HOW TO DETERMINE A VERB STEM
IN BIBLICAL HEBREW

EACH CONSONANT OF A ROOT / STEM / VOCABLE IS CALLED A RADICAL.

THE RADICALS HAVE NAMES BASED UPON THE WORD פעל "TO MAKE."

פ IS THE POSITION OF THE FIRST RADICAL (THE ONE ON THE RIGHT)
ע IS THE POSITION OF THE SECOND (USUALLY IN THE MIDDLE)
ל IS THE POSITION OF THE THIRD RADICAL (THE ONE ON THE LEFT)

GRAMMARIANS USE THE FOLLOWING DESIGNATIONS:
פ"ן פ"יי פ"יו פ"א ל"יה ל"יא ע"יי ע"יו ע"ע

1. **Remove all prefixes and suffixes**

    תת : the root is נתן "to give" (Nathan = he gave)

2. **If the remaining radicals are:**   לך : prefix a ה for הלך "to walk"

    קח : prefix a ל for לקח "to take"

3. **If one radical remains prefix a נ or י and affix a ה or ן**

4. **If two radicals remain, and**

    A. **if the first radical has a dagesh**
        1. prefix נ or י (for a פ"ן or a פ"יי verb)
        2. double the second radical (for an ע"ע verb)

    B. **if the second has a dagesh (and it is a non-begadkept letter) double it**

    C. **if neither radical has a dagesh**
        1. insert ו or י between the radicals (for a ע"ו or ע"יי "hollow" verb)
        2. prefix ו or י (for a פ"יי verb) OR prefix a נ (for a פ"ן verb)
        3. add a final ה (for a ל"ה verb)
        4. double the second radical (for an ע"ע verb)

    D. **if a ו preceeds the first radical, change it to a י (for a פ"יי verb)**

    E. **if the second radical is a ו or י change it to a ה (for a ל"ה verb)**
        AND go back to 4. A.