

These changes relate particularly to two areas. 1) The varying extent of ideas included in each word; 2) the varying usage of syntactical forms.

1) It is only in very technical writing that a word can be said to represent a point. Generally a word represents an area, and the precise part of that area that is intended must be determined from examination of context. Thus a very different part of the area covered by the word "end" is involved in James 5:11 from that involved in Luke 1:33. Luke 1:33 reads: "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." James 5:11 reads in part: "Ye...have seen the end of the Lord." If "end" in James 5:11 were taken in the sense in which it is used in Luke 1:33 the result would be nonsense. There are many verses in which either portion of the area of meaning of "end" might conceivably fit, and one must seek to determine from context whether it indicates a terminus or a purpose. In both of these verses the English word represents the Greek telos, so examination of the original gives no clue to the part of the area that is meant. A "death of god" theologian might interpret James 5:11 to mean that God is dead, on the basis of the way the word "end" is used in Luke 1:33. Many Scripture passages would easily show that such an interpretation would be quite out of harmony with Biblical teaching.

In other cases one English word may overlap with various Greek words and the area of meaning of a Greek word may overlap with several English words.

In any language the only solid way to determine the area of meaning of a word is by the examination of the various contexts in which it occurs. Etymology may suggest meanings but cannot prove them. Only usage can prove that a meaning is possible.