

A Little Greek Can Go a L-O-N-G Way (Sometimes Too Long)

Translate John 1:1 — Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

1. Ἐν (or: ἐν):

A few possible meanings (BDAG): in, among, on, at, near, among, before, with (means or instrument), by, in connection with, because of, on account of, while, when, during

2. ἀρχή

Classical Greek Meanings (Greek-English Lexicon, LSJ, includes some N.T. meanings):

beginning, origin
foundation
source (of action)
first principle, element
practical principle (of conduct)
principles (of knowledge)
end, corner (of bandage, rope, sheet)
origin (of a curve, Math.)
branch of a river
sum, total
vital organs (of body)
first place, power, sovereignty
method of government
empire, realm
magistracy, office
command, i.e. body of troops
(pl.) heavenly powers; powers of evil

Septuagint (Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint, Lust et al, rev. ed.)

beginning
branch (beginning of a river)
end, extremity
power, authority, office
government
(pl.) heads of families
top of mountains
census, sum, count

New Testament (BDAG)

beginning, origin
corner (of sheet: Ac 10:11; 11:5)
ruler, authority
rule, office
domain, sphere of influence

3. λόγος

Classical Greek (LSJ)

computation, reckoning
public accounts
treasurer

account, reckoning
measure
esteem, consideration, value
relation, correspondence, proportion
ratio, proportion (Math.)
analogy, rule
explanation
plea, pretext, ground
statement of a theory, argument
proposition (Logic: premise, conclusion)
rule, principle, law
thesis, hypothesis
reason, ground
formula (wider than *definition*, but freq. equivalent thereto)
debate (inward, of soul)
thinking, reasoning
creative reason
continuous statement, narrative
fable, tale, story
a historical work
speech (delivered in court, assembly)
verbal expression, utterance
a single word (rarely), usu. of a phrase
common talk, report, tradition
rumor
discussion, debate, deliberation
section, division (of a dialogue or treatise)
branch, department, division (of a system of philosophy)
a particular utterance, saying
divine utterance, oracle
proverb, maxim, saying
assertion
express resolution
word of command
thing spoken of, subject-matter
expression, utterance, speech (regarded formally)
intelligent utterance
phrase, complex term (Gramm.)
sentence, complete statement
language
The Word or Wisdom of God, personified as his agent in creation and world-government (LXX: Wisdom of Solomon 18:15; Philo)

New Testament (BDAG)

word
computation, reckoning
account, settlement of an account
reason, ground, motive
personified expression of God: The Logos (Word)