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Waw-Yod Interchanges in the Bible and their Reflection in Masora Notes

A very large number of the *k^etiv/q^ere* cases in the Bible text reflect *waw-yod* interchanges, which account for over a quarter of the *k^etiv uq^ere* occurrences in the Bible. The letters *waw* and *yod* are graphically similar to one another, and their interchanges sometimes express a morphological interchange of similar forms. As a result, in many cases a clash developed between the written and the oral tradition. In various Masoretic sources one encounters much evidence of disputes related to *waw-yod* interchanges: in the lists of disagreements between

eastern and western sources (חילופי מדינחאי ומערבאי) in the Masora book *Okhla we-Okhla* and also in various Masoretic comments appearing in the Masora Magna and the Masora Parva of biblical mss both in Tiberian and in Babylonian vocalization.

The article considers four Masoretic comments dealing with cases of *k^etiv* and *q^ere* involving *waw-yod* interchanges. The first Masoretic comment puts together verses with the same number of words that in the middle of each there is a note of *k^etiv uq^ere*. The Bible text reflected in this Masoretic comment contrasts with the accepted Tiberian tradition in 1 Sam 30:24 (in the word הירד). Despite this, most of the masoretes did not refrain from adducing this masoretic comment, and some even looked for ways to adapt it to their own tradition. Two Masoretic comments (about the word אחיה and about two consecutive *waws*) derive from the Babylonian Masora, whence they reached the Tiberian Masora. For this reason the wording they reflect is not precisely suitable to the Tiberian tradition, and the masoretes tried to deal with this problem in different ways. The fourth masoretic comment deals with *k^etiv* and *q^ere* notes in the words מדינים/מדונים. The scholars of Tiberias disagreed with those of Babylonia regarding the occurrences of these words, and this dispute is reflected in various Masoretic sources. In this case the evidence of the Masoretic sources fits well, creating together a clear and complete picture.