

Biblical Hebrew Course 101  
– Boot Camp –  
*Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew*  
Lesson 9  
שְׁעוֹר ט

**Developing our understanding of the Hebrew Aleph Bet:**  
Dageshes & Sh'vas, cont



*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

- 9.01 Review: dagesh kal & dagesh chazak
- 9.02 Review sh'va level 1 & level 2
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- 9.08 Review grammatical terms & definitions
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## 9.01 Review dagesh kal & dagesh chazak

### Dagesh kal (דָּגֶשׁ קָל)

- The dagesh kal is found only in 6 BeGeD KeFeT letters. The acronym for remembering these letters is BeGeD KeFeT: בְּגֵד כָּפֶת
- For this class, we're mainly concerned with the 3 letters that can change their sounds. These are בּ to ב; from כּ to כ; from פּ to פ.
  - It is important to remember that the dagesh kal never follows a vowel. (It can follow a sh'va.)
  - And that it only appears when a BeGeD KeFeT letter is the 1st letter of a word or when it opens a syllable, it will have a dagesh.

### Dagesh chazak (דָּגֶשׁ חָזָק)

- REMEMBER: A dagesh chazak is preceded by a short vowel.
- A dagesh chazak may appear in any consonant except the 5 gutturals (aleph: א, hey: ה, chet: ח, ayin: ע, & sometimes resh: ר).
- A dagesh chazak doubles the consonant.
  - Examples of a dagesh chazak in a word:

דָּבַר = דָּב + בָּר = pronounced: dahb-**behr** (note: the dagesh in the **dalet** is a dagesh kal because it is part of the בְּגֵד כָּפֶת letters; the **bet** has a dagesh chazak because it follows a vowel)

בַּמְדָּבָר = בָּר + מֵד + בָּר = pronounced: bahm-meed-**bahr** (note: the dagesh in the **bet** is a dagesh kal; the **mem** has a dagesh chazak because it follows a vowel)

Practice recognizing dagesh kal & dagesh chazak		
* Note: the rule for each dagesh is named below		
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration (please try to read before looking at transliteration)
1) דָּבַר	he spoke (Lev 25:2)	dahb- <b>behr</b> * Dagesh Kal ( <b>dalet</b> is part of בְּגֵד כָּפֶת & does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>bet</b> is doubled because dagesh follows a vowel.)
2) בַּמְדָּבָר	in the wilderness or desert (Dt 1:1)	bahm-meed- <b>bahr</b> * Dagesh Kal ( <b>bet</b> is part of בְּגֵד כָּפֶת & does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>mem</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel.) * Dagesh Kal ( <b>bet</b> is part of בְּגֵד כָּפֶת & does not follow a vowel)
3) הַמַּיִם	the water (Gen 1:2)	hahm- <b>mi</b> -yeem * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>mem</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel.)
4) לְמִטָּה	of every tribe (Num 13:2)	leh-maht- <b>teh</b> * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>tet</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel.)

### Grammar-made-simple: dagesh kal & dagesh chazak:

- Dagesh kal is when a BeGeD KeFeT letter begins a word or when it follows a sh'va, thereby opening a syllable. This dagesh changes sound only with בּ to ב; from כּ to כ; & from פּ to פ.
- Dagesh chazak follows a vowel & doubles the consonant it is in.

## 9.02 *Review sh'va level 1 & level 2 (refer to lesson 8)*

Reminder the sh'va can be either vocal or it can be silent.

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

### *Level 1: when a sh'va is at the beginning of a word*

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".		
Word	Meaning	Transliteration Explanation: 1. The small "eh" signifies the quick & almost indistinguishable "eh" sound. 2. The bolded, highlighted syllable is accented.
1) לְךָ	for yourself (Gen 6:14)	leh- <b>chah</b>
2) בְּיוֹם	in the day (Lev 19:6)	beh- <b>yom</b>
3) בְּרֵאשִׁית	Genesis (In the beginning) (Gen 1:1)	beh-reh- <b>sheet</b> (commonly pronounced b'resheet)

#### **Grammar-made-simple: level 1 of the vocal sh'va:**

Level 1: If the sh'va is under the 1<sup>st</sup> consonant of the word, it is vocal.

### *Level 2: when 2 sh'vas are consecutive (in other words, are in a row)*

When 2 sh'vas are consecutive, <u>the 1st is silent &amp; 2nd is vocal</u> . 1. The first of two consecutive sh'vas closes the syllable. The first sh'va is silent. 2. The second of 2 consecutive sh'vas is vocal <i>and</i> has a quick "eh" sound.		
Word	Meaning	Transliteration
1) עַבְדְּךָ	your servant (Gen 19:19)	ahv-deh- <b>chah</b>
2) תִּשְׁמָעוּ	you will obey (2 <sup>nd</sup> part of the Shema; Deut 11:13)	tees-meh- <b>oo</b>
3) אֶרְצְכֶם	your land (2 <sup>nd</sup> part of the Shema; Deut 11:14)	ahr-tseh- <b>chehm</b>
4) נַפְשְׁךָ	your soul (Deut 6:5)	nahf-sheh- <b>chah</b>
5) יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep (Ezekiel 11:20)	yeesh-meh- <b>roo</b>
6) שְׁבִתֶּךָ	your dwelling places (1Kings 8:30)	sheev-teh- <b>chah</b>

#### **Grammar-made-simple: level 2 of the vocal sh'va:**

Level 2: If there are 2 sh'vas in a row (consecutive), the 1<sup>st</sup> is silent (it closes the syllable) & the 2<sup>nd</sup> is vocal (& it opens the syllable).

### 9.03 *Sh'va level 3*

**Level 3: when a sh'va is under a dagesh chazak\*, it is vocal.** (\*Dagesh chazak explanation below↓.)

**\*Dagesh chazak is preceded by a vowel.**

1. The dagesh chazak doubles the consonant it is in.
2. This example shows how a dagesh chazak doubles the consonant it is in. כָּלָם = כָּם + לָ + לָם
  - a. Note, the לָ has a dagesh chazak. Why? It follows a vowel (כָּ).
  - b. The לָ is doubled, because of the dagesh chazak: כָּם + לָ + לָם
  - c. The 1st sh'va is silent; the 2nd is vocal: cool-leh-**chehm**. (Yes, this is similar to Level 2.)

Word	Meaning	Transliteration
		Explanation: 1. The small "eh" signifies the quick & almost indistinguishable "eh" sound. 2. The bolded, highlighted syllable is accented.
1) כָּלָם	all of you (2 <sup>nd</sup> person: you: masculine, plural) כָּם + לָ + לָם	cool-leh- <b>chehm</b> (The lamed with the 1st sh'va is silent; the 2 <sup>nd</sup> lamed is vocal)
2) הַשְּׁבִיעִי	the seventh הַשְּׁ + בִּי + עִי	hahsh-sheh-vee- <b>ee</b> (commonly pronounced hahsh-shvee- <b>ee</b> ) (The sheen with the 1st sh'va is silent; the 2 <sup>nd</sup> sheen is vocal)
3) טַפָּכֶם	your (2 <sup>nd</sup> person: you: masculine, plural) children (Dt 29:11) טַפָּ + כֶּם	tahp-peh- <b>chehm</b>

**Grammar-Made-Simple: Level 3: when a sh'va is under a dagesh chazak\*, it is vocal:**

1. \*Dagesh chazak is easily recognizable because the dagesh chazak follows any full vowel. (The sh'va is not a full vowel.)
2. The consonant with the dagesh chazak is doubled. כָּלָם = כָּם + לָ + לָם

### 9.04 *Sh'va level 4*

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

**When a sh'va follows a long vowel\*, it is vocal.**

**\*Long vowels:** (This is an introduction to long vowels)

kamats קָמֶץ (ִּ) // tsere צִירִי (ִּי) // cholam חֹלָם (ֹ) // cholam vav וּ חֹלָם (וֹ) // shurek שׁוּרֶק (וּ)

For example: הִיְתָה (The sh'va immediately follows the kamats, a long vowel; therefore, the sh'va is vocal. הִיְתָה is pronounced: hi-yeh-**tah**)

Word	Meaning	Transliteration
1) הִיְתָה	it was (3 <sup>rd</sup> person: feminine, singular)	hi-yeh- <b>tah</b> (commonly pronounced hi-yee- <b>tah</b> )
2) לִבְבְּךָ	your heart (from the V'ahavta from the Shema, Dt 6:5)	leh-vah- <b>veh</b> -chah (commonly pronounced leh- <b>vahv</b> -chah)
3) כָּתְבִים	write (masculine, plural)	koh-teh- <b>veem</b> (commonly pronounced koht- <b>veem</b> )
4) וּבְאִתּוֹ	and his oath	oo-veh-ah-lah- <b>toh</b>

**Grammar-made-simple: Level 4 is when the sh'va follows a long vowel:**

Level 4: If the sh'va follows a long vowel, it is vocal.

a. kamats קָמֶץ (ִּ) // tsere צִירִי (ִּי) // cholam חֹלָם (ֹ) // cholam vav וּ חֹלָם (וֹ) // shurek שׁוּרֶק (וּ)

9.05 *Practice identifying the different levels of sh'vas* (refer to Lesson 9 supplement)

Word	Meaning	Transliteration	Type of sh'va & why
1) בַּיָּד	by hand of (by the hand of Moses, Dt 4:44; Num 9:23)	beh- <b>yahd</b>	Level 1: sh'va is under 1st letter
2) הַבְּדִלָּה	Havdalah (ceremony closing Shabbat & distinguishes it from the common of other 6 days)	hahv-dah- <b>lah</b>	Non-vocal, silent sh'va, because sh'va follows a short vowel.
3) לִדְבֹר	to speak	leh-dahb- <b>behr</b>	
4) תִּשְׁמָעוּ	you do/will listen (Deut 11:27)	tees-meh- <b>ooh</b>	
5) כְּתָבִים	write (masculine plural)	koh- <b>teh</b> -veem (commonly pronounced kot' <b>veem</b> )	
6) בְּהָר	in or on mount or mountain	beh- <b>hahr</b>	
7) בְּמִדְבָּר	in desert or wilderness	beh-meed- <b>bahr</b>	
8) וַנִּשְׂאוּ	and they carried, they lifted, to marry (3cp)	veh-nah-seh- <b>oo</b> (commonly pronounced v'nahs- <b>oo</b> )	
9) לְחֹל	to be common (Lev 10:10; also in the Havdalah)	leh- <b>chohl</b>	
10) מִרְחָשֶׁת	saucepan (Lev 2:7: grain offering made in a pan)	mahr- <b>cheh</b> -sheht	
11) כֻּלְּכֶם	all of you (Deut 29:10)	kool-leh- <b>chem</b>	
12) בְּנֵי	sons of	beh- <b>nay</b>	
13) שִׁרְצוּ	they bring forth (Gen 9:7)	sheer- <b>tsoo</b>	
14) מִצְוָה	mitzvah / commandment	meets- <b>vah</b>	
15) זְמַן	time	zeh- <b>mahn</b> (commonly pronounced z'mahn)	
16) שְׂמָאל	left	seh- <b>mohl</b> (commonly pronounced s' <b>mohl</b> )	
17) אַבְרָהָם	Avraham	Ahv-rah- <b>hahm</b>	
18) מְאֹד	very	meh- <b>ohd</b>	
19) בְּבִקְשָׁה	please (adverb)	beh-vahk-kah- <b>shah</b>	

9.06 **ANSWERS to 9.05** “Practice identifying the different levels of silent & vocal sh’va”

Word	Meaning	Transliteration	Type of sh’va & why (Questions are on 9.03)
1) בַּיָּד	by hand of (by the hand of Moses, Dt 4:44; Num 9:23)	beh- <b>yahd</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
2) הַבְּדִלָּה	Havdalah (ceremony closing Shabbat & distinguishes it from the common of other 6 days)	hahv-dah- <b>lah</b>	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
3) לִדְבֹר	to speak	leh-dahb- <b>behr</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
4) תִּשְׁמָעוּ	you do/will listen (Deut 11:27)	teesh-meh- <b>ooh</b>	Level 2: 2 sh’vas in a row
5) כֹּתְבִים	write (masculine plural)	koh- <b>teh</b> -veem (commonly pronounced kot’ <b>veem</b> )	Level 3: sh’va follows a long vowel
6) בְּהָר	in or on mount or mountain	beh- <b>hahr</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
7) בְּמִדְבָּר	in desert	beh-meed- <b>bahr</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter 2 <sup>nd</sup> sh’va is non-vocal, silent sh’va; it follows a short vowel
8) וַנִּשָּׂאוּ	and they carried, they lifted, to marry (3cp)	veh-nah-seh- <b>oo</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter Level 4: 2 <sup>nd</sup> sh’va follows a long vowel
9) לְחֹל	to be common (Lev 10:10 also in the Havdalah)	leh- <b>chohl</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
10) מִרְחֶשֶׁת	saucepan (Lev 2:7: grain offering made in a pan)	mahr- <b>cheh</b> -sheht	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
11) כֻּלְּכֶם	all of you	kool-leh- <b>chem</b>	Level 3: sh’va is under a dagesh chazak
12) בְּנֵי	sons of	beh- <b>nay</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
13) שִׁרְצוּ	they bring forth (Gen 9:7)	sheer- <b>tsoo</b>	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
14) מִצְוָה	mitzvah	meets- <b>vah</b>	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
15) זְמַן	time	zeh- <b>mahn</b> (commonly pronounced z’ <b>mahn</b> )	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
16) שְׂמָאל	left	seh- <b>mohl</b> (commonly pronounced s’ <b>mohl</b> )	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
17) אַבְרָהָם	Avraham	Ahv-rah- <b>hahm</b>	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
18) מְאֹד	very	meh- <b>ohd</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
19) בְּבִקְשָׁה	please (adverb)	beh-vahk-kah- <b>shah</b>	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter

## 9.07 *Reading exercise: Leviticus 10:10*

“You are to distinguish between the holy & the common, & between the unclean & the clean,” Lev 10:10 ESV

וְלִהְבְּדִיל בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבֵין הַחֹל וּבֵין הַטָּמֵא וּבֵין הַטָּהוֹר:

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration
1) וְלִהְבְּדִיל	and to be divided, separated, make distinction, set apart	oo-lah-hahv- <b>deel</b>
2) בֵּין	between	bayn
3) הַקֹּדֶשׁ	the holy	hahk-ko- <b>dehsh</b>
4) וּבֵין	and between	oo- <b>vayn</b>
5) הַחֹל	the common, unholy, ordinary, profane	hah - <b>chol</b>
6) וּבֵין	and between	oo- <b>vayn</b>
7) הַטָּמֵא	the unclean, defiled	haht-tah- <b>meh</b> (commonly pronounced haht-tah-may)
8) וּבֵין	and between	oo- <b>vayn</b>
9) הַטָּהוֹר	the clean, pure	haht- tah- <b>hor</b>

## 9.08 *Review short definitions of grammatical terms*

דָּגֵשׁ קָל (dagesh kal) **dagesh lene.**

- Changes the sound of the consonant.

While the dagesh kal can be in the 6 BeGeD KeFet letters (בְּגֵד כֶּפֶת), there are only 3 of the 6 which change their sound.

The 3 letters which change sound with the dagesh kal: כּ to כ; פּ to פ; & טּ to ט

דָּגֵשׁ חָזָק (dagesh chazak) **dagesh forte or dagesh strong**

- Doubles consonant in which it stands.
- Identical in appearance to dagesh kal.
- May be in any consonant except the 5 gutturals (aleph, hay, chet, ayin, & sometimes resh).
- When a dagesh is immediately preceded by a vowel, the dagesh is a dagesh chazek.

eg: אַתָּה = אַת-תָּה (aht-tah).

דוֹ-תְנוּעָה (doo-teh-noo-ah) diphthong

נִקְדּוֹת/נִקּוּד (nik-kud/neh-kood-dot) symbols or Hebrew vowels

שָׁרֵשׁ (shoh-rehsh) 3-4 letter root of a word

## 9.09 *Weekly Parasha reading* listed on CFS website: [www.FaithfulStewardship.org](http://www.FaithfulStewardship.org)

GO to CFS website: [www.FaithfulStewardship.org](http://www.FaithfulStewardship.org)

CLICK on **Calendar**.

THEN, select **Yearly Calendars**.

NOW, select the **current year** (eg: 2025 Calendar & Readings)

THEN, scroll down to the **current month** (eg Aug 2025 calendar).

FINALLY, click on **current week** (eg 08/30/2025)