

Biblical Hebrew Course 101
Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew
Lesson 1
שְׁעוֹר א

Introducing the Hebrew aleph-bet



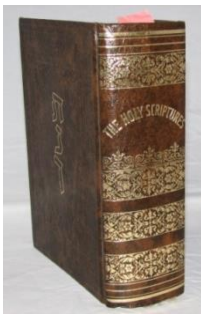
Congregation Faithful Stewardship Torah Scroll. (Written in Romania, circa 1936, during the rise of extreme anti-Semitism which led to WWII and the Holocaust.)

- 1.01 Introducing the first 5 consonants: aleph - hay
- 1.02 Practice the first 5 consonants & the first two vowels
- 1.03 Now, practice saying and writing
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INTERESTING FACT: *What did Yeshua study?*

During the time of Yeshua (Jesus), all followers of Yeshua including Yeshua Himself, the Apostles, Paul, James, etc. each read weekly from the Hebrew Scriptures (the Torah and the TaNaKh, (aka Old Testament)) on a table (which is called the Bema) in the synagogues.

1.01 First 5 letters in Hebrew Aleph-Bet (אָלֶפֶת-בֵּית עִבְרִית)



Congratulations on getting started learning Biblical Hebrew! The objective of this course is to learn to read -- write -- study in the Hebrew language of the LORD. Our desire is to learn to study God's Word effectively, which includes studying in the original language.

In this lesson, we will:

- Begin to learn to pronounce Biblical Hebrew with Sephardic pronunciation.
- (Sephardic is the pronunciation that is used in Israel today).
- Begin to print in Hebrew with Block (aka Square) Letters.
- Sound out the first 5 letters of the aleph-bet with the first 2 vowels (aka nikkud).

1.02 Practice the first 5 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*
3. Print each letter. (Copy the Block print below & refer to Aleph-Bet chart for letter formulation.)



Letters (aka consonants) & Vowels (aka nikkudot נִקּוּדוֹת)					
Please note that there are two forms of the בּ.					
The first is the בּ (bet, which has a dot/dagesh), while the second is the ב (vet, does not have a dot/dagesh).					
Block Print	Numeric Value	Name of Letter	Sound of Letter	Block Print <small>(as in English, there are slight variations in fonts)</small>	Write each Hebrew letter 5 times
א	1	aleph	<i>silent</i>	א	
ב בּ	2	bet vet	b in ball v in vice	ב בּ	
ג	3	gimmel	g in get	ג	
ד	4	dalet	d in dog	ד	
ה	5	hay	h in hi	ה	
Vowels (Note: the aleph is used below for illustration purposes. These vowels can be used with most consonants) NOTE: generally vowels are written below the consonant		Name of Vowel	Sound of Vowel There are two “ah” vowels in Hebrew. This is similar to English words that may be pronounced the same but spelled differently: “sew” & “so”. (We will discuss the grammatical reason in a future lesson.)	Block Print	Write each Hebrew letter 5 times
א		<i>kamats</i> : קָמֶץ	“ah” in spa	א	
א		<i>patach</i> : פָּתַח	“ah” in spa	א	

1.03 Now, practice saying & writing

First 5 Consonants (Consonants #1-5) & 2 vowels (nikkudot): patach & kamats				
Letter	Name	Sound	Block	Write Each Letter With Vowels 5 Times
א	aleph	<i>silent</i> (the aleph has the sound of attached vowel)	א	
אִ	aleph with kamats	ah (as in spa)	אִ	
אַ	aleph with patach	ah (as in spa)	אַ	
ב	bet	b (as in ball)	ב	
בִּ	bet with kamats	bah	בִּ	
בַּ	bet with patach	bah	בַּ	
ו	vet	v (as in vice)	ו	
וִ	vet with kamats	vah	וִ	
וַ	vet with patach	vah	וַ	
ג	gimmel	g (as in get)	ג	
גִּ	gimmel with kamats	gah	גִּ	
גַּ	gimmel with patach	gah	גַּ	
ד	dalet	d (as in dog)	ד	
דִּ	dalet with kamats	dah	דִּ	
דַּ	dalet with patach	dah	דַּ	
ה	hay	h (as in hi)	ה	
הִ	hay with kamats	hah	הִ	
הַ	hay with patach	hah	הַ	

1.04 Practice reading actual Hebrew words

1. Our objective in Hebrew 101 is to become familiar with the letters and their sounds *not* to memorize words.
2. Hebrew is read right to left and top to bottom. Begin by reading the right-most letter. Then, add the vowel that is generally written below the consonant.
3. For example: with the word אָהַב. Begin by reading the אָ; then add the הַ. We now have אָהַ (ah-hah). Finally, we add the ב. Since there is no vowel below this letter, it only has the sound of the consonant. When we put the word altogether, we have: אָהַב (ah-hahv).



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

Read & Write words below			
Hebrew <i>NOTE: generally vowels are written below the consonant</i>	Translation	Transliteration <i>The accented syllable is bold and highlighted</i> (please, try to read before looking at transliteration)	Practice Writing Each Hebrew Word
בָּהּ	in her	bah	
אָהַב*	Av is the 5 th month of the Biblical year, counting from Nisan. <i>(*note: there are 2 forms for this consonant. When there is no "dot," it is a <i>vet</i> ב; when there is a "dot," it is a <i>bet</i> ב)</i>	ahv: (reminder – "a" in Hebrew sounds <u>like</u> "a" as in spa – <u>not</u> like "a" as in apple.)	
אָב	father	ahv	
אָהַב	he loved	ah- hahv	
גָּד	Gad (as in the tribe of Gad)	gahd (like "a" in spa)	
אָהַבַּד	he was lost or perished	ah- vahd	

1.05 How Shall I Study Hebrew?

1. Consider taking your lesson with you & review it during lunch. Practice saying the first 5 letters, using the hand.
2. **Read** the Hebrew words in this lesson.
3. **Print** the words. Again, **read** the words.
4. As a general rule, the accent in Hebrew is on the final syllable.



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

1.06 Extra practice reading & writing in Hebrew

Extra Practice reading and writing			
Hebrew <i>NOTE: generally vowels are written below the consonant</i>	Translation	Transliteration <i>The accented syllable is bold and highlighted</i> (please, try to read before looking at transliteration)	Practice writing in Hebrew each word below 5 times
בָּא	I <u>come</u> (masculine); also he <u>came</u> ; arrived	bah	
בָּאָה	I <u>come</u> (feminine); also she <u>came</u>	bah -ah	
אָוָה	he was willing	ah- vah	
בָּגַד	he acted deceitfully or treacherously – <i>verb</i> (1Sam 14:33)	bah- gahd	
בָּדָד	alone (Lev 13:46)	bah- dahd	
גָּאָה	he exalted, triumphed – <i>verb</i> (Ex 15:1, 21)	gah- ah	

1.07 Homework & practice identifying letters & vowels in Genesis 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.
- Please write the name of each letter above that particular letter & the name of the vowel below the letter. (Only identify the letters & vowels which we have introduced thus far.)

Mark consonants above ↓ letter.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: א

↓ Aleph
kamats ↑

Mark vowels below ↑ the consonant.

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

Today, we read 12 *real* Hebrew words!!!