

LESSON 30

Temporal Constructions 1: Clauses in Primary Sequence

30.1. Introduction

Three Lessons will deal with Subordinate Temporal clauses and with the Temporal phrases which use *πρίν* and the Infinitive. For convenience, all *πρίν* constructions (clauses and phrases) will be treated together after the other Temporal constructions. Lesson 30 deals with Temporal clauses in Primary sequence—the verbs in the leading clause refer to the present or the future, as do the Temporal clauses themselves.

Some prepositions may have a Temporal force: *ἀπό* *from, since*; *εἰς* *until*; *ἐκ* *after*. Such prepositions will be considered here, only when they introduce an adjectival clause with Temporal force, for example, *ἀφ' οὗ* *from what <time>, ever since*.

Only the more common Temporal conjunctions and conjunctive phrases will be used in the Lessons and Exercises.

When a Temporal clause refers to a definite time, the Indicative Mood is used; the negative is *οὐ*. When a Temporal clause refers to an indefinite time, the Subjunctive Mood with *ἄν* is used in Primary sequence; the negative is *μή*. In Epic, *κε(ν)* (enclitic) is equivalent to *ἄν*. For the most part, Temporal clauses referring to the future use the indefinite construction, since what is in the future has not yet happened. In indefinite Temporal clauses in Primary sequence, some conjunctions, which end with a vowel, coalesce with *ἄν*.

<i>ὄτε ἄν</i>	=	<i>ὄταν</i>
<i>ὀπότε ἄν</i>	=	<i>ὀπόταν</i>
<i>ἐπεὶ ἄν</i>	=	<i>ἐπήν</i> , also <i>ἐπάν</i> (Aristotle +), <i>ἐπεάν</i> (Ionic)
<i>ἐπειδὴ ἄν</i>	=	<i>ἐπειδάν</i>

30.2. Contemporaneous Action in Temporal Clause

The main conjunctions are: ὅτε *when*; ὁπότε *when(ever)* (slightly less definite); ἠνίκα (*at the time*) *when*; ἔστω, ἔως, μέχρι *so long as, while*. The limits or duration of time may be emphasised in clauses introduced by ἐν ᾧ *during the time that, while*; ὅσον χρόνον *all through the time that, so long as*.

30.2.1. Definite

καὶ ... ἄν, ὦ Κυαξάρη, μᾶλλον σε ἐκόσμου ... ἢ νῦν, **ὅτε** σὺν τοιαύτῃ καὶ τοσαύτῃ δυνάμει οὕτω σοι ὀξέως ὑπακούω ... (X.Cyr. 2.4.6.)

*And would I be showing you, O Cyaxares, more respect ... than now, **when** I am obeying you so quickly with a force of such character and size ...?*

ὅτε with Present Indicative in the Temporal clause, contemporaneous with the Present potential Main clause (expressed by Past Imperf. Indic. with ἄν).

νύξ δ' ἔσται, **ὅτε** δὴ στυγερὸς γάμος ἀντιβολήσει οὐλομένης ἐμέθεν, τῆς τε Ζεὺς ὄλβον ἀπήυρα. (Hom.Od. 18.272–273.)

*And there will be a night, **when** indeed a hateful marriage will come upon poor me, <the one> whose happiness Zeus took away.*

ὅτε with Future Indicative in the Temporal clause (rare), contemporaneous with the Future Indicative of the Main clause. (τῆς τε: For this 'untranslatable τε' see Smyth, 1956, §2970; Hom.Od. 13.31, 60).

30.2.2. Indefinite

ἀλλ' **ὅταν** σπεύδῃ τις αὐτός, χὼ θεὸς συνάπτεται. (A.Pers. 742.)
*But **when** someone himself hastens on <to his doom>, the god also cooperates.*

ὅταν with Subjunctive in the Temporal clause, contemporaneous with the Present Indicative of the Main clause (referring to repeated action).

καὶ ἐν ᾧ ἂν ζῶμεν, οὕτως, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐγγυτάτω ἐσόμεθα τοῦ εἰδέειναι, ἐὰν ὅτι μάλιστα μηδὲν ὀμιλῶμεν τῷ σώματι ... (Pl.*Phd.* 67 A.)

And **while** we are alive, we shall on this condition, as it seems, be nearest to knowledge, if as much as possible we have no association with the body ...

ἐν ᾧ with ἂν and Subjunctive (slightly emphasising the duration of time) in the Temporal clause, contemporaneous with the Future Indicative of the Main clause.

30.3. Prior Action in Temporal Clause

The conjunctions ἐπεὶ, ἐπειδὴ and ὡς all have the meaning: *when, since, after*. In prose, ἐπειδὴ is more frequent than ἐπεὶ in a Temporal sense.

ἐπεὶ, ἐπειδὴ and ὡς may be used with the Superlative adverb τάχιστα to emphasise immediate priority: *as soon as*. The adverb τάχιστα is sometimes separated from the conjunction by one or more words. The separation occurs especially with ὡς, to avoid confusion with the idiom ὡς τάχιστα meaning ‘as soon as possible’.

In addition, the phrases ἐξ οὗ, ἐξ οὗτε, ἀφ’ οὗ and ἀφ’ οὗπερ all mean: *from what <time>, ever since*. These phrases introduce an adjectival-Temporal clause which emphasises a time limit, while the clause on which they depend expresses subsequent duration or repeated action.

30.3.1. Definite

ἐξ οὗ δ’ οἱ διερωτῶντες ὑμᾶς οὗτοι πεφήνασι ῥήτορες, τί βούλεσθε; τί γράψω; τί ὑμῖν χαρίσωμαι; προπέποται τῆς παραυτίκα χάριτος τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράγματα ... (D. 3.22.)

But **ever since** these orators have appeared, who constantly ask you, ‘What do you want? What <law> am I to propose? In what <way> am I to oblige you?’, the interests of the city have been squandered for <the price of> momentary gratification.

ἐξ οὗ with Present Perfect Indicative emphasises a limit (which has been reached), while the Main clause expresses subsequent repeated action.

30.3.2. Indefinite

ἄνδρες γὰρ **ἐπειδάν**, ᾧ ἀξιοῦσι προύχειν, κολουσθῶσι, τό γ' ὑπόλοιπον αὐτῶν τῆς δόξης ἀσθενέστερον αὐτὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἐστίν ... (Th. 7.66.3.)

*For, **when** men are thwarted in that in which they claim to excel, what is left of their reputation is weaker than its former self [lit. 'is itself weaker than itself'] ...*

ἐπειδάν with Subjunctive in the Temporal clause denotes action prior to the ongoing state expressed by the verb 'to be' in the Main clause.

ὡς γὰρ ἡμεῖς εἰκάζομεν, οὐκ ἐκὰς πάρεσται ὁ βάρβαρος ἐσβαλὼν ἐς τὴν ἡμετέραν, ἀλλ' **ἐπειδὴν τάχιστα** πύθηται τὴν ἀγγελίην ὅτι οὐδὲν ποιήσομεν τῶν ἐκείνος ἡμέων προσεδέετο. (Hdt. 8.144.5.)

*For as we surmise, the foreigner will invade our <country> and will be upon us not in any long time, but **as soon as** he has heard the message, that we shall do nothing of what that man was asking of us.*

ἐπειδὴν τάχιστα with Subjunctive in the Temporal clause emphasises immediate priority in relation to the Future Indicative of the Main clause. τῶν (Ionic) = ᾧν (Attic).

30.4. Subsequent Action in Temporal Clause: Indefinite

The conjunctions ἕσττε, ἕως and μέχρι all have the meaning: *until*. (As noted in §30.2, these conjunctions may also express contemporaneous action: *while*.) Temporal clauses expressing subsequent action in Primary sequence are always indefinite, since it is not known exactly when the time limit ('until') will be reached. Temporal clauses expressing subsequent action may be anticipated by Temporal adverbs such as πρίν (Epic) or πρότερον (Attic), or by adverbial phrases such as μέχρι τούτου. These expressions are redundant but emphatic.

καὶ μέχρι γε τούτου πλανῶνται, ἕως ἄν τῆ τοῦ
ξυνεπακολουθοῦντος τοῦ σωματοειδοῦς ἐπιθυμίας ἐνδεθῶσιν εἰς
σῶμα. (Pl.*Phd.* 81 D–E.)

*And right up to this <time> they wander around, until, by reason of the
desire for the bodily-nature which follows along with <them>, they are bound
to a body.*

ἕως ἄν with Subjunctive in the Temporal clause denotes action at any
time prior to that of the Main clause. As here, the Subjunctive is most
often Aorist.

References

Goodwin (1889), *Syntax of the moods and tenses of the Greek verb*, §§514–522,
529, 532–533, 539–540, 556, 558 (Temporal clauses awkwardly treated as
'Relative' clauses together with adjectival clauses and adverbial clauses of place
and manner); 611–612, 613.3–613.5 and 615–620 (Temporal constructions
referring to subsequent action, except πρίν).

Smyth (1956), *Greek grammar*, §§2383–2403, 2409–2413.

EXERCISE 30

Translate the following passages.

1. ἕως οὖν ἔτι ἀπαράσκευοι θαρσοῦσι ..., ἐγὼ μὲν ἔχων τοὺς μετ'
ἔμαντοῦ καὶ φθάσας, ἦν δύνωμαι, προσπεσοῦμαι δρόμῳ κατὰ
μέσον τὸ στράτευμα.

δρόμῳ	<i>at a run</i>
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2. τῶν μὲν γὰρ ὀργιζομένων ἐστὶν ὀξέως τι κακὸν τὸν λελυπηκότ'
ἐργάσασθαι, τῶν δ' ἀδικουμένων, ὅταν ποθ' ὑφ' αὐτοῖς λάβωσι
τὸν ἡδικηκότα, τότε τιμωρήσασθαι.

ἐστίν	<i>it is <characteristic of> (+ Gen.)</i>
ὑπό (+ Dat.)	<i>under <the control of></i>
τιμωρεῖν (Act. and Mid.)	<i>to punish</i>

3. ἐπὴν διαλλαγῆτε, ταῦτα δράσετε.
4. εἰ δ' ἂν ἐμοὶ τιμὴν Πρίαμος Πριάμοιο τε παῖδες
τίνειν οὐκ ἐθέλωσιν Ἀλεξάνδροιο πεσόντος,
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ ἔπειτα μαχήσομαι εἵνεκα ποινηῆς
αὐθι μένων, ἧὸς κε τέλος πολέμοιο κιχεῖω.

τιμή, -ῆς, ἡ	<i>price</i>
Πριάμοιο (Epic)	Πριάμου (Attic)
Ἀλεξάνδροιο πεσόντος	Gen. abs. (Temporal)
αὐτὰρ (adv.)	<i>then</i> (drawing consequence of a condition)
ποινή, -ῆς, ἡ	<i>recompense</i>
αὐθι (adv.)	<i>here</i>
ἧὸς κε (Epic)	ἕως ἄν (Attic)
κι(γ)χάνειν	<i>to reach</i> (here 1st pers. sg. Aor. Subj.)

5. τοῖς δὲ τυράννοις οὐδὲν ὑπάρχει τοιοῦτον, ἀλλ' ..., ἐπειδὴν εἰς
τὴν ἀρχὴν καταστῶσιν, ἀνουθέτητοι διατελοῦσιν·

οὐδὲν ... τοιοῦτο(ν)	Nom. neut. sg.; understand <i>help, advantage.</i>
διατελεῖν	<i>to continue</i>

6. Wait until you [sg.] learn *the rest* in addition.

<i>to learn in addition</i>	προσμανθάνειν
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7. And when I have accomplished what I want, I shall come fully prepared, in order to lead you [pl.] away to Greece and to go away myself to my own command.

<i>to accomplish</i>	διαπράσσεσθαι (Mid.)
<i>fully prepared</i>	Aor. or Perf. Mid. Partc. of συσκευάζειν
<i>command</i>	ἀρχή, -ῆς, ἡ

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