

# The Coptic Language

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## Lesson 1

**Table 1: The 25 Coptic Letters adapted from Greek Letters**

Coptic			Greek			English		Arabic
Letter	Cap	Small	Letter	Cap	Small	Cap	Small	
Alpha	Ⲁ	ⲁ	Alpha	Α	α	A	a	آ
Veeta	Ⲃ	ⲃ	Beta	Β	β	B	b	ب
Gamma	Ⲅ	ⲅ	Gamma	Γ	γ	G	g, gh, n	غ ج ن
Delta	Ⲇ	ⲇ	Delta	Δ	δ	D, Z	d, z	ذ
Ei	Ⲉ	ⲉ	Epsilon	Ε	ε	E	e	كسرة
Soo	Ⲋ	ⲋ	Not used	as a Greek	Letter	6		6
Zeeta	Ⲍ	ⲍ	Zeta	Ζ	ζ	Z	z	ز
Eeta	Ⲏ	ⲏ	Eeta	Η	η	E	y	ي
Theeta	Ⲑ	ⲑ	Theta	Θ	θ	TH	th	ت ث
Iota	Ⲓ	ⲓ	Iota	Ι	ι	I	i	كسرة
Kappa	Ⲕ	ⲕ	Kappa	Κ	κ	K	k	ك
Laula	Ⲗ	ⲗ	Lambda	Λ	λ	L	l	ل
Mei	Ⲙ	ⲙ	Mu	Μ	μ	M	m	م
Nei	Ⲛ	ⲛ	Nu	Ν	ν	N	n	ن
Eksee	Ⲝ	ⲝ	Xi	Ξ	ξ	X	x	إكسي
O	Ⲟ	ⲟ	Omicron	Ο	ο	O	o	ضمة
Pee	Ⲡ	ⲡ	Pi	Π	π	P	p	ب
Ro	Ⲣ	ⲣ	Rho	Ρ	ρ	R	r	ر

Seema	Ϣ	ϣ	Sigma	Σ	σ	S	s	س
Tav	Ϥ	ϥ	Tau	Τ	τ	T	t	ت
Epsilon	Ϧ	ϧ	Upsilon	Υ	υ	I, V		ف كسرة
Fei	Ϩ	ϩ	Phi	Φ	φ	PH		ف
Kei	Ϫ	ϫ	Chi	Χ	χ	K, SH	k, sh	ك ش
Epsée	Ϭ	ϭ	Psi	Ψ	ψ	PS		بس
OO	Ϯ	ϯ	Omega	Ω	ω	O		أو

**Table 2: Coptic Letters derived directly from older Egyptian Scripts  
(no Greek equivalence)**

Letter	Hiero-glyphic	Hieratic	Demotic	Coptic Cap	Coptic Small	English Sound	English Small	Arabic عربي
<b>Shai</b>						Sh		ش
<b>Fai</b>						F	f	ف
<b>Khai</b>						Kh		خ
<b>Hori</b>						H	h	ه
<b>Ganga</b>						J	g	ج
<b>Cheema</b>						Ch		تش
<b>Tee</b>						tee		تي

### The Definite Article (The)

In Coptic, as is the case in French and German, the definite article can be different depending on whether the noun is masculine, feminine or plural.

a) For masculine nouns, the main article is π, (some names take π̄ or φ)

Examples: Masculine nouns that take π

πΙCΩΝ = the brother (الأخ)

πΙΚΑϢΙ = the earth or the land (الأرض)

Masculine nouns that take π

Πωρι (ἄωρι) = The Son (الابن)

ἄωρο = the king (الملك)

Masculine nouns that take φ

Φιωτ (ἄιωτ) = The father (الآب)

ἄραν = the name (الاسم)

b) For feminine nouns, the main article is † (some names take ἄ or ἠ)

Examples: Feminine nouns that take †

†παρθενος = the virgin (العذراء)

†ωρω = the queen (الملكة)

Feminine nouns that take ἄ

ἄφε = the Heaven (السماء)

ἄωρι = the daughter (الابنة)

Feminine nouns that take ἠ

ἠματ = the mother (الأم)

ἠμη† = the middle (المنتصف)

**Exercise: Read the Following**

<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
παιωτ	My father أبي	ταματ	My mother أمي
πεκιωτ	Your father (s. m.) أبوك	τεκματ	Your mother (s. m.) أمك
πειωτ	Your father (s. f.) أبوكي	τεματ	Your mother (s. f.) أمك
πεφιωτ	His father أبوه	τεφματ	His mother أمه
πεσιωτ	Her father أبوها	τεσματ	Her mother أمها
πενιωτ	Our father	τενματ	Our mother أمنا
πετενωτ	Your father (plural) أبوكم	τετενματ	Your mother (plural) أمكم
ποφιωτ	Their father أبوهم	τοφματ	Their mother أمهم

**Exercise: Read the Following**

ἄβοτ	Month شهر	ἄφε	Head رأس
βωκ	Servant خادم	βαλ	Eye عين
ηι	House بيت	λας	Tongue لسان
κοϛζι	Little صغير	ϥωι	Hair شعر
ἐβολ	From من	ϣδα	Nose أنف
νοβι	Sin خطية	κας	Bone عظم
αλωμ	Cheese جبنة	οϣωμ	to eat يأكل
ἄλολι	Grapes عنب	ναϛ	to see يري
ωικ	Bread خبز	ςωβι	to laugh يضحك

**Exercise: Read the Following**

Ϡενοϣωϣτ ἕμοκ ὠ Πιχριστος  
 νεμ Πεκιωτ ἡἄσαθος νεμ Πιπνευμα  
 εθοϣαβ ρε ακι (ακτωνκ) ακωϣ ἕμμον  
 ναι ναν.

We worship You, O Christ, with Your good Father and the Holy Spirit, for you have come (risen) and saved us. Have mercy on us.

نسجد لك أيها المسيح، مع أبيك الصالح والروح القدس، لأنك أتيت (قمت) وخلصتنا. ارحمنا.

**Exercise: Read the Following**

Χερε νε Χαρια: ϣδρωπι εθνεως:  
 θεἑταςμιςι ναν: ἕφνοϣτ Πιλοσος.

Hail to you, O Mary, the beautiful dove, who has born to us God the Logos.

السلام لك يا مريم الحمامة الحسنة التي ولدت لنا الله الكلمة.

Κεμαρωϣτ ἄληθως: νεμ Πεκιωτ  
 ἡἄσαθος: νεμ Πιπνευμα εθοϣαβ: ρε  
 ακι ακωϣ ἕμμον ναι ναν.

Blessed are You indeed, with Your good Father and the Holy Spirit, for You have come and saved us. Have mercy on us.

مبارك أنت بالحقيقة مع أبيك الصالح والروح القدس، لأنك أتيت وخلصتنا. ارحمنا.

*Exercise: Read the Following*

**Πιλαος:**

Χε Πενιωτ ετδεν νιφνογι  
μαρεϋτογβο ηνε πεκραν: μαρεσι ηνε  
τεκμετογρο πετεζνακ μαρεϋωπι  
μηρητ δεν τφε νεμ ειχεν πικαχι:  
πενωικ ητε ραστ μηιϋ ναν μηφοογ.

Οτοζ χα νηετερον ναν εβολ:  
μηρητ εων ητενχω εβολ ηνηετε  
οτον ηταν ερωογ: οτοζ μηπερεντεν  
εδογν επιρασμοσ: αλλα ναεμεν εβολ  
εα πιπεεζωογ.

Ηεν Πιχριστοσ Ιησογσ Πενβοισ: εε  
θωκ τε τμετογρο νεμ τχομ νεμ  
πιωογ γα ενεε. αμην.

**People:**

Our Father who art  
in heaven; hallowed be Thy  
name. Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done on earth as  
it is in heaven. Give us this  
day our daily bread.

And forgive us our  
trespasses, as we forgive  
those who trespass against  
us. And lead us not into  
temptation, but deliver us  
from the evil one.

In Christ Jesus our Lord,  
for Thine is the Kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever. Amen.

**الشعب:**

أبانا الذي في السموات. لیتقدس  
اسمك. لیأت ملكوتك. لتكن  
مشیئتک. كما في السماء كذلك  
على الأرض. خبزنا كفافنا أعطنا  
اليوم.

وأغفر لنا ذنوبنا كما نغفر نحن  
أيضاً للمذنبين إلینا. ولا تدخلنا في  
تجربة. لكن نجنا من الشرير.

بالمسیح یسوع ربنا، لأن لك الملك  
والقوة والمجد إلى الأبد. آمین.