

Chapter Seventeen

Pi'el Strong Verbs

Vocabulary

זָכַר	male (m)	פָּנָה	to turn toward, face, prepare
זָנָה	to commit fornication, play the harlot	צָדַק	righteousness, just (m)
הִפְךָ	to turn, overturn	צוּה	(Piel) to command
הִחַה	to become hot, angry	רָחַץ	to wash
כָּפַר	(Piel) to cover, make atonement	רָעַע	to be wicked, evil
מָאֵן	(Piel) to refuse	שָׂבַע	to satisfy
מִגְרֵשׁ	pasture (m or f)	שָׁר	to sing
מַמְלָכָה	kingdom (f)	שָׁת	to put, place, set
סוּר	to turn aside	שָׁמַם	to be astonished, desolate
סָפַר	to count, (Piel) to tell, relate	תּוֹעֵבָה	abomination (f)

Pi'el

The Pi'el (פִּעֵל) is the intensive verb stem. It is used to express intensive active or causative action. This intensifying of the stem serves to strengthen and/or repetition of the action.

Qal	Pi'el
שָׁאַל "ask"	שָׁאַל "beg"
כִּי שָׁאַל שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת-הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה	וַיִּבְעֵהוּ יְבוּעֵהוּ בְּיָדוֹ וַשָּׁאַל
That Solomon had asked this thing (1 Kgs. 3:10)	"Let his sons wander and beg " (Ps. 109:10)

Usage of the Pi'el

1. *Intensive*. The primary use of the Pi'el is to express an intensification of the verb. Intenfication expressing the strengthening or repetition of the action¹. Dr. Page Kelley gives the following examples²:

Qal Perfect 3ms		Pi'el Perfect 3ms	
נִשָּׁק	He kissed	נִשָּׁק	He kissed repeatedly
שָׁבַר	He broke	שָׁבַר	He shattered

2. *Causitive*. Gesenius writes of the Pi'el, "The eager pursuit of an action may also consist in urging and causing others to do the same."³ This causative usage of the Pi'el is much like the Hif'il. Dr. Kelley identifies the following examples:

Qal Perfect 3ms		Pi'el Perfect 3ms	
אָבַד	He perished	אָבַד	He destroyed
גָּדַל	He was great	גָּדַל	He exalted (made great)
לָמַד	He learned	לָמַד	He taught

3. *Obsolete (denominative)*. Some verbs have no Qal form, the Pi'el is used and the meaning may be the simple active sense. For example:

Pi'el Perfect 3ms			
בִּקֵּשׁ	He sought	מָהַר	He hastened
בֵּרַךְ	He blessed	נָסָה	He tried, tested
דַּבֵּר	He spoke	נָצַח	He led, directed
הַלֵּל	He praised	צִוָּה	He commanded
זָמַר	He sang (with instrumental accompaniment)	קָדַם	He was before
יָחַל	He waited	קָפַד	He made to smoke
כָּבַס	He washed, cleaned	קָנָא	He was envious, zealous
מָאֵן	He refused	שָׂרַת	He ministered, served

Pi'el Perfect Form

¹ Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1910), p. 141

² Page Kelley, *Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), p. 109

³ Gesenius' *Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1910), p.141

To form the Pi'el perfect, place a hireq () under the first root consonant and a daghesh forte (·) in the second root consonant.

Perfect			
	Qal		Pi'el
3ms	שָׁמַר	→	שָׁמַר

Perfect			
	Qal	Pi'el	Translation
3ms	שָׁמַר	שָׁמַר	He guarded
3fs	שָׁמְרָה	שָׁמְרָה	She guarded
2ms	שָׁמַרְתָּ	שָׁמַרְתָּ	You guarded
2fs	שָׁמַרְתְּ	שָׁמַרְתְּ	You guarded
1cs	שָׁמַרְתִּי	שָׁמַרְתִּי	I guarded
3cp	שָׁמְרוּ	שָׁמְרוּ	They guarded
2mp	שָׁמַרְתֶּם	שָׁמַרְתֶּם	You guarded
2fp	שָׁמַרְתֶּן	שָׁמַרְתֶּן	You guarded
1cp	שָׁמַרְנוּ	שָׁמַרְנוּ	We guarded

Pi'el Imperfect Form

To form the Pi'el imperfect, place a sheva () under the first performative, a pathach () under the first root consonant, and a daghesh forte (·) in the second root consonant.

Imperfect			
	Qal		Pi'el
3ms	יִשְׁמַר	→	יִשְׁמַר

Imperfect			
	Qal	Pi'el	Translation
3ms	יִשְׁמַר	יִשְׁמַר	He will guard
3fs	תִּשְׁמַר	תִּשְׁמַר	She will guard
2ms	תִּשְׁמַר	תִּשְׁמַר	You will guard
2fs	תִּשְׁמַרִי	תִּשְׁמַרִי	You will guard
1cs	אֶשְׁמַר	אֶשְׁמַר	I will guard
3mp	יִשְׁמְרוּ	יִשְׁמְרוּ	They will guard
3fp	תִּשְׁמַרְנָה	תִּשְׁמַרְנָה	They will guard
2mp	תִּשְׁמְרוּ	תִּשְׁמְרוּ	You will guard
2fp	תִּשְׁמַרְנָה	תִּשְׁמַרְנָה	You will guard
1cp	נִשְׁמַר	נִשְׁמַר	We will guard

Pi'el Imperative Form

To form the Pi'el imperative, start with the Qal imperfect, remove the performative, place a pathach () under the first root consonant, and a daghesh forte () in the second root consonant.

	Qal Imperfect		Pi'el Imperative
2ms	תשמר	→	שִׁמַר

	Qal Imperfect	Pi'el Imperative	Translation
2ms	תשמר	שִׁמַר	(you) guard!
2fs	תשמרי	שִׁמְרִי	(you) guard!
2mp	תשמרו	שִׁמְרוּ	(you) guard!
2fp	תשמרנה	שִׁמְרֵנָה	(you) guard!

Pi'el Imperative Usage

1. Normal usage. The normal usage of the imperative is to express an intensive command. For example, תְּלַל־יְהוָה הַלְלִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה “Praise the LORD! **Praise** the LORD, O my soul!” (Ps. 146:1)
2. Used with pronominal suffix. For example, לְמַדְנִי חֻקֶיךָ “**Teach me** thy statutes! (Ps. 119:12).
3. Used with the particle of entreaty (נָא). וְעַתָּה תְּבַר־נָא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ “Now therefore, I pray thee, speak to the king.” (2 Sam. 13:13)
4. Used with the emphatic הַ suffix. סִפְּרָה־נָא לִי כָל־הַגְּדֹלוֹת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה אֱלֹהִים “Tell me, I pray, all the great things that Elisha has done.” (2 Kings 8:4)

Pi'el Infinitive Form

The Pi'el Infinitive construct and absolute have the same form as the Pi'el Imperative 2ms.

	Qal Imperfect		Pi'el Imperative	Pi'el Infinitive Construct	Pi'el Infinitive Absolute
2ms	תשמר	→	שִׁמַר	שִׁמַר	שִׁמַר (שִׁמַר)

Pi'el Participle Form

To form the Pi'el participle, start with the Qal participle, add the Pi'el participle prefix (מְ) add the pathach () under the first root consonant, and the daghesh forte (.) in the second root consonant.

	Qal Participle		Pi'el Participle	
ms	שׁוֹמֵר	→	מְשׁוֹמֵר	Guarding
mp	שׁוֹמְרִים	→	מְשׁוֹמְרִים	Guarding
fs	שׁוֹמְרָה	→	מְשׁוֹמְרָה	Guarding
fp	שׁוֹמְרוֹת	→	מְשׁוֹמְרוֹת	Guarding

Practice

I. Memorize the vocabulary

II. Memorize the Pi'el Perfect, Imperfect, Imperative, and Participle forms.

III. Translate the following:

1. אֱלֹהֵי פְלִטְנִי מִיַּד רָשָׁע (Ps. 71:4a)
2. וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הַיָּם בַּיָּמִים וְהָעוֹף יִרְבֵּ בְּאֶרֶץ
3. בְּכֹל-דְרָכָיו דָּעָה וְהוּא יֵיר אַחֲזֵתֶיךָ (Prov. 3:6)
4. הַדְרִיכֵנִי (lead me) בְּאַמְתָּךְ וְלִמְדֵנִי כִי-אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲוֹתָךְ קִוִּיתִי כָּל-הַיּוֹם
5. וַיִּגְלֶה (uncover) כְּבוֹד יְהוָה וְרָאוּ כָּל-בָּשָׂר יַחְדָּו כִּי פִי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר