

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא⁽¹⁾

אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם⁽²⁾

וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יָצַח וְהָאָרֶץ הִיטָה תְּהוֹ וּבָהוּ וְחִשָּׁד⁽³⁾

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New Letters:

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This is the letter **TZADEE SOFIT**:  (צָדִי סוֹפִית)

IT'S a letter that **siTS** above and below the line. It's a guy who is waiting to catch the **piZZa** he spun in the air.

It is a shape only found at the end of a word.

It sounds like **TS** or **TZ**.

It appears twice here: 

Notice that after the first TSADEE SOFIT there are two diamonds, one above the other. That symbol combined with the vertical line in the middle of the word is essentially a period (the end of a sentence) marker type of trope mark.

In order to practice a letter that only comes at the end of a word, an א (silent ALEPH) will be at the beginning of each word with each of the vowels.

Practice reading the letter TZADEE SOFIT with all the vowels (notice that the largest letters are those from Genesis 1:1-2):

 /Final \Tzadee

Practice reading these Hebrew words:

the land  land  he ran 

This is the letter **VET**: **ב** (בֵּית)

It has a **bar** on the **bottom**, and a **base** that goes **beyond**, just like the letter **ב**, but it has a **Vacuum** or a **Void** in the **Very** middle. It represents the number 2 (just like **ב**). It sounds like **V**.

It appears in the fourth word of 1:2: וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וְהָאָרֶץ הִיְתָה תְּהוֹ וְבָהּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ (3)

The **ב** (VET) is actually a **ב** (BET) that comes at the end of a syllable or after a long vowel.

Note that the two dots directly above the letter are a trope mark. Since it goes “up and down” and is not facing in front or behind, it means a small pause in reading (or the end of the grouping that came before).

The vowel is a holam without a VAV (it looks like a dot about to go **O**ver the letter from the top left).

Practice reading the letter VET with all the vowels (notice that the largest letters are those from Genesis 1:1):

בּ בֶּ בּוּ בָּ **בוּ** בִּ בֵּ בִּי בֵּ בֵּ בֵּ בֵּ <Vet

Practice reading these Hebrew words:

and on that day **וּבַיּוֹם** he brought **הֵבִיא** he will come **יָבֵא**

This is the letter **HET**: ח (חית)

I call this letter “none of the above” because it does not have a tail/toe like ת and it does not have a hole or hang like ה and it doesn’t sound like any letter in English. It represents the number 8. It sounds like **H**. This is kind of like a “wet h” like when you fog up glasses or a mirror. It is a guttural letter.

It first appears in Genesis 1:2: וַאֲתַתְּ הָאָרֶץ: וְהָאָרֶץ הִיְתְּהָ תֵהוֹ וְבָהוּ וְחִשְׁדָּ (3)

There is a trope mark under the **HET** that seems to point backwards, which indicates a brief pause.

The vowel is a **Holam** without a **VAV**. The vowel dot is also the dot for the letter **SHIN** (I call it a “double duty dot”).

At the end of a word, if there is a **PATAH** under the **HET**, the **PATAH** is pronounced before the **HET**, so לוֹחַ is pronounced “loo-ah.”

Practice reading the letter **HET** with all the vowels (notice that the largest letters are those from Genesis 1:2.):

חַ חֶ חֵ חִ חוּ חָ חוּ חִ חֵ חֶ חָ חֵ חָ חַ <Het

Practice reading these Hebrew words:

Messiah מְשִׁיחַ friends חֲבֵרִים dream חֲלוֹם

This is the letter **KHAPH SOFIT**: **ך** (כֶּף סוֹפִית)

It goes below the line. This shape is only found at the end of a word.

It looks a little like someone bending over to be sick (KH...)

It sounds like **KH** (like you are clearing your throat, preparing to spit).

It first appears in Genesis 1:2: **וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: וְהָאָרֶץ בְּרִחָא וְהָאָרֶץ חִתָּה וְהָאָרֶץ וְרִחָא וְהָאָרֶץ (3)**

It is the only final letter that always has a vowel mark in it. It will either have a Resting SH'VA or a QAMATZ in it.

Practice reading the consonant **KHAPH SOFIT** with all the vowels (notice that the largest letters are those from Genesis 1:1):

אָךְ אִיךְ אֵךְ אֹךְ אֶךְ אֵיךְ אֵךְ אֵךְ אֵךְ אֵךְ /Final \KHaph

Practice reading these Hebrew words:

your (fem. sing.) peace **שְׁלוֹמֶךָ**

your (masc. sing.) peace **שְׁלוֹמְךָ**

blessed / praised **בְּרוּךְ**

Our text so far: We have not yet finished learning enough letters to read the first two sentences. However, we can read all these words:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: ַּבּ וְהָאָרֶץ הִיְתָה תְהוֹ וְבָהוּ וְחָשָׁךְ

Notice that **אֶת** the definite direct object marker (DDOM) precedes each of the objects of the verb, and has a conjunctive VAV prefixed to it. This shows that God created the skies / heavens and God created the earth.

Notice that the last word of the first sentence and the first word of the second sentence are identical. This is another example of what we called a repetitive parallel in these first few words, that are markers of poetry. In Genesis 1:2 there is a repetition of the sound of the HEH in each of the four first words, and close to a HEH in the fifth word, with a HET instead. Then the second and third words share both HEH and TAV sounds. The third and fourth words share open-mouthed O - U patterns. The fourth word has a kind of repetition in itself of the V sound (although they were not originally the same sound -- the VAV is pronounced with the lips shaped as to pronounce a letter W, but blowing sound through the lips so that a V sound comes out instead of a W sound).

Notice the vowel under the conjunctive VAV in the fourth word. The typical spelling would be for a SH'VA to be under the VAV. Whenever there are commonly paired words, like in this case: “void and unformed” the SH'VA switches to the easier to pronounce “QAMATZ.”

The word for “darkness” sounds airy and yet choking at the same time. A bit like contemplating the vastness and darkness of outer space.