

Lesson 9

The Broken Plural

1. It was mentioned previously that there is no rule to construct the broken plural (الجمع المكسر). It is totally based on hearing the plural from the people of the language. Hereunder we list some of the scales of the broken plural which are used most often:

(أ) أَفْعَالٌ :
أَوْلَادٌ (جَمْعُ وِلْدٍ)
أَفْرَاسٌ (جَمْعُ فَرَسٍ)
أَشْرَافٌ (جَمْعُ شَرِيفٍ)
أَمْطَارٌ (جَمْعُ مَطَرٍ)
أَوْقَاتٌ (جَمْعُ وَقْتٍ)

(ب) فُعُولٌ :
مُلُوكٌ (جَمْعُ مَلِكٍ)
أَسْوَدٌ (جَمْعُ أَسَدٍ)
حُقُوقٌ (جَمْعُ حَقٍّ)
شُهُودٌ (جَمْعُ شَاهِدٍ)

قُلُوبٌ (جَمْعُ قَلْبٍ)

جُنُودٌ (جَمْعُ جُنْدٍ)

وُجُوهُ (جَمْعُ وَجْهٍ)

(ج) فِعَالٌ : كِلَابٌ (جَمْعُ كَلْبٍ)

ثِيَابٌ (جَمْعُ ثَوْبٍ)

رِمَاحٌ (جَمْعُ رُمْحٍ)

رِجَالٌ (جَمْعُ رَجُلٍ)

كِبَارٌ (جَمْعُ كَبِيرٍ)

صَغَارٌ (جَمْعُ صَغِيرٍ)

بِلَادٌ (جَمْعُ بَلَدٍ)

(د) فُعُلٌ : كُتُبٌ (جَمْعُ كِتَابٍ)

مُدُنٌ (جَمْعُ مَدِينَةٍ)

سُفُنٌ (جَمْعُ سَفِينَةٍ)

صُحُفٌ (جَمْعُ صَحِيفَةٍ)

طُرُقٌ (جَمْعُ طَرِيقَةٍ)

رُسُلٌ (جَمْعُ رَسُولٍ)

(ه) أَفْعَلٌ : أَشْهُرٌ (جَمْعُ شَهْرٍ)

أَرْجُلٌ (جَمْعُ رِجْلٍ)

أَنْهَرٌ (جَمْعُ نَهْرٍ)

أَبْحَرٌ (جَمْعُ بَحْرٍ)

أَنْفُسٌ (جَمْعُ نَفْسٍ)

أَعْيُنٌ (جَمْعُ عَيْنٍ)

(و) فُعَلَاءٌ : وُزَرَاءُ (جَمْعُ وَزِيرٍ)

أُمَرَاءُ (جَمْعُ أَمِيرٍ)

شُعَرَاءُ (جَمْعُ شَاعِرٍ)

سُفَهَاءُ (جَمْعُ سَفِيهٍ)

أَمْنَاءُ (جَمْعُ أَمِينٍ)

وَكَلَاءُ (جَمْعُ وَكِيلٍ)

أَسْرَاءُ (جَمْعُ أَسِيرٍ)

(ز) أَفْعَلَاءُ

This scale is generally used for the adjectives of intelligent beings which are on the scale of (فَعِيلٌ) as in:

أَصْدَقَاءُ (جَمْعُ صَدِيقٍ)

أَنْبِيَاءُ (جَمْعُ نَبِيٍّ)

أَحْبَاءُ³⁷ (جَمْعُ حَبِيبٍ)

أَقْرَبَاءُ (جَمْعُ قَرِيبٍ)

أَغْنِيَاءُ (جَمْعُ غَنِيٍّ)

أَوْلِيَاءُ (جَمْعُ وَلِيٍّ)

(ح) فُعْلَانٌ : فُرْسَانٌ (جَمْعُ فَارِسٍ)

بُلْدَانٌ (جَمْعُ بَلَدٍ)

قُضْبَانٌ (جَمْعُ قَضِيبٍ)

(ط) فَعَالِلٌ : عَنَاصِرٌ (جَمْعُ عُنْصُرٍ)

³⁷ The original was (أَحْبِيَاءُ). The reason why it has changed into (أَحْبَاءُ) will be explained later.

زَلَازِلُ (جَمْعُ زُلْزَلَةٍ)
كَوَاكِبُ (جَمْعُ كَوْكَبٍ)
جَوَاهِرُ (جَمْعُ جَوْهَرٍ)

Note 1: The plural of five-letter words also comes on this scale. However, the final letter has to be deleted, e.g. the plural of (سَفَرٌ جَلٌّ) is (سَفَارِجٌ). The (ل) has been deleted.

(ى) فَعَالِيلٌ : فَنَاجِينُ (جَمْعُ فَنَجَانٍ)
صَنَادِيقُ (جَمْعُ صُنْدُوقٍ)
قَنَادِيلُ (جَمْعُ قَنَدِيلٍ)
خَنَازِيرُ (جَمْعُ خَنَزِيرٍ)
بَسَاتِينُ (جَمْعُ بُسْتَانٍ)
سَلَاطِينُ (جَمْعُ سُلْطَانٍ)

(ك) فَعَالِلَةٌ : أَسَاتِدَةٌ (جَمْعُ أُسْتَاذٍ)
تَلَامِذَةٌ (جَمْعُ تَلْمِيزٍ)
مَلَائِكَةٌ (جَمْعُ مَلَكٍ)

This scale is specific with intelligent beings.

(ل) مَفَاعِلُ :

This scale is specific with those words that are on the scale of (مَفْعَلٌ), (مَفْعَلٌ) or (مَفْعَلَةٌ).

مَرَاكِبُ (جَمْعُ مَرَكَبٍ)
مَسَاجِدُ (جَمْعُ مَسْجِدٍ)
مَكَاتِبُ (جَمْعُ مَكْتَبَةٍ)

(م) مَفَاعِيلُ

This scale is used for those words that are on the scale of (مَفْعَالٌ) or (مَفْعُولٌ).

مَفَاتِيحُ (جَمْعُ مِفْتَاحٍ)
مَكَاتِيبُ (جَمْعُ مَكْتُوبٍ)

Note 2: The following plural scales are (غَيْرُ مُنْصَرَفٍ)³⁸.

³⁸ This is a certain class of nouns that is not fully declined. European grammarians sometimes refer to them as diptotes. This term is discussed in

Tanwīn will not be read on them.

فُعَلَاءٌ ، أَفْعَاءٌ ، فَعَالِلٌ ، فَعَالِلٌ ، مَفَاعِلٌ ، مَفَاعِلٌ

2. Remember the plural of the following words in particular:

The sound plural of (ابْنٌ) is (بُنُونٌ) in (حَالَةُ الرَّفْعِ) - the nominative case and (بَنِينَ) in (حَالَةُ النَّصْبِ وَالْجَرِّ) - the accusative and genitive cases. Its broken plural is (أَبْنَاءٌ).

The plural of (ابْنَةٌ) is (بَنَاتٌ).

The plural of (أَخٌ) is (إِخْوَانٌ) or (إِخْوَةٌ).

The plural of (أُخْتٌ) is (أُخَوَاتٌ).

The plural of (إِمْرَأَةٌ) is (نِسَاءٌ) or (نِسْوَةٌ).

The plural of (أُمٌّ) is (أُمَّهَاتٌ).

3. Some words have plurals on several scales. Hence the plurals of (بَحْرٌ) are (بِحَارٌ), (أَبْحَارٌ), (أَبْحُرٌ) and (بُحُورٌ).

4. Some words have different scales of plurals rendering

different meanings. For example, the word (بَيْتٌ) means house or verse (of a poem). Regarding the first meaning, the plural is (بُيُوتٌ) while the plural (أَبْيَاتٌ) is related to the second meaning.

The word (عَبْدٌ) means slave or servant. The respective plurals are (عَبِيدٌ) and (عِبَادٌ).

The word (عَيْنٌ) means eye or spring. The respective plurals are (أَعْيُنٌ) and (عُيُونٌ).

Vocabulary List No. 7

The plurals of some words are provided next to them.

Word	Meaning
بَاسِرٌ	scowling, frowning
بَعْضٌ ، أَبْعَاضٌ	some, part of
ثَابِتٌ	fixed, established
جَارٌ ، جِيرَانٌ	neighbour
حَدِيدٌ	iron
خَيْرٌ	good

سَفِيرٌ ، سَفْرَاءُ	ambassador
سَيْفٌ ، سَيْوْفٌ	sword
شَايٌ	tea
شَرْطٌ ، شُرُوطٌ	condition
صَعَبٌ ، صِعَابٌ	difficult
طَوِيلٌ ، طَوَالٌ	long, tall
عَرَبِيٌّ أَوْ عَرَبِيَّةٌ	Arabian
فَارِغٌ	empty
قَاطِعٌ	cutting, sharp
الْمَدْرَسَةُ الْعَالِيَةُ	high school
الْمُتَّقِي	pious
مُطِيعٌ	obedient
مُطَهَّرٌ	pure, clean
مَوْعِظَةٌ ، مَوَاعِظٌ	advice
نَاضِرَةٌ	fresh
نَاطِرَةٌ	looking
نَفِيسٌ ، نَفَائِسٌ	precious

نَافِعٌ	beneficial
يَوْمٌ ، أَيَّامٌ	a day
الْيَوْمَ	today
يَوْمَئِذٍ	on that day
زِينَةٌ	beauty
بَاقِيَاتٌ	remaining, permanent
الْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ	the good actions
رُمْحٌ ، رِمَاحٌ	spear, lance, javelin
فَنَاجِيْنٌ ، فَنَاجِيْنٌ	cup
سَفَرَجَلٌ ، سَفَرَجَلٌ	quince

Exercise No. 8

(A) In the under-mentioned examples, the adjective or predicate of unintelligent beings is used mostly as singular feminine. Translate the following phrases or sentences into English.

(1) أَقْلَامٌ طَوِيلَةٌ (2) الْعُلُومُ النَّافِعَةُ (3) الْأَوْلَادُ صِغَارٌ (4) رِجَالٌ

صَالِحُونَ (5) الْكُتُبُ صَعْبَةٌ (6) الشُّرُوطُ الصَّعْبَةُ (7) طُرُقٌ سَهْلَةٌ (8)
صُحُفٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ (9) الْحُقُوقُ الثَّابِتَةُ (10) هِيَ الْمُدُنُ الْوَسِيعَةُ (11)
الرَّمَّاحُ الطَّوَالُ مِنَ الْحَدِيدِ (12) نِسَاءٌ مُسَلِّمَاتٌ (13) هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتٌ (14)
الْإِخْوَانُ وَالْأَخَوَاتُ جَالِسُونَ (15) إِنَّ الْبَنِينَ وَالْبَنَاتِ مُطِيعُونَ (16)
السُّفْرَاءُ حَاضِرُونَ الْيَوْمَ (17) مَا هُمْ بِغَائِبِينَ (18) بَعْضُ الشُّعْرَاءِ مِنَ
الصَّالِحِينَ الصَّادِقِينَ (19) الْجَوَاهِرُ النَّفِيسَةُ لَامِعَةٌ (20) إِنَّ الْكِلَابَ
الْحَارِسَةَ جَالِسَةً عَلَى بَابِ الدَّارِ (21) الْمَوَاعِظُ الْحَسَنَةُ نَافِعَةٌ (22) هُمْ
عَبِيدُ الْإِنْسَانِ وَنَحْنُ عِبَادُ الرَّحْمَانِ (23) فِي الْمَدَارِسِ الْعَالِيَةِ مُعَلِّمُونَ مِنْ
الْعُلَمَاءِ الْكِبَارِ (24) الصَّنَادِيقُ الْفَارِغَةُ لِفَنَاجِينِ الشَّيْ (25) حُقُوقُ
الْجِيرَانِ كَحُقُوقِ الْأَقْرَبَاءِ (26) فِي الْبَسَاتِينِ سَفَارِحُ حُلُوةٌ (27) إِنَّ
الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعِيُونَ (28) وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَاضِرَةٌ إِلَى رَبِّهَا نَاطِرَةٌ وَ
وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَاسِرَةٌ (29) الْمَالُ وَالْبُنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ
الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ .

(B) Reply to these questions in Arabic, e.g.

(1) هَلْ عِنْدَكَ كِتَابٌ نَافِعٌ؟	نَعَمْ عِنْدِي كُتُبٌ نَافِعَةٌ
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- (2) هَلْ عِنْدَكَ سَيْفٌ قَاطِعٌ؟
- (3) هَلْ عِنْدَ حَامِدٍ رُمْحٌ طَوِيلٌ؟
- (4) هَلِ الْأَمِيرُ صَالِحٌ؟
- (5) هَلْ عِنْدَكَ ثَوْبٌ نَظِيفٌ؟
- (6) هَلِ الصُّنْدُوقُ فَارِغٌ؟
- (7) هَلِ التِّلْمِيذُ حَاضِرُ الْيَوْمِ؟
- (8) هَلْ عِنْدَكَ فَنَاجَانٌ؟
- (9) هَلْ عِنْدَكَ سَفْرَجَلٌ؟
- (10) هَلْ هُوَ غَنِيٌّ؟
- (11) هَلْ هِيَ ابْنَةُ صَالِحَةٍ؟
- (12) أَعِنْدَكَ جَوْهَرٌ نَفِيسٌ؟
- (13) أَعِنْدَكَ مِفْتَاحُ الصُّنْدُوقِ؟
- (14) هَلْ فِي الْمَدْرَسَةِ أُسْتَاذٌ؟
- (15) هَلْ فِي بَمْبَائِي مَكْتَبَةٌ كَبِيرَةٌ؟

(C) Translate the following phrases into Arabic

- (1) the Muslim men
- (2) the large ships

- (3) the clean clothes
- (4) the flowing rivers
- (5) The rivers are flowing.
- (6) the past months
- (7) They are truthful witnesses.
- (8) The two tall mountains
- (9) The spears are long and the swords are sharp.
- (10) Are you (pl.) unhappy?
- (11) No, we are cheerful.
- (12) Some kings are just.
- (13) The cups of the tea are empty.
- (14) Are you (pl.) friends?
- (15) Yes, and we are relatives.
- (16) The students and the teachers are in the madrasah.
- (17) Those girls are playing.
- (18) The people of īmān are the friends of Allāh.
- (19) the tall houses.
- (20) the Arabian verses
- (21) The Qur'ān has beneficial advice (plural).

Test No. 4

- (1) What is a (حرف أصلي)?
- (2) How many root letters are there in a noun and in a verb?
- (3) Besides the root letters found in a word, what are the

other letters called?

- (4) With regards to the root letters of words, how many types of words are there?
- (5) What are words which only have root letters called and what are those words called which have extra letters.
- (6) Which of the following words are (مجرد) and which are (مزید فیہ):

رَجُلٌ ، رَجُلَانِ ، تَكْبِيرٌ ، كَبَّرَ ، ذَهَبَ ، يَذْهَبُ ، ذَاهِبٌ

- (7) How is the scale of a word determined? In other words, how do you use the root letters (فعل) to determine which letter is a root letter and which one is extra?
- (8) What is the benefit of knowing the scales of words?
- (9) What are the well-known scales of the broken plural?
- (10) Which scales of the plural are (غير منصرف)?
- (11) Make the plurals of (عَبْدٌ), (أَخٌ), (سَنَةٌ), (أَمْرَأَةٌ), (بَحْرٌ), (أَسِيرٌ) and (فَنَجَانٌ).