

WHAT LITERATURE IS IN THE BIBLE?

As with most Biblical questions, the answer depends upon one's religious background. Some of the major variations are outlined in the chart below.¹

Jewish Tradition ²	Christian Tradition			
	Protestant ³	Roman Catholic ⁴	Eastern Orthodox ⁵	Ethiopian Orthodox ⁶
Tanakh	Old Testament			
Torah, the Law	(Christianity has no standard groupings of Old Testament writings of the type that exists in Judaism. Different editions use different group labelings, if they use any.)			
Genesis	Genesis			
Exodus	Exodus			
Leviticus	Leviticus			
Numbers	Numbers			
Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy			
				Enoch
				Jubilees
Nevi'im, the Prophets⁷				
Joshua	Joshua			
Judges	Judges			
	Ruth			
I Samuel	I Samuel		I Kingdoms (Greek)	I Samuel
II Samuel	II Samuel		II Kingdoms (Greek)	II Samuel
I King	I Kings		III Kingdoms (Greek)	I Kings
II Kings	II Kings		IV Kingdoms (Greek)	II Kings
	I Chronicles		I Paralipomenon (Greek)	I Chronicles
	II Chronicles		II Paralipomenon (Greek)	II Chronicles
			I Esdras	I Esdras
			II Esdras (Russian Orthodox only)	Ezra Apocalypse
	Ezra			
	Nehemiah			
			Judith	
			Tobit	
	Esther		Esther (with Greek additions)	
			I Maccabees	
			II Maccabees	
			III Maccabees	
				I Maqabeyan
				II-III Maqabeyan ⁸
				Pseudo Josephus ⁹
	Job			
	Psalms		Psalms (including 151)	
			Prayer of Mannaseh (Greek Orthodox only)	Prayer of Mannaseh (included in II Chronicles)
	Proverbs			Split into two books ¹⁰
	Ecclesiastes			
	Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon)			
			Wisdom of Solomon	
			Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)	
Isaiah	Isaiah			
Jeremiah	Jeremiah			
	Lamentations			Included in Jeremiah
			Baruch (including Letter of Jeremiah)	Included in Jeremiah
Ezekiel	Ezekiel			
	Daniel	Daniel (with Greek editions)		
Hosea	Hosea			
Joel	Joel			
Amos	Amos			
Obadiah	Obadiah			
Jonah	Jonah			
Micah	Micah			
Nahum	Nahum			
Habakkuk	Habakkuk			
Zephaniah	Zephaniah			

Jewish Tradition ²	Christian Tradition			
	Protestant ³	Roman Catholic ⁴	Eastern Orthodox ⁵	Ethiopian Orthodox ⁶
Haggai			Haggai	
Zechariah			Zechariah	
Malachi			Malachi	
Kethuvim, the Writings				
Psalms				
Proverbs				
Job				
The Song of Songs				
Ruth				
Lamentations				
Ecclesiastes				
Esther				
Daniel				
Ezra				
Nehemiah				
I Chronicles				
II Chronicles				
	New Testament			
	Gospels (New Testament divisions are not completely standardized; the ones used here are the most common, based on my observation of a variety of biblical texts.)			
			Matthew	
			Mark	
			Luke	
			John	
			Acts (sometimes grouped with the Gospels, as the second volume of Luke, or with one of the epistle groups)	
			Pauline Epistles	
			Romans	
			I Corinthians	
			II Corinthians	
			Galatians	
			Ephesians	
			Philippians	
			Colossians	
			I Thessalonians	
			II Thessalonians	
			I Timothy	
			II Timothy	
			Titus	
			Philemon	
			General (Catholic) Epistles	
			Hebrews (sometimes grouped with the Pauline Epistles)	
			James	
			I Peter	
			II Peter ¹¹	
			I John	
			II John	
			III John	
			Jude	
			Revelation (often grouped by itself, as the only NT apocalypse, but sometimes grouped with the general epistles)	
				Sinodos ¹²
				The Book of the Covenant
				Clement (Qalementos) ¹³
				Ethiopian Didascalia

¹ Blank spaces indicate that the religious group accepts a particular book as part of its Bible but does not place it in the same order as one or more of the other groups. Checkerboard spaces indicate that the religious group does not accept the book listed on that line as part of its Bible. Different names on the same line indicate that different groups use the same book under a different name (based on variations in English translations prepared for those groups). Old Testament writings for which the Jewish sequence is different from the most common Christian sequences have been listed twice.

²² The sequence of information for the books of the Tanakh is taken from the Jewish Publication society edition.

³ The sequence for the Protestant Old Testament is taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

⁴ The sequence for the Catholic Old Testament is taken from the New American version.

⁵ Eastern Orthodox churches do not agree on the same Old Testament sequence. To avoid excessive complication of the chart, the Eastern Orthodox Old Testament is presented using the Catholic order. The same procedure is followed for the Ethiopian Old Testament, for which different authorities give different sequences.

⁶ The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is not a particularly large Christian group, but it is included to illustrate how varied the biblical traditions of eastern Christians can be. Most of these groups follow the Eastern Orthodox tradition of an expanded Old Testament but often include even more works, a tendency the Ethiopians illustrate. (Cowley)

⁷ Jewish practice divides the prophets into two groups, Former (Joshua through Kings) and Latter. Latter Prophets are further divided into Major (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) and Minor (the 12 remaining, presented as one book until the most recent translations. In Jewish practice Samuel, Kings and Chronicles were not divided into 2 separate books until after the Middle Ages.

⁸ Maqabeyan is Amharic for Maccabees, but the books so named are not the same as any of the Maccabean literature included in Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Old Testaments.

⁹ Included in the Broader Canon, but not in the Narrower Canon promulgated by Haile Selassie, the last Ethiopian emperor. (Cowley)

¹⁰ Messale (Proverbs 1-24) and Tagsas (Proverbs 25-31). The other books related to Solomon (Wisdom, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes) are sometimes grouped together as the five books of Solomon. (Cowley)

¹¹ Nestorian Christians follow the ancient Peshitta Syrian version of the New Testament, which does not include II Peter, II John, III John, Jude, and Revelation. (Lieuwen)

¹² This and the works that follow it are part of the Broader Canon Ethiopian tradition, but not in the Narrower Canon, which accepts only the 27 generally accepted New Testament books. (Cowley)

¹³ This book is not identical to any of the Western Clementine literature.

Works Cited and Consulted

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