

Lesson 1 – The Hebrew Alphabet

1.1

1. The Hebrew Alphabet consists of twenty-three _____ or letters.
2. HISTORICAL NOTE: There are _____ vowels in the original Hebrew alphabet. Vowels were added by the Masoretes located in Russia in the 900s A.D.
3. Hebrew is written _____ to _____.
4. The first step in learning Hebrew requires that you _____ the alphabet in order.
5. You will also want to learn the _____ of the Hebrew letters, how each letter is _____ and the trans_____ value of each.

1.2

1. You have just learned that \aleph and \beth are _____.
2. While \aleph is indeed _____, the consonant \beth does have some phonetic _____.
3. When these two consonants are encountered in a word, they will take on the _____, or phonetic value, of their assigned _____.
4. This means that if an \aleph or \beth is _____ an “a” vowel, they will sound like an “a.”
5. If _____ an “o” vowel, they will sound like an “o.”

1.4

1. Five of the Hebrew letters have _____.
2. When one of these letters occurs at the end of a word, it is written _____ than that when it appears at the beginning or in the middle of a word.

3. The changing of a letter's form, however, does _____ change its pronunciation or transliteration.

No	Name	Form		Transliteration	Pronunciation
			Final		
1	aleph	א		/ʔ/	A very light glottal stop corresponding to the Greek <i>spiritus lenis</i> . Even before a vowel it is lost to the ear, like the <i>h</i> in <i>hour</i> .
2	beth	ב		/b/	bank
		בּ		/b/	never
3	gimel	ג		/g/	go
		גּ		/g/	go
4	daleth	ד		/d/	door
		דּ		/d/	door
5	he	ה		/h/	hand
6	waw	ו		/w/	vote
7	zayin	ז		/z/	zone
8	ḥeth	ח		/ħ/	loch (velar as in Scots)
9	ṭeth	ט		/t̥/	time
10	yod	י		/y/	year

11	kaph	כ		/k/	keep
		כ	ך	/k/	Bach (palatal as in German)
12	lamedh	ל		/l/	line
13	mem	מ	ם	/m/	main
14	nun	נ	ן	/n/	noon
15	samekh	ס		/s/	silver
16	ayin	ע		/ʔ/	A hard glottal stop formed at the back of the throat. It may be heard in certain pronunciations of words like <i>bottle</i> and <i>battle</i> in which the glottal stop replaces the normal <i>t</i> .
17	pe	פ		/p/	pay
		פ	ף	/p/	face
18	ṣade	צ	ץ	/ʃ/	cats
19	qoph	ק		/q/	keep
20	resh	ר		/r/	rope
21	sin	ש		/ś/	silver
22	shin	ש		/š/	shoe
23	taw	ת		/t/	time

		ת		/t/	time
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1.5

1. Six of the Hebrew consonants have two possible, but closely related

_____.

2. This term is a mnemonic device allowing for easy _____ of these six letters (בגדכפה).

3. The presence of a _____ - _____ indicates a hard pronunciation and its absence denotes a soft pronunciation.

1.7

1. Certain pairs or groups of consonants can sometimes look alike and become

_____.

ב	כ
ג	נ
ח,ה	ת
ש	ז
ם (Final <i>mem</i>)	ס
ד	ר
צ	ע
ו	ז
ו	ן (Final <i>nun</i>)
ך	ן (Final <i>nun</i>)

¹Christo Van der Merwe, Jackie Naudé, Jan Kroeze et al., *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 22.