

Chapter 19

The Present Infinitive

19.1 The Infinitive has the form "to do something", or "to be doing something". It is treated as one of the Moods of the Verb; it shows Voice (Active, Middle, Passive) and Tense, but does not take personal endings.

The Infinitive functions as a Neuter Verbal Noun.

1. As subject of a verb e.g. "**To sing** improves the voice."
2. As object of a verb e.g. "I like **to sing**."
3. As a predicate complement e.g. "I have something **to say**."

Greek also uses the Infinitive with prepositions (where English might use a participle)

1. with ἐν τῷ - time while doing something
2. with πρὸ τοῦ - before doing something
3. with μετὰ τὸ - after doing something
4. with διὰ τὸ - because (reason) to do something
5. with εἰς τὸ or πρὸς τὸ - purpose (in order) to do something
6. as a Genitive, with τοῦ - purpose (in order) to do something

In chapter 18 we met the Present Imperative, and learned that the Present Stem of a Greek verb implies a sense of continuing or repeated action. So the Greek Present Infinitive has the sense of "to be doing something". However, it is more usual in English to say "to do something" regardless of whether the action is continuous, repeated, or a single instance.

19.2 The basic pattern for the Present Infinitive Active is

STEM-ειν

Contract verbs follow the same rules that we learned earlier

| $\alpha + \text{-ειν} = \text{-αιν}$ | $\epsilon + \text{-ειν} = \text{-ειν}$ | $\omicron + \text{-ειν} = \text{-ουιν}$ |
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| For λέγω, this becomes | λέγειν | to say, to be saying |
| For ἀγαπάω, this becomes | ἀγαπᾶν | to love, to be loving |
| For ποιέω, this becomes | ποιεῖν | to do, to be doing |
| For πληρώω, this becomes | πληροῦν | to fulfill, to be fulfilling |
| ζάω is slightly irregular | ζῆν | to live, to be living |

19.3 Some verbs are generally followed by an Infinitive

- θέλω - I wish (to do something)
μέλλω - I am about / going / intend (to do something)
οφείλω - I ought (to do something)

and three "impersonal verbs" - verbs which only take "it" for their subject

- δεῖ - it is necessary (to do something) (from δέω - I bind)
ἔξεστιν - it is lawful / permitted (to do something)
πρέπει - it is fitting / proper (to do something)

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

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| 1. ὑμεῖς οφείλετε λέγειν λόγους καλούς. | You ought to speak good words. |
| 2. ἡμεῖς οὐ θέλομεν ποιεῖν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πονηροῦ. | We do not wish to do the works of the evil one. |
| 3. οὐκ ἔξεστιν τοῖς στρατιώταις βάλλειν τοὺς ἐλεύθερους εἰς τὴν φυλακὴν. | It is not lawful for the soldiers to throw (to be throwing) the free(men) into prison. |
| 4. δεῖ σοι διδάσκειν τὰ παιδία. | It is necessary for you to teach the children. |
| 5. οὗτοι οἱ τυφλοὶ θέλουσιν ἀναβλέπειν. | These blind men want to see again (receive their sight). |

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| 6. ἔξεστί μοι ἀναγινώσκειν τὰ βιβλία ; | Is it permitted for me to read the books? |
| 7. πρέπει ταῖς ἀδελφαῖς ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ; | Is it fitting for the sisters to have authority? |
| 8. οἱ ἅγιοι μέλλουσιν ἀναβαίνειν πρὸς Ἱεροσόλυμα. | The saints are about to go up to Jerusalem. |
| 9. ὁ μαθητὴς μέλλει καταβαίνειν ἐκ Ἱερουσαλήμ. | The disciple is about to go down from Jerusalem. |
| 10. οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι θέλουσιν προσκυνεῖν τῷ θεῷ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ. | The Jews wish to worship God in the Temple. |

19.4 Negation : The Infinitive is negated by μή (Remember, οὐ is only used with the Indicative)

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

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| 1. ἐγὼ ὀφείλω μὴ ποιεῖν τὰ κακά. | I ought not to do (the) bad things. |
| 2. θέλεις μὴ καταλείπειν τοὺς ἀδελφούς. | You wish not to abandon the brothers. |
| 3. οὐ θέλομεν καταλείπειν τὰς ἀδελφάς. | We do not wish to abandon the sisters. |
| 4. οὐκ ἔξεστιν ὑμῖν διώκειν τὰς χήρας. | It is not lawful for you to persecute the widows. |
| 5. Παῦλος θέλει μὴ συναναβαίνειν σὺν τῷ Μάρκῳ. | Paul wishes not to go up with Mark. |
| 6. Παῦλος οὐ θέλει συναναβαίνειν σὺν τῷ Μάρκῳ. | Paul does not wish to go up with Mark. |
| 7. ὀφείλομεν μὴ καταλείπειν τοὺς πτωχοὺς. | We ought not to abandon the poor. |
| 8. δεῖ ὑμᾶς μὴ ὑπακούειν τοῖς δαιμονίοις. | It is necessary for you not to obey the demons. |
| 9. θέλομεν μὴ διακονεῖν τῷ πονηρῷ. | We wish not to serve the evil one. |
| 10. ὀφείλετε μὴ ἀγαπᾶν τὰ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. | You ought not to love the things of this world. |

NOTE : Sections 19.5 and 19.6 may be postponed until later in the course.

19.5 Consequence clauses : ὥστε with the Infinitive

The consequence of the action of the main verb can be shown by using ὥστε with an Infinitive and a noun in the Accusative. The nearest English equivalent is probably "causing him/her to do something"
The Greek construction is rather different from the English - we just have to practice until it becomes familiar. The sentences below are modeled on constructions used in the New Testament.

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

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| 1. ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔχει ἐξουσίαν ὥστε ἐκβάλλειν τὰ δαιμονία. | Jesus has authority (so as) to cast out the demons. |
| 2. ὁ Ἰησοῦς θεραπεύει τὸν τυφλὸν ὥστε τὸν τυφλὸν βλέπειν. | Jesus heals the blind man so that (causing) the blind man to see. |
| 3. οἱ ὄχλοι ἀκολουθοῦσιν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς πλοῖον ἐμβαίνειν καὶ λαλεῖν αὐτοῖς. | The crowds follow Jesus so he gets into a boat (so as to cause him to get), and (so as to cause him to) he speaks to them. |
| 4. ὁ Πέτρος κηρύσσει τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὥστε πιστεῦειν τὸν λαὸν τῷ κυρίῳ. | Peter preaches the Gospel, (with the result that) causing the people to believe in the Lord. |
| 5. ὁ Χριστὸς θεραπεύει ἡμᾶς ὥστε ἔχειν ἡμᾶς ζωὴν καινὴν. | Christ heals us (causing us to have) so that we have new life. |
| 6. ὁ ἄνθρωπος παραλυτικός ἐστίν ὥστε μὴ περιπατεῖν αὐτόν. | The man is paralyzed (is a paralytic) (with the result that) so he does not walk. |
| 7. οἱ ὄχλοι ἀκούουσιν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ὥστε πιστεῦειν αὐτοὺς αὐτῷ. | The crowds listen to Jesus (with the result that) and they believe in Him. |
| 8. ὁ Παῦλος κηρύσσει ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ ὥστε ἀκούειν τὸν λαὸν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ. | Paul preaches in the synagogue (so that the people hear) causing the people to hear the word of God. |

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| 9. ὁ Ἰησοῦς διδάσκει τοὺς ὄχλους ὥστε λαμβάνειν τοὺς πτωχοὺς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. | Jesus teaches the crowds (causing the poor to) so that the poor receive the Gospel. |
| 10. οἱ ἀπόστολοι μαρτυροῦσιν τῷ κυρίῳ ὥστε τοὺς ὄχλους πιστεύειν αὐτῷ. | The apostles bear witness to the Lord causing the crowds to believe in him. |

19.6 The Infinitive used as a noun : the "Articular Infinitive"

The Infinitive can be treated as a neuter noun, so it can have a neuter Definite Article. Greek has some idioms which are built from an articular infinitive with a preposition. They cannot be translated word-for-word into English - we just have to learn the equivalent English expressions - see Section 19.1 Don't worry if these seem confusing at first. As you continue to read the Greek New Testament they will become quite familiar.

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

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| 1. καὶ ἐν τῷ κηρύσσειν αὐτοῦ ὁ Ἰωάννης κράζει καὶ λέγει, Μετανοεῖτε! | And in his (while he is) preaching , John cries out and says, "Repent!" |
| 2. ὁ θεὸς ἀκούει ὑμᾶς πρὸ τοῦ ὑμᾶς αἰτεῖν αὐτόν. | God hears you before you ask him. |
| 3. ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς μετὰ τὸ λάλειν αὐτοῖς ἀναβαίνει εἰς τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ. | The Lord Jesus, after speaking to them goes up (in)to Jerusalem. |
| 4. ἡμεῖς οὐ λαμβάνομεν διὰ τὸ μὴ αἰτεῖν ἡμᾶς. | We do not receive, because we do not ask. |
| 5. ὁ Ἰησοῦς οὐ πιστεύει αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν γινώσκειν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους. | Jesus does not entrust himself to them because he knows the men. |
| 6. οὐκ ἔχετε διὰ τὸ μὴ αἰτεῖν ὑμᾶς. | You do not have, because you do not ask. |
| 7. ὁ ὄχλος ἦλθεν εἰς τὸ ἀκούειν τῷ Ἰησοῦ. | The crowd came in order to listen to Jesus. |
| 8. μὴ γὰρ οἰκίας οὐκ ἔχετε εἰς τὸ ἐσθίειν καὶ πίνειν ; | Do you not have houses to eat and to drink in? (<i>I Cor. 11:22</i>) |
| 9. ὁ Παῦλος γράφει τὰς ἐπιστολάς ταύτας πρὸς τὸ οἰκοδομεῖν τὰς ἐκκλησίας. | Paul writes these letters in order to edify (build up) the churches. |
| 10. ἦλθομεν τοῦ διδάσκειν τὰς μαθητάς. | We came in order to teach the disciples. |

19.7 Sentences for reading and translation

1. ὁ προφήτης Ἡσαΐας μέλλει προφητεῦειν τῷ λαῷ τῶν Ἱεροσόλυμων.
2. ὁ μαθητὴς θέλει ἀναγγέλλειν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῖς πτωχοῖς.
3. οἱ πτωχοὶ θέλουσιν ἔχειν τούτους τοὺς ἄρτους ;
4. ὁ Παῦλος εἶπεν, Θέλω ἀναβαίνειν εἰς τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ.
5. ὁ διδάσκαλος λέγει, Οὐκ ἔξεστιν ὑμῖν διακονεῖν τοῖς δαιμονίοις.
6. ὁ Ἰωάννης μέλλει βαπτίζειν τὸν Ἰησοῦν.
7. οὐ πρέπει τοῖς στρατιώταις καταλείπειν τοὺς δεσμούς.
8. ἔξεστιν ταῖς χήραις αἰτεῖν τὸν ἄρτον.
9. δεῖ αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀναβαίνειν.
10. οὐκ ἔξεστιν δούλῳ τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ μὴ ὑπακούειν.

19.8 Writing Practice : Write the Greek text several times, while saying aloud (John 1:1)

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| Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος. | In (the) beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. |
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Review Section 5.5 if the last line seems confusing.

19.9 New Testament Passage for reading and translation : Matthew 12:1-4

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

In this passage we meet two verbs for "eat", with stems "εσθι-" and "φαγ-".

The εσθι- stem implies continuous or repeated action, e.g. "I am eating"

The φαγ- stem implies completed or single action, e.g. "I ate"

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| ἐπορεύθη | he went, travelled | (a past tense of πορεύομαι - I travel) |
| τοῖς σάββασι | on the Sabbath | |
| διὰ τῶν σπορίμων | through the grain-fields | |
| ἐπείνασαν | (they) were hungry | (a past tense of πεινάω - I am hungry) |
| ἤρξαντο | (they) began | (a past tense of ἀρχομαι - I begin) |
| τίλλειν | to pluck, pick | (the Present Infinitive of τίλλω - I pluck) |
| στάχυας | heads (of grain) | |
| ιδόντες | "having seen" = "after they saw" ("when they had seen this") | |
| εἶπαν | (they) said | (εἶπαν is a variant spelling of εἶπον - they said) |
| ἀνέγνωτε | you have read | (a past tense of ἀναγινώσκω - I read) |
| οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε ; | have you not read? | |
| τί ; | what? | (τί is the neuter singular Nom./Acc. of τίς - who?) |
| ἐποίησεν | (he) did | (a past tense of ποιέω - I do, act, make) |
| ἐπείνασεν | he was hungry | (a past tense of πεινάω - I am hungry) |
| οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ | those with him | |
| τοὺς ἄρτους τῆς προθέσεως | "the loaves laid out" - twelve loaves set on the altar each day | |
| ἔφαγον | they ate | |
| ἐξὸν | (was) lawful | (a past form of ἔξεστιν - it is lawful) |
| φαγεῖν | to eat | (the φαγ- stem is not used for the Present Tense) |
| εἰ μὴ | except | |
| τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν μόνοις | only the priests (Dat.) | (ὁ ἱερεύς - priest, μόνος - η - ον - only, alone) |

19.10 Vocabulary to learn

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| ἄγω | I lead | |
| ἀναβαίνω | I come/go up | (from ἀνά + βαίν- stem) |
| ἀναβλέπω | I look up, regain my sight | (from ἀνά + βλέπω - I see) |
| ἀναγγέλλω | I tell, report, proclaim | (from ἀνά + ἀγγέλλω - I tell) |
| ἀνάγω | I lead up | (from ἀνά + ἄγω - I lead) |
| δεῖ | it is necessary | (from δέω - I bind) |
| δέω | I bind | |
| διαβαίνω | I cross over, come over | (from διά + βαίν- stem) |
| ἐμβαίνω | I get into (a boat), embark | (from ἐν + βαίν- stem) |
| ἔξεστιν | it is lawful, permitted | |
| ἐσθίω | I eat | |
| θέλω | I wish, want | |
| καταβαίνω | I come/go down | (from κατά + βαίν- stem) |
| καταγγέλλω | I proclaim, make known | (from κατά + ἀγγέλλω - I tell) |
| κατάγω | I bring down | (from κατά + ἄγω - I lead) |
| καταλείπω | I leave behind, abandon | (from κατά + λείπω - I leave) |
| κηρύσσω | I preach, proclaim | |
| μέλλω | I am about to, am going to | |
| μεταβαίνω | I cross over, leave | (from μετά + βαίν- stem) |
| οἰκοδομέω | I build up, edify | (from ὁ οἶκος - house) |

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| ὀφείλω | I ought (to do something) | (ὁ ὀφειλέτης - debtor) |
| πίνω | I drink | |
| πρέπει | it is proper/fitting | |
| προφητεύω | I prophesy | (from πρό + φημί - I speak) |
| συγκαλέω | I call together | (from σύν + καλέω - I call) |
| συγκαταβαίνω | I come/go down with | (from σύν + κατά + βαίν- stem) |
| συνάγω | I gather, assemble (ἡ συναγωγή = synagogue, place for religious assemblies) | |
| συναναβαίνω | I come up together with - I travel with | (from σύν + ἀνά + βαίν- stem) |
| ὑπάγω | I go away | (from ὑπό + ἄγω - I lead) |
| πῶς ; | how?, in what way?, how can it be possible? | |
| τί ; | what? | (τί is the neuter singular Nom./Acc. of τίς - who?) |
| ὥστε | that, so that, with the result that | (with Infinitive + Accusative) |