

Chapter Twenty-Three

First Guttural Weak Verbs

Vocabulary

אַלף	Ox, thousand	חַמֵּשׁ	five (m)
חַוּץ	A place outside the house, a street	חַמֵּשֶׁה	five (f)
מֵאָה	hundred (f)	שֵׁשׁ	six (m)
פְּנִים	face (faces)	שֵׁשֶׁה	six (f)
שְׁנַיִם	two (m)	שִׁבְעָה	seven (m)
שְׁתַּיִם	two (f)	שִׁבְעֵהּ	seven (f)
שְׁלֹשׁ	three (m)	שְׁמוֹנָה	eight (m)
שְׁלֹשֶׁה	three (f)	שְׁמוֹנֵהּ	eight (f)
אַרְבַּע	four (m)	תִּשְׁעָה	nine (m)
אַרְבַּעֵהּ	four (f)	עָשָׂר	ten (m)

Classification of weak verbs

There are ten classifications of weak verbs based upon the position of the guttural within the verb. Remember strong (“sounding”) verbs are fairly standard while weak (“sounding”) verbs are subdivided into the ten groupings. The following is a review of the basics.

- A. *Strong verbs.* A strong verb contains three strong consonants in the root form. The strong consonants are: ב, ג, ד, ו, ז, ט, כ, ל, מ, נ (middle consonant), ס, פ, צ, ק, ר (final consonant), ש, שׁ, שׂ.
- B. *Weak verbs.* A verb is classified as weak if it contains one of the following:
 1. The verb contains one or more guttural consonants. The gutturals are: א, ה, ח, ע, and sometimes ר.
 2. The verb begins with י, ו, or נ.
 3. The verb’s second and third consonants are identical (Geminate).
 4. The verb is a middle vowel verb or a two consonant root (biconsonantal) verb.

Rules of Gutturals

1. Gutturals cannot be doubled. Since gutturals do not possess a dagesh forte they require lengthening of the preceding vowel. Lengthening has the following rules¹:
 - i) Patach (ַ) is lengthened to Qamets (ֶ).
 - ii) Hireq (ִ) is lengthened to Tsere (ֵ).
 - iii) Qibbuts (ֹ) is lengthened to Holem (ֺ).
2. Gutturals usually take “a” class vowels.
 - i) Normally the vowel following the guttural will be a Patach (ַ).
 - ii) When a strong guttural (א, ח, & ע) is the final consonant in a word, the “a” class vowel will come before the guttural.
 - iii) When the vowel before the final guttural is unchangeably long, i.e., ם, ן, ם, ן, ם, ן, ם, ן, a Patach (ַ) must be inserted between this vowel and the final guttural.
3. Gutturals usually take compound shevas (ֿ, ם, ן) rather than a simple sheva.

Weak Verb Designations						
	III	II	I	← Modern designation	Modern	Description
	ל	ע	פ	← Traditional		
1	ד	ט	ק	Pe Guttural	I - Guttural	Guttural in 1 st root position
2	ל	א	שׁ	‘Ayin Guttural	II - Guttural	Guttural in 2 nd root position
3	ח	ל	שׁ	Lamed Guttural	III - Guttural	Guttural in 3 rd root position
4	ל	כ	א	Pe ‘Alef	I – ‘Alef	‘Alef in 1 st root position
5	א	צ	ק	Lamed ‘Alef	III- ‘Alef	‘Alef in 3 rd root position
6	ח	ג	ק	Lamed He	III - He	He in 3 rd root position
7	ל	פ	נ	Pe Nun	I - Nun	Nun in 1 st root position
8	ב	ו	שׁ	‘Ayin Vav or Yod	II – Vav or Yod	II – Vav/Yod
9	ב	שׁ	ו	Pe Vav or Yod	I - Vav or Yod	I – Vav/Yod
10	ב	ב	ו	Double ‘Ayin	Geminate	

First Guttural Verbs

A First Guttural verb designated as Pe Guttural or I-Guttural is one whose initial consonant is one of the gutturals: א, ח, ע, or ד. When the first consonant is א it may be a Pe Guttural (I-Guttural) or its own class called the Pe Alef (I-‘Alef). Examples where the first root consonant is a guttural are:

¹ Page Kelley, *Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns, 1992), p. 223

1 st Root Consonant	Word	
א	אָהַב	He loved
ה	הָרַג	he killed
ח	חָזַק	he was strong, firm
ע	עָבַד	he served, worked
ר	רָאָה	he saw

1. **I-Guttural in the Piel, Pual, and Hithpael stems.** I-Guttural verbs in the Piel, Pual, and Hithpael stems follow the same rules as strong verbs.

Verb	Strong	I-Guttural ²
Piel Perfect 3 ms	מָשַׁל	עָמַד
Pual Perfect 3 ms	מָשַׁל	עָמַד
Hitpael Perfect 3 ms	הִתְמַשֵּׁל	הִתְעַמַּד

2. **I-Guttural verbs differ in the Qal, Nifal, Hifil and Hofal stems.** The differences for I-Guttural verbs in the Qal, Nifal, Hifil and Hofal stems can be divided into three groups.

- i) **The initial consonant cannot be doubled so the vowel must be lengthened.** This rule only applies to Nifal forms that are prefixed resulting in a doubling of the initial root consonant (dagesh forte added).

Nifal Imperfect		
	Strong Verb	I-Guttural
3 m s	יִמְשַׁל	יִעֲמֹד

- ii) **Gutturals normally take compound shevas.**
 a) For shevas that come after I-Gutturals in the Qal stem, the vowel must be a compound sheva.

Qal Perfect		
	Strong Verb	I-Guttural
2 m p	מָשַׁלְתֶּם	עָמַדְתֶּם

- b) A silent sheva that is normally attached to the prefix syllable is changed to a compound sheva of an I-Guttural and the first vowel becomes short.

² This section and examples are modeled and adopted from Page Kelley's Grammar

Qal Imperfect			
	Strong Verb	I-Guttural	I-Guttural
3 m s	יִמְשַׁל	יִעֲמֵד	יִחַוֵּק
2 f s	תִּמְשַׁלִּי	תִּעֲמָדִי	תִּחַוֵּקִי

Hifil Imperfect		
	Strong Verb	I-Guttural
3 m s	יִמְשִׁיל	יִעֲמִיד

Nifal Perfect		
	Strong Verb	I-Guttural
3 m s	נִמְשַׁל	נִעֲמַד

- iii) The I-Guttural Hofal stem contains the combination of vowels (ְ, ִ) in the first and second root consonants for all forms (Perfect, Imperfect, Infinitive, & Participle).

Hofal Perfect		
	Strong Verb	I-Guttural
3 m s	הִמְשַׁל	הִעֲמַד

3. **The I-Guttural containing vocalic affirmatives involving two vocal shevas.**
 Two vocal shaves cannot stand together within a word, so the first vowel is changed to a full vowel, and a compound sheva is changed to its corresponding short vowel [e.g., (ְ, ִ) turns to (ִ, ִ); (ְ, ִ) turns to (ִ, ִ); (ְ, ִ) turns to (ִ, ִ)].

Nifal Perfect 3fs	נִעֲמָדָה	→	נִעֲמַדָה
Hofal Perfect 3fs	הִעֲמָדָה	→	הִעֲמַדָה
Hofal Imperfect 2fs	תִּעֲמָדִי	→	תִּעֲמָדִי

Practice

- I. Memorize the vocabulary
- II. What is a weak verb?
- III. Memorize the three rules of gutturals

