

LESSON NOTES

Lower Beginner S1 #1

Asking People Where They're From in Hebrew

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HEBREW

1. יונתן: שלום, זה הכיסא שלי.
2. אנה: בסדר גמור. שמי אנה. איך קוראים לך?
3. יונתן: שמי יונתן. מאין את?
4. אנה: אני מארצות הברית. מאין אתה?
5. יונתן: אני מקנדה.
6. אנה: נעים מאוד.
7. יונתן: גם לי.

ENGLISH

1. YONATAN: Hello. That's my seat.
2. ANNA: Oh, Okay! (Yonatan taking a seat) My name is Anna. What's your name?
3. YONATAN: My name is Yonatan. Where are you from?
4. ANNA: I'm from the USA. Where are you from?
5. YONATAN: I'm from Canada.
6. ANNA: Nice to meet you.
7. YONATAN: Me too.

ROMANIZATION

CONT'D OVER

1. YONATAN: Shalom, zeh ha-kis'e sheli.
2. ANNA: Beseder gamur. Sh'mi Anna. Eikh kor'im lekha?
3. YONATAN: Shmi Yonatan. me'eyin at?
4. ANNA: Ani me-artzot ha-brit. Me'ayin atah?
5. YONATAN: Ani mi-kanada.
6. ANNA: Na'im me'od.
7. YONATAN: Gam li.

VOWELLED

1. יונתן: שלום, זה הכיסא שלי
2. אנה: בסדר גמור. שמי אנה. איך קוראים לך?
3. יונתן: שמי יונתן. מאין את?
4. אנה: אני מארצות הברית. מאין אתה?
5. יונתן: אני מקנדה.
6. אנה: נעים מאוד.
7. יונתן: גם לי.

VOCABULARY

Hebrew	Romanization	English	Class	Gender
גמור	gamur	finished/ completely	adjective	
מאין	me-ayin	from where	interrogative	
ארצות הברית	ar'tzot ha-brit	The United States	noun	Feminine
קנדה	kanada	Canada	noun	feminine
קוראים (לקרוא)	kor'im (likro)	to call (call)	verb	
אתה	atah	you, masculine singular	pronoun	Masculine
את	at	you, feminine singular	pronoun	Feminine
איך	eikh	how	interrogative, adverb	general
לך	lekha	to you (masculine)	Pronoun	male

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>מזג האוויר בסדר גמור. <i>Mezeg ha-avir be-seder gamur.</i></p> <p>The weather is completely okay.</p>	<p>מאין את? <i>Me-ayin at?</i></p> <p>Where are you (feminine) from?</p>
<p>ארצות הברית היא מדינה יפה. <i>Ar'tzot ha-brit hi medinah yafah.</i></p> <p>The United States is a beautiful country.</p>	<p>אתה באת מקנדה? <i>Atah bata mi-kanada?</i></p> <p>You came from Canada?</p>
<p>אתה קורא לי לבוא? <i>Atah kore li lavo?</i></p> <p>Are you are calling me to come over?</p>	<p>מה אתה מבשל? <i>Mah atah mevashel?</i></p> <p>What are you cooking?</p>

<p>את גרה בתל אביב. <i>At garah be-tel aviv.</i></p> <p>You live in Tel Aviv.</p>	<p>אמור לי איך להשתמש בשלט הרחוק. <i>emor li eikh le'hishtamesh ba'shalat ha'rakhok.</i></p> <p>Tell me how to use the remote control.</p>
<p>איך אתה מבשל ברוקולי? <i>Eikh atah mevashel brokoli?</i></p> <p>How do you cook broccoli?</p>	<p>איך קורים את זה? <i>E'ich kor'im et zeh?</i></p> <p>How do you read this?</p>
<p>כמה זה עולה? <i>kama zeh oleh?</i></p> <p>How much is it?</p>	<p>איך קוראים לך? (when talking to a male) <i>(when talking to a male)?</i></p> <p>What's your name? (when talking to a male)</p>

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

בסדר גמור (*beseder gamur*)

This phrase is similar to the English phrase "it's totally okay." *Beseder gamur* means "completely okay." It's a common answer to the question *מה שלומך?* (*mah shlomekh/mah shlom'kha*) or "How are you?" *Beseder* means "okay," and as we learned in other podcast lessons, the literal translation of this word is "in order." *Gamur* means "finished" or "complete" and here becomes "completely." You may notice that the order of these two words is the reverse of the order you would use in English, as is the case with most adjectives in Hebrew. Other uses for *gamur* are similar to the English usage of the words "complete" and "finished," like the "food is finished," which is *האוכל גמור* (*ha-okhel gamur*). This would mean that the food is finished or gone, not that the food is finished cooking; in that case, you would use the word for "ready" *מוכן* (*mukhan*). You can also use the word *gamur* when you want to say that you are tired at the end of the day *אני גמור* (*ani gamur*).

ארצות הברית (*ar'tzot ha-brit*)

Ar'tzot ha-brit is the phrase that we use in Hebrew for the "United States." The first word is the plural form of *e'retz*. This word has several different meanings, such as "land," "country," "earth," or "world." In this case, it means "lands." The second part of this phrase, *ha-brit*, means "the covenant" or "the alliance." These two words have been placed together in what is called a *s'michut* in Hebrew. A *s'michut* is the construction of two closely related nouns into one noun phrase. There are special forms for *s'michuts* in Hebrew, and one of these forms is that the second word of the *s'michut* carried the definite article *ha*, as you see in this *s'michut*.

So, we would literally translate this phrase as "the covenant lands" or "the lands of the covenant."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Asking People Where They Are From.

מֵאִין אַתָּה/אתה?

מֵאִין אַתָּה/אתה?

Me-ayin at/atah?

"Where are you from?"

In the dialogue, both Anna and Yonatan asked where the other was from. The phrase consisted of two words: מֵאִין (*me-ayin*) and אַת (*at*) or אַתָּה (*atah*), depending on who was speaking. The first word in this phrase is מֵאִין (*me-ayin*), and this phrase means "from where" or in older English "from whence." This phrase is actually very formal in Hebrew and would be used in more of a formal setting or an educational setting. It's a phrase that you learn as correct when you are learning Hebrew, but not one that you would use in day-to-day Hebrew. The second part of the phrase is אַת (*at*) or אַתָּה (*atah*), which is the masculine and feminine forms of "you." In the dialogue, Yonatan used the feminine form אַת (*at*) because he was talking to Anna and Anna use the masculine form אַתָּה (*atah*) because she was talking to Yonatan. The order of the words is different from in English, and you should remember that the verb "to be" is implied here because there is no other verb present. The literal word for word translation would be "from where (are) you?"

What to Use in Day-to-Day Hebrew

You would most often hear the above phrase in an education setting, like when you are learning Hebrew in an Ulpan or when you are speaking with someone who values speaking correct Hebrew. When you want to say the same thing in day-to-day Hebrew, you would use the word מְאִיפָה (*me-eifo*), which means the same thing, but is not considered "correct" Hebrew. The phrase would then be אַתָּה מְאִיפָה? (*me-eifo atah*) or אַת מְאִיפָה? (*me-eifo at?*). *Me-eifo* means exactly the same thing as מֵאִין (*me-ein*), meaning "from where."

You can also use this to ask about other people, using pronouns other than "you" or even items that you want to know the origin of.

For Example:

1.

מאיפה הם?

מַאיֶפֶה הֵם?

Me-eifo hem?

"Where are they from?"

2.

מאיפה החולצה שלך?

מַאיֶפֶה הַחוֹלְצָה שְׁלָךְ?

Me-eifo ha-ḥul'tzah shelakh?

"Where is your shirt from?"

Examples From This Lesson Using מאיפה

If Anna and Yonatan had used informal Hebrew in their conversation, they would have said the following:

1.

מאיפה את?

מַאיֶפֶה אַתְּ?

Me-eifo at?

"Where are you (feminine) from? (informal)"

2.

מאיפה אתה?

מַאיֶפֶה אַתָּה

Me-eifo atah?

"Where are you (masculine) from?"

Examples From This Dialogue

1.

מאין את?

?

Me-ayin at/atah?

"Where are you (feminine) from?"

2.

מאין אתה?

מַאִין אַתָּה?

Me-ayin atah?

"Where are you (masculine) from?"

The Reply to מאין אתה?:

Whether you use the formal version of "where are you from" or the informal version, the answer is the same. To answer this question, you would say אני מ (ani mi-) and then the place where you are from. *Ani* means "I" and *mi* means "from." Here again we have an implied "to be" verb.

Examples From the Dialogue

1. אני מארצות הברית.
אני מארצות הברית.
- Ani me-ar'tzot ha-brit.*
"I am from the United States."

2. אני מקנדה.
אני מקנדה.
- Ani mi-kanada.*
"I am from Canada."

You can also answer using other pronouns or nouns like in our earlier examples.

For Example:

1. הם מגרמניה.
הם מגרמניה.
- Hem mi-germaniya.*
"They are from Germany."
2. החולצה מפוקס.
החולצה מפוקס.
- Ha-hul'tzah mi-fox.*
"The shirt is from Fox."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

The Staggering Growth of Israel's Population

Israel has been built on immigration. At the time of the founding of the modern country, the population of Israel was around 800,000. Today, Israel has a population of just under 8 million people. Since Israel was founded as a homeland for Jewish people, immigration has been very important to its existence. In 1950, Israel created the Law of Return; this law granted all Jewish people the right to settle in Israel and have Israeli citizenship. In 1970, they expanded that law to include people of Jewish ancestry, meaning that people with one Jewish grandparent or parent were also entitled to Israeli citizenship. In the years since the creation of the State of Israel, Jewish people have returned to Israel from all over the world. These new citizens are given rights to certain things that will make the transition a little easier for them, like housing, tax breaks, and free language courses. In general, Israelis are very accepting of the many new immigrants who come to live in Israel. This creates great diversity in Israel, and Israeli society changes along with the new cultures within its borders. The new immigrants usually blend well into Israeli society, learning Hebrew and Israeli customs and joining in to Israeli society.