

Lesson # 2: Coming to Grips with the Greek Verb

We try to simplify this material but it is complex no matter what we do. Be patient and observant and you will gain a lot in the areas of recognition and understanding.

1. Character of the Greek verb

- it is an action word or one of verbal state ("to be")
- the subject may be expressed in the verb form or as a noun/ pronoun, etc., external to the verb form.
- it may be transitive (taking an object) or intransitive (not taking an object)
- it occurs in several conjugational (paradigm) forms depending on the class of the verb
- The Greek of the New Testament age combines the three basic Greek dialects: Attic, Ionic, and Doric. Words may be taken from each of these and have peculiarities going back to the mother dialect.
- it will be inflected to show the properties indicated below.

2. The Properties of the Greek verb

- Tense: To some degree both the time and variety of action employed with the verb.
- Mood: Denotes the state or conception of the action of a verb, i.e., is it conceived of as a fact, a possibility, a command, or something else?
- Voice: Shows the relation of the verb to the subject in the transmission of the action.

We will treat each of these in more extended form in the discussions that follow. The student should understand essentially what the terms connote.

3. The Expression of "Tense" in the verbThe tenses:

Seven tenses occur in the Greek Verb (for our study). These are grouped in this way:

PRIMARY

Present  
Future  
Perfect  
Future Perfect.

SECONDARY

Imperfect  
Aorist  
Pluperfect

It is an arbitrary division and so not required for a full understanding.