



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern USA  
St. Mary & St. Mina Coptic Orthodox Church  
2930 CR 193, Clearwater, FL 33759

# The Coptic Language

# Introduction

THE END

# ଶ୍ରୀ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ଜ୍ଞାନପାତ୍ର

Father Kyrillos Makar

# Notes

1. The Coptic language is described by Professor Rodolphe Kasser of the University of Geneva, Switzerland as "**one of the most beautiful, most cleverly structured and most musical in the world**" \*
2. These lessons are designed to teach some introductory basic principles of the "Bohairic" Coptic Dialect which is used by the church in its liturgical services.
3. The pronunciation is the traditional pronunciation that is used by the Church as well as the few families who use Coptic as their daily language.
4. There are 32 letters in the Coptic alphabet. The first 25 are derived from the Greek letters that have their origin in the Egyptian Hieroglyphic script, the last 7 letters are directly derived from the Egyptian Demotic Script.

\* Kasser, R., *The Coptic Language(s)*, The Coptic Encyclopedia, Vol. 8, Atiya, A.S., ed., Macmillan Publishing Co., NY, 1991, Page 145.

# LECTURE # 1

## The Egyptian Alphabets; Their relationship to other alphabets

### Egyptian Contributions to the development of civilization:

The contributions to civilization made by Egypt are best described by Dr. Leonard H. Lesko who wrote<sup>1</sup>: "The ancient Egyptians made outstanding contributions to the development of civilization. They created the world's first national government, basic forms of arithmetic, and a 365-day calendar. They invented a form of picture writing called Hieroglyphics. They also invented papyrus, a paperlike writing material made from the stems of papyrus plants. The Egyptians developed one of the first religions to emphasize life after death. They built great cities in which many skilled architects, doctors, engineers, painters, and sculptors worked. The best known achievements of ancient Egypt, however, are the pyramids they built as tombs for their rulers. The most famous pyramids stand at Giza. These gigantic stone structures - marvels of architecture and engineering skills - have been preserved by the dry climate for about 4500 years. They serve as spectacular reminders of the glory of ancient Egypt."

The rapid development of their writing system was facilitated by their discovery of methods to make paper and ink. Walter A. Fairservis, Jr.<sup>2</sup> states that "One of the most important contributions made by ancient Egypt was papermaking. Paper was made from the papyrus plant that grows abundantly in the marches of the Nile Valley. Before the Egyptians invented paper, writing was done on clay tablets, which crumble, or on stone, which is heavy and hard to carve. Unlike the rest of the ancient world, the Egyptians required only a brush and some ink, and they could easily carry these materials anywhere they went." Donald Jackson also affirms<sup>3</sup> that "Indeed the marriage of liquid ink, pen and paper first brought about by the Egyptians was such a revolutionary step that it is still the fundamental basis of most handwritten communication today."

### Egyptian Alphabets as the Ultimate Source of the Modern Western Alphabet:

The Egyptians developed the Hieroglyphic Writing around 3000 BC<sup>4</sup>. It consisted originally of signs that stood for words or ideas, but gradually each sign stood for a syllable or a sound. Hieratic, which is a simplified cursive form of the hieroglyphic, was soon developed by Egyptian scribes who used it for both religious and nonreligious purposes<sup>5</sup>. Around 700 BC

Demotic writing was developed. This was simpler and faster to write than the hieratic. The scribes used it for correspondence and record keeping<sup>5</sup>.

Around 1500 BC, the Semites developed an alphabet which is based on the Egyptian hieroglyphic system<sup>4,6,7</sup>. The Phoenicians, one of the Semitic peoples perfected an alphabet around 1000 BC. The Greek alphabet, which is the progenitor of Roman (Latin) letters<sup>4,6</sup> was directly derived from the Phoenician alphabet<sup>4,6,7,8</sup>, The Greeks not only took the forms of letters, they also took over some Phoenician names for the letters. The first letter of the Phoenician alphabet, א, its name is aleph, meaning ox, became α, or alpha in Greek. The second letter, ב, or beth, meaning house, became β, or beta in Greek<sup>4</sup>.

Based on the above-mentioned facts, the English alphabet of today can be traced back to the sign writing of ancient Egypt. Barbara Mertz states that: "*The birds and the bees of the ancient Egyptian script may have a more direct relationship to our own alphabet than we realize*"<sup>9</sup>. Davies<sup>10</sup> cites a quote by Gardiner describing this observation: "*The hieroglyphs lives on though in transmuted form within our own alphabet*". Compton's Encyclopedia<sup>6</sup> states that: "*The Latin Alphabet is a development from the Greek alphabet. The Greek alphabet, in turn, is an adaptation of a writing system which was developed among the Semites of Syria about 1500 BC. Outwardly, this first Semite writing seems to be an original and individual creation.. Its principals however, are certainly based on the Egyptian word-syllabic writing*". Marianne Cooley<sup>4</sup> states that "*The English alphabet developed from a number of early writing systems, beginning with the sign writing of Ancient Egypt*". In the same reference<sup>4</sup>, she shows, in a table form, the development of each letter starting with the Egyptian (about 3000 BC) followed by Semitic (1500 BC) followed by Phoenician (about 1000 BC) followed by Greek (about 600 BC) followed by Roman (114 AD) and finally the modern alphabet. Paul Johnson, in his book *The Civilization of Ancient Egypt*<sup>11</sup>, succinctly summarizes the development of modern Western Alphabet from the ancient Egyptian Alphabet in the following: "*The Egyptians mined at this Sinai site (the ancient turquoise mines) both during the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom. During the reign of Ammenemes III, around 1800 BC, Semitic workers were used at this site. One of them, evidently a man of creative ingenuity, became familiar with Egyptian hieroglyphic writing and determined to adapt it to his native Canaanite language, then unwritten. His stroke of genius was to select the alphabetic signs from the hieroglyphs, rejecting the consonantal groups and the ideograms. The new script survived and gradually spread north through Palestine and Syria, acquiring cursive characteristics in the process. In northern Syria, near the ancient port of Ras Shamra, it took on a cuneiform style - that is, it was adapted to the writing materials of the area, tablets and stylus. This Ras*

*Shamra script, ancient Ugaritic, has no other connection with Sumerian or Babylonian cuneiform. It is merely a modified form of the Canaanite-Egyptian alphabetic script. It was gradually adopted by the entire region, in various forms, and above all by the Phoenicians, who had an alphabet of twenty-eight letters. In the ninth century BC, the Greeks took over the Phoenician alphabet more or less as they found it, retaining even the names of the letters. They reversed the direction of the script from right-to-left to left-to-right, but the really important change they introduced, made essential by the structure of their own non-semitic tongue, was the vowel-sign. They switched the signs for six Canaanite consonants not used in Greek to vowels, and thus gave the world the structure of the alphabet more or less as we have it today. The ultimate source of the Western alphabet, therefore, is ancient Egypt<sup>11</sup>.*

The Microsoft Encarta 96 Encyclopedia<sup>12</sup> traces back the origin of several English letters to their hieroglyphic origin. For example, the letter "A" is traced back to the Egyptian hieroglyph of an eagle, the letter "B" from the hieroglyph for "crane", etc.

### **The Development of the Coptic Alphabet:**

#### **A. The origin of the word "Coptic":**

The words "Copt, Coptic" as well as the words "Egypt, Egyptian" have the same origin; and that is the old Egyptian words describing Egypt as "*E-KA-Ptah*" meaning *the House of the Spirit of Ptah*. (*E* means *House*; *Ka* means *Spirit*; and *Ptah* is *one of the famous Gods of Old Egypt*). Therefore, the words "Coptic" and "Egyptian" are linguistically one and the same word.

#### **B. The origin of the Coptic Alphabet:**

The present 32 letters of the Coptic Alphabet are derived from two sources; The first 25 letters are modified from the Greek alphabet (table 1); *it should be remembered that the origin of these Greek letters can be traced back to the old Egyptian letters*<sup>4</sup>. whereas the last 7 letters are a modification from Demotic letters (table 2)<sup>13</sup>.

#### **C. The contribution of the Coptic Alphabet to the Russian Alphabets:**

The current Alphabet of the Russian Language is known as the Cyrillic Alphabet. It was invented by Saint Cyril (826 - 869 AD) and Saint Methodius (815 - 884 AD), two Greek brothers who were missionaries to Russia during the 9th Century. They knew Coptic and they introduced, along with the Greek letters, Coptic letters such as ϩ (written as III) into the Russian Alphabet that is still in use in Russia today<sup>14</sup>.

#### **D. The Greek words in the Coptic Liturgy and the Coptic Language in general:**

In the first few centuries of Christianity in Egypt, the Greek language was the cultural language of the world, in much the same way as the English language these days. Greek was always the language used in international councils (Ecumenical councils). Many of the Coptic Church fathers e.g. Saint Athanasius, our 20th Pope, wrote mainly in Greek because, at that time, this is how people everywhere in the world would understand. However, many other Church fathers wrote in Coptic. Many Egyptians, especially in Alexandria, spoke Greek very fluently, in addition to Egyptian (Coptic) their mother tongue.

When Saint Mark came to Egypt and started his ministry there, Greek was the language that Saint Mark used and it was the language of the Liturgy that He handed down to his successors. When the Liturgy was later translated from Greek to Egyptian (Coptic), the Church kept some Greek words and expressions, and the Copts were very familiar with the meaning of these words. However, it is very important to remember that over 90% of the Divine Liturgy service and the Praises التسبحة is in Egyptian (Coptic), and less than 10% is in Greek.

The following are few examples of words of Greek origin that are used in our Liturgy:

1. Words of Greek origin that are used by the Coptic Church and many other churches. Actually these words are now part of many languages, including the Coptic as well as the English language:

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Word	pronounced	Meaning
ἀποστόλος	Apostolos	Apostle
μαρτύρος	Marteeros	Martyr
ἄγγελος	Angelos	Angel
διάκονος	Thiyakon	Deacon
καθολική	Katholikee	Catholic
ορθοδοξος	Orthodoxos	Orthodox

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## 2. Greek words that are sometimes used but have Coptic equivalents

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Greek Word		Coptic Equivalent		Meaning
θεος	(Theos)	ፈኖઉተ	(Efnouti)	God
θεοτόκος	(Theotokos)	ጨፍኖઉተ	(Masnouti)	Mother of God
ἄγιος	(Agyos)	ቅዬዕወንፈል	(Fee-eth-owab)	Saint (masculine)
ἄγια	(Agiya)	ቁዬዕወንፈል	(Thee-eth-owab)	Saint (feminine)
εὐχή	(Evkee)	ቈለዕላ	(Eshleel)	Prayer
ἀνέστη	(Anesti)	ፈጥዎኑ	(aftonf)	is risen
ἀληθώς	(Aleethos)	ከዚ በሆነውም	(khen oumethmee)	Truly

## 3. Traditionally, there are few hymns that are usually sung in Greek,

አዎችሳ ፌዴራሪ	(Thoksa Patri)
አገዮስ ይዥዕስ	(Agyos o-The-os)
እክርስቶስ አነስተ	(Ekhristos Anestee)

But the majority of Church hymns are in Coptic e.g.

ከዚ ቁጥን	(Khen-efran)
ፖዕሮ	(Epouro)
ታይሣዕያ	(Tai-shouri)

It should be remembered that the Coptic Language represents the final development of the Egyptian language. Cyrus Gordon, in his book, "Forgotten Scripts", states that: "The Coptic Church still preserves the native Egyptian language written in Greek characters, so that we have an unbroken tradition of Egyptian texts spanning about five thousand years"<sup>15</sup>. As a matter of fact, the Coptic language was the real key to the deciphering of the hieroglyphic and Demotic scripts by Champollion<sup>16, 17</sup>. As a French teenager living in Grenoble, France, Champollion dreamed of being the one who would unlock the secrets of the Rosetta stone. He studied both ancient History and Coptic language. Christine Hobson in her book "*The World of the Pharaohs*"<sup>18</sup> describes Champollion as "A genius with a gift of languages, including Coptic which he mastered early, believing correctly, that it would be the key he would need one day to understand Egyptian". Later on, he used his knowledge of the Coptic language to decipher the hieroglyphic writings on Rosetta stone. This great accomplishment of Champollion widely opened the doors to the unlocking of the glorious mysteries of Pharaonic Egypt<sup>15, 16, 17</sup>.

**The importance of the Egyptian (Coptic) language.**

1. It represents the final stage of the development of the Egyptian tongue, and in the words of Cyrus Gordon<sup>15</sup>, we have "an unbroken tradition of Egyptian texts spanning about 5000 years". Coptic language was the spoken language in Egypt until the 11<sup>th</sup> Century when it was gradually replaced by Arabic. There are some historical records indicating that it was still the spoken language in some areas of Upper Egypt until the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>19</sup>.
2. It was the language that Jesus - as a baby visiting Egypt with Saint Mary and Saint Joseph - heard and spoke. Egypt was the only country Jesus visited outside his home country. Therefore, we feel that our old country and our language were blessed through this visit.
3. Although the Coptic language, at the present time, is no longer used by significant number of Egyptians, it still lives on in the hundreds of words in the Egyptian Arabic dialect spoken everyday in Egypt<sup>20</sup>.
4. The Bible was translated to the Coptic language around the second century by the Egyptian scholars of the theological School of Alexandria, who were very fluent in both Greek and Coptic. Therefore the Coptic translation is considered one of the most reliable and accurate translations available.
5. The original writings of several early Church fathers were in Coptic, e.g. the writings and teachings of Saint Antony, the first Christian monk in the world, and those of Saint Shenouda the archmandrite were all in the Coptic language<sup>21</sup>.

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بالأسكندرية سنة ١٦٨٦ ش ١٩٦٩ م

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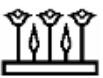
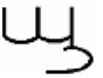
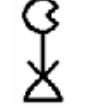
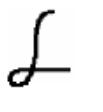
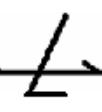
**Table 1**  
The 25 Coptic Letters adapted from Greek Letters

Coptic			Greek		
Letter	Cap	Small	Letter	Cap	Small
Alpha	Α	α	Alpha	Α	α
Veeta	Β	β	Beta	Β	β
Gamma	Γ	γ	Gamma	Γ	γ
Delta	Δ	δ	Delta	Δ	δ
Ei	Ε	ε	Epsilon	Ε	ε
soo	Ϛ	Ϛ	Not used as a Greek Letter		
Zeeta	Ϛ	Ϛ	Zeta	Ζ	ζ
Eeta	Η	η	Eta	Η	η
Theeta	Θ	θ	Theta	Θ	θ
Iota	Ι	ι	Iota	Ι	ι
Kappa	Κ	κ	Kappa	Κ	κ
Lavla	Λ	λ	Lambda	Λ	λ
Mei	Μ	μ	Mu	Μ	μ
Nei	Ν	ν	Nu	Ν	ν
Eksee	Ϛ	Ϛ	Xi	Ξ	ξ
O	Ο	ο	Omicron	Ο	ο
Pee	Π	π	Pi	Π	π
Ro	Ρ	ρ	Rho	Ρ	ρ
Seema	Ϲ	ϲ	Sigma	Σ	σ, ζ
Tav	Ͳ	Ͳ	Tau	Τ	τ
Epsilon	Ͳ	Ͳ	Upsilon	Υ	υ
Fei	Φ	Φ	Phi	Φ	ϕ
Kei	Χ	χ	Chi	Χ	χ
Epsee	Ψ	Ψ	Psi	Ψ	ψ
OO	Ω	ω	Omega	Ω	ω

Note that most Coptic letters are written in a somewhat different  
way than the corresponding Greek Letters.

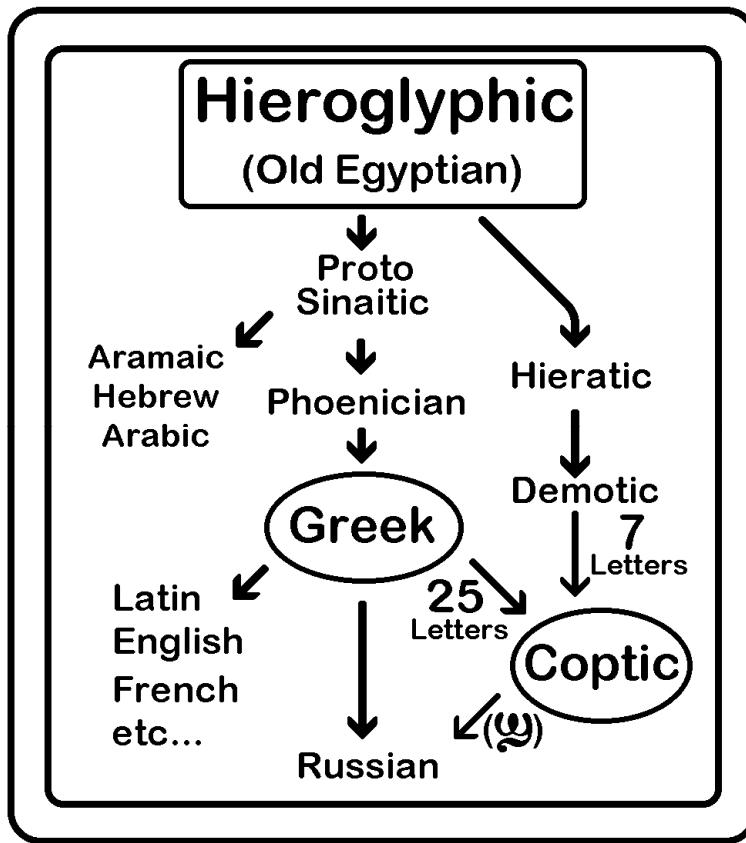
Note also that the Coptic names of the letters are in many cases different from the Greek names

Table 2  
Coptic Letters derived directly from  
older Egyptian Scripts

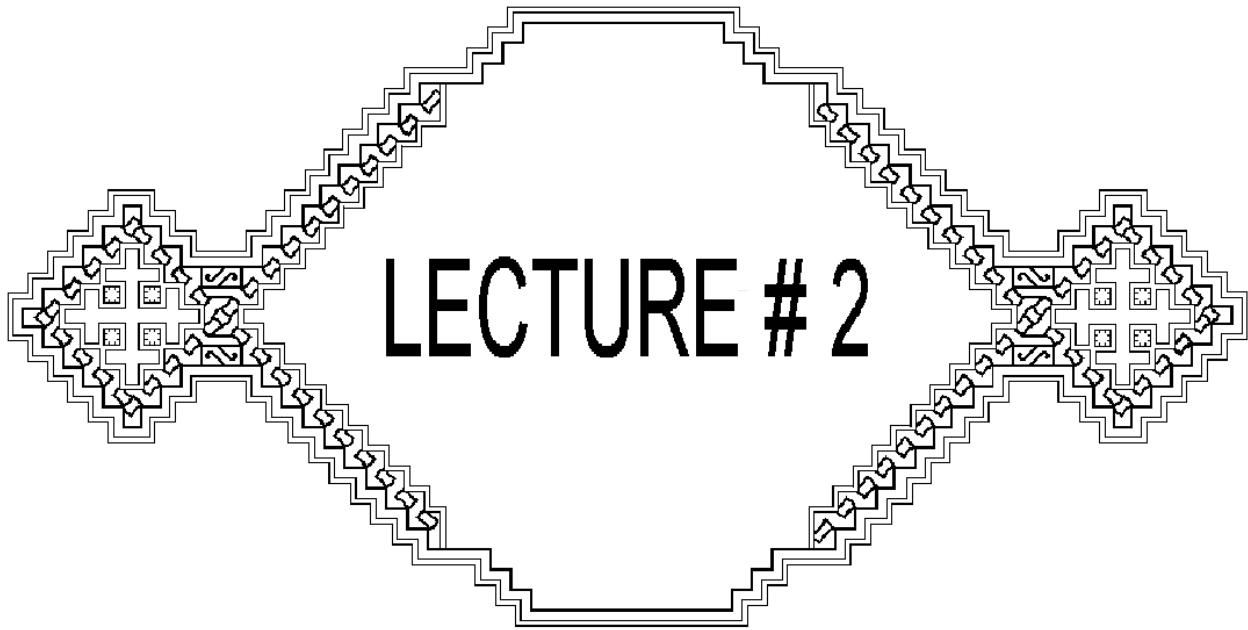
Letter	older Scripts			Coptic	
	Hiero-glyphic	Hieratic	Demotic	Cap	Small
<i>Shai</i>					
<i>Fai</i>					
<i>Khai</i>					
<i>Hori</i>					
<i>Ganga</i>					
<i>Cheema</i>					
<i>Tee</i>					

**Table 3. Summary of the  
Names and Pronunciation of the Coptic Alphabet**

Letter	pronunciation		
Alpha	Α	α	A as in <u>father</u> , or as in <u>fan</u>
Veeta	Β	β	V, B based on position in the word
Gamma	Γ	γ	G, N, GH based on position in the word
Delta	Δ	δ	TH, D TH as in <u>then</u> , (D in names)
Ei	Ε	ε	E as in <u>pen</u> , or as <u>rain</u>
Soo	Ϛ	Ϛ	it is the numeral 6
Zeeta	Ϛ	Ϛ	Z as in <u>zebra</u>
Eeta	Ϛ	Ϛ	EE as in <u>meet</u>
Theeta	Ϛ	Ϛ	TH as in <u>think</u>
Iota	Ϛ	Ϛ	I,Y based on position in the word
Kappa	Ϛ	Ϛ	K as in <u>cook</u>
Lavla	Ϛ	Ϛ	L as in <u>look</u>
Mei	Ϛ	Ϛ	M as in <u>mother</u>
Nei	Ϛ	Ϛ	N as in <u>nancy</u>
Eksee	Ϛ	Ϛ	X as in <u>box</u>
O	Ϛ	Ϛ	O (Short) as in British <u>not</u>
Pee	Ϛ	Ϛ	P as in <u>Peter</u>
Ro	Ϛ	Ϛ	R as in <u>room</u>
Seema	Ϛ	Ϛ	S, Z based on position in the word
Tav	Ϛ	Ϛ	T as in <u>take</u>
Epsilon	Ϛ	Ϛ	V, I, O based on position in the word
Fei	Ϛ	Ϛ	F as in <u>fan</u>
Kei	Ϛ	Ϛ	K, SH, KH based on position in the word
Epsee	Ϛ	Ϛ	PS both p and s are pronounced
Oo	Ϛ	Ϛ	O(Long) as in <u>throw</u>
Shai	Ϛ	Ϛ	SH as in <u>shake</u>
Fai	Ϛ	Ϛ	F as in <u>fan</u>
Khai	Ϛ	Ϛ	KH as in Arabic <u>Kh</u>
Hori	Ϛ	Ϛ	H as in <u>house</u>
Ganga	Ϛ	Ϛ	J, G based on position in the word
Cheema	Ϛ	Ϛ	CH as in <u>Church</u>
Tee	Ϛ	Ϛ	TEE as in <u>tea</u>
Jinkim	Ϛ	Ϛ	Makes the letter a Separate syllable
	-	-	



**Figure 1**  
**A flow chart showing the development**  
**of several alphabets from**  
**the Egyptian Hieroglyphic Script**



# LECTURE #2

## 1. Consonant Letters

**N** (n)

**q** (f)

**p** (r)

**T** (t)

**z** (h)

**Z** (z)

**K** (k)

**X** (g or J)

## 2. Vowel Sounds

**A** (a)

**E** (ai)

**I** (i)

**H** (ee)

**O** (o)

**W** (oo)

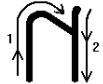
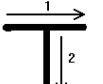
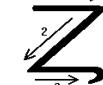
**O'** (ou)

Jinkim



A little slash on top of letters to make them pronounced as "separate syllables".

# 1. Consonant Letters

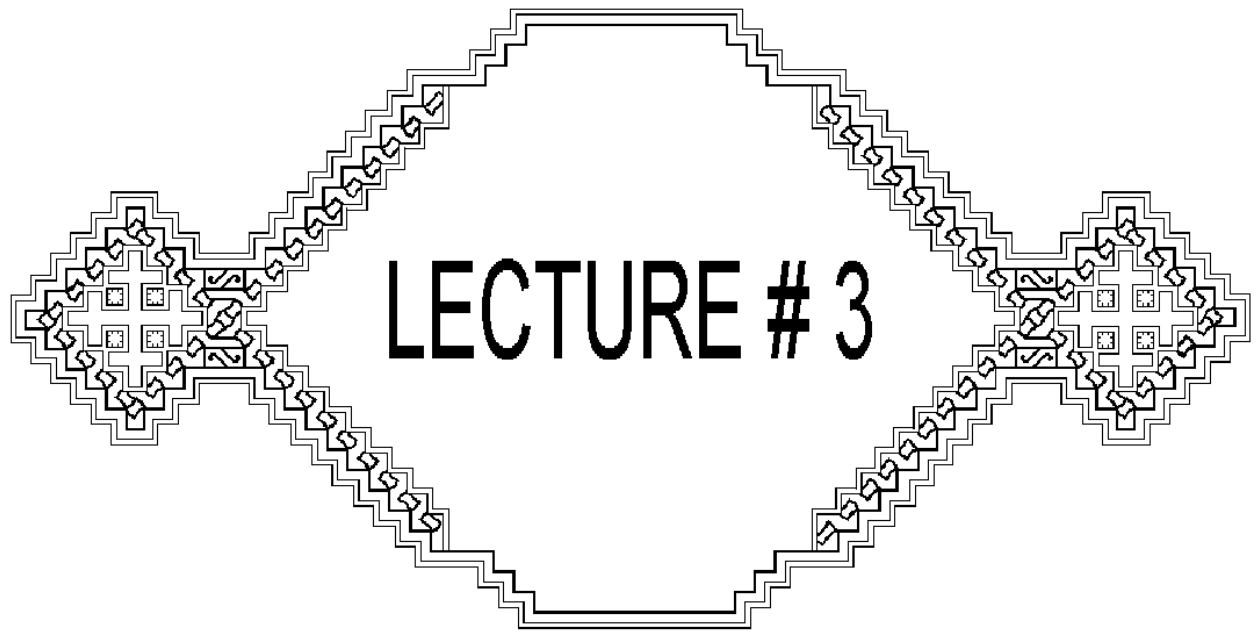
Letter	Name	Pronunciation	How to write it
<b>N</b>	<b>Nei</b>	<b>N</b> (as in <u>No</u> )	
<b>q</b>	<b>Fay</b>	<b>F</b> (as in <u>Fish</u> )	
<b>p</b>	<b>Ro</b>	<b>R</b> (as in <u>Room</u> )	
<b>T</b>	<b>Tav</b>	<b>T</b> (as in <u>Take</u> )	
<b>z</b>	<b>Hori</b>	<b>H</b> (as in <u>House</u> )	
<b>K</b>	<b>Kappa</b>	<b>K</b> (as in <u>cook</u> )	
<b>Z</b>	<b>Zeeta</b>	<b>Z</b> (as in <u>Zone</u> )	
<b>X</b>	<b>Ganga</b>	<b>J</b> (as in <u>Jim</u> ) <b>G</b> If followed by e, i, u (as in <u>Go</u> ) all other situations.	

## 2. Vowel Sounds

Vowel (s)	Name	Pronunciation	How to write it
Ճ	Alpha	A (as in Father) (or as in Fan)	
Ե	Eyy	E (as in Rain) (or as in Pen)	
Ի	yota	I Or Y (as in yellow) if followed or preceded by another vowel	
Է	Eeta	EE (as in Meet)	
Օ	O	Short O (as in not)	
Ո	OO	Long O (as in Broad) (open long O)	
ՈՒ		Long O (as in Broom) (closed long O) <b>Note:</b> When ՈՒ is followed by another vowel, it is pronounced as if there is a w between them e.g. ՈՒՃ is pronounced ուա ՈՒԻ is pronounced ուի ՈՒՀ is pronounced ուե	
՚	Jinkim	makes separate syllable (`n = en)	

Read and study the following words using the letters of Lesson 2

Word	<u>Approx.</u> pronunciation in English	Meaning
nofri	nofri	Hi or Good
na-nai	na-nai (as in rain)	Good
a-to-owwi	a-to-owwi	morning
rouhi	rouhi	evening
na-nai a-to-owwi	na-nai a-to-owwi	Good morning
na-nai rouhi	na-nai rouhi	Good evening
e-ho-oo	e-ho-oo	day
e-gorh	e-gorh	night
nofri e-ho-oo	nofri e-ho-oo	Good Day
nofri e-gorh	nofri e-gorh	Good Night
nay	nay (as in buy)	have mercy
nan	nan	upon us
jai	jai (as in rain)	Coptic conjunction article
jai nay nan	jai nay nan	have mercy upon us
ereenee	ereenee	peace
anzeeb	anzeeb	school
yoot	yoot (as in boat)	father
owwoh	owwoh	and
owway	owway	one
ef-too	ef-too	four
goot	goot	twenty
goot eftoo	goot eftoo	twenty four
oo-gay	oo-gay	By – So long



# LECTURE # 3

Consonant Letters (cont.)

ለ (l)

ሀ (m)

ኝ (x)

ኋ (p)

ኋ (s/z)

ሮ (f)

ወ (sh)

ኩ (kh)

ኩ (ch)

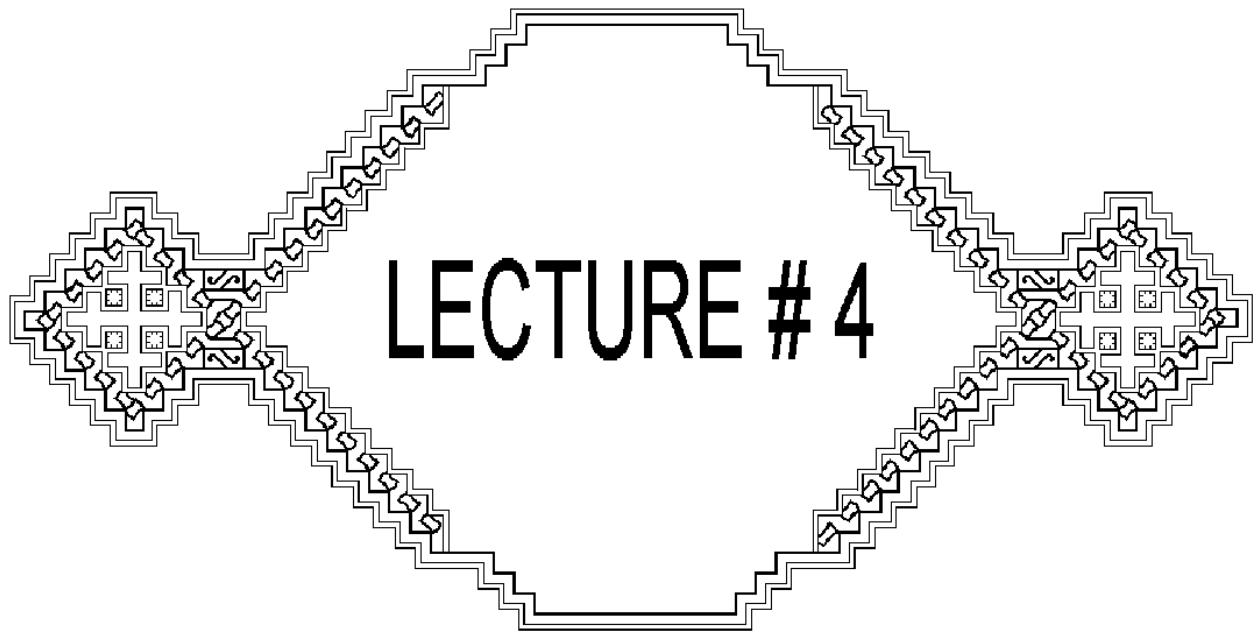
ተ (ti)

## Consonant Letters (cont.)

Letter	Name	Pronunciation	How to write it
Λ	Lavla	L (as in Look)	
Μ	Meyy	M (as in Mother)	
Ξ	Eksee	X (as in ax)	
Π	Pee	P (as in Pepper)	
Ϲ	Seema	Z (as in Zone) (in words of Greek origin when followed by the letter M) S (as in Same) In all other situations.	
Φ	Feyy	F (as in Fan)	
Ϣ	Shai	SH (as in Shake)	
Ӯ	Khai	Kh (as in German Achtung).	
ӻ	Cheema	Ch (as in Church)	
Ӿ	Tee	Tee (as in Tea)	

Read and study the following words using the letters of Lessons 2 & 3

Word	Approx. pronunciation in English	Meaning
πάσι	passi	to all
ἱρηνη πάσι (Gr. word)	ereenee passi	peace to all
ψληλ	eshleel	pray
ἀχπ	agp	hour
ἀχπια	agpia	Book of the hours
ψαι	shay (as in buy)	Feast, sunrise
Νοφρι ψαι	nofri shay	happy feast
πενιωτ	pen-yoat	our father
Νοφρι πενιωτ	nofri pen-yoat	Hi Abouna
Νοφρι ἐχωρε	nofri e-gorh	Good Night
ἕν	khain (as in rain)	in, by, through
ψραν	ef-ran	the name
ψιωτ	ef-yoat	the father
ἕν ψραν ἐψιωτ	khain ef-ran em-efyoat	In the name of the father
ναι	naim (as in rain)	and, with
ψηρι	sheeri	Son
ψερι	shairi (as in rain)	daughter
сон	Son (as in British hot)	brother
παсон	pa-son	my brother
сонаи	soani (as in boat)	sister
та-коани	ta-coani	my sister
еснав	esnav	two
шомт	shomt	three



# LECTURE # 4

## 1. Consonant Letters (cont.)

**Β** (b/v)      **Σ** (g/n/gh)      **Δ** (d/th)

**Θ** (th/t)      **Χ** (k/sh/kh)      **Ψ** (ps)

**Ϝ** (v / i / "o")

**Ϛ** (The numeral 6 – is not a letter)

## 2. Some grammatical notes

# 1. Some Consonant Letters (cont.)

Letter	Name	Pronunciation	How to write it
<b>ב</b>	<b>Veeta</b>	<b>V</b> (as in <u>v</u> ase) when followed by a vowel <b>B</b> (as in <u>b</u> aby) when it is the last letter of the word Note: If followed by a consonant, it is pronounced <b>B</b> <u>in most cases</u> . - The following are examples of words where b is followed by a consonant but pronounced <b>V</b> <b>אַבְבָּאָ</b> (ava) Bishop's title <b>תֹּוּבָּה</b> (tovh) ask, pray <b>אֶבְשִׁיר</b> (evshi) slumber <b>תְּבִתָּ</b> (tevt) fish	
<b>ס</b>	<b>Gamma</b>	G (as in <u>G</u> o) if followed by <b>כ, ה, ת, פ</b> N (as in <u>N</u> o) if followed by <b>ס, ק, צ, ח</b> <b>GH</b> (As in Arabic <b>جـ</b> ) in all other situations	
<b>ד</b>	<b>Delta</b>	<b>D</b> (as in <u>D</u> o) in proper names <b>Th</b> (as in <u>t</u> his) in all other cases	
<b>ת</b>	<b>Theeta</b>	<b>T</b> (as in <u>T</u> ake) if preceded by <b>כ, ו</b> <b>Th</b> (as in <u>T</u> hink) in all other cases	
<b>פ</b>	<b>Epsee</b>	<b>PS</b>	

Letter	Name	Pronunciation	How to write it
ꝝ	Keyy	<p><b>K</b> (as <u>cook</u>)  <b>In all Coptic words</b> (or in Greek words that borrowed into the Coptic language)  e.g. ꝝꝫꝫ (keemi) Egypt  ꝝꝩ (ko) put  ꝝꝩꝩ (evkee) ask, pray (sometimes pronounced evshee)  ꝝꝩꝩ (psikee) soul (sometimes pronounced psishee)</p> <p><b>SH</b> (as in <u>Shake</u>) in <b>Greek words</b> when followed by <b>Ε, Η, Ι</b> or <b>Ϋ</b>  e.g. ꝝεpe (shere) Hail</p> <p><b>KH</b> (as in German <u>Achtung</u>) in <b>Greek words</b> in other situations  e.g. ꝝιꝩꝩꝩꝩꝩ (pikhristos) Christ</p>	
ꝝ	Epsilon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>long o as in <u>room</u>  If preceded by o  (See Page 1 – 2)  as in ꝝꝩꝩꝩ, ꝝꝩꝩꝩ</li> <li>v as in <u>Vase</u> If preceded by <b>ѧ</b> or <b>ԑ</b>  as in <b>Ӗꝩѧ</b>, <b>ߡѧꝩѧ</b></li> <li>i as in <u>did</u>  in all other situations.  as in <b>ڰꝩꝩꝩ</b>, <b>ڸꝩꝩꝩ</b></li> </ol>	
Ꝼ	So-o	This is not a letter, It denotes the numeral 6.	

Read and study the following words using the letters of Lessons 2, 3 & 4

Word	Approx. pronunciation in English	Meaning
Ψαλμος	(Gr. word) psalmos	psalm
Δοξα	(Gr. word) thoksa (as in <u>them</u> )	glory
Δοξα πατρι	(Gr.) thoksa patri	glory to the father
μαν	mav	mother
Ταμαν	ta-mav	my mother
Φαι πε μηνα	fay (as in <u>buy</u> ) pe mina	This is mina
Θαι τε μαρια	<u>thay</u> te mariyya	This is mary
Παρθενος	(Gr. word) parthenos	virgin
Πικριστοс	pi-ekhristos	Christ
Αφτωνη	Af-tonf	is risen
Хайн оумечмехи	khain ou-methmee	truly
Φнотт	ef-nooti	God
πб оис	ep-choys	The Lord
πօռро	ep-ooro	The King
տօրք	ti-ooroa (as in <u>boat</u> )	The Queen
Хеми	keemi	Egypt
реинхеми	raim-en-keemi	Egyptian (Coptic)
реинамерика	raim-en-amerika	American
реинхристианос	raim-en-ekhristiyanos	Christian
αγγελοс	angelos (as in <u>go</u> )	angel

## Notes

### 1. Coptic Definite articles (equivalent to "the" in English)

#### 3 for singular masculine

πι	e.g. πιτοτ	the chair
ψ	e.g. ψιωτ	the father
π	e.g. πψηρι	the son

#### 3 for singular feminine

†	e.g. †παρθενος	the virgin
θ	e.g. θεαθ	the mother
†	e.g. †ψερι	the daughter

#### 2 for plural

νι	e.g. νιαστελοс	the angels
νεп	e.g. νεпψηри	the sons of God

## 2. How to say the numbers in Coptic

1	one	ⲟѡය	owway
2	two	Ѐѡѡ	esnav
3	three	ѡѡѡ	shomt
4	four	Ѐѡѡѡ	eftoo
5	five	Ѐѡѡѡѡ	etyoo
6	six	ѡѡѡѡѡ	so-oo
7	seven	ѡѡѡѡѡѡ	shashf
8	eight	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	eshmeen
9	nine	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	psit
10	ten	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	meet
11	eleven	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	meet owway
12	twelve	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ`ѡѡ	meet esnav
20	twenty	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	goot
21	twenty one	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	goot owway
24	twenty four	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	goot eftoo
30	thirty	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	map
40	forty	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	ehmai (as in <u>rain</u> )
50	fifty	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	taivi (as in <u>rain</u> )
60	sixty	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	sai (as in <u>rain</u> )
70	seventy	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	eshvai (as in <u>rain</u> )
80	eighty	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	khamnai (as in <u>rain</u> )
90	ninety	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	pistav
100	hundred	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	shai (as in <u>rain</u> )
1000	thousand	ѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡѡ	sho



**Je penyot**

**The Lord's Prayer**

أبانا الذي في السموات

չե պԵՆՈՎԱ ՇՏՅԵՆ ՆԻՎԻՈՎԻ ՄԱՐԵՎԴՈՎՅՈ ԽԵ ՊԵԿՐՃ  
**Je penyot et khen nifee-owwi mareftootovo enje pekran**

چي پنيوت إتخين نيفي اوی مارف طوفو إنجي پكران

أبانا الذي في السموات ليتقدس اسمك Our Father Who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name

ՄԱՐԵԸ ԽԵ ՏԵԿՄԵՏՈՎՐՈ ՊԵԴԵԽՆԱԿ ՄԱՐԵՎՄՈՎԱ

**Mares-ee enje tekmet-ooro petehnak maref shopi**

مارس اي إنجي تكمت أورو پتهناك مارف شويبي

ليأت ملكتك لتكن مشيئةك Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done

ՄՓՐԻՒ ՖԵՆ ՇՓԵ ՆԵՄ ՀՐՃԵՆ ՊԻԿԱՀԻ ՊԵՆՈՎԻԿ ԽԵ ԲԱԺ  
**Em-ef-reeti khen etfe nem hijen pikahi, pen-oyk ente rasti**

إمفرتي خين إنفي نيم هيچين پيكاهي بين أوبل إنتي راستي

كما في السماء كذلك على الأرض خبزنا الذي للغد On earth As it is in Heaven, Our daily Bread

ՄԻՎ ՆԱՆ ՄՓՈՕՎ ՕՎՈԶ ԽՃ ՆԻԵՏԵՐՈՆ ՆԱՆ ԵԲՈԼ

**Meef nan em-fo-oo, Owwoh ka nee-eteron nan evol**

ميف نان إمفوجوأ اووه كاني إتيرون نان إفول

أعطنا اليوم واغفر لنا ذنبنا Give us this day, and forgive us our trespasses

ՄՓՐԻՒ ՍՈՎՆ ԽԵ ԵԲՈԼ ՆՆԻԵՏԵ ՕՎՈՆ ԽԵ ԵՐՈՎՈՎ  
**em-ef-reeti hon entenko evol ennee-ete owwon entan ero-oo**

إمفرتي هون إنتين كو إفول إنتي إتي أوون إننان إروءو

كما نغفر نحن أيضاً للمذنبين إلينا as we forgive those who trespass against us

ՕՎՈԶ ՄՊԵՐԵՆՏԵՆ ԵՆՋՈՎՆ ԵՊԻՐՃՄՈԾ ՃԼՃԱ ՆԱՀՄԵՆ  
**Owwoh emper-enten ekhoon epirazmos, alla nahmen**

أووه إمبر إنتن إخون إبي رازموس لا ناهمين

ولاتدخلنا في تجربة لكن نجنا and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us

ԵԲՈԼՀԱ ՊԱՊԵԴԽՅՈՎ. ՖԵՆ ՊԻԽՐԻԾՈԾ ԻՆԾՈՎԾ ՊԵՆԲՈԻԾ  
**evol ha pi pet-ho-oo, khen pi-ekhristos Eesoos penchoys**

إفول ها بي پتهوو خين بي إخرستوس إيسوس بين شويس

من الشرير بال المسيح يسوع ربنا from the evil one, In Christ Jesus our Lord

ՀԵ ԹՈՒ ԴԵ ՄԱԵՏՈՎՐՈ ՆԵՄ ԴՀՈՎՆ ՆԵՄ ՊԱՅՈՎՆ ՖԱ ԵՆԵՀ ՃԱՀԻՆ  
**je thok te ti-met-ooro, nem ti-gom nem pi-o-oo sha eneh, Ameen**

جي ثوك تي مت أورو نيم تي جوم نيم بي أوأو شا إنيه آمين

لأن لك الملك والقوة والمجد إلى الأبد آمين for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever, Amen