

Chapter 20

Functions of Participles: Adjectival

THE BASICS

- ✓ Translating Participles
- ✓ The Participle and Time
- ✓ The Adjectival Participle

A STEP BEYOND

- ✓ ὑπάρχω as “Possessions”
- ✓ The Granville Sharp Rule

20.1 Vocabulary

20.1.1 -ρ Stem Liquid Verbs

αἶρω, ἄρῶ, ἦρα, ἦρκα, ἦρμαι, ἦρθην

I lift, take or pick up, take away

ἐγείρω, ἐγερῶ, ἦγειρα, —, ἐγήγερμαι, ἦγέρθην

I wake, raise or raise up, rise

σπείρω, —, ἔσπειρα, —, —, ἐσπάρην

I sow, scatter

φέρω, οἶσω, ἦνεγκα, -ενήνοχα¹, —, ἦνέχθην

I bear, carry, bring (cf. “transfer”)

προσφέρω

I bring (to), offer, present

χαίρω, χαρήσομαι, —, —, —, ἐχάρην

I rejoice, am glad

¹The perfect active occurs only in compounds with prepositions, as in προσενήνοχεν (Heb 11:17).

20.1.2 More Contract Verbs

ἀρνέομαι (ἀρνοῦμαι, ἀρνήσομαι)	I deny, repudiate
ἐπιτιμάω (ἐπιτιμῶ, ἐπιτιμήσω)	I rebuke, reprove, warn
καυχάομαι (καυχῶμαι, καυχήσομαι)	I boast, glory, pride myself in
πλανᾶω (πλανῶ, πλανήσω)	I lead astray, deceive, wander about

20.2 Translating Participles

The participle is one of the richest modes of expression in the Greek language because it carries both *nominal* and *verbal* significations (see p. 6, Participles). One cannot, therefore, find a simple, single, word-to-word correlation between Greek and English to render all that is inherent in the Greek participle. For example, as seen in the previous chapter, a participle has tense, voice, case, number, and gender. What English term can carry all that significance? None. Therefore, do not be reluctant to use more English words in translation than are in the Greek text. Use all the words and English grammatical structures needed to convey accurately to the reader everything that the Greek construction communicated to its original reader.

As an example, consider Matt 26:25, where Judas, who betrayed Jesus, is referred to as ὁ παραδιδούς (present active, nominative singular masculine). It would be quite inadequate to translate the participle simply as “betraying” because the form tells you additionally that the betrayer is a masculine, singular one who is the subject (nominative) of the clause; and the article tells you that the participle has a distinct nominal function. So the translator adds for the English reader appropriate terms such as “*the one who is* betraying.” A relative clause will often nicely convey the sense of the Greek participle when its adjectival aspect has the ascendancy.

Just as participles have both nominal and verbal significations, so also do they have both *adjectival* and *adverbial* characteristics. In any given context, one characteristic may predominate over the other and so must be translated appropriately. Hence, so that you may learn to identify and translate the nuances of participles in different contexts and grammatical constructions, ch. 20 focuses on the “adjectival” characteristics of the participle, while ch. 21 concentrates on the “adverbial” characteristics.

20.3 The Participle and Time

By itself, the participle has no inherent time value. It takes on temporal value in relation to the main verb of a given context (grammarians call this *relative time*). The tense of a participle indicates only *verbal aspect*. The following examples are meant to convey the verbal aspects of the various tenses in translation.

20.3.1 Present-Tense Participles

Antecedent activity. The present-tense participle may reflect action that is prior to that of the main verb, particularly if the main verb is future tense. The following examples represent this class:

Rom 5:17b πολλῶ μάλλον οἱ . . . λαμβάνοντες . . . βασιλεύσουσιν.
much more the ones who . . . *are receiving* . . . *will rule*.

Gal 1:23 ὁ διώκων ἡμᾶς ποτε νῦν εὐαγγελίζεται τὴν πίστιν.
The one *persecuting* us before *is* now *proclaiming* the faith.

In Rom 5:17b the action of the participle λαμβάνοντες is durative and contemporary to the writer, but the action of the main verb βασιλεύσουσιν lies in the future. In Gal 1:23 the adverbs ποτέ and νῦν are needed to make it clear that the present-tense participle διώκων expresses durative action *prior* to the current and ongoing action of the present-tense verb εὐαγγελίζεται.² The use of an aorist participle in this instance would not have contrasted the durative nature of Paul's previous persecution of Christians with the durative nature of his proclamation of the faith.

Simultaneous activity. The present-tense participle most often reflects action that is simultaneous with that of the main verb. Consider the following:

John 1:32 τεθέαμαι τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον ὡς περιστερὰν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ.
I have perceived the spirit *descending* like a dove out of heaven.

Rom 14:4 σὺ τίς εἶ ὁ κρίνων ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην;
Who *are you* who *are judging* another servant?

Matt 24:46 μακάριος ὁ δοῦλος ἐκεῖνος ὃν . . . ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ εὕρησει οὕτως ποιοῦντα.
“Blessed is that servant whom . . . his master *will find* so *doing*.”

Whether the action of the main verb is in the past, the present, or the future, the action of the participle takes place at the same time as that action. John perceived the descent as it was happening. Paul chastises the Romans for their ongoing practice of judging others. And the “doing” of the servant is perceived as a future act occurring at the same time as the verb “will find.”

20.3.2 Aorist-Tense Participles

Antecedent activity. Jude 5 provides a clear example of aorist participles expressing action that is prior to the action of the main verb:

²Otherwise, the translation would read, “The one who is persecuting us is proclaiming the faith”—a very different meaning indeed.

ὁ κύριος ἄπαξ λαὸν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου σώσας
 τὸ δεύτερον τοὺς μὴ πιστεύσαντας ἀπόλεσεν.
 The Lord, (*who*) *once rescued* a people out of Egypt,
later destroyed those who *did not believe*.

By use of the aorist tense, the participles translated “(who) rescued” and “did (not) believe” describe single, unitary events. Both actions, however, occurred before the action of the main verb, ἀπόλεσεν (destroyed). In this case, the adverbs help clarify this temporal relationship between the verb and the participles, but they are not essential to express it.

Simultaneous activity. The aorist participle also expresses action that occurs basically at the same time as the main verb, particularly when the main verb is in the past tense. A common example is the idiom ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν (“He answered and said”; e.g., Luke 5:5). A translation that aptly conveys the thought of the Greek is “by way of response, he said,” or “replying, he said.” First Thessalonians 2:13 provides another good example:

παραλαβόντες λόγον ἀκοῆς παρ’ ἡμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐδέξασθε
 οὐ λόγον ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐστὶν ἀληθῶς λόγον θεοῦ.
 When you received the word of God [which you] heard from us,
 you accepted (it) not as a word of people but as it truly is, a word of God.

An oft-cited illustration of simultaneous action is Matt 27:4, where Judas says, ἥμαρτον παραδοῦς αἷμα ἀθῶον “I have sinned, betraying innocent blood.” The aorist indicative verb has a completed force to it (and so the English perfect-tense translation), and the force of the aorist participle is adverbial, modifying the verb. Since Judas recognizes that his sin *was* the betrayal, the action of the participle must be simultaneous with that of the main verb. To express the temporal relationship between the verb and its aorist modifier, the sentence could be translated, “I sinned *when I betrayed* innocent blood”; but the emphasis properly belongs on the main verb (hence the NRSV’s “I have sinned *by* betraying . . .”).

20.3.3 Perfect-Tense Participles

The action of the perfect participle precedes that of the main verb, and the effect of the action continues in force.

John 5:10a ἔλεγον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τῷ τεθεραπευμένῳ . . .
 Therefore, the Jews were saying *to the one who had been healed* . . .

Rev 9:15 καὶ ἐλύθησαν οἱ τέσσαρες ἄγγελοι οἱ ἠτοιμασμένοι εἰς τὴν ὥραν.
 And the four angels, *who had been prepared* for the hour, were released.

In preparation for the next section, observe that the articular participle in John 5:10a functions as a substantive and is the indirect object of the verb and that the participle in Rev 9:15, in the attributive position, serves to modify “angels.”

20.3.4 Future-Tense Participles

Future participles are rarely encountered. Contrary to the other tenses, they *do* carry a time value—namely, the future.

20.4 The Adjectival Participle

20.4.1 Attributive Participles

With the article. Like an adjective, the participle will occur with the article to modify a noun. In each instance, the noun and the participle agree in gender, number, and case. One finds both attributive positions:

- article, participle, noun:

Luke 7:9 τῷ ἀκολουθοῦντι αὐτῷ ὄχλῳ
to the crowd *following* him (lit., “to the following him crowd”)

- article, noun, article, participle:

John 5:12 ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ εἰπὼν σοι
the person who *said* to you (lit., “the person, the one having said to you”)

Col 1:5 τὴν ἐλπίδα τὴν ἀποκειμένην
the hope *laid up* (lit., “the hope, the one laid up”)

Without the article. Contrary to typical adjectival constructions, the participle may have an attributive relation without the article. See Luke 6:48:

ὅμοιός ἐστιν ἀνθρώπῳ οἰκοδομοῦντι οἰκίαν.
“He is like a *person* [who is] *building* a house.”

Observe the agreement in case, number, and gender. The participle clearly is modifying “person” and can be translated by a relative clause. Indeed, in Matthew’s parallel version (7:24), a relative pronoun is used with a finite verb:

ὁμοιωθήσεται ἀνδρὶ . . . ὅστις ὠκοδόμησεν αὐτοῦ τὴν οἰκίαν.
“He is to be likened to a man . . . *who built* his house.”

Matthew 26:7 is another illustration of the anarthrous (without the article) construction:

προση̄λθεν αὐτῷ **γυνή ἔχουσα** ἀλάβαστρον μύρου βαρυτίμου
καὶ κατέχευεν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ **ἀνακειμένου**.

“A woman having an alabaster jar of very expensive ointment came to him and she poured [it] on his head as he was reclining.”

The clearest example is in the first line, Matt 26:7a, where ἔχουσα . . . βαρυτίμου modifies γυνή. But Matt 26:7b offers another example along with an instructive lesson. As noted earlier, an aspect of the participle’s genius lies in the fact that it is not *either* adjectival *or* adverbial; it is both. The last participle highlights this truth. That ἀνακειμένου is describing αὐτοῦ is clear from their agreement in case, number, and gender. Because it is modifying the pronoun αὐτοῦ—a clear adjectival function—one could have translated the participle as “who was reclining” (as in “on the head of him, who was reclining”). There is, however, an adverbial temporal force present in the context as well, and this is best expressed by the translation “as he was reclining.”³

As a *substantive*. Just as the adjective may be coupled with the article and used as a substantive, so may the participle. Any form of the participle may have this function. The Johannine writings are replete with examples:

1 John 3:7b ὁ **ποιῶν** τὴν δικαιοσύνην δίκαιός ἐστιν.
The one who is doing justice is just.

John 13:28 τοῦτο οὐδεὶς ἔγνω **τῶν ἀνακειμένων** πρὸς τί εἶπεν αὐτῷ.
No one among those sitting [there] knew why he told him this.

Rev 1:5b **Τῷ ἀγαπῶντι** ἡμᾶς καὶ **λύσαντι** ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν . . .
To the one who is loving us and who released us from our sins . . .

John 13:11 ἦδει γὰρ **τὸν παραδιδόντα** αὐτόν.
For he knew *the one who was going to betray* him.

In Rev 1:5b both participles agree with the dative singular masculine article and therefore fill out its meaning; but observe that the first participle is present tense and the second is aorist.

Substantives, but having objects. From the examples above, you should observe another characteristic of the participle: even substantival participles may have their own direct and indirect objects. For example, in 1 John 3:7b, τὴν δικαιοσύνην is the direct object of ποιῶν; in Rev 1:5b, ἡμᾶς is the direct object of both ἀγαπῶντι and λύσαντι; and in John 13:11, αὐτόν is the direct object of παραδιδόντα. Colossians 1:8 provides an example of both direct and indirect objects:

³See ch. 21 concerning the adverbial participle expressing time (pp. 196–97). Further illustrations of attributive participles without the article are Rom 8:24, ἐλπίς δὲ **βλεπομένη** οὐκ ἔστιν ἐλπίς (“But hope *that is seen* is not hope”); Mark 5:36, τὸν λόγον **λαλούμενον** (“the word *that is being spoken*”); and 2 Cor 3:2, ἡ **ἐπιστολή** ἡμῶν ὑμεῖς ἐστε, **ἐγγεγραμμένη** ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν (“You are our *letter, inscribed* on our hearts”).

... ὁ καὶ δηλώσας ἡμῖν τὴν ὑμῶν ἀγάπην ἐν πνεύματι.
 ... *who also made known to us your love in spirit (or in the spirit).*

In this case, ἡμῖν is the indirect object of the substantival participle, and τὴν ἀγάπην is the direct object.

Matthew 25:20 is another illustration of the substantival participle. But note the attributive position in which the direct object of λαβών stands: ὁ τὰ πέντε τάλαντα λαβών, “*the one who received the five talents.*”

20.5 ὑπάρχω as “Possessions”

When ὑπάρχω is found in participial form with the neuter plural article (τὰ ὑπάρχοντα), it functions as a substantive and is usually best translated as “possessions.” This construction is particularly prevalent in Luke-Acts (but see, e.g., 1 Cor 13:3).

20.6 The Granville Sharp Rule

Luke 6:47 Πᾶς ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρὸς με
 καὶ ἀκούων μου τῶν λόγων
 καὶ ποιῶν αὐτούς . . .

Everyone *who is coming* to me
 and *hearing* my words
 and *doing* them . . .

The first participle in the above passage is a substantival nominative (“the one coming”) with a modifying prepositional phrase (“to me”). The second participle is a continuation of the substantival nominative and has its own direct object (genitive because it is ἀκούω). The third participle concludes the substantival construction (with its own direct object). These three clauses—from πᾶς to αὐτούς—are, in effect, the subject of ἐστίν in the next clause; hence, “I will show you what *everyone who . . . them* is like.” Yes, it is a complicated sentence, but it is typical Greek.

Observe that ἀκούων and ποιῶν above are anarthrous. Luke 6:47 illustrates what H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey designate as the Granville Sharp Rule:

When the copulative καί connects two nouns of the same case, if the article ὁ or any of its cases precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle; i.e., it denotes a further description of the first-named person.⁴

⁴H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1927), 147.

In Luke 6:47 the three nominative singular masculine participles are connected by καί. Because the second and third are anarthrous, they are additional modifiers of πᾶς ὁ ἐρχόμενος. Thus, one understands by the Greek construction that part and parcel of “coming to me” is “hearing and doing”—Jesus is looking for more than just an entourage of yes-men and -women.

EXERCISES

A. Translate the following sentences into English:

- Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ὀκτώ* πάλιν ἦσαν ἕσω* οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ' αὐτῶν. ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν* κεκλεισμένων,* καὶ ἕστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν, Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν.
- Οἱ μὲν* οὖν⁵ διαμαρτυράμενοι* καὶ λαλήσαντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου ὑπέστρεφον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, πολλὰς τε κόμας* τῶν Σαμαριτῶν εὐηγγελίζοντο.⁶
- καὶ οἱ εἴκοσι* τέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι οἱ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ κάθηνται ἐπὶ τοὺς θρόνους αὐτῶν ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θεῷ λέγοντες,
- Εὐχαριστοῦμέν σοι, κύριε ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ,*
ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν,
ὅτι εἰληφας τὴν δυνάμιν σου τὴν μεγάλην
καὶ ἐβασίλευσας.*
- λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ὅτι ἐώρακάς με πεπίστευκας; μακάριοι οἱ μὴ* ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες.
- Εἰ δὲ κηρύσσεται ὅτι Χριστὸς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται, πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν τινες ὅτι ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν;
- ἔχοντες δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως, κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον,
Ἐπίστευσα, διό* ἐλάλησα, καὶ ἡμεῖς πιστεύομεν, διὸ καὶ λαλοῦμεν,
- εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ ἐγείρας τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἡμᾶς σὺν Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ καὶ παραστήσει σὺν ὑμῖν.
- καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατὴρ ἐκεῖνος μεμαρτύρηκεν περὶ ἐμοῦ. οὔτε φωνῆν αὐτοῦ πώποτε* ἀκηκόατε οὔτε εἶδος* αὐτοῦ ἐώρακατε,
- καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔχετε ἐν ὑμῖν μένοντα, ὅτι ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ἐκεῖνος, ὑμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετε.

⁵Sometimes μὲν οὖν forms an idiom meaning “so” or “then.”

⁶εὐηγγελίζω (aor. εὐηγγέλισα) is one of several compound verbs in the GNT with the prefixed adverb εὐ-. Observe that with this verb the past time augment *follows* the prefix, in contrast, for example, with εὐχαριστέω, which augments the prefix itself (aor. ηὐχαρίστησα). Other verbs containing this prefix, such as εὐλόγέω (aor. εὐλόγησα), form their past tenses *without* augmentation.

11. Ἐγόγγυζον* οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι περὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι εἶπεν, Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ καταβάς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.
12. Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις,* σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου οὐδὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου τῶν καταργουμένων*
13. ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ,* τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην,* ἣν προώρισεν* ὁ θεὸς πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων εἰς δόξαν ἡμῶν.
14. καὶ ᾤφθησαν αὐτοῖς διαμεριζόμεναι* γλῶσσαι ὡσεὶ* πυρός, καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐφ' ἓνα ἕκαστον αὐτῶν.
15. ὁ φυτεύων* δὲ καὶ ὁ ποτίζων* ἐν εἰσιν, ἕκαστος δὲ τὸν ἴδιον μισθὸν* λήμψεται κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον.*
16. Καὶ διαπεράσαντες* ἦλθον ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν εἰς Γεννησαρέτ.*
17. Καὶ ἐπιγνόντες αὐτὸν οἱ ἄνδρες τοῦ τόπου ἐκείνου ἀπέστειλαν εἰς ὅλην τὴν περιχώρον* ἐκείνην, καὶ προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ πάντας τοὺς κακῶς* ἔχοντας.

B. Translate the following sentences into Greek:

1. The one who is rejoicing (use a participle) in the Lord will edify the assembly.
2. I heard the man speaking to his disciples.
3. The woman following him touched his garment.
4. To those who have led others astray, I rebuke you.
5. Living for God leads to righteousness.