Ἴδμεν τὰ Μωσεῖ

A Liturgical Translator's Manual

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2022-04-21

O Lord, through the prayers of our Holy Fathers Kosmos the Poet, John of Damascus, and Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain, give us understanding and grace to create translations that are pleasing to You!

Contents

Purpose

This handbook is for people who speak English as a foreign language and are translating the liturgical texts into a non-Indoeuropean language. It answers the following questions: What does the Greek text say? What does it mean? What problems might I have translating it and how might I solve those problems? It answers these questions by providing the Greek text, example English translations, notes about each Greek word or phrase, and a detailed grammatical analysis[1].

Types of Translations

The type of translation a person creates depends on what the priority is. If the priority is to preserve the order of the Greek words and phrases and to use words that give the literal meaning of the Greek, I call this a *Structure-Oriented Translation*. I created the GE-SOT as an example. If the priority is to convey the meaning of the Greek text, I call this a *Meaning-Oriented Translation*. I created the GE-MOT as an example. Some translations balance these two priorities, for example, the translation in *The Festal Menaion* by His Eminence Kallistos Ware and Mother Mary (TFM). I created the GEV as another example. Whether or not a translation is structure-oriented, or meaning-oriented, or falls in between, when you translate a hymn, it is important to create a translation that can be sung based on a melody. So, the translation sometimes has to be adjusted by using different words or a different word order. Fr. Seraphim Dedes' translation is an example.

About the Global English Translations

The GEV, GE-SOT and GE-MOT use the Oxford 3000[2] list of the most important English words. People who speak English as a second language should know these words. By trying to use only these 3000 words, the Global English translations have to adjust the translation in ways similar to what happens when people translate the Greek into non-Indoeuropean languages. These translations demonstrate three types of translation. The GE-SOT is the closest to the Greek word order and the literal meaning. It is used for the word by word discussion of the meaning and for the interlinear grammar and dependency diagram. The GE-MOT will help you understand the meaning. It does this by adding information that is implied by the Greek text. If you must translate from English, ask your Bishop which translation He prefers. If He is not available to ask, then use the GEV.

How to Use this Handbook

If you can, first read the Greek text. Then study the translations. Note what is similar and different. Make a first draft translation from the Greek or the GEV. Write down questions you have. Look for answers in the notes and grammar sections. Make changes to your translation based on what you read. Let other people read your translation. Ask questions to learn how they understand it. Make changes as needed. Adjust the translation to fit the melody it will be sung to.

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[1]Comments, corrections, and suggestions for improvement should be sent to Michael Colburn at m.colburn@ocmc.org.

[2]https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/about/oxford3000.

Ἴδμεν τὰ Μωσεῖ

The Text and Translations

Source Text

If you know Greek, use this as your source text:

gr_gr_cog	Ἴδμεν τὰ Μωσεῖ τῇ βάτῳ δεδειγμένα, * Δεῦρο ξένοις, θεσμοῖσιν ἐξειργασμένα· * Ὡς γὰρ σέσωσται, πυρφο-ροῦσα Παρθένος, * Σελασφόρον τεκοῦσα, τὸν εὐεργέ-την, * Ἰορδάνου τε, ῥεῖθρα προσδεδεγμένα.

Global English Translations

If you do not know Greek, you can use the en_uk_gev as your source text (model):
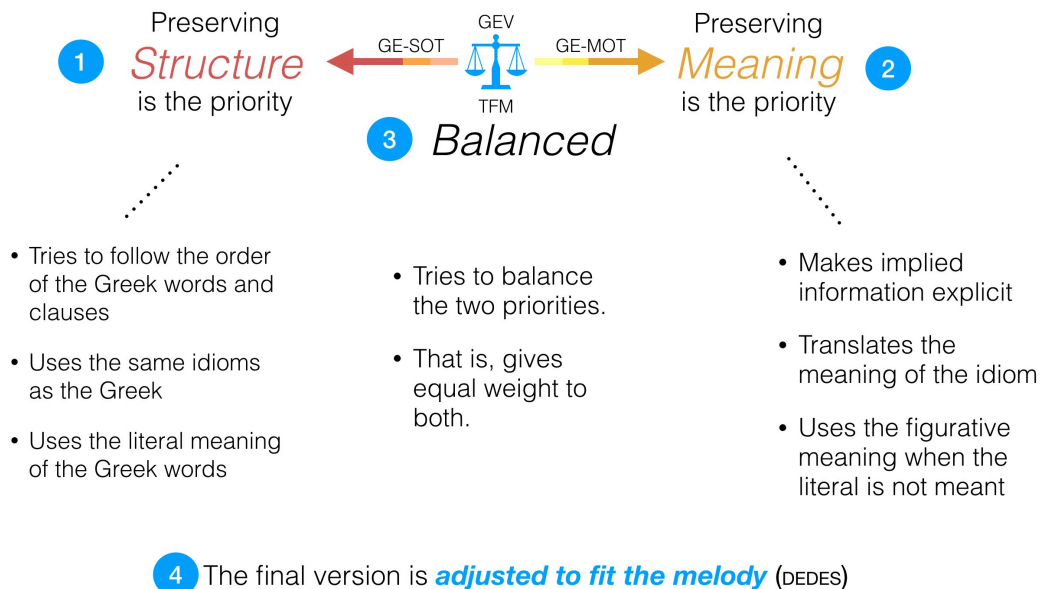
Structure Oriented (en_uk_gesot)	We see the [things] which [were] shown [to] Moses [in] the bush, here [by] strange laws completed: For as [the] fire-carrying Virgin was kept safe [when] [she] gave birth [to] the light-bringing Benefactor, so also [the] streams of Jordan [when] they received [him].
Model (en_uk_gev)	The things shown to Moses in the bush, we see completed here in strange ways: For when the Virgin gave birth to the one who helps us, who brings us light, she carried fire within her, but she was kept safe; and also Jordan's streams when they received him.
Meaning Oriented (en_uk_gemot)	God showed Moses a small tree that was burning, but it was kept safe. It was not harmed. In surprising ways, here we see the meaning of what God showed Moses: For when the Virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus Christ, the one who helps us, who brings us light, she had within her a baby who is like fire, but God kept her safe; and also God kept safe the waters of the Jordan River when Christ entered them to be baptized.

Other Translations

en_uk_tfm	That which was revealed to Moses in the bush we see accomplished here in strange manner. The Virgin bore Fire within her, yet was not consumed, when she gave birth to the Benefactor who brings us light, and the streams of Jordan suffered no harm when they received Him.
en_us_dedes	We have come to know the wonders shown to Moses * in the Bush by some strange laws are here accomplished: * preserved uninjured was the fire-bearing Virgin * when she brought forth the light-bringing Benefactor, * as were Jordan's streams when they received the Master.

Note: some liturgical hymns originally used punctuation marks to indicate the boundary of metric feet. They do not have a grammatical role. They are called *scansion* symbols. In the modern version of source text or translations you might see asterisks (*) or forward slashes (/) used as scansion symbols.

This Liturgical Translator's Handbook provides
4 types *of translations as examples to study*

1. Preserving *Structure* is the priority

GE-SOT ← GEV → GE-MOT
TFM

2. Preserving *Meaning* is the priority

3. *Balanced*

- Tries to follow the order of the Greek words and clauses
- Uses the same idioms as the Greek
- Uses the literal meaning of the Greek words

- Tries to balance the two priorities.
- That is, gives equal weight to both.

- Makes implied information explicit
- Translates the meaning of the idiom
- Uses the figurative meaning when the literal is not meant

4. The final version is ***adjusted to fit the melody*** (DEDES)

Notes About the Text

Summary

On the day of Theophany, at the Great Blessing of the Waters, a prayer is read that is attributed to Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem. In this prayer, he says, *Jordan turned back , beholding the fire of the Godhead coming down bodily and entering it.* (HTM). In the verse we are discussing, the hymn writer also talks about the fire of the Godhead, using different words. He first reminds us about a strange thing that Moses saw. He saw a bush that was on fire, but it was not consumed, or burned up, or harmed by the fire. It was kept safe. He tells us that the meaning of what Moses saw can be understood when we think about God the Son becoming a human being. In him, the fire of the Godhead entered the Theotokos, but she was not harmed. And in the same way, when the Son of God entered into the waters of the Jordan river, the fire of the Godhead entered them, but they also were not harmed. This strange thing was revealed ahead of time by the Angel of the Lord appearing to Moses as a flame in the middle of a bush that was not harmed. And it finds its completion, fulfillment, and perfection in the birth and baptism of Christ.

References to the Bible

This liturgical text makes the following references to the Bible:

✤ **gave birth** • τεκοῦσα • SOT: [when] [she] gave birth MOT: gave birth ➡ MAT 1:23 the virgin shall be with child, and shall give birth to a son ἡ παρθένος ἐν γαστρὶ ἕξει καὶ τέξεται υἱόν •

✤ **The things shown to Moses in the bush,** • τὰ Μωσεῖ τῇ βάτῳ δεδειγμένα • SOT: the [things] which [were] shown [to] Moses [in] the bush • MOT: God showed Moses a small tree that was burning, but it was kept safe. It was not harmed. ➡ (Exod 3:2) the bush burns with fire, —but the bush was not consumed βάτος καίεται πυρί ὁ δὲ βάτος οὐ κατεκαίετο •

✤ **they received him.** • ροσδεδεγμένα • SOT: they received [him] • MOT: Christ entered them to be baptized. ➡ Mark 1:9 Jesus...was baptised by John in the Jordan ὁ Ἰησοῦς...ἐβαπτίσθη ὑπὸ Ἰωάννου εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην •

Discussion

The notes are sorted based the order of words in the en_uk_gev version of the text. English quotations from the Bible are from the World English Bible British Edition (WEBBE) unless otherwise stated.

✤ **The things shown to Moses in the bush,** • τὰ Μωσεῖ τῇ βάτῳ δεδειγμένα • SOT: the [things] which [were] shown [to] Moses [in] the bush • MOT: God showed Moses a small tree that was burning, but it was kept safe. It was not harmed. • GRAMMAR: The Greek word τὰ, translated as *the things which* or as *that which,* is plural. That is, it refers to multiple things. The things are the bush, the flame of the fire, and the fact that the bush was not burned up. • REFERS TO EVENT ➡

Angel of the Lord appearing in Burning Bush to Moses:　• REFERS TO HUMAN ➠ Moses:　• REFERS TO PLANT ➠ Burning Bush: Regarding this bush, Osborn and Hatton 1999 says, "The bush was probably some kind of thorn bush, smaller than a tree but larger than an ordinary bramble."

✤ **we see** • Ἴδμεν • SOT: We see • MOT: we see • MEANING: The Greek word means *to know* or *to see*. What *we see* is the meaning or significance of the burning bush that Moses saw. The bush was burning, but was not destroyed or harmed. This was telling us ahead of time about a greater wonder that would occur: that when the Theotokos carried God as a baby within her, she was not harmed, even though God is like fire. And when God entered the Jordan river, it was not harmed. • GRAMMAR: Although this Greek verb is in the perfect tense, it is actually functioning as a present tense verb. See *Smyth*:794. Most grammars show the 1st person plural form of the verb as ἴσμεν, but *EDG*:1053 says ἴδμεν is an alternative form. • REFERS TO GROUP ➠ The Church: The pronoun *we* here refers to the writer or singer of the hymn and to those who read or hear it being sung.

✤ **completed** • ἐξειργασμένα • SOT: completed • MOT: the meaning of • MEANING: The Greek word literally means *to work out,* and so, to *make completely, to finish off, to bring to perfection* (LSJ). In this case, what God completed was the future event that the burning bush was pointing to: the fire of God entering the Theotokos and the streams of the Jordan, without harming either, just like the bush was not harmed.

✤ **here** • Δεῦρο • SOT, MOT: here • MEANING: The Greek word is an adverb either of place or time. An adverb is a word that modifies (gives more information about) a verb. As an adverb of time, it can be translated as *now.*　The translations used in this handbook have translated it as an adverb of place, using the word *here.* It is referring to the verb *completed* ἐξειργασμέν. That is, it is referring to the place or time that the meaning of the burning bush became known. The place or time is when God came to earth as a man (when he was a baby inside the Theotokos) and when he entered the Jordan river to be baptized.

✤ **in strange** • ξένοις • SOT: [by] strange • MOT: In surprising • MEANING: The word means *something not known before.*　• ADVICE FOR TRANSLATOR: It can be translated *unknown, unheard of, unfamiliar,* or *surprising.*

✤ **ways** • θεσμοῖσιν • SOT: laws • MOT: ways • MEANING: The Greek word has several meanings, including rules made by a government, or to moral rules, or to natural law, that is, *something that happens in nature in the same way and in the same circumstances*. But, in this case it refers to laws that work not in nature, but beyond nature. *EOPT*:326 says the poet is referring to laws that are cannot be explained by natural laws. They are occurring through an act of God. And, they are even more strange than the laws that kept the burning bush from being consumed by the fire.

✤ **For** • γὰρ • SOT, MOT: For • GRAMMAR: The conjunction *for* γὰρ tells us that what follows is the reason for what the writer said in the previous words of the hymn. That is, it tells us that the words following the word *for* will explain why the writer said the things Moses saw have been completed. They have been completed by both the Virgin Mary being preserved and the streams of the Jordan being preserved, even though the Son of God entered them, who is fire from God.

✤ **when** • Ὡς • SOT: as • MOT: when • GRAMMAR: This word is part of a multi-word construction: *as...so also*... ὡς...τε.... The two Greek words indicate a similarity between what the Virgin experienced and what the Jordan river experienced. That is, neither of them were harmed when God entered them. *EOPT*:326 also interprets it this way, saying *...**τόσον** ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ της Παρθένου, **ὅσον καί** ἐν τοῖς ρείθροις τοῦ Ἰορδάνου.... ...**as** in the belly of the Virgin, **so also** in the streams of Jordan*...

✤ **the Virgin** • Παρθένος • SOT: [the] Virgin • MOT: the Virgin • MEANING: The Greek word in this context means a *virgin,* that is, *a woman who has not had sexual relations*. • REFERS TO HUMAN ➦ Mary the Mother of Jesus Christ: • THEOLOGY: The Lord Jesus Christ was conceived in Mary by the Holy Spirit, not through relations with her husband Joseph. Per the tradition of the Church, the Theotokos remained a virgin all her life. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ➦ Matt 1:23 the virgin • ἡ παρθένος.

✤ **gave birth** • τεκοῦσα • SOT: [when] [she] gave birth MOT: gave birth • REFERS TO EVENT ➦ Birth of Christ:

✤ **to the one who helps us,** • εὐεργέτην • SOT: to the Benefactor • MOT: to the one who helps us • MEANING: The Greek word εὐεργέτην means a *benefactor.* That is, *someone who works to benefit other people*, or *someone who provides assistance to other people.* Sometimes this word was used as a title, for example for a king, in recognition of the good things he did for his people. In this hymn, the Lord Jesus Christ is called the *Benefactor* because he helps us by giving us *light,* that is, *knowledge about God*. • REFERS TO HUMAN ➦ Jesus Christ:

✤ **who brings us light** • Σελασφόρον • SOT: [to] the light-bringing MOT: who brings us light • THEOLOGY: One of the themes of the feast of Theophany is *illumination.* If something is illumined, it has light shining on it. When we are baptized God gives us knowledge about himself in our hearts. This knowledge is like a light shining in our hearts. The Church describes this gift as illumination. Here, in this verse, for this reason, the poet describes the Lord Jesus Christ as *the one who brings us light*. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ➦ John 8:12 ...Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world...." • ...ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησε λέγων· ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου.....

✤ **she carried fire within her** • πυρφοροῦσα • SOT: [the] fire-carrying MOT: she had within her a baby who is like fire • MEANING: The fire that the Virgin Mary carried within her was the fire of God. It was not a fire made from the matter of this world. That is, she carried in her womb the baby Jesus, who is the Son of

God. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ➡ Deut 4:24 your God is a devouring fire • ὁ θεός σου πῦρ καταναλίσκον: This is the One whom the Virgin Mary carried within her. • CHECK YOUR BIBLE ➡ Heb 12:29 our God is a consuming fire • Θεὸς ἡμῶν πῦρ καταναλίσκον.

✤ **but she was kept safe;** • σέσωσται • SOT: was kept safe MOT: but God kept her safe • MEANING: The phrase *kept safe* translates a single Greek word, σέσωσται. It means *to be kept from being harmed, hurt, or destroyed*. The Virgin Mary was kept safe from the fire of God that she carried within her, the baby Jesus.

✤ **and also** • τε • SOT: so also • MOT: and also • MEANING: This means the streams of the Jordan had the same experience as the Virgin. They were not harmed by the Son of God entering them. • GRAMMAR: See the grammar note about the word *as Ὡς.*

✤   **Jordan's streams** • Ἰορδάνου τε ῥεῖθρα • SOT: [the] streams of Jordan • MOT: the waters of the Jordan River • MEANING: The writer uses the plural word *streams ῥεῖθρα* because there are several sources of water that flow into the river. Early authors wrote that the river is named after two steams that are its source: the *Jor* and the *Dan*. As an example, *EOPT*:326 quotes St. John Chrysotom's *In Jordanem fluvium, PG 61.725,* Ὁ Ἰορδάνης παρὰ πάντας τοὺς ποταμοὺς δύο ῥίζας ἔχει πηγῶν· οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ μιᾶς πηγῆς προέρχεται ὁ Ἰορδάνης. Ἔχει δὲ τὴν μὲν μίαν πηγὴν εἰς τὴν Πανιάδα, τὴν δὲ ἄλλην πλησίον τῆς Πανιάδος· καὶ ἡ μὲν μία πηγὴ καλεῖται Ἰὸρ, ἡ δὲ ἄλλη Δάν·

✤ **when** • Ὡς • SOT: as • MOT: when • GRAMMAR: This word is part of a multi-word construction: *as...so also*... ὡς...τε.... The two Greek words indicate a similarity between what the Virgin experienced and what the Jordan river experienced. That is, neither of them were harmed when God entered them. *EOPT*:326 also interprets it this way, saying *...**τόσον** ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ της Παρθένου, **ὅσον καί** ἐν τοῖς ρείθροις τοῦ Ἰορδάνου.... ...**as** in the belly of the Virgin, **so also** in the streams of Jordan*...

✤ **they received him.** • ροσδεδεγμένα • SOT: they received [him] • MOT: Christ entered them to be baptized. • MEANING: Jesus went into the streams of the Jordan to be baptized by John. That is, the streams received Jesus. • REFERS TO EVENT ➡ Baptism of Christ:

Grammar

Interlinear Text

This section provides information about the grammar of words (that is, the morphology) [3]. The Greek words appear in the same order as they do in the source text.

1		2	3		4
Ἴδμεν		**τὰ**	**Μωσεῖ**		**τῆ**
we.see		the	to.Moses		[in].the
VERB.1.PL.PRF.ACT.IND		ART.PL.N.ACC	NOUN.SG.M.DAT		ART.SG.F.DAT
οἶδα		ὁ	Μωσῆς		ὁ

5	6		7	8	9	10
βάτω	**δεδειγμένα**		**,**	*****	**Δεῦρο**	**ξένοις**
bush	[things].[which].were.shown		,	*	here	[by].strange
NOUN.SG.F.DAT	PTCP.MP.PRF.N.PL.ACC		PM	PM	ADV	ADJ.PL.M.DAT
βάτος	δείκνυμι		,	*	δεῦρο	ξένος

11	12	13		14	15	16	17
,	**θεσμοῖσιν**	**ἐξειργασμένα**		**.**	*****	**Ὡς**	**γὰρ**
,	laws	completed		:	*	as	for
PM	NOUN.PL.M.DAT	PTCP.MP.PRF.N.PL.ACC		PM	PM	ADV	CONJ
,	θεσμός	ἐξεργάζομαι		.	*	ὡς	γάρ

18		19	20		21
σέσωσται		**,**	**πυρφοροῦσα**		**Παρθένος**
was.kept.safe		,	[the].fire-carrying		Virgin
VERB.3.SG.PRF.MP.IND		PM	PTCP.ACT.PRS.F.SG.NOM		NOUN.SG.F.NOM
σώζω		,	πυρφορέω		παρθένος

22	23	24	25		26	27
,	*****	**Σελασφόρον**	**τεκοῦσα**		**,**	**τὸν**
,	*	light-bringing	[when].[she].gave.birth		,	[to].the
PM	PM	ADJ.SG.M.ACC	PTCP.ACT.AOR.F.SG.NOM		PM	DET.SG.M.ACC
,	*	σελασφόρος	τίκτω		,	ὁ

28		29	30	31		32	33	34
εὐεργέτην		**,**	*****	**Ἰορδάνου**		**τε**	**,**	**ῥεῖθρα**
benefactor		,	*	of.Jordan		so.also	,	[the].streams
NOUN.SG.M.ACC		PM	PM	NOUN.SG.M.GEN		CONJ	PM	NOUN.PL.N.NOM
εὐεργέτης		,	*	Ἰορδάνης		τε	,	ῥεῖθρον

35	36
προσδεδεγμένα	**.**
[when].[they].received.[him]	.
PTCP.MP.PRF.F.PL.NOM	PM
προσδέχομαι	.

Dependency Diagram

A dependency diagram shows the syntax of the text. *Syntax* means *the grammatical relationship between words*. It shows the relationships based on dependency grammar[4]. The order of each Greek word in the diagram is based on the word it depends on[5]. It appears indented and after the word it depends on. The first word in the diagram is the root, that is, the starting point of the dependencies.

|–**1 root Ἴδμεν we.see VERB.1.PL.PRF.ACT.IND οἶδα**

  |–**9 advmod Δεῦρο here ADV δεῦρο**

  |–**13 ccomp ἐξειργασμένα completed PTCP.MP.PRF.N.PL.ACC ἐξεργάζομαι**

    |–**6 csubj:pass δεδειγμένα [things].[which].were.shown PTCP.MP.PRF.N.PL.ACC δείκνυμι**

      |–**2 det τὰ the ART.PL.N.ACC ὁ**

      |–**3 obl Μωσεῖ to.Moses NOUN.SG.M.DAT Μωσῆς**

      |–**5 obl βάτῳ bush NOUN.SG.F.DAT βάτος**

        |–**4 det τῇ [in].the ART.SG.F.DAT ὁ**

      |–**7 punct , , PM ,**

      |–**8 punct * * PM ***

    |–**12 obl θεσμοῖσιν laws NOUN.PL.M.DAT θεσμός**

      |–**10 nmod ξένοις [by].strange ADJ.PL.M.DAT ξένος**

        |–**11 punct , , PM ,**

    |–**18 advcl σέσωσται was.kept.safe VERB.3.SG.PRF.MP.IND σώζω**

      |–**14 punct . : PM ·**

      |–**17 mark γὰρ for CONJ γάρ**

      |–**21 nsubj:pass Παρθένος Virgin NOUN.SG.F.NOM παρθένος**

        |–**20 acl πυρφοροῦσα [the].fire-carrying PTCP.ACT.PRS.F.SG.NOM πυρφορέω**

          |–**19 punct , , PM ,**

      |–**25 advcl τεκοῦσα [when].[she].gave.birth PTCP.ACT.AOR.F.SG.NOM τίκτω**

        |–**16 advmod Ὡς as ADV ὡς**

          |–**15 punct * * PM ***

        |–**28 obj εὐεργέτην benefactor NOUN.SG.M.ACC εὐεργέτης**

          |–**24 nmod Σελασφόρον light-bringing ADJ.SG.M.ACC σελασφόρος**

            |–**22 punct , , PM ,**

            |–**23 punct * * PM ***

        |–**26 punct , , PM ,**

        |–**27 det τὸν [to].the DET.SG.M.ACC ὁ**

      |–**35 advcl προσδεδεγμένα [when].[they].received.[him] PTCP.MP.PRF.F.PL.NOM προσδέχομαι**

        |–**32 cc τε so.also CONJ τε**

        |–**34 nsubj:pass ῥεῖθρα [the].streams NOUN.PL.N.NOM ῥεῖθρον**

          |–**31 nmod Ἰορδάνου of.Jordan NOUN.SG.M.GEN Ἰορδάνης**

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[4]See http://universaldependencies.org
[5]*depends on* means *is governed by* or *subordinate to*.

|–**29 punct , , PM ,**
|–**30 punct * * PM ***
|–**33 punct , , PM ,**
|–**36 punct . . PM .**

Abbreviations

1	first person
3	third person
ACC	accusative
ACT	active
ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverb(ial)
AOR	aorist
ART	article
CONJ	conjunction
DAT	dative
DET	determiner
F	feminine
GEN	genitive
IND	indicative
M	masculine
MP	middle-passive
N	neuter
NOM	nominative
NOUN	noun
PL	plural
PM	punctuation mark
PRF	perfect
PRS	present
PTCP	participle
SG	singular

VERB	verb
acl	clausal modifier of noun (adjectival clause)
advcl	adverbial clause modifier
advmod	adverbial Modifier
cc	coordinating conjunction
ccomp	clausal complement
csubj:pass	clausal subject - Grammaticalized Passive
det	determiner
en_uk_gemot	Global English Meaning Oriented Translation
en_uk_gesot	Global English Structure Oriented Translation
en_uk_gev	Global English Version
en_uk_tfm	The Festal Menaion - Mother Mary and Metropolitan Kallistos
en_us_dedes	Translations by Fr. Seraphim Dedes
gr_gr_cog	Commonly used Orthodox Greek text
mark	marker
nmod	nominal modifier
nsubj:pass	nominal subject - passive
obj	object
obl	oblique nominal
punct	punctuation
root	root

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