Biblical Hebrew Course 101
– Boot Camp –
Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew
Lesson 8
שִׁעוּר ח

Developing our understanding of the Hebrew Aleph Bet:
Dagesh Chazak *plus* Vocal & Silent Sh'vas

Children have fun learning Hebrew with the puppet 'Shalom'!

"… and you are to teach them carefully to your children," from the Shema Deut 6:7a CJB

8.01 Review dagesh kal

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8.05 Level 1: vocal sh'va - sh'va at the beginning of the word is vocal

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8.09 Brief intro to she'va level 4

8.01 *Review dagesh kal – dagesh means emphasis.*

Dagesh kal (דָּגֵשׁ קַל)

- The dagesh kal is found only in six letters. The acronym for remembering these letters is BeGeD KeFeT: בֶּגֶד כְּפַת.
- For this class, we're primarily focused with the 3 letters that can change their sounds. These are ב to בּ; from כ to כּ; from פ to פּ.
- HINT: dagesh kal only appears in the <u>1st letter of a word</u> or <u>when it opens a syllable</u>.

8.02 *Introduce dagesh chazak*

Dagesh chazak (דָּגֵשׁ חָזָק)

- The dagesh chazak looks like the dagesh kal with a dot (dagesh) in the letter.
- No dagesh can have a guttural: aleph: א, hey: ה, chet: ח, ayin: ע, & sometimes resh: ר.
- Dagesh chazak doubles the consonant in which it stands. Example: את+תָה = אַתָּה (aht-**tah**).
- <u>Dagesh chazak is preceded by a vowel – any vowel except a sh'va.</u>

8.03 *Practice reading words with dagesh kal & dagesh chazak*

Before looking at the Transliteration column, try to recognize dagesh kal & dagesh chazak		

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration & identifying type of sh'vas (please try to read before looking at transliteration)
1) דַּבֶּר	he spoke (Lev 25:2)	dahb-**behr** * Dagesh Kal (**dalet** is part of בֶּגֶד כְּפַת & it does not follow a vowel.) * Dagesh Chazak (**bet** is doubled because this dagesh follows a vowel.)
2) בַּמִּדְבָּר	in the wilderness or desert (Dt 1:1)	bahm-meed-**bahr** * Dagesh Kal (**bet** is part of בֶּגֶד כְּפַת & it does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak (**mem** is doubled because dagesh follows a vowel.) * Dagesh Kal (**bet** is part of בֶּגֶד כְּפַת & bet does not follow a vowel)
3) הַמַּיִם	the water (Gen 1:2)	hahm-**mi**-yeem * Dagesh Chazak (**mem** is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel.)
4) לְמַטֶּה	of every tribe (Num 13:2)	leh-maht-**teh** * Dagesh Chazak (**tet** is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel .)
5) הַגָּדָה	Haggadah (booklet that tells the story of the exodus from Egypt)	hahg-gah-**dah** * Dagesh Chazak (**gimmel** is doubled because this dagesh follows a vowel.)
6) הַשָּׁמַיִם	the heavens (Gen 1:1)	hahsh-shah-**mi**-yeem * Dagesh Chazak (**sheen** is doubled because this dagesh follows a vowel.)
7) וַיַּבְדֵּל	and he divided (Gen 1:7)	vay-yahv-**dehl** * Dagesh Chazak (**yud** is doubled because this dagesh follows a vowel.) * Dagesh Kal (**dalet** is part of בֶּגֶד כְּפַת & it does not follow a vowel)
8) יַמִּים	seas (Gen 1:10)	yahm-m**eem** * Dagesh Chazak (**mem** is doubled because this dagesh follows a vowel.)

8.04 *Introduce vocal & silent sh'vas*

The sh'va can be either vocal or it can be silent. The vocal sh'va has the same "eh" sound as a segol or tsere, only the vocal sh'va sound is quicker.

The various rules which determine whether the sh'va is vocal ("eh") or silent which we will discuss in this lesson.

8.05 *Level 1 vocal sh'va: this sh'va is at the beginning of a word*

		Transliteration
Word	**Meaning**	**Level 1: When the sh'va is <u>under the first letter of a word it is vocal</u>.** This sh'va generally has a quick and an almost indistinguishable sound: "eh".
		Transliteration Explanation: 1. The small "eh" signifies the quick & almost indistinguishable "eh" sound. 2. The bolded, highlighted syllable is accented.
1) שְׁמַע	Shema	sheh-**mah** (commonly pronounced: sh'**mah**)
2) שְׁוָא	sh'va: one of the vowels in Hebrew	sheh-**vah** (commonly pronounced: sh'**vah**)
3) בְּרֵאשִׁית	Genesis (literally: in the head or beginning)	beh-reh-**sheet** (note: the "eh" in the 1st syllable is very quick and written with a small font. (commonly pronounced: b'reh-**sheet**)

8.06 *Level 2 vocal sh'va: 2 sh'vas are consecutive* *(in other words, they are in a row)*

Level 2: When <u>2 sh'vas are consecutive</u>, <u>the 1st is silent</u> & <u>2nd is vocal</u>. (Note: these sh'vas must be in a row) The ***first*** of two consecutive sh'vas closes the syllable. The ***second*** of 2 consecutives sh'vas is vocal and has a quick "eh" sound.

Word	**Meaning**	**Transliteration**
1) יִשְׁרְצוּ	they (3rd person, masculine, plural) will swarm, teem, or bring forth abundantly (Gen 1:20)	yeesh-reh-**tsoo**
2) וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ	and he (3rd person, masculine, singular) will guard or keep you. (from the Aaronic Blessing) The וְ is a vocal sh'va & does not count as one of the 2 consecutives sh'vas.	veh-yeesh-meh-**reh**-chah
3) יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh-**roo**

8.07 *Practice Levels 1 & 2 of the sh'va (answers on 8.08)*

Level 1: when a <u>sh'va is under the first letter of a word</u>, <u>it is vocal</u>. This sh'va generally has a quick and an almost indistinguishable sound: "eh".
Level 2: when <u>2 sh'vas are consecutive</u> (in a row), <u>the 1st is silent</u>. <u>The 2nd is vocal</u>.

Word	**Meaning**	**Transliteration**	**Identifying the level of sh'va** (Answers on 8.08)
1) יִשְׁרְצוּ	they (3rd person, masculine, plural) swarm, teem, or bring forth abundantly (Gen 1:20)	yeesh-reh-**tsoo**	Level 2: there are 2 sh'vas in a row; the 1st sh'va is silent & the 2nd is vocal
2) שְׁמַע	Shema	sheh-**mah** (commonly pronounced: sh'**mah**)	*Level 1: when a sh'va is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal.

Word	Meaning	Transliteration	Identify the level of the sh'va
3) בְּנֵי	sons of	beh-**nay** (commonly pronounced: b'**nay**)	* (refer to explanation above)
4) יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh-**roo**	
5) שְׁוָא	sh'va (one of the vowels in Hebrew)	sheh-**vah** (commonly pronounced: sh'**vah**)	
6) קְדֹשִׁים	holy (verb, masculine plural)	keh-do-**sheem** (commonly pronounced: k'do-**sheem**)	
7) רְאוּבֵן	Reuben (Ex 1:2)	reh-oo-**vehn**	
8) נַפְשְׁכֶם	your soul (Is 55:2)	nahf-sheh-**chehm**	

Grammar-made-simple: Levels 1 & 2 of the vocal sh'va:
1. Level 1: If the sh'va is under the 1st consonant of the word, it is vocal.
2. Level 2: If there are 2 sh'vas in a row (consecutive), the 1st is silent (it closes the syllable) & the 2nd is vocal (& it opens the syllable).

8.08 ANSWERS: (answers from 8.07)

Word	Meaning	Transliteration	Identify the level of sh'va
1) יִשְׁרְצוּ	they (3rd person, masculine, plural) swarm, teem, or bring forth abundantly (Gen 1:20)	yeesh-reh-**tsoo**	Level 2: there are 2 sh'vas in a row; the 1st sh'va is silent & the 2nd is vocal.
2) שְׁמַע	Shema	sheh-**mah** (commonly pronounced: sh'**mah**)	Level 1: the sh'va is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal.
3) בְּנֵי	sons of	beh-**nay** (commonly pronounced: b'**nay**)	Level 1: the sh'va is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal.
4) יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh-**roo**	Level 2: there are 2 sh'vas in a row; the 1st sh'va is silent & the 2nd is vocal.
5) שְׁוָא	sh'va (one of the vowels in Hebrew)	sheh-**vah** (commonly pronounced: sh'**vah**)	Level 1: the sh'va is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal.
6) קְדֹשִׁים	holy (verb, masculine plural)	keh-do-**sheem** (commonly pronounced: k'do-**sheem**)	Level 1: the sh'va is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal.
7) רְאוּבֵן	Reuben (Ex 1:2)	reh-oo-**vehn**	Level 1: the sh'va is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal.
8) נַפְשְׁכֶם	your soul (Is 55:2)	nahf-sheh-**chehm**	Level 2: there are 2 sh'vas in a row; the 1st sh'va is silent & the 2nd is vocal.

8.09 Brief intro to sh'va level 3

Level 3: *when a sh'va is under a dagesh chazak*, it is vocal.*

  *Note: When a dagesh follows any vowel (except a sh'va), that dagesh is a dagesh chazak. The dagesh chazak doubles the consonant in which it is located.

Level 3: *The 1ˢᵗ doubled consonant is silent & the 2ⁿᵈ is vocal. Sound familiar? Yes, it's similar to Level 2!*		
Word	**Dagesh chazak is noted in red**	**Pronunciation/Transliteration**
1) כֻּלְּכֶם	all of you (2ⁿᵈ person: you: masculine, plural) כֻּלְּכֶם = כֻּל+לְ+כֶם	cool-leh-**chehm**
2) הַשְּׁבִיעִי	the seventh הַשְּׁבִיעִי = הַשְׁ+שְׁבִי+עִי	hahsh-sheh-vee-**ee** (commonly pronounced hahsh-shvee-**ee**)
3) טַפְּכֶם	your (2ⁿᵈ person: you: masculine, plural) children (Dt 29:11) טַפְּכֶם = טַפ+פְּ+כֶם	tahp-peh-**chehm**

This time, you try & figure out how to divide these words into syllables!			
Word	**Practice dividing the word into syllables, as they are in the examples above**	**Answer**	**Transliteration**
1) עִמְּךָ	with you (Gen 21:22: 2ⁿᵈ person: masculine, singular) עִמְּךָ =_____	עִמְּ+מְ+ךָ	ahm-**meh**-chah
3) בַּמְּלָאכָה	You shall not do any work (Ex 31:3-5; 20:10) בַּמְּלָאכָה =_____	בַּמְּ+מְ+לָא+כָה	bahm-meh-lah-**chah**
3) הַדְּבָרִים	the words or things הַדְּבָרִים =_____	הַדְּ+דְּ+בָ+רִים	hahd-deh-vah-**reem** (commonly pronounced hahd-d'vah-**reem**

8.10 Brief intro to sh'va level 4 (in Lesson 9, we will study level 4 in more detail.)

Level 4: *when a sh'va follows a long vowel*, it is vocal.*

> **Grammar-made-simple: an easy way to learn which vowels are long:**
>
> Long vowels are kamats (ָ); tsere (ֵ); & the 3 dots: cholam (ֹ); cholam vav (וֹ); & the shurek (וּ)
>
> *Tip:* Learn the long vowels, then all the rest of the vowels are short 😊

Level 4: *When a sh'va follows a long vowel, it is vocal*		
1) לְבָבְךָ	your heart (from the V'ahavta from the Shema, Dt 6:5)	leh-vah-**veh**-chah (commonly pronounced leh-**vahv**-chah)
2) כֹּתְבִים	write (masculine, plural)	koh-teh-**veem** (commonly pronounced koht-**veem**)
3) וּבְאָלָתוֹ	and his oath	oo-veh-ah-lah-**toh**