

Dunamis – Exousia – Energeo, Energema, Energeia

In order to understand from the Word of God how the power of God works in your life, there are a number of Greek words that you should have at least some familiarity with. I refer to the Greek words because they have certain meanings attached to them but they are not consistently translated into the English versions. Also, you will find that English words (e.g. “power”) may be translated from more than one Greek word. In this study, we are going to give an overview of these words, their basic meanings and how they relate to each other.

When a baby is born, all of the potential for everything that child could ever be is in that child already. The potential has to be nurtured, developed, learned about. As the child grows and matures, the potential that was there at birth can come into fruition. The same is true with the spiritual new birth. All of the potential is there in the spirit life of the new birth. It must be nurtured, developed and learned about. As the believer grows and matures, that spiritual potential comes into fruition in his life.

Dunamis

The first of these words that we want to consider is the word *dunamis*. It is used 120 times in the New Testament. It is translated 14 ways, most often as the word “power” (77 times). It comes from a root word *dunamai* which is used 210 times and carries the basic meaning of “being able”. We are not going to look at each place the word *dunamis* is used – that can be done on your own utilizing a concordance should you want to. We will look at some selected occurrences as they relate to our overall topic of manifesting the power of God in our lives. *Dunamis* carries the basic meaning of inherent power, potential power or ability.

Luke 24:49 In this verse, the word “power” is *dunamis*.

Acts 1:4,5,8 In verse 8, the word “power” is *dunamis*.

We see from Luke that the promise of the Father was to be endued with power (*dunamis*) from on high. In Acts we see that the promise of the Father is to be baptized with the holy spirit. Verse 8 shows us that with holy spirit they would be able to receive (*lambano*, manifest) power (*dunamis*). That gift of holy spirit is the potential, the power source for successful Christian living and witnessing.

Acts 3:12 The word “power” is the word *dunamis*. It was not the apostle's own ability that healed this man.

Exousia

The second word we want to be familiar with is the word *exousia*. It is used 103 times in the New Testament and is translated in 6 different ways, most often as the word “power” (69 times). It comes from the root word *exesti* which carries the meaning of “it is permitted” or “lawful”. This word is used 32 times. Again, we will not be looking at every occurrence, just a few that I selected that are pertinent to our study.

Matthew 7:28, 29 In verse 29, the word “authority” is the word *exousia*.

Matthew 9:8 The word “power” is the word *exousia*.

Matthew 10:1 Again the word “power” is *exousia*.

Luke 10:19 In this verse both the word *dunamis* and *exousia* are used. The first “power” is *exousia*; the second “power” is *dunamis*.

Energieo, Energema, Energeia

The next word (or word group) that we will look at is the word *energeo* with two related words, *energema* and *energeia*. The word *energeo* occurs 21 times in the New Testament and is translated 8 ways, most often as “work” (12 times). *Energema* is used 2 times and translated “operation” and “working”. *Energeia* is used 8 times and translated 4 ways, most often as “working” (4 times).

I Corinthians 12: 6 “operations” is the word *energema*; “worketh” is *energeo*.

I Corinthians 12:10 “working” is *energema*.

I Corinthians 12:11 “worketh” is *energeo*.

Galatians 2:8 “wrought effectually” and “was mighty in” are both *energeo*.

Ephesians 3:20 “power” is *dunamis*; “worketh” is *energeo*.

Philippians 2:13 “worketh” and “do” are both *energeo*.

REFER TO CHART

Acts 2:4

And they were all filled with the holy spirit – *dunamis*

And began to speak – *exousia*

With other tongues – *energema*

As the Spirit gave them utterance - *energeo*