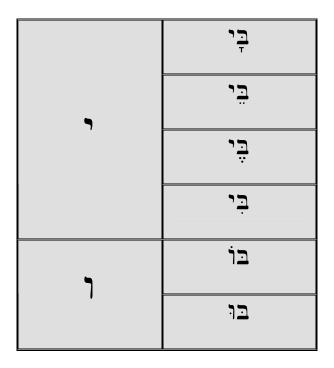
## FAQs - Chapter 2

## What are the *vowel letters*, or *matres lectionis*, and how do they differ from consonants?

The most common vowel letters are " and ". These were used by the Masoretes to indicate i/e and o/u sounds respectively. When vowel pointing was added to the Hebrew text, these vowel letters were created:



When and are functioning as vowel letters, they are not considered consonants. This is important for syllabification and pronunciation. For example, a word that is spelled with a Hireq Yod is not pronounced with a "y" sound.