# Unit 3

## Nouns, pronouns and adjectives: indefinite

In English, an adjective comes before its noun.
In Arabic, an adjective comes after its noun.

### Singular and indefinite

1. رَسُولٌ كَرِيمٌ  a noble messenger

2. وَعْدًا مَفْعُولاً  a fulfilled promise

3. ءَايَةٍ بَيِّنَةٍ  a clear sign

### Nominative:

An adjective must always agree with its noun. In example 1 above, the noun رَسُولٌ is masculine and indefinite so the adjective كَرِيمٌ *noble*, must also be masculine and indefinite. The noun ends in tanwin ٌ , so the adjective also ends with tanwin ٌ . Nouns and adjectives ending with tanwin ٌ are said to be in the **nominative case** (Arabic: مَرْفُوع ).

A noun is in the nominative case when :

i.   it is the subject of a sentence:  in line 5 opposite, رَسُولٌ كَرِيمٌ is the subject of the sentence. (For further notes on what is the subject of a sentence, see Unit 12.)

ii.  it is the *mubtada* or first part of a simple sentence, e.g. عَبْدٌ in line 11.

iii. it is a complement in simple sentences, like عَذَابٌ in line 2. (A complement gives some information (*khabar*) about the first part of a sentence.)

### Accusative

In example 2 above, both the noun and its adjective are masculine and indefinite. The noun وَعْدًا ends with tanwin اً. Notice there is an added alif after the tanwin ً.
The adjective مَفْعُولاً must also agree with its noun and end with tanwin اً and an alif. Nouns and adjectives with the ending اً are said to be in the **accusative case** (Arabic: مَنْصُوب ).  A noun is in the accusative case when:

i.   it is controlled by particles like إِنَّ *indeed*, أَنَّ *that*, and لَكِنَّ *but*. For example, see the word اللَّهَ in line 8. For more examples, see Unit 9.

ii.  it is the object of a sentence. In line 10 opposite, the object of the sentence is نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً , *an innocent person*. (Remember the word نَفْسًا is feminine although it does not end with a ة ; its adjective زَكِيَّةً must be feminine (with the ة ending) to agree with it.
Note: The ة with tanwin ً is not followed by an alif.)

iii. it is used as an adverb. In line 9 opposite, لَيْلاً is accusative because it ends with tanwin ً and may be translated as **'by** *night'*.  نَهَارًا is also accusative and may be translated as **'by** *day'*.

### Genitive

In example 3 above, both the noun and its adjective are feminine and indefinite. (How do we know they are feminine?) The noun ءَايَةٍ ends with tanwin ٍ and so does its adjective. Nouns and adjectives ending with the tanwin ٍ are said to be in the **genitive case** (Arabic: مَجْرُور ).

A noun is in the genitive case:

i.   when it is controlled by a preposition such as عَلَى *on*, فِى *in*.

ii.  to show possession. In line 15 opposite, the word رَسُولٍ is genitive and means **'of** *a messenger'*. The adjective كَرِيمٍ *noble*, is genitive to agree with its noun.

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فِى لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ

**On a blessed night**

This was the night in the month of Ramadan when the Qur'an was bestowed from on high to the noble Prophet, peace be on him, high on the mountain of light.
On this night, according to the opening verses of Surah ad-Dukhan, a clear distinction between all things good and evil was made both as a source of grace (*rahmah*) and as a warning to mankind.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| This is a strange thing. 50: 2 | هَـٰذَا شَـىْءٌ عُجِيبٌ | 1 |
| This is a painful punishment. 44: 11 | هَـٰذَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ | 2 |
| A blazing fire. 101: 11 | نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ | 3 |
| (It is) a good land and a forgiving Sustainer. 34: 15 | بَلْدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَ رَبٌّ غَفُورٌ | 4 |
| A noble messenger has come to you. 44: 17 | جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ كَرِيمٌ | 5 ■ |
| For him (shall be) a generous reward. 57: 11 | لَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ | 6 |
| And He prepared for them a generous reward. 33: 44 | وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَرِيمًا | 7 |
| Indeed, God is Forgiving, Merciful. 2:173 | إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ | 8 |
| By night and by day. 71: 5 | لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا | 9 |
| Have you killed an innocent person? 18: 74 | أَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً | 10 |
| And surely a believing servant (m.) is better than a polytheist. 2: 221 | وَلَعَبْدٌ مُؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ مُشْرِكٍ | 11 |
| And surely a believing servant (f.) is better than a polytheist. 2: 221 | وَلَأَمَةٌ مُؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ مُشْرِكَةٍ | 12 |
| And he is on a straight way. 16: 76 | وَهُوَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ | 13 ■ |
| On a blessed night. 44: 3 | فِى لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ | 14 ■ |
| Indeed it is the speech of a noble messenger. 69: 40 | إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ | 15 ■ |

| | |
|---|---|
| to, for | لَ |
| him | هُ |
| them | هُمْ |
| he prepared | أَعَدَّ |
| you killed | قَتَلْتَ |
| begins a ques-tion | أَ |

### Notes for text above

■ *Line 5:* This sentence begins with a verb. جَاءَكُمْ means 'he has come to you'.

■ *Line 13:* The word صِرَاطٍ *a path*, is singular and masculine. It also ends with tanwin ٍ and so it is genitive and indefinite. It is genitive because it is controlled by the preposition عَلَى *on*. The adjective مُسْتَقِيمٌ *straight*, is masculine and genitive because it must agree with its noun صِرَاطٍ.

■ *Line 14:* The word لَيْلَةٍ *a night*, is feminine. It also ends with tanwin ٍ and so is genitive and indefinite. It is genitive because it is controlled by the preposition فِى *in*. The adjective مُبَارَكَةٍ *blessed*, is feminine and genitive because it must agree with its noun لَيْلَةٍ.

■ *Line 15:* رَسُولٍ is genitive because it shows possession - 'of a messenger'. The adjective كَرِيمٍ *noble,* is genitive to agree with its noun رَسُولٍ.