

Overview of Verbs

Chapter 6

Person, Number & Voice

Person

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Editorial “we”: employed primarily in epistles and refers only to the author.

ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολὴν

“We have received grace and apostleship”
(Rom 1:5).

Person

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Exclusive “we”: refers to both the author and co-worker(s) but excludes the audience.

θεοῦ γὰρ ἐσμὲν συνεργοί...θεοῦ οἰκοδομῆ ἐστε

“For we are God’s co-workers. You are...
God’s building” (1 Cor 3:9).

Person

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Inclusive “we”: refers to both the author(s) and the audience.

πολλὰ γὰρ πταίμεν ἅπαντες

“for we all stumble in many ways” (Jas 3:2).

Number

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

A neuter plural subject can take a singular verb
(“the animals run,” τὰ ζῷα τρέχει).

πολλὰ τε τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα
διὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐγίνετο

“and many wonders and signs were being
performed through the apostles” (Acts 2:43).

Number

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Sometimes a compound subject (at least one is singular, and together they make a plural) is found with a singular verb.

ἐξῆλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ

“Jesus and his disciples **went on**” (Mark 8:27).

Active Voice

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Simple Active: The subject directly performs the action of the verb.

ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον

“God **loved** the world” (John 3:16).

Active Voice

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Causative Active: The subject is the cause behind the action of the verb.

τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει

“[God] **causes** His sun **to rise**” (Matt 5:45).

Active Voice

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Reflexive Active: The subject performs the action to himself (active voice + reflexive pronoun)

γύμναζε δὲ σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν

“**Train** yourself in godliness” (1 Tim 4:7).

Middle Voice

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Reflexive Middle: The subject of the verb performs the action to himself.

[Ἰούδας]...ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγγεατο

“[Judas]...went out and **hanged himself**”
(Matt 27:5).

Middle Voice

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Special Interest Middle: The subject of the verb performs the action for himself.

Μαριὰμ γὰρ τὴν ἀγαθὴν μερίδα ἐξελέξατο

“Mary **has chosen** the good portion [for herself]”
(Luke 10:42).

Middle Voice

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Permissive Middle: The subject allows something to be done to or for himself.

ἀναστὰς βάπτισαι καὶ ἀπόλουσαι
τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου

Get up and **be baptized**, and **wash away**
your sins” (Acts 22:16).

Passive Voice

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Simple Passive: The subject receives the action of the verb.

δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται

“For in it the righteousness of God **is revealed**”
(Rom 1:17).

Passive Voice

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Permissive Passive: The subject gives consent or permission regarding the action of the verb.

πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι

“**Be filled** with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18).

Moods

**Indicative, Subjunctive, Optative,
and Imperative**

Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

The mood of a verb indicates the author’s attitude (its actuality or potentiality) toward an event.

Ouch!

Indicative

Subjunctive

Optative

Imperative

Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Indicative: something is certain or asserted.
“He went fishing.”

Subjunctive: something is probable or indefinite.
“Whenever he goes fishing.”

Optative: something is possible or hoped for.
“I wish he would go fishing.”

Imperative: something is intended or commanded.
“Go fishing!”

Indicative Mood

Indicative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Declarative Indicative: An unqualified assertion or statement.

ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

“In the beginning **was** the Word” (John 1:1).

Indicative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Interrogative Indicative: A question that will also be answered in the indicative mood.

Σὺ τίς εἶ

“Who **are** you?” (John 1:19).

Indicative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Conditional Indicative: The protasis (“if” clause) of a first class conditional sentence.

εἰ οὖν **συνηγέρθητε** τῷ Χριστῷ,
τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε

“So if **you have been raised with** the Messiah,
seek what is above” (Col 3:1).

Indicative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Conditional Indicative: The protasis (“if” clause) of a second class conditional sentence.

εἰ γὰρ **ἐπιστεύετε** Μωϋσεῖ, ἐπιστεύετε ἂν ἐμοί·
περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν

“For if **you believed** Moses, you would believe Me, because he wrote about Me” (John 5:46).

Indicative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Cohortative Indicative: A future indicative that is used as a command.

ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου

“**You shall love** your neighbor” (Jas 2:8).

Indicative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Potential Indicative: Used with verbs of obligation, wish, or desire, followed by a complementary infinitive.

βούλομαι οὖν νεωτέρας γαμεῖν

“I want younger women to marry” (1 Tim 5:14).

Subjunctive Mood

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Purpose: ἵνα, ὅπως

ἦλθεν... ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός

“[John the Baptist] came...[in order] to testify about the light” (John 1:7).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Result: ἵνα, ὅπως

τίς ἥμαρτεν, οὗτος ἢ οἱ γονεῖς αὐτοῦ,
ἵνα τυφλὸς γεννηθῇ

“Who sinned, this man or his parents, that [as a result] he was born blind?” (John 9:2).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Conditional: εἰάν, εἰάν μή

The subjunctive is used in the protasis of a third class conditional sentence (probable future condition).

εἰάν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ

“If anyone keeps my word” (John 8:51).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Conditional: εἰάν, εἰάν μή

εἰάν μή τις γεννηθῇ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν
τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ

“Unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Indefinite Relative Clause: ὅστις (ὅν/ἐάν),
ὃς (ὃ) ἄν

ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσεται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται

“whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Acts 2:21).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Indefinite Temporal Clause: ὅταν, ἕως,
ἄχρι, μέχρι

ὅταν γὰρ λέγῃ τις· ἐγὼ μέν εἰμι Παύλου...

“For whenever someone says, ‘I’m with Paul...’”
(1 Cor 3:4).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Hortatory Subjunctive: The author commands his audience but also includes himself.

ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας

“Let us do good to everyone” (Gal 6:10 ESV).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Deliberative Subjunctive: Asks a real or rhetorical question.

ἐπιμένωμεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσῃ;

“Should we continue in sin in order that grace may multiply?” (Rom 6:1).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Emphatic Negation: Expressed by the double negative οὐ μή, it strongly denies that something will happen.

οὐ μή εἰσέλθῃτε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν

“you will never enter the kingdom of heaven”
(Matt 5:20).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Emphatic Negation: οὐ μή

οὐ μή σε ἀνῶ οὐδ’ οὐ μή σε ἐγκαταλίπω

“I will never leave you nor [never] forsake you”
(Heb 13:5).

How Firm a Foundation (last verse):

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no never, no never forsake.

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Prohibitory Subjunctive: Instead of an impv, the subjunctive is used when (1) the command is negated (**μὴ**) and (2) the verb uses the aorist tense.

Present λυέ (loose) μὴ λυέ (don't loose)

Aorist λύσον (loose) μὴ λύσης (don't loose)

The last form given is not **μὴ λύσον** (aorist imperative).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Prohibitory Subjunctive

ἄφετε τὰ παιδία ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς με καὶ **μὴ κωλύετε** αὐτά

"Let the children come to me, and **do not hinder** them"
(Luke 18:16).

ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵροντός σου τὸ ἱμάτιον καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα

μὴ κωλύσης

"if anyone takes away your coat, **don't hold back** your shirt either" (Luke 6:29).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Prohibitory Subjunctive

μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοὺς προφῆτας

"**Do not think** that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets" (Matt 5:17 ESV).

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Tense and Aspect

Remember, the present and aorist subjunctives do not communicate time of action (like all non-indicative verbs).

Present The action is progressive or repeated

Aorist Simple action with no regard to it as a process

Actually, most subjunctives are hypothetical or intended in the **future** rather than the past or present.

Subjunctive Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Meaning and Mood

Subjunctives communicate an **indefinite** action (not always an uncertain action).

ὅταν δὲ **ἔλθῃ** ἐκεῖνος, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, ὁδηγήσει ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πάσῃ.

"But **when he comes**, (namely) the Spirit of truth, he will guide you into the whole truth" (John 16:13).

Optative Mood

Optative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Overview of the optative mood

The optative was dying out in the Koine period, becoming absorbed by the subjunctive. There are only 68 uses in the NT (23 presents and 45 aorists—mostly in Luke and Paul). It is used to express a wish, prayer or something that is potential.

Optative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Voluntative: Expresses a prayer, benediction, blessing, or wish.

χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη **πληθυνθείη**

“**May** grace and peace **be multiplied** to you”
(1 Pet 1:2).

Optative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Voluntative: Negatively, it can be used to express abhorrence (used 14 times by Paul).

Τί οὖν; ἁμαρτήσωμεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐσμέν ὑπὸ νόμον
ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν; **μὴ γένοιτο**

“What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? **Absolutely not!**” (Rom 6:15).

Optative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Deliberative: Used with indirect (rhetorical) questions.

ἐπηρώτων δὲ αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ
τίς αὕτη **εἴη** ἡ παραβολή

“And His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable **might be**” (Luke 8:9 NASB).

Optative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Potential: Involves a fourth class conditional clause (possible fulfillment).

εἰ καὶ **πάσχοιτε** διὰ δικαιοσύνην, μακάριοι

“Even if **you should suffer** for righteousness, you are blessed” (1 Pet 3:14).

Imperative Mood

Imperative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Imperatives & Tenses

An “imperative” usually expresses a command.

The imperative mood occurs mainly in two “tenses”:
the **present** (progressive) and **aorist** (wholistic).
There are only 2 perfect imperatives in the NT.

There is **no 1st person** imperative because it is not
normal to command yourself to do something.

Imperative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Command: An exhortation or charge

πάντοτε **χαίrete**

“**Rejoice** always!” (1 Thess 5:16).

Imperative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Prohibition: A negative command that forbids
an action.

μὴ ἀγαπᾶτε τὸν κόσμον

“**Do not love** the world” (1 John 2:15).

Imperative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Request: A command that is given to a superior
and is thus weakened to a request or entreaty.

εἴ τι δύνη, **βοήθησον** ἡμῖν

“But if You can do anything...**help** us”
(Mark 9:22).

Imperative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Permission: Used to convey permission,
allowance, or toleration.

εἰ ὁ ἄπιστος χωρίζεται, **χωριζέσθω**

“If the unbeliever leaves, **let him leave**”
(1 Cor 7:15).

Imperative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Conditional: Like the subjunctive, an
imperative can be used to state a condition.

ἔρχου καὶ ἴδε

“**Come** and see” = “**If you come** you will see”
(John 1:46).

Imperative Mood

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Greeting: Often expressed with a stereotyped imperative.

Χαῖρε, ῥαββί

“Greetings, Rabbi!” (Matt 26:49).