# THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS

by

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### **PREFACE**

The study of the Greek New Testament is perhaps the most rewarding and exhilarating task possible. But this study requires exegetical tools. The syntax of Greek verb tenses stands at the center of accurate exegesis, and this grammatical tool must be formed and sharpened by inductive study of New Testament usage.

It has been this writer's happy task to seek to define more closely the value of the Greek present indicative verb. He wishes to thank all those who have assisted in this effort. First of all, thanks are due to Dr. James L. Boyer, the chairman of the examining committee, and to its other members, Dr. homer A. Kent, Jr., and Dr. Charles R. Smith, for their patient and expert advice at several important points. Also, thanks are due to Dr. John C. Whitcomb, Jr., who directs the Postgraduate Division of Grace Theological Seminary, for his help and encouragement throughout the entire program. In addition, this author wishes to express his gratitude toward several of his colleagues in the faculty of Faith Theological Seminary who have assisted with their advice, help, and personal libraries: Dr. A. Franklin Faucette, Dr. Stephen M. Reynolds, Dr. Sang Chan Lee, and Dr. Richard C. Curry. But the one person who has helped the most deserves special thanks, the author's wife, Tammie. In addition to spending many, many hours in difficult work, she has always been an inspiration and encouragement during this paper's preparation. Of course, our chief gratitude must be directed to the One who inspired the New Testament, and of whom it speaks.

It is this author's hope that this study of the present indicative will shed more light on the New Testament. Julius R. Mantey has advised, "I trust in your dissertation you will cite several examples in the New Testament where the present tense functions remarkably well in exegesis, so much so that its readers would be deprived of much insight if it were not used" (personal letter, September 13, 1974). Indeed, if the reader will more thoroughly appreciate the meaning of the New Testament, this paper's purpose will be fulfilled.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	
LIST OF TABLES	ix
PART I. INTRODUCTION	
Chapter	
I. THE PLACE OF TENSE IN GREEK	
The Importance of Tense in Exegesis Common Misunderstanding of Tense Modern Translation Approach of Eugene A. Nida Complexity of the Present Indicative Aktionsart and Aspect	1 4 7 16 18
II. THE PLAN OF ATTACK	24
An Inductive Approach Method of Procedure Summary of the Study's Results	24 26 28
III. THE FREQUENCY OF THE PRESENT INDICATIVE	30
Total Occurrences Present Indicative Frequency Doubtful Cases Morphological Note on Movable Nu	30 35 41 42
PART II. PRESENT INDICATIVE EXEGESIS	
I. THE USAGE CATEGORIES	45
Traditional Usage Classifications Proposed Classifications	45 49
II. THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN PRESENT TIME	53
Progressive Present The Verb "To Be"	53 56

Chapte	er	Page
	The Question of Aoristic Presents Declarative Present Customary Present Abstract Present Perfective Present The Present in Kingdom Passages Conclusion for Presents in Present Time	58 61 63 68 75 81 84
III.	THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN PAST TIME	85
	Historical Present Frequency Synoptic Comparison The Zero Tense Controversy Relevant New Testament Data Exegesis of the Historical Present Otter Past Time Usages Conclusion	85 90 107 117 130 135 137
IV.	THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN FUTURE TIME	138
	Futuristic Present Frequency Futuristic Present Vocabulary Futuristic Present Aspect Futuristic Present Exegesis Present for Immediate Future Conclusion	138 142 149 151 154 157
V.	THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN RELATIVE TIME	159
	Relative Present Indirect Present	159 160
VI.	THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN CONDITIONAL SENTENCES	163
	Present of the Protasis Other Uses with <b>Ei</b> Present of the Apodosis Conclusion	163 172 173 179
	PART III. CONCLUSION	
	The Problem of the Present Indicative Suggested Solution The Limits of Syntax	181 183 184
APPE	NDIX A. PRESENT INDICATIVE VERB CLASSIFICATION	186

	Page
APPENDIX B. TIE MOVABLE NU IN MATTHEW	245
APPENDIX C. HISTORICAL PRESENT CONTEXT	246
APPENDIX D. PRESENT OF THE PROTASIS	252
BIBLIOGRAPHY	256

# LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Present Indicatives per Chapter	30
2. Present Indicatives per Book	34
3. Present Indicatives per 100 Words	35
4. Present Indicatives per 100 Verb Forms	39
5. Present Indicative Preference by Book	40
6. Present Indicative Preference by Author	40
7. Progressive Present Frequency	55
8. Declarative Presents	61
9. Customary Presents	67
10. Abstract Presents	74
11. Perfective Present	81
12. Historical Present Frequency	86
13. Synoptic Historical Presents	93
14. Synoptic Historical Present Figures	104
15. Historical Present Vocabulary	119
16. Historical Present Verb Types	122
16A. Verb Type Percentages	123
17. Historical Present Contexts	126
18. Historical Present Connections	127
19. Futuristic Present Frequency	138
20. Futuristic Present Vocabulary	142
21. Present for Relative Time	161

Table	Page
22. Protasis Present Frequency	165
23. Apodosis Present Frequency	176

### PART I. INTRODUCTION

### I. THE PLACE OF TENSE IN GREEK

The verb is the center of the sentence. Verbs turn mere phrases into clauses. They supply the heart, the force of the sentence. Accurate exeges must begin with the verb.

The two primary features of verb syntax are mood and tense. This paper will deal exclusively with the indicative mood. Within that mood Biblical Greek has at least six tenses: present, imperfect, future, aorist, perfect, and pluperfect. Each of these tenses carries with it an exegetical background and flavor, implications and associations which belong to that tense alone. The exact force of these tenses is still highly debated. One of them, the present tense, especially has become the object of recent inquiry and discussion. This paper shall concentrate on that single tense, the present indicative.

## The Importance of Tense in Exegesis

The Bible student has a special interest in Greek exegesis. The New Testament in Greek is God's last direct revelation to His people, inspired and inerrant. Each word reflects the meaning that God intended.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the few possible NT examples of the non-periphrastic future perfect, see A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (hereinafter referred to as *Grammar*; Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934), pp. 906-07.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 822: "In the beginning the verb-root was used with personal suffixes. At first this was enough. Some verbs developed some tenses, others other tenses, some few all the tenses."

Whatever meaning can be extracted from a passage's syntax will be true, useful, and profitable (2 Tim. 3:16).

The exegesis of the tenses stands at the center of such study. No element of the Greek language is of more importance to the student of the New Testament than the matter of tense. . . . Though it is an intricate nd difficult subject, no phase of Greek grammar offers a fuller reward. The benefits are to be reaped only when one has invested sufficient time and diligence to obtain an insight into the idiomatic use of tense in the Greek language and an appreciation of the finer distinctions in force. <sup>1</sup>

This attitude springs from the conviction that the various authors selected their tenses purposefully.

It is certainly unsafe, however, to proceed upon any supposition other than that he New Testament writer used the tense which would convey just the idea he wished to express. This is the rule, and all seeming exceptions are to be regarded with doubt.<sup>2</sup>

While ample provision must be allowed for individual variations of style, as this paper will demonstrate, it should be assumed that each author employed tenses in accordance with general usage and propriety.

Further, traditional grammarians have assumed that each tense had its own distinct usage and force, and that one could not be switched with another without changing the flavor or even the meaning of the passage.

One hundred years ago Alexander Buttmann defended the distinct meaning of each tense:

In the use of the Tenses the N.T. writers are by no means deficient in the requisite skill. Consequently the so-called Enallage Temporum or Interchange of Tenses, which was applied by some of the older interpreters of Scripture often and indiscriminately, is to be opposed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (hereinafter referred to as Manual Grammar; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927). p. 177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

on behalf of the N.T. language at the outset, and discarded on principle.<sup>1</sup>

A. T. Robertson, with characteristic care and caution and historical awareness, likewise emphasizes the unique aura of each tense:

The point here is not whether the Greeks used an agrist where we in English would use a perfect, but whether Greeks themselves drew no distinction between an agrist and a perfect, a present and a future. It is not possible to give a categorical answer to this question when one recalls the slow development of the Greek tenses and the long history of the language. . . . It is a very crude way of speaking to say that one tense is used "for" another in Greek. That would only be true of ignorant men. In general one may say that in normal Greek when a certain tense occurs, that tense was used rather than some other because it best expressed the idea of the speaker or writer. Each tense, therefore, has its specific idea. That idea is normal and can be readily understood. Various modifications arise, due to the verb itself, the context, the imagination of the user of the tense. The result is a complex one, for which the tense is not wholly responsible. The tenses, therefore, are not loosely interchangeable. Each tense has a separate history and presents a distinct idea. That is the startingpoint.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, from the traditional view at least, the study of Greek tenses should bear rich fruit for Bible students.

The use of the Tenses is a most important subject for the exegesis of the NT. The student cannot learn too soon that the tenses are used with absolute accuracy by the NT writers, and he will soon realise how much is lost in meaning by inexactness.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, if traditional grammarians have been mistaken, if in certain situations certain tenses are indeed interchangeable, then should not the exegete be aware of that fact? In fact, by making artificial and arbitrary distinctions, would not the interpreter, teacher, or preacher

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Buttmann, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek*, tr. by J. H. Thayer (Andover: Warren F. Draper, Publisher, 1873), p. 195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 829-30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> James Hope Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Vol. I: *Prolegomena* (3 d ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908), p. 186.

be adding his own ideas to the Scripture and obscuring God's intended meaning? Thus, in either case, the study of Greek tenses is vital for New Testament exegesis.

## Common Misunderstanding of Tense

Perhaps some of the present difficulties among interpreters can be traced to earlier neglect of this subject by many Greek grammarians. A typical example might be the classical scholar Philip Buttmann (not to be confused with Alexander Buttmann quoted above). He exhibits a remarkably carefree attitude toward the peculiarities of Greek tenses:

As the present, the imperfect, the perfect, the pluperfect, and the future, agree in the main with the corresponding tenses of other languages, it is necessary only to speak briefly of the Aorist and the 3d Future of the Passive voice.<sup>1</sup>

F. W. Farrar was convinced that similar delusions plagued the translators of the venerable Authorized Version; he wrote that "the translators of our English version have failed more frequently from their partial knowledge of the force of the tenses than from any other cause."<sup>2</sup>

On the other side, many modern writers overstep the rules of syntax, forcing every occurrence of a particular tense into a supposed semantic rule. Many examples of such misuse of the present indicative will appear

<sup>1</sup> Philip Buttmann, *Greek Grammar for the Use of Schools*, tr. by Edward Everett (2nd ed.; Boston: Cummings, Hilliard, and Company, 1826), p. 277.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> As quoted by Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 821. Robertson quoted from the 1876 edition of Farrar's *Greek Syntax*, p. 123 (see p. lxviii). The edition to which this writer had access, *A Brief Greek Syntax and Hints on Greek Accidence* (New ed.; London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1868), does not seem to contain the quotation in the relevant chapter, pp. 110-27. However, Farrar does criticize various practices, as using the auxiliary verb "have" for Greek aorist verbs (pp. 118-19), which criticism appears unjustified.

in this paper. And other moods and tenses receive similar arbitrary classification in the commentaries, in spite of the warnings issued in standard grammars.

The present imperative, for example, when used with  $\mu \acute{\eta}$ , often means "stop doing such-and-such." Yet the pattern is by no means a rule. One need not claim that Paul accused Timothy of neglecting his ministerial gifts (1 Tim. 4:14)! And yet, surprisingly enough, even such a highly respected grammarian as Nigel Turner, who wrote the third volume of Moulton's *Grammar* himself appears to maintain that the rule is universal. The brilliant linguist Eugene A. Nida follows suit. One need only consult the various standard commentaries at such a passage as John 20:17, "Jesus says unto her, Do not touch me," to observe the confidence with which most commentators construct the scene--Jesus trying to wrench his feet from the woman's grasp. Comparatively few commentators even mention the alternative possibility that Mary was about to touch the Lord.

Along similar lines, many writers misunderstand the impact of the

<sup>1</sup> Moulton, for example, carefully explains the qualifications and exceptions involved, *Prolegomena*, pp. 125-26.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Turner, *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament* (hereinafter referred to as *Insights*; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1965), pp. 29-30. This is not the only difference that separates the authors of Volumes I and III of the famous grammar! See E. V. McKnight, "The New Testament and 'Biblical Greek," *The Journal of Bible and Religion*, XXXIV:1 (January, 1966), 36-42, and Nigel Turner, "The Literary Character of New Testament Greek," *New Testament Studies*, 20:2 (January, 1974), 107-14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964), pp. 199-200; and *God's Word in Man's Language* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1952), pp. 58-59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> As Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, ed. by F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971), p. 840, n. 38, in spite of his previous statement, p. 195, n. 65.

aorist tense. Frank Stagg in his instructive article "The Abused Aorist," faults such illustrious names as F. W. Beare, Wilhelm Bousset, R. H. Charles, Joachim Jeremias, Robert Law, Leon Morris, J. A. Sanders, Rudolf Schnackenburg, A. N. Wilder, Raymond E. Brown, and C. H. Dodd with misusing the aorist tense. They apply it, he says, too readily to the action itself as being punctiliar, rather than to the author's presentation or view of the action. The correct appreciation of the aorist as mere "non-determined" is not new. Ernest DeWitt Burton employed it during the previous century in the field of aorist prohibitions. More recently James L. Boyer has noted that the aorist expresses "simple occurrence," not "single occurrence," citing several examples of aorists that describe durative action which is being conceived of as punctiliar.

The aorist is the most colorless, the least distinctive of all the tenses in Greek. It is the catch-all tense which was used whenever there was no particular reason to emphasize duration or abiding result.<sup>4</sup>

Hence, to continue in his words, the interpretation of aorists should be equally broad:

From the viewpoint of exegesis a safe rule, perhaps slightly exaggerated, might be: When you come to a present, or imperfect, or perfect tense, dig into it and squeeze out of it its full significance. But when you come to an aorist tense, translate it as simply as possible and forget it.<sup>5</sup>

And yet respected scholars still "abuse the aorist." Nigel Turner has

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Stagg, in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 91:2 (June, 1972), esp. 222-28.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Burton, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek* (hereinafter referred to as *Moods and Tenses*; 3rd ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1898), pp. 75-76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Boyer, "Semantics in Biblical Interpretation," *Grace Journal*, 3:2 (Spring, 1962), 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> *Ibid*. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid*.

applied his understanding of the aorist to the science of textual criticism. Admitting that external manuscript evidence favors the inclusion of "daily" in Luke 9:23, he yet believes that intrinsic "grammatical evidence" rules it out, since "the addition of 'daily,' which has excellent manuscript authority, is impossible with the aorist imperative, for it makes the command durative." Note the use of that word "impossible." Should not grammar be derived from the text, and not vice versa?

While misunderstanding may err on the side of a too stringent interpretation, it may also err by overlooking subtle but important shifts in tense. In a very helpful article Julius R. Mantey disputes with Dr. Henry Cadbury of Harvard, who takes the periphrastic future perfects in Matthew 16:19 and 18:18 to be equivalent to simple futures. Mantey compares these passages to the simple perfects of John 20:23 and demonstrates that the future perfect tense itself provides the key to these difficult verses.<sup>2</sup> The apostles simply will be ratifying in their official capacity what has already been decided and established in heaven.

A false understanding of the Greek tenses can lead to arbitrary and misleading exegesis. A correct understanding will throw light and clarity upon God's true revelation.

Modern Translation Approach of Eugene A. Nida Central to this study are the issues of translation and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Turner, *Insights*, p. 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mantey, "Evidence that the Perfect Tense in John 20:23 and Matthew 16:19 is Mistranslated," *The Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 16:3 (Summer, 1973), esp. 129, 136.

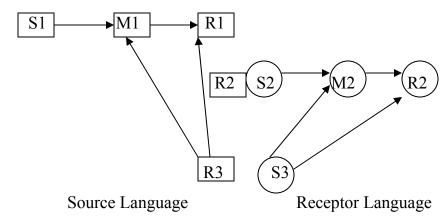
interpretation. No modern treatment of tense exeges is can ignore the presuppositions of recent translation theory. The word "presuppositions" was chosen purposefully, since many conclusions in this field stem from admittedly theological premises. Eugene Albert Nida is the best possible spokesman for the new approach. Born in 1914, he studied at the University of California at Los Angeles and the University of Southern California, and received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 1943. An ordained Baptist minister, he was honored with D.D. degrees from Philadelphia's Eastern Baptist Seminary in 1956 and from Southern California Baptist Seminary in 1959. Then in 1967 he obtained the earned Th.D. degree from the University of Munster in West Germany. From 1937 to 1953 he was Professor of Linguistics for the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the University of Oklahoma. Since 1943 he has been the Secretary of Translations for the American Bible Society. Internationally, he is the Coordinator of Research in Translations for the United Bible Societies--a post from which he exerts enormous influence over virtually every new published Bible translation throughout the world. Also, he provides an excellent focus for discussion since he is a prolific writer. In addition to being associate editor of Practical Anthropology, he is the author of numerous scholarly articles and of at least ten books dealing with Bible translation.<sup>1</sup>

## The Essence of the Theory

The following diagram appears in a recent article by Eugene

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Detals in this paragraph are taken from "Nida, Eugene Albert," *Who's Who in America:* 1972-1973 (37th ed.; 2 vols.; Chicago: Marquis Who's Who, Inc., 1972), II, 2334.

Nida.1



The top horizontal arrow in the diagram represents the original writing of a Scriptural portion. The square boxes indicate that the entire process was carried out in the original language--e.g., Greek. S1 is the original "source" or author; M1 is the "message," or form of the writing itself; and R1 is the original "receptor" of the message. The second horizontal arrow represents a translation of the passage into another language, the circles indicating the new language--e.g., English. The translator, R2 S2, fulfills two functions, as the symbols indicate. He must be first of all a receptor of the message in the original language, and then he must become the source of the translated message, M2, for the receptor, R2, who knows only the second language. The bottom symbol, R3 S3 represents the critic of the translation--a person who, even as the translator, must be familiar with both the original language and that of the translation.

The modern theory can now symbolically be stated thusly:

$$(R1=R2) > (M1=M2)$$

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The diagram and the following explanation are found in Eugene A. Nida, "Implications of Contemporary Linguistics for Biblical Scholarship," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 91:1 (March, 1972), 87-89.

Similar receptor response outweighs similar message form or content. Nida indicates with dotted lines the traditional method of judging translations. The critic looks for literary equivalence between M1 and M2-that is, between the two written texts. He expects literal translations of vocabular and syntax. As much as possible the exact form of the original is ought in the translation. Such a critic applauds what Nida calls an "F-E" translation ("Formal-Equivalence" translation), as, for example, the American Standard Version of 1901.<sup>1</sup>

But Nida defends the new method, indicated by the curved arrows. The critic should compare not the formal equivalence of the texts, but rather the response produced in the two receptors. The modern reader should have he same degree of understanding as he reads the translation as the original Greek readers had in the first Christian centuries. The modern critic, therefore, will prefer a more free translation, what Nida calls a "D-E" translation ("Dynamic-Equivalence" translation), as, for example, the Phillips translation.<sup>2</sup> The D-E translation is characterized by numerous departures from traditional standards. Often words are not translated literally, but are adapted to different cultural milieus. Thus "snow" becomes "kapok down" and "blood" becomes "death." Grammatical syntax also often is changed radically; and verb tenses, of course, need not be slavishly reproduced in a D-E translation.

Nida, Toward a Science of Translating, pp. 186, 192.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> As The New Testament: Today's English Version at Rom. 5:9, "by his death" (Gk. ἐν τῷ αἵματι), sponsored by the American Bible Society (New York: Pocket Books, 1966).

Nida attributes the phenomenal rapidity of this change in translation theory from "literalness" to "content transfer" to five major developments in recent years:

- (1) the rapidly expanding field of structural linguistics, . . . the liberation of translators from the philological presuppositions of the preceding generation.
- (2) the application of present-day methods in structural linguistics to the special problems of Bible translation by members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, also known as the Wycliffe Bible Translators.
- (3) the program of the United Bible Societies, . . . conferences, its journal *The Bible Translator*, helps for translators, and its own research and field work.
- (4) the publication since 1955 of *Babel*, under the auspices of UNESCO, a quarterly linguistic journal of contemporary trends.
- (5) machine translation . . . particularly in such places as the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in Moscow, Birkbeck College (University of London), and in the United States at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Harvard University, IBM Research Center in Tarrytown, New York, Georgetown University, and the University of California at Berkeley.<sup>1</sup>

There can be no doubt of Nida's favoring the new trend. His strongest criticism is reserved for such literal translations as the English Revised Version and the American Standard Version--citing a particularly obscurely worded example, he upbraids the "pernicious effects of the literal, awkward syntax," and continues, "The words may be English, but the grammar is not; and the sense is quite lacking."

# **Conflict with Traditional Theory**

Deep crevices separate the two approaches. Nida is aware of these. He mentions two conflicts in translation theory: "(1) literal vs. free

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating*, p. 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 20-21.

translating, and (2) emphasis on form vs. content"; and also three conflicts in theological approach: "(1) inspiration vs. philology, (2) tradition vs. contemporary authority, and (3) theology vs. grammar." While one may object to the choice of terms, it is clear that Nida favors the second alternative in each case. Both translators and receptors must fall into one of the two categories. Nida asserts that superior translators will follow his method:

F-E translations tend to distort the message more than D-E translations, since those persons who produce D-E translations are in general more adept in translating, and in order to produce D-E renderings they must perceive more fully and satisfactorily the meaning of the original text.<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, the more enlightened readers will appreciate the new theory:

The degree of sophistication of the receptors influences the extent to which one can use functional equivalents. In this connection it is important to note that so-called primitive peoples, whom we would regard as entirely unsophisticated, are usually quite ready to accept radical departures in the direction of functional rather than formal equivalents. Similarly, highly educated people in the Western world will gladly accept such far-reaching alterations. But partially educated persons, whether in folk or civilized societies, appear to have difficulty with anything but the most literal renderings, for their newly acquired respect for "book learning" seems to prejudice them against real comprehension and in favor of literalistic obscurantism. A little education can be a dangerous thing!<sup>4</sup>

And lest it be thought that obscurantism is dead, translators and publishers are warned to proceed with due strategy to overcome the resistance of the newly literate.

The introductions of revisions is essentially a matter of education. A church that has used a traditional text of the Scriptures for several generations will obviously not find immediately acceptable a radically different translation, reflecting contemporary insights

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating*, p. 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> *Ibid* , p. 172.

into text, exegesis, and lexicon. Rather, it is necessary to prepare a whole series of such revisions, with definite grades of adjustment to the theoretical goal. Thus, over a period of some twenty to fifty years the people may become better prepared to accept what is more nearly accurate and meaningful.<sup>1</sup>

But the heart of the matter is theological. At what point is "inspiration" applicable, and what aspects of the original should the translation thus seek to preserve? Nida candidly discusses the problem in the following definitive paragraph:

One must recognize, however, that neo-orthodox theology has given a new perspective to the doctrine of divine inspiration. For the most part, it conceives of inspiration primarily in terms of the response of the receptor, and places less emphasis on what happened to the source at the time of writing. An oversimplified statement of this new view is reflected in the often quoted expression, "The Scriptures are inspired because they inspire me." Such a concept of inspiration means, however, that attention is inevitably shifted from the details of wording in the original to the means by which the same message can be effectively communicated to present-day readers. Those who espouse the traditional, orthodox view of inspiration quite naturally focus attention on the presumed readings of the "autographs." The result is that, directly or indirectly, they often tend to favor quite close, literal renderings as the best way of preserving the inspiration of the writer by the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, those who hold the neo-orthodox view, or who have been influenced by it, tend to be freer in their translating: as they see it, since the original document inspired its readers because it spoke meaningfully to them, only an equally meaningful translation can have this same power to inspire present-day receptors.<sup>2</sup>

If the new method were found only among the neo-orthodox, the Bible student could deal with it easily. Yet, Nida continues by noting the adherence of many evangelicals as well to the new method:

It would be quite wrong, however, to assume that all those who emphasize fully meaningful translations necessarily hold to a neo-orthodox view of inspiration; for those who have combined orthodox theology with deep evangelistic or missionary convictions have been equally concerned with the need for making translations entirely meaningful.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Nida, Toward a Science of Translating

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid* , p. 27. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*.

No one would dispute the essence of Nida's claim. For example, the paraphrased *Living Bible* has received immense publicity from evangelist Billy Graham. The controversy among conservatives concerning such translation theories will continue to rage until a correct understanding of the place of syntax in inspiration and exegesis can be ascertained and defended. May this study contribute to that end.

## Some Criticisms of the Modern Theory

While a full analysis of this conflict deserves a separate treatment, two shortcomings of the modern theory are relevant to this paper. First, the orthodox doctrine of inspiration does indeed place the vital point on the written autograph, not the original receptors. Nowhere does the Bible claim that the R1 of Nida's notation understood the full import of the revelation. Rather the message, M1, was inspired and inerrant (cf. Isa. 6:9-10; 2 Pet. 3:16).

Second while almost all Scripture is lucid, each passage is a rich mine from which other truth, not immediately apparent, can be extracted. Using an analogy, an electronic musical synthesizer can produce a "pure" musical note, which would appear as a simple, perfect curve on an oscilloscope. A fine violin, playing the same note, will produce in addition a innumerable variety of overtones or harmonics, which would cause the curve on the oscilloscope to appear jagged and irregular. The Bible resembles the violin, not the synthesizer. All one has to do is read the Scripture proofs listed in any discussion in any standard systematic theology text to see the point: many verses which are teaching one main thought also contain subsidiary words, phrases, or clauses which, when compared to other passages, may imply some doctrine or truth quite

unrelated to that main thought. These are the "harmonics" of the Scripture. In a "free" translation the main thought is often preserved, or even emphasized. But in the process many of these "harmonics" are of necessity lost. In addition, the new wording will often introduce new subsidiary thoughts which are foreign to both the original message and the original receptors. And it cannot be argued that the translator can know what these points are and can thus preserve them in his free translation. Biblical exegesis is never complete, and no one knows what great truths still lie hidden in the vocabulary and syntax of Scripture.

It also should be mentioned that the "orthodox" translator does not seek "literalistic obscurantism." Rather, he desires to reproduce the exact meaning of the passage, within the limits of translatability, into modern speech. But he tries to preserve as much of the passage intact as possible. He seeks to know the exact force of a present tense, a dative pronoun, a particular vocabulary term. Each and every item of the sentence is weighed and analyzed. And as far as is possible, each part, along with the whole, is reproduced with its nearest equivalent in the new language. He thus must master thoroughly the Biblical language, and also the language of the translation. Perhaps, as Tyndale and Luther, the translator will even enrich and expand the potential and force of his own language, as he seeks to adapt it to the sublime thoughts of Scripture.

Concerning the present indicative tense in particular, this study was undertaken to see just what that tense does imply in the New Testament. If the tense was used strictly, it should be translated strictly. If it was used loosely, it should be translated loosely.

In either case, the resulting translation will be "orthodox."

Complexity of the Present Indicative

At first thought, the present indicative should be the easiest of the tenses to understand. Normally, it is the first to be learned. Yet, perhaps because of its very commonness, its usage patterns bewilder the investigator who feels at home with consistent and dependable limitations and rules. Some of its perplexing features are here noted under several heads.

## **Linguistic Questions**

The linguistic status of the present indicative in both classical and koine Greek is now a live issue. Older traditional grammar claims the indicative mood establishes the tenses as specifically defining time, allowing several categories of special usage exceptions. Most modern grammarians claim that the type of action, *Aktionsart*, or view of action, "aspect," is more important even in the indicative. Some even believe the present indicative to be a "zero" tense, after the analogy of early Indo-European languages, which in many contexts is a simple substitute for the prevailing tense of the passage.

## **Translation Questions**

In the more practical sphere, Bible translators must grapple with all the kinds of present indicatives, including perfective, historical, and futuristic usages. Should the translator reproduce the present tense, or should he use the appropriate past or future tense?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> E.g., J. Gresham Machen, *New Testament Greek for Beginners* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), pp. 20-22.

Translations differ: some keep the present (as in Mark 10:1, KJV and ASV, "cometh"); some change the tense to suit the context (RSV and NIV, "went," also NEB, "came"); the New American Standard Version compromises by using a cumbersome punctuation system ("\*went"). Which method best conveys the meaning of the Greek text?

## **Literary Questions**

The use of the historical present also figures largely in the question of Synoptic origins. The descending percentage uses from Mark to Matthew to Luke often are used as arguments to sustain the theory of Markan priority. A careful comparison of present indicative usage in the Synoptic Gospels should help to shed light on this question.

## **Exegetical Questions**

The extremely frequent occurrence of the present indicative results in its inclusion in many important historical, prophetical, and doctrinal passages. At times the meaning of the passage itself depends on the understanding of the verb's tense and mood usage. Some demand a time interpretation (John 3:36, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"; 8:58, "Before Abraham was, I am"); others must be interpreted in terms of aspect (Hebrews 7:3, "abideth a priest continually"; 1 John 3:6, "whosoever abideth in him sinneth not"). In some passages a possible futuristic use introduces various possible interpretations (John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world").

Another exegetical question concerns the use of the present indicative in various classes of conditional sentences. There are two variables: the degree of certainty or uncertainty indicated by various

Biblical authors in these constructions, and the time element, if any, impliedjn the condition.

## Aktionsart and Aspect

When one thinks of "tense," he automatically relates the word to time: past, present, or future. Yet in Greek, careful study reveals that tense often performs a double function.

Every tense has generally speaking a double function to perform, at least in the indicative: it expresses at once an action (continuance, completion, continuance in completion), and a time-relation (present, past, future), and the latter absolutely, i.e. with reference to the stand-point of the speaker or narrator, not relatively, i.e. with reference to something else which occurs in the speech or narrative.<sup>1</sup>

This double function is most apparent in the indicative, but even in that mood the time element is secondary.

The time of the action of the verb is often left to be inferred from the content, and cannot always be certainly told from the form of the verb. This is almost invariably the case with the moods other than the indicative, and is sometimes the case in the Indicative mood itself.<sup>2</sup>

The non-time feature of Greek tenses perplexed grammarians for many years. Occasionally a scholar with above average insight would fleetingly touch the nerve, as B. L. Gildersleeve, when he mused, "Moods are temporal, tenses are modal." Many older grammars neglect the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Friedrich Blass, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, tr. by Henry St. John Thackeray (2nd ed.; London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1905), p. 187.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> H. P. V. Nunn, *A Short Syntax of New Testament Greek* (5th ed.; Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1938), p. 66.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve, *Problems in Greek Syntax* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1903), D. 127; this book is a reprint of articles from the *American Journal of Philology*, XXIII (1902), of which he was the editor (p. 3)

subject altogether in discussions of the indicative.<sup>1</sup> Although the original edition of Goodwin omits the subject, the revision by Charles B. Gulick remedies the deficiency. Gulick notes in his preface,

Goodwin was a master in his own field of moods and tenses, and his exact knowledge combined with common sense produced a lucidity of statement that could hardly be improved. . . . I have tried to emphasize more distinctly the "character of the action."<sup>2</sup>

And in the appropriate section Gulick inserts his own understanding of the dual nature of Greek verb tense:

The tenses may express two relations. They may designate the time of an action . . . and also its character. . . The character of an action appears in all the moods and in the infinitive and participle; the relation of time appears always in the indicative, and to a certain extent in some dependent moods and in the participle.<sup>3</sup>

This new understanding of tense significance sprang from the investigations in Germany of semantic scholars at about the turn of the century. It was James Hope Moulton who first popularized the terms "linear" and "punctiliar" in English New Testament Greek studies in his first edition of his *Prolegomena* in 1906.<sup>4</sup> At this stage the German word *Aktionsart* ("kind of act-on") became a standard designation in English as well:

Our first subject under the Verb will be one which has not yet achieved an entrance into the grammars. For the last few years the comparative philologists--mostly in Germany--have been busily investigating

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> William W. Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar* (Rev. ed.; Boston: Ginn & Company, 1879), pp. 246-56; and George Benedict Winer, *A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament* (hereinafter referred to as *Idiom*), rev. by Gottlieb Lunemann, tr. from the 7th Ger. ed. by J. Henry Thayer (Rev. ed.; Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1874), pp. 264-81.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> William Watson Goodwin, *Greek Grammar*, rev, by Charles Burton Gulick (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1930), p. iv.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid , p. 266.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> C. F.D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (hereinafter referred to as *Idiom Book*; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 5.

the problems of *Aktionsart*, or the "kind of action" denoted by different verbal formations.<sup>1</sup>

The term now is thoroughly entrenched. "Tenses in Greek indicate the kind of action, rather than the time of the action. Hence grammarians in Germany coined this technical term, which has now become universally accepted."<sup>2</sup>

Grammarians have discerned three major types of action in Greek.

The three essential kinds of action are thus momentary or punctiliar when the action is regarded as a whole and may be represented by a dot (•), linear or durative action which may be represented by a continuous line (----), the continuance of perfected or completed action which may be represented by this graph (\*-----).

Eugene Nida, using the alternative term "aspect," to be defined later, notes six possible categories in Indo-European languages.

Aspect, which defines the nature of the action, is a much more frequently used grammatical category than tense. Even within the Indo-European languages it was at one time more significant than at present. As a description of the kind of action involved in the verb, aspect serves to differentiate a number of contrasts, of which some of the most common are: (1) complete vs. incomplete, (2) punctiliar vs. continuous, (3) single (or simulfactive) vs. repetitive, (4) increasing vs. decreasing, (5) beginning vs. ending, and (6) single vs. habitual or customary.<sup>4</sup>

According to these grammarians, in the earliest stages of Greek the stem of the verb indicated its *Aktionsart*, as it is called. Later the verbal prefix and suffix further defined its time or nature.<sup>5</sup>

Certain durative roots could be made perfective, for example, by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 108.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Turner, *Insights*, D. 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 823.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Nida, Toward a Science of Translating, p. 199.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Moule, *Idiom Book*, p. 6.

addition of prefixed prepositions.<sup>1</sup> Classical Greek also sought to maintain *Aktionsart* distinctions within the future tense.<sup>2</sup> In any case, time distinctions in verbs developed later.

It may be more of a surprise to be told that in our own family of languages Tense is proved by scientific inquiry to be relatively a late invention, so much so that the elementary distinction between Past and Present had only been developed to a rudimentary extent when the various branches of the family separated so that they ceased to be mutually intelligible.<sup>3</sup>

Ideally, assuming three types of action and three sorts of time, the language could have developed nine tenses. However, language being a human creation, it hardly develops along theoretically, mechanically precise lines.

A completer system of Tenses would include the nine produced by expressing continuous, momentary, and completed action in past, present, and future time. English can express all these, and more, but Greek is defective.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, terms and titles often fail to indicate precisely the concept involved. Such is the case with the term *Aktionsart*. When one hears "kind of action," he easily falls into a trap. The next logical deduction is that the verbal tense can define the sort of action which occurs in reality. Nigel Turner, as shown earlier, tends to follow this lead. This theoretical basis appears clearly in this statement:

Examining carefully the kind of action . . . grammarians have analysed it as either Durative (lasting) or iterative (repeating) in all moods of the present tense. The *Aktionsart* of the present must be clearly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, pp. 111-13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Blass, *Grammar*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, D. 108.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> James Hope Moulton, *An Introduction to the Study of New Testament Greek* (hereinafter referred to as New Testament Greek; 4th ed.; London: The Epworth Press, 1914), p. 191.

distinguished from that of the aorist, which is not durative or iterative) and expresses no more than one specific instance of the action of the verb, involving usually a single moment of time.<sup>1</sup>

Even when distinguishing *Aktionsart* from the corrected term, "aspect," he mixes his definition:

Essentially the tense in Greek expresses the kind of action, not time, which the speaker has in view and the state of the subject, or as the Germans say, the *Aspekt*. In short, the tense-stems indicate the point of view from which the action or state is regarded.<sup>2</sup>

While properly noting the "point of view from which the action or state is regarded," he defines "aspect" as "the state of the subject," which definition clouds the issue. A clearer definition of the two terms is this: "The original function of the so-called tense stems of the verb in Indo-European languages was not that of levels of time (present, past, future) but that of *Aktionsarten* (kinds of action) or aspects (points of view)." Note there the contrasting emphases in the terms *Aktionsart* and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Turner, *Insights*, p. 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Nigel Turner, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, Vol. III: Syntax (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), p. 59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> F. Blass and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (hereinafter referred to as BDF), tr. and rev. from the 9th-10th Ger. ed. by Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 116. Here is a good opportunity to compare two English editions of Blass's *Grammar*: Thayer's translation of Blass, and Funk's translation of Blass-Debrunner. The former is very readable and lucid, and provides an invaluable help to understanding the latter work, with its large mass of detail and extreme abbreviation, which render it hardly discernable to most Greek students. In Thackeray's "Preface to the English Edition," written in 1905, he compares Blass's grammar to that of Winer: "The books to which the author expresses his obligations are the grammars of Winer and Buttmann, Jos. Viteau, and Burton. The first-named of these works having grown to such voluminous proportions, the present grammar, written in a smaller compass, may, the author hopes, find a place beside it for such persons as maintain the opinion μέγα βιβλίον μέγα κακόν." Indeed, there has been an ironic turn of events. Imagine how dismayed Thackeray would be, were he to discover that Blass's latest edition has far surpassed even the μέγεθος of Winer!

"aspect." *Aktionsart* draws one's attention to the event itself; "aspect" more properly emphasizes the vantage point of the author.

This label (*Aktionsart*) has since become well known among New Testament grammarians, but it is possible that its significance is less well understood. In common with most English-speaking classical scholars, I prefer to use another label, "aspect," for what is referred to is not the kind of action, but the way in which the writer or speaker regards the action in its context--as a whole act, as a process, or as a state. <sup>1</sup>

To avoid the confusion inherent in the term *Aktionsart*, many Greek scholars now prefer the term "aspect" as designating the chief meaning of the tenses. For example, Maximilian Zerwick consistently prefers "aspect" to the term "tense" in his grammar, and does not use the term *Aktionsart*.<sup>2</sup> The new term provides an accurate insight into the syntactical data. The aorist tense can describe durative action; the present can describe punctiliar action; both tenses can describe perfected action. As W. D. Chamberlain has put it, "Remember that the same act may be looked at from any of these three viewpoints."<sup>3</sup>

The aspect of the present indicative will be seen to be complex, since the aspect is influenced also by the verbal root and by the historical evolution of present tense usage. However, a correct understanding of the concept of aspect itself will enable one to profit most greatly in any inductive study of the data.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> K. L. McKay, "Syntax in Exegesis," *Tyndale Bulletin*, 23 (1972), 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Zerwick, *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples* (hereinafter referred to as Biblical Greek), tr. from the 4th Lat. ed. by Joseph P. Smith (Rome: Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1963), e.g., pp. 77-78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> William Douglas Chamberlain, *An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 67.

### II. THE PLAN OF ATTACK

## An Inductive Approach

The most valuable data for the study of any Greek point of syntax in the New Testament is found in the Biblical text itself. Especially when the occurrences are frequent, the knowledge of New Testament usage provides the best guide--whether in lexicography or in syntax.

The opposite method seeks absolute grammatical rules first, and then seeks to impose these rules on every Biblical example. An outstanding example of the extremes to which this method can lead was cited earlier<sup>1</sup>--Nigel Turner's attempt to impose an inferior reading on the text because of supposed "grammatical evidence."

The method of this paper is inductive. The primary material shall be the New Testament examples.<sup>2</sup> With over five thousand occurrences of the present indicative in the New Testament, the material is more than ample to form valid conclusions. And these conclusions, in turn, should provide the most relevant guidelines to the exegesis of the present

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See above, p. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The superiority of the inductive method in grammatical research does not necessarily imply the superiority of that method in teaching a new language to beginners. For an interesting conflict of viewpoints, compare Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve, *Hellas and Hesperia*, *or the Vitality of Greek Studies in America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1909), pp. 29-30, who offers an amusing yet stringent criticism of inductive teaching methods, with William Sanford LaSor, *Handbook of New Testament Greek: An Inductive Approach Based on the Greek Text of Acts* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1973), I, vii-ix. LaSor's text, in fact, outlines a one year Greek course for beginners, using the inductive approach.

indicative.

The best preparation for proper Biblical exegesis, particularly in matters of semantics, the meaning of words, including both lexical and grammatical study, is the widest possible experience with and constant practice in the use of the original languages. One dare not look up a word in the analytical lexicon, discover it is a verb in the aorist tense, turn to the aorist tense section of Dana and Mantey, then say, "The original Greek says so and so."

Previous investigations have failed to treat the New Testament verb exhaustively. Normally, each writer will list a particular usage category and will offer three to six examples for each. Comparing the grammars, one notices that the examples are nearly always the same, leading one to suspect that they merely have been handed down and received from one generation to the next without independent investigation. For example, Zerwick's discussion of concessive clauses<sup>2</sup> cites, with one addition, a long list of illustrative references--which are identical, even in their order, with an earlier list compiled by Burton.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the failure to be exhaustive often has resulted in an unbalanced categorization. For example, the so-called "conative present" is catalogued in nearly every grammar as a major category. Yet an inductive search reveals fewer than five New Testament examples, each of which would fall more logically into another category with nearly fifty examples. Another drawback of previous investigations has been the retention of the older categories, even after the developments in the field of verbal aspect. Statements like this one by Chamberlain--"Those futuristic presents are usually aoristic"--appear with regularity, but without

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Boyer, "Semantics in Biblical Interpretation," p. 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, p. 102.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 112-13.

proof.<sup>1</sup> Also, recent studies in comparative linguistics, including the "zero tense" hypothesis, have raised serious questions regarding the interpretation and force of the present tense when used for non-present time; and these questions have yet to be faced by Biblical scholars. Finally, an exhaustive, inductive study brings to light many thoughts and suggestive examples which lead to the formation of newer, more relevant categories.

#### Method of Procedure

Since every inductive study must begin with a full collection of data, the first step was to locate and record every present indicative verb in the New Testament. This was no small task. The search began with a careful reading of the Greek New Testament, underlining every occurrence of a present indicative verb form. Each of these was written on a separate file card with the reference. The text used was the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament, second edition.<sup>2</sup> In order to check the list for omissions, it was compared with Nathan E. Han's *A Parsing Guide to the Greek New Testament* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1971). This work lists and parses most of the verb forms verse by verse throughout the New Testament. While Han's list is based on the twenty-fifth edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek text (p. vii), it still provides an effective check, since the two texts normally are quite similar. However, Han's list is not complete. It omits repeated verb forms which have been listed already within the previous several verses, and it omits many

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chamberlain, An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ed. by Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, and Allen Wikgren (2nd ed.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1968).

27

first person singular forms. In addition, it contains several omissions and numerous errors. Hence it has been necessary to correct the original data from time to time--adding overlooked examples, and deleting misread ones. The final result is listed in Appendix A. It is believed this list is complete. If anyone should find a missed example, the author would appreciate the information.

The second step was perhaps the most demanding of all. The over five thousand verb cards were repeatedly analyzed and distributed among various exegetical or syntactical categories. These categories often shifted as the study progressed, with resulting mergers, divisions, expansions, and multiplications. Some verbs, like people, just seem to dislike fitting in with the others, no matter how the arrangements are made. Finally, however, the basic lines began to form and solidify, resulting in the categories presented in Part II.

The third step involved a detailed study of each category. The lines of study were determined by the nature of the category, the exegetically significant issues involved, and the variety of the Biblical examples. In each case there is at least an effort to state a conclusion regarding any controversy concerning the particular category (e.g., the aspect of "punctiliar presents," the zero tense concept for historical or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> E.g.  $\pi\rho o\sigma \epsilon \dot{\upsilon}\chi \epsilon \sigma \theta \epsilon$  in Mt. 5:44 and 6:9 is parsed as an indicative, as is  $\mu \dot{\eta} \gamma \dot{\iota} \nu \epsilon \sigma \theta \epsilon$  in 6:16; Mt. 16:8 and Mk. 8:17 διαλογίζεσθε is listed as imperfect; the three dative participles  $\pi \epsilon \nu \theta o \dot{\upsilon} \sigma \iota$ , κλαίουσιν, and  $\pi \epsilon \rho \iota \pi \alpha - \tau o \dot{\upsilon} \sigma \iota \nu$  in Mk. 16:10, 12, are parsed as indicatives, whereas the indicative  $\pi \rho \dot{\alpha} \sigma \sigma o \upsilon \sigma \iota$  in Acts 17:17 is parsed as a dative participle. These mistakes are typical of many others--e.g., the verb "ye sin against Christ" in 1 Cor. 8:12 is parsed as either indicative or imperative! Yet a work of this much detail, especially in its first edition, must necessarily contain many typographical and editorial errors which will undoubtedly be corrected subsequently. In spite of these, it represents a major accomplishment, and a welcome balm to Greek students everywhere.

futuristic presents, or the precise force of simple conditional presents).

The final step was to compare the results of the study with traditional and contemporary literature about the Greek present indicative. The wide divergencies in this literature make it impossible to analyze it as a block. Rather, it appears that various authors seem to explain the data better at various points, and are less adequate elsewhere. As a result; the literature must be considered in the discussion of each category rather than as a unit at the end. Likewise, various Bible verses or passages will be discussed in the chapter dealing with the appropriate category.

### Summary of the Study's Results

It is the conclusion of this author that most previous definitions of the exact nature and force of the present indicative are inadequate. The tense can describe action in any time--past, present, or future; and it can describe action of any kind--durative, punctiliar, or perfective. In short, time and *Aktionsart* are both inadequate concepts to define the present tense.

Concerning the modern zero-tense claim, it is concluded that the concept is valid for certain roots and certain authors. But it is believed that in portions of Mark's and John's writings the historical present is a vivid, narrative form, and that in Revelation many futuristic presents are likewise vivid.

Concerning the tense's use in conditions, it is concluded that a present indicative protasis implies nothing as to the truth of the protasis; but, rather, that it establishes the subject as a question of fact.

Finally, concerning the aspect of the present indicative, it is conclusions that the tense has--except in zero usages--a legitimate aspect. It normally signifies a durative and/or present time aspect. The aspect is not related to the type of action, but to the force and attention with which the author perceives and relates it.

## III. THE FREQUENCY OF THE PRESENT INDICATIVE

#### **Total Occurrences**

The present indicative occurs with consistently high regularity. As A. T. Robertson has put it, "The present indicative, from the nature of the case, is the most frequent in actual usage and hence shows the greatest diversity of development." This author counted over five thousand present indicatives in the New Testament. The count includes the verb  $oi\delta\alpha$ , which has "come to be used as a practical durative present,"<sup>2</sup> in spite of its perfect form.<sup>3</sup> The following table shows the number of present indicatives counted in each chapter of the New Testament.

TABLE 1 PRESENT INDICATIVES PER CHAPTER

	chapter occurrences			chapter	occurrences
Matthew	1	2	Matthew	15	34
	2	8		16	26
	3	17		17	21
	4	11		18	26
	5	40		19	27
	6	42		20	28
	7	21		21	30
	8	22		22	31
	9	33		23	44
	10	21		24	27
	11	32		25	12
	12	43		26	63
	13	59		27	29
	14	13		28	6

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 350. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 350. In the same category is **ξοικεν** in James 1:6, 23. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 881.

TABLE 1--Continued

	chapter	occurrences		chapter	occurrences
Matthew	total	768	John	3	57
3.6.1		20		4	69
Mark	1	20		5	65
	2	40		6	67
	3 4	28 49		7 8	66
	5	28		8 9	101 59
	6	28 23		10	71
	7	39		11	45
	8	38		12	38
	9	43		13	62
	10	44		14	56
	11	31		15	31
	12	36		16	48
	13	18		17	21
	14	61		18	41
	15	24		19	32
	16	7		20	36
	total	529		21	54
				total	1,083
Luke					
	1	8			
	2	6		Acts 1	5
	3	10		2	19
	4	12		3	11
	5	24		4	10
	6	41		5	7
	7 8	46 32		6	2 16
	9	31		7 8	14
	10	23		9	16
	11	54		10	27
	12	61		11	
	13	30		12	6
	14	24		13	16
	15	22		14	4
	16	29		15	10
	17	16		16	11
	18	27		17	21
	19	22		18	5
	20	32		19	19
	21	10		20	15
	22	37		21	22
	23	20		22	16
	24	19		23	21
Iohn	total	636		24	13
John	1	50		25 26	19
	1 2	50 14		26 27	30 11
	2	14		2.1	11

TABLE 1--Continued

	chapter	occurrences		apter_	occurrences
Acts	28	7	2 Corinthians	10	13
	total	379		11	40
Romans				12	27
	1	20		13	18
	2	28		total	216
	3	22			
	4	12	Galatians	1	13
	5	9		2	15
	6	15		3	25
	7	34		4	30
	8	43		5	22
	9	19		6	10
	10	21		total	115
	11	18			
	12	7	Ephesians	1	5
	13	10		2	9
	14	30		3	8
	15	12		4	11
	16	14		5	22
	total	314		6	9
				total	64
1 Corinthians	s 1	16			
	2	12	Philippians	1	17
	3	30	11	2	12
	4	24		3	13
	5	6		4	16
	6	31		total	58
	7	49			
	8	17	Colossians	1	17
	9	40		2	14
	10	38		3	8
	11	39		4	9
	12	39		total	48
	13	23			
	14	45	1 Thessalonians	1	3
	15	56		2	11
	16	13		3	9
	total	478		4	14
				5	13
2 Corinthians	s 1	20		total	50
	2	10			
	3	16	2 Thessalonians	1	7
	4	14		2	8
	5	20		3	14
	6	9		total	29
	7	11			<b>-</b> /
	8	10	1 Timothy	1	11
	9	8		2	7
	-	Ŭ		_	,

# TABLE 1—Continued

1 Timothy	chapter 3	occurrences 10	2 Peter	chapter 1	occurrences 10
	4 5	8 14		2 3	9
	6	13		total	15 34
	total	63		ioiai	34
	totai	03	1 John	1	20
2 Timothy	1	12	1 301111	2	55
		15		3	42
	2 3	3		4	45
	4	6		5	46
	total	36		total	208
Titus	1	9	2 John		12
	2	1			
	3	5	3 John		19
	total	15			
			Jude		13
Philemon		11			
			Revelation	1	13
Hebrews	1	7		2	46
	2	12		3	35
	3	7		4	6
	4	7		5	6
	5	9		6	5
	6	6		7	6
	7	20		8 9	1
	8 9	10 14			11
	9 10	20		10 11	4 15
	11	15		12	6
	12	14		13	12
	13	14		14	12
	total	155		15	1
	totai	133		16	7
James	1	18		17	22
	2	25		18	7
	3	22		19	14
	4	32		20	5
	5	9		21	13
	total	106		22	14
				total	261
1 Peter	1	8			
	2	9			
	3	6			
	4	10			
	5	7			
	total	40			

Before summarizing these results, it might be profitable to note a single instance of style variation within a single book. Notice that chapters 2-3 of Revelation each contain many more present indicatives than any of the other chapters of the book. Of course, these chapters. the Letters to the Seven Churches, comprise a different literary genre from the others. Yet both portions come from John's pen. This example should warn the investigator to refrain from construing differences in present indicative frequency as evidence for divergent authorship.

The findings of Table 1 are summarized below:

TABLE 2
PRESENT INDICATIVES PER BOOK

<u>book</u>	occurrences	<u>book</u>	occurrences
Matthew	768	1 Timothy	63
Mark	529	2 Timothy	36
Luke	636	Titus	15
John	1,083	Philemon	11
Acts	379	Hebrews	155
Romans	314	James	106
1 Corinthians	478	1 Peter	40
2 Corinthians	216	2 Peter	34
Galatians	115	1 John	208
Ephesians	64	2 John	12
Philippians	58	3 John	19
Colossians	48	Jude	13
1 Thessalonians	s 50	Revelation	261
2 Thessalonians	s 29	total NT	5,740

With the number of occurrences in hand, one can see that he is working with a great deal of data. He also begins to feel that the tense is used differently by the different authors. Both these conclusions are true. But more data is needed. Total occurrence is not enough; there needs to be a frequency evaluation for each book and author.

# Present Indicative Frequency

Due to the detailed research of Robert Morgenthaler,<sup>1</sup> it is possible to compare the findings recorded above with other relevant statistical data, and to determine the frequency of the present indicative in each New Testament book and author. Morgenthaler's Greek text is Nestle's twenty-first edition;<sup>2</sup> but due to the large numbers involved and the basic similarity of that edition to the text used in this study, his figures are close enough for the purposes of this study.

## Frequency per 100 Words

Morgenthaler lists a total of 137,490 words in the Greek New Testament.<sup>3</sup> The number of words in each book is listed below, along with the number of present indicative verbs, and the resulting percentage: the number of present indicative verbs per one hundred words, to the nearest hundredth of a percent.

TABLE 3
PRESENT INDICATIVES PER 100 WORDS

book	words	P.I. verbs	P.I. verbs/100 words
Matthew	18,305	768	4.20
Mark	11,242	529	4.71
Luke	19,428	636	3.27
John	15,416	1,083	7.03
Acts	18,382	379	2.06
Romans	7,105	314	4.42
1 Corinthian	s 6,811	478	7.02
2 Corinthian	s 4,469	216	4.83
Galatians	2,229	115	5.16
Ephesians	2,418	64	2.65
Philippians	1,629	58	3.56

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Statistik des Neutestumentlichen Wortschatzes (hereinafter referred to as Statistik; Frankfurt am Main: Gotthelf-Verlag Zurich, 1958).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 164.

TABLE 3--Continued

<u>book</u>	words	P.I. verbs	P.I. verbs/100 words
Colossians	1,575	48	3.05
1 Thessalonians	1,475	50	3.39
2 Thessalonians	821	29	3.53
1 Timothy	1,588	63	3.97
2 Timothy	1,236	36	2.91
Titus	658	15	2.28
Philemon	33.3	11	3.28
Hebrews	4,951	155	3.13
James	1,749	106	6.06
1 Peter	1,678	40	2.38
2 Peter	1,098	34	3.10
1 John	2,137	208	9.73
2 John	245	12	4.90
3 John	219	19	8.68
Jude	457	13	2.84
Revelation	9,834	261	2.65
total NT	137,490	5,740	4.17

One notes several interesting phenomena. John's books have the highest usage, far above the New Testament average of 4.17 present indicatives per 100 words. His Gospel and epistles are very high; yet his Revelation is quite low, with only 2.65 present indicatives per 100 words; only four books have a lower rating. The nature of the Apocalypse's content accounts for the difference, as will be seen later. Also it is of interest that Paul's epistles tend to fall into natural groups:

Eschatological	1 Thessalonians	3.39
_	2 Thessalonians	3.53
Soteriological	Romans	4.42
	1 Corinthians	7.02
	2 Corinthians	4.83
	Galatians	5.16
Christological	Ephesians	2.65

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> However, the "letter" genre of Rev. 2-3, mentioned earlier, has a percentage more in line with John's other books. Independent count of the Nestle-Aland text, 25th ed., shows 1146 words for Rev. 2-3. With 81 present indicatives in the two chapters, the resulting percentage is 7.07 present indicatives per, 100 words, a typical figure for John.

	Philippians	3.56
	Colossians	3.05
	Philemon	3.28
Pastoral	1 Timothy	3.97
	2 Timothy	2.91
	Titus	2.28

Obviously, the lines are not absolute, but in general there is a pattern. From the highest percentages downward this order appears: Soteriological Epistles Eschatological Epistles, Christological Epistles (with Philippians reaching up and Ephesians down), then the Pastoral Epistles (overlapping the Christological Epistles).

While this frequency list is highly instructive, another frequency base would be even more helpful. Next shall be shown the frequency of the present indicative as compared with other tenses and moods, including infinitives d participles. This information will give a better idea of each author's style and tense preference.

# Frequency per 100 Verb Forms

In order to compute the number of present indicatives per 100 verbs, it was necessary first to determine the total number of verb forms in each book. The author was unable to locate this information already published; so it was necessary to add up the occurrences listed under every verb in a New Testament concordance. The concordance of Jacob Brubaker Smith<sup>1</sup> would be suited admirably for the project, since each entry charts the number of occurrences in each book, but his concordance is based on the <u>Textus Receptus</u> rather than on a later critical text.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> J. B. D Smith, ed., *Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1955).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. v.

closest work to J. B. Smith's based on a critical text, was found in the vocabulary list of Robert Morgenthaler. Using Nestle's twenty-first edition, Morgenthaler charts every vocabulary word in the New Testament, showing how many times it occurs in each book. The one drawback is that Morgenthaler combines John's epistles into a single entry. Hence, for John's epistles this author obtained the information from Moulton and Geden's Greek concordance.<sup>2</sup>

In order to ascertain the number of verbs in each book it was necessary to pick out the verbs from the other vocabulary words, to write them down ,with the number of occurrences in each book, and to add up the totals. Morgenthaler's list contains 1,846 verbs. Many occur only one time in the New Testament; the others range all the way up to the most common one, elval, which is found in the New Testament 2,450 times. In all, the New Testament contains 27,714 verb forms. Table 4 lists the number of verbs in each book, and the number of present indicatives per 100 verb forms. Notice that this table, while generally agreeing with the previous one, gives a much more accurate assessment of each book's preference for the present indicative. For example, Table 3 showed that the Gospel of John and 1 Corinthians have nearly identical P.I./100 words frequency. Yet Table 4 shows that Paul in 1 Corinthians actually is much

<sup>1</sup> Morgenthaler, *Statistik*, pp. 67-157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> W. F. Moulton and A. S. Geden, eds., A Concordance to the Greek New Testament According to the Texts of Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf and the English Revisers (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Morgenthaler, *Statistik*, p. 91. The task of recording these words and statistics was a strenuous one, involving nearly 48,000 entries in a difficult chart format. This author wishes to thank his wife, Tammie, for cheerfully doing this work with exemplary care and precision.

TABLE 4
PRESENT INDICATIVES PER 100 VERB FORMS

book	P.I. verbs	verb forms	P.I. verbs/100 verbs
Matthew	768	3,948	19.45
Mark	529	2,612	20.25
Luke	636	4,388	14.49
John	1,083	3,535	30.64
Acts	379	3,874	9.78
Romans	314	1,159	27.09
1 Corinthians	478	1,288	37.11
2 Corinthians	216	758	28.50
Galatians	115	407	28.26
Ephesians	64	325	19.69
Philippians	58	254	22.83
Colossians	48	234	20.51
1 Thessalonians	50	243	20.58
2 Thessalonians	29	122	23.77
1 Timothy	63	299	21.07
2 Timothy	36	224	16.07
Titus	15	112	13.39
Philemon	11	44	25.00
Hebrews	155	916	16.92
James	106	347	30.55
1 Peter	40	275	14.55
2 Peter	34	194	17.53
1 John	208	436	47.71
2 John	12	48	25.00
3 John	19	51	37.25
Jude	13	84	15.48
Revelation	261	1,537	16.98
total NT	5,740	27,714	20.71

more fond of the tense than John is in his Gospel. The reason for this variation is that Paul in 1 Corinthians uses all verb forms less frequently than John, thus having a lower P.I./word rating; but when he does use a verb form, he favors the present indicative, thus raising the P.I./verb rating. These findings can be summarized by listing the books in descending order of preference for the present indicative. This follows in Table 5, along with the rounded off percentage of present indicative usage, as opposed to other moods and tenses.

TABLE 5
PRESENT INDICATIVE PREFERENCE BY BOOK

rank	book	P.I. usage	rank	book	P.I. usage
1	1 John	48%	15	Colossians	21%
2	3 John	37%	16	Mark	20%
3	1 Corinthians	37%	17	<b>Ephesians</b>	20%
4	John	31%	18	Matthew	19%
5	James	31%	19	2 Peter	18%
6	2 Corinthians	28%	20	Revelation	17%
7	Galatians	28%	21	Hebrews	17%
8	Romans	27%	22	2 Timothy	16%
9	2 John	25%	23	Jude	15%
10	Philemon	25%	24	1 Peter	15%
11	2 Thessalonia	ns 24%	25	Luke	14%
12	Philippians	23%	26	Titus	13%
13	1 Timothy	21%	27	Acts	10%
14	1 Thessalonia	ns 21%			
				NT average	21%

Finally, with the above information in hand, one can ascertain each Biblical author's style and preference for the present indicative.

These findings are tabulated below; the authors are arranged in the order of the amount of their material in the New Testament.

TABLE 6
PRESENT INDICATIVE PREFERENCE BY AUTHOR

author Luke	words 37,810	verbs 8,262	P.I. verbs 1,015	%P.I. verbs/100 verbs 12%
Paul (incl. Hebrews)	37,300	6,385	1,652	26%
Paul (excl. Hebrews	32,349	5,469	1,497	27%
John	27,851	5,607	1,583	28%
Matthew	18,305	3,948	768	19%
Mark	11,242	2,612	529	20%
Hebrews (if non-Pauline)	4,951	916	155	17%
Peter	2,776	469	74	16%
James	1,749	347	106	31%
Jude	457	84	13	15%
total NT	137,490	27,714	5,740	21%

Therefore, the authors with above average present indicative usage, in descending order, are James, John, and Paul, while those below average are Mark, Matthew, Hebrews (if non-Pauline), Peter, Jude, and Luke.

## **Doubtful Cases**

In a few forms the present indicative is identical to either a subjunctive or an imperative. Normally the context clearly indicates which parsing is intended. However, occasionally both are possible within the context. In these cases the examples are included in this paper's discussion, bit they are here listed:

Mt. 11:3, προσδοκῶμεν, ind. or subj. (Burton notes that "all deliberative questions use either the Subjunctive or the Future Indicative," Moods and Tenses, p. 77.)

Mt. 24:43, γινώσκετε, ind. or impv.

Mt. 26:45, καθεῦδετε and ἀναπαύεσθε, ind. or impv., decided by punctuation

Lk. 7:19, 20, προσδοκῶμεν, see Mt. 11:3 above

Lk. 12:39, γινώσκετε, ind. or impv.

Jn. 12:19, θεωπεῖτε, ind. or impv.

Jn. 14:1a,  $\pi \iota \sigma \tau \epsilon \acute{\upsilon} \epsilon \tau \epsilon$ , ind. or impv.

Jn. 15:27,  $\mu$ αρτυρέὶτε, ind. or impv.

Acts 25:24,  $\theta \in \omega \pi \in \tau$ , ind. or impv.

1 Cor. 1:26, βλέπετε, ind. or impv.

1 Cor. 6:4, καθίζετε, ind. or impv., depends on punctuation

Eph. 5:5, "ίστε, ind. or impv.

1 Th. 2:9, **μνημονεύετε**, ind. or impv.

1 Pet. 1:6,  $\dot{\alpha}$ γαλλι $\hat{\alpha}$ σθε, ind. or impv.

1 Jn. 2:27, **μένετε**, ind. or impv.

With the inclusion of this list, the raw data for this study is complete. Part II will show the division of these occurrences into their respective categories and will develop the evidence for the conclusions of this study delineated in Part III.

# Morphological Note on Movable Nu

Students in first year Greek learn the following rule:

When the  $-o u \sigma_1$  of the third person plural of the verb comes either before a vowel or at the end of a sentence, a  $\nu$ , called movable  $\nu$ , is added to it. Thus  $\beta \lambda \dot{\epsilon} \pi o u \sigma_1 \nu \dot{\alpha} \pi o \sigma_1 \tau \dot{\delta} \lambda o u \varsigma$ . Sometimes the movable  $\nu$  is added even before a word that begins with a consonant. Thus either  $\lambda \dot{u} o u \sigma_1 \delta o \dot{u} \lambda o u \varsigma$  or  $\lambda \dot{u} o u \sigma_1 \nu \delta o \dot{u} \lambda o u \varsigma$  is correct.

Of course, the movable Nu also appears in the present indicative on the third person, singular and plural, of non-thematic verbs. The impression given in Machen's textbook is that seldom--"sometimes . . . even"--the movable Nu is used when the "rule" does not require it. However, it appears that the "rule" cited applies more to Byzantine and modern Greek than to classical or koine Greek. The movable Nu

is so universal in the forms which admit it at all, that it is only necessary to take note of omissions. Modern use, by which  $\nu$  is inserted before vowels only, is known to be wrong even for classical writers, and in Hellenistic it is altogether to be set aside.<sup>2</sup>

Actually, in Hellenistic Greek, it often runs counter to the rule:

Its particular place . . . is the pause, i.e. the end of a sentence or clause. Moreover, from the v BC on the tendency to employ  $\nu$  to avoid hiatus, and therefore to comply with the modern rule which stems from the Byzantine period, betrays itself in an increasing degree. It is very popular in the Hellenistic language, but e.g. in the papyri of the Ptolemaic period it is *omitted* often before vowels and *appears* still more often before consonants. . . . The standard MSS of the NT almost always employ it, whether a consonant or vowel follows, or the word stands at the end of a sentence.<sup>3</sup>

Interest in this subject began when it was noticed that in the New Testament examples of the present indicative, the movable Nu was nearly always present.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Machen, New Testament Greek for Beginners, p. 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> James Hope Moulton and Wilbert Francis Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Vol. II: *Accidence and Word-Formation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1929), p. 113.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> BDF, p. 12.

In fact, a careful search revealed that in only ten instances was the final Iota left final:

Mt. 18:10,	βλέπο <b>υσ</b> ι	Acts 17:7, πράσσουσι
Mk. 2:4,	χαλῶσι	Acts 18:10, ἐστί
Lk. 16:29,	"Εχουσι	Acts 19:38, ἔχουσι
Jn. 5:23,	τιμῶσι	Acts 26:4, ἴσασι
Jn. 10:14,	γινώσκουσι	Rev. 9:4, ἔχουσι

In each of these places the word is followed by a consonant, thus upholding the rule; but in one of them, Acts 17:7, the form is followed immediately by a comma, which, while allowed by Machen's wording, contradicts that of BDF, "Its particular place . . . is the pause, i.e. the end of a sentence or clause." However, these references do support this further statement in BDF:

It is omitted here and there (never, however, before a vowel and in pause) following  $\epsilon$  and with  $\dot{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\dot{1}$ , somewhat more often after the  $-\sigma\iota$  of the 3rd pl., most frequently by comparison after the -au of the dat. plur.<sup>2</sup>

In order to see how often the movable Nu could have been omitted, according to the rule, compared to the number of times it was omitted, this author selected at random the book of Matthew. Every potential case of a present indicative with the movable Nu was located. Then those examples were eliminated which were followed by a vowel or which were followed by any mark of punctuation in the UBS text. All of these occurrences, as expected, had the movable Nu. The remaining list, therefore, consisted solely of examples in which the verb was followed by a consonant and was not in pause--in other words, cases in which the movable Nu was not necessary. In only one case was the Nu missing (Mt. 18:10), but in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> BDF, p. 12. It should be noted that the Nestle text, used by BDF, inserts the Nu in Acts 17:7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

sixty-six cases it was still present. These cases are identified in Appendix B. As stated by Moulton-Howard, "The irrational addition of -v may be set beside its irrational omission." Hence, an easier rule to remember, and more accurate, is this one: "The rule of the koine was to use the  $\nu$  *movable* irrespective of what followed."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moulton and Howard, *Accidence and Word-Formation*, p. 113. <sup>2</sup> Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, p. 24.

#### PART II. PRESENT INDICATIVE EXEGESIS

#### I. THE USAGE CATEGORIES

Before the present indicative can be treated as a whole, it must be considered in its various exegetical usages separately. This chapter shall define the categories to be explored in this paper.

# **Traditional Usage Classifications**

Earlier grammarians were aware of the broad use of the present indicative found in the New Testament. W. H. Simcox, for example, wrestling with this problem, sought the solution in "foreign influence" and in "the special requirements of the Scriptural order of thought." Subsequently,

## A. T. Robertson noted simply,

All three kinds of action are found in the present (punctiliar, durative, perfect). All three kinds of time are also found in the present ind. (historical present = past, futuristic present = future, the common use for present time), <sup>2</sup>

thus adding to the time variations already noted by Simcox the aspect variations as well.

The difficulty and complexity of this subject becomes evident as one examines the various schemes which have been proposed for classifying the uses of the present indicative. No two systems are the same. However, in spite of the numerous differences, a few categories are so outstanding or unique that they appear in virtually every list:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> William Henry Simcox, *The Language of the New Testament* (4th ed.; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906), pp. 98, 101,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 869.

- a) Progressive present, action going on at the same time as the speaking or writing
- b) Conative present, attempted action not carried out
- c) Gnomic present, general truth
- d) Iterative present, repeated or customary action
- e) Aoristic present, punctiliar action in present time
- f) Historical present, past action
- g) Futuristic present, future action
- h) Perfective present, past action, with either the action itself or its effects continuing into present time

In spite of this general consensus grammarians have never fully agreed. In fact, none of the grammars consulted in this study had even the nine categories listed above.

The classical grammarian H. W. Smyth omits the aoristic category, and adds two others. He adds another perfective category for continuing action, and he adds the annalistic present, a present which "registers historical facts or notes incidents," in addition to the historical present. 

1

Another classical scholar, B. L. Gildersleeve, uses categories similar to these used later by Smyth.<sup>2</sup> He calls the progressive present the specific present, and the gnomic present the universal present. He includes the classical annalistic present under the head of historical present. But he leaves out the iterative as well as the aoristic categories.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Herbert Weir Smyth, *A Greek Grammar* (New York: American Book Company, 1916, pp. 276-78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve and Charles William Emil Miller, *Syntax* of Classical Greek from Homer to Demosthenes (hereinafter referred to as *Syntax*; 2 vols.; New York: American Book Company, 1900, 1911), I, 81-88.

Among scholars of Biblical Greek the variation is even greater.

R. T. France, for example, lists only five categories, omitting the gnomic, iterative, and perfective categories. And in his discussion of the aoristic present he shows some confusion.

C. F. D. Moule's analysis conforms fairly well to the list above, except there is no category for the perfective present whose effects continue into the present. Instead, another category of "present in reported speech" is introduced.<sup>3</sup>

The older grammarian S. G. Green notes only four categories, omitting these categories: conative (his is the only grammar seen to omit this category), gnomic (unless it be included under "habitual or usual act"), aoristic, and perfective. The last omitted category is, however, brought forward in th discussion of the "certain futurity" category.<sup>4</sup>

Burton comes closest to the "average" list, with all those listed and two additional, the periphrastic present (present of  $\epsilon i \nu \alpha \iota$  plus a present participle) and the present in indirect discourse. In addition, he divides the perfective present into its two natural parts.<sup>5</sup>

A. T. Robertson's scheme is a little harder to follow and compare, since he analyzes his *Aktionsart* categories rather than the tenses as such. Under "aoristic present" he includes the specific or constative

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> France, "The Exegesis of Greek Tenses in the New Testament," *Notes on Translation*, 46 (December, 1972), pp. 4-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, cf. pp. 6-7. Moule, *Idiom Book*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Samuel G. Green, *Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament* (Rev. ed.; New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1912), pp. 297-98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 7-16.

present (as "I say" in the Gospels) along with the gnomic, historical, and futuristic categories. Under "durative action" he includes the obviously progressive examples ("descriptive present"), past continuing action ("progrssive present"), and iterative and conative Presents. He allows some historical and futuristic presents, and adds "deliberative" and "periphrastic" presents. Finally, under "perfected action" he includes "presents as perfects."

Blass gives many examples of each category he lists. However, he does not include the gnomic, iterative, or perfective categories. He does add the "relative present," which is similar to the present in indirect discourse, only is limited to verbs of perception and knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

One of the few grammars to attach any priority to the categories is that of Dana and Mantey. Listed under "regular uses of the present" are the "progressive" and iterative categories. "Progressive" presents are divided into what has earlier been listed as progressive and perfective presents. An Dana and Mantey see two types of iterative presents, repetitive ("iterative") and habitual ("customary"). Under "special uses of the present" are listed the aoristic, futuristic, historical, conative ("tendential", and gnomic ("static") categories.<sup>5</sup>

The only writer this author discovered who tried to actually count the number of usages in each exegetical category was G. Mussies, <sup>6</sup> His

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, pp. 182-86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Mussies, *The Morphology of Koine Greek as Used in the Apocalypse of Saint John* (hereinafter referred to as *Apocalypse*; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), p. 333.

categories are sufficiently different from the average that they deserve a separate listing, along with an example and the number of occurrences in Revelation:

- 1) General present, Rev. 10:3, 6 times
- 2) Direct address to the reader, Rev. 16:15, 11 times
- 3) Explanatory remarks in visions, Rev. 17:18, 42 times (including 13 which should also be listed under #4, but are not counted there)
- 4) Reported speech, mainly Rev. 2-3, 121 times
- 5) Historical present, Rev. 19:12, 43 times
- 6) Future present, Rev. 14:9, 39 times

While this author would dispute the assignment of several examples to these categories, the list does demonstrate three things: the unusual grammatical character of the Apocalypse, the approximate weight of the major categories, and the difficulty of defining exegetically significant categories.

## **Proposed Classifications**

The exegetical categories arrived at by this author are here outlined, with an example of each usage, and the symbol used for each category (as in Appendix A).

- I. Present indicative in present time
  - A. Progressive present (10), describes action or state of being going on during the time of speaking or writing.
     Mt. 9:4, "Why are you thinking evil things in your hearts?"
  - B. Declarative present (11), introduces a statement of the speaker or writer.Lk. 7:28, "I say to you, . . ."
  - C. Customary present (12), describes habitual, customary, or repeated action.
    - 1. General customary present (121), describes customary action without reference to its repetition for any individual.

- 1 Cor. 1:22, "The Jews seek a sign."
- 2. Singular iterative present (122), describes action repeated by one individual.
  - Jn. 14:10, "The Father abiding in me does his works."
- 3. Plural iterative present (123), describes action repeated by each member of a plural subject.

  Lk. 5:33, "The disciples of John fast often."
- 4. Non-iterative customary present (124), describes customary action which occurs only once to any individual.

  Mt. 11:5, "The blind receive sight."
- 5. Parabolic customary present (125), describes the expected action of a typical person in a parable.

  Mt. 13:44, "From joy he goes and sells all he has."
- D. Abstract present (13), describes truth or fact which is theoretical or abstract, and therefore always valid.
  - Explanatory present (131), explains relevant facts and information to help the reader.
     Lk. 2:4, "the city of David, which is called Bethlehem."
  - 2. Factual present (132), describes a natural, theological, or theoretical truth.

    Jn. 15:5, "Without me you are not able to do anything."
  - Impersonal present (133), expresses what is right, proper, advantageous, or necessary.2 Cor. 5:10, "It is necessary for all of us to appear."
  - Interpretive present (134), explains the theological significance of an item in the text.Mt. 13:38, "The field is the world."
  - Comparative present (135), compares the similarities of two items.
     Mk. 4:26, "The kingdom of God is as a man."
- E. Perfective present (14), describes a present state resulting from past action.
  - General perfective present (141), describes perfected action with a simple present tense.
     Jn. 11:28, "The teacher <u>has come</u>."
  - 2. Present in periphrastic perfect (142), provides the helping verb for a perfect participle.Col. 2:10, "You are completed in him."

- 3. Present in citation periphrastic perfect (143), provides the helping verb in the phrase "it is written."

  Jn. 6:31, "even as it is written."
- Citation present (144), describes the actions or previous Scriptural writers or characters.
   Rom. 10:5, "Moses <u>writes</u> concerning the righteousness which is of the law."

## II. Present indicative in past time

A. Historical present (21), describes simple past action in a narrative.

Mk. 7:28, "She answered and says."

B. Present for immediate past (22), describes action immediately completed.

Jn. 13:22, "being uncertain concerning whom he says."

C. Imperfective present (23), describes past action continuing into the present.

Lk. 13:7, "For three years I come seeking fruit."

#### III. Present indicative in future time

- A. Futuristic present (31), describes future action. Jn. 20:17, "I ascend to my Father."
- B. Present for immediate future (32), describes action just about to happen.

Lk. 19:8, "Lord, I give to the poor."

#### IV. Present indicative in relative time

A. Relative present (41), describes action which is present to the verbal context of the clause, but not necessarily to the speaker or writer.

1 Cor. 7:36, "That which he wishes let him do."

B. Indirect present (42), describes action presented in indirect discourse, thought, or perception.

Lk. 18:37, "They declared to him that Jesus the Nazarene  $\underline{is}$   $\underline{coming}$ ."

#### V. Present indicative in conditional sentences

A. Present of the protasis (51), describes the condition necessary to produce the apodosis.

Ja. 4:11, "if you judge the law."

B. Concessive present (52), describes the condition in spite of which the apodosis will take place.

- Heb. 6:9, "though we speak thus."
- C. Substantive present (53), describes the content of desired information.
  - Lk. 6:7, "They were watching . . . if he heals on the Sabbath."
- VI. Modal use of the present indicative (60), employs the word as a subjunctive or an imperative.<sup>1</sup>

In a few places the present indicative seems to take on the meaning of another mood. It appears to be used as a subjunctive in deliberative questions with  $\pi \rho o \sigma \delta o \kappa \hat{\omega} \mu \epsilon \nu$  (Mt. 11:3; Lk. 7:19, 20), a form which can be either indicative or subjunctive; likewise, a subjunctive sense seems best for  $\gamma i \nu \epsilon \tau \alpha i$ , in Rom. 11:6 and  $\gamma i \nu \hat{\omega} \sigma \kappa o \mu \epsilon \nu$  in 1 Jn. 5:20. In two places the present indicative resembles the imperative mood: Lk. 2:29,  $\hat{\alpha} \pi o \lambda \hat{\nu} \epsilon i \varsigma$ ; and 2 Tim. 1:15,  $\hat{oi} \delta \alpha \varsigma$ . These few cases evidently should be treated as with the other mood and do not fall into the purview of this study.

#### II. THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN PRESENT TENSE

By far the largest number of usages lie within this category. Except for the perfect tense and specialized uses of the aorist, the present tense monopolizes expressions of present time. But within this general category are numerous subtypes. Each of these shall be examined in this chapter.

## Progressive Present

This constantly used designation finds various interpretations among grammarians. Burton tends to make the category nearly universal.

The most constant characteristic of the Present Indicative is that it denote action in progress. It probably had originally no reference to present time. But since, in the historical periods of the language, action in progress in past time is expressed by the Imperfect, and the Future is used both as a progressive and as an aoristic tense for future time, it results that the Present Indicative is chiefly used to express action in progress in present time. Hence in deciding upon the significance of any given instance of the Present Indicative in the New Testament as well as in Classical Greek, the interpreter may consider that there is, at least in the majority of words, a certain presumption in favor of the Progressive Present rather than any of the other uses mentioned below. <sup>1</sup>

This author concluded that nearly 40% of the New Testament's present indicatives are progressive presents. Robertson tends to lean more toward an "aoristic" present--i.e., no aspect distinction--as the basic idea of the tense, with the progressive feature being added later.

The original present was probably therefore aoristic, or at least some roots were used either as punctiliar or linear, and the distinctively durative notions grew up around specially formed stems and so were applied to the form with most verbs, though never with all. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 865.

However, he admits that it is the largest category in the New Testament.<sup>1</sup> He calls it "descriptive present," and reserves "progressive present" for presents that carry on past action (e.g., 1 John 2:9),<sup>2</sup> which cases will be treated later in this chapter.

In this study the term "progressive present" describes any present which describes an action or state of being which is present to the speaker or writer, and which does not fall into another, more specialized category. Some examples often given for this category, as Matthew 25:8 ("our lamps are going out") or 8:25 ("Lord, save, we perish"), are included rather in the "immediate future" category for reasons which will be argued in that discussion.<sup>3</sup>

The title "progressive present" is indeed vague. But the alternatives are misleading. Thus "simple present" might be assumed to be aoristic; "general present" might be confused with "present of general truth," the "gnomic" category.

Translating the progressive present often leads to the English periphrastic present--"he is drinking milk"--to avoid confusing it with the English general present of customary action--"he drinks milk."<sup>4</sup> Sometimes the Greek stresses the progressive idea by combining the present indicative of είναι with a present participle--the "periphrastic present." In these cases, the participle takes on the nature of a predicate adjective: The Greek has no special form for the progressive present of English, nor for the progressive tenses generally. In the periphrasis with the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 879.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 879; Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Moule, *Idiom Book*, p. 7; cf. Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 879.

present participle, the participle is generally equivalent to a characteristic adjective or substantive, with which it is often coupled.1

The progressive present is the largest single category of present indicative verbs, being used frequently by all authors. The following table notes its frequency in each book, as compared with other uses of the present indicative.

TABLE 7 PROGRESSIVE PRESENT FREQUENCY

book	prog. pres.	P.I. verbs	%prog. pres.
Matthew	210	768	27%
Mark	136	529	26%
Luke	201	636	32%
John	404	1,083	37%
Acts	204	379	54%
Romans	124	314	39%
1 Corinthians	174	478	36%
2 Corinthians	122	216	56%
Galatians	55	115	48%
Ephesians	38	64	59%
Philippians	42	58	72%
Colossians	33	48	69%
1 Thessalonians	29	50	58%
2 Thessalonians	12	29	41%
1 Timothy	19	63	30%
2 Timothy	19	36	53%
Titus	5	15	33%
Philemon	5	11	45%
Hebrews	50	155	32%
James	28	106	26%
1 Peter	17	40	42%
2 Peter	16	34	47%
1 John	120	208	58%
2 John	3	12	25%
3 John	11	19	58%
Jude	4	13	31%
Revelation	84	261	32%
total NT	2,165	5,740	38%

It is noticeable that the highest frequencies are found in Paul's Prison

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Gildersleeve, *Syntax*, I, 81.

Epistles, Acts, and scattered epistles of Paul and John. In these books more than half of the present indicatives are simple progressive presents. Yet one should beware of generalizations, as, for example, the difference between Second and Third John might prove.

The Verb "To Be"

The most common verb,  $\vec{\epsilon i} \nu \alpha i$ , is also one of the most complex. Its aspect is basically durative. In this sense it is contrasted with  $\gamma i \nu \epsilon \sigma \theta \alpha i$ , which denotes "temporal existence which has a beginning and ending." It especially is durative as a present tense helping verb in a periphrastic construction.

General agreement prevails concerning the verb's linking capabilities:

- a) x equals y,
- b) x is described by y, or
- c) x is located at y,<sup>4</sup>

as well as its primary syntactical usage:

Eivai is mainly a structure signaling word in Greek. As such, it is nearly lexically empty, in distinction from all other verbs in Greek. On the basis of this study, one may formulate the following generalizations with respect to  $\epsilon i \nu ai$ :  $\epsilon i \nu ai$ , belongs to a restricted class of verbs, consisting of one member;  $\epsilon i \nu ai$  is primarily a syntactic rather than a lexical item in the vocabulary stock of Greek:  $\epsilon i \nu ai$ , determines one sentence type that plays a fundamental role in the structure of Greek.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Charles H. Kahn, "The Greek Verb 'To Be' and the Concept of Being," *Foundations of Language*, 2 (1966), 254-55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lane C. McGaughy, *Toward a Descriptive Analysis of "Einai as a Linking Verb in New Testament Greek* (hereinafter referred to as "Einai), Dissertation Series, No. 6, The Society of Biblical Literature (Missoula, Montana: University of Montana, 1972), D. 135.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 150-51.

Where disagreement arises is in understanding its lexical status when used absolutely, as in the famous statement, "I am." Some writers vehemently deny any "existential meaning" for  $\epsilon i \nu \alpha i$ , and assume a predicate complement should be supplied. Kahn even goes so far as to assert that the Greeks' understanding of the verb  $\epsilon i \nu \alpha i$  led to certain distinguishing points in Greek philosophy.

On the other side, however, the verb seems to have "existential" force in the statement "I am." In John 8:58, for example, "It stands in unmistakable contrast to πρὶν 'Αβραὰμ γενέσθαι. This is the only passage in the NT where we have the contrast between εἶναι and γενέσθαι. The verse ascribes to Jesus consciousness of eternity or supra-temporality." A crucial passage is John 8:24-29. In verse 24 Jesus says, "If you believe not that I am, you shall die in your sins," and similarly in verse 28, "then shall you know that I am." This expression is tied closely to the description of Jehovah in the Old Testament. In this understanding Abbott is joined by Ethelbert Stauffer, who notes the special Messianic use of ἐνώ εἶμι in Mark and John. Some writers see the possibility

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> McGaughy, "Einai, pp. 119-25; Kahn, "The Greek Verb 'To Be' and the Concept of Being," pp. 250-54.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Friedrich Bachsel, "εἰμί," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. II, ed. by Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), p. 399.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Edwin A. Abbott, *Johannine Gramar* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906), pp. 183-86, notes Isa. 43:10-13; 46:4; 48:12; Dt. 32:39; also the parallel phrases "from the beginning," "working," and "speaking" in John 6:68-69 and Isa. 43:10; 52:6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "ἐγώ," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. II, ed. by Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), pp. 352-54.

of the simple translation "I am he" or "it is I" in many instances, as B. F. Westcott at John 6:20. But "I am he" is clearly rendered by ἐγώ εἰμί αὐτός, as in Luke 24:39. Rather, ἐγώ εἰμι, in the Gospels often has the added significance of "I am the Savior," "I am the Son of God." The phrase "seems to call upon the Pharisees to believe that the Son of man is not only the Deliverer but also one with the Father in the unity of the Godhead."

## The Question of Aoristic Presents

Most grammars have a major category of admittedly few examples for "punctiliar presents."

In those few cases where a punctiliar act taking place at the moment of speaking is to be denoted, the present is usually used since the punctiliar agrist stems form no present. <sup>5</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1881), p. 98. Westcott lists the following verses under his explanation: Mk. 13:6; Lk. 21:8; Jn. 4:26; 8:24, 28, 58; (9:4); 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8. However, Abbott is wrong to assume that Westcott favors the same translation in each passage, as an examination of each in Westcott's commentary will prove (*Johannine Grammar*, p. 183).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, p. 182.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. Mk. 13:6 and Lk. 21:8 with Mt. 24:5, which adds, δ **Χριστό**ς.

Abbott, Johannine Grammar, p. 187; an interesting issue of similar import is the possible Messianic claim in Christ's answers to the Sanhedrin and Pilate: "Are you the Son of God?" Jesus says, "You have said." For a convincing defence of the claim, see D. R. Catchpole, "The Answer of Jesus to Caiaphas (Matt. xxvi. 64)," New Testament Studies, 17:2 (January, 1971), 213-26. On pp. 217 and 226 Catchpole summarizes the statement's force: "In Matt.  $26:25 \ \sigma \hat{\mathbf{v}} \ \hat{\epsilon} \hat{\imath} \pi \alpha \varsigma$  contains an affirmation modified only by a preference for not stating the matter expressis verbis. . . . In each case considerations of the literary background of  $\sigma \hat{\mathbf{v}} \ \hat{\epsilon} \hat{\imath} \pi \alpha \varsigma$  or  $\hat{\mathbf{v}} \mu \hat{\epsilon} \hat{\imath} \varsigma$   $\lambda \hat{\epsilon} \gamma \epsilon \tau \epsilon$  converge with the position of the phrases at the turning point of the hearing to recommend the following meaning: affirmative in content, and reluctant or circumlocutory in formulation."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> BDF, p. 167.

However, the argument is lacking, since the aorist indeed can describe events in present time, as examples of the so-called "dramatic aorist" show. On the other hand, some claim the present tense cannot be agristic, it "cannot denote the completion of an act." 2 Burton comes into some difficulty by defining the present indicative as "action in progress" and then having to allow for a large exception category.

The Present Indicative is sometimes used of an action or event coincident in time with the act of speaking, and conceived of as a simple event. Most frequently the action denoted by the verb is identical with the act of speaking itself, or takes place in that act. . . . This usage is a distinct departure from the prevailing use of the Present tense to denote action in progress. There being in the Indicative no tense which represents an event as a simple fact without at the same time assigning it either to the past or the future, the Present is used for those instances, in which an action of present time is conceived of without reference to its progress.<sup>3</sup>

Robertson is quick to point out this inconsistency:

A greater difficulty is due to the absence of distinction in the tense between punctiliar and linear action. This defect is chiefly found in the indicative. . . . There is nothing left to do but to divide the so-called Pres. Ind. into Aoristic Present and Durative Present (or Punctiliar Present and Linear Present). The one Greek form covers both ideas in the ind. The present was only gradually developed as a . The present is formed on punctiliar as well as distinct tense. linear roots. It is not wise therefore to define the pres. ind. as denoting "action in progress" like the imperf. as Burton does, for he has to take it back on p. 9 in the discussion of the "Aoristic Present," which he calls a "distinct departure from the prevailing use of the present tense to denote action in progress." In sooth, it is no "departure" at all. The idiom is as old as the tense itself and is due to the failure in the development of separate tenses for punctiliar and linear action in the ind. of present time. 4

Due to the combined durative-punctiliar history of the present indicative,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, p. 198.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Goodwin-Gulick, *Greek Grammar*, p. 268: this statement was not made in Goodwin's own edition, cf. A Greek Grammar, p. 246.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, D. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 864.

it appears that the tense cannot be limited to either category.

It must not be thought, however, that the durative meaning monopolises the present stem. In the prehistoric period only certain conjugations had linear action; and though later analogic processes mostly levelled the primitive diversity, there are still some survivals of importance.<sup>1</sup>

The only limitation would come through the nature of the action itself. If the action takes any time at all, it could be classed as progressive. On this basis, K. L. McKay has denied a punctiliar present:

Some grammarians write as if the present may be used to express a punctiliar action in present time ("aoristic present"), but can it? If a real action is really in present time it is almost inevitably in process. In the rare cases where an aoristic sense in present time is appropriate--mainly in the colloquial language of comedy-the aorist is used.<sup>2</sup>

But in view of the many examples of presents with "undefined" action, it seems best to define the acristic present as Robertson does: "The acristic present = undefined action in the present, as acristic past (ind.) = undefined action in the past." In the New Testament, it "may be interpreted either as durative or as acristic, depending on the context."

In this study the common examples of aoristic presents have been switched to other--it is hoped, better--categories. Thus Robertson's example of Luke 7:8, "I say go, and he goes," is listed under customary present; and his "common  $\epsilon i\mu i$ " is under progressive presents. The only special category derived from these "aoristic presents" shall be the declarative category discussed next.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 119.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> McKay, "Syntax in Exegesis," p. 49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 865. <sup>4</sup> Mussies, *Apocalypse*, p. 276.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 865.

#### **Declarative Present**

The largest single category normally listed under "aoristic presents" is " $\lambda \acute{\epsilon} \gamma \omega$  in the Gospels." This category was considered sufficiently large and distinctive to be included as a separate category. Other examples belong with it, as "says the Lord" in Old Testament quotations, and the frequent "I exhort," "I command" and "I make known" statements throughout the New Testament, especially in the epistles. At first the category was entitled "presents of self-expression." But the strongly assertive quality of the examples made the title "declarative present" more appropriate. The following table delineates this category in the major New Testament sections.

TABLE 8
DECLARATIVE PRESENTS

type I	∕It.	Mk.	Lk.	Jn.	Acts	Epistl	es Rev	, total
1	3	2	8	5	11	66	2	97
2	-	-	-	-	-	33	-	33
3	27	3	36	3	1	4	1	75
4	-	2	5	-	-	-	-	7
5	27	12	6	-	-	-	-	45
6	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
7	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	20
8	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	5
9	-	-	-	-	4	8	16	28
total 3	57	20	55	33	16	111	19	311

Key: 1--miscellaneous: "I exhort, command, ask, adjure, etc,"

<sup>2--&</sup>quot;I say" introducing the speech

<sup>3--&</sup>quot;I say to you (pl.)"

<sup>4--&</sup>quot;I say to you (sing.)"

<sup>5--&</sup>quot;truly I say to you (pl.)"

<sup>6--&</sup>quot;truly I say to you (sg.)"

<sup>7--&#</sup>x27;truly truly I say to you (pl.)"

<sup>8--&</sup>quot;truly truly I say to you (sg.)"

<sup>9--&</sup>quot;says the Lord (or the Spirit)"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 9; Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 866; Moule, *Idiom Book*, p. 7.

As expected, books with more homiletic material rate higher than historical or prophetical books. However, authorship style here has an important bearing. Paul often "beseeches," "commands," and "exhorts." Jesus, on the other hand, as reported by all four Evangelists, merely "says." Yet the form of "I say" varies from book to book: Mark prefers "truly I say to you"; Luke prefers to omit "truly"; Matthew balances the two forms. John, who only three times has "I say to you," never writes "truly I say to you." Instead, twenty-five times John has the formula "truly truly I say to you," a form found nowhere else in the New Testament.

In almost all these instances the declarative verb is followed by the content of the speech. The declarative verb can therefore be understood as either durative, emphasizing the process of making the speech, or aoristic, emphasizing the content of the speech as a unit. The latter seems the most likely. The introduction probably is intended to add force to what is said. This understanding is that of the United Bible Societies' translating rule #19: "Introductory expressions such as 'verily, verily,' must be related to the content of what is said, not to the fact of saying." But one must be careful to distinguish *Aktionsart* and aspect in these verbs. The speech itself is not punctiliar, but it is merely viewed as aoristic, with no reference to its linear or punctiliar nature, but concentrating on the matter only.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sometimes "says the Lord" comes within or after the speech. Bruce M. Metzger notes, "Paul occasionally adds within or at the end of the quotation the words λέγει κύριος," "The Formulas Introducing Quotations of Scripture in the New Testament and in the Mishnah" (hereinafter referred to as "Formulas"), *Historical and Literary Studies: Pagan, Jewish, and Christian*, Vol. VIII of *New Testament Tools and Studies*, ed. by Bruce M. Metzger (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1968),p. 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating*, p. 182.

## **Customary Present**

This category, as many others, covers a wide territory and finds various definitions in the grammars. Robertson calls it "iterative" or "customary," and charts it as a series of punctiliar dots (••••). Dana and Mantey find a subdivision, calling "iterative" those presents which recur at successive intervals, and "customary," those which denote habitual action. Thus "I brush my teeth" would be customary, while "I still get cavities" would be iterative. On the whole, however, this method seems artificial and is difficult to carry out when assigning categories—What does one do with "I sin"?

Other grammarians lump several categories together. Burton has no separate category for repeated action, except what might be implied in "General or Gnomic Present." H. M. Smyth, on the other hand, divides the category into "customary," i.e., repeated by one person, and "factual," for "general truth."

It appears that the most cogent subdivision is that offered by Moulton, who uses the terms "frequentative" and "iterative." Using the word  $\mathring{\alpha}\pi o\theta \nu \mathring{\eta}\sigma \kappa \omega$ , he notes,

We find the present stem used as an iterative in 1 Cor. 15:31, and as frequentative in Heb. 7:8; 10:28; 1 Cor. 15:22; Rev. 14:13: the latter describes action which recurs from time to time with different individuals, as the iterative describes action repeated by the same agent.<sup>5</sup>

This division seems the best, and more objective than that suggested by Dana and Mantey. Eventually, this author divided customary presents into

 $<sup>^{1}</sup>$  Robertson,  $Grammar,\, p.~880.$   $^{2}$  Dana and Mantey,  $Manual~Grammar,\, p.~184.$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 8-9. <sup>4</sup> Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, p. 276.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 114. In this sense he, as opposed to Burton, includes αἀφίομεν in Luke 11:4 as frequentative, since the same individuals "habitually forgive," p. 119.

five groups. Each of these will be noted in turn.

### General Customary Present

This is the largest section, and includes repeated, customary, or habitual action, whether the subject is singular or plural. None of these examples fits certainly in any of the following four categories.

Usually the subject is plural, and the action described may or may not be repeated by any particular individual. This category does not stress the repetitive nature of the act for any particular individual; rather, it stresses the repetitive nature of the act itself. In the case of a singular subject, this category stresses not so much the repetitive nature of the act, as it emphasizes its dependability in any particular case; thus John 10:27-28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life." The plural verbs (hear, follow) are customary--whether each sheep hears and follows once or more than once is not the question in view. Also the singular verbs (know, give) are customary, since each individual instance is more in view than the mere repetition required for Christ to know and give life to all the sheep throughout history.

An interesting example of this usage is  $\alpha \pi \epsilon \chi o u \sigma \iota \nu$  in Matthew 6:2, 5, 16, "they have their reward." Adolf Deissmann has compared this usage to the common use of  $\alpha \pi \epsilon \chi \omega$  on papyri and ostraca business and tax receipts: "I have received payment in full--nothing more is due." Jesus was speaking of the Pharisees as a class, not necessarily of individuals. As Moulton has put it, "The hypocrites have as it were their money down,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, tr. by Lionel R. M. Strachan (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1927), pp. 110-12.

as soon as their trumpet has sounded."1

## Singular Iterative Present

This category includes cases where a singular verb represents repeated action for that one subject. For example, John the Baptist says in Matthew 3:11, "I baptize with water." The action is not progressive, but rather repetitive or habitual. Many times Jesus says, "The things which I say unto you." Yet the verb refers primarily to His repeated speeches made throughout His ministry, not primarily to the speech He is making at the time. Paul uses this category in Romans 7, where he describes his constant struggles with his sinful nature. It is wrong to suppose that he is describing his earlier life.<sup>2</sup>

### Plural Iterative Present

Often the present verb is plural and the action is customary. But, in addition, it is clear from the context and important in the statement, that each individual in the plural subject repeatedly does the action. Thus the disciples of John ask, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but thy disciples fast not?" (Mt. 9:14). The point of the question is not that fasting as such is at issue, but repeated fasting is the norm. Often the subject is "we," as with Paul's frequent "we preach Christ," "we boast on you," or "we give thanks often for you."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 247.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Charles Horne, *Salvation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), p. 113; cf. Boyce W. Blackwelder, *Light from the Greek New Testament* (Anderson, Indiana: The Warner Press, n.d.), p. 67.

## Non-Iterative Customary Present

This title may sound incongruous or self contradictory. Yet there are several New Testament examples which need such a category. In these cases the action occurs only once to each particular individual, but the action is considered repetitive as it occurs with many different individuals at different times. There is a close relationship between this category and the factual or gnomic present. The dividing line is a matter of emphasis, and thus of personal judgment. This category stresses the repetitive--and thus inevitable--nature of the action. The gnomic present instead emphasizes the physical, logical or legal basis of the action.

Thus Matthew 7:19, "Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire," is non-iterative, since it obviously can happen only once to each tree; yet it is customary, since it happens to many trees over the years. When Jesus declared in Matthew 11:5 that "the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them," He was referring to the sun of the single healings of each person as repetitive, since many people were being healed. Perhaps the finest example is Paul's in 1 Corinthians 15:22, "In Adam all die." Each person dies once; yet Paul uses the present tense because the action constantly repeats itself with different individuals.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> James Oliver Buswell is a bit unclear when he says, "The present tense of the verb justifies the implication of a continuous process. All men are subject to death," *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), I, 289; the word "continuous" is better replaced by "continuously repeated"; the action itself is not durative.

## Parabolic Customary Present

Often as He related a parable, Jesus would describe a hypothetical situation, and would describe the actions of the character which would be expected in that situation. For example, the man in Matthew 13:44, having found the treasure-field, "goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field." This action is not iterative, but it is customary for a person in his circumstances. Similarly, the plants in shallow ground "have no root" (Mk. 4:17) because there is no soil. Since these examples occur in parables and hypothetical situations, they are divided from the general customary presents.

Having seen all the types of customary presents, it is now possible to delineate the occurrences of each type in the New Testament books.

TABLE 9
CUSTOMARY PRESENTS

book	1	2	3	4	5	total
Matthew	99	31	14	13	17	174
Mark	21	15	10	-	21	67
Luke	73	27	13	12	25	150
John	55	47	8	5	2	117
Acts	10	14	4	-	-	28
Romans	25	36	8	-	-	69
1 Corinthians	82	15	15	3	-	115
2 Corinthians	33	4	2	-	-	39
Galatians	10	2	-	-	-	12
Ephesians	4	-	-	-	-	4
Philippians	4	1	-	-	-	5
Colossians	2	-	1	-	-	3
1 Thessalonians	5	-	2	-	-	7
2 Thessalonians	5	-	1	-	-	6
1 Timothy	12	2	-	-	-	14
2 Timothy	6	1	-	-	-	7
Titus	3	-	-	-	-	3
Philemon	-	1	-	-	-	1
Hebrews	33	3	-	1	-	37
James	40	-	-	-	-	40

TABLE 9--Continued

book	1	2	3	4	5	total
I Peter	9	-	-	-	-	9
2 Peter	8	-	-	-	-	8
1 John	24	1	2	-	-	27
2 John	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 John	-	7	-	-	-	7
Jude	8	-	-	-	-	8
Revelation	18	-	1	-	-	19
total NT	580	207	Q 1	21	65	076
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Key: 1--general customary presents

2--singular iterative presents

3--plural iterative presents

4--non-iterative customary presents

5--parabolic customary presents

#### **Abstract Present**

Often the present indicative indicates a general truth or a timeless statement or idiom. Unlike the previous category of customary or repeated presents, this category is necessarily durative. Yet the action itself need not be durative, only the truthfulness or validity of the statement within the context of the speaker or writer. Thus Jesus can say, "The seed is the word of God," and the context is established--the parable of the sower. In another parable the seed may represent something else entirely. There are five major types of abstract presents, and they are examined below.

### **Explanatory Present**

Often the Biblical writer will step aside to interpret or explain some item in his account to the reading audience. The very second occurrence of the present indicative in the New Testament falls into this group, "... which is interpreted, With us is God" (Mt. 1:23). Matthew uses this device only four times (above, and in 27:33, 46, 62), and Luke

only twice (2:4; 8:26). But it is frequent in Mark (12 times: 3:17; 5:41; 7:2, 4, 11, 34; 12:18, 42; 15:16, 22, 34, 42), and John (10 times: 1:38, 41, 42; 4:9; 5:2; 9:7; 19:17, 40; 20:16; 21:24), and Acts (9 times: 1:12, 19; 4:36; 8:26; 9:36; 13:8; 16:12; 23:8, 8). It is found only once in the epistles (Heb. 9:2) and three times in Revelation (2:24; 21:17; 22:20). It is possible to include some citations under other categories as well; for example, the verbs in Acts 23:8, "The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both," could be classified as customary presents as well as explanatory presents. Yet here it seems that the confidential tone of Acts calls for classing those verbs as primarily explanatory.

### **Factual Present**

This category, often called the "gnomic" present, has a fairly high number of occurrences. Unfortunately, the line separating this category and several others is not always clear, and the confusion is evident in the grammars. While all recognize a sort of "gnomic" present, the definitions and examples for the category are far from uniform. The difficulty arises from the nature of the category. If every statement of the Bible is true, is it not a fact, and is it not, therefore, factual? Furthermore, many progressive presents as well as customary presents lend themselves to this grouping.

Perhaps one helping factor is the durative nature of these verbs' aspect. K. L. McKay goes so far as to distinguish gnomic presents from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dana and Mantey call it "static" present, *Manual Grammar*, p. 186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 8-9.

gnomic agrists on the basis of aspect alone:

The difference between the present and the aorist in these timeless contexts is the normal aspectual difference between process and complete action, and we need not apologize for it.<sup>1</sup>

While this estimation appears a bit sweeping, it seems reasonable to restrict this category to more or less "timeless" expressions of fact. The aspect of these verbs could be either durative or "non-determined." Robertson thinks that gnomic presents are aoristic, and defines the gnomic present as "the aorist present that is timeless in reality, true for all time." Of course, "aoristic" here means "non-determined" aspect, not "punctiliar" in reality. Likewise, the timeless idea influences Dana and Mantey, who define their "static" present as "practically the present of duration applied to a verb of being."

The examples chosen for this category are those which appear too uniform or durative to be included under the customary presents. The statement is a matter of fact, theoretical or actual. Thus, Matthew 5:14, "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid" is a theoretical statement; there need be no historical example of such a city. On the other hand, Matthew 5:37, "whatsoever is more than these is of evil," is a theoretical statement which has many sad examples in reality. Matthew 6:22, "The light of the body is the eye," expresses a general truth of relative nature; that is, it is valid within the present created human race. Finally, 1 John 4:8, "God is love," declares a truth which is universally valid for all time.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> McKay, "Syntax in Exegesis," p. 49. <sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 866.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, p. 186.

## Impersonal Present

The little expressions "it is necessary," "it is lawful," "it is good," "it is proper," "it is better," and a few others pop up throughout the New Testament. They trace their descent to the ancient Greek language. "In the present tense the idiom is on purely Greek lines, not Semitic." . . . So the impersonal verbs (and  $\xi \chi \omega$ ) stand to themselves in support from ancient Greek and the κοινή." The identity of these has been disputed by some, as Nigel Turner, who maintains that the verbs quoted above are not impersonal if followed by "an infinitive as subject."<sup>2</sup> For truly impersonal verbs, Turner finds their origin at least partially in the desire to avoid God's name when He is the implied subject)

In this study the idiomatic phrases  $\delta \epsilon \sigma \tau \iota \nu$  and  $\tau \circ \hat{\upsilon} \tau \dot{\epsilon} \sigma \tau \iota \nu$  are not normally included as impersonal presents (as in Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 881), but are classed under such categories as explanatory or interpretive presents. One particular example stands out as highly problematical. It is  $\alpha \pi \epsilon \gamma \epsilon_1$ , in Mark 14:41, translated, "It is enough." That particular usage is included as impersonal, since the verb allows that meaning in contemporary koine Greek. Deissmann reproduces an ostracon from Thebes, dated 32-33 A.D., with identical usage in the first singular.<sup>4</sup>

What does the present tense of the impersonal verbs signify? Examining the examples, one concludes that the present tense normally stresses the present time application of the statement. "It is necessary  $(\delta \hat{\epsilon i})$ " applies to the present; "it was necessary (ἔδει)" applies to the past.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 881. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 291. <sup>2</sup> Turner, *Syntax*, pp. 291-92.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Deismann, *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 111-12; photograph, p. 111; cf. Robertson's comments, *Grammar*, p. 866.

Yet, even here, usage is more subtle. Thus, Jesus says, "These things it was necessary ( $\xi \delta \epsilon \iota$ ) to do" (Mt. 23:23), and yet it is still necessary: here the imperfect may be used because it was more important that they do something else also. Most of the impersonal verbs are found in the present tense, indicating that the time is indeed abstract, the aspect "non-determined."

### **Interpretive Present**

These verbs seek to explain the meaning of events, sayings, or parables from the theological perspective. They differ from explanatory presents, which explain more technical matters of language or custom. Thus ἐστιν in Matthew 3:3 is interpretive, "This is that which was spoken through Isaiah," and in 7:12, "This is the law and the prophets." Matthew 11:14 provides an important interpretive use as well: "and if you wish to receive (it), he is Elijah who is about to come." Often this present is used in the explanation of parables--e.g., "The one sowing the good seed is the son of man" (Mt. 13:37). This author included the crucial passage Matthew 26:26 in this category: "Take, eat, this is my body." The identity of the bread with Christ's body springs from theological truth and symbolism, not physical equality (Jn. 6:63). Sometimes the wording of the passage causes another verb to be used besides ἐστίν, as Mark 4:14, "The sower sows the word."

Often in the book of John Jesus or the author explains a term or fact introduced into the narrative, as "the witness of John" in 1:19, "the judgment" in 3:19, "the work of God" in 6:29, "the bread of God" in 6:33, "the will of my Father" in 6:40, and many other examples. Also included are the famous "I am" passages in John, already discussed in this

chapter.

The interpretive present is frequent in epistolary literature (e.g., Rom. 5:14), especially in Paul's more "theological" longer epistles; and in Hebrews, with that book's continual interpretation of Old Testament symbolism and prophecy. An example in Hebrews is at 10:20, "the veil, that is, his flesh." The verse has caused difficulty for some. Hebrews often uses the form  $\tau \circ \hat{\mathbf{v}} \tau'$   $\xi \sigma \tau \iota \nu$  (2:14; 7:5; 9:11; 11:16; 13:15; and here at 10:20). N. H. Young has shown that word order is not a factor in determining the antecedent in these cases. Yet the natural interpretation is to tie "veil" to "flesh," and the structure of the passage bears it out.<sup>2</sup> The usage occurs with greatest frequency (23 times) in Revelation, interpreting the apocalyptic visions (1:20a, b; 4:5; 5:6, 8; 11:4; 13:10, 18a, b; 14:12; 16:14; 17:9a, b, 11b, c, 12, 15, 18; 19:8; 20:2, 12, 14; 21:8). In fact, the abundance of these interpretive presents should encourage the student toward a literal, futuristic interpretation of Revelation, since John goes out of his way to avoid a mystical understanding by frequently employing interpretive presents.

# Comparative Present

In a few places the interpretive present is modified or softened by stating the interpretation as a "similarity,"--"is similar to"--much as a simile is distinguished from a metaphor by the addition of "like" or "as." Also, this category of verbs ushers the reader from the reality to the figure, while the interpretive present brings him back from the figure

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Young, "τοῦτ' ἔστιν τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ (Heb. x. 20): Apposition, Dependent or Explicative?" New Testament Studies, 20:1 (October, 1973), 101.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 102-04; cf. Homer A. Kent, Jr., The Epistle to the Hebrews; a Commentary (Winona Lake, Indiana: B.M.H Books, 1972), pp. 198-99.

to the reality.

Usage for this category in the New Testament is limited primarily to the Synoptic Gospels (Mt. 11:16; 13:31, 33, 44, 45, 47, 52; 20:1; Mk. 4:26; Lk. 6:47, 48, 49; 7:31, 32; 13:18, 19, 21). The only other examples in this category are the two occurrences of eouxcy in the book of James (1:6, 23).

This last group brings to an end the category of abstract presents. The occurrences of each type in the books of the New Testament are here listed.

TABLE 10 ABSTRACT PRESENTS

book	1	2	3	4	5	total
Matthew	4	54	21	22	8	109
Mark	12	33	23	6	1	75
Luke	2	35	30	9	8	84
John	10	66	15	22	-	113
Acts	9	4	21	5	_	39
Romans	_	25	4	8	_	37
1 Corinthians	_	69	15	5	_	89
2 Corinthians	_	4	4	<i>-</i>	_	8
Galatians	_	9	_	7	_	16
Ephesians		4	5	2	_	11
Philippians	_	_	1	_	_	1
Colossians	-	1	3	3	-	7
1 Thessalonians	-	1	1	3	-	1
2 Thessalonians	-	-	1	-	-	1
	-	-		-	-	
1 Timothy	-	8	5	-	-	13
2 Timothy	-	-	2	-	-	2
Titus	-	1	5	-	-	6
Philemon	-	-	-	1	-	1
Hebrews	1	8	3	7	-	19
James	-	18	1	-	2	21
I Peter	-	1	-	1	-	2
2 Peter	-	1	2	-	-	3
1 John	1	38	-	3	-	41
2 John	-	3	-	3	-	6
3 John	-	1	-	-	-	1
Revelation	3	1	7	23	_	34
total NT	41	384	169	127	19	740

#### TABLE 10--Continued

Key: 1--explanatory present

2--factual present

3--impersonal present

4--interpretive present

5--comparative present

While these verbs may be considered timeless, the present tense is appropriate since the truth is applicable to present time--whether to the speaker at the time of speaking, or the author at the time of writing. The aspect, therefore, is aoristic, in the sense of the "undetermined" view of the action's duration.

#### Perfective Present

The perfect aspect describes a present, continuing effect produced by a past event. Many times in the New Testament a present indicative is used in contexts where the perfective meaning is obvious. The unqualified denial of this fact by G. Mussies appears forced: "The present indicative does not express any view except the non-perfective view, and as such it is unmarked as opposed to the perfect indicative." The perfective present is indeed found in the New Testament, and can be divided into the following four heads.

### General Perfective Present

Often the stem of the verb itself is made perfective by the addition of a prepositional prefix, as  $\alpha \pi o \theta \nu \eta \sigma \kappa \omega$  and only gradually does

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mussies, *Apocalypse*, p. 275. If it be thought that the wording of this sentence is unclear, perhaps J. Neville Birdsall rightly attributes Mussies's awkward writing style to the fact that he, a German, himself wrote his book in English; review in the *Evangelical Quarterly*, XLV:1 (January-March, 1973), esp. p. 49.

it resume its durative nature. Such is also the case with  $\pi \acute{\alpha} \rho \epsilon_1 \mu_1$ . which can mean "I have come." as well as "I am present." In other cases the roots themselves evidently had a perfective meaning, as ἤκω or ἀκούω.<sup>3</sup> A. T. Robertson notes that in these cases the "root has the sense of state, not of linear action. This is an old use of these roots." 4 When the stems themselves are perfective, as ήκω or πάρειμι (often), it is important to remember that "this is not a Present for the Perfect of the same verb, but a Present equivalent to the Perfect of another verb."<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, is there any contrast between a perfect verb and a present used as a perfect? Burton and others tend to make no distinction.<sup>6</sup> But it seems better to see with Dana and Mantey a greater stress on the present state in the perfective present than in the simple perfect tense.

To say that this use is "present for perfect" is not accurately representing the case. It does approach quite closely the significance of the perfect, but stresses the continuance of results through present time in a way which the perfect would not do, for the perfect stresses existence of results but not their continuance.

New Testament examples of perfective presents are not lacking. John asks Jesus, "Do you come to me?" (Mt. 3:14); Jesus had already come and was there as a result. Jesus consoles the paralytic, "Your sins are forgiven" (Mt. 9:2), for Jesus had seen his faith already shown. This

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 114.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, eds., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 629.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, D. 10; BDF, p. 168; Chamberlain, *An* Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Robertson, Grammar, p. 881. <sup>5</sup> Burton, Moods and Tenses, p. 10. <sup>6</sup> Ihid <sup>7</sup> Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, p. 182.

last example is often listed under the category "aoristic present," but truly it better is perfective--God had already forgiven his sins, which forgiveness Jesus declared with authority (cf. v. 6). An undebatable example is found in Luke 1:34, where Mary protests to the angel, "How will this be, since I know not a man?" Her previous chastity resulted in her present virginity. Often in court scenes this usage comes forth. Pilate declares, "I find no fault in him" (Jn. 19:4), speaking of the results of the previous interrogation. Some controversy surrounds Acts 26:31, "This man has done nothing worthy of death or bonds." Winer believes the present is customary, his conduct in general. However, it seems better to class  $\pi \rho \acute{\alpha} \sigma \sigma \epsilon \iota$  there as perfective, since Paul's previous conduct was at issue, not his conduct, for example, while being held two years in Caesarea. To strengthen this claim, note the strongly parallel wording in Luke 23:15, "Nothing worthy of death has been done by him." Here the form is  $\dot{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\dot{\nu}$ πεπραγμένον, the periphrastic perfect. If this be the case, then Acts 26:31 parallels the force of Acts 25:11: "if I am guilty," a conditional present which is also perfective, and also "if I have done ( $\pi \in \pi \rho \alpha \gamma \alpha$ ) anything worthy of death," a normal perfect tense verb.

# Present in Periphrastic Perfect

A periphrastic construction combines the present indicative of the helping verb--normally  $\epsilon i \mu i^3$ --with a participle, to form a synthesis. The helping verb does influence to a degree the aspect of the resulting

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 267; also BDF, p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., for both Winer and BDF.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> But ἔχω appears in Mk. 8:17.

tense--making it more linear. "The periphrastic use of  $\epsilon i \nu \alpha i$  must be clearly distinguished from its equative function." Normally the construction is the present indicative of  $\epsilon i \nu \alpha i$  with either the present participle, forming the periphrastic present, discussed earlier, or the perfect participle, forming the periphrastic perfect, which McGaughy holds to be a simple equivalent to the perfect tense. The other possibility, the periphrastic aorist, using the imperfect form  $\hat{\eta} \nu$  with the aorist participle ( $\beta\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon i\varsigma$ ), is "quite exceptional," being limited in the New Testament to Luke 23:19.

A good example of the aspectual contribution of the Present indicative to the periphrastic perfect is in Ephesians 2:5, 8. Kenneth S. Wuest observes,

Not content with the details offered by the perfect tense, Paul uses a periphrastic construction consisting of a participle in the perfect tense and the verb of being in the present tense. The perfect tense speaks of the existence of finished results in present time, whereas Paul wanted to express persistence of finished results through present time. So he borrows the durative aspect of the present tense verb to give persistence to the existing results. . . . The security of the believer could not have been expressed in stronger terms. <sup>4</sup>

# Present in Citation Periphrastic Perfect

This category is merely a subdivision of the previous one. It consists of periphrastic perfects applied to Scripture citation--i.e., the form εἰστιν γεγραμμένον, "it is written." The form is found only six times, and always in John's Gospel (2:17; 6:31, 45; 10:34; 12:14; 20:30).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> L. C. McGaughy, "Einai, p. 82.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81. 3 Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, D. 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Wuest, "The Eloquence of Greek Tenses and Moods," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 117:46 (April, 1960), 135.

The first five refer to Old Testament Scripture; the last reference refers to his own book, "which things are not written in this book." He then employs the normal New Testament perfect form, "but these things are written ( $\gamma \acute{\epsilon} \gamma \rho \alpha \pi \tau \alpha \iota$ ) that you might believe." Since this periphrastic form is a special Johannine idiom, it appears best to understand its aspect as perfective, the equivalent of the perfect indicative, and not as especially durative. This form thus constitutes an idiomatic exception to the conclusion of the previous section.

## Citation Present

Often when one quotes from a written source, he thinks of the author as speaking still, in his writings. Thus in English, as well as other languages, the citation present is actually a perfective present-e.g., "Shakespeare extols the quality of mercy." The saying is past, yet the saying continues as an echo.

Some writers have sought to identify various Biblical citation formulas with the intended interpretation of the citation. Thomas Hartwell Horne has shown the fallacy of this method in practice. However, the form of citation presents does show the high regard of the New Testament writers for the Old Testament Scriptures. For the subject of the verbs "he says," "it says," and so forth, is often "God" or "the Holy Spirit," as well as "the Scripture." For an extremely important discussion

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Horne, An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures (8th ed.; 5 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1839), II, 336-46.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Turner, *Syntax*, p. 293; Turner notes the textual variant supplying ἡ γραφή in Rom. 10:8 in MSS D and G; see the Nestle-Aland text.

of the theological importance of citation presents, see Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, "'It Says:' 'Scripture Says' 'God Says'"; he shows how
these formulas confirm the orthodox doctrine of verbal inspiration.

Bruce M. Metzger notes that there needs to be an investigation comparing
the New Testament citation formulas with those of the Mishnah, to show the
difference between the Christian and the Orthodox Jewish attitudes toward
the Old Testament in the first century A.D.<sup>2</sup> While Metzger in his article
does not discuss the significance of the present tense in citation formulas, he does observe that "the New Testament writers allow themselves
more freedom in attributing personality to the Scriptures than do the
Tannaim."

Sometimes the human author is regarded as still speaking, as in Matthew 22:43, "How does David call his Lord?" Jesus considered David as still speaking, even though he was dead and buried (Acts 2:29). Other times the Scripture itself speaks (Jn. 19:37), or God in Scripture (Acts 13:35; Gal. 3:16). This form of citation present is especially frequent in the books of Romans and Hebrews, both of which make extensive theological use of the Old Testament.

The occurrences of the perfective present are enumerated in the following table.

Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, ed. by Samuel G. Craig (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948), pp. 299-348; the chapter originally appeared in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, X (1899), 472-510.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Metzger, "Formulas," pp. 52-53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55; this is especially true of Hebrews; see the appendix in Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (2nd ed.: Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1892), pp. 474-76.

TABLE 11

	PERI	FECTI	VE PR	ESENT	
book	1	2	3	4	total
Matthew	5	2	-	1	8
Mark	3	1	-	1	5
Luke	8	5	-	3	16
John	13	2	6	1	22
Acts	8	4	-	6	18
Romans	1	1	-	24	26
1 Corinthians	2	3	-	4	9
2 Corinthians	-	1	-	1	2
Galatians	1	-	-	2	3
Ephesians	1	2	-	2	5
Philippians	2	-	-	-	2
Colossians	-	1	-	-	1
1 Thessalonians	2	-	-	-	2
2 Thessalonians	1	-	-	-	1
1 Timothy	1	-	-	1	2
2 Timothy	1	-	-	-	1
Hebrews	9	4	-	14	27
James	1	-	-	2	3
2 Peter	-	1	-	-	1
1 John	1	1	-	-	2
Jude	1	-	-	-	1
total NT	61	28	6	62	157

Key: 1--general perfective present

2--present in periphrastic perfect

3--present in citation periphrastic perfect

4--citation present

The Present in Kingdom Passages

Twenty three times the present indicative describes some truth specifically about the Kingdom of God. These usages do not constitute a category for this study, but will be scattered among the other categories. However in view of their exegetical importance, they are here mentioned together.

This author believes the theocratic Kingdom of the Bible to be still in the future, to be ushered in by Christ after His personal, physical return to the earth. In many cases when the Kingdom is mentioned in the Gospels, therefore, the usage is taken as futuristic, especially when grammatical factors in the context suggest a futuristic usage. However, in some of these instances, the presents could also be factual--describing what the Kingdom is like without stating the time of its manifestation. Included as futuristic presents are the following references:

- a. Mt. 5:3, ἐστιν; parallel beatitudes are future
- b. Mt. 5:10, ἐστιν; see "a"
- c. Mt. 11:11, ἐστιν: they will be greater in the future; note future in Lk. 13:30
- d. Mt. 18:1, ἐστὶν; see "c"
- e. Mt. 1 :4 ἐστιν; see "c"
- f. Lk. 6:20, ἐστὶν: see "a"
- g. Lk. 7:28b, ἐστιν; see "c"
- h. Lk. 17:20a, ἐρχεται; πότε shows Pharisees expected a future kingdom

One additional reference qualifies as expressing immediate future, even though it is listed under the interrogative substantive category:

i. Acts 1:6, ἀποκαθιστάνεις: immediate future implied by "at this time"; future implied by "to Israel"

Even though the kingdom is future in its manifestation, it is present in it representatives and in many of its blessings for believers. The Church and the Kingdom are different. Yet the Church experiences spiritual blessings promised in the New Covenant. Even before Christ's death and resurrection, the Kingdom was present in Himself and in His appointed delegates; and after Pentecost the Kingdom was present in the Church

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kent, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary*, pp. 158-60.

through the Holy Spirit in many of its spiritual manifestations.<sup>1</sup> This idea does not contradict the truth that Jesus and the apostles taught an earthly futuristic Kingdom of both physical and spiritual aspects, in line with literal Old Testament prophecy.<sup>2</sup> All these remarks lead to the following two usages of the present indicative as progressive presents:

- j. Lk. 17:21, ἐστιν; ἰδού calls attention to the present time; "as to the personal presence of its King, the Kingdom was actually 'in the midst' of men."<sup>3</sup>
- k. Lk. 22:29, διατίθεμαι; for both the disciples and Jesus, the conferring takes place before the realization

One case is relative:

1. Lk. 21:31,  $\epsilon \sigma \tau \iota \nu$ ; "when you see" sets the time

Occasionally the present indicative is customary, describing "how things happen" concerning the Kingdom:

- m. Mt. 21:31, προάγουσιν; speaks of new birth
- n. Lk. 17:20b, ἔρχεται; Pharisees do not recognize the King<sup>4</sup>
- o. Lk. 18:24, εἰσπορεύονται; compare with "m"

Closely related to the customary presents are the factual presents. Each of these states a truth about the Kingdom, its source, character, or its

<sup>3</sup> Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom, An Inductive Study of the Kingdom of God* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1959), p. 272.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 271-73.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 319-20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This passage has been variously interpreted. Arndt and Gingrich make it progressive: "the Kingdom of God is not coming with observation i.e., in such a way its rise can be observed," Greek-English Lexicon, p. 628. Premillennialists can understand it either as in this paper, or by μετὰ παρατηρήσεως as prophetic date-setting. This author prefers the former, since the reference in Jesus' answer seems to be to the Pharisees' blindness.

subjects. The category is like the comparative present in the Kingdom Parables.

- p. Mt. 19:14,  $\epsilon \sigma \tau i \nu$ : describes the nature of its subjects
- q. Mk. 10:14, ἐστὶν: see "p"
- r. Lk. 18:16, ἐστὶν: see "p"
- s. Jn. 18:36a, ἔστιν; describes its source
- t. Rom. 18:36b, ἔστιν: see "s"<sup>1</sup>
- u. Rom. 14:17, ἐστιν: describes its character
- v. 1 Cor. 15:50, δύναται; describes the necessary nature of its rulers
- w. Eph. 5:5, ἔχει; see "v"

These few passages provide rich material for fascinating discussion, and for further specialized research in other tenses and moods.

#### Conclusion for Presents in Present Time

So far the study has consisted of present indicative usage which directly bears on present time. The major categories--progressive present, declarative present, customary present, abstract present, and perfective present--contribute various aspectual emphases. Even in present time the present indicative expresses both durative and aoristic points of view. In order to work out a general conclusion, it is necessary to push the tense to its time-limits, past and future, and to its modal limit in conditional sentences. This plan provides the basis for the rest of Part II.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The "but now" indicates a future reversal when the Kingdom shall be more worldly in its influence, if not in its source; cf. George N. H. Peters, *The Theocratic Kingdom of our Lord Jesus, the Christ* (3 vols.; 1884; reprinted; Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1972), II, 32-33.

#### III. THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN PAST TIME

Since Greek was a living language, it took on character and flavor by use, which still confuses the grammarian desiring "the rule of law" in language. The use of the present tense for past time, while it sounds incongruous, is actually common to all language. This chapter shall deal with three types of present indicatives: the historical present, the present for immediate past, and the imperfective present. The largest and most debated category is that of historical presents, and it will require the bulk of this chapter. The other two categories will be discussed at the end.

### Historical Present Frequency

The historical present is simply a present indicative in past narration, where one would expect a "past" tense, such as an imperfect or an aorist. The first one in the New Testament is φαίνεται in Matthew 2:13, "And after they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord *appears* to Joseph in a dream."

Since the historical present is limited to narration, it is rare in epistles, being encountered only in Hebrews. It is found chiefly in the Gospels, Acts, and Revelation (ch. 4-22). The individual occurrences of all the historical presents in the New Testament are listed in Appendix C. The following table shows the frequency of the historical present in each book in which it occurs. In addition to these there is a possible historical present in Hebrews 11:15 ( $\mu\nu\eta\mu\nu\epsilon\dot{\nu}o\nu\sigma\nu$ ); but since it is conditional, it is included in that list. This table is more accurate

TABLE 12 HISTORICAL PRESENT FREQUENCY

book	hist. pres.	verb forms	hist. pres./100 verb forms
Matthew	94	3,948	2.38
Mark	150	2,612	5.74
Luke	13	4,388	0.30
John	163	3,535	4.61
Acts	14	3,374	0.36
Revelation	54	1,537	3.51

and helpful for comparing frequencies than earlier attempts. John C. Hawkins, not knowing the total number of verbs in each book, had to estimate frequency by figuring the average number of historical presents on each page of the Westcott and Hort printed Greek text. Hawkins thus estimates: "it appears that Mark uses it more freely than John": 2 now an exact comparison is possible: 5.74 to 4.61, a difference of just under 25%.

Obviously, the frequency of the historical present varies considerably from book to book throughout the New Testament. This fact fits with the general usage of historical presents in all language. "It is a well-known idiom in all periods of Greek, particularly in popular, nonliterary usage."<sup>3</sup> Various strata of writing styles reflect various usage patterns:

It was indeed a permanent element in prose narrative, whether colloquial or literary; but it seems to have run much the same course in English, where the historic present is not normally used in educated conversation or in literature as a narrative form. It carries a special effect of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae* (2nd e.; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1909), p. 143. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> France, "The Exegesis of Greek Tenses in the New Testament," p. 5.

its own, which may be a favourite mannerism of a particular author, but entirely avoided by others.<sup>1</sup>

The historical present is so universal that Paul Kiparsky can cite a usage even from a Hittite inscription: "He went to his grandfather and speaks to him.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note how other Greek writings use the historical present. It is not found at all in Homer.<sup>3</sup> However, it is frequent in other classical writers.<sup>4</sup> This variation in classical authors invites speculation. Gildersleeve suggested that the tone of content influences the use or disuse of the historical present.

This use of the present belongs to the original stock of our family of languages. It antedates the differentiation into imperf. and aorist. Being a familiar form, it is set down as a mark of simplicity  $(\mathring{\alpha}\varphi\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\iota\alpha)$  of style. By reason, therefore, both of its liveliness and its familiar tone it is foreign to the leisurely and dignified unfolding of the epos, and is not found in Homer, whereas it is very common in the rhetorical Vergil, as it is very common in the Attic orators. Nor is it used to any extent, if at all, in the statuesque Pindaric ode, whereas it is frequent in the Attic drama, which seems to have introduced it to higher literature.  $^5$ 

The usage finds a home among the neo-classicists as well. Nigel Turner quotes the statistics produced by K. Eriksson (*Das Praesens Historicum in der nachclassischen griechischen Historiographie*, Diss. of Lund, 1943, pp. 39, 76, 83) showing widespread use of the historical

<sup>2</sup> Tense and Mood in Indo-European Syntax" (hereinafter referred to as "Tense and Mood"), *Foundations of Language*, 4(1968), 32.

Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 121.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Goodwin-Gulick, *Greek Grammar*, p. 268.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Several examples in classical literature are cited by Winer, *Idiom*, p. 267. H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, rev, by Gordon M. Messing (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), p. 277, offers an example of the similar "annalistic present."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Gildersleeve, *Syntax*, I, 86.

present in the Archeology of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Arrian's Anabasis, and Xenophon's *Anabasis*. He also notes a few samplings from Josephus. showing a high ratio of historical presents per page. This author spot checked a page of Josephus selected at random. One page of Greek contains several agrists and many imperfects, and in addition, three historical presents:  $\pi \alpha \rho \alpha \gamma i \nu \epsilon \tau \alpha i$ ,  $\epsilon \dot{\nu} \rho i \sigma \kappa \epsilon i$ , and  $\dot{\alpha} \pi o \lambda \dot{\nu} \epsilon i$ .

The historical present occurs often in the LXX. Winer's statement, "as to the Sept., in which this usage is extremely rare," is misleading. Parts of the LXX, especially the books of Kings, have many historical presents. Thackeray's classic work notes that even within the books of Kings, vocabulary and style vary sharply. He uses the following notations:<sup>5</sup>

earlier portions: 
$$K.\alpha$$
 (= 1 K.)  
 $K.\beta\beta$  (= 2 K. 1:1 - 11:1)  
 $K.\gamma\gamma$  (= 3 K. 2:12 - 21:43)  
later portions:  $K.\beta\gamma$  (= 2 K. 11:2 - 3 K. 2:11)  
 $K.\gamma\delta$  (= 3 K. 22:1 - 4 K. end)  
 $K.\beta\delta$  =  $K.\beta\gamma$  +  $K.\gamma\delta$ 

He then states that K.βδ shows an "almost complete absence of the historical present," while the other sections show varying amounts (145 in K.a. 28 in K. ββ, 47 in K.γγ). He notes the resulting contrasts within

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Turner, Syntax, p. 61. 2 Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 1:301, in *The Jewish War, Books I-III* With a translation by H. St J. Thackeray, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, Ltd., 1927), p. 140.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 267.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Henry St. John Thackeray, A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint (hereinafter referred to as Septuagint; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> *Ibid*.

#### the LXX:

The historic present tends to be used with verbs of a certain class; apart from  $\lambda \acute{\epsilon} \gamma \epsilon \iota$ , etc. it is specifically used of verbs of seeing in the Pentateuch, of verbs of motion (coming and going) in the later historical books: its absence from K.  $\beta \delta$ , distinguishes the later from the earlier portions of the Kingdom books.

Hawkins enlarges on Thackeray's list, and offers the following occurrences in LXX books:2

2 Esdras, 8
Ezra, 3
Nehemiah, 5
Job, 25
Esther, 2
Tobit, 10
Daniel, 1
Bel and the Dragon, 1
1 Maccabees, 2
2 Maccabees, 1
3 Maccabees, 3
4 Maccabees, 3

total LXX, 337

Having tabulated the total, he observes that the historical present is still more rare in the LXX, even in narrative portions, than in Mark's Gospel.<sup>3</sup> Moulton has suggested that the difference is due, at least in part, to the lack of  $\lambda \acute{\epsilon} \gamma \epsilon \iota$ , in LXX narration.<sup>4</sup>

As would be expected, the historical present is most common in popular speech. This fact is borne out by its very common use in the papyri,<sup>5</sup> and even in modern Greek.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Thackeray, *Septuagint*, p. 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, p. 213.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 121.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> *Ibid*. Moulton includes examples.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> BDF, p. 167.

# **Synoptic Comparisons**

One of the most interesting fields of Bible study is the subtle and intricate nuances of the three Synoptic Gospels. The so-called "Synoptic Problem" has intrigued scholars for centuries, and has produced a profound as well as elaborate literature. Entering into this picture is the historical present. Those who defend the Markan priority claim the higher frequency of the historical present in that book as evidence that the other authors "corrected" his usage by supplying past tenses. While this study cannot cover the point completely, a few comments are in order.

#### General Data

First, it is evident from Table 12 that Mark does use the historical present much more frequently than Matthew and Luke. But the distance between Matthew and Luke far exceeds that between Matthew and Mark. Hence, the remark, "Matthew and Luke do not favor the historic present," tends to be misleading.

### The Case of Luke 24:12

It has been assumed by many that Luke corrected Mark's grammar, deleting "Mark's historical presents except in 3:49." Hence, the appearance of any historical present in Luke is immediately suspect. One celebrated case is Luke 24:12, "Peter having arisen ran unto the tomb,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For example, Ned B. Stonehouse, *Origins of the Synoptic Gospels*, *Some Basic Questions* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), pp. 61-62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Charles H. Talbert and Edgar V. McKnight, "Can the Griesback Hypothesis Be Falsified?" (hereinafter referred to as "Griesback"), *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 91:3 (September, 1972), 350.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 367.

and having stooped down sees the linen cloths alone; and he departed wondering to himself what had happened." The UBS text includes the verse, but with a "D" rating. This rating appears strange in view of the verse's overwhelming textual support, including Aleph, A, B, and the Byzantine text, along with the Bodmer Papyrus, p<sup>75</sup>. Against the verse stands the western D alone. Three reasons have been advanced against the verse: the parallel wording in John 20, indicating (to some) an interpolation; the textual "Western Non-Interpolations" in Luke; and the presence in the verse of a historical present. Metzger reports that a "sharp difference" prevailed in the Committee as they debated these verses:

During the discussions a sharp difference of opinion emerged. According to the view of a minority of the Committee, apart from other arguments there is discernible in these passages a Christological-theological motivation that accounts for their having been added, while there is no clear reason that accounts for their having been omitted. Accordingly, if the passages are retained in the text at all, it was held that they should be enclosed within square brackets. On the other hand, the majority of the Committee, having evaluated the weight of the evidence differently, regarded the longer readings as part of the original text.<sup>4</sup>

And the Committee also refected theological borrowing from John as an explanation for Luke 24:12.

A majority of the Committee regarded the passage as a natural antecedent to ver. 24, and was inclined to explain the similarity with the verses in John as due to the likelihood that both evangelists had drawn upon a common tradition.<sup>5</sup>

Recently two scholars have attempted to disqualify the verse.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The nine so-called Western Non-Interpolations are Mt. 27:49; Lk. 22:19b-20: 24:3, 6, 12, 36, 40, 51, 52; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (hereinafter referred to as Textual Commentary; New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), D. 192.

K. P. G. Curtis considers the "linguistic evidence" as "most weighty" for excluding the verse. He does not mention such niceties as textual evidence. Raymond E. Brown is more cautious, but he also considers "the Western text as original not because of better transmission but through correct emendation." Both these critics are answered on their own ground by John Muddiman, who notes that the verse now "has at last been put up for rehabilitation. Muddiman asserts that, if Luke had a redactor, he would no doubt have "corrected" the historical present in 24:12, just as he supposedly had corrected the others taken from Mark. He continues with this bit of wisdom:

The uncorrected historic present . . . is a good illustration of the frequent inconclusiveness of the stylistic criterion in textual criticism. Unless we resort to emendation, we must admit that the Third Gospel contains at least two "scandalous" historic presents. Our author, then, is not infallible, but if he slipped twice, why not a third time, considering human rather than mathematical probability.<sup>5</sup>

F. Neiynck, following up Muddiman's article, adds the obvious fact that John could very well have referred to Luke when writing John 20,<sup>6</sup> adding significant details, or perhaps relating a separate but similar event. Furthermore, he sees as a possible "'source' of the uncorrected historic present" in Luke 24:12, the historical present  $\theta \epsilon \omega \rho o \hat{\upsilon} \sigma \iota \nu$ , which is found

<sup>1</sup> Curtis, "Luke xxiv. 12 and John xx. 3-10," *Journal of Theological Studies*, XXII (1971), esp. 515.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John (xiii-xxi)*, in The Anchor Bible, ed. by William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), pp. 967-69, 1000-01.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Muddiman, "A Note on Reading Luke XXIV. 12," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, XLVIII:3-4 (December, 1972), 542.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 544. <sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Neiynck, "The Uncorrected Historic Present in Lk. xxiv. 12," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, XLV11.1:3-4 (December, 1972), 553.

### in Mark 16:4.1

Thus it appears that Luke really did use historical presents.<sup>2</sup> Once again, grammar must proceed from the text, not the reverse. Specific Data

In order to compare accurately the three Synoptics' use of the historical present, one must examine the individual examples for each of the Gospels. The occurrences are here tabulated, along with the parallel usages (if any) in the other Synoptic Gospels. This table is a compilation of several charts in Hawkins's *Horae Synopticae* (pp. 144-49), along with the results of this author's research. The parallelism followed is that worked out by Burton and Goodspeed.<sup>3</sup> The forms marked with an asterisk (\*) are historical presents.

TABLE 13 SYNOPTIC HISTORICAL PRESENTS

	Matthew	Mark	Luke
*2:13	φαίνεται	-	-
*2:18	εἰσίν	-	-
*2:19	φαίνεται	-	-
*3:1	παραγίνεται	1:4 ἐγένετο	3:2 (ἐγένετο)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Neiynck, "The Uncorrected Historic Present in Lk. xxiv. 12," p. 551.

Thus Abbott is wrong to say that John is the only Evangelist to use  $\beta\lambda$ έπει as a historical present, *Johannine Grammar*, p. 350.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ernest DeWitt Burton and Edgar Johnson Goodspeed, *A Harmony of the Synoptic Gospels in Greek* (2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947).

TABLE 13--Continued

	Matthew	Mark	Luke
*3:13	παραγίνεται	1:9 ἤλθεν	-
*3:15	ἀφίησιν	-	-
4:1	ἀνήχθη	*1:12 ἐκβάλλει	4:1 ἤγετο
*4:5	παραλαμβάνει	-	4:9 ἤγαγεν
*4:5	ἴστησιν	-	4:9 ἔστησεν
*4:6	λέγει	-	4:9 εἶπεν
*4:8	παραλαμβάνει	-	4:5 ἀναγαγών
*4:8	δείκνυσιν	-	4:5 ἔδειξεν
*4:9	λέγει	-	4:6 εἶπεν
*4:10	λέγει	-	4:8 εἶπεν
*4:11	αφίησιν	-	4:13 ἀπέστη
*4:19	λέγει	1:17 εἶπεν	5:10 εἶπεν
	-	*1:21 εἰσπορεύονται	4:31 κατῆλθεν
	-	*1:30 λέγουσιν	4:38 ἠρώτησαν
	-	*1:37 λέγουσιν	-
	-	*1:38 λέγει	4:43 εἶπεν
8:2 ἰδο <b>ύ</b> πρ	οοσελθών	*1:40 ἔρχεται	5:12 ἐγένετοκαὶ ἰδού
8:3	λέγων	*1:41 λέγει	5:13 λέγων
*8:4	λέγει	*1:44 λέγει	5:14 παρήγγειλεν
*8:7	λέγει	-	-
	-	-	*7:40 φησίν
*8:20	λέγει	-	9:58 εἶπεν
*8:22	λέγει	-	9:60 εἶπεν
*8:26	λέγει	-	-

TABLE 13--Continued

	Matthew	Mark.		Luke	
9:2	ίδού	*2:3	<b>έ</b> χρεται	5:18	καὶ ἰδού
	προσελθών		φέρουτες		φέροντες
	-	*2:4	<b>χαλ</b> ῶσι	5:19	καθῆκαν
9:2	εἶπεν	*2:5	λέγει	5:20	εἶπεν
9:4	εἶπεν	*2:8	λέγει	5:22	εἶπεν
*9:6	λέγει	*2:10	λέγει	5:24	εἶπεν
*9:9	λέγει	*2:14	λέγει	5:27	εἶπεν
9:10	ἐγένετο	*2:15	γίνεται		-
9:12	εἶπεν	*2:17	λέγει	5:31	εἶπεν
*9:14	λέγοντες	*2:18	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι		-
9:14	λέγοντες	*2:18	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	5:33	$\epsilon \hat{i}\pi \alpha \nu$
12:3	εἶπεν	*2:25	λέγει	6:3	εἶπεν
	-	*3:3	λέγει	6:3	εἶπεν
12:11	εἶπεν	*3:4	λέγει	6:9	εἶπεν
*12:13	λέγει	*3:5	λέγει	6:10	εἶπεν
	-	*3:13	ἀναβαίνει	6:12	ἐγένετο ἐξελθεῖν
	-	*3:13	προσκαλέῖται	6:13	προσεφώνησεν
	-	*3:20	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	-	
	-	*3:20	$\sigma$ υνέρχετ $lpha$ ι	-	
12:46	ἰδού	*3:31	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	8:19	παρεγένετο
(12:47	$\hat{\epsilon_1}\pi\epsilon u)$	*3:32	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	8:20	ἀπηγγέλη
12:48	εἶπεν	*3:33	λέγει		-
12:49	$\hat{\epsilon_1}\pi\epsilon\nu$	*3:34	λέγει	8:21	εἶπεν
13:2	συνηχθήσαν	*4:1	συνάγεται	8:4	συνιόντος
	-	*4:13	λέγει		-

TABLE 13--Continued

	Matthew	Mark		Luke	
8:18	ἐκέλε <b>υ</b> σεν	*4:35	λέγει	8:22	εἶπεν
	-	*4:36	παραλαμβάνουσιν		-
8:24	έγένετο	*4:37	γίνεται	8:23	κατέβη
8:25	<b>ἤγειρα</b> ν	*4:38	<b>ἐ</b> γείρουσιν	8:24	διήγειραν
8:25	λέγοντες	*4:38	λέγουσιν	8:24	λέγοντες
8:29	λέγοντες	*5:7	λέγει	8:28	εἶπεν
	-	*5:9	λέγει	8:30	εἶπεν
8:34	<b>ἐ</b> ξῆλθεν	*5:15	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	8:35	ἦλθαν
	-	*5:15	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	8:35	ἦλθαν
	-	*5:19	λέγει	8:38	λέγων
9:18	ἰδο <b>ύ</b> προσελθών	*5:22	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	8:41	ίδοὺ ἦλθεν
9:18	προσεκύνει	*5:22	πίπτει	8:41	πεσών
	-	*5:23	παρακαλεῖ	8:41	πεσών
	-	*5:35	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	*8:49	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται
	-	*5:36	λέγει	8:50	ἀπεκρίθη
9:23	ἐλθών	*5:38	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	8:51	ἐλθών
9:23	<b>ἔ</b> λεγεν	*5:39	λέγει	8:52	εἶπεν
9:23	ἰδών	*5:38	θεωρεῖ		-
	-	*5:40	παραλαμβάνει	8:51	οὐκ ἀφῆκεν εἰ μή
9:25	εἰσελθών	*5:40	$\epsilon$ ί $\sigma$ πορε $\acute{f u}$ εται		-
	-	*5:41	λέγει	8:54	ἐφώνησεν
*9:28	λέγει		-		-
*9:28	λέγουσιν		-		-
*9.37	λέγει		-		-
*13:28	β λέγουσιν		-		-

TABLE 13--Continued

	Matthew		Mark	Luke	
*13:29	φασιν		-		-
*13:51	λέγουσιν		-		-
13:54	<b>ἐ</b> λθών	*6:1	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται		-
	-	*6:1	ἀκλουθοῦσιν		-
10:1	προσκαλεσθάμενος	*6:7	προσκαλέῖται	9:1 συ	υκαλεσάμενος
*14:8	φασίν	6:25	ήτήσατο λέγουσα		-
	-	*6:30	συνάγονται	9:10	<b>ύ</b> ποστρέψαντες
	-	*6:31	λέγει		-
	-	*6:37	λέγουσιν	9:13	$\epsilon i\pi \alpha \nu$
	-	*6:38	λέγει		-
*14:17	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	*6:38	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν		-
14:25	ἦλθεν	*6:48	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται		-
14:27	<b>ἐ</b> λάλησεν	*6:50	λέγει		-
*14:31	λέγει		-		-
*15:1	προ $\sigma$ έρχονται	*7:1	συνάγονται		-
15:1	λέγοντες	*7:5	έπερωτῶσιν		-
*15:12	λέγουσιν		-		-
15:16	εἶπεν	*7:18	λέγει		-
15:27	εἶπεν	*7:28	λέγει		-
15:30	προσῆλθον	*7:32	φέρουσιν		-
	-	*7:32	$παρακαλο\hat{\mathbf{υ}}σιν$		-
	-	*7:34	λέγει		-
15:32	εἶπεν	*8:1	λέγει		-
*15:33	λ <b>έ</b> γο <b>υ</b> σιν	8:4	$lpha$ πεκρίθη $\sigma$ $lpha$ $ u$		-

TABLE 13--Continued

	Matthew	Mark	Luke		
*15:34	λέγει	8:5	ήρώτα		-
15:35	παραγγείλας	*8:6	παραγγέλλει		-
16:2	είπεν	*8:12	λέγει		-
16:8	είπεν	*8:17	λέγει		-
	-	*8:19	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν		-
	-	*8:20	λέγουσιν		-
	-	*8:22	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται		-
	-	*8:22	φέρουσιν		-
	-	*8:22	$παρακαλο\hat{oldsymbol{u}}σιν$		-
*16:15	λέγει	8:29	ἐπηρώτα	9:20	εἶπεν
16:16	εἶπεν	*8:29	λέγει	9:20	εἶπεν
16:23	εἶπεν	*8:33	λέγει		-
*17:1	παραλαμβάνει	*9:2	παραλαμβάνει	9:28	παραλαβών
*17:1	ἀναφέρει	*9:2	ἀναφέρει	9:28	ἀνέβη
17:4	εἶπεν	*9:5	λέγει	9:33	$\epsilon i\pi \epsilon \nu$
17:17	εἶπεν	*9:19	λέγει	9:41	$\epsilon i\pi \epsilon \nu$
*17:20	λέγει		-		-
*17:25	λέγει		-		-
	-	*9:35	λέγει		-
*18:22	λέγει		-		-
*18:32	λέγει		-		-
19:1 ຖ້າ	θεν	*10:1	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται		-
19:2 ทุ้เ	κολούθησιν	*10:1	συνπορεύονται		-
	-		-	*11:37	<b>ἐ</b> ρωτᾶ

TABLE 13 continued

		TABLE 13 Continued	
	Matthew -	Mark -	Luke *11:45 λέγει
	-	-	*13:8 λέγει
	-	-	*16:7 λέγει
	-	-	16:23 δρᾶ
	-	-	*16:29 λέγει
	-	-	*17:37 λέγουσιν
*19:7	λέγουσιν	-	-
*19:8	λέγει	-	-
	-	*10:11 λέγει	-
*19:10	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	-	-
*19:18	λέγει	-	-
*19:20	λέγει	10:20 <b>ἔφ</b> η	18:21 εἶπεν
19:23	εἶπεν	*10:23 λέγει .	18:24 εἶπεν
	-	*10:24 λέγει	-
19:26	εἶπεν	*10:27 λέγει	18:27 εἶπεν
*20:6	λέγει	-	-
*20:7	λέγουσιν	-	-
*20:7	λέγει	-	-
*20:8	λέγει	-	-
20:20	προσῆλθεν	*10:35 προ $\sigma$ πορεύον	<b>τ</b> αι -
*20:21	λέγει	10:37 εἶπαν	-
*20:22	λέγουσιν	10:39 εἶπεν	-
*20:23	λέγει	10:39 εἶπεν	-
20:25	εἶπεν	*10:42 λέγει	-

TABLE 13--Continued

	Matthew	Mark	Luke
20:29	έκπορευομένων	*10:46 ἔρχονται	18:35 εν τῷ ἐγγίζειν
	-	*10:49 φωνοῦσιν	-
*20:33	λέγουσιν	10:51 εἶπεν	18:41 εἶπεν
	-	-	*19:22 λέγει
21:1	<b>ἤγγισαν</b>	*11:1 ἐγγίζουσιν	19:29 ἤγγισεν
21:1	ἀπέστειλεν	*11:1 ἀποστέλλει	19:29 ἀπέστειλει
21:2	λέγων	*11:2 λέγει	19:30 λέγων
	-	*11:4 λύουσιν	19:33 λυόντων
21:7	ἐπέθηκαν	*11:7 ἐπιβάλλουσιν	19:35 ἐπιρίφαντες
21:7	ἦγαγον	*11:7 φέρουσιν	19:35 ἦγαγον
	-	*11:15 ἐρχονται	
*21:13	λέγει	11:17 ἔλεγεν	19:46 λέγων
*21:16	λέγει	-	-
*21:19	λέγει	-	-
21:20	λέγοντες	*11:21 λέγει	-
21:21 €	:ἶπεν	*11:22 λέγει	-
	-	*11:27a ἐρχονται	-
21:23 τ	τροσῆλθαν	11:27β ἔρχονται	20:1 ἐπέστησαν
21:27 e	έἶπαν	11:33 λέγουσιν	20:7 ἀπεκρίθησαν
21:27 <b>e</b>	έφη	11:33 λέγει	20:8 εἶπεν
*21:31	λ <b>έγου</b> σιν	-	-
*21:31	λέγει	-	-
*21:41	λ <b>έγου</b> σιν	-	-
*21:42	λέγει	-	20:17 εἶπεν

TABLE 13--Continued

	Matthew	Mark	Luke
*22:8	λέγει	-	-
*22:12	λέγει	-	-
*22:16	ἀποστέλλουσιν	*12:13 ἀποστέλλουσιν	20:20 ἀπέστειλαν
22:16	λέγοντας	*12:14 λέγουσιν	20:21 λέγοντες
*22:20	λέγει	*12:16 λέγει	-
*22:21	λέγουσιν	12:16 εἶπαν	20:24 εἶπαν
*22:21	λέγει	12:17 εἶπεν	20:25 εἶπεν
22:23	προσῆλθον	*12:18 ἔρχονται	20:27 προσελθόντες
*22:42	λέγουσιν	-	-
*22:43	λέγει	-	-
24:1	προσηλθον ἐπιδεῖξαι	*13:1 λέγει	21:5 λεγόντων
*25:11	<b>ἐ</b> ρχονται	-	-
*25:19	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	-	-
*25:19	συναίρει	-	-
26:17	λέγοντες	*14:12 λέγουσιν	22:9 εἶπαν
	-	*14:13 ἀποστέλλει	22:8 ἀπέστειλεν
26:18	εἶπεν	*14:13 λέγει	22:10 εἶπεν
26:20	ἀνέκειτο	*14:17 ἔρχεται	22:14 ἀνέπεσεν
*26:25	λέγει	-	-
*26:31	λέγει	*14:27 λέγει	-
26:34	<b>ἔ</b> φη	*14:30 λέγει	22:34 εἶπεν
*26:35	λέγει	14:31 ἐλάλει	-
*26:36	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	*14:32 ἔρχονται	22:39 ἐπορεύθη
*26:36	λέγει	*14:32 λέγει	22:40 εἶπεν

TABLE.13--Continued

	Matthew	Mark	Luke
26:37	παραλαβών	*14:33 παραλαμβάνει	-
*26:38	λέγει	*14:34 λέγει	-
*26:40	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	*14:37 ἔρχεται	22:45 ἐλθών
*26:40	$\epsilon$ $\dot{0}$ ρ $\dot{0}$ κ $\epsilon$ ι	*14:37 εὑρίκει	22:45 εὖρεν
*26:40	λέγει	*14:37 λέγει	22:46 εἶπεν
*26:45	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	*14:41 ἔρχεται	-
26:47	ἰδού ἦλθεν	*14:43 παραγίνεται	22:34 προήρχετο
26:49	εἶπεν	*14:45 λέγει	-
*26:52	λέγει	-	22:51 εἶπεν
	-	*14:51 κρατοῦσιν	-
26:57	συνήχθησαν	*14:53 συνέρχονται	-
26:63	εἶπεν	*14:61 λέγει	-
*26:64	λέγει	*14:62 εἶπεν	-
26:65	λέγων	*14:63 ἔρχεται	-
26:69	προσῆλθεν	*14:66 ἔρχεται	-
26:69	λέγο $\mathbf{v}$ σα	*14:67 λέγει	22:56 εἶπεν
*26:71	λέγει	14:69 ἤρξατο λέγειν	22:58 ἔφη
27:11	ἔφη	*15:2 λέγει	23:3 ἔφη
*27:13	λέγει	15:4 ἐπηρώτα	-
*27:22	λέγει	15:12 ἔλεγεν	23:20 προσεφώνησεν
27:22	λ <b>έγου</b> σιν	15:13 ἔκραξαν	23:21 ἐπεφώνουν
27:27	συνήγαγον	*15:16 $σ$ υνκαλοῦ $σ$ ιν	-
27:28	περιέθηκαν	*15:17 ἐνδιδύσκουσιν	-
27:29	<b>ἐ</b> πέθηκα <i>ν</i>	*15:17 περιτιθέα $\sigma$ ιν	-

TABLE.13--Continued

	Matthew	Mark		Luke	
27:31	αἀπήγαγον	*15:20	<b>έ</b> ξάγο <b>υ</b> σιν	23:26	απήγαγον
27:32	ήγγάρε <b>υ</b> σαν	*15:21	ἀγγαρεύουσιν	23:26	<b>ἐ</b> πέθηκα <i>ν</i>
27:33	ἐλθόντες	*15:22	φέρουσιν	23:33	ἦλθαν
27:35	σταυφώσαντες	*15:24	σταυροῦσιν	23:33	<b>ἐ</b> στα <b>ύ</b> ρωσαν
27:35	διεμερίσαντο	*15:24	διαμερίζονται	23:34	διαμεριζόμενοι
*27:38	$\sigma$ ταυροῦνται	*15:27	σταυροῦσιν		-
28:1	ἦλθεν	*16:2	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	24:1	<b>ἤ</b> λθαν
	-	*16:4	θεωροῦσιν	24:3	εὖρον
28:5	εἶπεν	*16:6	λέγει	24:5	$\hat{\epsilon_1}\pi\alpha\nu$
*28:10	λέγει		-		-
	-		-	*24:12	βλέπει
	-		-	*24:23	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν
	-		-	*24:36	ο λέγει

This list is more helpful for examining the Synoptic Problem than any in Hawkins's work for several reasons. First, it follows a more recent critical text; Hawking follows the Westcott and Hort text exclusively. Due to the different text or to a different interpretation, this table includes three historical presents omitted by Hawkins (Mt. 2:18; 4:5, 9), and omits one which Hawkins includes with a question mark (Mk. 6:45,  $\alpha \pi o \lambda \acute{\mathbf{u}}$ ), treated here as a relative time present). Second, the arrangement of parallel readings is improved, and non-parallel but similar readings are omitted. Third, the historical presents of all three books are integrated into one list, making cross comparison much easier. Fourth, while

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, p. 144, n. 3.

Hawkins lists the parallel readings for Mark's historical presents, he does not for Matthew's or for Luke's. This incomplete treatment leads to an unbalanced conclusion. This table is especially revealing, since it shows many cases where Matthew has a historical present while Mark does not.

After examining this data, it is this author's opinion that the use or disuse of the historical present provides absolutely no evidence regarding the literary priority of any of the Synoptics. It is obvious that Mark employs it more than Matthew, and that Luke employs it hardly at all. Yet the places these authors use it show no significant pattern of literary interdependence. Notice the following summary table:

TABLE 14 SYNOPTIC HISTORICAL PRESENT FIGURES

parallel	Matthew	(94)	Mark (150)	Luke (13)
Mt. hist pres	94		21	0
Mt. other	0		87	0
Mt. nothing	0		42	13
Mk. hist pres	21		150	1
Mk. other	21		0	0
Mk. nothing	52		0	12
Lk. hist pres	0		1	13
Lk. other	35		87	0
Lk. nothing	59		62	0

This table is revealing. Assuming for the moment that Matthew copied from Mark, "correcting" Mark's historical presents, one might look at the

second vertical column to see what Matthew did with Mark's 150 historical Presents. There it is seen that Matthew changed 87 of them to other tenses--so far so good. And that same column shows that he simply did not reproduce 42 of them, either because the entire section was omitted or because he left out parts of the section. But also notice that he reproduced Mark's historical presents 21 times, which shows that his "correcting" was not too energetic. But looking in the first vertical column, one sees even more difficulties. Matthew not only brought over 21 of Mark's historical presents intact, but he added 73 more historical presents of his own! Fifty-two of them have no parallel in Mark, and he evidently composed them himself, or got them from another source. Did he incorporate them from source Q? That solution is unlikely since Q was shorter than Mark (even assuming such a document ever existed), and how in its shorter compass could it supply more than twice the historical presents that Mark did? No extant Greek literature has a higher percentage of historical presents than Mark. On the other hand, 'if Matthew composed 52 historical presents himself, why would he "correct" 87 of Mark's? But what is more amazing, and what Hawkins does not show in his charts, is that 21 times Matthew has changed Mark's normal past narrative tense, and has turned it into that dreaded historical present! In other words, the data, taken as a whole, supplies no evidence that Matthew "corrected" Mark's historical presents, only that Matthew used the historical present less, whether he wrote before or after Mark.

The same may be said for Luke. He was averse to the usage. The interesting feature in Luke is his use of historical presents in his peculiar material. Twelve times he used it in Lukan material, once in

conjunction with Mark, never in conjunction with Matthew. The ratio is similar to his use of fourteen historical presents in Acts.<sup>1</sup>

It appears that each author employed the historical present as he felt at the moment, without any special compulsion from previous writers. Each writer maintained his own general style, which included the approximate frequency with which he normally used the historical present, whether often, seldom, or in between.

Some writers have sought for various explanations to account for the frequency difference. Some have sought it in the language of Christ's original speech or of the particular Gospel or its sources.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, it has been suggested that in Mark "the Aramaic participial sentence may have contributed to its frequency."<sup>3</sup> While these influences may indeed have contributed to its use by different authors, they offer no clue to the order of the Synoptic Gospels.

Some particular idiosyncrasies appear in each writer's use of the historical present. Matthew limits it to verbs of speaking more than three-fourths of the time. Matthew and Luke often make up the lack by supplying  $3\delta o \hat{\mathbf{v}}$ . And Mark quite often uses  $\kappa \alpha \hat{\mathbf{v}}$  before the historical present, while John often employs asyndeton.

<sup>1</sup> Hawkins notes only 13, omitting not in Acts 26:25, *Horae Synopticae*, p. 149.

<sup>4</sup> Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, p. 148, n. cf. Talbert and McKnight, "Griesback," p. 355.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For a good scholarly discussion of the contemporary languages of Palestine, see Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, XXXII:4 (October, 1970), 501-31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> BDF, p. 167.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 868.

The conclusion can be only that "the personal equation may have to explain the variations in the Gospels." The difference is in the men and their approach to literature:

Luke's manifest reluctance to use it . . . is due to the fact that in Luke's time the construction was regarded as "too familiar for his liking." He is the scientific historian, while Mark and John are the dramatists. Different writers would feel differently about it.<sup>2</sup>

# Moulton especially tries to size up Luke:

We conceive that Josephus would use the tense as an imitator of the classics, Mark as a man of the people who heard it in daily use around him; while Luke would have Greek education enough to know that it was not common in cultured speech of his time, but not enough to recall the encouragement of classical writers whom he probably never read, and would not have imitated if he had read them.<sup>3</sup>

Whether the personal reasons for the stylistic variations in the Synoptics are correctly surmised by Moulton or not, detailed study of their use of the tense reveals no evidence of the priority of any. Thus one can agree with Stephen M. Reynolds, although for a different reason:

Comparative frequency or infrequency of the present tense in past situations may have nothing to do with earliness or lateness of a Gospel passage, and attempts which have been made to use this as a criterion should be abandoned.<sup>4</sup>

## The Zero Tense Controversy

The historical present provides the unlikely battleground for a modern controversy which strikes right at the root of tense exegesis. So far the battle has been joined only on one side. The traditional understanding of the present and imperfect tenses has received unquestioning

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 868. 
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 867.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 121.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Reynolds, "The Zero Tense in Greek," *Westminster Theological Journal*, 32:1 (November, 1969), 72.

acceptance for so long that its defenders are not responding to the attack. The new theory comes from the linguistic school, from scholars of comparative early Indo-European languages.

## **Traditional Interpretations**

Why does an author use the historical present in some places and not in others? What is its force, its semantical contribution? These questions have produced various answers. The most common explanation by far is that the historical present makes a "past action more vivid by bringing it into the present, setting it before the reader's or hearer's eves instead of giving a remote report." Thus Winer sees vividness instilled in John's Revelation.<sup>2</sup> Writing later Burton includes the concept in the definition itself: "The Present Indicative is used to describe vividly a past event in the presence of which the speaker conceives himself to be." Likewise Robertson and Moulton ascribe the same significance to the historical present.<sup>4</sup> Attempting to explain the data more closely. Goodwin and Gulick's *Greek Grammar* notes that the historical present is "used vividly for the agrist" (p. 267), while Hawkins notes the vividness it imparts to Mark and John: "In several cases the historic present gives to this Gospel [Mark] something of the vividness produced in the parallel places of Matthew and Luke by the use of  $i\delta o \hat{\mathbf{v}}$ , which is never employed by Mark (or by John) in narrative, but by Matthew 33 times and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> France, "The Exegesis of Greek Tenses in the New Testament," p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 267. <sup>3</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 9. <sup>4</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 867, 868; Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 120.

by Luke 16 times."

A second proposed explanation is that certain authors were influenced by their language milieu, especially by Hebrew and Aramaic. The primary apologist for this view is Nigel Turner, whose proclivity for "Biblical Greek" has been noted earlier. He finds two Hebrew sources for the historical present, "the picturesque participle in Heb. narrative."<sup>2</sup> and the Hebrew imperfect.<sup>3</sup> Noting John's extreme tense variation in Revelation, he maintains that John was "either inexpert in Greek or deliberately provocative in his choice of Semitic constructions." <sup>4</sup> He thus maintains that even the Greek future in Revelation can be translated by the English past or historical present, and he prefers such a translation:

One has only to examine the R.V. to experience the weird effect when the tenses are literally rendered, to the puzzlement of commentators all down the ages. Yet there is no doubt that the true text has a succession of future verbs; the manuscripts which offer us the past tense are clearly the victims of attempts to wring sense out of the text.<sup>5</sup>

The second volume of Moulton's grammar concurs to some extent, since it includes the historical present under the Appendix "Semitisms in the New Testament." Moulton and Howard also enlist the statistics of Thackeray and of Hawkins from the LXX to prove that the historical present cannot be proved to be an Aramaism. Turner's conclusions, however, have come

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, p. 144. <sup>2</sup> Turner, *Syntax*, p. 61. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Turner, *Insights*, p. 159.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 158-59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Moulton and Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation*, pp. 456-57. p. 456. <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 456.

under sharp attack. The historical present appears rather to be of good Greek lineage, and not a Semitism. This fact is strengthened by wide papyri usage. Hence Turner's theory seems based on insufficient evidence.<sup>1</sup>

Several other explanations have been advanced. Jelf thinks important events are emphasized by the usage, "the more important action being held as it were before our eyes, as present to us, while the less important one is suffered to pass rapidly by in the Aorist." Winer prefers the idea that "suddenness in a series of past events is indicated with striking effect by the Present." While these observations may correctly describe certain occurrences, they fail in the majority of cases. Therefore others have sought more subtle explanations. Blass quotes Karl Theodor Rodemeyer, *Das Praesens historicum bei Herodot and Thukydides* (Basel: Buckdrucherei M. Werner Riehm, 1889), explaining his theory and Blass's evaluation of it: Rodemeyer

attempts to show that the historical present indicates that an event took place at the same time as, or immediately after, a point of time already given; this is valid to a certain degree.<sup>4</sup>

Blass himself comes forward with a proposal; citing John 1:29-43, he concludes:

Thus the circumstances, or all that is secondary, are given in a past tense; on the other hand the main action is likely to be represented by the present, while the concluding events are again put into the aor.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> McKnight, "The New Testament and 'Biblical Greek," esp. pp. 39-42; earlier, Simcox, *The Language of the New Testament*, p. 78. For a discussion of Revelation usage, see below under "Surrounding Tenses."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> William Edward Jelf, *A Grammar of the Greek Language* (4th ed.; 2 vols.; Oxford: James Parker and Co., 1866), II, 68: also Turner, *Syntax*, p. 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 267.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> BDF, p. 167; Turner notes this theory also, *Syntax*, p. 61.

because here a historical present would not be natural.<sup>1</sup>

A final theory is one advanced by Thackery in his study of the historical present in Kings. He notes that the historical present may be used to "change scenes," or to introduce new characters or a new locality. This author noted several such examples in Mark's Gospel especially. Turner hesitates: "at most, it may be a tendency." And summarizing all the suggestions, he says, "but the hist. pres. is so universal that it is impossible to theorize." The traditional interpretations thus are numerous, but none of them fully accounts for the data. And each of them must account for opposite data. These problems have resulted in the broadside attack discussed next.

### Criticism of the Traditional Theories

The most powerful onslaught on traditional theory has come from a comparative linguist, Paul Kiparsky of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His article "Tense and Mood in Indo-European Syntax" summarizes the flaws of traditional grammar and proposes a bold new approach to present tense exegesis (he would use the term "semantics"). He begins by noting earlier explanations:

There are several: (1) The historical present expresses timelessness. (2) The historical present expresses simultaniety with the action denoted by the preceding verb. (3) The historical present has an inceptive meaning. The range of examples that will come up here is sufficient, I think, to show that none of these special meanings is

<sup>2</sup> Thackery, The Schweich Lectures, pp. 21-22, quoted by Turner, *Syntax*, pp. 61-62.

BDF, p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62; Moulton and Howard give stronger support to Thackeray's theory, *Accidence and Word Formation*, PP. 456-57.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61; also Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 868.

inherent to the historical present. In fact, any consistent semantic difference between historical presents and narrative past tenses has not been successfully demonstrated. Recognizing this, some have proposed, equally unacceptably, that the use of the historical present can be purely arbitrary. <sup>1</sup>

Singling out the "vivid" or "dramatic" concept, he sees this concept as a later development in Indo-European language.

While this is undoubtedly a correct intuition about the historical present as found in modern European languages, I shall argue that it is quite mistaken to transfer it to the earlier stages of Indo-European. In Greek . . . the historical present has quite different syntactic and semantic properties, to which the traditional idea, or any of its variants, must utterly fail to do justice.<sup>2</sup>

In order to point up the weaknesses of traditional theory, Kiparsky notes five phenomena:<sup>3</sup>

- a. the historical present behaves syntactically as a past tense
- b. the historical present often is linked directly to a past tense (as Thucydides, 7:29, "he attacked the town and takes it"; 8:84, "they captured the fort and drive out the garrison"; 8:102, "most of them escaped towards Imbros, but four are caught")
- c. the historical present "is never sustained over longer passages but normally alternates with preterite forms in rapid succession" <sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Kiparsky contrasts this to what he considers as modern usage: "A curiously pervasive fact is that verbs of saying are especially frequently put into the historical present in virtually all Indo-European languages. . . . In general, however, conjunction of past and historical present is quite untypical of modern languages. Conversely, the sustained use of the historic present in long passages of narrative which is natural in these, is conspicuously absent in earlier Indo-European. In this respect the two systems are completely reversed" (p. 32). However, this author recently ran across an example in modern literature which contradicts Kiparsky's rule. Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Prize winning novel, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovieh*, graphically portrays the misery, crudity, and hopelessness of Soviet prison camps. The novel was written in "a peculiar mixture of concentration camp slang and the language of a Russian peasant" (p. xvii). Telling a story to his men, a camp gang-boss

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood," p. 30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-33.

- d. the present is used similarly for the future tense (as Herodotus 1:207, "when they see so many good things, they will turn to them and after that there remains for us . . .")
- e. the present switches with the agrist in exactly the same way in modal contexts, including subjunctives, optatives, and imperatives.

Kiparsky sees no other alternative than to reject any particular special exegetical or semantic meaning the historical present might have.

It would be absurd to seek in such examples any semantic differences, however subtle, between aorist and present. But this simply highlights the impossibility of adequately characterizing the so-called historical present on a semantic basis alone. Rather a syntactic solution is called for. It is beginning to look as if the historical present in early Indo-European is a present tense only in its superficial form. It functions syntactically as a past tense, as shown by sequence of tenses, it is semantically indistinguishable from the past tenses, and it alternates with these in conjoined structures. <sup>1</sup>

Kiparsky's work was in classical Greek. But Biblical scholars were not slack to spot the implications for New Testament exegesis, Stephen M. Reynolds followed through with an article in the *Westminster Theological Journal*, 32:1 (November, 1969), 68-72, entitled "The Zero Tense in Greek." He notes his indebtedness to Kiparsky (pp. 68-69). He especially is impressed by Kiparsky's argument "c," the lack of a sustained series of historical presents throughout a narrative.

It is obvious that if the narrator for vividness intended to give the impression that he was relating the events as he saw them, he would continue to use the present tense and not break the illusion by introducing a past tense. The New Testament writers make no effort to maintain an illusion of this sort. On the contrary, they frequently

Tyurin mixes past tenses and historical presents as follows: past, past, present, past, present, present, present, past, past,

<sup>1</sup> Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood," p. 33.

revert to the aorist. . . .

When in a given passage in the New Testament there are many changes back and forth from aorist to present, it would seem that there is no forgetting of time for vividness, but that the present is considered the equivalent of the aorist in the context.<sup>1</sup>

Citing the example of Mark 5:32-42, Reynolds opposes other suggested theories as well:

I believe that no idea of the illusion of actually being present, or of special vividness for certain words can be consistently maintained to explain this interspersing of aorist and imperfect tense forms with the present tense. I do not believe that any explanation saying that verbs of primary importance are put in one tense and verbs of secondary importance in another can be advanced successfully. The only plausible explanation is that the present tenses here are the equivalent of the past tense forms. <sup>2</sup>

The article by Reynolds, in turn, is cited by Frank Stagg, who also rejects the "vivid" idea of the historical present or of the futuristic present: "'Present tense' does not illuminate the past action of a 'historical present' or the futuristic force of a 'futuristic present.'" While Eugene Nida has not written explicitly in this area, his analysis of another area could be viewed as sympathetic to the new trend. Speaking of lexical definition of terms in a context, he advocates the meaning which changes the context the least:

This process of maximizing the context is fully in accord with the soundest principles of communication science. As has been clearly demonstrated by mathematical techniques in decoding, the correct meaning of any term is that which contributes least to the total context, or in other terms, that which fits the context most perfectly. 4

### The Zero Tense Claim

Kiparshy sets forth with admirable clarity his solution to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Reynolds, "The Zero Tense in Greek," p. 70. 
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Stagg, "The Abused Aorist," pp. 222-23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Nida, "Implications of Contemporary Linguistics for Biblical Scholarship," p. 86.

problem. Rather than being exegetically significant, the historical (or futuristic) present is governed by syntactical rules—i.e., mechanically, as the Hebrew imperfect with waw-conversive is mechanical,--while it is exegetically identical to the narrative agrist.

Everything points to its being an underlying past tense, and its conversion into the present tense in the surface structure must be governed by a syntactic rule, evidently some form of conjunction reduction, which optionally reduces repeated occurrences of the same tense to the present. Such a rule not only accounts for the historical present, but at the same time for the alternation of aorist and present in modal contexts, and also for the alternation of future and present, which in the traditional theory remain separate and unexplained facts <sup>1</sup>

Thus the present can be a "zero tense," which merely carries on the thrust of earlier tenses.

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Schematically, then, the sequence . . . Past . . . and . . . Past . . . is reduced to . . . Past . . . and . . . zero . . ., and since it is the present which is the zero tense, the reduced structure . . . Past . . . and . . . zero . . . . is realized morphologically as Past . . . and . . . Present . . . . Repeated futures and subjunctives reduce in just the same way.<sup>2</sup>
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Kiparsky finds the Greek counterpart in the very early "injunctive" form of the verb--the stem with past endings but without the augment:

The Indo-European counterpart to these forms which at once suggests itself is the so-called injunctive. The unaugmented forms with secondary endings which this term refers to were characterized by Thurneysen in a classic study (1883) as forms which in effect

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood," pp. 33-34.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35. Kiparsky notes several modern African languages with such a zero tense (an "N-tense"): Masai, Bantu languages (Tswana, Hereo, Duala), and Swahili (p. 36). He also adduces other evidence that the present tense is the remnant of the zero tense: (a) when there are two conditions in a general conditional sentence in Old Irish, the first is subjunctive, the second is Present indicative: (b) the Prague School linguistics theory concludes that the present indicative is the "unmarked tense and mood"; (c) "while verbs may lack other tenses and moods, no verb lacks a present indicative"; and (d) "nominal sentences are normally interpreted as present indicative," pp. 34-45.

neutralize the verbal categories of tense and mood, expressing only person, number, and voice.1

These injunctive forms are found in the earliest copies of Homer, while later copies have changed them to either imperfects or historical presents, depending on the meter. For example, the injunctive  $\lambda \in \pi$  would become either ἔλειπε or λείπει, whichever fits the rhythm. Subsequent Greek writing (which is virtually all the extant Greek material) has only the present or imperfect to serve as the injunctive, thus making positive identification of a special injunctive tense usage impossible--which, according to Kiparsky, accounts for the lapse of traditional grammar. Thus he concludes with the following survey of the development of the historical present in Greek:

- (1) The oldest system, represented by Vedic Sanskrit, in which conjunctive reduction of tense and mood yielded injunctive forms. We shall see in the next two sections that the outlines of this system can also be reconstructed from Homeric Greek and Celtic.
- (2) A new system, in which the injunctive is lost and its role in conjunction reduction as the unmarked tense and mood is taken over by the present and the indicative. This stage is attested most clearly in Greek and Old Irish, but also in early Latin, Old Icelandic, and even some modern languages.
- (3) The newest system, characterized by the loss of conjunction reduction of inflectional categories. This system is that of most modern European languages and was already nascent in classical Latin. Thus in classical Latin the historical present does not always count as a past tense in sequence of tenses, but already optionally counts as a true present. Also we see the alternation of historical present and past typical of the other Indo-European languages being lost in

<sup>1</sup> Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood," p. 36.
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39. Kiparshy notes H. Koller, who discovered "that the verbs which typically occur in the historical imperfect are just those which also can occur in the historical present," p. 40; thus, the historical imperfect is likewise a zero-tense: "As is well known, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, the same authors who use the historical present in such profusion, also use a historical imperfect, which like the historical present is semantically indistinguishable from the agrist and also alternates in narrative with the agrist in much the same way as the historical present does."

Latin and replaced by sustained sequences of historical presents, which are frequent e.g. in Caesar.<sup>1</sup>

Applying this theory to the New Testament, Reynolds, allowing for such a thing as a "dramatic present" (which Kiparsky also does for more recent Greek), believes there are no examples of it in the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> He separates examples like "David says," which have "a present reference," and should have a distinctive name in English grammar."<sup>3</sup> This paper concurs, and has already discussed such cases under the category of citation presents.

If this theory is true, then much of previous grammar and exegesis is false and arbitrary. More than the historical or futuristic present is at stake. This theory would neutralize linear-punctiliar distinctions in many modal usages as well, in participles, subjunctives, infinitives, imperatives, and prohibitions. Certainly the theory deserves to be tested and analyzed. The New Testament, with its hundreds of examples, provides an admirable testing ground.

#### Relevant New Testament Data

The New Testament supplies many types of data. The data selected for investigation here is that which bears most directly on the various theories proposed to explain the historical present. The data for Synoptic comparison already has been presented. The following sections shall discuss data bearing on the exegetical significance of the historical present.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood," p. 38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Reynolds, "The Zero Tense in Greek," p. 72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

#### Verbs Used

The first question, and the easiest to investigate, is this: are certain verbs unduly common as historical presents? If so, is their exegetical significance different from other verbs which may appear as historical presents? Many authors have noticed that verbs of saying take the lead. In all Greek literature one often finds in "especially vernacular "(occasionally in Plutarch) in the reporting of a conversation" the forms  $\lambda \dot{\epsilon} \gamma \epsilon_1$ , and  $\phi \eta \sigma i \nu$ . Thackeray comments that "the historic present tends to be used with verbs of a certain class"; he mentions that verbs of seeing are common in the Pentateuch LXX and verbs of coming or going in the later historical books, in addition to verbs of saying.<sup>2</sup> Muddiman goes so far as to call verbs of saying "a separate category" in the study of historical presents.<sup>3</sup> Turner applies the tendency to all language: "In all speech, especially the least educated, forms like λέγει and  $\phi \eta \sigma i \nu$  appear in reports of conversation." The phrase "least educated" may be misleading, for Luke himself several times employs  $\phi \eta \sigma i \nu$ in the latter part of Acts.

In order to judge further this question, it will be necessary to tabulate the historical present word usage in each New Testament book. The results are tabulated below:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> BDF, D. 167; cf. Simcox, *The Language of the New Testament*, p. 99.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Thackery, *Septuagint*, a. 24; also Turner, *Syntax*, p. 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Muddiman, "A Note on the Reading Luke XXIV. 12," p. 544.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Turner, *Syntax*, p. 61.

TABLE 15 HISTORICAL PRESENT VOCABULARY

hist. pres.	Mt.	Mk	Lk.	Jn.	Acts	Rev.	total
ἀγγαρε <b>ύ</b> ω		1					1
β ἄγω				3			3
ἀδικέω						1	1
ἄδω						3	3
β ἀκολο <b>υ</b> θέω		1					1
β ἀναβαίνω		1					1
β ἀναφέρω	1	1					2
α ἀποκρίνομαι				3			3
ἀποστέλλω	1	3					4
ἀφίημι	2						2
βάλλω				1			1
γ βλέπω			1	5			6
γέμω						1	1
γίνομαι		2					2
δείκνυμι	1						1
διαμερίζω		1					1
δίδωμι				2			2
β ἐγγίζω		1					1
β ἐγείρω		1		1			2
eἰμ <b>ί</b>	1					8	9
$\beta$ εἰ $\sigma$ πορεύομ $\alpha$ ι		2					2
<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλω		1					1
β ἐκπορεύομαι						4	4

TABLE 15--Continued

hist. pres.	Mt.	Mk	Lk.	Jn.	Acts	Rev.	total
ἐνδιδ <b>ύ</b> σκω		1					1
β ἐξάγω		1					1
α ἐπερωτάω		1					1
<b>ἐ</b> πιβάλλω		1					1
β ἔρχομαι	5	24	1	13			43
α ἐρωτάω	1	1		4	1		7
<b>έ</b> χω						8	8
γ θεωρέω		3		4	1		8
ίστημι	1						1
κάθημαι						1	1
β καταβαίνω						1	1
κεῖμαι						1	1
α κράζω						2	2
κρατέω		1					1
κρίνω		1					1
λαμβάνω				2			2
α λέγω	68	72	8	120	2	12	282
λύω		1					1
μέλλω						1	1
νεύω						1	1
οἶδα						1	1
γ δράω			1				1
α παραγγέλλω		1					1

TABLE 15--Continued

hist. pres.	Mt.	Mk	Lk.	Jn.	Acts	Rev.	total
β παραγίνομαι	2	1					3
α παρακαλέω		3					3
παραλαμβάνω	3	4					7
β πατέω						1	1
περιτίθημι		1					1
πίπτω		1					1
πλανάω						1	1
ποιέω						4	4
πολεμέω						1	1
β προσέρχομαι	2						2
α προσκαλέομαι		2					2
β προσπορεύομα	1	1					1
$\sigma$ τα <b>υ</b> ρόω	1	2					3
α συγκαλέω		1					1
β συμπορεύομαι		1					1
β συνάγω		3					3
β συναίρω	1						1
β συνέρχομαι		2					2
$\sigma$ <b>ύ</b> ρω						1	1
τίθημι				1			1
τρέφω						1	1
β τρέχω				1			1
γ φαίνω	2						2
β φέρω		4					4

	D	rr	1 /	$\alpha$ .	1
$\perp$	۱В	LÆ	I )	Continu	ea

hist. pres.	Mt.	Mk	Lk.	Jn.	Acts	Rev.	total
α φημί	2		1	1	10		14
α φωνέω		1		1			2
χαλάω		1					1
total	94	150	13	163	14	54	488

Thus, out of a total of nearly two thousand verbs in the New Testament vocabulary, only seventy-five are used in the historical present, and only thirty-four of them are used so more than once. Traditional theory mentions verbs of saying, coming or going, and seeing. These verbs have been marked with the letters " $\alpha$ ," " $\beta$ ," and " $\gamma$ ," respectively. Their totals are as follows;

TABLE 16 HISTORICAL PRESENT VERB TYPES

book	saying	going	seeing	other	total
Matthew	70	11	3	10	94
Mark	78	44	4	24	150
Luke	10	1	2	-	13
John	125	18	13	7	163
Acts	12	-	2	-	14
Revelation	14	15	-	25	54
total	309	89	24	66	488

It certainly appears that traditional grammar fits with the New Testament data here. Over 86% of the historical presents in the New Testament fit the three categories. Of course, as expected, the lion's share belongs to the single verb  $\lambda \acute{\epsilon} \gamma \omega$ , with 58% of the total; the second highest,  $\acute{\epsilon} \rho \chi o$ - $\mu \alpha \iota$ , takes up 9% of the historical present usage. Only one other verb

is used over ten times,  $\phi\eta\mu\hat{i}$ , accounting for 3 1/2%. To counter the argument that these verbs are the most common anyway, one need note only the verb  $\epsilon\hat{i}\mu\hat{i}$  with 2450 New Testament usages, but only nine of them historical presents, eight being in Revelation.

More significant is the analysis of each author individually. In order to assist this analysis, Table 16 is here reproduced in percentages rather than in total usages:

TABLE 16A VERB TYPE PERCENTAGES

book	saying	going	seeing	other	total
Matthew	74%	12%	3%	11%	100%
Mark	52%	29%	3%	16%	100%
Luke	77%	8%	15%	-	100%
John	77%	11%	8%	4%	100%
Acts	86%	-	14%	-	100%
Revelation	26%	28%	-	46%	100%
total NT	63%	18%	5%	14%	100%

Matthew, Luke, and John reserve most of their historical presents for verbs of saying (about 75%), while Mark spreads out his usage more over other types (about 50% saying, 50% others). Luke, the most literary writer in the list, totally avoids using the historical present for any but the three categories named, and even there he uses it sparingly, and mainly for verbs of saying (over 80%). Finally, the Revelation shows the most unusual pattern of all. However, most of the historical presents in that book occur while John relates visions; and in a sense, John was actually describing the scene as if he were really present, for indeed, in his mind he was! So for that book, the traditional understanding of the historical presents often fits admirably well.

## Change of Scene

Thackeray some time ago suggested that the historical present was one technique used to change scenes or to introduce a new character or subject. Robertson also notes that it may often begin a new paragraph. This author found in the New Testament several places where the paragraphs in the United Bible Societies' Greek text began with a historical present (Mt. 2:13, 19; 3:1, 13; 9:14; 13:51; 15:1; 17:1; 26:31, 36; Mk. 1:12, 21, 40; 3:13, 20, 31; 4:13, 35; 5:35; 6:30; 7:1; 8:1, 22; 9:2; 10:23, 35; 11:1, 15, 27; 12:13, 18; 13:1; 14:27, 32, 43, 66; 15:21; Lk. 8:49; 11:37; Jn. 1:29; 4:7, 16; 9:13; 11:38; 13:36; 18:28; 19:28; 20:1; 21:20; Acts 21:37; 26:24; Rev. 17:15). For most books this number does not seem abnormally large, except in the Gospel of Mark and in chapters 2-3 of Matthew. What is more significant is that the verbs employed are often not  $\lambda \acute{\epsilon} \gamma \omega$  in books where  $\lambda \dot{\epsilon} \gamma \omega$  is often a historical present, but are other words, such as  $\tilde{\epsilon} \rho \chi o \mu \alpha i$  or  $\pi \alpha \rho \alpha \lambda \alpha \mu \beta \dot{\alpha} \nu \omega$ . Acts, on the other hand, which uses λέγω only twice as a historical present, employs it one of those two times to begin a paragraph at 21:37, and then continues down the paragraph with  $\phi \eta \sigma i \nu$  at 22:2. Especially noticeable are the paragraph beginnings in Matthew 2-3 and Mark 1, 3. Here and in a few other places one gets the feeling that Thackeray is right, that the historical present often does bring one back to his senses and does open his eyes to a new vista in the story.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moulton and Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation*, pp. 456-57; Turner, *Syntax*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 868.

## Surrounding Tenses

An important side of the controversy involves the tense-value of the historical present. Should it be considered as a replacement for an aorist verb or for an imperfect verb? Most writers tend to favor the aorist verb. Blass says it "can replace the aorist indicative in a vivid narrative at the events of which the narrator imagines himself to be present." The older grammarians Winer and Buttmann concur. Goodwin, however, allows either possibility in each case: "The present is often used in narration for the aorist, sometimes for the imperfect, to give a more animated statement of past events."

In order to obtain objective data for this question, this writer examined the verbal context of each historical present. Of primary concern was the tense of the indicative verb before and the verb after each historical present. Appendix C contains this information. Chains of two or more historical presents were classified according to the verbs before and after the entire chain. The imperfect of  $\epsilon i \mu i$  was considered neutral, since there is no aorist form; in that case the second following (or preceding) verb was used for the classification. Also, it is important to realize that the preceding and following verbs are not necessarily the immediate neighbors of the historical present form in the text, but are parallel verbs--on the same level of narration. For example, in this quotation, "I said, 'Who was that.' And a voice says, 'Nobody is here.' But

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> BDF, p. 167.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 267; Alexander Buttmann, A *Grammar of the New Testxnent Greek*, p. 196.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> William Watson Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (enlarged ed.; Boston: Ginn and Company, 1890), p. 11.

I knew better," the historical present "says" is surrounded in context by "said" and "knew," not the more immediate verbs "was" and "is."

The following table summarizes Appendix C. The left hand column describes the various tense contexts that occur. The dash represents the historical present; the abbreviation "Para" indicates that the historical present is the first or last tensally significant verb in the paragraph:

TABLE 17
HISTORICAL PRESENT CONTEXTS

context tenses	Mt.	Mk.	Lk.	Jn.	Acts	Rev,	total
Aor. only:	87	80	12	106	10	27	322
AorAor	63	44	8	69	5	14	203
ParaAor	12	32	3	22	1	2	72
AorPara	12	4	1	15	4	11	47
Impf. only:	2	34	-	13	-	7	56
ImpfImpf	-	12	-	4	-	-	16
ParaImpf	2	15	-	3	-	1	21
ImpfPara	-	7	-	6	-	6	19
Aor. & Impf.:	3	30	1	18	2	11	65
AorImpf	3	14	1	2	2	3	25
ImpfAor	-	16	-	16	-	8	40
Plpf. only:	-	3	-	9	-	1	13
ParaPlpf	-	1	-	2	-	1	4
PlpfPara	-	2	-	7	-	-	9
Aor. & Plpf.:	-	2	-	13	-	-	15
AorPlpf	-	1	-	6	-	-	7
PlpfAor	-	1	-	7	-	-	8
Fut. only:	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
ParaFut	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
FutPara	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Aor. & Fut.: (AorFut)	-	-	-	-	-	1	1

TABLE 17-Continued

context tenses	Mt.	Mk.	Lk.	Jn.	Acts	Rev.	total
Impf. & Fut.: (ImpfFut)	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Isolated (ParaPara)	2	1	-	4	2	2	11
total	94	150	13	163	14	54	488

In order to evaluate this table further, it is helpful to note how much of the time percentagewise the historical presents in each book are connected to each tense in parallel. Thus "Aor--Aor" counts as two aorists, "Impf--Pare counts as one imperfect, "Impf--Fut" counts as one imperfect and one future, and so on. Table 18 tabulates these findings.

TABLE 18
HISTORICAL PRESENT CONNECTIONS

book	aorist	imperfect	pluperfect	future
Matthew	97%	3%	-	-
Mark	66%	32%	2%	-
Luke	95%	5%	-	-
John	78 1/2%	13%	8 1/2	-
Acts	89%	11%	-	-
Revelation	67%	24%	15	8%
		<del> </del>		
total NT	78%	17 1/2%	3 1/2%	1%

This table reveals remarkable differences among the Biblical authors. Matthew and Luke-Acts, especially the former, nearly always connect the historical present to the aorist. Very seldom is it tied to an imperfect. This fact can show either that the historical present is substituted for an aorist in what would normally be a chain of aorists, or that the historical present takes the place of the imperfect which would

normally be used to break the monotony of continuous aorists. The first explanation seems simpler, and thus better. Also, in Matthew and Luke-Acts, the historical present is not usually used in context with imperfects, suggesting that it is not substituted for the imperfect in these books. The fact that it has no tie to the pluperfect or future, confirms its restricted exegetical force for the writers Matthew and Luke.

Mark, on the other side, places his historical presents next to imperfects nearly a third of the time. It seems that in his Gospel the historical present can substitute for either an aorist or an imperfect; and the fact that thirty times he places a historical present between an aorist and an imperfect, indicates that he considers the present even as a bridge which spans those tenses.

John's Gospel takes a mediating course. He can use the historical present as an imperfect on occasion, but usually prefers the aorist. The higher percentage with pluperfects is noticeable in his Gospel. His Revelation is similar to Mark in its use of the historical present for other tenses than the aorist.

Revelation ties most of them to the imperfect, and a few even to the future. This latter strange tendency is explained thusly: John saw visions in the past, he relates them as if present, and applies them to the future. In his important work on the morphology of the Revelation, G. Mussies explains and defends this understanding of the tense shifts. Although the quotation is long, its scholarship, importance, and clarity call for its insertion here:

In recounting visions and dreams an author usually starts by using a past tense expressing something like "I heard" or "I saw." This is also the case in the Apocalypse: all the indicatives which pertain

to St. John's act of seeing or hearing are past tenses. . . . The contents of the visions can of course also be told in past tenses and St. John usually starts in this way . . . all together 31 instances. However, in 4:5; 5:5; 6:16; 7:10; 8:11; 14:3; 15:3; 16:21, the author switches over to a present indicative, and he does so immediately after the introductory  $\hat{\epsilon i}\delta o \nu$ ,  $\hat{\eta} \kappa o \upsilon \sigma \alpha$ , etc., in 12:2, 4; 16:14: 19: 9, 11. These shifts indicate that he is no longer telling what he saw in the past, but rather what he is seeing again before his eyes, and as such these present indicatives give the idea of lively representation. Similar shifts have also been noticed in dream accounts that have come down to us in Egyptian papyri.

A further complication in the Apocalypse is the fact that the visions are supposed to predict future events (1:1, 19). This may account for the shifts to the future indicative usually via the intermediary stage of (historical or futural) presents. Immediate transitions from past tense to future tense are: 13:7-8; 22:1-3. Via the present indicative: 4:8-10; 7:14-17; 9:4-6; 18:4, 7-8, 15; 19:14-16; 20:4-8; 21:22-26.

The reverse shift is also found a number of times: 11:1-11 (verses 12-14 contain 8 more past tenses; here the direct speech contains a prophecy in futural and present tenses which become more and more picturesque until it suddenly falls back into the past tense again); 18:15-19; 20:8-10.

In our opinion it is unnecessary to see behind these shifts of time the inability of an author who could not handle the Greek tenses. Lancellotti, the only scholar who has thus far devoted a special study to the use of tenses in the Apocalypse holds the view that these "haphazard" shifts can be accounted for by assuming the Biblical Hebrew verb system as the underlying substrate. St. John's wavering between past and present, present and future is according to him due to the timelessness of both the Biblical Hebrew indicatives. If the influence of Biblical Hebrew were so strong still that St. John could not clearly distinguish between present and future tenses it is difficult to understand why he did not avoid to use the Greek future at all. The present indicative could then be used either as a present, past or future tense and the agrist as a past tense. Lancellotti's point of view would be proved if in the Apocalypse future indicatives were misused for past tenses or with the value of present time, or if agrists were used as presents or as futures. As long as this is not the case we think it more probable to assume that the underlying Hebrew had developed to a great extent towards Mishnaic Hebrew or was perhaps already identical to it.

As it is, the transitions to the future tense in the Apc. are usually preceded by another kind of transitions, namely those from a past tense to the present indicative. Such a use of tenses seems quite

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mussies defends 4:9-11 as futuristic, *Apocalypse*, pp. 342-47.

natural for an author who has to recount visions actually seen, or pretended to have been seen, in the past, but which at the same time predict future events.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the genre of the book explains the connections of its historical Presents.

The shifts of time which we have discussed are caused by the apocalyptic "genre": the visions reported were seen in the past, can be vividly pictured by present indicatives, but predict the future. It is therefore not accidental that there are no shifts of time in non-visionary parts like the Letters to the Seven Churches.<sup>2</sup>

# **Exegesis of the Historical Present**

## **Aspect**

First the aspect of the historical present must be determined. Some grammarians summarily assign to it punctiliar or aoristic force.<sup>2</sup> Many say it is primarily aoristic.<sup>3</sup> Robertson places the bulk of his discussion of the historical present in the "punctiliar action" section, but he also notes that "the hist. pres. is not always aoristic. It may be durative like the imperfect. This point has to be watched."<sup>4</sup> Robertson's point is well made. Often the historical present is durative. He himself supplies three examples: Mk. 1:12, ἐκβάλλει; 1:21, εἰσπορεύομαι; and also 6:1, ἀκολουθοῦσιν.<sup>5</sup> Many classical Greek scholars see this usage too. H. W. Smyth's grammar says, "The historical present may represent either the descriptive imperfect or the narrative

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mussies, *Apocalypse*,., pp. 333-36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 349.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> E.g., Chamberlain, *An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, pp. 68, 71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> E.g., BDF, p. 167; Turner, *Syntax*, p. 60; Mussies, *Apocalypse*, p. 276 (but he modifies this statement on p. 349 by equating it with a Hebrew participle).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 867; cf. pp. 866-69, 880.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 880.

aorist." Goodwin had stated already that the historical present could stand for either the agrist or the imperfect, and B. L. Gildersleeve, using the expression "kind of time" for "aspect," emphasized the durative nature of the present tense, even in narration, and the corollary possibility that the agrist tense can describe present time:

A typical difference having set itself up between imperfect and aorist in certain forms, the present associated itself with the imperfect and became by preference durative, by preference progressive. When, therefore, an aoristic present was needed, the aorist itself was employed. We who have learned to feel the augment as the sign of the past time may have our sensibilities shocked, but we have to unlearn that feeling; and in any case the fact is there, and it is impossible to explain all the uses of the agrist side by side with the present by a resort to the paradigmatic agrist or the empiric agrist. . . . The paradigmatic agrist and the empiric explanations do not satisfy the feeling in passages in which the shift from present to agrist is clearly a shift from durative to complexive, from progress to finality, and it is just these passages that show how alive the Greek is to the kind of time.<sup>3</sup>

Among scholars of New Testament Greek, the picture is basically the same. Burton, without being specific, seems to favor a progressive understanding.<sup>4</sup> Farrar also likens the historic present's role to that of the imperfect in narrative.<sup>5</sup> Similarly Buttmann notes the close relation of present to imperfect in conative usages. The traditional understanding of the role of the imperfect tense in narrative has been stated admirably by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Smyth, A Greek Grammar, p. 277; this older edition of Smyth also states that the imperfect "sets forth subordinate actions and attendant circumstances," p. 284; but that statement does not square with the data and was dropped in the Smyth-Messing edition, Greek Grammar, p. 422.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Goodwin, Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb, p. 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Gildersleeve, *Problems of Greek Syntax*, pp. 244-45.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p, 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Frederic W. Farrar, A Brief Greek Syntax and Hints on Greek Accidence, pp. 121-22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Buttmann, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, p. 205.

#### Robertson:

The personal equation, style, character of the book, vernacular or literary form, all come into play. It largely depends on what the writer is after. If he is aiming to describe a scene with vividness, the imperfect predominates. Otherwise he uses the aorist, on the whole the narrative tense par excellence. . . . The imperfect is here a sort of moving panorama, a "moving-picture show." . . . Sometimes the change from aorist to imperf. or vice versa in narrative may be due to the desire to avoid monotony. . . The aorist tells the simple story. The imperfect draws the picture. It helps you to see the course of the act. It passes before the eye the flowing stream of history. In the literary of the literary of the stream of the literary of the

It is not within the scope of this paper to analyze the imperfect tense, but it is here noted that this description by Robertson sharply contrasts with that of Kiparsky, noted above, which sees the imperfect in narration as a zero tense.

Whatever role the imperfect plays in narration, the historical present is tied to it in many cases. Gildersleeve has observed that "this use of the present belongs to the original stock of our family of languages. It antedates the differentiation into imperf. and aorist." Following this up, Dana and Mantey say, "This idiom is possibly a residue from the primitive syntax of the Indo-European language, when, like the Semitic verb, time relations were indicated by the context rather than the inflectional forms."

With this bewildering array and variety of views, one might be tempted to throw up his hands in despair. But the data in this chapter should lead to a more definitive conclusion. It appears that the New Testament was written in a transition period, from zero tense usages to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 839-40, 883.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Gildersleeve and Miller, *Syntax of Classical Greek from Homer to Demosthenes*, I, 86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, p. 185.

more modern dramatic present usages. The various authors were each more or less developed in the transition. In Matthew, Luke-Acts, and most of the narrative of John, the historical present seems aoristic. Especially is it so when surrounded by aorists in context (as Mt. 19). In Mark the historical present has various aspects. Generally, verbs which introduce new paragraphs, and verbs of saying or going are aoristic. However, when a section contains a high percentage of imperfects and historical presents (e.g., the Passion Narrative), those historical presents can be assumed to be durative in aspect. Likewise in John's Gospel, those few passages with large percentages of historical presents (e.g., ch. 2, 20, 21)<sup>1</sup> using unusual verbs can be taken as durative. The historical presents in the visions in Revelation are most probably durative, since John's language is written from the standpoint of one actually viewing the events described.

### Translation

It has been noted already how different versions translate historical presents.<sup>2</sup> Some writers suggest that all historical presents be given special treatment in translation. Robertson points out,

A vivid writer like Mark, for instance, shows his lively imagination by swift changes in the tenses. The reader must change with him. It is mere commonplace to smooth the tenses into a dead level in translation and miss the writer's point of view.<sup>3</sup>

#### And likewise France:

In translation, the important point is not to aim at wooden literalness of tense (if the language would allow it), but to achieve the same degree of vividness as the Greek intends, by whatever idiomatic means

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf. Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 868-69; and Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, pp. 350-51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See above, p. 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 830.

the language offers (which may be nothing to do with tense). Beware of making a lively narrative stuffy be being too literal. Translate idiom into idiom.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike France, Robertson suggests that the English historical present always should replace that in the Greek: "Modern literary English abhors this idiom, but it ought to be preserved in translating the Gospels in order to give the same element of vividness to the narrative." The United Bible Societies' translation rule #27 allows a little more flexibility: "In narrative style the present tense forms may be used to indicate the 'liveliness' of the narrative."

The conclusions of this chapter lead to a more specific translation policy. This policy may be summarized in a series of points:

- a. Historical presents in Matthew, Luke, and Acts normally should be translated as simple pasts.
- b. Historical presents at the beginning of a Paragraph, especially if followed by past tenses, should be translated as simple pasts, but with some indication of a new paragraph--either indentation or introductory particles.
- c. Historical presents in Mark or John normally should be translated by simple pasts, especially if they are verbs of saying or going, unless they appear in a context with an unusually high frequency of historical presents or imperfects. In that case, they should receive special emphasis; whether the English present or progressive past is used is a matter of English style preference.
- d. Historical presents in visions in Revelation should be translated as progressive pasts or as presents.

While the zero tense arguments have much validity, it seems arbitrary to rule that the natural "dramatic present" idiom, used in all languages, <sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> France, "The Exegesis of Greek Tenses in the New Testament," p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 868.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Nida, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, p. 183.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Kiparsky himself admits this for verbs of saying, "Tense and Mood," p. 32.

could never appear in koine Greek. Also it, is arbitrary to assume that "dramatic present" narratives must never include past tense verbs. These tendencies appear in writers of every language. It appears that Mark and, to a lesser degree, John are the two New Testament writers with a legitimate "dramatic" use of the historical present.

### Other Past Time Usages

Several times the New Testament offers a present tense verb which cannot be called a historical present, but yet which describes past action. These examples are tied more directly to present time; hence the present tense is in a more "normal" usage. There are two such categories.

#### Present for Immediate Past

Occasionally an event, usually a speech, which is just over is referred to in the present. For example, when Jesus declared to the paralytic, "Your sins are forgiven," the scribes immediately said, "This one blasphemes!" (Mt. 9:3). They did not mean that Jesus was continuously blaspheming, but that He had just blasphemed. The present tense, however, ties the past act to the present in point of time.

While grammarians have not noted this category under the present tense, Robertson does include a similar category for the aorist tense, called the "dramatic aorist":

The aorist in Greek, particularly in dialogue, may be used for what has just happened. It seems awkward in English to refer this to past time, but it is perfectly natural in Greek. So we translate it by the present indicative. From the Greek point of view the peculiarity lies in the English, not in the Greek.<sup>1</sup>

As the "dramatic aorist," the aspect of the present for immediate past

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, 842.

appears to be agristic, the present tense suggesting immediacy. There are fifty-seven examples of this usage in the New Testament, nearly half of them in John's Gospel.

### Imperfective Present

The imperfect tense describes action as continuous in the past. The imperfective present can do the same--in some cases as a historical present--or in others as an imperfective present. The difference with the imperfective present is that it goes up to and includes present time: it "gathers up past and present time into one phrase." The name given this category varies considerably among grammarians who distinguish it. Robertson calls it "progressive present," Moule, "present of past action still in progress," and Burton, "action still in progress."

Often the usage is distinguishable by the combination of a past adverb or adverbial phrase with a present tense verb--e.g., John 15:27, "from the beginning you are with me." As the imperfect, the imperfective present need not be progressive, but can be iterative, as in Luke 13:7, "three years from when I come seeking fruit." The usage occurs frequently, most often in John's Gospel. The following list shows its number of occurrences in each book in which it is found: Matthew (6), Mark (3), Luke (10), John (26), Acts (4), 1 Corinthians (2), Galatians (2), 2 Timothy (1), and Hebrews (1); total for the New Testament (55).

It is interesting to note that, as with the previous category,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 879. <sup>1</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 119. <sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 87 Moule, *Idiom Book*, p. 8. <sup>4</sup> Burton, Moods and Tenses, p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Cf. Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 10; Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 119.

this one can be performed by the aorist as well. Burton notes that the aorist "may also be used of acts beginning in past time and continuing to the time of speaking. Mt. 27:8; 28:15." Here, however, there is an aspect difference. The aorist has no defined aspect, while the present-describing the same sort of action--would view the action from a durative, continuous standpoint. Kiparsky understands this usage as zero also, but it seems that the predominance of durative verbs here such as ciµí (29 out of 55 times), especially in John, would call for the durative aspect. Burton calls for translation with the English perfect--e.g., "I have been with you,"--and his suggestion seems best.

#### Conclusion

The present tense often reaches back into past time. When it does so, it often retains its durative aspect, especially when the action continues into the present or when the writer imagines himself to be in the past as he describes the event. More often, however, the present indicative functions with a "zero" aspect, the tense being used as a substitute for the aorist in normal narration. The different style from author to author accounts for the variation in historical present usage. Language never stands still, and the New Testament provides a cross-section of its development. The conclusions reached in this chapter will affect the succeeding chapters as well. In addition, their implications can affect the exegesis of presents in modal contexts, but that is another study in itself.

<sup>1</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood," pp. 46-48.

### IV. THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN FUTURE TIME

Just as the present indicative can reach back to describe events in the past, so it can look ahead and relate future events. This chapter shall discuss two types of presents, futuristic presents and presents for immediate future. The former category is the larger, and shall receive its treatment first.

### Futuristic Present Frequency

The futuristic present has been called the "counterpart to the historical present." It describes a future event with a present tense verb--e.g., Matthew 26:2, "after two days is the Passover." For the sake of convenience, the New Testament examples have been divided into two Parts, general futuristic presents, dealing with normal events, and eschatological futuristic presents, dealing with events of the last days. occurrences of each type are tabulated below.

TABLE 19 FUTURISTIC PRESENT FREQUENCY

book	general	eschatological	total fut. p	res./100 verb forms
Matthew	21	17	38	0.96
Mark	16	6	22	0.84
Luke	17	12	29	0.66
John	87	13	100	2.83
Acts	5	-	5	0.13
Romans	5	2	7	0.60
1 Corinthians	2	10	12	0.93
2 Corinthians	2	-	2	0.26
Galatians	1	-	1	0.25

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> BDF, p. 168.

TABLE 19--Continued

book	general es	chatological	total fut. pres./1	00 verb forms
Ephesians	-	1	1	0.31
lossians	-	1	1	0.43
1 Thessalonians	s -	2	2	0.82
2 Thessalonians	s -	2	2	1.64
Timothy	1	-	1	0.33
Timothy	1	-	1	0.45
Hebrews	3	-	3	0.33
1 Peter	2	-	2	0.73
2 Peter	1	3	4	2.06
1 John	1	4	5	1.15
Revelation	3	32	35	2.28
total NT	168	105	273	0.99

As can be seen from this table John prefers this usage much more than other authors, both in his Gospel and in Revelation. The higher percentages in 2 Peter and 2 Thessalonians result from the eschatological content of those books.

In a few cases classification of examples is tricky, and the category chosen depends on one's interpretation of the passage. For example, Matthew 10:16 occurs in Jesus' speech to the Twelve before their itinerant preaching journeys: "Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves." If the verse applies to the Twelve at that time, it should be classed as either a progressive present or a present for immediate future. However, the context seems to indicate a later time. Verse 16 marks a transition in the discourse from triumph (experienced by the Twelve) to persecution (experienced by the Twelve and others later); and verse 23 ties that persecution to the second coming of Christ: "You shall by no means finish the cities of Israel until the Son of man comes" (cf. Mt. 24:34). For these reasons  $\mathring{\alpha}\pi \sigma \sigma \tau \acute{\epsilon}\lambda \lambda \omega$  in Matthew 10:16 is catalogued as a futuristic present.

By failing to recognize as a futuristic present διέρχομαι, in 1 Corinthians 16:5, the inserters of the subscription to 1 Corinthians ("written from Philippi") have introduced an error, and a contradiction with verses 8-9, which state that Paul was in Ephesus while he wrote the epistle. This spurious subscription stands in the Textus Receptus, and therefore in the King James Version.<sup>1</sup>

The distinction between present and future in John is nearly indistinct on occasion. Abbott notes the subtle shift in John 4:21-23 from future to present.

"The hour cometh" . . . refers to the time when Jerusalem and Gerizim will cease to be the special homes of worship; to the earlier and immediate time when worship is to be "in spirit and truth." The former (5:28) is used to predict the resurrection of those "in the tombs"; the latter to predict (5:25) the proclamation of the Gospel to those who are "dead (in sins)." In 16:2, 25, the shorter form is used to predict the persecutions and revelations that await the disciples after Christ's death; in 16:32, a version of the longer form, "the hour is coming and hath come," predicts the "scattering" of the disciples on that same night, and, perhaps literally, in that same "hour."

Some see in certain cases a present reference, as Blass at John 8:14, who believes that the "going" is present--only the destination is future. However, this interpretation is not necessary, especially when compared with other futuristic usages of  $\hat{\mathbf{v}}\pi\acute{\alpha}\gamma\omega$  and  $\mathring{\epsilon}\rho\chi\sigma\mu\alpha\iota$ . Ti $\theta\eta\mu\iota$  in passages like John 10:15 has caused controversy. Was Jesus then giving His life, or was He about to give His life on the cross? Some prefer the former understanding. But rather, it appears that the figure of the Shepherd,

<sup>4</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 870.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Simcox, The Language of the New Testament, p. 100; see also Henry Clarence Thiessen, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1943), P. 205.

Abbott, Johannine Grammar, pp. 352-53.

BDF, p. 168.

and the ordinary meaning of  $\psi \upsilon \chi \acute{\eta}$ , indicate more than earthly living, rather, His ensuing death. For this reason, these references are classed as futuristic. Another controversial usage is  $\epsilon \imath \iota \acute{\mu} \iota$  in John 12:26 (cf. 14:3; 17:24). Abbott mentions that some MSS show the difficulty by changing the form to  $\epsilon \imath \iota \iota$ , "I go." He himself claims that it "is not prophetic present, but expresses the real, and existing, though invisible fact." Winer modifies this idea by translating "where I have my home." It appears to this writer that  $\epsilon \imath \iota \iota$  can be used futuristically just as easily as  $\gamma \iota \nu \iota \iota \iota$  and that it is so used here. Finally, one should note the futuristic use of  $\iota \iota \iota$  and  $\iota \iota$  in John 20:17, "I ascend to my Father." In order to press this idea into present time, Abbott resorts to almost incredible spiritualizing. He does not even translate it "I am on the point of ascending," but maintains that

more probably the words are intended to suggest the thought of a spiritual ascending, already begun. . . . The mysterious words "Touch me not for I have not yet ascended" seem to mean that when the Lord had ascended His disciples would be able to "touch" Him (perhaps as being the "Bread of Life"). The Ascension may be regarded in two ways, 1st, as an uplifting from the material earth up to and beyond the material clouds and out of sight, 2nd, as an uplifting of the Messiah in the invisible world, and simultaneously in the hearts of the disciples, to the throne of God. Luke describes the former in the Acts. John may be thinking of the latter here, and, if so, ἀναβαίνω may mean, not "I shall ascend" but "I am ascending," i.e. the Father is preparing the moment when the Son shall be exalted to heaven in the sight of angels above and in the hearts of believers below. <sup>5</sup>

To steer clear of mysticism, one would do well to categorize these verbs

<sup>1</sup> Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, p. 354; cf. p. 163. 
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 353.

Winer, Idiom, p. 265. A Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 869.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, p. 355. Lest it be thought that his spiritualizing be thus limited to John, note his subsequent evaluation of the ascension in Acts, which he considers to be both a subjective and objective experience: "The moment for His full and final ascension will not have arrived till he can be so 'lifted up' as to 'draw all men' unto Himself," p. 355, n. 1.

in John as what on the surface they appear to be--futuristic presents.

# Futuristic Present Vocabulary

Just as the historical present prefers certain words to others, so the futuristic present shows a similar preference. The vocabulary words used by each author are charted below. Hebrews' three examples are listed under Paul.

TABLE 20 FUTURISTIC PRESENT VOCABULARY

word	Mt.	Mk. L	kActs	JnRev.	Paul	Peter	total
ἀγοράζω				1			1
αἴρω			1	3			4
αἰτέω		1					1
ἀκολουθέω				1			1
ἀναβαίνω	1		1	4			6
ἀνοίγω			1				1
ἀποθνήσκω				2	2		4
ἀποκαθιστάι	νω	1					1
ἀποκαλ <b>ύ</b> πτω		1			1		2
ἀπόλλυμι				1			1
ἀποστέλλω	4	2	3				9
αποτελέω			1				1
ἀφίημι	2			3			5
βάλλω				1			1
βαπτιζω		2					2
βλέπω				1			1

TABLE 20--Continued

word	Mt.	Mk. L	kActs	JnRev.	Paul	Peter	total
γαμέω	1	1	1				3
γαμίζω	1	1	1				3
γίνομαι	1		1				2
γινώσκω	1			1			2
διαμένω					1		1
δίδωμι				3			3
διέρχομαι					1		1
δικαιόω					1		1
δύναμαι			1	1			2
ἐγείρω	1	1	1	2	6		11
εἰμί	11	2	6	15	4	1	39
είσπορε <b>ύ</b> ομαι			1				1
<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλω			1				1
εκδικέω				1			1
<b>ἐ</b> κπορε <b>ύ</b> ομαι				1			1
<b>ἐ</b> ργάζομαι			1				1
<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	5	2	8	36	6		57
<b>εὐ</b> φαίνω				1			1
<b>ἐ</b> φίστημι					1		1
<b>ἔ</b> χω	3	2	1	9			15
ζάω				1			1
ζψοποιέω				2			2
θεωρέω				6			6
καταργέω					1		1

TABLE 20--Continued

word	Mt.	Mk.	LkActs	Jn.	-Rev.	Paul	Peter	total
κατοικέω							1	1
κλαίω					1			1
κρίνω					4	1		5
λαμβάνω					2			2
μαρτυρέω					1			1
μένω					1	1	1	3
νυστάζω							1	1
παράγω					2	1		3
παραδίδωμι	2	2	1					5
παραλαμβάν	ω2							2
πέμπω					1			1
πενθέω					1			1
πίνω		2						2
πίπτω						1		1
πορε <b>ύ</b> ομαι			1		5	1		7
προάγω	1	1						2
προσδοκάω	1							1
προσε <b>ύ</b> χομαι		1						1
σπένδομαι						1		1
στήκω						1		1
τελείοω		1						1
τήκομαι							1	1
τίθημι					3	1	1	5
<b>ύ</b> πάγω	1	1			21			24

TABLE 207-Continued

word	Mt.	Mk.	LkActs	JnRev.	Paul	Peter	total
φέρω				1			1
φεύγω				1			1
χαίρω				1			1
total NT	38	22	34	140	33	6	273

Of the sixty-seven verbs which are found in the futuristic present, only thirteen occur five times or more. These are their occurrences:

57—"ερχομαι	6άναβαίνω
39—εἰμί	6θεωρέω
24 ὑπάγω	5—ἀφίημι
15—-ἔχω	5—κρίνω
11—ἐγείρω	5-παραδίδωμι
9ἀποστέλλω	5—τίθημι
7-πορεύομαι	

Most prominent are verbs of going, especially ἔρχομαι; in the short list above they account for half of the total usages. It is believed that ἔρχομαι originally had a futuristic meaning in the root, derived from the classical verb εἶμι.¹ Thus ἔρχομαι, can be futuristic whether or not it is prophetic (Mt. 17:11; cf. 24:43).² Futuristic ἔρχομαι, can account for God's "wrath" predicted against the earth to be still future, at the Tribulation (Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; cf. present participle

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 354; Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar*, p. 247 (he notes that the future form ἐλεύσομαι, was not used in Attic prose); Buttmann, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek*, pp. 50, 204; Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, p. 353; Simcox, *The Language of the New Testament*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> BDF, p. 168.

at 1 Th. 1:10; cf. 1 Th. 5:9). This tendency to stay in the present is obvious when it is in parallel with a future verb, as in Luke 12:54-55 (ἔρχεται... ἔσται) and John 14:3 (ἔρχομαι καὶ παραλήμψομαι).<sup>2</sup> The present participle, "the coming one" is also futuristic, as in Revelation.<sup>3</sup> Blass, however, tends to discount this meaning in ἔρχομαι. He maintains that the futuristic present "is not attached to any definite verbs, and it is purely by accident that ἔρχομαι, appears with special frequency in this sense." He tries to neutralize some of the data by stating that "verbs of going and coming when used in the present also have the meaning of being in course of going (or coming), in which case the arrival at the goal still lies in the future: Jn. 3:8; 8:14; 14:4-5; Acts 20:22; Mt. 20:18; Jn. 20:17." The newer edition of Blass concurs and cites the same examples. 6 To some extent Buttmann's grammar tries to argue for a similar treatment:

By the Future ἐλεύσομαι, (Mt. 9:15; 1 Cor. 4:19; 16:12) the beginning of the future action is placed at a distance, by the Present it is placed more in the present (to be sure, not always in the immediate present of which the senses take cognizance as John 21:3, but also proleptically in the imaginary present of prophetic vision.<sup>7</sup>

This argument, however; seems strained. The coming or going is not in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John A. Sproule, "A Revised Review of The Church and the Tribulation by Robert H. Gundry" (postgraduate seminar paper, Grace Theological Seminary, 1974), p. 63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> BDF, p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. Mt. 3:11; Buttmann, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, p. 204.

Blass-Thackeray, *Grammar*, p. 189.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> BDF, p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Buttmann, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, p. 204:

progress until it is in progress. When Paul said he was to go through Macedonia (1 Cor. 16:5), he was not packing his bags--he was planning to leave later on (cf. vv. 8-9). Many similar examples can be shown from Jesus' life as well. When He said, "I come to you" (Jn. 14:18), He was not yet in the process of coming, for He had not even gone yet. It is better to realize, as most grammarians have, that ἔρχομαι and related verbs can take both a progressive use (in progress of coming) or a futuristic use (will come), just as other verbs do. The reason for its higher percentage is the nature of its meaning and the history of its root development.

The verb "to be,"  $\epsilon i\mu i$  or  $\gamma i\nu o\mu \alpha i$ , is the next most common. The verb  $\gamma i\nu o\mu \alpha i$ , is recognized as often being futuristic, even though there are only two New Testament examples. Yet not much discussion is given to futuristic  $\epsilon i\mu i$ . Zerwick, however, does note the futuristic use of  $\epsilon i\mu i$ , and suggests that its high frequency (along with that for  $\xi \chi \omega$ ) is due to an Aramaic speaking background, which language would render them with a present participal and a temporal adverb.

Most of the other terms on the most frequent list are special favorites of one author or of the Synoptic writers. The verbs ὑπάγω, ἔχω, πορεύομαι, ἀναβαίνω, θεωρέω, and κρίνω are favorites of John. The three "going" verbs, along with ἔρχομαι, are mostly in the Gospel. Ἔχω is found also in the visions of Revelation. The alternation in meaning in ἔχω from the Gospel to Revelation is remarkable.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Buttmann, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek*, pp. 203-04; Simcox, *The Language of the New Testament*, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, pp. 93-94.

In John  $\xi \chi \omega$  is used most often for possessions which are unseen externally, such as eternal life. In Revelation almost all the usages of this verb are open and visible, such as bodily parts or marks or objects grasped in the hand.<sup>1</sup>

This change in emphasis in  $\xi \chi \omega$  from John to Revelation is typical of the two books.

The book of John shows the first stages of belief and unbelief. The world consists of men who are to be convinced that Jesus is the Christ, and who thereby are to have life. The appeal goes out. Some hear and understand and accept, and others do not. The words in John are directed to this decision making process.

The book of Revelation, on the other hand, vividly paints the picture of the outcome of the decision demanded in John. Only occasionally is the call repeated. The choice of the majority of the world has already been made. The visible punishments are now to be meted out, as are the visible rewards. That was in John an inward allegiance becomes in Revelation an external categorization. The lost have the mark of the beast; the redeemed have the mark of God. God, who influences the heart in John, judges the earth in Revelation. The words used in Revelation point to that emphasis, most of them being interpreted literally and externally.<sup>2</sup>

The verb  $\theta \epsilon \omega \rho \dot{\epsilon} \omega$  is significant in the Gospel, as "seeing" in John sometimes has a higher spiritual significance. The Synoptic writers account for the frequency of  $\dot{\alpha}\pi o\sigma \tau \dot{\epsilon}\lambda\lambda\omega$  and  $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\delta i\delta\omega\mu_1$ , since each book contributes one usage in the three parallel passages. John and Matthew divide  $\dot{\alpha}\dot{\phi}i\eta\mu_1$  between them, and John divides  $\tau i\theta\eta\mu_1$ , with Peter and Paul. The Pauline futuristic present use of the verb  $\dot{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon i\rho\omega$  prevails in 1 Corinthians 15, where there are many similar usages classified in this paper under factual presents. The word admittedly can be futuristic,  $^4$  but the cogent

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ibid., pp. 47-52; Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, pp. 356-58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> John A. Battle, Jr., "An Exegetical-Statistical Study of the Most Common Words in John and Revelation" (unpublished S.T.M. thesis, Faith Theological Seminary, 1971), p. 47.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 102-03.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Cf., Jn. 7:52, Buttmann, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek*, p. 204.

arguments of Winer concerning 1 Corinthians 15 bear weight. The passage, he says,

treats of the resurrection of the dead, not as a fact (of the future), but as a doctrine: *in what manner does the resurrection of the dead* (according to thy teaching) *take place*? cf. vs. 42. In the same we can say: Christ *is* the judge; the punishments of the damned are eternal, etc.<sup>1</sup>

In this sense they could be classified as factual presents; but the events described are basically futuristic and prophetically eschatological; therefore, it was decided to class most of them as futuristic--especially since the future resurrection was debated, not the resurrection of Christ, which was admitted by all (cf. 1 Cor. 15:12).

### Futuristic Present Aspect

Is the futuristic present aoristic or durative? Or is it either? Most writers classify it as primarily aoristic. For example, Robertson says, "This futuristic present is generally punctiliar or aoristic. The construction certainly had its origin in the punctiliar roots." Moulton concurs in finding the origin of the usage in the punctiliar roots, and he sees further evidence to link the futuristic present to the aorist aspect: "Compare the close connexion between aorist (not present) subjductive and the future, which is indeed in its history mainly a specializing of the former." However, both Robertson and Moulton go out of their way to point out that durative roots are used as well. Robertson mentions the historical development of the future and the futuristic present as taking

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 266.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 869; also Blass-Thackeray, *Grammar*, p. 188; and Chamberlain, *Exegetical Grammar*, p. 71.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 120. <sup>4</sup> Ibid., n. 1.

place with durative roots as well, and Moulton admits that

though it is generally asserted that this use of the present tense for future originates in the words with momentary action, this limitation does not appear in any NT examples, any more than in English.<sup>2</sup>

And he notes the futuristic use of  $\tilde{\epsilon}\rho\chi o\mu\alpha 1$  and  $\gamma i\nu o\mu\alpha 1$ , which "have no lack of durative meaning about them." Burton goes a step further and seems to teach that futuristic presents primarily are progressive, that is, durative. Turner mentions the papyri usage in legal wills, the use of  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\epsilon i\pi\omega$ , "I leave," an "aoristic" declaration. An interesting discussion can follow on Revelation 14:11, "They do not have rest day and night." Does this verse teach eternal, durative suffering? The answer is yes, but the reason must not be the present tense of  $\tilde{\epsilon}\chi ou\sigma\iota\nu$ ; rather, it is the durative adverbial phrase of the genitive nouns "day and night," and the wording of the predicate "not have rest." These two factors prove eternal torment of those who rebel against God.

As with the historical present, it appears that the aspect of the futuristic present basically is aoristic. The fact itself is in view, not the process of carrying out the fact. This view does not rule out durative action; it only defines the standpoint from which the action is viewed. When one says "Jesus is coming," he views the action aoristically as long as the action is still in the future. But when the last time events are in the process of taking place, the same statement could be durative, for he would then view the second coming as a series of events going on.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 354. <sup>2</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 120.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Turner, *Syntax*, p. 63; for other examples from the papyri, see Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 869.

### **Futuristic Present Exegesis**

The Bible reader naturally asks what stress or importance to place on futuristic presents. The grammarians are not agreed; they range over all views. Some take it be be parallel to the historical present (the "dramatic" variety), seeing added vividness by its use. Thus Robertson sees in it "the present in a vivid, lively sense projected into the future," a "vivid future, as is true of all language," which "startles and arrests attention," which "affirms and not merely predicts." And Blass adds, "In confident assertions regarding the future, a vivid, realistic present may be used for the future (in the vernacular; a counterpart to the historical present." Likewise Burton concurs: "The Present Indicative may be used to describe vividly a future event." He continues,

It is indeed not to be supposed that Greek writers confused the Present and the Future tenses, or used them indiscriminately. But that the form which customarily denoted an act in progress at the time of speaking was sometimes, for the sake of vividness, used with reference to a fact still in the future, is recognized by all grammarians. The whole force of the idiom is derived from the unusualness of the tense employed.<sup>4</sup>

Other grammarians, however, and even the same grammarians in other instances, see other overtones in the futuristic present. Blass mentions that the form occurs often in classical Greek in prophecies,<sup>5</sup> and France then calls the entire category "prophetic present." Smyth notes an example, "in time this expedition captures Priam's city." Even Kiparsky

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 353, 829, 870. 
<sup>2</sup> BDF, p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 9. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> BDF, p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> France, "The Exegesis of Greek Tenses in the New Testament," p. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Smyth, A Greek Grammar, p. 277.

recognizes this usage in some cases.<sup>1</sup> Closely related to prophecy is the idea of assurance or certainty. For some the futuristic present gives an added tone of assurance.<sup>2</sup> Winer amplifies: "An action still future is to be designated as good as already present, either because it is already firmly resolved upon or because it follows according to some unalterable law."<sup>3</sup> Others see the certainty of the event as based upon its foreseen immediate fulfilment. Smyth says it describes actions which are "immediate, likely, certain, or threatening";<sup>4</sup> and Buttmann says it sometimes is used "in order to portray the more impressively their closely impending occurrence."<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, advocates of the zero tense in the historical present carry over a similar argument for futuristic presents. The present is merely a substitute for the future--nothing more, nothing less. Buttmann, in spite of his confident assertions quoted above, wrestled with a large number of apparently "zero" usages:

In this case the Present as the more common and simple verbal form perfectly takes the place of the Future in all languages, and a multitude of instances can be adduced from the N.T. where not only the Present alone has the future force, . . . but also where (especially in John) Presents alternate with Futures without a sensible difference, or where (in parallel passages) one writer employs the Present, the other the Future.<sup>6</sup>

This situation seems indicated by the historical development of the future tense. It appears that for some time the present doubled as the future

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood," pp. 48-50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Moule, *Idiom Book*, p. 7; Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 120.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 265. <sup>4</sup> Smyth, *A Greek Grammar*, p. 277.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Buttmann, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, p. 205.

for many roots. In fact, "in South Italian Greek the futuristic present is the only means of expressing the future ind." While Kiparsky does not defend with vigor the zero futuristic use of the present, Reynolds claims the same principle applies in verses like Matthew 26:2.

This illustrates a rule in New Testament Greek and modern English that when an action is known to be in the future the present tense may be substituted for the future tense. The present tense thus becomes semantically a "zero" tense, taking a future meaning from the context.<sup>2</sup>

After analyzing all the futuristic present tenses in the New Testament, this author believes that by and large the futuristic present is a simple equivalent for the future tense. It is here a "zero tense." This appears to be especially so for verbs like  $\tilde{\epsilon}\rho\chi o\mu\alpha 1$  and  $\tilde{\upsilon}\pi\acute{\alpha}\gamma\omega$ , and also for  $\epsilon \tilde{\iota}\mu \hat{\iota}$ . The historical development of the future of these verbs seems to have been retarded, giving the present a broader scope. Some verbs, as  $\tilde{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon \acute{\iota}\rho\omega$  in 1 Corinthians 15, could be kept in the present to emphasize the argument of the passage--a debate of fact. The only exceptions would be in passages that are clearly prophetic and use other verbs, especially the visions in Revelation. In these cases the futuristic present is indeed vivid, as John sees the future painted before him. Therefore, futuristic presents normally should be translated by simple futures, or where appropriate, by parallel English futuristic presents (e.g., "I go, am going," etc.). In truly vivid usages, it should be translated by an English present, in order to preserve the immediacy and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 869.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Reynolds, "The Zero Tense in Greek," p. 69.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, pp. 352, 354, for a similar argument for passages in John.

excitement of the original.

#### Present for Immediate Future

In a few places the present indicative describes action which is just about to take place. There may or may not be "warning signs" in the present, but normally the present situation causes the impending future event. This category is distinct from futuristic presents, since the action is to take place immediately, not at some undetermined later time. Winer notes that here "the Present is employed to denote what is just about to take place, what one is on the point of doing, that for which he is already making preparation." No grammarian consulted named this particular category. Many of them had an overlapping category, the conative present, which represents unsuccessful action. Burton, however, when defining the category, very nearly defines this one:

The Conative Present is merely a species of the Progressive Present. A verb which of itself suggests effort, when used in a tense which implies action in progress, and hence incomplete, naturally suggests the idea of attempt.<sup>3</sup>

The difference is this: the conative present must have some action going on in the present, and the action must be stopped short in the future. Since this is the case, the verb should be classified as a progressive present (which Burton does). The problem arises with the examples cited-for in each case which is not a progressive present, the action is still future. And since it is future, it is not different in kind from other

<sup>3</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 265.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 880; BDF, p. 167; Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 8.

immediately future action which will be completed successfully. Hence, the title "present for immediate future" appears better and more accurate. The conative idea is not to be disregarded entirely, however, and it is a legitimate use of the imperfect tense. Abbott classes John 10:32; 13:6, 27, as describing "actions of which the beginnings have been described. But the last example he uses, "what thou doest do quickly, is not conative, and could be classed as immediate future.

An interesting controversy surrounds John 11:47, "What do we do, because this man does many miracles?" This verse is classed as immediate future. It is a deliberative question. Blass and Buttmann make it a special usage, a substitute for the subjunctive, a loosening of classical standards.<sup>3</sup> Winer, on the other hand, had defended a special force for the indicative here that a subjunctive would have lost. In his "Translator's Preface" to Buttmann's grammar, Thayer notes the conflict.

While Winer . . . seems loath to recognize incipient departures from classic usage, Prof. Buttmann, on the other hand, is quick to concede and to trace out the general tendency of the language to degenerate from the classic standard Hence it comes to pass that respecting several details, such as . . . the Indic. Pres. for the Subjunc. in deliberative questions, his views vary materially from those of his predecessor.<sup>4</sup>

In rebuttal, Lunemann in his revision of Winer, answers Buttmann, insisting that the present indicative in John 11:47 (and 1 Cor. 10:22) is stronger than the subjunctive.

The Ind., however, here strictly denotes that something must undoubtedly be done (forthwith); so we say, what are we doing? more resolute and

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*., p. vi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 880; BDF, p. 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, p. 353.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. Buttmann, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, p. 209.

emphatic than *what shall we do?* 1 Cor. 10:22--not Subj., but "or *do we provoke God?* is that the meaning of our conduct, to awaken God's wrath?<sup>1</sup>

Abbott adds his assent. He compares the indicative in John 11:47 with the subjunctive in 6:28. The subjunctive, he says, asks "What is to be our course of action?" The indicative queries, "What are we accomplishing?" --that is, "We are accomplishing nothing." Abbott puts it this way, "We are doing nothing while this man is doing miracle after miracle." It appears to this writer that the indicative does add this perspective to the verb, but it does not refer merely to present (or past) action alone; it asks for the future as well.

Another question surrounds an example normally quoted as an exemplary progressive present, but which this author feels is immediate future. Dana and Mantey cite Matthew 8:25, "Lord, save, we perish!" as a descriptive progressive present.<sup>3</sup> It appears rather that the disciples were still very healthy, but feared imminent death in the storm and waves.

A very important example in the NT is the recurrent οἱ ἀπολλύμενοι "the perishing." Just as much as ἀποκτείνω and its passive ἀποθνήσκω, ἀπόλλυμαι, implies the completion of the process of destruction. When we speak of a "dying" man, we do not absolutely bar the possibility of a recovery, but our word implies death as the goal in sight. Similarly in the cry of the Prodigal, λιμῷ ἀπόλλυμαι, Lk. 15:17, and in that of the disciples in the storm, σῶσον, ἀπολλύμεθα, Mt. 8:25, we recognise in the perfective verb the sense of an inevitable doom, under the visible conditions, even though the subsequent story tells us it was averted.<sup>4</sup>

For this reason this verb often has been classified in this study as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 284.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Abbott, *Johannine Gramar*, p. 359, text and n. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, p. 182.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 114.

present for immediate future, rather than as progressive present.

This usage is fairly common in the gospels and occurs occasionally in a few other books. Here are listed its occurrences: Matthew (6), Mark (3), Luke (11), John (21), Acts (10), Romans (1), Revelation (4); total for the New Testament (56).

Translating the present for immediate future requires flexibility. Robertson suggests using "try" or "begin" followed by an infinitive. Often it can be translated by itself, with the meaning "about to . . . "being understood.

#### Conclusion

The present tense in future time has many parallels with the present tense in past time. In both cases the majority of usages derive not from some purposeful intention of the writer, but from the history of the development of individual verbal roots. Certain verbs prefer the present form to the future, especially verbs of going or coming.

Present tense verbs for the future normally are a oristic in aspect, the action being viewed as a unit, not as durative. This says nothing about the action in fact, only the manner in which it is viewed.

When deciding whether or not a verb is futuristic, one should note the root--is it a root that prefers the present stem? He should note the author--John is the biggest user of this form. In these cases the verb under question may well be futuristic. Other cases are more exceptional.

Finally, the force of futuristic verbs usually is equivalent to simple futures, especially with  $\xi \rho \chi o \mu \alpha \iota$  and  $\upsilon \pi \acute{\alpha} \gamma \omega$ . The futuristic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 880.

present of  $\epsilon i \mu i$  can likewise be a "zero" usage, unless spoken by Christ in a Messianic context, where the specialized meaning of the term discussed earlier would come into play. The only extended passages with truly vivid futuristic presents appear to be the visions of Revelation.

#### V. THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN RELATIVE TIME

In many cases the present tense occurs in a context which places the verb in a past or future time setting, yet with the verb being understood in that setting as being in present time. Normally it is in a subordinate clause; often it describes the content of one's speech, thought, or perception.

#### Relative Present

Often a present tense in a subordinate clause describes nonpresent action.

In subordinate clauses, the action expressed by the present may be (a) contemporaneous, (b) antecedent, or (c) subsequent to that set forth by the main verb. The context alone decides in which sense the present is to be taken.<sup>1</sup>

These subordinate, relative clauses normally are introduced by a relative pronoun (as  $\delta \varsigma$ ,  $\delta \sigma \tau \iota \varsigma$ ,  $\delta \iota \circ \varsigma$ ,  $\delta \sigma \circ \varsigma$ ) or by another relative word (as  $\delta \tau \varepsilon$ ,  $\delta \varsigma$ ,  $\delta \sigma \circ \upsilon$ ,  $\delta \sigma \circ \upsilon$ ,  $\delta \sigma \circ \upsilon$ , often these clauses are indefinite, and therefore can be conditional. These cases will be discussed under conditional presents. Sometimes these relative clauses are introduced by adverbs of time (as  $\delta \varepsilon \circ \upsilon$ ,  $\delta \varepsilon \circ \upsilon$ , and the indicative occurs seldom, usually in "the two least

Smyth-Messing, *Greek Grammar*, p. 425.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 117-18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See *Ibid.*, pp. 119-24, for an excellent discussion of conditional relative clauses.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 126-29.

correct of the N.T. writers," Mark and John.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes the relative present describes prophecy (cf. Mt. 2:4,  $\gamma \epsilon \nu \nu \hat{\alpha} \tau \alpha \iota$ ), sometimes a timelessly valid truth (Rom. 9:18,  $\theta \epsilon \lambda \epsilon \iota$ ), and sometimes a hypothetical or parabolic truth (Mt. 13:44,  $\epsilon \chi \epsilon \iota$ ). The usage's occurrences will be enumerated at the end of the next section.

#### **Indirect Present**

English grammar places indirect discourse and similar constructions in the same tense as the main clause. Thus in English one says, "He said that he felt sick," but in Greek, "He said that he feels sick." Greek retains the tense of the original statement, even when the quotation is indirect, with a change of person in the subject.<sup>2</sup> The construction ὅτι, plus the indicative can be understood as a noun clause.<sup>3</sup> In this usage Greek differs from Latin and English, in that it employs the indicative.<sup>4</sup> And sometimes Greek employs a mixed construction, the direct object followed by the ὅτι-clause.<sup>5</sup> However, this usage is not universal in the New Testament; several passages change the discourse tense.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Simcox, *The Language of the New Testament*, p. 10; he cites Mk. 3:11; 11:19, 25; Rv. 4:9; 8:1; one can disagree with this label, since αν apparently was used by the best writers with the indicative: Lk. 13:28; 1 Th. 3:8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> J. Harold Greenlee, "The Importance of Syntax for the Proper Understanding of the Sacred Text of the New Testament" (hereinafter referred to as "Syntax"), *The Evangelical Quarterly*, XLIV:3 (July-September, 1972), 144-45; he notes Jn. 4:1; 6:22.

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  *Ibid.*, p. 144; he notes the similar  $\tilde{\nu}\alpha$  with the subj. in Mt. 14:36 and with the impv. in Mk. 6:25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Moule, *Idiom Book*, p. 153.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> M.k. 1:24: Jn. 9:29; <sup>2</sup> Th. 2:4; *ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Jn. 1:50: cf. 9:30, 32, 35; Acts 19:32; Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 1029-30.

In indirect discourse from past time classical can use either the present or the past depending on whether the temporal point of view of the original sneaker or that of the reporter is adopted. In the NT the latter (*oratio obliqua*) is not popular and the former, which conforms to direct speech (*oratio recta*), prevails.<sup>1</sup>

An imperfect in indirect discourse therefore normally is rendered as a pluperfect.<sup>2</sup>

This category is entitled "indirect present" because a form similar to that of indirect discourse often appears with verbs of seeing, hearing, thinking, believing, or knowing, in which the original tense is preserved.<sup>3</sup> For example, Joseph heard that "Archelaus reigns" (Mt. 21:45). Since these occurrences are grammatically identical to indirect discourse, they are included with them in the overall category of indirect presents.

The following table delineates the occurrences of the present for relative time.

TABLE 21
PRESENT FOR RELATIVE TINE

book	rel. Pres.	ind. pres.	total
Matthew	10	10	20
Mark	7	15	22
Luke	15	9	24
John	14	27	41
Acts	1	18	19
Romans	10	-	10
1 Corinthians	9	-	9

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> BDF, p. 168.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> *Ibid*.; for a thorough discussion of indirect discourse, see Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 130-42.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1029; BDF, p. 168.

TABLE 21--Continued

book	rel. pres.	ind. pres.	total
2 Corinthians	1	-	1
Galatians	-	1	1
2 Thessalonians	-	1	1
Hebrews	2	2	4
James	1	-	1
1 John	3	1	4
Revelation	4	2	6
total NT	77	86	163

As would be expected, the highest numbers of indirect presents occur in books with much narrative and dialogue, especially John. The relative presents are more spread out, noticeable especially in Romans and 1 Corinthians.

The aspect in this category varies from example to example. Since relative time is actually present time viewed from afar, the durative aspect of the progressive present appears to prevail. In translation, presents of relative time are normally rendered by appropriate English tenses, whether past, general present, or future. The durative nature of non-iterative roots can be emphasized in exegesis.

#### VI. THE PRESENT INDICATIVE IN CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

This chapter shall consider present indicative verbs which are the main verb in the protasis of a conditional sentence, or a similar construction. These sentences are often complex grammatically. Normally they are divided into types or classes, depending on the grammatical form, including particles and verbal tense and mood, and upon sense.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the form of a conditional sentence is largely determined by two main factors--time (past, present, future) or *Aktionsart* (instantaneous, protracted, recurrent, etc.) and the degree of reality (impossible, improbable, possible, probable, actual). . . . The *protasis* is the only half in which the mood is variable. In the *apodosis* it is always Indic. (or its equivalent).<sup>2</sup>

This discussion shall analyze conditional presents in two classes: those in the protasis; and those in the apodosis, though catalogued elsewhere.

#### Present of the Protasis

The protasis is the "if" part of the sentence. Conditional sentences with a present indicative in the protasis are all classed by grammarians as "first class" conditional sentences. But here the agreement stops. Terminology which describes these classes varies from one authority to another. "The lack of any generally accepted terminology makes easy reference difficult. The classical grammars are also hopelessly at variance." Older grammars called these constructions "simple" conditional

Moule, *Idiom Book*, p. 150. BDF, p. 189.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For thorough discussions, see Moule, *Idiom Book*, pp. 148-51: Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 1004-23; BDF, pp. 188-216: Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 101-11; Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb*, pp. 145-73.

sentences. "When the protasis *simply states* a present or past particular supposition, implying nothing as to the fulfilment of the condition, it takes the indicative with  $\epsilon i$ ." Recently, LaSor has retained this terminology. Blass likes the term for classical Greek, but believes that by New Testament times the meaning had developed to the point where he prefers determined as fulfilled" for the koine term. This is the term of Robertson. Sometimes the sentence is mixed, with a protasis of one class and an apodosis of another. Burton lists examples of various types of these sentences. In order better to define and exegete these protasis constructions, it will be necessary to examine them in detail.

### Frequency of the Present in the Protasis

Most conditional constructions begin with the particle "if," as Matthew 4:3, "If  $(\epsilon i)$  you are the Son of God." Sometimes, however, another conditional construction is used, as an indefinite relative pronoun, for example, Matthew 5:39, "whoever  $(\delta \sigma \tau \iota \varsigma)$  strikes you." The occurrences of each of these types of protases are listed below. "Non- $\epsilon i$  protasis" also includes cases in which a compound form with  $\epsilon i$  is used. All these usages would be considered "first class" conditional clauses, since they are  $\epsilon i$  plus the present indicative.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar*, p. 267; cf. Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> LaSor, Handbook of New Testament Greek, II, 221-23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> BDF, pp. 188-89.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1004.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, pp. 109-10.

TABLE 22 PROTASIS PRESENT FREQUENCY

book	εί prot.	non εἰ prot.	total	prot./100 verb forms
Matthew	27	9	36	0.91
Mark	9	5	14	0.54
Luke	18	5	23	0.52
John	13	2	15	0.42
Acts	9	_	9	0.23
Romans	16	5	21	1.81
1 Corinthians	38	7	45	3.49
2 Corinthians	14	4	18	2.37
Galatians	10	4	14	3.44
Philippians	3	-	3	1.18
Colossians	2	_	2	0.85
1 Thessalonians	2	_	2	0.82
2 Thessalonians	2	_	2	1.64
1 Timothy	8	_	8	2.68
2 Timothy	2	-	2	0.89
Titus	1	-	1	0.89
Philemon	2	-	2	4.55
Hebrews	4	3	7	0.76
James	11	1	12	3.46
1 Peter	7	-	7	2.55
2 Peter	1	1	2	1.03
1 John	2	4	6	1.38
2 John	2	-	2	4.17
Revelation	5	1	6	0.39
total NT	208	51	259	0.93

It is evident that these conditional sentences are the favorites of Paul in his Soteriological Epistles, of Peter, and of James. The high percentages in Philemon and 2 John are due to the shortness of these letters.

1 John also shows a high frequency, but it will show an even higher frequency in the apodosis category.

## Significance of the Simple Protasis

The most important question for the exegesis of these conditional sentences is this: What credence does the form of the protasis (normally plus the present indicative) lend to the truth of the proposition?

Some writers take it to be "true to fact." For example, A. Glenn Campbell, Professor of Greek at the Montana Institute of the Bible, insists that the Greek construction of Matthew 4:3 should be translated, "Since you are the Son of God," that the Devil here admits the deity of Christ. J. Harold Greenlee criticizes Kenneth Wuest's similar handling of the passage in his *Expanded Translation*. Wuest carries this idea into other passages as well, translating et as "since." James Boyer also criticizes this simplistic approach:

The problem is a careless misapplication of the grammatical point. A condition determined as fulfilled has nothing whatever to do with the truth or reality of the supposition, only with the way the author is looking at it. For the sake of argument he assumes it as fact and draws a conclusion from it. . . To translate this simple condition of *ei* with the indicative by "in view of the fact" or "since" is a very serious mistranslation.<sup>3</sup>

In order to test the force of  $\epsilon i$  and the indicative, at least for the present tense, this author examined each protasis in the New Testament to see if Wuest's theory holds up, and to see just what the construction implies. The data of this investigation is noted in Appendix D. It was discovered that the "truthfulness" of the protasis to fact varied considerably, according to these percentages: true to fact (33%), contrary to fact (81%), either possible (36%), impossible to determine (22 ½%). In other words, over half the occurrences are either true or false, only a third are definitely true, and many are contrary to fact. That last category is of special interest; so its examples are here listed:

<sup>3</sup> Boyer, "Semantics in Biblical Interpretation," p. 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Campbell, "From the Greek Testament," *Voice, an Independent Church Journal*, March-April, 1974, p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Greenlee, "'If in the New Testament," p. 39; Robertson says the Devil assumes it as true for the sake of argument, *Grammar*, p. 1009.

Mt. 12:26, "if Satan casts out Satan"

Mt. 12:27, "if I cast out demons by Beelzeboul"

Lk. 11:19, "if I cast out demons by Beelzeboul"

Lk. 22:42, "if you will"

Jn. 8:39, "if you are children of Abraham"

Jn. 10:37, "if I do not the works of my Father"

Acts 5:39, "if it is of God" (see discussion below)

Acts 19:38, "if Demetrius and craftsmen have a matter"

Acts 25:11, "if I am guilty"

Rom. 4:15, "where (if?) there is no law"

Rom. 8:13, "if you live according to the flesh"

1 Cor. 9:17, "if I do it voluntarily"

1 Cor. 15:13, "if there is not a resurrection"

1 Cor. 15:15, "if the dead rise not"

1 Cor. 15:16, "if the dead rise not"

1 Cor. 15:19, "if in this life only we have hope"

1 Cor. 15:29, "if the dead rise not"

1 Cor. 15:32, "if the dead rise not"

Gal. 2:18, "if I build again the things I destroyed"

Gal. 5:11, "if I yet preach circumcision"

2 Tim. 2:13, "if ye are unfaithful"

Heb. 11:15, "if they are (were) mindful"

Heb. 12:8, "if you are without chastisement"

Ja. 2:11, "if you do not commit adultery but do commit murder"

Ja. 3:2, "if someone does not stumble in word" (?)

In order to see the absurdity of claiming a "true to fact"

interpretation for this construction, all one needs to do is insert the word "since" instead of "if, and read these passages from the Bible. Thus David R. Lithgow is right when he says that "the protasis introduced with ei, can have any degree of certainty from absolutely sure to improbable or hypothetical." Greenlee correctly observes that  $\epsilon \hat{i}$  with the indicative "does not imply either that the speaker believes that the condition stated is true or that he believes it is not true. . . . The 'if' clause itself implies nothing concerning the speaker's assumption." he provides examples of the condition where the speaker may: (a) believe it, John 15:20a, (b) disbelieve it, John 15:20b, (c) be uncertain, John 20:15, or (d) be mistaken, John 11:12.

Since this variety of usage is so clear, why do many still teach that the condition is true to fact? One reason is simple: in many cases it is true to fact, and in many more it could be true to fact. But another cause is the unfortunate terminology used. It already has been mentioned that Goodwin, Burton and others call these protases, "simple" conditions. However, others have used the term "determined as fulfilled." Robertson goes out of his way to explain what he means. He emphasizes that "the, point in 'determined' is that the premise or condition is assumed to be true (or untrue)." The certainty is related to the statement, not to the fact itself:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Lithgow, "New Testament Usage of the Function Words *Gar* and *Ei*, *Notes on Translation*, 47 (March, 1973), 19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Greenlee, "'If' in the New Testament," p. 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1007; BDF, p. 189.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1004.

The point about all the four classes to note is that the form of the condition has to do only with the statement, not with the absolute truth or certainty of the matter. . . . We must distinguish always therefore between the fact and the statement of the fact. The conditional sentence deals only with the statement. <sup>1</sup>

Thus the context must decide on the actual truth or falsity of the premise: "This condition, therefore, taken at its face value, assumes the condition to be true. The context or other light must determine the actual situation." And he purposefully selects Matthew 12:27 as his first example, to emphasize his point: "This is a good example to begin with, since the assumption is untrue to fact, though assumed to be true by Jesus for the sake of argument."

But it is not enough to see what the construction does not say; rather, its real force needs to be determined. That force appears to be this: with the present indicative expresses a premise in the realm of fact or reality. Either it is true or it is not.

Ei with the indicative simply means, "If it is a fact that . . . ," or "If it is not a fact that . . . ," while  $\dot{\epsilon}\acute{\alpha}\nu$  with the subjunctive means, "If at some time or other it should be true that . . . ," or, "If at some time or other it should not be true that . . . ." These two types of conditional clauses have nothing to do with the degree of certainty of the condition assumed.<sup>4</sup>

The εἰ conditions and the ἐάν conditions both can express either true or false premises. Robertson seems a little wide of the mark when he says that in John 13:17 (εἰ ταῦτα οἴδατε, μακάριοί ἐστε ἐαν ποιῆτε αὐτά) "we have the first and third class conditions happily combined with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*; cf. Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Greenlee, "Syntax," D. 145.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Greenlee notes Jn. 15:20: Gal. 1:18; 1 Jn. 2:23; 3:2, ibid., pp. 145-46.

clear distinction. [So far so good.] Jesus assumes the knowledge as a fact, but the performance is doubtful." It would be better to say, "Jesus regards their present knowledge as either existing or not--that matter is settled. But He regards their performance as possible or probable in the future." Robertson is difficult to read. He has already stated that first class conditions need not be true. But sometimes he gives the opposite impression. For example, he also criticizes Goodwin for saying that it "implies nothing as to the fulfilment of the condition." This obscurity, plus the title "determined as fulfilled," has created some confusion among subsequent Greek students.

The clearest exposition of conditional present exegesis which this author has found is an unsigned article entitled "Greek Conditional Sentences." First and third class conditional sentences are defined as follows:

When *ei* with the indicative is used, it implies that the truth or otherwise of the condition is regarded as in principle "determined," i.e. is represented as a fact (although the speaker does not commit himself as to whether he believes the condition is true or not). When *ean* with the subjunctive is used, it implies that the truth or otherwise of the condition is regarded as in principle "undetermined," i.e. is represented as uncertain, either because the condition is conceived as a future occurrence, which may or may not ever take place, or because the condition is a general one which may be realised at any time.<sup>4</sup>

Thus  $\epsilon \hat{i}$  with the indicative is translated as, "If (it is a fact that) ...," while  $\hat{\epsilon} \acute{\alpha} \nu$  with the subjunctive is translated as, "If (at any time it happen that) ...." These distinctions are in the viewpoint

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1019. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1006.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Bible Translator, XIII:4 (October, 1962), 223-24.

of the speaker, not necessarily in the events themselves, since the same thing can be thought of both ways (Mt. 5:46, cf. Lk. 6:32: and Mk. 3:24, cf. v. 26). However, the rule is recognized as not foolproof. But it does explain the data better than any other theory examined. Hence, the title "simple condition" seems best for  $\epsilon$  plus the indicative.

Before leaving this section, it would be good to notice one more passage. In Acts 5:38-39 Gamaliel warns the Sanhedrin to shun hasty action against the new sect of Christians. He reasons, "If it is of men  $(\epsilon \acute{\alpha} \nu \text{ plus subj.})$ , it shall cease; but if it is of God ( $\epsilon \acute{\imath}$ , plus ind.), you shall not be able to stop them." Some have thought that the Greek shows Gamaliel as actually believing in Christ. A critical writer taking that view has argued on that basis that the speech was "Christianized" in Acts. Even Robertson tries to get Gamaliel on the side of the Christians, to some extent at least:

Gamaliel gives the benefit of the doubt to Christianity. He assumes that Christianity is of God and puts the alternative that it is of men in the third class. This does not, of course, show that Gamaliel was a Christian or an inquirer. He was merely willing to score a point against the Sadducees.<sup>3</sup>

It seems better, rather, to view Gamaliel's speech from the standpoint of aspect. Whether the new sect and its miraculous power were from God, is a settled fact which nothing can change. If, on the other hand, it is of men, then future events will show it to be so--an alternative Gamaliel could have considered probable, even though he used a with the indicative.

1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "Greek Conditional Sentences," p. 224.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Radermacher quoted in Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, pp. 104-05.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1018.

#### Other Uses with ei

Occasionally the form of a sentence is the same as a conditional sentence, but the meaning is not. There are two specialized uses of this sort.

### **Concessive Present**

When the protasis states a condition in spite of which the apodosis will occur, the clause is concessive. Thus the unjust judge says, "Though ( $\mathbf{E}\hat{\imath}$ ) I fear not God nor regard man, I will avenge her" (Lk. 18:4). It would be wrong to translate  $\epsilon\hat{\imath}$  by "if," since it would reduce the sentence to absurdity.

Most writers mention the addition of  $\kappa\alpha i$  to the  $\epsilon i$  in these clauses. Burton suggests that  $\epsilon i$   $\kappa\alpha i$  ("even though") represents an admitted fact, while  $\kappa\alpha i$   $\epsilon i$  ("even if") represents an improbable supposition. However, it is good to heed LaSor's warning: "The distinction between  $\kappa\alpha i$   $\epsilon i$ , and  $\epsilon i$   $\kappa\alpha i$  does not always obtain. The primary importance of context must not be disregarded!" The aspect of concessive clauses follows the same lines as that of normal conditional clauses.

The New Testament examples of concessive present indicatives are here listed: Lk. 18:4, φοβοϋμαι, ἐντρέπομαι; 18:7, μακροθυμεῖ; Rom. 7:16, ποιῶ; 1 Cor. 9:2a, εἰμι; 2 Cor. 4:16, διαφθείρεται; 12:11, εἰμι; Heb. 6:9, λαλοῦμεν; 1 Pet. 1:6, [ἐστὶν].

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 113; also Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1026.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> LaSor, *Handbook of New Testament Greek*, II, 226.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Greenlee, "'If' in the New Testament," p. 43.

#### **Substantive Present**

Occasionally  $\epsilon \hat{\imath}$  introduces a clause much as  $\delta \tau_1$ , would, only the clause is an indirect statement or question. Sometimes the question is direct, but then  $\delta \tau_1$  often introduces a direct quotation. The whole clause of  $\epsilon \hat{\imath}$  plus the present indicative verb can be understood as a noun clause, hence the name "substantive present."

The number of New Testament examples is as follows: Matthew (3), Mark (2), Luke (5), John (1), Acts (9), 2 Corinthians (2), 1 John (1); total for the New Testament (23). As can be seen, Luke uses this form more than twice as often as the other writers combined. The aspect of each verb should be determined by its root. Impersonal verbs like  $\vec{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota\nu$  normally are aoristic, as are futuristic verbs like  $\vec{\alpha}\pi$ ok $\alpha\theta\iota\sigma\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  (Acts 21:37; 1:6). Most of the others are durative.

### Present of the Apodosis

Although all examples of the present indicative in the apodoses of conditional sentences have been catalogued under their appropriate categories, it is profitable to consider them together in this chapter. The present indicative finds its way into the conditional sentence often through the apodosis, the "then" clause: "If he really ate fourteen hamburgers, he has problems."

In these sentences the protasis may be one of any number of forms. It may be an indicative verb with a noun, or a relative or an indefinite pronoun, perhaps even referring to future time:

If the fact stated in the apodosis is already true at the time of speaking, or if the issue involved has already been determined,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Greenlee, "'If' in the New Testament," p. 43.

though not necessarily known, the Present indicative is frequently used after a protasis referring to future time. The thought would be expressed . . . as it will appear that or it will still be true that.<sup>1</sup>

In that case, the sentence is a first class condition. There are no examples of second class conditions with the present indicative, since that class requires a secondary tense in both members. The present indicative often supplies the apodosis in third class conditional sentences, with  $\dot{\epsilon}\dot{\alpha}\nu$  and the subjunctive in the protasis.<sup>2</sup> It is also found as the apodosis in fourth class sentences, with ei and the optative in the protasis. However, there are no complete New Testament examples, only partial ones (1 Cor. 14:10; 15:37; 1 Pet. 3:14, 17). In addition to the four "normal" classes of protases and to relative clauses, conditional participles often function as a protasis.<sup>4</sup> A familiar example is John 3:36, "The one believing ( $\delta$  πιστεύων) on the Son has eternal life," which means, "if one believes, then he has eternal life," as evidenced by the contrasting unbeliever mentioned next in the verse. The classical Greek scholar Gildersleeve gives an example from Herodotus, and mentions that the conditional participle was a comparatively late development in Greek. LaSor concludes from his inductive New Testament study that several forms are possible in the protasis of a conditional sentence, including along with  $\epsilon i$ -clauses "a participle (often in genitive absolute), an adverb, a prepositional phrase, a relative clause, or some other single word or

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 108; cf. BDF, p. 192.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Burton, *Moods and Tenses*, p. 107. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> BDF, pp. 215-16; and Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, p. 227.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Gildersleeve, *Problems in Greek Syntax*, pp. 12-13.

phrase." One must be careful, however, not to overdo it. Some sentences are similar in form, but are simple factual statements, with no conditional element intended. For example, while John 3:36 apparently stresses the conditional aspect and makes a plea for belief, a similarly worded passage, 1 Corinthians 9:13, "the ones working at (οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι) the temple eat of the temple," is classed as a simple customary present. In the latter passage there is no condition, no appeal, rather a simple substantive use of the participle. These distinctions sometimes are nice, and judgments may vary from person to person. However, the overall pattern should remain about the same in the total.

#### Frequency of the Present in the Apodosis

Since so many more types of conditional sentences have the present indicative in the apodosis than have it in the protasis, the number is higher than the protasis count. However, there are a few losses, since some first class sentences have another form in the apodosis. The frequency of apodosis presents for each book in which they occur is tabulated below. All of these examples are catalogued in Appendix A under their normal categories, but they can be seen there by the "A" written after the code number.

TABLE 23
APODOSIS PRESENT FREQUENCY

book	apod. pres.	apod. pres./100 verb forms
Matthew	59	1.49
Mark	21	0.80
Luke	63	1.44

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> LaSor, *Handbook of New Testament Greek*, II, 220-21.

TABLE 23--Continued

book	apod. pres.	apod. pres./100 verb forms
John	75	2.12
Acts	8	0.21
Romans	26	2.24
1 Corinthians	63	4.89
2 Corinthians	10	1.32
Galatians	10	2.46
Ephesians	3	0.92
Philippians	4	1.57
1 Thessalonians	2	1.64
1 Timothy	3	1.00
2 Timothy	2	0.89
Hebrews	5	0.55
James	12	3.46
1 Peter	1	0.36
2 Peter	2	1.03
1 John	58	13.30
2 John	3	6.25
3 John	1	1.96
Revelation	9	0.59
total NT	440	1.59

Obviously, the writer most addicted to this usage is John. And his First Epistle is by far the outstanding example. His Gospel also surpasses the other three in its use of conditional sentences with the present indicative. One may wonder at the low score for Revelation. The score drops even more when chapters 2-3 are removed, for they contain over half of the examples. This low percentage fits with Revelation's style and thrust. The book in its vocabulary and syntax is nearly totally bereft of logical statements or appeals to reason (unlike his Gospel and Epistle). It paints the picture of the result of one's previous choice, considered as already made. As with the protasis present, James rates high, as does Paul in his Soteriological Epistles (not 2 Cor.). These

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Battle, "An Exegetical-Statistical Study of the post Common words in John and Revelation," pp. 37, 72-73, 93-94, 99-100, 102-03.

two writers' argumentative style lends itself to frequent use of conditional sentences.

### Significance of the Present Apodosis

In order to ascertain the meaning and force of the apodosis, one must first examine the make-up of the protasis, and compare it with the context. In only two places does the New Testament contain "logically inconsequent" conditional clauses: Galatians 5:15 and James 3:14, "In both instances the Imperative clause remains valid whether or not the condition in the protasis is fulfilled. Logically, the Imperative clauses should be Future Indicative clauses--if you go on like this, you will . . . . . "

Otherwise, the protasis-apodosis relation is logical.

If the condition is first class, a present indicative in the apodosis indicates a present situation which is either true or untrue. In either case, these conditions are matters of present reality, matters of fact. If the condition is third class (or fourth), or if the protasis is a participle or a relative clause, the present indicative in the apodosis assumes another force. Many times a maxim, a universal truth, is of this form.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes it takes the form of legal legislation (Mt. 5:32; 19:9; Mk. 7:12; 10:11-12; Lk. 16:18; Rom. 14:23; 1 Cor. 7:4, 36; Heb. 10:28). When the condition is hypothetical or futuristic (as the third class often is), the present indicative apodosis is often a futuristic present (John 14:3). When a third class condition describes a present possibility, the present indicative apodosis is whatever aspect that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Moule, *Idiom Book*, p. 152.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 1019; cf. Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb*, p. 170.

verb would normally have: progressive, customary, or whatever (1 John 1:6-10). Similarly, a participial protasis, or an indefinite relative clause protasis, can speak of past, present, or future time (1 John 2:9, 10, and 17, respectively). The net result is a factual statement, which is applied in the specified cases.

One particular question in 1 John deserves notice here. 1 John 3:6 states, "Everyone abiding in him does not sin"; also verse 9, "Everyone begotten of God does not do sin"; and 5:18, "Everyone begotten of God does not sin." In order to get around the difficulty, most commentators and grammarians rely on the present indicative form of the apodosis. Wuest quotes 3:9 and says, "That simply is not true," and solves the difficulty by translating it "does not habitually sin." Most writers note the aorist subjunctive in 2:1, "if anyone does sin." J. R. Mantey thus compares the aorist and present usages:

The aorist tense in 1 John 2:1 is inadequately translated in practically all English translations. The tense basically was used to state a single act or thought, the opposite of the present tense, which pictures action in progress, as in 1 John 3:8-9, "continue sinning."

The aorist in 1 John 2:1 = "do not sin at all . . . commit a sin."

Nigel Turner takes a different tack. He sees the agrist of 2:1 as inceptive and the present of 3:9 as durative:

The apostle affirms that a Christian believer can never be a sinner. He will start to be one, will take the first (aoristic) step by committing this or that sin, but he stops short of the condition of being "a sinner."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wuest, *The Practical Use of the Greek New Testament* (Chicago: moody Press, 1946), p. 45.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mantey, "Notes from the Greek," *Notes on Translation*, 42 (December, 1971), 23.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Turner, *Insights*, p. 151.

The results of the study of this paper lead this author to a different emphasis. John obviously favors the present tense in this book, especially in apodoses. This is the character and thrust of the book. All issues are before his eyes at once. He sees truth at the poles. The book is "marked by contrasts, antitheses, opposites; . . . it is a picture in high contrast: a line drawing, rather than half-tone." John uses present tense verbs for both punctiliar and durative action (cf. λαμβάνομεν and τηρο $\hat{\mathbf{u}}$ μεν in 3:22). The point is the aspect John views the action, not the type of the action itself. John views the Christian as one who does not sin, as opposed to the unbeliever, who does sin. John does not distinguish durative from punctiliar sins. The present tense here is factual, not progressive; it describes John's vivid perspective toward sin, not the nature of the sin itself. In practice, all Christians do sin--isolated sins, habitual sins, and even continuous, durative sins. "In actual experience, of course, we find ourselves in 'dirty grays." John's point is that sin itself is inimical to the Christian. God keeps him and works within him (3:9; cf. 5:18, where δ γεννηθείς is Christ<sup>3</sup>). A correct view of aspect will keep one from casuistry on one hand and from naiveté on the other.

#### Conclusion

Conditional present indicatives are key words in exegesis. The danger lurks, however, to make them say too much. A present indicative

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> James L. Boyer. "Johannine Epistles" (class syllabus, Grace Theo logical Seminary, 1973), p. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 719; Stagg, "The Abused Aorist," pp. 226-27.

in the protasis tells the exegete only one thing: the condition is dealing in factual data. Either it is true or it is not true. The best term is "simple conditional sentence," and the best translation is, "if (it is a fact that) . . ," or, for concessive clauses, "though (it is/be a fact that) . . . "

A present indicative in the apodosis should be interpreted as it would be in any other context, normally as factual, as customary, or as progressive. The root and the context must provide the key. In John's writings especially, where this usage is most common, it must be remembered that verbal aspect describes the author's viewpoint, not necessarily the nature of the action itself. Apodoses with  $\ell \rho \chi o \mu \alpha 1$  or  $\ell u \pi \alpha \gamma \omega$  often are futuristic, especially with a third class protasis.

#### PART III. CONCLUSION

#### The Problem of the Present Indicative

Grammarians always like to have things fit together. For this reason they are perplexed by the present tense. Gildersleeve raises his voice with perhaps a note of resignation:

To the Greek the present was an indefinite tense. In familiar language it answered for present, it answered for past, it answered for future. It is universal: "The sun rises in the East and sets in the West." It is particular: "The sun sets behind a cloud." And this suffices.

Moulton also has said that "the present tense is not primarily a tense, in the usual acceptation of the term."<sup>2</sup>

Previous research has seen four main phases. The first phase viewed all tenses as time centered. Thus Winer writes, "The Present Tense ... expresses present time in all its relations." The second phase realized that time was secondary for the present tense, even in the indicative. Instead, this stage saw the present tense as defining the *Aktionsart*, the kind of action. Even Stagg, who denies a particular *Aktionsart* for the aorist, claims there is one for the present. Most of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Gildersleeve, *Problems in Greek Syntax*, p. 244.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Moulton, *Prolegomena*, p. 120.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Winer, *Idiom*, p. 265.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> E.g., Robertson, *Grammar*, pp. 881-82; Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating*, pp. 198-99.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 825; Goodwin-Gulick, *Greek Grammar*, 166; Smyth, *A Greek Grammar*, pp. 275-76; and many others.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Stagg, "The Abused Aorist," p. 231.

these writers claim the type of action described to be durative action. Goodwin goes even so far in his chart to deny that the present tense can represent "action simply taking place" in present time, leaving the space blank! However, other writers recognize the present tense's use for both punctiliar and linear action. The third phase saw the rise of "aspect" as an alternative to *Aktonsart*. K. L. McKay even has called for renaming the present tense the "imperfective aspect" in all moods but the indicative, but he still resides in phase two, regarding the indicative present as describing only durative action. An excellent definition of verbal aspect is that of Maximilian Zerwick:

The use of the "tenses" is determined not so much by the objective reality as by the speaker's needs: he will use the aorist for an action which objectively lasted a long time or was repeated, if what he wishes to express is simply the fact that the action took place; or the present for an action which is of its nature momentary, if what he wishes to express is the nature or kind of action as distinct from its concrete realization.<sup>4</sup>

The fourth phase is the zero-tense phase, introduced by Kiparsky. He himself recognizes a non-zero use of the present as well: "The [early Indo-European] present tense, besides serving as a zero tense, also has the positive function of denoting present time, and analogously in the case of the indicative mood." G. Mussies defines the present indicative as "a *timeless* or *omnitemporai* indicative." Each of these four phases

<sup>1</sup> Goodwin-Gulick, Greek Grammar, D. 267.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar*, p. 181.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> McKay, "Syntax in Exegesis," pp. 45, 49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, p. 78.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Kiparsky, "Tense and Mood," pp. 35-36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Mussies, *Apocalypse*, pp. 250-55.

has left its mark on the study. Yet none accounts for all the data.

Suggested Solution

The present indicative cannot be defined on the basis of time, for it covers all times. Nor can it be limited to a single Aktionsart, for it describes all types of action. The best definition appears to be "aspect." This term refers the tense's significance to the writer's view of the action, rather than to the action itself. Normally, of course, the two will coincide. But often the author may conceive of action as being in progress, which actually took place in the past, or as being durative, which actually is punctiliar. The present indicative normally signifies a durative and/or present time aspect. That is, the author conceives of the action in his mind as being present to him, and normally as durative (or iterative). The durative or punctiliar nature of the verb must be determined from the verbal root itself. The major exceptions to this rule would be "zero" usages of historical and futuristic presents, which share the aspect of the context. These usages are limited to a few verbal roots and to specific, delineated examples of a few specialized usages, as historical presents at paragraph headings. If these zero usages be temporarily set aside, though, the present aspect is a unified and workable definition.

While the presence of the present indicative in a passage is insufficient in itself to prove a certain interpretation, it does open several doors of possible interpretation, as seen in its various classifications. Many other doors remain closed; those doors are opened by the other tenses. Even in those areas in which tenses may overlap (e.g., the perfective present), the present indicative adds its emphasis of

durative present aspect in a way the other tense would fail to do.

### The Limits of Syntax

Some authors have shown undue dogmatism while exegeting Scriptural portions. Modern neo-orthodoxy has reversed the trend, and seeks mystical interpretations. Jay G. Williams, in a significant article which shows how the jump to the Wellhausen theory leads to the jump to existentialism in exegesis, rebels against real syntax:

Searching for the original meaning of a given text is like looking for the pot of gold at the end of Noah's rainbow. . . . A search for one meaning, then, is futile. We must listen to a whole chorus of interpretive voices, a chorus which sometimes harmonizes and sometimes does not. And, if we are to be true to the history of exegesis, we must add our own voice with its own distinctive melody. \(^1\)

Thus he asks on one occasion, "Is this legitimate interpretation?" rather than "Is this correct interpretation?"

Among Bible-believers, however, the danger is to press more into grammar than it will endure. "In many cases the present means such-and-such, therefore it does here, too." But other places may show opposite usage. Exegesis takes out the meaning that can be supported by inductive study of all usages. Robertson, perhaps America's greatest Greek scholar ever, is aware of the facts of life.

After all is done, instances remain where syntax cannot say the last word, where theological bias will inevitably determine how one interprets the Greek idiom. . . . When the grammarian has finished, the theologian steps in, and sometimes before the grammarian is through.<sup>3</sup>

This study should help to show just what the present indicative does say,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Williams, "Exegesis-Eisegesis: Is There a Difference?" *Theology Today*, XXX:3 (October, 1973), 219-20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

<sup>3</sup> Robertson, *Grammar*, p. 389.

as well as what it does not necessarily say. It is the tense of one who views reality as being before his eyes. It is the tense of certainty and assurance, as John has said, "Now are we children of God."

#### APPENDIX A

#### PRESENT INDICATIVE VERB CLASSIFICATION

Here are listed all the present indicative verbs in The New Testament, along with this author's classification of each. The numbers are the same as those indicated on pp. 49-52. An "A" after a number indicates that the particular form is the primary verb in an apodosis clause. An "E" after futuristic verbs (31E) indicates that the verb's interpretation is judged as eschatological. And an "o" after protasis verbs (51o) shows that the particular protasis clause does not begin with the simple but with a compound of it or with some other construction.

Mt.	1:20	έστιν	23	Mt.	4:8	δείκνυσιν	21
	1:23	έστιν	131		4:9	λέγει	21
	2:2	έστιν	10		4:10	λέγει	21
	2:4	γεννᾶται	41		4:11	άφίησιν	21
	2:6	֔	10		4:19	λέγει	21
	2:13	φαίνεται	21		5:3	έστιν	31E
		μέλλει	10		5:10	έστιν	31E
	2:18	εἰσίν	21		5:11	$\dot{\epsilon}\sigma$ τ $\epsilon$	31
	2:19	φαίνεται	21		5:13	$\dot{\epsilon}\sigma$ τ $\epsilon$	10
	2:22	βασιλε <b>ύ</b> ει	42			<b>ἰ</b> σχύει	121A
	3:1	παραγίνεται	21		5:14	έστε	10
	3:3	έστιν	134			<b>ἰ</b> σχ <b>ύ</b> ει	132
	3:9	ἔχομεν	10		5:15	καίουσιν	121
		λέγω	11			τιθέασιν	121
		δύναται	10			λάμπει	121
	3:10	κεῖται	10		5:18	λέγω	11
		έκκόπτεται	124A		5:20	λέγω	11
		βάλλεται	124A		5:22	λέγω	11
	3:11	βαπτίζω	122		5:23	έχει	42
		έστιν	10		5:25	εί	42
		<b>ε</b> ἰμὶ	10		5:26	λέγω	11
	3:13	παραγίνεται	21		5:28	λέγω	11
	3:14	<del>έ</del> χω	10		5:29	σκανδαλίζει	51
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχη	141			$\sigma$ υμφέρει	133
	3:15	ἐστὶν	133		5:30	σκανδαλίζει	51
		ἀφίησιν	21			$\sigma$ υμφέρει	133
	3:17	έστιν	10		5:32	λέγω	11
	4:3	εί	51			ποιεῖ	132A
	4:5	παραλαμβάν	<b>12</b> 1			μοιχᾶται	132A
		ίστησιν	21		5:34	λέγω	11
	4:6	λέγει	21			ἐστὶν	10
		εî	51		5:35α	ἐστιν	10
	4:8	παραλαμβάν	<b>12</b> 1		5:35β	έστὶν	10

Mt.	5:36	δύνασαι	10	Mt.	6:30	<b>ἀμφιέννυσιν</b>	51
1110	5:37	έστιν	132	1,10.	6:32	έπιζητοῦ σιν	121
	5:39	λέγω	11		0.52	οίδεν	10
	3.37	ραπίζει	510			χρήζετε	10
	5:44	λέγω	11		7:2	κρίνετε	121
	5:45	ανατέλλει	122		7.2	μετρεί τε	121
	3.43	βρέχει	122		7:3	βλέπεις	122
	5:46	έχετε	10A		1.5	κατανοεις	122
	3.40	ποιο <b>ύ</b> σιν	121		7:8	λαμβάνει	132A
	5:47	ποιε <b>ί</b> τε	10A		7.0	εὑρίσκει	132A
	3.47	ποιο <b>υ</b> σιν	121		7:9	έστιν	10 10
	5:48	έστιν	10		7:11	οίδατε	51
	6:1	έχετε	31E		7:12	έστιν	134
	6:2	ποιο <b>ύ</b> σιν	121		7:12	είσιν	10
	0.2		111		7:13 7:14	είσιν	10
		λέγω	121		7:1 <del>4</del> 7:15		121
	6:3	απέχουσιν	41		7.13	ἔρχονται	10
		ποιεί	121		7.16	είσιν	
	6:5	φιλοῦσιν \			7:16	συλλέγουσιν	121
		λέγω	11		7:17	ποιεί	121
	6.7	απέχουσιν	121		7.10	ποιεί	121
	6:7	δοκού σιν	121		7:18	δύναται	132
	6:8	οἶδεν "	10		7:19	έκκόπτεται	124
	( 1 (	έχετε	10		7.24	βάλλεται	124
	6:16	άφανίζουσιν 	121		7:24	ακούει	510
		λέγω	11		0.2	ποιεί	510
	<i>(</i> 10	ἀπέχουσιν	121		8:2	δύνασαί	10
	6:19	αφανίζει	121		8:3	θέλω	10
		διορύσσουσιν	121		8:4	λέγει	21
	<i>(</i> <b>2</b> 0	κλέπτουσιν	121		8:7	λέγει	21
	6:20	ἀφανίζει	121		8:8	εἰμὶ	10
		διορύσσουσιν	121		8:9	εἰμι	10
	C 21	κλέπτο <b>υ</b> σιν	121			λέγω	122
	6:21	<b>ἐστιν</b>	41			πορεύεται	121
	6:22	έστιν	132			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	121
	6:23	ἐστίν	51		0.10	ποιεί	121
	6:24	δύναται	132		8:10	λέγω	11
		δύασθε	132		8:11	λέγω	11
	6:25	λέγω	11		8:20	λέγει	21
		έστιν	132			<b>ἔ</b> χουσιν	121
	6:26	σπείρουσιν	121			έχει	121
		θερίζουσιν	121		8:22	λέγει	21
		συνάγουσιν	121		8:25	ἀπολλύμεθα	32
		τρέφει	122		8:26	λέγει	21
		διαφέρετε	132		0.0=	<b>έ</b> στε	10
	6:27	δύναται	132		8:27	έστιν	10
	6:28	μεριμνᾶτε	10		0.21	ύπακούουσιν	121
		αὐξάνουσιν	121		8:31	έκβάλλεις	51
		κοπιω σιν	121		9:2	ἀφίενται	141
		νήθουσιν	121		9:3	βλασφημέῖ	22
	6:29	λέγω	11		9:4	ἐνθυμεῖ σθε	10

Mt.	9:5	<b>ἐ</b> στιν	133	Mt.	10:42	λέγω	11
		'Αφίενται	141		11:3	εί	10
	9:6	<sup>"</sup> έχει	10			προσδοκῶμεν	60
		λέγει	21		11:4	ακούετε	10
	9:9	λέγει	21			βλέπετε	10
	9:11	ἐσθιει	10		11:5	αναβλέπο <b>υ</b> σιν	124
	9:12	<b>ἔ</b> χο <b>υ</b> σιν	121			περιπατο <b>υ</b> σιν	124
	9:13	,α έστιν	10			καθαρίζονται	124
		θέλω	10			ακούουσιν	124
	9:14	προσέρχονται	21			έγείρονται	124
		νηστύομεν	123			εὐαγγελίζονται	124
		νηστεύουσιν	123		11:6	έστιν	132A
	9:15	δύνανται	125A		11:8	$\epsilon$ i $\sigma$ i $ u$	121
		<b>,</b> έστιν	510		11:9	λέγω	11
	9:16	<b>ἐ</b> πιβάλλει	121		11:10	έστιν	134
		αἴρει	125A			ἀποστέλλω	31
		γίνεται	125A		11:11	λέγω	11
	9:17	βάλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	121			έστιν	31E
	,,,,	ρήγν <b>υ</b> νται	125A		11:12	βιάζεται	23
		έκχεῖται	125A			άρπάζουσιν	23
		απόλλ <b>υ</b> νται	125A		11:14	θέλετε	51
		βάλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	121		11.11	έστιν	134A
		συντηροῦνται	121		11:16	έστὶν	135
	9:24	καθεύδει	10		11:18	λέγουσιν	121
	9:28	λέγει	21		11.10	έχει	10
	J. <b>2</b> 0	Πιστεύετε	10		11:19	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	121
		δύναμαι	10		11:22	λέγω	11
		λ <b>έγουσιν</b>	21		11:24	λέγω	11
	9:34	έκβάλλει	122			Έξομολογοῦμαι	10
	9:37	λέγει	21		11:27	έπιγινώσκει	10
	10:2	έστιν	132		,	έπιγινώσκει	10
	10:11	έστιν	42		11:29	είμι	10
	10:15	λέγω	11		11:30	έστιν	132
	10:16	<b>ἀποστέλλω</b>	31		12:2	ποιού σιν	10
	10:20	έστε	31		12.2	<b>έξεστιν</b>	133
	10:23	λέγω	11		12:5	βεβηλοῦσιν	121
	10:24	<b>ἔστιν</b>	132		12.0	είσιν	121
	10:26	έστιν	142		12:6	λέγω	11
	10:27	λέγω	122		12.0	έστιν	10
	10.27	ακούετε	123		12:7	έστιν	134
	10:29	πωλεῖται	121		12.7	θέλω	10
	10:30	εἰσίν	142		12:8	έστιν	10
	10:31	διαφέρετε	10		12:10	έξεστιν	53
	10:37	ἔστιν	132A		12:10	διαφέρει	132
	10.57	έστιν	132A 132A		12.12	εξεστιν	133
	10:38	λαμβάνει	510		12:13	λέγει	21
	10.50	ακολο <b>υ</b> θεῖ	510		12:23	έστιν	10
		<b>ἔστιν</b>	132A		12:24	έκβάλλει	122
	10:40	δέχεται	132A 132A		12:25	έρημοῦται	121A
	10.70	δέχεται δέχεται	132A 132A		12:26	έκβάλλει	51
		Jekeini	1341		12.20	εκράλλει	<i>J</i> 1

Mt.	12:27	ἐκβαλλω	51	Mt.	13:23	ἐστιν	134
		<b>έ</b> κβάλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	121A			καρποφορεί	125
	12:28	ἐκβάλλω	51			ποιεί	125
	12:29	δύνταί	121A		13:27	έχει	10
	12:30	έστιν	10A		13:28	λέγουσιν	21
		σκορπίζει	10A			θέλεις	10
	12:31	λέγω	11		13:29	φησιν	21
	12:33	γινώσκεται	132		13:31	έστὶν	135
	12:34	δύνασθε	10		13:32	έστιν	132
		λαλεῖ	132			έστιν	132
	12:35	<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλει	122			γίνεται	132
		ἐκβάλλει	122		13:33	έστὶν	135
	12:36	λέγω	11		13:37	ἐστὶν	134
	12:38	θέλομεν	10		13:38	έστιν	134
	12:39	ἐπιζητεῖ	132			είσιν	134
	12:43	διέρχεται	121A			είσιν	134
		$\epsilon \hat{\mathbf{b}} \rho \hat{\mathbf{i}} \sigma \hat{\mathbf{\kappa}} \epsilon \mathbf{i}$	121A		13:39	έστιν	134
	12:44	λέγει	121A			έστιν	134
		<b>εὑ</b> ρίσκει	121A			είσιν	134
	12:45	πορεύεται	121A		13:40	συλλέγεται	124
		παραλαμβάνει				καίεται	124
		κατοικέῖ	121A		13:44	έστὶν	135
		γίνεται	121A			<b>ύ</b> πάγει	125
	12:48	έστιν	10			πωλε̂ι	125
		είσὶν	10			<b>έ</b> χει	41
	12:50	ἐστὶν	10A			άγοράζει	125
	13:10	λαλεῖς	122		13:45	έστὶν	135
	13:12	<b>ἔ</b> χει	51o		13:47	ἐστὶν	135
		έχει	51o		13:51	λέγουσιν	21
		έχει	41		13:52	έστιν	135
	13:13	λαλῶ	122			<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλει	125
		βλ <b>έπουσι</b> ν	121		13:55	έστιν	10
		ακούουσιν	121			λέγεται	10
		συνίουσιν	121		13:56	είσιν	10
	13:14	αναπληροῦται	121		13:57	ἔστιν	132
	13:16	βλέπο <b>υ</b> σιν	123		14:2	έστιν	10
		ακούουσιν	123			ένεργο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	123
	13:17	λέγω	11		14:4	<b>έ</b> ξεστιν	133
		βλέπετε	123		14:8	φησίν	21
		ακούετε	123		14:15	έστιν	10
	13:19	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	121A		14:16	<b>ἔ</b> χο <b>υ</b> σιν	10
		άρπάζει	121A		14:17	λέγουσιν	21
		ἐστιν	134		14:17	<b>ἔ</b> χομεν	10
	13:20	έστιν	134		14:26	έστιν	10
	13:21	<b>έ</b> χει	134		14:27	εἰμι	10
		έστιν	134		14:28	εi	51
		σκανσδαλίζετο			14:31	λέγει	21
	13:22	ἐστιν	134		14:33	εί	10
		$\sigma$ υμ $\pi$ νί $\gamma$ ει	125		15:1	προσέρχονται	21
		γίνεται	125		15:2	παραβαίνο <b>υ</b> σιν	123

Mt.	15:2	νίπτονται	121	Mt.	16:18	લેં	10
IVIL.	15:3	παραβαίνετε	123	IVIL.	16:20	έστιν	42
	15:5	λέγετε	123		16:21	δεῖ	133
	15:8	τιμ <mark>φ</mark>	123		16:23	9 61	10
	13.6	απέχει	122		10.23	φρονεῖς	10
	15:9	σεβονταί	122		16:24	θέλει	51
	15:11		132		16:27		10
	13.11	ห <b>ดเ</b> ขด์เ หดเขด์เ	132			μέλλει Σέργες	10
	15.10				16:28	λέγω	
	15:12	λέγουσιν Οζετικ	21		17:1	είσίν	10 21
	15:14	Οἶδας εἰσιν	10 10		1/.1	παραλαμβάνει	21
		έστέ	10		17:4	αναφέρει έσσιν	133
	15:16				17:4	έστιν	
	15:17	νοιέὶτε	10		17.5	θέλεις	51
		χωρεῖ 'Ο-() \	121A		17:5	έστιν	10
	15.10	έκβάλλεται , , ,	121A		17:10	λέγουσιν	121
	15:18	ͼξέρχεται	121A		17.11	δεî "	133
	15.10	κοινο <b>ί</b>	121A		17:11	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E
	15:19	ἐξέρχονται	121		17:12	λέγω	11
	15:20	ἐστιν	132			μέλλει	10
		<b>κοινο</b> ί	132		17:15	σεληνιάζεται	10
	15:22	δαιμονίζεται	10			πάσχει	122
	15:23	κράζει	10			πίπτει	122
	15:26	ἔστιν	133		17:20	λέγει	21
	15:27	<b>ἐ</b> σθίει	123			λέγω	11
	15:28	θέλεις	10		17:22	Μέλλει	10
	15:32	Σπλαγχνίζομα	ı 10		17:24	τελεῖ	32
		προσμένουσίν			17:25	λέγει	21
		<b>ἔ</b> χο <b>υ</b> σιν	23			δοκεῖ	10
		θέλω	10			λαμβάνουσιν	121
	15:33	λέγουσιν	21		17:26	είσιν	132
	15:34	λέγει	21		18:1	ἐστὶν	31E
		<b>ἔ</b> χετε	10		18:3	λέγω	11
	16:2	λέγετε	123		18:4	ἐστιν	31E
		π <b>υ</b> ρράζει	10		18:5	δέχεται	121A
	16:3	π <b>υ</b> ρράζει	10		18:6	συμφέρει	121A
		γινώσκετε	10		18:7	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
		δύνασθε	10		18:8	σκανδαλίζει	51
	16:4	ἐπιζητεῖ	132			ἐστιν	133
	16:8	διαλογίζεσθε	10		18:9	σκανδαλίζει	51
		<b>ἔ</b> χετε	10			έστιν	133
	16:9	νοείτε	10		18:10	λέγω	11
		μνημονεύετε	10			βλέπο <b>υ</b> σι	10
	16:11	νοέὶτε	10		18:12	δοκεῖ	10
	16:13	λέγουσιν	121			ζητεῖ	125A
	16:15	λέγει	21		18:13	λέγω	11
		λέγετε	10			χαίρει	125A
	16:16	εί	10		18:14	έστιν	10
	16:17	εί	10		18:18	λέγω	11
	16:18	λέγω	11		18:19	λέγω	11
		'				•	-

Mt.	18:20	είσιν	510	Mt.	20:22	δύνασθε	10
		εἰμι	31A			μέλλω	10
	18:22	λέγει	21			λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	21
		λέγω	11			Δυνάμεθα	10
	18:25	<b>έ</b> χει	41		20:23	λέγει	21
	18:28	ο φείλεις	51			έστιν	10
	18:32	λέγει	21		20:25	Οίδατε	10
	19:3	έξεστιν	53			κατακυριεύουσιν	121
	19:6	είσίν	132			κατεξουσιάζουσιν	121
	19:7	λέγουσιν	21		20:30	παράγει	42
	19:8	λέγει	21		20:32	θέλετε	10
	19:9	λέγω	11		20:33	λέγουσιν	21
	17.7	μοιχᾶται	132A		21:3	έχει	10
	19:10	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	21		21:5	έρχεται	31
	17.10	έστὶν	51		21:10	έστιν	10
		συμφέρει	133A		21:11	έστιν	10
	19:11	χωροῦσιν	132		21:13	λέγει	21
	19:12	είσὶν	132		21.13	ποιε <b>ι</b> τε	23
	19.12	είσιν	132		21:16	'Ακούεις	10
		είσιν	132		21.10	λέγουσιν	10
	19:14	έστὶν	132				21
	19:14	έρωτᾶς	22		21:19	λέγει λένει	21
	19.17	έστιν	10		21:21	λέγει Σέρμε	11
			51			λέγω	
	10.10	θέλεις			21:23	ποιείς	122
	19:18	λέγει	21		21:24	ποιῶ Φοθούνοθο	122
	19:20	λέγει 	21		21:26	φοβούμεθα "	10
	10.21	<b>ύ</b> στερῶ	10		21.27	<b>ἔ</b> χο <b>υ</b> σιν	10
	19:21	θέλεις	51		21:27	οἴδαμεν	10
	19:23	λέγω	11			λέγω	32
	19:24	λέγω	11		21.20	ποιῶ	122
	10.05	έστιν	133		21:28	δοκεῖ	10
	19:25	δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	10		21:29	θέλω	10
	19:26	έστιν	132		21:31	λέγουσιν	21
	19:28	λέγω	11			λέγει	21
	20:1	έστιν	135			λέγω	11
		λέγει	21			προάγουσιν	124
	20:7	λέγουσιν	21		21:38	ἐστιν	10
		λέγει	21		21:41	λέγουσιν	21
	20:8	λέγει	21		21:42	λέγει	21
	20:13	ἀδικῶ	22			ἔστιν	133
	20:14	θέλω	10		21:43	λέγω	11
	20:15	ἔξεστίν	133		21:45	λέγει	42
		θέλω	41		22:8	λέγει	21
		ἐστιν	10			ἐστιν	10
		εἰμι	10		22:12	λέγει	21
	20:18	ἀναβαίνομεν	31		22:14	εἰσιν	132
	20:21	θέλεις	10		22:16	<b>ἀποστέλλουσιν</b>	21
		λέγει	21			οἴδαμεν	10
	20:22	οΐδατε	10			εί	10
		αἰτεῖσθε	10			διδάσκεις	122

		(12171	Commuca			
22:16	μέλει	122	Mt.	23:23	ἀποδεκατοῦτε	123
	βλέπεις	122		23:25	καθαρίζετε	121
22:17	δοκεῖ	10			γέμουσιν	10
	<b>ἔ</b> ξεστιν	133		23:27	παρομοιάζετε	10
22:18	πειράζετε	10			φαίνονται	10
22:20	λέγει	21			γέμουσιν	10
22:21	λέγουσιν	21		23:28	φαίνεσθε	10
	λέγει	21			έστε	10
22:29	Πλανᾶσθε	141		23:29	οἰκοδομεῖτε	121
22:30	γαμοῦσιν	31E			κοσμεῖτε	121
	γαμίζονται	31E		23:30	λέγετε	121
	είσιν	31E		23:31	μαρτ <b>υ</b> ρεῖτε	121
22:32	είμι	10			μαρτ <b>υ</b> ρεῖτε	10
	ἔστιν	132		23:34	ἀποστέλλω	31
22:38	ἐστὶν	134		23:36	λέγω	11
22:40	κρέμαται	10		23:37	<b>έ</b> πισ <b>υ</b> νάγει	122
22:42	δοκεῖ	10		23:38	άφίεται	141
	έστιν	10		23:39	λέγω	11
	λέγουιν	21		24:2	βλέπετε	10
22:43	λέγει	21			λέγω	11
	καλέῖ	144		24:5	είμι	10
22:45	καλέῖ	51		24:6	δεῖ	133
	έστιν	134A			έστιν	31E
23:3	λέγουσιν	121		24:26	ἐστίν	10
	ποιοῦσιν	121		24:27	ἐξέρχεται	122
23:4	δεσμεύουσιν	121			φαίνεται	122
	$\dot{\epsilon}\pi$ ιτιθ $\dot{\epsilon}$ α $\sigma$ ιν	121		24:32	γινώσκετε	121
	θέλουσιν	121		24:33	ἐστιν	42
23:5	ποιοῦσιν	121		24:34	λέγω	11
	πλατύνου $σ$ ιν	121		24:36	οἶδεν	10
	μεγαλύνουσιν	121		24:40	παραλαμβάνεται	31E
23:6	φιλοῦσιν	121			ἀφίεται	31E
23:8	έστιν	10		24:41		31E
	έστε	10				31E
23:9	έστιν	10		24:42		10
23:10	έστιν				<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E
23:13	κλείετε	121		24:43		10
	<b>ε</b> ἰσέρχεσθε				<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
	ἀφίετε	121		24:44		41
23:15	περιάγετε	121			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E
				24:45		132
23:16				24:47		11
						10
23:17	ἐστίν	10		24:50	προσδοκᾶ	31
23:18		132A			γινώσκει	31
	όφείλει	132A		25:8	σβέννυνται	32
23:20	όμνύει	132A		25:11	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονατι	21
23:21	όμνύει	132A		25:12	οίδα	10
23:22	<b>ὀμνύει</b>	132A		25:13	οἴδατε	10
	22:17 22:18 22:20 22:21 22:29 22:30 22:32 22:38 22:40 22:42 22:43 22:45 23:3 23:4 23:5 23:6 23:8 23:9 23:10 23:13 23:15 23:16 23:17 23:18 23:20 23:21	22:16 μέλει βλέπεις 22:17 δοκεῖ ἔξεστιν 22:18 πειράζετε 22:20 λέγει 22:21 λέγουσιν λέγει 22:29 Πλανᾶσθε 22:30 γαμοῦσιν γαμίζονται εἰσιν 22:32 εἰμι ἔστιν 22:38 ἐστὶν 22:42 δοκεῖ ἐστιν λέγουιν 22:43 λέγει καλεῖ ἐστιν λέγουιν 22:43 λέγει καλεῖ ἐστιν 23:3 λέγουσιν ποιοῦσιν ἐπιτιθέασιν θέλουσιν 23:4 δεσμεύουσιν ἐπιτιθέασιν θέλουσιν 23:5 ποιοῦσιν πλατύνουσιν μεγαλύνουσιν μεγαλύνουσιν ἐσττε 23:10 ἐστιν 23:10 ἐστιν 23:11 ἐστιν ἐστε 23:15 περιάγετε ποιεῖτε 23:16 ἐστιν ὀφείλει 23:17 ἐστίν 23:18 ἐστιν ἐστίν 23:18 ἐστιν ἐστίν 23:21 ὀμνύει	βλέπεις   122     22:17   δοκεί   10     ἔξεστιν   133     22:18   πειράζετε   10     22:20   λέγει   21     22:21   λέγουσιν   21     λέγει   21     22:29   Πλανᾶσθε   141     22:30   γαμοῦσιν   31E     εἰσιν   31E     εἰσιν   31E     εἰσιν   132     22:32   εἰμι   10     ἔστιν   132     22:40   κρέμαται   10     22:42   δοκεί   10     ἐστιν   10     λέγουιν   21     22:43   λέγει   21     καλεί   144     22:45   καλεί   51     ἐστιν   134A     23:3   λέγουσιν   121     ποιοῦσιν   121     ποιοῦσιν   121     θέλουσιν   121     θέλουσιν   121     θέλουσιν   121     πλατύνουσιν   121     πλατύνουσιν   121     πλατύνουσιν   121     αλείετε   10     23:16   ἐστιν   10     23:17   ἐστιν   10     23:18   ἐστιν   10     23:17   ἐστιν   10     23:18   ἐστιν   10     23:19   ἐστιν   10     23:11   ἀμέετε   121     23:12   σφείλει   132A     3:20   σφείλει   132A     3:20   σφεύει   132A     23:21   σφεύει   132A     23:21   σφείει   132A     23:21   σφεύει   13	22:16 μέλει 122 Mt.  βλέπεις 122 22:17 δοκεῖ 10 ἔξεστιν 133 22:18 πειράζετε 10 22:20 λέγει 21 22:21 λέγουσιν 21 λέγει 21 22:29 Πλανᾶσθε 141 22:30 γαμοῦσιν 31Ε γαμίζονται 31Ε εἰσιν 132 22:38 ἐστὶν 134 22:40 κρέμαται 10 ἔστιν 10 λέγουιν 21 κάγουιν 21 22:42 δοκεῖ 10 ἐστιν 10 λέγουιν 21 22:43 λέγει 21 καλεῖ 144 22:45 καλεῖ 144 22:45 καλεῖ 51 ἐστιν 134Α 23:3 λέγουσιν 121 ποιοῦσιν 121 θέλουσιν 121 θέλουσιν 121 23:4 δεσμεύουσιν 121 πλατύνουσιν 121 μεγαλύνουσιν 121 μεγαλύνουσιν 121 μεγαλύνουσιν 121 μεγαλύνουσιν 121 μεγαλύνουσιν 121 23:6 φιλοῦσιν 121 πλατύνουσιν 121 23:7 κοιοῦσιν 121 μεγαλύνουσιν 121 μ	22:16 μέλει 122 Mt. 23:23  βλέπεις 122 23:25  22:17 δοκεί 10  ἔξεστιν 133 23:27  22:18 πειράζετε 10  22:20 λέγει 21  22:21 λέγουσιν 21 23:28  λέγει 21  22:29 Πλανᾶσθε 141 23:29  γαμοῦσιν 31Ε γαμίζονται 31Ε γαμίζονται 10  ἔστιν 132 23:31  22:32 εἰμι 10  ἔστιν 134 23:36  ἐστιν 134 23:36  ἐστιν 10 23:37  22:42 δοκεί 10 23:38  ἐστιν 10 23:38  ἐστιν 10 23:39  λέγουιν 21 24:2  22:43 λέγει 21  καλεί 144 24:5  22:45 καλεί 51 24:6  ἐστιν 134Α 23:36  ἐστιν 134Α 23:36  ἐστιν 134Α 24:6  ἐστιν 134Α 24:6  ἐστιν 134Α 24:5  22:45 καλεί 51 24:6  ἐστιν 121 24:27  23:4 δεσμεύουσιν 121 24:27  23:5 ποιοῦσιν 121 24:32  θέλουσιν 121 24:32  θέλουσιν 121 24:33  23:5 ποιοῦσιν 121 24:34  πλατύνουσιν 121 24:36  μεγαλύνουσιν 121 24:36  μεγαλύνουσιν 121 24:36  φίλοῦσιν 121 24:36  μεγαλύνουσιν 121 24:40  23:13 κλείετε 121 24:40  23:13 κλείετε 121 24:41  ἐστε 10  23:31 κλείετε 121 24:42  23:15 ποιοῦσιν 10  23:31 κλείετε 121 24:42  23:16 ἐστιν 10  23:13 κλείετε 121 24:43  εἰσέρχεσθε 121  αφίετε 121 24:44  23:17 ἐστιν 132Α 24:47  ὄφέιλει 132Α 24:48  23:17 ἐστιν 132Α 24:48  23:17 ἐστιν 132Α 24:48  23:21 ὀψινέει 132Α 25:12	22:16   μέλει   122   Mt.   23:23   ἀποδεκατοῦτε   βλέπεις   122   23:25   καθαρίζετε   γέμουστυ   ξέξστιν   133   23:27   παρομοιάζετε   φαίνουται   γέμουστυ   γ

<b>Μ</b> 4	25.10	¥0	21	N/I+	26.52	Sauce	10
Mt.	25:19	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	21 21	Mt.	26:53	δοικέῖς δύναμαι	10 10
	25:24	συναίρει εἶ	21		26:54	διε	133
	25:25		133		26:61	δίε Δύναμαι	10
	25:26	ἔχεις Θεοίζω	122		26:62	αποκρίνη	10
	23.20	θερίζω σ <b>υ</b> νάγω	122		20.02	αποκρίνη αποκρίνη	10
	25:29		41		26:63		11
	25:32	ἔχει ἀφορίζει	122		20.03	'Εξορκίζω εἰ	51
	26:2	Οἴδατε	10		26:64		21
	20.2	γίνεται	31		20.04	λέγει λέγω	11
		παραδίδοται	31		26:65	έχομεν	10
	26:10	παράστου τατ παρέχετε	10		26:66	εχομεν δοκεî	10
	26:11		31		20.00	έστίν	10
	20.11	ἔχετε ἔχετε	31		26:68	έστιν	10
	26:13	εχετε λέγω	11		26:70	οίδα	10
	26:15	θέλετε	10		20.70	λέγεις	22
	26:17	θέλεις	10		26:71	λέγει λέγει	21
	26:18	λέγει	11		26:72	οίδα	10
	20.16	έστιν	10		26:73	ei ei	10
		ποιῶ	32		20.73	ποιε <b>ί</b>	10
	26:21	λέγω	11		26:74	οἶδα	10
	26:22	κε γω εἰμι	10		27:6	έξεστιν	133
	26:24	υπάγει	31		27.0	έστιν	10
	20.24	παραδίδοται	31		27:11	εί	10
	26:25	καραστουται είμι	10		27.11	λέγεις	22
	20.23	ειμι λέγει	21		27:13	λέγει λέγει	21
	26:26	έστιν	134		27.13	άκο <b>ύ</b> εις	10
	26:28	έστιν	134			καταμαρτυρο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	10
	26:29	λέγω	11		27:17	θέλετε	10
	26:31	λέγει	21		27:17	θέλετε	10
	26:34	λέγω	11		27:21	λέγει	21
	26:35	λέγει	21		21.22	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	21
	26:36	ἔρχεται	21		27:24	ώφελε <u>î</u>	42
	20.30	ερχεται λέγει	21		27.24	γίνεται	42
	26:38	λέγει	21			είμι	10
	20.36	έστιν	10		27:33	έστιν	131
	26:39	έστιν	51		27:37	έστιν	10
	20.57	θέλω	10		27:38	σταυροῦνται	21
	26:40	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21		27:40	eî	51
	20.40	ευρίσκει	21		27:42	δύναται	10
		λέγει	21		21.72	έστιν	10
	26:42	δύναται	51		27:43	θέλει	51
	26:45	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21		27.73	είμι	10
	20.73	ερχεται λέγει	21		27:46	έστιν	131
		Καθεύδετε	10		27:47	φωνεῖ	22
		αναπαύεσθε	10		27:49	φωνει ἔρχεται	53
		παραδίδοται	32		27:62	έστίν	131
	26:48	έστιν	41		27:63	έγείρομα <b>ι</b>	31
	26:50	πάρει	10		27:65	"Εχετε	10
	26:52	λέγει	21		21.03	οίδατε	10
	20.32	veher	∠ I			otoute	10

N/I+	28:5	οἶδα	10	Mk.	2:18	%a	21
Mt.	28.3		10	IVIK.	2.18	<b>ἔρχονται</b>	21
	28:6	ζητέιτε ἔστιν	10			λέγουσιν	
	28:7		31			νηστεύουσιν	123 123
	28:10	προάγει λέγει	21		2:19	νηστεύουσιν δύνανται	132
	28:20	κε γει είμι	31		2.19	έστιν	41
	26.20	ειμι	31				41
Mk.	1:2	<b>ἀποστέλλω</b>	31			ἔχουσιν δύναται	132
IVIK.	1:7		31		2:21	έπιράπτει	121
	1./	"Ερχεται εἰμὶ	10		2.21	αίρει	121 125A
	1:11	είμι εἶ	10			αιρει γίνεται	125A 125A
	1:12	ει ἐκβάλλει	21		2:22	βάλλει	123A 121
	1:12	είσπορεύονται			2.22	απόλλ <b>υ</b> ται	121 125A
	1:24	οίδα	10		2:24	ποιοῦσιν	123A 10
	1.24	εί	10		2.24	ἔξεστιν	133
	1:27	έστιν	10		2:25	λέγει	21
	1.27	έπιτάσσει	122		2:26	ξξεστιν	133
		ύπακούου <i>σ</i> ιν	123		2:28	έστιν	10
	1:30		21		3:3	λέγει	21
	1:37	λέγουσιν λέγουσιν	21		3:4	λέγει λέγει	21
	1.57	ζητο <b>ῦ</b> σίν	10		3.4	"Εξεστιν	133
	1:38	λέγει	21		3:5	λέγει	21
	1:40	έρχεται	21		3:11	eî	10
	1.40	δ <b>ύ</b> νασαι	10A		3:13	αναβαίνει	21
	1:41	λέγει	21		3.13	αναραίνει αναβαίνει	21
	1.41	θέλω	10		3:17	έστιν	131
	1:44	λέγει	21		3:20	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21
	2:1	έστίν	42		3.20	συνέρχεται	21
	2:3	ξρχονται	21		3:22	έχει	42
	2:4	χαλώσι	21		3.22	έκβάλλει	42
	2:5	λέγει	21		3:23	δύναται	10
	2.5	ἀφίενται	141		3:24	δύναται	125A
	2:7	λαλε <b>î</b>	22		3:26	δύναται	132A
	2.7	βλασφημεῖ	22		3.20	έχει	132A
		δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	10		3:27	δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	132A
	2:8	διαλογίζονται			3:28	λέγω	11
	2.0	λέγει	21		3:29	έχει	132A
		διαλογίζεσθε	10		J/	έστιν	132A
	2:9	έστιν	133		3:30	έχει	10
	2.9	'Αφίενταί	141		3:31	έρχεται	21
	2:10	έχει	10		3:32	λέγουσιν	21
	_,_,	λέγει	21			ζητοῦσίν	10
	2:11	λέγω	11		3:33	λέγει	21
	2:14	λέγει	21		<del>-</del>	έστιν	10
	2:15	γίνεται	21		3:34	λέγει	21
	2:16	έστθίει	42		3:35	έστίν	10A
		<b>ἐ</b> σθίει	10		4:1	συνάγεται	21
	2:17	λέγει	21		4:9	έχει	51o
		ἔχουσιν	121		4:11	γίνεται	123
		<b>√</b>				•	

Mk.	4:13	λέγει	21	Mk.	5:9	ἐσμεν	10
		οἴδατε	10		5:14	έστιν	42
	4:14	$\sigma$ πείρει	134		5:15	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21
	4:15	είσιν	134			θεωροῦσιν	21
		$\sigma$ πείρεται	125		5:19	λέγει	21
		ἔρχεται	125		5:22	ἔρχεται	21
		αίρει	125			πίπτει	21
	4:16	είσιν	134		5:23	παρακαλεῖ	21
	1.10	λαμβάνο <b>υ</b> σιν	125		0.20	έχει	10
	4:17	έχουσιν	125		5:31	Βλέπεις	10
	,	είσιν	125		0.51	λέγεις	22
		σκανδαλίζοντο			5:35	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21
	4:18	είσὶν	125		0.50	σκύλλεις	10
	1.10	είσιν	134		5:36	λέγει	21
	4:19	συμπνίγουσιν	125		5:38	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21
	7.17	γίνεται	125		3.30	θεωρεῖ	21
	4:20	είσιν	125		5:39	λέγει	21
	7.20	ακούουσιν	125		3.37	θορυβέῖσθε	10
		παραδέχονται				κλαίετε	10
		καρποφοροῦσι				καθε <b>ύ</b> δει	10
	4:21	έρχεται	121		5:40	παραλαμβάνει	21
	4:22	έστιν	10		3.40	είσπορε <b>ύ</b> εται	21
	4:23		51		5:41	λέγει	21
	4:24	ἔχει ἀκούετε	123		3.41	, εγει έστιν	131
	4.24	μετρε <b>ί</b> τε	123			λέγω	11
	4:25	μετρέττε έχει	510		6:1	κε γω ἔρχεται	21
	4.23	έχει Έχει	510		0.1	άκολουθοῦσιν	21
		έχει έχει	41		6:3	έστίν	10
	4:26	ἔχει ἐστὶν	135		0.5	είσίν	10
	4:27	οίδεν	125		6:4	έστιν	132
	4:28	καρποφορεί	125		6:7	προσκαλέὶται	21
	4:29	αποστέλλει	125		6:14	κρου καλείται ένεργοῦσιν	123
	4:32	αναβαίνει	132		6:15	έστιν	10
	4.32	γίνεται	132		6:18	έξεστιν	133
		ποιεί	132		6:25	θέλω	10
	4:35	λότει λέγει	21		6:30	συνάγονται	21
	4:36	παραλαμβάνοι			6:31		21
	4:37	γίνεται	21		6:35	λέγει έστιν	10
	4:38	έγείρο <b>υ</b> σιν			6:37		21
	4.36	• •	21 21		6:38	λέγουσιν	21
		λέγουσιν μέλει	10		0.38	λέγει Ένετε	10
		μελει ἀπολλ <b>ύ</b> μεθα	32			ἔχετε ) έχουστι	21
	4.40		10		6.15	λέγουσιν ἀπολύει	41
	4:40	<b>έστε</b> *			6:45		
	4.41	έχετε	10		6:48	ἔρχεται ἐστιν	21
	4:41	έστιν	10		6:49	έστιν Σάντι	42
	5.7	ύπακούει	121		6:50	λέγει	21
	5:7	λέγει \$(%)	21		6.55	eἰμι ?	10
	<i>5</i> 0	δρκίζω	11		6:55	ἐστίν	42
	5:9	λέγει	21		7:1	συνάγονται	21

Mk.	7:2	ἔστιν	131	Mk.	8:17	διαλογίζεσθε	10
		ἐσθίουσιν	42			<b>ἔ</b> χετε	10
	7:3	ἐσθίουσιν	121			νοέιτε	10
	7:4	ἐσθίουσιν	121A			συνίετε	10
		ἐστιν	131			έχετε	142
	7:5	$\pi$ ερι $\pi$ ατο $\hat{\mathbf{u}}$ $\sigma$ ιν	123		8:18	βλέπετε	10
		ἐπερωτῶσιν	21			ἀκούετε	10
		ἐσθίουσιν	123			μνημονεύετε	10
	7:6	τιμᾳ̂	122		8:19	λέγουσιν	21
		ἀπέχει	122		8:20	λέγουσιν	21
	7:7	σέβονταί	122		8:21	συνίετε	10
	7:8	κρατεῖτε	121		8:22	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21
	7:9	άθετεῖτε	121			φέρουσιν	21
	7:11	λέγετε	121			παρακαλο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	21
		ἐστιν	131		8:23	βλέπεις	10
	7:12	ἀφίετε	132A		8:24	βλέπω	10
	7:13	ποιεῖτε	121			်ဝ်ဝှထ်	10
	7:15	έστιν	132		8:27	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	121
	,,,,,	δύναται	10		8:29	λέγετε	10
		έστιν	132			λέγει	21
	7:18	λέγει	21			ei	10
	7.10	έστε	10		8:31	δεῖ	133
		νοεῖτε	10		8:33	λέγει	21
		δύναται	132		0.55	φρονείς	10
	7:19	είσπορε <b>ύ</b> εται	132		8:34	θέλει	51
	7.17	έκπορεύεται	132		8:36	ώφελεῖ	133A
	7:20	κοινοί	132		9:1	λέγω	11
	7:21	έκπορε <b>ύ</b> ονται	121		7.1	είσίν	10
	7:23	έκπορε <b>ύ</b> εται	132		9:2		21
	1.23	κοινοῖ	132		9.2	παραλαμβάνει ἀναφέρει	21
	7:27	έστιν	133		9:3	δύναται	10
	7:28		21		9.5 9:5		21
	1.20	λέγει ἐσθίουσιν	123		9.3	λέγει έστιν	133
	7.22				0.7		
	7:32	φέρουσιν	21		9:7	έστιν ?	10
	7.24	παρακαλοῦσιν			9:10	έστιν	10
	7:34	λέγει ,	21		9:11	λέγουσιν	121
	7.27	έστιν	131		0.12	δεί	133
	7:37	ποιεί	122		9:12	ἀποκαθιστάνει	31E
	8:1	λέγει	21		9:13	λέγω	11
	8:2	Σπλαγχνίζομα			9:16	συζητεῖτε	10
		προσμένουσίν			9:18	ρήσσει 	122
	0.2	ἔχουσιν	23			ἀφρίζει	122
	8:3	ήκασιν	141			τρίζει	122
	8:5	έχετε	10		0.45	ξηραίνεται	122
	8:6	παραγγέλλει	21		9:19	λέγει	21
	8:12	λέγει	21		9:21	έστὶν	23
		ζητεῖ	10		9:22	δύνη	51
		λέγω	11		9:23	δύνη	51
	8:16	ἔχομεν	10		9:24	Πιστεύω	10
	8:17	λέγει	21		9:25	<b>ἐ</b> πισυντρέχει	42

Mk.	9:25	<b>ἐπιτάσσω</b>	11	Mk.	10:39	<b>Δυ</b> νάμεθα	10
TVIII.	9:29	δύναται	10	IVIII.	10.57	πίνω	31
	9:31	παραδίδοται	31			βαπτίζομα <b>ι</b>	31
	9:35	λέγει	21		10:40	έστιν	10
	7.50	θέλει	51		10:42	λέγει	21
	9:37	δέχεται	132A		10.12	Οίδατε	10
	7.57	δέχεται	132A			κατακυριεύουσιν	121
	9:39	έστιν	132			κατεξουσιάζουσιν	121
	9:40	έστιν	51o		10:43	έστιν	121
	<i>y</i> .10	έστιν	10A		10:46	<b>ἔρχονται</b>	21
	9:41	έστε	10		10:47	έστιν	42
	,	λέγω	11		10:49	φωνοῦσιν	21
	9:42	έστιν	133A		10.15	φωνεί	22
	J. 12	περίκειται	51		10:51	θέλεις	10
	9:43	έστίν	133		11:1	έγγίζουσιν	21
	9:45	έστίν	133			άποστέλλει	21
	9:47	έστιν	133		11:2	λέγει	21
	9:48	τελε <b>υ</b> τᾶ	132		11:3	ποιείτε	10
	,o	σβέννυται	132		11.0	έχει	10
	10:1	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21			άποστέλλει	31
	10.1	συμπορεύοντα			11:4	λύουσιν	21
	10:2	έξεστιν	53		11:5	ποιείτε	10
	10:8	είσὶν	132		11:7	φέρουσιν	21
	10:11	λέγει	21		11.,	έπιβάλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	21
		μοιχᾶται	132A		11:15	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21
	10:12	μοιχᾶται	132A		11:21	λέγει	21
	10:14	έστὶν	132		11:22	λέγει	21
	10:15	λέγω	11			έχετε	51
	10:18	λέγεις	22		11:23	λέγω	11
	10:19	οίδας	10			λαλεῖ	42
	10:21	ύστερεῖ	10			γίνεται	42
		ἔχεις	10		11:24	λέγω	11
	10:23	λέγει	21			προσε <b>ύ</b> χεσθε	31
	10:24	λέγει	21			αἰτεῖσθέ	31
		· ἐστιν	133		11:25	στήκετε	51o
	10:25	ἐστιν	133			έχετε	51
	10:26	δύναται	132		11:27	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21
	10:27	λέγει	21			<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21
	10:29	λέγω	11		11:28	ποιείς	122
		ἐστιν	132		11:29	ποιῶ	122
	10:33	ἀναβαίνομεν	10		11:33	λέγουσιν	21
	10:35	προσπορεύοντ	α121			οἴδαμεν	10
		θέλομεν	10			λέγει	21
	10:36	θέλετέ	10			λέγω	32
	10:38	οἴδατε	10			ποιῶ	122
		$α$ ἰτε $\hat{\imath}\sigma$ θε	10		12:7	ἐστιν	10
		$\delta$ <b>ύ</b> να $\sigma$ θ $\epsilon$	10		12:11	ἔστιν	133
		πίνω	31		12:13	αποστέλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	21
		βαπτίζομαι	31		12:14	λέγουσιν	21
						•	

Mk.	12:14	οἴδαμεν	10	Mk.	14:6	παρέχετε	10
IVIK.	12.17	εί	10	IVIK.	14:7	καρεχετε ἔχετε	31
		μέλει	122		17./	δύνασθε	121
		βλέπεις	122			<b>έ</b> χετε	31
		διδάσκεις	122		14:9	λέγω	11
		ἔξεστιν	133		14:12	λέγουσιν	21
	12:15	πειράζετε	10		17.12	θέλεις	10
	12:16	λέγει	21		14:13	άποστέλλει	21
	12:18	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	21		14.13	λέγει	21
	12.10	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	131		14:14	λέγει λέγει	22
	12:24	πλανᾶσθε	10		14.14	έστιν	10
	12:25	γαμο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	31E		14:17	<sup>ε</sup> ο τιν <sup>ε</sup> ρχεται	21
	12.23	γαμουστο γαμίζονται	31E		14:17		11
		είσιν	31E		14:18	λέγω Νπάρια	31
	12:26		31E		14.21	ύπάγει παραδίδοται	31
	12:27	ἐγείρονται ἔστιν	10		14:22	καρασισσται έστιν	134
	12.27	πλανᾶσθε	10		14:24	έστιν	134
	12.20	έστὶν	10				
	12:28				14:25	λέγω	11
	12:29	<b>ἐστίν</b> 	10		14:27	λέγει Σάντα	21
	12.21	έστιν *	10		14:30	λέγει Σέντε	21
	12:31	ἔστιν 	10		14.22	λέγω "	11
	12:32	έστιν *	10		14:32	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21
	10.22	ἔστιν ?	10		14.22	λέγει	21
	12:33	ἐστιν εἶ	133		14:33	παραλαμβάνει	21
	12:34		10		14:34	λέγει ?	21
	12:35	λέγουσιν	121		14.25	έστιν	10
	10.27	έστιν	132		14:35	έστιν	51
	12:37	λέγει	144		14:36	θέλω "	10
	10 41	έστιν	132		14:37	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21
	12:41	βάλλει	41			<b>εὑ</b> ρίσκει ` ΄	21
	12:42	ἐστιν	131			λέγει	21
	12:43	λέγω	11		1 4 41	καθεύδεις	10
	13:1	λέγει	21		14:41	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21
	13:2	Βλέπεις	10			λέγει	21
	13:6	είμι	10			Καθεύδετε	10
	13:7	δεῖ	133			ἀναπα <b>ύ</b> εσθε	10
	13:10	διε	133			ἀπέχει	133
	13:11	έστε	31			παραδίδοται	32
	13:14	δεῖ	133		14:43	παραγίνεται	21
	13:28	γινώσκετε	121A		14:44	έστιν	41
		ἐστίν	41		14:45	λέγει	21
	13:29	έστιν	42		14:51	κρατοῦσιν	21
	13:30	λέγω	11		14:53	συνέρχονατι	21
	13:32	οἶδεν	10		14:60	αποκρίνη	10
	13:33	οἴδατε	10			καταμαρτυροῦσιν	10
		έστιν	10		14:61	λέγει	21
	13:35	οίδατε	10			eî	10
		<b>ἔρχετα</b> ι	31E			εἰμι	10
	13:37	λέγω	10		14:63	λέγει	21
		λέγω	11			ἔχομεν	10

Mk.	14:64	d a success	10	Lk.	1:61	καλέιται	141
IVIK.		φαίνεται		LK.		έστὶν	10
	14:66	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21		1:63		
	14:67	λέγει	21		2:4	καλέιται	131
	14:68	οἶδα	10		2:10	<b>,</b> υαγγελίζομαι	11
		<b>ἐπίσταμαι</b>	10		2:11	έστιν	10
		λέγεις	22		2:29	ἀπολύεις	60
	14:69	ἐστιν	10		2:34	κεῖται	141
	14:70	εί	10		2:49	δεί	133
		εί	10		3:8	<b>ἔ</b> χομεν	10
	14:71	οίδα	10			λέγω	11
		λέγετε	22			δύναται	10
	15:2	εί	10		3:9	<b>ἐκκόπτεται</b>	10
		λέγει	21			<b>ἐκκόπτετα</b> ι	124A
		λέγεις	22			βάλλεται	124A
	15:4	αποκρίνη	10		3:16	βαπτίζω	122
		κατηγοροῦσιν	10			έρχεται	31
	15:9	θέλετε	10			εἰμί	10
	15:12	(θέλετε)	10		3:22	εί	10
	10.12	(λέγετε)	121		4:3	εî	51
	15:16	έστιν	131		4:6	δίδωμι	122
	13.10	συγκαλοῦσιν	21		4:22	έστιν	10
	15:17	ένδιδύσκουσιν			4:24	λέγω	11
	13.17		21		4.24	έστιν	132
	15.20	περιτιθέα <i>σ</i> ιν	21		4:25		11
	15:20	έξάγουσιν				λέγω οἶδά	
	15:21	ἀγγαρεύουσιν			4:34		10
	15:22	φέρουσιν	21		1.26	€1,	10
		έστιν	131		4:36	ἐπιτάσσει	122
	15:24	σταυροῦσιν	21			ἐξέρχονται	123
		διαμερίζονται			4:41	<b>લો</b>	10
	15:27	σταυροῦσιν	21		4:43	δεῖ	133
	15:31	δύναται	10		5:8	είμι	10
	15:34	ἐστιν	131		5:12	δύνασαί	10A
	15:35	φωνεῖ	22		5:13	θέλω	10
	15:36	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	53		5:21	έστιν	10
	15:42	ἐστιν	131			λαλεί	22
	16:2	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	21			δύναται	10
	16:4	θεωροῦσιν	21		5:22	διαλογίζεσθε	10
	16:6	λέγει	21		5:23	έστιν	133
		ζητέὶτε	10		5:24	<b>έ</b> χει	10
		έστιν	10			λέγω	11
	16:7	Προάγει	31		5:30	· ο θίετε	10
	(16:11)		42			πίνετε	10
	` ' )	( ) (i)			5:31	<b>ἔ</b> χο <b>υ</b> σιν	121
Lk.	1:18	εἰμι	10		5:33	νηστύουσιν	123
LA.	1:19	είμι	10		0.55	ποιοῦνται	123
	1:34	γινώσκω	141			ἐσθίο <b>υ</b> σιν	123
	1:34	έστὶν	10			πίνουσιν	123
					5:34	δύνασθε	132
	1:46	Μεγαλύνει	10		3.34		
	1:61	έστιν	10			έστιν	41

Lk.	5:36	<b>έ</b> πιβάλλει	121	Lk.	7:8	εἰμι	10
	5:37	βάλλει	121			λέγω	122
	5:39	θέλει	121			πορεύεται	121
		λέγει	121			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	121
		, · έστιν	133			ποιεί	121
	6:2	ποιείτε	10		7:9	Λέγω	11
		<b>έ</b> ξεστιν	133		7:14	λέγω	11
	6:4	<b>έ</b> ξεστιν	133		7:19	εί	10
	6:5	έστιν	10			προσδοκῶμεν	60
	6:7	θεραπε <b>ύ</b> ει	53		7:20	εί	10
	6:9	'Επερωτῶ	11			προσδοκῶμεν	60
		ἔξεστιν	53		7:22	αναβλέπουσιν	124
	6:20	έστὶν	31E			περιπατοῦσιν	124
	6:22	έστε	31A			καθαρίζονται	124
	6:24	ἀπέχετε	10			ακούουσιν	124
	6:27	λέγω	11			έγείρονται	124
	6:31	θέλετε	10			εὐαγγελίζονται	124
	6:32	ἀγαπᾶτε	51		7:23	έστιν	10
	0.02	έστίν	133A		7:25	εἰσίν	121
		ἀγαπῶσιν	121		7:26	λέγω	11
	6:33	έστίν	133A		7:27	έστιν	134
		ποιοῦσιν	121			ἀποστέλλω	31
	6:34	έλπίζετε	41		7:28	λέγω	11
		(ἐστὶν)	133A			έστιν	10
		δανείζουσιν	121			έστιν	31E
	6:35	έστιν	10		7:31	είσιν	135
	6:36	έστίν	10		7:32	είσιν	135
	6:38	μετρέὶτε	123			λέγει	121
	6:39	δύναται	132		7:33	λέγετε	121
	6:40	<b>ἔστιν</b>	132		, ,,,,	έχει	10
	6:41	βλέπεις	122		7:34	λέγετε	121
		κατανοείς	122		7:37	κατάκειται	42
	6:42	δύνασαι	10		7:39	άπτεται	10
	6:43	, έστιν	132			έστιν	10
	6:44	γινώσκεται	132		7:40	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10
		συλλέγουσιν	121			φησίν	21
		τρυγῶσιν	121		7:43	'Υπολαμβάνω	10
	6:45	προφέρει	132		7:44	Βλέπεις	10
		προφέρει	132		7:47	αφίεται	11
		λαλεῖ	132			ἀφίεται	51o
	6:46	καλεῖτε	121			άγαπậ	121A
		ποιεῖτε	121		7:49	έστιν	10
		λέγω	122			ἀφίησιν	22
	6:47	έστὶν	135		8:11	"Εστιν	134
	6:48	έστιν	135			έστὶν	134
	6:49	έστιν	135		8:12	είσιν	134
	7:4	έστιν	10			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	125
	7:5	ἀγαπῷ	10			αίρει	125
	7:6	είμι	10		8:13	δέχονται	125
	, .0	2-6			0.10	- 5,000	120

$\sim$	Λ	1
	u	ı

							201
		API	PENDL	X AContin	ued		
Lk.	8:13	<b>ἔ</b> χο <b>υ</b> σιν	125	Lk.	9:48	ἐστιν	132A
		πιστεύουσιν	125		9:49	ακολο <b>υ</b> θεῖ	10
		άφίστανται	125		9:50	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	51o
	8:14	συμπνίγονται				ἐστιν	10A
		τελεσφορο <b>ῦ</b> σι			9:54	θέλεις	10
	8:15	εἰσιν	134		9:58	<b>ἔ</b> χουσιν	121
		κατέχουσιν	125			έχει	122
		καρποφορο <b>ῦ</b> σι			9:62	, ΄ έστιν	132A
	8:16	καλ <b>ύ</b> πτει	121		10:3	ἀποστέλλω	32
		τίθησιν	121		10:11	ἀπομασσόμεθα	32
		τίθησιν	121		10:12	 λέγω	11
	8:17	, έστιν	10		10:16	ακο <b>ύ</b> ει	132A
	8:18	ἀκούετε	121			άθεταῖ	132A
		δοκεί	41			α θεταῖ	132A
	8:21	είσιν	10A		10:17	<b>ύ</b> ποτάσσεται	123
	8:24	ἀπολλύμεθα	32		10:20	<b>ύ</b> ποτάσσεται	123
	8:25	έστιν	10		10:21	'Εξομολογοῦμαί	10
		έπιτάσσει	121		10:22	γινώσκει	10
		ύπακούουσιν	121			έστιν	10
	8:26	έστὶν	131			έστιν	10
	8:28	δέομαι	11		10:23	βλέπετε	123
	8:30	έστιν	10		10:24	λέγω	11
	8:45	συνέχουσίν	10			βλέπετε	123
		αποθλίβο <b>υ</b> σιν	10			ακούετε	123
	8:49	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21		10:26	αναγινώσκεις	10
	8:52	καθεύδει	10		10:29	έστίν	10
	9:9	έστιν	10		10:36	δοκεί	10
	7.7	άκούω	141		10:40	μέλει	10
	9:12	έσμέν	10		10:41	μεριμνᾶς	10
	9:13	εἰσίν	10			θορυβάζη	10
	9:18	λέγουσιν	121		10:42	έστιν	133
	9:20	λέγετε	10		11:4	ἀφίομεν	123
	9:22	Δεῖ	133		11:6	έχω	10
	9:23	θέλει	51		11:7	είσίν	10
	9:25	<b>ώ</b> φελεῖται	133A			δύναμαι	10
	9:27	λέγω	11		11:8	λέγω	11
	, ,_,	είσίν	10			χρήζει	41
	9:33	έστιν	133		11:9	λέγω	11
	7.55	λέγει	41		11:10	λαμβάνει	121A
	9:35	έστιν	10		11.10	εὑρίσκει	121A
	9:38	δέομαι	11			ανοίγεται	121A
	7.20	έστιν	10		11:13	οἴδατε	51
	9:39	λαμβάνει	122		11:15	<b>έ</b> κβάλλει	122
	,,	κράζει	122		11:17	έρμοῦται	121A
		σπαράσσει	122			έρμο <b>ῦ</b> ται	121A
		άποχωρε <b>î</b>	122		11:18	λέγετε	22
	9:44	μέλλει	10		11:19	<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλω	51
	9:48	δέχεται	132A		11.17	έκβάλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	121A
	2.10	δέχεται	132A		11:20	<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλω	51
		2-V2			11.20		0.1

		A DDEN	DIV A. C.	<b>.</b> 1			202
T 1.	11.01		DIX ACont		12.22	\	1.1
Lk.	11:21	έστὶν "	125A	Lk.	12:22	λέγω	11
	11:22	αἴρει	125A		12:23	έστιν	132
	11.00	διαδίδωσιν	125A		12:24	σπείρουσιν	121
	11:23	έστιν	10A			θερίζουσιν	121
	11.04	σκορπίζει	10A			έστιν	121
	11:24	διέρχεται	121A			τρέψει	122
		λέγει	121A			διαφέρετε	10
	11:25	ε <b>ύ</b> ρίσκει	121A		12:25	δύναται	10
	11:26	πορε <b>ύ</b> εται	121A		12:26	δύνασθε	51
		παραλαμβάνει				μεριμνᾶτε	10A
		κατοικέῖ	121A		12:27	α <b>ὐ</b> ξάνει	121
		γίνεται	121A			κοπιᾶ	<b>1</b> 21
	11:29	ἐστιν	10			νήθει	121
		ζητεῖ	121			λέγω	11
	11:33	τίθησιν	121		12:28	ἀμφιάζει	51
	11:34	ἐστιν	132		12:30	<b>ἐπιζητοῦσιν</b>	121
		ἐστιν	132A			οἶδεν	10
	11:35	ἐστίν	41			χρήζετε	10
	11:37	ἐρωτᾶ	21		12:33	ἐγγίζει	121
	11:39	καθαρίζετε	121			ἐγγίζει	121
		γέμει	10		12:34	ἐστιν	41
	11:41	ἐστιν	31A		12:37	λέγω	11
	11:42	ἀποδεκατοῦτε	123		12:38	$\epsilon i\sigma$ ı $ u$	125A
		παρέρ $χ$ ε $σ$ θε	121		12:39	γινώσκετε	10
	11:43	ἀγαπᾶτε	10			έρχεται	41
	11:44	ἐστέ	10		12:40	δοκέῖτε	10
	11:44	οἴδασιν	124			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E
	11:45	λέγει	21		12:41	λέγεις	22
		<b>ύ</b> βρίζεις	10		12:42	ἐστὶν	10
	11:46	φορτίζετε	121		12:44	λέγω	11
		φορτίζετε	121		12:45	Χρονίζει	10
	11:47	οἰκοδομεῖτε	121		12:46	προσκοκᾶ	41
	11:48	ἐστε	10			γινώσκει	41
		συνευδοκεῖτε	10		12:49	Θέλω	10
		οἰκολομεῖτε	121		12:50	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10
	11:51	λέγω	11			συνέχομαι	10
	12:1	ἐστίν	134		12:51	δοκείτε	10
	12:2	ἐστὶν	142			λέγω	11
	12:4	Λέγω	11		12:54	λέγετε	121A
	12:5	λέγω	11			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
	12:6	πωλοῦνται	121			γίνεται	121A
	12.0	έστιν	142		12:55	λέγετε	121A
	12:7	διαφέρετε	10		100	γίνεται	121A
	12:8	Λέγω	11		12:56	οίδατε	10
	12:12	Λεγω δεῖ	133		12.50	οἴδατε	10
	12:12	έστιν	132		12:57	κρίνετε	121
	12:17	έχω	10		12:58	ι <b>ύ</b> πάγεις	41
	12:17		10		12:59	λέγω	11
		ἔχεις ἀπαιτοθοτιν				•	
	12:20	άπαιτο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	32		13:2	<b>Δ</b> οκ <b>ε</b> ῖτε	10

							203
		APP	ENDIX A	Continued	1		
Lk.	13:3	λέγω	11	Lk.	14:33	ἀποτάσσεται	510
	13:4	δοκεῖτε	10			δύναται	132A
	13:5	λέγω	11		14:35	ἐστιν	133
	13:7	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	23			βάλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	121
		εύρίσκω	23		15:2	προσδέχεται	10
		καταργεῖ	10			συνεσθίει	10
	13:8	λέγει	21		15:4	καταλείπει	125A
	13:14	εἰσίν	121			πορε <b>ύ</b> εται	125A
		δεῖ	133		15:5	· ἐπιτίθησιν	125A
	13:15	λύει	132		15:6	συγκαλεῖ	125A
		ποτίζει	132		15:7	λέγω	11
	13:18	ἐστίν	135			ἔχουσιν	10
	13:19	ἐστὶν	135		15:8	άπτει	125A
	13:21	ἐστὶν	135			σαροί	125A
	13:24	λέγω	11			΄ ζητεῖ	125A
	13:25	οἶδα	10		15:9	συγκαλεῖ	125A
		ἐστέ	23		15:10	λέγω	11
	13:27	οἶδα	10			λέγω	132
		έστέ	23		15:17	περισσε <b>ύ</b> ονται	10
	13:30	είσίν	10			απόλλ <b>υ</b> μαι	32
	10.00	είσὶν	10		15:19	είμὶ	10
	13:31	θέλει	10		15:21	είμὶ	10
	13:32	ἐκβάλλω	31		15:27	ήκει	141
	13.32	αποτελῶ	31		15:29	δουδεύω	23
		τελειο <b>ῦ</b> μαι	31		15:31	ei	23
	13:33	δε <b>î</b>	133		10.51	έστιν	23
	15.55	ένδέχεται	133		16:2	δύνη	10
	13:35	άφίεται	141		16:3	άφαιρε <b>ίτα</b> ι	141
	15.55	λέγω	11		10.5	ίσχύω	10
	14:3	"Εξεστιν	133			αίσχύναομαι	10
	14:14	έχουσιν	41		16:5	όφείλεις	10
	14:17	έστιν	10		16:7	οφείλεις	10
	14:18	'έχω	10		10.7	όφείλεις	21
	10	έρωτῶ	11		16:8	είσιν	132
	14:19	πορεύομαι	32		16:9	λέγω	11
	1	έρωτῶ	11		16:10	έστιν	132
	14:20	δύναμαι	10		10.10	έστιν	132
	14:22	έστίν	10		16:13	δύναται	132
	14:24	λέγω	11		10.15	δύνασθε	10
	14:26	<b>έρχεται</b>	51		16:15	έστε	10
	11.20	μισεî	51		10.15	γινώσκει	10
		δύναται	132A		16:16	εὐαγγελίζεται	23
	14:27	βαστάζει	510		10.10	βαίζεται	23
	11,4/	έρχεται	51o		16:17	έστιν	133
		δύναται	132A		16:17	μοιχεύει	132A
	14:28	ψηφίζει	132A 125A		10.10	μοιχεύει μοιχεύει	132A
	1 1.20	γηφιζει έχει	53		16:23	δρ <mark>φ</mark>	21
	14:31	έστιν	53		16:24	ορφ ὀδυνῶμαι	10
	14.31	20 11V	125 A		16.25	παρανα) είται	10

14:32 ἐρωτῷ

125A

16:25

παρακαλέῖται

10

							204
				-Continued			
Lk.	16:25	<b>όδυ</b> νᾶσαι	10	Lk.	19:3	ἐστιν	41
	16:27	'Ερωτῶ	11		19:5	δεῖ	133
	16:28	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10		19:8	δίδωμι	32
	16:29	λέγει	21			<b>ἀποδίδωμι</b>	32A
		"Εχουσι	10		19:9	ἐστιν	10
	16:31	ακούουσιν	51		19:11	μέλλει	42
	17:1	ἐστιν	133		19:13	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31		19:14	θέλομεν	10
	17:2	λυσιτελεῖ	133A		19:21	εî	10
		περίκειται	51			αἴρεις	122
	17:4	Μετανοῶ	10			θερίζεις	122
	17:6	<b>ἔ</b> χετε	51		19:22	λέγει	21
	17:9	έχει	125A			κρίνω	32
	17:10	έσμεν	10			; είμι	10
	17:20	ἔρχεται	31E		19:25	(ἔχει)	10
			121		19:26	λέγω	11
	17:21	έστιν	10			λέγω	41
	17:24	λάμπει	122		19:31	λύετε	10
	17:25	δεῖ	133			<del>ἔ</del> χει	10
	17:30	<b>ἀποκαλύπτετα</b> :			19:33	λ <mark>ύ</mark> ετε	10
	17:34	λέγω	11		19:34	<del>ἔ</del> χει	10
	17:37	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	21		19:40	$\Lambda \stackrel{\sim}{\epsilon} \gamma \omega$	11
	18:4	, φοβοῦμαι	52		20:2	ποιέὶς	122
		έντρέπομαι	52			έστιν	10
	18:6	λέγει	23		20:6	<b>,</b> έστιν	142
	18:7	, μακροθυμέῖ	52		20:8	λέγω	32
	18:8	λέγω	11			ποιῶ	122
	18:9	εἰσίν	42		20:14	έστιν	10
	18:11	ε <mark>ὐ</mark> χαριστῶ	10		20:17	<b>,</b> έστιν	134
		εἰμὶ ΄	10		20:21	οἴδαμεν	10
	18:12	νηστεύω	122			λέγεις	122
		αποδεκατῶ	122			διδάσκεις	122
		κτῶμαι	122			λαμβάνεις	122
	18:14	λέγω	11			διδάσκεις	122
	18:16	ἐστὶν	132		20:22	<b>ἔ</b> ξεστιν	133
	18:17	λέγω	11		20:24	έχει	10
	18:19	λέγεις	22		20:33	γίνεται	31E
	18:20	οἶδας	10		20:34	γαμοῦσιν	124
	18:22	λείπει	10		_0.5.	γαμίσκονται	124
	10.22	έχεις	10		20:35	γαμοῦσιν	31E
	18:24	είσπορεύονται				γαμίζονται	31E
	18:25	έστιν	133		20:36	δύνανται	31E
	18:26	δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	10			είσιν	31E
	18:27	έστιν	10			είσιν	31E
	18:29	λέγω	11		20:37	έγείροντα <b>ι</b>	31E
	10.27	έστιν	132		20.57	λέγει	144
	18:31	αναβαίνομεν	31		20:38	έστιν	10
	18:37	παρέρχεται	42		_0.50	ζῶσιν	10
	18:41	θέλεις	10		20:41	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	121
	10.71	20,013	10		20.71		141

							205
		APPEN	DIX A(	Continued			
Lk.	20:42	λέγει	144	Lk.	22:70	λέγετε	22
	20:44	καλέῖ	144			είμι	10
		ἐστιν	10		22:71	ἔχομεν	10
	20:47	κατεσθίο <b>υ</b> σιν	121		23:3	<b>દ</b> ૌ	10
		προσε <b>ύ</b> χονται				λέγεις	22
	21:3	λέγω	11		23:4	ε ὑρίσκω	141
	21:6	θεωρεῖτε	10		23:5	'Ανασείει	122
	21:8	εἰμι	10		23:6	ἐστιν	53
	21:9	δεῖ	133		23:7	ἐστὶν	42
	21:22	είσιν	134		23:14	κατηγορεῖτε	10
	21:28	ἐγγίζει	41		23:15	ἐστὶν	142
	21:30	<b>γινώσκετ</b> ε	121A		23:29	ἔρχονται	31
		ἐστίν	42		23:31	$ποιο$ $\hat{\mathbf{υ}}$ $\sigma$ ιν	51
	21:31	ἐστιν	42		23:34	(οἴδασιν)	10
	21:32	λέγω	11			$(\pi o 1o \hat{\mathbf{v}} \sigma 1 \mathbf{v})$	10
	22:9	θέλεις	10		23:35	ἐστιν	51
	22:10	$\epsilon$ ί $\sigma$ πορε $\mathfrak{v}$ εται	31		23:37	εί	51
	22:11	Λέγει	11		23:39	εί	10
		ἐστιν	10		23:40	φοβῆ	10
	22:16	λέγω	11			εί	10
	22:18	λέγω	11		23:41	<b>ἀπολαμβάνομεν</b>	10
	22:19	ἐστιν	134		23:43	λέγω	11
	22:22	πορε <b>ύ</b> εται	31		23:46	παρατίθεμαι	32
		παραδίδοται	31		24:5	ζητεῖτε	10
	22:24	δοκεῖ	42		24:6	ἔστιν	10
	22:25	κυριεύουσιν	121		24:7	δεῖ	133
		καλοῦνται	121		24:12	βλέπει	21
	22:27	είμι	10		24:17	ἀντιβάλλετε	22
	22:28	ἐστε	10		24:18	παροικεῖς	10
	22:29	διατίθεμαι	10		24:21	ἐστιν	42
	22:33	εἰμι	10			ἐστιν	10
	22:34	Λέγω	11		24:23	λέγουσιν	21
	22:37	λέγω	11		24:29	ἐστὶν	10
		δεῖ	133		24:36	λέγει	21
		ἔχει	31		24:38	ἐστέ	142
	22:38	ἐστιν	10			<b>ἀναβαίνουσιν</b>	10
	22:42	βο <b>ύ</b> λει	51		24:39	είμι	10
	22:46	καθεύδετε	10			<del>ἔ</del> χει	132
	22:48	παραδίδως	10			θεωρεῖτε	10
	22:53	έστὶν	10		24:41	"Εχετε	10
	22:57	οἶδα	10		24:44	δεῖ	133
	22:58	εî	10		24:49	ἀποστέλλω	31
		eỉµί	10				
	22:59	έστιν	10	Jn.	1:5	φαίνει	122
	22:60	οἶδα	10		1:9	φωτίζει	122
		λέγεις	22		1:15	μαρτυρεῖ	141
	22:64	έστιν	10		1:19	ἐστὶν	134
	22:67	εi	51			εί	10
	22:70	င်း	10		1:20	εἰμί	10

		A DE		<b>a</b> .:			206
			PENDIX A	Continu			
Jn.	1:21	<b>લો</b>	10	Jn.	2:7	λέγει	21
		λέγει	21		2:8	λέγει	21
		င်းμί	10		2:9	ἐστίν	42
		<b>લો</b>	10			φωνεί	21
	1:22	<b>લો</b>	10		2:10	λέγει	21
		λέγεις	32			τίθησιν	132
	1:25	βαπτίζεις	122A		2:17	ἐστίν	143
		eî	51		2:18	δεικνύεις	32
	1:26	βαπτίζω	122			ποιέῖς	22
	1.05	οἴδατε	10		3:2	οίδαμεν	10
	1:27	εἰμί	10			δύναται	10A
	1:29	βλέπει	21		2.2	ποιέῖς	122
	1.20	λέγει	21		3:3	λέγω	11
	1:30	έστιν Υ	10		2.4	δύναται	10A
	1 22	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31		3:4	λέγει	21
	1:33	<b>έστιν</b>	41A			δύναται	132A
	1:34	έστιν	10		2.5	δύναται	132A
	1:36	λέγει	21		3:5	λέγω	11
	1:38	λέγει	21		2.6	δύναται	132A
		ζητέῖτε	10		3:6	<b>έ</b> στιν ,	132A
		λέγεται	131		2.7	έστιν	132A
	1 20	μένεις	10		3:7	<b>Δ</b> εῖ	133
	1:39	λέγει	21		3:8	θέλει	41
	1.41	μένει 	42			πνεί	122
	1:41	ε <b>ύ</b> ρίσκει	21			άκούεις ε <sup>3</sup> ς α <b>τ</b>	122
		λέγει 2	21			οἶδας *	122
	1.40	<b>ἐστιν</b> εἶ	131		2.0	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	42 42
	1:42		10		3:8	ύπάγει έστὶν	132
	1.42	έρμηνεύεται • δοίστοι	131		2.0	δύναται	
	1:43	ε <b>ύ</b> ρίσκει	21 21		3:9 3:10		10 10
	1:45	λέγει ε <b>ὑ</b> ρίσκει	21		3.10	γινώσκεις	10
	1.43	λέγει	21		3:11	γινωσκεις λέγω	11
	1:46	δύναταί	10		3:11	οίδαμεν	10
	1.40	λέγει	21		3.11	λαλοῦμεν	123
	1:47	λέγει λέγει	21			μαρτυροῦμεν	123
	1.4/	ἔστιν	10			λαμβάνετε	123
	1:48	λέγει	21		3:12	πιστεύετε	51
	1.40	γινώσκεις	141		3:14	δε <b>î</b>	133
	1:49	eî Eî	10		3:18	κρίνεται	31EA
	1.47	εî	10		3:19	έστιν	134
	1:50	πιστεύεις	10		3:20	μισεί	121A
	1:51	λέγει	21		3.20	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	121A
	1.01	λέγω	11		3:21	έρχεται	121A
	2:3	λέγει	21		J. 41	έστιν	142
	2.5	έχουσιν	10		3:26	βαπτίζει	122
	2:4	λέγει	21		5.20	ξρχονται	121
	۵. ۱	ήκει	141		3:27	δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	121A

		APPEND:	IX AContin	ued			207
Jn.	3:28	εἰμὶ	10	Jn.	4:22	ἐστὶν	132
		εἰμί	142		4:23	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
	3:29	ἐστίν	132			έστιν	132
		χαίρει	132			ζητεῖ	10
	3:30	δέῖ	133		4:24	δεῖ	133
	3:31	ἐστίν	10		4:25	λέγει	21
		<b>ἐ</b> στιν	10			Οίδα	10
		λαλεῖ	122			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E
		(ἐστίν)	10		4:26	λέγει	21
	3:32	μαρτυρεῖ	122			είμι	10
		λαμβάνει	121		4:27	ζητεῖς	10
	3:33	έστιν	10		,	ζητεῖς	10
	3:34	λαλεῖ	122		4:28	λέγει	21
	3.31	δίδωσιν	122		4:29	έστιν	10
	3:35	άγαπ <u>ậ</u>	10		4:32	<sup>ε</sup> χω	10
	3:36	έχει	132A		7.52	οίδατε	10
	3.30	μένει	132A 132A		4:34	λέγει	21
	4:1	•	42		4.34		134
	4.1	ποιεί Βαππίζει	42		1.25	λέγει Σάνισσο	121
	1.5	βαπτίζει Έ			4:35	λέγετε	
	4:5	ἔρχεται ″Ε	21			έστιν *	31
	4:7	"Ερχεται	21			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
	4:9	λέγει	21			λέγω	11
		αίτεῖς	22		4.06	είσιν	10
		<b>συ</b> γχρῶνται	131		4:36	λαμβάνει	132
	4:10	έστιν	10			συνάγει	132
	4:11	λέγει	21		4:37	έστὶν	10
		έχεις	10			ἐστὶν	132
		έστὶν	10		4:42	πιστεύομεν	10
		έχεις	10			οἴδαμεν	10
	4:12	εί	10			έστιν	10
	4:15	λέγει	21		4:44	<del>ἔ</del> χει	132
	4:16	Λέγει	21		4:47	ήκει	42
	4:17	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10		4:49	λέγει	21
		λέγει	21		4:50	λέγει	21
		<b>ἔ</b> χω	10			ζῆ	10
	4:18	ἔχεις	10		4:51	ζῆ	32
		ἔστιν	10		4:52	ζῆ	10
	4:19	λέγει	21		5:2	ἔστιν	131
		θεωρῶ	10		5:6	<del>ἔ</del> χει	23
		εî	10			λέγει	21
	4:20	λέγετε	121			θέλεις	10
		ἐστὶν	10		5:7	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10
		δεῖ	133			έρχομαι	41
	4:21	λέγει	21			καταβαίνει	41
	*	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	31		5:8	λέγει	21
	4:22	προσκ <b>υ</b> νεῖτε	121		5:10	έστιν	10
		οίδατε	10			ἔξεστίν	133
		προσκυνοῦμεν	121		5:12	έστιν	10
		οίδαμεν	10		5:13	έστιν	42
		Jeouper	10		5.15	CO ILV	12

		A.T.			1		208
т.	5 1 4		PPENDIX A			~ ^	10
Jn.	5:14	$\epsilon$ ύρί $\sigma$ κ $\epsilon$ ι	21	Jn.	5:44	ζητέ <b>ιτ</b> ε "	10
	5:15	ἐστιν	42		5:45	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10
	5:17	<b>ἐρηάζεται</b>	23		5:47	πιστεύετε γ	51
	- 40	<b>ἐ</b> ργάζομαι	23		6:5	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	42
	5:19	λέγω	11			λέγει	21
		δύναται	10		6:7	ἀρκοῦσιν	132
		ποιεῖ	122		6:8	λέγει	21
	5:20	φιλεῖ	10		6:9	"Εστιν	10
		δείκνυσιν	122			<b>ἔ</b> χει	10
		ποιεί	41			έστιν	10
	5:21	<b>ἐγείρει</b>	31E		6:12	λέγει	21
		ζψοποι€ῖ	31E		6:14	ἐστιν	10
		θέλει	41		6:15	μέλλουσιν	42
		ζψοποιεῖ	31E		6:19	θεωρο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	21
	5:22	κρίνει	31E		6:20	λέγει	21
	5:23	τιμῶσι	122			εἰμι	10
		τιμᾳ̂	132A		6:24	ἔστιν	42
	5:24	λέγω	11		6:26	λέγω	11
		<b>ἔ</b> χει	132A			ζητεῖτέ	22
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31EA		6:29	έστιν	134
	5:25	λέγω	11		6:30	ποιείς	32
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E			ἐργάζη	32
		έστιν	10		6:31	έστιν	143
	5:26	<b>ἔ</b> χει	10		6:32	λέγω	11
	5:27	έστὶν	10			δίδωσιν	141
	5:28	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E		6:33	ἐστιν	134
	5:30	δύναμαι	10		6:35	εἰμι	10
		ἀκο <b>ύ</b> ω	122		6:36	πιστεύετε	10
		κρίνω	122		6:37	δίδωσίν	141
		· ἐστίν	10		6:39	έστιν	134
		ζητῶ	122		6:40	έστιν	134
	5:31	έστιν	132A		6:41	<b>ε</b> ἰμι	10
	5:32	ἐστὶν	10		6:42	έστιν	10
		οἴδα	10			οἴδαμεν	10
		ἐστιν	10			λέγει	22
		μαρτυρεῖ	10		6:44	δύναται	132A
	5:34	λαμβάνω	122		6:45	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	143
		λέγω	10			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	124A
	5:36	ἔχω	10		6:47	λέγω	11
		ποιῶ	122			έχει	132A
		μαρτυρεῖ	123		6:48	είμι	10
	5:38	έχετε	10		6:50	έστιν	134
		πιστεύετε	10		6:51	είμι	134
	5:39	δοκείτε	10		0.01	είμι	134
	5.57	είσιν	10		6:52	δύναται	10
	5:40	θέλετε	10		6:53	λὲγω	11
	5:41	λαμβάνω	122		0.55	έχετε	10A
	5:42	έχετε	10		6:54	έχει	132A
	5:43	εχετε λαμβάνετε	10		6:55	έστιν	132A 10
	5:44	δ <b>ύ</b> νασθε	10		0.55	έστιν	10
	J. <b>44</b>	ουνασσε	10			EU IIV	10

1	Λ	n
	U	7

				. ~ .			209
			PPENDIX .				
Jn.	6:56	μένει	132A	Jn.	7:23	χολᾶτε	10A
	6:57	ζῶ	10		7:25	ἐστιν	10
	6:58	έστιν	134			ζητοῦσιν	10
	6:60	έστιν	10		7:26	λαλεῖ	10
		δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	10			λέγουσιν	10
	6:61	γογγύζουσιν	42			ἐστιν	10
		σκανδαλίζει	10		7:27	οἴδαμεν	10
	6:63	έστιν	132			ἐστιν	23
		ώφελ <i>ε</i> ῖ	132			γινώσκει	41A
		έστιν	10			ἐστίν	42
		ἐστιν	10		7:28	οἴδατε	10
	6:64	εἰσὶν	10			οἴδατε	10
		$\pi$ ιστευουσιν	10			<b>ε</b> ἰμί	23
		εἰσὶν	41			ἔστιν	10
		ἐστιν	41			οἴδατε	10
	6:65	δύναται	132A		7:29	οἶδα	10
	6:67	θέλετε	10			οἶδα	23
	6:68	ἔχεις	10		7:33	εἰμι	31
	6:69	έί	10			<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31
	6:70	ἐστιν	10		7:34	εἰμὶ ΄	31
	7:3	ποιείς	122			εἰμι	10
	7:4	ποιεί	121A		7:35	μέλλει	10
		ζητεῖ	51o			μέλλει	10
		ποιείς	51		7:36	έστιν	10
	7:6	λέγει	21		,	εἰμὶ	31
	7.0	πάρεστιν	10			δύνασθε	10
		έστιν	10		7:40	έστιν	10
	7:7	δύναται	10		7:41	έστιν	10
	7.7	μισε <b>ί</b>	10		7:41	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
		μαρτ <b>υ</b> ρῶ	122		7:42	έρχεται	31
		έστιν	10		7:49	είσιν	10
	7:8	αναβαίνω	31		7:50	λέγει	21
	7:0 7:11	έστιν	10		7:51	κρίνει	132A
	7:11	έστιν	10		7.31	κρινει ποιε̂ι	42
	1.12	πλανά	122		7:52	rotet Ei	10
	7:15	οίδεν	10		7:52 7:52	έγγείρεται	31
	7:15 7:16	έστιν	10		(8:3)		21
					` /	ἄγουσιν	
	7:17	έστιν ```	10		(8:4)	λέγουσιν Σάστος	21
	7.10	λαλ <b>ῶ</b>	122		(8:5)	λέγεις	32
	7:18	ζητεῖ	121A		(8:10)	είσιν	32
		έστιν "	10		(8:11)	κατακρίνω	32
	<b>7</b> 10	ἔστιν	10		8:12	είμι	134
	7:19	ποιεῖ	121		8:13	μαρτ <b>υ</b> ρέῖς "	10
	<b>5.</b> 2. ^	ζητέὶτε "	10		0.1.	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10
	7:20	ἔχεις	10		8:14	έστιν	10A
		ζητεῖ	10			οίδα	10
	7:21	θαυμάζετε	10			<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31
	7:22	έστὶν	23			οἶδατε	10
		περιτέμνετε	121			<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	23
	7:23	λαμβάνει	51			<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31

1	1	$\mathbf{r}$
_	1	U

							210
		AI	PPENDIX	AContinu	ıed		
Jn.	8:15	κρίνετε	121	Jn.	8:44	$\dot{\epsilon}\sigma$ τ $\dot{\epsilon}$	23
		κρίνω	122			θέλετε	121
	8:16	έστιν	10A			ἔστιν	10
		<b>ε</b> ἰμί	10			λαλεῖ	132
	8:17	έστιν	132			ἐστὶν	10
	8:18	εἰμι	10		8:45	λέγω	122
		μαρτυρεῖ	122			πιστεύετε	121
	8:19	έστιν	10		8:46	<b>ἐ</b> λέγχει	32
		οἴδατε	10			λέγω	51
	8:21	<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31			$πισ$ τε $\dot{0}$ ετέ	10A
		<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31		8:47	ακο <b>ύ</b> ει	121A
		δύνασθε	10			ἀκο <b>ύ</b> ει	10
	8:22	λέγει	22			ἐστέ	23
		<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31		8:48	λέγομεν	123
		δύνασθε	10			εί	10
	8:23	ἐστέ	23			ἔχεις	10
		<b>ε</b> ἰμί	23		8:49	້ໍຊົ້ນ	10
		ἐστέ	23			~ τιμῶ	10
		<b>ͼ</b> ἰμὶ	23			<b>ἀτιμάζετε</b>	10
	8:25	εί	10		8:50	ζητῶ	10
		λαλῶ	122			έστιν	10
	8:26	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10		8:51	λέγω	11
		έστιν	10		8:52	έχεις	10
		λαλῶ	122			λέγεις	22
	8:28	εἰμι	42		8:53	εί	10
		ποιῶ	122			<b>દ</b> ો	10
		λαλῶ	122		8:54	έστιν	10A
	8:29	ποιῶ	122			ἔστιν	10
	8:31	<b>;</b> στε	10A			λέγετε	121
	8:33	ἐσμεν	10			έστιν	10
		λέγεις	22		8:55	οίδα	10
	8:34	λέγω	11			οίδα	10
		ἐστιν	132A			οίδα	10
	8:35	μένει	132			τηρῶ	122
		μένει	132		8:57	"χεις	23
	8:37	οἶδα	10		8:58	λέγω	11
		ἐστε	10			εἰμί	23
		ζητεῖτέ	10		9:4	δέî	133
		χωρεῖ	10			<b>ἐ</b> στιν	10
	8:38	λαλῶ	122			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
		ποιείτε	121			δύναται	31
	8:39	ἐστιν	10		9:5	<b>ε</b> ἰμι	10A
		λέγει	21		9:7	ἑρμηνεύεται	131
		έστε	51		9:8	έστιν	10
	8:40	ζητεῖτέ	10		9:9	ἐστιν	10
	8:41	ποιείτε	121			έστιν	10
		ἔχομεν	10			εἰμι	10
	8:42	ήκω	141		9:12	έστιν	10
	8:43	γινώσκετε	10			λέγει	21
		δύνα <i>σ</i> θε	10			οίδα	10

		A DE	DENIDIV A	Continue	1		211
Jn.	9:13	ΑΡΓ "Αγουσιν	PENDIX A- 21	-Continuec Jn.	10:3	<b>ἀνοίγει</b>	121
J11.	9:15	βλέπω	141	311.	10.5	ακούει	121
	9:16	έστιν	23			φωνεί	121
	7.10	τηρε̂ι	122			φωνει έξάγει	121
		δύναται	132		10:4	πορεύεται	121
	9:17	λέγουσιν	21		10.4	ακολουθε <b>ι</b>	121
	7.17	λέγεις	32			οίδασιν	121
		έστίν	10		10:5	οίδασιν	121
	9:19	έστιν	10		10:7	λέγω	11
	7.17	λέγετε	10		10.7	είμι Είμι	10
		βλέπει	10		10:8	εἰσίν	132
	9:20	<b>Ο</b> ίδαμεν	10		10:9	είμι	134
	7.20	έστιν	10		10:10	ἔρχεται	121
	9:21	βλέπει	10		10:10	είμι	134
	7.21	οίδαμεν	10		10.11	τίθησιν	121
		οίδαμεν	10		10:12	έστιν	125
		έχει	10		10.12	θεωρεῖ	121
	9:23	έχει	10			αφίησιν	121
	9:24	έστιν	10			φεύγει	121
	7.21	έστιν	10			άρπάζει	121
	9:25	έστιν	53			σκορπίζει	121
	7.20	οἶδα	10		10:13	έστιν	132
		οἶδα	10		10.15	μέλει	132
		βλέπω	10		10:14	είμι	134
	9:27	, θέλετε	10			γινώσκω	121
		θέλετε	10			γινώσκουσί	121
	9:28	င်း	10		10:15	γινώσκει	10
		ἐσμὲν	10			γινώσκω	10
	9:29	οΐδαμεν	10			τίθημι	31
		οἴδαμεν	10		10:16	·έχω	10
		ἐστιν	23			ἔστιν	10
	9:30	ἐστιν	10			διε	133
		οἴδατε	10		10:17	ἀγαπᾳ	10
		ἐστίν	23			τίθημι	31
	9:31	οἴδαμεν	10		10:18	αἴρει	31
		ακούει	132			τίθημι	31
		ακούει	121A			<b>ἔ</b> χω	10
	9:34	διδάσκεις	10			έχω	10
	9:35	πιστεύεις	10		10:20	έχει	10
	9:36	ἐστιν	10			μείνεται	10
	9:37	ἐστιν	10			ἀκούετε	121
	9:38	Πιστεύω	10		10:21	ἔστιν	10
	9:40	ἐσμεν	10			δύναται	132
	9:41	λέγετε	121		10:24	αἴρεις	31
		Βλέπομεν	10			eî .	51
		μένει	10		10:25	πιστεύετε	10
	10:1	λέγω	11			ποιῶ	122
		ἐστὶν	132A			μαρτ <b>υ</b> ρεῖ	123
	10.2	ėστιν	132Δ		10.26	πιστεύετε	10

132A

10:2

ἐστιν

10:26 πιστεύετε

10

		A DDE		Cantina	1		212
	10.26		ENDIX A			. /	21
Jn.	10:26	ἐστὲ ,	10	Jn.	11:39	λέγει "	21
	10:27	<b>ἀκούουσιν</b>	121		44.00	ὄζει ,	10
		γινώσκω	121		11:39	έστιν	10
	10.20	ακολουθοῦσιν	121		11:40	λέγει	21
	10:28	δίδωμι	121		11:41	ε <mark>ὐ</mark> χαριστῶ	10
	10:29	ἐστιν	10		11:42	ακο <b>ύ</b> εις	122
		δύναται	10		11:44	λέγει	21
	10:30	ἐσμεν	10		11:47	ποιοῦμεν	32
	10:32	λιθάζετε	32			ποιεί	122
	10:33	λιθάζομεν	32		11:49	οίδατε	10
		ποιείς	22		11:50	λογίζεσθε	10
	10:34	ἔστιν	143			συμφέρει	133
		ἐστε	10		11:56	δοκεῖ	10
	10:35	δύναται	132		11:57	ἐστιν	42
	10:36	λέγετε	22		12:4	λέγει	21
		Βλασφημεῖς	22		12:8	<b>ἔ</b> χετε	31
		είμι	10			<b>ἔ</b> χετε	31
	10:37	ποιῶ	51		12:9	ἐστιν	42
	10:38	ποιῶ	51		12:12	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	42
	11:3	φιλεῖς	10		12:14	έστιν	143
		$ec{lpha}\sigma$ θεν $arepsilon$ ι	10		12:15	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
	11:4	ἔστιν	10		12:19	θεωρεῖτε	10
	11:6	$\vec{\alpha}$ $\sigma$ θενε $\hat{\imath}$	42			<b>ώ</b> φελεῖτε	23
	11:7	λέγει	21		12:21	θέλομεν	10
	11:8	λέγουσιν	21		12:22	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21
		<b>ύ</b> πάγεις	31			λέγει	21
	11:9	είσιν	132			ἔρχεται	21
		προσκόπτει	121A			λέγουσιν	21
		βλέπει	41		12:23	ἀποκρίνεται	21
	11:10	προσκόπτει	121A		12:24	λέγω	11
		έστιν	41			μένει	121A
	11:11	λέγει	21			φέρει	121A
		πορεύομαι	31		12:25	ἀπολλ <b>ύ</b> ει	31A
	11:13	λέγει	22		12:26	<b>ε</b> ἰμὶ	31
	11:15	χαίρω	10		12:31	έστὶν	31
	11:20	έρχεται	42		12:34	μένει	132
	11:22	οἶδα	10			λέγεις	22
	11:23	λέγει	21			δεῖ	133
	11:24	λέγει	21			ἐστιν	10
		દો	10		12:35	ἐστιν	31
	11:25	εἰμι	134			<b>ἔ</b> χετε	31
	11:26	πιστεύεις	10			οίδεν	121A
	11:27	λέγει	21			<b>ύ</b> πάγει	41
		ε <b>ỉ</b>	10		12:36	ἔχετε	51o
	11:28	πάρεστιν	141		12:44	πιστεύει	132A
		φωνεί	141		12:45	θεωρεῖ	132A
	11:31	ύπάγει	42		12:47	κρίνω	31EA
	11:34	λέγουσιν	21		12:48	έχει	132A
	11:38	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	21		12:50	οίδα	10
	11:39	λέγει	21			έστιν	10
	- 1.07	1					

							213
		APPENI	DIX A(	Continued			
Jn.	12:50	λαλῶ	122	Jn.	13:31	λέγει	21
		λαλῶ	122		13:33	είμι	31
	13:3	<b>ύ</b> πάγει	31			<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31
	13:4	έγείρεται	21			δύνασθε	10
		τίθησιν	21			λέγω	11
	13:5	βάλλει	21		13:34	δίδωμι	11
	13:6	ἔρχεται	21		13:35	έστε	10
	10.0	λέγει	21		13:36	Λέγει	21
		νίπτεις	32		10.00	ύπάγεις	31
	13:7	ποιῶ	32			<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31
	15.7	οἶδας	10			δύνασαί	10
	13:8	λέγει	21		13:37	λέγει	21
	13.0	έχεις	10A		13.37	δύναμαί	10
	13:9	λέγει	21		13:38	άποκρίνεται	21
	13:10	λέγει	21		13.30	λέγω	11
	13.10	κεγει έχει	10A		14:1(a)		10
		έστιν	10A 10A		14:1(a)	είσιν	10
		έστε	10A 10		14.2		31
	12.11	έστε	10		14.2	πορεύομαι	
	13:11 13:12	εστε Γινώσκετε			14:3	ἔρχομαι -?	31EA
			10		1.4.4	ε <b>ἰμὶ</b>	31
	13:13	φωνεῖτέ	123		14:4	<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31
		λέγετε	123		1.4.5	οἴδατε	10
	10.14	ε <b>ἰμὶ</b>	10		14:5	Λέγει	21
	13:14	ὀφείλετε	10A			οἴδαμεν	10
	13:16	λέγω	11			ύπάγεις	31
		<b>ἔστιν</b>	132			δυνάμεθα	10
	13:17	οἴδατε	51		14:6	λέγει	21
		ἐστε	10A			είμι	134
	13:18	λέγω	22			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	132
		οἶδα	10		14:7	γινώσκετε	31
	13:19	λέγω	32		14:8	λέγει	21
		είμι	10			άρκεῖ	32A
	13:20	λέγω	11		14:9	λέγει	21
		λαμβάνει	132A			εἰμι	23
		λαμβάνει	132A			λέγεις	22
	13:21	λέγω	11		14:10	πιστεύεις	10
	13:22	λέγει	22			ἐστιν	10
	13:24	νεύει	21			λαλῶ	122
		λέγει	22			λαλῶ	122
	13:25	λέγει	21			ποιεί	122
		ἐστιν	10		14:12	λέγω	11
	13:26	<b>ἀποκρίνεται</b>	21			ποιῶ	122
		ἐστιν	10			πορεύομαι	31
		(λαμβάνει)	21		14:17	δύναται	10
		δίδωσιν	21			θεωρεῖ	10
	13:27	ποιείς	32			· γινώσκει	10
	13:27	λέγει	21			γινώσκετε	10
	13:29	λέγει	22			μένει	10
		· ἔχομεν	10			έστιν	10
		/\ · · ·	•				-

APPENDIX A	AContinued
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		APF	PENDIX A	Continu	ed		
Jn.	14:18	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31	Jn.	15:23	μισεῖ	132A
	14:19	θεωρεῖ	31		15:26	<b>ἐ</b> κπορε <b>ύ</b> εται	31
		θεωρεῖτέ	31		15:27	μαρτ <b>υ</b> ρεῖτε	31
		ζῶ	31			<b>ἐ</b> στε	23
	14:21	ἐστιν	132A		16:2	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31
	14:22	Λέγει	21		16:5	<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31
		μέλλεις	10			ἐρωτᾳ	10
	14:24	τηρεῖ	121A			<b>ύ</b> πάγεις	31
		ακούετε	10		16:7	λέγω	11
		ἔστιν	10			συμφέρει	133
	14:27	ἀφίημι	31		16:9	πιστεύουσιν	10
		δίδωμι	31		16:10	<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31
		δίδωμι	122			θεωρεῖτέ	31
		διδμσιν	31		16:12	· έχω	10
	14:28	'Υπάγω	31			δύνασθε	10
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31		16:15	<del>ἔ</del> χει	10
		πορεύομαι	31			έστιν	10
		έστιν	10			λαμβάνει	31
	14:30	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31		16:16	θεωρεῖτέ	31
	- 1,0	έχει	10		16:17	έστιν	10
	14:31	άγαπῶ	10			λέγει	22
	- 1,0 -	ποιῶ	32			θεωρεῖτέ	31
	15:1	είμι	134			<b>ύ</b> πάγω	31
	10.1	έστιν	134		16:18	έστιν	10
	15:2	αίρει	124		10.10	(λέγει)	22
	10.2	καθαίρει	121			οίδαμεν	10
	15:3	έστε	10			λαλεῖ	22
	15:4	δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	132A		16:19	ζητέιτε	10
	15:5	είμι	134		10.17	θεωρεῖτέ	31
	10.0	φέρει	121A		16:20	λέγω	11
		δύνασθε	132		16:21	έχει	132
	15:6	συνάγουσιν	124A		10.21	έχει	132
	13.0	βάλλουσιν	124A		16:22	έχετε	10
		καίεται	124A		10.22	αίρει	31
	15:10	μένω	10		16:23	λέγω	11
	15:12	έστὶν	134		16:25	κε γω ἔρχεται	31
	15:13	έχει	132		16:26	λέγω	10
	15:14	έστε	10A		16:27	φιλεῖ	10
	13.14	έντέλλομαι	10A 10		16:28	φιλει ἀφίημι	31
	15:15	λέγω	10		10.26	πορεύομαι	31
	13.13	οἶδεν	132		16:29	Λόγουσιν	21
		ποιε <b>ί</b>	125		10.29	λαλεῖς	22
	15:17	έντέλλομαι	10			λάλεις λέγεις	22
	15:17	μισε <b>ι</b>	51		16:30	οἴδαμεν	10
	15:19	έστέ	23		10.50	οίδας	10
	13.19	μισεî	132			διδας ἔχεις	10
	15:20	μισει ἔστιν	132			εχεις πιστεύομεν	10
	15:21	οίδασιν	41		16:31	πιστεύομεν πιστεύετε	10
	15:22	οιοαστν έχο <b>υ</b> σιν	10		16:32	πιστευέτε ἔρχεται	31
	13.44	εχουσιν	10		10.32	ερχειαι	31

		A DDE			ı		213
_	4 < 0.0		ENDIX ACo			24.	
Jn.	16:32	εἰμὶ	31	Jn.	18:31	ἔξεστιν	133
		έστιν	31		18:33	εi	10
	16:33	ἔχετε	31		18:34	λέγεις	22
	17:3	ἐστιν	134		18:35	είμι	10
	17:7	εἰσιν	10		18:36	ἔστιν	132
	17:9	<b>ἐρωτ</b> ῶ	11			ἔστιν	132
		<b>ἐρωτ</b> ῶ	11		18:37	εî	10
		είσιν	10			λέγεις	22
	17:10	ἐστιν	10			εἰμι	10
	17:11	<b>ε</b> ἰμὶ	31			ακο <b>ύ</b> ει	121A
		εἰσίν	31		18:38	λέγει	21
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31			έστιν	10
	17:13	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31			λέγει	21
		λαλῶ	10			ε <b>ὑ</b> ρίσκω	132
	17:14	εἰσὶν	10		18:39	βο <b>ύ</b> λεσθε	133
		<b>ε</b> ἰμὶ	10			έστιν	10
	17:15	<b>ͼ</b> ρωτῶ	11			έστιν	21
	17:16	είσὶν	23		19:4	λέγει	32
		eἰμ <b>ὶ</b>	23			ἄγω	141
	17:17	έστιν	10		19:5	λέγει	21
	17:19	άγιάζω	141		19:6	λέγει	21
	17:20	· ἐρωτῶ	11			ε <mark>ύ</mark> ρίσκω	141
	17:24	θέλω	10		19:7	έχομεν	10
		εἰμὶ	31			όφείλει	10
	18:3	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21		19:9	λέγει	21
	18:4	λέγει	21			εί	23
		, ζητέῖτε	10		19:10	λέγει	21
	18:5	λέγει	21			λαλεῖς	10
		είμι	10			οἶδας	10
	18:6	είμι	10			<b>έ</b> χω	10
	18:7	ζητέῖτε	10			έχω	10
	18:8	είμι	10		19:11	γ έγει	10
		ζητέῖτε	51		19:12	έχει εἶ	10A
	18:14	συμφέρει	133		17.12	αντιλέγει	132A
	18:17	λέγει	21		19:14	λέγει	21
	10.17	εî	10		19:15	λέγει	21
	18:17	εἰμί	21		17.10	έχομεν	10
	10.17	εἰμί	10		19:17	λέγεται	131
	18:20	συνέρχονται	123		19:21	είμι	10
	18:21	έρωτᾶς	22		19:26	λέγει	21
	10.21	οίδασιν	10		19:27	λέγει	21
	18:22	αποκρίνη	22		19:28	λέγει	21
	18:23	δέρεις	22A		17.20	Διψῶ	10
	18:25	εί	10		19:35	έστιν	10
	10.23	ει εἰμί	10		17.33	οἶδεν	10
	18:26	ειμι λέγει	21			λέγει	10
	18:28	΄Αγουσιν	21		19:37	λέγει λέγει	144
	18:29		21		19.37	λεγει έστὶν	131
	10.29	φησίν Φέρετε					
		φέρετε	10		20:1	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21

		4 DDE	NIDIX. A	Q .: 1			216
-	20.1			AContinued	21.12	2/	2.1
Jn.	20:1	βλέπει	21	Jn.	21:13	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	21
	20:2	τρέχει	21			λαμβάνει	21
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	21			δίδωσιν	21
		λέγει	21		21:15	λέγει	21
		οἴδαμεν	10			ἀγαπᾶς	10
	20:5	βλέπει	21			λέγει	21
	20:6	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	21			οἶδας	10
		θεωρεῖ	21			φιλῶ	10
	20:9	δεῖ	133			λέγει	21
	20:12	θεωρεῖ	21		21:16	λέγει	21
	20:13	λέγουσιν	21			ἀγαπᾶς	10
		κλαίεις	10			λέγει	21
		λέγει	21			οίδας	10
		οἶδα	10			φιλῶ	10
	20:14	θεωρεῖ	21			λέγει	21
		ἐστιν	42		21:17	λέγει	21
	20:15	λέγει	21			φιλέῖς	10
		κλαίεις	10			Φιλέῖς	10
		ζητεῖς	10			λέγει	21
		ἐστιν	42			οἴδας	10
		λέγει	21			γινώσκεις	10
	20:16	λέγει	21			φιλῶ	10
		λέγει	21			λέγει	21
		λέγεται	131		21:18	λέγω	11
	20:17	'Αναβαίνω	31			θέλεις	41
		λέγει	21		21:19	λέγει	21
	20:18	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	21		21:20	βλέπει	21
	20:19	λέγει	21			έστιν	10
	20:21	πέμπω	32		21:21	λέγει	21
	20:22	λέγει	21		21:22	λέγει	21
	20:26	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	21			<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31E
	20:27	λέγει	21		21:23	ἀποθνήσκει	31
	20:29	λέγει	21			ἀποθνήσκει	31
	20:30	ἔστιν	143			<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31E
	20:31	έστιν	10		21:24	έστιν	131
	21:3	λέγει	21			οίδαμεν	10
		'Υπάγω	31			ἐστίν	10
		λέγουσιν	21		21:25	"Εστιν	10
		'Ερχόμεθα	31			οίμαι	10
	21:4	ἐστιν	42				
	21:5	λέγει	21	Acts	1:6	ἀποκαθιστάνεις	53
		ἔχετε	141		1:7	ἐστιν	10
	21:7	λέγει	21		1:12	έστιν	131
		λέγει	10		1:19	ἔστιν	131
		έστιν	42		1:21	δεῖ	133
	21:9	βλέπουσιν	21		2:7	είσιν	10
	21:10	λέγει	21		2:8	ακούομεν	10
	21:12	λέγει	21		2:11	ἀκούομεν	10
		εî	10		2:12	θέλει	10
		ἐστιν	42		2:13	εἰσίν	142

		A DDE		, •	1		217
	0.15		NDIX AC			0/)	1.0
Acts	2:15	<b>ύ</b> πολαμβάνετε		Acts	7:28	θέλεις	10
		μεθύουσιν	10		7:33	έστίν	10
		<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10		7:34	ἀποστείλω	32
	2:16	ἐστιν	134		7:37	έστιν	134
	2:17	λέγει	11		7:38	έστιν	134
	2:22	οΐδατε	10		7:40	οΐδαμεν	10
	2:25	λέγει	144		7:48	κατοικέῖ	10
		έστιν	10			λέγει	144
	2:29	ἔστιν	23		7:49	λέγει	11
	2:32	ἐσμεν	10		7:51	αντιπίπτετε	121
	2:33	βλέπετε	10		7:56	θεωρῶ	10
		ακούετε	10		8:10	ἐστιν	10
	2:34	λέγει	144		8:18	δίδοται	42
	2:39	έστιν	10		8:21	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10
	3:6	<b>ύ</b> πάρχει	10			<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10
		<sup>*</sup> έχω	10		8:23	δρῶ	10
		δίδωμι	32		8:26	έστὶν	131
	3:12	θαυμάζετε	10		8:30	γινώσκεις	10
		ατενίζετε	10			άναγινώσκεις	10
	3:15	ἐσμεν ΄	10		8:32	ανοίγει	31
	3:16	θεωρεῖτε	10		8:33	αἴρεται	31
		οἴδατε	10		8:34	Δέομαι	11
	3:17	οίδα	10			λέγει	144
	3:21	δεῖ	133		8:36	φησιν	21
	3:25	έστε	10		0.50	κωλ <b>ύ</b> ει	10
	4:9	ανακρινόμεθα			9:4	διώκεις	122
	4:11	έστιν	134		9:5	eî	10
	4:12	έστιν	10		7.5	είμι	10
	7.12	έστιν	10			διώκεις	122
		δεῖ	133		9:6	δεῖ	133
	4:13	είσιν	42		9:11	προσε <b>ύ</b> χεται	10
	4:16	δυνάμεθα	10		9:11 9:14		10
	4:19	έστιν	53		9:14	ἔχει ἐστιν	10
						δεῖ	
	4:20	διμάμεθα έστιν	10		9:16		133 42
	4:36 5:25	έστιν εἰσίν	131 10		9:20 9:21	έστιν 2	
	3.23					έστιν 2	10
	<i>5.</i> <b>2</b> 0	βο <b>ύ</b> λεσθε	10		9:22	έστιν	42
	5:29	δεî ,	133		9:26	ἐστὶν ' ο	42
	5:32	ἐσμεν	10		9:34	ίᾶται	32
	5:35	μέλλετε	10		9:36	λέγεται	131
	5:38	λέγω	11		9:38	έστίν	42
	5:39	έστιν	51		10:4	έστιν	10
	6:2	έστιν	133		10:5	έπικαλεῖται	10
	6:13	πα <b>ύ</b> εται	122		10:6	ξενίζεται	10
	7:1	<del>ἔ</del> χει	53			ἐστιν	10
	7:4	κατοικέῖτε	10		10:11	θεωρεῖ	21
	7:25	δίδωσιν	42		10:18	ξενίζεται	53
	7:26	έστε	10		10:19	ζητοῦσιν	10
		<b>ἀδικ</b> εῖτε	10		10:21	εἰμι	10

		A DDENIE		~ .				210
	10.21	APPEND:		Contin		15.15		1.0
Acts	10:21	ζητεῖτε	10		Acts	15:15	συμφωνοῦσιν	10
	1000	πάρεστε	10			15:17	λέγει	11
	10:26	είμι	10			15:19	κρίνω	10
	10:27	εὑρίσκει	21			15:21	<sup>ε</sup> χει	23
	10:28	<b>ἐπίστασθε</b>	10			15:36	<sup>ε</sup> χουσιν	10
	10.20	έστιν	133			16:12	<b>ἐστίν</b>	131
	10:29	π <b>υ</b> νθάνομαι	10			16:17	εἰσίν	10
	10:31	φησίν	21			1610	καταγγέλλουσιν	123
	10:32	έπικαλεῖται	10			16:18	Παραγγέλλω	11
	10.22	ξενίζεται	10			16:20	<b>ἐκταράσσουσιν</b>	123
	10:33	πάρεσμεν	10	4.0		16:21	καταγγέλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	123
	10:34	καταλαμβάνομ		10		4 6 • 0	ἔξεστιν	133
		<b>ἔστιν</b>	10			16:28	έσμεν	10
	10:35	έστιν	132A			16:30	δεί	133
	10:36	έστιν	132			16:37	<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	32
	10:37	οἴδατε	10			16:38	είσιν	10
	10:42	έστιν	10			17:3	έστιν	10
	10:43	μαρτυροῦσιν	144				καταγγέλλω	10
	10:47	δύναται	10			17:6	πάρεισιν	141
	12:3	ἐστιν	133			17:7	πράσσουσι	123
	12:8	λέγει	21			17:18	δοκεί	10
	12:9	έστιν	42			17:19	Δυνάμεθα	10
	12:11	οΐδα	10			17:20	εἰσφέρεις	10
	12:15	Μαίνη	10				βουσόμεθα	10
	100	ἐστιν	10				θέλει	10
	13:8	λέγει	131			17:22	θεωρῶ	10
	13:15	ἐστιν	51			17:23	εὖσεβεῖτε	121
	13:25	<b>ε</b> ἰμὶ	10				καταγγέλλω	11
		<b>ε</b> ἰμὶ 	10			17:24	κατοικέῖ	10
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31			17:25	θεραπεύεται	121
	1001	e <b>ỉμ</b> ὶ	10			17:28	ζῶμεν	10
	13:31	είσιν	10				κινούμεθα	10
	13:32	<b>εὐαγγε</b> λιζόμεθ					ἐσμέν	10
	13:33	εî	10				ἐσμέν	10
	13:35	λέγει	144			17:29		10
	13:38	καταγγέλλεται				17:30	παραγγέλλει	122
	13:39	δικαιοῦται	132A			17:31	μέλλει	10
	13:41	<b>ἐ</b> ργάζομαι	31			18:10	είμι	10
	13:46	ἀπωθεῖσθε	10			10.10	ἐστί	10
		κρίνετε	10			18:13	ἀναπείθει	122
	140	στρεφόμεθα "	32			18:15	έστιν	51
	14:9	<b>ἔ</b> χει	42				βο <b>ύ</b> λομαι •	10
	14:15	ποιείτε	10			19:2	ἔστιν ·	53
	1 4 6 6	ἐσμεν	10			19:4	ἔστιν '	134
	14:22	δεῖ	133			19:13	`Ορκίζω	11
	15:1	δύνασθε	10A			10.15	κηρύσσει	122
	15:5	δεî	133			19:15	<b>γινώσκω</b>	10
	15:7	<b>ἐπίστασθε</b>	10				<b>ἐπίσταμαι</b>	10
	15:10	πειράζετε	10			10.5:	ἐστέ	10
	15:11	πιστεύομεν	10			19:21	δεῖ	133

		4 DDEN					219
	10.05		DIX A—Con		21.25	2/1-	5.0
Acts	19:25	<b>ἐπίστασθε</b>	10	Acts	21:37	<b>έ</b> ξεστιν	53
	10.26	ἐστιν	10		21.20	<b>γ</b> ινώσκεις	10
	19:26	θεωρεῖτε	121		21:38	eî,	10
		ἀκούετε	121		21:39	είμι	10
	10.5=	είσὶν	42			δέομαι	11
	19:27	κινδυνεύει	10		22:2	φησίν	21
		$\sigma$ έβεται	121		22:3	είμι	10
	19:34	έστιν	42			ἐστε	10
	19:35	φησίν	21		22:5	μαρτυρεῖ	132
		έστιν	10		22:7	διώκεις	122
		γινώσκει	10		22:8	εî	10
	19:36	ἐστὶν	133			είμι	10
	19:38	ἔχουσι	51			διώκεις	122
		ἄγονται	10A		22:16	μέλλεις	10
		είσιν	10A		22:19	<b>ἐ</b> πίστανται	10
	19:39	ἐπιζητεῖτε	51		22:25	ἔξεστιν	53
	19:40	κινδυνεύομεν	10		22:26	μέλλεις	10
	20:10	ἐστιν	10			ἐστιν	10
	20:18	<b>ἐ</b> πίστασθε	10		22:27	εî	10
	20:22	πορεύομαι	32		22:29	ἐστιν	42
	20:23	διαματύρεταί	122		22:30	κατηγορεῖται	41
		μένουσιν	10		23:3	μέλλει	10
	20:24	ποιοῦμαι	10			κάθη	10
	20:25	οΐδα	10			κελεύεις	22
	20:26	μαρτύρομαι	11		23:4	λοιδορεῖς	22
		<b>ε</b> ἰμι	10		23:5	ἐστὶν	10
	20:29	οίδα	10		23:6	ἐστὶν	42
	20:32	παρατίθεμαι	32			εἰμι	10
	20:34	γινώσκετε	10			κρίνομαι	10
	20:35	δεῖ	133		23:8	λέγσουσιν	131
		έστιν	133			όμολογο <b>υ</b> σιν	131
	20:38	μέλλουσιν	42		23:9	εὑρίσκομεν	141
	21:11	λέγει	11		23:11	δεῖ	133
		έστιν	10		23:15	έσμεν	10
	21:13	ποιείτε	10		23:17	<del>ἔ</del> χει	10
		<b>ἔ</b> χω	10		23:18	φησίν	21
	21:20	θεωρεῖς	10		23:19	ἐστιν	10
		εἰσιν	10			<sup>ε</sup> χεις	10
		<b>ύ</b> πάρχουσιν	10		23:21	ένεδρεύουσιν	10
	21:21	διδάσκεις	122			είσιν	10
	21:22	έστιν	10		23:27	έστιν	42
	21:23	λέγομεν	32		23:34	ἐστὶν	42
		είσιν	10		24:3	ἀποδεχόμεθα	121
	21:24	ἐστιν	10		24:4	παρακαλῶ	11
		στοιχεῖς	10		24:8	κατηγοροῦμεν	10
	21:28	έστιν	10		24:10	<b>ἀπολογοῦμα</b> ι	32
	21:31	συγχύννεται	42		24:11	εἰσίν ΄	23
	21:33	έστιν	142		24:13	δύνανταί	10
	21:37	λέγει	21			κατηγοροῦσίν	22
		•				11 1	

							220
			OIX AContin				
Acts	24:14	όμολογωῖ	10	Acts	26:27	οἶδα	10
		λέγουσιν	121			πιστεύεις	10
		λατρε <b>ύ</b> ω	121		26:28	πείθεις	10
	24:15	προσδέχονται	10		26:29	είμι	10
	24:16	ἀσκῶ	10		26:31	πράσσει	141
	24:21	κρίνομαι	10		27:10	θεωρῶ	10
	25:5	φησίν	21		27:22	παραινῶ	11
		ἐστιν	51		27:23	εἰμι	10
	25:9	θέλεις	10			εἰμι	121
	25:10	εἰμι	142		27:24	δεῖ	133
		δεῖ	133		27:25	πιστεύω	10
		ἐπιγινώσκεις	10		27:26	δεῖ	133
	25:11	άδικῶ	51		27:31	$\delta \acute{\mathbf{u}} \nu \alpha \sigma \theta \epsilon$	10A
		παραιτοῦμαι	10A		27:33	διατελεῖτε	10
		ἐστιν	51		27:34	παρακαλῶ	11
		κατηγοροῦσίν	22			<b>ύ</b> πάρχει	10
		δύναται	10A		28:1	καλεῖται	42
		<b>έ</b> πικαλο <b>ῦ</b> μαι	32		28:4	έστιν	10
	25:14	έστιν	142		28:20	περίκειμαι	23
	25:16	ἔστιν	10		28:22	άξιοῦμεν	10
	25:22	φησίν	21			φρονεῖς	10
	25:24	φησιν	21			έστιν	141
		θεωρεῖτε	10			ἀντιλέγεται	122
	25:26	·έχω	10			•	
	25:27	δοκεῖ	10	Rom.	1:6	έστε	10
	26:1	Έπιτρέπεταί	10		1:8	<b>εὐ</b> χαριστῶ	122
	26:2	ἐγκαλοῦμαι	141			καταγγέλλεται	122
	26:3	δέομαι	11		1:9	έστιν	10
	26:4	ίσασι	10			λατρε <b>ύ</b> ω	10
	26:7	<b>ἐ</b> λπίζει	10			ποιοῦμαι	122
		<b>ἐ</b> γκαλοῦμαι	141		1:11	ἐπιποθῶ	10
	26:8	κρίνεται	141		1:12	έστιν	133
		κρίνεται	53		1:13	θέλω	10
	26:14	διώκεις	122		1:14	εἰμί	10
	26:15		10		1:16	έπαισχ <b>ύ</b> νομαι	10
		εἰμι	10			έστιν	10
		διώκεις	122		1:17	<b>ἀποκαλύπτεται</b>	122
	26:17	ἀποστέλλω	31		1:18	'Αποκαλύπτεται	122
	26:23	μέλλει	53		1:19	έστιν	122
	26:24	φησιν	21		1:20	καθορᾶται	122
		Μαίνη	10		1:25	έστιν	10
		περιτρέπει	141		1:32	εἰσίν	132A
	26:25	μαίνομαι	10			ποιοῦσιν	121
		φησίν	21			συνευδοκοῦσιν	121
		αποφθέγγομαι			2:1	ei	10
	26:26	έπίσταται	10			κρίνεις	21
		λαλῶ	10			κατακρίνεις	121
		πείθομαι	10			πράσσεις	122
		έστιν	10		2:2	οίδαμεν	10
	26:27	πιστεύεις	10			έστιν	132
	20.27						

		4 DDE3 11					221
_			DIX ACont				
Rom.	2:3	λογίζη	10	Rom.	4:9	λέγομεν	11
	2:4	καταφρονέὶς	10		4:15	κατεργάζεται 	132
		ἄγει	132			ἔστιν	51o
	2:5	θησαυρίζεις	10		4:16	έστιν	10
	2:11	ἐστιν	132		4:21	ἐστιν	10
	2:14	εἰσιν	10		4:24	μέλλει	10
	2:15	<b>ἐ</b> νδείκν <b>υ</b> νται	121		5:1	ἔχομεν	10
	2:16	κρίνει	31E		5:2	καυχώμεθα	123
	2:17	ἐπονομάζη	51		5:3	καυχώμεθα	123
		ἐπαναπα <b>ύ</b> η	51			κατεργάζεται	132
		κα <b>υ</b> χᾶσαι	51		5:5	καταισχύνει	132
	2:18	γινώσκεις	51		5:7	τολμᾳ̂	132
		δοκιμάζεις	51		5:8	συνίστησιν	141
	2:21	διδάσκεις	122		5:13	<b>έ</b> λλογεῖται	132A
		κλέπτεις	122		5:14	έστιν	134
	2:22	μοιχεύεις	122		6:3	άγνοεῖτε	10
		ίεροσυλεῖς	122		6:8	πιστεύομεν	10A
	2:23	καυχᾶσαι	122		6:9	αποθνήσκει	31
		άτιμάζεις	122		0.5	κυριεύει	10
	2:24	βλασφημέιται			6:10	ζῆ	10
	2:25	ώφελε <del>ί</del>	133A		0.10	ζῆ	10
	2:28	έστιν	132		6:14	έστε	10
	3:5	σ <b>υ</b> νίστησιν	51		6:15	έσμὲν	10
	3.3	λέγω	11		6:16	οίδατε	10
	3:7	κρίνομαι	10A		0.10	παριστάνετε	51o
	3:8	βλασφημούμεθ				έστε	10A
	5.0	φασίν	122			ύπακούετε	41
		έστιν	31E		6:19	λέγω	22
	3:9	προεχόμεθα	10		6:21	λε γω ἐπαισχύνεσθε	10
	3:10	κροεχομέσα ἔστιν	10		6:22	έχετε	10
	3:11	έστιν	10		7:1	άγνοε <b>ί</b> τε	10
	3.11	έστιν	10		7.1	αγνοείτε λαλῶ	10
	2.12	έστιν	10				132
	3:12	έστιν έστιν				κυριεύει	
	2.14		10		7.2	ζ <u>η</u> ,	51o
	3:14	γέμει	10		7:3	έστὶν 	132A
	3:18	ἔστιν Ο''	10		7:14	οἴδαμεν	10
	3:19	Οΐδαμεν	10		7.15	οἴδαμεν	10
		λέγει	144		7:15	κατεργάζομαι	122
		λαλεῖ	144			γινώσκω	10
	3:22	έστιν	10			θέλω	41
	3:23	ύστεροῦνται	121			πράσσω	122
	3:28	λογιζόμεθα	10			μισῶ	41
	3:31	καταροῦμεν	10			ποιῶ	122
		<b>ίστάνομεν</b>	10		7:16	θέλω	41
	4:2	<b>ἔ</b> χει	144A			ποιῶ	52
	4:3	λέγει	144			σύμφημι	122
	4:4	λογίζεται	132		7:17	κατεργάζομαι	122
	4:5	λογίζεται	132		7:18	οίδα	10
	4:6	λέγει	144			οἰκεῖ	10
		λογίζεται	41			ἔστιν	134

	A DDENIDI	X AContinu	ad			222
Rom. 7:18	παράκειταί	10	Rom.	8:28	οΐδαμεν	10
7:19	θέλω	41	rtom.	0.20	συνεργεῖ	123
7.17	ποιῶ	122		8:34	έστιν	10
	θέλω	41		0.54	έντυγχάνει	122
	πράσσω	122		8:36	θανατο <b>ύ</b> μεθα	123
7:20	θέλω	122		8:37	ύπερνικῶμεν	123
7.20	ποιῶ	51		9:1	λέγω	11
	κατεργάζομαι			9.1	νεύδομαι	11
7:21	Ε <b>ύ</b> ρίσκω	121A 122		9:2	έστιν	10
7.21	παράκειται	10		9.2 9:4	είσιν	10
7:22		10		9. <del>4</del> 9:7	είσιν είσὶν	134
7:23	συνήδομαι Βλέσω	10		9.7 9:8	έστιν	134
7:25 7:25	βλέπω San San			9.8		
	δουλεύω	121		0.15	λογίζεται	132
8:5	φρονοῦσιν	121A		9:15	λέγει	144
8:7	<b>ύ</b> ποτάσσεται	10		9:17	λέγει Οίλ	144
0.0	δύναται	10		9:18	θέλει	41
8:8	δύνανται	10			έλε <b>ε</b> ῖ	132
8:9	έστὲ , ,	10A			θέλει	41
	οἰκεῖ "	51		0.10	σκληρύνει	132
	<b>ἔ</b> χει	51		9:19	μεμφεται	122
0.11	έστιν	10A		9:20	eî '	10
8:11	οἰκεῖ	51		9:21	<b>έ</b> χει	10
8:12	ἐσμέν	10		9:25	λέγει	144
8:13	ζῆτε	51		9:27	κράζει	144
	μέλλετε	10A		9:33	τίθημι	31
	θανατοῦτε	51		10:2	μαρτ <b>υ</b> ρῶ	10
8:14	ἄγονται	510			ἔχουσιν	10
	εἰσιν	10A		10:5	γράφει	144
8:15	κράζομεν	123		10:6	λέγει	144
8:16	συμμαρτυρεί	10			<b>ἔ</b> στιν	134
	ἐσμὲν	10		10:7	ἔστιν	134
8:17	συμπάσχομεν	51		10:8	λέγει	144
8:18	Λογίζομαι	10			έστιν	10
8:19	ἀπεκδέχεται	10			<b>ἔ</b> στιν	134
8:22	οΐδαμεν	10			κηρ <b>ύ</b> σσομεν	123
	συστενάζει	10		10:10	πιστε <b>ύ</b> εται	132
	συνωδίνει	10			<b>όμολογε</b> ῖται	132
8:23	στενάζομεν	10		10:11	λέγει	144
8:24	ἔστιν	132A		10:12	έστιν	10
	βλέπει	121		10:16	λέγει	144
	<b>έ</b> λπίζει	121		10:18	λέγω	11
8:25	βλέπομεν	41		10:19	λέγω	11
	<b>ἐ</b> λπίζομεν	51			λέγει	144
	<i>,</i> , ,	10A		10:20	<b>ἀποτολμ</b> ᾳ̂	144
8:26	συναντιλαμβά	ίνεται 122			λέγει	144
	δεῖ	133		10:21	λέγει	144
	οἴδαμεν	123		11:1	Λέγω	11
	ύπερεντυγχάν	ει122			<b>દ</b> ેયμί	10
8:27	οἴδεν	10		11:2	οἴδατε	10
	ἐντυγχάνει	122			λέγει	144

		A DDENIE	NTX7 A	<i>a</i>	1			225
D	11.0	, APPENI		Contii		14.10	,, ,	10
Rom.	11:2	ἐντυγχάνει	144		Rom.	14:10	<b>έ</b> ξουθενεῖς	10
	11:3	ζητοῦσιν	10			14:11	<b>Z</b> ῶ	10
	11:4	λέγει	144			1414	λέγει	11
	11:6	γίνεται	60			14:14	οἶδα	10
	11:7	ἐπιζητεῖ	10			14:15	λυπεῖται	51
	11:9	λέγει	144				περιπατείς	10A
	11:11	Λέγω	11			14:17	έστιν	132
	11:13	λέγω	11			14:21	προσκόπτει	51o
		είμι	10			14:22	έχεις	10
		δοξάζω	10				δοκιμάζει	10
	11:18	κατακα <b>υ</b> χᾶσαι				14:23	ἐστίν	132A
		βαστάζεις	10A			15:1	'Οφείλομεν	10
	11:23	ἐστιν	10			15:8	λέγω	11
	11:25	θέλω	10			15:10	λέγει	144
	12:1	Παρακαλῶ	11			15:12	λέγει	144
	12:3	Λέγω	11			15:14	έστε	10
		δεῖ	133			15:17	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10
	12:4	ἔχομεν	121			15:24	<b>ἐ</b> λπίζω	10
		<del>ʹ</del> έχει	121			15:25	πορεύομαι	31
	12:5	ἐσμεν	10			15:27	είσὶν	10
	12:19	λέγει	11				ὀφείλουσιν	10
	13:1	ἔστιν	10			15:29	οΐδα	10
		εἰσίν	142			15:30	Παρακαλῶ	11
	13:3	είσὶν	121			16:1	$\Sigma$ υνί $\sigma$ τημι	32
		θέλεις	10			16:4	εὐχαριστῶ	122
	13:4	έστιν	10			16:5	έστιν	10
		φορεῖ	121			16:7	είσιν	10
		έστιν	10			16:16	'Ασπάζονται	10
	13:6	είσιν	10			16:17	Παρακαλῶ	11
	13:9	<b>ἀνακεφαλαιοῦ</b>	ται	134A		16:18	δουλεύουσιν	121
	13:10	<b>ἐ</b> ργάζεται	132				έξαπατῶσιν	121
	14:2	πιστεύει	121			16:19	χαίρω	122
		<b>ἐ</b> σθίει	122			16:19	χαίρω 	10
	14:4	εi̇́	10			16:21	'Ασπάζεται	10
		στήκει	31			16:22	άσπάζομαι	10
		πίπτει	31			16:23	ἀσπάζεται	10
		δυνατεῖ	10				ἀπάζεται	10
	14:5	κρίνει	121				-	
		κρίνει	121		1 Cor.	1:4	Εὐχαριστῶ	122
	14:6	φρονέῖ	121A			1:10	Παρακαλῶ	11
		<b>έ</b> σθίει	121A			1:11	είσιν	10
		ε <b>ὐ</b> χαριστεῖ	122			1:12	λέγω	11
		έσθίει	121A				λέγει	122
		εὐχαριστεῖ	122				ς εἰμι	10
	14:7	ζῆ	132			1:14	ε <mark>ὐ</mark> χαριστῶ	10
	-,	αποθνήσκει	132			1:16	οίδα	10
	14:8	ζωμεν	121A			1:18	έστιν	10
		αποθνῆσκομεν				,	έστιν	10
		έσμέν	10A			1:22	αίτοῦσιν	121
	14:10	κρίνεις	1071				ζητοῦσιν	121
	1 1.10		10				2.1.000.10	121

		A DDEN	IDIX A	O .: 1			22 1
1.0	1.00			—Continued	4.4	<b>9</b> .	10
1 Cor.	1:23	κηρύσσομεν	122	1 Cor.	4:4	έστιν	10
	1:25	ἐστίν	132		4:7	διακρίνει "	10
	1:26	βλέπετε	10			ἔχεις	10
	1:30	έστε	10		4.0	κα <b>υ</b> χᾶσαι	10A
	2:6	λαλοῦμεν	122		4:8	ἐστέ	142
	2:7	λαλοῦμεν	122		4:9	δολῶ	10
	2:10	<b>ͼ</b> ρε <b>υ</b> νᾳ	10		4:11	πεινῶμεν	123
	2:11	οἶδεν	132			διψῶμεν	123
	2:13	λαλοῦμεν	122			γυμνιτεύομεν	123
	2:14	δέχεται	132			κολαφιζόμεθα	123
		ἐστιν	132			<b>ἀστατοῦμεν</b>	123
		δύναται	132		4:12	κοπιῶμεν	123
		ανακρίνεται	132			εὐλογοῦμεν	123
	2:15	ἀνακρίνει	122			ἀνεχόμεθα	123
		ἀνκρίνεται	122		4:13	παρακαλοῦμεν	123
	2:16	ἔχομεν	10		4:14	γράφω	10
	3:2	δ <b>ύ</b> νασθε	10		4:16	παρακαλῶ	11
	3:3	έστε	10		4:17	ἐστιν	10
		έστε	10A			διδάσκω	122
		περιπατεῖτε	10A		4:21	θέλετε	10
	3:4	<b>ε</b> ἰμι	10		5:1	ακούεται	10
		έστε	10A		5:2	ἐστέ	142
	3:5	ἐστιν	10		5:6	ζυμοῖ	132
		ἐστιν	10			οἴδατε	10
	3:7	ἐστίν	132		5:7	$\dot{\epsilon}\sigma$ т $\epsilon$	10
	3:8	εἰσιν	132		5:12	κρίνετε	121
	3:9	ἐσμεν	10		6:1	Τολμᾶ	10
		έστε	10		6:2	οἴδατε	10
	3:10	<b>ἐ</b> ποικοδομεῖ	121			κρίνεται	51
		<b>ἐ</b> ποικοδομεῖ	41			έστε	10A
	3:11	δύναται	10		6:3	οἴδατε	10
		<b>ἐ</b> στιν	134		6:4	καθίζετε	121
	3:12	<b>ἐ</b> ποικοδομεῖ	51		6:5	λέγω	11
	3:13	ἀποκαλ <b>ύ</b> πτετο	1131E			ເປັນເ	10
		έστιν	41		6:6	κρίνεται	121
	3:16	οἴδατε	10		6:7	έστιν	10
		έστε	10			<b>ἔ</b> χετε	121
		οἰκεῖ	10			$\vec{\alpha}$ δικε $\hat{\imath}$ σθε	121
	3:17	φθείρει	51			αποστρερεῖσθε	121
		έστιν	10		6:8	άδικεῖτε	121
		ἐστε	10			αποστερεῖτε	121
	3:18	δοκεῖ	51		6:9	οἴδατε	10
	3:19	ἐστιν	10		6:12	<b>έ</b> ξεστιν	133
	3:20	γινώσκει	10			συμφέρει	133
		είσὶν	10			ἔξεστιν	133
	3:21	έστιν	10		6:15	οἴδατε	10
	4:2	ζητέῖται	10			έστιν	10
	4:3	έστιν	10		6:16	οἴδατε	10
		ἀνακρίνω	10			έστιν	132A
	4:4	σύνοιδα	10			φησίν	144
		5 22 010 00				45.16.00	

		ΔΡΡΕΝ	DIX ACont	inued			220
1 Cor.	9:16	έστιν	10A	1 Cor.	10:33	ἀρέσκω	121
1 001.	9:17	πράσσω	51	1 001.	11:2	'Επαινῶ	10
	J.17	<b>έ</b> χω	10A		11.2	κατέχετε	10
	9:18	έστιν	10		11:3	θέλω	10
	9:23	ποιῶ	122		11.5	έστιν	10
	9:24	οίδατε	10		11:4	καταισχύνει	121A
	, . <u></u> .	τρέχουσιν	124		11:5	καταισχύνει	121A
		λαμβάνει	121		11.0	έστιν	10
	9:25	έγκρατεύεται	121A		11:6	κατακαλ <b>ύ</b> πτεται	51
	9:26	τρέχω	121		11:7	ὀφείλει	10
		πυκτεύω	121			, · έστιν	132
	9:27	<b>ύ</b> πωπιάζω	121		11:8	, στιν	132
		δο <b>υ</b> λαγώγῶ	121		11:10	ὀφείλει	10
	10:1	θέλω	10		11:13	έστὶν	133
	10:13	δύνασθε	41		11:14	διδάσκει	121
	10:15	λέγω	10			έστιν	10A
	10:15	Φημι	10		11:15	έστιν	10A
	10:16	εὐλογοῦμεν	121		11:16	δοκεῖ	51
		έστιν	134			ἔχομεν	10A
		κλῶμεν	121		11:17	έπαινῶ	10
		έστιν	134			συνέρχεσθε	123
	10:17	έσμεν	10		11:18	ακούω	141
		μετέχομεν	121			ακο <b>ύ</b> ω	10
	10:18	βλέπετε	10		11:19	δεῖ	133
		εἰσίν	132A		11:20	έστιν	41
	10:19	φημι	10		11:21	προλαμβάνει	121
		ἐστιν	10			πεινᾶ	121
		ἐστιν	10			μεθύει	121
	10:20	θύουσιν	121		11:22	ἔχετε	10
		θύουσιν	121			καταφρονεῖτε	121
		θέλω	10			καταισχύνετε	121
	10:21	δύνασθε	10			ἐπεινῶ	10
		δ <b>ύ</b> νασθε	10		11:24	ἐστιν	134
	10:22	παραζηλοῦμεν			11:25	ἐστὶν	134
	10.00	έσμεν	10		11:26	καταγγέλλετε	123
	10:23	<b>έ</b> ξεστιν	133		11:29	<b>ἐ</b> σθίει	121A
		συμφέρει	133			πίνει	121A
		<b>ἔ</b> ξεστιν	133		11:30	κοιμώνται	10
	10.05	οἰκοδομεῖ	121		11:32	παιδευόμεθα	121
	10:27	καλεί	51		11:34	πειν <b>ậ</b>	10
	10.20	θέλετε	51		12:1	θέλω	10
	10:28	έστιν	10		12:2	Οἴδατε	10
	10:29	λέγω	11		12:3	γνωρίζω	11
	10.20	κρίνεται	11			λέγει Sávozes	132A
	10:30	μετέχω Β) ασφουρίμας	51		12 .4	δύναται εἰσίν	132A
		βλασφημοῦμαι	10A 121		12 :4 12 :5	είσιν είσιν	10 10
	10:31	εὐχαριστῶ ἐσθίετε	510		12:5	είσιν είσίν	10
	10.31	πίνετε	510		12:0	είσιν δίδοται	121
		πινέτε ποιέιτε	510		12:7	δίδοται	121
		MOLECTE	510		14.0	otourat	121

		A DDENI	DIV A Continue 1			221
1 Can	12.11	_	DIX A—Continued	12.12		10
1 Cor.	12:11	ένεργεῖ Ο τέλοποιο	121 1 Cor.	13:12	γινώσκω	10
	12.12	βούλεται 	41	13:13	μένει ``	10
	12:12	έστιν *	132	14:2	λαλεῖ	121A
		έχει 	132		ακούει \\ 6	121A
	12.14	έστιν %	10	14.2	λαλε <b>ι</b>	121A
	12:14	ἔστιν 	132	14:3	λαλεῖ	121A
	12:15	<b>ε</b> ἰμὶ 	10	14:4	οἰκοδομεῖ	121A
		εἰμὶ *	10	1 4.5	οἰκοδομέῖ	121A
	12.16	ἔστιν -?	132A	14:5	θέλω	10
	12:16	εἰμὶ -2	10	14:10	είσιν 	51
		eiµì "	10	14:12	έστε	10
	10.01	έστιν	132A	14:14	προσεύχεται ,	121A
	12:21	δύναται	10	14.15	έστιν ?	121A
		<del>ἔ</del> χω "	10	14:15	έστιν	10
	12.22	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10	14:16	λέγεις	41
	12:22	έστιν	10	1417	οἶδεν	41
	12:23	δοκοῦμεν	121	14:17	<b>εὐ</b> χαριστεῖς	121A
		περιτίθεμεν	121	14.10	οίκοδομέιται	121A
	12.24	<b>ἔ</b> χει	10	14:18	εὐχαριστῶ	10
	12:24	έχει	121	14.10	λαλῶ	122
	12:26	πάσχει	510	14:19	θέλω	122
		συμπάσχει	121A	14:21	λέγει	11
		δοξάζεται	510	14:22		132
	12.27	συγχαίρει ,	121A	14:23	μαίνεσθε	10
	12:27	, έστε *	10	14:24	<b>έ</b> λέγχεται	121A
	12:30	<b>ἔ</b> χουσιν	121	14.05	ἀνακρίνεται	121A
		λαλο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	121	14:25	γίνεται 	121A
	12.21	διερμηνεύουσι		14:26	ἐστιν ἐστιν	10 10
	12:31 13:2	δείκνυμι -2	11 10A	14.20		10
	13:3	εἰμι ὦφελοῦμαι	10A 10A		έχει Έχει	121
	13:4	μακροθυμέ <b>ι</b>	132		ἔχει ἴνει	121
	13.4		132		έχει Έχει	121
		χρηστεύεται (٣) ο	132		έχει Έχει	121
		ζηλοῖ περπερε <b>ύ</b> εται	132	14:27	ἔχει λαλεῖ	51
		φυσιοῦται	132	14:31	δ <b>ύ</b> νασθε	10
	13:5	ασχημονεί	132	14:32	<b>ύ</b> ποτάσσεται	121
	13.3	αυ χημονέι ζητέὶ	132	14:33	έστιν	10
		παροξύνεται	132	14:34	έπιτρέπεται	133
		λογίζεται	132	14.34	λέγει	144
	13:6	χαίρει αίρει	132	14:35	θέλουσιν	51
	13.0	συγχαίρει	132	14.55	έστιν	133
	13:7	στέγει	132	14:37	δοκεῖ	51
	13.7	πιστεύει	132	14.57	γράφω	10
		κιο τε <b>υ</b> ει έλπίζει	132		γραφω έστὶν	10
		ύπομένει	132	14:38	άγνο€ <b>ι</b>	51
	13:8	πίπτει	132	11.50	άγωοείται	132A
	13:9	γινώσκομεν	121	15:1	Γνωρίζω	11
	10.7	•	121	15:2	σώζεσθε	10A
	13:12	βλέπομεν	10	13.2	κατέχετε	51
	13.14	ρποπομον	10			<i>J</i> 1

		APPENDIX	ζ AContinue	ed			220
1 Cor.	15:6	μένουσιν	10	1 Cor.	15:51	λέγω	11
	15:9	εἰμι	10		15:53	δεῖ	133
		είμι	10		15:58	ἔστιν	10
	15:10	είμι	10		16:5	διέρχομαι	31
		είμι	10		16:7	θέλω	10
	15:11	κηρύσσομεν	123			<b>ἐ</b> λπίζω	10
	15:12	 κηρύσσεται	51		16:10	<b>ἐ</b> ργάζεται	122
		 λέγουσιν	121A		16:11	έκδέχομαι	10
		ἔστιν	31E		16:15	Παρακαλῶ	11
	15:13	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	51			οἴδατε	10
	15:15	$\epsilon$ ύρι $\sigma$ κόμ $\epsilon$ θ $lpha$	10A			ἐστὶν	10
		ἐγείρονται	51o		16:17	χαίρω	23
	15:16	έγείρονται	51		16:19	'Ασπάζονται	10
	15:17	έστέ	10A			ἀσπάζεται	10
	15:19	ἐσμὲν	51		16:20	ἀσπάζονται	10
		· ἐσμέν	10A		16:22	φιλεῖ	51
	15:22	άποθνήσκουσι	124				
	15:25	δε̂ι	133	2 Cor.	1:4	παρακαλο <b>ύμ</b> εθα	121
	15:26	καταργεῖται	311		1:5	περισσεύει	121
	15:29	έγείρονται	51			περισσε <b>ύ</b> ει	121
		βαπτίζονται	121A		1:6	θλιβόμεθα	51o
	15:30	κινδυνεύομεν	10A			παρακαλούμεθα	51o
	15:31	ἀποθνήσκω	122			πάσχομεν	121
		<b>έ</b> χω	10		1:7	έστε	10
	15:32	έγείρονται	51		1:8	θέλομεν	10
		ἀποθνήσκομεν	31		1:12	ἐστίν	10
	15:33	Φθείρουσιν	132		1:13	γράφομεν	10
	15:34	<b>ἔ</b> χουσιν	10			ἀναγινώσκετε	10
		λαλῶ	10			ἐπιγινώσκετε	10
	15:35	ἐγείρονται	31E			<b>ἐ</b> λπίζω	10
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	31E		1:14	ἐσμεν	10
	15:36	$\sigma$ πείρεις	121		1:17	βουλεύομαι	10
		ζψοποιεῖται	121A			βουλεύομαι	10
	15:37	$\sigma$ πείρεις	121		1:18	έστιν	122
		$\sigma$ πείρεις	121		1:23	<b>ἐ</b> πικαλο <b>ῦ</b> μαι	11
	15:38	δίδωσιν	121		1:24	κυριεύομεν	10
	15:41	διαφέρει	132			ἐσμεν	10
	15:42	σπείρεται	132		2:2	λυπῶ	51
		<b>ἐ</b> γείρεται	31E		2:3	έστιν	10
	15:43	σπείρεται	132		2:4	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10
		έγείρεται	31E		2:8	παρακαλῶ	11
		σπείρεται	132		2:9	έστε	53
		<b>ἐ</b> γείρεται	31E		2:10	χαρίζεσθε	10
	15:44	σπείρεται	132		2:11	άγνοοῦμεν	10
		έγείρετα <b>ι</b>	31E		2:15	<b>ἐ</b> σμέν	10
		<b>ἔ</b> στιν	51		2:17	έσμεν	10
	1.5.50	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	132A		2.1	λαλοῦμεν	123
	15:50	φημι	11		3:1	'Αρχόμεθα	10
		δύναται	132		2.2	<b>χρήζομεν</b>	10
		κληρονομεῖ	132		3:2	έστε	10

		APPENDIX	AContinued			22)
2 Cor.	3:3	έστὲ	10 2 Cor.	6:12	στενοχωρεῖσθε	10
	3:4	<b>ἔ</b> χομεν	10		στενοχωρεῖσθε	10
	3:5	έσμεν	10	6:13	λέγω ΄΄	11
	3:6	αποκτείνει	121	6:16	ἐσμεν	10
		ζψοποιεῖ	121	6:17	λέγει	11
	3:9	περισσε <b>ύ</b> ει	10A	6:18	λέγει	11
	3:12	χρώμεθα	10	7:3	λέγω	10
	3:14	μένει	10		έστε	10
		καταργεῖται	121	7:4	<b>ύ</b> περπερισσε <b>ύ</b> ομαι	121
	3:15	 κεῖται	121	7:8	μεταμέλομαι	10A
	3:16	περιαιρεῖται	121A		βλέπω	10
	3:17	έστιν	10	7:9	χείρω	10A
	3:18	μεταμορφούμεθ	θα 10	7:10	ἐργάζεται	121
	4:1	ἐγκακοῦμεν	10		κατεργάζεται	121
	4:3	ἔστιν	51	7:15	έστιν	10
		ἐστὶν	142A	7:16	χαίρω	10
	4:4	<b>,</b> εστιν	10		θαρρῶ	10
	4:5	κηρύσσομεν	123	8:1	Γνωρίζομεν	11
	4:7	"Εχομεν	10	8:3	μαρτυρῶ	11
	4:11	παραδιδόμεθα	121	8:7	περισσε <b>ύ</b> ετε	10
	4:12	ἐνεργεῖται	10	8:8	λέγω	11
	4:13	πιστεύομεν	10	8:9	γινώσκετε	10
		λαλο <b>ῦ</b> μεν	122	8:10	δίδωμι	11
	4:16	ἐγκακοῦμεν	121		συμφέρει	133
		διαφθείρεται	52	8:12	πρόκειται	51
		ανακαινο <b>ῦ</b> ται	122A		· ἔχει	41
	4:17	κατεργάζεται	10	8:21	προνοοῦμεν	10
	5:1	Οίδαμεν	10	9:1	έστιν	133
		<b>ἔ</b> χομεν	10	9:2	οἶδα	10
	5:2	στενάζομεν	10		καυχῶμαι	122
	5:4	στενάζομεν	10	9:7	ἀγαπᾶ	132
		θέλομεν	10	9:8	δυνατεῖ	10
	5:6	ἐκδημοῦμεν	10	9:9	μένει	31
	5:7	περιπατο <b>ῦ</b> μεν	10	9:11	κατεργάζεται	10
	5:8	θαρροῦμεν	10	9:12	ἐστὶν	10
		εὐδοκοῦμεν	10	10:1	παρακαλῶ	11
	5:9	φιλοτιμούμεθα	10		θαρρῶ	10
	5:10	δεῖ	133	10:2	δέομαι	11
	5:11	πείθομεν	121		λογίζομαι	10
		<b>ἐ</b> λπίζω	10	10:3	στρατευόμεθα	121
	5:12	συνιστάνομεν	10	10:7	βλέπετε	121
	5:13	$\sigma$ ωφρονο $\hat{f v}$ μεν	510	10:10	φησίν	121
	5:14	συνέχει	10	10:11	ἐσμεν	10
	5:16	οίδαμεν	10	10:12	τολμῶμεν	10
		γινώσκομεν	10		συνιᾶσιν	10
	5:20	πρεσβεύομεν	10	10:14	ύπερεκτείνομεν	10
		δεόμεθα	11	10:18	ἐστιν	132A
	6:1		11		συνίστησιν	51o
	6:2	λέγει	144	11:1	$ec{lpha}$ νέχε $\sigma$ θέ	10
	6:9	ζῶμεν	10	11:2	ζηλῶ	10

2	3	0	

				~ .				230
		APPEND	IX A0	Contin	ued			
2 Cor.	11:3	φοβοῦμαι	10		2 Cor.	12:9	'Αρκεῖ	10
	11:4	κηρύσσει	51				τελεῖται	132
		 λαμβάνετε	51			12:10	εὐδοκῶ	121
		ἀνέχεσθε	121A				είμι	121
	11:5	λογίζομαι	10			12:11	είμι	52
	11:10	έστιν	10			12:13	έστιν	10
	11:11	ἀγαπῶ	10			12:14	ζητῶ	10
	11.11	οἶδεν	10			12,17	όφείλει	132
	11:12	ποιῶ	10			12:15	άγαπῶ	51
	11.12		121			12.13	. •	10A
	11.14	καυχῶνται		121		12.10	άγαπῶμαι	
	11:14	μεταχηματίζετ		121		12:19	δοκείτε	10
	11:15	μεταχηματίζον		51			ἀπολογοῦμεθα	10
	11:16	λέγω	11			10.00	λαλοῦμεν	11
	11:17	λαλῶ	10			12:20	φοβοῦμαι	10
		λαλῶ	10				θέλω	10
	11:18	καυχῶνται	121				θέλετε	10
	11:19	ἀνέχεσθε	121			13:1	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31
	11:20	ἀνέχεσθε	121A			13:2	προλέγω	11
		καταδουλοῖ	51			13:3	ζητέῖτε	10
		κατεσθίει	51				$\vec{lpha}$ σθεν $\hat{f \epsilon}$ ι	10
		λαμβάνει	51				δυνατεῖ	10
		<b>ἐ</b> παίρεται	51			13:4	ζῆ	10
		δέρει	51				ἀσθενοῦμεν	10
	11:21	λέγω	11			13:5	έστε	53
		λέγω	11				ἐπιγινώσκετε	10
		τολμῶ	10				· ἐστὲ	51
	11:22	είσιν	10			13:6	<b>ἐ</b> λπίζω	10
		εἰσιν	10				έσμὲν	10
		εἰσιν	10			13:7	· εὐχόμεθα	10
	11:23	εἰσιν	10			13:8	δυνάμεθά	10
		λαλῶ	11			13:9	χαίρομεν	121
	11:29	ἀσθενῶ	121				εὐχόμεθα	10
		ἀσθένω	121			13:10	γράφω	10
		σκανδαλίζεται				13:12	άσπάζονται	10
		πυροῦμαι				13.12	ao nagoriai	10
	11:30	διξ	51		Gal.	1:6	θαυμάζω	10
	11:31	οἶδεν	10		Gui.	1.0	μετατίθεσθε	23
	11.51	ψε <b>ύ</b> δομαι	10			1:7	έστιν	10
	12:1	δεî	133			1./	είσιν	51
	12:1	οἶδα	10			1:9	λέγω	11
	12.2	οίδα	10			1.9	κε γω εὐαγγελίζεται	51
		οίδα	10			1:10	πείθω	10
		οἶδεν	10			1.10	κειοω ζητῶ	10
	12.2	οίδα				1.11	· .	
	12:3	010α 018α	10			1:11	Γνωρίζω	11
			10			1.20	έστιν	23
	12.6	οἶδεν	10			1:20	γράφω	10
	12:6	φείδομαι ον έπου	11			1.02	ψεύδομαι	10
		βλέπει	121			1:23	εὐαγγελίζεται	122
		<b>ἀκούε</b> ι	121			2:2	κηρύσσω	122

							231
		A	PPENDIX A	—Con	tinued		
Gal.	2:4	ἔχομεν	10	Gal.	4:12	δέομαι	11
	2:6	διαφέρει	10		4:13	οἴδατε	10
		λαμβάνει	121		4:15	μαρτ <b>υ</b> ρῶ	11
	2:14	ὀρθοποδοῦσιν	42		4:17	ζηλοῦσιν	10
		ζῆς	51			θέλο <b>υ</b> σιν	10
		ἀναγκάζεις	10A			ζηλοῦτε	10
	2:16	δικαιο <b>ῦ</b> ται	132		4:19	ώδίνω	10
	2:18	οἰκοδομῶ	51		4:20	ἀποροῦμαι	10
		συνιστάνω	10A		4:21	ἀκούετε	10
	2:20	ζῶ	10		4:24	έστιν	134
		ζῆ	10			εἰσιν	134
		ζῶ	10			ἐστὶν	134
		ζω	10		4:25	ἐστιν	134
	2:21	ἀθετῶ	10			συστοιχεῖ	134
	3:2	θέλω	10			δουλεύει	10
	3:3	<b>ἐ</b> στε	10		4:26	ἐστίν	10
		$\dot{\epsilon}$ πιτελ $\dot{\epsilon}$ ι $\sigma$ θ $\dot{\epsilon}$	10			έστιν	134
	3:7	είσιν	10		4:28	έστέ	10
	3:8	δικαιοί	31		4:30	λέγει	144
	3:9	εὐλογοῦνται	121		4:31	έσμὲν	10
	3:10	είσὶν	510		5:2	λέγω	11
	5.10	είσίν	10A		5:3	μαρτύρομαι	11
		<b>ἐμμένει</b>	510		0.5	έστιν	10A
	3:11	δικαιοῦται	132		5:4	δικαιοῦσθε	510
	3:12	έστιν	10		5:5	απεκδεχόμεθα	10
	3:15	λέγω	11		5:6	ίσχύει	10
	3.13	άθετε <b>î</b>	132		5:9	ζυμοῖ	132
		έπιδιατάσσετα			5:11	κηρ <b>ύ</b> σσω	51
	3:16	λέγει	144		3.11	διώκομαι	10A
	5.10	έστιν	134		5:15	δάκνετε	51
	3:17	λέγω	11		3.13	κατεσθίετε	51
	3.17	ακυροῖ	141		5:16	Λέγω	11
	3:20	έστιν	10		5:17	έπιθυμεῖ	121
	3.20	έστιν	10		3.17	αντικείται	132
	3:25	•	10		5:18	άγεσθε	51
	3:26	έσμεν έστε	10		3.10	άστὲ	10A
	3:28	ένι	10		5:19	έστιν	10A
	3.20		10		3.19		10
	2.20	έστε 2			5.21	έστιν	
	3:29	έστέ Α έστι	10A		5:21	προλέγω	11
	4:1	Λέγω	11		5:22	ἐστιν ἔστιν	10
		έστιν Sanda fara	510		5:23		10
	4.0	διαφέρει	132A		5:25	ζωμεν	51
	4:2	έστὶν	132A		6:3	δοκεῖ	51
	4:6	έ <i>σ</i> τε .3	10		6.7	φρεναπατᾶ	10A
	4:7	eî '	10		6:7	μ <b>υ</b> κτηρίζεται "	121
	4:9	έπιστρέφετε Οίλουσο	10		6:10	<b>έ</b> χομεν	121
	4.10	θέλετε	10		6:12	θέλουσιν	121
	4:10	παρατηρείσθε			( 12	ἀναγκάζουσιν	121
	4:11	φοβοῦμαι	10		6:13	φυλάσσουσιν	121

				. ~				232
				ACont				
Gal.	6:13	θέλουσιν	121	I	Eph.	5:23	ἐστιν	10
	6:15	ἐστιν	132			5:24	<b>ύ</b> ποτάσσεται	10
	6:17	βαστάζω	1.0			5:28	ὀφείλουσιν	10
							άγαπᾳ	132A
Eph.	1:7	ἔχομεν	10			5:29	ἐκτρέφει	121
	1:14	ἐστιν	10				θάλπει	121
	1:16	παύομαι	121			5:30	ἐσμέν	10
	1:18	ἐστιν	10			5:32	ἐστίν	10
	1:23	ἐστὶν	10				λέγω	11
	2:5	$\dot{\epsilon}\sigma$ τ $\epsilon$	142			6:1	έστιν	133
	2:8	$\dot{\epsilon}\sigma$ τ $\epsilon$	142			6:2	έστιν	10
	2:10	ἐσμεν	10			6:9	<b>έ</b> στιν	10
	2:14	ἐστιν	10				ἔστιν	10
	2:18	ἔχομεν	10			6:12	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10
	2:19	έστὲ	10			6:17	έστιν	134
		ἐστὲ	10			6:20	πρεσβε <b>ύ</b> ω	10
	2:21	α <b>ὔ</b> ξει	10				δεῖ	133
	2:22	συνοικοδομέῖ		10		6:21	πράσσω	10
	3:4	δύνασθε	10				•	
	3:12	ἔχομεν	10	F	Phil.	1:3	Εὐχαριστῶ	10
	3:13	αίτο <b>ῦ</b> μαι	11			1:7	έστιν	133
		ἐστὶν	10			1:8	<b>ἐ</b> πιτοθῶ	10
	3:14	κάμπτω	10			1:9	προσεύχομαι	10
	3:15	ονομάζεται	141			1:12	βούλομαι	10
	3:20	αἰτούμεθα	10			1:15	κηρύσσουσιν	121
		νοοῦμεν	10			1:16	κεῖμαι	141
	4:1	Παρακαλῶ	11			1:17	καταγγέλλουσιν	121
	4:8	λέγει	144			1:18	καταγγέλλεται	122
	4:9	έστιν	10				ναίοω	10
	4:10	έστιν	10			1:19	χαίρω οἶδα	10
	4:15	έστιν	10			1:22	γνωρίζω	10
	4:16	ποιείται	10			1:23	συνέχομαι	10
	4:17	λέγω	11			1:25	οἶδα	10
	,	μαρτύρομαι	11			1:27	στήκετε	10
		περιπατεῖ	121			1:28	έστίν	10
	4:21	έστιν	10			1:30	άκούετε	10
	4:25	έσμέν	10			2:13	έστιν	10
	5:3	πρέπει	133			2:15	φαίνεσθε	10
	5:5	<b>ἴ</b> στε	10			2:17	σπένδομαι	51
	3.5	έστιν	134			2.17	χαίρω	10A
		έχει	132				συγχαίρω	10A
	5:6	έρχεται	31E			2:18	χαίρετε	10A
	5:10	έστιν	133			2.10	συγχαίρετέ	10A
	5:12	έστιν	133			2:19	'Ελπίζω	10A
	5:13	φανερο <b>ῦ</b> ται	132A			2:20	έχω	10
	5:14	έστιν	132A 132A			2:21	εχω ζητοῦσιν	121
	3.14	εστιν λέγει	132A 144			2:22	ζητουστν γινώσκετε	10
	5:15	λεγει περιπατέὶτε	144			2:23	γινωσκετε έλπίζω	10
	5:15 5:16	$\pi$ εριπατείτε $\epsilon$ ί $\sigma$ ιν	10			3:3		10
							ἐσμεν Souga	
	5:18	ἐστιν	10			3:4	δοκεῖ	51

							233
		4	ENDIX A		ied		
Phil.	3:8	ήγοῦμαι	10	Col.	2:5	<b>ε</b> ἰμι	10
		ήγοῦμαι	10		2:9	κατοικέῖ	10
	3:12	διώκω	10		2:10	ἐστὲ	142
	3:13	λογίζομαι	10			έστιν	10
	3:14	διώκω	10		2:17	ἐστιν	10
	3:15	φρονεῖτε	51		2:19	α <b>ὔ</b> ξει	10
	3:17	ἔχετε	10		2:20	δογματίζεσθε	10
	3:18	περιπατο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	121		2:22	ἐστιν	10
		λέγω	11		2:23	έστιν	10
	3:20	<b>ύ</b> πάρχει	10		3:1	έστιν	10
		ἀπεκδεχόμεθα	10		3:5	ἐστὶν	134
	4:2	παρακαλῶ	11		3:6	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E
		παρακαλ <i>ῶ</i>	11		3:11	ັ <sub>ເ</sub> ັນເ	10
	4:3	· ἐρωτῶ	11		3:14	ἐστιν	10
	4:8	ἐστίν	10		3:20	έστιν	133
	4:11	λέγω	11		3:24	δουλεύετε	10
		<b>ε</b> ἰμι	10		3:25	ἔστιν	132
	4:12	οἶδα	10		4:1	έχετε	10
		οἶδα	10		4:4	δεῖ	133
	4:13	<b>ἰσχύ</b> ω	10		4:6	δεῖ	133
	4:15	Οίδατε	10		4:9	, έστιν	10
	4:17	έπιζητ <b>ῶ</b>	10		4:10	'Ασπάζεται	10
	1.1,	έπιζητῶ	10		4:12	άσπάζεται	10
	4:18	απέχω	141		4:13	μαρτυρώ	10
	7.10	περισσε <b>ύ</b> ω	10		<b>T.</b> 13	μαρτυρώ μαρτυρώ	10
	4:21	άσπάζονται	10		4:14	ασπάζεται	10
	4:22	άσπάζονται	10		4.14	aonagerai	10
	4.22	ασπαζονται	10	1 Th.	1.2	Finanaranusu	123
Cal	1.2	Educação a	10	1 111.	1:2	Εὐχαριστοῦμεν οἴδατε	10
Col.	1:3	Εὐχαριστοῦμε			1:5		
	1:4	ἔχετε ² —	10		1:9	ἀπαγγέλλουσιν οἴδατε	121
	1:6	έστὶν ?	10		2:1		10
	1:7	έστιν	10		2:2	οἴδατε	10
	1:9	πα <b>υ</b> όμεθα "	121		2:4	λαλο <b>ῦ</b> μεν Υς	123
	1:14	<del>ἔ</del> χομεν	10		2:5	οἴδατε	10
	1:15	<b>έ</b> στιν	10		2:8	εὐδοκοῦμεν	10
	1:17	<b>έ</b> στιν	10		2:9	μνημονεύετε	10
	1:18	έστιν	10		2:11	οίδατε	10
		ἐστιν	10		2:13	<b>ε</b> ὖχαριστοῦμεν	10
	1:23	<b>ἐπιμένετε</b>	51			έστιν	10
	1:24	χαίρω	10			<b>ἐνεργε</b> ῖται	10
		ἀνταναπληρῶ	10		2:20	έστε	10
		έστιν	134		3:3	οἴδατε	10
	1:27	ἐστιν	134			κείμεθα	141
	1:28	καταγγέλλομει			3:4	μέλλομεν	10
	1:29	κοπιῶ	121			οἴδατε	10
	2:1	θέλω	10		3:6	έχετε	10
		<b>ἔ</b> χω	10		3:8	ζῶμεν	10A
	2:3	είσιν	10			στήκετε	51
	2:4	λέγω	11		3:9	δυνάμεθα	10
	2:5	άπειμι	51			χαίρομεν	10
		•				, · ·	

							234
		APP	ENDIX AC	Continue	ed		
1 Th.	4:1	έρωτῶμεν	11	2 Th.	3:10	θέλει	51
		παρακαλοῦμεν			3:11	ἀκούομεν	141
		δεῖ	133		3:12	παραγγέλλομεν	11
		περιπατέ <b>ι</b> τε	10		J.12	παρακαλοῦμεν	11
	4:2	οίδατε	10		3:14	ύπακούει	51
	4:3	έστιν	10		3:17	έστιν	121
	4:8	άθετεῖ	10A		5.17	γράφω	10
						γραφω	10
	4:9	<b>ἔ</b> χετε ?	10	1 77:	1.4		101
	4.10	έστε	141	1 Tim.	1:4	παρέχουσιν	121
	4:10	ποιείτε	121		1:5	ἐστὶν	10
		παρακαλοῦμεν			1:7	λέγουσιν	121
	4:13	θέλομεν	10			διαβεβαιοῦνται	121
	4:14	πιστεύομεν	51		1:8	Οίδαμεν	10
	4:15	λέγομεν	11		1:9	κεῖται	141
	5:1	ἔχετε	10		1:10	ἀντίκειται	51
	5:2	οίδατε	10		1:12	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E		1:15	είμι	10
	5:3	έφίσταται	31E		1:18	παρατίθεμαί	11
	5:4	ἐστὲ	10		1:20	έστιν	10
	5:5	ἐστε	10		2:1	Παρακαλῶ	11
		ἐσμὲν	10		2:4	θέλει	10
	5:7	καθεύδουσιν	121		2:7	λέγω	11
		μεθύουσιν	121			ψε <b>ύ</b> δομαι	11
	5:11	ποιείτε	121		2:8	Βούλομαι	10
	5:12	'Ερωτῶμεν	11		2:10	πρέπει	133
	5:14	παρακαλοῦμεν			2:12	έπιτρέπω	121
	5:27	Ένορκίζω	11		3:1	όρέγεται	51
	3.21	Lvopkisw	11		3.1	έπιθυμε <b>ι</b>	132A
2 Th.	1:3	ὀφείλομεν	10		3:2	δεî	133
2 111.	1.5	έστιν	10		3:5	οίδεν	51
		ύπεραυξάνει	10		3:7	δεί	133
		πλεονάζει	10		3:13		133 132A
	1.4	-				περιποιοῦνται	
	1:4	ἀνέχεσθε	121		3:14	γράφω	10
	1:5	πάσχετε	121		3:15	δ <b>ε</b> î	133
	1:11	,προσευχόμεθα			2.16	<b>ἐ</b> στὶν	10
	2:1	'Ερωτῶμεν	11		3:16	ἐστὶν	10
	2:4	ἔστιν	42		4:1	λέγει	122
	2:5	μνημονεύετε	10		4:5	άγιάζεται	132
	2:6	οἴδατε	10		4:8	ἐστὶν	132
	2:7	ένεργεῖται	10			ἐστιν	132
	2:9	ἐστιν	31E		4:10	κοπιῶμεν	121
	2:11	πέμπει	31E			ἀγωνιζόμεθα	121
	2:13	ὀφείλομεν	10			ἐστιν	10
	3:3	έστιν	10		4:13	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31
	3:4	παραγγέλλομε	121ע		5:4	έχει	51
		ποιείτε	121			έστιν	133
	3:6	Παραγγέλλομε	:ν11		5:5	προσμένει	122
	3:7	οἴδατε	10		5:8	προνοε <b>ιται</b>	51
		δεῖ	133			έστιν	132A
	3:9	έχομεν	10		5:11	θέλο <b>υ</b> σιν	121
		·V - L - 2	<del>-</del>				

		A DDE	NIDIV A. C.	.41			233
1 77:	5.12		NDIX ACoi			20/	101
1 Tim.	5:13	μανθάνουσιν	121	2 Tim.		ανθίστανται 30	121
	5:14	βούλομαι ν	10		3:15	οἶδας	23
	5:16	ἔχει	51		4:1	Διαμαρτύρομαι	11
	5:18	λέγει	144		4:6	σπένδομαι	31
	5:21	<b>Δ</b> ιαμαρτύρομα			4:8	ἀπόκειταί	141
	5:24	είσιν	10		4:11	έστιν	10
		έπακολουθοῦσι				έστιν	10
	5:25	δύναται	10		4:21	'Ασπάζεται	10
	6:1	εἰσὶν	10			•	
	6:2	εἰσιν	10	Tit.	1:6	έστιν	51
		είσιν	10		1:10	Είσὶν	10
	6:3	έτεροδιδα <i>σ</i> καλ			1:11	δεῖ	133
		προσέρχεται	51			<b>ἀνατρέπουσιν</b>	121
	6:4	γίνεται	121			δεῖ	133
	6:6	ἔστιν	132		1:13	ἐστὶν	10
	6:7	δυνάμεθα	10		1:16	δμολογοῦσιν	121
	6:9	<b>ἐμπίπτουσιν</b>	121			άπνοῦνται	121
		βυθίζουσιν	121		2:1	πρέπει	133
	6:10	ἐστιν	132		3:8	βο <b>ύ</b> λομαι	10
	6:13	παραγγέλλω	11			ἐστιν	133
	6:16	δύναται	10		3:9	είσὶν	10
					3:11	άμαρτάνει	132
2 Tim.	1:3	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10		3:15	'Ασπάζονται	10
		λατρε <b>ύ</b> ω	10				
		<b>ἔ</b> χω	122	Phle.	4	Εὐχαριστῶ	122
	1:6	ἀναμιμνήσκω	11		5	ἔχεις	10
		ἐστιν	10		9	παρακαλῶ	11
	1:12	πάσχω	10		10	παρακαλῶ	11
			10		12	ἔστιν	134
		οίδα	10		17	ἔχεις	51
		ἐστιν	10		18	ὀφείλει	51
	1:15	Οίδας	60		19	προσοφείλεις	10
		ἐστιν	10		21	λέγω	10
	1:18	γινώσκεις	10		22	<b>ἐ</b> λπίζω	10
	2:4	<b>ἐμπ</b> λέκεται	121		23	'Ασπάζεταί	10
	2:5	$\sigma$ τεφανο $\hat{f u}$ ται	121A				
	2:6	δεῖ	133	Heb.	1:5	εί	10
	2:7	λέγω	10		1:6	λέγει	144
	2:9	κακοπαθῶ	10		1:7	λέγει	144
	2:10	<b>ύ</b> πομένω	10		1:10	είσιν	10
	2:12	<del>ύ</del> πομένομεν	51		1:11	διαμένεις	31
	2:13	$\dot{lpha}$ πι $\sigma$ το $\hat{f v}$ μεν	51		1:12	<b>દ</b> ો	31
		μένει	10A		1:14	είσὶν	10
		δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	10		2:1	δεῖ	133
	2:17	έστιν	10		2:5	λαλοῦμεν	10
	2:18	ἀνατρέπουσιν	121		2:6	έστιν	10
	2:20	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	121			μιμνήσκη	121
	2:23	γεννῶσιν	121			έπισκέπτη	121
	2:24	δεῖ	133		2:8	δρῶμεν	10
	3:6	εἰσιν	10		2:9	βλέπομεν	10

							236
		APP	ENDIX AC	Continu	.ed		
Heb.	2:11	<b>ἐ</b> παισχύνεται	144	Heb.	7:23	εἰσιν	142
	2:14	ἔστιν	134		7:24	<sup>"</sup> έχει	10
	2:16	έπιλαμβάνεται	. 141		7:25	δύναται	10
		έπιλαμβάνεται	. 141		7:27	<sup>"</sup> έχει	10
	2:18	δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	10		7:28	καθίστησιν	121
	3:3	<b>ἔ</b> χει	132		8:1	ἔχομεν	10
	3:4	κατασκευάζετο	α1121		8:3	καθίσταται	121
	3:6	έσμεν	10A		8:5	<b>λατεύουσιν</b>	121
	3:7	λέγει	144			φησίν	144
	3:10	πλανῶνται	121		8:6	έστιν	10
	3:13	καλεῖται	10		8:8	λέγει	144
	3:19	βλέπομεν	10			<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	31
	4:2	έσμεν ΄	142			λέγει	11
	4:3	εἰσερχόμεθα	10		8:9	λ <b>έ</b> γει	11
	4:6	απολείπεται	141		8:10	λέγει	11
	4:7	ὀρίζει	144		9:2	λέγεται	131
	4:9	απολείπεται	141		9:5	έστιν	10
	4:13	έστιν	10		9:6	εἰσίασιν	121
	4:15	ἔχομεν	10		9:7	προσφέρει	121
	5:1	καθίσταται	121		9:9	προσφέρονται	121
	5:2	περίκειται	121		9:11	έστιν	134
	5:3	όφείλει	121		9:13	άγιάζει	51
	5:4	λαμβάνει	121		9:15	έστίν	10
	5:5	εί	10		9:17	ίσχύει	132
	5:6	λέγει	144		7.17	ζῆ	51o
	5:12	κεγει ἔχετε	10		9:22	ς ιι καθαρίζεται	121
	5:13	έστιν	132A		9.22	γίνεται	132
	5:14	έστιν	132A 132		9:25	γινεται εἰσέρχεται	122
	5.14 6:7		41		9.23 9:27	απόκειται	141
	0.7	γεωργεῖται μεταλαμβάνει			10:1		121
	6:9	μεταλαμβάνει	52		10.1	προσφέρουσιν δύναται	121
	6:11	λαλοῦμεν ἐσε			10.5		
		έπιθυμοῦμεν 	10		10:5	λέγει	144
	6:16	ὀμνύουσιν "	121		10:7	ήκω	141
	6:19	<b>ἔχομεν</b>	10		10:8	προσφέρονται	121
	7:2	έστιν	134		10:9	ήκω	141
	7:3	μένει "	23		10.10	ἀναιρεῖ ? (	141
	7:5	<b>ἔ</b> χουσιν	10		10:10	ἐσμέν	142
	7:5	<b>ἔστιν</b>	134		10:11	δύνανται	121
	7:7	εὐλογεῖται	132		10:15	Μαρτυρεῖ "	144
	7:8	λαμβάνουσιν	121		10:20	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	134
	<b>5.10</b>	ζ <u>ῆ</u>	10		10:25	βλέπετε	10
	7:12	γίνεται	132		10:26	ἀπολείπεται	141
	7:13	λέγεται	144		10:28	ἀποζνήσκει	124
	7:15	έστιν	133A		10:29	δοκείτε	10
		<b>ἀνίσταται</b>	51		10:30	οἴδαμεν	10
	7:17	μαρτυρεῖται	144		10:35	<b>ἔ</b> χει	10
	7:18	γίνεται	132		10:36	έχετε	10
	7:19	ἐγγίζομεν	10		10:38	εὐδοκεῖ	121A
	7:20	εἰσίν	142		10:39	ἐσμέν	121A

72	7
23	/

							237
		APPEN	IDIX ACon	tinued			
Heb.	11:1	"Εστιν	10	Ja.	1:13	πειράζει	121
	11:3	νοοῦμεν	10		1:14	πειράζεται	121
	11:4	λαλέῖ	10		1:15	τίκτει	121
	11:6	δεῖ	133			αποκ <b>ύ</b> ει	121
		ἔστιν	10		1:17	έστιν	10
		γίνεται	10			້ະນາ	10
	11:8	έρχεται	41		1:19	"Ιστε	60
	11:13	είσιν	42		1:20	<b>ἐ</b> ργάζεται	121
	11:14	<b>ἐ</b> μφανίζουσιν	121		1:23	έστὶν	51
		έπιζητοῦσιν	42			έοικεν	135A
	11:15	μνημονεύουσι	ν 51		1:26	δοκέῖ	51
	11:16	ὀρέγονται	144		1:27	ἐστίν	10
		έστιν	134		2:6	καταδυναστεύουσιν	121
		έπαισχ <b>ύ</b> νεται	122			<b>έ</b> λκο <b>υ</b> σιν	121
	11:32	λέγω	11		2:7	βλασφημοῦσιν	121
	12:5	διαλέγεται	144		2:8	τελείτε	51
	12:6	άγαπᾶ	51o			ποιείτε	10A
	12.0	παιδε <b>ύ</b> ει	121		2:9	προσωπολημπτέιτε	51
		μαστιγοί	121		,	έργάζεσθε	10A
		παραδέχεται	510		2:11	μοιχεύεις	51
	12:7	προσφέρεται	121		2.11	φονεύεις	51
	12.7	παιδε <b>ύ</b> ει	122		2:13	κατακα <b>υ</b> χᾶται	132
	12:8	έστε	51		2:14	δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	132
	12.0	έστε	10A		2:18	έχεις	10
	12:11	δοκεῖ	121		2.10	έχω	10
	12.11	αποδίδωσιν	121		2:19	πιστεύεις	10
	12:17	ίστε	10		2.17	έστιν	10
	12:21	είμι	10			ποιείς	10
	12:27	δηλοî	10			πιστεύουσιν	121
	13:10	έχομεν	10			φρίσσουσιν	121
	13.10	έχουσιν	10		2:20	θέλεις	10
	13:11	είσφέρεται	121		2.20	έστιν	132A
	13.11	κατακαίεται	121		2:22	βλέπεις	132A 10
	13:14		10		2:24	δρᾶτε	10
	13:14	ἔχομεν ἐπιζοποθιικώ	10		2.24	ορατε δικαιο <b>ῦ</b> ται	132
		έπιζητοῦμεν ἔστιν	134		2:26		
	13:15 13:16				2.20	έστιν 2	132A
		εὐαρεστεῖται	121		2.2	έστιν	132A
	13:17	άγρυπνοῦσιν	121		3:2	πταίομεν	121
	13:18	πειθόμεθα "	10		2.2	πταίει	51
	12.10	ἔχομεν	10		3:3	βάλλομεν	51
	13:19	παρακαλῶ	11		2.4	μετάγομεν	121A
	13:22	παρακαλῶ	11		3:4	μετάγεται	121
	13:24	άσπάζονται	10		2.5	βούλεται	41
т.	1.2	16	101		3:5	έστὶν , ,	132
Ja.	1:3	κατεργάζεται	121			α <b>ὐ</b> χεῖ	121
	1:5	λείπεται *	51		2 (	ανάπτει	121
	1:6	ἔοικεν	135A		3:6	καθίσταται	141
	1:12	ύπομένει	510		3:7	δαμάζεται	121
	1:13	πειράζομαι	10		3:8	δύναται	10
		έστιν	132		3 :9	εὐλογοῦμεν	121

							230
		APPENI	DIX AConti	nued			
Ja.	3:9	καταρώμεθα	121	1 Pet.	1:6	ἀγαλλιᾶσθε	10
	3:10	<b>ἐ</b> ξέρχεται	121			(ἐστὶν)	52
		χρή	133		1:8	αγαπᾶτε	10
	3:11	βρύει	121			ἀγαλλιᾶσθε	10
	3:12	δύναται	132		1:12	, . ἐπιθυμοῦσιν	10
	3:14	ἔχετε	51		1:17	έπικαλεῖσθε	51
	3:15	έστιν	132		1:25	μένει	31
	3:17	έστιν	132		1.20	έστιν	10
	3:18	σπείρεται	121		2:5	οἰκοδομεῖσθε	10
	4:2	έπιθυμε <b>ιτ</b> ε	121		2:6	περιέχει	10
		έχετε	121		2.0	τίθημι	31
		φονεύετε	121		2:8	προσκόπτουσιν	121
		ζηλο <b>ῦ</b> τε	121		2:11	παρακαλῶ	11
		δύνασθε	121		2.11	στρατεύονται	121
		μάχεσθε	121		2:12	καταλαλο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	121
		πολεμε <b>ι</b> τε	121		2:15	έστιν	10
		έχετε	121		2:19	ύποφέρει	51
	4:3	αίτειτε	121		3:1	απειθο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	51
	٦.5	λαμβάνετε	121		3:4	έστιν	132
		αίτεῖσθε	121		3:16	καταλαλ <i>ε</i> ῖσθε	121
	4:4	οίδατε	10		3:20	καταλαλείο σε ἔστιν	134
	4.4	έστιν	132		3:21	σώζει	134
		καθίσταται	132A		3:22	ο φζει έστιν	10
	4:5	δοκε <b>ί</b> τε	132A 10		3.22 4:4		10
	4.3		144		4:4	ξενίζονται καλύπτει	121
		λέγει ἐπιποθεῖ	10		4.8 4:11	καλυπτει λαλε̂ι	51
	4:6	δίδωσιν	121		4.11		51
	4.0		144			διακονέι	10
		λέγει ἀντιτάσσεται	121			χορηγεί 	10
		δίδωσιν			4.12	έστιν	10
	4:11	καταλαλέῖ	121		4:13	κοινωνεῖτε ἐ \$ίχο <b>-</b> 0 -	51
	4.11		132A		4:14	ὀνειδίζεσθε ἀναπαύεται	10A
		κρίνει	132A		4.10		
		κρίνεις εἶ	51		4:18	σώζεται	51
	4.10	·	132A		5:1	παρακαλῶ ἀντιτάσσεται	11
	4:12	εστιν εἶ	10		5:5		121
	4.14		10		5.7	δίδωσιν	121
	4:14	ἐπίστασθε ,	10		5:7	μέλει	10
	4.16	έστε	10		5:8	περιπατέῖ	10
	4:16	καυχᾶσθε	121		5:12	λογίζομαι	10
	4 17	<b>έστιν</b>	132		5:13	'Ασπάζεται	10
	4:17	έστιν	132	0 D /	1.0	0/	101
	5:4	κράζει	10	2 Pet.	1:8	καθίστησιν	121
	5:6	άντιτάσσεται	121		1:9	πάρεστιν	51o
	5:7	<b>έκδέχεται</b>	121		1 10	έστιν	132A
	5:11	μακαρίζομεν	121		1:13	ήγυδμαι	133
		έστιν	10			<b>ε</b> ἰμὶ	10
	5:13	Κακοπαθεί	10		1:14	έστιν	31
		εὐθυμεῖ	10		1:17	έστιν	10
	5:14	ἀσθενεῖ	10		1:19	ἔχομεν	10
	5:16	ἰσχύει	10			ποιείτε	121A

ാ	2	റ
	J	フ

							239
		APPI	ENDIX AC	Continue	ed		
2 Pet.	1:20	γίνεται	10	1 Jn.	2:4	ἐστίν	10
	2:3	ἀργεῖ	10			<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10
		νυστάζει	31E		2:5	γινώσκομεν	10
	2:9	οἶδεν	10			ἐσμεν	10
	2:10	τρέμουσιν	121		2:6	ὀφείλει	10
	2:11	φέρουσιν	121		2:7	γράφω	10
	2:12	άγνοοῦσιν	121			έστιν	10
	2:17	$\epsilon i \sigma \iota \nu$	10		2:8	γράφω	10
	2:18	δελεάζο <b>υ</b> σιν	121			έστιν	10
	2:20	ήττῶνται	51			παράγεται	31
	3:1	γράφω	10			φαίνει	10
		διεγείρω	10		2:9	ἐστὶν	10A
	3:4	έστιν	10		2:10	μένει	10A
		διαμένει	10			<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10A
	3:5	λανθάνει	10		2:11	ἐστὶν	10A
	3:7	είσιν	142			περιπατεῖ	10A
	3:9	βραδύνω	10			οἶδεν	10A
		ήγοῦνται	121			<b>ύ</b> πάγει	41
		μακροθυμέῖ	10		2:12	Γράφω	10
	3:11	δεῖ	133		2:13	γράφω	10
	3:12	τήκεται	31E			γράφω	10
	3:13	προσδοκῶμεν	10		2:14	έστε	10
		κατοικέῖ	31E			μένει	10
	3:16	έστιν	10		2:15	έστιν	10A
		$\sigma$ τρε $\beta$ λο $\hat{\mathbf{u}}\sigma$ ιν	121		2:16	ἔστιν	132
						ἐστὶν	132
1 Jn.	1:2	μαρτυροῦμεν	10		2:17	παράγεται	31E
		ἀπαγγέλλομεν	10			μένει	31EA
	1:3	ἀπαγγέλλομεν			2:18	· ἐστίν	10
	1:4	γράφομεν	10			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E
	1:5	έστιν	10			γινώσκομεν	10
		ἀναγγέλλομεν	10			έστίν	10
		έστιν	10		2:19	είσὶν	10
		ἔστιν	10		2:20	οἴδατε	10
	1:6	ἔχομεν	10		2:21	οἴδατε	10
		ψευδόμεθα	121A			οἴδατε	10
		ποιοῦμεν	121A			ἔστιν	132
	1:7	έστιν	10		2:22	έστιν	132A
		ἔχομεν	10A			ἔστιν	132
		καθαρίζει	10A			έστιν	132A
	1:8	<b>ἔ</b> χομεν	10		2:23	<del>ἔ</del> χει	132A
		πλανῶμεν	132A			έχει	132A
		έστιν	132A		2:25	έστὶν	10
	1:9	έστιν	10A		2:27	μένει	10
	1:10	ποιοῦμεν	132A			ἔχετε	10
		<b>ἔ</b> στιν ΄	10A			διδάσκει	10
	2:1	γράφω	10			έστιν	10
		έχομεν	10A			<sup>°</sup> έστιν	10
	2:2	έστιν	10			μένετε	10
	2:3	γινώσκομεν	10		2:29	έστιν	10
		•					

							240
				K AConti			
1 Jn.	2:29	γινώσκετε	10A	1 Jn.	4:3	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	31E
	3:1	ἐσμέν	10			ἐστὶν	10
		γινώσκει	10		4:4	έστε	10
	3:2	ἐσμεν	10			ἐστὶν	10
		οἴδαμεν	10		4:5	εἰσίν	10
		ἐστιν	41			λαλο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	121
	3:3	άγνίξει	121A			ακούει	121
		έστιν	10		4:6	έσμεν	10
	3:4	ποιεί	121A			ακουεί	121A
		έστὶν	132			έστιν	510
	3:5	οίδατε	10			ακο <b>ύ</b> ει	121A
	3.3	ἔστιν	10			γινώσκομεν	10
	3:6	άμαρτάνει	10 121A		4:7	έστιν	132
	3:7	έστιν	121A 132A		4.7	γινώσκει	132A
	3.7				4.0	έστίν	
	2.0	έστιν ?′	10		4:8		132
	3:8	έστίν	132A		4:10	έστὶν '	10
	• •	άμαρτάνει	122		4:11	ὀφείλομεν	10
	3:9	ποιεῖ	121A		4:12	μένει	10A
		μένει	121			ἐστιν	142A
		δύναται	121		4:13	γινώσκομεν	10
	3:10	ἐστιν	121			μένομεν	10
		ἔστιν	132A		4:14	μαρτυροῦμεν	10
	3:11	ἐστὶν	134		4:15	ἐστιν	10
	3:13	μισεῖ	51			μένει	132A
	3:14	οἴδαμεν	10		4:16	<b>έ</b> χει	10
		ἀγαπῶμεν	10			έστίν	132
		μένει	132A			μένει	132A
	3:15	· ἐστίν	132A			μένει	132A
		οἴδατε	10		4:17	ἐστιν	10
		<del>ἔ</del> χει	132A			ἐσμεν	10
	3:16	ο φείλομεν	10		4:18	ἔστιν	132
	3:17	 μένει	132A			βάλλει	121
	3:19	έσμέν	42			έχει	132
	3:20	έστίν	10		4:19	άγαπῶμεν	10
	3.20	γινώσκει	10		4:20		10
	3:21	έχομεν	121A		1.20	έστίν	132A
	3:22	λαμβάνομεν	121A			δύναται	132A
	3.22	τηροῦμεν	123		4:21	<b>έχομεν</b>	10
		ποιο <b>ῦ</b> μεν	123		5:1	έστιν	10
	3:23	έστὶν	10		3.1	άγαπ <u>α</u>	10 121A
	3:24		10 132A		5:2		121A 10
	3.24	μένει γινώσκομεν			3.2	γινώσκομεν	
		•	10		<i>5</i> 2	ἀγαπῶμεν	10
	4.1	μένει	10		5:3	έστιν	134
	4:1	έστιν	53		<i>7</i> . 4	εἰσίν 	10
	4:2	γινώσκετε	10		5:4	νικά,	121A
		<b>όμολογ</b> εῖ	51o		5:5	<b>έ</b> στιν	10
		έστιν	132A			<b>έ</b> στιν	10
	4:3	όμολογε <b>î</b>	51o		5:6	έστιν	10
		ἔστιν	132A			ἐστιν	10
		ἐστιν	134			ἐστιν	10

	APPENDIX AContinued						
1 Jn.	5:7	είσιν	10	3 Jn.	2	εὐοδοῦταί	10
	5:8	είσιν	10		3	περιπατέῖς	10
	5:9	λαμβάνομεν	51		4	ἔχω	10
	0.5	έστίν	10A		5	ποιέ <b>ί</b> ς	122
		έστὶν	10		8	όφείλομεν	10
	5:10	έχει	121A		9	έπιδέχεται	122
	5:11	έστὶν	10		10	ποιε <b>ί</b>	122
	5.11	έστιν	10		10	έπιδέχεται	122
	5:12	<b>ἔ</b> χει	132A			χωλ <b>ύ</b> ει	122
	5.12	έχει	132A			, ακουτ έκβάλλει	122
	5:13	έχετε	10		11	έστιν	132A
	5:14	έστὶν	10		12	μαρτυροῦμεν	10
	3.14	έχομεν	10		12	οίδας	10
		ακο <b>ύ</b> ει	121A			έστιν	10
	5:15	οίδαμεν	510		13	θέλω	10
	3.13	ακούει	121		14	έλπίζω	10
		οίδαμεν	10A		15	άσπάζονται	10
		έχομεν	41		13	ασπαζονται	10
	5:16	έστιν	132	Jd.	5	βο <b>ύ</b> λομαι	10
	3.10	λέγω	11	Ju.	7	πρόκεινται	141
	5:17	έστίν	132		8	μιαίνουσιν	121
	3.17	έστιν	132		O	άθετοῦσιν	121
	5:18	Οίδαμεν	10			βλασφημο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	121
	5.10	άμαρτάνει	121A		10	οίδασιν	121
		τηρεῖ	1217		10	βλασφημοῦσιν	121
		άπτεται	121			έπίστανται	121
	5:19	οίδαμεν	10			φθείρονται	121
	3.17	έσμεν	10		12	είσιν	10
		κεῖται	10		16	$\epsilon i \sigma i \nu$	10
	5:20	οἴδαμεν	10		10	λαλεῖ	121
	3.20	ήκει	141		19	είσιν	10
		γινώσκομεν	60		17	Clotv	10
	5:20	οἴδαμεν	10	Rev.	1:1	δεῖ	133
	3.20	έστιν	10	ICCV.	1:7	<b>έ</b> ρχεται	31E
		COTT	10		1:8	. 7	10
2 Jn.	1	ἀγαπῶ	10		1.0	ειμι λέγει	11
2 311.	5	έρωτῶ	11		1:11	βλέπεις	32
	6	έστὶν	134		1:16	φαίνει	121
	O	έστιν	134		1:17	είμι	10
	7	έστιν	134		1:18	είμι	10
	9	έχει	132A		1.10	<sup>ε</sup> χω	10
		έχει	132A		1:19	είσὶν	10
	10	έρχεται	51		1.17	μέλλει	10
	10	φέρει	51		1:20	είσιν	134
	11	κοινωνε̂ι	132A		1.20	είσίν εἰσίν	134
	12	κοινωνει ἐλπίζω	10		2:1	λέγει	11
	13	' <b>Α</b> σπάζεται	10		2:2	Οἶδα	10
	15	110 // 20 / 21 / 21				δ <b>ύ</b> νη	10
3 Jn.	1	ἀγαπῶ	10			είσίν	10
J 311.	2	εὔχομαί	122		2:3	έχεις	10
	-	25 Your	- <b></b>		2.5	-V2	10

				. ~ .			272
		Al	PPENDIX .	AContin	ued		
Rev.	2:4	<b>ἔ</b> χω	10	Rev.	3:7	ἀνοίγει	121
	2:5	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31A		3:8	Οίδα	10
	2:6	<b>έ</b> χεις	10			δύναται	10
		μισείς	10			έχεις	10
		μεσῶ	10		3:9	διδῶ	32
	2:7	λέγει	11			εἰσὶν	10
		έστιν	31E			ψεύδομαι	121
	2:8	λέγει	11		3:11	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	318
	2:9	Οίδα	10			έχεις	10
		εί	10		3:13	λέγει	11
		$\epsilon$ i $\sigma$ i $ u$	10		3:14	λέγει	11
	2:10	μέλλεις	10		3:15	Οἶδά	10
		μέλλει	10		2.10	εί	10
	2:11	λέγει	11		3:16	εî	10
	2:12	λέγει λέγει	11		3.10	μέλλω	10
	2:13	Οίδα	10		3:17	λέγεις	121
	2.13	κατοικέ <b>ι</b> ς	10		3.17	είμι	10
		κατοικείς κρατέῖς	10			ἔχω	10
		κρατείς κατοικέῖ	10			οίδας	10
	2:14		10			εί	10
	2.14	ἔχω Έχου	10		3:18		10
	2.15	ἔχεις "·····				συμβουλεύω	
	2:15	<b>ἔ</b> χεις	10		3:19	φιλῶ '	51o
	2:16	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31A			ͼλέγχω	121A
	2:17	λέγει	11		2.20	παιδε <b>ύ</b> ω	121A
	2:17	οἶδεν	41		3:20	κρούω	121
	2:18	λέγει	11		3:22	λέγει	11
	2:19	Οίδα	10		4:1	δεῖ	133
	2:20	ʹέχω	10		4:5	<b>ἐκπορεύοντα</b> ι	21
		ἀφεῖς	10			εἰσιν	134
		διδάσκει	121		4:8	γέμουσιν	21
		πλανᾶ	121			ἔχουσιν εἶ	21
	2:21	θέλει	10		4:11		10
	2:22	βάλλω	31A		5:5	λέγει	21
	2:23	εἰμι	10		5:6	είσιν	134
	2:24	λέγω	11		5:8	εἰσιν	134
		<b>έ</b> χουσιν	10		5:9	άδουσιν	21
		λέγουσιν	131			εί	10
		βάλλω	32		5:12	ἐστιν	10
	2:25	ἔχετε	10		6:10	κρίνεις	318
	2:27	συντρίβεται	121			<b>ἐ</b> κδιδεῖς	318
	2:29	λέγει	11		6:13	βάλλει	121
	3:1	λέγει	11		6:16	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	21
		Οἶδά	10		6:17	δύναται	10
		ἔχεις	10		7:10	κράζουσιν	21
		ζῆς	10		7:13	είσὶν	10
		εί	10		7:14	οἶδας	10
	3:4	ἔχεις	10			είσιν	10
		είσιν	10		7:15	είσιν	10
	3:6	λέγει	11			λατρ <b>εύουσ</b> ιν	121
	3:7	λέγει	11		8:11	λέγεται	41
			= =			- 1	• •

		APPEN	DIX ACont	inued			2 <del>4</del> 3
Rev.	9:3	έχουσιν	121	Rev.	14:4	είσιν	21
	9:4	ἔχουσι	42		14:5	είσιν	21
	9:6	φεύγει	31E		14:9	προσκυνεῖ	51
	9:10	ἔχουσιν	21		,	λαμβάνει	51
	9:11	ἔχουσιν	21		14:11	αναβαίνει	31E
	,	έχει	21			έχουσιν	31E
	9:12	έρχεται	31E			λαμβάνει	51
	9:17	έκπορεύεται	21		14:12	έστίν	134
	9:19	έστιν	21		14:13	λέγει	11
	7.17	άδικο <b>ῦ</b> σιν	21		1 1.15	ακολουθεῖ	315
	9:20	δύναται	121		15:3	ἄδο <b>υ</b> σιν	21
	10:3	μ <b>υ</b> κᾶται	121		16:5	eî	10
	10:9	λέγει	21		16:6	είσιν	10
	10:11	λέγο <b>υ</b> σίν	21		16:14	είσὶν	134
	10.11	Δεῖ	133		10.11	έκπορεύεται	21
	11:4	είσιν	134		16:15	έρχομαι	31E
	11:5	θέλει	51		16:21	καταβαίνει	21
	11.5	έκπορε <b>ύ</b> εται	121A		10.21	έστὶν	21
		κατεσθίει	121A 121A		17:8	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10
		δεῖ	133A		17.0	μέλλει	10
	11:6	έχουσιν	31E			ύπάγει	31E
	11.0	έχουσιν	31E			ἔστιν	10
	11:8	καλε <b>ιτ</b> αι	41		17:9	είσίν	134
	11:9	βλέπο <b>υ</b> σιν	31E		17.7	κάθηται	10
	11.7	άφίουσιν	31E			είσιν	134
	11:10	χαίρο <b>υ</b> σιν	31E		17:10	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	10
	11.10	εὐφραίνονται	31E		17.10	δεῖ	133
	11:14	έρχεται	31E		17:11	ἔστιν	10
	11:16	κάθηνται	21		17.11	έστιν	134
	11:17	Εὐχαριστοῦμε				έστιν	134
	12:2	κράζει	21			ύπάγει	31E
	12:4	σύρει	21		17:12	είσιν	134
	12:5	μέλλει	21		17.12	λαμβάνο <b>υ</b> σιν	315
	12:6	έχει	21		17:13	<b>έχουσιν</b>	315
	12:12	έχει	42		17.13	διδόασιν	31E
	12:14	τρέφεται	21		17:14	έστὶν	10
	13:4	δ <b>ύ</b> ναται	10		17:15	λέγει	21
	13:9	έχει	51		17.15	κάθηται	41
	13:10	ύπάγει	132A			είσὶν	134
	13.10	έστιν	134		17:18	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	134
	13:12	ποιεί	21		18:7	λέγει	21
	15.12	ποιε <b>ί</b>	21		10.7	Κάθημαι	10
	13:13	ποιε <b>ί</b>	21			εἰμί	10
	13:14	πλανᾶ	21		18:11	κλαίο <b>υ</b> σιν	31E
	10.11	έχει	21		10.11	πενθοῦσιν	31E
	13:16	ποιε <b>î</b>	21			άγοράζει	315
	13:18	έστίν	134		18:17	ά γυράζει ἐργάζονται	121
	15.10	έστίν	134		19:3	αναβαίνει	31E
	14:3	είσιν	21		19:8	έστίν	134
	14:4	είσιν	21		19:9	λέγει	21
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## APPENDIX A--Continued

		AP	PENDIA AConu
Rev.	19:9	λέγει	21
		είσιν	10
	19:10	λέγει	21
		είμι	10
		έστιν	10
	19:11	κρίνει	21
		πολεμεῖ	21
	19:12	οἶδεν	21
	19:15	ἐκπορε <b>ύ</b> εται	21
		πατέι	21
	19:16	<del>ἔ</del> χει	21
	20:2	έστιν	134
	20:3	δεῖ	133
	20:6	<b>έ</b> χει	10
	20:12	έστιν	134
	20:14	ἐστιν	134
	21:1	ἔστιν	21
	21:5	ποιῶ	32
		λέγει	21
		είσιν	10
	21:6	(εἰμι)	10
	21:8	έστιν	134
	21:12	ἐστιν	10
	21:16	κεῖται	21
		ἐστίν	21
	21:17	ἐστιν	131
	21:22	έστιν	21
	21:23	<b>ἔ</b> χει	21
	21:24	φέρουσιν	31E
	22:5	<b>ἔ</b> χουσιν	31E
	22:6	δέι	133
	22:7	<b>ἔ</b> ρχομαι	31E
	22:9	λέγει	21
		είμι	10
	22:10	λέγει	21
		έστιν	10
	22:12	ἔρχομαι	31E
		έστὶν	10
	22:16	<b>ε</b> ἰμι	10
	22:17	λέγουσιν	123
	22:18	Μαρτυρῶ	11
	22:20	Λέγει	131
		ἔρχομαι	31E
		. , , .	

# APPENDIX B THE MOVABLE NU IN MATTHEW

Following are the sixty-six examples in the Gospel of Matthew in which the Movable Nu is added to a present indicative form that does not require it according to "rule."

1 22	,	150	0 /
1:23	έστιν	15:2	παραβαίνο <b>υ</b> σιν
5:13	καίουσιν	15:20	έστιν
5:34	έστιν	15:26	ἔστιν
5:35a	έστιν	15:32	προσμένουσίν
5:35B	ἐστὶν		ἔχουσιν
6:2	απέχουσιν	16:28	εἰσίν
6:5	απέχουσιν	17:25	λαμβάνουσιν
6:7	δοκοῦσιν	18:9	ἐστιν
6:16	<b>ἀφανίζουσιν</b>	18:14	
	ἀπέχουσιν	18:20	είσιν
6:19	διορύσσουσιν	19:6	εἰσὶν
6:25	ἐστιν	19:11	χωροῦσιν
7:15	$\epsilon i \sigma \iota \nu$	19:12a	είσὶν
8:20	<b>ἔ</b> χο <b>υ</b> σιν	19:24	έστιν
10:2	έστιν	20:15	<b>ἔ</b> ξεστιν
10:24	<b>ἔ</b> στιν	21:26	<b>ἔ</b> χουσιν
10:26	<b>ἐ</b> στιν	21:42	έστιν
10:37a	ἔστιν	22:14	είσιν
10:37β	ἔστιν	22:17	<b>ἔ</b> ξεστιν
10:38	ἔστιν	23:3	λέγουσιν
11:5	αναβλέπουσιν	23:4	λ <b>έγουσιν</b>
11:10	έστιν		θέλουσιν
11:16	ἐστὶν	23:5	ποιοῦσιν
12:2	<b>ἔ</b> ξεστιν		<b>πλαντύνουσιν</b>
12:5	βεβηλο <b>ῦ</b> σιν		μεγαλύνουσιν
12:8	έστιν	23:6	. , φιλοῦσιν
12:10	<b>έ</b> ξεστιν	24:6	έστὶν
12:12		26:26	, έστιν
13:13	βλέπουσιν	26:28	έστιν
13:32a	·.	27:6	<b>έ</b> ξεστιν
13:32В		27:22	λέγουσιν
13:57	έστιν	27:33	έστιν
14:4	<b>ἔ</b> ξεστίν	27:62	έστὶν
- 1. 1	-7 111	_,.0_	

### APPENDIX C HISTORICAL PRESENT CONTEXT

Here are listed all the historical presents in the New Testament. The tenses of the preceding and following verbs which are parallel in the narrative are indicated by the number following each entry. The numbers here correspond to the entries in Table 17, pp. 126-27; they are as follows:

1AoristAorist 2ParagraphAorist 3AoristParagraph 4ImperfectImperfect 5ParagraphImperfect 6ImperfectParagraph 7AoristImperfect 8ImperfectAorist 9ParagraphPluperfect			10PluperfectParagraph 11AoristPluperfect 12PluperfectAorist 13ParagraphFuture 14FutureParagraph 15AoristFuture 16ImperfectFuture 17ParagraphParagraph					
Mt.	2:13 2:18	φαίνεται εἰσίν	2 3		Mt.	12:13 13:28	λέγει λέγουσιν	1
	2:19	φαίνεται	2			13:29	φησιν	3
	3:1	παραγίνεται	5			13:51	λέγουσιν	2
	3:13	παραγίνεται	5			14:8	φησίν	1
	3:15	ἀφίησιν	1			14:17	λέγουσιν	1
	4:5	παραλαμβάνει	1			14:31	λέγει	1
		ίστησιν	1			15:1	προσέρχονται	2
	4:6	λέγει	1			15:12	λέγουσιν	1
	4:8	παραλαμβάνει	1			15:33	λέγουσιν	1
		δείκνυσιν	1			15:34	λέγει	1
	4:9	λέγει	1			16:15	λέγει	1
	4:10	λέγει	1			17:1	παραλαμβάνει	2
	4:11	<b>ἀφίησιν</b>	1				ἀναφέρει	2
	4:19	λέγει	1			17:20	λέγει	3
	8:4	λέγει	3			17:25	λέγει	1
	8:7	λέγει	1			18:22	λέγει	3
	8:20	λέγει	1			18:32	λέγει	1
	8:22	λέγει	3			19:7	λέγει	1
	8:26	λέγει	1			19:8	λέγει	1
	9:6	λέγει	1			19:10	λ <b>έγουσιν</b>	1
	9:9	λέγει	1			19:18	λέγει	1
	9:14	προσέρχονται	2			19:20	λέγει	1
	9:28	λέγει	1			20:6	λέγει	1
		λέγουσιν	1			20:7	λέγουσιν	1
	9:37	λέγει	3				λέγει	1

							247
		APPEND	IX CCo	ontinued			
Mt.	20:8	λέγει	1	Mk.	1:44	λέγει	1
	20:21	λέγει	1		2:3	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	8
	20:22	λ <b>έγουσιν</b>	1		2:4	χαλῶσι	7
	20:23	λ <b>έγει</b>	1		2:5	λέγει	7
	20:33	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	1		2:8	λέγει	8
	21:13	λέγει	1		2:10	λέγει	8
	21:16	λέγει	1		2:14	λέγει	1
	21:19	λέγει	1		2:15	γίνεται	7
	21:31	λέγουσιν	17		2:17	λέγει	6
		λέγει	17		2:18	ἔρχονται	8
	21:41	λέγουσιν	2			λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	8
	21:42	λέγει	2		2:25	λέγει	4
	22:8	λέγει	1		3:3	λέγει	4
	22:12	λέγει	1		3:4	λέγει	4
	22:16	αποστέλλουσιι	- )1		3:5	λέγει	8
	22:20	λέγει	1		3:13	αναβαίνει	2
	22:21	λέγουσιν	1		5.15	προσκαλέιται	2
	22.21	λέγει	1		3:20	έρχεται	2
	22:42	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	7		3.20	σ <b>υ</b> νέρχεται	2
	22:43	λέγει	7		3:31	ερχεται Έρχεται	5
	25:11	<b>ἔρχονται</b>	1		3:32	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	6
	25:19	έρχεται	1		3:33	λέγει	6
	23.17	συναίρει	1		3:34	λέγει λέγει	6
	26:25	λέγει	3		4:1	συνάγεται	7
	26:31	•	2		4:13	λέγει	17
	26:35	λέγει λένει	1		4:35	λέγει λέγει	5
	26:36	λέγει Σονεται	2		4:36		5
	20.30	ἔρχεται \ έρισε	2		4:37	παραλαμβάνουσιν	3 4
	26:38	λέγει Σέρισι	1		4:38	γίνεται ένείουστα	1
		λέγει ************************************			4.38	έγείρουσιν Σάνουσαν	
	26:40	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	1		5.7	λέγουσιν	1
		ε <b>ύ</b> ρίσκει	1		5:7	λέγει Σάντα	7
	26.45	λέγει	1		5:9	λέγει	4
	26:45	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	3		5:15	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	1
	26.52	λέγει	3		7.10	θεωροῦσιν	1
	26:52	λέγει	1		5:19	λέγει "	1
	26:64	λέγει	1		5:22	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	1
	26:71	λέγει	1		5.00	πίπτει	1
	27:13	λέγει	1		5:23	παρακαλεῖ	1
	27:22	λέγει	1		5:35	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	2
		λέγουσιν	1		5:36	λέγει	2
	27:38	σταυροῦνται	7		5:38	<b>ἔρχονται</b>	7
	28:10	λέγει	3			θεωρεῖ	7
					5:39	λέγει	7
Mk.	1:12	<b>έ</b> κβάλλει	5		5:40	παραλαμβάνει	8
	1:21	είσπορε <b>ύ</b> ονται				εἰσπορεύεται	8
	1:30	λέγουσιν	4		5:41	λέγει	8
	1:37	λέγουσιν	1		6:1	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	1
	1:38	λέγει	1			<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	1
	1:40	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	2		6:7	προσκαλεῖται	8
	1:41	λέγει	1		6:30	συνάγονται	2

		A DDENIDI	v o	7	. 1			248
Mk.	6:31	APPENDI λέγει	X C( 7	Continu	.ea Mk.	11:33	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	6
IVIK.	6:37	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	1		IVIK.	11.33	λέγει	6
	6:38	λέγει	1			12:13	άποστέλλο <b>υ</b> σιν	2
	0.56	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	1			12:13	λέγο <b>υ</b> σιν	2
	6:48		7			12:14	•	1
	6:50	ἔρχεται ) έρισι	1			12:18	λέγει Κονουται	5
	7:1	λέγει	2			13:1	ἔρχονται ) έρισε	2
	7.1 7:5	συνάγονται έπουπώπου	2			14:12	λέγει	8
		ἐπερωτῶσιν ) έρισε	4			14.12	λέγουσιν ἀποστέλλει	
	7:18	λέγει	=			14.13		8
	7:28 7:32	λέγει	1			14.17	λέγει ************************************	8
	7:32	φέρουσιν	_			14:17	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	1
	7.24	παρακαλοῦσιν				14:27	λέγει	2
	7:34	λέγει	1			14:30	λέγει "	7
	8:1	λέγει	2			14:32	<b>ἔ</b> ρχονται	2
	8:6	παραγγέλλει	1			1 4 22	λέγει	2
	8:12	λέγει	1			14:33	παραλαμβάνει	2
	8:17	λέγει	4			14:34	λέγει	7
	8:19	λέγουσιν	4			14:37	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	8
	8:20	λέγουσιν	4				εὑρίσκει	8
	8:22	<b>ἔρχονται</b>	2				λέγει	8
		φέρουσιν	2			14:41	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	10
		παρακαλοῦσιν					λέγει	10
	8:29	λέγει	8			14:43	παραγίνεται	9
	8:33	λέγει	1			14:45	λέγει	12
	9:2	παραλαμβάνει				14:51	κρατοῦσιν	4
		<b>ἀναφέρει</b>	2			14:53	συνέρχονται	1
	9:5	λέγει	11			14:61	λέγει	8
	9:19	λέγει	1			14:63	λέγει	1
	9:35	λέγει	1			14:66	<b>ἔρχετα</b> ι	2
	10:1	<b>ἔ</b> ρχτεται	5			14:67	λέγει	2
		συμπορεύονται	ι 5			15:2	λέγει	4
	10:11	λέγει	6			15:16	συγκαλοῦσιν	1
	10:23	λέγει	5			15:17	ἐνδιδύσκουσιν	1
	10:24	λέγει	4				$\pi$ εριτιθέα $\sigma$ ιν	1
	10:27	λέγει	8			15:20	<b>έ</b> ξάγο <b>υ</b> σιν	3
	10:35	προσπορεύοντο	<b>λ1</b>	2		15:21	άγγαρεύουσιν	5
	10:42	λέγει	3			15:22	φέρουσιν	5
	10:46	ἔρχονται	5			15:24	σταυροῦσιν	1
	10:49	φωνοῦσιν	1				διαμερίζονται	1
	11:1	έγγίζουσιν	2			15:27	σταυροῦσιν	7
		αποστέλλει	2			16:2	· ἔρχονται	7
	11:2	λέγει	2			16:4	θεωροῦσιν	8
	11:4	λύουσιν	7			16:6	λέγει	7
	11:7	φέρουσιν	1				•	
		έπιβάλλουσιν	1		Lk.	7:40	φησίν	1
	11:15	<b>ἔρχονται</b>	2			8:49	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	2
	11:21	λέγει	3			11:37	έρωτᾶ	2
	11:22	λέγει λέγει	3			11:45	λέγει	2
		ἔρχονται	5			13:8	λέγει	3
		έρχονται έρχονται	5			16:7	λέγει λέγει	1
	11.2/β	cp Coriat	5			10.7	ne yet	1

							249
		APP	ENDIX (	CContinued			
Lk.	16:23	δρ <del></del> ậ	1	Jn.	6:5	λέγει	4
	16:29	λέγει	1		6:8	λέγει	1
	17:37	λέγουσιν	1		6:12	λέγει	1
	19:22	λέγει	1		6:19	θεωροῦσιν	8
	24:12	βλέπει	1		6:20	λέγει	7
	24:23	λέγουσιν	1		7:6	λέγει	8
	24:36	λέγει	7		7:50	λέγει	1
					(8:3	άγουσιν)	4
Jn.	1:21	λέγει	1		(8:4	λέγουσιν)	4
	1:29	βλέπει	2		8:39	λέγει	1
		λέγει	2		9:12	λέγει	3
	1:36	λέγει	12		9:13	"Αγουσιν	5
	1:38	λέγει	1		9:17	λέγουσιν	8
	1:39	λέγει	1		11:7	λέγει	1
	1:41	$\epsilon$ <b>ύ</b> ρί $\sigma$ κ $\epsilon$ ι	1		11:8	λέγουσιν	1
		λέγει	1		11:11	λέγει	1
	1:43	$\epsilon$ <b>ὑ</b> ρί $\sigma$ κ $\epsilon$ ι	7		11:23	λέγει	1
		λέγει	7		11:24	λέγει	1
	1:45	$\dot{\mathbf{e}}$ $\dot{\mathbf{b}}$ ρ $\dot{\mathbf{b}}$ $\sigma$ κ $\dot{\mathbf{e}}$ ι	8		11:27	λέγει	3
		λέγει	8		11:34	λέγουσιν	1
	1:46	λέγει	1		11:38	ἔρχεται	5
	1:47	λέγει	1		11:39a		8
	1:48	λέγει	1		11:39β		8
	1:51	λέγει	3		11:40	λέγει	8
	2:3	λέγει	7		11:44	λέγει	10
	2:4	λέγει	7		12:4	λέγει	1
	2:5	λέγει	7		12:22a	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	6
	2:7	λέγει	8			λέγει	6
	2:8	λέγει	1		12:22β	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	6
	2:9	φωνεῖ	12			λέγουσιν	6
	2:10	λέγει	12		12:23	αποκρίνεται	6
	3:4	λέγει	1		13:4	ἐγείρεται	1
	4:5	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	4			τίθησιν	1
	4:7	"Ερχεται	9		13:5	βάλλει	1
	4:9	λέγει	9		13:6	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	1
	4:11	λέγει	1			λέγει	1
	4:15	λέγει	3		13:8	λέγει	1
	4:16	Λέγει	2		13:9	λέγει	11
	4:17	λέγει	3		13:10	λέγει	11
	4:19	λέγει	3		13:24	νεύει	8
	4:21	λέγει	3		13:25	λέγει	8
	4:25	λέγει	3		13:26	αποκρίνεται	8
	4:26	λέγει	3			(λαμβάνει)	8
	4:28	λέγει	1			δίδωσιν	8
	4:34	λέγει	6		13:27	λέγει	1
	4:49	λέγει	1		13:31	λέγει	3
	4:50	λέγει	1		13:36	Λέγει	3 2 3
	5:6	λέγει	8		13:37	λέγει	
	5:8	λέγει	1		13:38	ἀποκρίνεται	3
	5:14	$\dot{\mathbf{e}}$ $\dot{\mathbf{b}}$ ρ $\dot{\mathbf{b}}$ σκ $\dot{\mathbf{e}}$ ι	1		14:5	Λέγει	17

		4 DDE		C .: 1			25
T.,	11.6			Continued	21.5	\	10
Jn.	14:6	λέγει	17	Jn.	21:5	λέγει	12
	14:8	λέγει	17		21:7	λέγει	8
	14:9	λέγει	17		21:9	βλέπουσιν	1
	14:22	Λέγει	2		21:10	λέγει	1
	16:29	Λέγουσιν	2		21:12	λέγει	7
	18:3	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	12		21:13	<b>ἔρχεται</b>	8
	18:4	λέγει	1			λαμβάνει	8
	18:5	λέγει	11			δίδωσιν	8
	18:17a	λέγει	11		21:15a	•	2
	18:17β	•	11		21:15β	•	2
	18:26	λέγει	1		21:15γ		2
	18:28	"Αγουσιν	2		21:16α	λέγει	2
	18:29	φησίν	1		21:16β	λέγει	2
	18:38α	λέγει	1		21:16γ	λέγει	2
	18:38β	λέγει	1		21:17α	λέγει	2
	19:4	λέγει	1		21:17β	λέγει	1
	19:5	λέγει	1		21:17γ	λέγει	1
	19:6	λέγει	1		21:19	λέγει	3
	19:9	λέγει	1		21:20	βλέπει	2
	19:10	λέγει	1		21:21	λέγει	2
	19:14	λέγει	1		21:22	λέγει	2
	19:15	λέγει	1			•	
	19:26	λέγει	12	Acts	8:36	φησιν	1
	19:27	λέγει	12		10:11	θεωρεῖ	1
	19:28	λέγει	5		10:27	ε <b>ὑ</b> ρίσκει	1
	20:1	ἔρχεται	2		10:31	φησίν	1
		βλέπει	2		12:8	λέγει	7
	20:2	τρέχει	2		19:35	φησίν	1
		.΄ . ἔρχεται	2		21:37	λέγει	2
		λέγει	2		22:2	φησίν	3
	20:5	βλέπει	1		23:18	φησίν	7
	20:6	έρχεται	1		25:5	φησίν	3
		θεωρεῖ	1		25:22	φησίν	3
	20:12	θεωρεῖ	1		25:24	φησίν	3
	20:13	λέγουσιν	1		26:24	φησίν	17
	20.10	λέγει	1		26:25	φησίν	17
	20:14	θεωρεῖ	11		20.20	φ./ο	- ,
	20:15a	λέγει	10	Rev.	4:5	ἐκπορεύονται	6
	20:15β		10	icov.	4:8	γέμουσιν	13
		λέγει	10		1.0	έχουσιν	13
	20:16β		10		5:5	λέγει	6
	20:17	λέγει	10		5:9	άδουσιν	3
	20:17	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	10		6:16	λέγουσιν	3
	20:19	λέγει	10		7:10	κράζουσιν	9
	20:19	λέγει	3		9:10	έχο <b>υ</b> σιν	6
	20:26	κε γει ἔρχεται	1		9:10	έχουσιν	6
	20:27	λέγει	1		7.11	έχο <b>υ</b> σιν	6
	20:27	λέγει λέγει	3		9:17	έκπορεύεται	1
	21:3	λε γει λέγει	1		9:17	έστιν	3
	41.3	λέγουσιν	1		2.19	άδικοῦσιν	3
		AE YOUO LV	1			WOLKOUD LV	3

## APPENDIX C--Continued

		API	CIN
Rev.	10:9	λέγει	1
	10:11	λέγουσίν	3
	11:16	καθηνται	1
	12:2	κράζει	2
	12:4	σ <b>ύ</b> ρει	2
	12:5	μέλλει	1
	12:6	έχετι	6
	12:14	τρέφεται	1
	13:12a	ποιεί	8
	13:12β	ποιεί	8
	13:13	ποιεί	8
	13:14	πλανᾶ	8
		<b>ἔ</b> χει	8
	13:16	ποιε <b>ι</b>	3
	14:3	<b>ἄδουσιν</b>	5
	14:4a	είσιν	8
	14:4β	είσιν	8
	14:5	είσιν	3
	15:3	<b>ἄδουσιν</b>	17
	16:14	ἐκπορεύεται	1
	16:21	καταβαίνει	1
		ἐστὶν	3
	17:15	λέγει	17
	18:7	λέγει	15
	19:9a	λέγει	1
	19:9β	λέγει	1
	19:10	λέγει	3
	19:11	κρίνει	7
	19:12	οίδεν	7
	19:15	<b>ἐ</b> κπορε <b>ύ</b> εται	16
		πατέὶ	14
	19:16	<b>ἔ</b> χει	14
	21:1	έστιν	1
	21:5	λέγει	1
	21:16	κεῖται	8
		έστίν	1
	21:22	έστιν	1
	21:23	έχει	1
	22:9	λέγει	3
	22:10	λέγει	3
			2

### APPENDIX D PRESENT OF THE PROTASIS

Here is listed every present indicative verb in the New Testament which is the main verb in a conditional clause. Following each entry is this writer's evaluation of the "truthfulness" of the protasis to fact. Four symbols are used:

- (+) true to fact
- (-) contrary to fact
- (0) either possible at that time
- (?) insufficient data

Mt.	4:3	εî	?	Mt.	26:42	δύναται	?
	4:6	<b>હ</b> ોં	?		26:63	εî	0
	5:29	σκανδαλίζει	0		27:40	εî	?
	5:30	σκανδαλίζει	0		27:43	θέλει	?
	5:39	ραπίζει	0				
	6:23	ἐστίν	0	Mk.	4:9	<b>έ</b> χει	0
	6:30	ἀμφιέννυσιν	+		4:23	<del>ἔ</del> χει	0
	7:11	οίδατε	+		4:25a	έχει	0
	7:24	ακούει	0		4:25β	<sup>Έ</sup> χει	0
		ποιεί	0		8:34	θέλει	0
	8:31	<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλεις	0		9:22	δ <b>ύ</b> νῃ	0
	9:15	ἐστιν	0		9:23	δύνη	0
	10:38	λαμβάνει	0		9:35	θέλει	0
		ακολουθεῖ	0		9:40a	ἔστιν	0
	11:14	θέλετε	0		9:42	περίκειται	0
	12:26	<b>ἐ</b> κβάλλει	-		11:22	έχετε	0
	12:27	ἐκβάλλω	-		11:25	στήκετε	0
	12:28	ἐκβάλλω	+			έχετε	0
	13:12a	<del>ἔ</del> χει	0		14:35	έστιν	0
	3:12β	έχει	0				
	14:28	εί	?	Lk.	4:3	εί	?
	16:24	θέλει	0		6:32	ἀγαπᾶτε	0
	17:4	θέλεις	0		7:47	αφίεται	0
	18:8	σκανδαλίζει	0		9:23	θέλει	0
	18:9	σκανδαλίζει	0		9:50a	ἔστιν	+
	18:20	εἰσιν	?		11:13	οἴδατε	+
	18:28	ὀφείλεις	+		11:19	ἐκβάλλω	-
	19:10	ἐστὶν	?		11:20	ἐκβάλλω	+
	19:17	θέλεις	0		12:26	δ $\mathbf{\acute{u}}$ ν $\mathbf{α}$ σ $\mathbf{θ}$ ε	+
	19:21	θέλεις	0		12:23	<b>ἀμφιάζει</b>	+
	22:45	καλεῖ	+		14:26	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	0
	26:39	ἐστιν	?			μισεῖ	0

		4 DDE	NID III D	a			25
				Continued		•	
Lk.	14:27	βαστάζει	0	Rom.	8:11	οἰκεῖ	+
		<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	0		8:13	ζῆτε	-
	14:33	ἀποτάσσεται	0			θανατοῦτε	+
	16:31	<b>ἀκούουσιν</b>	+		8:14	άγονται	0
	17:2	περίκειται	0		8:17	συμπάσχομεν	+
	17:6	ἔχετε	0		8:25	<b>ἐ</b> λπίζομεν	+
	22:42	βούλει	-		11:18	κατακα <b>υ</b> χᾶσαι	?
	22:67	င်း	?		14:15	λ <b>υ</b> πεῖται	?
	23:31	ποιοῦσιν	+		14:21	προσκόπτει	?
	23:35	έστιν	?				
	23:37	εî	?	1 Cor.	3:12	<b>ἐποικοδομεῖ</b>	?
		_			3:17	φθείρει	?
Jn.	1:25	εί			3:18	δοκεῖ	?
	3:12	πιστεύετε	1		6:2	κρίνεται	+
	5:47	πιστεύετε	?		7:9	έγκρατε <b>ύ</b> ονται	0
	7:4	ζητεῖ	0		7:12	<del>ἔ</del> χει	0
		ποιεῖς	?			<del>ἔ</del> χει	0
	7:23	λαμβάνει	+		7:13	<del>ἔ</del> χει	0
	8:39	έστε	-			συνευδοκεῖ	0
	8:46	λέγω	+		7:15	χωρίζεται	0
	10:24	εί	0		7:21	δύνασαι	0
	10:37	ποιῶ	-		7:36	νομίζει	0
	10:38	ποιῶ	+		7:39	ζῆ	?
	12:36	ἔχετε	+		8:2	δοκέῖ	0
	13:17	οίδατε	+		8:3	ἀγαπᾳ	+
	15:18	μισεῖ	+		8:5a	είσιν	+
	18:8	ζητέῖτε	+		8:13	σκανδαλίζει	?
					9:12	μετέχουσιν	+
Acts	4:9	ανακρινόμεθα	+		9:17	πράσσω	-
	5:39	έστιν	-		10:27	θέλετε	0
	13:15	έστιν	+			καλεῖ	0
	18:15	έστιν	-		10:30	μετέχω	+
	19:38	<b>ἔ</b> χουσιν	-		10:31	έσθίετε	+
	19:39	έπιζητεῖτε	+		10:31	πίνετε	+
	25:5	έστιν	0			ποιείτε	+
	25:11	ἀδικῶ	-		11:6	κατακαλ <b>ύ</b> πτεται	?
		έστιν	+		11:16	δοκέῖ	?
					11:34	πεινα	?
Rom.	2:17	ἐπονομάζη	+		12:26	πάσχει	0
		ἐπαναπα <b>ύ</b> ŋ	+			δοξάζεται	0
		καυχᾶσαι	+		14:10	εἰσιν ΄	+
	2:18	γινώσκεις	+		14:27	λαλεῖ	+
		δοκιμάζεις	+		14:35	θέλουσιν	+
	3:5	συνίστησιν	+		14:37	δοκεί	+
	4:15	έστιν	- (?)		14:38	ἀγνοεῖ	0
	6:16	παριστάνετε	?		15:2	κατέχετε	?
	7:1	ζῆ	?		15:12	κηρύσσεται	+
	7:20	ποιῶ	+		15:13	έστιν	_
	8:9	οἰκεῖ	+		15:15	έγείρονται	0
	0.7	<b>έ</b> χει	0		15:16	έγείρονται	-
		-V	9		15.10	- Jespon i we	

								254
APPENDIX DContinued								
1 Cor.		ἐσμεν	-		2 Th.	3:10	θέλει	+
	15:29	έγείρονται	-			3:14	<b>ύ</b> ποακο <b>ύ</b> ει	0
	15:32	έγείρονται	-					
	15:44a	ἔστιν	+		1 Tim.	1:10	<b>ἀντίκειται</b>	?
	16:22	φιλεῖ	0			3:1	ὀρέγεται	0
						3:5	οἶδεν	0
2 Cor.	1:6	θλιβόμεθα	+			5:4	<del>ἔ</del> χει	0
		παρακαλο <b>ύ</b> μεθ	α	+		5:8	προνοεῖται	0
	2:2	λυπῶ	+			5:16	<del>ἔ</del> χει	0
	4:3a	ἔστιν	+			6:3	<b>έτεροδιδασκαλ</b> εῖ	0
	5:13	$\sigma$ ωφρονο $\hat{oldsymbol{artheta}}$ μεν	+				προσέρχεται	0
	8:12	πρόκειται	+					
	10:18	συνίστησιν	?		2 Tim.	2:12	<del>ύ</del> πομένομεν	+
	11:4	κηρ <b>ύ</b> σσει	?			2:13	απιστοῦμεν	-
		λαμβάνετε	?					
	11:15	μετασχηματίζ	ονται	+	Tit.	1:6	ἐστιν	?
	11:20	καταδο <b>υ</b> λοῖ	?					
		κατεσθίει	?		Phle.	17	<sup>"</sup> έχεις	+
		λαμβάνει	?			18	ὀφείλει	?
		<b>ἐ</b> παίρεται	?					
		δέρει	?		Heb.	7:15	<b>ἀνίσταται</b>	+
	11:30	δεῖ	+			9:13	άγιάζει	+
	12:15	ἀγαπῶ	+			9:17	ζῆ	0
	13:5β	ἐστὲ	?			11:15	μνημονεύουσιν	-
						12:6	ἀγαπᾳ	0
Gal.	1:7	εἰσιν	?				παραδέχεται	0
	1:9	<b>εὐ</b> αγγελίζεται	+			12:8a	ἐστε	-
	2:14	ζῆs	+					
	2:18	οἰκοδομῶ	-		Ja.	1:5	λείπεται	?
	3:10a	εἰσιν	0			1:12	<b>ύ</b> πομένει	0
	3:10	<b>ἐμμένει</b>	?			1:23	ἐστὶν	0
	4:1	ἐστιν	0			1:26	δοκεῖ	0
	5:4	δικαιο <b>ῦ</b> σθε	+			2:8	τελεῖτε	0
	5:11	κηρ <b>ύ</b> σσω	-			2:9	προσωπολημπτεῖτε	0
	5:15	δάκνετε	?			2:11	μοιχεύεις	-
		κατε $\sigma$ θίετε	?				φονεύεις	-
	5:18	ἄγε $\sigma$ θε	0			3:2	πταίει	- (?)
	5:25	ζῶμεν	?			3:3	βάλλομεν	+
	6:3	δοκεῖ	0			3:14	<b>έ</b> χετε	?
						4:11	κρίνεις	0
Phil.	2:17	σπένδομαι	?					
	3:4	δοκεῖ	?		1 Pet.	1:17	<b>ἐ</b> πικαλεῖ <i>σ</i> θε	+
	3:15	φρονεῖτε	0			2:19	<b>ύ</b> ποφέρει	0
Col.	1:23	<b>ἐπιμένετε</b>				3:1	$\vec{\alpha}\pi$ ειθο $\hat{\mathbf{v}}\sigma$ ιν	+
	2:5	ἄπειμι	+			4:11	λαλεῖ	+
							διακονεῖ	+
1 Th.	3:8	$\sigma$ τήκετε	0				ουειδίζεσθε	+
	4:14	πιστε <b>ύ</b> ομεν	+			4:18	σψζεται	+

## APPENDIX D--Continued

2 Pet.	1:9	πάρεστιν	0	
	2:20	ήττῶνται	?	
1 Jn.	3:13	μισεῖ	+	
	4:2	<b>όμολογ</b> εῖ	0	
	4:3	<b>όμολογ</b> εῖ	0	
	4:6	ἔστιν	?	
	5:9	λαμβάνομεν	?	
	5:15a	οίδαμεν	+	
2 Jn.	10	<b>ἔ</b> ρχεται	0	
_ 011.	10	φέρει	0	
Rev.	3:19	φιλῶ	+	
	11:5	θέλει	+	
	13:9	<del>ἔ</del> χει	0	
	14:9	προσκυνεῖ	+	
		λαμβάνει	+	
	14:11	λαμβάνει	+	

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