

Biblical Hebrew Course 101

– Boot Camp –

Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew

Lesson 2

שְׁעָוֵר בָּ

Learning The Next 5 Consonants



The father of modern Hebrew: Eliezer Ben Yehuda at his desk in Jerusalem, circa 1912 (en.wikipedia.org). He said: “The Hebrew language will go from the synagogue to the house of study, and from the house of study to the school, and from the school it will come into the home and... become a living language.” (*Excellent book: “Tongue of the Prophets,” by Robert St. John.*)

- 2.01 First 10 consonants (letters) & 2 vowels: vav – yud & kamats & patach
- 2.02 Practice saying these consonants and the accompanying sounds
- 2.03 Practice reading and writing
- 2.04 Practice reading actual Hebrew words
- 2.05 Did you know: Revival of the Hebrew Language
- 2.06 Introduction to Hebrew Syllables
- 2.07 Review: How shall I study Hebrew?
- 2.08 Homework & practice identifying letters & vowels in Genesis 1:1

2.01 First 10 consonants & 2 vowels: vav, yud/yod & kamats & patach

In this lesson, we will:

- Begin to learn the next 5 letters in the Hebrew Aleph-Bet.
- Continue learning with the same two vowels from Lesson 1.

Below are the next consonants (aka letters) of the Hebrew Aleph-Bet.

1. Read the name of each letter below. (Refer to Sound of Letter column for pronunciation)
2. Do *the hand*: make a fist with your right hand. Point thumb down and say *aleph*. Raise index finger - say *bet*. Lift middle finger - say *gimmel*. Lift ring finger – say *dalet*. And finally lift pinkie – say *hay*. Again, point thumb down and this time say *vav*. Raise index finger - say *zayin*. Lift middle finger - say *chet*. Lift ring finger – say *tet*. And finally lift pinkie – say *yod*.
3. Print each letter. (Copy the Block print below & refer to Aleph-Bet chart for letter.) formulation.)



2.02 Practice saying these letters & sounds

Letters (aka consonants) & Vowels (aka nikkudot ניקודות)					
Book Print	Numeric Value	Name of Letter	Sound of Letter	Block Print (There are slight stylistic variations in the way each person writes a letter)	Write each letter
ו	6	vav	v in vice	ו	
ז	7	zayin	z in zoo	ז	
ח	8	chet	ch in Bach	ח	
ט	9	tet	t in tell	ט	
י	10	yod (or yud)	y in yell	י	
Vowels (aka nikkudot)	Name of Vowel	Sound of Vowel	Print	Write	
א	kamats: עָמָךְ	“ah” in spa	א		
ַ	patach: עַמְּךָ	“ah” in spa	ַ		

Tip:

Place these pages and your notes in a ring-book binder ... Bring your notebook to class.

2.03 Practice reading and writing

Next 5 Letters (consonants #5-10) & 2 vowels (nikkudot): patach & kamats				
Book Print	Name	Sound	Block (as in English, there are slight variations in the how each person writes a letter)	Write Each Letter
ו	vav	v in vice	ו	
וֹ	vav with kamats	vah	וֹ	
וּ	vav with patach	vah	וּ	
ז	zayin	z in zoo	ז	
זֹ	zayin with kamats	zah	זֹ	
זּ	zayin with patach	zah	זּ	
ח	chet	ch in Bach	ח	
חֹ	chet with kamats	chah	חֹ	
חּ	chet with patach	chah	חּ	
ט	tet	t in tell	ט	
טֹ	tet with kamats	tah	טֹ	
טּ	tet with patach	tah	טּ	
י	yod (or yud)	y in yell	י	
יֹ	yod with kamats	yah	יֹ	
יּ	yod with patach	yah	יּ	

2.04 Practice reading actual Hebrew words

Our objective, at this point, is to become familiar with the letters and their sounds not to memorize words.

How to read Hebrew:

1. 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. And so on until the complete word is read.
2. For example: with the word בָּהָא. First read the right-most letter, then its corresponding vowel (א); then add the next letter & its vowel (ה). We now have בָּהָא (ah-hah). Finally, add the ב. Since there is no vowel below this letter, it only has the sound of the consonant (v). Altogether, we have: בָּהָא (ah-hahv).



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

Read & Write words below – note: generally, the last syllable is the accented syllable.			
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration (please try to read before looking at transliteration) Accented syllables have yellow highlight and are bolded.	Write Each Hebrew Word
1) יָד	hand	yahd	
2) יְדָה	he threw, he shot	yah- dah	
3) אָחָ	brother	ach	
4) וָ	vav (6th letter of Hebrew aleph-bet)	vahv	
5) גָּהָ *	roof *These “dots” will be discussed in a future lesson	gahg	
6) דָּהָ *	fish	dahg	

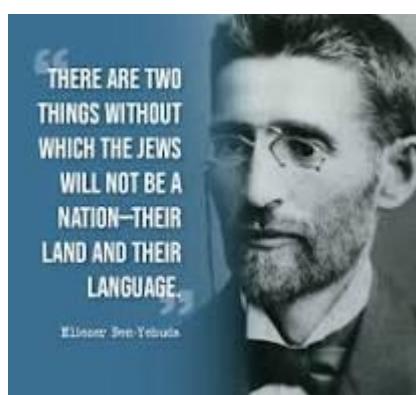
2.05 Did You Know: Revival of the Hebrew language

Following the Roman destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD, the Hebrew language began to die. By 132 AD, Hebrew had essentially died as a spoken language; it was reserved only for synagogue.

In the late 19th Century, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda began to revive Hebrew as a living language. He was so passionate that Hebrew would be revived and that his son, from birth, would only hear Hebrew – and no other language!

In 1948, Israel became an independent nation, & Hebrew again became the official language of Israel.

(Excellent book about Eliezer Ben Yehuda: “Tongue of the Prophets,” by Robert St. John.)



2.06 Introduction to Hebrew syllables

Guidelines for syllables:

1. Every Hebrew syllable begins with a consonant and a vowel. (Note: in Hebrew, syllables cannot begin with a vowel/nikkud.)
2. Hebrew has two types of syllables: open and closed.
 - a. Open syllables begin with a consonant and end with a vowel.
 - b. Closed syllables begin and end with a consonant and have a vowel between the two consonants.
 - c. Example:
בָּנָה has two syllables.
The first syllable is בָּ. It is open because it ends with vowel kamats.
The second syllable is נָה. It is closed because it ends with the consonant vet.
3. Easy way to identify how many syllables are in a word – count the number of vowels.
 - a. The number of vowels in the word equals the number of syllables. (Note: each syllable must begin with a consonant)
 - b. A simple way to indicate the type of syllables:
“O” = an open syllable
“C” = a closed syllable

Practice identifying the number of syllables

Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration Read before looking at transliteration	Number of syllables	Write each word with syllables	Indicate type of syllables (remember Hebrew is read right to left; use the right to left order when notating the syllables below)
1) יָד	hand	yahd	1	יָ	C (1 syllable; 1 vowel. Syllable ends with a consonant)
2) אֶחָד	brother	ach	1	אֶחָ	C
3) בָּרָאָה	he loved	ah-hahv	2	בָּ - אָה	O (1 st syllable on right: “אָה”) C (2 nd syllable: “בָּ”)
4) וָ	vav (6th letter of Hebrew Aleph-Bet)	vahv	1	וָ	C
5) גָּגָה	roof	gahg	1	גָּגָה	C
6) אָבָּא	father	ahv	1	אָבָּא	C
7) אָבָּאָה	he was lost or perished	ah-vahd	2		O (1 st syllable on right: “אָה”) C (2 nd syllable: “בָּאָ”)
8) גָּדָה	Gad (as in the tribe of Gad)	gahd (like “a” in spa)	1		C (1 syllable; 1 vowel. Syllable ends with a consonant)
9) חָגָגָה	celebrated (verb, as in he made or kept a festival)	chah-gahg	2		O (1 st syllable on right: “חָגָ”) C (2 nd syllable: “גָגָה”)
10) דָּהָגָה	fish (masculine)	dahg	1		C

Place these pages & your notes in a 3-ring- binder ... Bring binder to class.

2.07 Review: How Shall I Study Hebrew?

Consider taking your lesson with you & review it during your lunch.

- a. Practice saying the first 10 letters of the aleph-bet *using the hand*.
- b. **Read** the Hebrew words in this lesson.
- c. **Print** the words. Again, **read** the words.



► Practice: [Listen & Learn](#) (Scroll down to [Lesson 2 Listen & Learn](#))

<https://www.faithfulstewardship.org/bib-heb-101-learning-to-read-biblical-hebrew/>

2.08 Homework & practice identifying letters & vowels in Genesis 1:1

1. On previous pages, say the letter or word in Hebrew, then write it 5 times. The objective is to commit to memory these letters & vowels.
2. Please **write the name of each letter above** that letter & the name of the **vowel below** the letter.
(Only identify the letters & vowels which we have introduced thus far.)

← vav

א בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשְׁמִים וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

↑ patach

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



Shema & Tallit

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

By the end of today's class, we will have read 13 real Hebrew words!!! That means that so far, we will have read a total of 26 actual Hebrew words – isn't that great!!!

!!Don't forget to bring your completed homework to each class!!