

Chapter 1a – Hebrew Alphabet

Twenty-Three Consonants

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Transliteration</i>
א	Alef	silent	ʾ
ב	Bet	<i>b</i> as in <i>boy</i>	<i>b</i>
ג	Gimel	<i>g</i> as in <i>God</i>	<i>g</i>
ד	Dalet	<i>d</i> as in <i>day</i>	<i>d</i>
ה	He	<i>h</i> as in <i>hay</i>	<i>h</i>
ו	Waw	<i>w</i> as in <i>way</i>	<i>w</i>
ז	Zayin	<i>z</i> as in <i>Zion</i>	<i>z</i>
ח	Ḥet	<i>ch</i> as in <i>Bach</i>	<i>ḥ</i>
ט	Tet	<i>t</i> as in <i>toy</i>	<i>ṭ</i>
י	Yod	<i>y</i> as in <i>yes</i>	<i>y</i>
כ	Kaf	<i>k</i> as in <i>king</i>	<i>k</i>
ל	Lamed	<i>l</i> as in <i>lion</i>	<i>l</i>
מ	Mem	<i>m</i> as in <i>mother</i>	<i>m</i>
נ	Nun	<i>n</i> as in <i>now</i>	<i>n</i>
ס	Samek	<i>s</i> as in <i>sin</i>	<i>s</i>
ע	Ayin	silent	ʿ
פ	Pe	<i>p</i> as in <i>pastor</i>	<i>p</i>
צ	Tsade	<i>ts</i> as in <i>boots</i>	<i>ṣ</i>
ק	Qof	<i>k</i> as in <i>king</i>	<i>q</i>
ר	Resh	<i>r</i> as in <i>run</i>	<i>r</i>
שׁ	Sin	<i>s</i> as in <i>sin</i>	<i>ś</i>
שׂ	Shin	<i>sh</i> as in <i>ship</i>	<i>š</i>
ת	Taw	<i>t</i> as in <i>toy</i>	<i>t</i>



Chapter 1b – Hebrew Alphabet

Written from Right to Left

Hebrew is written from right to left,
not left to right as in English



א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י כ ל מ נ ס ע פ צ ק ר ש ת



Chapter 1c – Hebrew Alphabet

Five Final Forms

Five Hebrew letters have “final” forms. When one of these letters occurs at the **end of a word**, it is written differently than when it appears at the beginning or in the middle of a word. The changing of a letter’s form does not change its pronunciation or transliteration.

<i>Regular Form</i>	<i>Final Form</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Transliteration</i>	<i>Translation</i>
כ	ך	דרך	<i>drk</i>	road, way
מ	ם	עם	<i>‘m</i>	nation, people
נ	ן	זקן	<i>zqn</i>	old man, elder
פ	ף	כסף	<i>ksp</i>	money, silver
צ	ץ	ארץ	<i>‘rṣ</i>	earth, land



Chapter 1d – Hebrew Alphabet

Six *Begadkephat* Consonants

Six consonants have two possible pronunciations and are known as *begadkephat* consonants. To distinguish between the two pronunciations, a dot called **Daghes Lene** is inserted into the consonant. The presence of Daghes Lene indicates a “hard” pronunciation and its absence denotes a “soft” pronunciation.

<i>Begadkephat Letter</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Transliteration</i>
בּ	<i>b</i> as in <i>boy</i>	<i>b</i>
ב	<i>v</i> as in <i>vine</i>	<i><u>b</u></i>
גּ	<i>g</i> as in <i>God</i>	<i>g</i>
ג	<i>gh</i> as in <i>aghost</i>	<i><u>g</u></i>
דּ	<i>d</i> as in <i>day</i>	<i>d</i>
ד	<i>dh</i> as in <i>the</i>	<i><u>d</u></i>
כּ	<i>k</i> as in <i>king</i>	<i>k</i>
כ	<i>ch</i> as in <i>Bach</i>	<i><u>k</u></i>
פּ	<i>p</i> as in <i>pastor</i>	<i>p</i>
פ	<i>ph</i> as in <i>alphabet</i>	<i><u>p</u></i>
תּ	<i>t</i> as in <i>toy</i>	<i>t</i>
ת	<i>th</i> as in <i>thin</i>	<i><u>t</u></i>



Chapter 1e – Hebrew Alphabet

Four Guttural Consonants and ך

Four Hebrew letters are called *gutturals*. They are called gutturals because they are pronounced in the back of the throat.

א, ה, ח, ע and sometimes ך



Chapter 1f – Hebrew Alphabet

Easily Confused Letters

Hebrew consonants that look alike

1. ב (Bet) כ (Kaf)
2. ג (Gimel) נ (Nun)
3. ה (He) ח (Het) ת (Taw)
4. שׁ (Sin) שׂ (Shin)
5. ם (final Mem) ס (Samek)
6. ד (Dalet) ר (Resh)
7. צ (Tsade) ע (Ayin)
8. ו (Waw) ז (Zayin)
9. ם (Waw) ן (final Nun)
10. ך (final Kaf) ן (final Nun)

Hebrew consonants that sound alike

1. ט (Tet) ת (Taw with Daghesh Lene)
2. ק (Qof) כ (Kaf with Daghesh Lene)
3. ס (Samek) שׁ (Sin)



Chapter 1g – Hebrew Alphabet

Modern Pronunciation

The pronunciation of modern Hebrew differs in a number of ways from ancient pronunciation. With the three *begadkephat* consonants listed below, the forms without Daghes Lene are pronounced like the forms with Daghes Lene in modern Hebrew.

<i>Consonant</i>	<i>Traditional Pronunciation</i>	<i>Modern Pronunciation</i>
ג	<i>gh as in aghast</i>	<i>g as in God</i>
ד	<i>dh as in the</i>	<i>d as in day</i>
ת	<i>th as in thin</i>	<i>t as in toy</i>
ו	<i>w as in way</i>	<i>v as in vine</i>

