4. <u>Meanings and Uses of the Tenses</u>

Here is a section for your observation and general understanding.
You do not need to know all of the details although you must
know the names of the tenses and the essential idea in each. The
particular means for identifying the tenses, moods, and voices
will come in the next lesson. In this study we are simply trying
to establish definition and ideal.

All the examples given
in this section are in
the <u>Indicative Mode</u>.

THE PRESENT TENSE: Simple or continuing action in present time.

John 1:5..."the light shines"   L. 6, p. 8

The present tense has a number of applications of
which we note the following:

The <u>progressive present</u>: action continuing or in progress
at the given time.

John 5:7..."I am coming to it" (the pool)

The <u>gnomic present</u>: customary actions/general truths.

Matthew 7:17: "Every good tree brings forth good
fruit."   Proverbial statements are often in this
class.

The <u>aoristic present</u>: An action seen as a simple (and
thus completed) event although it is happening in
time in accord with the speaking or thinking.

Acts 16:18 "I command you in the name of Jesus"
"command"is the aoristic present.

The <u>historical present</u>: Describes a past event in which
the speaker envisions himself present.

Luke 8:49..."While he was yet speaking a certain one
from the ruler of the synagogue comes..." The
verb "comes" is the historical present...and you would
translate it "came".

Please note that these are given for your information
and future reference, not for your memory work at
this time. And this is not everything, by any means,
although it may open to you a little vista to see
the richness of Greek and how much more there is.

THE IMPERFECT TENSE: Basically continuing action in past time

John 1:1.."in the beginning was the Word"   L.1, p. 8

Among the imperfect applications that are of special
interest are these.

The <u>progressive imperfect</u>: the action was continuing in
progress in past time.

Matthew 3:6.."And they were baptized of him"
(Note the verb is passive as well..and some would
translate it "were being baptized")