

**The thirteen different spellings of the sacred Tetragrammaton  
in the *Leningrad Codex*, the primary Masoretic Text source**

Dr Pavlos D. Vasileiadis  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

February 13, 2018

The thirteen different spellings of the sacred Tetragrammaton found in the Leningrad Codex (*Codex Leningradensis*, B19A or LC, dated in 1008–10) are as shown below:

Verse	Spelling	Transliteration	Number of appearances
Genesis 2:4	יהוה	yəhwā [shewa-∅-qamets] [morphologically unpronounceable]	5,678
Genesis 3:14	יהוה	yəhōwā [shewa-hole-m-qamets]	46
Genesis 4:3	ליהוה	yhwā [∅-∅-qamets] [prefix formation]	789
Genesis 15:2	יהוה	yəhwī [khatef segol-∅-hireq] [morphologically unpronounceable]	2
Genesis 18:17	לו/ב/יהוה	yhōwā [∅-hole-m-qamets] [prefix formation]	6
Leviticus 23:38	יהוה	y <sup>y</sup> əhwā [shewa-∅-qamets] [blot in the ms., not dagesh; morphologically unpronounceable]	1
Judges 16:28	יהוה	yəhōwī [khatef segol-hole-m-hireq]	1
1 Kings 2:26	יהוה	yəhōwī [shewa-hole-m-hireq]	32
Psalms 68 67:21 20	וליהוה	yhwī [∅-∅-hireq] [prefix formation]	1

Psalm 144 143:15	יְהוָה	yăhwā [khatef patach-Ø-qamets] [prefix formation]	1
Ezekiel 24:24	יְהוָה	yəhwī [shewa-Ø-hireq] [morphologically unpronounceable]	269
Zechariah 6:12	יְהוָה	yəhwāh [shewa-Ø-qamets mappiq] [prob. blot in the ms., not qamets mappiq; morphologically unpronounceable]	1
Habakkuk 3:19	יְהוָה	yəhwīh [shewa-Ø-hireq mappiq] [prob. blot in the ms., not qamets mappiq; morphologically unpronounceable]	1
			6,828

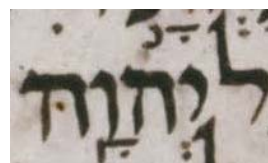
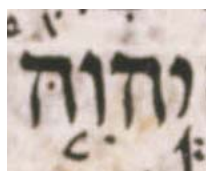
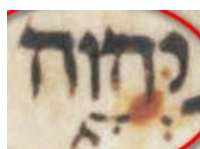
For comparison reasons are mentioned the following terms:

Genesis 1:1	אֱלֹהִים	'ēlōhīm [khatef segol-holem-hireq]
Genesis 15:2	אֲדֹנָי	'ādōnāy [khatef patach-holem-qamets]
<i>shema</i> ("the name" in Aramaic, Heb. הַשֵּׁם) <sup>1</sup>	שְׁמָא	shēmā' [shewa-qamets]
<i>Jesus</i>	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	yəhōshū <sup>a</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not to be confused with *shema* ("listen") שמע, the first word in Dt 6:4.

Some noteworthy observations:

1. The spelling of the Tetragrammaton found in Genesis 2:4 is the most common vowel combination used in the *LC*, pointing the reader to pronounce 'ādōnāy or the Aramaic shēmā'.
2. The cases with elements prefixed to the Tetragrammaton are formed in relation to the syllables added and affect their vocalization. (Genesis 4:3; 18:17; Psalm 68|67:21|20; 144|143:15). More specifically, in the cases that yod does not have a vowel because of the attached prefix, if this prefix was removed yod would have the vowel shewa.
3. Morphologically malformations are typically not pronounceable. (Genesis 2:4; 15:2; Ezekiel 24:24)
4. Morphologically correct forms are typically pronounceable. (Genesis 3:14; Judges 16:28; 1 Kings 2:26)
5. As shown in images below, it is very probable that the vocalizations of Leviticus 23:38, Zechariah 6:12 and Habakkuk 3:19 are transcription errors resulted from a blot in the manuscript.



Attempting to group the similar cases, the cases with qamets in the final syllable would total in 6,470 [5,678+789+1+1+1]. (Genesis 2:4; 4:3, Leviticus 23:38; Psalm 144|143:15; Zechariah 6:12) The cases with qamets in the final syllable and holem in the middle one would result in 52 [46+6]. (Genesis 3:14; 18:17) Similarly, for the hireq it would total in 271 [1+269+1]. (Psalm 68|67:21|20; Ezekiel 24:24; Habakkuk 3:19) As a result, the 13 vocalizations would actually result in six:

Verse	Spelling	Transliteration	Number of appearances
Genesis 2:4 Genesis 4:3 Leviticus 23:38 Psalm 144 143:15 Zechariah 6:12	יהוה ליהוה יהוה וַיִּהְיֶה יהוה	yəhwā [shewa-∅-qamets] yhwā [∅-∅-qamets] y <sup>y</sup> əhwā [-dagesh shewa-∅-qamets] yāhwā [patach-∅-qamets] yəhwāh [shewa-∅-qamets mappiq]	5,678 789 1 1 1 <hr/> 6,470
Genesis 3:14 Genesis 18:17	יהוה לו/ו ביהוה	yəhōwā [shewa-hole-m-qamets] yhōwā [∅-hole-m-qamets]	46 6 <hr/> 52
Genesis 15:2	יהוה	yəhwi [segol-∅-hireq]	2
Judges 16:28	יהוה	yəhōwi [segol-hole-m-hireq]	1
1 Kings 2:26	יהוה	yəhōwi [shewa-hole-m-hireq]	32
Psalm 68 67:21 20 Ezekiel 24:24 Habakkuk 3:19	וַיִּהְיֶה יהוה יהוה	yhwi [∅-∅-hireq] yəhwi [shewa-∅-hireq] yəhwih [shewa-∅-hireq mappiq]	1 269 1 <hr/> 271
			6,828

If all the vocalizations that have hireq in their final syllable, were further grouped according to their middle vowel, the six vocalizations would actually result in four:

Verse	Spelling	Transliteration	Number of appearances
Genesis 2:4 Genesis 4:3 Leviticus 23:38 Psalm 144 143:15 Zechariah 6:12	יהוָה לַיהוָה יהוָה שְׂיֵהוָה יהוָה	yəhwā [shewa-∅-qamets] yhwā [∅-∅-qamets] y <sup>y</sup> əhwā [-dagesh shewa-∅-qamets] yāhwā [patach-∅-qamets] yəhwāh [shewa-∅-qamets mappiq]	5,678 789 1 1 1 <hr/> <b>6,470</b>
Genesis 3:14 Genesis 18:17	יהוָה ל/ו/בִּיהוָה	yəhōwā [shewa-holem-qamets] yhōwā [∅-holem-qamets]	46 6 <hr/> <b>52</b>
Judges 16:28 1 Kings 2:26	יהוֵה יהוֵה	yěhōwi [segol-holem-hireq] yəhōwi [shewa-holem-hireq]	1 32 <hr/> <b>33</b>
Genesis 15:2 Psalm 68 67:21 20 Ezekiel 24:24 Habakkuk 3:19	יהוֵה וְלִיהוֵה יהוֵה יהוֵה	yěhwi [segol-∅-hireq] yhwi [∅-∅-hireq] yəhwi [shewa-∅-hireq] yəhwih [shewa-∅-hireq mappiq]	2 1 269 1 <hr/> <b>273</b>
			<b>6,828</b>

If we would further group these four vocalizations, without taking into account the vowel of the middle syllable that may or may not be present, the four vocalizations would actually result in two. Consequently, it seems probable that in 6,522 instances the Tetragrammaton was vocalized so as to be read 'ādōnāy (or the Aramaic *shēmā<sup>h</sup>*) and in 306 instances was vocalized so as to be read 'ēlōhīm.

Verse	Spelling	Transliteration	Number of appearances
<b>Genesis 2:4</b> <b>Genesis 3:14</b> <b>Genesis 4:3</b> <b>Genesis 18:17</b> <b>Leviticus 23:38</b> <b>Psalms 144 143:15</b> <b>Zechariah 6:12</b>	יהוה	yəhwā	5,678 46 789 6 1 1 1 <hr/> <b>6,522</b>
	יהוה	[shewa-∅-qamets] yəhōwā	
	ליהוה	[shewa-hole-m-qamets] yhwā	
	ל/ו/ב יהוה	[∅-∅-qamets] yhōwā	
	יהוה	[∅-hole-m-qamets] y <sup>∅</sup> əhwā	
	יהוה	[-dagesh shewa-∅-qamets] yāhwā	
	יהוה	[patach-∅-qamets] yəhwāh	
	יהוה	[shewa-∅-qamets mappiq] yəhwāh	
<b>Genesis 15:2</b> <b>Judges 16:28</b> <b>1 Kings 2:26</b> <b>Psalms 68 67:21 20</b> <b>Ezekiel 24:24</b> <b>Habakkuk 3:19</b>	יהוה	yəhwi	2 1 32 1 269 1 <hr/> <b>306</b>
	יהוה	[segol-∅-hireq] yəhōwi	
	יהוה	[segol-hole-m-hireq] yəhōwi	
	יהוה	[shewa-hole-m-hireq] yhwī	
	וְיְהוָה	[∅-∅-hireq] yəhwi	
	יהוה	[shewa-∅-hireq] yəhwi	
	יהוה	[shewa-∅-hireq mappiq] yəhwi	
			<b>6,828</b>

Search done using (a) *Accordance*, Biblia Hebraica Leningradensis, with the Groves-Wheeler Westminster Hebrew Morphology v. 4.20 and (b) *BibleWorks* v. 8.0.