

HELPFUL HINTS FOR UNDERSTANDING HEBREW

HEBREW HAS 22 LETTERS THAT WERE ORIGINALLY DRAWN AS PICTOGRAPHS.

The oldest Biblical writings show that [Hebrew](#) was originally a language where letters were pictures, similar to Egyptian hieroglyphs. These pictographs are a useful tool in studying the word of God as their pictures give additional understanding. See the *Hebrew Pictographs Chart* on our website for more information.

HEBREW IS WRITTEN RIGHT TO LEFT.

This is something different for most because it is the opposite of English and Spanish. Always remember when you are studying a word or verse to start at the right and progress to the left.

5 HEBREW LETTERS HAVE “SOFITS,” A SPECIAL END FORM.

Five letters have a normal way they are written if at the beginning of a word or the middle of a word but they are written a different way when they are at the end of a word as the final letter. This is called a sofit. Just as in English one letter can be written different ways (ex. l vs. i), the normal letter and the final (sofit) letter are the same Hebrew letter, just written differently based on the placement in the word.

HEBREW LETTER	NORMAL LETTER (BEGINNING OR MIDDLE OF A WORD)	NORMAL EXAMPLE	SOFIT - FINAL LETTER (AT THE END OF A WORD)	SOFIT-FINAL EXAMPLE
Kaph	כ	Kol כל All H3605	ך	Darak דרך Way H1869
Mem	מ	Amar אמר Said H559	ם	'Em אמם Mother H517
Nun	נ	Naba' נבא' Prophecy H5012	ן	Chen חן Grace H2580
Pey	פ	Palal פלל Pray H6419	ף	'Aph אף Anger H639
Tzaddi	צ	Tsad צד Side H6654	ץ	Ya'ats יעץ Counsel H3289

MANY WORDS HAVE A SMALLER ROOT WORD WITHIN THEM.

Root words are shorter words within a longer word that help us understand the word's meaning. As we study, root words will often be important and you'll begin to notice them in new words.

For example, the Hebrew word for word is [Dabar](#) (Strong's H1697 דָּבָר) but the last two letters spell the Hebrew word Bar (בַּר – Strong's H1248), which means Son. This root helps us to understand that God's Word is the door (Daleth ד) to the Son (Bar בַּר), as the Bible allows us get to know Jesus Christ (John 5:39; Luke 24:27, 44; Heb. 10:7). See the Hebrew Root Word resource for further examples.

SOME LETTERS ARE WRITTEN SIMILARLY & COMMONLY CONFUSED.

Study this chart, review your letters, and use memory devices to help you correctly identify the letters.

KAPH כ	HEY ה	VAU ו
BETH ב	CHET ח	ZA YIN ז
BETH ב	HEY ה	VAU ו
PEY פ	TAU ת	NUN SOFIT ן
GIMEL ג	CHET ח	MEM SOFIT ם
NUN נ	TAU ת	SAMEK ס
DALETH ד	KAPH כ	AYIN ע
RESH ר	PEY פ	TZADDAI צ