

Some people have the foolish idea that the word "thou" in some way expresses reverence. Thou instead of you. I was at a church the other day and a baby was being baptized. The minister said, I baptize thee. . . I wonder if he was showing reverence toward the baby! I read in the NT where Jesus said to Peter, Get thee behind me Satan for thou savorest not the things that be of God . . ." Was Jesus showing reverence for Satan or to Peter. The "thee" of course is just the singular, and "you" is the plural.

I thought as I began teaching Hebrew, I will use "thou" for the sing. and "you" for the plu. and then I can at least have 2 words that represent these 4 Heb. forms, instead of only one as we have in modern English. Some of my students had been reading the KJV for many many years but they had never sensed what "thou" was intended to mean. I found that half of them when I'd give them a sentence with "thou" would put it in the plu. They did not sense that "thou" was sing., and "you" plu.

Here were 4 distinctions in Heb., and just one way to say it in English! Then there are other cases where one in Heb. will cover 4 possibilities in English and you have to decide which one. So your original can give you thoughts immediately when you look at it which may be ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ difficult to express in English.

Ordinarily if you say in Heb. "the man greeted the king." If you said that in Heb. in many cases you could not tell whether it was the man who greeted the king or the king greeted the man. You'd have to know from context. Because English is one of the few languages in the world in which context is important in showing case. In Heb. the order does not matter! That is to say there is a more or less normal Hebrew but you can depart from it for emphasis. In English you always indicate an accusative by putting it after the verb. That's a peculiarity in English. You don't have it in German. In German you can have the words in any order you want but you have a different form to use.

So when you read the words "the king greeted the man" or "the man greeted the king," you have to guess from context which it is but you cannot express it in English in such a way that you don't make any selection. So in matters of form and syntax even a little knowledge of it can be tremendously helpful in really understanding what a passage of Scripture means.

Then, there is perhaps an even more important area. But a simpler one to make progress in. That is the area of areas of meaning. We read in the NT in about a dozen cases that we are to watch for we don't know the day or hour in which our Lord may come. That word "watch" in its various cases sometimes represents the Greek word grigorio(?) and sometimes the word ma oup eo(?) If you look up agoupeo and grigoreo in the Greek dictionary you can get an idea of exactly what they mean. Our English word watch--I have a watch right here!