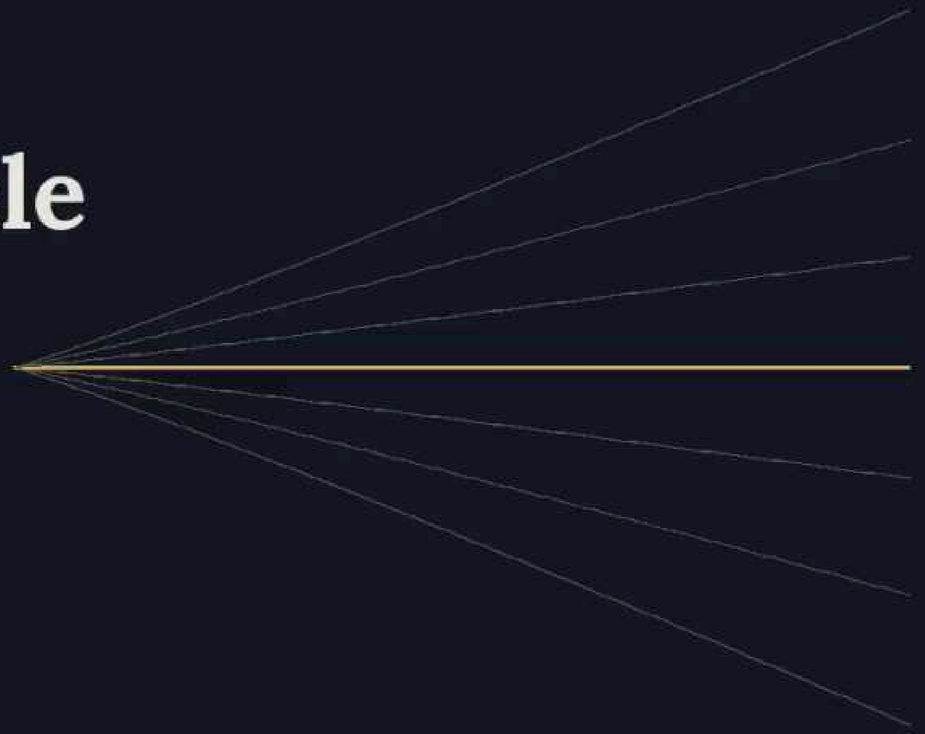
ANDERSON ACADEMY

HEBR 101 B · Introduction to Biblical Hebrew (Brief course)

Lecture 3 · about 6 min

Roots, Nouns, and the Article



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The root

- Usually three consonants
- Carries a basic meaning
- Vowels and affixes added
- Unlocks families of words

¶ 3.1

Vowels, prefixes, and suffixes are added to the root to make nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

The root m-l-kh

- Melekh, king
- Malkah, queen
- Mamlakhah, kingdom
- Malakh, he reigned

¶ 3.2

The name Abimelech, my father is king, and Melchizedek, my king is righteousness, are built from the same root.

The root k-t-v

Words

- Katav, he wrote
- Kotev, writing
- Mikhtav, a letter

How it works

- Root, the idea
- Pattern, the kind of word
- Mikhtav uses a prefix

¶ 3.3

In Modern Hebrew a reporter is a katav.

More roots

Root sh-l-m

- Sh-l-m, whole
- Shalom, peace
- Shalem, complete

Root d-v-r

- D-v-r, speak
- Davar, word
- Devarim, Deuteronomy

¶ 3.4

The Hebrew name for the book of Deuteronomy is Devarim, words, from its opening phrase, these are the words.

Gender

Masculine

- No special ending
- Melekh, king
- Sus, horse

Feminine

- Often ah or t
- Malkah, queen
- Susah, mare

¶ 3.5

Masculine nouns usually have no special ending.

Plurals

Masculine im

- Sus, horse
- Susim, horses
- Cherubim, seraphim

Feminine ot

- Susah, mare
- Susot, mares
- Torot, teachings

¶ 3.6

You already know the ending im from words that came into English: cherubim and seraphim,

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The dual

- Ending ayim
- Yadayim, two hands
- Enayim, two eyes
- Shamayim looks like a dual

¶ 3.7

The word for heaven, shamayim, looks like a dual, though it is really a plural.

Vowel changes

Singular	Plural
Davar	Devarim
Melekh	Melakhim
Bayit	Battim

¶ 3.8

So davar, word, becomes devarim, words, and melekh, king, becomes melakhim, kings.

The article

Without ha

- Melekh
- A king
- Sefer
- A book

With ha

- Ha-melekh
- The king
- Ha-sefer
- The book

¶ 3.9

and it usually doubles the first letter of the noun with a dagesh.

The article before gutturals

- Cannot double a guttural
- The vowel lengthens instead
- Ha-arets, the earth
- Ha-ish, the man

¶ 3.10

These small changes are regular and follow from the rules about gutturals you met in Lecture 1.

The construct chain

First noun in construct form

↓

Second noun in normal form

↓

Bet lechem, house of bread

↓

Bethlehem

¶ 3.11

Bet lechem means house of bread, which is the name of the town Bethlehem.

Construct forms

Normal	Construct
Davar, word	Devar, word of
Devarim, words	Devare, words of
Bayit, house	Bet, house of

¶ 3.12

Construct forms often shorten their vowels: davar becomes devar, and the plural ending im becomes e,

Famous construct chains

- Bet El, house of God
- Ben adam, son of man
- Shir ha-shirim, Song of Songs
- Melekh ha-melakhim

¶ 3.13

Shir ha-shirim, song of the songs, is the Song of Songs, a way of saying the best of songs.

Elohim

- Plural in form
- Singular verbs for the God of Israel
- A plural of majesty
- Shorter form El

¶ 3.14

Grammarians call this a plural of majesty or of fullness.

The divine name

- Four consonants
- Read as Adonai, my Lord
- Printed the LORD in English Bibles
- Called the divine name here

¶ 3.15

Most English Bibles print it as the LORD in capital letters.

Words for the person

Inner life

- Nefesh, living being
- Ruach, wind or spirit

Earth and body

- Adam, a human
- Adamah, ground

¶ 3.16

Adam, a human being, is related to adamah, ground,

Practice

- Write word families
- M-l-kh, sh-l-m, d-v-r
- Make construct chains
- Think in roots

¶ 3.17

Then make construct chains: devar ha-melekh, bet ha-melekh, the king's house.