

***The GREEK
Alphabet
Pronunciation and
Transliteration***

September 18, 2014

Alpha-Omega

Alpha, Beta, Gamma

The Greek Alphabet song

The Greek Alphabet

α

- Alpha,
a as in father

α

a

The Greek Alphabet

β

- Beta,
b as om Bible

β

b

The Greek Alphabet

γ

- Gamma,
g as in gone

γ g

The Greek Alphabet

δ

- Delta,
d as in dog

δ

d

The Greek Alphabet

Ε

- Epsilon,
e as in met

Ε

e

The Greek Alphabet



- Zeta,
z as in daze



The Greek Alphabet

η

- Eta,
e as in obey

η

ē

The Greek Alphabet

Θ

- Theta,
th as in thing

Θ

th

The Greek Alphabet

ι

- Iota,
i as in **intr**igue

ι

i

The Greek Alphabet

κ

- Kappa,
k as in kitchen

κ

k

The Greek Alphabet

λ

- Lambda
l as in law

λ



The Greek Alphabet

μ

- Mu

m as in mother

μ

m

The Greek Alphabet

ν

- Nu

n as in new

ν

n

The Greek Alphabet

ξ

- Xi

x as in axiom

ξ

x

The Greek Alphabet

Ο

- Omicron

ο as in not

Ο

ο

The Greek Alphabet

π

- Pi

p as in peach

π

p

The Greek Alphabet

ρ

- Rho

r as in rod

ρ

r

The Greek Alphabet

σ

- Sigma

s as in sit

σ

S

ς

The Greek Alphabet

Τ

- Tau

τ as in talk

Τ

τ

The Greek Alphabet

υ

- Upsilon

υ as the german ü

υ

u/y*

* Transliterated as a “u” if preceeded by another vowel,
and as a “y” if it occurs as a single vowel.

The Greek Alphabet

Φ

- Phi

ph as in phone

Φ

ph

The Greek Alphabet

χ

- Chi

ch as in loch

χ

ch

The Greek Alphabet

ψ

- Psi,

ps as in lips

ψ

ps

The Greek Alphabet

Ω

- Omega

o as in tone

Ω

o

SBL Font and Greek mapping

"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	.	^	Backspace
Tab	θ ^q	ω ^w	ε ^e	ρ ^r	τ ^t	ψ ^y	υ ^u	ι ⁱ	ο ^o	π ^p	'	,	`
Caps	α ^a	σ ^s	δ ^d	φ ^f	γ ^g	η ^h	.	κ ^k	λ ^l	;	'		Return
Shift		ζ ^z	ξ ^x	χ ^c	ς ^v	β ^b	ν ⁿ	μ ^m	,	.	^		Shift
Control	Alt											Alt	Control

Unshifted State

Pronunciation – γ Special

- γ usually has a hard “g” sound as in “get” or “goat”
- However when the “γ” is followed by “γ κ χ ξ” then it is pronounced as “n”. This is called a gamma nasal

Pronunciation – γ Special examples

Greek	TransLit	Sounds like
γγ	ng	As ng in bing
γκ	nk	As nk in boink
γχ	nch	As nch in bunch
γξ	nx	As nx in anxious

Diphthongs

- A diphthong is a combination of two vowels that produce one sound. The second vowel is always “i” or “u”.

Diphthongs (cont)

Diphthong	As in	Greek Example
αι	As in aisle	αιρω
ει	As in eight	ει
οι	As oil	οικια
αυ	As in sauerkraut	αυτοσ
ου	As in soup	ουδε
υι	As in suite	υιος
ευ, ηυ	As in feud	ευθυσ ηυξανεν

Breathing Marks

- Greek has two breathing marks, “rough” and “smooth”. Every word beginning with a vowel, or a rho has a breathing mark.

“`” is the rough breathing mark

“'” is the smooth breathing mark

Breathing Marks (cont)

- **Rough breathing mark:**
 - Adds an “h” sound before the vowel
 - Adds an “h” sound after the rho
- **Smooth breathing marks are not pronounced.**
- **Either breathing mark is placed ahead of an opening Capital letter.**
- **Either breathing mark is placed over the 2nd letter in a diphthong.**

SBL Font – Breathing Marks

rough

"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	'	^	Backspace
Tab	θ	ω	ε	ρ	τ	ψ	υ	ι	ο	π	,	\	
Caps	α	σ	δ	φ	γ	η	.	κ	λ	;	'		Return
Shift		ζ	ξ	χ	ς	β	ν	μ	,	.	˘		Shift
Control	Alt											Alt	Control

Unshifted State

smooth

Syllabification

Greek words syllabify much the same as English words do.

- 1. There is one vowel or diphthong per syllable**
- 2. A single consonant goes with the following vowel**
ie, **αυ-τος** not **αυτ-ος**

Detailed Syllabification Rules

1. **There is one vowel or diphthong per syllable**
2. Two consecutive vowels that do not form a diphthong are divided
3. **A single consonant goes with the following word.**
4. A consonant cluster that does not form a single sound is divided
5. A consonant cluster that forms a single sound goes with the following vowel
6. Double consonants are divided (two of the same consonants adjacent)
7. Compound words are divided where joined.

John 3:16, Normal & Syllabified

- Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλὰ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

Οὐ-τως γὰρ ἡ-γά-πη-σεν ὁ θε-ὸς τὸν
κό-σμον ὥσ-τε τὸν υἱ-ὸν τὸν
μο-νο-γε-νῆ ἔ-δω-κεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ
πι-στεύ-ων εἰς αὐ-τὸν μὴ ἀ-πό-λη-ται
ἀλλὰ ἔ-χῃ ζω-ὴν αἰ-ώ-νι-ον.

ACCENTS

Accents - There are Three

Acute	voice rose	αἰτέω
Grave	voice dropped	θεὸς
Circumflex	voice rose & dropped	Ἰησοῦς

PUNCTUATION

Punctuation

- There are 4 punctuation marks:
 1. Period Same as English.
 2. Comma Same as English,
 3. SemiColon a period above the line.
 4. Question Mark an English semicolon ;

Transliteration Usage

Many Greek “tools” will include a transliteration of the text being studied. Examples include:

- Verb: λέγω (*legō*), GK 3306
- Noun: σάρξ (*sarx*), GK 4922
- Noun: ἀββά (*abba*), GK 5

LET'S TRY SOME READING

John 1:1-5 Bible Reading

1.1 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.

— Holmes, M. W. (2010). The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition (Jn 1). Lexham Press.



Let's Try a little reading !

ὁ Ἰ-η-σους με ἀ-γα-πα
ὅ-τι γρα-φῇ κη-ρυσ-σει
παι-δι-α ἐί-σιν ἀ' υ-τω
ἀ'-σθε-νου-σι δυ-να-ται

Let's Try a little reading !

ναι Ἰ-η-σους ἀ'-γα-πα

ναι Ἰ-η-σους ἀ'-γα-πα

ναι Ἰ-η-σους ἀ'-γα-πα

ἡ γρά'-φη κη-ρυσ-σει

LET'S SING JESUS LOVES ME.



ο Ἰ - η - σοῦς με ἁ - γα - πᾶ ὅ - τι γρα - φῇ κη - ρύσ - σει