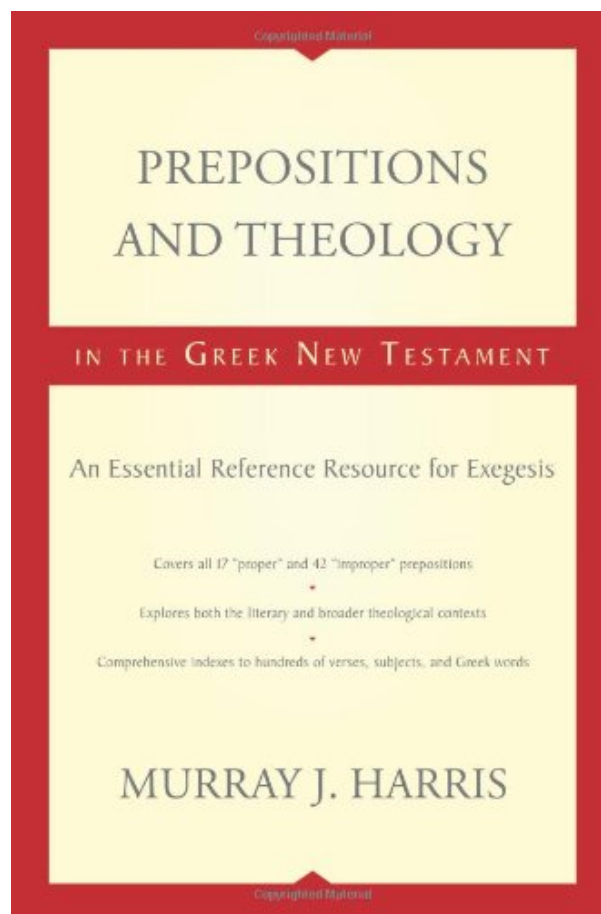


PREPOSITIONS AND THEOLOGY IN THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT: AN ESSENTIAL REFERENCE RESOURCE FOR EXEGESIS BY MURRAY HARRIS



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PREPOSITIONS AND THEOLOGY

IN THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

An Essential Reference Resource for Exegesis

Covers all 17 "proper" and 42 "improper" prepositions

•

Explores both the literary and broader theological contexts

•

Comprehensive indexes to hundreds of verses, subjects, and Greek words

MURRAY J. HARRIS

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Murray J. Harris is professor of New Testament Exegesis and Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. Previously he was Warden of Tyndale House, a biblical research library in Cambridge, England. He presently resides in New Zealand.

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Prepositions are important in the exegesis of the Greek New Testament, but they are at the same time very slippery words because they can have so many nuances. While *Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament* rejects the idea of a “theology of the prepositions,” it is a study of the numerous places in the Greek New Testament where prepositions contribute to the theological meaning of the text.

Offered in the hope that it might encourage close study of the Greek text of the New Testament, its many features include the following:

- Coverage of all 17 “proper” and 42 “improper” prepositions
 - Explores both literary and broader theological contexts
 - Greek font?not transliteration?used throughout
 - Comprehensive indexes to hundreds of verses, subjects, and Greek words
 - Discussion of key repeated phrases that use a particular preposition
-
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About the Author

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Most helpful customer reviews

19 of 20 people found the following review helpful.
Uncovering the Theology behind the Prepositions
By Dr Conrade Yap

This reference work is not about prepositions or about theology. It is about how the use of prepositions has contributed to the theological framework at various locations in the Greek New Testament. While it covers all 17 "proper" and 42 "improper" NT prepositions, the key emphasis in this book is about the theological significance the prepositions are presenting. Harris makes sure that the theological and literary contexts are addressed, together with the linguistic exercises needed to clarify the texts. While one needs to learn the "Big Four" of Greek grammar, namely, the aorist, the genitive case, the article, and the prepositions, the author feels that in order to "master" an in-depth knowledge of the Greek, one needs to master the prepositional system. In short, a preposition is a small word that ties relationships among words. Where it is placed, before or after the word makes a world of difference. What makes this study refreshing is the theological significance revealed after doing all the heavy lifting of word by word exegesis.

Murray takes special care to differentiate his book from the BDAG or the traditional textbooks on Greek grammar which focuses on the grammar. He gives a fascinating overview of the development of the Greek language.

Ancient Greek (as in the days of Homer)

Classical Greek from 450-330 BC;

Hellenistic/Koine Greek from 330BC to 330AD (also known as biblical Greek);

Medieval/Byzantine Greek from AD330 to 1453;

Modern Greek (AD1453 to present).

Then he dives into the structures and meanings of prepositions. Using a cube, the 17 "proper" prepositions:

- moving into (through, into, toward)
- Moving out of (away from, out of)
- On top (around, above, upon)
- Outside (with, in front of, opposite, beside)
- Inside (in)
- Under
- Up, Down.

When exegeting the grammar, care needs to be taken for the meaning of the preposition itself, the significance of the case used with the preposition, the context, and any irregular usage. Even as Murray highlights the many nuances and the details of each type of preposition, he cautions readers from becoming too eager in analyzing the details. He points out five dangers; first, the tendency to define each distinction too rigidly; second, failing to understand the style of the writer; third, missing the meaning for the style; four, missing out double meanings; and five, neglect of significant prepositions.

He then provides a chapter by chapter description of all the prepositions in the Greek NT, complete with examples and scriptural references. What is really helpful is the conscious effort of Murray to explicitly bring out the significance of each preposition. In some ways, the book reads like a concise commentary for the biblical texts chosen to highlight each preposition. For instance, in the exegesis of Hebrews 12:2, the grammar is an effective argument against any interpretation that Jesus died on the cross for the sake of receiving a heavenly reward. Rather, it is a conscious choice of willingly enduring the suffering on earth, instead of the heavenly joy. The former interpretation points to Jesus having a purpose of getting rewarded. The latter instead suggests to Jesus' love that overcomes all manner of personal gain or reward. It is a willing giving up of self-privilege or advantage that is the key meaning. Page after page, there are meanings and theological underpinnings that not only brings out profound insights of the Greek writers, it makes the study of Greek very interesting. Through examples, illustrations, comparison with other pericopes of the New Testament, this reference book is a big boon for the Christian world. I highly recommend this book for

students of Greek, as well as anyone who needs to exegete the Greek texts on a regular basis. I wish I had this text when I was studying Greek.

Rating: 5 stars of 5.

conrade

This book is provided to me free by Zondervan and NetGalley without any obligation for a positive review. All opinions offered above are mine unless otherwise stated or implied.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

No Serious Greek Scholar Can Neglect the Help This Book Provides

By Dr. Robert J. Vajko

Here is a very helpful reference resource for doing exegesis in relation to prepositions in the Greek New Testament. Harris is honing in on the different meanings and usages of Greek prepositions in order to grasp the meaning of the original text in the light of the original text's prepositions. After an introduction in chapter one and an explanation of what he calls "the distinctive features of prepositional usage in New Testament Greek," he devotes a chapter (3) to five dangers of drawing out the meaning (the true purpose of exegesis) on the basis of prepositional usage alone.

The remainder of the book dedicates itself to 17 "proper" and 42 "improper" prepositions. The value of this work is found in the examples drawn from the Greek text. Also the index of biblical references permits looking up any given preposition when doing exegesis. For example, I found his analysis of the uses of anti and huper to be solid and balanced. He clearly points out that anti has "substitutionary significance" (54) in Mark 10:45 and references three major scholarly articles from other works. His analysis of huper comes up with a representative and substitutionary meaning in 2 Cor 5:14 and Gal 3:13. Some scholars may question the idea of a dual meaning but they will need to wrestle with Harris's analysis.

No serious Greek scholar should or could work without taking into account the help found in this reference aid to serious exegesis. Harris has a reputation for being a thorough exegete.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

A most enlightening reading on biblical Greek prepositions

By Heman Wong

I would pay my tribute to the author for writing this book. From reading a few of his discussed exegesis, I was led into prayer.

The title is unique and the book makes exclusive discussions on prepositions of biblical Greek. The book adopts a pretty neat approach in treating the prepositions, covering 17 proper and 42 improper prepositions. Each proper preposition is covered by one chapter to discuss and illustrate its meaning and usage. Where the meaning and usage of a Greek preposition is confusing due to its translation into English, it is discussed and compared with the related Greek preposition. That is most useful! Take for example, the use of "ek" along with "eis" is discussed and illustrated with the well debated Roman 1:16 on pages 107-108. The ambiguity of the meaning of "eis" is discussed in pages 101-102. A comparison on "eis" in relation to "en" is given under pages 84-88. Discussion on the ranges of meaning of "en Christo" as used by Paul is given in pages 122-128. Each of these discussions has helped to reveal the whole range of meanings in the used verse, helping the reader to think more deeply and search for the range of meanings.

In some of the chapters, notable instances of particular usage of a particular preposition were discussed and argued in details to cross examine variant translations of a quoted verse or verses. That is most enlightening! On the other hand, two important constructions using "epi" was discussed using Roman 5:12 and 2

Corinthian 5:4. The first cannot be missed. Many of these passages were great lessons on exegesis.

The book runs the risk of being criticized to be too insightful. See for example its discussion on 1 Peter 2:24a in page 144 under the chapter on "epi". The author preferred to translate the verse as "He himself, in his own body, carried our sins up on to the cross.". Like each of the other discussed passages, he has based his arguments with careful explanation and support both grammatically and from the context.

Exegesis often rest on or end with debate on "the genitive case", "article" and "preposition". This book has a lot to offer on preposition.

See all 15 customer reviews...

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