

Biblical Hebrew 101

Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew

Lesson 7

שְׁעוֹר ז

Diphthong & Dagesh Kal



Lighting candles & eating challah is a wonderful way to welcome Shabbat.

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy,” Exodus 20:8 NASB, from the Ten Commandments

Continue reinforcing the Hebrew aleph-bet

- 7.01 Sound-A-Like Consonants
- 7.02 Diphthongs
- 7.03 Practice reading words with diphthongs
- 7.04 Interesting Fact: Did you know
- 7.05 Introducing dagesh kal
- 7.06 Practice reading words with dagesh kal
- 7.07 Hebrew blessings – practice reading & listening 🗣️

7.01 Sound-A-Like consonants: consonants with the same sound

Notice these consonants which sound-a-like:		
Letter	Name of letter	Sound
ו	vet	v, as in vice
ו	vav	v, as in vice
ט	tet	t, as in tell
ת	tav	t, as in tell
ח	chet	ch, as in Bach
ט	chaf	ch, as in Bach
ך	chaf sofit	same sound as ט; only it is the final letter of a word
כ	kaf	k, as in keep
ק	koof	k, as in keep
ס	sin (pronounced seen)	s, as in set
ס	samech	s, as in set

7.02 Diphthongs: a “yod” plus another vowel act as a unit & form a new sound

Standard Sound of Hebrew vowels:

א ("ee")
 א ("eh")
 א ("eh")
 א ("ah")
 א ("ah")

Diphthongs:

When a yod follows a vowel, the sound of the vowel changes; these two form a diphthong.*

“ee” as in sleep	“ay” as in stay	“ay” as in stay	“I” as in isle	“I” as in isle
א	א	א	א	א
Chirek Yod חִירֶק יוֹד	Tsere Yod צִירֵי יוֹד	Segol Yod סֶגוֹל יוֹד	Kamats Yod קָמָץ יוֹד	Patach Yod פָּתַח יוֹד

NOTE:

- There are only 3 diphthong sounds to remember: “I” (as in isle); “ay” (as in stay); and “ee” (as in sleep).
- Diphthongs are long vowels.

7.03 Practice reading words with diphthongs

Words with diphthongs (note: accented syllables are in bold & highlighted)		
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration
מים	water	mi-yeem
ים	sea	yahm
שמים	heaven	shah-mi-yeem
אדון	lord, master (Josh 3:11, 13; Neh 7:61; Ps 12:5, 97:5, 105:21, 114:7, Jer 22:18, 34:5; Zech 4:14, 6:5)	ah-dohn
אדני	My Lord (Ps 110:1)	Ah-doh-nee
אדני האדנים	Lord of the lords, hosts (Deut 10:17; Ps 136:3)	Ah-doh-nay* hah-ah-doh-neem (*“ay”: as in “stay”)
אדני יהוה	Lord YHVH, Lord God (Gen 15:2, 8; Deut 3:24, 9:26; Jdg 6:22, 16:28; Ps 69:7, 71:5, 16; etc)	Ah-doh-ni Yah-veh
האדון יהוה	The Lord YHVH, the Lord God (Ex 23:17, 34:23)	hah-Ah-dohn Yah-veh
אדנינו	our Lord (1Sam 16:16) Used to refer to leaders, eg King David (1Sam 25:14, 17; 1Ki 1:43, 47; Neh 10:30; Ps 8:2,10)	Ah-doh-nay*-noo (*“ay”: as in “stay”)
היה	he was	hiy-yah
חגי	Haggai, as in the book of <i>Haggai</i>	chah-gi* (*“i” as in “isle”)
בין	between	bayn (*“ay”: as in “stay”)
איפה	where? (interrogative or question word)	ay-foh
סיני	Sinai	See-ni
אלהים	God (Elohim)	Eh-loh-heem
ויחנה	and He will be gracious to you, will give you favor (from the Aaronic blessing [aka Birkat Kohanim or Priestly Blessing], Num 6:26)	vee-choon-neh-chah
חן	grace, favor, pleasant	chehn
היא	she	hee
חי	live	chi
חיים	living or life	chiy-yeem
לחיים	to life! (a common Hebrew toast)	leh-chiy-yeem
אלך	to you or upon you (this word is also in the Aaronic blessing [aka Birkat Kohanim or Priestly Blessing], Num 6:25)	eh-lay*-chah (*“ay”: as in “stay”)

7.04 INTERESTING FACT: Did you know?

Generally, a “J” in English name is translated as a “yod/yud” in Hebrew. For example: Joseph in English is Yosef in Hebrew; Jacob, Yaakov; Jerusalem, Yerushalayim

7.05 Introducing dagesh kal

1. Dagesh kal (דָּגֶשׁ קָל) is also called dagesh lene (or a weak dagesh)

- Changes the sound of the consonant.
The dagesh kal is only found in the 6 BeGeD KeFeT letters: בְּגָד כָּפֶת
However, for this class, we're only concerned with these 3 letters and their changes from ב to בּ;
from כ to כּ; from פ to פּ.
- Dagesh kal never follows a vowel.
- Dagesh kal is either 1st letter of a word or opens a syllable.

7.06 Practice reading words with dagesh kal

Practice recognizing dagesh kal		
* Note: the rule for each dagesh is named below		
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration (please try to read before looking at transliteration) Syllable that is accented is shown below with yellow bold highlight.
בְּרֵאשִׁית	In the beginning (Gen 1:1)	beh-reh- sheet * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of the בְּגָד כָּפֶת. When a word begins with a bet, there is a change in pronunciation)
כִּי	When, because, or like (Ex 1:2)	kee * Dagesh Kal (caf is part of the בְּגָד כָּפֶת. When a word begins with a chaf, the chaf changes to a kaf)
דָּבַר	he spoke (Lev 25:2)	dahb- behr * Dagesh Kal (dalet is part of בְּגָד כָּפֶת)
בְּמִדְבָּר	in the wilderness or desert (Dt 1:1)	bahm-meed- bahr * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגָד כָּפֶת)
דָּג	fish (Jonah 1:17)	dahg * Dagesh Kal (dalet is part of בְּגָד כָּפֶת)
פַּרְעֹה	Pharaoh (Gen 47:10)	pahr- oh * Dagesh Kal (pay is part of בְּגָד כָּפֶת)

(This blessing may be added at the end of any Hebrew blessing.)

Blessed be YHVH for evermore! Amen and amen. (Psalms 89:52)

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration Note: accented syllable is bolded
בָּרוּךְ	blessed or praise	bah- rooch
יְהוָה	YHVH / LORD	YH VH (or Adonai)
לְעוֹלָם*	forevermore (*sometimes the cholam floats to the right & isn't properly aligned over the vav. This is common when using left-to-right computers 😊)	leh-oh*- lahm
אָמֵן	Amen	ah-mehn
וְאָמֵן	and amen	veh-ah- mehn

CANDLELIGHT BLESSING:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 ... אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְנָתַן-לָנוּ אֶת יֵשׁוּעַ מְשִׁיחֵנו אֹר הָעוֹלָם. (אָמֵן)

“Praise You, YHVH, our God, King of the Universe Who makes us holy with His commandments; and gave to us Yeshua our Meshiach, the light of the world. Amen...”

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration
		Note: accented syllable is bolded
בָּרוּךְ	blessed or praise	bah- ruch
אַתָּה	you (masculine singular pronoun)	aht- tah
יְהוָה	YHVH / LORD	YH VH (or Adonai)
אֱלֹהֵינוּ	our God	Eh-lo- heh -noo
מֶלֶךְ	king	meh -lech
הָעוֹלָם	of the universe	hah-o- lahm
אֲשֶׁר	who or which	ah- shehr
קִדְּשָׁנוּ	makes us holy	keed-deh- shah -noo (commonly pronounced keed-dee- shah -noo)
*בְּמִצְוֹתָיו	in His commandments (*the i looks like a cholam vav, but it is a vav + cholam. It’s sound is “vo”. More info in Tip below. Also, the suffix וֹיְ is pronounced “tahv”)	beh-meetz-vo*- tahv
וְנָתַן	and he gave	veh-nah- tahn
לָנוּ	to us	lah -noo
*אֶת	(*This is a Definite Direct Object Marker, meaning a direct object follows the word “eht/אֶת” There is no equivalent term in English)	cht
יֵשׁוּעַ	Yeshua	Yeh- shoo -ah
מְשִׁיחֵנוּ	our Messiah	Meh-she- chah -noo (commonly pronounced Meh-she- chay -noo)
אֹר	light (‘ohr’ is included in construction of אֹר)	ohr
הָעוֹלָם	the world	hah-o- lahm

Grammar-made-simple: בְּמִצְוֹתָיו

- Every syllable must begin with a consonant. The following consonant begins the next syllable.
In the example above, the sheva under the “tsade” above closes the previous syllable.
- Each consonant, within a word, must have a vowel or sheva connected to it.
Since the “tsade” has a sheva, the “vav” must be a consonant. Which leaves the “dot” to be a cholam vowel.)
- The suffix **וֹיְ** is pronounced “tahv”.

KIDDUSH BLESSING (blessing over grape juice/wine):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן (אָמֵן)

*“Praise You, YHVH, our God, King of the Universe
 Who creates the fruit of the vine. Amen”*

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration Note: accented syllable is bolded
בוֹרֵא	creates, makes, shapes, forms	bo-reh
פְּרֵי	fruit of	p'ree
הַגֶּפֶן	the vine	hah-gah-fehn

MOTZI BLESSING (blessing over bread/food):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
 הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ: (אָמֵן)

*“Praise You, YHVH, our God, King of the Universe
 Who brings forth bread from the earth. Amen”*

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration Note: accented syllable is bolded
הַמוֹצִיא	(Who) brings forth	hah-mo-tzee
לֶחֶם	bread	leh-chehm
מִן	from	meen
הָאָרֶץ	the earth	hah-ah-rehtz



Yonah Black is getting ready to light Shabbat candles.