Learning Hebrew: Qal Infinitive Absolute

QAL INFINITIVE ABSOLUTE
The Infinitive Absolute is a verbal noun which means it has features in common with both verbs and nouns. There is no precise English equivalent to the Infinitive Absolute.

Since the Infinitive Absolute is not inflected for person, gender, or number, there is only one basic form. The vowel pattern for the Qal Infinitive Construct is consistent for all strong verbs and most weak verbs. The weak verb forms follow the strong verb pattern.

USE OF THE QAL INIFNITIVE ABSOLUTE
The Infinitive Absolute may be used in conjunction with other verbs to emphasize or intensify the verbal meaning. Secondly, it may also be used in the place of an Imperative to express a command. Third, it may be used with other verbs to express two verbal actions that occur at the same time.

There are four common uses for the Infinitive Absolute.
1. Emphatic – The Infinitive Absolute will immediately precede (or rarely follow) a Perfect or Imperfect verbal form of the same root in order to emphasize the verbal meaning.

<div align="center">אָמוֹר אָמַרְתִּי (I have surely said)</div>

2. Imperative – The Infinitive Absolute can stand alone and function as an Imperative.

<div align="center">זָכוֹר אֶת־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה (Remember this day)</div>

3. Contemporaneous Action – Two Infinitive Absolutes may appear together with a Perfect or Imperfect verb in order to express two verbal actions occurring at the same time.

<div align="center">וַיֵּלֶךְ הָלוֹךְ וְאָכֹל (and he walked, eating as he went)</div>

4. Complementary – An Infinitive Absolute may complement the main verb of the sentence and carry the temporal value of that main verb.

<div align="center">נָתוֹן אֹתוֹ עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם (He set him over all the land of Egypt)</div>

Sources: *The First Hebrew Primer, Third Edition* by Simon, Resnikoff, and Motzkin *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar* by Pratico and Van Pelt