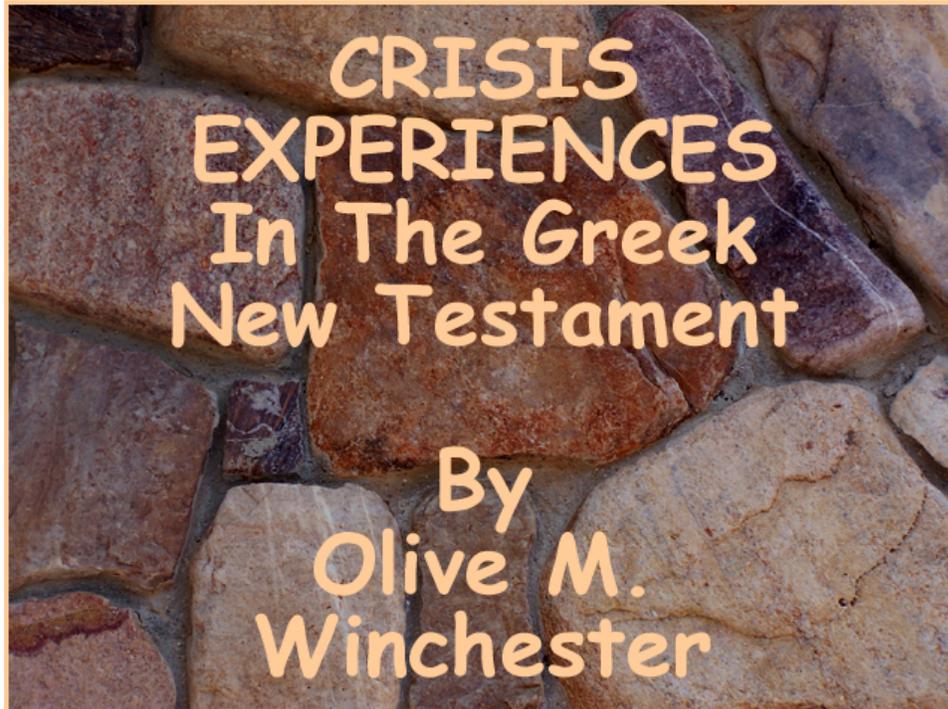


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**CRISIS EXPERIENCES IN THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT**  
By Olive M. Winchester



Edited Throughout,  
With Final Chapter  
By Ross E. Price

An Investigation Of The Evidence  
For The Definite, Miraculous  
Of Regeneration And Sanctification  
As Found In The Greek New Testament,  
Especially In The Figures Emphasized,  
And In The Use Of The Aorist Tense.

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## **FOREWORD**

**The accompanying manuscript on Crisis Experiences In The Greek New Testament, by Olive M. Winchester and Ross E. Price, has been very carefully reviewed and evaluated by me in every part. I consider it not only an interesting new approach to an important and somewhat controversial subject in New Testament interpretation and in practical religion, but also one that has been carried out in a scholarly manner as well. For those who believe in the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection it represents a significant and convincing contribution to the defense of that doctrine.**

**The linguistic argument presented in combination with one which has already been used effectively, viz., the figures and symbols employed in scriptural references to both regeneration and sanctification, comes with peculiar force to one who is acquainted with the facts of language, and should have considerable weight with anyone who will give it serious consideration. The authors have represented the case with unusual fairness, especially in the grammatical appendix, allowing all pertinent evidence to be aired, even when some might at first seem derogatory. Thus any possible answer seems to have been anticipated and the relative value and importance of the linguistic facts employed have been made perfectly clear.**

**The possibility of such an argument as has been presented in this treatise has been long anticipated, and we are happy to know that it has finally been furnished in so effective a manner.**

**Coral E. Demaray  
Professor Of Classical Languages  
And Biblical Literature,  
Olivet Nazarene College**

**\* \* \* \* \***

## **AN EVALUATION**

**A careful reading of Crisis Experiences In The Greek New Testament, by Dr. Olive M. Winchester and Dr. Ross E. Price, has convinced me of its real worth, in this our day, to any who are in need of assistance in the exposition of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification.**

**This study, to test the validity of the doctrine of instantaneous experiences of grace by a thorough examination of the tenses in the Greek New Testament, is, as one would expect, scholarly in method, sound in reasoning, and almost exhaustive in treatment. I find its thesis verified.**

**Bertha R. Dooley  
Professor Of Languages And Literature,  
Northwest Nazarene College**

**\* \* \* \* \***

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

**Miss Olive M. Winchester, Th.D, was born November 2, 1880, at Monson, Maine, the daughter of Charles and Sarah (Blackstone) Winchester. She began her study of the classical languages in her high school years. Her college training was taken at Radcliffe College, where she continued her study of the classics, receiving her A.B. degree in 1903. From 1902 to 1908 she was professor at the Collegiate Institute at North Scituate, Rhode Island. Following this she continued her theological studies as the first lady admitted to the Divinity School of Glasgow University in Scotland, receiving her Bachelor of Divinity degree there with high honors in 1912.**

**Returning to America, she served as Vice-Principal of the Collegiate Institute of North Scituate, Rhode Island, from 1914 to 1916. She then accepted the position as Vice-President of Northwest Nazarene College at Nampa, Idaho, where she was also professor of Greek, Hebrew, and Biblical literature. This position she held from 1917 to 1935, when, at the invitation of her former colleague, Dr. H. Orton Wiley, with whom she had served at Northwest Nazarene College, she accepted the position as the first dean of the Graduate School of Religion then organized at Pasadena College, Pasadena, California. She remained there as dean of the Graduate School and professor of Biblical literature and languages until the time of her death, February 15, 1947.**

**In 1917 she received the degree Master of Systematic Theology at the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California, and in 1925 was awarded the degree Doctor of Theology at Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey. She was ordained to the ministry in the Church of the Nazarene at Glasgow, Scotland, in**

1910. She is the author of *Christ's Life and Ministry*, 1932, and *Moses and the Prophets*, 1941, both published by the Nazarene Publishing House at Kansas City, Missouri. During her ministry in the field of Christian education Miss Winchester had written numerous articles for the various publications of her denomination and was known as an ardent exponent of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification.

Ross E. Price

\* \* \* \* \*

## PREFACE

For some time it has been the conviction of men who were acquainted with the beauty and genius of the Greek language that the grammatical and linguistic tools for New Testament interpretation have too often been neglected by those who would expound the Scriptures. Moreover, among those of the evangelistic groups who teach that conversion and sanctification are crisis experiences, there has been a growing interest in the possible evidences for such crises as may be found in the Greek New Testament. If the new birth and entire sanctification are definite, divine acts, miraculous in their nature, there should be both grammatical and linguistic evidences for such in the use that the New Testament writers made of the Greek language in which the message of salvation through Jesus Christ has come to us. Grammarians remind us that perhaps in no item have the Biblical translators made more blunders than in their rendering of the Greek tenses, and especially so in reference to the aorist.

It is not surprising, then, to find those of the evangelistic conviction who know the distinctions in kind of action presented by the Greek tenses using this knowledge as an argument in substantiation of the crisis nature of these great Christian experiences. Yet no one has, to our knowledge, made a careful and scientific investigation of the New Testament evidences in detail concerning this item. Finally, some even come to question just how much basis there might be for claiming that the New Testament Greek could be appealed to as a proof of our argument for the crisis nature of these experiences. It was in the year 1945 that Dr. Olive M. Winchester became concerned about this matter to the extent that she undertook the investigation which has resulted in the presentation of this treatise to those ministers and laymen who may be interested in this problem.

For some time prior to her death we had been corresponding concerning this project upon which she worked so zealously with her waning strength. Death came before she had opportunity to finish it. Her research notes and the handwritten draft of the first four chapters of this treatise were committed to me for editing and completion. A careful check has been made of all her sources, and the final chapter, setting forth our findings in the New Testament, has been added. It seemed important to include testimony from leading Greek authorities that would, from a technical standpoint, corroborate the position taken in this treatise. This has been

done by means of the appendix. For the sake of the English reader the Greek in the main body of the treatise has been transliterated\* in each instance where it has been used. [\*In this digital edition, I have retained only the English transliteration of the Greek words. -- DVM]

Indebtedness should be acknowledged to Miss Bertha R. Dooley, M.A., professor of languages and literature at Northwest Nazarene College, Nampa, Idaho; to Mr. Coral E. Demaray, Ph.D., professor of classical languages and Biblical literature at Olivet Nazarene College, Kankakee, Illinois; and to the close friend and colleague of both Dr. Winchester and myself, H. Orton Wiley, S.T.D., for reading the manuscript and for offering many valuable criticisms and suggestions for its improvement. Indebtedness to the various authorities and their publishers is carefully and, we trust, adequately acknowledged in the notes. Each and all of them have been gracious in granting the privilege of quotation.

Our prayer is, not only that this treatise will go forth as something of a tribute to Dr. Winchester's scholarship and spiritual insight, but that wherever it is read it will inspire faith to seek and find the two crisis experiences in salvation which seem so clearly set forth in the pages of the Greek New Testament, which she studied constantly and loved so much.

Ross E. Price,  
Dean, Graduate School of Religion,  
Pasadena College, Pasadena, California

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## 01 -- INTRODUCTION: THE ISSUE IN REVIEW

Each day and each age has its challenge and its special issues, whether economic, social, or religious. Those of us whose dominant interest lies in the realm of the religious make these issues our special concern, and more particularly are we moved when the application is to vital spiritual experience.

That group of evangelicals so often referred to as the holiness people believe that they have been blessed with the religious and theological position which they call their Wesleyan heritage.<sup>1</sup> The various denominational groups included by such a designation for the most part find their bond of union in the Wesleyan interpretation of the doctrine of entire sanctification and feel that they are called of God to carry on this tradition.

Among the points of emphasis in Wesley's interpretation of the experience was the belief that it is instantaneous in the religious life of the Christian believer. He came to this conclusion by a careful induction of facts. It was his custom, having established it at the beginning of his work, to question incisively each one who professed the experience of sanctification as to the manner of its obtainment.

Sometimes he would have another associated with him in the questioning. Even when the numbers increased, still he questioned and on through the passing years until finally he made the statement, ". . . and every one of these (after the most careful inquiry, I have not found one exception either in Great Britain or Ireland) has declared that his deliverance from sin was instantaneous: that the change was wrought in a moment."<sup>2</sup>

This was characteristic of Wesley. He had done likewise when he would know about the witness of the Spirit. To obtain this information he journeyed from England to the Moravian community in Germany, and there between the services, which convened somewhat after the fashion of a camp meeting today, he would take first one brother and then another and ask him how he had obtained the witness of the Spirit. This led him to look for a similar result for himself, which took place at the event of the Aldersgate experience.

Thus it was by a scientific investigation in both instances that Wesley obtained the concepts of crisis experiences of salvation.

While Wesley gives us this approach, we naturally desire to inquire into the scripture foundations for such a belief, for the Word of God is always our ultimate authority. There are figures used in scriptural references to these experiences which are very significant. In connection with the first work of grace there is that of the new birth and the resurrection, and with the second work the expressions crucify, put to death, mortify, cleanse, purify. These to us connote definite crisis experiences, but others have not felt that way and have suggested, e.g., that "put to death" simply means to render inoperative. Other figures have likewise been modified by those who reject belief in the miraculous and instantaneous nature of these experiences. Moreover, the trend of the day is to view all Christian experience as the result of growth. If there is a background of Christian culture, then this outward stimulus will stir the inherent divine element in man and he will gradually enter into the realm of grace. Proponents of this doctrine are inclined to feel that crisis experiences belong only to those who have been lacking in Christian culture and training. All this is out of accord with our teaching and with Christian experience as we have known it.

There are other evangelicals who accept a crisis experience in the initial work of grace but who deny the second. These are to be found within the ranks of the major Protestant denominations today.

With the rise of the modern holiness movement in the last years of the nineteenth century, the emphasis upon a definite, instantaneous work in connection with the experience of entire sanctification was renewed as in the days of Wesley and his followers. At that time the evangelical churches quite generally accepted the fact of a crisis in relation to the new birth but were not willing to admit a similar crisis in relation to sanctification. The emphasis of early Methodism was revived at this point. As a result there broke forth the holiness revival centering mainly in the

Methodist church, but touching members of other faiths as well. In this revival certain outstanding leaders appeared whose names have been a sacred memory among holiness people because they were such stalwart defenders of the experience of entire sanctification. Standing in the first rank among these leaders was Dr. Daniel Steele, who not only preached and expounded the doctrine but also wrote many books defending its truth. One of his books, entitled *Milestone Papers*,<sup>3</sup> contains a chapter entitled "The Tense Readings of the Greek New Testament." Therein he emphasizes especially the contention that the aorist tense so frequently used in the New Testament Greek, and particularly in connection with Christian experience, indicates the instantaneousness, and therefore the miraculous nature, of these great crises. Thus Dr. Steele makes use of the linguistic argument, The validity of this argument is the subject of the present investigation. If this can be depended upon we have a strong case, built in accordance with the inductive method of Wesley, with the significant figures of Scripture and the linguistic evidence all as proofs.

Before entering into the investigation itself, we would take up certain a priori reasons why Dr. Steele might be right. In the first place, he knew Greek. In those days the classics were taught not only in the large city high schools but also in the small town schools. The girls acquired the knowledge of serving and cooking at home, and the boys had their manual training there also, but at school they received a cultural development. Beginning Greek was generally started the second year of high school and before graduation one was supposed to have read prose from Xenophon and selections from Homeric poetry. Then in college one toiled on, somewhat painfully to be sure, through tragedy, comedy, history, oration, and concluded with philosophical Greek, with some Greek composition added for full measure. While this may not be an exact outline of Daniel Steele's education in Greek (for the writer,<sup>4</sup> who was going through Eastern schools during the last years of her life, is speaking from personal experience), yet it would represent in general his educational background. He could not have arisen to the position of a recognized scholar in the field as he did without some such training as this. He held a number of collegiate positions, was professor in Genesee College, was the first president of Syracuse University, then from 1884 to 1893 was professor of New Testament Greek in the School of Theology at Boston University.

The second reason why we consider the possibility that Steele's position may be valid is the fact that *Milestone Papers* was written during the latter part of his life. He states that it is "about three o'clock in the afternoon of life's brief day,"<sup>5</sup> and he feels that he is looking toward the sunset of life. While still carrying on ministerial labors, he had given up the heavier task of a college professorship and was turning much of his attention to writing. His reflections are not those of a young, immature mind, but come after long years of study. He knew his Greek New Testament, for he had taught it for a number of years.

Moreover, in the third place, there is the possibility that his argument was sound, for had it been vulnerable there would have been a severe attack upon it by

his contemporaries whose contrary assumptions he distinctly states at the close of the preface to his book:

"The writer hopes that the grammatical proof that the conditions of eternal life are continuous through this life, and that entire sanctification is a momentary act, will contribute to banish those seductive errors industriously propagated by certain popular lay evangelists: (1) that the first act of faith gives the person an inalienable and eternal standing in Christ, and (2) that sanctification must be imperfect so long as we live in the body, and that Death is a conqueror of sin mightier than the Son of God. Those who plead for a gradual death of sin in the believer without any special exercise of faith, and without any crisis in Christian experience, called by the Wesleys "the second blessing," may be encouraged by this chapter to expect entire sanctification "now, without doing or suffering any thing more."<sup>6</sup>

Thus we feel that Dr. Daniel Steele could not have gone too far wrong in the evidence he used and, this being so, we certainly desire to retain the benefit of such proof, for the impact of liberal thinking along this line is such that we need whatever defenses are available. Yet in treating this subject we propose to examine all of the facts with fairness and obtain all information possible from grammarians in the fields of both classical and New Testament Greek, and in any other languages that may shed light upon our problem. The writings of some of the great exegetes down across the years will also be examined for the contribution which they may make to our investigation.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 02 -- PROVIDENCE IN A LANGUAGE

When we survey the conditions that existed in the world just preceding the coming of Christ, we are inclined to feel that certain circumstances marked a providential preparation for this glorious event. First, the world was under one government, that is, the portion of the world which would be traversed by the early missionaries. Although the corruptions of this government were many, yet this unity gave easy access to the various sections of the country.

Then, there was an excellent system of roads, not like our great highways today to be sure; they did not need such, for the automobile had not yet made its appearance. But they did have highways suitable for their day and age, over which the traveler might go. Some had their special names and designations, as in our own time.

Furthermore, there was in general a universal language, brought about through the conquest of Alexander the Great about three centuries before the Christian era. While local dialects would be used in the various sections, Greek was the one language which was universally understood. Had this not been true the

**Apostle Paul and others who traveled across the different provinces of the Roman Empire would have encountered an insufferable barrier. They had not time to learn the particular language in each place, but with a knowledge of Greek they could preach at once in a tongue familiar to the people.**

**Not only was there a providence in the universality of the language, but in the particular one chosen. It is well known by us that any language is a poor vehicle to convey spiritual realities. We have found ourselves more than once like a wild bird beating against a cage in seeking to get the thought content of the mind through this medium of verbal expression; but some languages are more cumbersome than others and some more adaptable. Some languages are more pliable and flexible and hence able to express finesse of thought, especially in written form, while others seem to be wooden, as it were, by comparison.**

**Languages fall into families, and it is worthy of notice that two most outstanding and highly developed families each have a Biblical language. There is the Semitic family tree with the Hebrew, and the Indo-European with the Greek. These two are quite different in structure but both have a beauty of their own. In the Indo-European group there are two competitors for first place. The Sanskrit of India, which in the early days was the language of the great Vedic hymns of India and in the later days is known as the classical Sanskrit, has always been the language of the priestly and learned class. Then there was the Greek. Both of these languages excel in expressing shades of thought. The Sanskrit is an exact, scientific language but in comparison with it the Greek has its points of superiority. Says Butcher:**

**"For though language is an instrument of thought, language on its scientific and grammatical side, had been subjected to acute analysis in India, yet language as the instrument of persuasion, shaped and molded into forms that appealed alike to intellect and feeling, and answered the demands both of reason and beauty -- from this point of view language had not hitherto been treated. Such a union of the artistic and scientific spirit was the work of Greece."<sup>1</sup>**

**When we note the history of the Greek language we can see how this came to be. It was born among a thinking people. The true Greek was naturally philosophical and he set this stamp on the language. Thus it has a great variety of forms and numerous particles which often to the novice appear as unnecessary encumbrances, but to one who has become accustomed to the language are very significant. They express delicate shades of meaning, at times very difficult to render into English, but very necessary to the effects desired in the Greek.**

**There were distinct periods in the history of the language, and the Greek of the days of the great philosophers was not the Greek spoken in New Testament times, although it formed the basis for our New Testament Greek. For a long time scholars debated whether the New Testament Greek was classical or whether it was a specially ordained language.<sup>2</sup> One day all this was settled when someone found in the city dump of an Egyptian town some documents that had long been buried in**

the sand. Examining these, the scholars discovered that the Greek in which they were written was exactly like that in the New Testament. These documents were various in their nature; some were private letters, some were business contracts representing all phases of life in the first century of the Christian era. "There are business contracts," says Robertson, "bills, deeds, marriage contracts, wills, decrees, love letters, business correspondence, anything and everything that made up the life of the people of the time."<sup>3</sup> There is a marriage contract which sounds very much like the wedding ceremony of today. Epicurus, the philosopher, writes his charge to an orphan girl and admonishes her to obey her grandmother; an anxious mother writes to her son who has had an accident; a prodigal son writes home to beg forgiveness of his mother; and there are many others of like nature.

It was the Greek of the common life of the people, just as the gospel message was heard by this class gladly. The pedantry of the classical period with its long, involved, periodic sentences is not present; in its place for the most part stand simple, co-ordinate sentences. Other changes naturally have taken place. With the passing of the years the most of these have occurred in the forms. While there are a few in syntax, yet not many, and the use of the tenses remains practically the same. The spelling of words varies slightly in some cases, the dual number has been dropped, and the optative mood has only a few remnants left. Some prepositions have changed a little in their use, as also some of the subordinating conjunctions; yet essentially the language is the same and the niceties of construction which we are accustomed to look for in Greek writers are still present.<sup>4</sup> Milligan says, "Many passages, especially in the more literary parts of the New Testament, can be adduced where only by a close observance of the distinctions of tense and case construction can the writer's full meaning be grasped."<sup>5</sup>

It was called the Koiné (common), because it was the language common to the people everywhere, being spoken throughout the Roman Empire. It was divided into the vernacular and literary. "The New Testament," says Robertson, "is mainly in the vernacular Koiné, but it is the vernacular of men of great ability and some of them have a decided literary flavor, as we see in the writings of Luke, the Epistles of Paul, and the Epistle to the Hebrews."<sup>6</sup>

Thus we see that there appears to be a divine providence in the fact that the Greek became the medium for the gospel message, for it was the general language of the day; it was well adapted to express shades of thought and abstract concepts, and it was simplified in its structure sufficiently to be used by the common people.

\* \* \* \* \*

### 03 -- THE GRAMMARIANS TESTIFY

Grammar is not an entrancing word. It connotes tedious routine, but its absence often means failure. Ask a businessman whether he has not found difficulty in getting a stenographer who could spell properly and construct

**sentences correctly. Many a young person has lost a position because of such deficiencies.**

**But grammar is not only basic and necessary in the business world and in the literary realm; it also plays an important part in exegesis. A glance over the history of interpretation shows this. In the early Christian Church the allegorical method at first caught the imagination, especially at Alexandria. This sprang out of a strong mystical tendency that was not always tempered by sober judgment. Consequently, in the schools it was maintained that scripture had a manifold sense. The great scholar Origen argued that man has a body, a soul, and a spirit; so scripture has a threefold sense. Perhaps we should stop a minute to note the difference between meaning and application. Since human nature is one and the same, the application in one day and age may be quite true of similar conditions in another day and age; but when we say that originally the scripture has various meanings, then we have loosed all moorings and submitted scripture to the subjective fancy of the interpreter. But as regards Origen, in justice it should be said that, while he did favor the allegorical method, yet he also emphasized grammatical exegesis.**

**Finally, at Antioch, where the gospel was preached by men of Cyprus and Cyrene to Grecians, and the disciples were for the first time called Christians,<sup>1</sup> and which became the headquarters for the Gentile missionaries, was founded a school of interpretation that had as its foundation principles that the scripture must be interpreted in accordance with the laws of grammar and facts of history.**

**This school produced a number of outstanding scholars, but Chrysostom, the silver-tongued orator of the Early Church, is held as ranking first. Concerning him, F. W. Farrar notes:**

**"As a preacher of surpassing eloquence, whose popular exposition is based on fine scholarship and controlled by masterly good sense; as one who had thorough familiarity with the whole of Scripture, and who felt its warm tingling human life throbbing in all its veins; as one who took the Bible as he found it, and used it as a guide of conduct rather than as an armoury of controversial weapons or a field for metaphysical speculations -- Chrysostom stands unsurpassed among the ancient exegetes."<sup>2</sup>**

**When the vigor of the new life of the Early Church began to be dominated by ecclesiasticism, it lost its inspiring element and with it went the exegetical spirit. The Dark Ages followed; then came the Renaissance or Revival of Learning. Following close upon this came the Reformation, with the intrepid Luther proclaiming justification by faith. We regard him as a man of action primarily, for he not only liberated man from the domination of the Roman church in his personal faith and religion; but also by means of his German translation of the New Testament, and then the Old Testament, he gave us an example of careful exegetical work and laid down rules for the same, the first of them being a**

necessity for grammatical usage. This period was also graced by other great exegetes, among them John Calvin. Then in the two centuries following two tendencies asserted themselves: one dogmatic, the other liberal. But during this time the philologists and diligent students of the New Testament were preparing the way for a more grammatical study. Also during this time there arose a German evangelical school of interpreters.

Finally, a new era known as modern exegesis came into existence. Bishop Ellicott, with others, stands on the threshold here. Stowe, writing in the introduction to the American edition of Ellicott's work on Galatians, Ephesians, and I and II Thessalonians, states that the commentaries of Professor Ellicott mark an epoch in English sacred literature.<sup>3</sup> Then Ellicott in his preface to I Corinthians observes, after bemoaning the lack of attention to Robertson's grammar by many commentators, "If the student will patiently wade through these details of grammar, he will be rewarded by a real knowledge of the mind of the original, which so far as I know, cannot be acquired any other way."<sup>4</sup>

Again, Chafer reminds us that "the first rule of Biblical interpretation is: Interpret grammatically; with due regard to the meaning of words, the form of sentences, and the peculiarities of idiom in the language employed."<sup>5</sup>

Thus we can see the importance placed upon careful grammatical study in the history of exegesis. There are many important requisites also, but we have followed this one through because it is pertinent to our discussion, not that we should neglect other points. Above all, in exegesis, there must be a devout Christian faith that knows experientially the things that pertain to salvation.

Passing from the history of exegesis, we would consider particularly that portion of grammar known as tense. In English we connect tense directly with time, that is, an act in the present, past, or future, according to the tense used. But this is not the only connotation of tense in the Greek language; in fact, time is subordinate and kind of action is dominant; that is, an act is continuous, or completed, or a simple momentary occurrence. So H. V. P. Nunn suggests:

"It is somewhat unfortunate that we are compelled to use the name tense in connection with the forms of Greek verb. It directs our attention too much to the time of the action, whereas it was the state of the action, rather than the time, that was prominently before the mind of the Greek."<sup>6</sup>

Again A. T. Robertson, writing in the work appearing jointly under his own name and that of W. H. Davis to which we have already referred (*A Short Grammar of the Greek New Testament*), makes the following definite statements concerning tense:

"The name tense, French temps (Old French tens), Latin tempus, is a mistake. The Latin word, like French, means time. This is not the root idea in the Greek

tense. There is no time element in the tense except in the indicative mood and there it was a later development and not consistently observed. The one essential idea in the Greek tense is the kind of action described. One must dismiss all notion of time if he wishes to understand the Greek verb. Like voice tense deals with the action of the verb, not with the affirmation (mode). But while voice relates the action in various ways to the subject, tense presents the state of the action (the kind of action) without regard to time at all. This fundamental idea of the kind of action involved belongs to all the modes and no other idea does. This is the only general idea in tense."<sup>7</sup>

With this explanation of the function of tense in Greek, we turn to the particular one known as the aorist, a designation not found in our English, but existent in certain other languages. It is with this tense that we are especially concerned in this study. What kind of action does it denote?

While our interest is primarily in New Testament Greek, yet for a background it will be well for us to examine classical sources.

In the heyday of the classics in Eastern schools the two leading universities had each an outstanding Greek grammarian, Goodwin of Harvard and Hadley of Yale. Allen was associated with the latter as time went on, so we hear of Hadley and Allen; but we shall deal especially with Hadley and thus examine these two great authors. We shall note, however, in passing that to understand the nature of the action expressed by the aorist we have to examine the tense more particularly in some mood outside of the indicative. It is in the indicative that the tense relates especially to time, this being caused by a little prefix known as the augment. In the indicative it is also the predominant tense in narration, very frequently appearing in the capacity both in classical and New Testament Greek. Consequently classical grammarians define the aorist with special reference to this relation.

Turning to Goodwin's Greek Grammar we find this definition: "The Aorist takes its name (unlimited, unqualified) from its denoting a simple past occurrence, with none of the limitations as to completion, continuance, repetition, etc., which belong to other past tenses."<sup>8</sup> Here he is defining the aorist in its aspect of a tense denoting past time and comparing it with other tenses which denote past time. He is not discussing the kind of action the tense indicates. So, likewise, Hadley says, "The Aorist is used in narrating past actions, when thought of merely as events or single facts without reference to the time they occupied."<sup>9</sup>

Leaving this phase of the aorist, we shall seek for its significance in other moods. Here the number of the tenses in common use is greatly diminished, leaving the present and the aorist to do the most of the work. So Hadley states: "The present is used when continuance is naturally thought of; otherwise the aorist, especially in reference to single or transient actions."<sup>10</sup> Goodwin in his Moods and Tenses distinguishes between the present and aorist infinitive by quoting from Aristotle:

**"One may become pleased (aorist) quickly, as we may get angry (aorist) quickly; but we cannot be blessed (present, continuance) quickly -- although we can thus walk (present) and grow (present) and do such things."11**

**Here the aorist denotes momentary or transient action, and the present a confirmed or continuous act.**

**But before leaving the classical authorities we shall note one more. This time we go to a book of Greek prose composition, for it is the writing from English into another language that calls for an exact understanding of its syntax. This admonition reads thus:**

**The learner should get the conception that the only difference between the aorist and present in any mood except the indicative is the rather fine distinction between the act regarded as a single occurrence, not considering it as protracted (aorist), and the act regarded as extended in time (present).12**

**Although we have surveyed these authorities in a very brief manner, yet sufficient material has been covered to indicate the significance of the aorist tense in classical Greek as it relates to kind of action.13 We are inclined to feel that already the evidence is rather apparent that the aorist intrinsically denotes a momentary act or simple occurrence. While there may be extended uses of the tense which occur more especially in the indicative, yet this is its fundamental significance.**

**But before we come to the New Testament grammarians let us pay a visit to a professor of linguistics from an outstanding university, namely, Columbia, who is the author of a book published in the year 1939. He will not have any bias of any kind, save that he will seek to be linguistically correct. He deals with many languages and consequently views the field with a broad vision.**

**To begin, we note that he differentiates the import of verbal forms. He limits tense to time and then uses aspect to denote kind of action. The latter he observes "denotes kind of action or state as complete or incomplete in itself, as instantaneous (momentary, aoristic) or durative (cursive, imperfective) etc."14 The point we wish to note especially is that very definitely he implies that "aoristic" is the equivalent of "instantaneous," or "momentary." This particular point is reflected in his discussion, but the one reference is sufficient for our purpose. Leaving the classical and linguistic field, we come to our grammarians of the New Testament Greek. Many have been the authors in this line of study, but we shall limit ourselves to the leading scholars, supplementing these with some of the more recent writers in the field. The foremost grammarians always embody the results of those who have gone before them, so that with this method of procedure we shall have a good coverage.**

First in this order we have chosen Winer, who is the author of a grammar regarded for many years as the principal basis of New Testament exegesis; the first edition appeared in 1822. Among numerous valuable writings on Biblical subjects this was Winer's masterpiece. While thoroughly scientific in his study, yet he was conscientious in seeking for truth and possessed a reverence for the Holy Scriptures. For three-quarters of a century this work was the leading authority, and even in the days of A. T. Robertson, whose monumental work is now our guide,<sup>15</sup> the first proposition was a revised edition of Winer instead of a new grammar.

Naturally grammars, like other books, have their day and generation; the issues of one period are not those of another. So it was that when the new discoveries of the papyri in Egypt were made the demand arose for a work that would take these into account. In consequence there appeared the more compact work of James Hope Moulton in 1906, which will constitute our second main authority.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, a treatise to which we have already made reference, namely, that of A. T. Robertson entitled *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, will be our leading source. No more thorough investigation or more comprehensive treatment of the subject has been made, and this author, like his predecessors, has been actuated both by the joy in the language and a devout reverence for the Word of God.

Before taking up their treatment of the aorist tense we would do well to note their concept of the relation of grammar to exegesis, and in particular the importance of the study of tense in this respect. Winer speaks of the study of the New Testament language as the fundamental condition of all true exegesis. Then Moulton observes that the use of the tenses is a subject on which many of the most crucial questions of exegesis depend;<sup>17</sup> and A. T. Robertson has a chapter in his book *The Minister and His Greek New Testament* which is entitled "Sermons in Greek Tenses." In his opening paragraph he states:

"The purpose of this discussion is to emphasize and to illustrate the homiletical value of the Greek tenses in the New Testament. If there are sermons in stones and books in running brooks, surely there are homiletical hints in delicate and precise shading in the tenses if scientifically treated. Henry Drummond found biological science rich in spiritual significance. The modern minister should find grammatical research a gold mine for his soul and for the sermon."<sup>18</sup>

These are not their only observations but they are sufficient to give us their viewpoint.

Now we come to our special consideration. What do these outstanding New Testament grammarians have to say about the aorist tense? Naturally we turn first to the oldest writer.

Winer begins his discussion on tenses by saying that in general they are used in the New Testament exactly as in Greek writers and then continues, "The aorist refers to the past simply (the simple occurrence of an event at some past time, considered as a momentary act), and is the ordinary tense of narration."<sup>19</sup> Then in comparing the imperfect tense he observes:

"The imperfect sometimes seems to take the place of the aorist in narration, when events are described at which the narrator was present (Lk. 10:18). By this means the narration is made more graphic and animated than it would have been if the writer had used the aorist, which simply relates, condensing each action into a single point."<sup>20</sup>

It is striking that in these two references he is speaking of the aorist indicative and as a tense in narration, yet he mentions the momentary aspect. Continuing further still in the indicative mood, he makes a comparison of the aorist with the perfect tense, quoting Luke 4:18; "He anointed me . . . and has sent me," where he notes that the verb expressing the former, that is, the anointing (aorist), is regarded as an event which once occurred, while the latter (has sent) is represented as a condition still existing.<sup>21</sup>

When we pass into other moods, as we have already observed, we get the more essential nature of the tense than in the indicative mood. In commenting on the significance of the aorist imperative Winer says that it is used of action which rapidly passes and should take place at once or, at any rate, of action which is to be undertaken once only.<sup>22</sup> Then referring to the aorist infinitive he states that it may be used after any tense whatever, when the reference is to an action which rapidly passes, is completed all at once, or is to commence immediately.<sup>23</sup>

In regard to this last part of his statement ("commence immediately") the word believe (*pisteuo*) offers a good example. Harper and Weidner, in their *Introductory New Testament Greek Method*, contrast the present and aorist of this word by saying the present means to believe continuously and the aorist to believe at once.<sup>24</sup>

In summarizing Winer's position on this tense we notice three expressions which contribute to our position as to its significance, momentary, at a point, and at once. All of these apparently indicate a crisis, not a process.

Passing on to Moulton, his *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, volume one, is worthy of our study. This he calls *Prolegomena* and has reference to those things which are said as a background or which are foundational premises. At the beginning of Chapter VI of this work we note his observation concerning the trend among the philologists of his time toward a study of the kind of action described in the verbal forms.<sup>25</sup> Implying that the previous grammarians had not given sufficient attention to this important phase, he dwells upon the matter at length, and states that the aorist has a "punctiliar" action, that is, it regards action at a point or as a

whole. The word punctiliar in this respect was newly coined. Here we notice emphasis on what Winer had already suggested, i.e., that the aorist denoted action at a point. Moulton, however, goes into the subject in much greater detail, taking up in order the three kinds of action expressed by the aorist tense. But since we shall consider these in our review of A. T. Robertson's position, we may omit consideration of them until that time.

We are given the clearest conception of what Moulton meant by the expression punctiliar, or at a point, when he speaks of the punctiliar force in certain present tenses and quotes Mark 2:5 as an illustration, giving as a translation "are this moment forgiven."<sup>26</sup> Here the present tense (which Robertson calls aoristic in this case) presents the fact without any reference to its progress, which would otherwise be usual for the present tense. Then, again, when Moulton is discussing the use of tenses in connection with general truths he states, "The present is much commoner than the aorist, which generally (Goodwin, Moods and Tenses, p. 157) refers to a single or sudden occurrence, while the present (as usual) implies duration."<sup>27</sup>

As we have reviewed Moulton we have been impressed by his clear inference that the essential nature of the aorist tense is to denote momentary action. Action at a point can hardly imply anything other than this. There are extended uses which he notes and we shall note, yet in every case where the aorist tense is used the aggregate is brought into a whole and length is fore-shortened until it becomes a point in perspective.

Our present leading authority we now consider, namely, A. T. Robertson, late professor of New Testament interpretation in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky. At the very beginning he stresses the necessity for understanding tense if one would become oriented into the Greek point of view. This "affords the only sure basis of operation."<sup>28</sup> He believes that Greek grammarians have too often been dominated by Latin, whereas the Greek language "was due to the genius and spirit of the Greek people." Moreover, he states, "If one gets it into his head that the root idea of tense is time, he may never get it out and he will therefore never understand the beauty of the Greek tense, the most wonderful development in the history of language."<sup>29</sup>

Then he follows on to state that before tense developed there were two verb types, "one denoting durative or linear action, the other momentary or punctiliar action." In studying kind of action we must begin with the verb root and note what it signifies. We might illustrate this in English by the difference between the verbs hit and beat. Hit signifies a momentary act and beat a prolonged or durative act.

Robertson's discussion of verb roots considers the important distinctions of three essential kinds of action: the momentary or punctiliar, when the action is regarded as a whole and may be represented by a dot (.); the linear or durative action, which may be represented by a continuous line (—); the continuance of

perfected or completed action, which may be represented by the point and continuous line thus ( .\_\_ ), or thus ( \_\_. ) if the action refers to that which continued from a point of beginning and finally reached completion. He then says, "Originally, before distinct tenses were developed for these ideas, distinct verb roots existed for them, in particular for the punctiliar and the linear."<sup>30</sup> Thus we see that there is a twofold approach to the kind of action, one from the verb root itself and the other from the tense and its usage. This will play quite an important part in our discussion when we finally come to the particular texts which indicate crisis experiences. Returning to the subject of tense, Robertson again states: "The aorist stem presents action in its simplest form (undefined). This action is simply presented as a point by this tense. This action is timeless."<sup>31</sup>

Our readers will recall that we stated earlier in our discussion that the aorist denoted past time only in the indicative mood and this, as we had already noted, was due to the prefix known as the augment. That the aorist is inherently timeless is supported by the great classical lexical authorities, Liddell and Scott, who give the meaning of the word aorist as "undefined," i.e., in relation to time. The aorist remains undefined as regards time. The act thus expressed in the aorist (except in the indicative mood) may be past, present, or future, since the aorist itself sets no time, and denotes only kind of action.<sup>32</sup> This characteristic of the aorist is perhaps nowhere more distinctly expressed than in the words uttered at the baptism of Jesus: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). A. B. Bruce, writing in the Expositor's Greek Testament, interprets it thus, "My good pleasure decided itself once for all in him." Here the aorist not only spans our divisions of time, but goes out into the eternities. As Robertson observes concerning this passage: "The original timelessness of the aorist tense often appears in the aorist indicative, where in spite of the augment as the sign of past time, no point is made in past time. This is clearly seen in the voice of the Father at the Baptism of the Son."<sup>33</sup>

Winer states that this aorist may be explained very simply: "My delight fell on him, He became the object of my love,"<sup>34</sup> thus emphasizing the momentary aspect of the tense as used in this passage. We would also recall in passing the fact that Robertson makes it very clear, in his discussion of the kinds of action expressed by the verb root, that the concept of the punctiliar is momentary.

As the tense developed three distinctions arose. The aorist was used to accent the beginning point of an action and was designated inceptive (called ingressive by some grammarians); then it was used to accent the concluding point and was called effective or resultative (by some grammarians, the culminative aorist); and then there was a third use known as constative, concerning which Robertson states, "It just treats the act as a single whole, entirely irrespective of the parts of time involved."<sup>35</sup> It is this last use of the aorist which seems to afford a great deal of trouble to some interpreters. In fact, starting with this particular use, and forming a wrong concept of its significance, they make inferences in regard to

the use of the tense which are entirely misleading. Thus we see that it is necessary first of all to form a correct conception of the function of the aorist.

Let us note, first, what constative means. It signifies stand together. What then does the constative aorist do? It "treats an act as punctiliar which is not in itself point action," says Robertson.<sup>36</sup> It views the action from that aspect. The aorist is used, as it were, to give us a bird's-eye view. We might illustrate by the analogy of collective nouns. When we use the noun group we think of a whole and not of individuals; individuals are conveyed, as it were, into a point for thought. So with the constative aorist. The French language has a similar tense called past indefinite, and one grammarian observes that it simply states in lump what has happened.<sup>37</sup>

Another analogy may be drawn from an expression found in the New Testament, namely, "What are these things?" (Luke 15:26; John 6:9; Acts 17:20.) In the Greek the interrogative pronoun subject is singular and the demonstrative pronoun is plural; consequently some have concluded that the subject pronoun should be plural. But Winer states, "It is a mistake to say that the singular is used for the plural in such expressions. Here the various objects referred to are included under one general expression."<sup>38</sup>

There are many passages of scripture that illustrate this use of the aorist tense, for, in the New Testament as in classical Greek, the aorist is the main tense of narration, and it is here that the constative use appears more frequently. Certain passages seem to have offered special difficulty, and these we shall note.

Before going on to take up these passages, however, we should bear in mind a special warning that Robertson gives, namely, that "it is the commonest grammatical vice for one to make a conjectural translation into English and then to discuss the syntactical propriety of the Greek tense on the basis of this translation."<sup>39</sup> One should note the Greek point of view.

With this in mind we turn to the passage which has afforded the most difficulty, John 2:20, which reads, in the Authorized Version: "Forty and six years was this temple in building." A careful look at the passage seems to indicate that the thought is, "It took forty-six years to build this temple." The Jews were not laying emphasis upon the process; they were viewing the time required as a whole. This is borne out when we turn to the original and find the aorist tense; and Robertson, commenting on this text, says, "The whole period of forty-six years is treated as a point."<sup>40</sup> Moreover, in his *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, he translated it "within forty and six years was this temple built."<sup>41</sup> B. F. Westcott in his commentary on John gives a like translation; so also do Dana and Mantey in their *New Testament grammar*.<sup>42</sup>

Another instance is found in Hebrews 11:23, where it is stated that Moses was hid three months. Here a period of time is summed up.<sup>43</sup> Still another is

Revelation 20:4. "They reigned with Christ a thousand years." Here Robertson observes, "The period of a thousand years is merely regarded as a point."<sup>44</sup> William Douglas Chamberlain, commenting on these and like situations, remarks, "The difference between this aorist and the imperfect is that the aorist views the whole period of time involved at a glance, whereas the imperfect would describe the process as going on."<sup>45</sup>

These examples are sufficient and indicate that such uses of the aorist tense are not contrary to its fundamental significance. Its fundamental significance determines rather its point of view in these cases.

Before leaving this subject, we would note that the difficulty which arises in these particular passages and in others like them lies in the fact that in such cases the aorist is dealing with verbs which in their root idea are durative. It is not with its own kith and kin essentially, but even so it throws its concept over them. When, on the other hand, it deals with verbs that are in their root ideas "momentary or instantaneous no difficulty is involved. These examples are very numerous on almost any page of the New Testament. . . . This is the normal aorist in all moods."<sup>46</sup>

Finally Robertson warns: "It needs to be repeated that there is at bottom only one kind of aorist (punctiliar in fact or statement). The tense of itself always means point-action."<sup>47</sup>

With this grammatical background, let us view some of our passages which indicate crisis experience. We will recall that we noted that the idea of point action or linear action is in the verb root originally and after that in the tense. We shall study first the verbs used to indicate crisis experience and then in the second place note the tense which the New Testament writers employ.

In connection with what holiness people call the first work of grace, one of the outstanding figures is that of the new birth. This is punctiliar in sense. Turning then to the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, in reply the Master says, "Except a man be born from above, he is not able to see the kingdom of God." Here we find the aorist tense used for "be born." This is uniformly recurrent as we read on. Nicodemus uses it in his further questioning and Jesus in His response. This, then, is a case in which the action in and of itself is momentary or instantaneous, and the aorist finds here its normal function. Thus there is a twofold evidence for a crisis experience, the significance of the verb root and also the tense.

Another figure for the new life in the soul is that of spiritual resurrection. This likewise is a punctiliar or momentary act. Turning to Colossians 3:1 we read: "If then ye be raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above."<sup>48</sup> The first verb is in the aorist and the second, "seek," is in the present tense. The seeking is linear; that is, it marks the continuous trend of conduct. But the raising was a single

act; both the nature of the act and the tense indicate the punctiliar aspect. With this verse may be compared the tenses used in Col. 2:12; Rom. 6: 4; and Eph. 2: 5, 6.

Furthermore, there is the representation of the life imparted under the symbol "new man." In Ephesians 4:24 we read, "And put on the new man that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth."<sup>49</sup> To "put on" is punctiliar in action, and also the tense used is the aorist. In verse 22, where we have the injunction to "put off the old man," we have a like situation, as well as in the parallel passage in Colossians 3:5-10.

In these passages we have been dealing with the impartation of a new nature, but we could also note tenses which represent the concomitant work of forgiveness. Here again in the concept forgiveness the act is punctiliar and the Greek tense is the corresponding aorist. Thus it is in I John 1:9; Matt. 6: 12; Luke 23: 34; I John 2:12, the last reference having the punctiliar present however.<sup>50</sup>

Passing on in our discussion, we shall take those figures that denote one phase of the negative aspect of entire sanctification, such as "crucifixion," "body of sin destroyed," "put to death," or "mortify." These indicate action at a point. In the verses using the expression "crucifixion" (Rom. 6:6 and Gal. 5:24) we find the aorist, as also in connection with the body of sin being destroyed (Rom. 6:6). Then "dead to the law" (Gal. 2:19) and "mortify" or "put to death" (Col. 3:5) likewise have the aorist tense. These passages compare with those previously discussed in that they give double testimony to a crisis experience, both by the nature of the verb and by the tense used.

Another form of presentation of the negative aspect is found in the words "cleanse," "purify," "purge," and "sanctify." These expressions are quite frequently used. John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth" (aorist tense); Acts 15:9, "Purifying their hearts by faith" (aorist) ; I Cor. 5:7, "Purge out the old leaven" (aorist); I Thess. 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly", (aorist again); I Cor. 6:11, "Ye are sanctified"; Eph. 5:26, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it [the Church] with the washing of water by the word" (aorists for sanctify and cleanse); Tit. 2:14, "That he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (aorist in the case of purify). While these verbs are not essentially punctiliar in their roots, they are given this sense by the tense used. II Peter 2:20 reads, "After they have escaped [aorist] the pollutions of the world." This is quite clearly demonstrated also, by contrast, in I John 1:7, where there is reference to cleansing as a continual process contingent upon our walking in the light. The act of cleansing is punctiliar and momentary, but the maintenance of that state and condition is contingent upon walking in the light, and if this is done, the state and condition is maintained; this is a process that follows the act.

Coming to the positive aspect of entire sanctification, we would note especially those passages that relate to the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Foremost

among them stands Acts 2:4, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." That this was sudden is clearly intimated by the context. Here also it was both dispensational and individual: dispensational in that it marked the giving of the Holy Spirit to the Church, and individual in that each was filled. When Ananias prayed for Saul at Damascus, he used the aorist tense both in his petition that the Apostle might receive his sight and also in the prayer that he might be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17). The context indicates that the former was immediate (aorist tense along with adverb immediately), so the very natural inference is that the latter was so; moreover, the tense marks it as such. So also in 10:44, where the Holy Spirit fell upon the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. Again in Samaria, when Peter and John prayed that they might receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:45), the aorist tense is used. In Acts 8, verse 17, we have the imperfect tense, but here the thought is surely that first one and then another was receiving the Holy Spirit. That the actual reception took place in individual cases is clearly indicated by Simon's eagerness to obtain the ability to impart the gift. The individual reception was instantaneous, but in the case of the group it was successive.

Closely related to these passages are those which speak of sealing: II Cor. 1:22, "Who hath also sealed [aorist] us, and given [aorist] us the earnest of the Spirit"; Eph. 1:13, "In whom also after that ye believed [aorist], ye were sealed [aorist] with that Holy Spirit of promise." In both cases then we have the aorist, in the passages describing the reception of the Holy Spirit and in those indicating sealing. Sealing, moreover, is a punctiliar act.

Thus in the scripture passages we find that crisis experiences are confirmed in two ways -- by the nature of the verb root in most cases plus the use of the tense; and where the verb may be linear the tense denotes the momentary aspect.

We have heard the testimony of the grammarians concerning the significance of the aorist and have noted some of the important instances of its use in the Greek New Testament. We shall also find it profitable to hear from the commentators. Their statements will concern us in the chapter that follows.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 04 -- THE COMMENTATORS CONFIRM

In considering the commentators, those men who have sought to interpret for us the wonderful truths of God's Word, we confine ourselves to those who belong to the field of modern exegesis, and we speak of modern from the standpoint of time, not thought. It would be far too wearisome a task to follow the commentators all down through history. Moreover, the later ones who stand in the foremost rank gather up the work of their predecessors. The modern period began with the early nineteenth century, which followed "the blighting epoch of rationalism" and produced a number of commentators who defended evangelical truth. The last half of the nineteenth century might be regarded as the Victorian age of exegesis, and

since then also many valuable commentators have appeared, especially in the development of sets of commentaries.

Opening this period of modern exegesis two distinctive men stand on the threshold. First comes Dean Henry Alford, the noted author of what is known as Alford's Greek Testament. Sir Robertson Nicoll, in speaking of him, says:

"Of the influence of Dean Alford's books there is no need to speak. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the success and usefulness of Dean Alford's commentary in putting English-speaking students into possession of the accumulated results of the labors of scholars up to the time it was published. He made our best critical and exegetical helps, previously accessible only to a few readers, the common privilege of all educated Englishmen."<sup>1</sup>

Then comes Ellicott. Stowe, in speaking of him, states:

"The commentaries of Professor Ellicott, modest and unassuming as they are in tone, really mark an epoch in English sacred literature -- I speak of scholarship and mode of exhibition mainly -- Ellicott now most fully represents the clear common sense and reverential purity so happily characteristic of the best Biblical expositors in the English church."<sup>2</sup>

Passing on, we reach the period which we have chosen to designate the Victorian age of exegesis, for at that time lived those singularly devout scholars sometimes known as the Cambridge Triumvirate, Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hort. They planned in 1860 to put out commentaries on the whole New Testament but this project was completed only in part. Death intervened before the task was finished, but we do value the works they have left us.

In the preface of Hort's Epistle of James, Murray writing tells of the special issues these commentators had to face and also something of their method. The crisis of the day was the authority and inspiration of the Word of God. Continuing he observes:

"It is impossible to over-estimate the debt which English Christianity has owed in this perilous period of transition to the steadying influence exerted over the minds of their contemporaries by the simple fact of their lifelong devotion to the study of the sacred text, their fearless faith, their fidelity to the truth, their guileless workmanship, and their reverent humility."<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, as regards method, he states:

"Each word and phrase and sentence has been examined in the light of the whole available evidence with characteristic freshness and with a singularly delicate sense both of the meaning of words and of subtle variations of grammatical structure."<sup>4</sup>

Westcott, one of the brightest examples of English scholarship and industry, lived from 1825 to 1901. Referring, himself, to the painstaking study involved in his preparation of a commentary, he suggests that some people might feel that undue stress had been laid upon details of expression, but states that his experience of forty years had brought him to the conviction that we do not attend with sufficient care to such things. He says:

"A few hours spent in tracing out the use of a word or a form in comparing phrases often held to be synonymous, in estimating the force of different tenses of the same verb in regard to the contexts in which they are found, will bring assurance which no acceptance of another's work can give."<sup>5</sup>

The Expositor's Greek Testament,<sup>6</sup> opening the twentieth century, had as its purpose to give the students of that day and generation what Dean Alford had done early in the nineteenth century. By this time it was recognized that one man could not write the whole commentary on the entire New Testament. In fact, the task had proved too herculean for a trio of such scholars as Lightfoot, Westcott, and Hort. So different books were assigned to different individuals. We do have, however, the same painstaking scholarship and grammatical precision as in the case of the Cambridge Triumvirate. The exegesis of this series is not so contributory as the former for exposition and homiletical purposes, but it does possess great worth.

If we omit the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, which is intended primarily to give knowledge of the content, the other series to be taken into consideration is the International Critical Commentary. This, for the most part, is so lost in linguistic study that little is given for exposition, and since different volumes have been written by different authors, the nature of the exposition naturally varies with the author, some being more profitable than others. By the time these were written, critical theories had well-nigh gripped the scholastic world, and consequently we do not feel in them the spiritual insight and devotion to truth that existed in the nineteenth century commentators; yet even here we find definite reference to the significance of the aorist tense.

In checking the observations of the commentators in their attitude toward the aorist tense, we might take passages and note the statements of each one in turn in relation to the particular passage, or we may take the commentator and give his remarks on the tense in connection with particular passages. We believe it best to follow this latter method, for sometimes some express the significance of the tense with one passage and others with another. Moreover, in this way we shall get the attitude of the individual commentator instead of fusing him with a group.

Consequently we shall call Dean Henry Alford to bear witness first. In Ephesians 4:22 ("That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts") he states, regarding the command to "put off the old man," that the aorist is used because the act of putting

off is one and decisive and suggests that the same is true of "put on" relative to the new man (v. 24). Moreover, he marks the fact that the participle "created" in verse 24 is in the aorist because it is a historical fact, "once for all in Christ." Furthermore, in verse 25, where we have the injunction to put away falsehood, he states that the aorist should be noticed "because the man must have once for all put off falsehood as a characteristic before he enters the habit of speaking truth."<sup>7</sup>

Then in his comment on Colossians 3:5, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," etc., he enjoins to "notice the aorist implying a definite act" and adds, "Compare this with Galatians 5:24," where we have the aorist in connection with crucifying the flesh; and in the same connection he calls attention to Romans 8:13. The last half of Romans 6:12 and verse 13 have some interesting imperatives. The first one, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body," is present, which indicates that you are not to allow this state and condition as a continuity; so likewise "nor present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness"; but the third imperative changes tenses and we have the aorist in the command, "but present yourselves unto God." Alford, commenting, says:

"The present imperative above denotes habit; the exhortation guards against the recurrence of a devotion of the member to sin; this aorist imperative on the other hand, as in 12:1, denotes an act of self-devotion to God once for all, not a mere recurrence of the habit."<sup>8</sup>

Turning now to his observation concerning Romans 12:1, where the word "to present" is an aorist infinitive, we read, it is "an indication that the sanctification of the Christian life is to extend to that part of man's nature which is most completely under the bondage of sin."<sup>9</sup>

Carrying out the same line of thought as this is I Peter 2:5, where the children of God as a holy priesthood have their obligation "to offer up spiritual sacrifices"; so Alford explains: "The aorist here used, because no habitual offering, as in rite or festival, is meant, but the one, once for all, devotion of the body, as in Romans 12:1, to God as his."<sup>10</sup>

Taking Ellicott next in order, we become interested in his comments on certain texts that are quite vital to our doctrinal teaching. These are the more significant because he approached the subject purely from a grammatical standpoint and not with any doctrinal bias. On the word, "ye are dead" (Col. 3:3), he states, "The aorist may, and apparently does, point to the act, the perfect to the state which ensued thereon and still continues."<sup>11</sup>

In 3:1, "If therefore ye were raised with Christ," Ellicott suggests that it refers to a definite time. The reference to the perfect tense is in the declaration, "Your life is hid with Christ in God," a state which follows as the result of one's being raised.

Following along with verse five of the same chapter, where the command comes, "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth," or as our Authorized Version reads, "mortify," Ellicott says, "Kill at once." Then in verse eight, where we have the exhortation to "put off all these; anger, wrath . . ." he remarks that the aorist is that of sequence, that is, it has exactly the same significance as in "put to death"; so also in the aorist participles putting off the "old man" and putting on the "new man" (vv. 9, 10).

In Ephesians 4:22, "that ye put off," where we have the aorist infinitive, Ellicott suggests an alternative. He states that the aorist here is due to the common law of sequence of tenses, and then adds "perhaps (cf. 'to put on', v. 24), both contrasting with 'to be renewed in the spirit of your mind' (present tense indicating a continual process), the reference is to the speedy, single nature of the act."<sup>12</sup> Herein he follows Winer, who allows for these two possibilities in regard to the aorist infinitive; but when we examine A. T. Robertson's grammar (p. 857) we note that he says that the aorist infinitive is "an excellent illustration of punctiliar action." He does not allow for Winer's sequence, and we are inclined to feel that Robertson has the genius of the aorist infinitive in this respect.

Turning to the Cambridge Triumvirate, Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hort, we shall follow Lightfoot on the passages we have just been discussing. His first notation is in connection with Colossians 2:20, which reads, "If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world," and herein he suggests that "in all cases St. Paul uses the aorist [apethanon], never the perfect [tethneka]; for he wishes to emphasize the one absolute crisis, which was marked by the change of changes."<sup>13</sup>

In connection with "mortify" in 3:5 he exhorts: "Carry out this principle of death to the world (2:20, 3: 3) and kill everything that is mundane and carnal in your being."<sup>14</sup> It is to be noted that he refers his reader back to 2:20 and 3:3, where the aorist tense is used, and consequently his statement on 2:20 would apply here also. Then in 3:9 and 10, where we have the aorist participles expressing the thought of putting off and putting on, he says St. Paul uses them "because it is a thing to be done once for all."<sup>15</sup>

Lightfoot was to have written on Ephesians as well as Colossians, but only the introduction and notes on fourteen verses of the first chapter were published. In consequence, Armitage Robinson was charged with the completion of this work.<sup>16</sup> He had access to Lightfoot's notes, to which he frequently refers. We will therefore take up from his edition the parallel passage to Colossians 3: 9, which is Ephesians 4:22. Referring to the use of the tenses he says: "The interchange of tenses deserves attention . . . Viewed as a change of garments the process is momentary; viewed as an altered life it is continuous."<sup>17</sup> The momentary aspect comes from the aorist tense; hence his interpretation.

Returning to Lightfoot, we will examine his commentary on Galatians. Here the Apostle is dealing with some Christian believers who through the influence of

Judaizing teachers had sought salvation by returning again to the Jewish ordinances. He tells them, "Ye are then and there shut out from Christ" (Lightfoot's translation), "... ye fell from grace," and he notes that the aorists represent the consequences as instantaneous.<sup>18</sup>

We come next to 5:24, which reads in our Authorized Version, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Here the Greek likewise uses the aorist tense, and Lightfoot would read, "crucified the flesh," commenting on the tense thus: "The aorist is to be explained either (1) by reference to the time of their becoming members of Christ . . . or (2) as denoting that the change is complete and decisive."<sup>19</sup> He then refers his reader back to verse 4 (mentioned above) to note the thought of the instantaneous action of the aorist tense.

With this review, it is quite clear that Lightfoot's concept of the aorist tense is that fundamentally it denotes a momentary or instantaneous act. He does note certain special uses of the aorist, as the one known as the epistolary aorist; yet when it comes to the main function of this tense he holds to the momentary aspect.

Before going on to consider the position of Westcott and Hort, there is a passage associated in thought with those we have been discussing which we feel it would be profitable to consider here. That is Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." No one of the Cambridge Triumvirate wrote on Romans, but we do have a commentary very similar to theirs by Philippi; moreover, he was a contemporary of these men, so we turn to his commentary.

As we read his exegesis of this passage, our hearts are made to pulsate because of the definiteness of his position. He states, first, that the "old man" refers to the previous (sinful) character or ruling tendency of the whole life; then he defines "body of sin" as "the mass of sin as an articulated organism, whose members are particular lusts."<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, he takes up the words crucify and destroy and states that the destruction of sin here "can only be understood of an actual annihilation, not of a mere cessation of activity, a reduction to inactivity."<sup>21</sup>

While, in connection with this particular verse, he does not make any special mention of the significance of the aorist tense used, yet if we turn to 6:2, where we have the statement, "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (A.R.V.), we find the following comment: "To die to sin means to break off living connection with it, to have no further communion with it. The aorist denotes an occurrence that happened at once."<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, on Romans 6:13 he says, "The imperative aorist (in distinction from the imperative present just used) denotes here not so much an action passing rapidly, or one which should take place at once, Winer p. 393, but marks an action which took place but once, as once for all."<sup>23</sup> If now we examine his observations

on Romans 12:1, where the believer is challenged to a complete consecration of himself to God, we shall find that in both of these cases he has given us a very specific statement as to the import of the aorist, namely, that it denotes an at once action, for he says, "Self-surrender to God is to be conceived as a momentary act concluded at once and forever, which reveals its effects continuously in a walk well-pleasing to God."<sup>24</sup>

Again, on Romans 13:11, which gives the admonition that it is already time for us to rise from sleep, he says, "The infinitive aorist denotes an action passing rapidly, completed all at once, Winer p. 416."<sup>25</sup> Thus, when we put all of these together, we are left with no question as to his viewpoint concerning the aorist tense.

Since Westcott had as his field the Gospel and Epistles of St. John and the Epistle to the Hebrews, we naturally will look first for his interpretation of the experience of the new birth, which is so clearly delineated in the Johannine writings. We recall the evening when Nicodemus visited the Master and with courtesy addressed Him as Rabbi, suggesting that Jesus had given evidence of being a teacher sent from God through the miracles that attended His ministry. Thereupon the Master responded, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Here the word to be born is in the aorist tense and the tense is repeated several times during the conversation. What is its significance? Let us follow Westcott a little farther.

When we make study of the descriptive phrases used by St. John to indicate the relation of believers to God, we find that three significant ones are noted by Westcott. First, "The initial fact of the communication of the divine life is expressed by 'to be born of God.'" Second, "The essential connexion existing in virtue of this quickening is expressed by 'to be of God.'" Then third, "In virtue of this connexion the believer becomes and is a 'child of God.'" He notes that when the initial fact of the new life is regarded in its abiding power the aorist, which designates "to be born of God," is changed to the perfect tense (I John 5:1; 2:29; 4:7; etc.) ; but when "the fact of the communication of the divine life is especially noticed" it is "in the aorist."<sup>26</sup> Thus it can be clearly seen that both by figure and by tense St. John regards the beginning of the Christian life as a crisis experience.

Similar use of tenses, that is, aorist and perfect, appears again in the Johannine writings in the description of the incarnation. The aorist is used where the thought is that "the coming of Christ. . . is regarded as a simple fact realized historically once for all," and is by far the most dominant tense used, but the perfect appears when the coming is presented as an abiding fact.<sup>27</sup> Here again we have a definite crisis intimated, showing that the aorist tense carries that thought primarily.

In Westcott's commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews there are some notations regarding the significance of the aorist that help us to understand those

difficult passages relative to apostasy, and also the fact of crisis experiences. These are 6:4, 5, and 10:28. In the clauses in 6:4, "who were once enlightened," "tasted of the heavenly gift," "become partakers of the Holy Spirit," "tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," and "falling away," we have aorist participles.

Westcott, in commenting on the first, states: "The illumination both here and there is referred to the decisive moment when the light was apprehended in its glory. . . . Inwardly this crisis of illumination was marked by a reception of the knowledge of the truth (x: 26) . . . . The force of the tense is carried on through."<sup>28</sup>

When he speaks of the force of the tense being carried on through he has reference to the other phrases cited. Thus we see that he regards the aorist as representing a momentary crisis experience. The crisis experience first came in the reception of truth in a vital relation; then again the falling away was a definite act, for it also is in the aorist.

As we read on in this passage, however, we find present participles in the expressions, "crucifying to themselves the Son of God," "putting Him to an open shame." On these Westcott remarks: "The present participles bring out the moral cause of the impossibility which has been affirmed, There is an active, continuous hostility to Christ in the souls of such men."<sup>29</sup>

Taking the parallel passage in 10:28 ff., again we find a series of aorist participles. In these participles, three in number, we have a "triple indictment," says Westcott.<sup>30</sup> First there is an act, "who trod under foot the Son of God"; then there is the mental attitude, a deliberate judgment, "counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing"; and finally a manifestation of defiant apostasy, "did despite to the Spirit of Grace." Referring to the nature of the manifestations, the commentator states that they were final and decisive. This he adduces from the tense used and contrasts this with what the meaning would be were the tense present or perfect. Thus once more we have the sense of a decisive act, once for all, so characteristic of the aorist.

These citations from Westcott and Lightfoot have been sufficient to show their position, so we take up next F. J. A. Hort, the third member of the Cambridge Triumvirate. Moulton rated him as the greatest New Testament scholar that his country had seen for a generation. Since he writes only on the Epistle of James and the first three chapters of First Peter, we do not have so large a range for examination; but there is one passage that shows his concept of the significance of the aorist tense, viz., James 1:24. The forgetful hearer is described as like unto one who takes a look at himself in the mirror, "He takes note of himself, is gone, and straightway forgets what sort of a man he was." The verb "take note of" is in the aorist tense and Hort says, "The aorist denotes the instantaneous and quickly passing character of the seeing." Again, in reference to the expression "straightway forgetteth," Hort continues, "Again the aorist because the forgetting was a single and immediate act."<sup>31</sup> Here, then, he stands in agreement with his two associates

and with the grammarians whom we have already considered as to the basic significance of the tense.

Leaving the nineteenth century commentators, we enter the twentieth century. Here we find a different mode of procedure. No longer does one man or a small group of men undertake a series; on the other hand we have a general editor, or group of editors, who assign the various books to different writers. The general editor leaves the individual authors unfettered for the most part, and the attitude is that variety of treatment is of greater importance than full uniformity.

While there are different series, yet three stand forth with considerable prominence: The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, The Expositor's Greek Testament, and the International Critical Commentary. The first of these, we can plainly see from its title, is concerned with exposition of content, but it also takes up doctrinal matters.

H. C. G. Moule, writing in the first of the abovementioned works, states in a prefatory note in his commentary on Romans concerning the aorist tense that:

"As this tense of the Greek verb is very frequently mentioned in the Notes, we here explain that its ordinary use, as a past tense, is to denote a single and completed past act, or whatever in the past is viewed as such. It thus differs from the Imperfect, which denoted past continuity; and from the Perfect, which denotes continuity between the past and the present."<sup>32</sup>

It should be mentioned also that the Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges,<sup>33</sup> which is very similar, but works out the contents from the Greek text instead of the English, has among its authors, as may well be expected, men who take into consideration the force of the aorist tense. Alfred Plummer, in commenting on I John 2:1, "In order that ye may not sin," says, "The aorist is conclusive against the rendering 'that ye may not continue in sin'. He would help them to avoid every act of sin." Then with the following statement, "And if anyone sin," he notes, "The aorist again shows that it is an act, and not a state of sin, that is contemplated."<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, J. J. Lias, in the Cambridge Greek Testament, in discussing the opening injunction of I Corinthians 15:34, "Awake to righteousness," distinctly says, "The aorist marks the sudden momentary occurrence of the awakening."<sup>35</sup>

Returning to the English work of the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, Moule is the expositor for Ephesians and Colossians. In his comments on 4:22 of the former book he says, concerning the expression "put off," "The Greek verb is the infinitive aorist. The tense tends to denote singleness of crisis and action."<sup>36</sup> And on 3:5 of the second epistle mentioned he again reminds us, "The verb is in the aorist tense; decisive and critical action is in view."<sup>37</sup>

When we come to the Expositor's Greek Testament, we enter particularly the realm of theological and doctrinal exposition. Here we find some of the leading exegetes of the early part of the twentieth century. There is James Denney of the United Free Church College, Glasgow, Scotland; S. D. F. Salmond, principal of United Free Church College, Aberdeen, Scotland; C. G. Findlay, professor of Biblical literature, exegesis, and classics, at Headingly College, Leeds, England; and many others.

We shall follow them briefly through several books of the New Testament. First there is James Denney, who writes on Romans. Commenting on Romans 6:13 he translates and explains, "And do not go on, as you have been doing, putting your members at the service of sin, but put them once for all at the service of God. For the difference between the present and aorist imperative, see Winer, p. 383 f."<sup>38</sup> Winer, as we have learned, was the leading New Testament grammarian of that day. The second command in this verse is in the aorist tense, as plainly indicated, denoting a definite act to be done "once for all."

Passing on to Romans 13:11, where the exhortation is to awaken out of sleep, we have an aorist infinitive, and Denney, quoting Gifford, translates: "It is time for you at once to awake."<sup>39</sup>

Next we will pass to I Corinthians, where Findlay is the expositor. On 5:7, where the exhortation is, "Purge out therefore the old leaven," he states that the aorist here implies a summary act, and the preposition which is added to the verb indicates a complete removal.<sup>40</sup> On 15:34 of the same epistle he translates, "Rouse up to soberness in righteous fashion, and cease to sin," and follows with the comment, "The first imperative is aorist of a single action, the second present of a course of action."<sup>41</sup>

J. H. Bernard writes on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. On 1:22, where the words "sealed" and "gave" are aorist participles, he says that they "point to acts completed at a definite moment in the past."<sup>42</sup>

Coming now to Ephesians 4:25, where we have reference made to putting away falsehood, Salmond makes the following observation: "The participle has its proper aorist force expressing a thing understood to be done completely and finally, that is, 'having put off once for all falsehood in every form.'"<sup>43</sup> Then in Ephesians 4:22, 24, speaking especially in connection with verse 24, where the exhortation is, "Put on the new man," he observes: "The aorist is appropriately used as before in verse 22; 'putting off' and 'putting on' being acts, while renewal is a process."<sup>44</sup> The word renewal is in the present tense, indicating that the Apostle calls for a continuance of the mind in this state of spiritual renewal. We are not to think that, because the "putting off" of the old man and the "putting on" of the new man involves a crisis, this fact rules out the following state and process of renewed living in which it manifests itself.

Another important writer in this series is A. S. Peake, who writes the comments on Colossians. Concerning Colossians 3:9 he has this to say, "The imperative changes its tense from aorist to present, the exhortation to the decisive act being followed by a rule for their daily life."<sup>45</sup> In the preceding verse we have the aorist imperative, where the command is to put off anger, wrath, and kindred sins; this is the decisive act; then the rule for their daily life, in consequence of this, is that they are not to lie one to another. Finally, in connection with 2:20 of this same epistle, we have Professor Peake's translation of the first clause, "If, as in the case you died in union with Christ," followed by his statement of the import of the tense, "The aorist points to the definite fact, which took place once for all."<sup>46</sup>

Thus we see that there are numerous notations as to the significance of the aorist in these commentaries, and that they have their sources from different authors, yet all agree on the fact that it indicates a decisive act once for all.

The most imposing series of all commentaries in the twentieth century will be given our final consideration. This is the International Critical Commentary.<sup>47</sup> Since, as the name implies, the purpose is more technical than expositional, we would not expect too many references to our item of special interest. Yet the fact that they are not altogether lacking in such references indicates that the importance of this tense lies in the background of their thought, at least in some of the volumes of this series. William Sanday and A. C. Headlam are the authors of the famous volume on Romans.<sup>48</sup>

In commenting on Romans 6:13 they note, just as others have done, the significance of the change of tense. Paul's readers are not to continue to present their members as instruments of unrighteousness (present tense) but "to dedicate by one decisive act, one resolute effort,"<sup>49</sup> themselves to God.

Another reference concerns Romans 3:37, where the Apostle asks the question, "Where is boasting then?" and gives answer, "It is excluded." Here these writers observe that this is "an instance of the 'summarizing' force of the aorist; 'it is shut out once for all' by one decisive act. St. Paul has his eye rather upon the decisiveness of the act than upon its continued result."<sup>50</sup>

Passing on to the volume on the Epistles of Ephesians and Colossians, of which T. K. Abbott is the author, we note that in connection with Ephesians 4:22 and Colossians 3:9 we find similar statements regarding the aorist, used in these passages; in one case he says, "The aorist expresses the singleness of the act,"<sup>51</sup> and in the other case, "The aorist would, in fact, express a thing done once for all."<sup>52</sup> Concerning Colossians 3:3 he is still more explicit and notes that "the aorist expresses what occurred at a particular moment in the past."<sup>53</sup>

The volume on Hebrews in this same series is written by none other than James Moffatt, who, discussing the use of the aorist participle in Hebrews 2<sup>"</sup> 10, reminds us that "the choice of the aorist rather than the present in such cases is

due to the fact that the action is thought of not as in progress, but as a simple event or fact (Burton, Moods and Tenses, 149)."54

If we look for further notations<sup>55</sup> from the International Critical Commentary series, we shall find that Ernest DeWitt Burton, who writes the volume on Galatians, in speaking of the use of the aorist tense, refers to it as "denoting a past event viewed as a simple fact."<sup>56</sup> Or again, James H. Ropes, the author of the volume on James, in dealing with the passage concerning which Hort was quoted above (1:24), notes that the aorist here has reference to "a momentary act."<sup>57</sup> H. B. Swete, in translating Revelation 3:3, has due respect to the crisis nature of the repentance called for here. He states it thus: "Keep that which thou hast received, and promptly turn from thy past neglect."<sup>58</sup>

It is evident from our survey in this and the former chapter that the greatest of the grammarians and the leading commentators are in agreement as to the basic and significant use made of the aorist tense in the Greek New Testament. Should a careful study of the uses made of this tense, in regard to the Christian experiences of regeneration and sanctification, reveal that such use was discriminating on the part of the New Testament writers, the case would seem conclusive. It is our belief that the aorist tense was used in these writings to portray, as it alone could do, that kind of action which is involved in an instantaneous, momentary, crisis experience of salvation. Such would surely be characteristic of God's dynamic response to genuine faith.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 05 -- THE VOICE OF SCRIPTURE

We come now to consider the actual situation as it may exist in the Greek New Testament concerning the uses made of the tense we have been considering. "To the law and to the testimony" must be our slogan. "What saith the scripture?" Enough reference has already been made to point definitely in the direction of the premise that the New Testament writers used their tenses discriminately; especially did they do so in the uses of this important aorist tense. This is the conviction of James H. Moulton, who says:

"The use of the tenses is a most important subject for the exegesis of the New Testament. The student cannot learn too soon that the tenses are used with absolute accuracy by the New Testament writers, and he will soon realize how much is lost in meaning by inexactness."<sup>1</sup>

This "absolute accuracy" in the use of the tenses was the point emphasized by Dr. Daniel Steele in his Milestone Papers, to which reference was made in our first chapter.<sup>2</sup> Nor is it to be supposed that those who wrote the Greek of the New Testament were less concerned about tense significance than the writers of the Greek classics.

We propose to take up one by one, therefore, the main passages of the New Testament which have reference to the experiences of regeneration and sanctification, noting the actual tense used by the various writers. Let us consider the first work, commonly referred to as the new birth, and then move on to a consideration of the second work of grace, which we designate entire sanctification. It will be well to consider first the divine and, apostolic commands to obtain these experiences before we take up those passages which describe their attainment.

## **I. THE NEW BIRTH**

In his sermon on the Day of Pentecost Peter quotes Joel 2:32, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). Here the word for call upon in the Greek is in the aorist tense, and concerning it A. T. Robertson says, "punctiliar idea, in any single case, and so aorist."<sup>3</sup> Here both the tense and the verb substantiate Robertson's comment.

Again, at the conclusion of this famous sermon by the Apostle, he responds in the aorist tense to the question as to what his hearers must do by saying, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you" (Acts 2:38). Here again the verbs "repent" and "be baptized" are both aorist imperatives. A. T. Robertson's comment here is, "Change your mind and your life. Turn right about and do it now."<sup>4</sup> The command was obeyed and in short order three thousand of his hearers were changed from Christ-rejecters to believers. We may note that Peter was keeping faith with John the Baptist, who also commanded his auditors, "Bring forth [aorist] therefore fruit worthy of repentance" (Matt. 3:8, A.R.V.).

When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth he challenged them to "awake to righteousness, and sin not" (I Cor. 15:34). Here the command to awake is aorist, whereas the prohibition of sin is present tense, thus indicating that the awakening, true to its physical type, must be instantaneous and definite, whereas the present tense for "sin not" would rule out any continuation of sinning.

Also when Timothy is urged to lay hold on eternal life and to urge his hearers to do likewise (I Tim. 6:12 and 19) the command to "lay hold" in both instances is put in the aorist tense. Concerning these references N. J. D. White, in the Expositor's Greek Testament, observes, "The aorist (epilabou) expresses the single act of laying hold of the prize."<sup>5</sup>

St. John, in speaking of those who were "born" or "begotten" of God (John 1:13), does so by means of the aorist tense. The context definitely specifies that it is a spiritual generation to which he has reference here. Dr. Winchester has already called our attention to the aorist used in Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus (John 3:3, 5, 7), where the word for being born from above is in this tense. We may note,

further, that when Jesus says that unless this takes place one cannot "see" the kingdom of God (3:3), this verb also is aorist.

James seems to be of a similar opinion as to the nature of the new birth when he reminds us (Jas. 1:18) that it was of God's own will that he "begat" us. The purpose for such a begetting by the word of truth is that those thus begotten might be "a kind of first fruits of his creatures." Note, therefore, that the experience is described, not as a process, but as a single definite act by the use of the aorist tense. Bagster's *New Analytical Greek Lexicon to the New Testament*<sup>6</sup> defines the Greek word (*apekuesen*) thus, "To bring forth, to generate by spiritual birth." And A. T. Robertson says, "Regeneration, not birth of all men," is the thing referred to here.<sup>7</sup>

The Apostle Peter is of the same mind in describing the new birth (I Pet. 1:3) when he ascribes praise to God, "who according to his great mercy begat [aorist] us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead" [A.R.V.]. Here again Dr. A. T. Robertson regards this as a reference to the new birth.<sup>8</sup> With this position Johnstone is also in agreement, as he calls our attention to the fact that Peter's term is referring to the same thing of which Jesus spoke in John 3:3.<sup>9</sup> Thus both the verb and the tense in which it is used speak to us of a crisis experience which we commonly call regeneration.

Passing from this group of terms, let us now consider the New Testament use of the expressions "saved" and "be saved." Luke puts it clearly in the aorist tense (Luke 8:12) when he relates Jesus' account of the "way side" hearers to whom the devil comes, taking away the Word from their hearts, "that they may not believe and be saved." Both verbs are aorist, indicating that the act of faith and the experience of salvation are both simple and definite in nature.

Since entering the Kingdom and being saved refer to the same experience, according to the terminology of the Synoptic writers, we may note with profit Luke's verb in 13:24 where we are commanded to "agonize to enter in by the narrow gate," the phrase "enter in" being but one verb in the Greek, and aorist in its tense.

Peter, preaching to the people in Jerusalem (Acts 4:12), declared that there was no "other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (A.R.V.), save that of Jesus Christ. He too uses the aorist tense for the experience he describes with the words "be saved."

When the Philippian jailer came trembling into the presence of Paul and Silas with the question on his lips, "What must I do to be saved?" (aorist) he was undoubtedly thinking of more than physical safety (Acts 16:30). Again A. T. Robertson raises the question, "What did he mean by 'saved'? Certainly more than escape from peril about the prisoners or because of the earthquake, though these had their influences on him. Cf. 'way of salvation' in verse 17."<sup>10</sup> Daniel Steele says,

**"The jailer wished immediate deliverance from his guilt, and was directed to a definite and sharply defined act of reliance on Christ."<sup>11</sup>**

**Titus (3:5) is reminded that God, according to His mercy, "saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (A.R.V.). The term "saved" is aorist and has definite reference to the new birth, as the following explanation describes it as having taken place through "regeneration" and "renewal" by the Holy Spirit. It therefore speaks to us of a definite personal transformation accomplished by the Spirit of God.**

**We find a similar situation in regard to the term for conversion when the command, "Be converted," appears, and in the use of the word "convert." Jesus says (Matt. 18:3), "Except ye turn ['be converted,' A.V.], and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (A.R.V.). Here both the verbs "turn" and "become" are aorist, as is the verb translated "enter into." Surely Jesus had reference in these words to a definite crisis experience. If He spoke Aramaic, which is possible, Matthew is careful to indicate His true meaning in the Greek.**

**Again, when Jesus spoke to Peter that fateful evening in the Upper Room, saying, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32), the verb which He used was in the aorist tense.**

**Peter's advice to his Jerusalem audience following the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate was, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). But it is important for us to notice that the words "repent ye," "be converted," and "be blotted out" are all aorists, used, we think, with definite significance and accuracy. He has reminded his hearers that God's purpose and patience call for instant change of attitude on their part. Moreover, such action is necessary, he tells them, that the promised times of refreshing may "come" (aorist) from the presence of the Lord. We note, therefore, that the being converted, the blotting out of sins, and the coming of times of refreshing from the Lord are phases of the definite crisis experience of regeneration.**

**Let us consider one more such reference in James 5:19-20. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Here, again, both forms of the Greek verb (epistrepho, "convert") are aorist.**

**Continuing our study, let us take up next the reference to one's being justified. Paul's statement in Romans 5:1 is a good passage with which to begin. "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (A.R.V.),<sup>12</sup> is often quoted without too much regard to the crisis experience of which Paul speaks. Yet the verb for "being justified" is aorist. In verse nine of the**

same chapter Paul again uses the aorist tense in saying, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him" (A.R.V.). Here "being now justified" is aorist, whereas the reference to being saved is future and, as Robertson well notes, has reference to "the final salvation."<sup>13</sup>

Paul uses the aorist again in Galatians 3:24: "So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (A.R.V.). Thus the process of awakening and discipline occasioned by the law is thought of as culminating in a crisis of justification by faith.

Titus 3:7 reads: "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." "Justified" is again aorist, as is the word translated by the phrase "be made heirs." The meaning seems obvious.

Returning to Romans, chapter five, let us consider now the term "reconciled" as it appears in verse ten. "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life" (A.R.V.). Both the first and second instances of the word "reconciled" are aorists, indicating definiteness both in Christ's act of reconciliation and in our being reconciled; but the phrase "shall be saved" is again future referring, as in verse one, to a final salvation still to be realized.

If we ask what is the case in regard to forgiveness of sins, we should investigate such passages as Mark 4:12 and I John 1:9. The former reads, "Lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." "Be forgiven" is aorist and has reference to the definite act of God. Likewise "be converted" is also aorist and, though it appears in a future condition, expressing a contingency based upon human action, it involves the same kind of action and hence the aorist tense is used to indicate the fact that whenever it does occur it will be a crisis and not a process. God forgives in an instant. That is characteristic of Him. Man may be converted in an instant also. This is characteristic of divine grace.

The classic passage for forgiveness is I John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Here both the word for "forgive" and the word for "cleanse" are aorist in tense. Daniel Steele observes, "The cleansing is just as definite, distinct, and decisive as the forgiveness.<sup>14</sup> Undoubtedly St. John would have us understand that forgiveness and cleansing are definite experiences, each being accomplished at a particular point of time. On this passage Westcott comments thus concerning the words "forgive" and "cleanse": "Both acts are here spoken of in their completeness. The specific sins (hai hamartiai) are forgiven..., the character ( adikia) is purified."<sup>15</sup> Alford does not overlook the tense of these verbs when he says, "Observe, the two verbs are aorist, because the purpose of God is to do each in one great complex act -- to justify and to sanctify wholly and entirely."<sup>16</sup> There can be no doubt then of the truth of Dr. Godbey's statement, "Here we have the whole plan of salvation focalized in a

nutshell, the Holy Ghost promising us pardon and purity on the isolated condition of a full, honest confession of our sins, actual and original.<sup>17</sup> We have tarried longer in our consideration of this text because it refers so explicitly to the two works of grace, both of which are given definiteness through the use of the Greek tense so well adapted to expressing this kind of action.

In Ephesians 2:4-5 the Apostle Paul uses a double compound, which he probably coined himself, to express a great spiritual truth: "But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ."<sup>18</sup> The Greek verb (sunedzooopiesen, "made alive together") is not only a very unusual form but appears in the aorist tense, conveying the idea that God, by a definite act, makes alive through union and identification with Christ. The word occurs only once more in the New Testament, Col. 2:13. Here again it is aorist: "And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses" (A.R.V.). Not only is the word just referred to aorist but the word translated by the phrase "having forgiven" is also aorist. Robertson's comment is pertinent: "The act of forgiving is simultaneous with the quickening, though logically antecedent."<sup>19</sup> Nor should we overlook the fact that in the following parenthetical phrase, "by grace ye have been saved," the verb for "saved" is in the perfect tense, indicating that the divine act, completed in the past, continues to the present moment as a redeemed state of grace for these Ephesians.

Not only does Paul use the aorist tense in denoting the definite divine act of making alive those once dead in trespasses and sins, but he also uses the same tense in the kindred phrase of being made free. His triumphant testimony in the second verse of the eighth chapter of Romans reads, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death" (A.R.V.). The verb translated "made free" is aorist again. Just as the law of buoyancy brought in by the rising tide liberates the stranded ship from its bondage to the law of gravitation, so does the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus make free the soul that was once in bondage to the law of sin and death.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the kind of action described by this aorist verb would be as definite and unified as the surging lift of the rising tide. Dean Alford will not let us overlook the tense here, for he says, "Aorist, referring to the time of his conversion."<sup>21</sup> He then goes on to say further, "This 'law of the Spirit of life' having freed him from the law of sin and death, so that he serves another master, all claim of sin on him is at an end -- he is acquitted, and there is no condemnation for him."<sup>22</sup> Thus Paul uses his tenses discriminatingly in order to present to us the true nature of his deliverance.

Let us hear more of this great experience from the Apostle. In II Corinthians 5:17 we find another golden text: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Some have thought that this verse has primary reference to the passing of Judaism, concerning which the Apostle has been speaking in the context; but Alford again

becomes very explicit in saying, "There does not appear to be any allusion, as in Chrysostom and Theophylus, to the passing away of Judaism, but only to the new birth, the antiquation of the former unconverted state with all that belonged to it."<sup>23</sup> This seems to be in keeping with Paul's context, which emphasizes life in the spiritual realm. Now the verb translated "passed away" is in the aorist tense, thus indicating the kind of action that took place; but when he notes that they are become new he uses the perfect tense to indicate that the new state of affairs still remains, complete and continuing. Thus he gives us to understand that this new birth is both a completed act and an abiding experience by the very use he makes of his Greek tenses. Incidents like this one bear out the statement by Moulton which was quoted at the beginning of this chapter.<sup>24</sup>

We should note one more passage before leaving this discussion concerning the nature of the new birth experience. In Ephesians 3:17 Paul is praying "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love," etc. Here the word for "dwell" is aorist. The Greek term is (*katoikesai*), meaning "to take up an abode," with the aorist infinitive not only expressing purpose but emphasizing the action at the point of its beginning (ingressive aorist).<sup>25</sup> Here again Alford suggests an appropriate rendering, "take up His lasting abode,"<sup>26</sup> which is surely being true to the Greek form. Lest one should be tempted to interpret this indwelling as something other than the personal indwelling of Christ in the individual believer, let us hear from Abbott at this point. "The indwelling here spoken of is not in the Church, but in the individual hearts."<sup>27</sup>

There is no doubt that this investigation as to the definite, miraculous nature of the new birth could be carried on further with great profit. Yet, for most evangelicals, the miraculous nature of conversion is not challenged as often as the belief in a separate and definite work of sanctification. It will be more important for us to give space in this treatise to that phase of our investigation, to which we now turn.

## II. ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION

Taking up the commands first, and then proceeding to the consideration of the descriptive passages, we may begin with Paul's great exhortation in Romans 12:1. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Here it is the verb "present" which engages our attention. It is an aorist infinitive. On pages 38 and 39 of this treatise, Dr. Winchester has given the comments of Dean Alford concerning this passage. Again, on page 43 she has given the comments of Philippi. The clear statements of each of these scholars need not be repeated at this juncture; let it simply be noted that both declare that the action referred to is an at once kind of action, being done once for all. So Daniel Steele rightly considers it to have reference to "a single act, never needing to be repeated." He adds the further observation, "If in Paul's conception believers were to be sinning and repenting all their days, as the best that grace could do for them,

he would have used the present imperative, 'Be presenting your bodies again and again.'<sup>28</sup> Dr. Adam Clarke observes, "They are exhorted to give themselves up in the spirit of sacrifice; to be as wholly the Lord's property as the whole burnt-offering was, no part being devoted to any other use."<sup>29</sup> The fact that Paul uses the aorist tense to designate it indicates the singleness and definiteness of the act involved. That these Romans are already Christian believers is evident from the fact that he addresses them as brethren and that Paul was indeed writing to the Roman Christians. Yet Paul would have their sanctification include both mind and body (cf. verse 2), though in verse one he indicates that the sanctification of the Christian life is to extend to that part of man's nature which is most completely under bondage to sin, i.e., the body.<sup>30</sup>

The verb "present" occurs again in another passage significant for its holiness teaching, Eph. 5:25-27: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (A.R.V.). Here the word "present" is in the aorist tense, as are the words "sanctify" and "cleansed." The aorist in this case, as in the case of the other two verbs noted, has reference to a single act that is definite on the part of the heavenly Bridegroom, regardless of the fact that this presentation may yet be still in the future at the time of His return in glory. We shall have occasion to return to this passage. Other passages where the verb is aorist are Col. 1:22 and 28; and II Cor. 11:2, where the same idea is present, viz., the single significant act of the bride being presented to the Bridegroom.

Dr. Winchester has already called our attention to the aorists involved in Paul's injunction that the "old man" be "put off" and the "new man" be "put on," as they appear in his epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. These will merit further study on our part. Before coming to them let us note his statement in Romans 13:14, where he says, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." Here "put ye on" is an aorist. Prior to that in verse 12 of the same chapter he has commanded them to "cast off the works of darkness," and exhorted them to "put on the armour of light." Both verbs are in the aorist tense; more specifically they are what the grammarians call volitive and subjunctive aorists. Clearly, then, the Apostle does not think of this casting off and putting on as anything gradual in the experience of his readers.

On pp. 39-40 of this treatise Dr. Winchester has noted what Ellicott and Robertson said about the aorist for "put off" in Ephesians 4:22. There it was observed that it is an excellent example of punctiliar action. Moreover, notation should be made of the parallel passage in Colossians 3:8, where "put off" is aorist; and in the following verse, where again the aorist is used; as Lightfoot reminds us "because it is a thing to be done once for all."<sup>31</sup> In the positive command to "put on" which follows in Ephesians 4:24 and its parallel in Colossians 3:12 we again find the tense is aorist. Before leaving this section of Pauline teaching let us notice

that in Ephesians 4:24, where he speaks of this new man "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," the word "created" is also aorist.

Another significant phase of the experience of sanctification is referred to by the Apostle in his command that the Colossians "put to death" the members of fornication, uncleanness, etc. (Col. 3:5.) Here the King James Version is at fault and some have been misled to think that "mortify" is something that could be carried on daily. But the American Standard Version, true to the Greek (*nekrosate*), renders the word in its true force, "put to death." This aorist is very definite and, according to Dr. W. B. Godbey, "literally means 'kill instantaneously,' because the Greek verb is in the aorist tense, which means a sudden momentary action."<sup>32</sup> Both from the root action of the verb and the tense in which it appears here we have depicted a definite crisis act. Paul is carrying forward the thought suggested in verse 3 just prior to this, where he says, "For ye died." Concerning this A. T. Robertson says it signifies a "definite act."<sup>33</sup> If it seems impossible from a human standpoint to accomplish this killing of evil propensities in the soul we may say with Dr. Godbey:

"While it is impossible for me to kill old Adam in my heart, either suddenly or gradually, I can, in the twinkling of an eye, turn him over to omnipotent Adam the Second, who, pursuant to my faith, will kill him before I can open my eye to see him fall. So the way you kill all the evil in your heart is simply to trust for it."<sup>34</sup>

We agree, then, with Daniel Steele that "here, in the very strongest terms, is the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification as a distinct and instantaneous work of the Spirit clearly set forth."<sup>35</sup> Let us not overlook the fact that when the aorist imperative is used in commands, as in this case, it denotes summary action -- action that is either transient or instantaneous, or to be undertaken at once.<sup>36</sup>

The same apostle, writing to the Romans (6:6), declares, "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Here we must not forget that both terms, "crucified" and "destroyed," are aorists. Commenting on this passage, Daniel Steele very aptly observes:

"The aorist here teaches the possibility of an instantaneous death-stroke to inbred sin, and that there is no need of a slow and painful process, lingering till physical death or purgatorial fires end the torment. Men are not crucified limb by limb, after one part is dead finding a hand or arm or finger alive, but the whole life is extinguished all at once."<sup>37</sup>

Dr. Winchester has called our attention to the German commentator Philippi's statement regarding the verb "destroy," (*katargethe*), in this passage, to the effect that it "can only be understood of an actual annihilation, not of a mere cessation of activity, a reduction to inactivity,"<sup>38</sup> of this body of sin.

One more important passage embodying this same concept must be noted. In Galatians 5:24 Paul says, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." The aorist verb "crucified" Robertson explains as referring to a "definite event emphasizing the completeness of the extermination of this evil force and the guarantee of victory over one's passions and dispositions toward evil."<sup>39</sup> "The flesh" is defined by Burton as "the force in men that makes for evil."<sup>40</sup> He then continues by saying that "crucified" refers to the act by which they put an end to the dominion of that force."<sup>41</sup> On this same passage Lightfoot suggests that the aorist may be explained "as denoting that the change is complete and decisive."<sup>42</sup> Here again we find it profitable to hear from Dr. Godbey:

"When Christ was crucified on the cross all the people in all ages, being truly His, were legally and essentially crucified with Him, exterminating the evil affections of Adam the first, the legal phase of their crucifixion taking place along with Christ on the cross, the experimental counterpart follows as a legitimate sequence. The verb here is not the perfect as E. V., but aorist, which does not denote time, but instantaneity and completion, setting forth the fact that all the elect of Christ were legally crucified with Him, which is in due time verified by grace being summarily executed and completed in a moment."<sup>48</sup>

Another consideration that is important to our understanding of sanctification as a second definite work of divine grace in the heart of the believer is the use of the verb "sanctify." It has, we feel, been mistranslated "consecrate" in many instances by the translators of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament published in 1946. We shall do well to give consideration to the main passages in which this verb appears. Beginning with John 17:17, in the high priestly prayer of Jesus, the request is, "Sanctify them through thy truth." The verb "sanctify" is an aorist imperative. We must not overlook the fact that when Jesus, following this, speaks of sanctifying himself, He does not use the aorist tense but the present, which in this case takes on the idea more aptly expressed by the clause "for their sakes I am consecrating myself"; for, as Dr. Steele observes, "Christ's was not a real sanctification or cleansing, inasmuch as he was never polluted; but the disciples needed sanctification in reality, or 'truly."<sup>44</sup> The aorist denotes an action that is either definite and complete or viewed as occurring but once, whereas the present denotes action commenced with a view to continuation or action as going on.<sup>45</sup> Thus the writer's use of the aorist is true to its import, indicating a single definite act. And in the case of Christ's own act the word "consecrate" used by the Revised Standard Version is perhaps permissible.

In I Corinthians 6:11 Paul contrasts the present state of his readers with Gentiles of their day when he says, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The three important verbs are all aorists. "Ye washed yourselves" (aorist middle), "ye are sanctified" (aorist passive), and "ye are justified" (aorist passive). Concerning the order of the verbs "sanctified" and "justified" G. G. Findlay says, "These twin conceptions of the Christian state in its

beginning appear commonly in the reverse order,"<sup>46</sup> thus indicating that the true order in Christian experience is first justification and then sanctification. The reversion of the terms in this passage seems therefore to be for a rhetorical or logical purpose and to have no chronological significance for Paul's present purpose. In any case if the aorist tense signifies a definite experience of justification no one can deny that it just as definitely indicates an experience of sanctification. And why should we expect those experiences to be definite and complete? Simply because they are accomplished "by the Spirit of God." The divine Personality achieves a perfect work in response to true faith.

We must now turn to a passage we took up previously in another connection (Eph. 5:26), for here also the word "sanctify" appears. Just as Christ gave himself for the world that He might redeem it and that it through His death might be saved, so did He give himself for the Church that He might "sanctify it, having cleansed it." Both verbs are aorist in tense. The purpose for which He sanctifies and cleanses His Church is that He may "present" it to himself "holy and without blemish." Only thus can it really be glorious in His sight and happy in His presence.

Another instance of the word "sanctify" appears in I Thessalonians 5:23, where Paul prays, "May the very God of peace himself sanctify you wholly." Here the verb "sanctify" is aorist and in the optative mood, indicating that the Apostle's request is for their definite sanctification, and this in such a sense that it is complete and entire. Luther knew the significance of the term "wholly" (holokleron, in the Greek) when he translated it into the German to read *durch und durch*, i.e., "through and through." Paul's use of the aorist for the experience designated in the term "sanctify" was discriminating, indicating to us the kind of action he had in mind as a divine work for these Thessalonians was of a punctiliar and thorough nature.

One more passage must suffice for our study of the term "sanctify." Hebrews 13:12 states, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate" (A.R.V.). The verb is again aorist. Thus we may notice that the author of this epistle, like his contemporaries among New Testament writers, used his tenses accurately.

Let us take up next the word "cleanse." On the basis of certain promises which he has called to the attention of the Corinthian Christians in his Second Corinthian letter, chapter six, Paul continues with the exhortation found in 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Here let us again notice his tenses. The word for "cleanse" is an aorist, indicating a definite act of cleansing, whereas the word "perfecting" is in the present tense and plainly indicates a progressive process. This is to say to us that the negative side of holiness, the cleansing, is accomplished in a moment as a divine act, whereas the positive growth in holiness is an ongoing process of "perfecting" the believer in Christian ethics and maturity. Here Dr. Steele reminds us that Paul's exhortation, by

virtue of the tense, is, "Let us cleanse ourselves at a stroke from every filthiness of the flesh and spirit." He then continues, "If Paul had been exhorting to a gradual inward cleansing he would certainly have used the present tense."<sup>47</sup> That Paul seems to include himself in such a statement is in keeping with Greek rhetoric and he does so, not to claim that he was polluted in the flesh and spirit himself, but simply to soften the command to these Corinthians. As Dr. Steele very keenly observes again:

"While the Wesleyan doctrine of instantaneous sanctification is taught by the aorist tense in this verse, the seemingly paradoxical Wesleyan doctrine of progressive sanctification is also taught by the present participle, 'perfecting' holiness, etc."<sup>48</sup>

And, to quote Dr. Steele further:

"The perfect inward cleansing instantaneously wrought by the Holy Spirit through faith is to be constantly and progressively carried outward into all the acts of daily life, as the moral discrimination becomes more and more acute with the increase of knowledge."<sup>49</sup>

Here we have another example of the contention by Moulton that the New Testament writers used their tenses with accuracy.<sup>50</sup>

We have already considered Ephesians 5:26 in our discussion concerning the term "sanctify," so it will be sufficient here to remind the reader that the term "having cleansed" (a single word in the Greek) is an aorist participle. Passing on to James 4:8 we find the following command: "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." Both "cleanse" and "purify" are aorist imperatives, thus signifying that the writer's meaning is "do it once for all, and do it now!" A parallel emphasis is found in Isaiah 1:16-18, and Psalms 24:3-4. The cleansing of the hands undoubtedly has reference to an initial work of grace for the sinner, whereas the purifying of the heart deals with the divided allegiance of the unsanctified. Double-mindedness is characteristic of the personality divided between the will of God and the will of self. While James evidently has in mind the passages referred to in the psalm, he thinks of the pure heart as a quality of single-mindedness. Alford's comment is pertinent here: "The hands being the external organs of action, and becoming polluted by the act." Then concerning the double-minded he says, "Ye whose affections are divided between God and the "world."<sup>51</sup> And though he does not think the writer is addressing two classes of people here, such a position is possible only to one who ignores the difference made in the Scripture between acts of sin and the principle of sin. The very statement of the inspired writer strongly suggests that it is referring to two classes of people, "sinners" and "double minded." And if the initial cleansing the hands is to be understood as a simple definite act, both from the tense of the verb and the symbolism of the act to which it refers, who will deny that the further step of purifying the heart is a like definite act accomplished by divine grace? It may be

well to note, with James H. Ropes, that the cleansing of the hands has direct reference to the making of the outward conduct pure, whereas the purifying of the heart has reference to moral purity.<sup>52</sup> Dr. Godbey is on firm footing when he says that James thus issues a "call to sinners for pardon and to Christians for Sanctification."<sup>53</sup> The fact that both calls are expressed by an aorist imperative indicates the definite character of the crisis to be expected in each instance and the summary nature of the act expected.

John seems to be in agreement with Paul and James on this matter of a crisis experience of cleansing, for in I John 1:9 we note the promise that God is "faithful and just . . . to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He expresses this cleansing in the aorist tense just as he does the forgiveness promised in this same verse. Dr. Steele correctly observes, therefore, that "the cleansing is just as definite, distinct, and decisive as the forgiveness."<sup>54</sup> We have thought on this text above when discussing the crisis nature of the act and experience of forgiveness. But the following from Dr. Steele is important for our understanding at this juncture:

"Dusterdieck says: 'the death and blood of Christ are set forth in two aspects: (1) as a sin-offering for our justification, and (2) as the purifying medium for our sanctification.' If the purifying is to be by degrees, the present tense would have been used instead of the aorist. He pleads for gradual sanctification, but there is no more grammatical basis for it than there is for a progressive justification."<sup>55</sup>

Westcott confirms the position taken by Dr. Steele when he says, "Both acts are here spoken of in their completeness. The specific sins ( hai hamartiai) are forgiven: the character ( adikia) is purified."<sup>56</sup> Dr. Alfred Plummer in commenting on the phrase "and to cleanse us" says:

"This is not a repetition in different words; it is a second and distinct result of our confession: 1. We are absolved from sin's punishment; 2. We are freed from sin's pollution. The forgiveness is the averting of God's wrath; the cleansing is the beginning of holiness."<sup>57</sup>

Perhaps Toplady had read something like this when he wrote in his immortal hymn:

Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy wounded side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Save from wrath and make me pure.<sup>58</sup>

Moving on from the word "cleanse" to the term "purify," we may note several important aorists. The first is of supreme importance. In Acts 15:9, Peter is recounting what happened at Cornelius' house and comparing it with what happened to the one hundred and twenty at Pentecost. He says, (quoting verses 8 and 9) "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the

Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." The American Standard Version translates "cleansing" instead of "purifying." Here the term, however translated, is aorist in its Greek tense. Let us note that this giving of the Holy Spirit accomplished purification of their hearts in each instance and let us not overlook the fact that in each case the experience was instantaneous. In Acts 2:2 Luke expressly states that it came "suddenly." We shall have occasion to note later that the word "filled" in Acts 2:4 is also aorist. Speaking of Acts 15:9, Daniel Steele remarks: "This verse is a key to the instantaneous sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit wrought in the hearts of believers on the day of Pentecost, since the words even as he did unto us refer to that occasion."<sup>59</sup> Hence when Paul writes to Titus about the purpose of Jesus, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people" (Tit. 2:14), he uses the aorist tense to indicate the kind of action he has in mind when he uses the verb "purify." That Christ's twofold work includes not only redeeming from all iniquity but also a purifying is to the end that by means thereof He might have "a people for his own possession" (A.R.V.) and conformed to His own image and likeness. "The verbs gave, redeem, and purify are all aorists, indicating momentary acts. The purifying is before death, because its subjects are to be zealous of good works."<sup>60</sup> We have already called the reader's attention to the command in James 4:8, "purify your hearts, ye double minded," where the term is also aorist.

Two references in which the term "purge" appears are worthy of note in this study. In I Corinthians 5:7, Paul says, "Purge out the old leaven." The word "purge" is an aorist imperative, concerning which A. T. Robertson says, "To cleanse out, to clean completely," and then observes as to the aorist tense, "aorist tense of urgency, do it now."<sup>61</sup> Here of course the reference is to the casting out of a member of the fellowship who is corrupt, but the aorist tense is used to denote decisive and instant action. The same tense appears in his counsel to Timothy (II Tim. 2:21), where he notes that "if a man therefore purge himself from these [vessels of dishonor], he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." And here again the same verb means "to cleanse out," and is also aorist. Let us not overlook the fact that in this verse both "sanctified" and "prepared" appear in the perfect tense, indicating a permanent result of the definite and instantaneous act of purging. Here, again, the Apostle uses his tenses accurately.

Three important uses of the word "sealed" are vital to this study. Paul's statement in II Corinthians 1:21, 22 is, "God" who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (A.R.V.). Both the words "sealed" and "gave" are aorist participles. Of these aorists J. H. Bernard says: "The aorists point to acts completed at a definite moment in the past."<sup>62</sup> The sealing is represented as accomplished in a moment by the gift of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. Both acts are phases of a single definite work of God. In Ephesians 1:13 Paul again speaks of this act of God by means of the aorist tense, when he says, "In whom . . . having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (A.R.V.). Here

again the act of faith, designated by the term "believed," and the experience of being "sealed" are both expressed in the aorist tense. For the technical scholar of New Testament Greek the grammatical construction here strongly indicates two definite works of grace in the heart of the believer. For our present study, however, it is sufficient to notice that again the tense is used discriminately with reference to the kind of action indicated. Our third reference is also in Ephesians where in chapter four, verse thirty, Paul commands, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption" (A.R.V.). Again the word sealed is aorist.

In writing to the Thessalonians, in I Thessalonians 3:10, Paul says he is praying night and day that he might see their faces and "may perfect that which is lacking" in their faith. Here the word for "perfect" is a strong verb in the aorist tense and optative mood, expressing a strong wish and indicating the kind of action he sees necessary to their faith. He does not leave us to ponder as to what this perfecting of their faith might be, for in verse 13 of the same chapter he says, "To the end that he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God." Here the word "stablish" is aorist, indicating a single definite act. In these verses Paul seems to be serving notice on these Thessalonian believers that their faith is yet deficient, and that they must be blameless in holiness as a qualification to meet their returning Lord. His use of the aorist tense indicates his thought of it as a crisis to be experienced, and he is solicitous to come to them that they may be brought into full realization of it.

In speaking to the Ephesians (Eph. 4:13, 14) concerning the various orders and callings of the ministry, Paul says that God has ordained such "for the perfecting of the saints," etc., "till we all come [the word is attain in the A.R.V.] in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children," etc. This attaining of the perfect man (or full grown man, as the A.R.V. translates the Greek word (teleion), is thought of as a momentary and definite act and is so expressed by the aorist tense of the verb "come" by the Apostle. Hence he is not speaking of growth in grace but of a crisis experience in which the saint passes from spiritual babyhood into a full-grown Christian. Concerning this Daniel Steele observes: "The perfecting of the saints is here expressed by a definite and momentary arrival at a point where faith merges into knowledge, where a Saviour believed becomes a Saviour fully realized."<sup>63</sup> The word "come" in this passage would therefore be more logically translated "arrive" as expressing the true significance of the aorist tense. We have noticed that the translators of the A.R.V. have made it read "attain," which is likewise nearer the true significance of the tense than the word "come" in its modern sense.

Concerning the experience of entire sanctification, viewed as the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believer, we note here several passages. The first is Acts 10:44, where the account is given of the Holy Spirit falling upon the members of Cornelius' household. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all

them which heard the word." "Fell" in this instance is aorist. At the conclusion of the account Peter raises the question, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (Acts 10:47.) In this verse the word "received" is aorist. Thus with respect to the kind of action involved the aorist tense is used to specify this instantaneous occurrence. Just as the coming of the Spirit was sudden on the Day of Pentecost, so was it in its coming upon the house of Cornelius. As Alford observes: "The outpouring of the Spirit on the Gentiles was strictly analogous to that in the day of Pentecost; Peter himself describes it by adding (ch. xi. 15), "even as also upon us in the beginning."<sup>64</sup> Notice that in the passage referred to by Alford the aorist tense again appears.

In keeping with this same thought we may remember that when Paul arrived at Ephesus (Acts 19:1 ff.) he found there certain disciples who had not heard of the gift of the Holy Spirit. "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:6). The word translated "came upon" is aorist, just as in the case of the original promise given by Jesus in Acts 1:8. There the Saviour's promise is, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (R.S.V.), "come upon" being also aorist.

The same tense is used in Acts 2:4, where the scripture speaks of those in the Upper Room by saying, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." "Filled" is aorist. Or, again, in the case of the Apostle Paul, following his conversion on the Damascus road, when Ananias came into his lodging on Straight Street, "and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:17). Here the word "filled" is aorist, as is also the word "received." The context supports the belief that this was a definite and momentary experience for the Apostle.

In Hebrews 13:21 we have the author's final prayer for those to whom he has written, in the words, "The God of peace . . . make you perfect in every good work to do his will." Again the verb for "make perfect" is aorist in tense and optative in mood, expressing a strong wish for their receiving from God an experience of perfection, for as Steele observes, "The workman and not the work is to be made perfect."<sup>65</sup> Yet the perfecting is to the accomplishing of every good work. And Alford rightly notices that both "make perfect" and "to do" His will are aorists with "the same final sense."<sup>66</sup> This being made perfect by a single definite act of God accomplishes what the law could not do, for we note in Hebrews 10:1 that "the law having a shadow of things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Here "make perfect" is a single word in the Greek and occurs in the aorist tense as in the previous passage.

Two commands concerning this experience are to be noticed. In John 20:22 Jesus breathed upon His disciples "and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." "Receive ye" is an aorist imperative. Alford regards this imparting of the Spirit to the disciples here as a "symbol and foretaste of that which they should receive at Pentecost."<sup>67</sup> The aorist tense speaks here, as in Acts 2:4 and 1<sup>8</sup>, of a single definite act. The other passage with a similar command is in I Peter 1:15 "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation," etc. Here "be ye holy" is aorist imperative passive, not only expressing the definiteness and completeness of the act but the fact that the persons addressed are to be the objects of the action which transforms them. Let us not overlook the import of such an aorist, which says, in effect, "Do it now, once for all!" Concerning this Greek word (genethete) Alford again says, "Aorist Imperative, setting forth the completeness with which this holiness is to be put on."<sup>68</sup> And Daniel Steele paraphrases it thus: "So become ye (aorist, by an all surrendering act of faith) holy in all manner of conduct."<sup>69</sup>

One further group of references dealing with the believer becoming a partaker of the divine nature and Spirit must suffice for this investigation as to the voice of Scripture in corroboration of the thesis of this discourse. Hebrews 6:4 speaks of those who "were made partakers of the Holy Spirit" (A.R.V.). It does so by placing the verb "were made" in the aorist tense. This passage has been considered by Dr. Winchester in the preceding discussion. It is sufficient to notice that the words "enlightened" and "tasted" in this same context are also aorist in their tense. This same writer, in speaking of the chastenings of the Lord as contrasted with those of an earthly father, says (12:10), "For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." The verb translated "be partakers of" is an aorist infinitive of purpose followed by the genitive of the word for holiness. Concerning this phrase A. T. Robertson says, "Genitive and metalabein (to share in);"<sup>70</sup> and hence the idea is not only to have a share in God's holiness but to do so in a definite experience of His sanctifying grace. Alford's comment on this verse is: "The becoming partakers of God's holiness is manifestly to be taken subjectively: becoming holy like Him."<sup>71</sup> In the same vein as this the word comes to us in II Peter 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Here let us note that not only "ye might be" (or become, and it is one word in the Greek) but also "having escaped" (also but one word) are both aorist in tense. Dr. A. M. Hills, writing concerning this verse in *Holiness and Power*, says:

"Now we reach the conclusion of the whole matter, the two things that human beings universally need: first, 'escape' from the universal corruption of human nature that is in the world; second, we need to become 'partakers of the divine nature.' This is precisely the work of the sanctifying Spirit of God, -- to cleanse our hearts, and to make us in nature holy like Christ. And it is to this very end that all these promises tend."<sup>72</sup>

**We have come to the end of this investigation, having heard from the grammarians, the commentators, and the Scriptures themselves. We must rest our case with this and commend to the reader the evidence herewith presented. After such an investigation this writer cannot but feel the truth of the statement with which this chapter opened; in the words of James Hope Moulton, "The tenses are used with absolute accuracy by the New Testament writers."<sup>73</sup> Let us thank God and take courage that the voice of Scripture is plain in its delineation of the experiences of regeneration and sanctification as being in each case a complete and definite work of divine grace.**

**Let us never be content until, with the multitudes who have experienced these works of grace, we too have been miraculously changed and made holy by the action of the Holy Spirit in response to venturesome faith that expects it in a moment and not as a process of mere human endeavor.**

**\* \* \* \* \***

## **APPENDIX**

### **Corroborating Testimony from Modern Grammarians and Churchmen**

**Concerning the New Testament Writers' Use of Tenses, the German author and grammarian Alexander Buttman gives us the following helpful discussion:**

**"Among all known ancient languages none distinguishes the manifold temporal (and modal) relations of the verb so accurately as the Greek. It is conceivable that under the prolonged dominion of the Greek language and culture, permeating as they did the concerns of all classes, the knowledge of the significance of these forms of speech (so essential in making one's self understood) was not only lost by the less cultivated portion even of the Greek people, but also became the possession of those foreign populations and individuals that made the Greek tongue their own. Had the Jews and others become acquainted with this foreign tongue only through the medium of the written language, not through contact with the people who spoke Greek themselves, or had the adoption of the language taken place suddenly and not before the time when the N. T. books were composed, instead of gradually and centuries earlier, there would be greater reason than there is for the assertion that the N. T. writers in the use of the Greek tenses laboured under a degree of uncertainty, fostered by the well-known poverty of the Hebrew tongue in this respect; or even if they had employed exclusively only certain Greek temporal forms and avoided others, we might assume at all events the possibility of such a supposition. We see, however, that the N. T. writers, even those less practiced in the use of language, avail themselves with great assurance of the whole treasure of the Greek temporal forms Active, Passive, and Middle. Obscurity and uncertainty of thought occasions necessarily a diminished facility in the employment of the corresponding forms of speech. That this is the case, for example, with respect to the Moods, particularly the Optative,**

and the Tenses connected with "an", will appear from the exposition given below. But 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 on behalf of the N. T. language at the outset, and discarded on principle. Still less does the observation that other languages . . . frequently employ different temporal relations, give us any right to assume that the writer in Greek connected with a tense any other conception than that residing in the tense."<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the same theme A. T. Robertson offers the following observations:

"The Greek tense, as I have shown in the ninety pages devoted to the subject in my Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (pp. 821-910), seizes upon the three kinds of action (punctiliar, linear, and state of completion) present in some verb stems and preserves them in a wonderful way. One must drop any idea of time in connection with the Greek tense and think only of the kind of action. Then one will see the beauty of the Greek tense. The time element does occur in the indicative mode, but is a secondary matter. The tenses are not confused in the Greek New Testament. On the other hand, they are employed with wonderful precision and clearness. The difficulty that modern men have with these tenses is that they come to them from the standpoint of the translation into English, French, German, or some other modern tongue. Unfortunately the Greek tenses do not run parallel with our modern tenses. They correspond much more nearly to the tenses in the Sanskrit than to the Latin tenses, but they have their own genius and history."<sup>2</sup>

George Milligan, professor of divinity and Biblical criticism in the University of Glasgow, Scotland, at the beginning of this century, was a co-laborer with James Hope Moulton. To him reference has already been made in this treatise. After having discussed some instances of peculiarity in New Testament usages in reference to the conjunction (hina), which is familiar in purpose clauses, he makes the following definite statements:

"It may seem, perhaps, from these and similar instances that the niceties of construction which we are accustomed to look for in the Greek writers are wanting in the New Testament, but this is far from being the case. And many passages, especially in the more literary parts of the New Testament, can be adduced where only by a close observation of the distinctions of tenses and case construction can the writer's full meaning be grasped.

"In 1 Cor. xv.; for example, the whole force of the argument rests on the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ who died and was buried is now risen, and continues unchangeably the same. And accordingly after using aorists to denote the two former acts, apethanen, and etaphae, St. Paul in verse 4 changes to the perfect

engageptai in speaking of the resurrection. Christ not merely 'rose again,' as in the rendering of the Authorized Version, but 'hath been raised,' and consequently, by implication, lives forever, the earnest of His people's resurrection."<sup>3</sup>

He is therefore of the same opinion concerning the use of the Greek tenses by the New Testament writers as we found Moulton to be. For the latter's definite statement the reader is referred to the footnote on page 54 of this treatise.

**Concerning the Greek Tenses Generally.** Here we should like once again to refer the reader to the quotation from A. T. Robertson which appears on page 15 of this treatise. No better statement of the nature of the Greek tenses is to be found anywhere. Following carefully the position of Robertson and Moulton are two writers of our own times, H. E. Dana, Th.D., professor of New Testament interpretation in the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; and J. R. Mantey, Th.D., professor of New Testament interpretation in the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. In their work on the grammar of the Greek New Testament first published in 1927 they make the following statements with reference to "the Greek tenses":

"No element of the Greek language is of more importance to the student of the New Testament than the matter of tense. A variation in meaning exhibited by the use of a particular tense will often dissolve what appears to be an embarrassing difficulty, or reveal a gleam of truth which will thrill the heart with delight and inspiration. Though it is an intricate and difficult subject, 11o 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 the tense in the Greek language and an appreciation of the finer distinctions in force.

". . . It is certainly unsafe, however, to proceed upon any supposition other than that the 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.

"The distinctive function of the verb is to express action. Action as presented in the expression of a verbal idea involves two elements, time of action and kind of action. That is, the action may be described as occurring at a certain time, and must be described, if intelligible, as performed in a certain manner. Tense deals with these two aspects of verbal expression, kind of action being the chief idea involved, for time is but a minor consideration in the Greek tenses."<sup>4</sup>

It is therefore important that we keep in mind the fact that the fundamental function of the Greek tense is to denote kind of action. The Germans call this aktionsart. The concern for a Greek root in the aorist tense which will express punctiliar action accounts for a good portion of the so-called irregularity in the principal parts of Greek verbs, especially in New Testament Greek. Of this

aktionsart we shall have more to say later. Continuing, for the present, our consideration of the interpretation of the tenses, we note the following statement from F. W. Farrar: "The translators of our English version have failed more frequently from their partial knowledge of the tenses than from any other cause."<sup>5</sup> William Douglas Chamberlain, Ph.D., professor of New Testament language and literature at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, in his grammar published in 1941 warns us that "the student should disabuse his mind at once of the notion that the primary idea of tense in the Greek verb is time. The fundamental idea is kind of action stated."<sup>6</sup> He continues:

"There is a time element in the Greek tense, but it is decidedly secondary to the kind of action described. The time element appears directly only in the indicative mode. In the subjunctive, optative and imperative modes and in the infinitive and participle, it is only relative, if it appears at all. This is why the indicative uses all of the tense forms and the other modes are confined largely to the present and the aorist."<sup>7</sup>

Following this same writer still further we read:

"In the subjunctive, optative and imperative modes, and in the infinitive and participle, a present tense form is timeless and durative, and an aorist is timeless and punctiliar."<sup>8</sup>

No less a scholar than Moulton informs us that the use of the tenses is "a subject on which many of the most crucial questions of exegesis depend."<sup>9</sup> We have, therefore, given careful consideration to this matter of the significance of tense and trust that, in the words of the same scholar, "It has been made clear that the notion of (present or past) time is not by any means the first thing we must think of in dealing with tenses."<sup>10</sup> We turn now to a further consideration of one phase of this important subject, viz., aktionsart.

Concerning the Grammatical Importance of aktionsart. As we have already noted, the kind of action expressed by the verb root is commonly referred to by the German term, aktionsart. Many so-called irregular verbs in the New Testament have become such because the linear idea was so persistent in some roots that they never were used in the aorist tense. Rather than form the aorist on this linear root the Greek has brought forward a good synonym with a punctiliar kind of action expressed in its root and has formed the aorist on that. Hence, as Moulton explains it,<sup>11</sup> the verb meaning "I eat" (esthio) obviously expresses linear action. Rather than form an aorist on such a root the Greek has brought forward a synonym with a punctiliar root, viz., (phagein, a word which originally meant "to divide"), to supply the defect. Hence the aorist is not formed on the durative root of (esthio) but upon the punctiliar root (phagein). Whenever used in the New Testament, (ephagon), the aorist of the verb "to eat," is invariably constative and thus simply denotes the action viewed as a whole under the concept of a single act. Our two main tenses for the verb "to eat" are thus (esthio), present tense and linear action, and (ephagon),

aorist tense denoting "simply the action seen in perspective, and not either the beginning or the end of the action," to use Moulton's phraseology again.<sup>12</sup> Since the future tense is usually punctiliar in its action the future of this same verb is built on the same root as the aorist and becomes (phagomai). Thus we see the great concern the Greek language shows for expressing kind of action by means of its tenses. Other examples could be given, but further technicalities would hardly clarify the matter for the average reader. Robertson is careful to remind us that the aorist tense itself is subject to the aktionsart of the verb root and that the action which is thus represented is invariably punctiliar. We have noted in this treatise the aorist in John 2:20, where forty-six years are involved, but as in the case of Romans 5:12 "the thing in each case is looked at as a whole."<sup>13</sup>

"The writer uses the aorist because duration is not the point about which he is concerned. The aorist is never used 'for' any other tense but only for itself"<sup>14</sup> With this in mind let us emphatically say that the imperfect tense is not used to describe either of the crises involved in the twofold work of divine grace in the believer's experience of salvation. If, therefore, either of them was thought of as a process, or as a matter of growth, this imperfect tense would surely have been used by the New Testament writers. Let us now hear from some of the other grammarians (most of whom have followed Winer, Moulton, and Robertson, to be sure) concerning the action described by means of the aorist tense.

Concerning the Kind of Action Depicted by the Aorist Tense. We turn first to the work by Chamberlain, to whom reference has been made above. Concerning the kind of action described by the aorist tense he says:

"The aorist tense expresses punctiliar action in past time. The term aorist means undefined. The action is stated without describing it.

"The so-called 'second' aorist is the oldest form of the verb, the present tense forms developing later to express repeated or continued action. The so-called 'first' aorist is a still later development. It grew out of the need to make linear verb roots (see aktionsart) express punctiliar action."<sup>15</sup>

Then, speaking concerning the phases of emphasis of the aorist, he says:

"A given aorist tense form may have any one of three phases of emphasis: it may accent the beginning of the act, ingressive aorist; it may accent the conclusion of the act, effective aorist; or it may look at the whole act without particular emphasis upon its beginning or conclusion, constative aorist. The key to this problem of interpretation lies in the aktionsart of the verb."<sup>16</sup>

We take up next the work by Messrs. Dana and Mantey, to which we have also had reference previously in this discussion. Concerning the aorist tense their statement is as follows:

**"We approach now the most prevalent and most important of the Greek tenses. It is also the most peculiar to Greek idiom. The fundamental significance of the aorist is to denote action simply as occurring, without reference to its progress. It is the indefinite tense ( [aoristos] unlimited). It has no essential temporal significance, its time relations being found only in the indicative, where it is used as past and hence augmented. Its true function is best seen in the potential moods, and should be carefully considered in interpretation. The aorist signifies nothing as to completeness, but simply represents the action as attained. It states the fact of the action or event without regard to its duration. . . . It presents the action or event as a 'point,' and hence is called 'punctiliar.'"17**

**These authors then continue with a large number of quotations from both Robertson and Moulton, many of which have already been noted in this treatise.**

**The Reverend H. V. P. Nunn, M.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge, England, writes a work entitled A Short Syntax of New Testament Greek, which was published at the Cambridge University Press in 1924. In his consideration of the Greek tenses he says:**

**"It is somewhat unfortunate that we are compelled to use the name tense in connection with the forms of the Greek verb. It directs our attention too much to the TIME of the action of the verb, whereas it was the STATE of the action, rather than the time, that was most prominently before the mind of the Greek. The time of the action of the verb is often left to be inferred from the context, 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.18 Following this he comes to a discussion of the aorist tense as follows:**

**"The use of the AORIST INDICATIVE denotes that the action is regarded simply as an event without any account being taken of its progress or of the existence of its result. Even its time is not always distinctly contemplated; but, generally speaking, it is regarded as taking place in past time.**

**"The name Aorist means without boundaries or indefinite, and denotes that the action expressed by the verb is not defined with regard to its time, progress, or result.**

**"The Aorist Indicative is most frequently used to describe a past event or series of events, viewed AS A WHOLE, without any reference to the progress Of the action, or the existence of its result.**

**"The fact so recorded may be**

**"(a) A momentary Action: "And having stretched forth his hand, he touched him." Mt. viii. 3.**

**"(b) A continued act or state viewed as a single action: "He abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling." Acts xxviii. 30.**

**"(c) A Series of similar acts viewed as constituting a single event: 'Thrice I suffered shipwreck.' 2 Cor. xi. 25.19"**

**We should like here to refer the reader to the discussion which follows on the next page of this appendix, which will clarify some items relating to the use of the type of aorists included here under (b) and (c). We do not find these types of aorists referring to the crisis experiences of salvation in the New Testament. As we have noted from the symbols and figures representing regeneration and sanctification, the idea of a single definite act is usually present not only in the tense but also in the root the word used. Psychologically, there comes for each soul a moment when his own spirit is aware of the divine work of grace in his heart, regardless of how long the process leading up to that moment through confession or consecration may have been.**

**William Watson Goodwin, former professor of Greek literature at Harvard University, describes the aorist tense thus:**

**"The aorist indicative expresses the simple occurrence of an action in past time; as εγραφα, I wrote.**

**"This fundamental idea of simple occurrence remains the essential characteristic of the aorist through all the dependent moods, however indefinite they may be in regard to time. The aorist takes its name (aoristos, unlimited, unqualified) from its thus denoting merely the occurrence of an action, without any of the limitations (horoι) as to completion, continuance, repetition, etc., which belong to other tenses. . . .**

**"The aorist of verbs which denote a state or condition generally expresses the entrance into the state or condition. . . .**

**"The aorist is distinguished from the imperfect by expressing only the occurrence of an action or the entrance into a state or condition, while the imperfect properly represents an action or state as going or as repeated."<sup>20</sup>**

**Here an important point to note is the fact that when the aorist is used in reference to a state or condition it refers particularly to the entrance into that state or condition. Thus the aorist tense, while significantly indicating the simple occurrence of the experience of regeneration or sanctification, does not deny the possibility of a continued growth in the experience once it is entered. It simply indicates the momentary nature of one's entrance into that state and condition.**

**The significant distinction of the imperfect tense as contrasted with the aorist for Biblical interpretation is brought out by Samuel G. Green, onetime professor at**

Rawdon College, London, in his Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament. He says, "The Imperfect should carefully be distinguished from the Aorist, or simple Past, although our translators have generally rendered the two tenses alike."<sup>21</sup> He then calls attention to Matthew 2:4, and paraphrases the translation by saying, "Herod was enquiring of the priests and scribes, not once for all but repeatedly; and when they had replied, he ascertained (Aorist, one act) of the Magi what they had seen."<sup>22</sup>

Three familiar names to students of New Testament Greek are Ernest DeWitt Burton, professor of Greek and and honored president of the University of Chicago; John Homer Huddilston, professor of Greek at the University of Maine, and later at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois; and J. Gresham Machen, professor of New Testament for many years at Princeton Theological Seminary (1906-29) and later at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Let us hear from each of them in turn.

Burton, in his Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in the New Testament Greek, states:

"The Aorist Indicative is most frequently used to express a past event viewed in its entirety, simply as an event or a single fact. It has no reference to the progress of the event, or to any existing result of it."<sup>23</sup>

Similarly Huddilston, in treating of the aorist in the moods other than the indicative, says:

"The distinction between the present and aorist is that the present denotes what is continued, extended, or repeated, while the aorist denotes the fact simply without any continued or extended action."<sup>24</sup>

J. Gresham Machen, whose New Testament Greek for Beginners is a popular textbook at present, makes, for the convenience of the student, a distinction from the temporal standpoint in the tenses of the Greek, using the simple divisions of past, present, and future time, etc., but he does so only after saying in his introduction that he is fully aware of the nontemporal character of the tenses and that only through a temporal use can their distinctions be made clear at the beginning.<sup>25</sup> Yet he makes sure that the proper distinctions as to kind of action should be noted by the student. His statements appear at various points in his text concerning the aorist tense:

"The aorist is like the imperfect in that it refers to past time. But the imperfect refers to continuous action in past time, while the aorist is the simple past tense .... But in past time the distinction is very carefully made; the Greek language shows no tendency whatever to confuse the aorist with the imperfect."<sup>26</sup>

The above statement has reference, of course, to the indicative mood of the verb. In reference to the subjunctive mood he says:

"In the subjunctive mood there is absolutely no distinction of time between the tenses; the aorist tense does not refer to past time and the present subjunctive does not necessarily refer to present time. The distinction between the present and the aorist concerns merely the manner in which the action is regarded."<sup>27</sup>

In regard to the imperative mood he continues:

"There is no distinction of time between the tenses in the imperative mood. The aorist imperative refers to the action without saying anything about its duration or repetition, while the present imperative refers to it as continuing or as being repeated."<sup>28</sup>

Concerning the tenses in the participle he further states:

"Properly speaking the tenses in the participle do not have to do with time, and their fundamental, non-temporal character appears in the usage now under discussion."<sup>29</sup>

In his introduction, the same writer says, "It is unfortunate that so many students of the New Testament have no acquaintance with the classical Greek."<sup>30</sup> Certainly it would seem that if more of the present-day students of New Testament Greek approached the study through a background of classical Greek there would be less bungling in our interpretations of the tenses.

Allen Rogers Benner, former professor at Andover, and Herbert Weir Smyth, Ph.D., former professor of Greek literature at Harvard University, were collaborators in the publication of a Beginner's Greek Book published in 1906. Concerning the aorist indicative and infinitive they write:

"The aorist indicative expresses a simple act (i.e. not continued or repeated) in past time.

"The aorist infinitive, like the aorist indicative, denotes a simple act (i.e. not continued or repeated); but unlike the aorist indicative, the aorist infinitive does not necessarily refer to past time. It differs from the present infinitive in the kind of action only."<sup>31</sup>

Note the emphasis upon the kind of action expressed by the aorist in anything other than the indicative mood, as was the case with Machen's work.

Let us return to James Hope Moulton's little work, *An Introduction to the Study of New Testament Greek*, published in its fourth impression under date of 1947. Herein he states: "The Aorist is the ordinary narrative tense, and answers

generally to our own Preterite. Being a 'momentary tense,' it describes an event as a single whole, without regarding the time taken in its accomplishment."<sup>32</sup> Similarly, at a later point in his discussion he says concerning the participle, "The Aorist describes a single act in the past, generally preceding the action of the main verb, but often contemporaneous with it, when it is in past time."<sup>33</sup>

It has been of interest to the present writer to note that Dr. Raphael Kuhner, onetime professor at Hanover, Germany, in his work entitled *A Grammar of the Greek Language for the Use of High Schools and Colleges*,<sup>34</sup> advances a similar position as that which we have held in this treatise. He says:

". . . the Aorist expresses a moment or point of time, while the Imperfect denotes duration or continuance. The Aorist therefore describes a momentary action or a single action; the action, however, described by the Aorist may be a continued or protracted one, but the writer in using the Aorist presents no such view of it, communicating merely the fact of the occurrence. The Imperfect, on the other hand, describes an action in its continuance and progress, -- not merely a single act, but a series of acts."<sup>35</sup>

It is important to notice his statement to the effect that even though the action described by the aorist may have been continued or protracted the writer does not view it as such but only as a simple occurrence when he uses the aorist to refer to it.

We include here a discussion from one of the older writers for the sake of the examples he gives us concerning the use of the aorist as compared with the imperfect tense. In the eleventh edition of Peter Bullions' *Greek Grammar* we find this observation "As the aorist does not, like the imperfect, express continuance, it is often used to express momentary action, and that in the same construction in which the imperfect is used to express continued action."<sup>36</sup> On the preceding page of this same work he makes the following statements and observations concerning the imperfect tense in comparison with the aorist:

"The Imperfect represents an action as going on, but not completed, at some past time expressed or implied: as *egraphon*, I was writing, (e.g. when he came).

"Observation: From its expressing the continuance of an action, it is frequently used to express what was customary, or continued from time to time; as *ho ippokomos ton hippon etribe kai, pasas hemeras*, the groom KEPT RUBBING AND CURRYING the horse every day.

"Observation: For the same reason it is used instead of the aorist, to express a past action, without reference to any specified time. When the action is continued, and not momentary, and when action of both kinds are mingled in narration, the continued action is often expressed by the imperfect, and the momentary by the aorist; as *exedpame kai kathulaktei*, HE RAN FORTH (the aorist,) and CONTINUED

**BARKING** at them (the imperfect); tous men oun peltastas hedexanto oi barbaroi kai emaxanto epeid enngus hason oi hoplitai etraponto kai hoi peltasai euthus heponto, The barbarians **RECEIVED** (aorist) the peltastae and **FOUGHT** (imperfect) with them. But when the heavy-armed soldiers were near, they **TURNED** (aorist) and the peltastae immediately **PURSUED THEM** (imperfect)."37 [Most of the Greek in the above two paragraphs was not transliterated. My sincere apology for any big mistakes in transliterating anything in the the paragraphs. I have one year of Greek in Bible school, many, many years ago. -- DVM]

If we consider another nineteenth century writer of lesser rank, we find an interesting discussion on the use of the aorist tense in Alpheus Crosby's Grammar of the Greek Language. He says:

"The indefinite tenses present a simple. (as it were, a momentary) view of the action as an undivided whole; the definite tenses present a more extended view of it as in progress (begun, going on, possibly never completed).

"The former are distinguished in general as narrative, and the latter as descriptive tenses. If action is conceived of as motion in a straight line, the definite tenses may be said to present a side view of this line, so that it is seen in its full length; but the indefinite tenses to present only an end view of it, so that it appears as a mere point. Thus:

Definite view: egraphe -----	Indefinite view: egrapse
(_____)	(.)
scribebat, he was writing,	scripsit, he wrote.

"Hence the **ACTION** is presented,

"1) By the definite tenses, as continued or prolonged; but by the Aorist, as momentary or transient: or by the former, as a habit or continued course of conduct; but by the latter, as a single act. . . .

"2) By the definite tenses, as doing at the time of, or until another action; but by the Aorist, simply as done in its own time. . . .

"3) By the definite tenses, as begun, attempted, designed, or imminent (doing, not done); but by the Aorist, as accomplished (done). . . .

"4) By the definite tenses, as introductory; but by the Aorist, as conclusive."38

We may well conclude this survey of the kind of action expressed by the aorist tense with some final observations by A. T. Robertson, who never loses sight of the importance of the Greek tenses for Biblical interpretation. He says:

**"Often a sharp distinction is drawn between the aorist and other tenses in the same context. Thus in Matthew 25:5 we read of the ten virgins that "they all slumbered and slept." But this rendering ignores the fact that the first verb is in the aorist indicative and the second in the imperfect indicative. "They all fell to nodding and went on sleeping." Every preacher has observed this experience in some of his hearers. We see a like distinction in John 5:8 and 9. Jesus said to the lame man: "Arise, take up thy bed, and walk." He was to take up his bed at once as a single act (aorist imperative) and go on walking (present imperative, linear action). In the result John keeps the same tenses: "He took up his bed (at once, aorist indicative) and went on walking" (imperfect indicative). Thus the whole picture is set beautifully before us.<sup>39</sup>**

**"The difference between the aorist and the present comes out in many ways. Thus in John 10:38 the English rendering fails to note that we have merely two tenses of the same verb: "That ye may know and understand." A more exact translation of the thought involved in the change of tense in the same verb thus repeated would be: "that ye may come to know and keep on knowing." Jesus is anxious that his hearers may grasp the idea and hold on to it that he and the Father are one. Even if on this occasion Jesus spoke Aramaic, John has reproduced his idea of the distinction between these two tenses of the same verb.<sup>40</sup>**

**"The infinitive offers some interesting examples of the difference between the aorist (punctiliar) and the present (linear) tenses. One of the best is in Acts 15:37 and 38, where the English renderings fail to note the point. Barnabas proposed to Paul that they take along John Mark on the second mission tour: "Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark." The set purpose of Barnabas comes out in the imperfect indicative and the modest proposal in the aorist infinitive as just this once.<sup>41</sup>**

**"Suffice it to say that one misses much of the spirit of the New Testament unless he can go with the writers in the use of the Greek tenses."<sup>42</sup>**

**All of the above discussion is definitely in keeping with our position in this writing. A careful distinction is maintained in the Greek language between the use of tenses, and especially so by the writers of the New Testament. The imperfect is not used to describe either of the crises involved in the twofold work of divine grace in the believer's experience of salvation. But the aorist, on the other hand, is consistently chosen for this designation. We therefore have two valid bases for our premise that both regeneration and sanctification are definite, miraculous experiences -- (1) the absence of the imperfect tense in such instances, and (2) the presence of the aorist tense, which would properly indicate that kind of action.**

**Miscellaneous Testimony. H. C. G. Moule, the British commentator to whom reference has been made in the main body of this writing, in commenting on Ephesians 3:16-17, translates the word (katoikesai) "take up His abode," and says: "Then note the tense of the Greek verb. It is Aorist, and this marks a point, a crisis,**

a step."43 In his commentary on Ephesians in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges his position is even more definite when he observes: "The tense is the aorist (infinitive), and the idea of the aorist is singleness of act. Accordingly, the Lord is viewed here not merely 'dwelling' but, in a definite act, "coming to dwell; 'taking up abode."44

Dr. E. F. Walker, a member and minister of the Church of the Nazarene from the time of its official beginning in 1908, and one of its honored general superintendents from 1911 until the time of his death in 1918, has written a study of our Lord's prayer for His disciples in John 17, entitled Sanctify Them. The first edition was published in 1899. A second edition was printed by the Nazarene Publishing House, from which we select the following quotation:

"At some point of time between the moment of conversion and the moment of glorification, the souls of the elect are purified from sin and perfected in love.

"Even if sanctification were a gradual process, there would be a moment of its completion. Logically, all theories of sanctification are bound to its instantaneousness. If it belongs to the resurrection, even, it is instantly completed at the moment when the body is glorified. If at death, there is a moment when death takes place. If by growth, there is a minute when full growth is attained. No theory of sanctification gets rid of its instantaneousness.

"The word "sanctify" in the Greek text is in the aorist tense and the imperative mood [John 17:17]. This fact is conclusive that the work of sanctifying here prayed for cannot be gradual, but must be instant and complete. The office of the Greek aorist is to express a point in the expanse of time -- past, present, or future; ordinarily the past. Crosby's Greek Grammar says: "The action is represented by the aorist as momentary or transient, as a single act." Winer's learned New Testament Greek Grammar declares: "The action represented by this tense is to be viewed as momentary." The imperative mood with the aorist tense means to do or be at once and completely. The word 'sanctify' is in this mood and tense, and signifies 'instantly and completely sanctify.'

"Jesus did not pray the Father to sanctify His disciples by a gradual process, but by an instantaneous act. If ever that prayer was answered -- and we believe it was answered on the day of Pentecost -- those disciples were at once made holy. Grow in grace, before and after their sanctification, they certainly could, and no doubt did. But "suddenly," in the upper room, the sanctifying Spirit accomplished in them this work prayed for. And this is still the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus; growth in holiness, but instant sanctification. Whenever this prayer of Jesus is answered for any one who has believed in Him, in that moment he can truthfully sing --

'Tis done! Thou dost this moment save,  
With full salvation bless:

Redemption through Thy blood I have,  
And spotless love and peace.

"It is reasonable to assume and Scriptural to believe that sanctification will be effected just as soon as all the conditions of it are fulfilled."<sup>45</sup>

"A servant of Christ Jesus, saluteth you, always striving for you in his prayers, that ye may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God."<sup>46</sup> "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it."<sup>47</sup>

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**ENDNOTES**

## CHAPTER 01 NOTES

1 Among these we would include such groups as the Wesleyan Methodists, the Free Methodists, the Holiness Methodists, the Church of the Nazarene, the Church of God (with headquarters at Anderson, Indiana), the Pilgrim Holiness church, some of the Pentecostal groups, and at least certain groups within the ranks of the Methodist church, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Society of Friends, and the Arminian Baptists. -- R. E. P.

2 Sermons, Vol. 2, p. 223.

3 Published at New York by Nelson & Phillips, 1878. Cf. chapter V, pp. 53 ft.

4 This autobiographical reference by Dr. Winchester gives us something of her own splendid training in the Greek language. Following her graduation from Radcliffe College, she carried forward her studies in New Testament Greek in the Divinity School of Glasgow University and taught both classical and New Testament Greek for most of her busy life as a Christian educator. -- R. E. P.

5 Milestone Papers, p. 5.

6 Ibid., p. 8.

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## CHAPTER 02 NOTES

1 S. H. Butcher, Some Aspects of the Greek Genius, p. 16.

2 That it was providentially directed for the expression of Christian thought we do not question, but that a special language was given for this medium is another issue. -- O. M. W.

3 A. T. Robertson, writing in Robertson and Davis' A Beginner's Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. ix.

4 In this paragraph Dr. Winchester has followed Milligan; see his New Testament Documents, pp. 67 f. -- R. E. P.

5 Milligan, New Testament Documents, p. 67.

6 Robertson, op. cit., p. ix.

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## CHAPTER 03 NOTES

1 Acts 11:20, 26.

2 F. W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, p. 220.

3 C. E. Stowe, "Introductory Notice to the American Edition," *Ellicott's Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Andover; Warren F. Draper, 1890), Vol. I, p. i.

4 Charles J. Ellicott, *A Critical and Grammatical Commentary on St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Andover: W. F. Draper, 1889), p. 7.

5 Rollin T. Chafer, *Science of Biblical Hermeneutics* (Oberlin, O.: Bibliotheca Sacra Co., 1939), p. 75.

6 H. V. P. Nunn, *A Short Syntax of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1924), p. 66.

7 *A Short Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, p. 293.

8 Wm. W. Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1892), p. 270.

9 James Hadley, *A Greek Grammar for Schools and Colleges* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1877), p. 264.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 267

11 Wm. W. Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1900), p. 30.

12 A. Sidgwick, *Introduction to Greek Prose Composition* (Eighth edition; Boston: Ginn & Co., 1893), p. 77.

13 To this list of classical authorities Dr. Winchester could have added the name of John Williams White, who joins in agreement with these already mentioned in saying, "The aorist indicative expresses the simple occurrence of an action in past time; the imperfect expresses its continuance." ,and, again, "The time expressed by the present and aorist subjunctive is generally future, the present expressing the action as going on or repeated, the aorist expressing simply its occurrence." Cf. his *First Greek Book* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1896), pp. 22 and 77 respectively. Italics are his. -- R. E. P.

14 L. H. Gray, *Foundations of Language* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1939), p. 203.

15 A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: The Broadman Press, 1914. Fourth, enlarged edition, 1923).

16 Here Dr. Winchester has reference to Moulton's *Prolegomena*, which is Volume I of his now famous grammar.

17 J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek. Vol. I, Prolegomena* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906), p. 118.

18 Page 88. The chapter referred to is VIII. The book is published at London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1923.

19 G. B. Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek, regarded as the Basis of New Testament Exegesis* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1870), pp. 330-331.

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 336-337.

21 *Op cit.*, p. 339. The full passage in the A.R.V. reads:

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:  
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
And recovering of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty them that are bruised,  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19).

22 G. B. Winer, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

23 *Loc. cit.*

24 Wm. R. Harper and R. F. Weidner, *An Introductory New Testament Greek Method* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), p. 440.

25 J. H. Moulton, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

26 A. T. Robertson, (*Word Pictures in the Greek New Testament, Vol. I, p. 268*) translates (*aphientai*) in this passage "are forgiven," referring the reader to his *Grammar*, pp. 864 ff., where the punctiliar or aoristic use of the present tense is discussed. The King James Version reads, "Thy sins be forgiven thee."

27 J. H. Moulton, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

28 *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, p. 821.

**29 See Robertson's Introduction to Davis' A Beginner's Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. viii.**

**30 Robertson & Davis, A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament, p. 293. Cf. also Dana & Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 179. But especially note Robertson's large grammar, p. 823.**

**31 A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research, p. 824.**

**32 The Greek word (aoristos) and its fundamental meaning are thus basic to our understanding of the aorist tense.**

**33 See his The Minister and His Greek New Testament, p. 93. In his first volume of Word Pictures in the New Testament (p. 29), he also refers to the word eudokesa as the timeless aorist.**

**34 See page 347 of his grammar.**

**35 See his Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research, p. 832. Concerning the constative aorist, Dana and Mantey in their recent Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament (p. 196) say, "It takes an occurrence and, regardless of its extent of duration, gathers it into a single whole."**

**36 A. T. Robertson, op. cit., p. 832.**

**37 John Hart Brown, Handbook of Everyday French (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1931), p. 186.**

**38 G. B. Wirier, op. cit., p. 212**

**39 A. T. Robertson, op. cit., p. 821.**

**40 Ibid., p. 833.**

**41 See Volume V, p. 40, of this work. In speaking of the aorist used here he calls it a "constative or summary use of the aorist."**

**42 Reference is to page 43 in Westcott's The Gospel According to St. John (London: John Murray, 1898), and page 196 in Dana and Mantey's work referred to above. Here we should like to call the reader's attention to a statement in reference to this same scripture passage by Maurice Goguel in his Life of Jesus (p. 227): "The meaning of this saying is not 'It took 46 years to build this Temple,' but 'for 46 years this Temple has been a building.'" By the last expression 'a building' he plainly means to say 'an edifice.' This is a different way of thinking on this passage. One wonders just how it would be reconciled with the above explanations by the**

grammarians and commentators. His book is published at New York by Macmillan Co., under date of 1933. Translated into the English by Olive Wyon. -- R. E. P.

43 See Robertson's large grammar, p. 833.

44 Ibid., p. 833. Or, as Blass reminds us, the aorist may be used in reference to action "expressly stated to have extended, over any length of time, provided that it is only the completion and the conclusion of it which is emphasized, this being just the force of the aorist." Grammar of New Testament Greek, p. 193. His italics.

45 See his Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941), p. 77.

46 A. T. Robertson again, on page 833 of his large grammar.

47 Grammar, p. 835.

48 Dr. Winchester is probably translating from the original here.

49 Here again, Dr. Winchester must be translating from the Greek.

50 It is interesting to note that in this connection, where the present tense is used, grammarians regard it as an aoristic present, such as in Matthew 9:2 and the parallel passage in Mark 2:5. -- O. M. W.

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## CHAPTER 04 NOTES

1 The Expositors Greek Testament (General Editor's Preface)

2 C. E. Stowe, Introductory Notice to the American Edition of Ellicott's Commentary, p. i.

3 J. O. F. Murray (of St. Augustine's College, Canterbury), writing in the Preface to F. J. A. Hort's work The Epistle of St. James (London: Macmillan Co., Ltd., 1909), p. vii.

4 J. O. F. Murray, op. cit., p. iv.

5 See the Preface to his work The Epistles of St. John (London: Macmillan & Co., 1886), p. vi.

6 Published at London by Hodder and Stoughton, 1901. W. Robertson Nicoll, editor.

7 Alford's Greek Testament, Vol. III, 4th ed., p. 125.

8 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 370.

9 Ibid., p. 439. The verse in full reads: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," etc. (Rom. 12:1.)

10 Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 346.

11 Commentary, Vol. II, p. 183 (Am. Ed.): "For ye are dead [aorist], and your life is hid [perfect] with Christ in God."

12 Ellicott, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 106. Dr. Winchester has translated the Greek words here.

13 The translation seems to be Dr. Winchester's own. In this quotation from Lightfoot I have transliterated his Greek for the sake of the English reader. The word crisis is Lightfoot's italics. Cf. his Epistle to the Colossians, p. 268.

14 Ibid., p. 277.

15 Ibid., p. 281. Lightfoot's italics again.

16 Westcott also writes on Ephesians, but his work was very scarce during the time of Dr. Winchester's writing, so she did not have access to it. Recent reprinting has made it available.

17 Epistle to the Ephesians (London: Macmillan & Co., 1914), p. 191. For other comments on this passage cf. pp. 37 f. and 39 of this treatise.

18 Epistle to the Galatians, p. 204. Gal. 5:4 is the passage referred to, which reads: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

19 Ibid., p. 213.

20 Friedrich Adolph Philippi, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878), Vol. I, p. 299.

21 Ibid., p. 298.

22 Ibid., p. 289.

23 Ibid., p. 308. His italics.

24 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 250.

25 Ibid., p. 311.

26 B. F. Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John* (Cambridge & London: Macmillan and Co., 1886), p. 122. Cf. his special note on "Children of God." Dr. Winchester has translated the Greek in his quotations for the sake of the English reader.

27 Ibid., pp. 124 ff. Cf. his additional note on "Aspects of the Incarnation," especially p. 126.

28 *Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 150. Italics are Westcott's.

29 Ibid., p. 153.

30 For his discussion of this in detail cf. *ibid.*, pp. 331 ff.

31 F. J. A. Hort, *The Epistle of St. James* (London: Macmillan Co., Ltd., 1909), pp. 39 and 40 respectively.

32 H. C. G. Moule, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, with Introduction and Notes," *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, J. J. S. Perowne, general editor (Cambridge: The University Press, 1903), p. 6.

33 Same general editor as the above work 'and same publishers.

34 A. Plummer, *The Epistles of St. John*, p. 33. The A.R.V. translates I John 2:1, "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

35 J. J. Lias, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 177. Here he is giving a quotation from Meyer, which fact does not weaken his point.

36 See page 118 of his *The Epistle to the Ephesians*.

37 *The Epistle to the Colossians*, p. 120.

38 *Expositor's Greek Testament*, Vol. II, p. 634. Italics ours.

39 Ibid., p. 699.

40 Ibid., p. 810.

41 Ibid., p. 993.

42 Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol. III, p. 45. The A.R.V. translates II Cor. 1:21-22 as follows: "Now he that establisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

43 S. D. F. Salmond in the Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol. III, p. 345.

44 Ibid., p. 344. Italics are Salmond's.

45 A. S. Peake, in the Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol. III, p. 539.

46 Ibid., p. 534.

47 Published at New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, under the general editorship of C. A. Briggs, S. R. Driver, and Alfred Plummer.

48 This volume was published in 1897.

49 Cf. p. 161.

50 Sanday & Headlam, Epistle to the Romans, p. 95. The passage in full reads as follows: "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith" (Rom. 3:27).

51 T. K. Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, p. 136. Eph. 4:22, of the A.R.V., translates, "That ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit."

52 Ibid., p. 283, Col. 3:9, "Lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings" (A.R.V.).

53 Ibid., p. 279. "For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (A.R.V.).

54 James Moffatt, The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 31. This quotation is entirely from Burton (of Chicago University), which makes it doubly strong.

55 Here Dr. Winchester's work was cut off by her death. Her understudy, who has edited her handwritten notes to this point, continues from here.

56 E. D. Burton, The Epistle to the Galatians, p. 276.

57 James H. Ropes, The Epistle of St. James, p. 177. Note his reference to Moulton's Prolegomena, p. 144.

58 H. B. Swete, The Apocalypse of St. John, p. 49. The italics are ours. They translate the Greek term for repentance, (metanoeson), which is an aorist

imperative. This author is not one of the I.C.C. commentators, however. He writes in the famous Macmillan series.

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## CHAPTER 05 NOTES

1 James H. Moulton, *An Introduction to the Study of New Testament Greek* (London: The Epworth Press, 1947), p. 186.

2 See page 3 of this treatise.

3 *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, III, 28.

4 *Ibid.*, III, 34.

5 Vol. IV, p. 145.

6 London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, Ltd., n.d., and New York: Harper & Brothers, n.d.

7 *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, VI, 20.

8 *Ibid.*, VI, 81.

9 Robert Johnstone, *The First Epistle of Peter* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1888), pp. 53-54.

10 *Op. cit.*, III, 262.

11 *Milestone Papers*, p. 63.

12 Note the marginal reading, "let us have peace."

13 *Word Pictures*, IV, 357.

14 *Milestone Papers*, p. 87.

15 B. F. Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John*, p. 25. I have transliterated his Greek in the parentheses.

16 *Greek Testament*, IV, 430.

17 *Commentary on the Nero Testament*, II, 367.

**18** The reader has no doubt noticed that many of our scripture quotations are from the American Standard Version. This is because in such instances the translation seems superior to that of the more familiar Authorized Version.

**19** Word Pictures in the New Testament, IV, 494.

**20** Paul seems to personify both sin and death here, so that a literal translation would specify "the Sin" principle and "the death." The latter seems to be personified as the consequence of bondage to the sin principle. As Sanday and Headlam suggest, it

thus refers to "the authority exercised by Sin and ending in death."

Cf. Epistle to the Romans, p. 191.

**21** Greek Testament, II, 386.

**22** Loc. cit. Italics are his own.

**23** Op. cit., II, 664.

**24** See page 54 of this treatise.

**25** Cf. Moulton, Prolegomena, p. 130.

**26** Greek Testament, III, 110.

**27** T. K. Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians ("International Critical Commentary"), p. 96.

**28** Milestone Papers, p. 69.

**29** See his Commentary, VI, 136.

**30** Cf. Alford's suggestion to this effect.

**31** Epistle to the Colossians, p. 281. The italics are his own.

**32** Commentary on the New Testament, III, 146.

**33** Word Pictures in the New Testament, IV, 500.

**34** Commentary on the New Testament, III, 146.

**35** Milestone Papers, p. 80.

**36** On this point compare Winer, p. 313. Or consult Dana & Mantey, p. 300.

**37 Milestone Papers, p. 71.**

**38 F. A. Philippi, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, II, 299.**

**39 Word Pictures, IV, 313.**

**40 Galatians, International Critical Commentary, p. 319.**

**41 Loc. cit.**

**42 Epistle to the Galatians, p. 213.**

**43 Commentary on the New Testament, IV, 534.**

**44 Milestone Papers, p. 67.**

**45 Consult Winer's Grammar of New Testament Greek, pp. 393-394.**

**46 See his Commentary on First Corinthians in the Expositor's Greek Testament, II, 817.**

**47 Milestone Papers, p. 73.**

**49 Loc. cit.**

**49 Ibid., p. 74.**

**50 See page 54 of this treatise.**

**51 Greek Testament, IV, 316.**

**52 The Epistle of James (I.C.C.), pp. 269-270.**

**53 The Commentary on the New Testament, II, 243.**

**54 Milestone Papers, p. 87.**

**55 Ibid., pp. 87-88.**

**56 The Epistles of St. John, p. 25. We have added a transliteration of his Greek as in the previous instance. Cf. pages 60-62 of this treatise for our discussion of the word "forgive."**

**57 The Epistles of St. John, "Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges," p. 84.**

**58 "Rock of Ages." From the first stanza as it was originally written.**

59 Op. cit., p. 70.

60 Daniel Steele, Milestone Papers, p. 83. His italics.

61 Word Pictures in the New Testament, IV, pp. 113-114.

62 See his comments on II Corinthians, Expositors Greek Testament, III, p. 45. Italics are my own.

63 Milestone Papers, p. 79.

64 Greek Testament, II, 122. I have translated his Greek here.

65 Milestone Papers, p. 87.

66 Greek Testament, IV, 272.

67 Ibid., I, 910.

68 Op. cit., IV, 340.

69 Milestone Papers, p. 84.

70 Word Pictures in the New Testament, V, 436.

71 Greek Testament, IV, 244.

72 A. M. Hills, Holiness and Power, p. 123. Italics are his own.

73 An Introduction to the Study of New Testament Greek, p. 186. See page 54 of this treatise for the complete statement.

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#### APPENDIX NOTES

1 Alexander Buttman, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek (Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1878, translated from the German by J. H. Thayer), pp. 194-195. The italics are ours.

2 The Minister and His Greek New Testament, p. 90.

3 New Testament Documents, pp. 67-68.

4 **A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, pp. 176-177. The italics are their own.**

5 **F. W. Farrar, Greek Syntax, p. 123.**

6 **M. D. Chamberlain, An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941), p. 67.**

7 **Ibid., pp. 67-68.**

8 **Ibid., p. 69.**

9 **A Grammar of New Testament Greek, Vol. I, Prolegomena, p. 119.**

10 **Loc. cit.**

11 **Ibid., p. 111.**

12 **Op. cit., p. 111.**

13 **Robertson & Davis, A New Short Grammar of the Greek Testament, p. 295.**

14 **Loc. cit. And, as Blass reminds us: "The distinction between continuous and completed action is most sharply marked in the case of the imperfect and aorist indicative, and moreover this distinction is observed with the same accuracy in the N. T. as in classical Greek." Grammar of New Testament Greek, p. 190.**

15 **Chamberlain, op. cit., pp. 75-76.**

16 **Ibid., p. 76.**

17 **A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, pp. 193-194. Their italics. In the brackets I have transliterated the word for aorist.**

18 **Op. cit., p. 66.**

19 **A Syntax of New Testament Greek, p. 68. In the case of the scripture passages quoted Nunn gives both the English translation and the Greek. I have omitted the Greek. Italics and capitals are his own.**

20 **Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb, p. 16. The italics are his own.**

21 **Samuel G. Green, Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament, p. 326.**

22 **Ibid., pp. 326-327.**

**23 Op. cit., p. 19.**

**24 Essentials of New Testament Greek, p. 205.**

**25 See page viii of his Introduction.**

**26 New Testament Greek for Beginners, pp. 81-82.**

**27 Ibid., p. 131.**

**28 Ibid, p. 180.**

**29 Ibid., p. 206.**

**30 Ibid., p. vii.**

**31 A. R. Beuner and H. W. Smyth, Beginner's Greek Book (New York: American Book Co., 1906), pp. 42-43.**

**32 Moulton, op. cit., p. 190.**

**33 Ibid., p. 199.**

**34 Translated from the German by B. B. Edwards and S. H. Taylor. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1885.**

**35 Ibid., p. 346. The italics are his own.**

**36 Rev. Peter Bullions, The Principles of Greek Grammar; Comprising the Substance of the most approved Grammars extant, For the use of Colleges and Academies (11th Ed., New York: Pratt, Woodford & Co., 1846), p. 80.**

**37 Ibid., p. 79. The italics and capitals are his own.**

**38 Alpheus Crosby, A Grammar of the Greek Language for the Use of Schools and Colleges (Revised Edition, New York and Chicago: Potter, Ainsworth, and Co., 1875), pp. 359-361. It is important to note that he divides the tenses into the classification of definite and indefinite. His mention of the aorist in each case specifies clearly just what kind of action he understands it to indicate. The italics are Crosby's.**

**39 The Minister and His Greek New Testament p. 94.**

**40 Ibid., p. 95.**

**41 Ibid., p. 99.**

42 Ibid., p. 102.

43 Christ and Sanctification (London: Pickering & Inglis, Ltd., n.d.), p. 44.

44 The Epistle to the Ephesians, p. 97. His italics.

45 E. F. Walker, Sanctify Them, pp. 54-55.

46 Col. 4:12 (A.R.V.),

47 I Thess. 5:23-24 (A.R.V.).

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THE END