

LESSON 3

ح هَاءُ AND ن نُون. THE SUKŪN SIGN

ح (ḥā'). It is another Arabic sound which non-Arabs may find difficult to produce. Even non-Arab Muslims familiar with Qur'anic sounds produce it like English *h*. It is a strong guttural ḥ pronounced with a strong and sustained expulsion of air from the chest. Ziadeh and Winder (*An Introduction to Modern Arabic*) suggest that the sound may be mastered by realizing that it is similar to a stage whisper, but formed farther back. Another suggestion is to whisper 'Hey you!' as loud as you can.

In the English script this sound is usually represented by putting a dot under *h*, thus ḥ.

ح is written like ح and ح̣. The only difference is that ح has no dot.

Observe the following combinations:

jb	ج ب	ب	ج
khb	خ ب	ب	خ
hb	ح ب	ب	ح

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ḥm	حم	م	ح
ḥq	حق	ق	ح
ḥl	حل	ل	ح

ن (*nūn*). It is pronounced like English *n*. The initial and the medial forms of ن are similar to those of ب. The difference between the initial and medial forms of ب and ن is that the dot of ب is placed below the tooth and the dot of ن is placed above the tooth.

Observe the following combinations:

bm	بم	م	ب
nm	نم	م	ن
bq	بق	ق	ب
nq	نق	ق	ن
jns	جنس	س	ج
ḥbs	حبس	ب	ح
ḥsn	حسن	ن	ح
lbn	لبن	ب	ل

THE SUKŪN SIGN

In Arabic a letter is said to be either 'moving' or 'resting'. A letter is resting if it cannot open a syllable. The sign of resting consists of a small un-

closed circle ^ placed above a letter. A closed circle is used often in Near Eastern and Maghribī scripts. This sign is called *sukūn* and it indicates the absence of a vowel after a consonant. The letter with the *sukūn* sign is called *sākin*.

Observe the following combinations and then learn these words:

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|--|-------|------|----|----|
| 1. Off, from, out of, away | (‘an) | عَنْ | نْ | عَ |
| 2. Who, whosoever, who?
Whom, whomsoever, whom? | (man) | مَنْ | نْ | مَ |
| 3. Of, some, some of,
belonging to, from | (min) | مِنْ | نْ | مِ |
| 4. Not, not yet | (lam) | لَمْ | نْ | لَ |
| 5. No, by no means | (lan) | لَنْ | نْ | لَ |

ILLUSTRATIVE TEXT

- | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------|----|----|----|
| 1. to shave | (ḥalaqa) | حَلَقَ | قَ | لَ | حَ |
| 2. to reach | (laḥiqa) | لَحِقَ | قَ | حَ | لَ |
| 3. to appear | (najama) | نَجَمَ | مَ | جَ | نَ |
| 4. to abrogate | (nasakha) | نَسَخَ | خَ | سَ | نَ |
| 5. to be content | (qani‘a) | تَنِعَ | عَ | نَ | قَ |
| 6. to call aloud | (naqa‘a) | نَقَعَ | عَ | قَ | نَ |
| 7. to carry | (ḥamala) | حَمَلَ | لَ | مَ | حَ |
| 8. to dislike | (naqama) | نَقَمَ | مَ | قَ | نَ |

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All the above words are verbs. Now note the following two words, for while the first one is a verb, the second word with a *sukūn* on م is an affirmative particle.

9. to live in comfort (na^ʿama) and luxury نَ عَ مَ نَعَمَ

10. yes! yes indeed! (na^ʿam) نَ عَ مٌ نَعَمَ

PRACTICE TEXT 2

1. to incline جَنَحَ 5. to imagine حَسِبَ

2. to restrain حَبَسَ 6. to efface, blot out مَحَقَ

3. to roll onwards سَبَحَ 7. to stop, prevent, prohibit مَنَعَ

4. to snatch away from سَلَبَ 8. to curse لَعَنَ

9. to abuse سَلَقَ

نَسَاخَ

NASAKHA