

## LESSON V

### 13. The Gutturals

The gutturals are א, ה, ח, ע, and sometimes ר. They have certain characteristics that distinguish them from other letters of the alphabet.

**13.1** *Gutturals cannot be doubled. That is, they reject the dagesh forte.* When this takes place, the preceding short vowel is left in an open, unaccented syllable, and therefore must be lengthened.

- (1) If pătăḥ, it will be lengthened to qāmēṣ.
- (2) If ḥîrēq, it will be lengthened to šērê.
- (3) If qîbbûṣ, it will be lengthened to ḥólēm.

This is called “compensatory lengthening” of a vowel.

Please note, however, that if the guttural that rejects a dagesh forte is either ה or ח, no lengthening of the preceding short vowel is necessary. Under these circumstances ה and ח are said to be doubled by implication and the preceding syllable is treated as a closed syllable.

**13.2** *Gutturals tend to take “a” class vowels before and sometimes after them.* This preference is especially noticeable with the strong gutturals א, ח, and ע. When one of these gutturals occurs at the end of a word and is preceded by an unchangeably long vowel that is not of the “a” class, then another short “a” sound must be inserted between this vowel and the guttural. This short “a” sound is called a pătăḥ furtive, because of its hurried pronunciation. Pătăḥ furtive is not a full vowel and must not be regarded as increasing the number of syllables in a word. It is represented in transliteration by a raised “a,” just as in the case of the ḥătēf-pătăḥ.

Examples:

וְרוּחַ (Gen. 1:2), *verû<sup>a</sup>ḥ*

נֹחַ (Gen. 6:9), *nō<sup>a</sup>ḥ*

רַקִּיעַ (Gen. 1:6), *rāqî<sup>a</sup>ʿ*

גַּבְיָה (1 Sam. 9:2), *gāvō<sup>a</sup>ḥ*

**13.3** *Gutturals tend to take compound shevas rather than simple shevas.* This will usually be a ḥătēf-pătăḥ (ֿֿ). Initial א, however, often takes a ḥătēf-segôl (ֿֿֿ). Only in rare instances will a guttural appear with a ḥătēf-qāmēṣ (ֿֿֿֿ).

Examples of gutturals with compound shevas:

אֲשֶׁר ʾăššēr, who, which, what

אֱלֹהִים ʿĕlōhîm, God

חֶלֶם ḥălôm, dream

חֲלִי ḥălî, sickness

## V.14 THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

The gutturals' preference for compound shevas is so strong that even silent shevas that occur beneath gutturals will usually be changed to compound shevas. Whenever this change takes place, the vowel preceding the guttural will remain short, even though it is now left in an open, unaccented syllable. Sometimes it may receive a *mētēg* in order to insure its stress in pronunciation. Furthermore, the vowel before the guttural will belong to the same class as the compound sheva that follows the guttural.

Examples:

|         |                            |          |                             |
|---------|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| נֶעֱבֹד | <i>nă-<sup>˙</sup>āvōd</i> | נֶחֱלָה  | <i>nă-<sup>˙</sup>hălāh</i> |
| מֶעֱמֹד | <i>mō-<sup>˙</sup>ōmād</i> | אֶעֱשֶׂה | <i>ē-<sup>˙</sup>ēśēh</i>   |

### 14. The Definite Article

**14.1** Hebrew has no indefinite article. It is the absence of the definite article which indicates that a noun is indefinite.

Examples:

|       |                        |      |                   |
|-------|------------------------|------|-------------------|
| אִישׁ | <i>īś, a man</i>       | בֵּן | <i>bēn, a son</i> |
| בַּת  | <i>bāt, a daughter</i> | יוֹם | <i>yôm, a day</i> |

**14.2** The definite article never stands alone but is prefixed to the noun whose definiteness it determines. The form of the article is not affected by the gender and number of the noun to which it is prefixed, but is the same for all genders and numbers.

**14.3** The principal rules to follow in writing the definite article are these:

(1) It is usually written  $\cdot \aleph$  ( $\aleph$ , plus *pătāḥ*, plus dagesh forte in the first consonant of the noun) before all non-gutturals.

Examples:

|      |                     |         |                           |
|------|---------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| יָד  | <i>yād, a hand</i>  | הַיָּד  | <i>hāy-yād, the hand</i>  |
| קוֹל | <i>qōl, a voice</i> | הַקּוֹל | <i>hāq-qōl, the voice</i> |
| לֵב  | <i>lēv, heart</i>   | הַלֵּב  | <i>hāl-lēv, the heart</i> |

(2) When the article is prefixed to a noun whose initial consonant is a guttural, the form of the article will be modified to compensate for the guttural's refusal to be doubled. The following changes may be noted:

(a) Before  $\aleph$  and  $\aleph$ , the article is usually written  $\aleph$  ( $\aleph$ , plus *pătāḥ*, but *without* the dagesh forte). In this situation,  $\aleph$  and  $\aleph$  are said to be doubled by implication, that is, virtually doubled.



Examples:

|          |                           |          |                                |
|----------|---------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|
| חֶרֶב    | (f) <i>hě-rěv</i> , sword | הַחֶרֶב  | <i>hă-hě-rěv</i> , the sword   |
| הַיֵּכָל | <i>hê-khāl</i> , temple   | הַהֵיכָל | <i>hă-hê-khāl</i> , the temple |

(b) Before א, ע, and ר, the article is usually written ה (ה, plus qāmēš). In this case, the guttural's rejection of the dagesh forte causes the preceding short vowel to be lengthened (pātāḥ to qāmēš). This is known as the compensatory lengthening of a vowel. Without the lengthening, pātāḥ would have been left as a short vowel in an open, unaccented syllable.

Examples:

|       |                           |         |                           |
|-------|---------------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| רֹאשׁ | <i>rōš</i> , head         | הָרֹאשׁ | <i>hā-rōš</i> , the head  |
| אב    | <i>āv</i> , father        | הָאב    | <i>hā-āv</i> , the father |
| עִיר  | (f) <i>ʿir</i> , (f) city | הָעִיר  | <i>hā-ʿir</i> , the city  |

(c) Before ה, and before *unaccented* ה or *unaccented* ע, the article is written ה (ה, plus sēgōl).

Examples:

|       |                           |         |                                  |
|-------|---------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|
| חָכָם | <i>hā-khām</i> , wise man | הַחָכָם | <i>hě-hā-khām</i> , the wise man |
| עָפָר | <i>ʿā-fār</i> , dust      | הַעָפָר | <i>hě-ʿā-fār</i> , the dust      |
| רִים  | <i>hā-rîm</i> , mountains | הַרִים  | <i>hě-hā-rîm</i> , the mountains |

(3) When the article is prefixed to a noun whose initial consonant is yôd, followed by a simple sheva (יְ), the article will normally be written ה (ה, plus pātāḥ, but without the dagesh forte). The same rule sometimes applies when a noun's initial consonant is מ, followed by a simple sheva (מְ). It does not apply, however, in the case of other letters of the alphabet that occur with a simple sheva.

Examples:

|          |                            |            |                                   |
|----------|----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| יְלָדִים | <i>yelā-dîm</i> , children | הַיְלָדִים | <i>hă-yelā-dîm</i> , the children |
| יָר      | <i>yē-ôr</i> , river       | הַיָּר     | <i>hă-yē-ôr</i> , the river       |
| מַסְלָה  | <i>mesîl-lāh</i> , highway | הַמַּסְלָה | <i>hă-mesîl-lāh</i> , the highway |

But note these exceptions with initial מ:

|           |                          |             |                                  |
|-----------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| מְלָכִים  | <i>melā-khîm</i> , kings | הַמְלָכִים  | <i>hām-melā-khîm</i> , the kings |
| מְקוֹמוֹת | <i>meqō-môt</i> , places | הַמְקוֹמוֹת | <i>hām-meqō-môt</i> , the places |

Note the regular manner in which the article is prefixed to consonants other than yôd and mēm when these are supported by a simple sheva.

|           |                          |             |                                  |
|-----------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| דְּבָרִים | <i>devā-rîm</i> , words  | הַדְּבָרִים | <i>hăd-devā-rîm</i> , the words  |
| זְקֵנִים  | <i>zeqē-nîm</i> , elders | הַזְקֵנִים  | <i>hăz-zeqē-nîm</i> , the elders |

## V EXERCISES

(4) A few nouns in their singular form undergo internal changes when the definite article is prefixed to them. The most important are the following:

|       |               |         |                      |
|-------|---------------|---------|----------------------|
| אֶרֶץ | ʿē-rěš, earth | הָאֶרֶץ | hā-ʿā-rěš, the earth |
| הַר   | hār, mountain | הַהָר   | hā-hār, the mountain |
| עַם   | ʿām, people   | הָעַם   | hā-ʿām, the people   |
| גֶּן  | gān, garden   | הַגֶּן  | hāg-gān, the garden  |
| פָּר  | pār, bull     | הַפָּר  | hāp-pār, the bull    |
| חַג   | hāg, festival | הַחַג   | hē-hāg, the festival |
| אֹרֹן | ʾārôn, ark    | הָאֹרֹן | hā-ʾā-rôn, the ark   |

## EXERCISES

1. A good method for learning a vocabulary is to prepare vocabulary cards. Write the Hebrew on one side of the card and the English translation on the reverse side. Glance at these cards whenever you have a spare moment during the day. Practice pronouncing the Hebrew aloud.

2. Prefix the definite article to the following words.

|              |              |             |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| (1) יָד      | (7) עֵשָׂן   | (13) הִכָּל |
| (2) יָאֵר    | (8) אֶרֶץ    | (14) הָר    |
| (3) מִדְּבָר | (9) עַם      | (15) גֶּן   |
| (4) בֵּית    | (10) חֶרֶב   | (16) חַג    |
| (5) אִשָּׁה  | (11) רוּחַ   | (17) הָרִים |
| (6) עֵת      | (12) בְּרִית | (18) רֹאשׁ  |

3. Divide the following words into syllables and specify whether the syllables are open (O) or closed (C), and whether their vowels are long (L) or short (S).

Example: הַחֹשֶׁךְ - 1st. syllable (חֹ) is closed (ח is doubled by implication) and has a short vowel. 2nd. syllable (שֶׁ) is open and has a long vowel. 3rd. syllable (כֶּ) is closed and has a short vowel.

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| (1) הַחֹשֶׁךְ | (6) הָאֱלֹהִים   |
| (2) הָעֶשֶׂיר | (7) הַשֵּׁם      |
| (3) הַנְּבִיא | (8) הַיּוֹם      |
| (4) הָאֹרֹן   | (9) הַמִּצֵּה    |
| (5) הָעֵנָן   | (10) הַדְּבָרִים |



4. All the words in the preceding exercise have the definite article. Be prepared to explain why each article was given the form that it has.

5. Mark the words in the following list that are feminine.

- |             |             |              |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| (1) אור     | (7) חֹשֶׁךְ | (13) שְׁלוֹם |
| (2) אָרֶץ   | (8) חֶרֶב   | (14) בְּרִית |
| (3) אִישׁ   | (9) רֹאשׁ   | (15) רוּחַ   |
| (4) אִשָּׁה | (10) עִיר   | (16) אָדָם   |
| (5) בֵּית   | (11) הָר    | (17) מֶלֶךְ  |
| (6) גֶּן    | (12) שָׁנָה | (18) בֵּית   |

6. Complete the writing of the definite article with the following nouns.

- |              |                 |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| (1) הָאָרֶץ  | (7) הַיָּאֵר    | (13) הַרֹאשׁ    |
| (2) הַיּוֹם  | (8) הָעֵנָן     | (14) הַשְּׁלוֹם |
| (3) הַצֵּאֵן | (9) הַהָר       | (15) הַלֵּב     |
| (4) הָאֱהָל  | (10) הָאֱלֹהִים | (16) הָעִיר     |
| (5) הָעָם    | (11) הַבְּרִית  | (17) הַבֵּית    |
| (6) הַחֵג    | (12) הָעֵת      | (18) הַשָּׁנָה  |

### VOCABULARY

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (1) אור <i>ôr</i> , light                  | (10) חֶרֶב (f) <i>hê-rêv</i> , sword      |
| (2) אָרֶץ (f) <i>ê-rêš</i> , earth         | (11) חֹשֶׁךְ <i>hō-šekh</i> , darkness    |
| (3) אִשָּׁר <i>ăšer</i> , who, which, what | (12) טוֹב <i>ṭov</i> , good               |
| (4) בֵּית <i>bā-yīt</i> , house            | (13) יָם <i>yām</i> , sea                 |
| (5) בְּרִית (f) <i>bêrît</i> , covenant    | (14) מַיִם <i>mā-yīm</i> , water          |
| (6) גֶּן <i>gān</i> , garden               | (15) מֶלֶךְ <i>mê-lêkh</i> , king         |
| (7) דָּבָר <i>dā-vār</i> , word, thing     | (16) רוּחַ (f) <i>rûah</i> , spirit, wind |
| (8) הָר <i>hār</i> , mountain              | (17) שְׁלוֹם <i>šā-lôm</i> , peace        |
| (9) חֵג <i>hăg</i> , feast, festival       | (18) שָׁנָה (f) <i>šā-nāh</i> , year      |