



**RESOURCE**

Parashah: B'reisheet = In the Beginning  
Genesis 1:1-6:8; Isaiah 42:5-43:28; John 1:1-18

**TITLE: HEBREW ALEPHBET**

**WHAT IS THIS?**



"Bet" is the second letter of the Hebrew alephbet (the first is "aleph"). It is introduced in this parashah because it is the first letter of the first word in the entire Bible. It is the first letter of the word "B'reisheet" which means "in the beginning." We say "Genesis." "Bet" is also the first letter of the word in Hebrew that means "house." In Hebrew, letters mean things and the definition of each word includes the meanings of all the letters it is made up of.

The Hebrew word for "house" is **בֵּית** (pronounced "by-eet"). Reading from right to left, that word is spelled "bet," "yod," "tav." Using the primary meaning of each of those letters, the meaning would be some arrangement of the meanings of "house," "hand," "sign." More depth can be discerned by using the additional meanings of those letters as well.

In the alephbet list below notice that at least two forms of every letter are given. The first is how the letter looks when printed in books. The second is a simpler block form that you can learn to print quite easily. If there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> book and block form of a letter, the presence or absence of a dot changes its pronunciation. In the case of the "shin/sin" the dot is moved. Five letters change form when used at the end of a word. Notice that the final form of "mem" is closed and it is the same size as the regular letter. All the other final forms are longer and extend below the line that other letters sit upon.

English Name & Pronunciation	Hebrew Letter: Book & Block & Final Forms	English Name & Pronunciation	Hebrew Letter: Book & Block & Final Forms
Aleph (silent)	א    א	Bet (B in boy) & (V in very)	ב    ב ב    ב
Gimmel (G in girl)	ג    ג	Dalet (D in door)	ד    ד
Hey (H in hoop)	ה    ה	Vav (V in very)	ו    ו
Zayin (Z in zebra)	ז    ז	Chet (CH in Bach)	ח    ח
Tet (T in tulip)	ט    ט	Yod (Y in yes)	י    י
Kaf (K in kitty) & (CH in Bach)	כ    כ    כף	Lamed (L in leap)	ל    ל
Mem (M in mom)	מ    מ    מם	Nun (N in noon)	נ    נ    נן
Samech (S in sun)	ס    ס	Ayin (silent)	ע    ע
Pey (P in park) & (F in food)	פ    פ    פף	Tsade (TS as in nuts)	צ    צ    צץ
Kof (K in kitty)	ק    ק	Resh (R in room)	ר    ר
Shin (SH in she) Or Sin (S in sun)	ש    ש	Tav (T in tall)	ת    ת