

BBH Workbook p. 7 #7

וְ

The vowel וְ is called Shewa.

Hebrew has two kinds of Shewa: Silent and Vocal. The two look exactly the same, but are transliterated differently.

Silent Shewa

Silent Shewa always closes a (closed) syllable and is never pronounced. Therefore it is never transliterated.

The word מִדְּבַר, for example, consists of two syllables: מִדְּ|בַר . The first syllable of מִדְּבַר ends in a Silent Shewa. This Shewa is neither pronounced nor transliterated (the transliteration of מִדְּבַר is midbar).

Vocal Shewa

Vocal Shewa only occurs in open syllables and is always pronounced. Vocal Shewa is usually transliterated by upside-down e (ə) or superscripted e (ĕ).