

LESSON 31

Temporal Constructions 2: Clauses in Past Sequence

31.1. Introduction

In Past sequence, 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 Optative Mood without ἄν is used; the negative is μή. But sometimes the Primary construction is used even in Past sequence ('Vivid' construction). The common conjunctions and conjunctive phrases are the same as in Lesson 30.

31.2. Contemporaneous Action in Temporal Clause

31.2.1. Definite

ὅσον δὲ χρόνον ἐκαθέζετο ὁ Κῦρος ἀμφὶ τὴν περὶ τὸ φρούριον οἰκονομίαν, τῶν Ἀσσυρίων τῶν κατὰ ταῦτα τὰ χωρία πολλοὶ μὲν ἀπῆγον ἵππους, πολλοὶ δὲ ἀπέφερον ὄπλα, φοβούμενοι ἤδη πάντας τοὺς προσχώρους. (X.Cyr. 5.3.25.)

And all through the time that Cyrus remained inactive concerning arrangements about the fort, many of the Assyrians in these parts were withdrawing their horses, and many were handing in weapons, since by now they were in fear of all their neighbours.

ὅσον χρόνον with Past Imperfect Indicative emphasises the duration of time.

31.2.2. Indefinite

... ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τελευτῆς, ὄτ' ἤδη μέλλοιεν ἀποπλεῖν ὡς τοὺς γονέας καὶ τοὺς φίλους τοὺς ἑαυτῶν, οὕτως ἠγάπων τὴν διατριβὴν ὥστε μετὰ πόθου καὶ δακρύων ποιεῖσθαι τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν. (Isoc. 15.88.)

... *but at the end, when they were now about to sail away to their parents and their own family members, they were so content with their way of life as to make their departure with regret and tears.*

ὄτ(ε) and Optative without ἄν denotes any (rather than every) time contemporaneous with the repeated action of the Main clause.

31.3. Prior Action in Temporal Clause

With the Past Aorist Indicative, the conjunctions ἐπεὶ, ἐπειδὴ and ὡς usually imply action prior to that of the clause on which they depend. The Past Perfect Indicative is much less common in a Temporal clause, and often implies a past state resulting from completed action.

31.3.1. Definite

ἐπεὶ θεράπνας τῆσδε Θηβαίας χθονὸς
λιπόντες ἐξέβημεν Ἄσωποῦ ῥοάς,
λέπας Κιθαιρώνειον εἰσεβάλλομεν ... (E.Ba. 1043–1045.)

When we had left the dwellings of this Theban land and had crossed the streams of Asopus, we began to head into the broken-country of Cithaeron ...

ἐπεὶ with Past Aorist Indicative denotes action prior to that of the Main clause.

ὡς γὰρ ἐπετρόπευσε τάχιστα, μετέστησε τὰ νόμιμα πάντα, καὶ ἐφύλαξε ταῦτα μὴ παραβαίνειν. (Hdt. 1.65.5.)

For as soon as he had become guardian, he changed all the customs, and ensured that <people> should not transgress these.

ὡς ... τάχιστα with Past Aorist Indicative emphasises immediate priority.

ὅς **ἐπειδή** ἐπολιορκέετο ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων καὶ Κίμωνος τοῦ Μιλτιάδεω, παρεὼν αὐτῷ ὑπόσπονδον ἐξελεθεῖν καὶ νοστήσαι ἐς τὴν Ἀσίην, οὐκ ἐθέλησε ... (Hdt. 7.107.1.)

*And **when** he was being besieged by the Athenians and Cimon son of Miltiades, although it was possible for him to go out under truce and to return to Asia, he refused ...*

ἐπειδή with Past Imperfect Indicative denotes an action that has begun but not been completed. Thus, ἐπειδή ἐπολιορκέετο could be translated: 'after he began [OR: had begun] to be besieged'.

31.3.2. Indefinite

ἐπειδὴ γὰρ προσβάλοιεν ἀλλήλοισι, οὐ ῥαδίως ἀπελύοντο ὑπὸ τε τοῦ πλήθους καὶ ὄχλου τῶν νεῶν ... (Th. 1.49.3.)

*For **when(ever)** they (had) made an attack on each other, they did not easily extricate themselves due to the number and density of the ships ...*

ἐπειδή and Optative without ἄν denotes any action in this battle prior to that of the clause. (τε anticipates a second καί in the next phrase.)

31.4. Subsequent Action in Temporal Clause

31.4.1. Definite

καὶ οἱ μὲν Ἕλληνες τεταγμένοι τε προσῆσαν καὶ διὰ φυλακῆς ἔχοντες, **ἔως** ἐστρατοπεδεύσαντο ἐν ἐπιτηδείῳ· (Th. 2.81.4.)

*And the Greeks kept advancing, drawn up in ranks and remaining on guard, **until** they pitched camp in a suitable <place>.*

ἔως with Past Aorist Indicative denotes instantaneous action subsequent to the continuous action expressed by the Past Imperfect Indicative of the Main clause.

31.4.2. Indefinite

... τὰ τε ἄλλα χωρία εἶχον, μένοντες ἕως σφισι κάκεινοι ποιήσειαν τὰ εἰρημένα. (Th. 5.35.4.)

... *and they* [= Athenians] *kept control of the other places, waiting until* those <troops> [= Spartans] *should have done for them what had been stated.* (OR: *waiting for those <troops> to do for them what had been stated.*)

ἕως and Optative without ἄν denotes the anticipated but indefinite limit for which the Athenians (Subject of the Main clause) were waiting.

References

Goodwin (1889), *Syntax of the moods and tenses of the Greek verb*, §§514–522, 532, 535, 553, 613.1–613.2, 613.5, 614.2, 615–619.

Smyth (1956), *Greek grammar*, §§2388, 2395–2396, 2414–2417.

EXERCISE 31

Translate the following passages.

- καὶ ὑπέσχετο μὲν δεομένου σου τὸ ναῦλον τῶν ξύλων παρασχῆσειν, ὅτε ἀνήγου ὡς βασιλέα·

δεῖσθαι (Mid. + Aor. Pass.)	<i>to request</i>
ναῦλον, -ου, τό	<i>freight-payment</i>
ἀνάγεσθαι (Mid.)	<i>to set sail</i>

- ἔτι δὲ ὅποτε αὐτόμολοι, ὡς εἰκός, πρὸς βασιλέα ἰόντες χρήματα ἐθέλοιεν ὑφηγεῖσθαι, καὶ ταῦτα ἐπεμέλετο ὡς διὰ τῶν φίλων ἀλίσκοιτο ...

αὐτόμολος, -ου, ὁ	<i>deserter</i> (adj. as noun)
χρήματα, -ων, τά	<i>merchandise</i>
ὑφηγεῖσθαι (Mid.)	<i>to show the way to</i> (+ Acc.)
καί	<i>also, modifying ταῦτα</i>
ταῦτα	direct Object of ἐπεμέλετο, anticipating ὡς clause

3. ἐπειδὴ δὲ εἰρήνης ἐπιθυμήσαντες οἱ πολέμοι ἐπρεσβεύοντο, Ἀγησίλαος ἀντεῖπε τῇ εἰρήνῃ, ἕως τοὺς διὰ Λακεδαιμονίους φυγόντας Κορινθίων καὶ Θηβαίων ἠνάγκασε τὰς πόλεις οἴκαδε καταδέξασθαι.

πρεσβεύεσθαι (Mid.)	<i>to send embassies</i>
τοὺς ... φυγόντας	Object of καταδέξασθαι
Κορινθίων καὶ Θηβαίων	Possessive Gen. qualifying τὰς πόλεις

4. ἀναδιδάσκοντες αὐτὸν τῶν Αἰτωλῶν ὡς εἶη ῥαδία ἢ αἴρεις, ἰέναι ἐκέλευον ὅτι τάχιστα ἐπὶ τὰς κώμας καὶ μὴ μένειν ἕως ἂν ξύμπαντες ἀθροισθέντες ἀντιτάξωνται ...

ἀναδιδάσκειν	<i>to explain</i>
Αἰτωλοί, -ῶν, οἱ	<i>Aetolians</i> (The Gen. pl. qualifies ἢ αἴρεις.)
αἴρεις, -εως, ἢ	<i>capture</i>
ὅτι τάχιστα	ὡς τάχιστα

5. ... διὰ παντός ἐπολέμου ἀνθρώποις νεοκαταστάτοις, ἕως ἐξετρύχωσαν ...

διὰ παντός	<i>constantly</i>
νεοκατάστατος, -ον	<i>newly established</i>
ἐκτρυχοῦν	<i>to wear (someone) out, to exhaust</i>

6. ἐπειδὴ δέ τι ἐμφάγοιεν, ἀνίσταντο καὶ ἐπορεύοντο.

ἐμφαγεῖν (Aor.)	<i>to eat hastily</i>
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7. ... and the rest of the foreigners, when they had seen them giving way, no longer held their ground, but took to flight.

<i>to give way</i>	ἐνδιδόναι
<i>to hold one's ground</i>	ὑπομένειν

8. Up to this [point] Lasthenes used to be named a friend, until he betrayed Olynthus.

<i>up to</i>	μέχρι (+ Gen.)
<i>Lasthenes</i>	Λασθένης, -ους, ὁ
<i>Olynthus</i>	Ὀλυνθος, -ου, ἡ (place)

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