

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Lower Beginner S1 #1

Asking People Where They're From in Hebrew

CONTENTS

- 2 INTRODUCTION
- 2 POST CONVERSATION BANTER
- 2 KEY VOCAB AND PHRASES
- 3 LESSON FOCUS
- 5 OUTRO

1

INTRODUCTION

Sherah: Hello and welcome to HebrewPod101.com. This is Lower Beginner Series Season 1, Lesson 1 - Asking People Where They're From in Hebrew. I'm your host, Sherah!

Amir: And I'm Amir.

Sherah: In this lesson, you'll learn how to ask where someone is from.

Amir: The conversation takes place on an airplane to Israel

Sherah: It's between Anna and Yonatan, who is sitting next to her on the plane.

Amir: The speakers are strangers, so they'll be using formal Hebrew.

Sherah: Let's listen to the conversation.

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Sherah: So, Anna is on her way to Israel to make Aliyah. Aliyah is Hebrew for "immigrating to Israel".

Amir: Immigration in Israel is always a hot topic.

Sherah: Israel is built on immigration, because it was founded to be a homeland for the Jewish people.

Amir: Jewish people had been making their way to the area for many years before its founding, to escape anti semitism in Russia and in Europe.

Sherah: Right, when Modern Israel was founded, there were around 800,000 people living in Israel.

Amir: And now there are close to 8 million people living in Israel, so we have grown quite a lot.

Sherah: Yah, but that didn't just happen accidentally. In 1950, Israel made a law that said anyone who was Jewish had the right to come and live in Israel, and be an Israeli citizen.

Amir: In the 70s they expanded this to include people who had one Jewish parent or grandparent, so this opened the door to many other people to come live in Israel.

Sherah: And this made Israeli society quite a melting pot.

Amir: It definitely did! We have citizens from all over the world.

Sherah: Right, and the most recent large-scale immigrations have been from Russia, Ethiopia and even Latin America.

Amir: I think that in general, Israelis are very accepting of new immigrants.

Sherah: That's true for the most part, especially if the new immigrants take the time to learn and speak Hebrew, and are open to becoming part of Israeli society.

Amir: I think most do learn Hebrew.

Sherah: Yes, and that's what makes Israeli culture so rich! Okay, let's move on to the vocabulary.

KEY VOCAB AND PHRASES

Sherah: Let's have a closer look at the usage for some of the words and phrases from this lesson. The first phrase is בסדר גמור.

Amir: בסדר גמור means “completely okay”.

Sherah: In English, we would more likely say, “it’s totally okay”.

Amir: Sure, that works too, but here we want to be true to the meaning of the words. בסדר is a word we learned in our earlier Absolute Beginner Series and it means, “okay”.

Sherah: Or “in order” if you want to get technical.

Amir: Right, גמור נוח means “finished”, but it can also mean “complete”. So “completely okay” is the translation that we came up with that is close to the Hebrew.

Sherah: If you want to use the adjective גמור in other ways, you use it the way that you would use the English “finished”. Like האוכל גמור.

Amir: Although, in English this could sound like you are saying that the food is finished cooking. In Hebrew, this means that the food is all gone.

Sherah: Very true. האוכל גמור - the food is finished. Let's move on to our next phrase ארצות הברית.

Amir: The good ole' United States. The first word of this phrase is ארצות and this can mean “land”

Sherah: In this case it's closest to “lands”.

Amir: The second part is הברית and this means “covenant” or “alliance”.

Sherah: When you put them together, it means “lands of the covenant”.

Amir: That's kind of close to “United States”.

Sherah: It is, just in slightly different words. You may have noticed that the prefix -ה, which means “the”, is attached to the second word.

Amir: That's because this is a special compound noun, and they have special rules.

Sherah: Yes, compound nouns have different pronunciations and if you have a -ה or “the” with a compound noun, it appears before the second noun in the phrase.

Amir: You only need to be familiar with it for now.

Sherah: Right, it's a little more complicated than we want to get at the moment, so for now just remember that the -ה goes on the second noun. Okay, let's move on to the Grammar.

LESSON FOCUS

Sherah: In this lesson you'll learn how to ask someone where they're from.

Amir: We are going to start off by telling you what the formal way to do this is. This is

what your Ulpan, or intensive Hebrew school, teacher will tell you to say.

Sherah: That's right. In Hebrew, there are no real rules that will tell you when to use formal Hebrew and when to use informal Hebrew, so there are times when we will teach you both and you can use whichever one you are comfortable with.

Amir: When you learn Hebrew in Ulpan, you learn these formal Hebrew phrases, but you will probably only use them in Ulpan, or with people who speak high Hebrew. And there are some of those people around.

Sherah: This is one phrase that you will hear people use sometimes. When you want to ask someone where they are from, you say מאין אתה or מאין את.

Amir: מאין means "from where". This is the correct word to use in this phrase.

Sherah: מאין is followed by אתה or את depending on if you are talking to a man or a woman.

Amir: את is "you" for a woman and אתה is "you" for a man.

Sherah: So, מאין אתה? is literally "from where you".

Amir: Right. Here, there is no word for the verb "to be" since it is in the present tense.

Sherah: Let's have the listeners repeat. Listeners, repeat after me. מאין אתה [pause]

Amir: This is what you use when you are asking a man. How about if you're asking a woman?

Sherah: Repeat after me. מאין את [pause]

Sherah: So this is great if you want to speak formal Hebrew, but can you tell us what you'd say in normal everyday Hebrew, Amir?

Amir: Well, you would say מאיפה אתה or מאיפה את.

Sherah: מאיפה is "where" and -מ is "from", so it means exactly the same thing.

Amir: Your Ulpan teacher may not let you ask it that way, but that's what you'll hear from most Israelis.

Sherah: So, now that we've gone this far, how do you answer the question מאין אתה?

Amir: If you are asking me, אני מישראל, "I am from Israel."

Sherah: So, in the answer we start with the Hebrew word for "I", אני. You don't need a verb in this sentence, so you go on to the word for "from" which is -מ and then the place where you are from.

Amir: So, Shira מאין את? "where are you from?"

Sherah: אני מארצות הברית. "I am from the United States." You can also use this expression to talk about other things or specific people. For example, I could say מאיפה החולצה?

Amir: Shira asked where my shirt is from and I would answer החולצה מפוקס. "The shirt is from Fox."

Sherah: Fox is a clothes store in Israel. Let's give another example. Let's say you see a group of tourists, and you want to ask where they are from. You would say מאין הם מאיפה הם "where are they

from?"

Amir: הם מגרמניה. They are from Germany.

OUTRO

Sherah: Good to know. Well that's it for this lesson.

Amir: Now that you've listened to this lesson, please visit HebrewPod101.com and tell us where you're from.

Sherah: And be sure to check the lesson notes. Bye everyone!

Amir: להתראות