

# 27. Second Aorists

## Lesson in a Nutshell

Rather than using  $\sigma\alpha$  to show that they are aorists, second aorists undergo a stem change. This is not unlike how in English the past tense of “go” is “went.”

Rather than using  $\sigma\alpha$  to show that they are aorists, second aorists undergo a stem change.

If you understand the previous sentence, you understand second aorists. That’s all there is to them.

It is easiest to show what a second aorist is by beginning with English.

In English, we have a regular way to put things in past tense — we add **ed**.

So, for example:

*Today I clean.*  
*Yesterday I clean**ed**.*

*Today I play.*  
*Yesterday I play**ed**.*

But there is another way that English verbs move into past time. They undergo a stem change. For example:

Today I teach.  
Yesterday I **taught**.

Today I go.  
Yesterday I **went**.

Today I run.  
Yesterday I **ran**.

Little kids often say something like this:

Yesterday I **goed** swimming with my mom. We correct them and say, “Yesterday you **went** swimming with your mom.”

But actually, the kid is applying a logical rule to “go” to make it into “go**ed**.” The problem is not with the kid’s logic. The problem is with English!

In Greek, second aorists are exactly like this. We have already seen one thing Greek verbs do to show they move into past time — they add an **augment** to the front of the verb.

But how do Greek verbs normally indicate they are in the aorist tense?

They add **σα**.

λύω I loose  
ἔλυ**σα** I loosed

βλεπώ I see  
ἔβλεψ**α**<sup>1</sup> I saw

Second aorists do not follow the rules.  
They do not add **σα**.

They undergo a stem change.  
Just like in English!

For example:

λαμβάνω: I take  
ἔλαβ**ον**: I took

βάλλω: I throw  
ἔβαλ**ον**: I threw

Sometimes these changes are very obvious (as in λάμβανω/ἔλαβον.) Other times there is only the difference of a single letter (as in βάλλω/ἔβαλον.)

Which set of endings would you expect the second aorists to use, primary or secondary?

Secondary, of course.  
We are in past time.

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<sup>1</sup> Notice that the σ is “hidden” in the ψ. ἔβλεπ**σα** became ἔβλεψ**α**. See the square of stops.

Without the **σα**, the endings look much more normal to us. In fact, the second aorists look exactly like imperfects with one important difference:

## the stem change

I put that in big, bold blue since it is so important to remember. Second aorists are simply verbs that show you they have moved to the aorist tense by changing their stem rather than adding a **σα**.

### Imperfect

augment, present tense stem  
secondary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I was loosing"</p> <p>ἔλουν ἔλυες ἔλυνεν ἔλύομεν ἔλύετε ἔλουν</p>	<p><b>Middle/Passive</b> M: "I was loosing for self" P: "I was being loosed"</p> <p>ἔλυόμην ἔλύου ἔλύετο ἔλύομεθα ἔλύεσθε ἔλύοντο</p>
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Personal Endings			
	Active (do the action)	Middle/Passive (receive the action)	
Primary (present & future tense)	(1s) I	ω	ομαι
	(2s) you	εις	η
	(3s) he/she/it	ει	εται
Secondary (past tense)	(1p) we	ομεν	ομεθα
	(2p) you (all)	ετε	εσθε
	(3p) they	ουσι(ν)	ονται

### 2nd Aorist

augment stem change  
secondary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I took"</p> <p>ἔλαβον ἔλαβες ἔλαβεν ἔλάβομεν ἔλάβετε ἔλαβον</p>	<p><b>Middle</b> "I took for self"</p> <p>ἔλαβόμην ἔλάβου ἔλάβετο ἔλάβομεθα ἔλάβεσθε ἔλάβοντο</p>
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λαμβάνω

aorist act  
νογραφῆς

Look at how **λαμβάνω** shows it is an aorist. No **σα**. Just the stem change.

Compare the second aorist of **λαμβάνω** with the imperfect of **λύω**. Do you see how similar they are?

Here is the second aorist on the Master Chart.

Indicative Mood

#### Imperfect

augment, present tense stem  
secondary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I was loosing"</p> <p>ἔλουν ἔλυες ἔλυνεν ἔλύομεν ἔλύετε ἔλουν</p>	<p><b>Middle/Passive</b> M: "I was loosing for self" P: "I was being loosed"</p> <p>ἔλυόμην ἔλύου ἔλύετο ἔλύομεθα ἔλύεσθε ἔλύοντο</p>
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#### Present

Present tense stem (lexical form)  
primary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I loose"</p> <p>λύω λύεις λύει λύομεν λύετε λύουσιν</p>	<p><b>Mid/Pass</b> M: "I am loosed for self" P: "I am loosed"</p> <p>λύομαι λύῃ λύεται λύομεθα λύεσθε λύονται</p>
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#### Liquid Future

λ, μ, ν, ρ, no σ,  
primary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I will stay"</p> <p>μενῶ μενείεις μενείει μενύομεν μενύετε μενύουσιν</p>	<p><b>Middle</b> "I will stay for self"</p> <p>μενυόμην μενεῖαι μενεῖται μενύομεθα μενύεσθε μενύονται</p>
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#### Future

σ before  
primary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I will loose"</p> <p>λύσω λύσεις λύσει λύσομεν λύσετε λύουσιν</p>	<p><b>Middle</b> "I will loose for self"</p> <p>λύσομαι λύσῃ λύσεται λύσομεθα λύσεσθε λύονται</p>
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#### Perf Act

reduplication, κ  
primary active end

Active  
"I have loosed"

λέλυκα  
λέλυκας  
λέλυκεν  
λέλυκαμεν  
λέλυκατε  
λέλυκασι

#### 2nd Perf Act

reduplication, no κ  
primary active endings

Active  
"I have become"

γέγονα  
γέγονας  
γέγονεν  
γέγοναμεν  
γέγονατε  
γέγονασιν

#### Perfect Middle/Passive

reduplication, no κ, no connecting vowel  
primary m/p endings

M: "I have loosed for self"  
P: "I have been loosed"

λέλυμαι  
λέλυσαι  
λέλυται  
λέλυμεθα  
λέλυσθε  
λέλυνται

#### Liquid Aorist

augment, λ, μ, ν, ρ, no σ,  
secondary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I stayed"</p> <p>ἔμεινα ἔμεινας ἔμεινεν ἔμεινομεν ἔμεινατε ἔμειναν</p>	<p><b>Middle</b> "I stayed for self"</p> <p>ἔμεινόμην ἔμειναι ἔμεινεται ἔμεινομεθα ἔμεινασθε ἔμειναντο</p>
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#### 2nd Aorist

augment stem change  
secondary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I took"</p> <p>ἔλαβον ἔλαβες ἔλαβεν ἔλάβομεν ἔλάβετε ἔλαβον</p>	<p><b>Middle</b> "I took for self"</p> <p>ἔλαβόμην ἔλάβου ἔλάβετο ἔλάβομεθα ἔλάβεσθε ἔλάβοντο</p>
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#### Aorist

augment σα,  
secondary endings

<p><b>Active</b> "I loosed"</p> <p>ἔλυσα ἔλυσας ἔλυσεν ἔλυσαμεν ἔλυσατε ἔλυσαν</p>	<p><b>Middle</b> "I loosed for self"</p> <p>ἔλυσομαι ἔλυσῃ ἔλυσεται ἔλυσομεθα ἔλυσεσθε ἔλυονται</p>
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#### Aor Pass

augment θη  
secondary act end

Passive  
"I was loosed"

ἔλαθην  
ἔλάθης  
ἔλάθη  
ἔλάθην  
ἔλάθητε  
ἔλάθησαν

#### 2nd Aor Pass

augment η  
secondary act end

Passive  
"I was written"

ἔγραψην  
ἔγράψης  
ἔγράφη  
ἔγράψην  
ἔγράψητε  
ἔγράψαν

#### Future Pass

θης  
primary m/p endings

Passive  
"I will be loosed"

λυθήσομαι  
λυθήσῃ  
λυθήσεται  
λυθήσομεθα  
λυθήσεσθε  
λυθήσονται

#### 2nd Fut Pass

τις  
primary m/p endings

Passive  
"I will be loosed"

ἀποσταλήσομαι  
ἀποσταλήσῃ  
ἀποσταλήσεται  
ἀποσταλήσομεθα  
ἀποσταλήσεσθε  
ἀποσταλήσονται

λ

υ

κ

σ

Please notice that there are three types of aorists: Regular, liquid and second.

This has nothing to do with the meaning!

These are just different forms that aorists use to say, “Hey! I’m an aorist!”

One more time: What is a second aorist?

*A verb that shows does not use  $\sigma\alpha$  to show you it is aorist.  
Instead, it uses*

**a stem change!**

That’s all there is to it.