Weak Verbs: I-Waw & I-Yod (Ross 35)
Dr. Phillip Marshall

1.1 Hebrew has a number of verbs that are spelled with R1-YOD. However, historically these kinds of verbs can be divided into two sorts:

1. Those that were originally I-WAW (where the original R1-waw was changed to a R1-yod), and

2. Those that were originally I-YOD (the R1-yod was retained, and so it looks identical to the I-waw verbs after waw became yod).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I-YOD verbs</th>
<th>Orig. I-WAW</th>
<th>Orig. I-YOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>יָשַׁב</td>
<td>´וָשַׁב</td>
<td>יָשַׁב</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘to sit’</td>
<td>יָרַשׁ</td>
<td>יָרַשׁ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘to possess’</td>
<td></td>
<td>יָרַשׁ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears that Hebrew avoided writing waw when it was the first root letter of a noun or verb, so whenever a word began with waw, it was switched to yod. Let’s look at the Holladay lexicon to see how many words begin with waw.

1.2 Typical weaknesses of these types of verbs: [Note: when R1 opens a syllable, it appears as cons. yod: יָשַׁב ‘he sat’ (Qal pft 3ms).]

1.2.1 R1-waw/yod will NOT close the syllable with the prefixes (stem-prefixes or prefix-conjugation’s “nutty” prefixes). This will leave the prefix with an open syll., and a long vowel (instead of a closed syll. with a short vowel). [Note: this weakness occurs in all the same places as the R1-nun experiences when trying to close the syll.—Qal impf/juss/coh/wci, Ni pft/ptc, and all Hi/Ho forms.]

1.2.2 The orig. R1-waw or -yod will frequently appear as a vowel-marker (mater), and in one place as the orig. R1-waw consonant (Niphal impf/juss/coh/impv).

The chart below exemplifies these weaknesses
1.2.3 QIIC weakness: In Qal Impv and Infc, most I-waw verbs undergo apheresis (like many I-nuns) and so behave similarly (only R2/R3 in the Qal Impv, only R2/R3 + bonus taw in Qal Infc).

The chart below exemplifies these weaknesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Qal Impf 3ms</th>
<th>Qal Impf 2ms</th>
<th>Qal Infc</th>
<th>Qal Infc + 1cs sfx</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>יָשַׁב</td>
<td>יֵשֵׁב</td>
<td>שֵׁב</td>
<td>תִּבֶ שֶׁ֫</td>
<td>תִּבְ שִׁ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>יָרַד</td>
<td>דֵרֵי</td>
<td>דֶ֫דֶת</td>
<td>רִדְתִּי</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, the verb יָרַשׁ (‘to inherit, possess’) behaves according to both the orig. I-waw and the I-yod patterns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parsing</th>
<th>Inflected form</th>
<th>Pattern followed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qal impf 3ms</td>
<td>יָרַשׁ</td>
<td>I-yod</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.3 The Qal Impf forms of יָכֹל ‘to be able’: This verb is an orig. I-waw verb; the impf prefix will have a shureq, which is a mater representing that original waw as a vowel-marker.

Qal impf

3ms יָכֹל he will be able

3fs תּוּכַל she will be able

1cs אוּכַל I will be able

1.4 Irregular מָלַךְ.

This verb is the other multiple-personality verb in the Hebrew language. Even though it is I-gutt, in the Qal and Hiphil, it behaves as if it were I-waw!

Qal Pft

3ms מָלַךְ he walked

Qal Impf

3ms יֵלֵךְ he will walk

Qal Impv

2ms לֵךְ walk!

Qal Infc

לֶ֫כֶת to walk/the act of walking

Hi Pft

3ms הוֹלִיָּה he led

Hi Impf

3ms יוֹלִיָּה he will lead

Hi Impv

2ms הוֹלֵךְ lead!

Hi Ptc

ms מָלֵכֶת leading

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