

Chapter 15a – Qal Imperfect: Strong

Introduction to the Imperfect Conjugation

The Imperfect conjugation is used to express an *incomplete action* whether in the past, present or future.

The Imperfect conjugation is sometimes called the “prefix” conjugation because different inflectional prefixes or *preformatives* are added to the verbal stem in order to indicate person, gender and number.

At the beginning of your studies, it is best to translate Imperfect verbs with the future tense.



Chapter 15b – Qal Imperfect: Strong

Strong Verb Paradigm

	<i>Suffor- mative</i>	<i>Imperfect Paradigm</i>	<i>Prefor- mative</i>	<i>Translation</i>
3ms		יִקְטֹל	י	he will kill
3fs		תִּקְטֹל	ת	she will kill
2ms		תִּקְטֹל	ת	you (ms) will kill
2fs	י	תִּקְטֹלִי	ת	you (fs) will kill
1cs		אֶקְטֹל	א	I will kill
3mp	ו	יִקְטֹלוּ	י	they (mp) will kill
3fp	נָה	תִּקְטֹלְנָה	ת	they (fp) will kill
2mp	ו	תִּקְטֹלוּ	ת	you (mp) will kill
2fp	נָה	תִּקְטֹלְנָה	ת	you (fp) will kill
1cp		נִקְטֹל	נ	we will kill



Chapter 15c – Qal Imperfect: Strong

Diagnostics and Notes

The following graphic identifies the preformative and stem vowel that are diagnostic for the Qal Imperfect.



1. In the Qal strong verb, all preformative consonants have the Hireq vowel, except the 1cs form which has Seghol (אֶקְטֹל).
2. The stem vowel is Holem, except in those forms that have sufformatives that consist of a vowel (2fs, 3mp and 2mp), wherein the Holem stem vowel is reduced to Vocal Shewa.
3. Two sets of forms are identical in the Imperfect paradigm. In each instance, context must suggest the proper identification.

תִּקְטֹל both 3fs and 2ms (she will kill *or* you will kill)
תִּקְטְלֶנָּה both 3fp and 2fp (they will kill *or* you will kill)



Chapter 15d – Qal Imperfect: Strong

Other Imperfect Strong Verbs

	זָכַר <i>to remember</i>	כָּתַב <i>to write</i>	שָׁמַר <i>to keep</i>	קָבַץ <i>to gather</i>
3ms	יִזְכֹּר	יִכְתֹּב	יִשְׁמֹר	יִקְבֹּץ
3fs	תִּזְכֹּר	תִּכְתֹּב	תִּשְׁמֹר	תִּקְבֹּץ
2ms	תִּזְכֹּר	תִּכְתֹּב	תִּשְׁמֹר	תִּקְבֹּץ
2fs	תִּזְכְּרִי	תִּכְתְּבִי	תִּשְׁמְרִי	תִּקְבְּצִי
1cs	אֶזְכֹּר	אֶכְתֹּב	אֶשְׁמֹר	אֶקְבֹּץ
3mp	יִזְכְּרוּ	יִכְתְּבוּ	יִשְׁמְרוּ	יִקְבְּצוּ
3fp	תִּזְכְּרֶנָּה	תִּכְתְּבֶנָּה	תִּשְׁמְרֶנָּה	תִּקְבְּצֶנָּה
2mp	תִּזְכְּרוּ	תִּכְתְּבוּ	תִּשְׁמְרוּ	תִּקְבְּצוּ
2fp	תִּזְכְּרֶנָּה	תִּכְתְּבֶנָּה	תִּשְׁמְרֶנָּה	תִּקְבְּצֶנָּה
1cp	נִזְכֹּר	נִכְתֹּב	נִשְׁמֹר	נִקְבֹּץ



Chapter 15e – Qal Imperfect: Strong

Stative Verbs

With the Imperfect inflection of stative verbs,
the stem vowel is Pathach regardless
of the stem vowel in the Perfect.

	<i>Perfect</i>		<i>Imperfect</i>
<i>Pathach-Stative</i>	גָּדַל	➤	יִגְדֹּל
<i>Tsere-Stative</i>	כָּבַד	➤	יִכְבֹּד
<i>Holem-Stative</i>	קָטַן	➤	יִקְטֹן



Chapter 15f – Qal Imperfect: Strong

Stative Verb Paradigms

	גָּדַל <i>Pathach Stative</i>	כָּבַד <i>Tsere Stative</i>	קָטַן <i>Holem Stative</i>
3ms	יִגְדֹּל	יִכְבֹּד	יִקְטֹן
3fs	תִּגְדֹּל	תִּכְבֹּד	תִּקְטֹן
2ms	תִּגְדֹּל	תִּכְבֹּד	תִּקְטֹן
2fs	תִּגְדְּלִי	תִּכְבְּדִי	תִּקְטְנִי
1cs	אֶגְדֹּל	אֶכְבֹּד	אֶקְטֹן
3mp	יִגְדְּלוּ	יִכְבְּדוּ	יִקְטְנוּ
3fp	תִּגְדְּלֶנָּה	תִּכְבְּדֶנָּה	תִּקְטְנֶנָּה
2mp	תִּגְדְּלוּ	תִּכְבְּדוּ	תִּקְטְנוּ
2fp	תִּגְדְּלֶנָּה	תִּכְבְּדֶנָּה	תִּקְטְנֶנָּה
1cp	נִגְדֹּל	נִכְבֹּד	נִקְטֹן



Chapter 15g – Qal Imperfect: Strong

Parsing

When asked to parse Qal Imperfect verbs, you will be required to identify the verbal stem, conjugation, person, gender, number and verbal root. When parsing, give the required information in the proper order as the following examples illustrate.

ישָׁמַעוּ Qal Imperfect 3mp שָׁמַע

יִמְלֹךְ Qal Imperfect 3ms מָלַךְ



Chapter 15h – Qal Imperfect: Strong

The Negative Particles לא and אל

The Imperfect can be negated with לא. This negative particle is always placed immediately before the verb. It can simply negate the verb or it may be used with the Imperfect for an absolute or permanent prohibition.

לא תרצח

you shall not kill (Ex 20:13)

לא תנאף

you shall not commit adultery (Ex 20:14)

The Imperfect can also be negated with אל. This negative particle is used with the Imperfect to express an immediate, specific and non-durative prohibition.

אל-תירא

Do not fear! (Gen 15:1)

אל-תשמעו אל-דברי נביאיכם

Do not listen to the words of your prophets! (Jer 27:14)

