Intermediate Greek
Western Reformed Seminary (www.wrs.edu)
John A. Battle, Th.D.

NOTES ON GREEK SYNTAX

These notes deal with Greek grammar and its relation to biblical interpretation. These notes are not complete, but cover major areas of syntax as they commonly impact the interpretation of the NT. There are many categories and points in the grammars not included in these notes, and the student should be familiar with a standard grammar. Knowledge of the subtleties of Greek syntax will greatly assist understanding the New Testament text.

Cases

Three-fifths of the words in the NT have case endings: nouns, adjectives (including the article), pronouns, and participles.

Prepositions are used with three different cases of their objects: genitive, dative, and accusative. The quickest method to determine the influence of case in these constructions is to check the lexicon under the appropriate preposition. In this section we will note the uses of the cases when used without a preposition.

Many grammars divide the five Greek cases (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative) into eight cases instead, by superimposing Sanskrit and Latin categories on the genitive and dative cases. Here we will follow the five-case system. Some grammarians go to great lengths to assert that the case should be determined by the word's function in the sentence, not by its morphology, or form; A. T. Robertson and Dana and Mantey fall into this category. These notes follow the tradition of Moulton and others (table comparing the systems, Wallace 34). The average speaker—and the average Greek student—can easily understand various uses of cases without positing additional cases as well. The net result is similar: either the form determines the case, with variations in the uses of the cases, or the function determines the case, with various forms used for the cases (but with many more cases!).

The nominative and vocative cases

The vocative case is used solely for direct address. Often the nominative functions as a vocative. Of course, in many cases the forms are morphologically indistinguishable.

- *Vocative*—Luke 1:3, "Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,"

- *Nominative*—Luke 8:54, "But he took her by the hand and said, 'My child, get up!'"

The nominative functions usually as the subject of the sentence. It may also serve as the predicate nominative.

- *Subject*—John 3:35, "The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands."

- *Predicate nominative*—1 Thess 2:20, "Indeed, you are our glory and joy."

Note that when a sentence contains both a subject and predicate nominative in the nominative case, the subject will be the more definite of the two (more definite words include pronouns, proper names, and nouns with the article; Wallace 41-46).

Note that often with the future tense of εἰμί *eimi* ("to be"), the predicate nominative may be expressed by εἰς *eis* plus the accusative, especially on OT quotes. This pattern follows Semitic influence, and contains the idea of "becoming" (Wallace 47-48; see Zerwick 10-11).

> Matt 19:5-6, "and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."
>
> Matt 21:42, "Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures: "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes"?'"

The genitive case

The eight-case system divides the genitive case into two cases, genitive and ablative—the "genitive" denoting description, and the "ablative" denoting separation.

The genitive used as an adjective

—The more common usage

Genitive of possession—identifies owner of property.

Luke 5:3, "He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon [literally, "of Simon"], and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat."

Genitive of origin and relationship—identifies one's father, owner, husband, etc.

Matt 4:21, "Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets."

Mark 16:1, "When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body."

Genitive of description—sometimes called attributive genitive, or genitive of characteristic quality; describes the noun as an adjective would (Wallace has a separate category for genitive of description, as a catch-all separate from attributive genitive, 79-81).

Luke 16:9, "I tell you, use worldly wealth ("wealth of the world") to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings." (In verse 11 the related adjective is used to modify "wealth.")

Mark 1:4, "And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."

Partitive genitive—identifies the whole from which a part is taken.

Luke 5:3, "He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat."

Rev 11:13, "At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed."

Genitive of apposition—also called "epexegetical genitive," defines the noun it modifies.

John 2:21, "But the temple he had spoken of was his body." (Cf. KJV—"But he spake of the temple of his body.")

Mark 10:6, "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.'" (Identifies which "beginning" – the creation of Adam and Eve)

2 Cor 5:5, "Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." (cf. KJV—"Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.")

Comparative genitive—used for second member of a comparison, translate using "than."

John 13:16, "I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him."

Subjective genitive—identifies the subject of the action implied by the noun

Rom 2:16, "This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares." (i.e., the gospel Paul was preaching)

Objective genitive—identifies the object of the action implied by the noun

Rom 10:2, "For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God (literally, "they have a zeal of God"), but their zeal is not based on knowledge."

**Often it is difficult to determine if a certain genitive is objective or subjective—cf. 2 Cor 5:14, "For Christ's love ("the love of Christ") compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died."

The genitive used as an adverb or verbal complement

Genitive of separation—related to genitive of source; identifies (former) location or place from which now absent.

Eph 2:12, "Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship (literally, "strangers of the commonwealth") in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world."

Genitive of time—identifies the time of action mentioned by the verb

John 3:2, "He came to Jesus at night (literally, "of night") and said, 'Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.'"

Genitive of place—identifies the place of action mentioned by the verb.

> Luke 16:24, "So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water (literally, "of water") and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'"

Genitive absolute—used to set off an adverbial participle phrase in which the subject of the participle does not have a corresponding noun or pronoun in the main clause (discussed under participles in Wallace 654-55).

> John 5:13, "Jesus departed, a crowd being in that place" (both the noun "crowd" and the participle "being" are in the genitive case).

Certain types of verbs—often are followed by the genitive:

- "take, eat," followed by partitive genitive
- "touch, hold, desire, reach, obtain, fill, be full of"
- verbs of sensation: "smell, hear"
- verbs of emotion: "be angry at, wonder at, bear with"
- "remember, forget"
- "rule over, surpass"

The dative case

The dative is used in three major ways:

- Pure dative: To/for/with reference to whom?
- Instrumental dative: How?
- Locative dative: Where?

Pure dative

The pure dative "expresses the person more remotely concerned" (Blass).

Indirect object—same as with English (uses "to" or "for").

Matt 18:26, "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.'" [cf. KJV, "The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all."]

Dative of advantage or disadvantage—also called dative of interest; same function as indirect object without formal structure (see BDF, pp. 101-02).

Rom 14:4, "Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand."

Dative of reference/respect—NT usually uses accusative for this; relates action to a particular sphere or category (see BDF, p. 105, for more examples).

Luke 18:31, "All the things written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man"

Rom 6:2, "By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"

Dative of possession—strong personal interest

Luke 1:7, "But they had no children (literally, "there was not to them a child"), because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years."

Locative dative

The locative dative places the noun or its action in a particular place or time or sphere.

Dative of sphere—identifies logical limits of action, as opposed to spatial or temporal limits; used with nouns, verbs, or adjectives

Heb 5:11, "We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn." [cf. KJV, "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing."]

Rom 4:20, "Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God."

Matt 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." (NIV)

Dative of place—identifies place of action

> John 21:8, "The other disciples followed in the boat (the word "in" is understood from the dative), towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards."

Dative of time—identifies time of action (see Dana and Mantey, p. 90)

> Matt 20:19, "and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!"

> Acts 8:11, "They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic."

Instrumental dative

> The instrumental dative describes the means, cause, or manner of action.

Associative dative—identifies one's companion in action. Often used with σύν- verbs.

> Mark 14:51, "A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus" (literally, "was following with him").

> Eph 2:5, "He made us alive together with Christ."

Dative of manner—describes how action is done; sometimes called adverbial dative.

> 1 Cor 11:5, "And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is just as though her head were shaved."

Dative of means—specifies the means used by the agent; distinct from the agent (the agent often uses ὑπό *hupo* with the genitive).

> Matt 8:16, "When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick."

> Acts 12:2, "He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword."

Dative of cause—more closely linked to the agent (BDF cites Rom 11:20).

Heb 2:15, “and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”

The dative as a compliment

Many verbs and particles customarily take the dative. See Wallace 171-175; for lists, see BDF 104, 106-07, 108-09.

The accusative case

The accusative is usually the direct object of the verb, although it has a few specialized adverbial uses, which often are duplicated by other cases.

Accusative of direct object—same as with English.

John 8:46, “Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don’t you believe me?”

Double accusative—both objects are found in the accusative (full discussion in Wallace 181-189).

Matt 22:45, “If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?”

John 14:26, “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

John 15:15, “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”

Cognate accusative—same as direct object, except the same word is used for the verb as is for the object.

2 Tim 4:7, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

Accusative as subject of infinitive—sometimes included under accusative of respect (see under infinitives).

Adverbial accusative—this category includes accusatives of extent, manner, and reference

> *Accusative of Manner*—Matt 10:8, "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give (literally, "gift receive, gift give")."
>
> *Accusative of Extent*—Luke 22:41, "He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed."
>
> *Accusative of Respect/Reference*—Rom 16:6, "Greet Mary, who worked very hard (literally, "many things") for you."

Two rules about the article

> [See the thorough discussion of the Greek article in Wallace 206-290; of these two rules, 255-290.]

Colwell's Rule

> Later research refined the original rule as stated by E. C. Colwell in 1933. It involves the definiteness of a predicate nominative when it has no article and is located in front of the verb. Most indefinite predicate nominatives are found after the verb. Here is Wallace's conclusion:
>
> "An anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominative is normally qualitative, sometimes, definite, and only rarely indefinite" (Wallace 262).
>
> *Qualitative*—John 1:14, "The Word became flesh" (lit. "the Word flesh became").
>
> *Definite*—John 1:49, "You are the King of Israel" (lit. "you king are of Israel").

Granville Sharp Rule

> Original rule by Granville Sharp, published in 1798.
>
> > "When the copulative καί connects two nouns of the same case, [viz. nouns (either substantive or adjective, or participles) of personal description, respecting office, dignity, affinity, or connection, and attributes, properties, or qualities, good or ill], if the article ὁ, or any of its

> cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle; i.e., it denotes a farther description of the first-named person." (quoted in Wallace 271)

Rule applies only to personal, singular, and non-proper substantives. The same person is referred to, unless

1. Neither is impersonal
2. Neither is plural
3. Neither is a proper name

Mark 6:3, "This is the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James."

Titus 2:13, "While we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." Note how the G. S. Rule asserts that the two nouns "God" and "Savior" refer to the same person, Jesus Christ. This rule is used in several passages in the argument supporting the deity of Jesus Christ from the Bible.

In cases where these conditions are not met, they may still refer to the same person, but this rule will not assert that they do. However, in any case, the two substantives are viewed as united in some way in the particular action described in the sentence.

> For example, when "the Pharisees and Sadducees" are mentioned in the Gospels, they often are acting together in opposition to Jesus. Even though they are not the same group, and the rule does not apply (the three conditions are not met), they still are acting as a united group in the context.

Verb Tense & Mood

Verb tense (indicative mood)

Grammarians used to link tense too closely to time; now they recognize the flexibility of time, even in the indicative. Later they came to use the term *Aktionsart* ("type of action") to describe the thrust of the tenses. Now they more often use the term *Aspekt* or *aspect*, emphasizing more the "view of the action" than the type of the action.

> [For surveys of tense usage, see Zerwick, 77-99; Blass, Debrunner, Funk, 166-81; Wallace, 494-586 (finite verbs), 587-655 (infinitives and participles). For an

excellent survey of the current status of study involving verbal aspect, see Robert E. Picirilli, "The Meaning of the Tenses in New Testament Greek: Where Are We?" *JETS* 48:3 (September 2005) 533-555. For a clear introduction to the relation of aspect and tense, see Constantine R. Campbell, *Basics of Verbal Aspect in Biblical Greek* (2008).]

Present indicative

(Cf. John A. Battle, *The Present Indicative in New Testament Exegesis*)

- Action viewed as present or habitual

  "He looses, is loosing."

Aorist indicative

- Simple view of the action

  "He loosed"

Imperfect indicative

- Action viewed as in progress in the past

  "He was loosing"

Perfect indicative

- Present state resulting from past action

  "He is loosed," or "He has loosed"

Pluperfect indicative

- Past state resulting from a previous action

  "He was loosed" or "He had loosed"

Future indicative

- Action yet to take place

  "He will loose"

Other moods of the verb

Along with the indicative mood, Greek verbs are found in the following moods: subjunctive, imperative, and optative. Participles and infinitives will be discussed in following sections.

Subjunctive

[See Wallace 461-480; Turner 93-117; Dana and Mantey 170-172; BDF 183-94; Zerwick discusses moods together, 100-23.]

The subjunctive is found in the present or aorist tenses, occasionally in the perfect. Normally the tense of the subjunctive makes little difference in its meaning (note the sane remarks of Machen, *NTGFB* 131). However, certain tenses are used in specialized formulas or uses of the subjunctive.

In general the subjunctive views action as possible, or wished, but not certain. It is the normal mood for the first member of a conditional sentence (the protasis) in which the outcome is still in doubt.

Matt 9:21, "She said to herself, 'If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.'"

Other special uses:

- Hortatory subjunctive

  Heb 4:14-16, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

- Subjunctive of prohibition

  Aorist subjunctive with μή *me* ("not")

  Cf. future indicative with οὐ *ou* ("not")

Matt 6:13, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

- Subjunctive of purpose

  With ἵνα *hina* ("that," "in order that")

  John 15:8, "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

- Deliberative subjunctive

  Rhetorical device; does not expect answer

  1 Cor 11:22, "Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not!"

Imperative

The imperative is found in either the present or the aorist. As with the subjunctive, the tenses make no difference in the time of action, but may indicate a different view of the commanded action. The aorist would be a simple command or prohibition, while the present may emphasize the continuing nature of the command or prohibition. Turner (3:74-78) tends to overstate the difference, as an examination of his examples will indicate.

Many have written that the present imperative used in prohibitions implies that the prohibited action is now going on. However, NT usage will show that this does not necessarily follow. That might impact the interpretation of such verses as 1 Tim 4:14, "Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you." In this case the Greek does not imply that Timothy had indeed been neglecting his gift.

Optative

[See Wallace 480-484; Zerwick 119, 123-24; Dana and Mantey 172-74; Turner 118-33 (good discussion); BDF 194-95.]

The optative is very rare in the NT, its main use being μὴ γένοιτο *me genoito*, "may it not be!" translated in the KJV "God forbid."

It is found in the protasis of conditional sentences in which the condition is possible but not probable. Occasionally the optative functions in the NT to express a wish, a prayer, a modest request, or in an oblique use in indirect discourse.

Wish:

> Mark 11:14, "Then he said to the tree, '<u>May no one ever eat</u> fruit from you again.' And his disciples heard him say it."
>
> 1 Pet 1:2, "<u>May</u> grace and peace <u>be multiplied</u> to you."
>
> Luke 1:38, "'I am the Lord's servant,' Mary answered. '<u>May it be to me</u> as you have said.' Then the angel left her."

Oblique use:

> Luke 22:23, "They began to question among themselves <u>which of them it might be</u> who would do this." (actual question: "Who is it?")

The optative is found in several tenses, and the tense distinction must be treated flexibly, in accordance with the context.

Infinitives

> [See Wallace 587-611; BDF 196-212; Turner 134-49; Zerwick 132-36; Dana and Mantey 208-20.]

Infinitives are verbal nouns, indeclinable forms found in the present, aorist, and perfect tenses. Tense distinctions in the infinitive are subtle, and normally are not related to time at all.

Infinitives are found without the article ("anarthrous") about 2,000 times and with the article ("articular") about 300 times in the NT. Most of the time the article, when used, serves to indicate the case which the infinitive should be considered to be when used with a preposition. The other times the article helps to fit the infinitive into the context of the sentence.

> [For a summary of statistics, see Dana and Mantey, p. 214.]

As in the English language, so in the Greek—the infinitive can function as an adverb, or as a substantive—a noun or an adjective.

Infinitives as adverbs

Infinitives may modify adjectives or adverbs, as in Mark 1:7, "And this was his message: 'After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.'" However, when used as adverbs, infinitives most frequently modify verbs:

Expressing purpose or result

This usage of the infinitive is found about 400 times in the NT.

> *Purpose*: Matt 2:2, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."
>
> *Result*: Rom 1:10, "And I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you."
>
> Heb 5:5, "So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest (literally, "did not glorify himself to become high priest"). But God said to him, 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'"

Expressing time

> [Very good discussion in Machen, *NTGFB*, pp. 137-39]

Actually, such infinitives act as nouns with a preposition—the articular infinitive with πρό *pro* + genitive, or πρίν *prin* or πρίν ἤ *prin ē* + accusative ("before"); ἐν *en* + dative ("in, while"), or μετά *meta* + accusative ("after").

> Mark 14:30, "'I tell you the truth,' Jesus answered, 'today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times.'"
>
> Matt 13:4, "As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up."
>
> Matt 26:32, "But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

Expressing cause

> 2 Corinthians 2:13, "I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find (literally, "not for me to find") my brother Titus there. So I said good-by to them and went on to Macedonia."

Infinitives as nouns

Most often the infinitive is the object of a verb. It also serves as a subject, indirect object, or object of a preposition.

> Mark 12:12, "Then they looked for a way to arrest him [literally, "they were seeking to arrest him"] because they knew he had spoken the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd; so they left him and went away."

Infinitives as adjectives

Frequently the infinitive modifies nouns, especially such nouns as "authority," "need," etc.

> John 1:12, "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

Participles

> [For a good summary of attributive, predicate, and substantive uses of adjectives (applicable here to participles), see Machen *NTGFB* 35-37; for syntax of participles, see Wallace 612-655; Turner 150-62; BDF 212-20; Zerwick 125-31; Dana and Mantey 220-33.]

Participles are verbal adjectives; they can be used in the sentence in one of four ways:

1. As a verb, in conjunction with helping verbs (periphrastic construction; Wallace 647-649)

   > Col 1:6, "All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth."

2. As an adjective, in the attributive position

   > "The swimming disciple grew tired."

3. As an adverb, in the predicate position

   > "The disciple, swimming, grew tired."

4. As a noun, in the substantive position

"The swimmer grew tired."

Participles are found in four tenses: present, aorist, perfect, future. The tense of the participle normally relates the time of the participle to that of the main verb, placing the view of the participle's action before, during, or after that of the main verb (there are some exceptions; see Zerwick 129).

Uses of participles

Attributive use

Attributive participles normally are translated by adjective clauses, using "who," "which," or "that." Sometimes the participle form can be maintained in the English ("the approaching crowd").

> John 6:50, "But here is the bread <u>that comes down</u> from heaven, which a man may eat and not die."

Substantive use

Substantive participles normally are translated by noun clauses ("he who . . ." or "that which . . ."), or occasionally by appropriate nouns ("the believers").

> Rev 1:5, "and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and <u>the ruler</u> of the kings of the earth. To him <u>who loves us</u> <u>and has freed us</u> from our sins by his blood,"

Adverbial use

Adverbial, or predicate, participles are used in a variety of ways:

- Temporal participle

  Very common; places participle before, during, or after main verb; translated with adverb clause using "before," "while," "after," or "when"

  Matt 2:7, "Then Herod summoned ["having called"] the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared."

- Modal participle

  Describes manner in which the main verb is carried out; often translated as English participle. This category may include participles of means.

  Matt 3:1, "In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea."

  Means—1 Cor 4:12, "We labor, working with our own hands."

- Causal participle

  Describes the reason or cause for the main verb. Can be translated using a "because" clause.

  Matt 1:19, "Joseph, being a righteous man, and not willing to disgrace her, determined to put her away secretly."

- Conditional/concessive participle

  A way of expressing the condition in a conditional sentence; can be translated using an "if" or "since" clause. Concessive participles would use "although."

  Matt 21:22, "All things whatever a person should ask in prayer, if you believe (lit. 'believing'), you will receive."

  Concessive—Rom 1:21, "Although they knew God (lit. 'knowing God'), they did not honor him as God."

- Purpose (telic) participle

  Expresses the purpose for the main verb. Often can be translated using the English infinitive.

  Luke 13:7, "For three years I have come to seek ('seeking') fruit."

- Result participle

  Shows the result of the action of the main verb. Often is closely related to the purpose participle when the purpose is successful.

  Mark 9:7, "A Cloud came, covering them."

- Circumstantial participle (Wallace, "participle of attendant circumstance")

  Equivalent of an additional finite verb; translated as a verb with "and"

  Matt 9:18, "A ruler <u>came and</u> ('having come') bowed down to him."

  2 Tim 4:11, "Only Luke is with me. <u>Get Mark and</u> bring him with you (lit. "having gotten Mark, bring him with you"), because he is helpful to me in my ministry."

- Redundant participle

  Formal equivalent of a Semitic construction or idiomatic thought pattern; often not necessary to translate at all ("he answered saying," most often in the Synoptic Gospels; good discussion in Zerwick 125-27)

Absolute constructions

When the sentence contains no suitable antecedent for an adverbial participle, the participle and its subject (if any) may be introduced into the sentence in the genitive case (occasionally the accusative case). This is called a genitive absolute (or accusative absolute).

[Machen *NTGFB* 124-25, has a good discussion.]

Matt 9:33, "And <u>when the demon was driven out</u>, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, 'Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.'"

Other uses of participles

Participles occasionally perform other tasks, as being used to emphasize a verb (related to the Hebrew infinitive absolute).

Matt 13:14, "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; <u>you will be ever seeing</u> (literally, "seeing you will see") but never perceiving.'"

They also can serve in the place of an imperative.

Rom 12:9-19 [all underlined words are participles used as imperatives]

[9] Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. [10] Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. [11] Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. [12] Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. [13] Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

[14] Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. [15] Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. [16] Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

[17] Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. [18] If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. [19] Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

Other items of syntax

While it is neither desirable nor possible to cover all of syntax in this brief section, a few common items are included here which often bear on the interpretation of a passage.

Prohibitions

Prohibitions normally are found in one of three forms:

- μή *me* with the aorist subjunctive
- μή *me* with the present imperative
- οὐ *ou* with the future indicative

The aorist subjunctive is a simple prohibition, "Don't do this."

The present imperative is a prohibition with continuing force, "Don't be doing this." While the present imperative does point to the continuing nature of the prohibition, it does not necessarily imply that the person is presently engaged in the prohibited action. (A Greek teacher of mine once noticed in Greece a sign in a bus: "No Talking to the Driver"—using the form in question. See the article in Wallace 714-717.)

A stronger prohibition, used for example in the Ten Commandments, is the simple οὐ *ou* ("not") with the future indicative, "You will not do this."

Expressions of purpose

The purpose of an action can be expressed in a variety of ways (for a brief discussion, see Machen *NTGFB* 132, 138, 195, 196).

- ἵνα *hina* ("that, in order that") or ὅπως *hopos* ("that, in order that") with the subjunctive

- εἰς *eis* ("to, into") with the articular infinitive

  1 Thess 3:5, "For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about (εἰς τὸ γνῶναι) your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless."

- The genitive of the articular infinitive

  Acts 9:15, "But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry (τοῦ βαστάσαι) my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel."

- The anarthrous infinitive

  Matt 5:17, "Do not think that I have come to abolish (καταλῦσαι) the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish (καταλῦσαι) them but to fulfill (πληρῶσαι) them."

- Negative clauses with μή *me* or ἵνα μή *hina me* + subjunctive

The particle that more often expresses result is ὥστε *hoste*, "so that, with the result that."

Conditional sentences

The condition is expressed in the first part of the sentence (the protasis) and the consequence in the latter part of the sentence (the apodosis). There are over 600 formal conditional sentences in the NT, with many additional informal conditional sentences (see Wallace 679-712). Traditionally these sentences have been divided into four classes. The following chart summarizes these four classes:

Class	Protasis	Apodosis	Meaning	Example
I	εἰ *ei* + indicative		already determined as true or false	1 Pet 2:3 Matt 12:27
II	εἰ *ei* + secondary tense of the indicative	ἄν *an* + secondary tense of the indicative	contrary to fact	John 11:32
III	ἐάν *ean* + subjunctive		possible-probable future contingency	1 Pet 3:13
IV	εἰ *ei* + optative		remotely possible future contingency	1 Pet 3:14

Of special note is the fact that Class I conditions are not necessarily true to fact (contrary to some grammarians); for examples, see Battle, *The Present Indicative in New Testament Exegesis*, p. 167.

Questions expecting a negative or a positive answer

English provides a form for asking a question that expects a negative answer. Usually such a question is considered rhetorical—for example, "You don't like it, do you?" We would expect the answer, "Of course I don't." Greek has a similar feature; it uses the negative μή *me* ("not") with a verb in the indicative mood; normally this negative word appears only with the other moods of the verb. On the other hand, there are questions that expect a positive answer, such as the English question, "Don't you like it?" We would expect the answer, "Of course I do." In Greek questions expecting a positive answer use the normal negative with the indicative, οὐ *ou* ("not").

> Matt 26:25, "Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, 'Surely not I (uses *me*, expects negative answer), Rabbi?' Jesus answered, 'Yes, it is you.'"
>
> Luke 6:39 has both types of questions: "He also told them this parable: 'Can a blind man lead a blind man (uses *me*, expects negative answer)? Will they not both fall into a pit (uses *ou*, expects positive answer)?'"
>
> 1 Cor 12:29-30, "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?" All of these questions use *me*, expecting a negative answer—this is a good point for those who claim that all Christians should speak in tongues or possess some other supernatural gift.