

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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- 9.05 Practice identifying the different levels of sh’va
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- 9.08 Review grammatical terms & definitions
- 9.09 Weekly Parasha: <https://www.faithfulstewardship.org/calendar/>

9.01 Review dagesh kal & dagesh chazak

Dagesh kal (דגש קל)

- The dagesh kal is found only in 6 BeGeD KeFeT letters. The acronym for remembering these letters is BeGeD KeFeT: **בְּגָד כָּפֶת**
- For this class, we're mainly concerned with the 3 letters that can change their sounds. These are **ב** to **בּ**; from **כ** to **כּ**; from **פ** to **פּ**.
 - 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 (דגש חזק)

- 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** = **דָּבַר** + **בַּר** = pronounced: dahb-**behr** (note: the dagesh in the **dalet** is a dagesh kal because it is part of the **בְּגָד כָּפֶת** letters; the **bet** has a dagesh chazak because it follows a vowel)
 - בְּמִדְבָּר** = **בְּמִדְבָּר** + **מֵדָבָר** = 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- behr * Dagesh Kal (dalet is part of בְּגָד כָּפֶת & does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak (bet is doubled because dagesh follows a vowel.)
2) בְּמִדְבָּר	in the wilderness or desert (Dt 1:1)	bahm-meed- bahr * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגָד כָּפֶת & does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak (mem is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel.) * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגָד כָּפֶת & 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) לְמַטֵּה	of every tribe (Num 13:2)	leh-maht- teh * Dagesh Chazak (tet 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 **ב** to **בּ**; from **כ** to **כּ**; & from **פ** to **פּ**.
- 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) לָךְ	for yourself (Gen 6:14)	leh- chah
2) בְּיוֹם	in the day (Lev 19:6)	beh- yom
3) בְּרֵאשִׁית	Genesis (In the beginning) (Gen 1:1)	beh-reh- sheet (commonly pronounced b'resheet)

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

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

Level 2: When 2 sh'vas are consecutive, the 1st is silent & 2nd is vocal.

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

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

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).

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: TIP: If a vowel is in front of a dagesh, it is a dagesh chazak.**

- The dagesh chazak doubles the consonant it is in.
- This example shows how a dagesh chazak doubles the consonant it is in. כָּלָם = כָּם + לָ + לָם
 - Note, the לָ has a dagesh chazak. Why? It follows a vowel (כָּ).
 - The לָ is doubled, because of the dagesh chazak: כָּם + לָ + לָם
 - 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 nd person: you: masculine, plural) כָּם + לָ + לָם	cool-leh- chehm (The lamed with the 1st sh'va is silent; the 2 nd lamed is vocal)
2) הַשְּׁבִיעִי	the seventh הַשְּׁ + בִּי + עִי	hahsh-sheh-vee- ee (<u>commonly pronounced</u> hahsh-shvee- ee) (The sheen with the 1st sh'va is silent; the 2 nd sheen is vocal)
3) טַפְּכֶם	your (2 nd person: you: masculine, plural) children (Dt 29:11) טַפְּ + כֶּם	tahp-peh- chehm

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

- *Dagesh chazak is easily recognizable because the dagesh chazak follows any full vowel. (The sh'va is not a full vowel.)
- 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. (*Long vowels are listed below ↓.)

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

***Long vowels:** (This is an introduction to long vowels)
kamats קָמֶץ (ֶ) // *tseré* צִירֵי (ִי) // *cholam* חוֹלָם (וֹ) // *cholam vav* חוֹלָם וּ (וּ) // *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 rd person: feminine, singular)	hi-yeh- tah (<u>commonly pronounced</u> hi-yee- tah)
2) לִבְבְּךָ	your heart (from the V'ahavta from the Shema, Dt 6:5)	leh-vah- veh -chah (<u>commonly pronounced</u> leh- vahv -chah)
3) כָּתְבֵם	write (masculine, plural)	koh-teh- veem (<u>commonly pronounced</u> koht- veem)
4) וּבְאִתּוֹ	and his oath	oo-veh-ah-lah- toh

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.

- kamats* קָמֶץ (ֶ) // *tseré* צִירֵי (ִי) // *cholam* חוֹלָם (וֹ) // *cholam vav* חוֹלָם וּ (וּ) // *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- yahd	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- lah	Non-vocal, silent sh'va, because sh'va follows a short vowel.
3) לְדַבֵּר	to speak	leh-dahb- behr	
4) תִּשְׁמָעוּ	you do/will listen (Deut 11:27)	teesh-meh- ooh	
5) כְּתָבִים	write (masculine plural)	koh- teh -veem (commonly pronounced kot' veem)	
6) בְּהָר	in or on mount or mountain	beh- hahr	
7) בְּמִדְבָּר	in desert or wilderness	beh-meed- bahr	
8) וַנִּשְׂאוּ	and they carried, they lifted, to marry (3cp)	veh-nah-seh- oo (commonly pronounced v'nahs- oo)	
9) לְחֹל	to be common (Lev 10:10; also in the Havdalah)	leh- chohl	
10) מִרְחָשֶׁת	saucepan (Lev 2:7: grain offering made in a pan)	mahr- chesh -sheht	
11) כֻּלְּכֶם	all of you (Deut 29:10)	kool-leh- chem	
12) בְּנֵי	sons of	beh- nay	
13) שִׁרְצוּ	they bring forth (Gen 9:7)	sheer- tsoo	
14) מִצְוָה	mitzvah / commandment	meets- vah	
15) זְמַן	time	zeh- mahn (commonly pronounced z'mahn)	
16) שְׂמָאל	left	seh- mohl (commonly pronounced s'mohl)	
17) אַבְרָהָם	Avraham (Abraham)	Ahv-rah- hahm	
18) מְאֹד	very	meh- ohd	
19) בְּבִקְשָׁה	please (adverb)	beh-vahk-kah- shah	

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- yahd	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- lah	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
3) לְדַבֵּר	to speak	leh-dahb- behr	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
4) תִּשְׁמָעוּ	you do/will listen (Deut 11:27)	teesh-meh- ooh	Level 2: 2 sh’vas in a row
5) כָּתְבִים	write (masculine plural)	koh- teh -veem (commonly pronounced kot’ veem)	Level 3: sh’va follows a long vowel
6) בְּהַר	in or on mount or mountain	beh- hahr	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
7) בְּמִדְבָּר	in desert	beh-meed- bahr	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter 2 nd sh’va is non-vocal, silent sh’va; it follows a short vowel
8) וַנִּשְׂאוּ	and they carried, they lifted, to marry (3cp)	veh-nah-seh- oo	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter Level 4: 2 nd sh’va follows a long vowel
9) לְחֹל	to be common (Lev 10:10 also in the Havdalah)	leh- chohl	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
10) מִרְחֶשֶׁת	saucepan (Lev 2:7: grain offering made in a pan)	mahr- cheh -sheht	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
11) כִּלְכֶם	all of you	kool-leh- chem	Level 3: sh’va is under a dagesh chazak
12) בְּנֵי	sons of	beh- nay	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
13) שִׁרְצוּ	they bring forth (Gen 9:7)	sheer- tsoo	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
14) מִצְוָה	mitzvah	meets- vah	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
15) זְמַן	time	zeh- mahn (commonly pronounced z’ mahn)	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
16) שְׂמָאל	left	seh- mohl (commonly pronounced s’ mohl)	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
17) אַבְרָהָם	Avraham (Abraham)	Ahv-rah- hahm	Non-vocal, silent sh’va, because sh’va follows a short vowel.
18) מְאֹד	very	meh- ohd	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter
19) בְּבִקְשָׁה	please (adverb)	beh-vahk-kah- shah	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

וְלַהֲבַדִּיל בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבֵין הַחֵל וּבֵין הַטְּמֵא וּבֵין הַטְּהוֹר:

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

9.08 **Review short definitions of grammatical terms**

דָּגֵשׁ קַל (dagesh kal) dagesh lene.

- Changes the sound of the consonant.

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

The 3 letters which change sound with the dagesh kal: כּ to כָּ; ט to טָ; & פּ to פָּ

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: אֶתְּהָ = אֶת-תְּהָ (aht-tah).

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

נִקְדוּת/נִקְדוּד (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

GO to CFS website: 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)