

Supplement to Ch. 2 of  
*Using NT Greek in Ministry* by David Alan Black (Baker, 1993)  
Rodney J. Decker, Th.D., Assoc. Prof. of NT  
Baptist Bible Seminary  
Sept 2006, v. 1.1

Any discussion of bibliographical resources eventually becomes dated and needs to be revised to add more recent works. Since Black's book was published in 1993, it is long overdue for an update. This is especially true in terms of computer resources, but even major reference works in print are revised from time to time and new works are published which supersede older standards. These notes are designed to supplement and update Dr. Black's recommendations; they follow the section headings in the book.

In addition to the bibliographical tools noted on p. 34 you should add these:

- D. A. Carson, *NT Commentary Survey* (5th ed., Baker, 2001); this is not a “dull read”! Carson is quite blunt in his opinions and he often expresses it “creatively” ☺ —not all bibliographies are fun to read; this one is. Since this chapter does not attempt to list NT commentaries, Carson's work is a valuable supplement.
- Frederick Danker, *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study* (Augsburg Fortress, 2003); now includes a CD ROM with full text and additional material.
- John Glynn, *Commentary and Reference Survey: A Comprehensive Guide to Biblical and Theological Resources* (new ed. due early 2007 from Kregel)

## 1. An English Bible

I'll not try to provide an exhaustive update to this section, but do note several recent English translations that should be added to Black's list:

- NASB95, *New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update edition* (a nice “upgrade” to the English; always the Greek student's favorite due to how formal [some insist on saying “literal”!] its translation is)
- ESV, *English Standard Version*<sup>1</sup> (an evangelical revision of the RSV; serviceable)
- HCSB, *Holman Christian Standard Version* (a recent contribution that falls somewhere between ESV and NIV in translation style; contemporary idiom)
- NET, *New English Translation* (similar to NIV in the text; noteworthy for the extensive translator's notes; available online in full: <[www.netbible.org](http://www.netbible.org)>)
- TNIV, *Today's New International Version* (a revision of NIV; uses “inclusive language”; though not extreme, it has still engendered controversy)

---

<sup>1</sup> I have published an extensive review of the ESV NT; details at <<http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/esv.htm>>.

- ISV, *International Standard Version* (of which Dr. Black is the NT editor). This one is not yet complete; the NT is finished and the OT about half. See the details at <[www.isv.org](http://www.isv.org)>.

Although I still use the NIV as my standard “reading text,” that choice would not be as easy if I were just beginning my ministry. (What you decide to use in pulpit ministry, of course, may need to be something totally different than your own reading Bible; there are a multitude of factors to consider at that level—and the wrong choice can disrupt your ministry unnecessarily.)

## 2. A Modern Edition of the Greek NT

Since Black’s book was published both the NA and UBS texts have been revised. The UBS text is now in its 4th edition (1993, unfortunately, printed in a much less readable typeface than earlier editions); text is the same as 3d ed., but the apparatus has been totally revised, including the meaning of the A-B-C-D ratings on the readings (which Black explains in this chapter; see the introduction to the 4th ed. for their revised meaning). The same is true of the NA text, now in its 27th ed., 1993).

Two other Greek NTs of note have been published. The UBS and NA texts are the primary “working tools” for the Greek student, but each of these has their place as well: *The NT in the Original Greek, Byzantine Textform*, compiled and arranged by Maurice Robinson and William G. Pierpont (Chilton Book Publishing, 2005). This is a “majority text” position (of which I am not persuaded), though different than the earlier (and unrelated) edition by Hodges and Farstad. Robinson is one of very few qualified text critics who takes a Byzantine position. The second that I have just seen announced (but not yet seen an actual copy) is a new reprint edition: *The Greek NT with Dictionary* by Westcott and Hort (Hendrickson, 2006). This is a reprint of the 1881 original with a new foreword by Eldon Jay Epp, a critical apparatus giving alternate readings found in UBS/NA and majority text editions, and Souter’s (old, 1916) lexicon.

Also to be noted is Zondervan’s *A Reader’s Greek NT* (Richard J. Goodrich and Albert L. Lukaszewski, 2004). This gives essentially the UBS/NA text, but edited to reflect the translator’s choices in the NIV; it also includes extensive vocabulary notes, verse-by-verse. Handy to carry to church, etc., but no critical apparatus, etc. for the study.

## 3. An Exegetical Guide

I am aware of nothing newer in this category, but perhaps it would be good to mention *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek NT* by Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981) which is more detailed in the Gospels than the original *Linguistic Key* (the newer vol. by Rogers and Rogers may have leveled this a bit).

There is also a new series being produced which might fall under this heading: *The Baylor Handbook on the Greek NT* (from Baylor Univ. Press). These are not exegetical commentaries, but grammatical handbooks/commentaries on each book of the NT. They discuss grammar and syntax verse-by-verse. Thus far two have been released: Acts (Parsons and Culy) and the Johannine Epistles (Culy). (Disclaimer re. my recommendations here: I will be doing the volume on Mark! Hopefully it will be as useful as the first two volumes. Mark probably won't be available until 2010.)

#### 4. A Greek-English Lexicon

This is perhaps the most significant update of the entire chapter. Bauer's lexicon has now been released in a 3d ed. (Univ. of Chicago Press, 2000). This is a *major* revision and is now much more valuable than previously. Anyone doing NT exegesis really must have BDAG (as the 3d ed. is known). For a review and explanation as well as links to numerous other related resources, see my extensive web page devoted to BDAG: <<http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/bdag.htm>>.

In the "abridged" lexicon department you'll find Warren Trenchard's *A Concise Dictionary of NT Greek* (Cambridge, 2003) very useful. It's not nearly as cumbersome to carry with you to class or on vacation and it is complete for the NT. (It's much better than Newman's little dictionary.)

#### 5. A Greek Word Study Dictionary

There are no significant additions to this category, but it is an appropriate place to point you to two *essential* works that discuss word studies in general—and the fallacies that are so abundant in the popular pulpit: D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies* (2d ed., Baker, 1996) and Moisés Silva, *God, Language and Scripture* (Zondervan, 1990). These are both very important works that you need to master if you are to use the biblical languages well. (There's also a chapter on this subject in my *Koine Reader* [forthcoming, Kregel].)

#### 6. A Concordance of Greek Words

There are three new entries here. First, the venerable Moulton & Geden has been totally revised: *Concordance to the Greek NT*, ed. I. Howard Marshall, 6th ed., fully revised (T. & T. Clark, 2002). The text now reflects the UBS<sup>4</sup> and NA<sup>27</sup> texts rather than WH. The only thing not revised, but which needed doing desperately, is that the headwords have been left in all caps—something very clumsy for most students. An alternate to this work is the *Exhaustive Concordance to the Greek NT*, ed. John R. Kohlenberger III, Edward Goodrick, and James Swanson (Zondervan, 1995). Also a replacement for the classic *Englishman's Greek Concordance* is available as *The Greek-English Concordance to the NT*, ed. John R. Kohlenberger III, Edward Goodrick, and James Swanson (Zondervan, 1997), now coordinated with the NIV instead of KJV.

## 7. A New Testament Greek Grammar

Pride of place in this category should now go to Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Zondervan, 1996). At around 800 pages it should never be assigned for classroom reading, but as a reference tool it is invaluable if used via the Scripture index. If you're working on a passage to preach or teach, by all means make it a regular habit to check the index for the extensive comments that you'll often find in Wallace. Unlike most grammars, he is not content to discuss a grammatical feature and then list a few examples. He gives examples *with explanation* as to how the grammar affects one's understanding of the text—and often at length. Invaluable, especially on the noun and the article.

As a result of Wallace's publication, most students will find the "big grammars" less necessary (Robertson, BDF, MHT), though advanced students in NT will still want them. Perhaps more helpful now are several good intermediate grammars that do a good job with the grammar but not with the extended examples and discussion in Wallace. The best are Stanley Porter's *Idioms of the Greek NT* (Sheffield, 2d. ed., 1994)—especially good on the verb; and Richard Young's *Intermediate NT Greek* (Broadman Holman, 1994), an ideal textbook.

## 8. A Textual Commentary

Metzger's *Textual Commentary* (discussed by Dr. Black) has now been updated in a 2d ed. (1994) to reflect the 4th ed. of the UBS text. Brand new is Roger Omanson's *A Textual Guide to the Greek NT* (2006) which is referred to as an *adaptation* of Metzger's commentary. Since it only arrived in my mailbox this week, I can't give an assessment of it yet. It is larger than Metzger at over 550 pgs.

Without getting into a bibliography of NT textual criticism, I would note only two works. First is Dr. Black's own edited volume, *Rethinking NT Textual Criticism* (Baker, 2002) with essays by Epp, Holmes, Elliott, Robinson, and Silva. They provide a good survey of contemporary approaches. The second is more narrow in focus, and that is *Reinventing Jesus: What The Da Vinci Code and Other Novel Speculations Don't Tell You* (Kregel, 2006) by J. Ed Komoszewski, M. James Sawyer, and Daniel B. Wallace. This addresses the underlying issues in *The Da Vinci Code* and is also an explicit refutation of the nonsense in books like Bart Ehrman's *Misquoting Jesus*. The largest section of the book is an introduction to textual criticism.

There is also a 4th edition of Metzger's *The Text of the NT*, edited and revised by Bart Ehrman. Although it does update some matters, it also introduces some of Ehrman's own (unorthodox) idiosyncrasies. You're probably better off finding a used copy of the 3d edition if you can.

## 9. A Synopsis of the Gospels

Nothing new at this level that I'm aware of.

## 10. The Septuagint

There is a new revision of Rahlfs' LXX that was due July 2006, but I haven't seen it yet. This is an extensive revision carried out by Robert Hanhart who made corrections or additions in about 1,000 places (ISBN, 3-438-05119-2). Rahlfs has been the standard edition for nearly a century. This revision should extend its usefulness for many more years. In the meanwhile, the major critical edition, the Göttingen LXX, continues to crawl ahead with some scholars cautiously optimistic that it may be completed in our lifetime. Related to this is the *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (NETS), of which the Psalms is in print (transl. Pietersma; Oxford, 2000), with the rest due (hopefully) in 2007. You can read provisional editions of the entire OT on the web at <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/>.

Several books *about* the LXX have been published in recent years, but for the purposes of this bibliography, I will mention only *Invitation to the Septuagint* by Karen Jobes and Moisés Silva (Baker, 2000). The first part of the book is a good introduction to the LXX, and the rest will take you into more specialized studies. Very valuable.

### Expanding Your library

Here I will try to be much more selective since there has been a veritable flood of good NT books published in the last 13 years. A few of the highlights are all I can offer you. I'll try to stay within the general scope of Black's comments in this section, roughly in the same order.

For NT introductions, pride of place should probably go the volume by D. A. Carson and Douglas Moo, *An Introduction to the NT* (Zondervan, 2005; the 2d ed. of a work originally authored by Carson, Moo, and Leon Morris—who died July 2006).

Several NT theologies have been published of late. By far the best of them is Frank Thielman's *Theology of the NT* (Zondervan, 2005). It demonstrates good sensitivity to the text as well as (IMHO) a sound methodology.

In the NT backgrounds department, I have found Everett Ferguson very helpful: *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (2d ed., Eerdmans, 1993). If you never have the opportunity to get a seminary class in this subject, it would be well worth your time to read carefully through Ferguson.

For an overview of NT studies, covering the various sub-disciplines, note that the volume co-edited by Black and Dockery is now available from a new publisher in an extensively revised form as *Interpreting the NT: Essays on Methods and Issues* (Broadman & Homan, 2001). My favorite

text in this category, however, is *The Face of NT Studies: A Survey of Recent Research*, ed. Scot McKnight and Grant Osborne (Baker, 2004).

For additional language tools, see the comments under §7, Grammars (particularly the intermediate grammars listed there). In addition, you should someday have an analytical lexicon—*someday!* not now while you're still learning Greek. But once you've actually learned Greek, then an analytical is a useful tool for when you get stuck and simply can't identify some odd form (or perhaps a common one you just can't remember!). These days Bible software programs serve this purpose well, but for those who prefer a real book (may your tribe increase! ☺), I'd suggest Wm. Mounce's (Zondervan, 1993) since his terminology, etc. will be familiar if you've learned Greek from his textbook. There are a number of other choices, most of which are serviceable. The only one you want to avoid is the old Bagster edition since it represents the TR text and not what you have in your UBS text.

Black notes the parallel text edition of NA and RSV; a recent publication does this genre one better: *New Testament: New English Translation, Novum Testamentum Graeca* (published jointly by Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft and Net Bible Press, 2004). This provides the full NA<sup>27</sup> text (including the textual apparatus and side margin material) as well as the English NET Bible on the facing page—with a select subset of the NET Bible notes, particularly those which are specific to Greek grammar, translation, and textual criticism: a *technical* study Bible! (Note that this is *not* an interlinear; the Greek and English are on facing pages.) For details, see <[http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page\\_id=2056](http://www.bible.org/page.asp?page_id=2056)>.

In the journal department, the standbys are still valuable (e.g., *BSac*). I'd also recommend *Trinity Journal* for more technical articles. You ought to consider adding two newer journals as well. *The Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* is now in its 10th vol., having begun publication in 1996; one issue per year is published. It provides high quality articles that are often “language specific/explicit” in their content. The journal from my own seminary tries to address both ministry and academic contexts: *The Journal of Ministry and Theology*.

The interface of linguistics and the Greek of the NT has been mentioned above (see the works by Silva and Carson listed in §5). Perhaps this is as good a place as any to list the *Pocket Dictionary for the Study of NT Greek*, by Matthew DeMoss (IVP, 2001). This is a very handy work that will bail you out when you encounter a technical term you don't recognize, or can't remember the critical details of some grammatical category. It covers the vocabulary of grammar, semantics, textual criticism, exegetical method, and NT criticism in just under 140 small pages (small enough to keep tucked in your briefcase or backpack for quick access in seminary classes).

### **A Word on Computers**

Most of the software programs listed in Black are now extinct; that's normal in this genre—and a good reason to buy real books that you will still be able to read in another 13 years! ☺ These days serious language study boils down to just a few programs.

If you're fortunate enough to own a Mac ☺, you can use the Cadillac of all Bible software: *Accordance* <[www.accordancebible.com](http://www.accordancebible.com)> (now in v. 7). If you can describe it semantically, syntactically, or grammatically, *Accordance* can probably find it for you. This is a valuable research tool that handles Greek (and Hebrew, as well as many modern language Bibles, etc.) in a very intuitive fashion. (It also has the usual collection of e-books, but that is not the primary value of these tools.)

But since most of the world insists on running Windows, you will want to know about *BibleWorks* <[www.bibleworks.com](http://www.bibleworks.com)> (now in v. 7) and *Logos Bible Software* <[www.logos.com](http://www.logos.com)> (v. 3). *BibleWorks* is probably the leader for technical research in the biblical languages, though *Logos*, who long ignored this sector, has been trying to catch up the last few years. *Logos* is preeminently an electronic library program and has the largest collection of titles and the best search capabilities of working with such a large library. The software, however, is large, slow, and clumsy (IMHO!). You can open *Accordance* or *BibleWorks*, do a search, find your information, and exit the program while *Logos* is still loading! But some people are totally devoted to it. Your mileage may vary!

All three programs listed here have fully tagged texts (grammatical identifiers for each word) that can be searched for individual items or for various syntactical patterns. They also have other related tools, e.g., you can get a hypertext version of BDAG for any of the three, and they all have a sentence diagramming module (*BibleWorks* now includes complete sentence diagrams of the entire NT by Randy Leedy which are quite well done). If you use such tools as only a glorified interlinear and analytical, you're missing much of the power they offer.

There are a few other programs that have loyal followers, some of which are much less expensive or free. I cannot comment on these since I've not used them. I have not heard that there are other programs which rival the "big 3" for technical study, however.