STUDY PACK 10

BIBLE GRAMMAR

"... The true meaning of Scripture is the natural and obvious meaning by which we ought resolutely to abide."   ~~ John Calvin ~~

I.   **GRAMMAR REFERS TO THE HUMAN RULES FOR THE USE OF WORDS AND THE STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS**

Grammar deals with the form of words and the relationship between words.

A   Each language has its own rules of grammar.

B.   In English and Hebrew the rules of grammar are built around _____.

C.   In Greek the rules of grammar are built around _____.

D.   In some languages words can have more than one proper meaning. These are referred to as _____ languages.

E.   Hebrew, Greek and English are polysemic languages.

F.   In polysemic languages _____ determines the proper word definition.

II   **IN THE BIBLE GOD DOES NOT ALWAYS FOLLOW THE RULES OF HUMAN GRAMMAR**

A   God is no more bound by the rules of grammar than He is in the rules of nature.

B.   God often uses impersonal pronouns to refer to persons.

Examples:

Romans 8:16
John 4:21-22
Luke 1:34-35
Proverbs 18:22
Revelation 5:6
Genesis 3:15

C.   The book of Revelation is well known for routinely violating the rules of Greek grammar.

D.   The epistles of Paul are full of grammatical errors!

Martyn Lloyd Jones comments on the grammar of Paul:

> "Now, the Apostle was very guilty of that - unfinished sentences! Or if he does not actually leave them unfinished, he will throw in a tremendous digression, and then will suddenly remember, and back he will come and finish his sentence. An appallingly bad style, you say? I thank God for it."

III. VERB TENSES

A. English has three verb tenses: past, present, and future.

B. Greek adds a fourth tense - aorist!

Aorist is _____ - it is _____.

C. God often mixes the tenses in prophetic sections - He is not bound by time.

IV. GRAMMAR AND THE TRINITY

God sometimes uses singular words to refer to Himself but sometimes He uses plural words.

Examples:

Gen. 3:15
Deut. 6:4; Jn. 10:34-36
Ps. 136:1-3
Dan. 3:25

V. PRONOUNS

A pronoun substitutes for a noun. In English, it usually refers to the closest noun. That is not true in Greek where word endings are more important than word order. The New Testament was originally given in Greek and translated into English. In the English Bible, sometimes pronouns do not refer to the nearest noun because of this.

Examples:

Luke 11:37
Ephesians 1:3-11
II Corinthians 5:14

VI SOME GUIDELINES FOR CONSIDERING GRAMMAR IN HERMENEUTICS

A. Identify the key word of a passage and label it grammatically.

B. Study the relation of the word to others around it.

C.   Note the possible meanings it might give the context.

D.   Apply the other principles of hermeneutics.

VII.   GRAMMATICAL INTERPRETATION

"When we speak of interpreting the Bible grammatically, we are referring to the process of seeking to determine its meaning by ascertaining four things: (a.) the meaning of words (lexicology), (b.) the form of words (morphology), (c.) the function of words (parts of speech), and (d.) the relationships of words (syntax)."

~~ Roy Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation, p. 100* ~~