

Chapter 21a

Qal Infinitive Absolute

introduction

The Infinitive Absolute is not inflected for person, gender or number and so there is only one form to memorize. This form is easy to identify and varies little with weak verbal roots.



1. The vowel pattern of the strong verb also occurs in most weak verb types.
2. Frequently, the Holem Waw stem vowel is written defectively as Holem. (קטל).
3. Unlike the Infinitive Construct, the Infinitive Absolute does not occur with prepositional prefixes or pronominal suffixes.



Chapter 21b

Qal Infinitive Absolute

weak verbs

	<i>Qal Perfect</i> <i>3ms</i>	<i>Infinitive</i> <i>Absolute</i>
<i>I-Guttural</i>	הִלֵּךְ	הִלְוֹךְ
<i>I-Guttural</i>	עָבַר	עָבוֹר
<i>I-א</i>	אָכַל	אָכוֹל
<i>II-Guttural</i>	גָּאַל	גָּאוֹל
<i>II-Guttural</i>	בָּחַר	בָּחוֹר
<i>III-ח</i>	שָׁכַח	שָׁחוֹחַ
<i>III-ע</i>	שָׁמַע	שָׁמוֹעַ
<i>III-א</i>	יָצָא	יָצוֹא
<i>I-נ</i>	נָפַל	נָפוֹל
<i>I-י</i>	יָדַע	יָדוֹעַ
<i>Geminate</i>	סָבַב	סָבוֹב



Chapter 21c

Qal Infinitive Absolute

III-7 and biconsonantal verbs

<i>Verbal Root</i>		<i>Infinitive Absolute</i>
עֲשֶׂה	>	עֲשֵׂה or עֲשׂוּ
שָׁתָה	>	שָׁתֵּה or שָׁתוּ
רָאָה	>	רָאֵה or רָאוּ
חָיָה	>	חָיֵה or חָיוּ

<i>Verbal Root</i>		<i>Infinitive Absolute</i>
בּוֹא	>	בּוֹא or בּוֹ
שָׁיַם	>	שָׁיֵם
קוּם	>	קוּם
מוֹת	>	מוֹת



Chapter 21d

Qal Infinitive Absolute

parsing

The Infinitive Absolute form is *not* inflected for person, gender or number. When parsing you are required to identify only stem, conjugation and lexical form.

הִלֹּךְ	Qal Infinitive Absolute	הִלַּךְ
מוֹת	Qal Infinitive Absolute	מוֹת



Chapter 21e

Qal Infinitive Absolute

usage

- 1. Emphatic.** The Infinitive Absolute can precede or follow a Perfect or Imperfect verbal form of the same root in order to emphasize the verbal meaning.

מוֹת תָּמוּת

you (2ms) will *certainly* die (2 Kgs 1:16)

- 2. Imperative.** The Infinitive Absolute can stand by itself and function as an Imperative.

שָׁמֹר אֶת-יּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת

Observe the sabbath day! (Deut 5:12)

- 3. Contemporaneous Action.** Two Infinitive Absolutes can be used together with a Perfect or Imperfect verb to express two verbal actions occurring simultaneously.

וַיֵּלֶךְ הֵלֹךְ וְאָכַל

(literally) and he walked, *walking* and *eating*;
(idiomatically) and he walked, *eating as he went* (Judg 14:9)

- 4. Complementary.** The Infinitive Absolute can complement the main verb of a sentence and carry the temporal value of that main verb.

רָגַם אֹתוֹ בְּאֲבָנִים כָּל-הָעֵדָה

All of the congregation *shall stone him* with stones (Num 15:35).



Chapter 21f

Qal Infinitive Absolute

the particle ישׁ

Hebrew can express the *existence of someone or something* by using the particle ישׁ (ישׁ-) which translates either “(there) is” or “(there) are.”

ישׁ מֶלֶךְ

“there is a king” or “a king is”

אֲכֵן יֵשׁ יְהוָה בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה

Surely the Lord is in this place (Gen 28:16).

ישׁ may also be used to express *possession* when followed by the preposition לְ (to).

ישׁ-לִי תִקְוָה

Literally: There is to me hope.
Idiomatically: I have hope (Ruth 1:12).

הֲיֵשׁ לָכֶם אָח

Literally: Is there to you a brother?
Idiomatically: Do you have a brother? (Gen 43:7)



Chapter 21g

Qal Infinitive Absolute

the particle אֵין

Hebrew may express *the non-existence or absence of someone or something* by using the particle אֵין (אֵין) which translates either “(there) is not” or “(there) are not.”

אֵין-יוֹסֵף בַּבּוֹר

Joseph was not in the cistern (Gen 37:29).

וְאֵין-דַּעַת אֱלֹהִים בְּאֶרֶץ

(And) there is no knowledge of God in the land (Hos 4:1).

אֵין can appear with pronominal suffixes as in אֵינִי (3ms or 1cp) and אֵינָם (3mp) or it may be used to negate a verbless clause or sentences with Participles used predicatively.

אֵינָם יִרְאוּ אֶת-יְהוָה

They do not fear the Lord (2 Kgs 17:34).

אָמַר נָבֵל בְּלִבּוֹ אֵין אֱלֹהִים

(The) fool says in his heart, “There is no God” (Ps 53:2 [English 53:1]).

