

The Coptic Language

Fr. Jacob Nadian

Lesson 6

ἮΕΝ ḲḠΑΝ ḲḠἸΩΤ ΝΕἸ ΠῶΗΡΙ ΝΕἸ ΠἰΠΝΕἸἸἸἸ ἘΘῶἸἈΒ. ΟἸΝῶἸἸ ḲῶἸἸἸ. ἈἸΗΝ.

Ϣ (seema): This is the nineteenth letter of the Coptic Alphabet, and it can be pronounced as:

1. “Z”; if followed by the letter “Ἰ”
ἈϢἈϢἸἸἸ → peace سلام
ἸἸἸἸἸἸἸ → thought فكر
ΒἈΠἸἸἸἸἸ → baptism معمودية
2. “S”; otherwise
ϢἸ → yes نعم
ϢἈḲ → teacher معلم
ϢἸἸἸἸ → “body” جسد [also ϢἈḲḲ → body جسد]

ϢἸ (tav): This is the twentieth letter of the Coptic Alphabet, and it can be pronounced as:

1. “T”
ἸἈḲḲἸ → destroy يدمر
ἸἸἸἸἸ → nine تسعة
ḲῶἸἸἸἸἸ → examine يمتحن
2. “D”; in Greek words only if preceded by the letter “N”
ἸἸἸἸἸἸἸ → pure طاهر
ἸἸἈΝἸἸἸἸἸ → meet يقابل
ἸΝἸἸἸἸἸ → commandment وصية

Χ (kei): This is the twenty-third letter of the Coptic Alphabet, and it can be pronounced as:

1. In all Coptic words, it is pronounced as “K”:

ΧΗΜΙ → Egypt, derived from the old Egyptian word KEMET, which means ‘the black land’ because of its fertile soil مصر

χα → forgive, leave or put يسامح أو يترك

ΧΟΙΑΚ → the Coptic month, Kiahk كيهك

ΨΥΧΗ → soul (same as Greek) نفس

εΥΧΗ → ask or pray (same as Greek) يصلي

ἄρωα → fire نار

2. In all Greek words, it has two ways of pronunciations:

- (i) “SH”; if it is followed by one of these letters: ε, ι, Η, Ϛ:

χερε → peace or hail (greeting) سلام

χηρα → widow ارملة

χερουβιμ → Cherubim شاروبيم

χιων → snow ثلج

χιμων → storm عاصفة

αρχη → head or chief رئيس

αρχηγος → pioneer رائد

- (ii) “KH”; if it is followed by one of these letters: α, ο, ω or a consonant:

Χριστος → Christ مسيح

ἄριστος → good or kind طيب

χαρις → grace نعمة

αρχων → leader قائد

χορος → choir خورس

χωρα → region or countryside مقاطعة

μοναχος → monk راهب

1. **Relative Clause:** Coptic uses three forms of the relative pronoun. They are used with nouns of either gender or number as well as verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The forms are as follows:

ε- ετ- ετε-

The most common form is ετ-. They all are translated in English as, 'who', 'whom', or 'which'. They are usually used with sentences containing adverbial predicates, examples:

πρωωι ετθεν πηι	The man who is in the house	الرجل الذي في البيت
Πενιωτ ετθεν νιφιοϣι	Our Father who art in heavens	أبانا الذي في السماوات

1.1 The relative pronoun ετ- functions as the subject of the relative clause:

Affirmative

†ϣιωι ετϣι φωωιτ	The woman who is on the road	المرأة التي علي الطريق
νιδελλοι ετθεν †εκκλχια	The monks who are in the church	الرهبان الذين في الكنيسة

Negative

νιδελλοι ετθεν †εκκλχια λν	The monks who are not in the church	
الرهبان الذين ليسوا في الكنيسة		

1.2 The relative clause cannot be used to modify an indefinite noun.

2. **Relative Nouns:** Nouns can be formed out of adjectives by prefixing the definite article to the relative pronoun and attaching the new prefix to an adjective, as follows:

Singular Masculine		Plural	
πετ-	πετε-	νετ-	νετε-

Examples:

πεθοϣαβ	The holy one, the one who is holy
πετρωϣ	The evil one, the one who is evil

3. **Demonstrative Adjectives - Far Objects:** The demonstrative for the far objects trails the noun it modifies. It is formed from a combination of the relative pronoun 'ετε--' and the adverb 'ωωλϣ'. In English it is translated as 'that' for singular and 'those' for plural. However

Coptic has one form for either gender or number, as follows:

πρωμι ἐτεῦμαϣ	that man	الرجل
ϣεβιωμι ἐτεῦμαϣ	that woman	المرأة
νικνηοϣ ἐτεῦμαϣ	those brothers	هؤلاء الاخوة

4. Greek Nouns:

A typical Coptic text contains a large number of Greek loan-words, mostly nouns. Greek masculine and feminine nouns retained their gender when they were used in Coptic. Neuter nouns were treated as masculine nouns. All Greek nouns came into Coptic in the nominative singular case and such form is kept the same in all other cases in Coptic, examples:

πιαστειλοϣ	m.	The angel	الملاك
ϣεπιστολη	f.	The letter	الخطاب أو الرسالة
πιννεϣμα	n.	The spirit	الروح

5. Vocabulary:

ἔμαϣ	adv.	There هناك	ϣερι	f.	daughter, girl بنت أو ابنة
ναβρεν	prep	in the presence of في حضور	ϣηρι	m.	son, child, boy ولد أو طفل أو ابن
νοϣϣ	m.	god إله	εβρεν	prep.	at the entrance of في مدخل
ϣνοϣϣ	m.	God الله	εωοϣ	adj.	Evil شر
ρο	m.	door, gate, mouth باب أو بوابة أو فم	βοιϣ	m.	master, owner سيد أو مالك
ρωοϣ	pl.	doors, gates أبواب أو بوابات	Πβοιϣ	m.	The Lord الرب
χακι	m.	Darkness ظلمة	βοιϣεϣ	pl.	masters, owners أسياد أو مالكين
ἔρο	m.	shore, bank شاطئ	ϣω	m.	Village قرية

Greek Nouns

ἄγγελος	m.	angel, messenger ملاك	μαθητής	m.	disciple, pupil تلميذ
ἐκκλησία	f.	Church كنيسة	πόλις	f.	City مدينة
ἐπιστολή	f.	letter, epistle رسالة او خطاب	τάφος	m.	Tomb قبر

Response to the Gospel of Resurrection and Fifty Joyful Days

مرد إنجيل عيد القيامة والخمسين المقدسة

Λοιπον ἀγκαυ θεν πιμθαυ: κατα
νίσκη ὑπρόφητικον θεν πιμαθ ψουτ
νέζουτ Πιχριστος ἀνεστη εκνεκρων.

Ἀλληλοῖα. Ἀλληλοῖα.
Ἀλληλοῖα. Ἀλληλοῖα. Ἰησοῦς
Πιχριστος Ποτρο ἵτε πῶου αϑτωνϑ
έβουθεν νηεθωουτ.

Φαι έρε πῶου εριπρεπιναϑ νεμ
Πεϑιωτ ἵαγαθος νεμ Πιπνευμα
εθουαβ ιςχεν τῆου νεμ ψα ένεθ.

Χε εῖμαρωντ ἵχε Φιωτ νεμ
Πωηρι: νεμ Πιπνευμα εθουαβ:
† τριας ετχικ έβου: τενουωϑ
ὑμος τεντῶου νας.

And they also laid Him
in the tomb according to the
prophecies and on the third
day Christ rose from the
dead.

Alleluia. Alleluia.
Alleluia. Alleluia. Jesus
Christ, the King of Glory,
has risen from the dead.

This is He to Whom the
Glory is due, with His
Good Father and the Holy
Spirit, now and forever.

Blessed be the Father
and the Son and the Holy
Spirit, the perfect Trinity.
We worship Him and
glorify Him.

وأيضاً وضعوه في القبر. حسب
الأخبار النبوية. وفي اليوم الثالث
قام المسيح من الأموات.

هلليويا. هلليويا. هلليويا.
هلليويا. يسوع المسيح ملك
المجد قام من بين الأموات.

هذا الذي تليق به الكرامة مع أبيه
الصالح والروح القدس من الآن
وإلى الأبد.

مبارك الآب والابن والروح
القدس الثالوث الكامل، نسجد له
ونمجده.