

Gk-101 Introduction to Hebrew and Greek

Pronunciation

April 19, 2014

5 Quick Rules to Pronunciation

- Distinguish Dagesh Forte from Dagesh Lene
- Distinguish Shureq (ך)
from Waw with Dagesh Forte (ך)
- Identify Syllables
- Distinguish silent Shewa from vocal Shewa
- Distibguish Qamets from Qamets hatuf

Dagesh Forte versus Dagesh Lene

- If there is a Dagesh in any letter other than a *begadkephat*, it must be a Dagesh Forte, the doubling Dagesh. So, in the word קָטֵל, the Dagesh in the *ט* must be forte and the word would be transliterated qattel
- If the *begadkephat* with Dagesh is immediately preceded by a full vowel, it is Forte. If it is preceded by no vowel, including a Silent Shewa, it is Lene

Shureq (וּ)

verses Waw with Dagesh Forte (וּ)

- If the letter before וּ has no vowel, it is Shureq.

In כָּתוּב The Tav before the וּ has no vowel and so the וּ must be the vowel shureq

In מְצוּה The Tsade before the וּ has a vowel under it (Patach) and וּ must be a doubled consonant.

Identifying Syllables

- A word has as many syllables as it has full vowels.
- Hebrew words are accented only on one of the last two syllables; Often it is only marked when it is NOT the last syllable.

Most commentaries and Bible study tools do not mark the accents so when in doubt, accent the last syllable.

Silent Shewa verses vocal Shewa

- Vocal Shewa begins, or is a syllable. Silent Shewa ends a syllable. In the word דָּבַר , the Shewa is at the beginning of a syllable and must be vocal. A composite Shewa is vocal and begins the second syllable.
- Shewa after a short vowel in an unaccented syllable is silent. In מְרַכְּבָה , the ךְ (Resh + Shewa) is preceded by a short vowel, Seqhol, and there is no accent – therefore the Shewa is silent and closes the syllable.

Qamets verses Qamets hatuf

- Qamets hatuf occurs only in a closed, unaccented syllable.

In הַכְּמָה the כּ closes the syllable and הֶ is both closed and unaccented – therefore the vowel must be Qamets Hatuf – transliterated as hokma.

In וַיִּקֶּם the Qamets under the Yod appears in an open syllable, and the Qamets under the Qof appears in a closed (un accented) syllable, so it must be short. - Transliterated as wayyaqom

Other interesting Marks

- Soph Pasuq (meaning end of verse) found at the end of a verse and looks like two stacked diamonds :
- Mappig looks exactly like a Dagesh BUT is only found in the letter He at the end of a word to make that He as a true consonant instead of a vowel letter.

Consider:

- סוס is the word for male horse
- סוּסָה the Mappig indicates a suffix HER, and thus “her horse”
- סוּסָה with no Mappiq in it indicates a feminine meaning, a female horse, a “mare”

Other interesting Marks

- Maqqef looks like and functions similarly to a hyphen in English, The main difference is that it appears at the top of the line rather than in the middle.

וּבְכָל־הָאָרֶץ

It indicates a close connection between 2 words

Let's look at Ruth 1:1 (LHB)

וַיְהִי בִּימֵי שָׁפֵט הַשָּׁפָטִים
וַיְהִי רֵעַב בְּאֶרֶץ
וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לָחֵם יְהוּדָה
לְגוֹר בְּשָׂדֵי מוֹאָב
הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּשְׁנֵי בָנָיו: