Ross Lessons 3–4
How to Label Syllables for Tone

As we discussed in the handout “Hebrew Syllables,” 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 ◊ over the cons. that begins the stressed syllable, as in מֶ֫/ֶךְ (king) אֶ֫/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 before the stressed syllable.
PPT = propriotonic. This is any syllable before the pretonic syllable. 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 after the stressed syllable.

So, here are some examples:

Post T T PT Post T T PT PPT
מֶ֫/ֶךְ שְׁמוּ/ֶאֵל אֶ֫/רֶץ כַּר/ֶמֶל הָפְ/ֶקַּד/ֶה