

Lesson 9 – The Piel & Pual Stems

The Piel Stem

26.1 The Meaning of the Piel Stem. The Piel stem is used to express an _____ type of action with an _____ voice. In other words, the simple action of the Qal stem will take on some type of intensive nuance in the Piel stem. For example, the verb שָׁבַר means “he broke” in the Qal stem. The Piel form, however means, “he smashed” or “he shattered.”

26.3 The Piel Perfect Paradigm

3 rd Masculine Singular	
3 rd Feminine Singular	
2 nd Masculine Singular	
2 nd Feminine Singular	
1 st Common Singular	
3 rd Common Plural	
2 nd Masculine Plural	
2 nd Feminine Plural	
1 st Common Plural	

26.5 The Piel Imperfect Paradigm

3 rd Masculine Singular	
3 rd Feminine Singular	
2 nd Masculine Singular	
2 nd Feminine Singular	
1 st Common Singular	
3 rd Masculine Plural	
3 rd Feminine Plural	
2 nd Masculine Plural	
2 nd Feminine Plural	
1 st Common Plural	

Pual Stem

28.1 The Pual stem is the passive counterpart of the Piel stem. The Pual stem is used to express an intensive type of action with a passive voice.

26.3 The Pual Perfect Paradigm

3 rd Masculine Singular	
3 rd Feminine Singular	
2 nd Masculine Singular	
2 nd Feminine Singular	
1 st Common Singular	
3 rd Common Plural	
2 nd Masculine Plural	
2 nd Feminine Plural	
1 st Common Plural	

26.5 The Pual Imperfect Paradigm

3 rd Masculine Singular	
3 rd Feminine Singular	
2 nd Masculine Singular	
2 nd Feminine Singular	
1 st Common Singular	
3 rd Masculine Plural	
3 rd Feminine Plural	
2 nd Masculine Plural	
2 nd Feminine Plural	
1 st Common Plural	

Examples utilizing the Piel Stem:

Joshua 3.7

⁷ And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to **magnify** thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee.

7 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֶחַל גְּדַלְךָ בְּעֵינַי כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יֵדְעוּן כִּי כִּאֲשֶׁר הָיִיתִי עִם־מֹשֶׁה אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ:

Parsing

גְּדַל verb piel infinitive construct + pronominal suffix 2nd person masculine singular

Psalms 34.3

³ O **magnify** the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

4 גְּדַלְנוּ לַיהוָה אֶתִּי וְנִרְוַמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו:

Parsing

גְּדַל verb piel imperative masculine plural

Definition

0315.0 גָּדַל (gādāl) **grow up, become great or important, promote, make powerful, praise, (magnify), do great things.** (ASV and RSV Similar.)

(315a) גָּדַל (gādēl) **becoming great, growing up.**

(315b) גְּדֻלָּה (gōdel) **greatness.**

(315c) גְּדֻלִּים (gēdīlīm) **twisted threads.**

(315d) גָּדוֹל (gādōl) **great.**

(315e) גְּדֻלָּה (gēdūllā) **greatness.**

(315f) מִגְדָּל (migdāl) **tower.**

(315g) מִגְדֹּל (migdōl) **tower.**

The root is used for physical growth of people and other living things as well as for the increase of things tangible and intangible whether objects, sounds, feelings or authority. It overlaps in meaning with *rābab* and *rābā* but unlike these roots it never refers to being numerous, only to being great in size, importance etc. It is combined with the divine name to form personal names, the most frequent from being Gedaliah meaning "the Lord is great" (2Kings 25:22-25). In 1Sam

26:24 the word means to set a high value on one's life. In Job 2:13 it is used for expressing intense grief while in 1Kings 10:23 it refers to the importance (greatness) of a king. It often speaks of God's greatness (2Sam 7:22) and Messiah is described as one who "will be great unto the ends of the earth" (Mic 5:4 [H 3]).

The meaning "cause to grow" or "rear" children, plants etc. is limited to the Piel stem. In both Piel and Hiphil stems, however, it bears the meaning "to magnify" or "consider great." This is how the psalmists frequently use the word, calling on the worshiper to ascribe greatness to the Lord and to his name (Psa 35:27; Psa 40:16 [H 17]; Psa 70:4 [H 5]).

In Ezek 38:23 the verb is used reflexively to show how God magnifies himself by means of his acts in nature and in history, to show the nations that he is the Lord. But in Isa 10:15 the same form is employed to show how evil man attempts to magnify himself against the Lord and in Dan 11:36-37 this is precisely the word used to describe what the Antichrist will do at the end of the age as he seeks to show himself omnipotent.

Examples using the Pual Stem:

Hosea 13.16

¹⁶Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God: they shall fall by the sword: their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.

יִתְאַשֵׁם שְׁמֵרוֹן כִּי מָרְתָה בְּאַלְהֵיהָ בַחֲרֵב יִפְּלוּ עַל־לֵיהֶם יִרְטָשׁוּ
וְהָרִיזוּתִיו יִבְקָעוּ:

Parsing

רטש verb pual imperfect 3rd person masculine plural

בקע verb pual imperfect 3rd person masculine plural

Definition – רטש

This unusual word appears only in the Piel and Pual stems. There are two occurrences of the Piel form, 2Kings 8:12, "Dash in pieces their children, " and Isa 13:18, where KJV, "Shall dash their young men to pieces" is to be much preferred to RSV, "Will destroy their young men." There are four usages of the Pual stem: Isa 13:16 "Their babies also shall be dashed"; Hos 10:14 "Mothers were dashed in pieces"; Hos 13:16 [H 14:1], "Babies shall be dashed in pieces"; and Nah 3:10, "Young people will be dashed." The gruesome atrocity described by this root was common to ancient warfare. it was a punishment predicted by God for pagan nations and those who rejected the moral law and embraced pagan practices. The details of the action are not given in most of the texts, but in Isa 13:18 the instrument is said to be the bow. Apparently the word can mean just "slaughter" (Isa 13:18, RSV, NIV "strike down"). W.W.

Definition – בקע

0271.0 בקע (bāqa‘) **to cleave, divide, break through, break up, rip up, tear.**
(ASV and RSV similar.)

(271a) בעקע (beqa‘) **half shekel.**

(271b) בקעה (biq‘â) **valley, plain.**

(271c) בקיע (b^eqîa‘), בקיע (bāqîa‘) **fissure, breach.**

This root with its derivatives appears seventy-three times in the OT. Cognates are found in Ugaritic (bq’), Arabic (faqa‘a) and Ethiopic. The basic idea seems to be "a strenuous cleaving of recalcitrant materials" (Greenfeld, HUCA). As a result of the cleaving, the contents may "burst forth" (cf. Isa 58:8; etc.), but it is clear that this meaning is secondary and not primary as with such roots as פצח (pāṣaḥ), or פרח (pāraṣ).

bāqa‘ is used in five situations, all of which express the forcefulness of the splitting action. Of these, only the first sees the splitting action as coming from within, as in the hatching of eggs (Isa 34:15; Isa 59:5), the splitting of wineskins (Josh 9:4, 13), the dawn rending the heavens (Isa 58:8; cf. Mesha Insc. 1.15), etc.

The second usage expresses the splitting actions encountered in daily life as the splitting of wood (Gen 22:3; 1Sam 6:14) or of stones (Psa 141:7).

Thirdly, the word is used with reference to the splitting of the earth. In all cases but 1Kings 1:40, where the splitting is attributed to the noise of jubilation over Solomon's coronation, this is the work of the Lord (Num 16:31 etc.). Two references here are of special importance, for they indicate that the earth will be split upon the return of the Lord (Micah 1:4; Zech 14:4). The creation will not be able to stand when the Creator returns in his glory.

Fourth, bāqa‘ is associated with warfare and violence. It is used several times to express the action of troops in breaking into a city, camp or territory (2Kings 25:4; 2Chr 21:17; Ezek 30:16). The results of such a conquest were often horrifying. Captives and young children were frequently thrown from high places so that they were "split open" (KJV "dashed to pieces") on the rocks below (2Kings 8:12; 2Chr 25:12). Pregnant women were all too commonly "ripped up" (2Kings 15:16; Amos 1:13; etc.).

The final usage is associated with water production and behind that lies creation. These creative activities were directly paralleled by God's redemptive actions on behalf of Israel. The One who first cleaved open brooks and springs (Psa 74:15) was able to do it again in the wilderness of Sinai (Psa 78:13; Isa 48:21). The One by whose knowledge the great deeps were first split up (Prov 3:20) (and again in Noah's day (Gen 7:11) could once again exercise his mastery over the waters by dividing the waters of the Red Sea for his people (Exo 14:16; Isa 63:12; etc.). In the Akkadian creation epic, Marduk is said to have split the body of Tiamat, the Great Deep, as the basis for creation. Whether some relation exists between the biblical and Akkadian material is difficult to ascertain (cf. Psa 74:12-17; Isa 51:9-11). In any case God's creation was pictured as *ex nihilo* and not as the result of some warfare of the gods. However, the burden of these passages is not simply that God is possessed of such terrible power as to split rocks and waters, etc., but that the possessor of such power is able to redeem a lost creation. Of this the Akkadian knows nothing. See the discussion under t^hôm, no. 2495a.

beqa'. Half-shekel. A "cloven" shekel. Appears only in Gen 24:22 and Exo 38:26. It is also to be understood in the weight of Solomon's gold shields (2Chr 9:16) which according to 2Kings 10:17 weighed three minas each (150 shekels, 300 beqas).

biq'â. Valley, plain. Originally a cleft in the mountains. Thus the plain of Megiddo (Zech 12:11) is that valley which lies between the Carmel range on the south and the highlands of Galilee on the north near the pass of Megiddo through the Carmel range. As such the word is to be distinguished from 'ēmeq which means simply "low place." Of the twenty occurrences, eleven are used to designate places (as above). The remainder are often paralleled with "mountains," by which contrast, the entirety of the land is indicated (cf. Isa 40:4). J.N.O.