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Comparatives, Conjunctions, Adverbs, and Clause Types

You will be able to—

1. recognize and translate comparatives;
2. recognize, classify, and translate conjunctions, adverbs and particles;
3. recognize, classify, and translate purpose, result, and other types of clauses;
4. gain more practice in translating and working with Greek;
5. translate John 1:1–10; and
6. master ten more high-frequency vocabulary words.

Introduction to Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

In this chapter we will examine four syntactic odds and ends. *Comparative adjectives* (e.g., greater) usually compare two items. *Superlative adjectives* (e.g., greatest) are used when comparing more than two items. The issue is more the number of items being compared than the inflection on the Greek form. A comparative may be used as a regular adjective or as a superlative. Likewise a superlative may be used as a normal adjective or comparative. Both may be used as a elative which is an intensification of the regular adjectival usage [the *very big* baloon] (Wallace, *The Basics of New Testament Syntax*, 132ff).

Comparative Adjectives

Greek uses either the endings **-ιων** or **-τερος, -α, -ον,** or the particle ἤ (than) to indicate a comparative. For example:

μέγας (great)   μείζων (greater)
μικρός (small)   μικρότερος (smaller)
ἀγαθός (good)   κρείσσων (better)

These are then declined like adjectives (**μείζων, μείζονος, μείζονι...**).
Wallace notes a regular adjective may be used as a comparative:
1) Comparative: Mat. 18:8 καλόν σοί ἐστιν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν κυλλόν
          it is **better** to enter into life crippled.

2) Superlative: Mt 22:38 αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μεγάλη καὶ πρώτη ἐντολή
> this is the **greatest** and first commandment

A comparative may function as a:
1) Regular adjective: Mat 12:6 λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι τοῦ ἱεροῦ μεῖζον ἐστιν ὧδε
> I tell you, [something] **greater** than the temple is here
2) Superlative: Luk 9:48 ὁ μικρότερος πᾶσιν ὑμῖν ... ἐστιν μέγας
> the least among you ... is **greatest**
3) Elative (sense of the adj. is intensified): Acts 13:31 ὃς ὤφθη ἐπὶ ἡμέρας πλείους
> who appeared for **very** many days

Superlative Adjectives

The superlative is rare in the New Testament. It is formed by suffixing either **-τατος, -η, -ον** or **-ιστος, -η, -ον.** There may be a change in the stem as seen in the following example. The most frequent is πρῶτος (first) and ἔσχατος (last). The superlative form may function as a regular adjective or as a comparative or elative.

Adjective	Comparative	Superlative
μικρός (little)	ἐλάσσων (less)	ἐλάχιστος (least)
μέγας (great)	μείζων (greater)	μειζότερος (greatest)
νέος (new)	νεώτερος (newer)	νεώτατος (newest)

Other superlatives are
> ὕψιστος, -η, -ον (highest)   πρῶτος, -η, -ον   (first)
> πλεῖστος, -η, -ον (most)   ἔσχατος, -η, -ον (last)

Superlative as an elative: Mk 4:1 συνάγεται πρὸς αὐτὸν ὄχλος πλεῖστος
> a **very great** crowd gathered before him. (adj. sense instensified: very)

Superlative as comparative:
> Mat 21:28 ἄνθρωπος εἶχεν τέκνα δύο. καὶ προσελθὲν τῷ πρώτῳ εἶπεν
>> a man had two sons. He came to the **first** and said...
> (vid. Wallace, *The Basics of New Testament Syntax,* 132ff, for a more complete
>> discussion)

Conjunctions

Conjunctions connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. Dana and Mantey's classifications according to broader areas of meaning are helpful (*Manual Grammar,* 257).

Temporal

ἄχρι	until	ὅτε	when
ἐπεί	when	πρίν	before
ἐπειδή	when	ὡς	when, as
ἕως	until		

Causal

γάρ	for	ὅτι	because
διότι	because	ὡς	since
ἐπεί	since	ἐπειδή	since

Purpose

ἵνα	in order that
ὅπως	in order that
ὡς	in order that

Result

ὥστε	so that
ἵνα	(may also sometimes mean) so that
ὡς	so as
ὅτι	so that

Continuative

δέ	and, now	ὅτι	that
ἵνα	that	οὖν	then, now
καί	and	τέ	and

Adversative

ἀλλά	but	μέντοι	however
δέ	but	οὖν	however
καί	but		

Particles

Perschbacher (*New Testament Greek Syntax,* 171–84) identifies particles as small indeclinable words that are not prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, or interjections. The following is a list of some of most frequently used particles:

ἀμήν	so be it, truly, amen
ἄν	(untranslated; occurs with the various moods and often with relative pronouns)
ἄρα	therefore, then
γέ	indeed (emphasizes the word it goes with)
ἴδε	look! notice, behold
ἰδού	look! notice, behold
μέν	indeed (often with the relative pronoun), on the one hand
ναί	yes, indeed

Adverbs

There are many ways in Greek by which the verb may be modified in an adverbial sense of time, manner or place.   In English, an adverb is often designated by the addition

of the –ly ending (he went <u>quickly</u>). We can often convert adjectives into adverbs by adding the –ly ending (he was an articulate [adj.] speaker; he spoke articulately [adv.]).

In Greek we are familiar with several ways the verb may be modified in time, manner and place already. One may use a participle in an adverbial manner (<u>After leaving the store</u>, he went home; vid. chs. 20/21 Translating Participles—adverbial sense). Secondly, the articular infinitive is also used in an adverbial manner (before Phillip called you, I saw you....; vid. ch. 22 Articular Infinitives). Thirdly, many prepositional phrases have an adverbial verb modifying function and indeed some adverbs actually became more prepositional in their function and are classed as "adverbial prepositions" (i.e. ἔξω outside). Indeed, some words are classified as both improper prepositions and adverbs and some are marked by the –θεν ending (ὀπίσω (prep. + genitive=after; ὄπισθεν adv. "from behind"). Fourthly, as in English where an adjective can be converted into an adverb by changing the ending (articulate/articulately) so in Greek using the genitive plural form an adverb may be formed by shifting the –ων ending to an –ως (e.g. καλῶν [good] becomes καλῶς [well] (Stevens, 87f.). Finally, there are explicit adverbs which help develop the meaning of the verb in time, manner, and location.

Time: αὔριον (tomorrow), σήμερον (today), ἐχθές (yesterday), νῦν (now) and
       τότε (then), πώποτε (ever, at any time)

Manner: οὕτως (thus/in this manner), ταχέως (quickly)

Location: ἄνω (above), ἄνωθεν (from above), κάτω (below), ἐκεῖ (there),
       ἐκεῖθεν (from there), ὧδε (here), ἐντεῦθεν (from there);
       vid. Porter, *Idioms*, 125.

Clause Type Introduction

We have studied nouns, verbs, prepositions, and other parts of speech. After studying single words, we must move on to larger grammatical constructions. Clauses are a group of connected words that contain a verb. Clauses can function substantively (like a noun), adjectivally, or adverbially. We have already seen clauses in the four types of conditional clauses (if x then y). The following will be an initial exploration into several types of dependent clauses. For higher level analysis one will find wonderful resources in S. Porter's *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield, 1999), S. Levinsohn's *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek* (SIL, 2000) and Katharine Barnwell's *Introduction to Semantics and Translation* (SIL, 1980).

1. Substantive
   I do not have <u>what I need</u> (functions as the object)
2. Adjective
   He bought the ball <u>that Coach Kessler had signed</u>.
3. Adverb
   I will come <u>when I have finished playing with Elliott</u>.

The various clause types follow. The four types of conditional clauses were covered in chapter 23, on the subjunctive verb.

Purpose Clauses

A purpose clause gives an explanation of the object or goal that was pursued by the main verb. They are retrospective, looking back and giving an explanation for why something has occured. I stopped quickly <u>to avoid running over Zach's bike</u>. Greek expresses purpose in at least three ways (Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar,* 283–84):

1. With an infinitive:
   Μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλύσαι τὸν νόμον.
   Do not think <u>that I came to destroy the law</u> (Mat. 5:17).

2. With ἵνα or ὅπως + subjunctive:
   ἦλθεν . . . ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός.
   He came <u>that he might bear witness concerning the light</u> (Jn. 1:7).

3. With εἰς or πρός followed by an articular infinitive:
   ποιοῦσιν πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.
   They do [them] <u>to be seen by men</u> (Mat. 23:5).

Result Clauses

Result clauses describe the results that flow from the main verb. There are several ways in which result clauses are marked in Greek. The difference between purpose and result is often subtle in English.

1. The most common is ὥστε or ὡς + infinitive:
   καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάναι
   And if I have all faith, <u>so as to remove mountains</u> (1 Cor. 13:2)

2. ὥστε or ὅτι + indicative:
   ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν
   <u>So that he gave his unique Son</u> (Jn. 3:16)

Cause Clauses

Cause clauses are prospective, looking forward to a goal with intention. They are often introduced with "because." These types of clauses are generally introduced by conjunctions like ὅτι or ἐπεί. They can be formed by participles and infintives as well (Porter, *Idioms*, 237).
    For example:
Jn 14:19 **ὅτι ἐγὼ ζῶ καὶ ὑμεῖς ζήσετε**
    because I live you shall also live.

Temporal Clauses

There are several ways to form clauses that indicate events taking place before, while, or after the time of the main verb (Dana and Mantey, *Manual Grammar,* 280–82):

1. With an indicative verb introduced by various prepositions and particles:

when	ὅτε, ἐπειδή, ὡς
whenever	ὅταν
while	ἕως, ἄχρι, οὗ
until	ἕως, ἄχρι
since	ὡς, οὗ

    ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς λόγους τούτους, μετῆρεν.
    When Jesus had finished these words, he departed (Mat. 19:1).

2. With the subjunctive and various prepositions or particles:

whenever	ὅταν, ἐπάν
until	ἕως, ἄχρι, μέχρι

    ἐκεῖ μένετε ἕως ἂν ἐξέλθητε ἐκεῖθεν.
    Remain there [in that place] until you leave there (Mk. 6:10).

3. With πρίν + infinitive indicating "before":
    εἴρηκα ὑμῖν πρὶν γενέσθαι.
    I have told you before it comes to pass (Jn. 14:29).

4. With a participle:
    καὶ ἐξελθὼν εἶδεν πολὺν ὄχλον.
    And when he came forth, he saw the great crowd (Mat. 14:14).

Vocabulary

δύο	two (135)
δώδεκα	twelve (75)
εἷς, μία, ἕν	one (344)
ἑκατόν	one hundred (11)
ἑπτά	seven (88)
μηδείς, μηδεμία, μηδέν	no, no one (90)
οὐδείς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν	no, no one (234)
πέντε	five (36)
τρεῖς, τρία	three (68)
χιλιάς, -άδος, ἡ	thousand (23)