

PHENOMENA RELATING TO HEBREW WEAK VERBS

EFFECTS OF GUTTURALS

1. **a-class vowel preference:** Gutturals prefer a-class vowels. See Ross 6.2 (p. 64).
2. **“undageshability”:** Gutturals cannot take a דָּגֵשׁ . See Ross 6.2 (p. 64).
3. **composite שְׁוָא (šewa) preference:** Gutturals prefer a composite שְׁוָא over a simple one. See Ross 6.2 (p. 64).
4. **virtual doubling:** The weak gutturals א and ח will compensate for not being able to show a דָּגֵשׁ by simply behaving as if there were one. See Ross 6.3.1 (p. 64).
5. **compensatory lengthening:** When the strong gutturals א , ע , and ח occur in the first position of a word, and adding a prefix would demand doubling (dageshing) in the position where the guttural stands, the prefix vowel will lengthen (i.e. $\text{חִירֶקֶת} \rightarrow \text{יַחֲרִי}$ or $\text{חִירֶקֶת} \rightarrow \text{יַחֲרִיקֶת}$). See Ross 6.3.3 (p. 65).
6. **segholation:** In the case of I- ע , ח , or א nouns, *including substantival participles*, a bound article or preposition will often be vocalized with a segol (usually with a meteg).
7. **vowel harmonization:** Often, prefixing a א to a form which begins with a guttural (and sometimes ג) will result in the sound found under the prefix reduplicating under the first root consonant. See Ross 6.3.5 (p. 65).
8. **apocopation of III - ח :** When the guttural ח occurs in the third root position of a Hebrew verb, it will frequently apocopate (disappear), especially when a suffix is added. In some cases, it will be replaced with a א before the addition of the suffix. See Ross chapter 36).
9. **quiescence of III- א :** When א occurs at the end of a word or syllable, it will generally quiesce, and if the preceding vowel is short, it will lengthen. See Ross 33.4 (p. 237).

OTHER WEAK LETTERS

1. **assimilation of א :** The weak consonant א will usually assimilate, i.e. convert to a dagesh in the following consonant. Note that if the following consonant is a guttural, the assimilation will lack the dagesh and the א will elide (disappear).
2. **erratic behavior of ל :** In some cases (e.g. לִקְחָה), a ל may behave like a א . See Ross 34.6 (p. 247); cf. p. 549.
3. **erratic behavior of א / א :** In a historically I- א verb (which will appear to begin with a א), the historic א will return in the form א or א in derived stems (but not in the Qal). In a true I- א verb, the א will be retained in all forms. In prefixed forms of I- א verbs, the א will elide. See Ross pp. 550-51. This is also true of the I- ח in the case of חִלְּלָה (Ross 35.4; p. 254).

GUTTURAL CHARTS

In chapters 6 and 8 of Ross, we learned the behavior of gutturals in relation to the definite article and the separable preposition **מִן**. The same behaviors come into play in dealing with verbs containing gutturals.

Definite Article (theoretically an independent/unbound or *maqep*-ed article **הַ** in ancient Hebrew):

	UR-FORM*	NON-GUTTURAL	GUTTURALS			
Unprefixed Form 1 st Letter		(ANY)	הַ הַ	אֵ רֵ עֵ	הַ הַ עֵ	הַ
Definite Article	הַ	הַ	הַ	הַ	הַ	הַ
Bound Prep w/ Hidden Article	מִן	מִן	מִן	מִן	מִן	מִן
Phenomenon		ASSIMILATION	VIRTUAL DOUBLING	COMP. LENGTH.	SEGHOLATION†	HARMONIZATION
Section in Ross		5.5	6.3.1	6.3.3	6.3.4	6.3.5

Preposition **מִן** (in *maqep* format, **מִן**):

	W/MAQEP	NON-GUTTURAL	GUTTURALS	QUIESCENT
Unprefixed Form 1 st Letter		(MOST)	אֵ הַ רֵ עֵ	י
FROM, OF, MORE THAN....	מִן	מִן	מִן	מִן
Phenomenon		ASSIMILATION	COMPENSATORY LENGTHENING	QUIESCENCE
Section in Ross		8.4.1	8.4.2	8.4.1

Note that I-guttural verbs will be affected in the same ways that a I-guttural noun receiving a prefix is. The same phenomena seen in these charts apply equally to verbs. If a prefix consists of or ends with a **מִן** (and sometimes **מִן**), follow the chart associated with **מִן**.

Disappearing Radicals:

THIRD ROOT CONSONANT	SECOND ROOT CONS.	FIRST ROOT CONSONANT	
III-הַ	II-י/א	I-נ (sometimes also I-ל)	I-א/א (sometimes also I-ה)
apocope of the הַ	elision of the י/א [‡]	assimilation of the נ (and ל of לִקַּח)	elision of the א/א (and ה of הִלַּח)

Note that in geminate roots, the 3rd radical (which duplicates the second) will disappear in most forms. See Ross.

* Ross does not discuss this, and the theoretical ur-form is not attested in the Hebrew Bible. The behavior of the definite article, however, follows behaviors consistent with an ur-form ending in **י**.

† This term is not used in Ross, but cf. W. Randall Garr, "The Seghol and Segholation in Hebrew," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989).

‡ Elision does not occur in the Niphal stem or in the Imperfect of the Qal, Niphal, or Hiphil. Most imperatives and infinitives retain the י/א as well.

VOWEL SHIFTS ON WAW AND BOUND PREPOSITIONS

This is included because the **infinitive construct** *can and often does* take bound prepositions and (in sequence) may also take the waw-conjunctive.

Waw-Conjunctive and Infinitive Constructs with bound prepositions:

	NORMAL FORM	LABIAL	ACCENTED FIRST SYLLABLE	YOD/ŠEWA	SIMPLE ŠEWA	GUTTURAL W/COMPOUND ŠEWA			ELOHIM
		פמב				וְ	וֹ	וּ	
IN, WITH, BY, WHEN	בְּ	בְּ		בִּי	בְּ	בִּי	בִּי	בִּי	בְּ
LIKE, AS, WHEN	כְּ	כְּ		כִּי	כְּ	כִּי	כִּי	כִּי	כְּ
TO, FOR	לְ	לְ		לִי	לְ	לִי	לִי	לִי	לְ
WAW CONJUNC	וְ	וְ	וְ	וִי	וְ	וִי	וִי	וִי	וְ
Phenom.		phonetic	C.L.	QUIESCENCE		HARMONIZATION			C.L.

Waw-Consecutive [aka waw-conversive or waw-hahipuch (waw of reversal)]:

	NORMAL FORM	LABIAL פמב	PERF I-תּ OR I-תּ	PERF I-א, I-ע, OR I-ר VERB	IMPERF 1CS (PREFIX וְ)	ANY OTHER IMPERFECT	NEG. PART. לֹא־	I-שׁ (RARELY)
WAW CONSEC	וְ	וְ	וְ	וְ	וְ	וְ	וְ	וְ
Phenom.				COMPENSATORY LENGTHENING			VOWEL RED.	C.L.

Note: Note that the waw conjunction manifests *much more* vowel variation than the waw-consecutive! Waw-consecutive can often be differentiated from waw-conjunctive, even in non-normal forms, by the location of the stress. The waw-consecutive frequently causes a shift in the stress (from the ultima to the penult or vice versa).⁵ The *non-vocalic* tropes (excluding *meteg*) will show you where the stress is.

Observe the examples below (stressed syllable in black, unstressed in grey).

Accentuation Shift as Diagnostic Indicator of Waw-Consecutive

RAW VERB FORM		VERB FORM + WAW-CONJUNCTIVE	VERB FORM + WAW CONSECUTIVE
יִפְקֹד	Qal Impf 3ms פִּקֵּד	וַיִּפְקֹד	וַיִּפְקֹד
אֶתְפַּקֵּד	Hith Impf 1cs פִּקֵּד	וְאֶתְפַּקֵּד	וְאֶתְפַּקֵּד
פִּקֹּדֶתִי	Qal Pf 1cs פִּקֵּד	וּפִקֹּדֶתִי	וּפִקֹּדֶתִי
קִטַּלְתִּי	Qal Pf 1cs קָטַל	וּקִטַּלְתִּי	וּקִטַּלְתִּי

Notice the **compensatory lengthening** caused by the וְ prefix of the 1cs form in the second example. Since the third example begins with the labial פ, thus mutating the waw-conjunctive to a רֶ (רִ), the same form follows with the less precarious verbal root קטל.

⁵ There are two exceptions: Neither [1] the ending וְ- nor [2] the anaptyctic segholate ending וְ- can be stressed. Cf. Cyrus H. Gordon, "Accentual Shift in the Perfect and Waw-Consecutive," *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1938): 319.