

## THE USE AND ABUSE OF AUTHORITY: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ PASSAGES IN REVELATION

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The purpose of this dissertation is to carry out a linguistic, structural, and exegetical investigation of the term ἐξουσία as it occurs in the Greek text of the Apocalypse.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the pertinent literature dealing with ἐξουσία. The review follows a chronological order to demonstrate a trend in the development of ἐξουσία studies. There is a shift in the rendering of the term. Earlier works put more emphasis on the meaning of power or authority, whereas recent studies point to liberty and right as the primary meaning of ἐξουσία. There is a current tendency to emphasize philosophical and socio-ethical aspects without the necessary etymological study of the term.

Chapter 2 surveys the usage of ἐξουσία in extracanonical (Greco-Roman, Jewish apocalyptic, Qumran, Rabbinic, Hellenistic Jewish, Papyri, and Inscriptions) and canonical (LXX, Biblia Hebraica, Greek NT) literary sources that are linguistic backgrounds to the meaning of the term. The Greco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish works generally employ ἐξουσία with regard to human power relationships. The NT use of the term closely follows the LXX and the Jewish apocalyptic usage particularly in the area of delegated power/authority in human and supernatural relationships.

Chapter 3 focuses on the specifics of the twenty-one ἐξουσία occurrences in Revelation. These passages are investigated in the literary structure and context of the book. The role ἐξουσία plays is the overall literary context of the Apocalypse is further demonstrated by microstructural analyses of the given pericopes. It is concluded that the term plays a special focusing role both in the macro- and microstructures of the Apocalypse. Thus, it significantly contributes to the center message of Revelation, which is the activity and judgment of antidivine powers.

In the summary and conclusions of the dissertation a synthesis of the research is given, then theological and ethical implications are pointed out including some areas of further study.