

Ray SUMMERS, *Essentials of New Testament Greek*, 1995
Lesson 1

The Letters And Sounds Of Greek

1.1 The Greek Alphabet

New Testament Greek has twenty-four letters. The English alphabet roughly corresponds to the Greek. Notice that the first, third, and fifth groups of letters are similar to the corresponding English letters. This grouping is significant only as a learning aid.

Capital Letters	Small Letters	Name	Transliteration ¹	Pronunciation
A	α	alpha	a	<u>f</u> ather
B	β	beta	b	<u>b</u> all
Γ	γ ²	gamma	g	<u>g</u> ift
Δ	δ	delta	d	<u>d</u> ebt
E	ε	epsilon	e	<u>m</u> et
Z	ζ	zeta	z or dz	<u>z</u> ion, <u>ad</u> ze ³
H	η	eta	ē	o <u>b</u> ey
Θ	θ	theta	th	<u>th</u> eme
I	ι ⁴	iota	i	<u>p</u> it (short) or magaz <u>i</u> ne (long)
K	κ	kappa	k	<u>k</u> it
Λ	λ	lambda	l	<u>l</u> ong
M	μ	mu	m	<u>m</u> an
N	ν	nu	n	<u>n</u> o
Ξ	ξ	xi	x	relax
O	ο	omicron	o	<u>o</u> melet
Π	π	pi	p	<u>p</u> ay

¹ Transliteration is the process of assigning the nearest equivalent English letter to each Greek letter. This is discussed in Lesson 2.

² When γ is followed by a γ, κ, or χ, it is pronounced like an English n. Example: ἄγγελος (an' ge los).

³ When initial, zeta is z; when internal, it is dz.

⁴ Sometimes ι appears under long vowels, in which case it is called iota subscript, as in α, η, ω (see 1.4).