

Unit 4

Nouns, and adjectives: definite

A word with the definite article cannot have tanwīn.

In phrases showing possession like **كِتَابُ اللَّهِ** which means 'the book of Allah', the word **كِتَابُ** is definite but it must not have the definite article.

The word **اللَّهِ** with its genitive ending means 'of Allah' (see Unit 10).

Grace and mercy
God's rahmah or grace and mercy extends over everything. The attributes of God as Rahman - most Gracious, and Rahim - most Merciful, are repeated over and over again in the Qur'an. God is ever ready to forgive the errant but repentant soul and His attribute as Ghafur - Forgiving - is also repeated often in the Qur'an.

الودود - the Loving,

is another attribute of Allah. It is mentioned once in the Qur'an and refers to God's all-embracing love.

Nouns which end with tanwīn are indefinite.

A word becomes definite when the definite article **الـ** is attached before it. **الـ** is always attached to the word which follows:

مَائِدَةٌ a table

كِتَابٌ a book

الْمَائِدَةُ the table

الْكِتَابُ the book

When a word is definite, it loses the 'n' of the tanwīn.

When the word to which the **الـ** is attached begins with a 'sun' letter, the **ل** of the definite article loses its sukūn and the sun letter gets a shaddah. This means that the **ل** of the definite article is omitted in pronunciation, and the sun letter is clearly doubled, e.g. **الشمسُ**, **the sun**.

The sun letters are fourteen:

ت ث د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ل ن

Masculine, singular and definite

If a noun is masculine, singular and definite, its adjective must also be masculine, singular and definite. The adjective must also agree with its noun by having the same case endings. Study the following examples:

1. **الْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ** the great Qur'an (nominative) - ending with dammah
2. **الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ** the straight path (accusative) - ending with fat-hah
3. **الشَّيْطَانَ الرَّجِيمَ** the rejected Satan (genitive) - ending with kasrah

In example 1 above, the word **الْقُرْآنَ** is masculine and singular. It is definite because it has the definite article **الـ**. It is also in the nominative case because it ends with a dammah.

The adjective **الْعَظِيمَ** agrees with its noun **الْقُرْآنَ** by being masculine and singular. It also has the definite article and ends with a dammah.

In examples 2 and 3, see how each adjective agrees with its noun.

Feminine, singular and definite

If a noun is feminine, singular and definite, its adjective must also be feminine, singular and definite. The adjective must also agree with its noun by having the same case endings. Study the following examples:

4. **النَّفْسَ الْمَطْمَئِنَّةَ** the satisfied soul (nominative) - ending with dammah
5. **الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ** the next abode (accusative) - ending with fat-hah
6. **الْمَوْعِظَةَ الْحَسَنَةَ** good advice (genitive) - ending with kasrah

In example 5 above, the word **الدَّارَ** is one of those few words which are feminine even though they do not have a **ة** ending. **الدَّارَ** is also singular and definite. It is also in the accusative case because it ends with a fat-hah.

The adjective **الْآخِرَةَ** agrees with its noun **الدَّارَ** by being feminine with a **ة** ending, by being singular, and by being definite by having **الـ**. It also ends with a fat-hah.

See how each adjective agrees with its noun in examples 4 and 6 above.

Note: The word **الدُّنْيَا** (line 9 opposite) does not change. It has the same form for all cases.

Indeed God is Forgiving, Merciful. 2: 173

1 إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

He is the Forgiving, the Loving (God).
85: 14

2 هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْوَدُودُ

That is the great favour. 42: 22

3 ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ

Guide us the straight way. 1: 6

4 ■ أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

They fear the painful punishment. 51: 37

5 ■ يَخَافُونَ الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ

It is tremendous news. 38: 67

6 هُوَ نَبَأٌ عَظِيمٌ

Concerning the awesome news. 78: 2

7 ■ عَنِ النَّبَأِ الْعَظِيمِ

And a sign for them is the dead earth.
36: 33

8 وَآيَةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَرْضُ الْمَيِّتَةُ

The worldly life is only a play and a
pastime. 47: 36

9 ■ إِنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌّ وَلَهُوَ

And the next abode is better. 7: 169

10 وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ

Indeed the next abode - it is truly the
life! 29: 64

11 ■ إِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْيَوَانُ

Call to the way of your Sustainer with
wisdom and good exhortation. 16: 125

12 أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْكَلِمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ

Say: O disbelievers! 109: 1

13 ■ قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ

O tranquil soul! 89: 27

14 ■ يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ

By the fig and the olive and Mount
Sinai and this secure land. 95: 1-2

15 ■ وَالتِّينِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ وَطُورِ سِينِينَ وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ

Notes for text above

- **Line 4:** أَهْدِنَا means 'Guide us'.
- **Line 5:** يَخَافُونَ means 'They fear'.
- **Line 7:** عَنْ is a preposition and means 'about' or 'concerning'. It has a kasrah on the ن to link it in pronunciation with the following word.
- **Line 9:** إِنَّمَا means 'only'.
- **Line 11:** لَهِيَ is the ل of emphasis + هِيَ .
- **Line 12:** The word أَدْعُ means 'Call' or 'Invite'.
- **Lines 13 and 14:** The interjection يَا - O! is the

simple and usual way of addressing someone. Here it is joined to another interjection أَيُّهَا - also meaning **O!** (masculine, for singular and plural) which is immediately followed by اَلْ. The feminine form, أَيَّتُهَا is also followed directly by the definite article.

■ **Line 15:** The first وَ and the other three separate waws in this line are used for making an oath (*qasam*). Each of these waws is known as the '*waw al-qasam*', and the words controlled by it are in the genitive. Two more examples: وَاللَّهِ by God!; وَالْعَصْرِ By Time!