

## Lesson 3

- Maqqef
- Sign of the Direct Object
- Dagesh Forte
- Silent Sheva

### MAQQEF (מִקְּפֵי)

- 3.1 Maqqef is a short horizontal stroke used to join together two or more words within a verse (a “Hebrew hyphen” of sorts). Words so joined are pronounced as one speech unit, the primary accent falling on the final word in the unit. Another way of stating this is that all words that are not final in such a unit lose their primary accents. They may undergo certain vowel changes on this account. For example, כָּל, “all,” becomes כָּלְ (with qames-ḥaṭuf) when placed before a maqqef, as in כָּל־הַיּוֹם (Gen. 6:5). Likewise מַה, “what,” becomes מַהְ when joined to the following word by a maqqef, as in מַה־יִּקְרָא־לוֹ (Gen. 2:19).

Most of the occurrences of maqqef will be with monosyllabic words such as the following:

אֶלְ to	לֹא not	עַד unto
אִם if	מַהְ what	עַל upon
גַּם also	מִי who	עִם with
כָּל all	מִן from	פֶּן lest

### SIGN OF THE DIRECT OBJECT (אֵת)

- 3.2 A direct object is a word representing a person or thing upon which the action of a verb is performed. The direct object may be either definite or indefinite. If definite, it is usually preceded by the particle אֵת. The particle serves merely as the sign (or indicator) that the next word is the direct object, but אֵת is not to be translated. אֵת may be written alone, or it may be joined by a maqqef to

the following word. In the latter case *šere* is shortened to *segol*. Thus we find אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם in Genesis 1:1 but אֶת־הָאָוֶר in Genesis 1:4.

## DAGESH FORTE

Earlier we saw that dagesh lene is a dot which may be placed in six consonants (ב, ג, ד, כ, פ, ת). In three cases (ב, כ, פ) the dagesh lene indicates that the letters are to be given a harder pronunciation. Dagesh forte is identical in appearance to dagesh lene, but it serves an entirely different purpose. It is a dot that indicates the doubling of the consonant in which it stands. It may be placed in any consonant except the five gutturals (א, ה, ח, ע, ר). 3.3

There are three basic rules to follow in distinguishing dagesh lene from dagesh forte.

1. A dot in any letter other than a BeGaD KeFaT letter or a final ה is a dagesh forte and indicates the doubling of that letter.
2. A dot in a BeGaD KeFaT letter will be a dagesh lene whenever that letter is *not* immediately preceded by a vowel (with the exception of simple silent sheva).
3. A dot in a BeGaD KeFaT letter will be a dagesh forte whenever that letter is immediately preceded by a vowel.

Another way of stating these last two rules is that dagesh lene *never* stands after a vowel, whereas dagesh forte *always* stands immediately after a vowel (except simple silent sheva).

With regard to the BeGaD KeFaT letters, the dagesh forte has the same effect as dagesh lene in hardening the pronunciation of ב, כ, and פ.

Thus the dagesh in the word בָּרִית is a dagesh lene (no vowel precedes it), and the pronunciation is hard (*bərît*). On the other hand, the dagesh in הֶבֶן is a dagesh forte (a vowel immediately precedes it), and the pronunciation is also hard (*hab/bēn*).

## SILENT SHEVA

In the last lesson (§2.17), we learned that Hebrew makes use of semi-vowels, or half-vowels, known as vocal shevas. We learned that there are simple vocal shevas (ְ) and compound vocal shevas (ֵ, ׇ, ׈). 3.4

Hebrew also makes use of the silent sheva, written exactly like the simple vocal sheva (ְ), but serving an entirely different purpose. A vocal sheva, whether simple or compound, will only stand beneath a consonant that *begins* a syllable. The silent sheva, on the other hand, only stands beneath a consonant that *ends* a syllable. The silent sheva, therefore, may also be referred to as a *syllable divider*. Syllable division will be treated in §§4.18–22.

Whenever two shevas stand under adjacent consonants within a word, the first will always be silent and the second will be vocal. In other words, the first marks the end of a syllable, whereas the second stands at the beginning of a new syllable. In יְמִשְׁלוּ (yīm-šalû), for example, the first sheva (ְ) is silent, whereas the second (ֶ) is vocal.

A sheva that stands beneath a doubled consonant (one that has a dagesh forte) will always be vocal. In קִטְלוּ (qit-ṭalû), for example, where ט is pointed with a dagesh forte, the sheva that follows it (ֶ) must be classified as a vocal sheva. (The sheva beneath the doubled letter is essentially doubled: the first of the two is silent because it closes a syllable while the second is vocal because it begins a new syllable.)

A particularity of the final kāf (ך) is that it is normally pointed with a raised silent sheva (ֶּ). This distinguishes it from other letters that have final forms and the letter dalet (ד).

לֶּךְ *lēk*

מֶלֶךְ *melek*

## Exercises

Because you will use the new vocabulary in the exercises, you may wish to make your new vocabulary cards (see Exercise 6) before doing the exercises.

### Exercise 1

There are BeGaD KeFaT letters in all the words listed below. Add a dagesh lene wherever it belongs in one of these letters. All of the shevas are silent.

1. אֶכְתֵּב

5. דִּבֵּר

9. מִשְׁכָּב

13. פְּנִים

2. בְּגָד

6. יְגִדֵּל

10. קְדוּשׁ

14. נִפְשׁ

3. בֵּית

7. כֶּסֶף

11. מְשַׁפֵּט

15. תּוֹרָה

4. גְּדוּל

8. מְדַבֵּר

12. נְבִיא

16. תְּכַתֵּב



Exercise 5

וַיְבָרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּו שַׁבַּת מְכֹל־מְלֶאכֶתוֹ אֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא  
אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת:

1. Copy the two words that contain both a silent sheva and a vocal sheva.
2. Copy the word that is marked as the direct object of the verb.
3. Copy the three words that contain dagesh fortes.
4. Copy the four words that contain compound shevas.
5. Copy the three words that contain BeGaD KeFaT letters with dagesh lenes.

1. ① וַיְבָרֵךְ ② מְלֶאכֶתוֹ

silent Sh'was  
vocal Sh'was

2. אֶת-יוֹם

3. ① הַנְּטִבִימִי ② וַיְקַדְּשׁ ③ מְכֹל

4. ① אֱלֹהִים ② אֲשֶׁר ③ לַעֲשׂוֹת

↳ I can only find 3 word Dr. Emanuel ... "אֱלֹהִים" repeats twice ...

5. ① כִּי ② מְלֶאכֶתוֹ ③ בָּרָא

\* I created flash cards and I also memorized the 18 words.

*Exercise 2*

Mark the words in the following list which contain a dagesh forte.

- |            |             |              |               |
|------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. אֶתָּה  | 4. הִנֵּה   | 7. כֶּסֶף    | 10. שֵׁשִׁי   |
| 2. גְּבוּר | 5. חִיָּה   | 8. מְשַׁפֵּט | 11. תְּמוּנָה |
| 3. דְּבַר  | 6. יִרְדֵּן | 9. שִׁבְר    | 12. תְּפִלָּה |

*Exercise 3*

Transliterate the words listed above and practice pronouncing them.

*Exercise 4*

Exodus 3:1 is reproduced here. (Words joined by maqqef count as one speech unit.)

וּמִשֶׁה הָיָה רָעָה אֶת־צֹאן יִתְרוֹ חֲתָנוּ כִּהְיָן מִדִּין וַיִּנְהַג אֶת־הַצֹּאן אַחֲרֵי הַמִּדְבָּר  
וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הַר הָאֱלֹהִים חֲרֵבָה:

1. Copy the three words in which all the letters are gutturals.
2. Copy the three pairs of words linked together by maqqefs.
3. Copy the word that has both a dagesh lene and a dagesh forte, indicating which is which.
4. Copy the word that contains a compound sheva.

*Exercise 5*

Genesis 2:3 is reproduced here. (Words joined by maqqef count as one speech unit.)

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְכֹל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָא  
אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת:

1. Copy the two words that contain both a silent sheva and a vocal sheva.
2. Copy the word that is marked as the direct object of the verb.
3. Copy the three words that contain dagesh fortes.
4. Copy the four words that contain compound shevas.
5. Copy the three words that contain BeGaD KeFaT letters with dagesh lenes.

**Exercise 6**

Vocabulary Cards

(front of card)		(back of card)
noun (m)	Lesson 3	
Hebrew word		definition

Having a strong Hebrew vocabulary is essential to learning Hebrew. A great way to learn vocabulary is to prepare vocabulary cards. (Electronic vocabulary building tools can also be very beneficial.) Write the Hebrew on one side of the card. Designate the part of speech in a corner: in the example the word is marked as a noun and as masculine. Marking the lesson where the word was first encountered is helpful for later, so the sample has “3” for this lesson in another corner. Write the Hebrew word in the center. On the reverse, write the English translation or translations. Don’t make the cards too small because you may want to add information later. A 3”x5” card blank on both sides, cut in half, is a good size. Practice pronouncing the Hebrew aloud.

**Vocabulary**

All nouns listed in this and subsequent vocabulary lists will be masculine unless otherwise indicated. All feminine nouns will be indicated by an (f) written beside them.

- |         |                        |          |  |
|---------|------------------------|----------|--|
| אָב     | (’āv) father, ancestor | אָדָם    | (’ādām) man, humankind   |
| אָח     | (’āḥ) brother, kinsman | אֱלֹהִים | (’ēlōhîm) God  |
| אָחוֹת  | (’āḥôt) (f) sister     | בֵּן     | (bēn) son, child (especially in the plural בְּנִים “children”) |
| אִישׁ   | (’îš) man              | בַּת     | (bat) (f) daughter   |
| אִשָּׁה | (’iššâ) (f) woman      |          |  |
| אִמָּ   | (’ēm) (f) mother       |          |  |

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יִשְׂרָאֵל	( <i>yisrā'ēl</i> ) Israel	עַם	( <i>'am</i> ) people
לֵב	( <i>lēv</i> ) heart	קוֹל	( <i>qôl</i> ) voice
עִיר	( <i>'ir</i> ) (f) city	רֹאשׁ	( <i>rô'sh</i> ) head
עוֹף	( <i>'ôf</i> ) bird(s)	שֵׁם	( <i>šēm</i> ) name