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"Only If Father God Is with You"
Translating Post-nuclear Conditional Clauses in the Gospels

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Abstract: Most conditional clauses in NT Greek are pre-nuclear and provide a frame for what follows. In contrast, most conditional clauses that are post-nuclear are either clausal complements (if introduced with εἰ) or focal protases (whether introduced with εἰ or with ἐάν). In verb-object languages like English, placing the protasis after the apodosis often implies that the protasis is focal. If the protasis is negative in Greek, another way to show that it is focal in many languages (including verb-final ones) is to make it positive and use an adverb such as "only" or "always." In many verb-final languages, all conditional clauses are pre-nuclear, so translators need to distinguish those that provide a frame from those that are focal. This paper includes examples from four verb-final Quichuan languages that show how they made this distinction.

Key words: conditional clauses, NT Greek, post-nuclear conditionals, translation, frame versus focus

1 Introduction

Other papers in this volume have already indicated that conditional clauses in NT Greek are formed by placing the subordinator εἰ or ἐάν at or near the beginning of the clause. Rijksbaron (2002:68–69) distinguishes between "neutral" conditions (those with εἰ) and "prospective" conditions (those with ἐάν):

- *Neutral* conditions: When authors use εἰ and indicative mood, "No indication is given concerning the likelihood of fulfilment of the condition" (ibid.:68). So, Greek authors use εἰ for situations that are

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certain to occur ("Since...") and for situations that may or may not occur ("If...").

- *Prospective* conditions: Authors use ἐάν and subjunctive mood when they "consider fulfilment of the condition very well possible" in the given context (ibid.:69). For example, when Jesus states, "For if [ἐάν] you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you" (Mt 6:14),[1] he considers it likely that his hearers will sometimes "forgive men their trespasses." Similarly, when he states, "but if [ἐάν] you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (15), he considers it probable that they will sometimes want to "not forgive men their trespasses."[2] Greek authors use ἐάν even when the condition is highly unlikely in the particular context.

Whether the subordinator is εἰ or ἐάν, conditional clauses more often precede their matrix clause than follow it (see the table below). I first make some observations about pre-nuclear conditional clauses (§§1.1–1.2). Post-nuclear conditional clauses with εἰ are more frequent than those with ἐάν because εἰ is used to introduce the complement of matrix verbs such as "tell" or "see," and such complements nearly always follow the matrix verb (§2). Post-nuclear conditional clauses that function as the protasis to a consequence clause (the apodosis) are considered in §3.

The following table indicates how many conditional clauses occur in each of the Gospels. Separate columns show whether the conditional subordinator is εἰ or ἐάν, and how many of the clauses are pre-nuclear or post-nuclear. For post-nuclear clauses with εἰ, separate columns indicate whether the clause concerned is a complement or a protasis.

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, translations into English are from the Revised Standard Version (RSV), modified as appropriate to reflect the Greek source text more closely.

[2] The context in which the conditional clauses of Mt 6:14–15 are given is the prayer that Jesus has taught his disciples to pray: "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (12).

	εἰ	εἰ		ἐάν	ἐάν
	pre-nuclear	post-nuclear[3]		pre-nuclear	post-nuclear
		complement	protasis		
Matthew	31	5	3 or 4[4]	35	5
Mark	8	9	5	18	3
Luke	26	10	2	22	0
John	37	0	4	45	11

1.1 Pre-nuclear conditionals as a frame for the apodosis

In most if not all languages of the world, conditional clauses may begin sentences in order to provide a "frame" (Runge 2010:207) or "point of departure" (Levinsohn 2023a:§2.2) for what follows. We see this in Matthew 6:14: "For if [ἐάν] you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you." The sentence begins with the conditional clause (protasis), "if you forgive men their trespasses." This clause provides the frame for the nuclear clause (the apodosis), "your heavenly Father also will forgive you."[5]

When a Greek sentence begins with a conditional clause which provides the frame for what follows, then translators should be able to begin the equivalent sentence with a subordinate clause, as well. Similarly, if a consultant is checking a draft translation, he or she would expect sentences in the draft to begin with a subordinate clause if the original began with a conditional clause that provided a frame for what follows.

1.2 Pre-nuclear conditionals that are focal, rather than frames

On five or six occasions in the Gospels, a pre-nuclear conditional clause does not provide a frame for the apodosis. Rather, the protasis (which is always

[3] These figures do not include occasions when εἰ is followed by an indefinite pronoun with the meaning "whoever, whatever" (BDAG 2000:279 εἰ §7), as in Mt 18:28: "Repay whatever [εἴ τι] you owe." Mk 11:25 (discussed in §3.1) may provide a further example: "forgive anything [εἴ τι] you may have against anyone."

[4] See §3.1 for discussion of Mt 27:40.

[5] In Jn 9:31 ("but if [ἐάν] anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, this one God listens to"), the protasis has been left-dislocated, with the proximal demonstrative τούτου 'this one' referring back to the subject of the protasis. However, the protasis still provides a frame for the apodosis ("this one God listens to").

subordinated with ἐάν) is focal.[6] The protasis is usually focal when the information in the apodosis has already been established in or, at least, implied by the context.

Jesus' words in John 8:24 provide an example (see discussion below):

24a I told you that you will die in your sins,

24b for you will die in your sins unless [ἐάν μή] you believe that I am [he].

In the Greek text, the protasis ("if you do not believe that I am") comes before the apodosis ("you will die in your sins"). Jesus had already told his listeners, "You will die in your sin(s)" (21, 24a), so the information in the apodosis of 24b had already been established in the context; in fact, Jesus repeats the exact words that he had used in 24a. The information that had not been established in the context is their need to believe that "I am [he]." So, the protasis is focal.

In English, one way to show that the protasis is focal is to place it after the apodosis, and this is what the RSV has done (see also GNB).[7]

In languages that cannot place the protasis after the apodosis (e.g., those that are verb-final), one option is to attach a focus marker to the end of the conditional clause. This was the option chosen in Highland Inga ([inb] Quechuan, Colombia). When the conditional clause provides a frame for what follows in Inga, the enclitic *ka* functions as a frame marker and is attached to the end of the conditional clause. When the conditional clause is focal, the enclitic *mi* replaces *ka*.[8]

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[6] The "focus of an utterance is that part which indicates what the speaker intends as the most important or salient change to be made in the hearer's mental representation" (Dooley and Levinsohn 2023:§11.1).

[7] See also Lk 16:31 ("neither will they be convinced if [ἐάν] someone should rise from the dead"). As in Jn 8:24, the protasis, which is focal, precedes the apodosis in the Greek text. Lk 4:7 ("All these will be yours, then, if [ἐάν] you worship me"—GNB) may provide a further example (contrast RSV and NIV), both of which begin the sentence with the protasis, thereby implying that it provides the frame for the apodosis "it shall all be yours."

[8] See Levinsohn 2023b:§6.5.4 for discussion of the enclitic *ka* as a marker of "story development." In the Quichuan languages of Ecuador cited in this article, the enclitic is written *ca* (bolded in the examples). In all the languages cited in this paper, the enclitic *mi* is an evidential that is used in affirmative sentences when the author has witnessed the event. In verb-final sentences, it is attached to the focal constituent (the "rheme"—Levinsohn 1975). For convenience, I refer to *mi* as a "focus marker" throughout this paper.

Now consider Mark 7:2–4b:

2 they [some Jewish religious leaders] saw that some of his disciples were eating with hands defiled, that is unwashed.
3 (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless [ἐάν μή] they wash their hands, observing the tradition of the elders;
4a and when they come from the market place,
4b they do not eat unless [ἐάν μή] they purify themselves;)

The passage concerns eating practices, and contrasts how Jesus' disciples were eating ('with hands defiled'—2) with how the Jews habitually ate (washing their hands and purifying themselves according to the tradition of the elders). So, as in John 8:24, the information in the apodosis of 3 and 4 ("they do not eat") had already been established in the context, whereas no reference had been made in the context to the people following the tradition of the elders in washing and purifying themselves. Consequently, the protasis of 3 and 4b is contrastively focal.

Once again, languages like English can show that the protasis in 3 and 4b is focal by placing it after the apodosis, while verb-final languages like Inga may attach a focus marker to the end of the conditional clause.

Nicolle (2022:59, 60, this volume) presents a third option for protases that are negated: to make the protasis positive and use an adverb such as "only" (e.g., "they only eat **if** they purify themselves [first]") or "always" (e.g., "they **always** purify themselves before eating"—4b).[9]

A further option might be to express both the protasis and apodosis in independent clauses (e.g., "They first purify themselves, and only then do they eat").

Now consider Jesus' words in John 15:9–10:

9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love.
10a If [ἐάν] you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love,
10b just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Jesus had just told his listeners, "abide in my love" (9), so much of the information in the apodosis of 10a ("you will abide in my love") had already been established in the context. The information that had not been established in the context is their need to "keep my commandments."[10] So the protasis is focal.

[9] In this and other examples, I have reproduced Nicolle's underlining and bolding.

[10] The verbal mood shifts from imperative ('abide') in 9 to future indicative ('will abide') in 10a, but it is nevertheless true that much of the information in the apodosis of 10a is established, whereas the information in the protasis of 10a is non-established.

In English, we would therefore expect the protasis to follow the apodosis: "You will abide in my love if you keep my commandments." If we were to do this, though, the parallelism with 10b would be lost. So all the English versions I have checked keep the protasis before the apodosis (see above).

However, there is still a problem. When people read John 15:9–10 aloud, we might expect them to read 10a so that the primary stress does *not* fall on any part of the apodosis ("abide in my love"), since the information in it is established.[11] Rather, we would expect them to put the primary stress on some element of the protasis ("keep" or "my commandments"). In practice, many readers do stress some element of the apodosis (e.g., "my love"), which sounds strange, if one has just heard verse 9.

One way to solve the problem in English would be to change the order of the two parts of both 10a and 10b, so that the passage might read as follows:

10a You will abide in my love if you keep my commandments,
10b just as I abide in my Father's love because I have kept his commandments.

However, I have found no English version that makes such a radical change.

In summary, then, nearly all the conditional clauses that are pre-nuclear in the Gospels in Greek provide a frame for what follows, and we can expect them to also be pre-nuclear in translations into other languages. The remaining five or six are focal, and we have considered three ways of indicating that they are focal in other languages:

- Placing them after the apodosis (in languages like English).
- Using a focus marker (in verb-final languages like Inga).
- If the protasis was negative in Greek, making it positive and using an adverb such as "only" or "always."

2 Conditional clauses functioning as a complement

When a conditional clause functions as the complement of a verb such as "tell," the subordinator used is always εἰ. See, for example, Matthew 26:63:

63a I adjure you by the living God,
63b tell us if [εἰ] you are the Christ, the Son of God.

[11] In the audio recording of the GNB (https://www2.bible.com/en-GB/bible/68/JHN.15.GNT), the reader seems not to put primary stress on any part of 10a. In contrast, he correctly stresses "Father's" in 10b, because of the parallelism between "my Father's commandments" in 10b and "my commandments" in 10a.

In the above example, "if you are the Christ, the Son of God" is the complement of "tell us."

This use of εἰ is the same as in Classical Greek; "*Yes-no*-questions are usually introduced by εἰ 'if, whether'" (Rijksbaron 2002:56). The conditional clause as complement almost always follows the main verb.[12]

If the main verb is "say" or "ask," then English versions usually leave εἰ untranslated and present the complement as direct reported speech, as in Matthew 12:10: "And they asked him, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?'"[13] In Mark 15:44b, however, the speech is reported indirectly: "he asked him whether [εἰ] he was already dead."[14]

Sometimes, the main verb is "see," as in Matthew 27:49 = Mark 15:36: "Wait, let us see whether [εἰ] Elijah will come to save him." However, the Greek text often leaves "see" implicit, as in Mark 3:2 = Luke 6:7: "And they watched him, whether [εἰ] he would heal him on the sabbath." In these passages, English versions such as the RSV often add "to see."[15]

In Mark 15:44a, the main verb is "wondered": "And Pilate wondered if [εἰ] he were already dead."[16]

In Luke 14:31, the main verb is "take counsel": "Or what king, going to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether [εἰ] he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?"

In many verb-final languages, the complement always precedes the main verb. In some of these languages, the complement is presented as an embedded yes-no question, as in Matthew 27:49 (Salasaka Highland Quichua [qxi] Quechuan, Ecuador): "Wait, let us see: Will Elijah come (*shamun**chu***) to save from the cross?" (The yes-no question marker in these Quichuan languages is *chu* [bolded].)

Sometimes, the complement is also followed by a form of the verb "say," as in Mark 3:2 (Chimborazo Highland Quichua [qug] Quechuan, Ecuador): "'Will Jesus heal (*alliyachin**chu***) this man or what?' saying, they were watching in order to accuse."

The subordinator εἰ also introduces the complement of "(be) better," as in Matthew 26:24 = Mark 14:21: "It would have been better for that man if [εἰ] he

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[12] For a pre-nuclear example, see Acts 4:19: "Whether [εἴ] it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you decide."

[13] See also Mt 19:3 = Mk 10:2; Mk 8:23; Lk 6:9; 13:23; 22:49.

[14] See also Lk 23:6.

[15] See also Mk 11:13a; Lk 14:28 (NIV, NLT). In contrast, the NLT renders Mk 3:2 (but not Lk 6:7), "Jesus' enemies watched him closely. Would he heal the man's hand on the Sabbath?"

[16] Contrast the translation of Mk 15:44a in more modern English versions, e.g., "Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead" (NIV).

had not been born."[17] In verb-final languages, such a complement may be marked as focal, as in Salasaka Quichua: "Not having.been.born-FOCUS (*Na wacharishkasha-**mi***), it would have been good."

In Luke 12:49, εἰ introduces the complement of "wish": "and how I wish [εἰ] it were already kindled!" (NIV). In verb-final languages, the complement might well be marked as focal.[18] Alternatively, the language may have other ways of expressing contrafactual wishes, such as Inga *Amalai* "Oh that it were ...!"

Luke 19:42 ("If [εἰ] you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace" [NIV]) lacks a main verb such as "I wish," but RSV translates it in the same way as Luke 12:49: "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace!"

A residual example is Mark 8:12, which literally means, "Truly, I say to you, if [εἰ] a sign shall be given to this generation." Bratcher and Nida (1961:251) point out that this is "a Hebraism indicating strong denial, 'no sign shall be given.'"

In summary, when εἰ introduces a complement clause, the complement clause normally follows the matrix verb in both Greek and English. In most verb-final languages, the complement clause will precede the matrix verb and, where appropriate, be marked as focal.

3 Conditional clauses functioning as the protasis

We now consider the 32 or 33 occasions when a post-nuclear conditional clause functions as the protasis (13 or 14 with εἰ, and 19 with ἐάν). No less than 14 of the 19 instances with ἐάν are negated with μή (ἐάν μή 'if not', 'unless'), and Nicolle discusses most of them in his related article in this volume. So this section will mainly concern the remaining examples.

We begin with the passages in which the subordinator is εἰ (§3.1), before discussing those in which the subordinator is ἐάν (§3.2).

3.1 Post-nuclear protases with εἰ

Of the 13 or 14 post-nuclear protases whose subordinator is εἰ, six are positive (Mt 24:24 = Mk 13:22a; Mt 27:43 and, possibly, 27:40; Mk 11:25; Lk 23:35), one is negated with οὐκ ... οὐδέ ... οὐδέ (Jn 1:25), and seven are negated with μή (Mk 6:5; 9:9; Lk 9:13 [with negator μήτι]; Jn 19:11; plus, in infinitival form, Mt 5:13; Jn 10:10; 13:10). We consider first the positive protases (§3.1.1) and then the negative ones (§3.1.2).

[17] See also Mk 9:42 = Lk 17:2.

[18] In fact, all three translations into Ecuadorian Quichua treated 'already being kindled' as a frame (by attaching *ka* to it) and ended the sentence with 'it would have been good.' They handled Lk 19:42 in the same way.

3.1.1 Positive protases with εἰ

In Matthew 24:24 = Mark 13:22a, the conditional clause εἰ δυνατόν 'if possible' occurs in the middle of a subordinate clause of result: "so as [ὥστε] to lead astray, if possible, even the elect." In Chimborazo Quichua, the result clause was turned into a main clause with the conditional expression providing the frame for the following main verb: "If it is possible to cause to believe even those that God has chosen, they will cause [them] to believe." In Inga, in contrast, the conditional expression was expressed as "almost": "they will almost [*ñalla*] deceive those that God has chosen."

Matthew 27:43 and Luke 23:35 are both speeches that the bystanders uttered when Jesus was on the cross:

> 27:43 He trusts in God; let him deliver him now, if [εἰ] he desires him; for he said, "I am the Son of God."
>
> 23:35 He saved others; let him save himself, if [εἰ] he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!

In both passages, a directive in third person (the apodosis) is followed by a protasis which expresses a statement that the speakers do not believe to be true. In both Greek and English, placing the protasis after the apodosis preserves the continuity between the apodosis and the immediate context. This is particularly clear in Luke 23:35, as "He saved others" is the lead-in to the directive to "let him save himself." Matthew 27:43 is similar. "He trusts in God" is the lead-in to the directive to "let him deliver him now" (with no repeated reference to God (contrast RSV).

In addition, placing the protasis after the apodosis gives prominence to the protasis. Wright (2011:180) adds "really" to his translation of Luke 23:35 to reflect this: "let him try rescuing himself, if he really is the Messiah, God's chosen one!" Similarly, the NVI version in Spanish adds "*de veras*" 'truly' to its translation of Matthew 27:43: "*Él confía en Dios; pues que lo libre Dios ahora, si de veras lo quiere*."

In languages that require the protasis to precede the apodosis, it would also be appropriate to include an adverb such as "truly" in the protasis, to give it some prominence. This was the option chosen in Inga in Matthew 27:43.

We turn now to Matthew 27:40: "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, if [εἰ] you are the Son of God, [and] come down from the cross." As the second pair of brackets indicates, some source documents have καί 'and', while others omit it.

If καί is omitted, then the conditional clause functions as a frame for "come down from the cross" (as in the RSV), and this is the option that was chosen in the Inga and Ecuadorian Quichua translations.

In contrast, the GNB treats "if you are the Son of God" as the protasis for the preceding directive, "save yourself": "You who were going to tear down the Temple and build it up again in three days! Save yourself if you are God's Son! Come on down from the cross!" Placing the protasis after the apodosis avoids beginning the speech with a long vocative ***and*** a conditional frame (*"You who were going to tear down the Temple and build it up again in three days, if you are God's Son, save yourself"). In addition, the clause-final position of the protasis probably gives prominence to it, as in the previous examples.

We now consider Mark 11:25: "And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if [εἰ] you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive your trespasses." Placing the protasis after the apodosis avoids beginning the sentence with a temporal frame and a conditional frame. However, it is also possible to read the combination of εἴ and τι as meaning 'whatever' (GNB has: "forgive anything you may have against anyone"). This appears to be the interpretation that lies behind the Chimborazo Quichua translation: "You, on praying to God, forgive everyone what they have offended."

It appears, then, that positive protases with εἰ have been placed after the apodosis for more than one reason. What is most relevant for translators is that, in some of the passages (Mt 27:43, Lk 23:35 and, possibly, Mt 27:40), the post-nuclear position of the protasis probably makes it more prominent. In such passages, translators may wish to use an adverb such as "really" or "truly" to bring out the prominence.

3.1.2 Negative protases with εἰ

We begin this subsection with John 1:25, which has a protasis negated with οὐκ ... οὐδέ ... οὐδέ: "Then why are you baptizing, if [εἰ] you are neither [οὐκ] the Christ, nor [οὐδέ] Elijah, nor [οὐδέ] the prophet?" The addressee (John) has already said that he is not the Christ (20), nor Elijah, nor the prophet (21), so a possible rendering of εἰ is "since". The focus of the information interrogative is the question word "Why?" (Levinsohn 2023a:§4.2). The sentence begins with this focal element, which is followed by the presupposition (You are baptizing for some reason), and finally, information in the protasis that was established earlier in the conversation. Consequently, the interrogative sentence violates the Principle of Natural Information Flow, and one reason for doing so is in order to give prominence to "Why?" (Levinsohn 2023b:§4.2.3).

The NLT places the protasis of John 1:25 before the apodosis, but gives prominence to "Why?" by rendering it, "what right do you have to ...?": "If you aren't the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet, what right do you have to baptize?"

In Imbabura Highland Quichua ([qvi] Quechuan, Ecuador), a similar effect is achieved by expressing the protasis as a full sentence, followed by an adverbial

connector which functions as a frame for the question itself. This has the effect of slowing the conversation down and creating the expectation that something important is about to follow. A free translation of the speech is as follows: "You say like, 'I am neither the Messiah, I am neither Elijah, I am neither the Prophet." Being thus (*Shina cashpa-ca* [thus being-FRAME]),[19] why are you baptizing like this?'"

In the remaining examples of this section, the protasis is negated with μή or, in the case of Luke 9:13, with μήτι.

First, consider what Jesus said to Pilate in John 19:11 (English versions usually translate the εἰ μή combination "unless"): "You would have no power over me unless [εἰ μή] it had been given you from above." Nicolle (2022) points out that, when the protasis is introduced with ἐάν μή or, in this instance, εἰ μή, one way of rephrasing the sentence is by using "only." So John 19:11 could be rephrased using "only" in the following ways (ibid:60):

(a) You would have power over me only **if/because** it had been given you from above.
(b) You would only have power over me **if/because** it had been given you from above.

When John 19:11 was translated into Imbabura Quichua, back in 1976, the above strategy was precisely the one that was used. The protasis was expressed positively, and ended with the limiter *lla* ('only', underlined), together with the focus marker *mi*: "Only **if** Father God had given you power (*Taita Dios canman ushaita caraschca cajpilla-**mi*** [Father God to.you power given being.only-FOCUS]), could you do anything at all to me."

We turn now to Luke 9:13. The disciples' reply to Jesus' directive, "You give them something to eat" includes the εἰ μήτι combination, which, according to BDAG (2000:279, §6j), means "*unless indeed*, *unless perhaps*": "We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless [εἰ μήτι] we are to go and buy food for all these people."

Reiling and Swellengrebal (1971:371) note that, in the verb-final language Marathi ([mar] Indo-Aryan, India), the protasis and apodosis are transposed: "if we don't buy and bring bread, then we have nothing besides five loaves and two fish."

Other verb-final languages have opted for a two-sentence solution. For example, the Inga rendering is, "We have here only five loaves and two fish (*Pichka tanda i iskai chalwalla-**mi*** [five bread and two fish.only-FOCUS]). Otherwise

[19] Participial clauses in the Quichuan languages cited in this volume are marked as having the same subject as the following clause (with *shpa*/*spa*) or as having a different subject (with *jpi*/*gpi*).

(*Mana kagpi-ka* [not being-FRAME]), it would be necessary to go and buy food and all these."

It is also possible to read τι in Luke 9:13 as an interrogative particle. The following are two English versions that include an interrogative element:

> All we have are five loaves and two fish. Do you want us to go and buy food for this whole crowd? (GNB)
>
> All we've got here is five loaves and a couple of fishes – unless you mean we should go ourselves and buy food for all these people? (Wright 2011:141)

In the remaining passages, the εἰ μή combination introduces an exception to the preceding assertion. Mark 6:5 provides an example.

> 5a And he could do no mighty work there,
>
> 5b except that [εἰ μή] he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them.

So 5b can be rephrased as: "He could only lay his hands upon a few sick people and heal them."

The Inga rendering of 5b is similar: "He lay hands and healed only a few sick ones."

In the following passages, the exceptions that the εἰ μή combination introduces are in infinitival form. A rephrasing with "only" is possible in the first two passages:

> John 10:10 The thief does not come except [εἰ μή] to steal and kill and destroy.
> Rephrased as: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy." (RSV)
>
> John 13:10 He who has bathed does not need except [εἰ μή] to wash his feet.
> Rephrased as: "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet." (NIV)
>
> Matthew 5:13 It [Salt] is no longer good for anything except [εἰ μή] to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.
> Rephrased: "It has become worthless, so it is thrown out and people trample on it." (GNB)
>
> Inga: "It will be no good for anything. Instead, it needs to be thrown out."

Finally, consider Mark 9:9:

9a he charged them to tell no one what they had seen,
9b except [εἰ μή] when the Son of man should have risen from the dead.

All the English versions I have examined rephrase 9b to read "until the Son of man should have risen from the dead." In other words, they place the exception to the directive of 9a at an unspecified point of time in the future when the resurrection will take place.

A rephrasing with "only" is also possible: "he told them that they must only tell people what they had seen after the Son of man had risen from the dead."

In Inga, what Jesus said in this verse was expressed in two sentences:

9a You are to be telling no-one what you have seen.
9b From after this One who became Man has died and become alive (*wañuspa kaugsariskauramanda-mi* [having.died from.after.became.alive-FOCUS]) you may tell what you have thus seen.[20]

In summary, most of the post-nuclear protases that begin with εἰ μή in the Gospels introduce exceptions to a preceding assertion. In many instances, a positive rephrasing with "only" may well be the best way of translating them, especially in verb-final languages.

3.2 Post-nuclear protasis with ἐάν

We begin discussion of the post-nuclear protases whose subordinator is ἐάν with the five passages in which the protasis is positive (§3.2.1). We then consider those passages in which the protasis is negative and is introduced with ἐάν μή 'if not', 'unless' (§3.2.2).

3.2.1 Positive protases with ἐάν

A positive protasis with ἐάν follows the apodosis on five occasions in the Gospels (Mt 4:9; 16:26; Jn 13:17b, 13:35; 15:14). In at least three of them, the protasis is focal.

First, consider John 15:12–14:

12 This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.
13 Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

[20] The Chimborazo Quichua and Imbabura Quichua translations are similar.

14 You are my friends if [ἐάν] you do the things which [ἅ] I command you.

In the above passage, the topic of "friends" is introduced in 13, so the apodosis of 14 ("You are my friends") contains some information that has been established in the immediate context. In contrast, the topic of "command" was introduced in 12 and, in most manuscripts, the reference in 14 ("the things which I command you") is plural, so does not refer exclusively to the commandment of 12. This means that the information in the protasis is less established than that of the apodosis, and the protasis is focal.

The translation into Inga of 14 reflects this by beginning the sentence with the protasis and marking it as focal (What I command you doing being-FOCUS my disciples you are).

Now consider the second conditional clause in John 13:17 (the one introduced with ἐάν):

17a If [εἰ] you know these things,
17b blessed are you if [ἐάν] you do them.

The above sentence begins with a protasis ("If you know these things" [17a]) which provides the frame for (17b). Newman and Nida (1980:436) point out that "the 'if' clause in Greek states a condition that is true to fact"—an interpretation which is consistent with the use of the neutral subordinator εἰ.

We turn now to (17b), which consists of an apodosis ("blessed are you") followed by a protasis ("if you do them"). "Doing is emphatic over against mere knowing" (Lenski 1942:929), so the apodosis is focal. The translation into Chimborazo Quichua reflects this by beginning (17b) with the protasis and marking it as focal:

17a All these things you already know.
17b These things doing-FOCUS you are blessed.

John 13:34–35 reads as follows:

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if [ἐάν] you have love for one another.

We may parse (35) in two ways:

- Newman and Nida (1980:449) commend the restructuring of the GNB, which reads, "If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples." If we follow the GNB, then the

protasis ("If you have love for one another") is the frame for the apodosis ("then everyone will know that you are my disciples"). The translation into Inga reflects this by beginning (35) with the protasis and marking it as the frame, "Thus if you are loving each other-FRAME".

- If "By this" (ἐν τούτῳ) is cataphoric, pointing forward to the protasis ("if you have love for one another"), then the protasis is focal. The translations into Chimborazo Quichua, Imbabura Quichua and Salasaka Quichua reflect this by beginning 35 with the protasis and marking it as focal, "Thus if you are loving each other-FOCUS".

I am inclined to think that the second option is more faithful to the Greek!

Now consider what the devil said to Jesus in Matthew 4:9: "All these I will give you, if [ἐάν] you will fall down and worship me." "All these" (Ταῦτά ... πάντα) refers to "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" (8), which the devil had just showed to Jesus. So the apodosis contains established information. In contrast, none of the information in the protasis ("if falling down you will worship me") is established, and it is this proposal that Jesus addresses in his reply of 10, when he quotes from Deuteronomy 6:13 ("You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve"). So the protasis of (9) is focal.

However, all the Quichua translations that I have been citing begin (9) with the protasis and mark it as a frame for "I will give you all these things." They then attach the focus marker to "these things." If I was checking their translations today, I would suggest that it might be better to attach the focus marker to the protasis!

Another way of ensuring that the protasis of the devil's speech is focal is to express it in a separate sentence. His speech might then read something like, "I am willing to give you all these. So fall down and worship me."

Another option, which might work particularly well in verb-final languages, would be to turn the apodosis into a purpose clause, since it is a consequence of the protasis being fulfilled. The devil's speech would then read something like, "In order that I give you all these, fall down and worship me."

Finally, consider Jesus' words in Matthew 16:24–26:

24 If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.
25 For [γάρ] whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
26 For [γάρ] what will it profit a man, if [ἐάν] he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?

The conjunction γάρ indicates that (26) is strengthening what Jesus said in the previous verse which, in turn, strengthens his words in (24). (26) itself is an information interrogative "in which all but the question word is the presupposition, and the question word itself is the focus. It is not surprising, therefore, that the question word precedes the verb in the focal position" (Levinsohn 2000:§4.2).

We occasionally find interrogative sentences with the conjunction γάρ in which a conditional frame precedes the interrogative (e.g., "For if [ἐάν] you love those who love you, what reward have you?" [Mt 5:46]). So we cannot argue that, in Matthew 16:26, the protasis follows the apodosis because the sentence is interrogative. Rather, it would appear that, while the primary focus of (26) is the question word "what," some prominence is also given to the protasis and, in particular, to the words that are preposed for focal prominence in Greek in the two parts: "the whole world" and "his life."

The Imbabura Quichua translation achieves this double prominence by expressing (26) in two sentences. The first sentence is suppositional, with the focus marker attached to the first part ("having got all whatever there is in this world"): "[Suppose] a man were to get and have all whatever there is in this world." This is followed by an interrogative sentence which begins with the protasis as frame, "Although it is thus, if he went and lost his soul (*chingaita chingagrishpa-ca* [soul going.losing-FRAME]), what good would it be?"

I conclude that, whenever a positive protasis with ἐάν follows the apodosis in Greek, it is prominent and, except in the case of information interrogatives, focally prominent. The challenge for us, then, is to ensure it is more than simply a frame for the apodosis in the translations that we are producing or checking.

3.2.2 Negative protases with ἐάν μή

Nicolle's article in this volume is devoted to 'unless' and 'if... not' conditionals (2022), so this section is intended solely as a supplement to it.

When a negative protasis with ἐάν μή precedes the apodosis, it typically provides a frame for what follows (see §1.1). See, for example, John 13:8:

> 8a Peter said to him [Jesus], "You shall never wash my feet."
> 8b Jesus answered him, "Unless [ἐὰν μὴ] I wash you, you have no part in me."

As Nicolle (2022:63) notes, the protasis of Jesus' reply "echoes Peter's statement." It provides the frame for the following assertion, "you have no part in me."[21]

[21] See also Mt 5:20; 8:3; Lk 13:3, 5; Jn 3:3, 5; 4:48; 6:53; 12:24; 15:6; 16:7a; 20:25.

When a negative protasis with ἐάν μή provides a frame for what follows in the four Quichuan languages we have been using for illustration, the frame marker *ka*/*ca* is attached to the end of the protasis.

Occasionally, a negative protasis with ἐάν μή precedes the apodosis but is focal (see §1.2 for discussion of Jn 8:24 and Mk 7:3, 4). In Inga, this is shown by replacing the frame marker *ka* with the focus marker *mi*.

When a negative protasis with ἐάν μή follows the apodosis, it is usually focal. Nicodemus' assertion in John 3:2 provides an example: "no one can do these signs that you do unless [ἐὰν μὴ] God is with him." The apodosis refers to established information ("these signs that you do"), whereas the information in the protasis has not been established in the context ("God is with him").

Nicolle (2022:57) suggests three ways of rephrasing this sentence positively, making use of the adverb "only":

(a) "a person can do these signs that you do only **if** God is with him."
(b) "a person can only do these signs that you do **if** God is with him."
(c) "only **if** God is with him can a person do these signs that you do."

The presence of "only" ensures that, in all three of these renderings, the protasis is still focal.[22]

The Imbabura Quichua translation also used the limiter "only" (*lla*) and the focus marker *mi*: "Only if/because Father God is with you (*Taita Dios canhuan cajpilla-**mi*** [Father God with.you being.only-FOCUS]), you are doing just wonderful things."

Nicolle (ibid.:61) writes that, in the case of Matthew 18:35 ("So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, unless [ἐάν μή] you forgive your brother from your heart"), "the force would be lost if it were rephrased" with "only if."[23]

In Imbabura Quichua, the protasis begins the sentence as a frame, but is immediately followed by "in just the same way" and the focus marker.

Now consider Jesus' prayer in Matthew 26:42:

42a My Father, if [εἰ] this cannot pass unless [ἐάν μή] I drink it,
42b thy will be done.

Jesus begins his prayer with a protasis whose subordinator is εἰ, and which serves as the frame for the apodosis, "thy will be done." Within this protasis is a protasis negated by ἐάν μή, which follows the apodosis "this cannot pass."

[22] See also Mt 12:29 = Mk 3:27; Jn 6:44-6:65; 15:4(bis).

[23] For discussion of Jn 3:27, 5:19 and 7:51, see Nicolle (2022:62, 62-63 and 60).

All the English versions I have examined keep 42a negative. However, it is possible to rephrase it with "only," so that it reads, "if this can only pass if I drink it."

In Chimborazo Quichua, the translators attached the limiter "only, just" (*lla*) to the verb phrase "go to take" (as well as to the apodosis): "If I am going to just take (*apanallataj cajpi-ca* [to.just.take being-FRAME]) this suffering (which is) like a bitter drink, please just do what you want."

In Mark 4:22, ἐάν μή introduces a purpose clause: "For there is nothing hid, except [ἐάν μή] to be made manifest;" Bratcher and Nida (1961:145) rephrase this statement positively as follows: "if something is hidden, it is in order that it (eventually) be manifested." GNB also rephrases the statement in a positive way: "Whatever is hidden away will be brought out into the open."

The Chimborazo Quichua reads as follows: "Whatever has been hidden will not remain hidden, everything-FOCUS (*tucui-**mi***) will be made known."

A residual example with ἐάν μή is found in Jesus' words in Mark 10:29–30:

> 29 Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel,
> 30 unless [ἐάν μή] he receive a hundredfold now in this time

Bratcher and Nida (1961:327) write as follows about 30: "*ean mē labē* 'unless he receive', 'except he receive': this construction goes back to the beginning of v. 29, *oudeis estin hos aphēken ... ean mē labē* 'there is none who left ... unless he receive'. The phrase can be freely translated 'Whoever left ... will receive'." The parallel passage in Luke 18:30 replaces ἐάν μή with "whoever" and a double negative (ὃς οὐχὶ μὴ), and no English or Quichua version that I have examined begins 30 with "unless" or "except."

I conclude that, when a negative protasis with ἐάν μή follows the apodosis, it is usually focal. The challenge for us, as it was in the examples of §3.2.1, is to ensure that such protases are more than simply a frame for the apodosis in the translations that we are producing or checking.

4 Conclusions

I began this paper by noting that most of the conditional clauses that are *pre-nuclear* in the Gospels in Greek provide a frame for what follows. Consequently, we can expect them to also be pre-nuclear in translations into other languages (§1.1). On the rare occasions that a pre-nuclear conditional clause is focal, we noted three ways of indicating that it is focal in other languages (§1.2):

- Placing it after the apodosis (in languages like English).
- Using a focus marker (in verb-final languages like Inga).
- For negative protases in Greek, making them positive and using an adverb such as "only" or "always."

When a clause with the conditional subordinator εἰ is *post-nuclear* in the Gospels, εἰ may be introducing a clausal *complement*. The norm in English, as in Greek, is for the complement clause to follow the matrix verb ("ask, say, see, tell, wonder," etc.). In most verb-final languages, the complement clause will precede the matrix verb and, where appropriate, be marked as focal (§2).

When a post-nuclear conditional clause functions as a *protasis* to a preceding apodosis, it is usually focal or, at least, prominent. In the case of positive protases with εἰ, it may be appropriate to use adverbs such as "really" or "truly" to express such prominence. When a positive protasis with εἰ or ἐάν is focal, we need to ensure that it is more than simply a frame for the apodosis in the translations that we are producing or checking (§§3.1.1, 3.2.1).

The same is true of negative protases that follow their apodosis. Most of the protases that begin with εἰ μή introduce exceptions to a preceding assertion, while those that begin with ἐάν μή "usually describe the *only* situation or fact that would invalidate the apodosis" (Nicolle 2022:53). In many instances, a positive rephrasing with "only" may well be the best way of translating such protases, especially in verb-final languages (§§3.1.2, 3.2.2).

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