

**QAL** is the “simple” stem; it makes up more than 60% of all verbs in the Hebrew Bible.

There are 6 derived stems:

- |                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| 1. <b>Niphal</b> | 4. Hiphil   |
| 2. Piel          | 5. Hophal   |
| 3. Pual          | 6. Hithpael |

A note on the names of the derived stems:

- each of these names is based on the 3ms perfect form of **פעל**. **נִפְעַל** = niphal; **פָּעַל** = piel; etc.)

### **NIPHAL** (נִפְעַל)

There are 5 major meanings/functions of the niphal verb:

- |                                  |           |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. passive verb for the qal stem | 4. middle |
| 2. reciprocal or reflexive       | 5. active |
| 3. resultative                   |           |

1) What is a passive verb?

- In biblical Hebrew, a passive verb typically does not express the “agent” (the entity doing the act) of the action.
  - active: **וַיִּכְתֹּב הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה** The priest wrote the words of Yahweh. (agent = the priest)
  - passive: **וַיִּכְתְּבוּ דְבָרֵי יְהוָה** The words of Yahweh were written. (agent = not present)
- There is almost never a specified agent with a niphal verb. (You would not see “The words of Yahweh were written *by the priest*.”)

2) What is a reflexive/reciprocal verb?

- A reflexive verb is the subject is doing an action to itself; a reciprocal verb is an action is done on two or more subjects, most often the action is being done to each other.
  - reflexive: **נִשְׁמַר** He guarded himself.
  - reciprocal: **נִשְׁפָּטוּ** They entered into litigation with one another.

3) What is a resultative verb?

- A resultative verb is basically stative in meaning; it describes the state of the subject.
  - passive: **נִפְתַּח הַשַּׁעַר** The gate was opened
  - resultative: **נִפְתַּח הַשַּׁעַר** The gate is open

4) What is a middle verb?

- A middle verb is a verb in which the object of the active verb becomes the subject.
  - active: **פָּתַח אֶת־הַשַּׁעַר** He opened the gate.
  - middle: **נִפְתַּח הַשַּׁעַר** The gate opened.

5) What is an active niphal verb?

- Some niphal verbs have no (or nearly no) corresponding qal verb; these are translated actively.
  - The active translation for a niphal verb is limited to specific roots. active: **נִלָּחַם** He fought.