LOGOS BIBLE SOFTWARE 2.0A CD

System Requirement: MSWORD 3.1 or WINDOWS 95, 386-PC or higher with minimum of 4MB RAM (8MB RAM recommended)

Alas! A true multimedia and scholarly Bible software with the highest sophistication is available for Christian computer fan.

LOGOS 2.0A (the debugged version of 2.0) is the second generation of the CD-WORD Library developed by the Dallas Theological Seminary at a cost of nearly two million US dollars. When CD-WORD Library first appeared in 1990, it was a product ahead of its time. At that time, most HK people (even many computer shops) only know of CD being an audio device but not CD-ROM. Due to the fact that Windows was not yet popular, the CD-WORD Library had to include a runtime Windows (3.0) environment; this factor with other technical limitations were the reason for its incompatible with the later versions of the Windows such as 3.1 or 3.11. In 1992, a joint announcement was made by Logos Research Systems, Inc., CDWORD Software, Inc., and Dallas Theological Seminary that Logos Research Systems, Inc. will upgrade the highly acclaimed CDWORD Library for compatibility with Microsoft Windows 3.1, and future versions of MSWindows. The present LOGOS 2.0A is, however, more than just a system upgrade. Apart from the addition of many more Bible texts and reference works, such as the morphological Hebrew text developed by Westminster Theological Seminary, the interface of the software is substantially different. The following is a list of items included in the full (Level 4) version of LOGOS 2.0A:

English Versions: KJV, NIV, ASV (1901), NASB, RSV, NRSV, NKJV; **Original Language texts**: NA 26th, Gramcord Gk Morph., BHS Hebrew with Morph., Rahlf's LXX with Morph., Byzantine/Majority GNT, Textus Receptus (Stephen's 1550 and Scrivener's 1881) GNT, Latin Vulgate; **Original Language Tools**: Vine's Dict., Tense-Voice-Mood, Abridged Kittel, BAGD, LS-Intermediate, Louw-Nida Lexicon, Chapman's GNT Insert; **Bible Dictionaries**: New Bible Dictionary, Harper's Bible Dictionary; **Bible Commentaries**: Bible

Knowledge Commentary, Matthew Henry's Commentary, Harper's Bible Commentary, Jerome Biblical Commentary; **Other Tools**: Strong's Numbers with Lexicon, Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, New Nave's Topical Bible, Torrey's New Topical Textbook, The Complete Guide to Bible Versions, Logos Bible Map Set; **Devotional Tools**: Pilgrim's Progress, Spurgeon's Morning & Evening, Logos Hymnal, St. Augustine's Confessions.

There are other levels (One, Two, Three) which refer to the size of this collection of electronic books and not the performance. It is clear that a wide range of users with different backgrounds can benefit for it. There are many add-on items already included in the CD itself and need only a special code to "unlock" these items; this certainly makes any purchase on the add-on much easier (I must say that the unlocking mechanism is quite sophisticated). Logos has an ambitious plan to release new product add-on every month. In a recent issue of the Christian Computing Magazine (Sept. 1995), it announced the addition of more than 25 new electronic titles for the LOGOS according to the Logos Library System electronic publishing standard (would this eventually be the standard format for electronic publication, at least in the Christian circle?). This demonstrates the fact that the purpose of LOGOS is not to produce a Bible software, but a biblical research library system. They are also aggressively sourcing contractual rights to major reference works not only lexical, commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and atlases, but also collections of English translation of Christian classics such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Wesley, the Nicene, Anti-Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers. Because of its connection with the Electronic Bible Society (a not-for-profit organization with the mission to include all of the historical materials of the Christian faith, exceeding 5,000,000 pages), all these and many other works will be made available in the future versions of LOGOS at a very reasonable cost. One important release which may be available not long after the appearance of this review is the Six-Volumes Anchor Bible Dictionary by Doubleday.

Compared with the Bible Windows (BWIN) and Bible Works for Windows (BWORKS), LOGOS is reputed as the most user-friendly program. Its interface is extremely intuitive, and virtually any novice is able to displaying texts in various versions and doing searches in 10-15 minutes. This perhaps is the most encouraging news for any computer novice. Furthermore, without the need of going through a written manual, users have the privilege of watching a live demonstration by the president of the company. This 30 minutes long video-tape would certainly carry one through the program with very little difficulty.

CDWORD Software, Inc. (or, Dallas Theological Seminary) has spent most of the money in the development of the **CDWORD** Library on the management of this massive data. To hold all the data listed above in a CD is not difficult, most important is the interface which includes the display and search algorithm. In this respect, LOGOS 2.0 has done an exceptionally good job. To begin with, the hypertexts is extremely impressive, one can virtually link any word in any text to any other references of this word in any other work (or, group of works), including maps and charts. This means, a search for the term "Galilee" would list every occurrence of Jerusalem in the Bible, other Bible versions, Bible dictionaries, commentaries, biographies, Bible handbooks, lexicons, hymn books, maps, or atlases ... instantly. This technology could be applied to all the additional add-ons available at present or in the future. The result of the search can be cut and pasted to any Windows based word processor. You could even specify bibliographical citation styles for formal documentation.

The current version has improved on the "Library Browser" which is a multi-tiered display of book categories, titles and contents. Using the mouse, a user may open any book or simply expand the display to include the full table of contents. The browser also allows the user to select entire categories of books for instant searches. Some searching techniques reflect quite an amazing capabilities. For instance, you can use pre-defined search ranges in a single category, book, or chapter ... or, you can specify and store your own specially-defined ranges and even set non-contiguous ranges. To recall, modify, and re-execute any of the last 80 searches can be done with ease and speed. There are more than 20 different search operators available. Wild card and boolean techniques are standard. Furthermore, with the database of the Nave's Topical Bible, the Cross Reference searching allows the user to limit the searches not only to specific books, but to specific topics in those books. For example, looking up "love", the program will bring you under the topic "marriage." Since the program is using an implementation of Unicode, it is also able to search and display a whole variety of texts, maps, graphs, and tables, in a variety of languages. As all the data could be downloadable into a harddisk, one could certainly speed up the searching progress. The note system in 2.0A has been thoroughly revised.

With so many different language tools available (with every word of both Hebrew and Greek testaments analyzed and linked to many standard references) in this CD, any student could pretend to be more-or-less Hebrew and Greek scholars, and these tools certainly threaten the existence of any language teacher and at the same time redefine the meaning of their existence. Just one example

is suffice here; LOGOS 2.0 links the NASB (a very literal translation) with the NA-26th Greek text. You can click on a word in the English text and the underlying Greek word is highlighted. Clicking on the Greek word with the right mouse button give you both the option to display the Greek morphological data for the word. A key word search on the Greek dictionary form will allow the user to search through actual Greek lexicons for additional information. With an electronic library as integrated as this software, one could easily achieve a lot of research effort efficiently and effectively. It is no kidding that one really can write (or "edit", or "rewrite") an exegetical paper with some reflections from John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress or Spurgeon's Morning and Evening (or with more, Packer, Ryle, Sproul, and others). As a seminary professor, it's not so much that my role is threatened by this integrated system, rather it is the philosophy of my class presentation has to be reshaped. If my presence in the classroom is merely to bringing together information from various sources, I would never be able to do a better job than the computer networking.

One disadvantage, perhaps, for seminary students is its inability to display the biblical texts together with a literal translation and morphological information in interlinear format. This feature is probably only found in the Bible Windows. In 2.0A the new "Inline Strong's Numbers" may make up for this deficiency, though still not satisfactory. A major problem is the grammatical search. Among all the major bible softwares that I know of, probably no software could provide the kind of flexibility and manipulation in the search function such as the Gramcord system (the Window version is coming out very soon). Compare with BBW and BWIN, LOGOS is certainly a bit clumsy. I hope that this feature could be improved.

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