Binyan #1: Pa'al / Qatal / Qal

The Meaning

This Binyan in Hebrew literature is called Pa'al (נָעַל), and in other Semitic Research literature called Qatal (רָבָּל). This Binyan conveys the simplest possible meaning among the Binyanim. Due to this, this particular Binyan has also been nicknamed Qal, which means "light" or "easy" in Hebrew.

Before we continue, it is worthy to remind you that Hebrew is a language that uses the root letters and changes the vowel sounds around those root letters:

The Past Tense: "aa/aa"

Let's LEARN Our First Example

NEW WORD #1: Let's "study" and "learn" our first word, as it is in colloquial Hebrew. Its root is lamed-mem-dalet (לָמַד) and it conveys a meaning of "studying" or "learning". To remember this root, just take the letter LaMeD (ל) and spell it out in Hebrew. As well, words you might already know like talmud (תלמוד), and talmid "student" (תלמיד) come from this root.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Standard Inflection Tables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I studied</td>
<td>lamad'ti</td>
<td>לָמַדְתִּי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You studied</td>
<td>lamad'ta</td>
<td>לָמַדְתָּ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (f.) studied</td>
<td>lamad't</td>
<td>לָמַדְתּ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/It studied</td>
<td>lamad</td>
<td>לָמוּד</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She/It studied</td>
<td>lam'dah</td>
<td>לָמְדוּה</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We studied</td>
<td>lamad'nu</td>
<td>לָמַדוּנְו</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y'all studied</td>
<td>lamad'tem</td>
<td>לָמַדְתֶּמֶל</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y'all (f.) studied</td>
<td>lamad'ten</td>
<td>לָמַדְתֶּנֶל</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They studied</td>
<td>lam'du</td>
<td>לָמוּד</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard Inflection Tables

The table above is a pretty standard Hebrew inflection chart. Most inflection charts go from singular to plural, from 1st to 3rd person, and then from masculine to feminine.
Sometimes Gender Doesn't Matter
If there is a blank in the chart, it means that it doesn't matter. For example, a woman can say lamad'ti, and so can a man say lamad'ti. As a general rule, first person has no need to inflect into masculine or feminine.

Where does the name come from?
So why do they call this Binyan Pa'al or Qatal? Look at the Sing. 3rd M. form. Replace the letters with pey-ayin-lamed, and get: Pa'al. Similarly, if you replace them with qof-tet-lamed (גזל), you get: Qatal. All the names of the Binyanim come from the Sing. 3rd M. form.

The "aa/aa" Binyan
Notice how in most of the forms presented above they have a Qamatz followed by a Patakh? This is your sign that it is the first Binyan Pa'al. They both make an "aa" sound.

למד

Without any suffix, this form is called a verb stem. In this case, the verb stem by itself automatically is the Sing. 3rd Masculine form ("he learned"). In order to inflect it in the past tense, one must add suffices to this word.

There are only two exceptions to this rule: "she learned", "they learned". Hebrew is a language that tries to say a lot of things in as very few syllables as possible. Here is why there was a change: try to say lamadah 10 times very fast, and over time you'll start saying lam'dah.

Memorizing the Suffices
The suffices of verbs do NOT change from Binyan to Binyan. They stay the same always:
- Sing. 2nd person endings: 'ta (תא) and 't (ת). They are both similar to the pronouns atah (אתה) and at (את), respectively.
- Plur. 2nd person endings: 'tem (תמים) and 'ten (ทาน), come from atem (אתם) and aten (אתן). Think of it as if the mem is pluralizing the form, and nun is a more feminine letter to pluralize.
• As well, we get the Plur. 1st person 'nu (נ) derived from anakhnu (اناון) or more likely the more polite form anu (אנו).
• The hey suffix for the Sing. 3rd person feminine adds an "ah" sound. It's amazing how among a lot of languages in the world, an "ah" sound makes something feminine. Like amigo is feminine for amigo!
• Sing. 1st person ending: 'ti (תי) is something one must remember on his own. But yud suffices in Hebrew usually indicate ownership of the first person.

**WRITING Out Another Example**

**NEW WORD #2:** Let's "write out" another example. The root is kaf-tav-vet (כָּתַבְ). We all have heard of a k’tubah (קְתֻבָּה), which is a "marriage contract". It gets this name because marriage contracts have to be written.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I wrote</th>
<th>katav'ti</th>
<th>קְתֻבָּתִי</th>
<th>1st Singular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You wrote</td>
<td>katav'ta</td>
<td>קְתֻבָּתָה</td>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (f.) wrote</td>
<td>katav't</td>
<td>קְתֻבָּתָה</td>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/It wrote</td>
<td>katav</td>
<td>קְתֻבָּה</td>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She/It wrote</td>
<td>kat'vah</td>
<td>קְתֻבָּה</td>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We wrote</td>
<td>katav'nu</td>
<td>קְתֻבָּנָה</td>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y'all wrote</td>
<td>katav'tem</td>
<td>קְתֻבָּתֶם</td>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y'all (f.) wrote</td>
<td>katav'ten</td>
<td>קְתֻבָּתֶן</td>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They wrote</td>
<td>kat'vu</td>
<td>קְתֻבָּה</td>
<td>3rd Plural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice that all we did was take the first example and change the root letters? The vowels still stayed the same. This is how Hebrew works. We do not memorize words; rather, we memorize root letters, and we memorize the vowel patterns surrounding those root letters.

**A Small White Lie That Has To Be Fixed**

Up until know you've been lied to (kind of). That which has been presented to you up above was the pronunciations of Modern Hebrew. In Biblical Hebrew, there are only two differences in the chart:

Those Qamatz become Sh'va. Notice that this is only in the Plur. 2nd Person.
**Review Practice**

**NEW WORD #3:** I hope that all of the pieces are starting to "fall" into place for you. The root *nun-fey-lamed* ( ICollection ) means "falling". This is where we get the *Nephilim* (ICollection) in the bible, for they are "fallen ones". As well the last two letters of the root sound like the English word "fall". Fill out the following chart IN PENCIL.

- In the 3rd column the Biblical Hebrew written out with vowel points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I fell</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n'falen</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NEW WORD #4:** I hope that everything so far is "going" well. If we're to translate our learning terms into hiking terms, I say that we've "walked" a long distance. The root *hey-lamed-kaf* (ICollection) means "walking" or "going". and inflect it in the following chart:

- In the 3rd column the Modern Hebrew written out with vowel points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>You (f.) walked</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>halach'ten</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You may have heard of Torah Portion "lech l'cha" (ICollection). The first word means "go!" in command form, and the second word means "for you". Add a *hey*, and you have the root for "walking" or "going". Maybe the *hey* represents the amount of air you have to breathe after walking so far.
1) Which of the following words **IS** a verb belonging to *Pa'al*?
   a. חותל
   b. ברא
   c. כתיבת
   d. התלמודית

2) This *Binyan* conveys:
   a. Simple meaning.
   b. Causative meaning.
   c. Reflexive meaning.
   d. All of the above.

3) Which of the following is **NOT** a name of the 1st *Binyan*?
   a. Qal
   b. Pa'al
   c. P'al
   d. Katal

4) Which of the following verbs does **NOT** belong to *Pa'al*?
   a. עשתה
   b. ליראת
   c. כתבות
   d. חיות

5) Which of the following verbs does **NOT** belong to the 2nd Person?
   a. שמעת
   b. כתבת
   c. ליראת
   d. לאבד
   e. לחתות

6) Which of the following roots conveys a meaning of "learning"?
   a. שלח
   b. אבד
   c. למד
   d. שמע
   e. כתב
7) "SHE sent out": Which of the following is correctly written?
   a. שלָה
   b. שלָהה
   c. שלָהָ
   d. שלָה

8) Which of the following is a biblical Hebrew form?
   a. יְשַׁבְתּוּ
   b. בְּרָאשָׁה
   c. שֵׁמוֹת
   d. לֶמֶלָה

9) Which of the following roots conveys a meaning of "writing"?
   a. נ פ ל
   b. א ב ד
   c. ל מ ד
   d. ש מ ע
   e. כ ת ב

10) "They were lost": Which of the following is correctly written?
    a. אָבְדוּ
    b. אָבַדְנוּ
    c. לֶפֶדָה
    d. אָבַדְהֵ

11) Which of the following convey a meaning of "falling"?
    a. נ פ ל
    b. א ב ד
    c. ל מ ד
    d. ש מ ע
    e. ה ל מ

12) Which of the following convey a meaning of "walking"?
    a. נ פ ל
    b. ל מ ד
    c. נ פ ל
    d. ל מ ד
    e. ה ל מ
The Future Tense: Symmetric Syllables

You will notice that future tense verbs are based on prefixes, and will sometimes add a suffix in addition to adding a prefix. This is in contrast to the past tense which purely had suffices.

We'll start off with the two examples that we already learned. You'll notice a slight difference between the two charts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I will study</th>
<th>el'mad</th>
<th>1st</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You will study</td>
<td>til'mad</td>
<td>m. 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (f.) will study</td>
<td>til'm'di</td>
<td>f. 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/It will study</td>
<td>il'mad</td>
<td>m. 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She/It will study</td>
<td>til'mad</td>
<td>f. 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will study</td>
<td>nil'mad</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y'all will study</td>
<td>til'm'du</td>
<td>m. 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They will study</td>
<td>il'm'du</td>
<td>m. 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y'all/They will study</td>
<td>til'mad'na</td>
<td>f. 3rd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I will write</th>
<th>ech'tov</th>
<th>1st</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You will write</td>
<td>tich'tov</td>
<td>m. 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (f.) will write</td>
<td>tich't'vi</td>
<td>f. 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He/It will write</td>
<td>ich'tov</td>
<td>m. 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She/It will write</td>
<td>tich'tov</td>
<td>f. 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will write</td>
<td>nich'tov</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y'all will write</td>
<td>tich't'vu</td>
<td>m. 2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They will write</td>
<td>ich't'vu</td>
<td>m. 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ya'll/They will write</td>
<td>tich'tav'nah</td>
<td>f. 3rd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rule of Thumb for *Pa‘al* Future Tense

The following rules apply ONLY in *Pa‘al*.

- If there are **FOUR** letters, cut the word into **equal halves**:

  ![Image 1](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

- If there are **FIVE** letters, cut the word **symmetrically** into **three parts**:

  ![Image 2](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

- If there are **SIX** letters, cut the word into **three equal pieces**:

  ![Image 3](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

### The First Syllable

- The first syllable always takes a *Hiriq*, making an "ee" sound!
  - The only exception is the *aleph* prefix, where it takes a *Segol*, making an "e" sound.
- In *Pa‘al*, the *yud* prefix does NOT make a "y" sound, rather just the "ee" sound.

### The Second Syllable: *ephal* or *ephol*?

As you could see in the above two examples, the first syllable was always consistent. Yet in the four letter words, there are two options for the second syllable:

- A *Patakh* which makes an "ah" sound.
- A *Kholem* which makes an "o" sound.

![Image 4](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

So what is going on here? If they are both equally *Pa‘al*, why are the vowel sounds different? That's just the way it is! For each verb, one has to memorize if it takes an "oh" sound or an "ah" sound.

Here are the names for both groupings:

- The second syllable has a *Patakh*: *ephal* (עפאל)
- The second syllable has a *Kholem*: *ephol* (עפאל)

Take Note:

- Both *ephal* and *ephol* belong to the *Binyan Pa‘al*.
- When the inflected verbs that have five or six letters, there is no difference between *ephal* and *ephol*. 
• If in the last two letters of the root there is a letter like: ayin, aleph, khet, or hey, then it is most definitely ephal.
• If none of the above letters are in the last two letters, then it is most likely ephal.
• In Modern Hebrew, in ephol there is a vav between the last two root letters.

**Exceptions**

- **Past Tense**
  - One cannot use the "ah/ah" method if:
    - If the last root letter is hey or yud.
    - If the middle root letter is vav or yud.
    - With some certain roots, like: יְשֵׁנ

- **Future Tense**
  - One cannot use the symmetric syllable method if:
    - If the first root letter is nun, yud, vav, hey, aleph, ayin.
    - If the middle root letter is vav or yud.
    - With some certain roots, like: קְלֵקִי.

**Summary Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FUTURE</th>
<th></th>
<th>PAST</th>
<th>&quot;ah/ah&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EPHOL</td>
<td>EPHAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
<td>לָמַדְ</td>
<td>קְתֹּב</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- The chart represents the conjugation of verbs in Hebrew, with special cases noted for ephol and ephal in the past tense, and for the symmetric syllable method in the future tense.
- The "ah/ah" method is applicable in certain cases, and its usage is noted in the chart.
- The chart is designed to help in understanding the conjugation of verbs in Hebrew, particularly focusing on the use of ephol and ephal as well as the "ah/ah" method.
Review Practice 2

NEW WORD #5: Let's "throw out" this next verb root: zayin-resh-qof. (זרק)
This conveys a meaning of "throwing", but sometimes is translated as "sprinkling".
The High Priest has to "sprinkle" the blood on the altar. Remember the last time your friend threw a piece of paper in your face, and then you said: "Hey you ZeRK, why did you throw that!" This root in the future tense is ephol, fill out the following table in the Future Tense with vowel points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st</th>
<th>m.</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>f.</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>m.</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>f.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>אֶזְרֹק</td>
<td>You (f.) will throw</td>
<td>tiz'rok</td>
<td>Ya'll/They will throw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NEW WORD #5: Have you "heard" of this next root: shin-mem-ayin (שמע)?
You for sure have "heard" the Sh'ma Israel declaration of faith of Judaism. It conveys a meaning of "listening". The future tense is ephal, fill out the following table in the Future Tense with vowel points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st</th>
<th>m.</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>f.</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>m.</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>f.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tish'ma'</td>
<td>He will hear</td>
<td>tish'ma'</td>
<td>Ya'll/They will hear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st</th>
<th>m.</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>f.</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>m.</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>f.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>בֵּשְׁמַע</td>
<td>m.</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>f.</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>m.</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>f.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1) Which of the following verbs do **NOT** belong to *Pa'al*?
   a. מַדְרֶכְר
   b. מִסְפּוּנֵר
   c. אֲזֵרֹק
   d. חֲבַתְבֶּנָה

2) Which of the following **IS** a future tense verb?
   a. שָׁמְעוּ
   b. כָּתַבְתָּ
   c. יִשְׁמְעוּ
   d. כַּתְבוּ

3) Future Tense Verbs:
   a. Sometimes have suffixes.
   b. Never have suffixes.
   c. Always have prefixes.
   d. a and c
   e. b and c

4) "She will send out": Which of the following is written correctly?
   a. תִּשְׁלַח
   b. תִּשְׁלָח
   c. תִּשְׁלְחָה
   d. שָׁלַחְתָּ
   e. שַׁלְחָה

5) "You (m. sing) will throw" and "She will throw":
   a. Sound exactly the same in Hebrew: תִּזְרַק
   b. Sound different from each other: תִּזְרֹק - תִּזְרְקִי
   c. The word "throw" isn't in *Pa'al*.
   d. Sound exactly the same in Hebrew: תִּזְרַק

6) What is *ephal* and *ephol*?
   a. *Ephal* and *Ephol* were the Aramaic names of Cain and Abel.
   b. *Ephal* and *Ephol* are *Binyanim* other than *Pa'al*.
   c. *Ephal* and *Ephol* are future tense classifications of *Pa'al*.
   d. *Ephal* and *Ephol* are past tense classifications of *Pa'al*.

7) If there is a *khet* in the **second** letter of the root:
   a. Then the verb will definitely be *ephol*.
   b. Then the verb will definitely be *ephal*.
   c. No way of knowing. It depends on the first letter.
   d. No way of knowing. That depends on the third letter.
8) What is the second syllable sound in *ephol*?
   b. *Hiriq*: "ee" sound.
   c. *Kholem*: "oo" sound.
   d. None of the above.

9) "I will learn": Which of the following is written correctly?
   a. אֲלָמֵּד
   b. אֶלְמֹד
   c. לָמַדְתִּי
   d. אֶלְמַד

10) "I will write": Which of the following is written correctly?
   a. אַכְתִּיב
   b. אֶכְתֹּב
   c. כְָתַבְתִּי
   d. אֶכְתַּב
   e. אִכְתֹּב

11) "We will hear": Which of the following is written correctly?
   a. שָׁמַענוּ
   b. אֶשְׁמְעוּ
   c. נִשְׁמֹעָ
   d. נִשְׁמַע
   e. None of the above.

12) Plural 2nd Person Feminine and 3rd Person Feminine:
   a. Are written the same.
   b. Are written the same, but sound different.
   c. Differ when they are *Ephal*.
   d. Differ when they are *Ephol*.

13) Which of the following roots conveys a meaning of "hearing"?
   a. נ פ ל
   b. א ב ד
   c. ז ר ק
   d. ש מ ע
   e. כ ת ב

14) Which of the following roots conveys a meaning of "throwing"?
   a. נ פ ל
   b. כ ת ב
   c. ג ר ק
   d. ש מ ע
   e. פ ע ל
15) Which of the following verb roots will you have difficulty with if you try to conjugate them into the Future Tense according to the methods presented in this chapter? (Check all that apply.)

- לָקַח
- נָרַח
- בְּרַח
- גְּלַח
- אֲמַח
- חֲלַח
- עֲבַר

16) Which of the following verb roots will you have difficulty with if you try to conjugate them into the Past Tense according to the methods presented in this chapter? (Check all that apply.)

- לָקַח
- נָרַח
- בְּרַח
- גְּלַח
- אֲמַח
- חֲלַח
- עֲבַר

The quizzes in these chapters were designed to be difficult. All the answers can be found in the chapter somewhere. Work hard now in this Binyan, and the rest of the Binyanim will be easier.

Ironically, the Qal Binyan (which means "easy") is not the "easiest" Binyan, because it has the most exceptions among all of the Binyanim.