

Chapter 17

Prepositions - Part 1

17.1 Prepositions

Prepositions tell us the relation between two words - they generally tell us where something is or takes place.

e.g. "The dog is **in** the street.", "John came **before** Jesus.", "I went **out**.", "He looked **at** me."

Greek uses prepositions very frequently, either as stand-alone words, or as prefixes to other words, to show direction, etc.

e.g. ἄγω - I lead, συναγω - I gather together, εἰσαγω - I lead in(to), ὑπαγω - I go away

Greek prepositions are linked to particular grammatical cases.

For example,

Prepositions which imply "**motion towards**" something usually "take" (go with) the **Accusative**.

Prepositions which imply "**motion away from**" something usually take the **Genitive**.

Prepositions which imply "**something at rest**" usually take the **Dative**.

e.g. εἰς τὸν οἶκον - into the house, ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου - out of the house, ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ - in the house

The same general relations are found in Latin, German, and other inflected Indo-European languages.

Some prepositions can take more than one case, and their meaning may vary accordingly.

At first sight the dictionary and vocabulary lists can look intimidating and confusing. Don't worry about them, just keep on reading the Greek New Testament, and you will begin to see how the prepositions fit in the rest of the sentence.

17.2 "he/she/it went/came" - ἦλθεν

"we went/came" - ἦλθομεν

At this point it will be useful to learn how to say that someone came or went (a simple past tense).

In section 13.3 we met the simple past εἶπεν - "**he said**", and εἶπομεν - "**we said**".

Now we meet ἦλθεν - "**he came/went**", and ἦλθομεν - "**we came/went**"

English uses two verbs, "I come" and "I go", where Greek only uses one. The English "I come" implies movement towards an observer; "I go" implies movement away from an observer. The movement is the same in both cases, the only thing that changes is the position of the observer, so Greek logically uses the same verb. The rest of the sentence will indicate whether one should translate it as "come" or "go".

Several of the prepositions combine with verbs to form verbs which show the direction of movement.

e.g. προσηλθεν προς τον οικον.	She/he/it came/went towards the house.
εισηλθεν εις τον οικον.	She/he/it came/went into the house.
εξηλθεν εκ του οικου.	She/he/it came/went out of the house.
απηλθεν απο του οικου.	She/he/it came/went away from the house.

Note : Greek is not consistent in its use of compound verbs - you may find either a compound or the simpler ἦλθ- form in a sentence with a preposition.

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

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| 1. ὁ Πέτρος προσηλθεν προς τον Ἰησοῦν. | Peter came/went to(wards) Jesus. |
| 2. αὐτή εἰσηλθεν εἰς τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ. | She entered into Jerusalem. |
| 3. ἀπηλθομεν ἀπο των Φαρισσαιων. | We went away from the Pharisees. |
| 4. αὐτός ἦλθεν και εἶπεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ, Ῥαββί! | He came and said to Jesus, "Rabbi!" |
| 5. εἰσηλθομεν εἰς τον ἀγρον. | We came into the field. |
| 6. εἰσηλθεν ὁ γεωργος εἰς τον ἀγρον ; | Did the farmer go into the field? |
| 7. ὁ Λουκας ἐξηλθεν ἐκ του ἱερου. | Luke went out of (left) the temple. |
| 8. ὁ νυμφιος ἦλθεν προς τον οικον. | The bridegroom went towards the house. |
| 9. ὁ δεσμιος εἰσηλθεν εἰς την φυλακην. | The prisoner went into the prison. |
| 10. ἐξηλθομεν ἐκ της κωμης. | We went out of (left) the village. |

17.3 Preposition which takes the Accusative : εἰς

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

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| 1. το παιδιον ἦλθεν εἰς τον ἄγρον. | The child went into the field. |
| 2. ἦλθομεν εἰς την κωμην. | We went into the village. |
| 3. ὁ Στεφανος βλεπει εἰς τον οὐρανον. | Stephen looks into heaven. |
| 4. εἰσηλθεν ὁ Ἰωαννης εἰς την συναγωγην ; | Did John enter into the synagogue? |
| 5. Οὐ. ἦλθεν εἰς την ἔρημον. | No. He went into the desert. |
| 6. το τεκνον βαλλει λιθους εἰς την θαλασσαν. | The child is throwing stones into the sea. |
| 7. ὁ Ἰησους ἦλθεν εἰς την Γαλιλαιαν. | Jesus came (in)to Galilee. |
| 8. ἦλθομεν εἰς την Ἰουδαιαν ; | Did we go into Judea? |
| 9. Ναι. ἦλθομεν εἰς την Ἱερουσαλημ. | Yes. We went into Jerusalem. |
| 10. οὐκ ἦλθεν εἰς τους ἀγρους
ἀλλ' εἰς την οἰκίαν. | He did not go into the fields
but into the house. |

17.4 Prepositions which take the Genitive : ἀπό, ἐκ, πρό

ἀπο becomes ἀπ' when followed by a vowel with a smooth breathing, and ἀφ' when followed by a vowel with a rough breathing.

In compound words, ἐκ- becomes ἐξ- if followed by a vowel.

προ never drops its vowel.

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

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| 1. ὁ κυριος ἀποστελλει ἡμας
ἀπο του Ἱερουσαλημ. | The Lord sends us
(away) from Jerusalem. |
| 2. ὁ Ἰησους ἀπηλθεν ἀπο της Ἰουδαιας
και εἰσηλθεν εἰς την Γαλιλαιαν. | Jesus went away from Judea
and entered (into) Galilee. |
| 3. ὁ μαθητης ἦλθεν ἐκ της γης Ἰσραηλ. | The disciple went out of the land of Israel. |
| 4. ἐξήλθομεν ἐκ του ἱερου και ἀπηλθομεν
ἀπο του Ἱερουσαλημ. | We came out of the temple and went away
from Jerusalem. |
| 5. ἐγὼ ἀποστελλω τον ἀγγελον μου
προ προσωπου σου. | I am sending my messenger
before your face. (<i>Matt. 11:10</i>) |
| 6. ὁ Ἰησους ἦλθεν εἰς Ἱεροσολυμα
προ του Πασχα. | Jesus came to Jerusalem
before the Passover. |
| 7. ὁ Πητρος ἀποστολος ἦν προ του Παυλου. | Peter was an apostle before Paul. |
| 8. ἀπηλθεν ὁ Ἰησους ἀπο της Ἰουδαιας ; | Did Jesus go away from Judea? |
| 9. Ναι. αὐτος ἀπηλθεν ἀπο της Ἱεροσολυμα
και εἰσηλθεν εἰς την Γαλιλαιαν. | Yes. He went away from Jerusalem
and entered into Galilee. |
| 10. ἐξήλθεν ἡ χηρα ἐκ του οἴκου
και εἶπεν, Οὐαι μοι. | The widow went out of the house
and said "Woe is me (to me)." |

17.5 Prepositions which take the Dative : ἐν, σύν

When συν forms compounds, the ν may drop out or change to a μ, γ or λ depending on the following letter.
e.g.

ζητεω - I seek, συζητεω - I argue, discuss; καλεω - I call, συγκαλεω - I call together;
μαθητης - disciple, συμμαθητης - fellow-disciple εἶμι - I am, συνειμι - I am present with;
λαμβάνω - I get, receive, συλλαμβανω - I seize, arrest; ἐσθιω - I eat, συνεσθιω - I eat with

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

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| 1. ὁ μαθητης ἐν ταις Ἱεροσολυμοις ἦν ; | Was the disciple in Jerusalem? |
| 2. Ναι. αὐτος ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἦν
συν τοις συμμαθηταις αὐτου. | Yes. He was in the temple
with his fellow-disciples. |

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| 3. ὁ δεσμιος ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ ἐστίν. | The prisoner is in the prison. |
| 4. τὸ τέκνον ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐστὶν
σὺν τῷ διδασκάλῳ αὐτοῦ. | The child is in the house
with his teacher. |
| 5. ὁ προφήτης σὺν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ
ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐστίν. | The prophet is in the desert with his disciples. |
| 6. ὁ Πέτρος συγκαλεῖ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς
εἰς τὸν οἶκον καὶ ὅτε αὐτοὶ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ
συνεῖσιν σὺν αὐτῷ
αὐτὸς διδάσκει αὐτοὺς. | Peter calls the brothers together
into the house, and when they
are together with him in the house
he teaches them. |
| 7. ὁ Μάρκος οὐ συνῆλθεν σὺν τῷ Παύλῳ
εἰς τὸ ἔργον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. | Mark did not accompany Paul
in(to) the work of the Gospel. |
| 8. ἡ Μάρθα καὶ αἱ ἀδελφαὶ σὺν αὐτῇ
λεγουσὶν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους. | Martha and the sisters with her
talk to/with the apostles. |
| 9. ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ
σὺν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ. | Jesus went out of the Temple
with his disciples. |
| 10. ὁ χιλιάρχος πιστεύει τῷ κυρίῳ
σὺν ὅλῳ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ. | The officer believes in the Lord,
with his whole household. |

17.6 Prepositions which take several cases

ἀνά, διά, ἐπί, κατά, μετά, παρά, περί, πρό, πρὸς, ὑπέρ, ὑπό

For a start, learn just one meaning for each preposition, and increase the range of meanings as you read more and gain more experience by reading them in context.

ἀνα (upwards) and **κατα** (downwards) form a pair. The way to remember which is which is ἀνα and "up" both begin with a vowel. **κατα** and "down" both begin with a consonant. ἀνα and "up" are shorter than **κατα** and "down".

ὑπο (under) and **ὑπερ** (above) form a pair. The way to remember which is which is a **hyp**odermic needle goes "under" the skin, a **hyper**active child is swinging from the light fixtures.

δια, ἐπι, κατα, μετα, παρα and ὑπο drop their terminal vowel if followed by a vowel. If followed by a vowel with a rough breathing, **κατα** and **μετα** become καθ' and μεθ' respectively, ἐπι and ὑπο become ἐφ' and ὑφ' respectively.

περι and προ always keep their vowels.

Practice - until you can read and translate easily.

The phrases in bold type are common phrases or idioms which you should learn.

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| 1. ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει τὴν ἀλήθειαν, δια τούτου
οἱ Φαρισαῖοι οὐκ ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν. | Jesus speaks the truth, because of this ,
the Pharisees do not love him. |
| 2. διηλθομεν δια τοῦ ἱεροῦ . | We went through the temple . |
| 3. ὁ ἄγγελος βαλλεῖ τὸν διαβόλον ἐπι τὴν γῆν . | The angel throws the devil onto the earth . |
| 4. ὁ Ἰωάννης βλέπει τὸν κύριον
ἐπι τῷ θρόνῳ . | John sees the Lord
upon the throne . |
| 5. ἦλθεν ἐπι (τοῦ χρόνου) τοῦ θερισμοῦ. | He came at the time of the harvest. |
| 6. ἀναγινώσκει τὸ εὐαγγέλιον
κατὰ τὸν Μάρκον . | He is reading the Gospel
according to Mark . |
| 7. οἱ Φαρισαῖοι λαμβανουσὶν συμβούλιον
κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ . | The Pharisees get (make) a plan/plot
against Jesus . |
| 8. ὁ Ἰησοῦς παραλαμβάνει τοὺς μαθητάς αὐτοῦ
κατ' ἰδίαν εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ. | Jesus takes his disciples along with him
privately to Capernaum. |

9. ὁ Φαρισαῖος ἦλθεν καθ' ἡμέραν εἰς τὸ ἱερόν.	The Pharisee went (in)to the temple daily .
10. μετα ταῦτα ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν.	After these things , Jesus went into Galilee.
11. τὸ παιδίον ἦλθεν μετ' αὐτοῦ .	The child went with him .
12. ὁ Ἰησοῦς περιπατεῖ παρα τὴν θαλάσσαν .	Jesus is walking beside the sea .
13. ὁ Ἰωάννης ἦν ἄνθρωπος παρα τοῦ θεοῦ .	John was a man from God .
14. αὐτοὶ ἦσαν παρα τῷ Πέτρῳ .	They were with Peter .
15. ὁ νυμφίος ἦλθεν περι τὴν τρίτην ὥραν .	The bridegroom came at about the third hour .
16. ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει τοῖς ὄχλοις περι Ἰωάννου .	Jesus speaks about John to the crowds.
17. ὁ Ἰωάννης βλέπει τοὺς ἀγγέλους περι τὸν θρόνον τοῦ θεοῦ.	John sees the angels around the throne of God.
18. ὁ ἁμαρτολὸς ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν .	The sinner went to(wards) Jesus .
19. ἡ Μαρία εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν , Ῥαββί.	Mary said to him , "Rabbi!"
20. ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν .	The Word was with God. (<i>John 1:1b</i>)
21. οὐκ ἐστὶν μαθητὴς ὑπὲρ τὸν διδασκαλόν οὐδὲ δούλος ὑπὲρ τὸν κύριον αὐτοῦ.	A disciple is not above (his) teacher , nor a slave above his master. (<i>Matt. 10:24</i>)
22. ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖ ταῦτα τὰ ἔργα ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν .	Jesus does these works on our behalf .
23. οὐκ ἐστε ὑπο νόμον .	You are not under the Law. (<i>Gal. 5:18</i>)

The main use of ὑπό is with passive verbs, to show the agent who acts upon the subject.

We will meet the Passive later. For now, we will use "he is being baptized" = βαπτίζεται.

24. ὁ Ἰησοῦς βαπτίζεται ὑπο τοῦ Ἰωάννου .	Jesus is being baptized by John .
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There are no Sentences for reading and translation, because you need to spend extra time learning the prepositions and their idioms.

17.7 Writing Practice

A. Review

Type with a word-processor and print out Matthew 6:9b-13 in a large font size (16-24 pt). You may use SPionic or a Polytonic Greek Unicode font.

Keep the print-out to read aloud at the start of each lesson or study session.

B. : Write the Greek text several times, while saying aloud (John 1:1)

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, In (the) beginning was the Word

17.8 New Testament Passages for reading and translation

Matt. 3:13, 2 Corinth. 1:1-2, Gal. 1:1-5, Philemon 1-3

In your Greek New Testament, read the passages aloud several times until you can read them without long pauses or stumbling. Then use the translation helps to translate them.

παραγινεται	(he) came	(from παραγινομαι - I come, arrive, appear, come beside)
(του) βαπτισθηται	(in order) to be baptized	
θεληματος	will	(Genitive singular of το θελημα - will)
τη οὔση	to the one being	(a feminine present participle of εἶμι, describing τη ἐκκλησια)
πασιν	to everyone	(Dative plural of πας, πασα, παν - each, every)
οὔσιν	being	(Dative plural participle of εἶμι)
χαρις	grace	(Nominative singular of ἡ χαρις - grace)
πατρος	father	(Genitive singular of ὁ πατηρ - father)
ἐγειραντος	the one having raised = the one who raised	(a Gen. participle of ἐγείρω - I raise)
παντες	all, everyone	(Nom. Masc. plural of πας, πασα, παν - each, every)

δόντος	having given	(a Genitive participle of δίδωμι - I give)
ὅπως	so that, in order that	
εἴξειληται	he might choose, select	(a Subjunctive of ἐκλέγομαι - I choose, select)
αἰώνος	age, eternity	(Genitive. of ὁ αἰών - age)
ἐνεστώτος	present, imminent	(Gen. participle of ἐνίστημι - to be impending, present)
συνεργῶ	fellow-worker	(Dative of ὁ συνεργός)
συστρατιωτῆ	fellow-soldier	(Dative of ὁ συστρατιώτης)

17.9 Vocabulary to learn

Two nouns to learn

ὁ θερισμός	harvest	
το συμβούλιον	plan, plot	(ἡ βουλή - council, plan)

Prepositions

	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
ἀνά ¹	each, each one	-	-
ἀπό ²	-	away from	-
διά ³	because of, on account of	through, by means of	-
εἰς	into	-	-
ἐκ	-	out of, out from	-
ἐν	-	-	in, on
ἐπί ⁴	on, upon, against, concerning	in the time of, on, upon, over	on, upon, at, in, concerning
κατά ⁵	according to, just as	down, against	-
μετά	after, behind	with, in company with	-
παρά ⁶	beside, alongside	from, from beside	with, beside
περί ⁷	around, about	about, concerning	-
πρό	-	before (time or place)	-
πρός ⁸	toward, to, so that, with	for, for the sake of	at, on, near
σύν	-	-	with, along with, in company with
ὑπέρ ⁹	above, beyond, over and above	for, on behalf of	-
ὑπό ¹⁰	under, below	by, by means of	-

1. ἀνά as a prefix has the sense of "up" or "again"
2. an apostate is someone who has fallen away from the faith.
3. one can see through diaphanous material
4. ἐπι του χρονου του . . . = "at the time of" often omits "χρονου" and writes "επι του . . ."
5. κατά as a prefix has the sense of "down"
6. parallel lines run alongside one another
7. περί - hence the "perimeter" of a circle
8. the most common use of προς in the New Testament is προς + Acc.
πρός + Gen. is used once in the New Testament, Acts 27:34
πρός + Dat. is used 5 times in the New Testament
9. ὑπέρ may be used as an adverb = even more
10. a hypodermic needle goes under the skin