

Studies in Semitic Vocalisation and Reading Traditions

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SAMUEL BEN JACOB'S TREATMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL VOCALIC SHEWAS

Kim Phillips

1.0. INTRODUCTION: THE PRONUNCIATION OF *SHEWA*¹

Various masoretic treatises discuss the pronunciation of *shewa*—in particular the significant question of when a *shewa* is to be considered silent, and when it is sounded.² The rules laid out in these treatises do not in all respects conform to the rules found in modern grammars (which have been influenced by later medieval grammatical works in which the earlier Tiberian pronunciation had already been largely forgotten).

In crude summary, these early masoretic treatises state that the *shewa* is vocal:

- At the beginning of a word
- Beneath a geminated consonant

¹ I am grateful to Dr Ben Outhwaite and Prof. Geoffrey Khan for their patient discussion with me of many of the rules and details contained in this study.

² Treatises of particular significance in this regard include the *Sefer Diquḏe haṭ-Ṭe'amim* (ed. Dotan 1967), the anonymous *Treatise on the Shewa* (Levy 1936), and the *Hidāyat al-Qāri* (Eldar 1994; Khan 2020).

- If it is the second of two consecutive, word-internal *shewas*

Elsewhere, the *shewa* is silent. In particular, an isolated, word-internal *shewa* is generally silent—even when preceded by an inherently long vowel (e.g., פְּתֻבוּ).³

Nonetheless, the early masoretic treatises discuss many different phonetic contexts in which an isolated, word-internal *shewa* not under a geminated consonant is pronounced as vocal, in contrast to the general rule. These include the *shewa* under the ם of the word-initial cluster הַק־ (under certain conditions); a *shewa* under the first of a pair of identical consonants (always when preceded by a long vowel, and often when preceded by a short vowel); the *shewa* in certain forms of the verbs בָּרַדְ/הִתְבָּרַדְ, בָּרַדְ, הִלְדְ, אָבַלְ, יָרַדְ, גָּרַשׁ; the *shewa* beneath a sibilant following conjunctive *waw* (under certain conditions); various other smaller classes of phonetic contexts (Yeivin 1968, 22–49).

This paper surveys how Samuel ben Jacob, the scribe responsible for producing the Leningrad Codex, treats these exceptional vocalic *shewas*. In addition to the Leningrad Codex itself, data will be gathered from codices L17 and Gott 27—manuscripts of the Former Prophets also produced by Samuel ben Jacob, as well as L^m and RNL EVR II B 60, Torah manuscripts by the same

³ For accessible overviews of the issue, see Yeivin (2003, 230–238); Khan (2012, 86–92). This paper relies heavily on Yeivin (1968 and 2003).

scribe.⁴ It is to be hoped that consulting multiple Samuel ben Jacob manuscripts will facilitate distinguishing between the intentional and the accidental in his work, and thereby reveal a more accurate and trustworthy picture of his practice. Data from the Aleppo Codex will also be presented to serve as background to Samuel ben Jacob's approach.

2.0. REPRESENTING THE EXCEPTIONAL VOCALIC SHEWAS

Taking the early masoretic codices *en masse*, the most common means of indicating an exceptional vocal *shewa* is by means of the *ga'ya*. The *ga'ya* is placed on the vowel immediately preceding the *shewa* and serves to indicate the vocalic nature of the following *shewa*. Yeivin refers to this type of *ga'ya* as 'phonetic', rather than 'musical' (Yeivin 2003, 221–26).⁵

⁴ For L^m, see Breuer (1992); for Gott 27, see Gottheil (1905), and Yeivin (1993, 188–89). These MSS have, or had, colophons explicitly naming Samuel ben Jacob as their scribe. For a detailed description of MS L17, and a demonstration that it is indeed the work of Samuel ben Jacob, see Phillips (2017). After I had completed a first draft of this paper, Joseph Ofer (2018) announced, in a lecture in Krakow, his discovery of yet another manuscript by the same scribe: RNL EVR II B 60. I have not been able to examine this manuscript thoroughly, but initial soundings have already yielded data useful for this study. Images of L^m and Gott 27 are not currently available to scholars, so I have been able to glean information germane to this study only as it appears, *ad hoc*, in the available scholarship.

⁵ Though the Masoretes themselves do not make this distinction explicit, it seems that they were aware of it. The early masoretic codices themselves (or rather the Masoretes and scribes behind these codices) were

Often, the phonetic context in which this class of phonetic *ga'ya* is used would not be a suitable context for a musical *ga'ya*. Hence, there is frequently no formal ambiguity as to whether a particular *ga'ya* is musical or phonetic—provided one has a reasonable grasp of the various different classes of *ga'yas* and their usual environments. Nonetheless, certain manuscripts—notably the Aleppo Codex, and to a lesser extent British Museum Or. 4445—have a propensity to mark the presence of an exceptional vocalic *shewa* by using a composite *shewa* (Yeivin 1968, 24; 2003, §429). Samuel ben Jacob also uses the composite *shewa* for this purpose, though to a far lesser degree. The composite *shewa* can either be combined with, or replace, the use of phonetic *ga'ya* in any given instance.

Formally, then, the early masoretic codices either mark these exceptional vocalic *shewas* in one of three ways—phonetic *ga'ya* only; composite *shewa* only; both phonetic *ga'ya* and composite *shewa*—or leave them unmarked.⁶

The ensuing data present Samuel ben Jacob's practice in representing the exceptional, vocalic nature of the *shewas* in

clearly aware that these classes of *ga'yas* (phonetic versus musical) were distinct to a greater degree than, say, the various different sub-classes of musical *ga'ya*. This is demonstrated by the fact that while the early codices only rarely put two musical *ga'yas* on the same word (Yeivin 2003, §391), there is no such hesitation about placing both a musical and a phonetic *ga'ya* on the same word (Yeivin 2003, §408).

⁶ In this category, the *shewa* is known to be vocalic either because it is unambiguously presented as such in other early masoretic codices, or because it is mentioned as being vocalic by the various masoretic sources that discuss this issue.

three contexts: the *shewa* under the *mem* of the word-initial cluster: *הֶמֶן* (under certain conditions); a *shewa* under the first of a pair of identical consonants (always when preceded by a long vowel, and often when preceded by a short vowel); the *shewa* in certain forms of the verbs: *הִתְבַּרַּךְ*/ *בִּרַּךְ*, *הִלְךְ*, *יָרַד*, *אָבַל*.⁷ These three classes cover the great majority of occurrences of exceptional, vocalic *shewas*. MS L17 determined the text range from which comparative data were gathered. That is, if a relevant form appeared in the extant text of L17, the equivalent data were also gathered from L and A. Where possible, I have also included additional data from L^m, Gott 27, and RNL EVR II B 60.

3.0. DATA

3.1. *Shewa* Following *mem* of Word-initial *הֶמֶן*

This class of exceptional vocalic *shewas* concern the word-initial structure *הֶמֶן*.⁸ Usually, though not always, the initial *ה* is the definite article. Hence, what is said here also applies to *בְּמֶן*, *כְּמֶן*, and *לְמֶן*, where the definite article is discernible in the *pataḥ* beneath the prefixed preposition. These prefixed forms were included in the search.

The basic rule here can be stated thus: if the *הֶ* is the second syllable before the stressed syllable, and the word is not suitable for minor *gaʿya*, then the *shewa* under the *mem* will normally be

⁷ The verb *יָרַשׁ* is not included in the following discussion, as no suitable examples occur in the text-range from which data were gathered.

⁸ 'Word-initial' is not intended to preclude the possibility of the presence of *ן*.

vocal, apart from all instances of the word לְמִנְצֵחַ, and a few other isolated exceptions.⁹

In gathering the data for this set, every instance of word-initial -הָהּ/-הֶהּ, with or without an inseparable preposition, was noted from the entire range of text contained in L17, regardless of word structure or number of syllables before the stressed syllable. All twenty-two examples, in all three of the manuscripts examined, show a *gaʿya* under the first letter. In twenty instances the combination -הָהּ/-הֶהּ itself is present, and a further two instances concern the combination -בְּהָהּ/-בְּהֶהּ, wherein the ה of the definite article has been elided in favour of the prefixed -בּ. In twenty-one of the examples the -הּ (or equivalent) does indeed constitute the second syllable before the stressed syllable. In הִמְצִרְטֵים (2 Kgs 7.8), the -הּ constitutes the third syllable before the accented syllable. Nonetheless, א vocalises the מ with a *hatef patah* in this instance, too. In twenty of the examples the word structure is not suitable for minor *gaʿya* (and hence the *gaʿya* present must be phonetic). In the remaining two cases—הִמְלִקְקִים (Judg. 7.6) and הִמְלִקְקִים (Judg. 7.7)—if a simple *shewa* were written beneath the *mem*, the forms would be suitable for not-fully-regular minor *gaʿya*, and thus the *gaʿya* could, theoretically, be either phonetic or musical. This is particularly the case in Judg. 7.7, where the primary accent on the word is disjunctive.

From RNL EVR II B 60 I was able to gather seven relevant examples. In each example the -הּ constituted the second syllable from the accent. None of the forms was suitable for minor *gaʿya*.

⁹ For an exhaustive discussion, see Yeivin (1968, 24–30).

	הַמְּ-	הַמְּ-
A	4	18
L	20	2 הַמְּלֶקֶתִּים (Judg. 7.6) הַמְּלֶקֶתִּים (Judg. 7.7)
L17	20	2 הַמְּלֶקֶתִּים (Judg. 7.6) הַמְּלֶקֶתִּים (Judg. 7.7)
RNL EVR II B 60 (Torah)	7	0

Various aspects of these data are worthy of comment, or require explanation:

- The results nicely illustrate Yeivin's (1968, 24) claim that A's propensity to mark vocalic *shewa* in this context with a *ḥatef* is one of the most striking characteristics of its vocalisation compared with the other early masoretic codices.
- Of the four cases in the sample where A does not mark a *ḥatef* vowel, three concern the word הַמְּנִשָּׁה occurring once in each of the three verses Josh. 22.9–11.¹⁰ Yeivin (1968, 25) discusses these instances and concludes that, most likely, the vocaliser of A simply overlooked them. The

¹⁰ In fact, there is an additional instance of the same phenomenon in v. 7. L17, however, is not extant at this point, so this instance has not been included.

fourth case where A does not mark a *ḥatef* vowel concerns *הַמְלִיקָיִם* (Judg. 7.6), which will be considered below.

- Samuel ben Jacob is consistent across all three MSS, both in preferring the simple *gaʿya* over the *gaʿya* + *ḥatef* combination, and in his exceptional marking of *הַמְלִיקָיִם* with a *ḥatef* in Judg. 7.6, 7 in both L and L17.

The two occurrences of *הַמְלִיקָיִם* in Judg. 7.6, 7 are puzzling. They are the only two words in our sample where Samuel ben Jacob (consistently in both L and L17) vocalises the first *ṣ* with a *ḥatef pataḥ*.¹¹ Conversely, the occurrence in v. 6 is the fourth and final example in the whole data set where the vocaliser of A *fails* to point the *ṣ* with a *ḥatef*.¹²

¹¹ It is, of course, possible that these *ḥatef* vowels were later emendations not carried out by Samuel ben Jacob. In neither manuscript, however, is this obviously so.

¹² It can be stated with relative confidence that Samuel ben Jacob is not out-of-step with masoretic stipulation in pointing Judg. 7.6 with a *ḥatef*, despite A's simple *shewa*. Various masoretic sources either state or imply that in both instances of *הַמְלִיקָיִם* the *shewa* under the *ṣ* is vocalic. *Diqduqe haṭ-Te'amim* §14 (ed. Dotan 1967, 131, 228–32), states that the *shewa* under the first *ṣ* in *הַמְלִיקָיִם* should be pronounced as *pataḥ*, but does not specify whether this pertains to both occurrences, or only to one of them. Since, however, the word does not appear in the list of eighteen exceptions forming the latter part of §14, Yeivin (1968, 28) is of the opinion that this implies that both occurrences of the word are referred to. Yeivin (1968, 27) also mentions the reading of CUL Or. 1080, 13, 3², which specifies *הַמְלִיקָיִם בִּידֵם וְחִבְרוּ*.

Given that the pointing of these two words across both L and L17 is consistent, it seems plausible to see these as intentional choices, and to seek a rationale behind them. It is tempting to find such a rationale in the fact that these two words alone in the sample above have a structure suitable for minor *ga'ya*. That is to say, the form $\eta\text{מְלֻקְקִים}$ is ambiguous. Does the *ga'ya* represent minor *ga'ya* (i.e., a musical *ga'ya*)—in which case the *shewa* under the מ is silent—or a phonetic *ga'ya*—in which case the *shewa* under the מ is vocal? Thus, had Samuel ben Jacob employed his standard practice at Judg. 7.7 (where the accent on the word is disjunctive), relying exclusively on the inclusion of a *ga'ya* on the η to indicate the vocalic nature of the following *shewa*, this would have led to ambiguity. At least in the case in Judg. 7.7, then, it is tempting to think that Ben Jacob may have written the *ḥatef pataḥ* beneath the מ in order to disambiguate.¹³

¹³ The same argument can be made, scarcely, for the instance in Judg. 7.6, in that minor *ga'ya* can sometimes even occur on words with conjunctive accents. Yeivin (1993, 188–89) mentions that Gott 27 employs some *ḥatef* vowels under non-guttural letters, and gives the two instances of $\eta\text{מְלֻקְקִים}$ in Judg. 7.6, 7 as examples. This evidence is extraordinary, given the data above. Contrary to his practice in L and L17, Ben Jacob apparently marks the *shewa* under the ק with a *ḥatef*, but fails to mark either a *ga'ya* beneath the η or a *ḥatef* beneath the מ . It is difficult to interpret these data, however, without the context of his regular practice regarding phonetic *ga'ya* in Gott 27.

3.2. Doubled Consonants¹⁴

3.2.1. Preceded by Long Vowel¹⁵ (sixteen instances), e.g.,
עלֹוֹת

	<i>Ḥatef</i>	<i>Ga'ya</i>	<i>Munah-Zaqef</i>
A	13	2	5
L	0	3	5
L17	1 (לְקוֹי)	2	5

3.2.2. Preceded by Short Vowel¹⁶ (thirty-one instances: seventeen cases of הַנְּי and fourteen others), e.g., מְקַלְלִים

	<i>Ḥatef</i>	<i>Ga'ya</i>
A	10	6
L	0	10 (NOT used on: וַיְהִלֵּל, וַיְקַלֵּל, הַמְּלַקְקִים, הַמְּלַקְקִים; A has <i>ḥatef</i> in each case extant)
L17	1 (וּפְלִי)	10 (NOT used on: וַהֲתַפְּלִי, וַהֲתַפְּלִי, הַמְּלַקְקִים, הַמְּלַקְקִים; A has <i>ḥatef</i> in each case)

¹⁴ For an up-to-date discussion of this issue, see Heijmans (2018, 98–110).

¹⁵ That is, a vowel that shows inherent length, rather than a vowel that is read as long due to syllable structure or stress.

¹⁶ That is, a vowel that is not inherently long, which would therefore be read as short in this context, unless a *ga'ya* accompanies it, and/or the simple *shewa* following it is replaced by a *ḥatef* vowel.

Diqduqe haṭ-Te'amim (§5) contains a clear rule concerning the pronunciation of a *shewa* under the first of two contiguous identical consonants:

סימן שתי אותיות אשר בתיבה אחת צבוחות זו לעומת זו חרותות... אם
 געיא לאות ראשון תקדום בנעימת לחשון, יפתח פיו באות הראשון... ואם
 אין געיא אצלם, לא יפתחו לעולם...

According to Dotan's interpretation:

"When two [identical] letters are contiguously written... if a *ga'ya* precedes the first letter in pronunciation, [the reader] pronounces the first of the [identical] letters with a vocal *shewa*... but if there is no *ga'ya*, the *shewa* is silent" (Dotan 1967, 115–16, 189–92).

According to Yeivin (2003, §423), this rule is not reflected in A or the other early masoretic codices. Rather, if the first identical letter is preceded by a long vowel, the *shewa* is always sounded, regardless of whether a *ga'ya* is written. If the first identical letter is preceded by a short vowel, the *shewa* is silent, unless it is preceded by a *ga'ya*, or the *shewa* is explicitly marked as a *ḥatef* (with or without *ga'ya*).

The first table above is consistent with Yeivin's description. Excluding the five cases of *munaḥ-zaqef*¹⁷ leaves eleven instances of two identical consonants preceded by a long vowel. A's extensive use of *ḥatef* vowels points to the *shewa* under the first identical consonant being vocalic in these cases. Yet L and L17 show a strong tendency *not* to mark a *ga'ya* on the long vowel. It is unlikely, given Samuel ben Jacob's proximity to the Ben Asher

¹⁷ In these cases, the *munaḥ* takes precedence over the *ga'ya*, occupying the same position that the *ga'ya* could otherwise fill.

pronunciation tradition elsewhere, that his tendency here not to mark the *ga'ya* is due to his reading the following *shewa* as silent. More likely, he is working with the assumption that the *shewa* under the first of two identical consonants is always vocal when preceded by a long vowel, and therefore does not feel the obligation to mark the *ga'ya*—a *ga'ya* which would be indistinguishable from a musical *ga'ya* in any case.

In the case of the pair of identical consonants preceded by a short vowel all the sources agree that in the particular form הַנְּי, there ought to be no *ga'ya*, and the *shewa* is silent. This is reflected in L and L17, in all seventeen occurrences in the sample.

With the fourteen remaining forms, the table above demonstrates Samuel's clear tendency to mark the vocalic nature of the *shewa* with a *ga'ya*. The contrast between this, and his strong tendency *not* to mark the *ga'ya* after a long vowel preceding a pair of identical consonants, is striking. Nonetheless, there is no contradiction in his practice here. In syllables of the structure C_1VC_2 , where the vowel is not inherently long (long *qameṣ*, *holem*, *ṣere*) and the syllable does not have the primary stress, the vowel is read as short, and the syllable closed. Thus, in the structure $C_1VC_2C_2$ under consideration, the addition of a *ga'ya* with the first vowel is formally necessary in order to render the following *shewa* vocal. This is quite unlike the situation in the preceding paragraph, where the inherently long vowel meant that, written or unwritten, the secondary stress was a phonological necessity.

This, then raises the question of why Samuel ben Jacob would omit this phonetic *ga'ya* in contexts where it was required. Excluding, for now, the perplexing הַמְּלִקְקִים cases, there are four

further cases in the data above (two in L and two in L17) where Samuel ben Jacob fails to include a phonetic *ga'ya*, despite the fact that A marks a *ḥatef* vowel under the first of the doubled letters in each case. *Prima facie*, these either look like mistakes on Samuel's part, or indicate a different pronunciation to that of A. Further consideration, however, reveals a third alternative—for three of the cases.

In the cases of וְיִהְיֶה־לּוֹ and וְיִקְלָל־ם in L, and וְהִתְפַּלֵּל in L17, the words lack the expected phonetic *ga'ya*, but are marked with a minor *ga'ya*. Significantly, this type of musical *ga'ya* requires a very particular syllabic pattern of the word on which it occurs—a syllabic pattern that is attained only if the *shewa* under the first doubled letter is read as vocalic. That is to say, the marking of the minor *ga'ya* on these three words requires, and therefore implies, the vocalic nature of the *shewa* under the first doubled letter. Thus, it appears that, in these three cases, Samuel's pronunciation was identical to that of A; it is simply that his means of denoting that pronunciation differed. It is worth noting, further, that Samuel's is the most concise way of marking the required information.¹⁸

3.3. אָבֵל, יָרַד, הָלַךְ, בָּרַךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ

Various masoretic and post-masoretic treatises, including *Diquduq haṭ-Ṭe'amim* and the *Kitāb al-Khilaf*, discuss aspects of the vocalisation of these verbs. In each case, the discussion pertains to the *shewa* beneath the middle radical in certain morphological

¹⁸ This phenomenon will be examined in greater depth in a forthcoming study.

forms of the verb. The various rules all note that under certain phonetic circumstances the *shewa* is to be realised as vocal rather than silent.

3.3.1. בָּרָךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ

The rule in *Diqduqe haṭ-Ṭe'amim* states that when the accent falls on the כ of the root, the *shewa* under the ר is to be pronounced as vocal, whereas if the accent is on the ב (i.e., has been retracted), the *shewa* under the ר is silent (§21, ed. Dotan 1967, 140, 262–68).

As expected, A's regular practice is to mark this vocalic *shewa* graphically, by using a *ḥatef pataḥ*. Perhaps more surprising, given the data above, is that Samuel ben Jacob's practice in L is frequently—though not uniformly—to mark the vocalic nature of the *shewa* using a *ḥatef pataḥ*, though many of these appear to be secondary emendations.¹⁹ Moreover, the evidence currently available suggests that Samuel ben Jacob was even more

¹⁹ There are sixteen occurrences of the verbs בָּרָךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ suitable for vocalic *shewa* in the first twenty-seven chapters of Genesis. In the final form of L, three of these have a simple *shewa* (14.19; 26.3; 27.23). Interestingly, one notes that in two of these cases, 14.19 and 27.23, the presence of a preceding minor *ga'ya* implies that the simple *shewa* is vocalic (see §3.2.2. above). The remaining thirteen occurrences all have a *ḥatef pataḥ*. In only four of these cases, however, is the *ḥatef pataḥ* positioned naturally, and hence is likely to be original to the first layer of vocalisation (27.29, 34, 38, 41). In the remaining nine cases the *pataḥ*

assiduous in marking this *ḥatef pataḥ* in his other biblical manuscripts. In L17 there are ten occurrences of these verbs suitable for a *ḥatef* vowel. All ten are marked with a *ḥatef pataḥ* in L17, whereas only seven of these are marked with a *ḥatef pataḥ* in L. The great majority of these ten appear original.²⁰ Likewise, in Gott 27 the *ḥatef pataḥ* is marked in all pertinent occurrences. In L^m, the *ḥatef pataḥ* is marked in all occurrences save two (Gen. 27.19, 31).²¹ Due to lacunae in RNL EVR II B 60—and in particular the fact that the manuscript begins part way through Exodus—I was able to find only one instance of the verb בָּרַךְ suitable for a *ḥatef* vowel: Deut. 24.13. In this case, the *ḥatef* vowel was written, with no evidence of its being secondary.

3.3.2. יָרַד, הִקְלִיף

According to *Diqduqe haṭ-Te'amim*, in any form of these two verbs immediately preceding a letter with *dagesh*, a word-internal *shewa* is pronounced as vocal. In practice, this amounts to ten

is squeezed above a simple *shewa*, and appears to be the result of secondary correction, by Samuel himself or a later hand (12.3; 22.18; 24.60; 26.4, 12; 27.19, 27, 31, 33).

²⁰ The ten occurrences are: Josh. 22.33; Judg. 5.2, 9; 1 Sam. 13.10; 2 Sam. 8.10; 19.40; 21.3; 1 Kgs 8.66; 2 Kgs 4.29; 10.15. None of the *ḥatefs* here are obviously secondary, but those at Josh. 22.33; 2 Sam. 8.10; 1 Kgs 8.66 show some irregularity of form, which might indicate their secondary nature.

²¹ This information is derived from Breuer (1992, 1, 8). Breuer examines both the Torah MS L^m and the MS of the Former Prophets Gott 27, but refers to them both with the single label L^m.

occurrences of the 1cs or 1cpl lengthened *qal* imperfect of the verb הָלַךְ , e.g., $\text{אָנֹכִי הֹלֵךְ$ (Exod. 5.3), and one 1cs lengthened *qal* imperfect of the verb יָרַד (§25, ed. Dotan 1967, 146, 275–77).

Dotan notes that all eleven cases in L are marked with a *ḥatef pataḥ*, but claims that most of the eleven are the result of secondary emendation (Dotan 1967, 276).²² L17 contains three of the relevant cases, all of which, likewise, are marked with *ḥatef pataḥ* (1 Sam. 9.6; 2 Sam. 15.7; 2 Kgs 6.2). Of these, however, only the vocalisation in 1 Sam. 9.6 might possibly be a later correction.

3.3.3. אָכַל

The rule according to *Diqduqe haṭ-Te'amim* states that in forms of the verb with an object suffix where the ל is marked with a *segol* (with the sole exception of Eccl. 5.10), the *shewa* beneath the כ is vocalic, e.g., $\text{הָאָכַלְתָּ$ (L Gen. 3.17). Elsewhere, the *shewa* is silent (§22, ed. Dotan 1967, 141, 269–71). According to the *Kitāb al-Khilaf* (Lipschütz 1965, 17), this rule was practised by Ben Asher, whereas Ben Naftali did not mark the *ḥatef pataḥ*.

There are twenty-four specific instances that meet Ben Asher's criteria. In the nine extant occurrences in A, the כ is marked with a *ḥatef* vowel. Cohen (1992, 70*) extrapolates from

²² In my estimation, only two of the occurrences of *ḥatef pataḥ* might be original (Exod. 5.3; Jer. 5.5). The remaining nine occurrences are cramped and malaligned, and likely constitute later emendations (Gen. 18.21; Exod. 3.18; 4.18; 1 Sam. 9.6; 26.11; 2 Sam. 15.7; 2 Kgs 6.2; Jer. 40.15; Ruth 2.2).

these to claim that the remaining fifteen instances ought also to be reconstructed in the same manner.

Samuel ben Jacob's practice in L is mixed: in fourteen cases he marks a *ḥatef pataḥ*; in the remaining ten cases he marks a simple *shewa*.²³ In many of the fourteen cases the *ḥatef pataḥ* appears to be secondary, as can be discerned by the cramping caused by the secondary interpolation of a *pataḥ* adjacent to the extant simple *shewa*.²⁴

Most of the twenty-four cases occur in the Pentateuch and Ezekiel. L17, accordingly, has only two relevant cases, both of which are marked with a simple *shewa* (2 Kgs 6.28, 29). Both these occurrences in L are also marked with a simple *shewa*.

In RNL EVR II B 60 I found twelve occurrences of the verb in forms suitable for a *ḥatef* vowel, according to the Ben Asher tradition. All twelve occurrences were marked with a *simple shewa*—following Ben Naftali. These concur with the evidence from L17 above.

3.3.4. Discussion

Several questions immediately arise from the data above. First, given Samuel ben Jacob's clear preference for phonetic *ga'ya* over *ḥatef* vowels in the first two contexts described in this article,

²³ The following have a simple *shewa*: Lev. 7.6; Deut. 12.15, 18, 22 (2x), 24, 25; 28.39; 2 Kgs 6.28, 29.

²⁴ Of the fourteen instances of *ḥatef pataḥ* in this context in L, the following six might be original: Gen. 3.17; Isa. 31.8; Ezek. 4.10a, 10b, 12; Eccl. 6.2. The remaining eight are almost certainly secondary: Lev. 6.11, 19; Num. 18.10, 13; Deut. 15.20, 22; Ezek. 4.9; 7.15.

why does he multiply his use of *ḥatef* vowels in this third context? This is explicable by the fact that there is no unambiguous way to use a *gaʿya* with the verbs בָּרַךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ, הֵלֵךְ, יָרַד, אָכַל to mark the vocalic nature of the word-internal *shewa*. For example, in forms such as בָּרַכְנִי ‘bless me’ (L Gen. 27.34) and בָּרַכְנִי ‘(the Lord) blessed me’ (L Josh. 17.14), a *gaʿya* beneath the ב would attend either a *qameṣ* or a *šere*, and in either case could be interpreted as a major *gaʿya* in a closed syllable before the accent. Thus, the only unambiguous way to mark the sounded nature of the *shewa* in this case is to use a *ḥatef* vowel.

This raises a subsequent question. In the case of עֲלִלוֹת (i.e., two identical consonants preceded by an inherently long vowel), the use of a *gaʿya* to indicate the vocalic nature of the *shewa* would be ambiguous, just as is the case with בָּרַךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ, הֵלֵךְ, יָרַד. Yet Samuel chose to leave the vocalic nature of the *shewa* in עֲלִלוֹת unmarked, but to mark the vocalic *shewa* in בָּרַךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ, הֵלֵךְ, יָרַד explicitly, with a *ḥatef pataḥ*. Possibly, the explanation for this apparent inconsistency lies in the asymmetry between these two contexts regarding their scope of applicability. In the עֲלִלוֹת class the *shewa* is vocalic whenever a long vowel precedes the pair of identical consonants, with no further conditions, and few exceptions. By contrast, in the case of בָּרַךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ, הֵלֵךְ, יָרַד, the sounded nature of the *shewa* is dependent on multiple criteria and conditions. It is possible, therefore, that Samuel ben Jacob chose to explicitly mark the vocal *shewa* in this latter class to ease the burden on the reader.

The most puzzling issue arising from the data concerning בָּרַךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ, הֵלֵךְ, יָרַד, אָכַל concerns Samuel’s practice regarding the

vocalisation of אָכַל. Our current lack of direct access to L^m and Gott 27 renders all explanations provisional. If, however, the pattern outlined above is borne out by thorough examination of these manuscripts, two questions arise therefrom. Why, given Samuel's overall consistency in marking the *ḥatef* with the verbs בָּרַד/הִתְבָּרַד, הִלֵּךְ, יָרַד—particularly in L^m, L17, and Gott 27—does he avoid marking the *ḥatef* on the appropriate forms of אָכַל, and what—if anything—does he intend to indicate thereby? Regarding the latter question, the contrast between the treatment of אָכַל and בָּרַד/הִתְבָּרַד, הִלֵּךְ, יָרַד may be interpreted as having phonetic significance. That is to say, Samuel follows Ben Asher in pronouncing the vocalic *shewa* under the relevant circumstances with the verbs בָּרַד/הִתְבָּרַד, הִלֵּךְ, יָרַד, and notes this by using *ḥatef pataḥ*. His decision to avoid the *ḥatef pataḥ* in the case of אָכַל may therefore signal his belief that these *shewas* should be parsed as silent (or at least not pronounced identically to the pronunciation of *ḥatef pataḥ*). It is not clear why this should be the case, but it is noteworthy that it is precisely in the treatment of the verb אָכַל that one difference between Ben Asher and Ben Naftali arises. Samuel is not necessarily aligning himself with Ben Naftali on this issue (though this is a possibility), but it is possible that similar factors underlie both Samuel's and Ben Naftali's deviation from Ben Asher on this point.

4.0. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The survey above examines Samuel ben Jacob's treatment of the exceptional vocalic *shewa* in three phonetic contexts, across several of his manuscripts, and can be summarised as follows. In the

case of the word-initial structure -הָקְ , Samuel's consistent preference is to indicate the sounded nature of the *shewa* using *ga'ya* only. Likewise, with cases of *shewa* under the first of two identical consonants, if the preceding vowel is historically short, Samuel indicates the sounded nature of the *shewa* using *ga'ya* only. If a preceding minor *ga'ya* already requires the *shewa* to be understood as vocalic, Samuel shows a tendency to omit the phonetic *ga'ya*. If the preceding vowel is inherently long, Samuel apparently assumes the sounded nature of the *shewa*, but does not mark it. By contrast, in the case of the vocalic *shewa* in certain forms of the verbs הִתְבָּרַךְ / בִּרַךְ , הִלֵּךְ , יָרַד Samuel's tendency is to indicate the vocalic nature of the *shewa* using a *ḥatef* vowel. In the case of אָכַל , however, he seems to prefer the simple *shewa*.

In his treatment of these classes of exceptional vocalic *shewas*, Samuel shows a tendency towards graphic economy. He omits the *ga'ya* before the first of two identical consonants when the attendant vowel is inherently long—perhaps because he expects his readers to be aware of the correct pronunciation without aid. He rarely marks both phonetic *ga'ya* and a *ḥatef* vowel (unlike in A). In both L and L17 we noted occasions where Samuel omits a necessary phonetic *ga'ya* because an earlier minor *ga'ya* requires, and therefore implies, the vocalic nature of the *shewa* in question.

The main point of interest arising from the comparison between multiple Samuel ben Jacob manuscripts has been his consistency across the manuscripts, and the nature of that consistency, which includes major trends (e.g., preference for phonetic *ga'ya* over *ḥatef* vowels), minor trends (e.g., his occasional

omission of phonetic *ga'ya* when a preceding minor *ga'ya* renders it pleonastic), and specific readings (e.g., his exceptional pointing of *הַמְלִיקִים* in Judg. 7.6, 7). Such consistency could plausibly be the result of a shared *Vorlage*. Other tentative evidence, however, suggests that L and L17 were not copied from a shared *Vorlage* (Phillips 2017, 27). Likewise, one notes that his minor tendency to omit phonetic *ga'yas* when musical *ga'yas* render them superfluous is not identically expressed between L and L17. The type of consistency observed here is best explained as a result of Samuel's intelligent grasp of the finer details of the vocalisation and accentuation, worked out in a set of consistent practices or tendencies, rather than as a result of mindless copying of an exemplar.²⁵

Comparison between the various manuscripts also sheds light on the corrections found in L itself. As is well known, the vocalisation and accentuation of L are very close to the practice of Ben Asher, as measured by comparison with the *Kitāb al-Khilaf* and MS A itself (Yeivin 1980, §30). Much of this proximity, however, has been obtained via correction (additions as well as erasures) of the first hand in L (Loewinger 1960, 82, and the bibliography cited there; Scanlin 1995, 105–25). An outstanding question in the study of L is whether Samuel ben Jacob himself performed these emendations, or whether they are the work of a

²⁵ For further evidence of Samuel's high level of educational attainment, see Outhwaite (2018). This stands in contrast to a widely held opinion that Samuel's skill as a *naqdan* and masorete (lower-case m!) were not pronounced. Even Cohen (1996, 9*), who holds MS L in high regard, claims that Samuel is merely an "average copyist."

different hand (Cohen 1992, 69*–70*). A third-person colophon in L (fol. 479r), in the hand (and with the siglum) of Samuel ben Jacob, claims that the codex has been carefully corrected (מוגה) (באר היטב) according to carefully corrected manuscripts of Ben Asher. It is uncertain, however, whether the ‘correction’ described by the term מוגה refers precisely to the later layer of corrections visible in the manuscript.

The data above feed directly into this question. Regarding בְּרִדְ/הִתְבָּרֵד, at least, it can no longer be claimed that Samuel ben Jacob was unaware of Ben Asher’s stipulations (despite having written out the relevant rule in the masoretic material at the end of L!). At least by the time he wrote L^m, RNL EVR II B 60, L17, and Gott 27 he had internalised this part of the *Diqduqe haṭ-Te’amim*. Does this imply that these latter manuscripts were all written after the initial copying of L?²⁶ This is beyond the power of these data to determine. At the very least, the comparative data rule out one option: it can no longer be categorically denied that Samuel ben Jacob could himself have performed the corrections on בְּרִדְ/הִתְבָּרֵד in L.

²⁶ This is possible, though so are other interpretations. For example, the rather imperfect rendering of the rule of Ben Asher in L could simply be the product of haste. Equally, even if L were written first, the data do not require that Samuel was, at that time, ill-versed in Ben Asher’s rules. As Dotan remarks frequently in his edition, it may be that ben Asher’s rules concerned the *pronunciation* of the *shewa*, rather than the graphic representation thereof. Or, at the very least, Samuel may have interpreted the rules in this way when working on MS L.

Finally, comparison between the various manuscripts of Samuel ben Jacob continues to hint at the possibility of Samuel preserving details of a tradition occasionally distinct from that of Ben Asher, despite his claims of having followed the latter in the aforementioned colophon. This has previously been noted in the curious case of the pointing of הִירָחֵם אֱלִי (1 Sam. 27.10) (Breuer 1992, xvii; Phillips 2017, 16). In the data above, his tendency not to mark the relevant forms of אָכַל with a *ḥatef* vowel stood out starkly against the backdrop of his practice of including the *ḥatef* vowel with the verbs בָּרַךְ/הִתְבָּרַךְ, יָרַד, הֵלֵךְ, בָּרַךְ.

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