Lesson 4 Introduction to Verbs (al-fi’l)

Recap

You should have set up your computer with the Arabic language so that you can type arabic letters into the browser or MS Word document. Find the root words and meanings of the following words from the dictionary (what kind of words are they?).

الْحَمْدُ

الْعَالَمِينَ

مَالِكِ

الدِّينِ

الصِّرَاطَ

الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

الْمَغْضُوبِ

نَعْبُدُ

نَسْتَعِينُ

أَنْعَمْتَ

Answers

In the dictionary, the first entry is the verb (fi’l) in the perfect (past) tense of the root word (base stem) if it exists, followed by a transliteration of how it’s pronounced (whether it is a fatha, kasra or dhomma for each letter). It is followed by the vowel of the imperfect (present/future) and in parentheses the verbal noun

حَمِدَ

Hamida, he praised, from this we get

محمد

Which means the praised one

1 عَلِمَ

‘Alima, it has a raised number that tells us there is an Arabic homonym for that word. In English, homonyms are words that are spelled the same but mean differently. E.g. I lie down vs I lied to you. In Arabic, homonyms are words that are spelled slightly differently and mean differently.

‘Alima means he knew, he informed, he learned, etc. From this root word, we get ‘ilm, which means knowledge, which is a different ism called a masdar (a verbal noun-an abstract noun derived from a verb, not the same as an infinitive – to learn- and more like a gerund - learning, in English)

عِلْمٌ

Its homonym is

عَالَمٌ

Which is an ism that means the world, and the word

العالمين

Inhabitants of the world

 مَلَكَ

Which means he took possession, he acquired, he possessed, he owned, he ruled, he exercised power. The imperfect verb is imliku, and there are three masdar

Malk (possession) , mulk (kingdom, rule) and milk (property)

From these concepts we get two versions, Maalik (owner), malik (king)

Addeen

دين

دَانَ

He borrowed, he owed

He obeyed, he submitted

دَيْنٌ

Debt, liability, obligation, payback

Yaumiddeen – day of payback, day of judgment

All the listing in the dictionary starts with a verb if it exists

Al-Fi’lu – All words that indicates something that happened at a specific time

It is divided according to its conjugation (saraf) and time of occurrence into the past (perfect) ماض from مضي that means, done, passed, and present/future (imperfect) مضارِعٌ , and command أمرٌ

We won’t cover saraf (whole other topic), but as far as nahwu, fi’l are divided into two kinds, fixed (the end vowel does not change) or declinable/changeable (the end vowel does not change)

All fi’l madi and amr, do not change (always mabni) regardless of where they are placed in the sentence

Fi’l mudari’ changes its vowel ending depending on where its placed e.g. fatha, sukun

Most fi’l mudari’ starts with , ya, ta, nun, hamza

Every fi’l is a sentence on its own – it has an inside doer

كتب

He wrote.

كتبتْ

She wrote

يَكْتُبُ

He is writing (still writing)

تكْتُبُ

She is writing

Kataba, katabat – fi’l mudari’ changeable He wrote, she wrote

F’il in Surah Fatihah

Na’budu – Mudari’ starts with nun, changeable – e.g. add harf, lan, changes it to lanna’buda

Hidden doer – “We” “We worship” is a complete sentence.

We will always worship Allah, it is never complete, it is continuous

Root word – ‘abada

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We find another kind fi’l – command ‘ubudu (all of you worship)

‘Ala abdina – On our slaves – verbal noun

Ta’budu – more mudari’ starts with ta

(3:64) Mudarri’ Changes it’s end A’lla na’buda

Page 2 (5:60) Madhi “They worshipped” mabni ala fatha

Page 5 (16:35) “What we worshipped” mabni ala sukun

We will be worthy of Allah’s help if we enslave ourselves to Allah. Purpose is to become a slave. We don’t ask for help first. This is very different from our attitude towards religion. Religion for most people is to ask from God what you wish.

Nasta’in – another mudari’ – always asking for help from Allah

Istia’nah – specific word for help. Example of asking help to change your flat tire. Are you going to sit in your seat and just watch them? Ask for help without making any effort. Istianah is help after exhausting yourself. You started the effort. If you don’t start the effort, you don’t deserve to ask for help. Who gets the help of Allah?

Two extreme – Allah does everything – everything is done by Allah. The other extreme – material – everything is because I did everything, I, I, What Allah?

Islam balances both. Allah is asking us for our best efforts, results is always in the Hands of Allah. Allah does not give results if you don’t make any effort. Because you make the effort, help will come from Allah. You give me your best effort and I will give you results. We never get frustrated or rely on results. We rely on efforts.

Ihdina sirat al mustaqeem – Command or rather (request) fi’l

We need help for everything, so there is no mention of what kind of help we need. But our most desperate need is guidance. We need it again, and again, and again. Allah will give us everything and help us without asking. The one thing He will not give you without you asking for it, is guidance.

We cannot pass this down to our children. They have to ask for it. If we don’t give our children the love for guidance, they will not ask for guidance. Guidance is NOT cheap. Guidance is not even found in memorization. It comes from Allah and only after we ask for it.

An’amta – naeem – favored, blessed “you blessed”. Not the one you’re favoring right now. You ask for advice from people who have graduated, not your classmates.

Danger of relying on living personalities. Quran is full of stories of good examples of people, because we asked for guidance. Every single story is applicable to us till the day of judgement. If we are not practicing, following, the examples of those stories, we are refusing guidance.