

Aland, Barbara, et al., eds.

The UBS Greek New Testament: A Reader's Edition

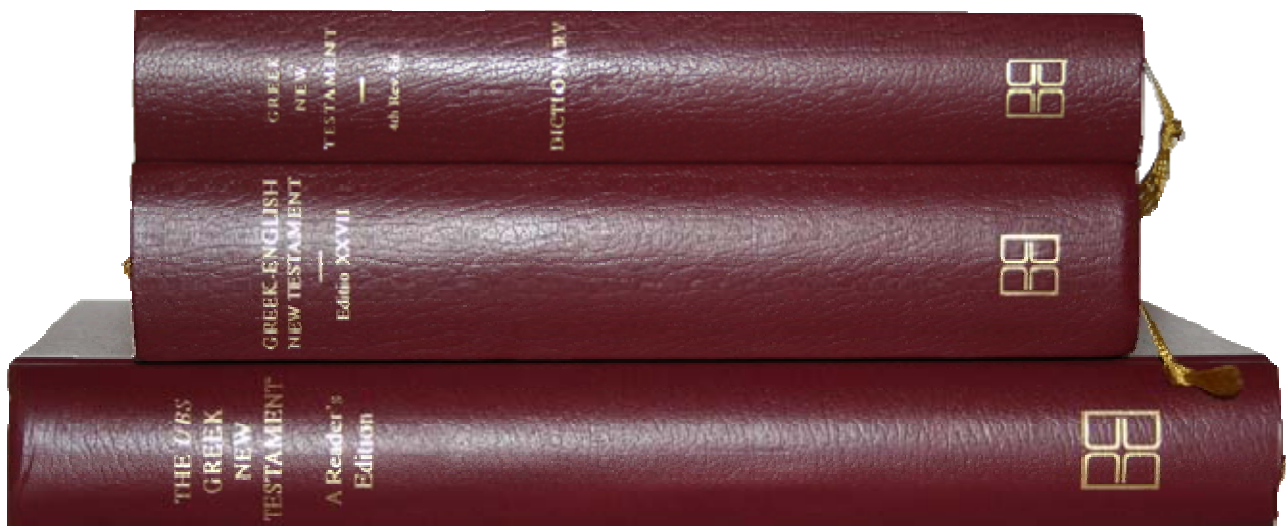
Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007. Pp. 704. Hardcover.
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Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

New Jersey

When the UPS driver arrived with the package from Hendrickson I was very excited to dive right into the *UBS Reader's Edition*. I had heard quite a bit about it since late last year and so far everything had been fairly positive. When I opened the box my initial reaction was: 'Wow, it's big!' For some reason or another I had assumed that it would be roughly the same size as the UBS4 or NA27-RSV Diglot, but it's closer in size to the NA27-NET Diglot (same height while slightly thinner). Below is a photo showing the difference.



The main features are listed as:

- Translation of all vocabulary items occurring 30 times or less in the New Testament at the bottom of each page
- Translations given according to context
- Definitions of idiomatic word combinations
- Grammatical analysis of all difficult verb forms
- Reader-friendly layout enabling the reader to transfer easily from text to dictionary and vice versa
- An appendix providing translations of all vocabulary items occurring more than 30 times in the New Testament
- Including the maps from the UBS Greek New Testament

To this I'd add the aesthetic features:

- Classic burgundy hardcover
- Sewn binding allowing the book to lay flat
- Gold ribbon marker
- Thick cream colored paper minimizing bleed-through

Having heard many a GNT reader complain about the italic font of the UBS4 (which I have never found to be a problem) or the Zondervan *Reader's Greek New Testament* (which I have never had the pleasure of reading), you will be interested to know that the italics have been reserved for the quoting of Old Testament passages only. The font is also larger than that of the UBS4 or NA27-RSV Diglot. I imagine that it's comparable to that of the large print NA27, but having never viewed that particular GNT I can't know for sure. This Reader's Edition also maintains the English section headings that are found in the UBS4 which I always find helpful. And as if it needs to be stated, there is no text-critical apparatus. That space has been devoted to the vocabulary glosses.

Now onto functionality: When I reviewed Zondervan's *A Reader's Hebrew Bible* I noted how I was working through sections of Genesis with much greater ease than with a straight Hebrew text & lexicon or one of my diglots. I can easily say the same of this volume, but my comprehension with this volume is much greater than with the other because I have a decent amount of Greek vocabulary memorized. It just so happens that most of the vocabulary I don't know appears in the footnotes. The footnotes themselves are really helpful and they go beyond merely stating the simple definition of the word, at times they give the parsing information as well.

For example, in John 13:4 the word *διέζωσεν* is footnoted and the gloss reads: “*διαζωννυμι 3s aor act ind, come/go (out)*” [p. 287] indicating the person (third), the number (singular), the tense (aorist), the voice (active), and the mood (indicative). I also like that the “Running Greek-English dictionary” compiled by Barclay Newman matches for the most part what I’m used to from my UBS4. This has made the transition to this Bible very easy and for doing quick translation; this is a great little dictionary.

So now onto the question of who this Bible is for; if you read Greek with ease then you won't need this Reader's Edition; you'll do fine to stick with your NA27 or whatever other Greek text you prefer. But if you're like me, i.e., having a very limited knowledge of Greek and a little bit of vocab. under your belt, then this is absolutely a great volume to continue learning with. My daughter just completed kindergarten and I've noticed that they haven't been teaching her to read by explaining *how* language works or *why* it does the things that it does, but rather they've just taught her how to sound words out and thrown her into the texts that she's been reading. And at the end of the year I can say that she now reads amazingly well! A volume like this is perfect for just submerging yourself in the text. At the moment I see no room for improvement.