

Biblical Hebrew 101
Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew
Lesson 3
שְׁעוֹר ג

Introducing the next 5 letters & 2 vowels



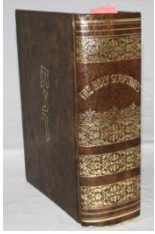
Sbema & Tallit

During a 1st Century VBS, Pastor Don taught children the Hebrew Aleph-Bet. (This was written by 8-12 year olds!)

Introducing the next 5 consonants of the Hebrew aleph-bet

- 3.01 Introduce the next 2 vowels: segol & tsere
- 3.02 Introduce 5 more consonants: kaf - samach
- 3.03 Tip: Sofits
- 3.04 Let's read Hebrew
- 3.05 Interesting Fact: Hebrew words in English
- 3.06 How shall I study Hebrew?
- 3.07 Identify letters we have had in Genesis 1:1

Introducing the next 5 consonants + 2 more vowels:



- Learn the next two vowels, bringing us up to 4 vowels.
- Learn the next five letters (or consonants), bringing us up to 15 consonants.
- Learn 3 forms of 1 consonant/letter.
- Introduce the first three sofits (final letters). Sofits are letters with the exact same sound as their corresponding letter. The only difference is its shape when that letter is the last or final letter of a word. At that time, its shape changes; however, its sound remains the same.

3.01 First, let's introduce the next 2 vowels & review the previous 2 vowels.

VOWELS				
Vowels (aka nikkudot). Note: shown with aleph but can be with any letter	Name of vowel	Sound of vowel	Block Print	Write each letter
אָ	patach: פָּתַח	“ah” as in spa	אָ	
אֶ	kamats: קָמָט	“ah” as in spa	אֶ	
אֵ	segol: סֶגוֹל	“eh” as in bed	אֵ	
אִ	tsere: צִירֵי	“eh” as in bed	אִ	

3.02 Now, let's introduce 5 more letters of the Hebrew aleph-bet.

1. Read the name of each letter below. (Refer to Sound of Letter column for pronunciation)
2. Read & Print each letter below. (Refer to Sound of Letter column for pronunciation)

Tip: There are 3 different shapes of kaf:

- kaf (כּ) – pronounced “k” as in keep
- chaf (כַּ) – pronounced as “ch” in Bach
- chaf sofit (ך) – also pronounced as “ch”. Sofits appear only at the end of a word.

Next 5 letters (Consonants #11-15) & 4 vowels					
Letter	Numeric value	Name	Sound	Block	Write letter & vowel
כּ	20	kaf	k in keep	כּ	
כַּ		kaf with dagesh (dot), & patach	kah	כַּ	
כֵּ		kaf with dagesh (dot), & segol	keh	כֵּ	
כִּ		kaf with dagesh (dot), & tsere	keh	כִּ	
ח	20	chaf (note: <u>no dagesh</u> in a chaf)	ch in bach (both כַּ & ך have the same sound)	ח	
חַ		chaf with kamats	chah	חַ	
חֵ		chaf with segol	chah	חֵ	
חִ		chaf with tsere	chah	חִ	

כ	20	chaf sofit (a sofit is the final letter of word)	ch in bach	ך	
כּ		chaf sofit with a kamats	chah (generally כּ only has 1 of two vowels: a sheva or a kamats.)	ךּ	
ל	30	lamed	l in let	ל	
לַ		lamed with patach	lah	לַ	
לֶ		lamed with segol	leh	לֶ	
לֶ׃		lamed with tsere	leh	לֶ׃	
מ	40	mem	m in me (both מ & ם have the same sound)	מ	
מַ		mem with kamats	mah	מַ	
מֶ		mem with segol	meh	מֶ	
מֶ׃		mem with tsere	meh	מֶ׃	
ם	40	mem sofit (a sofit is the final letter of word)	m in me	ם	
נ	50	nun (<i>noon</i>)	n in nice (both נ & ן have the same sound)	נ	
נַ		nun with patach	nah	נַ	
נֶ׃		nun with segol	neh	נֶ׃	
נֶ׃		nun with tsere	neh	נֶ׃	
ן	50	nun sofit (a sofit is the final letter of word)	n in nice	ן	
ס	60	samech	s in set	ס	
סַ		samech with kamats	sah	סַ	
סֶ׃		samech with segol	seh	סֶ׃	
סֶ׃		samech with tsere	seh	סֶ׃	

3.03 Tip: Sofits (final letters): Five of Hebrew letters have a different shape when they appear as the last letter of a word.

In this lesson, we introduced the first 3:

- chaf sofit (כּ) – pronounced the same as “כּ” (“ch” as in **Bach**)
- mem sofit (ם) – pronounced the same as “מּ” (“m” as in **Tom**)
- nun sofit (ן) – pronounced the same as “נּ” (“n” as in **Ben**)

3.04 Let's read Hebrew:

1. **Remember:** the objective is to read the words ... **not to memorize their definitions.**
2. Hebrew is read right to left and top to bottom. Begin by reading the right-most letter. Then add the vowel that is written below it.
3. For example: with the word אָהַב. Begin by reading the אָ; then add the הָ. We now have אָהָ (ah-ha). Finally, we add the ב. Since there is no vowel below this letter, it only has the sound of the consonant. When we put the word altogether, we have: אָהַב (ah-hav).



Always remember read: right to left and top to bottom.

Read & Write words below: notice as a general rule, the final syllable is accented. Accented syllables are highlighted in yellow and bolded.			
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration (please, try to read word before looking at transliteration)	Practice writing each word below
יָלַד	he gave birth, fathered or begat (as in a genealogy)	yah- lahd	
יָלֵד	boy	yeh -lehd (*note: when a 3 or 4-letter word has 2 segols, the first gets the accent)	
הַטְּמֵא	the unclean	haht-tah- meh (Lev 10:10)	
כַּלְהָ	bride, engaged girl	cahl- lah	
כַּכֵּה	so, like this, thus	cah -chah	
לֶחֶם	bread	leh -chehm (*note: when a 3 or 4-letter word has 2 segols, the first gets the accent)	
אֶבֶן	stone	eh -vehn*	
סֵלָה	Selah (pause, consider, as in Ps 3:2)	seh -lah	
לֵב	heart	lehv	
אֵל	God	ehl	
מָה	What? (interrogative)	mah	
אָמֵן	Amen (truly, truth, 'let it be')	ah- mehn	

3.05 Interesting fact: An example of a Hebrew word's being incorporated into English is 'ruthless'

In the Torah, Ruth exuded the essence of kindness and giving. She was a Moabite princess who walked away from everything: wealth, prestige, and her religion. Why? To take care of her mother-in-law Naomi, who had nothing. Her kindness was rewarded by God, Ruth married a wealthy man (Boaz) and became the great-grandmother of King David. Ruth was a gentile who became a true Jew because of her actions. In fact, many consider her the spiritual mother of the Jewish people.

The word "ruthless" is the opposite of who Ruth was. A "ruthless person" is one who is selfish, conniving, merciless, acting in their personal interest. Ruth did not display any of these characteristics.

3.06 How Shall I Study Hebrew?



Consider taking your lesson with you to work & review during lunch.

1. Practice saying the first 15 letters of the aleph-bet *using the hand*.
2. **Read** the Hebrew words in this lesson.
3. **Print** the words. Again, **read** words.



Extra Practice			
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration (please, try to read before looking at transliteration)	Practice writing each word below
אֶחָד	one	eh- chahd	
זֶה	this	zeh	
גַּן	garden	gahn	
אֵלֶּה	these	ehl -leh	
לָבָן	Laban (also means <i>white</i>)	lah- vahn	
כֵּן	yes, so, thus	cehn	
מָה	what	mah	

3.07 Identify letters & vowels we've had:

On the Scripture below, please **write the name of the letter above that particular letter & the name of the vowel below the letter**. Do the same for each letter. (Identify *only* the letters & vowels which we have introduced thus far.)

← mem sofit

א

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

↑ tsere

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” Gen 1:1.