

Notes on the Koine readings for 5 OCT 08

J 1:27-30

- ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος.
 - Greek prefers to use the article and participle rather than a relative clause. Thus, this phrase means “the one who is coming after me”, preferable to the non-idiomatic “the after me coming (one)”. Note below (29) the phrase ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου, translated as “who takes away the sins of the world.” Literally, we have the article ὁ and the participle αἴρων together (“the taking away (one)”. Note that the Latin, like English, uses the relative clause: *qui tollit peccata mundi*.
 - the stem of this durative participle αἴρων is αἴρ. (The aorist stem, which is also the root (hence this is a root aorist) is ἄρ.) The iota makes the root into a durative stem.
 - The verb αἴρειν literally means “lift up” or “pull up” as in pull up a plant, that is, extirpate. Hence it can mean destroy. In a military context referring to an army, it can mean “break camp” (as in “pull up” stakes.)
 - adverbs or adverbial phrases of location (before, after, in front of, behind, on the other side of, etc.) typically take the genitive case in Greek, as here: ὀπίσω μου “behind me”. This is probably a genitive of proximity (what I sometimes fancifully call ‘the genitive of edge’).
- (29) τὸν Ἰησοῦν. Greek often uses the article with personal names (like German, for instance).
- (30) ὃς ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν.
 - ἔμπροσθέν μου means literally “in front of me” or “ahead of me”.
 - γέγονεν is a 3rd singular present perfective: “has gotten (to be)”, not “did get” or “is getting”.
 - The reduplication γέ is a sign of the perfective as is the o-grade of the root (γον)
 - the durative stem is the zero-grade: γν
 - the aorist stem is the e-grade: γεν
 - this ablaut series is one of the ways that Greek may differentiate among the aspects. Not all Greek verb, of course, show this variation.
 - πρῶτός μου

- *πρῶτος* means “first” literally, but it also may be used to mean “first” in the sense of “first in authority” or “in power”. When it means that, it governs the genitive case. We use the preposition “over” in English: e.g., “to be over other people” is to be in charge of them.

Mt 8:5-10

- (5) *παρακαλῶν* means “calling (*καλ*) to one’s side (*παρα*)”, that is “summoning”.
- *ὁ παῖς μου*.
 - “My servant”. *παῖς* may mean “child” or “son”, but it is also slang for “servant” or “slave”. The parallel passage in Luke (7:1-9) makes it clear that servant is meant, as Luke uses both *δοῦλος* (2) and *παῖς* (7).
 - In classical Greek *δοῦλος* meant “slave” but its use was generalized in Koine.
- *Ἐγὼ ἐλθὼν θεραπεύσω αὐτόν*.
 - Note that classical Greek prefers subordinating one of two predicates in a sentence that has two predicates while English definitely prefers (idiomatically) coordinating them. Thus, the Greek expression here means literally “I (after) coming shall tend to him”, whereas idiomatic English is “I shall come and tend him”.
 - Note too that the aorist participle is used here (*ἐλθὼν*) as the aorist aspect of the participle shows priority of action relative to the main verb: *θεραπεύσω*. The durative participle (*ἐρχόμενος*) would be incorrect here, as that would make the sentence mean “I shall tend to him while I’m on the way”. The durative participle shows simultaneity of action relative to the main verb. Rather, clearly what was intended was “First I’ll come; then I’ll tend.”
 - *θεραπεύσω*.
 - some translations give “heal” for this verb. This is incorrect. *θεραπεύειν* means to “tend”. There is a difference between a physician treating your illness and curing your illness.
 - the proper word for “heal” is *ἰάομαι*. Indeed it shows up in verses 8: *ἰαθήσεται*: “he will be healed”.
 - *ἰαθήσεται* is a future passive form. The form may be parsed as follows:
 - *ια*, root (carries the core meaning of “heal”)

- θή shows passive (this formation was borrowed from the aorist passive)
- σ is the sign of the future
- ε is the theme vowel
- ται is the 3rd singular primary medio-passive ending (appropriate as the future was considered a primary tense.)
- On the future passive see Mounce 24.13-19.