, until (the time of) John. In the Septuagint the references to μέχρι occur in poetic passages and cannot be used to substantiate an historical usage. However, Moulton cites a similar usage from 110 B.C. "μέχρι [το]ῦ ἀπό προ[κει]μενος. . . I am free from the labors above mentioned."² The translation "until" with the sense "as far as" fits with all the Gospel uses.

The only other use of μέχρι is with the relative pronoun οὗ in Mark 13:30. Here the translation is "until" and the construction is a subordinating conjunction. "This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished." A parallel to this occurs in Joshua 4:23, "until ye were passed over."

From these uses it can be seen that μέχρι in the Gospels is best translated "until" and may occur as a preposition of time with the sense of "as far as" and as a temporal conjunction.

¹ Thayer, Lexicon, p. 91.

² Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), p. 407.

ὅποτε

In the uncertain reading of Luke 6:3 the temporal particle ὅποτε is found in a few manuscripts. If this reading is correct it is the only attested usage in the New Testament. In Classical Greek this is translated "whenever" and in the papyri it means "when."¹ A clear illustration of the use in the Septuagint is seen in the title of the five Psalms² where ὅποτε is used to help identify the time of the writing of the Psalm. In each instance the particle is used with the aorist indicative mode referring to a real past event. This is the way it is used in Luke 6:3 "what David did when he was hungry."

ὅταν

The conjunction ὅταν occurs extensively in the Gospels with the aorist subjunctive, less often with the present subjunctive and once each with the present, imperfect and aorist indicative. There are only five ὅταν constructions with the indicative in the New Testament and three occur in Mark, the only uses in the Gospels. With the indicative this temporal particle is translated "at the time that," "whenever," "when" and speaks of an action that is

¹ Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 453.

² Psalm 3, 33 (34), 55 (56), 58 (59) and 59 (60).

"conditional, possible, and, in many instances, repeated."¹
 In Mark 11:25 ὅταν with the present indicative is translated, "whenever ye stand praying" obviously indicating an indefinite number of repetitions in the past, present and possibly future time. Jesus conceives that such occasions happen from time to time since the indicative mode is used.

The imperfect indicative is found in Mark 3:11, "whenever they were beholding Him." Though the use of ὅταν with a past tense in the indicative mood² is a rare construction in the New Testament, it is common in the Septuagint.³ It is natural to use the indicative since real past events are referred to. The imperfect shows that the action was often repeated rather than being a general condition which belongs to any time.

Also ὅταν is used with the aorist indicative in Mark 11:19 (AV) "and every evening he went forth." However a better translation would be, "whenever evening came" (NASV). The Koine and Byzantine writers use this construction to indicate a definite occurrence.⁴ This verse presents

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 592.

² Ezra P. Gould, Mark (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. 56.

³ Robertson, Grammar, p. 973. For example in the LXX see Gen. 38:19; 1 Sam. 17:34.

⁴ Ibid.

the problem of determining whether Mark is viewing the practice of "every evening" or "the evening of one single day."¹ Though it might be more natural to use the conjunction ὅτε which only occurs with the indicative to express a single occurrence, ὅταν with the aorist indicative in this context argue that this unusual construction is indicating the practice of Jesus every evening at the time evening came. Such a translation is in agreement with the Greek text, the evening practice of Jesus during this time and the use of ὅταν which normally reflects indefiniteness. This is true whether the subjunctive or the indicative mood is used. To indicate a definite single occurrence Mark would normally use ὅτε. Therefore, a good translation would be, "at the time evening came (each day) He would go outside the city." These three uses of ὅταν with the indicative record real events. Although these three references in Mark are insignificant in number compared to the uses of ὅταν with the subjunctive they suggest a popular rather than a technical grammatical style.

The present subjunctive with ὅταν is found in twenty-one different accounts² in the Gospels indicating

¹ Gould, *Mark*, pp. 214-15.

² Mt. 6:2, 5, 6, 16; 10:23; 15:2; 26:29 (Mk. 14:25); Mk. 13:4 (Lk. 21:7), 11 (Lk. 12:11); 14:7; Lk. 11:21, 34, 36; 14:12, 13; Jn. 7:27, 8:44; 9:5; 16:21(2) and probably Lk. 12:55.

iterative or repeated action usually with the idea of future uncertainty.¹ In two passages the idea of repeated action is not present. In John 7:27 "when Christ cometh" and Mark 13:4 and Luke 21:7 "what shall be the sign when these things are about to be accomplished" the action indicated is only contemporaneous. To indicate this it was necessary to use the present tense. In all other cases both contemporaneity and repeated action is permissible. The time indicated by the construction is obviously future as is expected with the subjunctive mode. Translated "when" in many English texts, the sense of the present subjunctive indicates "during the time when this or that is going on," or "at the moment when this is beginning."² Consequently, the lexical translations include "whenever," "as often as," and "every-time that."³ With the exception of John 7:27 the action of a $\delta\tau\alpha\nu$ clause with a present subjunctive verb is contemporaneous with the main clause and suggests a regular repeated action regardless of the tense or mode of the verb in the main clause. This is true whether the main clause has a

¹ Robertson, Grammar, p. 971.

² Edwin A. Abbott, Johannine Grammar (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906), p. 385.

³ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 592.

present¹ or aorist² imperative or a present³ or future⁴ indicative verb. A good illustration of the contemporaneous and regularly repeated action can be seen in Matthew 6:2 "when therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet." A good paraphrase would be "during any time that you are giving alms do not sound a trumpet." Such a translation demonstrates both the contemporaneous and repeated action usually in the future which is found with ὅταν in a present subjunctive construction.

The aorist subjunctive occurs most often with ὅταν. According to Nigel Turner ὅταν is used "most commonly of a definite action taking place in the future but concluded before the action of the main verb. Thus the main verb is usually future indicative but it may be imperative."⁵ The suggested lexical translation of ὅταν with the aorist subjunctive in all instances is "when."⁶ However, Turner's statement is somewhat misleading. In the Gospels the main

¹ Mt. 6:16; 10:23; Mk. 13:11 (Lk. 12:11); Lk. 14:12, 13.

² Mt. 6:2, 6.

³ Mt. 15:2; I. 14:7; Lk. 11:21, 34; Lk. 12:55; Jn. 8:44; 9:5; 16:21(2).

⁴ Mt. 6:5; 26:29 (Mk. 14:25); Mk. 13:4 (Lk. 21:7); Lk. 11:36.

⁵ Turner, p. 112.

⁶ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 592.

verb with the **ὅταν** and aorist subjunctive construction is most often present indicative,¹ although it is also future indicative,² present subjunctive,³ aorist subjunctive,⁴ present imperative,⁵ and aorist imperative.⁶ The conjunction **ὅταν** is found six times in a **ἵνα ὅταν** construction.⁷

ὅτε

The use of **ὅτε** as a subordinating conjunction occurs fifty-four times in the Gospels. It can be translated "when," "while," and "as long as."⁸ Each time it is found with the indicative mode it denotes a definite event except in Luke 13:35 where the reading **ἕως ἡξεί ὅτε εἶπητε** is found. This is the only place in the New Testament where **ὅτε** is found with the subjunctive mode. The parallel

¹ Mt. 5:11 (Lk. 6:22); 9:15 (Mk. 2:20; Lk. 5:35); 12:43 (Lk. 11:24); 13:32 (Mk. 4:32); 23:15; 24:32 (Mk. 13:28; Lk. 21:30); 24:33 (Mk. 13:29; Lk. 21:31); Mk. 4:15, 16 (Lk. 8:13); Mk. 4:29, 31; 12:25; Lk. 6:22, 26; 12:54; Jn. 2:10; 10:4; 16:21.

² Mt. 19:28; 21:40; 25:31; Mk. 12:23; Lk. 13:28; Jn. 4:25; 7:37; 8:28; 15:26; 16:13; 21:18.

³ Jn. 13:19.

⁴ Mk. 9:9; Lk. 14:8.

⁵ Mt. 24:15 (Mk. 13:14; Lk. 21:20 has aorist); Mk. 13:7; Lk. 17:10.

⁶ Mt. 10:19; Lk. 14:10; 23:42.

⁷ Lk. 14:10; Lk. 16:4, 9; Jn. 5:7; 14:29; 16:4.

⁸ Arndt and Gingrich, *Lexicon*, p. 592.

passage in Matthew 23:39 does not retain the ὅτε so that it is questionable whether ὅτε, and the subjunctive is the correct textual reading.

On the two occasions where the present tense follows ὅτε, the main verb is also present and the translation "while" or "when" emphasizing an action taking place during a designated period of time seems most appropriate. This is true whether the action introduced is a general truth¹ or a definite event (Mk. 11:1). The uses of ὅτε with the imperfect² are like those of the present except that the main verb is most often an imperfect tense.

The future tense within a ὅτε clause is found once in Luke 17:22 where the main verb is future and four times in John³ where the main verb is present. This use of ὅτε introduces a clause suggesting a future indefinite event. However, in each instance the speaker is Jesus Christ and this makes the event spoken of in the future tense a certainty. It is reasonable then to find ὅτε which is normally reserved for definite past events, used to indicate these future, events which will take place at a definite point in time.

¹ George B. Winer, Grammar, p. 297 (also see Jn. 9:4).

² Mk. 14:12; 15:41; Jn. 17:12; 21:8.

³ Jn. 4:21, 23; 5:25; 16:25.

The remaining forty-two uses ὅτε introduce a clause employing an aorist verb. In each instance a specific time of past action is in view and the conjunction must be translated "when." Most of the places¹ are in a narrative or historical setting. Sometimes in the parallel passages an aorist participle is substituted for the ὅτε conjunction.² On five occasions in Matthew the familiar Septuagint narrative expression καὶ ἐγένετο³ translating וְהָיָה "and it came to pass" introduces the ὅτε clause. The remaining eleven citations of ὅτε are found in quotations and indicate specific occurrences at a definite point in time. That ὅτε when used with the indicative of past tenses is to be understood "of a thing actually gone before,"⁴ fits the pattern found in the Gospels. When used with the present indicative it refers to a thing "actually existing at anytime" and when with the future indicative a thing "actually future."⁵ The choice between using ὅταν or ὅτε

¹ Mt. 9:25; 21:1 (Mk. 11:1; Lk. 19:29); 27:31 (Mk. 15:20); Mk. 1:32; 4:10; 6:21; 7:17; Lk. 2:21, 22, 42; 6:13; 22:14; 23:33; Jn. 1:19; 6:24; 12:16, 17; 13:12, 31; 19:6, 8, 23, 30; 20:24; 21:25.

² Mt. 13:6; 26:20; Mk. 14:17; Mt. 27:35; Mk. 15:22.

³ Mt. 7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1.

⁴ George Henry Liddell and Robert Scott, Lexicon, II (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940), 1265.

⁵ Ibid.

by the Gospel writers seems to be determined primarily by the mode of the verb in the dependent clause. The subjunctive mode normally demands the more doubtful *ὅταν* and the indicative mode requires *ὅτε*.

ὡς

The conjunction *ὡς*, originally a relative adverb from *ὡς* is rather common in the New Testament as a temporal conjunction.¹ The exact number of times the temporal *ὡς* occurs varies with each Greek edition and with the interpretation of the text since *ὡς* can be used other than temporally. Sir John Hawkins gives nineteen uses of *ὡς* in Luke and sixteen in John. It is found thirty-three other times in the New Testament.² A better count in the Gospels seems to be nineteen in Luke and eighteen in John with the greatest number of these occurring with verbs in the aorist tense. All the verbs are in the indicative mode regardless of the tense. Only in Mark 9:21 is *ὡς* found with the perfect tense and it is translated "since."³

On seven occasions *ὡς* is found in a clause with

¹ Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 974.

² Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: At the Clarendon press, 1967), p. 89.

³ Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 974.

verbs either in the present¹ or imperfect² tense indicating continuing action and introducing action simultaneous to the main verb. The translation of ὥς can be "while," "when," "as long as."³ "While" is a suitable translation of these passages as is illustrated by John 20:11, "and so while she was weeping, she stooped and looked into the tomb." Luke 24:32, "were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road while He was opening the Scriptures to us," is a passage where ὥς is used twice in the same verse. The two actions introduced by ὥς, "while He was speaking" and "while He was opening" signify action that is simultaneous to the main verb, "were burning." The disciples' "burning hearts" were directly related to Christ's speaking and explaining the Scriptures. In as much as the main verb and the ὥς clause verbs indicate progressive action, the translation of ὥς should suggest this.

Usually when ὥς introduces a temporal clause an aorist indicative verb is found both in the subordinate clause and in the main clause. The proper translation is "after," or "when,"⁴ and is consistently used in most

¹ Lk. 12:58; 20:37; Jn. 12:35, 6.

² Lk. 24:32; Jn. 2:23; 20:11.

³ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 907.

⁴ Ibid., p. 906.

English translations. These uses are found in Luke or John¹ and except for one instance the passages in Luke are in non-parallel material. In the one parallel account, both Matthew 21:1 and Mark 11:1 have ὄτε instead of the ὡς which is found in Luke 19:29. In each instance where ὡς occurs with an aorist verb, the clause seems to indicate action that is either simultaneous with or prior to the main verb. This is illustrated from Genesis 30:25 "and it came to pass after Rachel had born Joseph that Jacob said to Laban." A New Testament example is found in Luke 19:5, "and when Jesus came to the place, He looked up." That is, Jesus came to where Zaccheus was and then looked up. In most passages the action of the ὡς clause is totally prior to the action of the aorist verb. Both, "after they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs" (Jn. 19:33) and "when they got out upon the land, they saw a fire" (Jn. 21:9), illustrate that the action of the ὡς clause with an aorist verb does precede in time the action of the main verb.

The translation "while" introduces a ὡς clause which contains a verb indicating progressive action. When the ὡς clause has an aorist verb, "when" or "after" is a suitable translation especially when the ὡς clause obviously precedes

¹ Lk. 1:23, 41, 44; 2:15, 39; 4:25; 5:4; 7:12; 11:1; 15:25; 19:5, 29, 41; 22:66; 23:26; 24:32; Jn. 2:9; 4:1, 40; 6:12, 16; 7:10; 11:6, 20, 29; 11:32, 33; 18:6; 19:33; 21:9.

in time the main clause,

Adverbs and Improper Prepositions

The temporal adverbs and prepositions used as adverbs also aid in explaining time relationships within a clause. The time indicated can vary considerably and only after each use is considered separately can the scope of its meaning be understood. For convenience the words studied in this section are listed in alphabetical order.

ἄμα

This preposition occurs in Matthew 13:19 as an adverb and in 20:1 as an improper preposition both expressing time. In the parable of the wheat and the tares a warning is given lest the slaves in pulling up the tares "at the same time" root up the wheat. The concern was that the time of the two actions would be coincident¹ and the wheat crop would be ruined. Later in 20:1 the vineyard owner went out early in the morning to hire workers. The expression used is ἄμα πρωί, a classic idiom which can be literally translated "at the same time with early dawn."² The break of day is the time for starting work in the country. These two uses of ἄμα to indicate time can also be found in the

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 41.

² Archibald T. Robertson, The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. I. Word Pictures (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1930), p. 159.

Epistles, the papyri and Josephus.

ἄρτι

The adverb ἄρτι, when used temporally, refers to an event of the immediate past, "just now," of the immediate present, "at once," "immediately," "now," and in general "now," "at the present time."¹ This adverb translates תְּהֵיכָּן in the two Gospels, Matthew and John where it is found. The position of ἄρτι in the sentence does not follow any certain pattern although Matthew "habitually places adverbs after imperatives but before indicatives."² All the uses note time closely connected with the present. Once it refers to an event that is just past, "my daughter has just now died" (Mt. 9:18). It can also refer to a near future event "He will at once put at My disposal . . ." (Mt. 26:53). In the Gospel of John it refers to a present event, "I was blind, now I see" (Jn. 9:19).³ It appears that each time a present event is in view it has the sense "at this precise time."

The preposition ἀπὸ is joined with ἄρτι on five occasions⁴ and is translated "from now" or "from

¹ Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 109..

² Blass and DeBrunner, Grammar, D. 250.

³ See also Jn. 9:25; 13:7, 33, 37; 16:12, 31.

⁴ Mt. 23:39; 26:29, 65; Jn. 13:19; 14:7.

henceforth." This meaning is clear from the context and the emphasis is "from the present or precise time" into the future. In each case or is associated with the present time.

ἐγγύς

Though the adverb ἐγγύς often is used of place it is also found in seven different accounts in the Gospels¹ referring to time. In each case the time spoken of is future though it concerns "things imminent and soon to come to pass."² Each of the four uses in John refers to a feast and speaks of the nearness of the feast. However, the closeness of time to the event cannot be stated accurately. For example, in John 2:13 Jesus was in Capernaum when the Passover was at hand (ἐγγύς). Yet, Jesus had time to go to Jerusalem before this Passover was celebrated (v. 23). Counting the elapsed time for the journey and the arrival in Jerusalem the term ἐγγύς cannot be understood to give exact time such as hours. The translation "at hand" with the general idea of something soon to come to pass is a good translation. In each instance in the Gospels ἐγγύς occurs with a form of εἰμί expressed or understood so that the adverb is used as a predicate adjective.

¹ Mt. 24:32 (1,1k. 13:28; Lk. 21:30); 24:33 (Mk. 13:29); 26:18; Jn. 2:13; 6:4; 7:2; 11:55.

² Thayer, Lexicon, p. 164.

εἶτα

The word, εἶτα, translated "then," "next," "after that"¹ is found as an adverb of time six times in the Gospels. This represents roughly one-half of the uses in the New Testament. These references in the Gospels all appear temporal even though in other places εἶτα can function as a transition word.²

On four occasions³ εἶτα is the first word in the sentence and each time it indicates a brief intervening time or sequence of events. A good illustration of the brevity in time that it indicates is seen in the healing of the blind man of Bethsaida in Mark 8:25. In verse twenty-four the blind man reported that he saw men like trees walking about. "Then (εἶτα) again He laid His hands upon his eyes," undoubtedly after a very brief period of time. In Luke 8:12 εἶτα, occurs in the middle of the verse but it too indicates that the action which it introduced follows only a short period of time.

In one instance, Mark 4:17, "then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word," a longer lapse of time is demanded. After the planting of the seed, which

¹ Thayer, Lexicon, p. 188.

² Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 233.

³ Mk. 8:25; Jn. 13:5; 19:27; 20:27.

is the Word of God, time passes before persecution comes to destroy the effect of the Word. Consequently, for exegetical purposes εἶτα itself does not determine the length of time between events but rather it notes the sequence of events in the narrative. For this reason the translation “then” is proper for it denotes that there is a time sequence but it does not suggest the length of the time

Ἐπειτα

The adverb Ἐπειτα translated "then," "thereupon," "thereafter" or "afterwards"¹ occurs twice in the Gospels and each time with a verb of saying. Though it can refer to either a short or long period of time, it is like εἶτα in that it shows a sequence of time or thought. In John 11:7 several days elapse between the sequence of events in view. And though the Ἐπειτα in this passage might be a substitute for δέ in the μέν . . . δέ relationship, as was often the case in Classical Greek, it is more likely that Ἐπειτα occurs without the δέ relation to indicate the temporal idea of simple succession.² In Luke 16:7 only a brief moment occurs between the successive statements. The Ἐπειτα

¹ Thayer, Lexicon, p. 230.

² Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, John, trans. by Frederick Crombie (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, Publishers, 1884), pp. 337-38.

emphasizes the relationship of congruity between the transactions with the first and second creditors.

In Galatians 1:18 where ἔπειτα is found, a period of fourteen years separates ἔπειτα from the circumstances introduced by ἔπειτα. From these illustrations it is obvious that ἔπειτα like εἶτα, as an adverb denotes a time sequence in events rather than a specific time indication.

εὐθέως, εὐθύς

The synonyms εὐθέως and εὐθύς translated "straightway," "immediately," "forthwith," or "at once" have particular interest because of the use of εὐθύς in Mark's Gospel. That these two adverbs must often be equal in meaning can be demonstrated by seven passages¹ in Matthew which use εὐθέως when Mark in his parallel accounts has εὐθύς.

Matthew, Luke and John use εὐθέως in miracles, in the calling of Peter and Andrew, in the teaching of Jesus and in the events of the Passion to show the immediacy of the action. One writer suggests that both εὐθέως and εὐθύς have the sense of immediate consecutiveness.² However, this idea cannot be substantiated in all passages as is illustrated by John 6:21 "and immediately the boat was at the land." Some time had to elapse between the time when Jesus

¹ Mt. 4:20; 8:3; 13:5; 14:22; 20:34; 26:49, 74.

² J. H. Bernard, John, I (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1962), 232.

walked on the water (vv. 19-21a) and the boat arrived on shore. This especially clear in Matthew 14:28-34 where a more detailed account of the same event is given. Jesus not only entered the boat but the disciples worshipped Him and some time later they landed the boat (Mt. 14:34).

Therefore, in John's account the use of εὐθέως denotes the next consecutive event in his narrative but not immediacy of time. In the parable of the sower and the seed (Mt. 13: 5), the seed is scattered and "immediately sprang up because it had no depth of soil." Obviously the seed did not grow instantaneously though it would spring up more quickly than normal. In these three Gospels both εὐθέως and εὐθύς seem to be used either with the sense of immediacy or with the idea of next in sequence of events. The time indicated between event is may vary in length as is illustrated above.

The Gospel of Mark provides an important area of study because of its more than forty uses of εὐθύς and the absence of εὐθέως.

Nigel Turner suggests some of the problems of this study when he writes:

Nevertheless Mark uses εὐθύς only five times near the verb, i.e., as an adverb (viz. 1²⁸ 5¹³ vl. 36. 42 6²⁵ 7²⁵ 1³¹ vl. 3⁶ vl.); elsewhere it is probably merely a connective conjunction, occurring at the beginning of its clause. . . Some thirty of these instances are καὶ εὐθύς: and so (consecutive, like the Heb.), like καὶ ἰδοὺ in Matthew. But it must be said that sometimes, as at 6²⁵, εὐθύς has rather stronger adverbial force: she

went in immediately.¹

It can be seen in the passages where Turner cites **εὐθύς** as an adverb that it shows immediacy. For example, during Jesus' early ministry it is stated, "and immediately the news about Him went out everywhere" (Mk. 1:28). However, Turner does not cite Mark 1:43 "and sternly warning Him immediately He sent him out" as being adverbial even though it appears to be used this way. Other passages in Mark follow this pattern of **καὶ** separated from **εὐθύς** where the **εὐθύς** ought to be considered as an adverb of time denoting immediacy. Still other passages have **εὐθύς** alone as an adverb where immediacy is understood.³

The use of **καὶ εὐθύς** which often occurs in Mark may be like John's **οὖν** both of which are similar to the Hebrew *waw* consecutive which often shows historical sequence or transition.⁴

If this is true, the proper translation in Mark would be "and then," or "then." Yet, most of the **εὐθύς** passages imply by the context not only historical sequence but immediacy as in the various healing miracles of Christ. An example of this is found in Mark 1:42, "and

¹ Turner, Syntax, III, 229.

² Mk. 3:6; 5:42; 6:25, 54; 9:20.

³ Mk. 4:15, 16, 17; 4:29; 5:2; 9:24.

⁴ Bernard, John, I, 38.

immediately the leprosy left him." Both the sequence and immediacy seem obvious. It may be true that in some passages there is a primary emphasis on the sequence rather than the immediacy of the event. In Mark 1:29 it is stated, "and immediately after they had come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew." Here it can be argued that a small period of time elapsed between the leaving of the synagogue and the entering of Simon's house. Obviously **καὶ εὐθύς** is sometimes used as a conjunction. But does this rule out the idea of immediacy from Mark's narrative? If the trip from the synagogue to the home was short and the only action, the concept of immediacy of time and action can be maintained within the rules of language. A complete examination of the uses of **καὶ εὐθύς** suggest that Mark combined the idea of the Hebrew waw consecutive with the immediacy of **εὐθύς** to join two closely related events in their proper sequence and show the immediacy of the time relationship of the second to the first. A good illustration of this is found when Herodias told Salome to ask for the head of John the Baptist. Following this it is written, "and immediately she came in haste before the king and asked" (Mk. 5:25).

In summarizing the use of **εὐθέως** and **εὐθύς** it can be stated that immediacy or near immediacy of time is indicated between two actions when they are used as adverbs. For this reason two basic ideas are conveyed in the possible

translations. If the context demands immediacy, "at once" or "immediately" are good translations. But if the verbal action follows and is not necessarily instantaneous, perhaps "forthwith" or "then" would convey better this idea. These translations are accurate whether εὐθύς is used as an adverb or with a conjunction.

ἤδη

The adverb ἤδη usually translated "now," "already" occurs in each of the Gospels and with the indicative mode expressed or understood except in Luke 21:30 where it is found in a ὅταν clause with the subjunctive mode. Each of the major tenses except the future are used with the adverb. This word always indicates time in the thirty-six distinct uses in the Gospels.¹

When used with the present tense ἤδη can signify action that has already taken place and is also true at the present time as in Matthew 15:32, "they have remained with Me now three days." At times it suggests what is true of the present and perhaps of the immediate past, "Lord now (by this time) the body is stinking" (Jn. 11:39). Sometimes it refers to what is only currently present "Come, for everything is read now" (Lk. 14:17).

The imperfect tense is combined with ἤδη in "the

¹ Thayer Lexicon, p. 276.

boat was already many stadia away" (Mt. 14:24) showing a condition that is true in the present and the immediate past. Also it may indicate something only presently true, "it was now about the sixth hour" (Lk. 23:44).

However, the aorist tense and ἤδη can look back to the past referring to an event already completed in the past as in "Elijah already came" (Mt. 17:12). Something that happens in the near past and is true in the present such as "he was dead by this time (already)" (Jn. 19:33) may also use ἤδη with the aorist. It can also express an event just happening "when the day was now breaking" (Jn. 21:4).

The perfect tense may refer to a past incident which is true in the present "the Jews had already agreed" (Jn. 9:22) or event completed in the immediate past, "all things are now finished" (Jn. 19:28). At no time does the perfect plus ἤδη suggest an action taking place in the present time. The translations of ἤδη when found with a perfect verb include "by this time" and "already."

The construction of ἤδη καί is found only in John 9:27 and is translated "even now" signifying that which was just done in the present.

In summary, the uses of this adverb are confined to three areas: (1) those contexts which indicate an action completed in the past and true in the present; (2) the passages which relate an action just completed which obviously is also true in the present; (3) the constructions

expressing an event just happening. The choice of translations between "now," "already," "by this time" is dependent upon the context.

μετὰ ταῦτα

On fifteen occasions the Greek expression μετὰ ταῦτα is found in three Gospels signifying "in order of time."¹ It is translated "after these things," "afterward," "after that" and "hereafter" in various versions. This expression introduces action that is subsequent to the activity of the preceding main clause. The time separating the two actions may be only a few minutes, as in John 19:38 where the Roman soldiers pierce Jesus' side and "after this" Joseph approaches Pilate for the release of the body. On other occasions² the span of time may include minutes or hours. In John five, Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath Day and "afterward," apparently on the same day, Jesus meets the man in the temple (v. 12).

More often there is a lapse of days³ between events. For example, when Zacharias received the revelation concerning the birth of a son he completed his ministry and went home. Then Luke 1:24 states, "and after these days

¹ Thayer, Lexicon, p. 404.

² Cf. Mk. 16:2; Lk. 5:27.

³ Lk. 10:1; 17:8; 18:4; Jn. 3:22; 21:1.

Elizabeth his wife became pregnant." Obviously several days passed from his revelation in the temple to the time of Elizabeth's conception because he had to complete his priestly duties and arrive home. In the Septuagint a lengthy period also is seen in Exodus 3:20 where the Lord promises to smite Egypt and "after this" Pharaoh would release Israel.

In some passages the time between events may be a matter of months or an indefinite length of time as in John 7:1.¹ The events of chapter six take place in the spring of the year near the Passover, whereas the time of chapter seven is the fall, the Feast of Tabernacles. Verse one provides a transition between the six months and it uses **μετὰ ταῦτα**.

The neuter singular form **μετὰ τοῦτο** is only in John. Of the four uses these two, John 11:11 and 19:38, indicate a very brief interval of time. However, a lapse of days takes place in John 2:12 and 11:7.

In comparing the singular and the plural forms there is no obvious reason for a preference in form. That **μετὰ ταῦτα** occurs more often follows the Greek pattern. Both forms indicate events in order of time and indicate a consecutive sequence which may be a short or large expanse

¹ Cf. Lk. 12:4; Jn. 5:1; 6:1; 13:7.

of time separating the two actions. The subsequent action always follows the **μετὰ ταῦτα** or **μετὰ τοῦτο** and the context determines the best translation.

νῦν

An Often used word indicating present time is **νῦν** which is translated "now" in most Bibles. Though generally speaking it is used to show present time as opposed to the past, it does occur with differing senses in several expressions and verb tenses. The adverb **νῦν** is found with the present tense¹ and is used of that which will occur soon, "now Lord you are letting thy bondservant depart in peace" (Lk. 2:29), or what is present time, "Blessed are you who hunger now" (Lk. 6:21) or a contemporary custom, "Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup" (Lk. 11:39). When **νῦν** is used with the aorist tense² it may refer to something just completed, "you have now heard the blasphemy" (Mt. 26:65) or which took place in the recent past, "Bring some of the fish you have now caught" (Jn. 21:10).

If the future tense is used, the **νῦν** indicates things which are thought of as already begun to be done, "Now the ruler of this world shall be cast down" (Jn. 12:31). This is also suggested by the subjunctive mode in a third

¹ Lk. 2:29; 6:21, 25; 11:39; Jn. 12:31; 16:29.

² Mt. 26:65; Jn. 13:31; 21:10.

class conditional sentence (Mk. 10:30). The imperfect tense and $\nu\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ show an event just recently completed as in "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you" (Jn. 11:8). John uses the perfect tense four times¹ with $\nu\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ demonstrating an immediate present based on past activity. The imperative mode,² on the other hand, marks the present as the proper time to do something, "let Him now come down from the cross" (Mt. 27:42).

There are several instances where $\nu\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ is combined with another word usually indicating immediate present. When the expression is $\nu\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ "but now" there is a contrast between the past and the immediate present, whether real or unreal circumstances exist.³ However, on two occasions it contrasts a past with a near future event (Jn. 16:5; 17:3). Five times John⁴ uses $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\nu\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ "and now" to indicate the immediate present as in, "for you have had five husbands; and the one whom you now have. . . ." Two other expressions likewise indicate the immediate present. In John 9:21 there is $\pi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ $\nu\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ "but how he now sees." Later John 16:22 has $\circ\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ $\nu\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ "therefore you too now have sorrow."

The expression $\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\nu\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ in Matthew 24:21, "since

¹ Jn. 8:52; 12:27; 16:30; 17:7.

² Mt. 27:42, 43; Lk. 22:36.

³ Lk. 16:25; 19:42; Jn. 8:40; 9:41; 15:22, 24; 18:36.

⁴ Jn. 4:18, 23; 5:25; 14:29; 17:5.

the beginning of the world until now," relates time up to the present. Luke uses the phrase ἀπό τοῦ νῦν¹ indicating time from the present into the future. In each instance it is used with a future tense or a futuristic present. An appropriate translation would be "from this time on," or "from now on."

In all passages where νῦν is found the present time is in view and a contrast with some other time, whether past or future, is implied.

ὀπίσω

Three times during the testimony of John the Baptist concerning Jesus he employs the preposition ὀπίσω, "after," in a temporal sense. One comment is recorded in three Gospels, "one mightier than I after me" (Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:7; Jn. 1:15). John also uses this word with the temporal idea in 1:27 and 1:30. Most often in the Gospels ὀπίσω includes a spatial concept which seems to be the most common understanding of the word. Only contextual evidence can decide whether time or place is referred to. In these aforementioned verses the testimony given to Zacharias taught that John was to be the temporal antecedent of Jesus to prepare the people for the coming of the Lord (Lk. 1:17). Historically, Jesus came to be baptized after these statements of

¹ Lk. 1:48; 5:10; 12:52; 22:69.

John but he never came to take a place behind John.

Kendrick Grobel tries to show that Jesus assumed the position of a disciple of John by asserting that Jesus followed John in place rather than time.¹ He follows the other usage of *ὀπίσω* which is spatial. He further maintains that time would be indicated by *μετά* with the accusative.² However, it must be recognized that John was a Jew who would use *ὀπίσω* with its Septuagintal background. The Old Testament antecedent of *ὀπίσω* is *אחרי* and its derivatives. The *ὀπίσω* in Ecclesiastes 10:14, "a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?", must be temporal. Other passages also allow for the temporal idea as in Genesis 17:8, "I will give to thee and to thy seed after thee." It must be admitted that the temporal use of *ὀπίσω* can be substantiated prior to John and although some passages in the Gospels may have a spatial or spatial-temporal idea, these uses of John can be and contextually must be temporal only.

πάντοτε

The adverb *πάντοτε*, occurs temporally nine times in eight different locations, one of which has two parallel readings. Thayer cites "at all times," "always," and

¹ Kendrick Grobel, "He That Cometh After Me," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LX (1941), 397-401.

² *Ibid.*, 398.

ever"¹ as the best translations. The problem arises as to whether the time is limitless, or is limited to this life or to a given activity of this life.

In most instances in the Gospels, *πάντοτε* does not mean eternal. It refers to the length of time there will be poor among the human race on the earth (Mt. 26:11). Found twice in Luke's parables, it indicates the length of time the elder son is with the father (15:31) and the amount of time the disciples ought to pray (18:1). Both passages in Luke teach that the time is no longer than a life time. John 6:34 indicates that the people wanted bread from God as long as (*πάντοτε*) they lived but this does not mean eternally since the same ones rejected the Lord later in the chapter. However, twice, in John 8:29 and 11:42, Jesus speaks of "always" pleasing the Father and the Father "always" hearing the Son. If these refer only to the time when Jesus was on earth, they could not express limitless time. However, since these statements about Jesus are eternally true they appear to indicate limitless time. They are the only two uses of *πάντοτε* that do.

The final two instances are limited to smaller periods of time as in John 7:6. Here, the brothers of Jesus desire Him to go to Jerusalem. He replies it is not His

¹ Thayer, Lexicon, p. 476.

time but "your time is always ready." The context indicates there was "always" opportunity to go to the feast at Jerusalem. Of course, if they delayed too long the feast would be over. Thus, πάντοτε though meaning "always" can be greatly limited by its context. In John 18:20 Jesus replies to the high priest's question, "I always taught in synagogues and in the temple." This statement taken in context limits the application of πάντοτε to the time of Jesus teaching, roughly three years. That is, when Jesus taught in the synagogue or the temple He always gave His teaching and the high priest should know what Jesus said. However, it does not say that Jesus "always" taught in these places and that He never gave any private teaching.

Therefore, πάντοτε should not be understood as "always" in the limitless sense of "eternal" or "forever." The context in each instance indicates the extent of the always to (1) a brief period of days (Jn. 1:6); (2) a period of years (Jn. 8:29); (3) a lifetime (Lk. 15:31); and (4) possibly the length of human history (Mt. 26:11 et passim ποτέ)

The word ποτέ occurs only twice in the Gospels, Luke 22:32 and John 9:13, but about twenty-five times in the Epistles. As an enclitic particle of time it has an indefinite meaning of "at anytime," "at some time," "once,"

and "formerly."¹ In the Septuagint it is used most often in the construction μήποτε . When used of time that is past it is translated "once," "formerly" (at some time or another) but when used of a time that is future it should be translated "when."² The healing of the man born blind is found in John nine. In this context the Pharisees bring the healed man to the temple and he is referred to as τὸν ποτέ τυφλόν. Since the time of his blindness is past, the correct translation must be "the one formerly blind." However, in Luke 22:32, Jesus refers to a future repentance of Peter and the best translation of ποτέ is "when." Both translations are imprecise as to a specific time but one is found in a past context and one is future. A parallel illustration to Luke 22:32 can be found in Joshua 22:28, "It shall be, when they say so to us," speaking of a future time.

πρίν

The adverb πρίν occurs seven times in the Gospels and is translated "before" each time. In Classical Greek "in Homer πρίν appears as an adverb, as a conjunction, as a quasi conjunction."³ Most frequently it occurs with an

¹ Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary, p. 530.

² Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 701.

³ Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve, "On ΠΡΙΝ in the Attic Orators," American Journal of Philology, II (1881), 469.

aorist infinitive if the notion is only and necessarily "before" and not "until."¹ "Homer has it 81 times with the infinitive, six with subjunctive, once with the opt. and not at all with the indicative."² It is not surprising then that *πρίν* occurs six of the seven times with the aorist infinitive. Although *πρίν* is an adverb it carries the force of a conjunction when used with the infinitive and indicates things past (it. 1:18; Jn. 8:58) or things future (Mt. 26:34, 75; Jn. 4:49; 14:29). Only in Luke 2:26 are *πρίν ἄν* and the subjunctive found together and they express what was from the point of view of the original statement a future or unrealized contingency. In this use *πρίν* really carries the same translation and idea of *πρότερον* before, which indicates antecedent time.

πρό

The preposition *πρό* occurs by itself eleven times in the Gospels and, always being translated "before," it shows time that is antecedent. On several occasions *πρό* is used to indicate a distinction of time between two or more individuals (Mt. 5:12; Jn. 5:7; 10:8). It is used by the Pharisees who accused the disciples of not washing ceremonially "before the meal" (Lk. 11:38). It also shows the

¹ Ibid., 476.

² Robertson, Grammar, p. 977.

sequence of two events that were yet future (Lk. 21:12).

Most often πρό can be found with words indicating a particular time such as "before the time" (Mt. 8:29), "before the flood" (Mt. 24:38), "before the Passover" (Jn. 11:55; 12:1; 13:1) and "before the foundation of the world." It is clear from these uses that no length of time is indicated by the πρό but rather antecedent time. This use of πρό should not be confused with the Hebraism πρό προσώπου which is also translated "before" but indicates place.

The unusual construction in John 12:1, πρό ἕξ ἡμερῶν τοῦ πάσχα. It is "six days before the Passover," needs further examination. It is the only use of πρό with a numeral in the Gospels. Though grammarians attribute this to a Latin idiom, Moulton demonstrates that similar idioms did appear in Doric and Ionic prior to the time of the New Testament.¹ It is more likely that this is a coincidence with the Latin. It may be that this construction is "a natural development from the ablative case with 'starting from'."²

There is one good illustration of this construction in Josephus, "πρὸ μιᾶς ἡμέρας τῆς ἑορτῆς." The entire passage is translated as follows: "and one day before a

¹ James Hope Moulton, Prolegomena 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1919), pp. 100-01.

² Robertson, Grammar, p. 622.

festival the treasurers would go to the commander of the Roman garrison and, after inspecting their own seal, would take the robe."¹ This seems to indicate that the first day prior to the festival is the day indicated. If this is true in John 12:1, the reckoning of the six days begins with the first day preceding τοῦ πάσχα. Since πάσχα can refer to the day the lamb was slain, Nisan fourteenth, and also the day it was eaten, Nisan fifteenth, the sixth day prior to this would be either Nisan eighth or ninth. Without further clarification in the text it is impossible to determine which day is meant or which day of the week is meant. Only the coming of Jesus to Bethany six days prior to πάσχα is certain.

πρότερον

The neuter comparative form of the preposition is πρότερον which is found only in John and occurs as an adverb indicating "earlier," "formerly," "in former times."² There seem to be two basic uses: (1) to indicate something prior to something else that is done (Jn. 7:50), and (2) to contrast the past with the present (Jn. 6:62; 9:8). In none of these uses does πρότερον have an expressed object. It merely indicates a time earlier than the present moment.

¹ Josephus Antiquities 15. 408.

² Arndt and Gingrich, Lexicon, p. 729.

τότε

The temporal adverb **τότε** translated "then," "at that time" occurs well over one hundred times not including the parallel passages. It is used extensively in Matthew as a connective particle to indicate the chronological sequence of events. Theodor Zahn summarizes the use of **τότε**:

The commonest formula for the continuation of the narrative is **τότε**, which is used in Matt. some ninety times in all. This usage is quite unknown in Mark, nor is it exactly parallel in Luke and John, for in Luke . . . **τότε** signifies 'at that moment,' immediately after the occurrence of what has just been related, in reality; 'thereupon'; so also **τότε οὖν** . . . , uses the word sometimes to denote immediate sequence . . . , but very often, also, as an indefinite term for approximate correspondence in time, where there is no single preceding incident which leads up to the account that follows . . . , so that the phrase does not differ appreciably from **ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ** . . . ¹

However, it does not of itself specify a definite point in time.

As stated above the most frequent use of **τότε** is to denote the chronological sequence of events. This may indicate which are removed from each other by an extended period of time. For example, Jesus ate in the house of Matthew with sinners and on this occasion gave a discourse. Immediately following this discourse Matthew 9:14 has **τότε** introducing the statement that the disciples of John came

¹ Theodor Zahn, Introduction, trans. by M. W. Jacobus, II (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1953), 591-92.

to Jesus who was not in Matthew's house. How long a period of time elapsed is unspecified. Another example showing a period of time between events coupled by τότε is found in Matthew 27:58. Here, Joseph asks for the body of Jesus and then (τότε) Pilate ordered it given to Joseph. The other Gospels prove that many events, taking perhaps nearly an hour, occurred between these events.

Sometimes τότε is used to introduce new subject matter as in Matthew 15:1, "Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus." It is clear that τότε does introduce a subsequent event but that event does not immediately follow in time the event which precedes.

Quite often τότε does introduce an event that follows a preceding event immediately as to time. This may occur at the beginning of a verse as in Matthew 26:65 or within the verse as in "And He said to them, . . . then He arose" (Mt. 8:26). The use of τότε to show consecutive sequence, whether immediate or non-immediate, occurs most often with the aorist tense. The translation "then" is suitable providing it is understood that the context alone indicates the time rather than τότε. It is important to observe that the parallel accounts often do not use τότε but δέ and καί. This further suggests that τότε is not as much an indicator of time as it is of sequence.

A further use of τότε occurs with the future tense. In this instance the τότε introduces a future action when

the thing under discussion will take place. The eschatological passages in Matthew twenty-four and twenty-five have many uses of this construction. The translation of **τότε** could better be "at that time." Again the **τότε** separates the two future events as to sequence and time.¹

Another use of **τότε** is found with events that are taking place at the same time and are concomitant events. For example, when Herod slew the infants in Bethlehem, Matthew records, "then (**τότε**) that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled" (Mt. 2:17). Obviously there was no time lapse between the slaying and the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy. The slaying and the fulfilling were at the same time. Perhaps it would be best to understand this use of **τότε** as indicating logical sequence in a manner similar to the Hebrew *waw* consecutive.

The adverb **τότε** on a few occasions combines with to form **ἀπὸ τότε** which is translated "from that time on."² The use of **ἀπό** showing source together with **τότε** showing point in time following the preceding action contrasts that which precedes the **ἀπὸ τότε** to that which follows.

In summary, **τότε**, "then," is a connective particle used to introduce a subsequent event. It is often used in

¹ Cf. for frequent use of this, see Mt. 24:9, 10, 14, 21, 23, 30, 40 and Mt. 25 *passim*.

² Mt. 4:17; 16:21; 26:16; Lk. 16:16.

a narrative to show sequence that may or may not immediately follow the preceding event. While most of the events are past, it is sometimes used to show the sequence of future events and thus it has the translation "at that time." It is the context, not τότε that indicates the time of the subsequent event. In parallel accounts και and δε are often used instead of τότε. This further suggests that τότε has the sequential function of the Hebrew waw conversive. The ἀπὸ τότε introduces subsequent time and is translated "from that time on."

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The events during the ministry of the Lord took place in time and it is only natural that many expressions of time occur throughout the Gospels. These temporal expressions are conveyed either by word meaning or grammar. While the expressions were familiar to those in the first century, they may be misinterpreted. Most temporal expressions are not explicit. In addition, there is a definite lack of knowledge about the first century dating concepts. To apply contemporary methods and expressions of reckoning time to the Gospel era adds further confusion. The time related in the Gospels must be interpreted through its own history and contextual setting.

The clearest way of communicating time is by the use of time words. To the people of Palestine many words were commonly used day after day to record the passing of time. These words include year, month, week, day, hour and feast (Chapter II). The meaning and use of these words are obvious most of the time. However, these words have other meanings which on some occasions produce problems in understanding the specific meaning in a particular passage.

Three words—*αἰών*, *καιρός* and *χρόνος*--are used to indicate time unspecified (Chapter III). That is, these

words express extra-calendar time even though they may refer to an historical event. Each word occurs with several phrases or expressions. A single common translation is consequently not possible. Each context must determine the time and duration intended in order to set forth the proper translation.

There are a number of words which express time during a year--year, month, week, tomorrow and yesterday-- (Chapter IV). Though the words often have more than one meaning, the context usually indicates the correct meaning. The meanings are basically the same as those in the Septuagint and early Greek.

The day was the most natural way to relate events to history. It is not surprising that the day and its many subdivisions are used most often for this purpose (Chapter V). There is a diversity of meanings for these words but the contextual evidence makes these meanings clear. Most often the time indicated is not a specific point in time during a day but is an approximation of time.

In addition to words for time there are also grammatical means to indicate time. These ideas are not only conveyed by the words themselves but by the construction of the grammar. One such grammatical method of expressing time is through the temporal infinitive (Chapter VI). The time expressed is relative since the purpose of tense with the infinitive is to relate kind of action. The present tense

indicates continuing action and the aorist indefinite action. The action of the infinitive can be antecedent, simultaneous or subsequent in time to the action of the leading verb. It is the use of the preposition with the infinitive that signifies the temporal relationship between the infinitive and the main verb.

The Greek adverbial participle (Chapter VII) especially in the present and aorist tenses can be used to express a time relationship with the leading verb. This is also true of the genitive absolute. When a participle is used temporally, can only be determined from the context. Usually the present participle shows simultaneous action and the aorist participle antecedent action. In some instances the context suggests other action.

Many conjunctions and adverbs also were employed to express time with the clauses (Chapter VIII). The temporal conjunctions introduce dependent temporal clauses which may be simultaneous, subsequent or antecedent to the main verb. The adverbs some of which are actually improper prepositions, indicate time relationships within a clause. These conjunctions and adverbs express many time relationships in the Gospels but they have no importance for historical calendar dating.

Several conclusions are evident. The meanings and uses of time words in the Gospels follow the earlier Greek and the Septuagint. There can be no doubt that Hebrew

thinking and linguistic patterns had some influence upon the Gospel writers. For example, the use of ל with the Hebrew infinitive is translated into Greek by ἐν τῷ and the Greek infinitive. Also, the Hebrew Sabbath gave form and meaning to the Greek σάββατον . How extensive this Hebrew influence was cannot be ascertained.

It also appears that the Jewish system of reckoning time used the same basic terms that were found throughout the Roman Empire. There is as much knowledge of the Jewish system as there is of the Roman method and both systems were adequate for the common people.

In considering all the expressions of time it appears that the time indications were a complementary part rather than a major portion of the message. The inability to develop a specific chronological diary of the events in the Gospels should not be taken as a shortcoming of the writers. It is more an indication that the purpose of the Gospels was centered in the message. Though the events took place in time, the Gospels are not time-centered. Instead of being concerned when the events happened, it is important to recognize that they happened. Anyone writing of these same events today would no doubt interweave expressions of time which would result in similar problems of chronological interpretation.

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