

# Biblical Hebrew Course 101

## *Learning to Read Biblical Hebrew*

Lesson 8

שְׁעוֹר ח

## Dagesh Chazak *plus* Vocal & Silent Shevas



*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

### ***Begin learning the dagesh chazak plus the vocal & silent shevas***

- 8.01 Review dagesh kal
- 8.02 Introduce dagesh chazak
- 8.03 Practice reading words with dagesh kal & dagesh chazak
- 8.04 Introduce vocal & silent shevas
- 8.05 Level 1: vocal sheva – sheva is at the beginning of the word is vocal
- 8.06 Level 2: vocal sheva – 2 consecutive shevas
- 8.07 Practice levels 1 & 2 of the vocal sheva
- 8.08 Answers to 8.04

### 8.01 Review dagesh kal – dagesh means emphasis.

Dagesh kal (דגש קל) is also called dagesh lene (or a weak dagesh)

- The dagesh kal is found only in six letters. The acronym for remembering these letters is BeGeD KeFeT: בְּגֵד כְּפֹת
- For this class, we're concerned with the 3 letters that can change their sounds. These are כּ to כ; from כּ to כ; from פּ to פ
- It is important to remember that the dagesh kal never follows a full vowel
- HINT: dagesh kal only appears in the 1st letter of a word or when it opens a syllable

### 8.02 Introduce dagesh chazak

Dagesh chazak (דגש חזק) is also called dagesh forte (or strong dagesh)

- Both the dagesh chazak & the dagesh kal look the same: both have “dots” inside a consonant.
- A dagesh chazak is immediately preceded by a full vowel (note: a sheva is a half vowel & not a full vowel).
- A dagesh chazak may appear in any consonant except the 5 gutturals (aleph: א, hey: ה, chet: ח, ayin: ע, & sometimes resh: ר).
- This dagesh doubles the consonant in which it stands. Example: אַהֲתָּהּ = אַהֲתָּ + אַהֲתָּהּ (aht-tah).
- HINT: If dagesh is preceded by a full vowel, it is a dagesh chazak.

### 8.03 Practice reading words with dagesh kal & dagesh chazak

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- <b>behr</b> * Dagesh Kal ( <b>dalet</b> is part of כְּפֹת בְּגֵד & does not follow a full vowel) * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>bet</b> is doubled because dagesh follows a full vowel.)
2. בְּמִדְבָּר	in the wilderness or desert (Dt 1:1)	bahm-meed- <b>bahr</b> * Dagesh Kal ( <b>bet</b> is part of כְּפֹת בְּגֵד & does not follow a full vowel) * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>mem</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a full vowel.) * Dagesh Kal ( <b>bet</b> is part of כְּפֹת בְּגֵד & does not follow a full vowel)
3. הַמַּיִם	the water (Gen 1:2)	hahm- <b>may</b> -yeem * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>mem</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a full vowel.)
4. לְמַטֵּה	of every tribe (Num 13:2)	leh-maht- <b>teh</b> * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>tet</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a full vowel.)
5. הַגִּדָּה	Haggadah (booklet that tells the story of the exodus from Egypt)	hahg-gah- <b>dah</b> * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>gimmel</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel.)
6. הַשָּׁמַיִם	the heavens (Gen 1:1)	hahsh-shah- <b>may</b> -yeem * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>sheen</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a full vowel.)
7. וַיִּבְדֵּל	and he divided (Gen 1:7)	vay-yahv- <b>dehl</b> * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>yud</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a vowel.) * Dagesh Kal ( <b>dalet</b> is part of כְּפֹת בְּגֵד & does not follow a full vowel)
8. יַמִּים	seas (Gen 1:10)	yahm-m- <b>mem</b> * Dagesh Chazak ( <b>mem</b> is doubled because the dagesh follows a full vowel.)
9. וַלְהַבְדִּיל	And to divide (Gen 1:18)	oo-lah-hahv- <b>deel</b> * The dot in the vav makes up the shurek vowel & it not a dagesh * Dagesh Kal ( <b>dalet</b> is part of כְּפֹת בְּגֵד & does not follow a full vowel)

### 8.04 Introduce vocal & silent shevas

The sheva can be either vocal or it can be silent. The vocal sheva is pronounced with a very quick and almost indistinguishable “eh” sound.

There are various rules which determine whether the sheva is vocal (“eh”) or silent which we will discuss in this lesson.

### 8.05 Level 1: vocal sheva – when sheva is at the beginning of a word

When the sheva is <u>under the first letter of a word it is vocal</u> . It is a sheva na (עָנָא נְאָ). This sheva 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.
שְׁמָע	Shema	sheh- <b>mah</b> (commonly pronounced: sh' <b>mah</b> )
שְׁוָא	sheva: one of the vowels in Hebrew	sheh- <b>vah</b> (commonly pronounced: sh' <b>vah</b> )
בְּרֵאשִׁית	Genesis (literally: in the head or beginning)	beh-reh- <b>sheet</b> (note: the “eh” in the 1 <sup>st</sup> syllable is very quick and written with a small font. (commonly pronounced: b'reh- <b>sheet</b> )

### 8.06 Level 2: vocal sheva – when 2 shevas are consecutive (in other words, are in a row)

When 2 Shevas are consecutive, <u>the 1st is silent</u> (חָא נְאָ) & <u>2nd is vocal</u> (עָא נְאָ). 1. The first of two consecutive shevas closes the syllable. The first sheva is silent (חָא נְאָ) 2. The second of 2 consecutive shevas is vocal (עָא נְאָ) and has a quick “eh” sound.		
Word	Meaning	Transliteration
יִשְׂרְצוּ	they (3 <sup>rd</sup> person, masculine, plural) will swarm, teem, or bring forth abundantly (Gen 1:20)	yeesh-reh- <b>tsoo</b>
וַיִּשְׁמְרוּךָ	and he (3 <sup>rd</sup> person, masculine, singular) will guard or keep you. (From the Aaronic Blessing) NOTE: The ך is a vocal sheva (עָא נְאָ) & does not count as one of the 2 consecutive shevas	veh-yeesh-meh- <b>reh</b> -chah
יִשְׁמְרוּ	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh- <b>roo</b>

#### Grammar-made-simple: Levels 1 & 2 of the vocal sheva:

- Level 1: If the sheva is under the 1<sup>st</sup> consonant of the word, it is vocal.
- Level 2: If there are 2 shevas in a row (consecutive), the 1<sup>st</sup> is silent (it closes the syllable) & the 2<sup>nd</sup> is vocal (& it opens the syllable).

## 8.07 Practice levels 1 & 2 of the sheva

When the sheva that is <u>under the first letter of a word sheva</u> , it is <u>vocal &amp; is called a sheva na</u> (עָ וְאֵ). This sheva generally has a quick and an almost indistinguishable sound: “eh”.			
When 2 Shevas are consecutive (in a row), <u>the 1st is silent</u> (אֵ וְאֵ) & <u>2nd is vocal</u> (עָ וְאֵ).			
Word	Meaning	Transliteration	Name Level of sheva & why (Answers are on 8.09)
יִשְׂרָעֹן <sup>1</sup>	they (3 <sup>rd</sup> person, masculine, plural) swarm, teem, or bring forth abundantly (Gen 1:20)	yeesh-reh- <b>tsoo</b>	Level 2: 2 shevas in a row; the 1 <sup>st</sup> sheva is silent & the 2 <sup>nd</sup> is vocal
שְׁמַע <sup>2</sup>	Shema	sheh- <b>mah</b> (commonly pronounced: sh' <b>mah</b> )	*Level 1: when a sheva is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal
בְּנֵי <sup>3</sup>	sons of	beh- <b>nay</b> (commonly pronounced: b' <b>nay</b> )	* (refer to explanation above)
יִשְׁמְרוּ <sup>4</sup>	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh- <b>roo</b>	
שְׁוָא <sup>5</sup>	sheva (one of the vowels in Hebrew)	sheh- <b>vah</b> (commonly pronounced: sh' <b>vah</b> )	
קְדוֹשִׁים <sup>6</sup>	holy (verb, masculine plural)	keh-do- <b>sheem</b> (commonly pronounced: k'do- <b>sheem</b> )	
בְּרֵאשִׁית <sup>7</sup>	Genesis (literally: in the head or beginning)	beh-reh- <b>sheet</b> (note: the “eh” in the 1 <sup>st</sup> syllable is very quick and written here with a small font)	
וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ <sup>8</sup>	and you (2 <sup>nd</sup> person, masculine, singular) will guard or keep. (From the Aaronic Blessing, Nu 6:24-26.)	veh-yeesh-meh- <b>reh</b> -chah	
רְאוּבֵן <sup>9</sup>	Reuben (Ex 1:2)	reh-oo- <b>vehn</b>	
וְאַהֲרֹן <sup>10</sup>	and Aaron (Ex 5:1)	veh-ah-hah- <b>ron</b>	
נַפְשְׁכֶם <sup>11</sup>	your soul (Is 55:2)	nahf-sheh- <b>chehm</b>	

“By studying Hebrew, we are able to get the treasures out the Word,” DH

## 8.09 ANSWERS to “Practice levels 1 & 2”

When the sheva is under the first letter of a word it is **vocal** and is called a **sheva na** (שְׁוָא נָע). This sheva generally has a quick and an almost indistinguishable sound: “eh”.

When 2 Shevas are consecutive (in a row), **the 1st is silent** (שְׁוָא נָח) & **2nd is vocal** (שְׁוָא נָע).

Word	Meaning	Transliteration	Level of sheva & why (Answers to 8.07)
יִשְׂרָעוּן <sup>1</sup>	they (3 <sup>rd</sup> person, masculine, plural) swarm, teem, or bring forth abundantly (Gen 1:20)	yeesh-reh- <b>tsoo</b>	Level 2: 2 shevas in a row; the 1 <sup>st</sup> sheva is silent & the 2 <sup>nd</sup> is vocal
שְׁמָעָה <sup>2</sup>	Shema	sheh- <b>mah</b> (commonly pronounced: sh' <b>mah</b> )	Level 1: when a sheva is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal
בְּנֵי <sup>3</sup>	sons of	beh- <b>nay</b> (commonly pronounced: b'ney)	Level 1: when a sheva is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal
יִשְׁמְרוּ <sup>4</sup>	they will guard or keep	yeesh-meh- <b>roo</b>	Level 2: 2 shevas in a row; the 1 <sup>st</sup> sheva is silent & the 2 <sup>nd</sup> is vocal
שְׁוָא <sup>5</sup>	sheva (one of the vowels in Hebrew)	sheh- <b>vah</b> (commonly pronounced: sh' <b>vah</b> )	Level 1: when a sheva is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal
קְדוֹשִׁים <sup>6</sup>	holy (verb, masculine plural)	keh-do- <b>sheem</b> (commonly pronounced: k'do- <b>sheem</b> )	Level 1: when a sheva is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal
בְּרֵאשִׁית <sup>7</sup>	Genesis (literally: in the head or beginning)	beh-reh- <b>sheet</b> (note: the “eh” in the 1 <sup>st</sup> syllable is very quick and written here with a small font)	Level 1: when a sheva is under the first consonant, it is vocal
וְיִשְׁמְרְךָ <sup>8</sup>	and you (2 <sup>nd</sup> person, masculine, singular) will guard or keep. (From the Aaronic Blessing, Nu 6:24-26.)	veh-yeesh-meh- <b>reh</b> -chah	The וְ is a vocal sheva (Level 1), because it is under the 1 <sup>st</sup> consonant & does not have a vowel preceding it Level 2: 2 shevas in a row; the 1 <sup>st</sup> sheva is silent & the 2 <sup>nd</sup> is vocal
רְאוּבֵן <sup>9</sup>	Reuben (Ex 1:2)	reh-oo- <b>vehn</b>	Level 1: when a sheva is under the first consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal
וְאַהֲרֹן <sup>10</sup>	and Aaron (Ex 5:1)	veh-ah-hah- <b>ron</b>	Level 1: sheva is under 1 <sup>st</sup> consonant & there is no vowel preceding it, it is vocal (Also, the chatef patach does not count as a sheva.) (Reminder: the dot above the “resh” is a cholam. Cholams tend to float to the right, rather than correctly appearing between the 2 consonants; in this case, the cholam should be between the “resh” and the “nun sofit”.)
נַפְשְׁכֶם <sup>11</sup>	your soul (Is 55:2)	nahf-sheh- <b>chehm</b>	Level 2: 2 shevas in a row; the 1 <sup>st</sup> sheva is silent & the 2 <sup>nd</sup> is vocal