Ross Lesson 4: Tone, Meteg, Maqqep, Q-QH LECTURE NOTES

1. How to Label Syllables for Tone (Ross 4.1)

As we discussed in a prior handout under "Hebrew Syllables" (Lesson 2), Hebrew places standard accent (or tone) on the **final syllable**. Therefore, the accent on final syllables is unmarked, and your first inclination should always be to stress the last, or ultimate, syllable. If the accent is on a non-final syllable, accent/tone is indicated by placing the symbol $\acute{\circ}$ over the cons. that begins the stressed syllable, as in מֶּ/לֶךְ (king)   אֶ/רֶץ (earth, land)

You will need to learn how to label the syllables of a word for its relationship to tone. Each syllable in a word can be labelled in one of the following ways:

T = tonic. This is the stressed syllable.
PT = pretonic. This is the syllable right <u>before</u> the stressed syllable.
PPT = propretonic. This is any syllable <u>before the pretonic syllable</u>. Or, in relation to the tonic syllable, it's any syllable that is two or more syllables before the tonic syllable.
Post = post-tonic. This is the syllable right <u>after</u> the stressed syllable.

So, here are some examples:

Post T		T PT		Post T		T PT		T PT PPT		
מֶּ/לֶךְ		שְׁמוּ/אֵל		אֶ/רֶץ		כַּר/מְלִי		הָפְ/קַד/תֶּם		

Note on accent marks: The accent mark symbol used above is NOT a Masoretic accent (the Masoretes were the scribes who added vowel points and accent/cantillation marks to the consonantal Hebrew text). The symbol $\acute{\circ}$ is a made-up symbol used in Hebrew grammars for the sake of simplicity (since there are many different Masoretic accent mark symbols). We have already been introduced to an accent mark called "silluq" in Ross (see p. 48, footnote *b* in the HW):

דָּבָר׃   silluq= $\circ̣$ sop pasuq= ׃   'atnaḥ= $\circ̣$ (see Ch. 5 HW)

2. Meteg (short vertical stroke: $\circ̣$) (Ross 4.2)

Problem: Meteg looks like a silluq accent mark but it is NOT an accent mark. Meteg occurs BEFORE the tone/accented syllable and tells you not to hurry over that vowel with the

me<u>t</u>eg and so reduce its pronunciation (the vowel is to be pronounced completely). Cf. English reduction of unstressed vowels: *about   apocalyptic*

Where will the me<u>t</u>eg occur? Typically 3 places/situations:

2.1. 2 syllables before the tone – O/PPT.   הָאָדָם

2.2. To preserve proper pronunciation (of vowels when there's possible ambiguity).

חָכְמָה   חֶכְמָה

יְרְאוּ   יִרְאוּ (defectively spelled יִירְאוּ)

2.3. Before CS (compound shewa)

הָאֲדָמָה   כֹּהֲנִים

3. Maqqe<u>p</u> (Ross 4.3)

אֶל־אֱלֹהִים

4. Qāmeṣ (Q) vs Qāmeṣ-Ḥāṭûp (QH) (Ross 4.4)

The symbol ָ is ambiguous between being Q (long ā) and QH (short o). How to tell the difference?
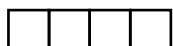
   1. Is the vowel ָ in a CUSS syllable? Yes = QH; No = Q.

   2. If the ָ is followed immediately by a normal shewa (ְ), then ask: Is there a me<u>t</u>eg to the LEFT of the ambiguous vowel? No = QH; Yes = Q.

פְָּקְדָה

פָּקְדָה