

Steps For Learning Biblical Hebrew

A Sequence For The Student Compiled By Roderick Graciano

http://www.tmin.org/tminpages/BiblicalHebrew_GettingStarted.html

1. Memorize the **Hebrew Alphabet** (Print version), and the sounds made by each letter (p. A-7 in Section A of our Hebrew syllabus). Use the **Hebrew Alphabet Song** (p. A-2, and audio at: https://www.tmin.org/audio/Hebrew_Alphabet_Ditty.mp3) to help you learn the consonant names.
2. Use the “**Writing The Hebrew Alphabet**” practice sheets (posted at: http://www.tmin.org/pdfs/Writing_The_Hebrew_Alphabet.pdf) to help you recognize the Hebrew consonants.
3. Start attending a **Biblical Languages Fellowship** where you can study biblical Hebrew with others.
4. Memorize the 12 Hebrew **Full Vowels** on p. A-8. Memorize the sounds that they make, and which ones are long, and which are short.
5. Memorize the four **Reduced Vowels** with their sounds (p. A-9).
6. Memorize the 11 **Hebrew Diphthongs** (p. A-12). Some of these are the same as **Full Vowels** on p. A-8.
7. Memorize the **BiG Duck FaT Letters** (p. A-15), and which three still change their sound with a dagesh.
8. Learn the **Vocabulary Words For Genesis 1.1-5** on p. C-5.
9. Learn about **Reading The Sheva**, when it is vocal and when it is silent (pp. A-13 and A-14).
10. Learn the words for the **Parts Of The Human Head** (p. C-6). Note that the word for *skull*, גִּלְגֻּלֵּת, has a silent sheva, and so is pronounced, **gul-go-let** (you should hear the relationship of this word to the name, *Golgotha*).
11. Memorize **Genesis 1.1** in Hebrew. There are two **Shevas** in this verse (see top of p. A-9), and they are both vocalized (not silent).

12. **Choose a means to help you look up and analyze biblical Hebrew words.** There are various options, all of which will require you to learn grammatical terms (like *qal*, *participle*, *etc.*) and some of which will require you to learn letter codes for those terms:
- a. The easiest kind of tool for this is also the most expensive: Bible software, like BibleWorks or Logos, allows you to see definitions and analyses of Hebrew words by simply holding your computer cursor over the word on your computer screen. The parsing information is written out so you don't have to learn code letters. Their included lexicons, however, do abbreviate grammatical terms (like **adv.** for *adverb*).
 - b. The old and clunky way to look up and analyze Hebrew words is to use Benjamin Davidson's *The Analytical Hebrew And Chaldee Lexicon* (\$20-\$30 on Amazon). The grammatical information is all abbreviated in this reference book, so you see parsing information like, "Hiph. pret. 2 pers. s. m., suff. 3 pers. s. m."
 - c. Another way, which constrains you to looking up words in their biblical context, is to use the *Analytical Key To The Old Testament* by John Joseph Owens. This four volume work provides abbreviated parsing information also (e.g., "Qal act. ptc. m.p.—3 m.p. sf."), but once you get used to its system, you can actually read straight through the OT using these volumes alone, since they include the entire OT text in order.
 - d. A free alternative is to use the Scholar's Gateway word parser at: <http://scholarsgateway.com/parse/> . This requires you to use a Hebrew keyboard (pictured on the screen) to type in the word (complete with vowels) that you need defined and analyzed.
13. Learn the three inseparable **Hebrew Prepositions** on p. C-8.
14. Acquire and use a copy of Todd J. Murphy's *Pocket Dictionary for the Study of Biblical Hebrew*, The IVP Pocket Reference Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).
15. Learn the **Independent Personal Pronoun** (p. C-10).
16. Learn the **Vocabulary Words For Genesis 1.6-8** on p. C-11.