

# HEBREW THROUGH MOVEMENT

# בְּרָכוּ



Originally developed as a complement to the JECC's curriculum,  
*Lasim Lev: Sh'ma and Its Blessings, plus Kiddush*

**Jewish Education Center of Cleveland**

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## INTRODUCTION TO USING HEBREW THROUGH MOVEMENT WITH PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS

This unit is one of a series developed by the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland as a starting point for planning prayer and blessing lessons using Hebrew Through Movement. Indeed, the power of Hebrew Through Movement is in its ability to introduce and reinforce key vocabulary of Jewish prayers and rituals by using the foundational commands that have students walking, running, turning, and pointing. With HTM, students learn Hebrew by listening and reacting, and as a result, words and phrases stick in their heads much easier than when they attempt to memorize a list of words.

A few things to note:

- At the stage of language that Hebrew Through Movement operates, students will never fully be able to understand all the Hebrew words and phrases of a blessing or prayer. But they can be introduced to enough vocabulary so that the blessing begins to take on meaning.
- To work with the prayers and blessings, students need to have completed Foundational Level Five in the curriculum guide (available for free download from the home page of: [HebrewThroughMovement.org](http://HebrewThroughMovement.org)).<sup>1</sup> This level of learning provides the basic vocabulary to introduce and reinforce the complicated language of Hebrew prayers. Core commands that will be helpful include:

לָקוּם	get up
לְלַכּוֹת אֶל	walk to
לְקַפוֹץ אֶל	jump to
לְהַצְבִּיעַ עַל	point to
לְקַחַת	take
לְגַעַת ב	touch
לְהַרְיֵם אֶת	raise up
לְהוֹרִיד אֶת	lower
לְשִׂים _____ עַל	put (the)(a) _____ on

- Most of the time, HTM focuses on individual words, but at times an entire phrase is offered as the object of a command.
- Note that the JECC develops curriculum in response to the needs of local Cleveland congregations. After evaluation and revision during a pilot year, our materials are then shared nationally. The Hebrew Through Movement lessons are embedded into two JECC prayer curricula:
  - *Lasim Lev* (a focus on the *Sh'ma* and its Blessings, plus *Kiddush*)
  - *Lakum...La'amod* (a focus on the *Amidah*, plus *V'ahavta*)

<sup>1</sup> Teachers gain the basic skills for working with Hebrew Through Movement through the 10 hour online-seminar offered by the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland: <http://www.hebrewthroughmovement.org/online-seminar-registration.html>

Both are available for free download from JECCMarketplace.com. If your program needs a specific prayer, blessing, or vocabulary that is not included, use the general template provided in these lessons to create your own.

**This guide contains:**

- Suggestions for the vocabulary a teacher might choose in working with a prayer or blessing
- Ideas for teaching each of the chosen vocabulary words
- Resource Sheets with pictures that will help with the teaching of concepts (print these in color, preferably on cardstock; lamination is optional)
- Explanations of when students may have learned specific vocabulary if your program uses *Lasim Lev* or *Lakum...La'amod* OR if your program has been teaching the prayers/blessings in the same order by which these guides are organized.

**Three teaching tips:**

- Teachers are welcome to introduce vocabulary from this guide in any order they wish BUT it is helpful to complement student learning with words that match the current focus of their *t'fillah* class. Thus, if you are a Hebrew Through Movement teaching specialist, be sure to stay in contact with the classroom teacher so you choose the most helpful vocabulary, weekly
- Remember to start each lesson with a review of past vocabulary. This review should contain words students have already learned that will assist in the rest of the lesson. For instance, if you know students will be touching objects (לְגַעַת בּוּ) and picking them up (לְהַרִים אֶת), include those verb forms in the review.
- Anytime you complete a Hebrew Through Movement lesson based on a prayer, blessing or ritual, end your session by helping your students recite the actual blessing. This creates immediate and strong reinforcement between the vocabulary just learned and the actual prayer.

Make sure to recite the blessing בְּרַכּוֹ after each HTM class session.

Vocabulary options for HTM are indicated in red:

בְּרַכּוֹ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ  
בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

● לְשִׁים לֵב (pay attention)

- *In the JECC’s curriculum for Sh’ma and Its Blessings, a core focus is that these prayers ask us to “pay attention” in a variety of ways. Teaching this command will help the students as they work with this overall t’fillah curriculum.*

Give a series of commands (stand up, sit down, walk, etc) and then say לְשִׁים לֵב which will cue the students to stop, lean in, look at you and pay attention.

● יְהוָה

Show a card that has the name of God on it (pages 9-11, below). Show the card and use the Foundational commands as students work with it.

לְהַצְבִּיעַ עַל-\_\_\_\_\_  
לְגַעַת בְּ-\_\_\_\_\_  
לְהַרְיֵם אֶת הַ-\_\_\_\_\_  
לְהוֹרִיד אֶת הַ-\_\_\_\_\_

Then, place cards with *other* names of God (pages 9-11, below) around the room. Ask students to point to יְהוָה and make sure they find and point to the card with this exact name of God.

● לְבָרַךְ

- *If your students are using the JECC’s curriculum guide “Lasim Lev,” check out the instructions for the third session; it’s then that students formally work with the root ב-ר-כ as it relates to this prayer. Your work with HTM complements that learning.*

Offer a variety of “blessing” commands. For example, say לְבָרַךְ עַל גֵּר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת and then launch into the blessing that matches.

**NOTE:** For HTM, we usually cue/command students to recite a blessing in this form לְבָרַךְ עַל גֵּר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת and then we help students launch into reciting the actual blessing (e.g., in this case, the Shabbat candle blessing).

● לְבָרַךְ עַל יְהוָה

- *This command may need an English introduction.*

When you give this command to an assigned prayer leader (one student in the front of the room with this role), have him/her respond with the first line:

בְּרַכּוֹ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ

Or, teach students that when you whisper the word “English” at the end of your command, they should all say at least one praise of God (like “God is wonderful,” “God is great,” “God is powerful,” etc).

Then you can repeat the command for the class and have them respond:

בְּרוּךְ יי המְבַרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

• **בְּרַכּוֹ ... הַמְבֹרָךְ**

Use cards with the words בְּרַכּוֹ and הַמְבֹרָךְ (see below) and ask students to point to, lift them up, etc.

• **לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד**

- *If your students are using the JECC's curriculum guide "Lasim Lev," check with the classroom teacher to see if s/he has already taught this command; it's introduced at the beginning of the third session.*

Command students to "sit-stand" (a down-up sequence)

לְשֹׁבֵת ... לְקוּם

לְשֹׁבֵת ... לְקוּם

לְשֹׁבֵת ... לְקוּם

And then command:

לְשֹׁבֵת לְקוּם לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד...

["forever and ever"] Then YOU do something that shows it's forever... for example, as the students are going down-up, down-up "forever," you sit at your desk, open a book and read.

בְּרָכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ  
בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרֵךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד



נל

ז :

ה'

אֶלְדָּנִי



אֵל

יְהוָה

אֱלֹהִים



בְּרָכוּ

הַמְבוֹרָךְ

