Daniel
Christopher K. Lensch, S.T.M.
Western Reformed Seminary (www.wrs.edu)

# Aramaic Language and Grammar

Biblical Hebrew (BH) and Biblical Aramaic (BA) share many words in common, and more with slight differences in vocalization (vowel pointing) or in single letters.

| Hebrew Letter | Often Replaced in Aramaic by | Word Example |
|---|---|---|
| ז | דּ | דְּהַב |
| שׁ | ת | תּוּב |

While there are many common roots, plurals and constructs in BA look very different from BH. An emphatic form can represent the vocative ("O, King") or definiteness ("the king").

| Gender | Singular | Plural | Sing. Construct | Plural Construct |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Masc. | מֶלֶךְ | מַלְכִין | מֶלֶךְ | מַלְכֵי |
| Fem. | חֵיוָה | חֵיוָן | חֵיוַת | חֵיוָת |

| Singular Emphatic | Plural Emphatic |
|---|---|
| מַלְכָּא | מַלְכַיָּא |
| חֵיוְתָא | חֵיוָתָא |

The word דִּי is used frequently. It stands in the place of אֲשֶׁר and serves as a relative pronoun (who, that, which), a conjunction (so that, because…), and the sign of the genitive (of, from). The key demonstrative pronouns are

| | Masc. Singular | Fem. Singular | Common Pl. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Proximate: this | דְּנָה | דָּא | אֵלֶּין אֵלֶּה |
| Remote: that | דֵּךְ | דָּךְ | אִלֵּךְ |

VERBS
        The Perfect and Imperfect tenses are found as expected.
        However, the derived stems that indicate voice and intensity, while still named after forms of the verb פָּעַל, have different names because the stems are pointed differently than BH, and may have different prefixes.
        BA has no parallel forms to the BH Niphal or Pual.
        Statives will have variant vowel pointings as in BH.

| Stem Use | BH Perfects | BA Perfects | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Simple Active | Qal | Pe-al | קְטַל | |
| Simple Passive | Niphal | Pe-il | קְטִיל | |
| Simple Reflexive | Hithpiel | Hithpe-el | הִתְקְטֵל | |
| Intensive | Piel | Pa-el | קַטֵּל | |
| Causative | Hiphil | Haphel | הַקְטֵל | Shaphel שַׁקְטֵל Aphel |
| Causative Passive | Hophal | Hophal | הָקְטַל | |

| Causative Reflexive | X | Hishtaphal | הִשְׁתַּקְטַל |

The simple (Pe-al) imperfect and imperative forms have a qibbuts in the second position of the root: כְּתֻב / יִכְתֻּב