


## A. Administrative

1. Title: Proposal to add HEBREW YOD TRIANGLE to ISO/IEC 10646
2. Requester's Name: Mark E. Shoulson
3. Submission Date:
4. Completion: This is a complete proposal

## B. Technical—General

|   |  |
|---|--|
| New character? Name?  | Yes. HEBREW YOD TRIANGLE  |
| Addition of characters to existing block?   | Yes. Hebrew  |
| Number of characters  | 1  |
| Proposed category   | Category A   |
| Proposed level and rayionale  | Level 1. The proposed character is a single non-combining character.   |
| Character names included in proposal?   | Yes  |
| Character names in accordance with guidelines?  | Yes  |
| Characters shapes reviewable?   | Yes  |
| Who will provide computerized font?   | Mark E. Shoulson   |
| Font format?  | TrueType   |
| Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts, etc.) provided?                                     | Yes  |
| Are published examples (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of use of proposed characters attached? | Yes  |
| Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing?   | No   |

## C. Technical—Justification

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? | Yes  |
| Contact with the user community?                                      | Yes  |
| Information on the user community?                                    | Jews, students of Judaism and Jewish literature, students of religion, publishers of Bibles and biblical literature. |
| The context of use for the proposed characters?                       | High-frequency character in religious texts, including prayer books, Bibles, of certain historical eras              |
| Proposed characters in current use?                                   | Yes, though rarely   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Where?  | See below for examples from Steinzaltz; see also <a href="http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15092-hebrew-nomina-sacra.pdf">http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15092-hebrew-nomina-sacra.pdf</a> for historical examples  |
| Characters should be encoded entirely in BMP?   | Yes   |
| Rationale   | All Hebrew characters are in the BMP; there is room in the Hebrew block for adding a single character.  |
| Should characters be kept in a contiguous range?  | Single character.   |
| Can the characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?        | No.   |
| Where?  |   |
| Reference?  | <a href="http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15092-hebrew-nomina-sacra.pdf">http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15092-hebrew-nomina-sacra.pdf</a>   |
| Can any of the characters be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to an existing character? | No.   |
| Where?  |   |
| Reference   | Attached proposal and <a href="http://std.dkuug.dk/jtc1/sc2/wg2/docs/n1740/n1740.htm">http://std.dkuug.dk/jtc1/sc2/wg2/docs/n1740/n1740.htm</a> and <a href="http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15092-hebrew-nomina-sacra.pdf">http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15092-hebrew-nomina-sacra.pdf</a> |
| Combining Characters or use of composite sequences included?  | No  |
| List of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images provided?                                  | No  |
| Characters with any special properties such as control function, etc. included?                             | No  |

05EF;HEBREW YOD TRIANGLE;Lo;0;R;<compat> 05D9 05D4 05D5 05D4;;;;N;;;;;

## E. Proposal

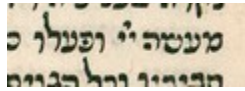
This character was first proposed in <http://std.dkuug.dk/jtc1/sc2/wg2/docs/n1740/n1740.htm>, which described the situation regarding Hebrew *nomina sacra*, namely, that the Tetragrammaton, the four-letter name of God, is so holy and significant in Judaism that it was considered too holy to write down for “frivolous” reasons, lest it somehow come to harm or erasure. This is based on the Biblical commandments in Deuteronomy 12:2-3 to destroy idolatrous temples, idols, and places of worship, and to destroy the very names of the idols, commandments which are immediately followed by a commandment in Deuteronomy 12:4, “Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God.” Although in the

larger context (as expanded by the following verse) this commandment forbids worshipping God in many different places, as the idolators did their gods, it is also interpreted as if it were commenting directly on the verse immediately before it: you must wipe out the names of the idols—but you may not treat God in that way.

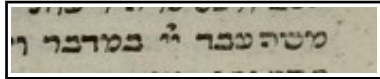
Because of this, the name of God was often treated as a special element in Hebrew writing, as scribes often avoided writing the simple sequence of letters, preferring to use abbreviations or even unique glyphs to represent the word. <http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2015/15092-hebrew-nomina-sacra.pdf> gives many examples in Hebrew texts, both manuscript and printed, of special symbols used to represent the Tetragrammaton: symbols not currently available in ISO IEC 10646 (In more recent times, the trend has moved away from using special symbols for the Tetragrammaton, in favor of abbreviations with ordinary letters.)

The original proposal, *N1740*, proposed that *all* these various symbols be unified and considered glyph variants of one overarching and underlying character, the HEBREW TETRAGRAMMATON. UTC did not agree to this analysis, and thus rejected the proposal, but in light of the later document UTC suggested that at least *some* of the special characters be proposed for encoding in their own right. Accordingly, we propose the encoding of the ם character, which is one of the more frequently-used non-Unicode symbols historically used for this purpose. Since it is a placeholder for the tetragrammaton, we propose that HEBREW YOD TRIANGLE have a compatibility decomposition to the letters of that Name, viz. U+05D9 U+05D4 U+05D5 U+05D4.

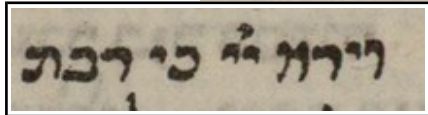
1. From [ספר נפת צופים](#), (*Sefer Nofet Tsufim*) ca 1477.



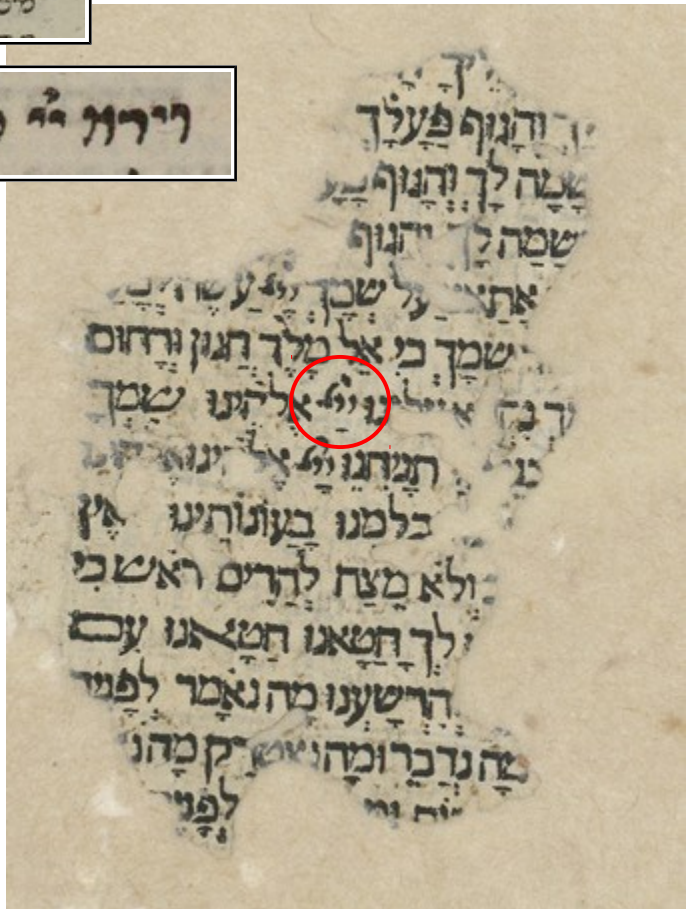
2. From [ספר בן גוריון](#) (*Sefer ben-Gurion*), ca 1480



3. From [פרוש על התורה : עם התועליות](#) (*Perush 'al haTorah 'im haTo'aliyot*)



4. From a [prayer book](#), ca. 1485-1490 (note that this version appears to include an additional “flourish,” as well as a PATAH)



5. From הרב עדין אבן-ישראל שטיינזלץ: הגדה של פסח (Rabbi Adin Even-Israel Steinsaltz Passover Haggadah), 1979 (reprint from 2001), illuminated by Ada Yardeni. Note that in the larger text at the bottom, a simple double-YOD (יײ) is used, whereas in the smaller text we see the triangle. In the commentary on the same page, letter HE with GERESH (ה׳) is used, all for the same phrase.

בכבודו ובעצמו, וראיה לכך מלשון הכתוב "ועברתי בארץ-מצרים... אני ה' (שמות יב, יב). וכדי להבליט

שנאמר  
ועברתי בארץ מצרים  
בלילה הזו  
והפיתי כל בכור  
בארץ מצרים  
מאדם ועד בהמה  
ובכל אלהי מצרים  
אעשה שפטים  
אני ה'  
ועברתי בארץ מצרים  
אני ולא מלאך  
והפיתי כל בכור  
אני ולא שדרך  
ובכל אלהי מצרים  
אעשה שפטים  
אני ולא השליח  
אני יי אני  
הוא  
ולא אחר