

Chapter 34

Nouns of the Third Declension Part 1 - Nominative, Vocative, and Genitive

34.1 In earlier chapters we met the nouns and adjectives of the First and Second Declensions, which comprise the majority of Greek nouns and adjectives. All nouns which do not belong to the First or Second Declension are classified as Third Declension - they are a relatively small group, with a variety of endings. They may be further subdivided into smaller families which follow various patterns of endings. One of the characteristics of the Third Declension is that the Nominative Singular can not be used to determine the stem of the noun. The Nominative Singular is often different, and the real stem is found by going to the Genitive Singular. For this reason, Third Declension nouns are listed in dictionaries in the form Nominative Singular, Genitive Singular, gender. e.g. πατήρ, πατρός, ὁ - father.

34.2 In previous chapters we have met the most frequent Third Declension nouns, but only in the Nominative singular. In this chapter we will add the Nominative plural, and the Genitive singular and plural. A glance at the Vocabulary list for this chapter shows that, although the forms of the Nominative are variable, the Genitive singulars end in -ος or -ως or -ους. A closer look shows that the nouns can be put into several groups with similar endings.

The stem of a Third Declension noun is found by removing the -ος from the Genitive singular

34.3 Third Declension Families of Masculine and Feminine Nouns

The following table gives examples of the families of Third Declension nouns found in the New Testament. Focus on the similarities rather than the differences between the groups.

	Genitive singular -ος		Nominative plural -ες		Genitive plural -ων	
	Singular		Plural			English
stem ends in	Nominative	Genitive	Nominative	Genitive		
liquid, -ερ	ὁ ἀστήρ	ἀστέρος	ἀστέρες	ἀστέρων		star
liquid, -ρ	ὁ πατήρ	πατρός	πατέρες	πατέρων		father
-οντ	ὁ ἄρχων	ἄρχοντος	ἄρχοντες	ἄρχόντων		ruler
nasal, -ν	ὁ αἰών	αἰῶνος	αἰῶνες	αἰῶνων		age
guttural, -γ, -κ, -χ	ἡ γυνή	γυναικός	γυναῖκες	γυναικῶν		woman
	ἡ θρίξ	τριχός	τρίχες	τριχῶν		hair
labial, -β, π, -φ	ὁ Αἰθίοψ	Αἰθίοπος	Αἰθίοπες	Αἰθίοπων		Ethiopian
dental, -δ, -τ, -θ	ἡ ἐλπίς	ἐλπίδος	ἐλπίδες	ἐλπίδων		hope
	ὁ ἡ παῖς	παιδός	παῖδες	παίδων		lad, lass
-υ	ὁ ἰχθύς	ἰχθύος	ἰχθύες	ἰχθύων		fish
-ι change to -εως	ἡ πόλις	πόλεως	πόλεις	πόλεων		city
-ευ change to -εως	ὁ βασιλεύς	βασιλέως	βασιλεῖς	βασιλέων		king
-ου	ὁ ἡ βοῦς	βοός	βόες	βοῶν		bull, cow

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

1. ἀστήρ γὰρ ἀστέρος διαφέρει ἐν δόξῃ. For star differs from star in glory. (1 Cor. 15:41)
2. καὶ ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἄρχοντος. And Jesus came into the ruler's house. (see Matt. 9:23)
3. καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ Αἰθίοψ εὐνοῦχος δυνάστης Κανδάκης βασιλίσσης Αἰθιοπῶν. Look - a man, an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a high official of Kandace, Queen of the Ethiopians. (Acts 8:27)

4. χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.	Grace and peace (be) to you from God our Father and (from) the Lord Jesus Christ. (<i>Romans 1:7</i>)
5. οἱ ὄχλοι ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων.	The crowds followed him from the cities. (<i>see Matt. 14:13</i>)
6. ἐξεπορεύοντο ἔξω τῆς πόλεως.	And they went outside the city. (<i>Mark 11:19</i>)
7. νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη . . . μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη.	Now there remain faith, hope, love . . . and the greatest of these is love. (<i>1 Cor. 13:13</i>)
8. Σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων ;	Are you the king of the Jews? (<i>Matt. 27:11</i>)
9. Ὡς ὠραῖοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων τὰ ἀγαθὰ.	How beautiful (are) the feet of those announcing (the) good things. (<i>Rom. 10:15</i>)
10. οὗτοι μετὰ τοῦ ἀρνίου πολεμήσουσιν, καὶ τὸ ἀρνίον νικήσει αὐτούς, ὅτι κύριος κυρίων ἐστὶν καὶ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων.	They (these) will fight against the Lamb and the Lamb will conquer them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. (<i>Rev. 17:14</i>)

34.4 Third Declension Families of Neuter Nouns

Neuter Nouns always have the same endings for Nominative-Vocative and Accusative Singular, and usually an -α for Nominative-Vocative and Accusative Plural.

Stems ending in -ας drop the sigma and contract with the vowels of the endings. The Genitive -ος ending becomes -ους, the Nominative/Accusative -α ending becomes -η.

stem ends in	Singular		Plural		English
	Nom/Voc/Acc	Genitive	Nom/Voc/Acc	Genitive	
-τ	το σῶμα	σωμάτος	σώματα	σωμάτων	body
	το ὕδωρ	ὑδάτος	ύδάτα	υδάτων	water
	το φῶς	φωτός	φῶτα	φώτων	light
sigma -ας, -ές, -ος	το γένος	γένους	γένη	γενῶν	family
"one of a kind"	το πῦρ	πυρός	πυρά	πύρων	fire

Practice - until you can read and translate easily :

- οὐ . . . ὁ λέγων μοι, Κύριε, κύριε,
εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν
τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἀλλ' ὁ ποιῶν
τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρὸς μου
ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.
Not the one saying to me "Lord, Lord,
will enter into the kingdom
of the heavens, but the one doing
the will of my Father
in the heavens. (*Matt. 7:21*)
- οἱ ἄρχοντες τῶν ἐθνῶν
κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν.
The rulers of the Gentiles
lord it over them (*Matt. 20:25*)
- αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Ἰωάννης εἶχεν
τὸ ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τριχῶν καμήλου.
John himself had his
clothing of camel's hair(s). (*Matt. 3:4*)
- καὶ αἱ πόλεις τῶν ἐθνῶν ἔπεσαν.
And the cities of the Gentiles fell. (*Rev. 16:19*)
- Ἕμεῖς δὲ ἐστε σῶμα Χριστοῦ
καὶ μέλη ἐκ μέρους.
You are the body of Christ
and parts individually. (*1 Cor. 12:27*)
- καὶ ὁ τρίτος (ἄγγελος) ἐξέχεεν
τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ εἰς τοὺς ποταμοὺς
καὶ τὰς πηγὰς υδάτων.
And the third (angel) poured out
his bowl into the rivers
and the springs of waters. (*Rev. 16:4*)
- πολλάκις γὰρ πίπτει εἰς τὸ πῦρ
καὶ πολλάκις εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ.
For he often falls into the fire
and often into the water. (*Matt. 17:15*)
- οἱ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλόξ πυρός.
His eyes (were) like a flame of fire. (*Rev. 19:12*)
- Ἕμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου.
You are the light of the world. (*Matt. 5:14*)

10. καὶ δώσω τέρατα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἄνω And I will give wonders in heaven above
καὶ σημεῖα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς κάτω, and signs on the earth below,
αἷμα καὶ πῦρ καὶ ἀτμίδια καπνοῦ. blood and fire and clouds of smoke. (Acts 2:19)

34.5 The Vocative

Nouns of the ἀνὴρ and πατήρ family have a shortened vowel in the Vocative singular.

Nouns of the βασιλεύς -έως family, and those with stems ending in a dental (ἐλπὶς -ίδος family) or guttural, are reduced to the bare stem in the vocative singular.

Most other families of Third Declension Nouns are identical in the Nominative and Vocative singulars.

Vocative plurals are always identical in form to the Nominative plural.

NOTE : Because the Definite Article has no Vocative form, if there is a Definite Article with the word, both of them will use the Nominative.

Singular Nominative	ἀνὴρ	πατήρ	γυνή	βασιλεύς	ἐλπὶς	βοῦς	παῖς	ἰχθύς
Vocative	ἄνερ	πάτερ	γύναι	βασιλεῦ	ἐλπί	βοῦ	παῖ	ἰχθύ

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

- αἱ γυναῖκες εἶπον, Ἄνερ ἄπιστε, ὕπαγε. The women said, "Faithless man - go away!"
- οἱ ἱερεῖς εἶπον, The priests said,
Γύναι, ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ ἀνὴρ σου ; "Woman, where is your husband?"
- Χαῖρε, βασιλεῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων. Hail, King of the Jews. (Matt. 27:29)
- πιστεύεις, βασιλεῦ Ἀγρίππα, King Agrippa, do you believe
τοῖς προφήταις ; (in) the prophets? (Acts 26:27)
- πορεύσομαι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου I will go to my father
καὶ ἐρῶ αὐτῷ, Πάτερ, ἡμάρτον and I will say to him, "Father, I sinned
εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐνώπιόν σου. against heaven and before you." (Luke 15:18)
(πατέρα is the Accusative singular of πατήρ)
- καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔλεγεν, Ἀββα ὁ πατήρ. And Jesus was saying, "Abba, Father." (Mark 14:36)
(see Note above re. the Definite Article)
- ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ . . . ὁ Ἰησοῦς At that time . . . Jesus said,
εἶπεν, Ἐξομολογοῦμαι σοι, πάτερ, "I give thanks to you, Father,
κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς. Lord of heaven and earth. (Matt. 11:25)
- καὶ λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, And Jesus said (says) to her,
Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι ; "What (is that) to me and you, ma'am? (John 2:4)
- ὁ Παῦλος ἔκραζεν ἐν τῷ συνεδρίῳ, Paul was crying out in the Sanhedrin,
Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, ἐγὼ Φαρισαῖός εἰμι, "Guys, brothers, I am a Pharisee,
υἱὸς Φαρισαίων · περὶ ἐλπίδος καὶ a son of Pharisees. I am being judged about the hope
ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν κρίνομαι. and the resurrection of the dead. (Acts 23:6)
- ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῇ, Θάρσει, Jesus said to her, "Take heart, daughter,
θύγατηρ, ἡ πίστις σου σῶζει σε. your faith saves you." (see Matt. 9:22)

34.6 Sentences for reading and translation

- ὁ θεὸς σῶζει ἡμᾶς ἐκ χειρὸς τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἡμῶν.
- θέλομεν ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρὸς.
- αἱ μητέρες ἡμῶν ἀναγινώσκουσιν τὸ βιβλίον τοῦ Μωϋσέως.
- καὶ ἦλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐθαύμαζον ὅτι μετὰ γυναικὸς ἐλάλει. (John 4:27)
- λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Πίστευέ μοι, γύναι, ὅτι ἐρχεται ὥρα ὅτε οὔτε ἐν τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ οὔτε ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις προσκυνήσετε τῷ πατρί. (John 4:21)
(ὄρει is the Dative singular of τὸ ὄρος - mountain)
- ὁ πίνων ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος τούτου διψήσει πάλιν. (John 4:13)
- οὗτος ὁ νόμος οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐστὶν ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν πατέρων. (see John 7:22)
- οἱ ἄγγελοι βαλοῦσιν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρός. (see Matt. 13:42)

9. ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων οὗτος. (Luke 23:38)
 10. αἱ γυναῖκες οὐχ εὔρον τὸ σῶμα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. (see Luke 24:3)

34.7 Writing Practice : Write the Greek text, while saying aloud (Matt. 5:6)

μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες	Happy are the ones hungering
καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην,	and thirsting (for) righteousness
ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.	for they shall be fed.

34.8 New Testament Passages for reading and translation : Matt. 24:29-31, 1 Cor. 15:38-41

In your Greek New Testament, read the passages aloud several times until you can read them without long pauses or stumbling. Then use the translation helps to translate them.

τὴν θλίψιν	trouble, suffering	(Accusative of ἡ θλίψις -εως - trouble)
σκοτισθήσεται	will be darkened	(Future Passive of σκοτιζῶ - I darken)
πεσοῦνται	(they) will fall	(Future of πίπτω - I fall. See chapter 28)
σαλευθήσονται	(they) shall be shaken	(Future Passive of σαλεύω - I shake)
φανήσεται	(it) will appear	(Future Passive of φαίνομαι - I appear)
πᾶσαι	all	(Fem. Nominative plural of πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - each, every, all)
πολλῆς	much	(Fem. Accusative singular of πολὺς, πολλή, πολύ - much, many)
μεγάλης	great	(Feminine Accusative singular of μέγας, μεγάλη, μέγα - great)
ἐπισυνάξουσιν	they will gather together	(Future of ἐπισυνάγω - I gather together)
τεσσάρων	four	(Genitive plural of τέσσαρες - four)
τὸ ἄκρον	boundary, top	
ἀπ' ἄκρων . . . ἕως ἄκρων	= from one end to the other	
δίδωσιν	(he) gives	(Present Indicative of δίδωμι - I give)
ἠθέλησεν	he wished	(Aorist of θέλω - I want, wish)
πᾶσα	all	(Fem. Nom. singular of πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν - each, every, all)
ὁ αὐτός, ἡ αὐτή	the same	
ἄλλη	other, another	(Fem. Nom. singular of ἄλλος, ἄλλη, ἄλλο - other)
ἐπίγεια	earthly	(from ἐπί + γῆ - earth)

34.9 Vocabulary to learn - Including all the Third Declension Nouns which were given in earlier vocabularies. Now learn the full entry (Nominative and Genitive singular, with gender). Do not try to learn all the words all at once. Take time, divide them into families, and learn one family at a time.

M/F, stems ending in ρ

ὁ ἀνὴρ, ἀνδρὸς	man, husband
ὁ ἀστήρ, -έρος	star
ἡ θυγάτηρ, -τρός	daughter
ἡ μήτηρ, -τρός	mother
ὁ πατήρ, πατρός	father
ἡ χεὶρ, χειρός	hand

M/F, stems ending in -v

ὁ αἰών, -ῶνος	age
ὁ ἀμπελών, -ῶνος	vineyard

M/F, stems ending in -οντ

ὁ ἄρχων, -οντος	ruler
ὁ δράκων, -οντος	dragon

M/F, stems ending in labial

ὁ Αἰθίοψ, Αἰθίοπος	Ethiopian
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M/F, stems ending in guttural

ἡ γυνή, -αικός	woman, wife, lady
ἡ θρίξ, τριχός	hair
ἡ σάλπιγξ, σάλπιγγος	trumpet
ἡ σὰρξ, σὰρκος	flesh, meat
ἡ φλόξ, φλογός	flame

M/F, stems ending in dental

ἡ ἀτμίς, ἀτμίδος	vapor, mist
ἡ ἐλπίς, ἐλπίδος	hope
ὁ ἡ παῖς, παιδός	child, servant, boy, girl
ὁ πούς, ποδός	foot
ἡ σφραγίς, -ιδος	seal
ἡ χάρις, χάριτος	grace

M/F, stems ending in -ου

ὁ ἡ βοῦς, βοός	bull, cow
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M/F, stems ending in υ

ὁ ἰχθύς, -ύος fish

F, stems in -ι, like πίστις

ἡ ἀνάστασις, -έως resurrection
 ἡ ἄφεσις, -έως forgiveness, release
 ἡ δύναμις, -έως power, strength, ability
 ἡ θλίψις, -έως trouble, persecution
 ἡ κρίσις, -έως judgment
 ἡ πίστις, -έως faith
 ἡ πόλις, -έως city
 (*hence politics - how one runs a city*)

M, stems ending in -έυ, like βασιλεύς

ὁ ἀρχιερεύς, -έως high priest
 ὁ βασιλεύς, -έως king
 ὁ γραμματεύς, -έως scribe, lawyer, scholar
 ὁ ἱερεύς, -έως priest
 ὁ Μωϋσῆς, -έως Moses

"One of a kind" noun

τὸ πῦρ, πυρός fire

N, stems end in -τ like ὄνομα

τὸ αἷμα, -τος blood (*hence hemo-*)
 τὸ ἔνδυμα, -τος clothing
 τὸ θέλημα, -τος wish, will
 τὸ κάλυμμα, -τος veil
 τὸ κτήμα, -τος possession, property
 τὸ ὄνομα, -τος name
 τὸ ὀφείλημα, -τος debt
 τὸ πνεῦμα, -τος spirit, wind, breath
 τὸ σπέρμα, -τος seed
 τὸ σῶμα, -τος body
 τὸ τέρας, -ατος wonder, omen
 τὸ ὕδωρ, ὕδατος water
 τὸ φῶς, φωτός light

N, stems end in -ας, -ές, -ος, like ἔθνος

τὸ γένος, -ους family, race
 τὸ ἔθνος, -ους nation, people
 τὰ ἔθνη the Gentiles
 τὸ ἔτος, -ους year
 τὸ κτήνος, -ους farm animal
 τὸ μέλος, -ους part, member (of body)
 τὸ μέρος, -ους part, piece
 ἐκ μέρους in part, individually
 τὸ ὄρος, -ους mountain, hill
 τὸ φέγγος, -ους light

other Vocabulary to learn

κατακυριεύω I lord it over
 σαλεύω I shake
 ἡ βασίλισσα queen
 ὁ δυνάστης ruler, high official
 ὁ εὐνοῦχος eunuch
 ἡ κάμνος furnace, oven (*Second Declension feminine -ος*)
 ὁ καπνός smoke
 ἡ πηγή spring, fountain, well
 τὸ πτηνόν bird
 ἡ σελήνη moon
 ἡ φυλή tribe
 ἀνω above, up
 ἀνωθεν from above
 εὐθέως immediately, at once
 πολλάκις often
 ἐκλεκτός, -ή, -όν chosen (*ἐκ + καλέω - I call*)
 ἐπουράνιος, -α, -ον heavenly
 ὠραῖος, -α, -ον beautiful, welcome