

Chapter Ten

First Aorist Verb

Vocabulary

αἶρω	I take up, take away	καὶ γώ	and I, I also
ἀμήν	verify, truly, amen	καταβαίνω	I go down
ἀναβαίνω	I go up	οὐ	not (ουκ or ουχ)
ἄρχομαι(D)	I begin	Παῦλος, ὁ	Paul
δέ	but, and, now	πείθω	I persuade
δοξάζω	I glorify, praise	Πέτρος, ὁ	Peter
ἐσθίω	I eat	πιστεύω	I believe, have faith (in)
θεραπεύω	I heal	τέκνον, τό	child
ἴδιος, -α, -ον	one's own		

The Aorist Verb

The Greek aorist is the most used tense on the New Testament and the most peculiar to the Greek idiom. The word aorist comes from the Greek ἀόριστος meaning “undefined,” “undetermined.” Grammarians call the action punctular meaning that the aorist treats the action as a point. That is, the fundamental idea of the aorist is to denote action simply as occurring, without reference to its progress.¹ It does not distinguish the action as complete or incomplete. It simply states that action took place in the past without regard to its duration.

The usual way to translate the aorist in with the simple past tense in English.

There are three primary types of past action associated with the aorist:

1. *Constative*. Regards the action in its entirety and is pictured as < ’ >.

ἠρώτησαν αὐτόν, τί οὖν; Σύ Ἠλίας εἶ

They asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?”

2. *Ingressive*. The action is viewed from the standpoint of its initiation and is pictured as >-----.

ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ δύο τυφλοί

two blind men **began to follow** him

3. *Culminative*. The action is viewed in its results and is pictured as ----<’

ἐνίκησεν ὁ λέων ὁ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰούδα

the Lion from the trib of Judah **has overcome**

¹ H.E.Dana & Julius Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: MacMillan Publishing, 1955), 193

First Aorist Active Indicative Form

The First Aorist is distinguished by the addition of the sigma. The verb is identified by the augment (ε-) followed by the stem (-λυ-) followed by the tense sign (-σα-), followed by the personal pronoun ending.

Singular		Plural	
1 st	ἔ-λυ-σα I loosed	1 st	ἔ-λύ-σα-μεν we loosed
2 nd	ἔ-λυ-σας you loosed	2 nd	ἔ-λύ-σα-τε you loosed
3 rd	ἔ-λυ-σε(ν) he/she/it loosed	3 rd	ἔ-λύ-σαν they loosed

Example:

ὅτι οὐκ **προέγνω** (before know) καὶ **προώρισεν** (before decide) συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (Rom 8:29a)

For whom **He forknew** and **He predestined** [to be] conformed men of the image of the Son of Him.

First Aorist Middle Indicative Form

The First Aorist Middle is formed similarly to the active form. The verb is identified by the augment (ε-) followed by the stem (-λυ-) followed by the tense sign (-σα-), followed by the personal pronoun ending.

Singular		Plural	
1 st	ἐ-λύ-σα-μι I loosed myself	1 st	ἐ-λύ-σα-με-θα we loosed ourselves
2 nd	ἐ-λύ-σω you loosed yourself	2 nd	ἐ-λύ-σα-σθε you loosed yourselves
3 rd	ἐ-λύ-σα-το he/she/it loosed himself/herself/itself	3 rd	ἐ-λύ-σαν-το they loosed themselves

Example:

ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε (John 10:25a)

Jesus **answered** them, “I told you, and you are not believing”

Notice: most aorist middle verbs are classified as deponent so the deponent is to be translated as an active. In the example above the middle would normally be translated

“Jesus himself answered,” but since it is deponent one translates in the active, “Jesus answered.”

Practice

A. Translate the following sentences.

1. ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη οὐχ ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἠγαπήσαμεν (we loved) τὸν θεὸν ἀλλ’ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς. (1 Jn 4:10)
2. Ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ἵνα εἰδῆτε (you may know) ὅτι ζωὴν ἔχετε αἰώνιον. (1 Jn 5:13)
3. πάντες ἐξέκλιναν (turn) ἅμα (together) ἠχρεώθησαν (useless)· οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ ποιῶν (doing) χριστότητα (good), οὐκ ἔστιν ἕως (until) ἑνός (one). (Rom 3:12)
4. οὓς δὲ προώρισεν (he predetermined), τούτους καὶ ἐκάλεσεν (he called)· καὶ οὓς ἐκάλεσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν· οὓς δὲ ἐδικαίωσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν. (Rom 8:30)
5. καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία (promise) ἣν αὐτὸς ἐπηγγείλατο (promised) ἡμῖν, τὴν ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον (eternal). (1 John 2:25)