

LESSON 3

In this lesson we learn the following:

1) Comparative and superlative degrees of the adjective : Adjectives in the comparative degree are on the pattern of أَفْعَلٌ like أَحْمَلُ 'more beautiful,' أَحْسَنُ 'better,' أَصْغَرُ 'smaller,' أَقْدَمُ 'older'. As we have already learnt, words on this pattern are diptotes and so have no *tanwîn*.

أَفْعَلٌ is followed by مِنْ 'than', e.g.:

حَامِدٌ أَطْوَلُ مِنْ بِلَالٍ 'Hâmid is taller than Bilâl.'

أَفْعَلٌ is the same for masculine, feminine, singular and plural, e.g. :

بِلَالٌ أَطْوَلُ مِنْ آمِنَةَ 'Bilâl is taller than Aminah.'

آمِنَةُ أَطْوَلُ مِنْ بِلَالٍ 'Aminah is taller than Bilâl.'

الْأَبْنَاءُ أَطْوَلُ مِنَ الْبَنَاتِ 'The sons are taller than the daughters.'

الْبَنَاتُ أَطْوَلُ مِنَ الْإِبْنَاءِ 'The daughters are taller than the sons.'

Note the following examples wherein مِنْ is followed by a pronoun:

أَنْتَ أَحْسَنُ مِنِّي 'You are better than I.'²

أَنَا أَقْصَرُ مِنْكَ 'I am shorter than you.'

هُمَّ أَكْبَرُ مِنَّا سِنًا 'They are older than we.'³

أَفْعَلٌ is also used for the superlative degree. In this case, it is followed by a noun in the genitive case.

إِبْرَاهِيمُ أَحْسَنُ طَالِبٍ فِي الْمَدْرَسَةِ 'Ibrâhîm is the best student in the school.'

الْأَزْهَرُ أَقْدَمُ جَامِعَةٍ فِي الْعَالَمِ 'Al-Azhar is the oldest university in the world.'

² Note that in مِنْنِي the *nûn* has *shaddah*. There is no *shaddah* with other pronouns : نَا, مِنْهَا, مِنْكَ, مِنْهُمْ, مِنْنَا, but مِنْنَا has *shaddah* because it is made up of مِنْ and نَا.

³ سِنٌ means 'age'. أَكْبَرُ سِنًا literally means 'bigger in age'.

فاطمة أكبر طالبة في فصلنا 'Fâtimah is the eldest student in our class.'

The Arabic name for both the comparative and superlative degrees is **أَفْعَلُ التَّفْضِيلِ**.

2) **وَلكِنَّ** : 'but' is one of the sister of **إِنَّ**, and so acts like **إِنَّ**, e.g.:

بِلالٌ مُجْتَهِدٌ وَلَكِنَّ حَامِداً كَسَلاً 'Bilâl is hard working, but Hâmid is lazy.'

أَخِي مُتَزَوِّجٌ وَلَكِنِّي عَزَبٌ 'My brother is married but I am a bachelor.'

سَيَّارَتِي قَدِيمَةٌ وَلَكِنَّهَا قَوِيَّةٌ 'My car is old, but it is strong.'

3) **كَأَنَّ** is one of the sisters of **إِنَّ**, and so the noun following it is *mansûb*. It means 'it looks as if', e.g.:

كَأَنَّ الإِمَامَ مَرِيضٌ 'It looks as if the imam is sick.'

مَنْ هَذِهِ الْفَتَاةُ؟ كَأَنَّهَا أُخْتُكَ 'Who is this girl? It looks as if she is your sister.'

كَأَنَّ هَذِهِ السَّيَّارَةَ لَهُ 'It looks as if this car belongs to him.'

كَأَنَّكَ مِنَ الْهِنْدِ 'You seem to be from India.'

4) The numbers from 11 to 20 with a masculine *ma'dûd*. These numbers are compound : they consist of two parts. The *ma'dûd* is singular, *mansûb*, e.g.:

أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا 'eleven stars'

تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ كِتَابًا 'nineteen books'

We will deal with these numbers under four heads:

(a) Numbers 11 and 12:

Here both parts agree with the *ma'dûd*, e.g.:

أَحَدَ عَشَرَ طَالِبًا 'eleven male students'

إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ طَالِبَةً 'eleven female students'

إِثْنَا عَشَرَ طَالِبًا 'twelve male students'

إِثْنَا عَشْرَةَ طَالِبَةً 'twelve female students'

(b) Numbers from 13 to 19:

Here the second part agrees with the *ma'dûd* and the first part does not, e.g. :



As you can see, in ثَلَاثَةٌ عَشْرَ طَالِبًا the *ma'dūd*, طَالِبًا, is masculine, so the second part of the number عَشْرَ is masculine while the first part ثَلَاثَةٌ is feminine as indicated by the ة-ending.

In ثَلَاثَ عَشْرَةَ طَالِبَةً the *ma'dūd* طَالِبَةً is feminine, so the second part of the number عَشْرَةَ is also feminine while the first part ثَلَاثَ is masculine as indicated by the absence of ة.

In this lesson we learn these numbers only with the masculine *ma'dūd*. We will learn them again with the feminine *ma'dūd* in Lesson 6.

(c) These numbers are *mabni* (indeclinable)⁴. In other words, they do not change to indicate their function in the sentence. This will become clear by comparing the numbers from 3 to 10 with these numbers :

عِنْدِي ثَلَاثَةٌ رِيَالَاتٍ 'I have three riyals.'

أُرِيدُ ثَلَاثَةَ رِيَالَاتٍ 'I want three riyals.'

هَذَا الْقَلَمُ بِثَلَاثَةِ رِيَالَاتٍ 'This pen costs three riyals.'

عِنْدِي ثَلَاثَةٌ عَشْرَ رِيَالًا

أُرِيدُ ثَلَاثَةَ عَشْرَ رِيَالًا

هَذَا الْقَلَمُ بِثَلَاثَةِ عَشْرَ رِيَالًا

⁴ The words اِثْنَا and اِثْنَا in اِثْنَا عَشْرَ and اِثْنَا عَشْرَةَ are *mu'rab* (declinable). In genitive and accusative cases, they become اِثْنِي and اِثْنِي, e.g. :

عِنْدِي اِثْنَا عَشْرَ رِيَالًا 'I have twelve riyals.'

أُرِيدُ اِثْنِي عَشْرَ رِيَالًا 'I want twelve riyals.'

هَذَا الْكِتَابُ بِاِثْنِي عَشْرَ رِيَالًا 'This book costs twelve riyals.'

Note that the اِثْنَا and اِثْنَا commence with *hamzat al-wasl* and it is omitted in pronunciation when preceded by a word.

(d) The number 20 is عِشْرُونَ. It has the same form for both the masculine and feminine *ma'dūd*. The *ma'dūd* is singular, *mansūb*, e.g. :

عِشْرُونَ طَالِبَةً , عِشْرُونَ طَالِبًا

We will learn the numbers from 30 to 90 in Lesson 23 *إن شاء الله*. We'll learn there the other cases of these numbers as well.

5) The ordinal numbers:

The word for 'first' is *أَوَّلٌ*. Ordinal numbers from 2 to 10 are formed on the pattern of *ثَالِثٌ* 'third', *رَابِعٌ* 'fourth', *خَامِسٌ* 'fifth', *سَادِسٌ* 'sixth'.

'Second' is *ثَانٍ*, which is originally *ثَانِيٌ* like *غَالٍ* in Lesson 1. With *ال*, it is *الثَّانِي*.

6) *أَنْتَ طَالِبٌ، أَلَيْسَ كَذَلِكَ؟* 'isn't it so?' If a student is asked the answer is *بَلَى*. We'll learn more about *بَلَى* in Lesson 6.

7) *أَيُّهُمَا* : 'which of the two?', e.g. :

There are two students from France in the class. Which of them is your brother?

8) The two broken plural forms *مَفَاعِلُ* and *مَفَاعِلُ* like *فَنَادِقُ* and *فَنَاجِينُ* are called *مُنْتَهَى الْجُمُوعِ*.

Exercises

1. Answer the following questions.
2. Mark the correct statements with this sign (✓) and the incorrect ones with this (x).
3. Read the following examples of *أَفْعَلُ التَّفْضِيلِ*.
4. Make with the help of the words given in the exercise sentences containing adjectives in the comparative degree.
5. Change the adjectives in the following sentences to superlative degree as explained in the example.
6. Rewrite the following sentences using *وَلَكِنْ* as explained in the example.

7. Rewrite the following sentences using كَأَنَّ as explained in the example.
8. Learn the numbers from 11 to 20.
9. Read the following sentences and write them substituting words for figures.
10. Learn the ordinal numbers.
11. Fill in the blanks with the ordinal forms of the numbers given in the brackets.
Note that the feminine of أَوَّلُ is أَوَّلَى.
12. The teacher asks every student a question containing أَلَيْسَ كَذَلِكَ؟, and the student replies saying بَلَى.
13. The teacher asks every student a question containing أَيُّهُمَا.

Vocabulary:

مَهَجَعٌ	hostel
كَوْكَبٌ	star
فَرِيقٌ	team
شَقِيقٌ	full brother
فِي الْمَنَامِ	in dream
نَافِذَةٌ	window, pl. نَوَافِذُ
سِنٌّ	age, tooth
شَهْرٌ	month
لَاعِبٌ	player
وَاسِعٌ	spacious, large
شَهِيرٌ	famous
ثَمَنٌ	price
كَسَلَى	lazy (fem. form of كَسَلَانُ)