

# Unit 28

The verb:  
the present  
tense of **كَانَ**

يَكُ ، تَكُ ، أَكُ

These are shortened forms respectively of the Jussive:

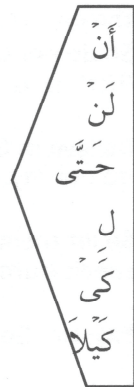
يَكُنْ ، تَكُنْ ، أَكُنْ

Because the verb **كَانَ** occurs very frequently in various forms in the Qur'an, we give below its conjugation in the three modes of the Present: Indicative ( **مَرْفُوعٌ** ), Subjunctive ( **مَنْصُوبٌ** ) and Jussive ( **مَجْزُومٌ** ). We also give the Imperative.

| Indicative |            |            |        |
|------------|------------|------------|--------|
| Plural     | Dual       | Singular   |        |
| يَكُونُونَ | يَكُونَانِ | يَكُونُ    | 3.m.   |
| يَكُنَّ    | تَكُونَانِ | تَكُونُ    | 3.f.   |
| تَكُونُونَ | تَكُونَانِ | تَكُونُ    | 2.m.   |
| تَكُنَّ    | تَكُونَانِ | تَكُونِينَ | 2.f.   |
| نَكُونُ    | نَكُونُ    | أَكُونُ    | 1.m.f. |

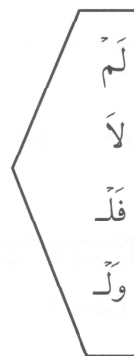
| Subjunctive |          |          |        |
|-------------|----------|----------|--------|
| يَكُونُوا   | يَكُونَا | يَكُونَ  | 3.m.   |
| يَكُنَّ     | تَكُونَا | تَكُونَ  | 3.f.   |
| تَكُونُوا   | تَكُونَا | تَكُونَ  | 2.m.   |
| تَكُنَّ     | تَكُونَا | تَكُونِي | 2.f.   |
| نَكُونِ     | نَكُونِ  | أَكُونِ  | 1.m.f. |

Controllers



| Jussive       |          |                 |        |
|---------------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| يَكُونُوا     | يَكُونَا | يَكُنْ / يَكُ   | 3.m.   |
| يَكُنَّ       | تَكُونَا | تَكُنْ / تَكُ   | 3.f.   |
| تَكُونُوا     | تَكُونَا | تَكُنْ / تَكُ   | 2.m.   |
| تَكُنَّ       | تَكُونَا | تَكُونِي / تَكُ | 2.f.   |
| نَكُنْ / نَكُ | نَكُنْ   | أَكُنْ / أَكُ   | 1.m.f. |

Controllers



### Belief cannot be forced

The question in line 6 implies that it is impossible to force people to be believers in God. Belief has to come from within, through the use of reflection and reason. 'Let there be no coercion in matters of faith (for) the right way now stands out clearly from error' says the well-known verse (2: 256) of the Qur'an. This disposes of the widespread fallacy that Islam offers unbelievers the choice of 'conversion or the sword'.

| Imperative |        |        |
|------------|--------|--------|
| كُونُوا    | كُونَا | كُنْ   |
| كُنَّ      | كُونَا | كُونِي |

The imperative is formed from the Jussive by dropping the prefix **تَ**.

When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, 'Be!' and it is. 3: 47

1 إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ

On (that) day, mankind will be like scattered moths. 101: 4

2 يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ

And the mountains will be like carded wool. 101: 5

3 وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ

He refused to be with the prostrating ones. 15: 31

4 أَبِي أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ

And I was commanded to be among the believers. 10: 104

5 وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Would you force people to be (lit. so that they should be) believers? 10:99

6 ■ أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ

He was not (even) a thing mentioned. 76: 1

7 لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا

And I did create you before and you were not (even) a thing. 19: 9

8 ■ وَقَدْ خَلَقْتُكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْئًا

They said: Were we not with you? 4: 141

9 قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ

And I was not immoral. 19: 20

10 ■ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا

And do not be like those who have forgotten Allah... 59: 19

11 وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ

And be among those who are thankful. 7:144

12 وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

And do not ever be among those who denied the signs of Allah...

13 ■ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بَيِّنَاتِ اللَّهِ

lest you be among the losers. 10: 95

14 فَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

O you who have believed! Be helpers of God. 61: 14

15 يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ

### Notes for text above

Remember that the predicate of the verb كَانَ is in the accusative - see, for example, lines 6, 7, 8, 10 and 15.

■ **Line 6:** تُكْرِهُ, you force, is the present active of a Form IV verb (see Unit 33).

■ **Line 8:** تَكُ is short for تَكُنْ .

■ **Line 10:** أَكُ is short for أَكُنْ .

■ **Line 13:** تَكُونَنَّ has the emphatic ending which in translation is conveyed by the English word 'ever'.