

**SYNTAX OF THE MOODS  
AND TENSES IN  
NEW TESTAMENT  
GREEK, SECOND EDITION**

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Syntax of the moods and tenses in New Testament Greek, Second edition by Ernest De Witt Burton

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**ERNEST DE WITT BURTON**

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SYNTAX  
OF THE  
MOODS AND TENSES  
IN  
NEW TESTAMENT GREEK

BY  
ERNEST DE WITT BURTON  
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*SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED*

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1894

(F. M.)

TO  
MY FATHER AND MOTHER

in grateful recognition  
of the instruction of early years  
and the helpful interest and encouragement  
in the work of later years

THIS BOOK  
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

Q21025

## PREFACE.

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THE first edition of this work appeared as a pamphlet in 1888. In issuing this revised and enlarged edition, it seems desirable to state somewhat more fully than was done in the former preface the purpose which it is hoped the book will serve. Classified according to its intent, it belongs among the aids to the interpretation of the New Testament. It is designed to assist English-speaking students in the task of translating the Greek New Testament into English forms of thought and expression. The work has not been undertaken under the impression that grammar is an end in itself, or that a knowledge of it is the sole qualification for successful interpretation, but in the conviction that grammar is one of the indispensable auxiliaries of interpretation. The book is written, therefore, in the interest not of historical but of exegetical grammar, not of philology as such, but of philology as an auxiliary of interpretation. If it has any value for historical grammar, this is incidental. Its main purpose is to contribute to the interpretation of the New Testament by the exposition of the functions of the verb in New Testament Greek, so far as those functions are expressed by the distinctions of mood and tense.

The student of the New Testament who would interpret it with accuracy and clearness must possess — along with other qualifications for his work — a knowledge of the distinctions of thought which are marked by the different moods and tenses of the Greek verb. If he would acquire facility in the work of interpretation, he must have an easy familiarity with the leading uses of each mood and tense. It is not enough



that he have at hand for reference an encyclopedic treatise on the subject. He must acquire, as a personal mental possession, a knowledge of the leading functions of the several forms of the Greek verb, and of the forms which express those functions in English. For this purpose he needs a book which, availing itself of the assured results of comparative and historical grammar, and applying to the interpretation of the Greek verb the principles of grammar and logic, the laws both of Greek and of English speech, shall enumerate the various functions of each mood and tense, exhibit in some degree their relative importance, and define each clearly. The definitions should be scientifically accurate, but they should at the same time be constructed with reference to the point of view of the interpreter. For the English-speaking student English usage must be constantly considered and must frequently be defined and compared with Greek usage. If such a book does not solve all the problems of New Testament grammar, it should, by its treatment of those which it discusses, illustrate to the student the right method of investigation and so suggest the course which he must pursue in solving for himself those problems which the book leaves unsolved. My aim has been to provide a book fulfilling these conditions.

The aim of the book has determined the method of its construction. The usages which are of most frequent occurrence, or otherwise of especial importance, have been emphasized by being set in the largest type, with a title in bold-faced type. The table of contents also has been so constructed as to make prominent a conspectus of the leading uses. It may be well to require of students who use the book as a text-book that they be able to name and define these leading usages of each mood and tense; if they also commit to memory one of the Greek examples under each of these prominent usages, they will do still better.

The matter printed in smaller type consists partly of fuller exposition of the usages defined in the more prominently

printed sections, partly of enumeration and definition of the less frequent usages. The portions in smallest type are chiefly discussions of the rarer or more difficult usages. They are an addition to the text-book proper, and are intended to give the work, to a limited extent, the character of a book of reference. The occasional discussions of English usage would of course have no place in a work on Greek grammar pure and simple, but to the end which this book is intended to serve they are as really germane as any discussions of the force of a Greek tense. One often fails to apprehend accurately a thought expressed in Greek quite as much through inexact knowledge of one's own language as through ignorance of Greek usage.

As concerns the extent to which I have used the work of others, little need be added to the testimony which the pages of the book themselves bear. While gathering information or suggestion from all accessible sources, I have aimed to make no statement concerning New Testament usage which I have not myself proved by personal examination of the passages. Respecting classical usage and pre-classical origins, I have relied upon those authorities which are recognized as most trustworthy.

On a subsequent page is added a list of books and authors referred to by abbreviations in the body of the book. To all of the works there enumerated, as well as to those mentioned by full title in the body of the book, I am under obligation for assistance or suggestion. It is a pleasure also to acknowledge the valuable assistance privately given by various friends. Prominent among these, though not completing the list, are Professor W. G. Hale of the University of Chicago, Professors M. L. D'Ooge and W. W. Beman of the University of Michigan, my brother, Professor Henry F. Burton of the University of Rochester, and Professor George W. Gilmore of Brooklyn, N.Y. But I am chiefly indebted to Professor William Arnold Stevens of the Rochester Theological Seminary, under whose instructions I first became interested in the

subject of this book, and to whom my obligations in many directions are larger than can be acknowledged here.

In quoting examples from the New Testament I have followed the Greek text of Westcott and Hort as that which perhaps most nearly represents the original text, but have intended to note any important variations of Tischendorf's eighth edition or of Tregelles in a matter affecting the point under discussion. The word *text* designates the preferred reading of the editor referred to, as distinguished from the marginal reading. In the English translation of the examples I have preferred to follow the Revised Version of 1881 rather than to construct entirely independent translations. Yet in not a few passages it has seemed necessary to depart from this standard either because the revisers followed a Greek text different from that of Westcott and Hort, or because their translation obscured the value of the passage as an illustration of the grammatical principle under discussion, or occasionally because I was unwilling even to seem to approve what I regarded as unquestionably an error of translation.

While I have given all diligence to make the book correct in statement and in type, I dare not hope that it has altogether escaped either typographical errors or those of a more serious character. I shall welcome most cordially criticisms, suggestions, or corrections from any teacher or student into whose hands the book may fall.

ERNEST D. BURTON.

CHICAGO, September, 1893.