

THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* that we carry in The Way International Bookstore is a one-volume reference book that is the abridged version of a much larger nine-volume set by the same name. The nine-volume set has often been referred to as “Kittel,” since one of the major editors was Gerhard Kittel. This one-volume work, by Geoffrey W. Bromiley, is referred to as “Little Kittel” and includes all of the entries that are in the unabridged set. The amount of information recorded for each entry in “Little Kittel” has been substantially reduced by placing the emphasis on the New Testament usage of each word.

Although there are no Strong’s numbers to tie this work to some of our other research materials, it has several features that make it user-friendly. The Contents in the front of the book indicates that there is a Table of Greek Keywords that begins on page ix. It lists all the Greek words that appear in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, transliterated into English and in alphabetical order. The Table of English Keywords, beginning on page xx, lists alphabetically the essential meanings of the Greek words. Both tables also include the page numbers on which these words are found.

For example, let’s say you are working the word *exousia*, which is one of the Greek words translated in English as “power.” You could go to the Table of English Keywords in “Little Kittel” and on page xxx find all the family groups which mean “power”:

power, 186, 238, 466, 1230
to give power, 186
to have the power, 238

You could also go to the Table of Greek Keywords and find *exousia* on page xii:

exousía, 238

When we turn to page 238, we see a rectangular box in which the Greek family of words including *exousia* is listed. Each Greek word is followed by English words in brackets which give the meaning. These are the keywords found in the Table of English Keywords. The rectangular box reads as follows:

éxestin [it is proper, possible], *exousía* [right, power], *exousiázō* [to have the right or power],
katexousiázō [to exercise authority]

The word *éxestin* is the root word from which “Little Kittel” has built this family. This is the first word described after the rectangular box on page 238. The beginning of the entry reads: “‘It is free,’ denoting...an action that is possible because there is occasion for it or no obstacle to it...” It further states that in the New Testament this root word “mostly refers to God’s law or will with its specific demands,” especially the Old Testament law.

The next word listed is *exousía*. Under this word we find three major sections:

A. Ordinary Greek Usage.

This section includes comments on the word's secular background in the Greek language.

B. The Jewish and NT Usage.

Here we learn the word's role in the Old Testament, both in the Septuagint (LXX), which is the Greek Old Testament, and in regard to the parallel Hebrew word.

C. The NT Concept of *exousía*.

This section explains that the New Testament concept rests on three foundations: "First, the power indicated is the power to decide. Second, this decision takes place in ordered relationships, all of which reflect God's lordship. Third, as a divinely given authority to act, *exousía* implies freedom for the community." This section continues, explaining this word and some of its New Testament uses in more detail.

The information included here to describe *exousía* gives us a greater scope and depth of the word's meaning. This, in turn, enables us to apply these truths as we walk with God's power in our lives and in the household.

At the end of each word-family article, the name of the person (or persons) who wrote it is found in brackets. As with all reference works, we are both thankful for what the writers have accomplished and also careful to check their work with the keys to rightly dividing God's Word.

It is important to understand that some Greek scholars transliterate Greek words differently than others. The reason for this is that the standard for transliteration has varied over the years. An example can be seen by looking on page 186 of "Little Kittel." At the bottom of the page, we see the word *dýnamis* in the rectangular box. This is the same word transliterated *dunamis* in our ministry publications.

This one-volume version is a great help to serious Biblical students in extending and deepening our understanding of the rich truths found in the New Testament. Enjoy utilizing this tool in your research and study of God's matchless Word.