

The Greek Language I

From Pastor Rice's www.GSBaptistChurch.com/greek

The classical power of the Greek language was touched upon in the introduction. Biblical Greek is called "Koine Greek" or the "The common man's Greek," Koine Greek is no longer used in ordinary communication and is thus called a dead language. This makes it very stable. Contrast that with the very dynamic language of modern English. Modernists think it evolving, but it is devolving dramatically. Every Christian can benefit from the study of the Koine Greek.

Learning Greek I

You can learn a lot by watching a child learning to read. If this is your second language, after English, you are now that child. It is humbling, enlightening, and good for your brain. First learn the alphabet with the pronunciations of each letter. Then start reading the Biblical Koine Greek from the *Greek New Testament (Textus Receptus)*¹. Look up familiar portions of Scripture. Reading the genealogies of Matthew chapter one and Luke chapter three can be interesting and helpful. Pronounce one word at a time trying to figure out the syllabification as you go. You are now reading at a second grade reading level. Keep at it, work on your vocabulary, and in a year or two you can be reading at a third grade level. I repeat, it is humbling, enlightening, and good for your brain.

Those who stop learning are destined to grow old and senile.

The difference between the brain of a child and that of an old man is that the child must fit in a thousand new things every day, the old man's brain just sits still, satisfied with itself.

Keep your brain young. Learn something new. Study Greek and Hebrew.

Pastor Edward Rice

Learn the Alphabet

Mounce Chapter Three² - The Alphabet and Pronunciation (Memorize)
Greek Alphabet (Sung to "One-Little Two-Little Three-Little Indians")

α	A	Alpha	a as in <u>f</u> ather	ν	N	Nu	n as in <u>n</u> ew
β	B	Beta	b as in <u>B</u> ible	ξ	Ξ	Xsi	x as in <u>a</u> xiom
γ	Γ	Gamma	g as in <u>g</u> one	ο	Ο	Omicron	o as in <u>o</u> t
δ	Δ	Delta	d as in <u>d</u> og	π	Π	Pi	p as in <u>p</u> each
ε	E	Epsilon	e as in <u>m</u> et	ρ	Ρ	Rho	r as in <u>r</u> od
ζ	Z	Zeta	z as in <u>d</u> aze	σ ς	Σ	Sigma	s as in <u>s</u> tudy
η	H	Eta	e as in <u>o</u> bey	τ	Τ	Tau	t as in <u>t</u> alk
θ	Θ	Theta	th as in <u>t</u> hing	υ	Υ	Upsilon	oo as in <u>o</u> ok
ι	I	Iota	i as in <u>i</u> ntrigue	φ	Φ	Phi	ph as in <u>ph</u> one
κ	K	Kappa	k as in <u>k</u> itchen	χ	Χ	Chi	ch as in <u>ch</u>
λ	Λ	Lamba	l as in <u>l</u> aw	ψ	Ψ	Psi	ps as in <u>l</u> ips
μ	M	Mu	m as in <u>m</u> other	ω	Ω	Omega	o as in <u>o</u>
		Learning Greek is Fun				See how far we've come	

Be Careful! Don't confuse η (eta) with English "n", the ν (nu) with the "v", the ρ (rho) with the "p", the

1 *Greek New Testament (Textus Receptus)*, Trinitarian Bible Society, available from Christian Book Distributors \$11..40
CBD Stock No: WW800126 via www.christianbook.com/greek-new-testament/9781862280977/pd/800126?event=ESRCG

2 William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar*, 2nd Ed., Zondervan, 1993

χ (chi) with the "x" or the ω (omega) with the "w."

There are two sigmas in Greek, ζ occurs only at the end of a word and the σ occurs within the word.

The vowels in Greek are α, ε, η, ι, ο, υ, ω .

Gamma (γ) usually has a hard "g" sound, as in "get." However, when it is immediately followed by γ, κ, χ or ξ it is pronounced as a "n." For example, the word αγγελος is pronounced "angelos." This is called the gamma nasal.

Alpha and iota may be either long or short. Epsilon and omicron are always short, while eta and omega are always long.

Breathing Marks (When Used) are placed over all leading vowels (α, ε, η, ι, ο, υ, ω)

´ ο or ´ ο = rough and adds an "h" sound, and

˘ ο or ˘ ο = smooth and adds nothing (no "h" sound).

All words beginning with a vowel (α, ε, η, ι, ο, υ, ω) or a rho (ρ) should have a breathing mark. A rough breathing mark, ´ , adds a "h" sound to the word. A smooth breathing mark, ˘ , is placed over the first vowel and is not pronounced. Thus ὑπερ is pronounced "huper" and ὑπερ would be pronounced "uper" if it were a real Greek word. Don't confuse the accent symbol and remember all rho (´ ρ) not (˘ ρ) and upsilons (´ υ) not (˘ υ) have rough breathing marks. (#r) not (˘ r)

Learn the DIPHTHONGS (Memorize)

αι	as in <u>a</u> isle	ἄϊρω
ει	as in <u>e</u> ight	εἶ
οι	as in <u>o</u> il	οἶκία
αυ	as in <u>sau</u> erkra <u>u</u> t	αὐτός
ου	as in <u>sou</u> p	οὐδέ
υι	as in <u>sui</u> te	υἱός
ευ,ηυ	as in <u>fe</u> ud	εὐθύς

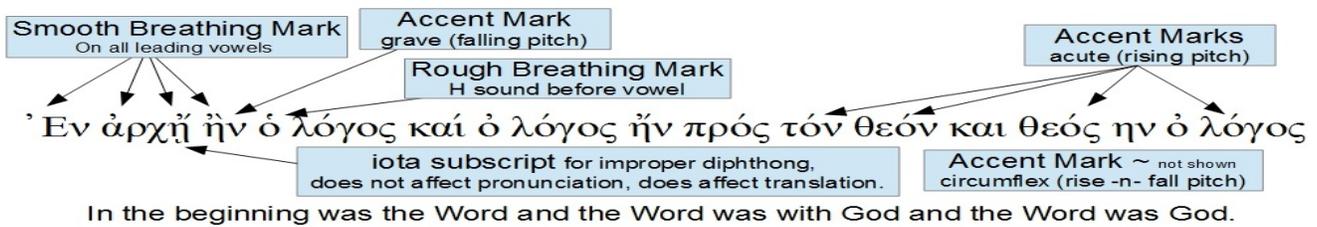
Note the breathing mark goes over the second letter of the diphthong.

There are improper diphthongs. An improper diphthong is an iota placed beneath an alpha, eta or omega ending. It does not effect pronunciation but is essential for proper translation so watch for them.

There are non-thonged diphthongs. These show up with a double dot over the second vowel. The double dot is called a *diaeresis* (¨) as in (αῖ). When the diaeresis shows up the vowels are pronounced separately. For example ἑσάιας has an αι the normally forms the aisle diphthong, but the the diaeresis (¨) disqualifies it making the pronunciation asa-ias.

Diaeresis are frequently used in German, but occasional in English. It would be **naïve** to ignore it.

Accent Marks - illustrated :



Accent marks used to indicate a rise (or fall) in pitch, rather than just a stress accent. That is why you may see a reversed accent mark like ἦν in the verse above. One is an acute accent ἦν, the other a grave accent ὁ. You may also see a circumflex accent where the voice was to rise then fall, as in ἀγνώσ. Thus the shape of the accent mark gives a clue to the direction of the pitch.

Practice Greek Pronunciations

John 1:1 (GTR) Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν και θεός ἦν ὁ λόγος

Practice Greek Pronunciation John Chapter 1

(Note onlineBible TR has no breathing marks or accents Greek Orthodox text is shown below)

1 εν αρχη ην ο λογος και ο λογος ην προς τον θεον και θεος ην ο λογος TR

1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος.

2 Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν.

3 πάντα δι αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν.

4 ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

5 καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν. (Greek Orthodox Bible)

1 ¶ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 ¶ And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. {comprehended: or, did not admit, or, receive}

(KJV)

Read and Pronounce carefully: John 1: 6-10

6 Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ Θεοῦ, ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἰωάννης·

7 οὗτος ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν, ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός, ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσι δι αὐτοῦ.

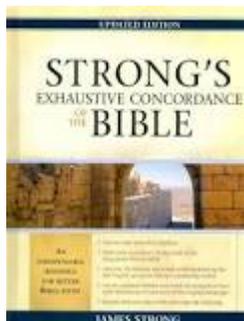
8 οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός.

9 Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

10 ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν, καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω.

Read and Pronounce carefully: John 2: 1-6

- 1 Καὶ τῆς ἡμέρας τῆς τρίτης γάμος ἐγένετο ἐν Κανᾷ τῆς Γαλιλαίας, καὶ ἦν ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐκεῖ·
- 2 ἐκλήθη δὲ καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν γάμον.
- 3 καὶ ὑστερήσαντος οἴνου λέγει ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πρὸς αὐτόν· οἶνον οὐκ ἔχουσι.
- 4 λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι οὕτω ἤκει ἡ ὥρα μου.
- 5 λέγει ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ τοῖς διακόνοις· ὅ τι ἂν λέγῃ ὑμῖν, ποιήσατε.
- 6 ἦσαν δὲ ἐκεῖ ὑδρίαὶ λίθιναι ἕξ κείμεναι κατὰ τὸν καθαρισμὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, χωροῦσαι ἀνὰ μετρητὰς δύο ἢ τρεῖς.



Everything you need to learn Greek (or Hebrew) is found in James Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* with Dictionaries of the Hebrew and Greek Words. These are readily available in print at a reduced price on the internet. The very last section of the book is a Greek dictionary and its opening page has the Greek alphabet and diphthongs with detailed explanations of their use. Use this resource for looking up words in Greek. It is an experience you will never outgrow.

When using the BST Greek computer Font you might find this helpful:

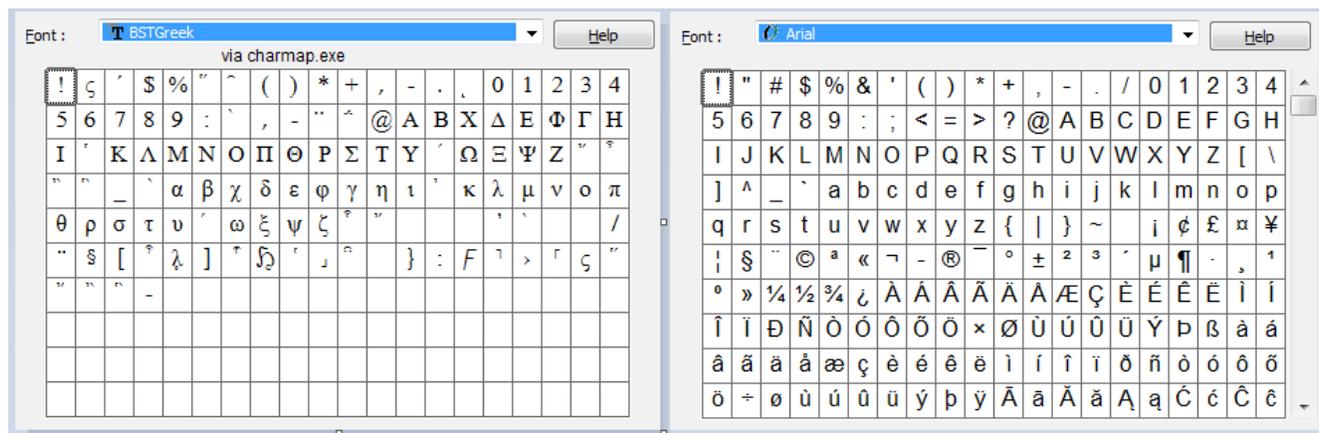
a b c d e f g h I j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z ; ' : " Turns into:

α β χ δ ε φ γ η ἰ κ λ μ ν ο π θ ρ σ τ υ ω ξ ψ ζ ᾿ : ς Τυρνσ ιντο:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z < > ? , . / Turns into:

Α Β Χ Δ Ε Φ Γ Η Ἰ Κ Λ Μ Ν Ο Π Θ Ρ Σ Τ Υ ᾿ Ω Ξ Ψ Ζ , ᾿ ᾿ , ᾿ Τυρνσ ιντο

Finding the final s is still a challenge, but the charmap.exe program for BST shows:



The only way I could get the final s in the BST Greek font was to insert the special character (<insert><special character> ς) The English keyboard replaces all " with “ and I could not change it. Uncertain characters should be inserted with the <Insert><Special Character> then choose from the chart.

EXERCISES

Carefully Write out the Greek Alphabet several times this week.

1. When do you find the two different forms of sigma?

A. _____

B. _____

2. What are the seven vowels?

3. What are the three breathing marks, and when do you find them?

A _____

B _____

C _____

4. How does the iota subscript affect pronunciation?

5 When is the diaeresis used?

Quiz# 1 is an alphabet completion worksheet. It should be printed out, completed by hand printing, faxed/scanned/pictured, and then emailed to Pastor-Rice[att)GSBaptistChurch.com for grading.

Take Quiz#1 at www.GSBaptistChurch.com/greek/grk101quiz01.pdf

It may be helpful to review Dr. Rodney Decker's work

View Prof Rodney Decker's BBC Viewgraphs for this section:

http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/greek/decker_bbc/wgk03-4.pdf

Please complete the Exercise above and take Quiz#1 before going on to Lesson 2 via grk102.pdf.

Back to Index: <http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/greek/>
On to Lesson 2: <http://www.gsbaptistchurch.com/greek/grk102.pdf>
