Grade 4 Biblical Hebrew

First edition · 5 units · 10 lessons · one quarter · Hebrew from the Leningrad Codex

FIRST EDITION

Course guide

Grade 4 Biblical Hebrew is a short course of 10 lessons (5 units of 2), one lesson a week for a quarter, with three sessions of 20–30 minutes a week.

The student learns how Hebrew words break into syllables, how the strong dagesh doubles a letter, why the throat letters (gutturals) refuse it and take hurried hatef vowels, the furtive patach, and the marks that join words (maqqef) and end verses (sof pasuq).

Then the student learns the letters as numbers and the alphabet poems of Psalm 119 and Lamentations, and reads two whole verses aloud in the Hebrew of the Leningrad Codex: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet (Psalm 119:105) and Psalm 117, the shortest psalm.

> Every lesson has a short video, most under ten minutes, from Hebrew teaching channels approved for School Launch: Aleph with Beth (a free Christian Biblical Hebrew course with songs and easy Bible stories) and Daily Dose of Hebrew (two-minute verse readings by seminary professors), with a few single videos from Biblingo and BibleProject. The Daily Dose verse videos are made for adults; in the younger grades they are marked as the parent's video. Every lesson works without the video. Please preview every video yourself before you show it to your child. The videos were chosen by title and channel, and YouTube may show its own suggestions when a video ends, so stay nearby and stop the player when the lesson's part is done.

Start with Lesson 1.1 →

Who it is for

Written for students in grade 4 (about ages 9–10) who read independently. No earlier Hebrew is needed: the course reviews the letters and builds from there, though a student who has done earlier grades will feel at home. A parent or teacher reads along, joins the reading practice and checks the practice answers with the key. Nothing needs to be bought: every activity uses paper, index cards, pencil and household things.

How to use this course

1. **The weekly rhythm.** The quarter has 10 lessons, one a week, each with three sessions of 20–30 minutes. Session 1 is the warm-up, the teaching and the picture study (in the first lesson of each unit). Session 2 is the activity and the Hebrew notebook. Session 3 is the worked examples, the practice, the game and reading aloud: the student reads the week's Hebrew out loud to the family.
2. **Read it out loud every day.** Hebrew is learned by reading it aloud, a few minutes a day. Open every session by reading the alphabet, the vowel chart and the verses learned so far. Five minutes of cheerful reading beats an hour of silent staring.
3. **Story, then how Hebrew works, then doing.** The core ideas are written to be read aloud or read by the student. *The story* tells what happened; *How Hebrew works* explains the pattern; *Read it out loud* gives the sounds. After each paragraph, ask the student to tell it back.
4. **Flashcards.** Every lesson adds new letters, signs or words. Make a flashcard for each one: Hebrew on the front, the sounds and meaning on the back.
5. **The Hebrew notebook.** Use any notebook for the whole quarter: letter charts, vowel charts, copywork and translations. Write Hebrew from the right edge of the line. Date every page.
6. **Unit review and unit challenge.** Each unit ends with a short review (25 points), which may be done orally, and a unit challenge. Keep the challenge work in a folder.
7. **Right to left.** Hebrew is written and read from right to left, so a Hebrew book opens from what an English reader calls the back. Every Hebrew word in these lessons is set right to left; when the child writes, start at the right edge of the line.

8. **The word list.** The quarter teaches 40 letters, signs and words. Unit 1: טוֹב (tov), נָעִים (na‘im), אַחִים (achim), יָחַד (yachad), הַמַּיִם (hammayim), הִנֵּה (hinneh), אַתָּה (attah), וַיַּרְא (vayyar). Unit 2: אָב (av), בָּנִים (banim), הָאָרֶץ (ha’arets), רִחַם (richam), אֱלֹהִים (Elohim), אֲנִי (ani), שֶׂה (seh), בְּנִי (beni). Unit 3: רוּחַ (ruach), נֹחַ (Noach), חֵן (chen), הַמִּזְבֵּחַ (hammizbeach), בְּטַח (betach), לֵב (lev), כָּל (kol), אַל (al). Unit 4: יָמֵינוּ (yameinu), חָכְמָה (chokhmah), אֶחָד (echad), עֶשֶׂר (eser), חֲדָשִׁים (chadashim), אֱמוּנָתֶךָ (emunatekha), בֹּקֶר (boqer), רַבָּה (rabbah). Unit 5: נֵר (ner), דְּבָרֶךָ (devarekha), אוֹר (or), רַגְלִי (ragli), הַלְלוּ (halelu), גּוֹיִם (goyim), חַסְדּוֹ (chasdo), לְעוֹלָם (le‘olam).
9. **Printables.** Each lesson has a one-page worksheet, and the answers are in a separate key for the parent. Each unit review also has a printable key.
10. **The Hebrew Bible.** Hebrew verses are quoted from the Westminster Leningrad Codex, the public-domain electronic text of the Leningrad Codex, the oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Old Testament, copied around A.D. 1008. It is the Hebrew text the King James translators’ Old Testament comes from (the Masoretic text), in its oldest complete copy. In the elementary grades the verses are shown with their vowel points but without the small cantillation marks (the musical accents), which would crowd a beginner’s page; Biblical Hebrew I shows them in full. Hebrew verse numbers sometimes differ from English ones; every verse here is chosen so that the numbers match. God’s own name, written with four letters (יהוה), is printed LORD in capitals in the King James; Jewish readers have long said Adonai (“Lord”) in its place, and this course does the same. The English verse is always the King James Version, quoted exactly.

Scope and sequence

UNIT 1 · WEEKS 1–2

Syllables and the Doubling Dot

How Hebrew words break into syllables, open and closed, and how the strong dagesh doubles a letter. Psalm 133 sings how good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, and Genesis 1:4 tells how God divided the light from the darkness.

1.1 Open and Closed Syllables

1.2 The Strong Dagesh: the Doubling Dot

UNIT 2 · WEEKS 3–4

Throat Letters and Hurried Vowels

The gutturals, the four throat letters (and resh) that follow their own rules, and the hatef vowels, the quick vowels that only gutturals use. Psalm 103 says the LORD pities His children as a father, shown in Rembrandt's Return of the Prodigal Son; Abraham tells Isaac, God will provide himself a lamb.

2.1 The Gutturals

2.2 The Hatef Vowels

UNIT 3 · WEEKS 5–6

Sneaky Vowels and Verse Marks

The furtive patach, the vowel that sneaks in before a final guttural, and the marks that join and end verses: maqqef and sof pasuq. Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD; Trust in the LORD with all thine heart.

3.1 The Furtive Patach

3.2 Maqqef and Sof Pasuq

UNIT 4 · WEEKS 7–8

Letters That Count

Hebrew letters are also numbers, and the alphabet orders some of the Bible's poems. Moses prays, So teach us to number our days; Psalm 119 and Lamentations march through the alef-bet, and Rembrandt shows Jeremiah weeping over Jerusalem.

4.1 Letters as Numbers

4.2 Alphabet Poems: Psalm 119 and Lamentations

UNIT 5 · WEEKS 9–10

Reading Whole Verses

Putting every rule together to read two whole verses aloud: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet (Psalm 119:105), with William Tyndale, who learned Hebrew to give England the Bible, and the shortest psalm, Psalm 117.

5.1 Thy Word Is a Lamp: Psalm 119:105

5.2 The Shortest Psalm: Psalm 117

Weekly pacing calendar

WEEK	PLAN
1	• Session 1: Lesson 1.1 Open and Closed Syllables: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.1 reading practice, video and activity (clap-and-split cards) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet *Three sessions a week of 20–30 minutes. On the other days, read the week's Hebrew words and verse aloud for five minutes.*
2	• Session 1: Lesson 1.2 The Strong Dagesh: the Doubling Dot: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.2 reading practice, video and activity (double-letter chain) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 1 review and unit challenge (syllable ladder)
3	• Session 1: Lesson 2.1 The Gutturals: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.1 reading practice, video and activity (throat-letter sorting) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet
4	• Session 1: Lesson 2.2 The Hatef Vowels: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.2 reading practice, video and activity (lamb on the mountain) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 2 review and unit challenge (guttural mouth chart)

WEEK	PLAN
5	• Session 1: Lesson 3.1 The Furtive Patach: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.1 reading practice, video and activity (grace ark) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet
6	• Session 1: Lesson 3.2 Maqqef and Sof Pasuq: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.2 reading practice, video and activity (joined-word bracelets) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 3 review and unit challenge (verse-marks chart)
7	• Session 1: Lesson 4.1 Letters as Numbers: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.1 reading practice, video and activity (hebrew number clock) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet
8	• Session 1: Lesson 4.2 Alphabet Poems: Psalm 119 and Lamentations: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.2 reading practice, video and activity (psalm 119 letter flags) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 4 review and unit challenge (my alphabet poem)
9	• Session 1: Lesson 5.1 Thy Word Is a Lamp: Psalm 119:105: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.1 reading practice, video and activity (clay lamp) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet
10	• Session 1: Lesson 5.2 The Shortest Psalm: Psalm 117: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.2 reading practice, video and activity (nations banner) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 5 review and unit challenge (recorded reading)

Materials

Hebrew notebook (any notebook)

One for the quarter: charts, copywork and translations.

Index cards and a box, bag or ring to keep them
For the flashcard deck that grows every lesson.

Pencil, colored pencils and a fine-tip marker
For letter charts, vowel charts and lettering.

Scissors, glue, tape and some poster board or taped printer paper
For the unit challenges.

Grading

Grades come mostly from the daily work: reading aloud, the flashcard reviews, the notebook and the practice, because a language is learned by steady, honest repetition. A student who reads Hebrew out loud faithfully, keeps a neat notebook and corrects his or her own practice earns full credit.

PART	%
Reading aloud and flashcards	**30**
Hebrew notebook (dated pages, charts, copywork)	**25**
Practice (corrected with the answer key)	**15**
Unit reviews	**15**
Unit challenges	**15**

Scale: A 90–100, B 80–89, C 70–79, D 60–69. Below 60: repeat the reading drills and practice with help.

- A reading answer is right when every consonant and vowel is sounded; small differences of accent are fine.
- Unit reviews may be done orally for a student who writes slowly; the parent writes down the answers.
- Hebrew handwriting is graded on clear letter shapes written right to left, not on beauty.

A note to parents

You do not need to know Hebrew to teach this course. Every letter, vowel and word has its sounds written out, and every answer is in the answer key. Learn alongside your child, quiz each other with the flashcards, and let your child catch your mistakes.

Please preview every video yourself before you show it to your child. The videos were chosen by title and channel, and YouTube may show its own suggestions when a video ends, so stay nearby and stop the player when the lesson's part is done.

Why Biblical Hebrew? Because it is the language of most of the Old Testament, the Scriptures Jesus read and quoted. A student who can read even a little Hebrew sees with his or her own eyes the words behind the English Bible: In the beginning God created, and The LORD is my shepherd.

This is a course in the Hebrew of the Bible, not in modern politics. The stories are the stories of Scripture and of the faithful scribes, scholars and translators who copied and handed down the Hebrew text, told cheerfully and honestly.

UNIT 1

Syllables and the Doubling Dot

Lesson 1.1 teaches open syllables (ending in a vowel) and closed syllables (ending in a consonant) with Psalm 133:1 and a picture of the Good Shepherd.

Lesson 1.2 teaches the strong dagesh, the dot that doubles a letter, in הִנֵּה, הַמַּיִם and וַיַּרְא, with Genesis 1:4.

PREREQUISITES

- Grade 3 Biblical Hebrew: all the vowels and the shewa.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can split a Hebrew word into syllables.
- ☐ I can tell an open syllable from a closed one.
- ☐ I can tell a strong dagesh (doubling) from a weak dagesh (b, k, p at the start of a word).

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

1.1	**Open and Closed Syllables**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
1.2	**The Strong Dagesh: the Doubling Dot**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 1 review

The student reads aloud or writes. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**
   Split into syllables: שָׁלוֹם
2. **5 pts**
   Split into syllables: הִנֵּה
3. **5 pts**
   Is the dagesh strong or weak? בֵּן and הַמַּיִם
4. **5 pts**
   Say Psalm 133:1 in English.

ANSWER KEY

1. sha-lom: two syllables, the first open, the second closed.
2. hin-neh: the dagesh doubles the nun.
3. בֵּן: weak (b at the start of a word). הַמַּיִם: strong (it doubles the mem: ham-ma-yim).
4. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

> Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: SYLLABLE LADDER

Make a ladder poster of ten Hebrew words from this unit. Write each word on a rung, then below it the syllables with a dash between them, and mark each syllable O (open) or C (closed). Circle every strong dagesh in red.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads all ten words by syllables.
Writing	The syllables are split and labeled correctly.
Understanding	Every strong dagesh is found and explained.
Care	Hebrew is written right to left with every mark in its place.

UNIT 1 · SYLLABLES AND THE DOUBLING DOT · LESSON 1.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

1.1 Open and Closed Syllables

OBJECTIVES

- Split a Hebrew word into syllables.
- Tell an open syllable from a closed one.
- Read Psalm 133:1 syllable by syllable.

> **Warm-up.** Clap the beats in your own name, then in “Je-ru-sa-lem.” Each clap is a syllable. Hebrew words clap out the same way, and every Hebrew syllable starts with a consonant.

WATCH

Hebrew Worship - 133 תְּהִלִּים - Psalm 133 - Biblical Hebrew

Aleph with Beth · 3:21

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zrIk58p15E

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the core reading; sing along with the psalm, then watch the verse video and follow each word.

Note: Aleph with Beth sings Psalm 133 in Biblical Hebrew with the words on screen (3:21); clap the syllables of hinneh mah-tov.

BACKUP VIDEO

Psalm 133:1

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:55

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1cD7aXTz7w

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Psalm 133:1 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

syllable
One beat of a word. In Hebrew every syllable starts with a consonant and has one vowel.

closed syllable
A syllable that ends in a consonant: שִׁיר shir, טוֹב tov.

open syllable
A syllable that ends in a vowel: מַה mah, שָׁ sha.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

טוֹב

tov

TOHV

adjective

good

נָעִים

na'im

nah-EEM

adjective

pleasant

אַחִים

achim

ah-KHEEM

noun, plural

brothers, brethren

יָחַד

yachad

yah-KHAHD

adverb

together

CORE IDEAS

The story. Psalm 133 is a short song of David about brothers who live in peace: Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! God's people are like a family, and quarrels make the family sad. David says unity is like the dew that falls on the mountains, where the LORD commanded the blessing.

How Hebrew works. Every Hebrew syllable begins with a consonant and has one vowel. If it ends with that vowel, it is open: מַה mah. If it ends with a consonant, it is closed: טוֹב tov. Split words like this: שָׁלוֹם sha-lom (open, closed); אַחִים a-chim (open, closed); דָּוִד da-vid (open, closed).

A rule of thumb. A long vowel (qamets, tsere, holem) usually sits in an open syllable; a short vowel (patach, segol, hireq) usually sits in a closed one. That helps you read new words in the right rhythm.

PICTURE STUDY



The Lord Is My Good Shepherd, after Bernhard Plockhorst, late 1800s · Color print after a painting · Widely reprinted

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

The German painter Bernhard Plockhorst painted Jesus as the Good Shepherd, and prints of it hung in homes and Sunday schools all over the world. It brings together Psalm 23 (The LORD is my shepherd) and Jesus' words, I am the good shepherd (John 10:11). David, who wrote Psalm 133, was a shepherd boy before he was a king.

Look closely

- What is the shepherd carrying in each hand?
- Find the ram with curled horns.
- How do the sheep feel about their shepherd?
- Is the path smooth or rough?

Talk about it

1. Why does a shepherd carry a lamb?
2. How does a good shepherd keep the flock together, as brothers dwell together in unity?

ACTIVITY

Clap-and-split cards

Make word cards cut apart into syllables.

You will need

- Index cards
- Scissors
- A marker

Steps

1. Write five words, one per card: שָׁלוֹם, דָּוִד, אַחִים, טוֹב, שִׁיר.
2. Read each word and clap its syllables.
3. Cut each card between the syllables (remember, cut right to left).
4. Mix the pieces and rebuild the words.

Tips

- Each piece must start with a consonant.
- A one-syllable word stays whole.

Check your work

☐ I rebuilt all five words.

☐ I can say which pieces are open and which are closed.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy שָׁלוֹם, דָּוִד, אַחִים, טוֹב. Write each again split into syllables and mark O or C.

> **From history.** Psalm 133 is one of the fifteen Songs of Degrees (Psalms 120–134). Pilgrims may have sung them on the road up to Jerusalem for the feasts.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Split: נָעִים

▼ **Show solution**

1. nun + qamets = na: ends in a vowel, open.
2. ayin + hireq yod + mem = ʻim: ends in m, closed.

Answer: na-ʻim (pleasant): open, closed.

Example 2. Split: יָחַד

▼ **Show solution**

1. yod + qamets = ya: open.
2. chet + patach + dalet = chad: closed.

Answer: ya-chad (together): open, closed.

PRACTICE

1. Easy Open or closed? מַה

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Open: it ends in a vowel.

2. Easy Open or closed? טוֹב

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Closed: it ends in bet (v).

3. Easy How many syllables? שִׁיר

   ▼ **Show answer**

   One.

4. Medium Split: שָׁלוֹם

   ▼ **Show answer**

   sha-lom.

5. Medium Split: אַחִים

   ▼ **Show answer**

   a-chim.

6. Hard Translate: מַה־טּוֹב

   ▼ **Show answer**

   How good!

COMMON MISTAKES

- Starting a syllable with a vowel. In Hebrew even אַ starts with the consonant alef.
- Counting the silent yod of hireq yod as its own syllable.

> **Make it a game · Syllable hop.** Lay paper squares on the floor in a row from right to left. The parent says a Hebrew word from the lesson; hop one square for each syllable, saying it as you land. Say O or C for each landing.

> **Scripture.** "A Song of degrees of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> הִנֵּה מַה־טּוֹב וּמַה־נָּעִים
>
> Read hinneh mah-tov u-mah-naʻim, behold how good and how pleasant. Clap the syllables: hin-neh mah-tov u-mah-na-ʻim.

UNIT 1 · SYLLABLES AND THE DOUBLING DOT · LESSON 1.2 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

1.2 The Strong Dagesh: the Doubling Dot

OBJECTIVES

- Tell a strong dagesh from a weak dagesh.
- Read a doubled letter as two: ham-ma-yim.
- Read Genesis 1:4.

> **Warm-up.** Say “bookkeeper” slowly. Hear the two k’s? Now say “ham-mer” holding the m a moment. Hebrew has a dot that tells you to hold a letter like that: to say it twice.

WATCH

Genesis 1:4

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:04

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dAINJcfHcY

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the worked examples; follow the verse word by word and hold every doubled letter.

Note: Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Genesis 1:4 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

BACKUP VIDEO

Easy Story 3 - The Creation Story

Aleph with Beth · 4:50

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjVzrsHOgUM

Aleph with Beth’s easy story of the creation in simple Hebrew with pictures; listen for vayyar, and he saw.

KEY TERMS

strong dagesh (dagesh forte)
A dot inside a letter that doubles it: הַמַּיִם ham-ma-yim, the waters.

weak dagesh (dagesh lene)
A dot in בּ גּ דּ כּ פּ תּ at the start of a word or after a closed syllable. It only makes b, k, p hard: בֵּן ben.

doubling
Saying a consonant twice, once to close one syllable and once to open the next.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

הַמַּיִם

hammayim

ham-MAH-yim

noun with the article

the waters

הִנֵּה

hinneh

heen-NEH

particle

behold

אַתָּה

attah

aht-TAH

pronoun

you (one man)

וַיַּרְא

vayyar

vai-YAHR

verb

and he saw

CORE IDEAS

The story. On the first day God said, Let there be light. Then God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. Light and darkness are not equal. God calls the light good and puts the darkness in its place.

How Hebrew works. A dot inside a letter right after a vowel is a strong dagesh. It doubles the letter: the first copy closes one syllable, the second opens the next. הַמַּיִם ham-ma-yim; הִנֵּה hin-neh; וַיַּרְא vay-yar (and he saw); אַתָּה at-tah (you).

Strong or weak? In ב ג ד כ פ ת at the very start of a word, the dot is weak: בֵּן. After a vowel it is strong: הַבַּיִת hab-ba-yit (the house). The guttural letters א ה ח ע and resh never take the doubling dot; that is the subject of Unit 2.

ACTIVITY

Double-letter chain

Make a paper chain where a doubled letter links two links.

You will need

- Paper strips
- Tape
- A marker

Steps

1. Write ham on one strip and ma on the next; link them so the m's sit side by side. Write הַמַּיִם across the pair.
2. Do the same for hin-neh (הִנֵּה), vay-yar (וַיַּרְא), at-tah (אַתָּה).
3. Read each pair, holding the doubled letter.

Tips

- The doubled letter belongs to both syllables.

Check your work

☐ My chain has four pairs.

☐ I hold every doubled letter.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy הַמַּיִם, הִנֵּה, אַתָּה, וַיַּרְא. Under each write it in syllables with the doubled letter written twice in English.

> **From history.** The scribes called the Masoretes, who added the vowel points around A.D. 700–1000, marked the doubling dot so carefully that readers today still say the words just as they were chanted in the synagogue a thousand years ago.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: הַשָּׁמַיִם

▼ **Show solution**

1. he + patach = ha.
2. shin with dagesh after a vowel: strong, so hash-sha.
3. mem + patach = ma; yod + hireq + mem = yim.

Answer: hash-sha-MA-yim (the heavens).

Example 2. Strong or weak? בְּרֵאשִׁית

▼ **Show solution**

1. The bet is the first letter of the word.
2. At the start of a word the dot is weak.

Answer: Weak: it just makes the bet a b.

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: אַתָּה

   ▼ **Show answer**

   at-TAH (you).

2. Easy Read: הִנֵּה

   ▼ **Show answer**

   hin-NEH (behold).

3. Easy Strong or weak? the dot in דָּג

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Weak: start of the word.

4. **Medium** Split: הַמַּיִם

   ▼ **Show answer**

   ham-ma-yim.

5. **Medium** Which letters never take a strong dagesh?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   The gutturals א ה ח ע and resh ר.

6. **Hard** Say Genesis 1:4 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading a strong dagesh as a single letter. Hold it: ham-ma, not ha-ma.
- Confusing the dagesh with the dot of shureq וּ or holem וֹ.

> **Make it a game · Hold it!.** The parent reads a word. If it has a strong dagesh, everyone freezes for one second on the doubled letter. Take turns reading: הַמַּיִם, בֵּן, הִנֵּה, דָּג, אַתָּה, טוֹב.

> **Scripture.** “And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.” (Genesis 1:4, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> וַיַּ֣רְא אֱלֹהִ֔ים אֶת־הָאוֹר֙ כִּי־ט֔וֹב וַיַּבְדֵּ֥ל אֱלֹהִ֖ים בֵּ֣ין הָאוֹ֑ר וּבֵ֖ין הַחֹֽשֶׁךְ׃
>
> Find vayyar (and he saw) and vayyavdel (and he divided): each starts with a doubled yod. In hachoshekh, the darkness, the article cannot double the chet, a guttural.

UNIT 2

Throat Letters and Hurried Vowels

Lesson 2.1 teaches the gutturals א ה ח ע and resh, why they refuse the doubling dot, and why they like a-vowels, with Psalm 103:13 and Rembrandt.

Lesson 2.2 teaches the hatef vowels ֱ ֲ ֳ in אֱלֹהִים, חֲדָשִׁים and אֲנִיָּה, with Genesis 22:8.

PREREQUISITES

- Unit 1: syllables and the strong dagesh.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can name the four gutturals and resh.
- ☐ I can read hatef patach, hatef segol and hatef qamets.
- ☐ I can explain why אֱלֹהִים starts with a hatef vowel.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

2.1	**The Gutturals**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
2.2	**The Hatef Vowels**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 2 review

The student reads aloud or writes. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**
   Name the gutturals.

2. **5 pts**
   Read: אֱלֹהִים

3. **5 pts**
   Read and translate: אָב and בָּנִים

4. 5 pts

   Say Genesis 22:8 in English, as far as “burnt offering.”

ANSWER KEY

1. Alef א, he ה, chet ח, ayin ע (and resh ר behaves like them).
2. e-lo-HEEM (God): the hatef segol is a quick e.
3. av (father), banim (children, sons).
4. And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.

Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: GUTTURAL MOUTH CHART

Draw a large side view of a head. Mark where in the mouth and throat each guttural is made (alef and he at the throat, chet and ayin deeper). Next to each, write a Bible word that uses it and one hatef vowel word.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads all the words on the chart.
Writing	Letters and hatef vowels are written correctly.
Understanding	The chart explains why gutturals do not double.
Care	Hebrew is written right to left with every mark in its place.

UNIT 2 · THROAT LETTERS AND HURRIED VOWELS · LESSON 2.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

2.1 The Gutturals

OBJECTIVES

- Name the gutturals א ה ח ע and resh ר.
- Explain why they never take a strong dagesh.
- Read Psalm 103:13.

> **Warm-up.** Put your hand on your throat and say “ah,” “ha,” then a scratchy “kh.” Feel the buzz low down? Those are throat sounds. In Hebrew the throat letters have their own rules.

WATCH

Hebrew Worship - 103 תְּהִלִּים - Psalm 103 - Biblical Hebrew

Aleph with Beth · 6:48

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQ5tu4o0kVw

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the core reading; sing along with the first verses and point to each guttural.

Note: Aleph with Beth sings Psalm 103 in Biblical Hebrew with the words on screen (6:48); listen for rachem and rachamim, mercy.

KEY TERMS

guttural

A throat letter: א ה ח ע. Resh ר follows most of the same rules.

compensation

When a guttural cannot double, the vowel before it often grows longer: הָאָרֶץ ha-arets, not hä-arets.

רַחֵם rachem (rah-KHEM)

To have pity, mercy, tender love.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

אָב *av* **AHV** noun father	**בָּנִים** *banim* **bah-NEEM** noun, plural sons, children
הָאָרֶץ *ha’arets* **hah-AH-rets** noun with the article the earth	**רִחַם** *richam* **ree-KHAHM** verb he pitied, had mercy

CORE IDEAS

The story. Psalm 103 says: Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. Jesus told of a son who wasted all his money and came home hungry and ashamed. His father saw him a great way off, ran to him and kissed him. That is how God receives everyone who turns back to Him.

How Hebrew works. The gutturals א ה ח ע and resh ר are made deep in the throat. They follow three rules. 1. They never double: no strong dagesh. 2. They like the a-vowels (patach, qamets). 3. They take a hatef vowel instead of a vocal shewa (Lesson 2.2).

See it. The article is usually ha + doubling: הַמַּיִם. Before a guttural it cannot double, so its vowel lengthens: הָאָרֶץ ha-a-rets (the earth), הָעִיר ha-ir (the city). In רַחֵם rachem, resh takes a patach and chet stands firm without doubling.

PICTURE STUDY



The Return of the Prodigal Son, Rembrandt van Rijn, about 1668 · Oil on canvas · Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

Rembrandt painted this near the end of his life, after he had lost his wife, his children and his money. He shows the moment in Jesus' parable (Luke 15) when the father welcomes the son home. The tall man on the right is often taken to be the elder brother, who was angry at the welcome.

Look closely

- Look at the father's two hands. Are they the same?
- What do the son's clothes and feet tell you about his journey?
- Find the tall man standing on the right.
- Where is the light brightest?

Talk about it

1. How is this father like the LORD in Psalm 103:13?
2. Why might the elder brother look so stern?

ACTIVITY

Throat-letter sorting

Sort word cards by whether the article could double.

You will need

- Index cards
- A marker
- Two boxes labeled “doubles” and “cannot double”

Steps

1. Write: הַמַּיִם, הָאָרֶץ, הַשָּׁמַיִם, הָעִיר, הַיּוֹם, הָרֹאשׁ.
2. Read each word.
3. Look at the letter after ha-. Put the card in the right box.
4. Underline every guttural.

Tips

- Gutturals and resh go in “cannot double.”

Check your work

☐ I sorted all six.

☐ I can say why הָאָרֶץ has qamets.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Write the four gutturals and resh large. Copy הָאָרֶץ, הָעִיר, רַחֵם and underline the gutturals.

> **From history.** Most English readers say chet like the ch in Scottish loch. Ayin was once a deep throat sound; Greek translators sometimes wrote it as g, which is why Hebrew ‘Azzah became Gaza in English.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: הָעִיר

▼ **Show solution**

1. he + qamets = ha: the article.
2. ayin is a guttural, so no doubling; ayin + hireq yod + resh = ir.

Answer: ha-EER (the city).

Example 2. Read: כְּרַחֵם

▼ **Show solution**

1. kaf with vocal shewa = ke.
2. resh + patach = ra; chet + tsere + mem = chem.

Answer: ke-ra-KHEM (like as … pitieth).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Which of these is a guttural: ב, ע, מ?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   ע ayin.

2. Easy Read: אָב

   ▼ **Show answer**

   av (father).

3. Easy Read: בָּנִים

   ▼ **Show answer**

   ba-NEEM (children).

4. Medium Why is it הָאָרֶץ and not הַא?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Alef is a guttural and cannot double, so the article lengthens to qamets.

5. Medium Name three rules of the gutturals.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   No doubling; they like a-vowels; they take hatef vowels for a vocal shewa.

6. Hard Say Psalm 103:13 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Putting a doubling dot in a guttural. It never happens.
- Saying ayin like alef. Many readers today make them sound alike, but they are different letters; spell carefully.

> **Make it a game · Throat or lips?.** The parent shows one letter at a time. Touch your throat for a guttural (א ה ח ע ר) and touch your lips for any other letter. Then read a word with it.

> **Scripture.** “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.” (Psalm 103:13, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> כְּרַחֵם אָב עַל־בָּנִים רִחַם יְהוָה עַל־יְרֵאָיו׃
>
> Read kerachem av al-banim, like as a father pitieth his children. Underline the gutturals: resh, chet, ayin, alef, he. In the Hebrew, LORD is the holy Name; say Adonai.

UNIT 2 · THROAT LETTERS AND HURRIED VOWELS · LESSON 2.2 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

2.2 The Hatef Vowels

OBJECTIVES

- Read hatef patach ֲ, hatef segol ֱ and hatef qamets ֳ.
- Explain why gutturals take them.

- Read Genesis 22:8.

> **Warm-up.** Say “a-gain” fast, so the first a nearly disappears. That half-swallowed vowel is like today’s hurried vowels.

WATCH

Easy Story 43 - Abraham and His Son - אַבְרָהָם וּבְנוֹ

Aleph with Beth · 8:01

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXishmLJ5Ok

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the worked examples; watch the story and raise a hand at each Elohim.

Note: Aleph with Beth’s Easy Story 43, Abraham and His Son, told in simple Biblical Hebrew with pictures (8:01); listen for Elohim and avraham.

KEY TERMS

hatef vowel

A quick, hurried vowel: a shewa with a short vowel beside it. Gutturals use it where other letters would have a vocal shewa.

hatef patach

A quick a: חֲדָשִׁים cha-da-SHEEM (new ones).

hatef segol

A quick e: אֱלֹהִים e-lo-HEEM (God).

hatef qamets

A quick o: אֳנִיָּה o-nee-YAH (a ship).

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

אֱלֹהִים

Elohim

eh-loh-HEEM

noun

God

אֲנִי

ani

ah-NEE

pronoun

I

שֶׂה

seh

SEH

noun

a lamb, a sheep

בְּנִי

beni

beh-NEE

noun with suffix

my son

CORE IDEAS

The story. God tested Abraham and told him to offer his son Isaac. As they climbed the mountain, Isaac asked, Where is the lamb? Abraham answered: My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. God did provide a ram in Isaac's place. Christians see here a picture of the Lamb of God, Jesus, given in our place (John 1:29).

How Hebrew works. Where another letter would take a vocal shewa ְ(a quick e), a guttural cannot. It takes a hatef vowel: a shewa with a short vowel beside it. Read it quickly. אֱלֹהִים e-lo-him; אֲנִי a-nee (I); חֲדָשִׁים cha-da-shim.

Careful. A hatef vowel never closes a syllable and never stands alone; it always leads straight into the next syllable.

ACTIVITY

Lamb on the mountain

Make a mountain card with Genesis 22:8 climbing up it.

You will need

- Card stock
- Cotton balls
- Markers
- Glue

Steps

1. Draw a mountain. Glue a cotton-ball ram in a thicket near the top.
2. Write the Hebrew words of Genesis 22:8 up the side of the mountain, right to left: אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֶה־לּוֹ הַשֶּׂה.
3. Circle each hatef vowel in blue.

Tips

- Copy the dots exactly; a hatef vowel has three or four dots.

Check your work

☐ I copied the words carefully.

☐ I found the hatef vowels.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy אֱלֹהִים, אֲנִי, חֲדָשִׁים, אֲנִיָּה. Name each hatef vowel.

> **From history.** The place where Abraham offered Isaac is called Moriah (Genesis 22:2). Abraham named the place Jehovah-jireh, the LORD will provide (Genesis 22:14).

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: אֱלֹהִים

▼ **Show solution**

1. alef + hatef segol = e (quick).
2. lamed + holem = lo.
3. he + hireq yod + mem = heem.

Answer: e-lo-HEEM (God).

Example 2. Read: אַבְרָהָם

▼ **Show solution**

1. alef + patach + bet = av: closed.
2. resh + qamets = ra; he + qamets + mem = ham.

Answer: av-ra-HAM (Abraham).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Which letters take hatef vowels?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   The gutturals.

2. Easy Read: אֲנִי

   ▼ **Show answer**

   a-NEE (I).

3. Easy What does hatef segol sound like?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   A quick e.

4. Medium Read: אֱלֹהִים

   ▼ **Show answer**

   e-lo-HEEM.

5. Medium Why does God's title Elohim start with a hatef vowel?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Alef is a guttural, so it takes hatef segol instead of a vocal shewa.

6. Hard Say Genesis 22:8 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading a hatef vowel as a full, long vowel. Keep it quick.
- Mixing hatef qamets ֲ (o) with hatef patach ֲ (a).

> **Make it a game · Hurry-up reading.** The parent writes six words with hatef vowels and six without. Read them; on every hatef vowel, say it as fast as you can. A wrong long vowel costs a point.

> **Scripture.** "And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together." (Genesis 22:8, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֶה־לּוֹ הַשֶּׂה
>
> Find Elohim with its hatef segol. Then find yir'eh-lo, will provide himself (literally, will see for himself), joined by a maqqef.

UNIT 3

Sneaky Vowels and Verse Marks

Lesson 3.1 teaches the furtive patach in נֹחַ, רוּחַ, and הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, with Edward Hicks's Noah's Ark and Genesis 6:8.

Lesson 3.2 teaches maqqef ־ (the joining line) and sof pasuq :(the end of a verse), with Proverbs 3:5.

PREREQUISITES

- Unit 2: gutturals and hatef vowels.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read a furtive patach before its letter.
- ☐ I can find a maqqef and read the joined words as one.
- ☐ I can find the sof pasuq at the end of a verse.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

3.1	**The Furtive Patach**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
3.2	**Maqqef and Sof Pasuq**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 3 review

The student reads aloud or writes. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**
   Read: רוּחַ and נֹחַ

2. **5 pts**
   What does a maqqef do?

3. **5 pts**
   What is the sof pasuq?

4. **5 pts**
   Say Proverbs 3:5 in English.

ANSWER KEY

1. ROO-ach (spirit, wind) and NO-ach (Noah): the patach is read before the chet.
2. It joins two or more words so they are read as one, with one main stress.
3. Two diamond dots :that end a verse, like a period.
4. Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

> Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: VERSE-MARKS CHART

Copy Proverbs 3:5 in Hebrew on a long strip. Color each maqqef green, the sof pasuq red, and any furtive patach blue. Below, write the verse in English and an explanation of each mark.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads the whole verse.
Writing	The marks are copied and colored correctly.
Understanding	Each mark is explained.
Care	Hebrew is written right to left with every mark in its place.

UNIT 3 · SNEAKY VOWELS AND VERSE MARKS · LESSON 3.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

3.1 The Furtive Patach

OBJECTIVES

- Find a furtive patach under a final ח, ע or ה.
- Read it before the letter: ru-ach.
- Read Genesis 6:8.

> **Warm-up.** Try to say “rooch” without any vowel before the scratchy ch. Hard! Now say “roo-ach.” Hebrew slips a little a in to help, and today you learn how it is marked.

WATCH

Easy Story 34 - Noah the Righteous & the Floodwaters נֹחַ הַצַּדִּיק וּמֵי הַמַּבּוּל

Aleph with Beth · 6:28

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoR1Xg6CkoE

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the core reading; watch the Noah story, then the verse video for ruach Elohim.

Note: Aleph with Beth's easy story of Noah in simple Biblical Hebrew with pictures; listen for noach.

BACKUP VIDEO

Genesis 1:2

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:06

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2txBWG9pQg

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Genesis 1:2 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

furtive patach

A patach under a final ח, ע or ה after another vowel. Read it before the letter: רוּחַ ROO-ach.

נֹחַ Noach (NO-ach)

Noah: his name means rest.

חֵן chen (KHAYN)

Grace, favor.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

רוּחַ

ruach

ROO-ahkh

noun

spirit, wind, breath

נֹחַ

Noach

NOH-ahkh

name

Noah

חֵן

chen

KHAYN

noun

grace, favor

הַמִּזְבֵּחַ

hammizbeach

hahm-meez-BEH-ahkh

noun with the article

the altar

CORE IDEAS

The story. The whole earth was filled with violence, and God was grieved. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. Grace means favor that is given, not earned. God told Noah to build an ark, and Noah did all that God commanded.

How Hebrew works. A word can end in a guttural after a vowel that is not a: רוּחַ, נֹחַ. The throat needs a little a to get there, so a patach slips in. It is written under the last letter but read before it: ru-ach, no-ach, הַמִּזְבֵּחַ ham-miz-be-ach (the altar).

Careful. The furtive patach adds no new syllable beat in the stress: say ROO-ach and NO-ach, with the stress on the first vowel.

PICTURE STUDY



Noah's Ark, Edward Hicks, 1846 · Oil on canvas · Philadelphia Museum of Art

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

Edward Hicks was a Quaker preacher and sign painter from Pennsylvania. He painted Noah's Ark from a popular print, adding his own bright, calm animals. He painted this one in 1846, three years before he died.

Look closely

- Which animals are first in line?
- Find a pair of birds.
- What is the weather doing?
- Where is the door of the ark?

Talk about it

1. Why do the animals look so calm?
2. What does it mean that Noah found grace?

ACTIVITY

Grace ark

Make a paper ark with the Hebrew of Genesis 6:8 on its side.

You will need

- Brown paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers

Steps

1. Cut out an ark shape.
2. Write וְנֹחַ מָצָא חֵן on the side, right to left.
3. Draw the furtive patach under the chet in blue.
4. Add animal pairs on top.

Tips

- The patach goes under the chet but is read before it.

Check your work

☐ I read my ark's words aloud.

☐ I can say why the patach is "furtive."

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy רוּחַ, נֹחַ, הַמִּזְבֵּחַ and mark each furtive patach.

> **From history.** Noah's name means rest; his father Lamech said, This same shall comfort us (Genesis 5:29). The words noach and nacham (comfort) sound alike.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: רוּחַ

▼ **Show solution**

1. resh + shureq = roo.
2. Final chet with patach after another vowel: furtive, so read a before ch.

Answer: ROO-ach (spirit, wind).

Example 2. Read: הַמִּזְבֵּחַ

▼ **Show solution**

1. ha + doubled mem: ham-miz.
2. bet with tsere = be; furtive patach + chet = ach.

Answer: ham-miz-BE-ach (the altar).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: נֹחַ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   NO-ach (Noah).

2. Easy Read and translate: חֵן

   ▼ **Show answer**

   chen, grace.

3. Easy Under which letters can a furtive patach come?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Final ח, ע or ה.

4. Medium Read: רוּחַ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   ROO-ach.

5. Medium Is the patach read before or after the letter?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Before.

6. Hard Say Genesis 6:8 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading רוּחַ as roo-cha. The a comes first: roo-ach.
- Putting the stress on the furtive a.

> **Make it a game · Sneak it in.** The parent writes words ending in ח or ע, some with a furtive patach and some without. Read them; when you meet a furtive patach, whisper the a before the last letter.

> **Scripture.** “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” (Genesis 6:8, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> וְנֹחַ מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה׃
>
> Read venoach matsa chen, and Noah found grace. Noach has a furtive patach. LORD is the holy Name; say Adonai.

UNIT 3 · SNEAKY VOWELS AND VERSE MARKS · LESSON 3.2 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

3.2 Maqqef and Sof Pasuq

OBJECTIVES

- Find a maqqef and read the joined words as one unit.
- Find the sof pasuq at the end of a verse.
- Read Proverbs 3:5.

> **Warm-up.** Say “mother-in-law” as one word. The little lines join three words into one. Hebrew has a joining line too, and it sits up high.

WATCH

Proverbs 3:5

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 4:15

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ksu0coSHPEk

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the core reading; follow the verse and lift a finger at each maqqef.

Note: Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Proverbs 3:5 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

maqqef ־

A short high line that joins words into one unit with one main stress: אֶל־יְהוָה el-Adonai, unto the LORD.

sof pasuq ׃

End of verse: two diamond-shaped dots, like a colon, after the last word of every verse.

בְּטַח betach (beh-TAHKH)

Trust! (a command).

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

בְּטַח *betach* **beh-TAHKH** verb, command trust!	**לֵב** *lev* **LAYV** noun heart
כָּל *kol* **KOHL** noun all, every	**אַל** *al* **AHL** particle do not

CORE IDEAS

The story. King Solomon wrote: Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. To lean on something is to put your weight on it. We are not to put our whole weight on our own cleverness but on God.

How Hebrew works. The maqqef ־ sits high, at the top of the line. It joins short words to the next word so they are said together: בְּכָל־לִבֶּךָ, אֶל־יְהוָה (with all thy heart), אַל־תִּשָּׁעֵן (lean not). The sof pasuq ׃ ends the verse.

Watch. A word before a maqqef loses its own stress and may shorten its vowel: kol (all) becomes khol- in bekhol-libbekha.

ACTIVITY

Joined-word bracelets

Make bead bracelets where joined words share one string.

You will need

- Paper beads or squares
- Yarn
- A marker

Steps

1. Write the words of Proverbs 3:5 on squares.
2. String them right to left. Where there is a maqqef, tie the two squares tightly together.
3. Put a red bead at the end for the sof pasuq.
4. Read the verse along the string.

Tips

- Four maqqefs in this verse.

Check your work

☐ My string has every word in order.

☐ I read joined words together.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Proverbs 3:5 in Hebrew. Color each maqqef green and the sof pasuq red.

> **From history.** The chapter and verse numbers in our Bibles were added much later (verses in the Old Testament were fixed by the Masoretes; the numbers came in the 1400s–1500s), but the sof pasuq marked the end of each verse long before the numbers.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: בְּכָל־לִבֶּךָ

▼ **Show solution**

1. bekhol: with all (kol shortened before the maqqef).
2. libbekha: thy heart (doubled bet).

Answer: be-khol-lib-be-KHA: one unit, one main stress.

Example 2. Read: וְאֶל־בִּינָתְךָ

▼ **Show solution**

1. ve-el: and unto.
2. binatekha: thine understanding.

Answer: ve-el-bee-na-te-KHA.

PRACTICE

1. Easy Where does the maqqef sit: low or high?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   High, at the top of the line.

2. Easy What mark ends every verse?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   The sof pasuq :

3. Easy Read: אֶל־

   ▼ **Show answer**

   el- (unto).

4. Medium How many maqqefs are in Proverbs 3:5?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Four.

5. Medium Translate: בְּטַח

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Trust!

6. Hard Say Proverbs 3:5–6 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading a maqqef like a hyphen in English and pausing. Run the words together.
- Mistaking the sof pasuq for a colon in the middle of a verse.

> **Make it a game · Link up.** Write each word of Proverbs 3:5 on a card. Players take turns laying the cards right to left. Laying a word that needs a maqqef, you must hook your finger with the next player's: you are joined!

> **Scripture.** "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." (Proverbs 3:5, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> בְּטַח אֶל־יְהוָה בְּכָל־לִבֶּךָ וְאֶל־בִּינָתְךָ אַל־תִּשָּׁעֵן׃
>
> Count the maqqefs: el-Adonai, bekhol-libbekha, ve'el-binatekha, al-tishsha'en. Find the sof pasuq at the end. LORD is the holy Name; say Adonai.

UNIT 4

Letters That Count

Lesson 4.1 teaches the letters as numbers (alef 1 to tav 400) with Psalm 90:12.

Lesson 4.2 shows the alphabet poems: the 22 stanzas of Psalm 119 and the alphabet chapters of Lamentations, with Lamentations 3:23 and Rembrandt's Jeremiah.

PREREQUISITES

- The letters in order.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can give the number value of any letter.
- ☐ I can write small numbers in Hebrew letters.
- ☐ I can explain what an acrostic poem is.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

4.1	**Letters as Numbers**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
4.2	**Alphabet Poems: Psalm 119 and Lamentations**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 4 review

The student answers aloud or in writing. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**
   What are the values of א, י, ק and ת?

2. **5 pts**
   Write 12 and 22 in Hebrew letters.

3. **5 pts**
   How many stanzas does Psalm 119 have, and how many verses in each?

4. **5 pts**
   Say Lamentations 3:23 in English.

ANSWER KEY

1. 1, 10, 100, 400.
2. (10+2) יב and (20+2) כב.
3. 22 stanzas, one for each letter, with 8 verses each: 176 verses.
4. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: MY ALPHABET POEM

Write a short poem of praise in English with eight lines. Begin the lines with the sounds of alef, bet, gimel, dalet, he, vav, zayin, chet (A, B, G, D, H, V, Z, Ch), and write the Hebrew letter in the margin of each line. Number the lines with Hebrew letters.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads the poem and the letter names.
Writing	The letters and numbers are written correctly.
Understanding	The poem follows the alphabet in order.
Care	Hebrew is written right to left with every mark in its place.

UNIT 4 · LETTERS THAT COUNT · LESSON 4.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

4.1 Letters as Numbers

OBJECTIVES

- Give the number value of each letter.
- Write numbers to 99 in letters.
- Read Psalm 90:12.

Warm-up. Write your age in Roman numerals. The Romans used letters as numbers, and so did the Hebrews. Today you can write your age in Hebrew.

WATCH

Hebrew - Aleph-Bet Hebrew Alphabet Song - Free Biblical Hebrew

Aleph with Beth · 2:12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFkuW-tQsog

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> before the number chart; sing the alef-bet and count on your fingers: 1 to 9, then 10s, then 100s.

Note: Aleph with Beth's Aleph-Bet song (2:12): the 22 letters sung in order, each letter on screen.

KEY TERMS

units

א 1, ב 2, ג 3, ד 4, ה 5, ו 6, ז 7, ח 8, ט 9.

tens

י 10, כ 20, ל 30, מ 40, נ 50, ס 60, ע 70, פ 80, צ 90.

hundreds

ק 100, ר 200, ש 300, ת 400.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

יָמֵינוּ

yameinu

yah-MAY-noo

noun with suffix

our days

חָכְמָה

chokhmah

khokh-MAH

noun

wisdom

אֶחָד

echad

eh-KHAHD

number

one

עֶשֶׂר

eser

EH-ser

number

ten

CORE IDEAS

The story. Psalm 90 is a prayer of Moses, the oldest psalm. Moses saw how short life is: the days of our years are threescore years and ten. So he prayed: So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. To number our days is to remember that each day is a gift to use well.

How it works. Add the letters, biggest first, from right to left: יב = 10 + 2 = 12; כב = 22; קנ = 150 (the number of the Psalms). Fifteen is written טו (9 + 6), not ה + י, and sixteen טז (9 + 7), to avoid spelling part of God's name.

Where you see it. Hebrew Bibles number chapters and verses with letters. The 22 stanzas of Psalm 119 are headed by the letters in order.

ACTIVITY

Hebrew number clock

Make a clock face with Hebrew-letter numbers.

You will need

- A paper plate
- A brad fastener
- Paper hands
- Markers

Steps

1. Write א to יב around the plate where 1–12 go.
2. Attach the hands with the brad.
3. Set the clock and read the time in Hebrew letters.

Tips

- 11 is יא and 12 is יב.

Check your work

- ☐ My clock has all 12 numbers.
- ☐ I can read any hour.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Write the numbers 1–10, 20, 30, 100 and 400 in Hebrew letters. Write your age.

> **From history.** Psalm 90 has the heading A Prayer of Moses the man of God. If Moses wrote it, it is among the oldest songs in the Bible.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. What number is לג?

▼ **Show solution**

1. lamed = 30.
2. gimel = 3.

Answer: 33.

Example 2. Write 119 in Hebrew letters.

▼ **Show solution**

1. 100 = ק.
2. 19 = 10 + 9 = יט.

Answer: קיט.

PRACTICE

1. Easy What is ה?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   5.

2. Easy What is כ?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   20.

3. Easy What is ק?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   100.

4. Medium Write 15 in Hebrew letters.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   (6 + 9) טו.

5. Medium What is כג?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   23.

6. Hard Say Psalm 90:12 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing small numbers first. Write the biggest value first, on the right.
- Writing 15 as יה. Use טו.

> **Make it a game · Number race.** The parent calls a number from 1 to 99; the first to write it in Hebrew letters scores. Then switch: the parent writes letters and you add them up.

> **Scripture.** “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” (Psalm 90:12, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> לִמְנוֹת יָמֵינוּ כֵּן הוֹדַע וְנָבֹא לְבַב חָכְמָה׃
>
> Read limnot yameinu, to number our days. The word limnot comes from the same root as manah, to count.

4.2 Alphabet Poems: Psalm 119 and Lamentations

OBJECTIVES

- Explain what an acrostic is.
- Find the letter that heads each stanza of Psalm 119.
- Read Lamentations 3:23.

> **Warm-up.** Try to say a list of things you thank God for, one for each letter: A, B, C … How far can you get? Bible poets did this with the Hebrew alphabet.

WATCH

Psalm 119:169

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:16

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7B5tL-y9UUE

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the core reading; this is the first verse of the tav stanza, the last letter.

Note: Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Psalm 119:169 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

BACKUP VIDEO

Hebrew - Aleph-Bet Hebrew Alphabet Song - Free Biblical Hebrew

Aleph with Beth · 2:12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFkuW-tQsog

Aleph with Beth's Aleph-Bet song (2:12): the 22 letters sung in order, each letter on screen.

KEY TERMS

acrostic

A poem where each line or stanza starts with the next letter of the alphabet.

stanza

A group of lines in a poem. Psalm 119 has 22 stanzas of 8 verses.

אֱמוּנָה emunah (eh-moo-NAH)

Faithfulness, firmness.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

חֲדָשִׁים

chadashim

khah-dah-SHEEM

adjective, plural

new

אֱמוּנָתֶךָ

emunatekha

eh-moo-nah-TEH-khah

noun with suffix

thy faithfulness

בֹּקֶר

boqer

BOH-ker

noun

morning

רַבָּה

rabbah

rahb-BAH

adjective

great, much

CORE IDEAS

The story. Jeremiah saw Jerusalem burned by the Babylonians. In Lamentations he weeps, but in the middle of his grief he remembers: It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

How it works. Psalm 119 has 22 stanzas, one for each letter. All eight verses of the alef stanza begin with alef, all eight of the bet stanza with bet, and so on to tav: 176 verses in all. Lamentations 1, 2 and 4 have 22 verses, one per letter. Lamentations 3 has 66 verses: three for each letter. Verses 22, 23 and 24 all begin with chet: חַסְדֵי, חֶלְקִי, חֲדָשִׁים.

Why? An alphabet poem is easy to memorize, and it says, "from A to Z." Psalm 119 praises God's word from every side, alef to tav.

PICTURE STUDY



Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem, Rembrandt van Rijn, 1630 · Oil on panel · Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

Rembrandt painted this when he was about 24. The weeping prophet sits apart from the burning city he warned about. The book beside him is marked Bibel, and the gold objects may be treasures he saved.

Look closely

- What is burning in the background?
- Where is Jeremiah looking?
- Find the book.
- Where does the light fall?

Talk about it

1. Why would Jeremiah say God's mercies are new every morning even here?
2. How does Rembrandt use light and darkness?

ACTIVITY

Psalm 119 letter flags

Make 22 small flags, one for each stanza of Psalm 119.

You will need

- 22 paper triangles
- String
- Tape
- A marker

Steps

1. Write one letter on each flag, with its stanza number (alef 1, bet 2 … tav 22).
2. Under each, write the verse number where its stanza starts (1, 9, 17 …).
3. Hang them right to left across a wall.

Tips

- Each stanza starts 8 verses after the last.

Check your work

☐ I made all 22 flags.

☐ I can find any stanza.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Write the 22 letters with the first verse of each Psalm 119 stanza (1, 9, 17 … 169).

> **From history.** Other acrostics are Psalms 9–10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112 and 145, and Proverbs 31:10–31 (the virtuous woman).

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Which letter heads Psalm 119:105?

▼ **Show solution**

1. 105 − 1 = 104; 104 ÷ 8 = 13.
2. So it is the 14th stanza: nun.

Answer: Nun: verse 105 begins נֵר, a lamp.

Example 2. Read: חֲדָשִׁים

▼ **Show solution**

1. chet + hatef patach = cha.
2. da + shim.

Answer: cha-da-SHEEM (new ones).

PRACTICE

1. Easy How many letters are in the Hebrew alphabet?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   22.

2. Easy How many verses does Psalm 119 have?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   176.

3. Easy Which letter heads the last stanza?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Tav.

4. Medium Which letter begins Lamentations 3:22–24?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Chet.

5. Medium What is an acrostic?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   A poem whose lines or stanzas follow the alphabet.

6. Hard Say Lamentations 3:22–23 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Thinking every verse of Psalm 119 starts a new letter. Each letter has eight verses.
- Forgetting that Lamentations 3 has three verses per letter.

> **Make it a game · Stanza hunt.** The parent names a letter; find the verse where its Psalm 119 stanza begins (1 + 8 × its place minus 1). Check in a Bible: in many Bibles the Hebrew letter is printed above each stanza.

> **Scripture.** "They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:23, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> חֲדָשִׁים לַבְּקָרִים רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתֶךָ׃
>
> Read chadashim labbeqarim, new every morning. The verse begins with chet, in the chet section of this alphabet chapter.

UNIT 5

Reading Whole Verses

Lesson 5.1 reads Psalm 119:105 aloud, word by word and then smoothly, with the portrait of William Tyndale.

Lesson 5.2 reads Psalm 117, the shortest psalm, and reviews the quarter.

PREREQUISITES

- Units 1–4.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read Psalm 119:105 aloud from the Hebrew.
- ☐ I can read Psalm 117:1 aloud.
- ☐ I can explain each mark in these verses.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

5.1	**Thy Word Is a Lamp: Psalm 119:105**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
5.2	**The Shortest Psalm: Psalm 117**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 5 review

The student reads aloud. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**
   Read Psalm 119:105 aloud in Hebrew.
2. **5 pts**
   Translate ner, devarekha and or.
3. **5 pts**
   Read Psalm 117:1 aloud in Hebrew.
4. **5 pts**
   What does halelu-yah mean?

ANSWER KEY

1. ner-leragli devarekha ve’or lintivati.
2. Lamp, thy word, light.
3. halelu et-Adonai kol-goyim, shabbechuhu kol-ha’ummim.
4. Praise ye the LORD (literally, praise Yah).

Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: RECORDED READING

Record yourself reading Psalm 119:105 and Psalm 117:1–2 in Hebrew, then in English (KJV). Make a cover card with both verses copied in Hebrew.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The verses are read clearly with good syllables.
Writing	The Hebrew is copied with all marks.
Understanding	The student can translate each word.
Care	Hebrew is written right to left with every mark in its place.

UNIT 5 · READING WHOLE VERSES · LESSON 5.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

5.1 Thy Word Is a Lamp: Psalm 119:105

OBJECTIVES

- Read Psalm 119:105 aloud, word by word, then smoothly.
- Name each mark in the verse.
- Translate its key words.

Warm-up. Turn off the lights and walk across the room holding a flashlight pointed at your feet. You can see only the next step. That is what this verse says God’s word does.

WATCH

Psalm 119:105

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:46

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nn1rt1A0F1Y

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the worked examples; read along, then try the next verse with the video.

Note: Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Psalm 119:105 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

BACKUP VIDEO

Psalm 119:106

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:42

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBO9lBvQLt4

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Psalm 119:106 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

נֵר ner (NAYR)

A lamp: in Bible times, a small clay lamp burning olive oil.

דְּבָרְךָ devarekha (de-vah-REH-khah)

Thy word.

נְתִיבָה netivah (ne-tee-VAH)

A path.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

נֵר *ner* **NAYR** noun lamp	דְּבָרְךָ *devarekha* **deh-vah-REH-khah** noun with suffix thy word
אוֹר *or* **OHR** noun light	רַגְלִי *ragli* **rahg-LEE** noun with suffix my foot

CORE IDEAS

The story. A clay lamp gave only a little light, enough for the next few steps. The psalmist says God's word is like that: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. William Tyndale believed every plowboy should be able to read that word, so he learned Hebrew and Greek and translated the Bible into English. Much of his wording lives on in the King James Version.

Read it.

> נֵר־לְרַגְלִי דְּבָרְךָ וְאוֹר לִנְתִיבָתִי׃

ner-le-rag-LEE (a lamp to my feet: maqqef!) de-va-RE-kha (thy word) ve-OR (and a light) lin-tee-va-TEE (to my path), and the sof pasuq.

Rules you used. Syllables (lin-ti-va-ti), maqqef (ner-leragli), vocal shewa (le-, de-), holem vav (or), and the suffix -i, my.

PICTURE STUDY



Portrait of William Tyndale, unknown engraver, after an older painting, 1836 · Hand-colored engraving · Printed copy; many collections

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

William Tyndale (about 1494–1536) translated the New Testament and much of the Old Testament from Hebrew and Greek into English. Printing English Bibles was against the law then, and Tyndale was strangled and burned at the stake near Brussels. His last words were reported as, Lord, open the King of England's eyes. About 75 years later, the King James translators kept much of his English.

Look closely

- What is Tyndale pointing at?
- What is he wearing?
- Read the Latin word MARTYR in the gold letters. What does it tell you?
- Find the paper scroll.

Talk about it

1. Why would someone risk his life to translate the Bible?
2. How is the Bible a lamp for you?

ACTIVITY

Clay lamp

Make a model clay lamp with Psalm 119:105 on a tag.

You will need

- Air-dry clay
- A battery tea light
- Card and string

Steps

1. Pinch a small bowl from the clay and pull out a spout.
2. Set the battery tea light in it.
3. Write נֵר־לְרַגְלִי דְּבָרֶךָ on a tag and tie it on.
4. Read the verse by your lamp.

Tips

- Do not use a real flame without a parent.

Check your work

☐ My lamp holds the light.

☐ I read the verse from my tag.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Psalm 119:105 in Hebrew. Under each word write it in syllables and in English.

> **From history.** Psalm 119:105 begins the nun stanza: all eight of its verses start with nun.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: לְרַגְלִי

▼ **Show solution**

1. lamed + vocal shewa = le.
2. resh + patach + gimel = rag (closed); lamed + hireq yod = lee.

Answer: le-rag-LEE (to my feet).

Example 2. Read: לִנְתִיבָתִי

▼ **Show solution**

1. lin (closed).
2. tee-va-tee.

Answer: lin-tee-va-TEE (to my path).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Translate: נֵר

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Lamp.

2. Easy Translate: אוֹר

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Light.

3. Easy What does the ending -i mean?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   My.

4. Medium Find the maqqef in the verse.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   ner-leragli.

5. Medium Split: דְּבָרְךָ

▼ **Show answer**

de-va-re-kha.

6. Hard Read the whole verse aloud in Hebrew.

▼ **Show answer**

ner-leragli devarekha ve’or lintivati.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading the shewa in לְרַגְלִי as silent. At the start of a word it is vocal: le.
- Forgetting that the final kaf in דְּבָרְךָ carries a qamets: kha.

> **Make it a game · Lamp relay.** Darken the room. Pass a flashlight; whoever holds it reads the next Hebrew word of the verse. Go around until the verse is read three times without a mistake.

> **Scripture.** “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105, KJV)
>
> In Hebrew, from the Leningrad Codex:
>
> נֵר־לְרַגְלִי דְּבָרְךָ וְאוֹר לִנְתִיבָתִי׃
>
> Read the whole verse aloud: ner-leragli devarekha ve’or lintivati.

5.2 The Shortest Psalm: Psalm 117

OBJECTIVES

- Read Psalm 117:1 aloud.
- Find halelu-yah.
- Review the quarter’s rules.

> **Warm-up.** Count how many words are in your favorite song. Psalm 117 has only 17 Hebrew words, but it calls the whole world to praise God.

WATCH

Hebrew Worship - Psalm 117 - הַלְלוּ אֶת־יהוה Biblical Hebrew

Aleph with Beth · 1:47

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKLID-Rjybg

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the core reading; sing the psalm, then listen to the verse read slowly.

Note: Aleph with Beth sings Psalm 117 in Biblical Hebrew with the words on screen (1:47).

BACKUP VIDEO

Psalm 117:1 - Biblical Hebrew

Biblingo: Learn the Biblical Languages · 0:17

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLi0h1NKBhc

Biblingo reads Psalm 117:1 aloud in Biblical Hebrew with the text on screen (0:17).

KEY TERMS

הַלְלוּ halelu (ha-le-LOO)

Praise! (said to many people).

גּוֹיִם goyim (goh-YEEM)

Nations.

חַסְדּוֹ chasdo (khahs-DOH)

His merciful kindness, his steadfast love.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

הַלְלוּ *halelu* **hah-leh-LOO** verb, command praise!	גּוֹיִם *goyim* **goh-YEEM** noun, plural nations
חַסְדּוֹ *chasdo* **khahs-DOH** noun with suffix his merciful kindness	לְעוֹלָם *le'olam* **leh-oh-LAHM** phrase for ever

CORE IDEAS

The story. Psalm 117 is the shortest psalm and the shortest chapter in the Bible: O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD. Paul quotes it in Romans 15:11 to show that the good news is for every nation.

Read it.

> הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כָּל־גּוֹיִם שַׁבְּחוּהוּ כָּל־הָאֻמִּים׃

ha-le-LOO et-Adonai kol-go-YIM shab-be-CHU-hu kol-ha-um-MIM. The holy Name is read Adonai.

Hallelujah. The psalm ends הַלְלוּ־יָהּ, halelu-yah: praise Yah, a short form of God's name. The dot in the final he (mappiq) means the h is sounded.

ACTIVITY

Nations banner

Make a banner calling all nations to praise.

You will need

- A long paper strip
- Markers
- A world map or atlas

Steps

1. Write הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כָּל־גּוֹיִם across the top.
2. Around it, write the names of ten countries.
3. Read the Hebrew aloud, then the KJV.

Tips

- Copy each maqqef.

Check your work

☐ I read the Hebrew without help.

☐ I can say what goyim means.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Psalm 117:1 in Hebrew. Mark maqqefs green, the sof pasuq red, every strong dagesh in red, and every vocal shewa in blue.

> **From history.** Psalm 117 belongs to the Hallel (Psalms 113–118), sung at Passover. Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn after the Last Supper (Matthew 26:30), very likely from these psalms.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: שַׁבְּחוּהוּ

▼ **Show solution**

1. shab: closed (patach + bet with strong dagesh).
2. be-CHU: vocal shewa then chet + shureq.
3. hu: he + shureq.

Answer: shab-be-CHU-hu (praise him).

Example 2. Read: הָאֻמִּים

▼ **Show solution**

1. ha: article with qamets before the alef (a guttural).
2. um: qibbuts + doubled mem; mim.

Answer: ha-um-MEEM (the peoples).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Translate: הַלְלוּ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Praise!

2. Easy Translate: גּוֹיִם

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Nations.

3. Easy How many verses are in Psalm 117?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Two.

4. Medium Why is the article הָ (not הַ) in הָאֻמִּים?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Alef is a guttural and cannot double.

5. **Medium** What does halelu-yah mean?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Praise ye the LORD (praise Yah).

6. **Hard** Read Psalm 117:1 aloud in Hebrew.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   halelu et-Adonai kol-goyim shabbechuhu kol-ha'ummim.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading הַלְלוּ as hal-lu. The second lamed has a vocal shewa: ha-le-lu.
- Missing the doubled bet in שַׁבְּחוּהוּ.

> **Make it a game · Quarter review bingo.** Make a bingo card with nine rules: open syllable, closed syllable, strong dagesh, guttural, hatef vowel, furtive patach, maqqef, sof pasuq, letter-number. The parent points to a word in Psalm 117:1 or 119:105; cover the rule it shows.

> **Scripture.** "O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people." (Psalm 117:1, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כָּל־גּוֹיִם שַׁבְּחוּהוּ כָּל־הָאֻמִּים׃
>
> Read the whole verse aloud. Every rule of this quarter is here: syllables, strong dagesh, gutturals, maqqef and sof pasuq. LORD is the holy Name; say Adonai.