

Ancient Hebrew for Children

BeGaD-KePhaTh letters

ב ג ד כ פ ת letters

Soph Pasuq

Sh'wa

Maqqeph

Booklet 5

THE HEBREW ALPHABET

Final Form
Letters

א	Aleph	No sound (silent)
בב	Beth	B as in “Beginning” or V as in “Vine”
גג	Gimmel	G as in “God”
דד	Daleth	D as in “Dark”
ה	Hey	H as in “Heaven”
ו	Waw	W as in “World”
ז	Zayen	Z as in “Zion”
ח	Hketh	Hk as in lightly clearing your throat
ט	Teth	T as in “Time”
י	Yod	Y as in “Yes”
ך	Kaph	K as in “Kin”
ל	Lammed	L as in “Lord”
ם	Mem	M as in “Mercy”
ן	Nun	N as in “Noah”
ס	Sammech	S as in “Sin”
ע	Ayen	No sound (silent)
ף	Pe	P as in “Pray” or ph/f as in “flood”
ץ	Tsade	Ts az “riTZ crackers”
ק	Koph	Q as in “IraQ”
ר	Resh	R but pronounced in back of the throat, like Russian “r”
שׁ	Sin	S as in “Savior”
שׂ	Shin	Sh as in “Shine”
תת	Tau	T as in “Time” or TH as in “The”

VOWEL MEMORY KEYS

Short

PATHAQ



FLAT HAT PATHAQ

SEGHOL



HEN EGGS

HIRIQ



it

Long

QAMETS



FATHER

SERE



MATES

HIRIQ YOD



i in taxi



QAMETS

HATUPH



oTTer

HOLEM



OVER

THE ONLY VOWEL THAT IS
"OVER" THE LETTERS SAYS "o"

QIBUTS



Hard to Put

SHURIQ



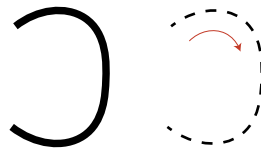
"Ooo!"

(WHAT WAW SAYS
WHEN POKED IN THE BELLY)

Käph

Käph is the 11th letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It comes into English as a “k” and sounds like the English “k” when it has a dot (daghesh lene) in it, like this: כּ.

To remember its pronunciation, you can think of it as a backward “c” and the hard “c” sound like “Cat.”



käph came in the same spot in the alphabet as the English “k.”

The letter käph had many shapes in the ancient past, such as these:

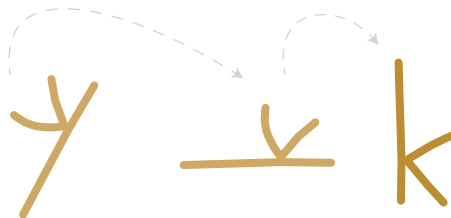


But, these ancient shapes turned into the following shape later in Aramaic.

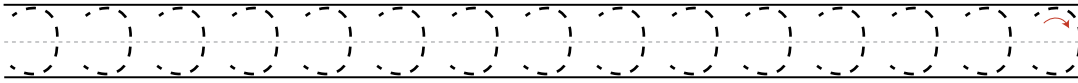
Ancient käph:



It is easy to see this becoming a “k” in English:

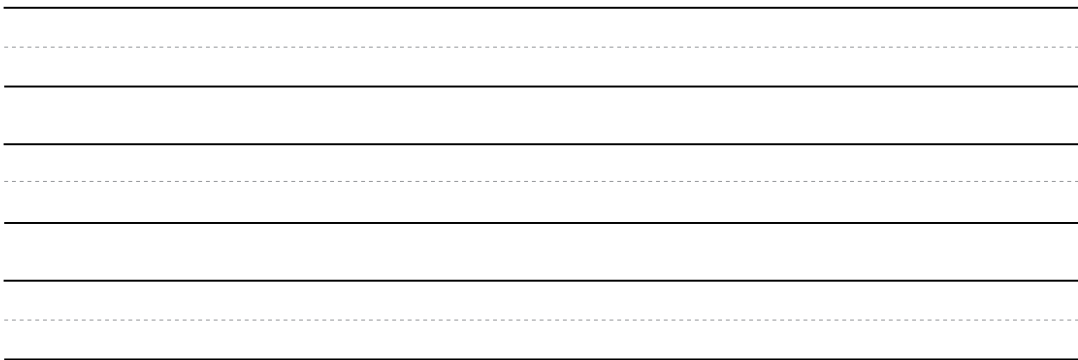


Trace the Hebrew letters below.
Start on the right and move left.

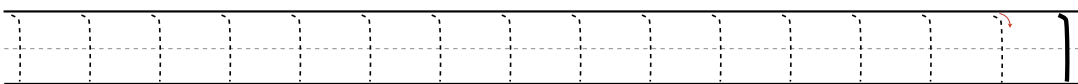


käph

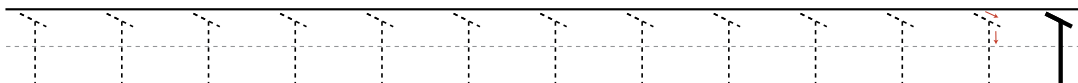
Fill in the next three lines with the letter “käph”



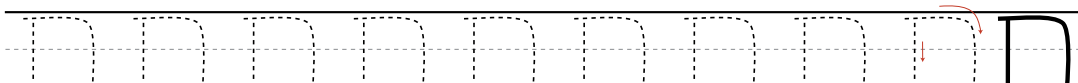
REVIEW: trace the following letters



Waw



Zayen

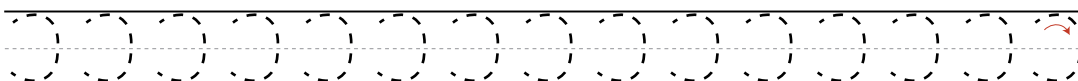


Hkēth



Tēth

Once again, write out käph

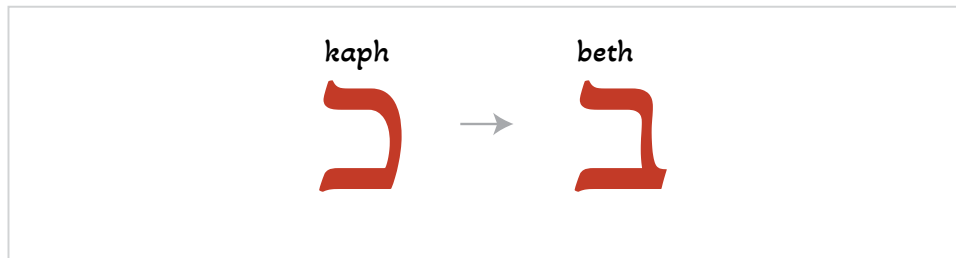


Käph

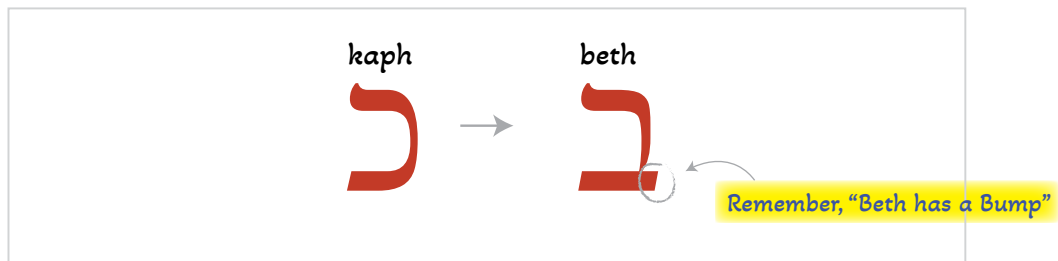
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN כ AND ב

The difference between כ and ב

The difference between these two letters is in the tittle. Again, a tittle is the smallest part of a Hebrew word that makes a difference in meaning. Can you identify the tittle?



The little piece of line that sticks out at the base of the “beth” is a tittle.



Just like in English, the Hebrew fonts can change the letter shapes slightly. The following letters are all kaph's:



The following letters are all beth's:



PRACTICE IDENTIFYING

ב AND כ

Circle all the beths and cross out all the kaphs in the following lines.

7 6 5 4 3 2 1
ב כ ב כ כ ב כ Line 1

7 6 5 4 3 2 1
כ כ כ ב כ כ כ Line 2

7 6 5 4 3 2 1
ב כ ב כ ב ב ב Line 3

7 6 5 4 3 2 1
ב כ ב כ כ ב כ Line 4

ב כ ב ב ב כ ב Line 5

Vocabulary

כבד

כבוד

noun

“to be weighy”
“to be heavy”
“to be valueble”
“to be glorious”

כבד

adjective

God, the Creator, designed the root **כבד** to describe something that has weight to it, either physically or in the mind.

As a verb, it meant “to be heavy or weighy.”

So, if something is heavy, that can be a good thing if its weight adds to its value or honor (Is. 29:13, Ex. 20:12, 1 Chro. 11:21). So, in this sense, more weight equals more importance, whether speaking of the weight of someone’s position or influence or the weight of something’s value (such as gold or silver).

But if that weightiness creates difficulties, like a heavy burden, then it is not something desirable (Gen. 48:10, Is. 6:10, 1 Sam. 5:6; 2 Sam. 13:25; Gen. 18:20).

So, this word was used for the ideas of “honor” and “glory” and “value” as well as of “grievous” (like a famine that weighed heavily on the land - Gen. 12:10) or “heavy” (like sins that weighed heavily on a person - Ps. 38:4)

Also, if something does not work correctly or efficiently, if it is hard to accomplish, it can feel “heavy” for the one trying to get the work done (e.g., Gen. 48:10).

The opposite of “honoring” (**כבד**) God is not “dishonoring” Him in Hebrew. It is to make Him light in the mind, speech, or behavior. In other words, when a person thinks, speaks, or behaves in a way that makes God appear to be of little value or meaning (as if He does not weigh much in their life), that person is contrary to God. He is taking God lightly, which is cursing Him, for the Hebrew word in Scripture for “curse” is the word “to make light” of something.

Psa. 19:1

The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד-אֱלֹהִים

Ex. 20:12

Honour thy father and thy mother:
that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

כִּבְדָּךְ אֶת-אָבִיךָ וְאֶת-אִמְךָ

1 Sam. 4:22

"The glory is departed from Israel"

גָּלְיָה כְּבוֹד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל

Gen. 31:1

And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.

all this glory
כָּל-הַכְּבוֹד הַזֶּה:

Ex. 18:18

Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

this thing is too heavy

כִּבְדָּךְ מִמֶּךָ הַדָּבָר

The BEGAD-KEPHATH Letters

→ בְּגִד־כַּפֹּת ←

These letters (beth, gimmel, dalet, and kaph, pe, tau) form a special group in Hebrew. These are the only letters that can take a *daghes lene*. What is a *daghes lene*?

A *daghes lene* is a dot in the middle of the letter, like this:



These letters always have a *daghes lene*, unless something makes it go away. If the dot goes away, then these letters soften their pronunciation.

For example:

בּ says "b" but ב says "v" (like a "b" but letting air through while saying it)

טּ says "t" but ט says "th"

פּ says "p" but פ says "ph" (like "phone")

כּ says "k" but כ says "kh" (saying "k" while letting a little air through)

These four, especially, will be a focus. It is harder to tell or make a difference for the other two for English speakers.

בגד-כפת Exercise

The teacher will select three students at a time and assign either one of the first set of begad-kephath letters to each student. The teacher will then point at the letters slowly in a row and each student must say the letter assigned to him or her.

Once the students are comfortable with it, then the teacher can point at letters out of order.

All the students in a class should be used for the first set before moving on to the next three letters.

First set:

בגד

Second set:

כפת

All 6 letters:

בגד כפת

1. Circle all the daghesh lene's below:

בכגדכפתרתגב

2. Circle all the letters below that are begad-kephath letters

למזהגדלככגדכפתרתגבטת

3. Now put a daghesh lene in all the letters that are begad-kephath letters (if they do not already have one).

למזהגדלככגדכפתרתגבטת

4. Circle all the begad-kephath letters in the Hebrew verses below.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת
הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ :

4. Write the begad-kephath letters in Hebrew 3 times here:

1.

2.

3.

The BEGAD-KEPHATH Rule

When does a begad-kephath letter lose its *daghes lene*?

RULE:

A begad-kephath letter loses its *daghes lene* when a vowel sound comes before it.

So, the beth below has lost its *daghes lene* because a vowel is right before it:

לב Read the word

And this beth has lost its *daghes lene*. Why?

לאב

Because aleph is silent, so the last sound before the beth is a holem:

Last sound before the beth לאב

Now, this next beth does not lose its *daghes lene* because the vowel does not come after it:

בֿ

The BEGAD-KEPHATH Practice

Circle each begad-kephath letter below, then put a *daghesh lene* in each begad-kephath letter that SHOULD have one.

גִּם 4

אֲבִי 1

תְּסַפֶּה 5

אֵת 2

Not a vowel sound

בְּאֵרֶץ 6

אֵתוֹ 3

Decide whether the begad-kephath letters below (the ones with question marks over them) should have a *dagesh lene* or not. Put in a *dagesh lene* where needed.

תִּרְאֵ בֶן 1

לֹא-תִקַּח 2

כִּי לֹא-תִעֲזֹב 3

בְּלֹא דְבָרִי 4

The BEGAD-KEPHATH Practice

ANSWER KEY

Circle each begad-kephath letter below, then put a *daghesh lene* in each begad-kephath letter that SHOULD have one.

גִּם 4	אֲבִי 1
תִּסְפֶּה 5	אֶת 2
בְּאֶרֶץ 6	אֹתוֹ 3

Not a vowel sound →

Decide whether the begad-kephath letters below (the ones with question marks over them) should have a *dagesh lene* or not. Put in a *dagesh lene* where needed.

תִּרְאֶה בְּךָ 1
לֹא-תִקַּח 2
כִּי לֹא-תִעָזֵב 3
בְּלֹא דָבָר 4

HEY (ה) AT THE END OF A WORD

When *hey* ה is the last letter of a word, it is silent. It makes no sound. So, these two words are pronounced the same:

בֶּהּ בֵּהּ

Read the following word but be sure **not** to pronounce the *hey* ה at the end.

זֶה ← Zayen says “z”

Now read this next word.

מֶה ← Mem says “m”

So, this word ends in what sound? The sound of the “a” in the pathaq.

~~מֶה~~ ← The last sound of this word is a vowel sound, because the hey is silent.

Now, remember the begad-kephath rule:

RULE

A begad-kephath letter loses its *daghesh lene* when a vowel **sound** comes before it.

THIS RULE ONLY APPLIES SOMETIMES IN THE HEBREW BIBLE TO WORDS ENDING IN HEY. Still, the following section will apply the rule as if it applies all the time.

So, should this beth have a daghesh lene or not?

מַה בּוֹ

(See the next page for the answer)

So, should this beth have a daghesh lene or not?

מַה בּוֹ

It should NOT!

Should this *gimmel* ג have a *daghesh lene*?

זֶה ג

It should NOT!

Practice

Draw a kaph in the following blank spots (marked by circle). Then put a *daghesh lene* in each one that should have it.

י בְּאֶרֶץ ל-שִׁמְרָן לֵם

Draw a gimmel in the following blank spots (marked by circle). Then put a *daghesh lene* in each one that should have it.

לְמַה נִבְתָּ אֶתְהָ וְזִי גִפְיִן

VOWELS IN HAND

Use the chart on the following page to help read each of the syllables below.

דִּי 25

כִּי 17

תִּי 9

בִּי 1

דִּוֹ 26

כִּי 18

תִּי 10

כִּי 2

דִּוֹ 27

כִּוֹ 19

תִּי 11

כִּי 3

דִּי 28

כִּי 20

תִּי 12

כִּי 4

דִּי 29

כִּי 21

תִּי 13

כִּי 5

דִּי 30

כִּי 22

תִּי 14

בִּוֹ 6

דִּי 31

כִּוֹ 23

תִּי 15

בִּי 7

דִּי 32

כִּוֹ 24

תִּי 16

כִּי 8

READING PRACTICE

9 זאת את את 1

10 אל ב ב 2

11 הָבֵל גֵּל גֵּל 3

12 ^{“Japheth”}
יֶפֶת חִי זֶה 4

13 יִזְזַ בָּא עַל 5

14 יַח יַח אָחָד 6

טוֹב 7

אָחַת 8

VOWELS IN HAND

Use the chart on the following page to help read each of the syllables below.

דִּי 25

כִּי 17

תִּי 9

בִּי 1

דִּוֹ 26

כִּי 18

תִּי 10

בִּי 2

דִּוֹ 27

כִּוֹ 19

תִּי 11

בִּי 3

דִּי 28

כִּי 20

תִּי 12

בִּי 4

דִּי 29

כִּי 21

תִּי 13

בִּי 5

דִּי 30

כִּי 22

תִּי 14

בִּוֹ 6

דִּי 31

כִּוֹ 23

תִּי 15

בִּי 7

דִּי 32


כִּוֹ 24

תִּי 16

בִּי 8



Lammed

This is the letter “lammed” (pronounced like “lama”  but with an “-ed” at the end instead of an “-a”).

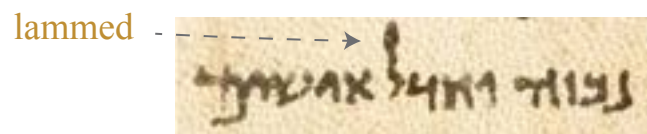
It is the 12th letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The 12th English letter is “L” as well! Because the English alphabet came from Hebrew.

It is pronounced like an English “L” and is the source of the English “L.” (See below.)

Lammed is the only letter that stands above the top line of a Hebrew line of writing:

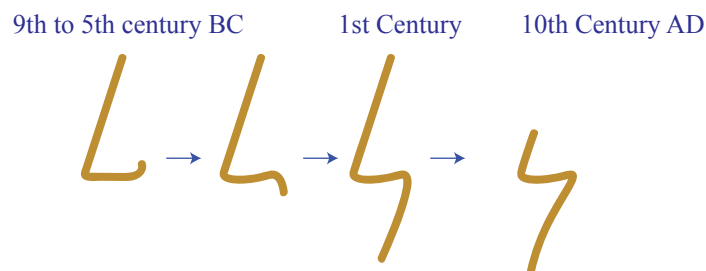


Here is a *lammed* in an ancient Hebrew manuscript:



Scribes would often drag the top of the lammed as high as they could.

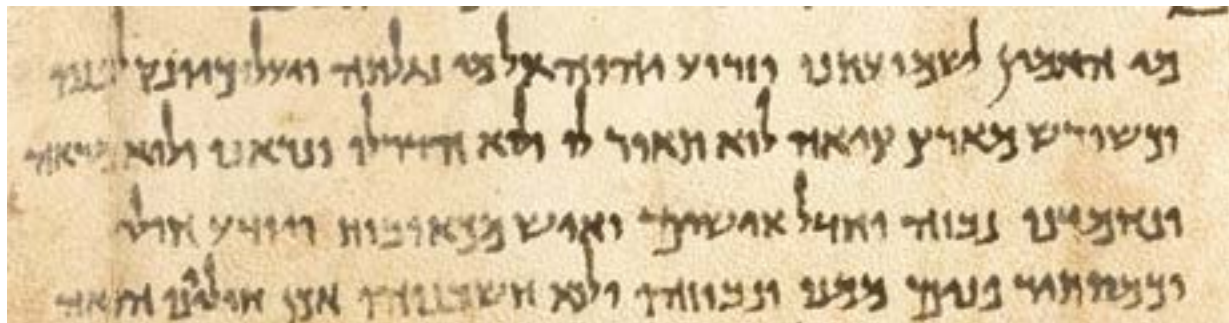
Notice that when you go back in time, the lammed did not have the bottom tail. Now you know where the English “L” came from! Directly from ancient Hebrew:




A lammed can take a daghesh forte but it cannot take a daghesh lene.

Practice

Circle all the lammeds below:



You should find 14 lammeds in the text above.

Here is a typed lammed: 

Add the missing top line to all the lammed's below:

תַּשְׁמֵרוּן דְּעֵשׂוֹת דְּמַעַן תַּחֲיוֹן

Draw lammeds in the blank spots below:

וְהָיָה : אֵל : וְהָיָה : אֵל : אֶכְלָה

Cross out any lammeds that are pointed in the wrong direction below:

לל לללללללל

Trace the line of lammed's below:

Fill in the lines below with lammed's:

Reading Practice

fish דָּג 10	to walk הָלַךְ 7 final form kaph	to lodge לִין? 1 final form nun	short for "Baal" בַּל 1
Gad גָּד 11	no, not לֹא 8	no, not לֹא 8	to roll גֹּל 2
to pierce חָלַל 12	heart, mind לֵב 9	to, toward אֵל 3	heart, mind (long form) לֵבָב 3

Read the following syllables. Each person should read through all of them.

דָּל 3 יב 2 ו 1

Now read the following word taken right from Genesis 1:4, from the first day of creation.

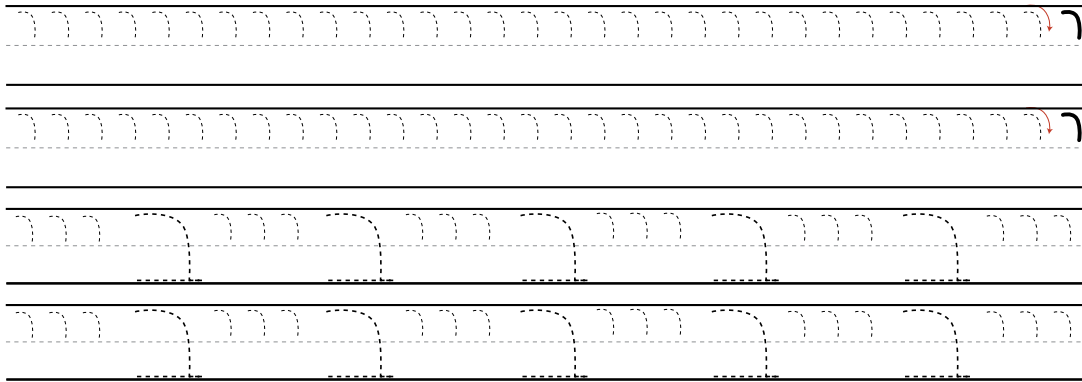
בָּדַל = to divide

וַיִּבְדֵּל

"And [God] divided..."

REVIEW: trace the following letters

Start here



Yod

INTERACTIVE LETTERS

Beginning with number 1 below, each person say the alphabet letters out loud. Once everyone has said the letters in number 1, each person will say the letters in number 2, then 3, one person at a time for each number.

י כ ל 1

ט י כ ל 2

ח ט י כ ל 3

Now, one more time, everyone taking turns, say the alphabet letters below, beginning with zayen:

ז ח ט י כ ל 4

Sof Pasuq

There are no periods in Hebrew, but the Hebrews did have something similar. At the end of a section, the scribes would insert two diamonds or circles to mark the end of that section, much like the end of a verse today. The name of this mark at the end is called a “sof-pasuq.”

“Sof-Pasuq”

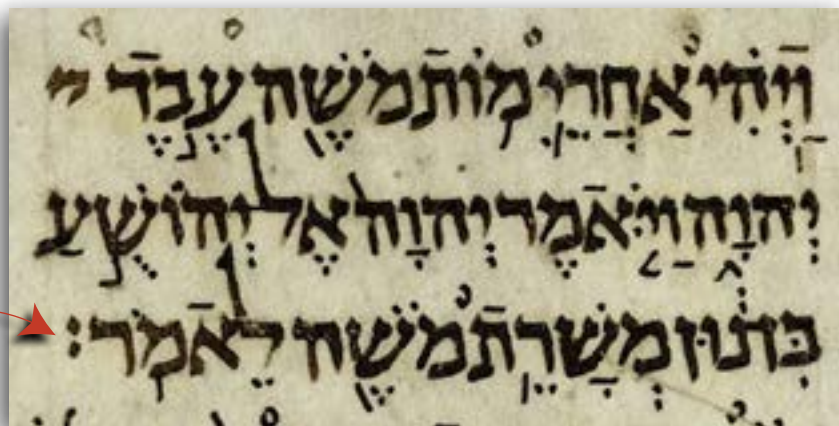


Example

מִים לְמִים :

The “sof-pasuq” stands by itself, never above or below a letter but after the last word of the verse.

Here is a “sof-pasuq” in an ancient, handwritten Hebrew manuscript that is 1100 years old. (The Aleppo Codex, Joshua 1:1)



“Sof-Pasuq”

Here is a “sof-pasuq” in typed Hebrew:

וְיִהְיֶה בִּקְרֹן יוֹם אֶחָד :

SOF-PASUQ EXERCISE SHEET

Circle every “sof-pasuq” in the Hebrew Scriptures below.

Hint:

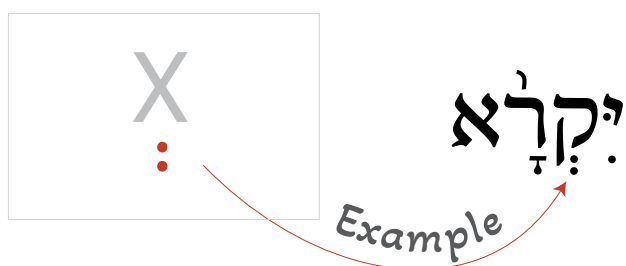
וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לְאוֹר יוֹם
וּלְחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב
וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד: פ
וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי רָקִיעַ
בְּתוֹךְ הַמַּיִם וַיְהִי מִבְּדִיל בֵּין
מַיִם לַמַּיִם:
וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הַרְקִיעַ
וַיַּבְדִּיל בֵּין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מִתַּחַת
לָרָקִיעַ וּבֵין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל
לָרָקִיעַ וַיְהִי-כֵן:

Sh'wa

To pronounce the word “sh’wa” just add these two syllables together: sh+wa (like wa in “water”).

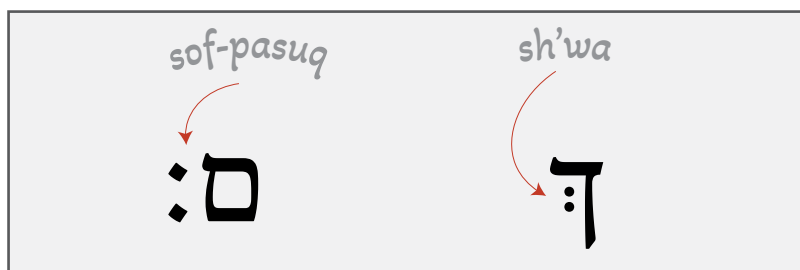
Two dots below a letter are called a sh’wa.

“Sh’wa”



“Sh’wa” either is totally silent (no sound) or it gives a brief sound like “u” in “upper.”

Here is the difference between a “sof-pasuq” and “sh’wa”:



The sh'wa can be vocal (make a sound) or it can be silent (no sound).

RULE:

A sh'wa is always vocal, unless a short vowel comes right before it.

Here are most of the short vowels in Hebrew:



All of these sh'was are vocal, because they start the word and do not have a short vowel before them:



This sh'wa is silent, because it has a short vowel before it:



Sh'wa Exercise 1

Circle all the sh'was:

בְּמִשְׁכָּבָה שְׁעָרוֹ וְרִתֵּץ
בְּגֵדָיו וְרִתֵּץ בְּגֵדֵיהֶם
וְהִפְתָּהֶם הַלְלוּם

Draw sh'was in the empty spots (circled) below.

וְהוּא עֲשֶׂהוּ וְיִבְנֶה

Fill in the rule below:

A sh'wa is always _____, unless a _____ vowel comes right before it.

So, if a sh'wa was at the beginning of a word it would be what? Vocal or silent?

Sh'wa Exercise 2

Circle all the sh'was that are silent. Use the vowel chart at the bottom of the page to know which vowels are short.

בְּמִשְׁכָּבָה שְׁעָרוֹ וְרִתֵּץ
בְּגִדָיו וְרִתֵּץ בְּגִדֵיהֶם
וְהִפְתָּהֲרוּ הַלְוִיִּם

Short Vowels

X X X X
- ◌◌◌ ◌◌ ◌◌◌◌

REVIEW: write out the begad-kephath letters 3 times

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

REVIEW: fill in the rule for begad-kephath letters:

BEGAD-KEPHATH RULE:

A begad-kephath letter loses its *daghes* _____ when a _____ sound comes _____ it.

REVIEW: place a daghesh lene in each begad-kephath letter that should have one.

בגדיו במשכה

בגדיו במשכה

Now the gimmel should NOT have a daghesh lene. Why? Can you figure it out? Don't look until you figure it out but the answer is on the next page.

Answer to why the gimmel should not have a daghesh lene:

Because it is preceded by a vowel sound (vocal sh'wa).

Maqqêph

Sometimes two or more Hebrew words are joined together by an upper line between them. This line is called a “maqqeph” (pronounced “mac-kafe,” like “safe” but with a k). The following Hebrew words are joined by a maqqeph:



The maqqeph was very similar to a modern hyphen.


Words could be joined together for several reasons. One was to show a close relationship between the words, just like in English when a hyphen joins two words such as “faith-based” or “Horse-and-Buggy Lodge.”


Circle all the maqqeph's in Proverbs 8:11 below:

כִּי-טוֹבָה חֲכָמָה מִפְּנִיָּים
וְכָל-חֲפָצִים לֹא יִשְׁוּוּ-בָהּ:

QUESTION-ANSWER SHEET


1. Is this a maqqeph?  yes / no

2. Is this a maqqeph?  yes / no

3. Is this a maqqeph?  yes / no

4. Is this a maqqeph?  yes / no

5. What is this?  Write the answer here: _____

6. What is this?  Write the answer below:

7. Write a maqqeph where it should go in these words:

בֵּת צִיּוֹן