

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 (דגש קל)

1. The dagesh kal is found only in 6 BeGeD KeFeT letters. The acronym for remembering these letters is BeGeD KeFeT: **בְּגֵד כָּפֶת**
2. For this class, we're mainly concerned with the 3 letters that can change their sound. These are **ב** to **בּ**; from **כ** to **כּ**; from **פ** to **פּ**.
 - a. It is important to remember that the dagesh kal never follows a vowel. (It can follow a sh'va.)
 - b. 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)

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

בְּמִדְבָּר = **בְּמִד** + **בָּר** = pronounced: bahm-meed-**bahr** (note: the dagesh in the **bet** is a dagesh kal; the **mem** has a dagesh chazak because it generally follows a short 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 בְּגֵד כָּפֶת & does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak (bet is doubled because dagesh follows a short vowel.)
2) בְּמִדְבָּר	in the wilderness or desert (Dt 1:1)	bahm-meed- bahr * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגֵד כָּפֶת & does not follow a vowel) * Dagesh Chazak (mem is doubled because the dagesh follows a short vowel.) * Dagesh Kal (bet is part of בְּגֵד 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 short vowel.)
4) לְמִטָּה	of every tribe (Num 13:2)	leh-maht- teh * Dagesh Chazak (tet is doubled because the dagesh follows a short vowel.)

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

1. 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**.
2. Dagesh chazak generally follows a short 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) (notice: the cholam floated & should be over vav)	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) תִּשְׁמָעוּ	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) נַפְשְׁךָ	your soul (Deut 6:5)	nahf-sheh- chah
5) יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep (Ezekiel 11:20)	yeesh-meh- roo
6) שְׁבִתֶּךָ	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.**

1. The dagesh chazak doubles the consonant it is in.
2. This example shows how a dagesh chazak doubles the consonant it is in. כָּלָל = כָּל + לָל
 a. Note, the לָ has a dagesh chazak. Why? It follows a vowel (כָּ).
 b. The לָ is doubled, because of the dagesh chazak: כָּל + לָל
 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) הַשְּׁבִיעִי	the seventh הַשְּׁ + בִּי + עִי	hahsh-sheh-vee- ee (commonly pronounced hahsh-shvee- ee) (The sheen with the 1st sh'va is silent; the 2nd sheen is vocal)
2) כָּלָכֶם	all of you (2nd person: you: masculine, plural) כָּל + לָל + כֶּם	cool-leh- chehm (The lamed with the 1st sh'va is silent; the 2nd lamed is vocal)
3) טַפְּכֶם	your (2nd 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:

1. *Dagesh chazak is easily recognizable because the dagesh chazak generally follows a short vowel. (The sh'va is not a full vowel.)
2. The consonant with the dagesh chazak is doubled. כָּלָל = כָּל + לָל

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 (ֶ) // tsere צִירִי (ִ) // cholam חוֹלָם (וֹ) // cholam vav וּ // shurek שׁוּרֶק (וּ)

Diphthongs are also generally long vowels.

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 (3rd person: feminine, singular)	hi-yeh- tah (commonly pronounced hi-yee- tah)
2) לִבְּךָ	your heart (from the V'ahavta from the Shema, Dt 6:5)	leh-vah- veh -chah (commonly pronounced leh- vahv -chah)
3) כָּתְבִים	write (masculine, plural)	koh-teh- veem (commonly pronounced 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.

- a. kamats קָמֶץ (ֶ) // tsere צִירִי (ִ) // cholam חוֹלָם (וֹ) // cholam vav וּ // shurek שׁוּרֶק (וּ)
- b. Diphthongs are also generally long vowels.

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 (<u>commonly pronounced kot'veem</u>)	
6) בְּהָר	in or on mount or mountain	beh- hahr	
7) בְּמִדְבָּר	in desert or wilderness	beh-meed- bahr	
8) וַיִּשְׂאוּ	and they carried, they lifted, to marry (3cp)	veh-nah-seh- oo (<u>commonly pronounced v'nahs-oo</u>)	
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- cheh -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 (<u>commonly pronounced z'mahn</u>)	
16) שְׂמָאל	left	seh- mohl (<u>commonly pronounced s'mohl</u>)	
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) כְּתִבִּים	write (masculine plural)	koh- teh -veem (commonly pronounced kot’ veem)	Level 3: sh’va follows a long vowel
6) בְּהָר	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 2nd 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- oo	Level 1: sh’va is under 1st letter Level 4: 2nd sh’va follows a long vowel
9) לְחוּל	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) כֻּלְּכֶם	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 הַטָּמֵא וּבֵין הַטָּהוֹר:

Hebrew	Word-For-Word Translation for each word	Transliteration
1) וְלַהֲבַדִּיל	and to be divided, separated, make distinction, set apart	oo-lah-hahv- decl
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) הַטָּמֵא	the unclean, defiled	haht-tah- meh (commonly pronounced haht-tah-may)
8) וּבֵין	and between	oo- vayn
9) הַטָּהוֹר	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 כֶּ; פּ to פֶּ; & טּ to טֶ

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 short vowel, the dagesh is a dagesh chazek.

eg: אֶתְּהָ = אֶתְּהָ (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

GO to CFS website: www.FaithfulStewardship.org

CLICK on **Calendar**.

THEN, select **Yearly Calendars**.

NOW, select the **current year** (for example: 2026 Calendar & Readings)

THEN, scroll down to the **current month** (for example: Aug 2026 calendar).

FINALLY, click on **current week** (for example: 08/29/2026)