

Biblical Hebrew Course 101
– **Boot Camp** –
Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew

Lesson 8
שְׁעוֹר 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 Let’s put concepts together
- 8.02 Exercise: identify these concepts (answers on 8.09)
- 8.03 Introduce dagesh chazak
- 8.04 Practice identifying the dagesh kal & dagesh chazak
- 8.05 Introduce the vocal & silent sh’vas
- 8.06 Level 1: vocal sh’va – this sh’va at the beginning of the word is vocal
- 8.07 Level 2: vocal sh’va – 2 consecutive sh’vas
- 8.08 Exercise: Practice Levels 1 & 2 of the vocal sh’va (answers on 8.09)
- 8.09 Answers to 8.02 and 8.08

8.01 Let's put these concepts together ☺

- **Chatefs:** are a sh'va that is attached to a patach, segol, or kamats. The chatef vowels are only under guttural consonants. (Lesson 5)
 - The chatef patach is written **ֿ**. This chatef maintains the sound of the patach (as in *spa*).
 - The chatef segol is written **ֿ**. This chatef maintains the sound of the segol (as in *bed*).
 - The chatef kamats is written **ֿ**. This chatef does not maintain the sound of the kamats but it has a long “o” sound (as in *row*).
- **BeGeD KeFeT:** found only in 6 letters: **בְּגָד כֶּפֶת**. Only 3 change their sound when they have a dagesh (dot): **ב** to **בּ**; from **ג** to **גּ**; from **פ** to **פּ**. (Lesson 6)
- **Dagesh Kal:** when a BeGeD KeFeT letter opens a word or a syllable, it has a dagesh kal. (Lesson 6)
- **Diphthong:** when a yud is added to a vowel, it becomes a new vowel with a different sound. (Lesson 7)
 - The patach or kamats plus a yud changes to an “I” sound (as in *isle*).
 - The segol or tsere plus a yud becomes “ay” (as in *stay*).
 - The chirek plus a yud becomes an “ee” (this “ee” is pronounced slightly longer than the chirek by itself; the chirek yud has the sound of the “ee” as in *sleep*).
- **Syllables:** every Hebrew syllable begins with a consonant & has a vowel – no syllable can begin with a vowel. An open syllable has a consonant and a vowel. A closed syllable begins with a consonant, has a vowel, and closes with a consonant.

8.02 Exercise: identify the concepts listed above

Identify the chatef, BeGeD KeFeT, dagesh kal, diphthongs, syllables (answers on 8.09)			
Hebrew	Translation	Identify the various concepts listed above	Transliteration
1) בַּיִן	between	Bet has a <u>dagesh kal</u> because it is <u>BeGeD KeFet</u> & <u>opens</u> word. Tsere yud is a <u>diphthong</u> (sound is <u>ay</u> as in <u>stay</u>)	bayn (*“ay”: as in “stay”)
2) אֱלֹהִים	God (Elohim)	Under the aleph is a _____. Under the hay is a _____.(sound is _____,as in _____.	Eh-loh- heem
3) אֲדֹנָי	My LORD (Ps 110:1)	Under the aleph is a _____.(sound is _____, as in _____). Under the noon is a _____.(sound is _____,as in _____).	Ah-doh- nee
4) אַהֲבָה	love (noun)	Under the 1 st hay is a _____.(sound is _____, as in _____).	ah-hah- vah
5) אֹנִיָּה	ship or boat. All types of sea-going vessels (Jonah 1:3)	Under the aleph is a _____.(sound is _____, as in _____). Under the noon is a _____.(sound is _____,as in _____). The yud has a _____, which doubles the yud.	oh-nee- yah

8.03 Introduce dagesh chazak

Dagesh chazak (דגש חזק)

- The dagesh chazak looks like the dagesh kal in that they both have a dot (dagesh) in the letter.
- Gutturals don't take dageshes. (Gutturals are: aleph: א, hey: ה, chet: ח, ayin: ע, & sometimes resh: ר)
- Dagesh chazak is preceded by a vowel – any vowel.
- Dagesh chazak doubles the consonant in which it stands. Example: אָהָה = אָהָה+תָּהָה (aht-tah).

8.04 Practice identifying the dagesh kal & dagesh chazak

<i>Before looking at the Transliteration column, try to recognize dagesh kal & dagesh chazak</i>		
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration & identify the type of sh'vas (please try to read before looking at transliteration)
1) בַּמְדְּבָר	in the wilderness or desert (Dt 1:1)	bahm-meed- bahr * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגַד כְּפֹת & it does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak (mem is doubled because dagesh follows a vowel.) * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגַד כְּפֹת & bet does not follow a vowel)
2) הַמַּיִם	the water (Gen 1:2)	hahm- mi -yeem *
3) הַגִּדָּה	Haggadah (booklet that tells the story of the exodus from Egypt)	hahg-gah- dah *
4) הַשָּׁמַיִם	the heavens (Gen 1:1)	hahsh-shah- mi -yeem *

<i>ANSWERS to practice above</i>		
Hebrew	Translation	Transliteration & identify the type of sh'vas
1) בַּמְדְּבָר	in the wilderness or desert (Dt 1:1)	bahm-meed- bahr * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגַד כְּפֹת & it does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak (mem is doubled because dagesh follows a vowel.) * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגַד כְּפֹת & bet does not follow a vowel)
2) הַמַּיִם	the water (Gen 1:2)	hahm- mi -yeem * Dagesh Chazak (mem is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel.)
3) הַגִּדָּה	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.)
4) הַשָּׁמַיִם	the heavens (Gen 1:1)	hahsh-shah- mi -yeem * Dagesh Chazak (sheen is doubled because this dagesh follows a vowel.)

8.05 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 tseré, only the vocal sh'va sound is slightly quicker.

In this lesson, we will discuss some of the main rules which determine whether the sh'va is vocal (“eh”) or silent.

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

Level 1: When the sh'va is <u>under the first letter of a word</u> it is vocal. 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) שְׁמָע	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 1 st syllable is a quick “eh”. (often pronounced: b'reh- sheet)

8.07 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>, the 1st sh'va is silent & 2nd is vocal. (Note: these sh'vas must be in a row) The first of two consecutive sh'vas closes the syllable. The second of 2 consecutive sh'vas is vocal and has a quick “eh” sound.		
Word	Meaning	Syllables & Pronunciation
1) יִשְׂרְצּוּ	they (3 rd person, masculine, plural) will swarm, teem, or bring forth abundantly (Gen 1:20)	יִשְׂ רְצּוּ – draw a line between the 2 sh'vas. yeesh-reh- tsoo
2) וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ	and he (3 rd person, masculine, singular) will guard or keep you. (from the Aaronic Blessing) The ׀ is a vocal sh'va & does not count as one of the 2 consecutive sh'vas.	וַיִּשְׁ מְרֶךָ – remember for Level 2, the 2 sh'vas must be consecutive veh-yeesh-meh- reh -chah
3) יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep	יִשְׁ מְרוּ yeesh-meh- roo

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 Exercise Practice Levels 1 & 2 of the sh'va (answers on 8.09)

Word	Meaning	Transliteration	Identify the level of sh'va
1) שְׁמָעָה	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.
2) בְּנֵי	sons of	beh- nay (commonly pronounced: b' nay)	
3) יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh- roo	Level 2: there are 2 sh'vas in a row; the 1 st sh'va is silent & the 2 nd is vocal.
4) נַפְשְׁכֶם	your soul (Is 55:2)	nahf-sheh- chehm	

8.09 ANSWERS: (answers from 8.02 & 8.08)

<i>Answers to Exercise 8.02:</i> Identify the concept: <u>Chatef?</u> <u>BeGeD KeFeT?</u> <u>Dagesh kal?</u> <u>Diphthongs?</u> <u>Syllables?</u>			
Hebrew	Translation	Identify the various concepts listed above	Transliteration
1) בֵּין	between	Bet has a dagesh kal because it is BeGeD KeFeT & opens word. T'sere yud are a diphthong (sound "ay" as in "stay").	bayn (*"ay": as in "stay")
2) אֱלֹהִים	God (Elohim)	Under the aleph is a chatef segol. (sound "eh" as in "bed"). Under the hay is a chirik yud diphthong (sound "I" as in "isle").	Eh-loh- heem
3) אֲדֹנָי	My LORD (Ps 110:1)	Under the aleph is a chatef patach (sound "ah" as in "spa"). Under the noon is a chirik yud diphthong (sound "ee" as in "sleep").	Ah-doh- nee
4) אַהֲבָה	love (noun)	Under the 1 st hay is a chatef patach (sound "ah" as in "spa").	ah-hah- vah
5) אֲנִיָּהּ	ship or boat. All types of sea-going vessels (Jonah 1:3)	Under the aleph is a chatef kamats (sound "oh" as in "row"). Under the noon is a chirik yud diphthong (sound "ee" as in "sleep"). Under the yud is a dagesh chazak, which doubles the yud.	oh-nee- yah

<i>Answers to Exercise 8.08:</i> Practice Levels 1 & 2			
Word	Meaning	Transliteration	Identify the level of sh'va
1) שְׁמָעָה	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.
2) 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.
3) יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh- roo	Level 2: there are 2 sh'vas in a row; the 1 st sh'va is silent & the 2 nd is vocal.
4) נַפְשְׁכֶם	your soul (Is 55:2)	nahf-sheh- chehm	Level 2: there are 2 sh'vas in a row; the 1 st sh'va is silent & the 2 nd 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.