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**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES,**

**MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Mountain Top University**

**Kilometre 12, Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, MFM Prayer City, Ogun State.**

**PHONE: (+234)8053457707, (+234)7039395024, (+234) 8039505596**

**EMAIL: [support@mtu.edu.ng](mailto:support@mtu.edu.ng)**

**Website: [www.mtu.edu.ng](http://www.mtu.edu.ng).**

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# COURSE GUIDE

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**COURSE TITLE: Introduction to Greek Grammar I**

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**LECTURER: Chibuzo I. NWANGUMA (Ph.D)**





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# COURSE OBJECTIVES

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## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course, as the title implies, is the beginning of the journey into mastering New Testament Greek. It begins with a brief overview of Greek Grammar, that is, the stages Greek Grammar has gone before it got to us. The alphabet is learnt. Students are then taken through fundamental word formation principles through the various declensions, vocalization, accents, some Greek vocabulary and the conjugation are equally studied.

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## LECTURE ONE

### BRIEF HISTORY OF GREEK LANGUAGE

#### 1.0 Introduction

This lesson focuses on the basic history of Greek Language. It discusses the various dialects of the Greek Language and the spread of it through the agency of Alexander the Great. The lesson then ends with the origin of Greek alphabet and the various pronunciations or vocalization of Greek words.

#### Objectives

At the end of this lecture, the learners should be able to:

1. give brief history of Greek Language
2. explain the differences between the various dialects
3. discuss the contributions of Alexander the Great in Spread of Greek Language

#### Pre-Test

1. Explain the origin of your language
2. How were languages formed?
3. By what means do languages spread?

### CONTENT

#### 1.1 Introduction

During the classical period, Greek language was divided into a number of dialects, of which there were three great families –the Doric, the Aeolic, and the Ionic. In the fifth century before Christ, one of the Ionic families, the Attic, attained the supremacy, especially as the language of the prose literature. The Attic dialect was the language of the Athens in her glory – the language of **Thucydides**, of Plato, of **Demos then** and of most of the other great writers of Greece.

#### 1.2 The Attick Dialect

Many things made the Attic dialect dominant in the Greek speaking world. First and foremost of such was the genius of the Athenian writers. Also, the political and commercial importance of Athens was without effect; even when the Athens were conquered by several powers like the Spartans and subsequently, the Macedonians under Philip, the influence of the Attic dialect survived the loss of political power. Thus, the language of Athens also became the language of the conquerors.

### **1.3 The Contribution of Alexander**

Macedonian was not originally a Greek kingdom, but it adopted the civilization of the day which was the civilization of Athens. The tutor of Philip's son, Alexander the Great who endeavoured to spread Greek culture, was Aristotle, the Greek philosopher. Also, after the death of Alexander the Great resulting in the breaking of the kingdom, the Macedonian conquest rather meant nothing less than the Hellenization of the East, or the enormous acceleration of the Hellenization process which had already begun. It is interesting that even during the Roman era from about the BC 40; no attempt was made to suppress the Greek language. The conquerors rather became the conquered.

### **1.3 The Spread of Greek Language and Culture**

This language owes its name and, to some extent, its existence as well, to the conquests of Alexander the Great. Originally there were several Greek dialects, each of them specifically connected with some particular geographical areas. Most important of these were the Attic, Ionic, Doric and Aeolic dialects. Eventually the Attic became the literary language of Greece.

Since Alexander the Great recruited the men for his army from all parts of the Greek world, a dialect gradually formed which, having Attic as a basis, served as a common means of communication among all men of the army, and later among the merchants who followed the army into the conquered lands. The new language was the "Koine" language which means "common"; i.e., common to all Greek-speaking people. Later "Koine" acquired a broader meaning. This brings us to a second name of the language of the New Testament: "Hellenistic period", that is Greek period.

The aim of the ambitious young conqueror was to bring all lands within the borders of his empire under the influence of the Greek civilization; in other words, to "Hellenize" them. The Greek word for Greece itself is Hellas, and the term used to describe the process of fusing Greek and Oriental cultures is to hellenize. Therefore this period of history is known as the "Hellenistic" period. One of the effects of the Hellenizing policy of Alexander was to make the New Greek dialect "Koine" in a wider sense, in that it became the common language of the whole Mediterranean world. Although the "Hellenistic period" lasted from the death of Alexander in 323 BC to the establishment of the Roman Empire in 30 B.C., the "Koine" survived approximately until the middle of the sixth century of our era, to be succeeded by another, the "Byzantine" form of the Greek language. The main characteristic feature of the "Koine" is a consistent tendency to simplification through the dropping of many of the formulas of the older Greek dialects. However, the new dialect retained to a large degree the great flexibility of the Greek language.

### **The Problem of Pronunciation**

Before we can begin the study of the language, or even of its alphabet, we must deal with the problem of pronunciation. There are two pronunciation "styles" of New Testament Greek: (1)

the Erasmian pronunciation which has its origin in the work of the 16th century Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus, and (2) the Modern Greek pronunciation. Whatever the pronunciation of the Greek language in classical times may have been, there can be little doubt that so far as the "Koine" of the Alexandrian period is concerned the Erasmian pronunciation presents serious flaws. The papyri, a collection of private letters business correspondence, etc., which have been unearthed in Egypt since the 1870s — and rewritten in the "Koine" Greek, and bear witness to the fact that most, if not all, vowels and diphthongs had during that period, not the phonetic value which the Greek scholars bear witness to.

Erasmian pronunciation ascribes to them, but the one which they have in spoken Modern Greek. One should beware of being dogmatic with regard to this matter, but at the present time it is quite safe to assert that the Modern Greek pronunciation is in many respects much closer to that of the "Koine" period than the Erasmian one. However, the Erasmian pronunciation is still in use in American and European colleges and seminaries. In other, therefore, to spare students unnecessary confusion, the Erasmian pronunciation is presented in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this lesson. Remember that, unlike Latin, Greek is not a "dead" language; it is still spoken. And it should be at least a matter of interest for the student that he be acquainted with the way the language in which the New Testament was written is still being spoken today.

### Post-Test

1. a. How many dialects did we have in the ancient Greek?  
b. Why was the Attic dialect more prominent and dominant the others?
2. Discuss the contribution of Alexander the Great in the spread of Greek culture and language.
3. What is meant by the problem of pronunciation in Greek language?

### Bibliography

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*Learning the Basics of New Testament Greek*, (Revised Edition Copyright © 1998 by AMG Publishers. All rights reserved.)

Machen, J. Gresham, 1923, *New Testament Greek for Beginners*, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company



## **LECTURE TWO**

### **The Greek Alphabet**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

In Revelation 1:8 we read, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, aisth the Lord. Here the writer John used, as will be recognized in this study, the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet. These two letters, when used in conjunction with each other, refer to the beginning and end of a process; and they came to refer to the Universe and the divine power. In Revelation 1:8, this means that Christ (the One who took our place on Calvary's cross so that we might be delivered from our sins) was none other than the Creator of the universe, the very One who maintains it by the power of His Word and who will control the affairs of the universe throughout eternity. It is interesting that this One who is large enough to create the universe is small enough to live in our hearts.

#### **Objectives**

At the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

1. Recite the Greek alphabet from memory and correctly write the letters of the alphabet.
2. Distinguish between long and short vowels
3. Recognize and pronounce the seven common diphthongs taught in the lesson
4. Apply the breathing marks correctly
5. Recall the four punctuation marks

#### **Pre-Test**

1. How many letter are there in the alphabet of your language?
2. Explain the features of a vowel in a language.
3. What is meant by the term diphthong?

## CONTENT

### 2.1 The Alphabet

Capital Letters	Small Letters	Names	Pronunciation
A	$\alpha$	Alpha	a as in father
B	$\beta$	Beta	b
$\Gamma$	$\gamma^1$	Gamma	g as in got
$\Delta$	$\delta$	Delta	d
E	$\epsilon$	Epsilon	e as in get
Z	$\zeta$	Zeta	dz
H	$\eta$	Eta	a as in late
$\Theta$	$\theta$	Theta	th
I	$\iota$	Iota	i as in pit, ee as in feet
K	$\kappa$	Kappa	k
$\Lambda$	$\lambda$	Lambda	l
M	$\mu$	Mu	m
N	$\nu$	Nu	n
$\Xi$	$\xi$	Xi	x
O	$\omicron$	Omicron	o as in okazi
$\Pi$	$\pi$	Pi	p
P	$\rho^2$	Rho	r
$\Sigma$	$\sigma(\varsigma)^3$	Sigma	s
T	$\tau$	Tau	t
Y	$\upsilon$	Upsilon	u as in ugba
$\Phi$	$\phi$	Phi	ph
X	$\chi$	Chi	German ch
$\Psi$	$\psi$	Psi	ps
$\Omega$	$\omega$	Omega	o as in note

#### Note

1. Before another  $\gamma$  or  $\kappa$  or  $\chi$ ,  $\gamma$  is pronounced like ng
2. At the beginning of a word  $\rho$  is written  $\rho^2$ , rh
3.  $\varsigma$  is written at the end of a word, while  $\sigma$  is written elsewhere

### 2.2 The Greek Vowels

Short	Long
$\alpha$	$\alpha$
$\epsilon$	$\eta$
$\omicron$	$\omega$
$\iota$	$\iota$

υ υ

**Note:** Except ε and ο that have corresponding η and ω respectively in places of long vowels, the rest, α, ι, or υ could be either short or long in context.

## 2.3 The Diphthong

A diphthong is a combination of two vowels in a single syllable. The second letter of the diphthong is always a close vowel while the first is always an open vowel except in the case of υι. The common diphthongs are as follows.

- αι, pronounced as ai in aisle
- ει, pronounced as ā in fate (ει and η are pronounced alike)
- οι, pronounced as oi in oil
- αυ, pronounced as ow in cow
- ευ, pronounced as eu in feud
- ου, pronounced as oo in food
- υι, pronounced as uee in queen

## 2.4 Breathing Mark

A vowel or a diphthong at the beginning of a word always has a breathing mark over it. The breathing mark stands over a vowel, and in the case of a diphthong, it stands over the second of the two vowels.

The rough breathing ( ‘ ) indicates that a h-sound is to be pronounced before the initial vowel or diphthong, whereas the smooth breathing ( ’ ) indicates that no such h-sound is pronounced.

<b>Examples:</b>	υῖός	h-υῖός,	Rough
	ἄδελφός	ἄδελφος	Smooth

## 2.5 Punctuation

There four marks of punctuation: the comma (,) and the period (.), both are written on the line and are corresponding to the comma and period in English; the colon which is a dot above the line (·) and it takes the place of the English colon and semicolon; and the question mark (;) and it looks like the English semicolon.

## Post-Test

1. Write the Greek alphabet
2. Give the paradigm of a Greek vowels
3. State the Greek diphthongs you know.
4. What is meant by breathing in Greek?

## Bibliography

Grazier, E. Robart, 1991, *Greek I Study Guide: (Developed in Cooperation with ICI, Texas: Int'l Correspondence Institute*

## LECTURE THREE

### The Accent

#### 3.0 Introduction

In the last lesson, we studied the alphabet, diphthongs, breathing marks, an aspect of the accents, and the punctuation. In this lesson, the concern is what one may call an absolute attention on the accent in the Greek Language.

#### Objectives:

At the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

- Know the three different accents in Greek
- Identify the ultima, penult, and antepenult
- Recognize long and short syllables
- Apply the general rules of accent

#### Pre-Test

1. Why is accent important in any language?
2. Name the accents you know.
3. What is meant by syllable

#### Content.

#### 3.1 The Preliminary Definitions

##### Kinds of Accents

There are three accents, the acute ( ´ ), the circumflex ( ^ or ~ ), and the grave ( ` )

The acute accent ( ´ )

λόγος  
ἔχω  
οἶκου

Note that the accent mark comes after the breathing mark over the initial vowel in the second example above and that the accent mark comes after the breathing mark over the second letter/vowel of the initial diphthong in the third example.

The circumflex ( ^ or ~ )

δῶρον  
οἶκος

Note that the circumflex accent is placed above the breathing mark over the second vowel of the diphthong in the second example. Accent marks are never placed on the first vowel of a diphthong.

##### The Syllables



A syllable is several letters of a word taken together so as to form one word. There is one vowel sound in a syllable and as many consonants as can be pronounced easily.

### Examples

- a. sal va tion has three syllables  
b. αν θρω μος has three syllables

Antepenult                  Penult                  Ultima

αν	θρω	πος
αγ	γελ	ος
	δου	ος
	λο	γος

The last syllable is the **ultima**; the one before that is the **penult**; while the one before that is the antepenult.

### 3.2 The Long and Short Syllables

In the first instance, it will be very important that you know at sight and memory the long and short vowels we have already learnt earlier. There are other two points we need to have in mind as we study the syllables. First, **syllables bearing a long vowel or a long diphthong are long**. Second, *when the diphthongs ai and oi come last in a word, they are to be considered short for accent purposes*.

### Examples

αν θρώ πους  
αν θρω ποι

In the first example, we have three syllables. The first one is short because the antepenult *an* contains the short vowel *a*. The second syllable, the penult, contains a long vowel; therefore, it is long.

In the second example, there are three syllables also. The first are like the word in the first example. The third syllable, however, has the diphthong *oi* which is the last or final in the word. When the diphthong *oi* comes last in a word, it is to be considered short for accenting purposes.

### 3.3 General Rule of Accent (Noun)

The basic principle in noun accent is that the accent remains constant. This means that the accent remains on the syllable as in the nominative singular, so nearly as the general rules of accent will permit. The general rules of accent as they apply to nouns are as stated below.

1. The acute ( ´ ) stands only on one of the last three syllables of a word; the circumflex ( ˆ ) only on one of the last two; and the grave ( ` ) stands only on the last.
2. The circumflex accent cannot stand on a short syllable
3. If the ultima is long, the antepenult cannot be accented; and if the penult is accented at all, it must have acute accent.
4. If the ultima is short, a long penult must have the circumflex accent if it is accented at all.
5. A long ultima can have either the acute or the circumflex accent.
6. An acute accent on the last syllable of a word is changed to grave accent when followed without intervening mark of punctuation by other words in a sentence.
7. A long accented ultima takes a circumflex accent, except in the nominative and accusative cases. Then, it takes an acute.

### Post-Test

1. Name and explain Greek accents.
2. What is a syllable? State and explain the various syllables in Greek language.
3. In a tabular format, write Greek vowels stating the classes of the individual vowels vis-à-vis the corresponding opposite classes, whether long or short.
4. Write a comprehensive note on the general rule of accent
5. Place the right accents over the following verb forms: λυω, ἔχω, γινωσκομεν, βλεπετε, λαμβανεις, γραφουσι.

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## LECTURE FOUR

### Present Active Indicative

#### 4.0 Introduction

In the last lesson, we studied the rules concerning accents. But in this lesson, we'll look at the active indicative of the regular verb in New Testament Greek. Understanding the materials in this lesson is extremely important. For example, an accurate interpretation of the Bible depends on the understanding of the durative aspect of the present tense.

#### Objectives:

At the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

- Recite from memory all vocabulary: Greek to English, English to Greek
- Recite from memory the endings of the present active indicative of λύω
- Define and explain the grammatical ideas taught in this lesson; especially, the six elements of a verb

#### Pre-Test

- What is vocabulary?
- Explain what you understand by present active indicative.
- What is grammar?

#### 4.1 Content.

##### Vocabulary

βλέπω,	I see	λαμβάνω,	I take
γινώσκω	I know	λέγω	I say
γράφω,	I write	λύω	I loose, I destroy
διδάσκω,	I teach	ἔχω	I have

#### 4.2 Elements in Greek Verb

##### Tense

Tense is that distinction in verb which express distinctions in time and action denoted. The Greek is somewhat more concerned with the kind of action that is denoted than it is with time element. The time element of the Greek verb is determined not by tense alone but by other elements such as mood, for example.

**Present Tense:** The present tense represents an action. This is called linear or durative action. For example, as going on or being continued.

λύω, I am loosing                      λύεις, You are loosing

The present tense with the indicative mood.

##### Voice

Voice is that distinction in verb form which indicates the relationship the object has with the action of the verb, whether acting or being acted upon.

Greek has three voices: action, middle, and passive. The active represents the grammatical subject as acting upon an external object. The middle voice represents the grammatical subject as acting in some way in reference to itself. The passive voice represents the subject as being acted upon.

### Example

**Active:** He sees a man

**Middle:** I washed myself

**Passive:** They were being healed

We are not now primarily concerned with the middle and passive voices. They will be studied in a later lesson. Our concern here is the active voice. The active voice represents the subject as acting rather than being acted upon.

### Example

λούμεν, we are loosing

λούουσι, they are loosing.

In the first example above, the subject “we” is doing the action of the verb. That is, the subject “we” is doing the loosing. Also, in the second example above, the subject “they” is doing the action of the verb.

### Mood

Mood is that distinction in a verb form which expresses whether the action or state that the verb denotes is conceived of as a fact, or as a command, or in some other manner. Some examples of different moods will be helpful in giving us a clear understanding of mood.

### Examples

**The indicative mood makes a statement as a fact:** It is raining

**The imperative mood expresses a command:** Untie the colt

**The subjunctive mood gives a express contingency, probability, wish:** If it rains, you should stay in the house.

Here are two examples from the Greek, with translations in English, of the indicative mood.

### Example

γράφει,

He is writing

γράφεις,

You are writing

We have now studied three of the elements of Greek verb viz. tense, voice, and mood.



### 4.3 Forms of the Present Active of λύω

#### Singular

λύω, I loose or I am loosing  
λύεις, you loose or you are loosing  
λύει, he looses or he is loosing

#### Plural

λύομεν, we loose or we are loosing  
λύετε, ye loose or ye are loosing  
λύουσι, they loose or they are loosing

#### Person and Number

Listed below are personal ending of the present active indicative of the regular verb in Greek. There are, of course, three persons and two numbers in the Greek language as in English.

1st	Singular	ω	I
2nd	Singular	εις	you
3rd	Singular	ει	he (she, it)
1st	Plural	ομεν	we
2nd	Plural	ετε	ye
3rd	Plural	ουσι	they

### 4.4 Root, Stem, and Variable Vowels

λύω is a root form, that is, it is in the present tense, active voice, indicative mood, and it is first person singular. Right from now, anywhere mention is made of **root form of a verb**, reference is being made to the present active indicative, first person singular of the verb.

The stem of a verb is that part of the verb minus the personal ending and the variable vowel.

The variable vowel is the vowel placed between the stem and the personal ending.

Then, λύω is a root form – that is, it is a present tense, active voice, indicative mood, first person singular form.

λυ is the stem of the verb form.

ω is the personal ending of the verb.

To conjugate the verb λύω, we add the personal endings to the stem and insert – where necessary a variable vowel between the stem and the personal ending. Accents must be placed over the vowels or diphthongs according to the recessive accent rule of verbs.

**Note:** The variable vowel ο (omicron) precedes μ and ν in the personal endings, while the variable vowel ε (epsilon) precedes other consonants.

Stem	Variable Vowels	Personal Ending
1st Sing. λυ		ω
2nd Sing. λυ		εις
3rd Sing. λυ		ει
1st Plu. λυ	ο	μεν
2nd Plu. λυ	ε	τε
3rd Plu. λυ		ουσι

For the time being, it will be far better to regard ω, εις, ει, ομεν, ετε, and ουσι as the endings which are simply added to the verb stem.

## Second Person: Singular You and Plural Ye

J Greshan Machen suggests that the archaic “**thou**” be used to express the second person singular and that “**ye**” be used to express the second person plural. Given the trend in the English language of late, we will be forced to employ the common “**you**” for the second person and the archaic “**ye**” for the second person plural.

### 4.5 Review of Verb Accents

Verb have recessive accent.

**Explanation:** The rule means that, in verbs, the accent goes back as far as the general rules of accent will permit.

This rule definitely fixes the accent of any verb form; it is not necessary to know what verb form is derived from or to have any other information whatever. Knowing that it is a verb form, one needs only to look at the ultima. **If the ultima is short, an acute must be placed on the antepenult** (supposing the word has as many as three syllables); **if the ultima is long, an acute must be placed on the penult.**

**Example:** Suppose a verb form ἐγινωσκου is to be accented. In accordance with the rule of verb accent, the accent is trying to get back as far back as the general rules of accent will permit. But ἔγινωσκου would violate Rule 1; and since the **ultima** is long, ἐγίνωσκου would also violate Rule 3a. Therefore, the penult must be accented. Again, ἐγινῶσκου would violate Rule 3b. Then, ἐγινώσκου is correct. On the other hand, if a verb form ἐγινωσκε is to be accented, although ἔγινωσκε is forbidden by Rule 1, ἐγίνωσκε is permitted; and since verbs have recessive accent, that accenting, ἐγίνωσκε, is correct, and ἐγινῶσκε or ἐγινωσκέ would be wrong. If the verb form has only two syllables, Rule 4 often comes to play. So, if the verb form σωζε is to be accented, the rule of recessive verb accent decrees that the former of the two syllables shall be accented. Rule 4, however, decrees that the accent should not be σῶζε but σῶζε.

### Post-Test

1. Conjugate the following Greek verbs as you translate them to English: βλέπω, γράουσιν, λαμβάνομεν, διδάσκω
2. Explain the three elements in Greek verb

3. In a tabular form, describe persons and numbers in Greek
4. Describe the Rule Verb Accent as analyzed in the lesson.

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## LECTURE FIVE

### Second Declension

#### 5.0 Introduction

In the last lesson, we studied the various elements of the Greek verb. In this lesson, we'll look at the elements of the Greek noun: case, gender, number, and root. If you are not familiar with an inflected language, the various forms and concepts given in this lesson could be somewhat confusing. Do not be discouraged. I am confident that as you study diligently and consistently, your effort will be rewarded.

#### Objectives:

At the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

- Recite from memory all vocabulary: Greek to English, English to Greek
- Recite from memory the endings of the second declension, and masculine neuter nouns.
- Identify and define in relation to nouns: gender, number, cases
- State the correct order of cases as they appear in the examples and their meaning

#### Pre-Test

- What is declension?
- What is meant by grammatical gender?

#### 5.1 Content.

##### Vocabulary

ἀδελφός, ὁ, a brother	ἱερόν, τό, a temple
ἄνθρωπος, ὁ, a man	καί, conj., and
ἀπόστολος, ὁ, an apostle	λόγος, ὁ, a word
δοῦλος, ὁ, a slave, a servant	νόμος, ὁ, a law
δῶρον, τό, a gift	οἶκος, ὁ, a house
θάνατος, ὁ, a death	υἱός, ὁ, a son

You will notice that after each noun in the vocabulary, there is either an ὁ or a τό. These are Greek articles and they are placed there to let us know the gender of the nouns. The masculine article, ὁ, indicates masculine gender; the feminine article ἡ, indicates feminine gender while the neuter article τό, indicates neuter gender. There are no feminine nouns in this lesson as well as there is no indefinite article in Greek. ἀδελφός can either mean a brother or the brother depending on the context.

#### Example

δοῦλος is followed by ὁ, therefore, it is a masculine noun.  
Also, ἱερόν, is followed by τό, and so it is a neuter noun.  
More will be said about gender in the lesson.



## 5.2 Declension

Declension is the inflection of a substantive (noun, adjective, pronoun, or participle) for the purpose of indicating its relation to the rest of the sentence. Declension is a matter of form; it indicates, for example, the various forms which occur at the end of a noun. Declension could be distinguished from *case* which indicates the function of a noun in a sentence.

### Declension of ἄνθρωπος, ὁ, a man

Singular	Plural
Nom. ἄνθρωπος, a man	N. V. ἄνθρωποι, men
Gen. ἀνθρώπου, of a man	G. ἀνθρώπων, of men
Dat. ἀνθρώπῳ, to or for a man	D. ἀνθρώποις, to or for men
Acc. ἄνθρωπον, a man	A. ἀνθρώπους, men
Voc. ἄνθρωπε, man	

### Declension of υἱός, a son

Singular	Plural
Nom. υἱός, a son	N. V. υἱοί, men
Gen. υἱοῦ, of a son	G. υἱῶν, of a son
Dat. υἱῷ, to or for a son	D. υἱοῖς, to or for sons
Acc. υἱόν, a man	A. υἱούς, sons
Voc. υἱέ, son	

There are three declensions in Greek. The first declension has an inflected system in which the *a* sound is predominant. In the second declension, the one we are concerned with in this lesson, the *o* sound predominates. Consonant stems predominate in the third declension.

The second declension which we are studying now is sometimes called the *o* declension because of the prominence of the vowel *o* in the declension.

### Declension of δῶρον, τό, a gift

Nom. V. δῶρον, a gift	N. V. δῶρα, gifts
Gen. δῶρου, of a gift	G. δῶρων, of gifts
Dat. δῶρῳ, to or for a gift	D. δῶοις, to or for gifts
Acc. δῶρον, a gift	A. δῶρα, gifts

δῶρον as we know is a neuter noun. All neuter nouns of all declensions, the vocative and the accusative of both numbers are like the nominative, and the nominative, vocative and accusative plural always end in short *α*.

## 5.3 Gender and Number

### Number

It is important that one distinguishes between grammatical gender and natural gender. One of the words in the vocabulary for this lesson is νόμος. It is masculine in gender. The classification, masculine gender, has nothing to do with sexuality. In other words, there is nothing masculine at all about the word law. Again, it is highly likely that this terminology, masculine gender, arose because the Greek word for man, ἄνθρωπος, is also in this classification.

However, we must simply remember that there are three grammatical genders in Greek, namely, masculine, feminine, and neuter.

### Number

There are two numbers: singular and plural. Verbs agree with their subjects in number.

### Examples

δοῦλος, “a slave” is singular.

δοῦλοι, “slaves” is plural

δοῦλος λύει: A slave is loosing. Here, both the subject δοῦλος, (δοῦλος, a slave) and the verb (λύει, is loosing) are singular in number. They agree.

δοῦλοι λύουσι: slaves are loosing. Again, both the subject, δοῦλοι and the verb, λύουσι, are plural.

This issue of agreement of vital importance in a proper understanding of Greek language.

## 5.4 Case

Case is that distinction in noun forms which shows the relationship a noun has with other elements in a sentence. Case has to do with the function of a noun in a sentence. It will well if we look at each of the cases.

### The Nominative

The nominative is the case of a subject of a sentence. The subject of a sentence in the Greek language will always be in the nominative case.

### Example

ἀδελφὸς γράφει

A brother is writing

ἀπόστολος βλέπει

An apostle is seeing

According to the paradigm on the declension of ἀπόστολος above, in the first example, ἀδελφός is nominative singular; and since it is nominative, it is the subject of the sentence.

In the second example, ἀπόστολος is nominative. Consequently, it is the subject of the sentence. You can now see the importance of being able to recognize the forms or endings of Greek words.

### The Genitive

The genitive case expresses possession. It also expresses the idea of origin and separation. For such reason, it is often called a **whence case**. The genitive case has many other important uses which must be learned by observation in context. For our purpose and for the time being, it is more advisable to see genitive case as that which expresses possession and origin. Thus, we will translate any word in genitive case by the English prepositions “of” and “from.”

#### Example

δοῦλος ἀποστόλου γράφει                      A servant of an apostle is writing

δοῦλος is nominative; therefore it is the subject. ἀποστόλου is genitive. It shows possession and should be translated with the English preposition “of.” That is “of an apostle.”

It should be noted that the word in the genitive case followed the noun which it possessed. The genitive of possession nearly always follows the noun it possesses. **This rule must always be remembered** especially at level of our exposure to New Testament Greek

### The Dative

The dative case is that of the indirect object. The basic function of the dative case is to point out the one for whom or in whose interest an act is performed. It is often called the case of *person interest* or *personal advantage*. We will translate a word in the dative case by the English prepositions **to** and **for**. There are other ways to translate a word in the dative case, and we will take note of them as the occasions arise. At the moment, the use of the prepositions **to** and **for** suffices.

#### Example

ἄνθρωπος γράφει ἀδελφῷ                      A man is writing to a brother

In the example, the word ἀδελφῷ is in the dative case. The ending ῷ is a dative singular ending of the second declension nouns. It is translated by the English word **to** in a sentence

δοῦλοι γράφουσι ἀπόστολοις                      Servants are writing to apostles

In the example, the word ἀπόστολοις is in the dative case. The dative plural ending οῖς demands that we should translate with the English word **to** in the sentence.



## The Accusative

The accusative is the case of direct object. The object of a transitive verb is placed in the accusative case.

### Example

ἀδελφὸς βλέπει ἄνθρωπον      A brother sees a man.

ἄνθρωπον is accusative singular according to the second declension paradigm we have above and it is therefore the direct object of the verb βλέπει. The direct object in a sentence receives the direct action of the verb.

δοῦλοι γράφουσι νόμους      Servants are writing laws.

The word νόμους is in the accusative case and it is plural. And being in the accusative case, it is the direct object of the verb γράφουσι.

## The Vocative

The vocative case is a case of address. Note the example in the paradigm above. You will, however, not be required to learn the vocatives. But you just carefully note them as you see them when you start translating the New Testament.

## 5.5 Word Order

The normal order of sentences in Greek is like that of English – subject, verb, and object. There is no special tendency, as in a language like Latin, where verb is put at the end. Greek however, can vary the order for purposes of emphasis or euphony much more freely than English. The English translator must observe the endings and not just the order.

However, when you translate a Greek sentence, you should follow an order in looking for the different components. First locate the subject which is often a noun in the nominative case except where it is the unexpressed subject of a verb. The next thing you have to look for is the verb, and then, the direct object which also is often a noun in the accusative case. It is certain that other components in the sentence will naturally be unveiled. Having done all these, it will be relatively easy to assemble the elements together into a good English sentence.

### Examples

ἀπόστολος	λέγει	λόγον
Subject	Verb	Direct object

In the example, a noun in the nominative case comes first. It is followed by a verb, while the direct object comes last. The sentence is translated “An apostle is saying a word.” The same construction could also be written as follows:

λέγει	ἀπόστολος	λόγον
Verb	Subject	Direct object



The order of the elements of the sentence differs from those of the first sentence, but the translation is still, “An apostle is saying a word.” It could also be in the following order.

λόγον	λέγει	ἀπόστολον
Direct object	Verb	Subject

There is yet another arrangement; and the tradition is still to locate the subject first, then the verb, and finally the direct object. The translation is still in the same manner: An apostle is saying a word.”

βλέπετε	νόμους	καὶ	οἴκους
Verb (ye)	Direct object		Direct object

This sentence should be translated, “Ye are seeing laws and houses.” There is no noun in the nominative case to act as the subject. “Ye” is the unexpressed subject of the verb.

## 5.6 Movable ν

Based on the features of the New Testament Greek, Machen provides some explanations on what he calls movable ν, the letter nun. He says, the –ουσι of the third person plural of the verb comes either before a vowel or at the end of a sentence, a ν called movable ν, is added even before a word that begins with a consonant. Thus, either γράφουσι νόμους or γράφουσιν νόμους is correct.

It must not be supposed that this movable ν occurs at the end of every verb form ending in a vowel when the next word begins with a vowel. On the contrary, it occurs only in a very few forms, which must be learned as they appear.

## Post-Test

1. Translate the following from Greek to English: a) ἀδελφὸς βλέπει ἄνθρωπον. b) ἀπόστολοι διδάσκουσιν ἄνθρωπον. c) δούλους καὶ οἴκους λαμβάνουσιν ἀδελφοί.
2. Translate the following from English to Greek: a) A servant is writing. b) Servants and sons are saying a word to a brother. c) We see gifts and servants.
3. Decline the following words: ἄνθρωπος; ἱερόν
4. Describe what we mean by movable ν.

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- Grazier, E. Robart, 1991, *Greek I Study Guide: (Developed in Cooperation with ICI*, Texas: Int'l Correspondence Institute
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## LECTURE SIX

### First Declension

#### 6.0 Introduction

In the last lesson, we studied the second declension, cases, gender, and numbers. The only new thing to look at in this lesson is the first declension, and it is glaring that it'll be much easier if one had diligently learned the earlier lesson. Most of this lesson will be a kind of review work for the learner.

#### Objectives:

At the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

- Know the meaning of the words in the vocabulary.
- Recite from memory the three models of first declension.
- Master the gender and case of nouns in the lesson

#### Pre-Test

- What the difference between first and second declensions?
- What is the role of η in this declension?

#### 6.1 Content.

##### Vocabulary

ἀλήθεια, ἡ, truth

βασιλεία, ἡ, a kingdom.

γραφη, ἡ, a writing, a Scripture

δόξα, ἡ, glory.

εἰρήνη, ἡ, peace

ἐκκλησία, ἡ, a church.

ἐντολή, ἡ, a commandment.

ζωή, ἡ, life

ἡμέρα, ἡ, a day

καρδία, ἡ, a heart

Παραβολή, ἡ, a parable

φωνή, ἡ, a voice

ψυχή, ἡ, a soul, a life

ὥρα, ἡ, an hour

#### 6.2 First Declension Forms

We will study three kinds of first declension nouns. There are five classes of first declension nouns and three of such will be studied in this lesson while the two will be addressed later. The following rules must be memorized.

1. All nouns of the first declension whose nominative singulars end in α or η are feminine in gender.
2. First nouns ending in ας and ης in the nominative singular are masculine. This will be studied in a later lesson.
3. When the nominative singular ends in η, the η is retained throughout the singular.
4. When the stem of noun ends in ε, ι or ρ, the nominative singular will end in long α and this will be retained throughout the declension.
5. When the nominative singular ending is α and it is not preceded by ε, ι, or ρ, the genitive and the dative singular take an η.
6. All first declension plurals are the same

The examples below clarify the rules above.

### Examples

First declension nouns whose nominative singular is  $\eta$  are declined as follows. (Note that the  $\eta$  is retained throughout the singular)

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	γραφή, a writing	N. γραφαί, writings
Gen.	γραφῆς, of a writing	G. γραφῶν, of writings
Dat.	γραφῇ, to a writing	D. γραφαῖ, to writings
Acc.	γραφῆν, a writing	A. γραφάς, writings
Voc.	γραφή, o writing	V. γραφαί, o writings

Is  
First declension nouns whose nominative singular is  $\alpha$  which are preceded by  $\epsilon$ ,  $\iota$ , or  $\rho$  are declined as follows. (Note that the  $\alpha$  is retained throughout the singular).

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	ἡμέρα, a day	N. ἡμέραι, days
Gen.	ἡμέρας, of a day	G. ἡμερῶν, of days
Dat.	ἡμέρᾳ, to a day	D. ἡμέραις, to days
Acc.	ἡμέραν, a day	A. ἡμέρας, days
Voc.	ἡμέρα, o day	V. ἡμέραι, o days

First declension nouns whose endings are  $\alpha$  but are not preceded by an  $\epsilon$ ,  $\iota$ , or  $\rho$  are declined as follows.

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	δόξα, glory	N. δόξαι, glories
Gen.	δόξης, of glory	G. δοξῶν, of glories
Dat.	δόξῃ, to glory	D. δόξαις, to glories
Acc.	δόξαν, glory	A. δόξας, glories
Voc.	δόξα, o glory	V. δόξαι, o glory

Note the change from  $\alpha$  in nominative singular to  $\eta$  in the genitive and dative singular. In the accusative, the  $\alpha$  is retained.

### Post-Test

1. Translate the following from Greek to English. a) ἀπόστολος διδάσκει παρβολήν. b) καρδίαι ἀνθρώπων γινώσκουσι ἀδελφείαν
2. Translate the following to Greek. a) A kingdom takes glory. b) we have writings of apostles. c) churches have peace and glory.
3. Decline the following words. a) ἀλήθεια, ἡ, truth; b) φωνή, ἡ, a voice

## **Bibliography**

- Adewale, A. Olubiyi, 2015, *Understanding Biblical Greek*, Abeokuta: Crowther Theological Publishers
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