

# Beginning Greek I – Formation of Greek Nouns and Adjectives

April 18 7-8:30 p.m.

In person at Wai 'alae Baptist Church

Online via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88485111334?pwd=Um5tS21lV0NKYll2d1duMHZaTDlOQT09>

**Meeting ID: 884 8511 1334**

**Passcode: 123050**

Greek nouns and adjectives are formed similar to what we saw with Greek verbs – as well as English nouns and verbs.

Stem + Ending

logo + v

The good news is that unlike the verb, Greek nouns and adjectives only have endings – no augments, connecting vowels, reduplication, or the like. As we learned last week, the Greek noun often has additional help with an article.

ο( logo + v

The endings communicate case (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, or vocative), number (singular, plural), and often grammatical gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter).

## Grammatical gender

Remember that Greek uses grammatical genders – masculine, feminine, and neuter.

- Words that refer to biological gender will follow the same grammatical gender.
- Words that do not refer to biological gender can be any gender. Some scholars have tried to see a system or pattern to the designations, but their conclusions are not definitive or very helpful.

The following words are all nominative and singular. However, they have different gender. The article helps us know the gender.

ο( logo + v

h( xara

to ai{ma

It looks like the first one is the only one with an ending and the second and third have the same ending. That's partly correct. This is why having the article can be so helpful. Just remember too, that English (except for pronouns) is much more difficult to understand because it has no case endings.

the carrot      the frog      the oven

We have no way of knowing how these words would function in an English sentence. Whereas in Greek, the case endings would help us know.

## The Three Buckets

One of the ways that I explain the Greek noun and adjective system is to use the image of three buckets. Imagine that the Greeks had been using their language for a while but found different people using it different ways and more and more people who wanted or needed to learn it. To help make the language more consistent and to be able to teach others how to speak it, they took a look at all of their nouns and sorted them into three buckets.

Into one bucket, they tossed all the Greek noun stems that ending in alpha a or its long cousin eta h

Into a second bucket, they tossed all the Greek noun stems that ended in omicron o

Into a third bucket, they tossed all the Greek noun stems that ending in some other letter.

For each bucket, they gave the nouns similar endings depending on case, but with some differences. They also gave all the nouns, regardless of which bucket they were in, to indicate case, number, and grammatical gender.

The last letter in the stem determined which bucket. The bucket determined which endings. The articles were ALWAYS the same regardless of which bucket they were in.

This made-up story explains what is called in technical terms the three declensions.

- The first declension includes noun stems that end in a or h.
- The second declension includes noun stems that end in o.
- The third declension includes noun stems that end in everything else.

Many feminine nouns are in the first bucket (declension) and the feminine article follows the first declension. Many masculine and neuter nouns are in the second declension and the masculine and neuter article follows the second declension. **However, all three declensions can include words of any gender.**

## Review of the cases

Cases tell us how a word is functioning in a sentence – e.g., subject, direct object, indirect object, object of preposition.

Nominative – Subject, complement, predicate nominative

Genitive – Possession, source or origin, indirect object, direct object, object of certain prepositions

Dative – Indirect object, location, means or instrument, object of certain prepositions

Accusative – Direct object, object of certain prepositions

Vocative – Direct address (who is being spoken to)

## Practice

These are the nouns from 1 John 1. Go through the first time and see if you can tell which declension (bucket) they are in. If there is time, we will go back and look at the case and the number.

τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς

αἱ χεῖρες

ἡμεῖς

ἡμῶν

ἡμῖν

ἡμᾶς

ὁ λόγος

τοῦ λόγου

τῆς ζωῆς

ἡ ζωὴ

ὕμεῖς

ὕμῖν

τὴν ζωὴν

τὴν αἰώνιον

τὸν πατέρα

τοῦ πατρὸς

κοινωνίαν

ἡ κοινωνία

τοῦ υἱοῦ

αὐτός

αὕτη

αὐτῷ

αὐτοῦ

αὐτόν

Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

ταῦτα

ἡ χαρὰ

ἡ ἀγγελία

ὁ θεὸς

φῶς

σκοτία

τῷ σκότει

τὴν ἀλήθειαν

τῷ φωτὶ

ἀλλήλων

τὸ αἷμα

τοῦ υἱοῦ

τὰς ἁμαρτίας

ἁμαρτίας

ἁμαρτίαν

ἐαυτοῦς

ἢ ἀλήθεια

ἡμῶν

πιστός

δίκαιος

ἀδικίας

ψεύστην