

Biblical Hebrew 101

Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew

Lesson 10

שְׁעוֹר י'

Review What We've Learned



“...man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD,”
Dt 8:3; Mt 4:4.

Review what we've learned in 101

- Lessons 1-5 The Hebrew aleph bet & vowels (pages 53-57)
 - Lesson 1 Accented syllables (page 53)
 - Lesson 2 Dagesh chazak or dagesh forte (page 54)
 - Lesson 3 2 segols in a row & sofits (page 55)
 - Lesson 4 Interesting facts about Bar Mitzvah (page 56)
 - Lesson 5 Chataf vowels (page 57)
- Lesson 6 BeGeD KeFeT letters (page 58)
- Lesson 7 Diphthongs (review of page 58)
- Lesson 8 4 levels of vocal & silent shevas (review of Lesson 8-9)
- Lesson 9 Words & phrases used in our Hebrew class
Current Parasha Reading

Lesson 1: first 5 letters of Hebrew aleph bet & vowels with “ah” sound

Hebrew Indented words are from the same root as word above.	Translation	Transliteration (Please try to read before looking at transliteration) Accented syllable is shown with yellow bold highlight.
אָב	father (note: red letter is vet אָ; the other form of אָ) <i>also Av</i> is the 5 th month of the Biblical year, counting from Nisan.	ahv: (reminder – “a” sound in Hebrew is <u>like “a” in spa</u> – <u>not</u> like “a” in apple.)
אָבָא TIP 1	abba, daddy, son-ship (covenantal relationship)	ahb -bah
אָהַב	he loved (verb: 3 rd person, masculine, singular, past tense)	ah- hahv
גָּד TIP 2	Gad (as in the tribe of Gad)	gahd
אָבַד	he perished, was lost (verb: 3 rd person, masculine, singular, past tense)	ah- vahd
הָבָא	the coming	hahb- bah
הַ	the	hah
בָּא	I come (verb: 1 st person, masculine, singular, present tense) <i>also</i> he came; arrived (verb: 3 rd person, masculine, past tense)	bah
בָּהּ	in her (בָּהּ & בָּא sound the same, but are spelled differently. As in English: “so” and “sew.”)	bah
אָבָהּ	he was willing (verb: 3 rd person, masculine, singular, past tense)	ah- vah
בָּגְדוֹ	they acted deceitfully or treacherously (verb: 3 rd person, masculine plural, past tense; Job 6:15)	bah-geh- doo
בְּגָד	clothes, covering, wrap	beh -gehd
בְּדָד	alone (Lev 13:46)	bah- dahd
גָּאָה	he exalted, triumphed (verb: 3 rd person, masculine, past tense; Ex 15:1, 21)	gah- ah

Grammar-made-simple: review accented syllables & dots in the 1st letter of a word

Tip 1: Which syllable is accented? As a general rule, the final syllable is accented, as noted with the yellow highlight in the Transliteration column throughout these lessons.

Tip 2: When a dot is in the 1st letter of a word, the pronunciation of that letter changes if it is one of 3 letters: אָ, אֱ, אִ.
 For example: אָ changes to אֱ; אֱ changes to אִ; and אִ changes to אִ.

Lesson 2: next 5 letters of Hebrew aleph bet & vowels with “ah” sound

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration (Please try to read before looking at transliteration) Accented syllable is shown with yellow bold highlight.
יָד	hand	yahd
יָדָה	he threw, he shot (verb: 3rd person, singular, masculine, past tense)	yah- dah
הָיָה	he was (verb: 3rd person, masculine, past tense)	hiy- yah
אָח	brother	ach
יְהוָה	YHVH (also written as יְהוִה)	YaH- VeH
וָו	vav (6 th letter of the Hebrew Aleph-Bet)	vahv
דָּג	fish (masculine, singular)	dahg
דָּגָה TIP 1	the fish	hahd- dahg
דָּגָהּ	school of fish	dah- gah
גָּח	roof	gahg
חָג	festival (noun, masculine, singular)	chahg
חָגָה	celebrated, as in make or keep a festival (verb: 3rd person, masculine, singular, past tense)	chah- gahg
בָּגַד	spoil (Ezekiel 25:7)	bahg
דָּאָג	anxious, fear, concerned, worried (verb: 3rd person, masculine, singular, past tense)	dah- ahg

Grammar-made-simple: Dagesh Chazak or Dagesh Forte

Tip 1: When a dot is in a consonant and there is a vowel in front of it, the letter is doubled. eg: chag-gai = יָגַגְּגַי .

Lesson 3: next 5 letters of aleph bet, 3 sofits, & vowels with “eh” sound

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration
יָלֵד ^{TIP 1}	boy	yeh -lehhd (note: when a 3 or 4-letter word has 2 segols, the first is accented)
כֵּן	so, like this, thus (כֵּן כֵּן - soso)	cah -chah
אֶבֶן ^{TIP 1}	stone	eh -vehn
סָלַח	Selah (pause, consider, think on this. Psalm 3:2)	seh -lah
לֵב	heart	lehv
אֶחָד	one	eh- chahd
לֶחֶם ^{TIP 1}	bread	leh -chehm
זֶה	this	zeh
גַּן	garden	gahn
לָבָן	the color white (also, Jacob’s father-in-law, Laban)	lah- vahn
חֵן	favor, grace	chehn
כִּן	yes	cehn
מָה	What (interrogative; it’s a question word)	mah
מִן	from, of (preposition)	meen

Grammar-made-simple:

^{TIP 1} Two segols in a row:

- ▶ When a 3 or 4 letter word has 2 segols, the first is accented. (If there are more letters in the word, then the accent generally will follow the usual rule with the accent on the final syllable.)

Sofits (final letters)

Five Hebrew letters have different shapes when they are the final letter of a word. Though their shape changes, their sound does not differ from its corresponding letter.

The 5 sofits are:

- ▶ chaf sofit (ך) – pronounced the same as “כ” (“ch” as in **Bach**)
- ▶ mem sofit (ם) – pronounced the same as “מ” (“m” as in **me**)
- ▶ nun sofit (ן) – pronounced the same as “נ” (“n” as in **nice**)
- ▶ fay sofit (ף) – pronounced the same as “פ” (“f” as in **far**)

Lesson 4: last 7 letters & chirek

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration Accented syllable is shown with yellow bold highlight.	Practice writing each word (Use Block print on page 1 of this lesson.)
בַּר	son of (Aramaic, Bar Mitzvah, info below)	bahr	
אֶרֶץ <small>TIP 1</small>	land	eh -rehtz	
אֶרֶץ- <small>TIP 1</small>	land of (when a maqef (hyphen) is used; אֶרֶץ is construct: land of.)	eh -rehtz	
הִנֵּה	behold ('listen up')	hee- neh	
אָמֵן	Amen (truly, truth, 'so let it be it')	ah- mehn	
אֶלֶף <small>TIP 1</small>	1000	eh -lehf	
דָּוִד	David	Dah- veed	
מָה זֶה?	What is this?	mah zeh ?	
בְּטָח	of course, certainly, for sure, security, safely, securely	beh -tach	
פָּאֵרָן	Paran (Num 13:3)	Pah- rahn	

Grammar-made-simple:

TIP 1 Two segols in a row:

- ▶ When a 3 or 4-letter word has 2 segols, the first is accented.

Interesting facts about Bar Mitzvah:

There are references to Bar Mitzvah (a boy's coming of age) in the Talmud¹.

By the 14th century, some sources mention a boy was called to the Torah for the first time on or following his 13th birthday. By the 17th century, boys not only read Torah but also gave talks. The first recorded bar mitzvah ceremony was in France in the 13th century. (Originally, it was merely a blessing that a father gave his son.)

According to the Orthodox Jews, a bar mitzvah is *not a graduation which celebrates an accomplishment of the past*, rather it is *the beginning of responsibility*.

In 1846, in New York, girls began to have their bat mitzvah.

¹The Talmud, a written record of rabbinic teachings that spans a period of about six hundred years, was begun during the first century AD (after the Temple's destruction) and continued through the sixth and seventh centuries AD.

<https://jps.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/HiltonExcerpt.pdf>

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/484213/jewish/What-is-the-Origin-of-the-Bar-Mitzvah-Celebration.htm

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/bar-bat-mitzvah> (source Encyclopedia Judaica)

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/history-of-bar-mitzvah/>

<https://reformjudaism.org/talmud>

Lesson 5: last 7 letters, 2 sofits, & the chataf vowels

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration (try to read before looking at transliteration)
אַהֶבָה	love (noun)	ah-hah- vah
אֲדָמָה	earth, ground	ah-dah- mah
הָאֲדָמָה	the earth (Genesis 12:3)	hah-ah-dah- mah
חָטָא	sinner	chah- tah
אֲשֶׁר	who, whose, which, where, that (relative pronoun)	ah- shehr
חֲטַף	chataf is a half or reduced vowel. (eg: חֲטַף, חֲטַף, חֲטַף)	chah- tahf
יַעֲשֶׂה	he will do, make (Num 9:14)	yah-ah- seh
אֱמֶת	truth	eh- meht ^{Tip}
וְאִמָּץ	& courage (& courageous)	veh-eh- mahts ^{Tip}
חֲזֹק וְאִמָּץ	“Be strong and of good courage” Congratulations said to Torah service participants at the end of Torah service. (Deut 31:6, 7, 23; Josh 1:6, 7, 9, 18, 10:25; 2Sam 10:12; 1Chron 19:13, 22:13, 28:20; and 2Chron 32:7)	chah- zak veh-eh- mahts
עֲדַת	congregation of (Ex 35:1)	ah- daht
לַעֲשׂוֹת	to do or make (Ex 35:1) (Note: the dot to the left of the ׁ has double duty: it makes the letter a seen plus it serves as a cholam.)	lah-ah- soht
יַעֲבֹד	he will work or serve	yah-ah- vohd
לְרֵעִי	to your neighbor (Lev 19:18b; final line of the Messianic Shema)	leh-reh-ah- chah
אֱלֹהִים	Elohim – a title for god, not actual God’s name (Gen 1:1-1:12, etc)	eh-loh- heem
אֱלֹהֶיךָ	your God (Deut 8:6)	eh-loh- hay -chah
הָאֱלֹהִים	the gods (literally), the God, or the judges (Ex 21:6)	hah-eh-loh- heem

Grammar-made-simple:

Chatafs: חֲ – chataf segol; חֳ – chataf kamats; & חִ – chataf patach

- ▶ Chataf vowels only fall under gutturals. However, not every guttural always has a chataf.
- ▶ The חֲ & חֳ are pronounced quicker and shorter than the regular segol and patach. (The חִ is pronounced with a long “o,” as in “row”, which we will cover in a later class.)

TIP Normally when there are 2 segols in a 3-4 letter word, the accent moves to the first segol. However, because אֱמֶת & וְאִמָּץ have both a chataf segol (a half or reduced vowel) & a segol, the accent does not move to the first; instead it remains on the last syllable.

Lesson 6: “oh” and “oo” types of vowels

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration
Indented words are from the same root as word above.		Accented syllable is shown with yellow bold highlight.
נָכוֹן	right, correct	nah- chohn (long “O”)
כְּבוֹד	glory, honor, splendor, weighty	kah- vohd
אֲרוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ	Holy Ark (storage cabinet which houses the Sefer Torah, Torah Scroll)	ah- rohn -- hahk-koh- dehsh
סוֹף	end or close (the same root as סוֹפֵת, as in ‘mem sofit’ ם)	sohf
סוֹפֵת	suffix or ending: the 5 final letters: eg ‘mem sofit’ ם.	soh- feet
הַעֲדוּת	the testimony	hah-eh- doot

BeGeD KeFeT letters: ת פ כ ד ג ב

There are 6 letters in the Hebrew aleph bet which can be written with or without a dagesh. They are called the BeGeD KeFeT letters. This term is simply a device for the easy memorization of these 6 letters.

These 6 consonants are: bet (ב); gimmel (ג); dalet (ד); kaf (כ); pay (פ); and tav (ת).

However, only three of the six letters actually change their sound, depending upon whether there is a dagesh in the letter or not. These are bet (ב); kaf (כ); pay (פ). (The blue-highlighted letters below show how the sound changes with these three letters.)

BeGeD KeFeT	Name of letter	Sound	Example	Explanation
ב	with dot: bet	as in ball	רַבָּה (rahb-bah)	NOTE: the bet and vet are pronounced differently
ב	without dot: vet	as in vice	שֶׁבֶט (sheh-veht)	
ג	with dot: gimmel	as in get	גַּם (gahm)	Note: the gimmel is pronounced the same with and without the dagesh
ג	without dot: gimmel	as in get	חָג (chahg)	
ד	with dot: dalet	as in dog	דָּג (dahg)	Note: the dalet is pronounced the same with and without the dagesh
ד	without dot: dalet	as in dog	עוֹד (od)	
כ	with dot: kaf	as in keep	כֶּן (kehn)	NOTE: the kaf and chaf are pronounced differently
כ	without dot: chaf	as in Bach	נָכוֹן (nah-chon)	
פ	with dot: pay	as in pet	פַּעַם (pah-ahm)	NOTE: the pay and fay are pronounced differently
פ	without dot: fay	as in far	סוֹפֵת (so-feet)	
ת	with dot: tav	as in tell	תּוֹדָה (to-dah)	Note: the tav is pronounced the same with and without the dagesh
ת	without dot: tav	as in tell	שֶׁבֶט (shahb-bat)	

Lesson 7: Diphthong (דו־תְּנוּעָה : doo-teh-noo-ah)

Standard Sound of Hebrew vowels:

א ("ee")
 ח ("eh")
 ה ("eh")
 א ("ah")
 א ("ah")

With the addition of a yod, the vowel becomes a diphthong & the sound changes

“ee” as in sleep
 “ey” as in they
 “ey” as in they
 “I” as in isle
 “I” as in isle

אֵי
אֵי
אֵי
אֵי
אֵי

Chirek Yod
Tsere Yod
Segol Yod
Kamats Yod
Patach Yod

חֵירָק יוֹד
צִירֵי יוֹד
סְגוּל יוֹד
קָמָץ יוֹד
פְּתַח יוֹד

NOTE:

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

Remember: when a long vowel is followed by a yod; the vowel becomes a diphthong.		
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration
מַיִם	water	mi-yeem
שָׁמַיִם	heaven	shah-mi-yeem
אֲדֹנָינוּ	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-ney*-noo (*“ey”: as in “they”)
הָיָה	he was	hiy-yah
חַגִּי	Haggai, as in the book of <i>Haggai</i>	chah-gi* (*“i” as in “isle”)
בֵּין	between	beyn (*“ey”: as in “they”)
אֵיפֹה	where? (interrogative or question word)	ay-foh
סִינַי	Sinai	See-ni
אֱלֹהִים	God (Elohim)	Eh-loh-heem
וַיְחַנֵּךְ	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
הִיא	she	hee
חַי	live	chi
לְחַיִּים	to life! (a common Hebrew toast)	leh-chiy-yeem
אֵלֶיךָ	to you or upon you (this word is also in the Aaronic blessing [aka Birkat Kohanim or Priestly Blessing], Num 6:25)	eh-ley*-chah (*“ey”: as in “they”)

7.04 **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

Lesson 8: vocal shevas

Level 1 of the vocal sheva

- When the sheva is under the first letter of a word it is vocal, the sheva is a sheva na (שְׁוָא נָע). This sheva generally has a quick and almost indistinguishable sound: “eh”

Level 1- Sheva that is under the first letter of a word is vocal (quick or short “eh”). This sheva generally has a quick and almost indistinguishable sound: “eh”.		
Word	Meaning	Transliteration
קָדוֹשׁ	holy, sacred (Is 1:4, the holy one; construct)	keh- dosh (commonly pronounced k’dosh)
בְּרָכָה	blessing (noun; Gen 12:2)	beh-rah- chah (commonly pronounced brachah)
מְאֹד	very	meh- od
שְׁמַע	Shema (refer to page 42 for more details)	sheh- mah (commonly pronounced sh’mah)
כְּתָב	writing, text, decree, registration of the text (noun, masculine; Esther 4:8)	keh- tahv
שְׁאוֹל	Sheol, hell, or grave (noun)	Sheh- ol
שְׁלֹשׁ - רְגָלִים	3 annual pilgrimage festivals (Ex 23:14 - noun)	sheh- losh reh-gah- leem
שְׁוָא	one of the vowels in Hebrew	sheh- vah (commonly pronounced sh’vah)

Level 2 of the vocal sheva

- When 2 Shevas are consecutive (in a row), the 1st is silent (שְׁוָא נָח) & 2nd is vocal (שְׁוָא נָע).
 - If a sheva is under the 1st letter of the word, it is vocal & does not count as one of 2 consecutive shevas.
 - The first of two consecutive shevas closes the syllable and this sheva is silent (שְׁוָא נָח)
 - The second of 2 consecutives shevas is vocal (שְׁוָא נָע) and has a quick “eh” sound.

When 2 Shevas are consecutive, <u>the 1st is silent</u> (שְׁוָא נָח) & <u>2nd is vocal</u> (שְׁוָא נָע).		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The first of two consecutive shevas closes the syllable. The first sheva is silent (שְׁוָא נָח) The second of 2 consecutives shevas is vocal (שְׁוָא נָע) and has a quick “eh” sound. 		
Word	Meaning	Transliteration
יִשְׂרָצוּ	they (3 rd person, masculine, plural) will swarm, teem, or bring forth abundantly (Gen 1:20)	yeesh-reh- tsoo
וַיִּשְׁמְרוּךָ	& he (3 rd person, masculine, singular) will keep or guard you. (From the Aaronic Blessing) NOTE: The ו is a vocal sheva (שְׁוָא נָע) & does not count as one of the 2 consecutives shevas	veh-yeesh-meh- reh -chah
יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh- roo

Grammar-made-simple: Levels 1 & 2 of the vocal sheva:

- Level 1: If the sheva is under the 1st letter of the word, it is vocal.
- Level 2: If there are 2 shevas in a row (consecutive), the 1st is silent (it closes the syllable) & the 2nd is vocal.

Lesson 9: Introducing Levels 3 & 4 of vocal shevas

Level 3: when sheva is under a dagesh chazak, it is vocal

(Review Lesson 9.01: a dagesh chazak follows either a long or short vowel)

When a <u>sheva is</u> under a dagesh chazak (דָּגֶשׁ חָזָק), the sheva is vocal (שְׁוָא נָע).		
For example: עֲמַךְ = עֶמֶךְ + מָךְ + חָךְ = pronounced: ahm-meh- chah		
Word	Meaning	Transliteration
כֻּלְכֶם	all of you (2 nd person: you: masculine, plural) Eg: כֻּלְכֶם = כֶּם + לְ + כֶּם	cool-leh- chehm
עֲמַךְ	your (2 nd person: you: masculine, singular) people (2Sam 7:24)	ahm-meh- chah
הַשְּׁבִיעִי	the seventh	hahsh-sheh-vee- ee (commonly pronounced hahsh-shvee- ee)
הַדְּבָרִים	the words or things	hahd-deh-vah- reem (commonly pronounced hahd-d'vah- reem)
דְּבָרִים	literally “words” (or “things”) Also this is the Hebrew name for the book of Deuteronomy	deh-vah- reem (commonly pronounced d'vah- reem)
טַפְּכֶם	your (2 nd person: you: masculine, plural) children (Dt 29:11)	tahp-peh- chehm
קִדְּשָׁנוּ	sanctifies us (from Festival Candle Blessing)	keed-deh- shah -noo

Level 4: when sheva follows a long vowel, it is vocal

When <u>Sheva follows a long vowel*</u> , it is vocal (שְׁוָא נָע).		
*Long vowels: kamats קָמֵץ (ֹ) // tserē צִירֵי (ִי) // cholam חוֹלָם (וֹ) // cholam vav חוֹלָם שְׁוָא (וֹ) // shurek שׁוּרֵק (וֹ) PLUS, all diphthongs are long. For example: הִיְתָה (In this word, note: the sheva immediately follows the chamatz, which is a long vowel. Therefore, the sheva is vocal. הִיְתָה is pronounced: hi-yeh- tah)		
Word	Meaning	Transliteration
הִיְתָה	it was (3 rd person: feminine, singular)	hi-yeh- tah (commonly pronounced hi-yee- tah)
לְבָבְךָ	your heart (from the V'ahavta from the Shema, Dt 6:5)	leh-vah- veh -chah (commonly pronounced leh- vahv -chah)
וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ	and with all your soul (from the V'ahavta from the Shema, Dt 6:5)	oo-veh-chol nahf-sheh- chah
כָּתְבִים	write (masculine, plural)	koh-teh- veem (commonly pronounced koht- veem)
וּבְאָלְתוֹ	and his oath	oo-veh-ah-lah- toh

Grammar-made-simple: Levels 3 & 4 of the vocal sheva:

- Level 3: If the sheva is under a dagesh chazak, it is vocal.
- Level 4: If the sheva follows a long vowel, it is vocal.

a. kamats קָמֵץ (ֹ) // tserē צִירֵי (ִי) // cholam חוֹלָם (וֹ) // cholam vav חוֹלָם שְׁוָא (וֹ) // shurek שׁוּרֵק (וֹ)

Lesson 10: Words & Phrases used in our Hebrew class

Grammatical terms:

דו־תְּנוּעָה	(doo-teh-noo-ah)	diphthong – (AKA: דו־תְּנוּעָה, דִּפְתוּנָה (בְּלִשְׁנוֹת))
נִקּוּדוֹת/נִקּוּד	(nikud/nikudot)	symbols or Hebrew vowels
סְמִיכוֹת	(s'mee-chut)	(aka construct). 2 words used as a single unit or word. It takes the place of “of”; means “of” or “belonging to”. eg: people <u>of</u> Israel -- עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל
שְׁרֵשׁ	(sho-rehsh)	3-4 letter root of a word. Other words are developed from this word.

Vocabulary

“וְ” & “וּ”	(veh & oo)	this letter attaches to the 1 st letter of word & means “and”
לְמָה?	(lahm-mah)	Why?
מָה זֶה?	(mah zeh)	What is this?
אֵיךְ אוֹמְרִים?	(ehch-om-reem)	How do you say?
כֵּן כֵּן כֵּן!	(kehn, kehn, kehn)	Yes, Yes, Yes!
לֹא לֹא לֹא!	(lo, lo, lo!)	No, No, No!
עוֹד פְּעַם	(od--pah-ahm)	Again
כָּל הַזְּמַן יָשָׁר	(kol--hahz'mahn -- yah-shahr)	All the time straight.
יֵשׁ לִי שְׁאֵלָה	(yehsh lee -- sheh-eh-lah).	I have a question.
שְׁעוֹר	(shee-oor)	lesson
אַרְצוֹת הַבְּרִית	(ahr-tsot—hahb-breet)	U.S. (literally, the covenanted lands)

Current Parasha reading (www.RestoringTorah.org – go to calendar)