An Introduction to the Bauer/Danker
Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

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"It is a mistake to shun the lexicon as a graveyard haunted by columns of semantic ghosts or simply fall back on it as on a codebook identifying words that did not appear in first-year Greek vocabulary lists."[1]

Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* Revised and edited by Frederick W. Danker. 3d ed. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2000. lxxxix + 1108 pgs. Hardcover. $85.00. ISBN 0-226-03933-1. Reviewed by Rodney J. Decker, Th.D., Associate Professor of New Testament, Baptist Bible Seminary, Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania.[2]

Long awaited, the recent release of the third English edition of Bauer's lexicon—*the* standard in New Testament lexicography—marks a significant achievement in biblical scholarship. Everyone who is serious about grappling with the text of the Greek testament owes a great debt to Frederick Danker and to the University of Chicago Press. Originally due in the mid-90s, many of us have fretted over innumerable delays, but the wait has been worth it.

The history of BDAG (as the new edition is to be known) may be traced to Preuschen's *Vollständiges griechisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testament* which appeared in 1910—the first lexicon to be published after the discovery and study of the papyri. This work was revised several times by Walter Bauer as *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur.* The fourth German edition (1949–52) was the basis of the first English edition

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* Please note that this is still a draft edition. As time allows this will be expanded and revised. Future editions of this available on my faculty web site: <http://faculty.bbc.edu/rdecker/rd_rsrc.htm>. As of this 2d ed. you will also note that the document is beginning the long trek to a Unicode format. As a result, two different Greek fonts are used. Most of the original material is still in the Galilee font, but the more recent is in the new Unicode font, Gentium. Eventually it will all become Unicode. But not in this year's release.

[1] Frederick W. Danker, *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study,* 3d ed. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1970), 133.

[2] The review which forms the first part of this article was published in the *Journal of Ministry and Theology (JOMAT)* 5.1 (Spring 2001): 121–23.

prepared by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (1957). A second English edition (in which Danker took the place of Arndt who had died in 1957) followed in 1978, based on Bauer's fifth edition (1957–58). The sixth edition of the *Wörterbuch* (following Bauer's death in 1960) was edited by the Alands (Kurt and Barbara) and Viktor Reichmann (1988). The third English edition builds on the preceding English editions, the sixth German edition, and Danker's own work.

The two most obvious and appreciated changes from previous editions are the inclusion of actual definitions of each Greek word (rather than simple English translation glosses) and the much improved typography. There is a considerable difference between how one might *translate* a Greek word into English and *defining* that word. The only other lexicon which has attempted to provide definitions is Louw and Nida's *Greek-English Lexicon of the NT Based on Semantic Domains.*[3] BDAG still includes translation glosses, but finally gives something equivalent to what readers would expect to find in a dictionary of their own mother tongue: definitions.

As to the typography, the user will quickly notice that the pages are much more legible. Although the main text is still set in 7 point Times Roman, the leading has been increased to 10 points; the main entry word is set in a larger (10 point), bold typeface; and a brighter paper has been used. All NT references are set in bold, which makes it much easier to locate specific instances of a word in the NT. Perhaps the most distinctive innovation in the typography is the use of bulleted numbers to outline the semantic divisions of each article. Top level divisions are numbered with solid bullets (e.g., ❶ ❷ ❸) and second level categories with hollow bullets (e.g., ① ② ③).[4] This greatly facilitates tracing the structure of BDAG's entry and the semantic range of each word.

Other changes include the very large increase in non-NT citations (an additional 15,000 according to the publisher) and a major reworking of the abbreviation lists in the front matter.

The inevitable question that must arise upon the publication of such a book is, "Should I buy it?" If you are a student of the Greek NT and have not yet purchased a standard lexicon, the answer is an unqualified, emphatic *Yes.* You will never accomplish any serious exegesis if you remain forever with only a beginner's lexicon (as Newman's *Dictionary*[5] must be judged; it has other limitations as well). There is no other equivalent

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[3] 2 vols., 2d ed., New York: United Bible Societies, 1989.
[4] Technically these hollow bullets use letters, not numbers, but I do not have a font with such characters.
[5] Barclay M. Newman, Jr., *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* (London: United Bible Societies, 1971).

tool. Louw and Nida's *Lexicon* has a different focus altogether. Abbott-Smith is much more limited (though handy enough to carry on vacation). Thayer ought not even be considered since his work is both inaccurate and seriously out of date (it is "pre-papyri"). The only other major lexicon is Liddell and Scott,[6] but that work focuses primarily on classical Greek even though the LXX and NT are included. So buy BDAG (sell your car if necessary!) and learn to use it. You will not regret your purchase.

Another easy recommendation can be made for those who are either teaching Greek or who are doing graduate work in NT (or theology). In either case you simply must buy the new edition. As a teacher, all your students will be using BDAG in just a few years, and you will have to have the tool that they are using. For graduate students, only the most recent research is adequate, particularly when you reach the dissertation stage. (You can always "retire" the older edition to a handy place by your favorite reading chair at home—which is where my old BAG has been for a number of years.)

But what if you already have the first or second edition of Bauer's lexicon (BAG or BAGD)? Here advice is more difficult. If all you have is one of the earlier editions and your eyes are not as keen as they once were, then the much improved legibility of the new BDAG may be worth your investment, especially if you do not also own Louw and Nida's *Lexicon,* for then you would gain the added definitions as well. If you own an earlier edition *and* you also have Louw and Nida, then the choice becomes more difficult. You might decide to be content with these two tools—and that would be a viable decision *if* you regularly use both these tools together. More commonly Louw and Nida sits on the shelf untouched, and that is not good. It does take longer to consult two reference tools than one—and Louw and Nida is more clumsy to use than Bauer since one must first find the word in the index volume and then trace its multiple occurrences in the main volume. The gain in using the new BDAG might well expedite your study and even prompt you to pull down Louw and Nida to compare definitions.[7]

Historical Background

So that you appreciate better the new edition of Bauer's lexicon, let me provide a bit of historical background. The first lexicon of the Greek NT was published in 1522. It was only 75 pages long and consisted of a glossary list of the words in the NT with a Latin equivalent.

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[6] Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon,* rev. H. Jones, with a supplement by P. Glare, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

[7] The longer that I use BDAG, the more impressed I am with the wisdom of buying this new edition, even if one already has and uses BAGD and Louw and Nida. I am seriously contemplating buying a second copy so that I don't have to haul it back and forth from my study to home—which I've been doing even though I have my original copy of BAG at home by my chair.

In the Middle Ages Greek was little known, although intellectual life was much influenced by Greek writers. The Greek philosophers, mathematicians, and astronomers were expounded at the universities, but they were read in Latin translation, not in Greek. The Council of Vienne in 1311 recommended the setting up of chairs for the study of the Greek language so that a better understanding of holy scripture might be attained, but theological questions were discussed in terms of the Vulgate, not the Greek text. Since the NT was not known in Greek, no Greek dictionary of the NT was needed.[8]

Other early lexicons were published by Pasor in 1619 and by Lucius in 1640. All of these were Greek-Latin dictionaries. So far as I know, the first lexicon that provided English translations was the work of Edward Leigh, published in 1639. Better known of the early Greek-English works was the lexicon by Parkhurst in 1769. The standard Greek-English lexicon of the late 19th C. and for more than half of the 20th C. was Thayer. This influential lexicon traces its origins to Wilke's Greek-Latin lexicon of 1839, as revised by Grimm in 1868. At the time this was considered to be a major accomplishment, "by far the best Lexicon of the NT extant."[9] In a review published in 1878, Professor Schürer declared that "it is not only unquestionably the best among existing NT Lexicons, but…, apart from all comparisons, it is a work of the highest intrinsic merit…. It ought to be regarded by every student as one of the first and most necessary requisites for the study of the NT, and consequently for the study of Theology in general."[10] Thayer's own work of editing and translating Grimm-Wilke into English, although described modestly in his introduction, was significant and added substantially to the quality of the English edition.

As valuable as it was in its day, no such work is ever the final word. From our perspective, 115 years later, it is obvious that Thayer's work contained some serious flaws. All such efforts—the 3d edition of BDAG included—reflect the state of the discipline at the time as well as the theological perspective of the author. In the 19th C. it was frequently assumed that the Greek of the NT was not classical Greek, but rather a special dialect of Greek created by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of accurately conveying divine revelation: "Holy Spirit Greek" as it was sometimes called. A classic statement of this position can be found in Rothe's *Dogmatic* (1863):

We may appropriately speak of a language of the Holy Ghost. For in the Bible it is evident that the Holy Spirit has been at work, moulding for itself a distinctly religious mode of expression out of the language of the country which it has chosen as its sphere, and transforming the linguistic elements which it found

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[8] G. Friedrich, "Pre-History of the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament," transl. G. Bromiley, *TDNT* 10:613–61 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 10:613.

[9] Thayer, *Lexicon*, Preface, v.

[10] *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1/5/1878, as cited by Thayer, *Lexicon*, Preface, v—vi.

ready to hand, and even conceptions already existing, into a shape and form appropriate to itself and all its own."[11]

Thayer accepted the same view of the NT's Greek, listing in an appendix about 300 "biblical" words that either did not occur outside the NT or which were used in the NT with meanings unique to Scripture.[12] What Thayer did not know, indeed, could not have known at the time, is that almost all of these 300 words *were* used in Greek contemporary with the NT. The list of such words is now, I believe, about a dozen—and it is likely that many (perhaps all) of them will sooner or later be found in extra-NT texts as well.[13]

What has made the difference? In one word, "papyri."

> The situation took a decided change when, in the 1890s, there began to appear in great abundance those volumes which make available to the learned world the Greek papyri found in Egypt. As a result, interest was awakened, too, in ostraca ... and inscriptions. In all of them we have witnesses of the speech of daily life, especially in its colloquial form, in so far as they avoid the influence of custom, formula, and school—and infinitely many do just that! Here, at length, was discovered the proper background for a truly scientific view of the language of the oldest Christian literature. The honor of having been discoverer and pathfinder in this field belongs to Adolf Deissmann, who, beginning in 1895, demonstrated to us more and more clearly ... that our literature on the whole represents the late Greek colloquial language, which, to be sure, some authors used with more literary polish, others with less.[14]

Although for the past 100 years biblical scholars have been able to employ the evidence of the papyri, Thayer published just before this flood of information. It is unfortunate that his extensive efforts became obsolete so quickly.

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[11] Cremer, *Lexicon*, Preface, iv.

[12] This was not the only explanation proposed to explain the seemingly unique nature of NT Greek. Others argued that its uniqueness was due to its Hebraic background; others—the "purists"—attempted to demonstrate that all the grammar of the NT could be illustrated from the classics. For a helpful study of the subject, including these historical developments, see Porter, *Language of the NT: Classic Essays* (Sheffield, 1991); Wallace, *Greek Grammar* (Zondervan, 1996), 12–30; and Walter Bauer's Introduction to his lexicon, printed as pp. xiii–xxix of BDAG.

[13] This was Bauer's contention; see BDAG, xx. In this regard, see also John A. L. Lee and G. H. R. Horsley, "A Lexicon of the NT with Documentary Parallels: Some Interim Entries, 1," *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 10 (1997): 55–84, and *idem*., "A Lexicon of the NT with Documentary Parallels: Some Interim Entries, 2," 11 (1998): 57–84. (Part 2 at: <http://www.bsw.org/?I=72111&a=Art04.html>.) Lee and Horsley are working on a new koine Greek lexicon of non-NT materials that illustrated the vocabulary of the NT; this will replace M&M.

[14] Bauer, "Introduction," BDAG, xiv.

Danker also criticizes Thayer for his diachronic orientation: "Thayer's adoption of comparative philological methodology, with stress on etymology, contrasts with developments at the turn of the century, and even the publication of a corrected edition in 1889 could not disperse the pall of obsolescence that had settled on Thayer's work even before its publication."[15] This is perhaps slightly overstated in that Thayer's method, defective as it is, was the reigning method in most circles of biblical study well into the 20th C. as may be seen in Robertson's *Grammar* (4th ed., 1923) and (especially) in the massive *TWNT* edited by Kittel.[16] Thayer appears to have been sensitive to the changing currents in regard to these methodological issues, noting that "on points of etymology the statements of Professor Grimm have been allowed to stand, although, in form at least, they often fail to accord with modern philological methods." Yet he goes on to discuss his own use of "the meaning of radical [i.e., root] words," derivatives, etymology, etc., all the while he tips his hat in the synchronic direction: "A student often wants to know not so much the inherent meaning of a word as the particular sense it bears in a given context or discussion."[17] Thayer was living in a transitional age methodologically. This resulted in his work having a much shorter useful life than those which began life but a short time later (as seen particularly in the Preusen/Bauer lexical line).

In addition to Thayer's inadequate, pre-papyri knowledge of the language of the NT and his diachronic methodology, his lexicon also suffers from his theological perspective. His lexicon, he tells us, is explicitly theological in many entries, giving "all the materials needed for a complete exposition of the biblical content" of key words. This is not only methodologically deficient (theology cannot be done on the basis of isolated words, though it requires no less than a study of the vocabulary), but gives scope for Thayer's own theology to come to the fore. Although he claims that he represents the consensus of theological thought except for "the comparatively few points respecting which doctrinal opinions still differ," Thayer was an unitarian, and this cannot but help having an impact on his work in some areas.[18] A careful reading of his entry on υἱός, e.g., will evidence his Christology; his entry on θεός in relation to Jesus in non-committal.

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[15] Danker, *A Century of Greco-Roman Philology,* SBL, Biblical Scholarship in North America series (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 47.

[16] A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research,* 4th ed. (Nashville: Broadman, 1923); *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament,* ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, 10 vols. (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933–79), ET, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* transl. and ed. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76).
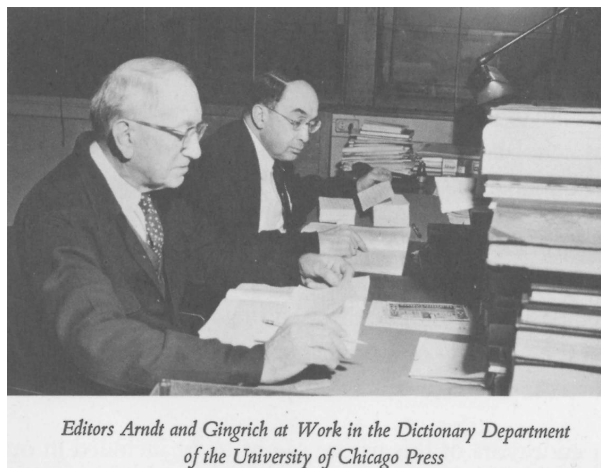
[17] Thayer, *Lexicon,* "Preface," vii.

[18] This is certainly not unique to Thayer. *All* of us have theological preconceptions that color our thinking and our writing. The criticism here is not that Thayer had them, but that the nature of them was inimical to orthodoxy.

Following the discovery, study and publication of the papyri, the first lexicon to be published was the Greek-German work by Preuschen (1910), though he did not make significant use of this new material. It was, however, the beginning of what we know today as BDAG. When Preuschen died in 1920, Walter Bauer (1877–1960) was charged with the revision of this lexicon. The second edition of Preuschen (edited by Bauer) was published in 1928 and widely acclaimed as the best NT lexicon then available. A third edition was published in 1937 with Bauer's name alone on the title page. Bauer continued to revise and expand this lexicon with a fourth edition in 1949–52. This was a major revision and has prompted not a few expressions of awe.[19]

WALTER BAUER
(1877–1960)
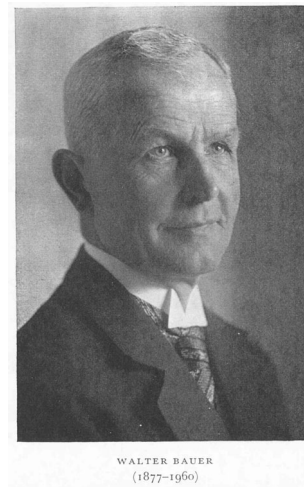
It was this 4th German edition that was translated into English, revised, and expanded by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich in 1957 (BAG). This substantial project was financed in part by the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, leaving all NT students in their debt.

Editors Arndt and Gingrich at Work in the Dictionary Department
of the University of Chicago Press

Bauer continued his work on the lexicon, published (as was the fourth edition) in fascicles 1957–58. This edition contained so much new material that a revision of the English translation was deemed necessary. When Arndt died (just one month after the first English edition was published), one of his former students, F. William Danker, was asked to work with Gingrich to prepare the second English edition. This was subsequently published in 1979 (BAGD). It was not just a translation of the German

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[19] See the lengthy quote from Hans von Campenhausen, *TLZ* 75 (1950): 349, cited by Danker in the Foreword to BDAG (vi).

edition, but contained a significant quantity of new material, including additional bibliographical entries, new material from papyri,[20] Qumran, etc.

Danker

If you learn nothing else from this potted history, you should be impressed that such work is never finished. "Any lexicographic endeavor worth its name must evolve in a context of new discoveries and constantly changing theoretical structures."[21] Work continued on the German lexicon following Bauer's death in 1960, a 6th edition being published in 1988 by Kurt & Barbara Aland and Victor Reichmann (BAAR). Since Gingrich died in 1993, the work on the preparation of the new 3d English edition has been carried out by Danker. As with most such projects of such a and complex nature, there have been seemingly interminable delays. The 3d edition technical was originally anticipated in the mid-late 1990s. Each fall anticipation rose that BDAG would be released at the annual SBL meeting in November of that year—but this anticipation proved to be only speculation. Even when it appeared in the University of Chicago Press's catalog with an official ISBN in the fall of 1999, hopes were once again unfulfilled, though promises of "this winter" were given. These soon became "this spring," followed by "this summer," and "in time for the fall semester." All to no avail. But November 2000 finally saw the official publication of the 3d English edition of Bauer. Display copies arrived in Nashville (the site of the 2000 annual meeting) from the printer on November 17, the night before the convention began. (It is mildly surprising that University of Chicago Press did not install a salad bar type "drip shield" over the display copies!) Copies actually shipped to customers in December of that year.

Reading/Deciphering BDAG

With that historical introduction to BDAG, turn now with me to your copy and let me take you on a tour of what I hope will become your very good friend—a tool that you will use weekly (if not daily) for the rest of your ministry (or until a better edition is available).

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[20] Study of the papyri still continues; the publication of the Bodmer papyri, 1959–64, was especially important for the 2d ed. of Bauer.

[21] BDAG, Foreword, vii. See also the comments of G. Friedrich in his "Pre-History of the TDNT," in TDNT, 10:660: "Lexicography ... is never at its goal but always on the way to new insights." Friedrich also cites H. Tiktin to the effect that "All human work is imperfect. Dictionaries are incontestably among the most imperfect human products. Those who are driven by calling or circumstances to seek help in lexical works should realize how inadequate is that which even the best and most comprehensive of dictionaries can offer the user" (Wörterbücher der Zunkunft," *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift,* 2 [1910]: 243f).

Title: note subtitle: "… and Other Early Christian Literature." This is not just a NT lexicon; it covers a broad range of koine Greek literature written by Christians in the first two centuries as well. The corpus covered is listed in abbreviation list 1. Although coverage of these other writings is extensive, it is not exhaustive.

Front Matter
Foreword, v–xi (Danker)
Introduction, xiii–xxix (Bauer)

Abbreviations: see Foreword, x (paragraph 2, *ll.* 13ff)
Note: the basic NT text on which this lexicon is based is NA^{27}.

List:
1. The New Testament, the Apostolic Fathers, and Selected Apocrypha
* on entries = NT/canonical
Bibliographical references in this list indicate the standard critical eds. of each text that is cited.

2. The Old Testament and Intertestamental/Pseudepigraphical Literature
* on entries = LXX
Note that this section includes the apocrypha. Bibliographical references in this list indicate the standard critical eds. of each text that is cited.

3. Inscriptions

4. Papyri/Parchments and Ostraca

5. Writers and Writings of Antiquity
These are mostly classical Greek writers, though non-biblical koine & even some Byzantine Greek writers are also included. Note that dates for each writer are given at the right margin of the column.

6. Periodicals, Collections, Modern Authors and Literature: just that, modern bibliography
The reference to a "virgule" in header of this section is to the diagonal slash: /. See the first three entries for examples.

7. Sigla

Note especially the explanation of the + sign. Most of the others are textual sigla and will not be found very often.

8. Composite List of Abbreviations.
This is new in the 3d. ed. (there were only separate lists in the 2d. ed.; you had to look in every list if you didn't recognize the entry) and is a major improvement. Start here if you have no idea in what category an abbreviation belongs. List 8 also includes general abbreviations that are not included in lists 1–7 (e.g., abbr.., abs., abstr.). When an entry in list 8 does occur in lists 1–7, a cross-reference is given to direct you to the complete reference (entries in list 8 are abridged). You should check both the composite list and the individual lists, however, since frequently there is information in one that is not in the other.

And then follows 1,108 pages of small print, double-column pages that contain an enormous amount of very valuable information.

For a sample, let's read and decode the very first entry on p. 1. The main entry is given as: Α, α, τό. This is not a word per se, but the first letter of the Greek alphabet, given in both upper and lower case. The inclusion of the article τό tells us that when this letter is used as a word in the text, it is treated as a neuter gender word. The next item in the entry, "indecl." is an abbreviation found in list 8 on p. lxvii and means "indeclinable." In other words, this "word" never takes case endings and is always spelled "α." The next note in parentheses (s. ἄλφα) tells us to also *see* (s. is in list 8, p. lxxvi) the entry under the word ἄλφα (which you will find on p. 48).

The next portion of the entry is printed in bold face Roman type and gives the *definition* of the word. In this instance the entry Α, α, τό is defined as "**first letter of the Greek Alphabet**." The inclusion of an actual dictionary definition may not seem significant if this is your first exposure to a Greek lexicon, yet it is a startling change from almost all previous Greek lexicons in any language.[22] Traditionally lexicons have given only translation glasses—one word equivalents in the target language that suggest how the particular Greek word might be translated (see Danker's Foreword to BDAG, p. viii, first paragraph). BDAG does include suggested formal equivalents following the definition. These are given in bold italic type. In our sample entry, we are told that this word is translated as ***alpha.***

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[22] The only other lexicon that provides actual definitions is Louw and Nida's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains,* 2d ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989). It is possible that the *Diccionario Griego-Español* (ed. Adrados, et al; 1989ff) does the same, but I have not worked with that lexicon.

We are then told to *compare* (cp. = list 8, p. lxiii) SibOr 5, 15. If you are somewhat conversant with NT studies, you might guess that this refers to the Sibylline Oracles—and you would be correct. If not, you would turn first to abbreviation list 8 where you would find SibOr on p. lxxvi. It is listed as a reference to *Oracula Sibyllina* (Latin for Sibylline Oracles) which date from the second and third centuries A.D. We are also referred to list 5, which takes us to p. xlix. Here we find the full entry giving the bibliographical information of the published editions of the Sibylene Oracles that have been cited in BDAG—that edited by J. Geffcken in 1902 and by A. Kurfess in 1951. The "5, 15" gives the location/reference of the passage which Danker wants us to compare.

Returning to our sample entry we next read "hence as numeral α′ = 1." This tells us that the letter alpha functions in Greek not only as the first letter of the alphabet, but also as the equivalent of our English numeral 1. (Note that in this case it is written with a "prime sign" following: α′.) We are then told parenthetically that this α′ can be used either for the cardinal *one* (= εἰς) or the ordinal *first* (= πρῶτος). An example of α′ used (presumably! I haven't checked) as an ordinal may be found in TestSol. This will send us scurrying back to list 8 again. On p. lxxvii we learn that this refers to the Testament of Solomon, a writing dating somewhere from the first to the third century A.D. The reference to "List 2" directs us to the full entry on p. xxxiv where the 1922 edition of C. H. McCown is cited. Comparing the lexical entry with list 2 also enables us to note the example that BDAG cites is in "PVindobBosw at 18:34." List 2 includes reference to a specific papyrus manuscript of the Testament of Solomon, Papyrus Vindobonensis, edited by K. Preisdendonz. (What the "Bosw" means, I have no idea!) We are also told that α is often used in the sense of "first" in the papyri.

As we press on into this entry, following the parenthetical note and a colon, we learn that α′ is used to mean "first" (i.e., πρώτη) in the titles of letters, citing 1 Corinthians, 1 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 1 Peter, 1 John, and 1 Clement as examples. (The parenthetical note within this statement suggests alternate equivalents: πρωτέρα and πρότερον.) At the end of this sentence "ἐντολή Hm 1, title" informs us that it appears with the word ἐντολή (commandment) in (the Shepherd [i.e., pastor] of) Hermes, in the section titled Mandates (= Ἐντολή).[23] It is, in other words, not only used in titles of books, but also in headings of sections within a work. And we finally reach a period—the end of the first sentence in the entry.

The next few sentences discuss the symbolic use of the letter α. "As a symbolic letter Α signifies the beginning, Ω the end." Following this statement is a bibliographical

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[23] The second section of the Shepherd of Hermas consists of 12 sections titled Ἐντολὴ α′ through Ἐντολὴ ιβ′ (i.e., Mandates 1 through 12).

reference: "FBoll, Sphaera 1903, 469ff." This is a book by F. Boll titled *Sphaera* published in 1903; we are directed specifically to a discussion that begins on p. 469 and continues for several pages (ff). We can find Boll listed in abbreviation section 8 on p. lxi or on p. lii (section 6), but this particular book (*Sphaera*) is not listed. In the Boll entry that *is* given, note the equal sign after the bold face listing: " = FB.," This is the first (F) and last (B.) initial of the author's name. This will be helpful if we attempt to further identify the work cited. (In cases where BDAG does not give complete information on books, it is often because they are recognized reference works or well-known major studies—at least to specialists! Your recourse here is to turn to library catalogs and search by author or title or to do a web search. In this case a Google web search <www.google.com> for "Sphaera" and "Boll" will enable you to discover that Franz Boll published *Sphaera: Neuegriechische Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Sternbilder* [*Spheres: New Greek Texts and an Examination of the History of the Constellations*]. Although published in 1903, it was reprinted in 1967. (Boll died in 1924.) Our search this time has turned up a major work that most of you cannot read since it is written in German, but the same process will other times lead you to works in English or Spanish or French or Italian—some of which languages you *can* read.[24]

Returning to BDAG's entry on alpha, we are next told that "The two [letters, i.e., α and ω] came to designate the universe and every kind of diving and superhuman power." Two more bibliographical entries follow which discuss this statement. The first is listed as: "S. Rtzst., Poim. 256ff. Erlösungsmyst. 244." Turning first to abbreviation list 8, we find on p. lxxvi the entry " Rtzst." and are told that this refers to RReitzensten who appears in list 6. There is also a sub list here that gives "Poim" as "Poimandres." Note that the "S." is not an initial. BDAG does not use a period and space with names. Reitzensten's first initial is "R" not "S." The "S." is the abbreviation further down p. lxxvi and means "see." If we turn back to list 6, all that we add is that Reitzensten's book *Poimandres* was published in 1904. Since it is also in German, most of you will stop at that point. If you were more serious in your research, or simply were curious, you could pursue this further. I did so by checking the Luther Seminary library catalog on the web (they have one of the larger collections of German theological works). That catalog shows the full title as *Poimandres: Studien zuv griechisch-ägyptischen and frühchristlichen literature* [*Poimandres: Studies in Greek-Egyptian and Early Christian Literature*], Leipzig, 1904. Reprint: Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellchaft, 1966.

"Poimandres" (also spelled Poemandes or Poemander) means "Shepherd of men" (ποιμήν and ἄνδρες) and is the title of the most famous of the Hermetic literature

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[24] That most Americans ignore everything not written in English is unfortunate and a commentary on both our provincialism and the anti-intellectualism of our culture in general and our churches in particular.

(*Corpus Hermeticum,* or *Hermetica;* Poimandres is sometimes also used as the name for the entire Corpus rather than just the first document).[25]

Returning to BDAG, the second bibliographical entry is another work by Franz Boll, listed here as "Aus d. Offb. Joh. 1914, 26f." Turning to list 8, p. lxi, provides a slightly longer title ("Aus der Offenb. Johannis") and refers us to list 6, p. lii, where we are given the full title: Aus der Offenbarung Johannis. A search of the Luther Seminary catalog gives the complete bibliographical data: *Aus der Offenbarung Johannis: hellenistische Studien zum Weltbild der Apokalypse* [*The Revelation from John: Hellenistic Studies in the Worldview of the Apocalypse*]. Leipzig: B. G. Teubuer, 1914. Reprinted in the series: Studien zur Geschichte des antiken Weltbildes und der griechischen Wissenschaft, 1 (= vol. 1 of Studies in the History of Classical Worldviews and Greek Science), Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1967.

Next we are told that the earliest Christian usage of α and ω as symbolic letters occurs in the Sator-anagram of Pompeii which is discussed in "JDaniélou, Primitive Christian Symbols, tr. DAttwater, '64, 99–101." Checking a library catalog will tell you that the author's name is Jean Daniélou, the translator's ("tr.") name is Donald Attwater and that the publisher is Helicon Press in Baltimore.[26]

BDAG then cites the phrase ἐγώ εἰμί τò ἄλφα καὶ τò ὦ which occurs several times in Revelation. You will need to look at your Greek testament to understand the entry at this point. We are told the letters α and ω are explained as "beginning and end" in Rev. 1:8 v.l. The abbreviation is expanded in list 8, p. lxxviii, as "variae lectiones," Latin for variant readings. Your Greek text (either UBS[4] or NA[27]) has the ἄλφα ... ὦ phrase, but no

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[25]For more information on the Hermetic material, see the summary in F. B. Huey, Jr. and Bruce Corley, *A Student's Dictionary for Biblical and Theological Studies* (Zondervan, 1983), 94, or Richard Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1976), 76–77 and the references cited there. At greater length, see the article in *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ABD), s.v. Hermes Trismegistos and the bibliography there.

[26]The reference to the Sator-anagram identifies a mysterious inscription that dates to the first century. It consists of a word square as follows:

R O T A S
O P E R A
T E N E T
A R E P O
S A T O R

There is a brief bibliography available at <http://omega.cohums.ohio-state.edu/hyper-lists/classics-l/99-03-01/0635.html>. For a helpful summary, see Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity,* 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 553–54. Despite the assertion of BDAG that the Sator-anagram (aka, Rotas-Sator word square) is an early Christian anagram, this is unlikely. The square is more likely Jewish or perhaps Mithraic in origin. No one today knows what this means. It is almost certainly not a "Pater Noster" anagram as sometimes suggested. See Ferguson for details.

reference to "first and last." The textual apparatus, however, indicates an insertion following this phrase: ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος, which occurs in some texts. If this reading were original (it probably isn't), then John would be equating ἄλφα with ἀρχή (beginning). Even if this is not original, it still illustrates the same equation, but by a later copyist who inserted it in the text at this point (perhaps because he remembered this combination and assumed that the manuscript from which he was copying [the *exemplar*] had omitted it by mistake, whereas what he remembered occurred in Rev. 21:6 or 22:13 instead). Note that BDAG does not use bold face text for "1:18" at this point because that text has αλφα, not α–and the entry we are looking at is for the letter α, not the word ἄλφα. (If BDAG cited Rev. 1:8 v.l. under the article on ἄλφα , then it *would* be in bold face text.)

The next reference cited is Rev. 21:5 (look at it in your Greek testament) which also uses ἄλφα and ἀρχή in parallel. He next refers us (S. = see) to an article by O. Weinreich in ARW (the journal *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft,* see list 8, p. lxi), vol. 19 published in 1919, pp. 180f., which comments on the use of ἄλφα in Rev. 21:6 (perhaps also Rev. 1:8 v.l., but you would have to check the article to know for sure).

The entry continues with reference to a variant reading (v.l.) in Rev. 1:11 in which α is parallel, not with ἀρχή (beginning), but with τρῶτος (first): εγω ειμι το Α και το Ω, ο πρωτος και ο εσχατος.[27] In this case, the reference **1:11 v.l.** *is* bolded because the text there (in ctr. to 1:8) *does* use the letter α rather than the word ἄλφα. In Rev. **22:13, α** is paralleled with both ἄρχη and πρῶτος (see the text in your Testament).[28]

Another bibliographical reference occurs here: "(cp. Mal., P. 105, 812 [8])." Using the abbreviation lists you can decipher this as follows: The "cp." means "compare" (list 8, p. lxiii). "Mel." is found on list 8, p. lxx, as the abbreviation for Melito of Sardis who lived in the second century A.D. Checking list 5 to which we are referred enables us to identify the "P." as Melito's *Paschal Homily* (the 1966 edition by O. Perler and the 1979 edition by S. Hall are cited). The following characters (105, 812 [8]) identify the location of the passage in Melito that BDAG suggests we compare.

The next statement tells us that John's use of ἄλφα in parallel with πρῶτος and ἔσχατος can be found in Isaiah 44:6 and in "related rabbinic symbolism" Isaiah records the proclamation of YHWH that: אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן (I am the first and I am the last). This

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[27] This variant is not cited in the UBS[4] text; as given above it is from NA[27]—which does not include accents or breathing marks in such variants.

[28]It appears that there is a typographical error in BDAG at this point. Since Rev. 22:13 uses the word ἄλφα instead of the letter α, the reference should not have been bolded—or the earlier references 1:8 v.l. and 21:6 should have been set in bold face type.

appears in the LXX as Ἐγὼ πρῶτος καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ ταῦτα (I am first and I am after these things)–the Hebrew text is a closer parallel than the LXX, which might have been expected from BDAG's reference to rabbinic parallels.

The lexical entry concludes with several additional sources of information. First there is a cross reference to the article in BDAG on Ω (S. on Ω = see the article on Ω). We are also told to see three articles in other published sources:

FCabrol, Dict. d'Arch. I, 1, 1–25. This will not be found in list 8 under the author (Cabrol), but p. lxiv does tell us that Dict. d'Arch. appears in list 6 under "DACL." Thus we find on p. liii the entry "DACL = Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, ed. FCabrol, HLeclercq, I–XV 1903–53. A bit of sleuthing on the web tells us that this is a 15 vol. encyclopedia edited by Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq titled *Dictionary of Christian Archaeology and Liturgy*, published 1903–53 in Paris by Letouzey et Ane.

FDornseiff, D. Alphabet in Mystik u. Magic[2] 1925, 17f. This I cannot find anywhere in the abbreviations list in BDAG, but several library catalog searches on the web produced this hit at the Princeton Seminary Library: Franz Dornseiff, *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magic* [*The Alphabet in Mysticism and Magic*] (Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1975). This was originally published in part as the author's dissertation in 1916 under the title *Buchstabenmystik*, and the complete work in 1925 (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner).

R. Charles, HDB I 70. In list 8, p. lxvi we find a listing s.v. HDB to HastDB on list 6. Turning there we find on p. liv that this is the 4 vol. *Dictionary of the Bible* edited by J. Hastings between 1898 and 1904. (There is a reprint edition: New York: Scribner, 1924.)

There is only one additional piece of information in this entry. At the end of the article the abbreviation "TW" is given. Our now well-used list 8 tells us on p. lxxviii that TW stands for Theologisches Wöterbuch zum NT; tr. GBromiley, Theological Dictionary of the NT. This is the set best known in English simply as TDNT, or sometimes "Kittel." This closing annotation tells us that there is an entry for the same word in TDNT. All entries in BDAG close with this note if the word is listed in TDNT. (Occasionally a vol. number will be given if the entry is not under the same heading.)

Although they do not appear in our sample entry, there are several other abbreviations that regularly appear at the end of an entry. These flags tell the reader that the work referenced also lists this word. Since not all NT words appear in these other reference

works, the note in BDAG can save the user a lot of wasted time. Of these, the first will be of greatest use to students.

M-M = Moulton and Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (a lexicon of the papyri)

DELG = Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque: historie des mots*, 4 vols, 1968–80

Sv = H. Sieben, *Voces: Eine Bibliographie zu Wörten und Begriffen aus der Patristik*

So, what have we learned from this (perhaps, at times, tedious) exploration? If nothing else, you have learned first-hand how much information BDAG contains—and in such highly condensed form! Few people ever use BDAG to its fullest potential. Just looking for translation glosses barely scratches the surface of the information in BDAG. You have also learned the function and importance of the abbreviation lists. Remember that these lists are not bibliographies, and many entries will require you to turn to the library catalogs and the web for further information.

You should also have observed that there are numerous cross references to other scholarly literature in a variety of languages. In this entry citations were given to resources in German, French, and English. Although most seminary students will (unfortunately) not pursue many foreign language items, at least you know that there are English works included—and you will be reminded that not everything worth reading and studying has been written in English.

Using BDAG for Exegesis[29]

The following section will use 1 Cor. 2:6–8 to illustrate how BDAG may be used for exegetical purposes. It will help if you would take time to read this text before continuing with the article. A few notes have been provided to help you do that.

> ⁶Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου οὐδὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου τῶν καταργουμένων· ⁷ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ, τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην, ἣν προώρισεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸ

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[29]This section and the selection of the entry ἄρχων in 1 Cor. 2 is to be credited to a similar, though much briefer, illustration by Gordon Fee, *New Testament Exegesis*, 2d ed. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 104–09. Fee's material, of course, used the second edition of Bauer (BAGD).

τῶν αἰώνων εἰς δόξαν ἡμῶν· ⁸ἣν οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἔγνωκεν, εἰ γὰρ ἔγνωσαν, οὐκ ἂν τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης ἐσταύρωσαν.[30]

καταργουμένων, PPPMPG > καταργέω, cp. BAGD 417.2 with BDAG p. 525f ❸ for a definition. The meaning here is found in BDAG's category ❸: "to cause something to come to an end or to be no longer in existence." It may be glossed as: *abolish, wipe out, set aside.* BDAG gives a translation of this text as: "doomed to perish." [You will want to evaluate this classification in the process of your exegesis; I personally think that this text fits best under ❷ – and there are theological implications of this decision!]

ἀποκεκρυμμένην, RPPFSA > ἀποκρύπτω, I hide; προώρισεν, 3SAAI > προορίζω, I predestine; ἔγνωκεν 3SRAI > γινώσκω (reduplication with two consonants at front of stem uses vocalic reduplication; see Mounce, *BBG,* ¹223, ²228.); ἔγνωσαν, 3PAAI > γινώσκω; ἐσταυρωσαν, 3PAAI > σταυρόω

A major exegetical crux in this text relates to those identified here as ἄρχοντες, rulers. Regarding these rulers, we are told that:
- Paul's message is not that of the rulers of this age,
- The rulers are "coming to nothing,"
- They did not "know" the wisdom of God (it was a mystery and thus hidden), and
- If they had known (2d class condition), they would not have crucified Jesus.

Who are these rulers? There are 2 major options:
- Human rulers (Jewish and Roman)
- Spirit beings/demons

How do we decide? BDAG provides adequate information to reach a conclusion. Here's how.

Walk through the entry s.v. ἄρχων on p. 140, following the notes below as you go.

1. Main entry, ἄρχων, οντος, ὁ. There are five things you know just from the main entry: the nom. sg. form; the gen. sg. form; the stem can be determined from the gen. ending given (= *ἀρχοντ-); that it is a third declension noun (stem ends with a consonant); and the gender (masc., since the article is listed as ὁ).

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[30] Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. ⁷But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (*ESV*).

2. Parenthesis, (Aeschyl., Hdt.+). See the explanation of the + sign on p. lix (list 7). The list of items in parenthesis at the beginning of each entry is now a shorter list than ²BAGD since inscriptions, papyri, LXX, pseud., Philo, Josephus, etc. are *assumed* by the + sign, not spelled out. Checking the abbreviations Aeschyl and Hdt. on list. 5, pp. xli tells us that this word is found in Greek literature beginning in Aeschylus (V C. BC) and in Herodotus (also V C. BC). The + tells us that this word occurs regularly throughout the full range of Greek literature. This gives you some idea of the breadth of this word's usage. It is a common word in classical Greek from at least the 5th C. BC, continuing on into the koine.

3. Information regarding morphology, ἄρχων is actually the participle of ἄρχω used substantivally.

4. Definition: "one who is in a position of leadership, especially in a civic capacity." This is a general definition which will be further refined in the categories below.

5. Note the organization of the entry. There are two main categories, each subdivided. The bulleted categories are a *very helpful* innovation in ³BDAG. Previous editions have used more traditional typography. First level headings use a *solid* bulleted number: ❷; second level use hollow bulleted letters: ⓒ. Some entries extend the subdivisions further, using first Greek characters then Hebrew (e.g., ἀγάπη, p. 6, see ❶ > (a) > β > א ב ג [middle of 2d column], or ἅγιος, p. 10–11, see ❶ > (a) > β > א ב ג ד ה).

If you look at the various meanings given for ἄρχων, you will see that BDAG lists two: ❶ "one who has eminence in a ruling capacity" and ❷ more generally (= "gener.," see list 8, p. lxv) this word can also refer to "one who has administrative authority." This differs from ²BAGD which listed three categories instead of two; the third was a listing for evil spirits. The change in the third edition recognizes that this is not a different *meaning*, only a different referent. As a result, meaning #3 from ²BAGD is now a sub category of meaning ❶ (= ❶ⓒ). There have been many changes like this in BDAG as greater consistency in classification has been attempted.

For the first meaning, BDAG suggests *ruler, lord,* or *prince* as appropriate English glosses. The subdivisions list three classes of referents: (a) earthly figures, (b) Christ, and ⓒ transcendent figures. There are four NT passages which use ἄρχων to describe earthly rulers: Mt. 20:25 (οἱ ἄ. τῶν ἐθνῶν); Acts 4:26 (οἱ ἄ.), 7:27, 35. Both references in Acts refer to Moses and the word ἄρχων is used in parallel with δικαστής (judge). These are also both quotations from Exodus 2:14. In addition there are two citations from other early Christian literature: B 9:3 (the Letter of Barnabas, a 2d C. letter; see list 8, p. lxi and list

1, p. xxxii) and 1 Cl 4:10 (First Clement [late 1st C., though BDAG does not tell you this]: see list 8, p. lxii and list 1, p. xxxii; note that 1 Clement is alphabetized under 'c,' not '1'). The reference in Barnabas is similar to ["cp."] the use in Matt. 20:25, and may be an OT quotation or illusion (Is 1:10). You would have to compare these references to find out which it is. Likewise Acts 4:26 is a quotation from Ps. 2:2.

For the second subdivision ❶(b), references to Christ as ἄρχων, there is only one reference: Rev. 1:5. Here the Greek text is cited and translated. Note that this assumes the same definition and gloss as ❶(a).

The third subdivision includes those instances in which ἄρχων refers to "transcendent figures" as those who have eminence in a ruling capacity. It is used this way of evil spirits "whose hierarchies resembled human polit[ical] institutions." The evidence cited for this use is listed as "Kephal. I p. 50, 22; 24; 51, 25 al." What is this "Kephal."? A trip to list 8, p. lxix, tells us that this refers to Kephalaia as published in *Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin.* The date is "uncertain," but since we are referred to list 5, we know that this is a "writing of antiquity," not a secondary source. These are handwritten manuscripts (*Handschriften*) that are of Manichean origin.

Here you will have to do a bit of exploring on your own if you are not familiar with the term Manichean. You might remember reading this term in connection with Augustine–he was a disciple of Mani at the time he was converted to Christianity. Manicheanism was a non-Christian, dualistic religion that post-dates the NT. Founded by Mani (Persia, 3d C. AD), this religion is an amalgam of Zoroastrian dualism with some soteriological ideas resembling Christianity. Mani claimed to be the Paraclete promised by Jesus.[31]

You should remember two things in particular about this statement in BDAG: 1) no NT references are cited that illustrate this use, and 2) those that are must date sometime after the 3d C. AD (i.e., after the origin of Manicheanism).

The next statement tells us that the devil is referred to in the NT as the ruler of the demons (ἄ. τ. δαιμονίων) in Matt. 9:34; 12:24; Mark 3:22; and Luke 11:15. He is also described as the ruler of this world (ἄ. τοῦ κόσμου τούτου) in John 12:31; 14:30; and 16:11. There is a parenthetical note within this NT listing directing us to the entry on βεελζεβούλ which will give us additional information about the devil's relationship to the demons (a most interesting entry–you should read it!). We are also told in the same

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[31]If you did not recognize the Manichean reference in the bibliographical entry in BDAG, you would have to look for other references to the Kephalaia to determine the significance of this information.

parenthesis that "Porphyr[y]"[32] provides names for the rulers of the evil demons (τοὺς ἄρχοντας τ. πονηρῶν δαιμόνων): Sarapis and Hecate. List 8 tells us that Porphyry was a philosopher who lived in the 3d C. AD. The source of this information about Porphyry is given as "Eus., PE 4, 22, 15"). Another trip to list 8 reveals that this is Eusebius of Caesarea, a 4th C. AD writer of "various works." Following the cross reference to list 5 we discover that "PE" is his work *Praeparatio Evangelica.*

The entry continues by citing two early Christian writers who also use ἄρχων to describe the devil: Barnabas 18:2 calls him the ruler of the present age of lawlessness (ἄ. καιροῦ τοῦ νῦν τῆς ἀνοιμίας), and Ignatius calls him the ruler of this age (ὁ ἄ. τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) in his letters to the Ephesians (= IEph) 17:1 and 19:1, the Magnesians (= IMg) 1:2, to the Trallians (= ITr) 4:2, to the Romans (= IRo) 7:1, and to the Philadelphians (= IPhld) 6:2. Within this list there is a parenthetical reference to "Orig. , C. Cels. 8, 13, 13," which, according to our familiar friend, list 8, refers to Origen (technically, Origenes), *Contra Celsum,* in which he also uses the designation "the ruler of this world." Then follows another parenthetical note: "Cp. AscIs 1,3; 10, 19." This refers to two similar references in the Ascension of Isaiah, a pre-NT, Jewish pseudepigraphical work (per lists 8 and 2).

The next portion of this entry is a long note relating to "AcPlCor 2, 11." This turns out to be the NT apocryphal book, the Acts of Paul which purports to be the apostle's correspondence with the Corinthians. It is also known as (a.k.a.) Third Corinthians (list 8, p. lvii; see also list 1, p. xxxi). In the published edition of a papyrus manuscript (Bodmer Papyrus MS X [10]) there is an editor's textual note that suggests the insertion of the phrase ὁ γὰρ ἄρχων ἄδικος ὢν καὶ θεὸς [sic: θεός]. This is based on a Latin manuscript of the same work which reads "nam quia injustus princeps deus volens esse" (the prince of this world being unjust and desiring to be god). There is a "see" note ("s.") following this to "ASchlatter, D. Evglst. Joh. 1930, 271f." This is not included in the abbreviations (most commentaries cited in BDAG are not listed), but a quick library catalog search turns up: Adolf von Schlatter, *Der evangelist Johannes, wie er spricht, denkt und glaubt. Ein Kommentar zum vierten evangelien* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1948). Although the date is different, this is likely just a different edition of the same commentary on John's gospel.[33] Schlatter, a German scholar who deserves to be better known, discusses the use of ἄρχων in AcPlCor.

BDAG then tells us that "many [i.e., many scholars] would also class the ἄρχοντες τοῦ

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[32]The abbreviation given in list 8 is "Porph." Why it is entered here as "Porphyr" is unclear, especially since the full name is only one letter longer: Porphyry. It is probably a typographical or editing error. Since this is simply a matter of consistency, it does not affect the accuracy of the information.

[33] For those of you who aren't familiar with German, the "D." on the front of these titles is the article, *der, die,* or *das* (masc., fem., neut. forms, nom. sg.) = *the.*

αἰῶνος τούτου **1 Cor 2:6–8** in this category." Just the fact that it is worded this way should alert you to the fact that there is an exegetical dispute here. Does ἄρχων in 1 Cor. 2:6–8 refer to evil spirits? Many conclude that they are the focus of Paul's comments. The parenthetical note following gives representative citations from both sides of the issue. First those who agree with BDAG's classification that these are evil spirits: "so from Origen to H-DWendland ad loc." Origen you should recognize as the early church father (2d–3d C. AD). The second is a modern German commentator (the "ad loc." is your clue to a commentary: list 8, p. lix, tells you that ad loc. is short for *ad locum,* "to or at the place under consideration"; this is a common convention for referring to a commentary). A catalog search will tell you that this is probably Heinz Dietrich Wendland, *Die Briefe an der Korinther: übersetzt und erklärt* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968). Representing the opposing view (i.e., that ἄρχων does not refer to evil spirits in 1 Cor. 2:6–8 but rather human rulers), BDAG tells us that "for the possible classification under mng. 2 s. TLing, ET 68, '56/57, 26; WBoyd, ibid. 68, '57/58, 158." In expanded form, this says "for ... meaning 2 see the articles by T. Ling, *Expository Times* 68 (1956/57): 26; and W. T. P. Boyd, *Expository Times* 68 (1957/58): 158." "If you take the time to consult these, you will find that Ling argues for 'human authorities,' while Boyd argues for both, i.e., human rulers controlled by demons, although the emphasis is clearly on the latter."[34] The only portion of this reference that appears in the abbreviation list is the "ET" for *Expository Times*; all the other information needed (vol. number, year, page references) is included in the text.

BDAG next lists four references from other early Christian literature outside the NT: Barnabas [B] 4:13 refers to the evil ruler (ὁ πονηρὸς ἄ.); the martyrdom of Polycarp [MPol] 19:2, the unrighteous ruler (ὁ ἄδικος ἄ.); then we are told to compare (cp.) the use of "the ruler of deceit = the deceitful ruler" in the pseudepigraphical works Testament of Simeon 2:7 (TestSim) and Testament of Judah 19:4 (TestJud). All these references are singular, not plural (note the singular article used in each citation), so the reference is not to evil spirits (as in 1 Cor. 2:6–8), but to the devil. If you have not figured this out yet, BDAG represents the word under discussion by just the first letter of the word. If case or number are significant, this is indicated by the appropriate form of the article.

Next we find another NT reference to Eph 2:2, the ruler of the authority (= Kingdom?) of the air (ὁ ἄ. τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος)–again a reference to the devil. The parenthetical note refers us to the entry on ἀήρ, particularly to the last part of that entry ("end").

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[34]G. Fee, *NT Exegesis*, 108.

The word ἄρχων is also used "with ἄγγελος as a messenger of God and representative of the spirit world." The primary reference here is to the Letter of Diognetus 7:2 ("Dg"–see list 8, p. lxiii and list 1, p. xxxii), a 2d C. AD apologist, although there is also a parenthetical reference to the 3d C. AD philosopher Porphyry's work *Ep. ad Anebonem* c. 10 (Ep ad Aneb.–see list 8, p. lxxiv and list 5, p. xlviii). We are specifically told to see ("s.") the word ἀρχάγγελος in that passage.

This section of the entry concludes with a citation from Ignatius' letter to the Smyrnaeans 6:1 (ISm, see list 8, p. lxviii and list 1, p. xxxii). BDAG gives both the text and a translation: "οἱ ἄ. ὁρατοί τε καὶ ἀόρατοι *the visible and invisible rulers."*

We now move to the second major division of this entry. Section ❷ covers instances in which ἄρχων is used generally in reference to "one who has administrative authority." If you compare this definition (and the examples that follow) with the first category, you'll find that this is a "lesser" use and refers more to a "functionary" than to someone with, say, regal authority. Any authority wielded by someone in this category has delegated rather than inherent authority. So instead of translating this as "*ruler, lord, prince,*" BDAG suggests that we use "*leader, official.*" We also learn that ἄρχων is used this way as a loanword in rabbinical literature. [You can find more info on this in Jastorw.[35]] In this sense ἄρχων is used in Romans 13:3 and as a textual variant (v.l.) in Titus 1:9,[36] with which we are to compare the pseudepigraphal work, Palms of Solomon (PsSol—see the abbrev. lists) 17:36.

At the end of this paragraph there is a note that is relevant to our main query: "For **1 Cor 2:6–8** s. 1b above." [This is a error; the reference should be 1c.] Although you might wonder why BDAG would bother with such a listing here if he has already discussed it above, it is significant. He has decided that our passage is best classified under the heading 1.c. and has already discussed it in that context. But by listing it here, he is telling you that many others would disagree with him and place 1 Cor. 2:6–8 under this entry. This makes quite a difference in our understanding of the passage. If it does belong under 1.c., then the reference is to demons, but if it belongs under 2, then a human referent is in view. We will return to this issue a bit later.

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[35] Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Pardes, 1950), 1:121, אַרכוֹן, *ruler, elder.*

[36] This textual variant does not appear in the UBS text, but you will find it in an NA text (or in Tischendorf). There is a long addition at the end of v. 9 that is found in only one minuscule MS, 460 (a 13th C. copy). Although it is certainly not original, it could be helpful is seeing how the word ἄρχων was used by someone who still spoke/wrote Greek.

BDAG now subdivides section ❷ by referent: reference to human leaders or officials who are Jewish are cited in 2.a. and Gentile leaders are listed in 2.b. We are told that there is information to be found on the subject of Jewish leaders in the index of Schürer. This is a valuable four-vol. set, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*.[37] In the Greek word section of the extensive indices (over 120 pgs.!) an entry will be found for "ἄρχοντες (Jewish officials)" directing the reader to a number of pages in vols. 2 and 3. Returning now to BDAG, we also have reference to the use of this word in three ancient sources. First is a reference to volume 3 of the published papyri of the British museum (PLond III, 1177, 57 p. 183; see abbrev. list 4), this reference dating to 113 AD—and a brief citation is even included. Second is a collection of Greek inscriptions (IGR I, 1024, 21; also in abbrev. list 4), and the third is a citation from Josephus' *Antiquities.*

In the NT we discover that ἄρχων is used in reference to the high priest in Acts 23:5 in which Paul cites Exod. 22:27 when he appears before the Sanhedrin. The use in Matt. 9:18, 23 refers to lesser Jewish officials, not the high priest, but those in charge of an individual synagogue, a use which is paralleled in a Greek inscription (IG XIV, 949, 2). Similar references are found in Luke 8:41 and in a textual variant in Acts 14:2. (The 'D' following the Acts 14 reference is to a 5th C. uncial MS which contains a long addition in this verse.) The word can also refer to members of the Sanhedrin: Luke 18:18; 23:13, 35; 24:20. The less specific ἄρχων τῶν Ἰουδαίων is found in John 3:1 (there it describes Nicodemus). BDAG suggest that we compare this use with κριτὴς τῶν Ἑλλήνων (judges of the Greeks) in Epictetus 3, 7, 30 as well as with John 7:26, 48; 12:42; Acts 3:17; 4:5, 8; 13:27; 14:5. Most of these verse simply refer to οἱ ἄρχοντες (or a similar phrase), though some are more elaborate, e.g., Acts 4:8, ἄρχοντες τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ πρεσβύτεροι—which BDAG suggests is very similar to 1 Maccabees 1:26, ἄρχοντες καὶ πρεσβύτεροι. Finally, two specific individuals are described with ἄρχων. In Luke 14:1 it is τὶς τῶν ἀρχόντων τῶν Φαρισαίων (a certain ruler of the Pharisees). BDAG suggests this is best translated "a member of the Sanhedrin who was a Pharisee," which avoids implying that he ruled over the Sanhedrin. And last, a judge is called an ἄρχων in Luke 12:58.

The final paragraph of this entry (which is not nearly as long as the explanation! ☺) cites one NT reference to a Gentile described as an ἄρχων, Acts 16:19. Other Greek materials cited in this category include Diodorus Siculus (1 C. BC) and other unspecified occurrences to be found in the indices to *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* (SIG) and *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae* (OGI). A specific reference and note in OGI are mentioned as relevant to the use in Acts 16:19. There are also two patristic citations,

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[37] The original work by Emil Schürer (which can still be purchased inexpensively in a Hendrickson reprint—but which ought to be avoided in favor of the newly revised edition) has been revised and edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black, 2d ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973–1987).

1 Clement 60:2 and the Martyrdom of Polycarp (MPol) 17:2; both are late first, early second century writings. In the same corpus there are several other closely related words used with ἄρχων: ἡγούμενοι, βασιλεῖς.

The entry ends with several bibliographical sources in which you can find further information (the basics are in the abbrev. lists; you'll need to check a library catalog to find the publication details):

B. 1324 = Carl Buck, *A Dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages: A Contribution to the History of Ideas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), 1324.

DDD 153–59 = Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, eds. *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 1995; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 153–59.

EDNT = Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament,* 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990–93). [Since no page reference is given, you assume it is listed alphabetically under the same word, ἄρχων.]

DELG = Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique langue grecque: historie des mots,* 4 vols. (Paris : Klincksieck, 1968–80).

M-M = James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-literary Sources* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914–1930; reprints, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949 and Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997).

TW = Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friederich, eds. *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932–1973); ET, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* transl. & ed., Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976).

So now that we've figured out what all this means, what is its significance? How does this data help us resolve the exegetical question? BDAG has already indicated a preference for the conclusion that ἀρχόντων in our passage refers to demonic beings, though he has also indicated the alternate possibility (less likely to him) that they are human rulers. What evidence is given for these diverse uses?

First, in the singular, ἄρχων can refer to Jesus (Rev. 1:5) or to Satan. As a designation for Satan it appears in the Synoptics (e.g., Matt. 9:34), in John (12:31), and in Paul (Eph. 2:2).

All of these are the singular form, ἄρχων. But, second, our passage uses a plural form, ἀρχόντων. Every use of the plural in the NT cited by BDAG (other than 1 Cor. 2:6–8) refers to *human* rulers, either Jewish or Gentile. This includes the only other use of the plural by Paul, Rom. 13:3. Third, almost all the uses of the plural form of ἄρχων cited by BDAG which clearly refer to demonic rulers *post-date* the NT by several centuries.[38] The uses closest to the NT, late first century AD and early second century, use the singular in reference to Satan.[39] The only exception is a single reference in Ignatius (ISm 6.1, and here the reference is not limited to demons[40]), and this appears to be the exception since BDAG cites a half dozen other references from Ignatius using the singular in this way. It would thus appear that the lexical evidence argues most strongly for understanding the referent of ἀρχόντων in 1 Cor. 2:6–8 being human rulers.[41]

The final arbiter is, of course, the context—and that would appear to substantiate the conclusion reached on the basis of the lexical data. As Fee summarizes,

> What becomes clear in the context is that Paul is contrasting human and divine wisdom, the latter being perceived only by those who have the Spirit (2:10–14). Since the contrast in v. 14 is clearly with *human beings* who have *not* the Spirit and therefore see the divine wisdom as folly, there seems to be no good contextual reason of any kind to argue that the introduction to this set of contrasts (vv. 6–8) refers to other than human rulers, who as the "chief people" of this age represent those who cannot perceive the wisdom of God in the cross.[42]

What this example of the exegetical use of BDAG illustrates is that there is both an abundance of valuable data included, but that it, like any other lexicon, is a secondary source and must be treated critically. One hesitates to disagree with BDAG and does so with respect and caution and only when contrary evidence is clear.

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[38] In section 1.c., the "transcendent figures" in the Manichean literature ("Kephal.") date to the 4th C. AD. The reference in Porphyry is from the 3d C. AD.

[39] See the citations from the apostolic fathers in 1.c., including Barnabas, Ignatius, and several pseudepigraphal works.

[40] If you check the reference in Ignatius you will discover that it is not very strong support for arguing that ἄρχων must refer to demonic rulers in 1 Cor. 2. It is a rather general, inclusive reference to "heavenly beings" and includes both good and evil angels: Μηδεὶς πλανάσθω· καὶ τὰ ἐπουράνια καὶ ἡ δόξα τῶν ἀγγέλων καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες ὁρατοί τε καὶ ἀόρατοι, ἐὰν μὴ πιστεύσωσιν εἰς τὸ αἷμα Χριστοῦ (Let no one be misled. Even the heavenly beings and the glory of angels and the rulers, both visible and invisible, are also subject to judgment, if they do not believe in the blood of Christ") (text and transl. from J. B. Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations of Their Writings,* 2d ed., ed. and rev. Michael W. Holmes [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992], 188–89).

[41] The lexical data can be extended beyond the scope of BDAG. You should read the fuller discussion of additional lexical resources that Fee gives which allow you to explore usage in Josephus, the papyri, and in patristic sources (*New Testament Exegesis,* 3d ed. [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002], 90–93).

[42] Fee, *NT Exegesis,* 92.

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