

Prepositions

Chapter 8

Prepositions in English

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Prepositions
indicate relationship



The word following
the preposition is
called the **object** of
the preposition

The apple is on the desk.

The total construction is a
prepositional phrase

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Prepositions in Greek

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Greek prepositions differ somewhat
from English prepositions

ἐν μετά σύν εἰς διά
ἐκ παρά ὑπό ἀπό

In Greek, the object of the preposition can be
in one of three different cases:

Genitive

Dative

Accusative

Meaning

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

The meaning of a preposition is based on
the **case** of its object

διὰ τοῦ ἱεροῦ

διὰ plus the genitive case is translated "through"

"through the temple"

Some prepositions take only one case (e.g., ἀπό), some can
take two (e.g., διά), and a few can take three (e.g., παρά).

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Meaning

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

The following prepositions take
objects in only **one** case:

ἀπό + **Genitive** = "from"
ἐκ + **Genitive** = "out of"
ἐν + **Dative** = "in"
σύν + **Dative** = "with"
εἰς + **Accusative** = "into"
πρός + **Accusative** = "to/toward"

Meaning

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

The following prepositions can
take objects in **two** cases:

διὰ "through" / "because of"
κατά "against" / "according to"
μετά + **Genitive** = "with" / "after"
περί + **Accusative** = "concerning" / "around"
ὑπέρ "on behalf of" / "above"
ὑπό "by" / "under"

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Meaning

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

The following prepositions can take objects in **three** cases:

ἐπί	+	Genitive	=	“on” / “upon” / “against”
παρά		Dative		
		Accusative		“from” / “with” / “beside”

Note: The object of a preposition will **NEVER** be in the nominative case.

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Meaning

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Translating Prepositions

When translating prepositions with the genitive, do not use the word “of.” Likewise, with the dative, do not use the words “to” or “for.”

ἀπὸ τῆς οἰκίας

“from the house”

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Form Variations

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

The preposition **ἐκ**

The preposition **ἐκ** has the kappa when followed by a word that begins with a consonant, but becomes **ἐξ** when the following word begins with a vowel.

ἐκ νόμου

ἐξ ἀνθρώπων


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Form Variations

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Most prepositions that **end** with a vowel drop their final vowel when the following word begins with a vowel.

δι' ἐπαγγελίας

δι' 

Exceptions: **πρὶ** and **πρό** (+ genitive = “before”) experience no changes.


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Form Variations

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Most prepositions that **end** with a vowel drop their final vowel when the following word begins with a vowel.

παρ' ἀγγέλους

παρ' 

These prepositions **lose their accent** and are pronounced with the following word. This is called “**elision**.”

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Form Variations

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Prepositions that end in “π” or “τ”

If an elided preposition’s final letter is “π” or “τ” and the following word’s vowel has a **rough breathing mark**, the consonant of the elided preposition is changed to its aspirated form: “φ” or “θ.”

π	→	φ	ἀφ' ἡμερῶν, “from [the] days”
τ	→	θ	μεθ' ἡμέρας ἕξ, “after six days”

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Form Variations

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

Summary of changes:

ἀπό	→	ἀπ' or ἀφ'
διά	→	δι'
ἐκ	→	ἐξ
ἐπί	→	ἐπ' or ἐφ'
κατά	→	κατ' or καθ'
μετά	→	μετ' or μεθ'
παρά	→	παρ'
ὕπό	→	ὕπ' or ὕφ'

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Compound Verbs

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

Compound verbs in English

Sometimes a preposition is added to the beginning of a verb to alter its meaning.

backfill

uphold

download

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Compound Verbs

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

Compound Verbs and Augments

Compound verbs are augmented after the prepositional prefix.

ἐπερωτάω	→	ἐπ <u>η</u> ρώτων
ὕπάγω	→	ὕπ <u>η</u> γον
ἀποκρίνομαι	→	ἀπ <u>ε</u> κρίθη
παρακαλέω	→	παρ <u>ε</u> κάλει
περιπατέω	→	περ <u>ι</u> πάτει

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Usage

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

Adverbial prepositional phrases

- Modify Verbs
- Answer **where? when? how? why?**
- Example:

ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ

“he went out of the temple”

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Usage

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

Adjectival prepositional phrases

- Modify nouns or other substantives
- Answer **which? what kind of?**
- Example

τὴν δόξαν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ μόνου θεοῦ

“the glory which is from the only God”

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Usage

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

Prepositions may also simply follow an article which functions like a noun

τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ

“the things in the world”
(1 John 2:15)

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Usage

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

A preposition prefixed to a verb is often
repeated as a matter of style

πῦρ **ἐκ**πορεύεται **ἐκ** τοῦ στόματος αὐτῶν

“fire came **out** of their mouth”

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Usage

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Nouns and adjectives that follow prepositions are often
considered definite, even if they do not have an article

ἀπὸ κυρίου

“from **the** Lord”

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Usage

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

Increased usage of prepositions during the NT era.

Prepositions were used to make the author's meaning
more explicit.

τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ

“on the third day”

ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ

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Vocabulary

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

αὐτός, —ή, —ό, **he, she, it; self, same**
(autopilot)

ἐγώ, ἡμεῖς, **I; we** (ego, egomaniac)

ὅς, ἥ, ὅ, **who, which, that**

σύ, ὑμεῖς, **you (sg); you (pl)**

ἄρτος, ὁ, **bread, food**

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Vocabulary

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

δικαιοσύνη, ἡ, **righteousness, justice**

εἰρήνη, ἡ, **peace** (irenic, Irene)

ἐξουσία, ἡ, **authority, right, power**

θάλασσα, ἡ, **lake, sea** (thalassic)

λαός, ὁ, **people, crowd** (laity)

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Vocabulary

Εν ἀρχῇ ἦν
ὁ λόγος

ὁδός, ἡ, **way, road** (exodus)

οἰκία, ἡ, **home, dwelling, family**
(economy)

οἶκος, ὁ, **house, household, family**

ὀφθαλμός, ὁ, **eye** (ophthalmology)

τόπος, ὁ, **place** (topography)

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