(Lesson 2)

(Introduction to the Vowels)

In Western Syriac (Aramaic) there are 5 vowels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Sound of the Vowel in English/Arabic</th>
<th>ܠܒܫܰܡܐ (The Vowel)</th>
<th>ܡܫܰܡܐ (The Name of the Vowel)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ܬ̣ܘ̣ܥ̣ܐ</td>
<td>ܦܬ̣ܘ̣ܗ̣ܐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>ܐܘ̣ܥ̣ܐ</td>
<td>ܘܙ̣ܘ̣ܥ̣ܐ</td>
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<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>ܐܝ̣ܥ̣ܐ</td>
<td>ܝܪ̣ܒ̣ܨ̣ܐ</td>
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<tr>
<td>ee</td>
<td>ܐܝ̣ܥ̣ܐ</td>
<td>ܗܘ̣ܘ̣ܨ̣ܐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oo</td>
<td>ܐܝ̣ܥ̣ܐ</td>
<td>ܘ marzo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to write the vowels:

Exercise: Re-write the following vowels five times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>getObjectAtIndex(index)</th>
<th>getObjectAtIndex(index)</th>
<th>getObjectAtIndex(index)</th>
<th>getObjectAtIndex(index)</th>
<th>getObjectAtIndex(index)</th>
<th>getObjectAtIndex(index)</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
How to write the abgd (Alphabet):

(The olaf and the loma đo are the tallest letters. The 'é is like the loma đo, but shorter)
The abgd letters position above/under the line (the letters with the thin line don’t have that slight space, they are touching to the line: 

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{l} & : \text{d} \quad \text{d} \\
\text{m} & : \text{m} \\
\text{n} & : \text{n} \\
\text{i} & : \text{i} \\
\end{align*}
\]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>End of the Word</th>
<th>Middle of the Word</th>
<th>Beginning of The Word</th>
<th>Stand Alone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ܠ</td>
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<td>ܣ</td>
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<td>ܣ</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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The olaf in Syriac has no value, it is not pronounced when there is no vowel over it, except when used as a number. It’s similar to the ‘hamzé’ in Arabic ‘ء’. The English pronunciation is the most accurate for the most part.

The letter yood, sometimes writing as yudh is the smallest letter of the Aramaic abgad (Alphabet). The letter “g” (Gomal) is pronounced like the first “g” in ‘g’arage.

**Exercise:** Practise reading the Syriac letters with the different vowels, and the letters without the vowels (without the vowels the Arabic pronunciation would be the closest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ܓ</th>
<th>ܕ</th>
<th>ܗ</th>
<th>ܘ</th>
<th>The Letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ܓ | ܕ | ܗ | ܘ | \-
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<th>ZĘ</th>
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<td>SO</td>
<td>SA</td>
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<td>P-h</td>
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<td>QO</td>
<td>QA</td>
<td>Qh</td>
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<td>RA</td>
<td>Rh</td>
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<td>ŠŠEE</td>
<td>ŠŠÉ</td>
<td>ŠŠO</td>
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<td>ŠŠ-h</td>
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<tr>
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<td>TEE</td>
<td>TÉ</td>
<td>TO</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>T-h</td>
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<tr>
<td>تُ</td>
<td>تَ</td>
<td>تُو</td>
<td>تَو</td>
<td>تُ</td>
<td>تَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alternate spelling (in English) for the names of letters in Syriac, and the meaning of each letter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Meaning of the Letter</th>
<th>The Name of Letter</th>
<th>The Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bull, Ox</td>
<td>Olaph</td>
<td>ܐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House, Tent</td>
<td>Bet</td>
<td>ܒ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camel</td>
<td>Gomal</td>
<td>ܓ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door (Dam)</td>
<td>Dolat</td>
<td>ܕ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window, Fence</td>
<td>Hé</td>
<td>ܗ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wedge, Nail</td>
<td>Waw</td>
<td>ܘ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapon</td>
<td>Zain</td>
<td>ܙ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall, Obstacle</td>
<td>Het</td>
<td>ܚ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snake</td>
<td>Tet</td>
<td>ܛ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand</td>
<td>Yud</td>
<td>ܝ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm of Hand</td>
<td>Koph</td>
<td>ܟ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Lomad</td>
<td>ܠ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water (Ocean)</td>
<td>Mim</td>
<td>ܡ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>Nun</td>
<td>ܢ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>Semkat</td>
<td>ܣ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye</td>
<td>'ain</td>
<td>ܥ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mouth</td>
<td>Fé</td>
<td>ܦ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fish-hook</td>
<td>Sodé</td>
<td>ܨ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monkey</td>
<td>Quph</td>
<td>ܩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head, Top Person</td>
<td>Rish</td>
<td>ܪ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teeth</td>
<td>Shin</td>
<td>ܫ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark, Sign, Cross</td>
<td>Taw</td>
<td>ܬ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(You’ll notice that the ‘ܐ’ can be pronounced as ‘p’ or ‘f’, we will cover this topic in later lessons, in Western Syriac (starting not to long ago) the letter ‘ܐ’ is pronounced as ‘f’ no matter what state it’s in (which is grammatically wrong). There are still some scholars that will pronounce it as ‘p’, and like them I prefer to use the ‘p’ when appropriate and the ‘f’ when appropriate.)
Alternate spelling (in English) for the names of vowels in Syriac:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(The Vowel)</th>
<th>(The Name of the Vowel)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| َ | َةُحُو ftoho  
| َ | َضُقُو zqofo  
| َ | َرُصُو rboṣo  
| َ | َحُصُو hboṣo  
| َ | َعُصُو šoṣo  |

This alternative spelling is mainly due to some bad habits which have been picked up in Western Syriac (Aramaic), I recommend using the spelling as found at the beginning of this lesson.

☆☆☆
The Syriac (Aramaic) History (Part 2)

(This historical material is written by other authors, and this author doesn’t claim authorship of the material in the section “The Syriac (Aramaic) History”)

Ancient Phoenician Period (5250-3800 B.C.)

- The first house on Earth that’s built with stone appeared in Byblos around 5250 B.C.
- Great progress in Lebanon: domestication of animals, art of jewel making, and the precious stones industry.

Eneolithic Period (3800-3200 B.C.)

- Appearance of copper in industry at Byblos.
- The opening of the metal era.
- Further progress in the industry and art of ceramics, of precious stones, ivory, gold, and silver.

Proto-urban Period (3200-3000 B.C.)

- Progress of metallurgic industry.
- Which lead to houses built of stone being divided into many rooms and halls, and assembled within city walls.

 NAMES – šmo-hé (مَحْدُودًا)

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