Classical Syriac

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Chapter 9

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9.1. Demonstratives[1]

Demonstratives are words that are used to point to specific objects while, at the same time, distinguishing them from other objects. There are four demonstratives in English: "this," "that," "these," and "those." For example, in the phrase "I want to buy this book," the word "this" points to a specific book and distinguishes it from other books.

There are two types of demonstratives in Classical Syriac: near demonstratives and remote demonstratives. Near demonstratives are used to point to objects that are conceptually closer to the speaker (e.g. "this book" or "these books") while remote demonstratives are used to point to objects that are conceptually further away from the speaker (e.g. "that book" or "those books"). This distinction, however, is not always maintained. Near demonstratives in the plural ("these") can sometimes function like remote demonstratives ("those").

The following chart provides the forms for both near and remote demonstratives:

Table 9.1 – Demonstratives		
	Near Demonstratives	Remote Demonstratives
msg	ܗܳܢܳܐ (this)	ܗܰܘ (that)
fsg	ܗܳܕܶܐ (this)	ܗܳܝ (that)
mpl	ܗܳܠܶܝܢ (these)	ܗܳܢܽܘܢ (those)
fpl	ܗܳܠܶܝܢ (these)	ܗܳܢܶܝܢ (those)

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[1] Cf. Nöldeke §§226–30; Muraoka §§13,72 91; Duval §§173, 175, 307, 363; Mingana §§499–507; Brockelmann §§93–94.

In terms of usage, demonstratives have similar functions to the ones used for adjectives. When demonstratives are used attributively, they are referred to as **demonstrative adjectives**. When demonstratives are used in the form of an assertion, they are referred to as **demonstrative pronouns**. When demonstratives are used as substantives they are referred to as **substantival demonstratives**.

9.1.1. Demonstrative Adjectives (i.e. the Attributive Use)

Demonstrative adjectives agree with the noun they are modifying in gender and number and occupy the same grammatical slot as the noun they are describing. In other words, demonstrative adjectives point to a noun and distinguish it from other nouns but not in the form of an assertion. For example, in the sentence, "This man went to the bank," the word "this" is a demonstrative adjective. It points to the man and distinguishes the man from other men. Together with the word "man," it functions as the subject of the sentence.

Demonstrative adjectives can be used either before or after the noun they modify. Note the following examples:

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܡܪܚܡ ܐܢܐ ܥܠ ܟܢܫܐ ܗܢܐ.	I have compassion for this crowd. (Mark 8:2)
ܡܛܠ ܗܕܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܙܠܝ ܢܦܩ ܠܗ ܫܐܕܐ ܡܢ ܒܪܬܟܝ.	Because of this word [i.e. reply], the demon has gone out from your daughter. (Mark 7:29)
ܘܢܦܩ ܪܘܚܐ ܗܠܝܢ ܛܢܦܬܐ.	And these impure spirits went out. (Mark 5:13)
ܘܐܡܪ ܠܗܘ ܓܒܪܐ:	And he said to that man. (Mark 3:5)
ܐܢ ܓܝܪ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܥܠ ܢܦܫܗ ܬܬܦܠܓ. ܠܐ ܡܫܟܚܐ ܠܡܩܡ ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܗܝ.	For if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. (Mark 3:24)
ܘܗܘܐ ܒܝܘܡܬܐ ܗܢܘܢ	And it came about in those days... (Mark 1:9)

Demonstrative adjectives can sometimes be used as an equivalent to the definite article ("the"). In the Peshitta New Testament, this happens quite frequently when the underlying Greek uses the definite article to point to the noun. Note the following examples:

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܘܗܢܝܢ ܣܟܠܬܐ ܢܣܒ ܠܡܦܝܕܝܗܝܢ.	And the foolish ones took their lamps. (Matt 25:3)

| ܚܙܳܐ ܕܶܝܢ ܝܶܫܽܘܥ ܒܥܶܕ݂ ܗܰܝܡܳܢܽܘܬ݂ܗܘܿܢ. ܐܶܡܰܪ ܠܗܰܘ ܡܫܰܪܝܳܐ. | Now when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic… (Mark 2:5) |

This use should be distinguished from cases when 3msg and 3fsg independent personal pronouns are used like a definite article (see §6.1).

9.1.2. Demonstrative Pronouns (i.e. the Predicate Use)

Demonstrative pronouns are demonstratives that point to an object in the form of an assertion. For example, in the sentence, "This is the book," the word "this" is a demonstrative pronoun and distinguishes the book from other books. Demonstrative pronouns function as the subject of a clause and must agree with the object they are pointing to in gender and number. Only near demonstratives (i.e. this, these) can be used as demonstrative pronouns.

Demonstrative pronouns can be used in simple verbless clauses (i.e. clauses that do not indicate that the verb "to be" needs to be supplied). In most cases, however, they are used in verbless clauses with enclitic personal pronouns.

Msg and fsg demonstrative pronouns can be used with 3msg and 3fsg enclitic personal pronouns to mean "this is." When this happens, the demonstrative pronoun will have the same gender as the enclitic personal pronoun. When msg demonstratives are combined with the 3msg enclitic personal pronoun, they are sometimes combined to form a single word (ܗܳܢܰܘ).[2] However, they are frequently written as separate words in East Syriac. In both cases, whether written together or as two separate words, they are pronounced as a single word.

When fsg demonstratives are used with the 3fsg enclitic personal pronoun, they are written as separate words in both West Syriac and East Syriac. When these words are used together in West Syriac, the zlāmāʾ qašyāʾ becomes a zqāpāʾ (ܗܳܕ݂ܶܐ ܗܝ). In East Syriac, the zlāmāʾ qašyāʾ becomes a ptāḥāʾ. Since this textbook follows the forms used in East Syriac, the combinations will appear as follows:

Table 9.2 – Near Demonstratives with 3msg/fsg Enclitic Personal Pronouns			
	Near Demonstratives	Enclitic Pronouns	Combination	Pronunciation
msg	ܗܳܢܳܐ (this)	ܗܘ (is)	ܗܳܢܳܐ ܗܘ (this is) or ܗܳܢܰܘ	*hānāw*
fsg	ܗܳܕ݂ܶܐ (this)	ܗܝ (is)	ܗܳܕ݂ܶܐ ܗܝ (this is)	*hādēy*

Note the following examples of how msg and fsg demonstrative pronouns are used:

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[2] In West Syriac, the second zqāpāʾ becomes a ptāḥāʾ (ܗܳܢܰܘ).

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܗܵܢܲܘ ܗܘ ܒܹܪܝ,	This is my son. (Mark. 9:7; Mosul Bible Mark. 9:6)
ܗܵܕܹܐ ܗ̄ܝ, ܐܵܬܵܐ ܩܲܕܡܵܝܬܵܐ ܕܲܥܒܲܕ ܝܼܫܘܿܥ ܒܩܵܛܢܹܐ ܕܲܓܠܝܼܠܵܐ.	This is the first sign that Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. (John 2:11)
ܥܢܵܐ ܝܼܫܘܿܥ ܘܐܸܡܲܪ ܠܗܘܿܢ: ܗܵܢܲܘ ܗܘ ܥܒܵܕܹܐ ܕܐܲܠܵܗܵܐ.	Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God…." (John 6:29)

Note the following examples of how plural demonstrative pronouns are used:

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܗܵܠܹܝܢ ܒ̈ܢܲܝ ܚܵܡ:	These are the sons of Ham. (Gen 10:20)
ܗܵܠܹܝܢ ܐܸܢܘܿܢ ܕܥܲܠ ܕܫܵܡܥܝܼܢ ܡܸܠܬܵܐ.	These are the ones who hear the word. (Mark 4:16)

9.1.3. Substantival Demonstratives

Like substantival adjectives, substantival demonstratives point to a particular entity without actually naming that entity. They must agree with the entity they are pointing to both in gender and number. In most cases they can be translated as *this one*, *this thing*, *this*, etc. In some cases, they can be translated using a personal pronoun (e.g. he, she, etc.). When referring to something abstract (e.g. an action that was performed in a previous sentence), feminine demonstratives are used. Note the following examples:

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܘܐܸܡܲܪ ܠܗܘܿܢ: ܗܵܢܵܐ ܡܵܢܵܐ ܡܸܬܚܲܫܒܼܝܼܢ ܐܢ̄ܬܘܿܢ ܗܵܠܹܝܢ ܒܠܸܒܟܘܿܢ.	And he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things in your heart?" (Mark 2:8)
ܘܡܸܬܚܲܙܲܪ ܗܘܵܐ. ܕܢܸܚܙܸܐ ܡܲܢܘ ܕܗܵܕܹܐ ܥܒܲܕ.	And he was looking to see who had done this. (Mark 5:32).
ܘܐܸܢ ܐܢܵܫ ܢܹܐܡܲܪ ܠܟܘܿܢ: ܡܵܢܵܐ ܥܵܒܕܝܼܢ ܐܢ̄ܬܘܿܢ ܗܵܕܹܐ.	And if anyone says to you, "Why are you doing this?" (Mark 11:3)
ܗܵܢܵܐ ܐܸܬܵܐ ܠܣܵܗܕܘܼܬܵܐ	This one (*or* he) came as a witness…. (John 1:7)
ܒܵܬܲܪ ܗܵܕܹܐ ܢܚܸܬ ܠܲܟܦܲܪܢܲܚܘܿܡ	After this, he went to Capernaum. (John 1:12)
ܗܵܠܹܝܢ ܒܒܹܝܬ ܥܲܢܝܵܐ ܗ̈ܘܲܝ.	These things happened in Bethany. (John 1:28)

| ܡܛܠ ܗܢܐ ܐܬܝܬ ܐܢܐ | I came because of this. (John 1:31) |
| ܘܐܢܐ ܚܙܝܬ ܘܐܣܗܕܬ ܕܗܢܐ ܗܘ ܒܪܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ. | And I have seen and I bear witness this one is the son of God. (John 1:34) |

Remote substantival demonstratives are frequently modified by a relative clause (e.g. the one who, the ones who, etc.). When this happens, the demonstrative should not be translated, "that one who" or "those ones who," but should be translated, "the one who," or "the ones who." This function is especially common with participles. Participles will be discussed in chapter 13. Note the following examples:

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܗܢܘܢ ܕܐܟܠܝܢ ܒܬܐ ܕܐܪܡܠܬܐ.	The ones [those ones] who devour the houses of widows. (Mark 12:40)
ܗܘ ܕܢܫܩ ܐܢܐ ܗܘܝܘ.	The one [that one] whom I kiss, it is he. (Mark 14:44)
ܚܕ ܕܝܢ ܡܢ ܗܢܘܢ ܕܩܝܡܝܢ ܫܡܛ ܣܝܦܐ.	But one of the ones [those ones] who were standing drew a sword. (Mark 14:47)
ܗܢܐ ܗܘ ܗܘ ܕܐܡܪܬ:	This is the one who said… (John 1:15)

9.2. Apposition[3]

Apposition is when two noun phrases (i.e. a noun, pronoun, or noun with all of its modifiers) stand side-by-side and refer to the same person, thing, or concept, with one of the noun phrases serving to further identify or explain the other noun phrase. For example, in the sentence, "The runner, a good friend of mine, came over for dinner," the words *the runner* and *a good friend of mine* stand in apposition to each other: both noun phrases refer to the same person and the words *a good friend of mine* serve to further identify who *the runner* is. An easy way to identify when two noun phrases stand in apposition to each other is to transform the two noun phrases into a sentence that equates the two using the verb *to be*. The sentence given above can be transformed to be, "The runner is a good friend of mine."

When two noun phrases stand in apposition to each other, the primary element is referred to as the **main noun phrase** while the secondary element, the element that further identifies or explains the noun phrase, is referred to as the **appositive**. In the sentence given above, *the runner* is the main noun phrase while *a good friend of mine* is the appositive.

Apposition is used quite frequently in Classical Syriac. Note the following examples (the appositives have been placed in bold):

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[3] Cf. Nöldeke §§212–13; Muraoka §95; Duval §364; Brockelmann §201.

Examples

Syriac	English	Explanation
ܪܫܐ ܕܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܪܗ ܕܕܘܝܕ.	The beginning of the gospel of Jesus, **the Messiah**, **the son of David**. (Mark 1:1)	The phrases, "the Messiah" and "the son of David," serve to further identify who Jesus is—Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus is the son of David.
ܚܙܐ ܠܫܡܥܘܢ ܘܠܐܢܕܪܐܘܤ ܐܚܘܗܝ.	He saw Simon and Andrew, **his brother**. (Mark 1:16)	The phrase, "his brother," serves to further identify who Andrew is—Andrew is the brother of Simon.
ܡܛܠ ܗܪܘܕܝܐ ܐܢܬܬܐ ܕܦܝܠܝܦܘܤ ܐܚܘܗܝ.	Because of Herodias, **the wife of Philip, his brother**. (Mark 6:17)	The phrase, "the wife of Philip," serves to further identify who Herodias is—Herodias was the wife of Philip. The phrase, "his brother," also serves to further identify who Philip is—Philip is the brother of Herod.

In some cases, the main noun phrase does not stand immediately next to the appositive. This happens when the normal word order of other elements in the sentence does not allow them to stand side-by-side in the sentence. When this happens, there is normally another indicator to let the reader know that the two noun phrases stand in apposition to each other. Note the following example:

Examples

Syriac	English	Explanation
ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܝܢ ܕܩܒܠܘܗܝ. ܝܗܒ ܠܗܘܢ ܫܘܠܛܢܐ ܕܒܢܝܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܢܗܘܘܢ. ܠܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܡܗܝܡܢܝܢ ܒܫܡܗ.	But the ones who received him—he gave **them** the power to become children of God, **the ones who believe in his name**. (John 1:12)	The phrase, "the ones who believe in his name," serves to further describe what the author means by the word "them"—they are the ones who believe in his name. Both the main noun phrase and the appositive are identified by the preposition ܠ at the beginning of the phrase.

9.3. Postpositive Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words that are used to join words, phrases, and sentences to each other. Common conjunctions in English include *and*, *but*, *therefore*, *however*, and *because*. Several

conjunctions have already been included in the vocabulary sections of previous chapters: ܘ (and), ܐܶܠܳܐ (but), ܟܰܕ (when, while, after), ܡܶܛܽܠ (because of), and ܡܶܛܽܠ ܕ (because). The focus of this section will be on postpositive conjunctions. **Postpositive conjunctions** are conjunctions that can never stand in the initial position of a clause. In many cases, postpositive conjunctions are found in the second position, though they may also be found further on in the clause. Classical Syriac has three postpositive conjunctions: ܓܶܝܪ, ܕܶܝܢ, and ܗܳܟܺܝܠ.

9.3.1. ܓܶܝܪ [4]

The conjunction ܓܶܝܪ is quite similar to the conjunction γάρ (*gar*, "for") in Greek. Both conjunctions are postpositive, both normally appear in the second position of the clause, both introduce a clause that provides grounds for something that was previously said ("for" or "because"), and both sound quite similar to each other. There is debate about whether ܓܶܝܪ was taken over directly from Greek or if it comes from an earlier Aramaic word. Regardless of which explanation is correct, it is clear that the conjunction ܓܶܝܪ has taken over the function of the conjunction γάρ (*gar*, "for") in Greek. Note the following examples:

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܘܡܶܬܬܰܡܗܺܝܢ ܗܘܰܘ ܥܰܠ ܝܽܘܠܦܳܢܶܗ. ܡܰܠܶܦ ܗܘܳܐ ܠܗܽܘܢ ܓܶܝܪ ܐܰܝܟ ܡܫܰܠܛܳܐ. ܘܠܳܐ ܐܰܝܟ ܣܳܦܪ̈ܰܝܗܽܘܢ.	And they were amazed at his teaching, for he was teaching them like one who has authority and not like the scribes. (Mark 1:22)
ܘܰܫܡܰܥ ܗܶܪܳܘܕܶܣ ܡܰܠܟܳܐ ܥܰܠ ܝܶܫܽܘܥ ܓܠܶܐ ܗܘܳܐ ܠܶܗ ܓܶܝܪ ܫܡܶܗ.	And King Herod heard about Jesus because his name had become known to him. (Mark 6:14)
ܫܒܰܩܬܽܘܢ ܓܶܝܪ ܦܽܘܩܕܳܢܳܐ ܕܰܐܠܳܗܳܐ. ܘܰܐܚܺܝܕܺܝܢ ܐܢ̱ܬܽܘܢ ܡܰܫܠܡܳܢܽܘܬܳܐ ܕܰܒܢܰܝ̈ܢܳܫܳܐ.	—because you have forsaken the commandment of God and you have held on to human tradition. (Mark 7:8)

9.3.2. ܕܶܝܢ [5]

The conjunction ܕܶܝܢ is also quite similar to a Greek conjunction, the conjunction δέ (*de*). Both words cannot be used at the beginning of a clause, both normally appear in the second position in the clause, both have similar meanings, and both sound quite similar to each other. Despite these similarities, however, the conjunction ܕܶܝܢ was not taken over from Greek but comes from the Aramaic conjunction אֱדַיִן (*ʾĕḏayin*, then). However, because these words are so similar, ܕܶܝܢ has

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[4] Cf. Nöldeke §§155, 327; Duval §§297, 372; Mingana §566; Brockelmann §175. See also Aaron Michael Butts, *Language Change in the Wake of Empire: Syriac in its Greco-Roman Context* (Penn State University Press, 2016), 192–4.

[5] Cf. Nöldeke §§155, 327; Duval §§297, 372; Mingana §566; Brockelmann §175.

taken on the functions of the Greek conjunction δέ (*de*).The conjunction ܕܶܝܢ has several functions:

a) ܕܶܝܢ can be used to indicate a new phase in a story or a new phase in a discourse. The action communicated in the ܕܶܝܢ clause takes place after the action of the previous clause. It can be translated using the words "then" or "and":

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܒܪܰܡܫܳܐ ܕܶܝܢ ܒܡܰܥܪܳܒܰܝ ܫܶܡܫܳܐ. ܟܰܐܝܬܝܘ ܠܘܳܬܗ ܟܽܠܗܘܢ ܐܰܝܠܶܝܢ ܕܒܝܫܐܝܬ ܥܒܝܕܝܢ ܘܕܰܝܘܳܢܶܐ.	Then in the evening, at the setting of the sun, they brought to him all who were sick and demon-possessed. (Mark 1:32)
ܟܰܕ ܫܡܰܥ ܕܶܝܢ ܝܶܫܘܥ. ܐܶܡܰܪ ܠܗܘܢ:	And when Jesus heard this, he said to them…. (Mark 2:17)
ܗܘ ܕܶܝܢ ܡܶܕܶܡ ܕܰܗܘܳܐ. ܒܶܗ ܚܰܝܶܐ ܐܝܬܰܘܗܝ.	Now that which came into being in him was life. (John 1:3 [Syr^C])[6]

b) ܕܶܝܢ can be used to introduce a parenthetical statement. It can be translated using the word "now":

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܗܘ ܕܶܝܢ ܝܘܚܰܢܳܢ ܠܒܝܫ ܗܘܳܐ ܠܒܽܘܫܳܐ ܕܣܰܥܪܳܐ ܕܓܰܡܠܶܐ.	Now John was clothed with clothing from the hair of camels. (Mark 1:6)
ܬܰܠܡܝܕܰܘܗܝ, ܕܶܝܢ ܕܝܘܚܰܢܳܢ ܘܕܰܦܪܝܫܶܐ ܨܳܝܡܝܢ ܗܘܰܘ.	Now the disciples of John and of the Pharisees were fasting. (Mark 2:18)

c) ܕܶܝܢ can also be used to indicate contrast. It is often used with this function when the conjunction δέ (*de*) has this function in the underlying Greek of the New Testament. It can be translated using the word "but":

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܐܶܢܳܐ ܐܰܥܡܶܕܬܟܘܢ ܒܡܰܝܳܐ. ܗܘ ܕܶܝܢ ܢܰܥܡܶܕܟܘܢ ܒܪܘܚܳܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܳܐ.	I baptize you in water but he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit. (Mark 1:8)
ܗܘ ܕܶܝܢ ܝܶܫܘܥ ܐܶܬܪܰܚܰܡ ܥܠܰܘܗܝ,,	But Jesus had compassion on him. (Mark 1:41)

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[6] Syr^C stands for the Curetonian Gospels, a manuscript of the Old Syriac version of the Gospels.The text here differs somewhat from the text of John 1:3 in the Peshitta.

| ܟܕ ܚܙܐ ܕܝܢ ܝܫܘܥ ܗܝܡܢܘܬܗܘܢ. | But when Jesus saw their faith…. (Mark 2:5) |

9.3.3. ܗܟܝܠ[7]

The conjunction ܗܟܝܠ is an adverbial conjunction that is used to indicate an inference or a consequence that is drawn from information that was previously communicated. It can normally be translated using the words "therefore" or "then":

Examples	
Syriac	**English**
ܡܕܝܢ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܗܟܝܠ ܙܘܓ. ܒܪܢܫܐ ܠܐ ܢܦܪܫ.	Therefore, whatever God has joined together, let no one separate. (Mark 10:9)
ܡܢܐ ܗܟܝܠ ܢܥܒܕ ܡܪܐ ܟܪܡܐ.	What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do? (Mark 12:9)

9.4. Vocabulary

Nouns		
Singular	**Plural**	**Meaning**
ܐܘܪܚܐ	ܐܘܪܚܬܐ	(f) road, way
ܐܝܕܐ[8]	ܐܝܕܝܐ	(f) hand
ܓܡܠܐ	ܓܡܠܐ	(m) camel
ܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ	———	(f) faith, faithfulness
ܙܒܢܐ	ܙܒܢܐ	(m) time
ܚܛܝܬܐ	ܚܛܗܐ	(m) sin
ܛܘܪܐ	ܛܘܪܐ	(m) mountain
ܝܘܡܐ	ܝܘܡܬܐ	(m) day
ܦܘܩܕܢܐ	ܦܘܩܕܢܐ	(m) command, visitation, punishment
ܫܐܕܐ	ܫܐܕܐ	(m) demon

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[7] Cf. Nöldeke §327; Muraoka §§13,72 91; Duval §294.

[8] The construct state of ܐܝܕܐ used quite frequently is ܐܝܕ.

Demonstratives		
msg	ܗܳܢܳܐ	this, this one
fsg	ܗܳܕܶܐ	this, this one, this matter, this circumstance
mpl	ܗܳܠܶܝܢ	these, these ones, these things
fpl	ܗܳܠܶܝܢ	these, these ones, these things
msg	ܗܰܘ	that, that one
fsg	ܗܳܝ	that, that one
mpl	ܗܳܢܽܘܢ	those, those ones, those things
fpl	ܗܳܢܶܝܢ	those, those ones, those things

Postpositive Conjunctions	
ܓܶܝܪ	for, because
ܕܶܝܢ	then, and, now, but
ܗܳܟܶܝܠ	therefore, then

Proper Nouns	
ܐܶܫܰܥܝܳܐ	Isaiah
ܪܳܥܽܘܬ	Ruth
ܫܠܶܝܡܽܘܢ	Solomon
ܫܡܽܘܐܶܝܠ	Samuel
ܐܰܬܶܐܘܳܕܳܘܪܳܘܣ	Theodore

9.5. Homework

a) Using practice sheet 9.1, memorize the forms for near and remote demonstratives.

b) Memorize the uses of demonstratives in §9.1 above.

c) Memorize the vocabulary in 9.6 above. Make sure you can translate the words from Syriac to English as well as English to Syriac. The following link on Quizlet can be used to help you learn the vocabulary: https://quizlet.com/_cc0oqd?x=1qqt&i=2z26w0.

d) Using practice sheet 9.2, translate the sentences from Syriac to English.