

The Perfect Tense

A lesson for the *Paideia* web-app
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The Perfect Aspect

- Completed with ongoing effects
 - A train that has passed
 - Now we'll be late for work!



Image by [Dr. Neil Clifton](#)



1st Perfect Forms

- Active
 - Stem change (reduplication with ε)
 - *κ* tense marker
 - *α* connecting vowel

Present Stem

λυ-

Perfect Stem

λελυ-



Parts of a 1st Perfect Active Indicative Verb

Augment	Reduplicated Stem	Tense marker	Conn. vowel	Personal ending	Complete form
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–	λελυ	κ	α	μεν	λελυκαμεν
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Perfect (Primary) Active Endings

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	-	-μεν
2 nd person	-ς	-τε
3 rd person	-(ν)	-σι(ν)



1st Perfect (Primary) Active Endings

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	-κα	-καμεν
2 nd person	-κας	-κατε
3 rd person	-κε(ν)	-κασι(ν)



Perfect Active Indicative Examples

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	λελυ <u>κα</u>	λελυ <u>κα</u> μεν
2 nd person	λελυ <u>κας</u>	λελυ <u>κα</u> τε
3 rd person	λελυ <u>κε</u> (ν)	λελυ <u>κα</u> σι(ν)



Perfect Forms

- Active
 - Stem change (reduplication with ε)
 - χ tense marker
 - α connecting vowel
- Middle
 - Stem change (reduplication with ε)
 - no tense marker
 - no connecting vowel

Present Stem

$\lambda\nu-$

Perfect Stem

$\lambda\varepsilon\lambda\nu-$



Perfect (Primary) Middle/Passive Endings

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	-μαι	-μεθα
2 nd person	-σαι	-σθε
3 rd person	-ται	-νται



Perfect Middle/Passive Indicative Examples

	Singular	Plural
1 st person	λελυμαι	λελυμεθα
2 nd person	λελυσαι	λελυσθε
3 rd person	λελυται	λελυνται



The Perfect Aspect

- Completed with ongoing effects
 - A train that has passed
 - Now we'll be late for work!
- Translating *λελυκα*
 - Sometimes with "have"
 - "I have released"
 - Sometimes simple past
 - "I released"
 - Sometimes simple present
 - "I release"



Understanding Reduplication

	Voiceless	Voiced	Voiceless Fricative	Reduplication	Example
Labial	π	β	φ	πε-	πεφανερωκα
Velar	κ	γ	χ	κε-	κεχαρισμαι
Dental	τ	δ	θ	τε-	τεθεραπευω



Understanding Reduplication

- Reduplication and initial vowels
 - Initial vowel lengthens instead
 - ἀγαπαω -> ἤγαπηκα
 - αἶτεω -> ἤτηκα
 - Diphthongs often don't do anything
 - εὕρισκω -> εὕρηκα
 - εὐλογεω -> εὐλογηκα
- Reduplication and double initial consonants
 - Often ἐ added instead of reduplication
 - γινωσκω (stem γνο-) -> ἐγνωκα
 - Stem change, not an augment



Understanding Reduplication

- Reduplication and prepositional prefixes
 - Reduplication follows the prefix
 - ἐκβαλλω -> ἐκβεβληκα



Predictable Changes

Present	Perfect Active Components	Perfect Form	Translation	Comments
βαπτίζω	βεβαπτιζ + - + μαι	βεβαπτισ <u>μ</u> αι	I have been baptized	Final ζ becomes σ before ending (even if no tense marker)
γνωρίζω	έγνωριζ + - + μαι	έγνωρι <u>σ</u> μαι	I have been made known	
σωζω	σεσωζ + κ + α	σεσω <u>κ</u> α	I have rescued	Or final ζ dropped before κ tense marker.
ἀποκρίνομαι	ἀποκεκρι <u>ν</u> + - + ται	ἀποκεκρι <u>ι</u> ται	I have answered	Final ν disappears before ending.
ἀγαπάω	ήγαπα <u>α</u> + κ + α	ήγαπ <u>η</u> κα	I have loved	Contract vowel lengthens before tense marker.
πληροω	πεπληρο <u>ο</u> + κ + α	πεπληρ <u>ω</u> κα	I have kept	



Perfected with Other Stem Change

- Sometimes same as 2nd aorist (real) stem
 - ἔχω (σχ-) -> ἐσχηκα
 - αἶρω (έρ-) -> ἤρκα



Perfects with Other Stem Change

- Sometimes arbitrary

- βαλλω (βαλ-) -> βεβληκα
- καλεω -> κεκληκα
- λέγω (είπ-) -> είρηκα
- ἀποκτεινω (ἀποκτεν-) -> ἀπεκταγκα
- ἀποστελλω (ἀποστελ-) -> ἀπεσταλκα
- ἀγγελλω (ἀγγειλ-) -> ήγγελκα
- όραω -> έωρακα
- εύρισκω (εύρ-) -> εύρηκα
- πινω (πι-) -> πεπωκα



2nd Perfects

- Reduplication and no **κ** tense marker
 - φευγω -> πεφευγα
 - γραφω -> γεγραφα
- Other stem change and no **κ** tense marker
 - ακουω -> **ακηκοα**
 - γίνομαι -> **γεγονα**
 - έρχομαι -> **έληλυθα**
 - λαμβανω -> **είληφα**
 - κραζω -> **κεκραγα**
- Only 2nd perfect in active voice
 - No tense marker anyway in middle/passive



Keep Learning

- You can learn more about the Greek perfect tense here:
 - Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek* (3rd edition)
 - Perfect tense, 25.1-25 (p. 224-238)
 - Wallace, *Basics of New Testament Syntax* (1st edition)
 - "Tenses," *Perfect*, pp. 247-250

