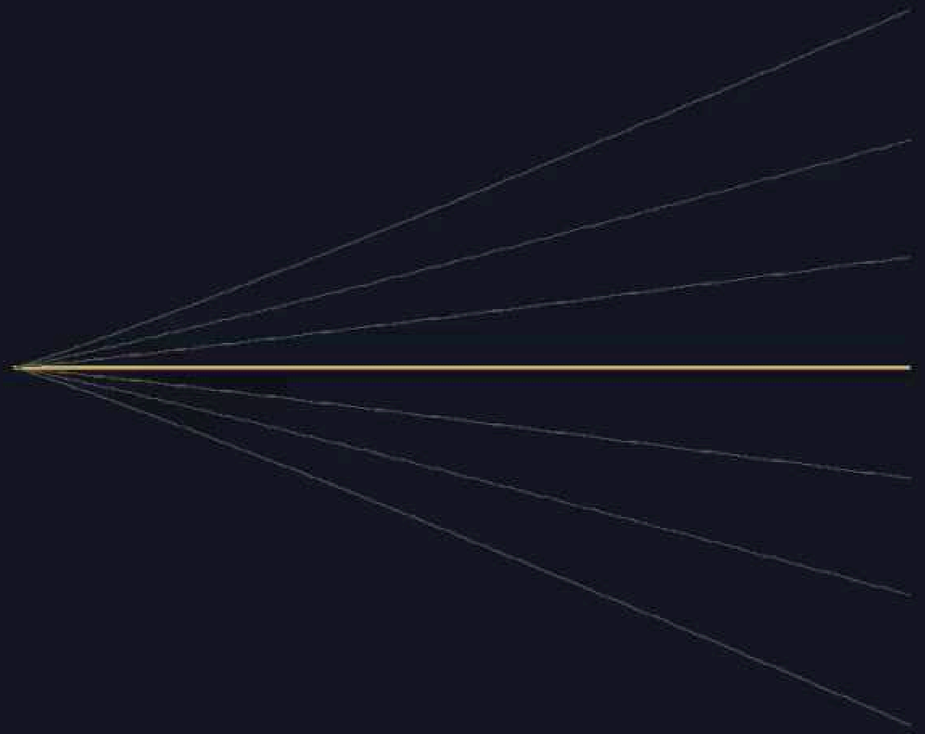
ANDERSON ACADEMY

HEBR 101 B · Introduction to Biblical Hebrew (Brief course)

Lecture 5 · about 7 min

The Verb and Its Stems



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Questions or feedback: garyanderson@mail.grokbot.com · @garyanderson

Listing a verb

- Built on the root
- Listed by he did
- Shamar, he kept
- The root letters plainly shown

¶ 5.1

So the verb to keep is listed as shamar, he kept.

Binyanim

- Seven main stems
- Each adds a shade of meaning
- Qal, the simple stem
- Shamar, to keep

¶ 5.2

The simplest stem is called qal, meaning light, and it gives the basic sense of the verb.

Two conjugations

Perfect

- Qatal
- Suffixes after the root
- Often completed action

Imperfect

- Yiqtol
- Prefixes before the root
- Often incomplete action

¶ 5.3

The perfect is formed by adding suffixes to the root; the imperfect is formed mainly by adding prefixes.

Qal perfect of shamar

He, she, you, I

- Shamar, he kept
- Shamrah, she kept
- Shamarta, you kept
- Shamarti, I kept

They, you all, we, you

- Shamru, they kept
- Shamartem, you all kept
- Shamarnu, we kept
- Shamart, you kept, feminine

¶ 5.4

In the plural: shamru, they kept; shamartem, you all kept; shamarnu, we kept.

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Gender in the verb

- He kept, shamar
- She kept, shamrah
- You, masculine or feminine
- The ending shows both

¶ 5.5

English shows gender only in the pronouns he and she, but Hebrew builds it into the verb itself.

Qal imperfect of shamar

- Yishmor, he will keep
- Tishmor, she or you will keep
- Eshmor, I will keep
- Nishmor, we will keep
- Yishmeru, they will keep

¶ 5.6

Some forms share a prefix, so the context and any ending help to decide.

Aspect

Perfect

- Action seen as complete
- Often past in English

Imperfect

- Action seen as incomplete
- Ongoing, repeated, or future

¶ 5.7

The imperfect presents it as incomplete, ongoing, repeated, or still to come.

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The participle

- Shomer, keeping or keeper
- Like an adjective or noun
- Shomer Yisrael, Psalm 121
- The present tense of Modern Hebrew

¶ 5.8

Psalm 121 calls God shomer Yisrael, the keeper of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Infinitives and imperative

Forms

- Lishmor, to keep
- Shamor, emphatic or a command
- Shemor, keep!

Example

- Shamor et yom ha-shabbat
- Keep the Sabbath day
- Deuteronomy

¶ 5.9

as in the Sabbath commandment of Deuteronomy, shamor et yom ha-shabbat, keep the Sabbath day.

The seven stems

- Qal, simple
- Niphal, passive or reflexive
- Piel, intensive
- Pual, passive of piel
- Hiphil, causative
- Hophal, passive of hiphil
- Hitpael, reflexive

¶ 5.10

the passive of piel; hiphil, usually causative; hophal, its passive; and hitpael, usually reflexive.

The root q-d-sh

- Qadosh, holy
- Qal, to be holy
- Piel, qiddesh, to sanctify
- Hitpael, to sanctify oneself

¶ 5.11

In the hitpael it means to sanctify oneself.

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Qal and hiphil

Qal

- Malakh, he reigned
- Simple action

Hiphil

- Himlikh, he made king
- Causing action

¶ 5.12

The hiphil often adds a sense of causing: the subject makes someone else do or become something.

Weak verbs

- Gutturals and weak letters
- Change in predictable ways
- Classified by the weak letter
- Include say, go, give, and be

¶ 5.13

These weak verbs include some of the commonest in the Bible, such as to say, to go, to give,

The verb hayah

- To be
- Left out in the present
- Used for past and future
- Va-yehi, and it came to pass

¶ 5.14

and above all to mark the flow of a story: va-yehi, and it came to pass, or and there was.

Wishes and requests

Jussive

- Jussive
- Yehi, let there be
- Third person wish

Cohortative

- Cohortative
- Nishmerah, let us keep
- First person resolve

¶ 5.15

The cohortative adds an ending ah to the first person: nishmerah, let us keep.

Reading verbs

Find the root

Read the prefix or suffix

Decide the person and aspect

Ha-melekh shamar et ha-torah

¶ 5.16

Ha-melekh shamar et ha-torah means the king kept the teaching.

Practice

- Write the perfect and imperfect
- Try katav and malakh
- Name the stems of q-d-sh
- See roots at a glance

¶ 5.17

Then take q-d-sh and name the stems you know.