

Lesson 4

Gender

1. Arabic words are of two types with regards to gender: (1) (مذكر) – masculine and (2) (مؤنث) – feminine, e.g. (ابن) – son is masculine and (ابنة) – daughter is feminine.
2. When a *tā ta'nīth*¹⁰ (ة) is appended to the end of a masculine noun, it becomes feminine, e.g. (ابن) changes to (ابنة). Similarly (حسن) changes to (حسنة) and (ملك - king) changes to (ملكة - queen) etc. This rule applies more to adjectives (اسم الصفة) and sometimes to (اسم الذات).
3. In some words, the alif maqsūrah (ي) or the alif mamdūdah (اء) is a sign of the word being feminine, e.g. (حسنى) – a beautiful lady; (زهراء) – radiant.

¹⁰ The round tā which is a sign of feminine words.

4. Some nouns are feminine without any sign of being feminine. They are known as (مُؤَنَّثٌ سِمَاعِيٌّ) – as heard from the Arabs. The details are as follows:

- (a) any word referring to a woman, e.g. (أُمٌّ) – mother; (عَرُوسٌ) – bride; (هِنْدٌ) – a woman's name, or India.
- (b) the names of countries, e.g. (مِصْرٌ) – Egypt, (الشَّامُ) – Syria, (الرُّومُ) – The Roman Empire.
- (c) parts of the body in pairs, e.g. (يَدٌ) – hand, (رِجْلٌ) – foot, (أُذُنٌ) – ear, (عَيْنٌ) – eye.
- (d) Besides the above-mentioned nouns, there are other nouns which are used as feminine by the Arabs. Some of them are:

أَرْضٌ	earth
حَرْبٌ	war
خَمْرٌ	wine
دَارٌ	house
رِيحٌ	wind

سُوقٌ	market
شَمْسٌ	sun
نَارٌ	fire
نَفْسٌ	soul

Although some words have a (ة) at the end, they are masculine in usage because they refer to males, e.g. (طَرَفَةٌ) – name of a poet, (خَلِيفَةٌ) – the leader of the Muslims, (عَلَامَةٌ) – a very learned scholar.¹¹

6. Just as an adjective corresponds to its noun in being definite or indefinite, so does it correspond in gender.

Vocabulary List No. 3

Word	Meaning
بَلَدَةٌ	city
الْحَكِيمُ	wise
شَدِيدٌ	severe

¹¹ This word is used for females as well.

صَادِقٌ	truthful
طَالِعٌ	rising
طَوِيلٌ	tall, long
غَارِبٌ	setting
فَرِيضَةٌ	obligatory
فَاطِمَةٌ	name of a woman
الْقُرْآنُ	the Qur'ān
قَصِيرٌ	short
قَلْبٌ	heart
مُطْمَئِنٌّ	peaceful
مُوقَدَةٌ	ignited
نَهْرٌ	river

Exercise No. 3

(A) Translate these phrases into English

(1) النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ (2) لَيْلَةٌ طَوِيلَةٌ (3) الْقُرْآنُ الْحَكِيمُ (4) رِيحٌ شَدِيدَةٌ

(5) الْخَلِيفَةُ الْعَادِلُ (6) بَلَدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَ رَبٌّ غَفُورٌ (7) دَارٌ عَظِيمَةٌ (8) نَارٌ
مُوقَدَةٌ (9) ابْنَةٌ صَالِحَةٌ (10) هِنْدُنُ الصَّادِقَةُ (11) الْعُرُوسُ الْحَسَنَةُ (12)
الشَّمْسُ الطَّالِعَةُ وَ الْقَمَرُ الْغَالِبُ (13) الصَّلَاةُ الْفَرِيضَةُ (14) فَاطِمَةُ
الزَّهْرَاءُ (15) الْإِبْنَةُ الْحُسْنَى (16) حَرْبٌ طَوِيلَةٌ (17) طَرْفَةُ الشَّاعِرِ
(18) رَشِيدُنِ الْعَلَّامَةِ

(B) Translate these phrases into Arabic:

(1) a beautiful girl (2) the pious caliph (3) the wise man (4)
the obligatory zakāh (5) an obligatory salāh (6) a short night
(7) the big day (8) the good thing (9) the ugly bride (10) the
setting sun and the rising moon (11) the severe wind (12)
the long river (13) the long war (14) the short hand (15) the
peaceful heart (16) Muhammad, the pious (17) the very
learned Fātimah.