

## Biblical Alphabets

Hebrew							Greek			
Name	Normal	Hard	Final	Tanslit.	Paleo	Early	Name	Miniscule	Unci- al	Trans.
'ālēf	א			'	𐤀	a	alpha	α	Α	a
bêth	ב	בּ		<u>b</u> b	𐤁	b	beta	β	Β	b
gimēl	ג	גּ		g g	𐤂	g	gamma	γ	Γ	g
dālēt	ד	דּ		<u>d</u> d	𐤃	d	delta	δ	Δ	d
hēy	ה			h	𐤄	h	epsilon	ε	Ε	e
wāw	ו			w	𐤅	u	zeta	ζ	Ζ	z
zayin	ז			z	𐤆	z	eighta	η	Η	ē
ḥēt	ח			ḥ	𐤇	H	theta	θ	Θ	th
tēt	ט			t	𐤈	T	iota	ι	Ι	i
yōd	י			y	𐤉	i	kappa	κ	Κ	k
kap	כ	כּ	ך	<u>k</u> k	𐤀	k	lamda	λ	Λ	l
lāmed	ל			l	𐤁	l	mu	μ	Μ	m
mem	מ		ם	m	𐤂	m	nu	ν	Ν	n
nun	נ		ן	n	𐤃	n	xi	ξ	Ξ	x
sāmek	ס			s	𐤄	s	omicron	ο	Ο	ō
'ayin	ע			'	𐤅	o	pi	π	Π	p
pēh	פ	פּ	ף	<u>p</u> p	𐤆	p	rho	ρ	Ρ	r
ṣadê	צ		ץ	ṣ	𐤇	x	sigma	σ ς	Σ	s
qōp	ק			q	𐤈	q	tau	τ	Τ	t
rêš	ר			r	𐤉	r	upsilon	υ	Υ	u
šin/sin	שׁ שׂ			š ś	𐤀	w	phi	φ	Φ	f
tāw	ת	תּ		<u>t</u> t	𐤁	t	chi	χ	Χ	ch
							psi	ψ	Ψ	ps
							omega	ω	Ω	ō

As evidenced by inscriptions and ostraca, the Hebrews used the Paleo Hebrew script until at least the exile to Babylon in 586 B.C. They apparently adopted a script similar to the Babylonian/Assyrian (square) script when they returned. F. M. Cross calls this the Early Jewish script and dates it from the Maccabean period to the First Jewish Revolt in A. D. 70.<sup>1</sup> It is what is seen in the Qumran manuscripts. The more formal script used in modern texts is most often called the Square Script and dates to after the First Revolt. On a few occasions (mainly times of revolts-Maccabees [167 B.C.], Rome [A.D. 70]) some scribes reverted to the Paleo script as a form of nationalism. It has to be remembered that the ancient evidences of the scripts are going to be someone's (bad?) handwriting or an inscribers effort on a stone tablet. So too the Greek scripts.

In Greek text critical studies, the older manuscripts are found written in the Uncials and the younger in Miniscules.

<sup>1</sup> Frank M. Cross, "The Development of the Jewish Script," *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of William Foxwell Albright*, ed. by G. E. Wright (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1961), 189-190.