

Level 2 Lexical Analysis

Use the templates and guidelines in this section to complete a Level 2 lexical analysis. It is emphasized that while the templates and guidelines are less detailed than Level 1, Level 2 does not compromise on the details needed for analysis. The student should be familiar enough with what is needed so that he/she is thorough in analyzing words in context.

Analyzing Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases

By now, if careful attention was given to the discussion regarding adverbs, the student should be aware of how difficult the analysis of prepositions can be. Prepositions have been described above as a special kind of adverb, and they also have been described as a grammatical tool related closely to noun case functions. Additionally, it is well to keep in mind the poignant quote from Harris: “Danish linguist V. R. Brøndal believes that Greek prepositions were decisive in the development of Western philosophy, which was based on Greek and on the nuances expressed by these prepositions.”¹ If prepositions played such a substantial and most crucial role in the development of philosophical thought, analyzing them in the living Word of God is no light matter.

As an example, the Apostle Paul makes a fascinating and critical theological point based on the use of two prepositions in Romans 3:30, “since [there is] one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.” Paul makes this statement as part the conclusion of a technical argument about faith and the Law, leading the reader to consider the distinction between “by faith” and “through faith” by beginning his remark with the words, “Therefore we conclude that...” (Romans 3:28). Paul has built a careful argument and formulates his conclusion around the use of prepositions.

To pursue the analysis of prepositions brings the students very soon into the consideration of logic and propositional relationships. It was stated at the end of the chapter on Greek nouns that a basic function of prepositions is to describe the relationship between other words. That relationship is best described in terms associated with logical analysis and the many kinds of relationships between propositions. This is a matter of advanced study, which the student is encouraged to explore (see this article on Logic and Propositions). For now, the initial questions posed in Chapter 9 for studying prepositions and prepositional phrases can be slightly expanded to introduce the ideas of logical and propositional analysis. More details will be given below in **Level 3 Lexical Analysis**.

- What is the core meaning of the preposition?
 - Local/geographic orientation?

¹ Harris, 14.

How to Use
Greek & Hebrew Study Tools

- Agency? (Something done by or through someone?)
 - Origin or destination? (From, to?)
- What words are being linked/related by the preposition?
 - Are the words arranged general to specific or vice versa?
 - Are the words contrastive?
 - Are the words complementary?
- What noun case is being used?
 - What is the core idea of the noun case?
- What is the nature of the relationship being expressed by the preposition regarding the words in its phrase? Answering the sub-points above should help the student answer this question.
 - Give careful consideration to each sub-point
 - Substitute other prepositions into the phrase and think through the difference these other prepositions make. Give other possible prepositions to use, why use the one that the author chose (under the guidance of the Holy Spirit)? What meaning is conveyed that is different from other prepositions?