

# BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

(also called Hebrew Scriptures)



**The Vulgate**  
c. 382 CE  
a Latin translation of the Old and New Testaments  
This is the key Latin text of the Catholic Church, revised over time; key versions were adopted in 1592 and in 1972.

**LXX The Septuagint**  
c. 208-130 BCE  
a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures  
The Septuagint was widely used by the Greek-speaking Jewish community and the early church.

The text of the Hebrew Scriptures developed over centuries, reflecting both oral and written traditions. But what happened when most of the people couldn't speak Hebrew anymore? Different traditions developed around key translations. Each translation had a slightly different collection of books and order.

**Masoretic**  
c. 7th-10th centuries CE  
a Hebrew text  
The Masoretic text builds off the oldest written texts and copied both the words and the pronunciation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Known for their accuracy in transcribing, these rabbis established a text tradition that we still use today.

**Targum**  
c. 1 BCE  
an Aramaic text  
The Jewish community spoke Aramaic rather than Hebrew. Targums were Aramaic translations but were never seen as authoritative.

**Dead Sea Scrolls**  
c. 150 BCE-75 CE  
a Hebrew text  
Found 1946-1956, these Hebrew texts were preserved by the Essene community living in the desert around the first century. The texts can be compared to surviving Hebrew and Greek texts and help us better understand how the words of the Hebrew Scriptures compare over time.

## The Canon

Each faith community has decided what constitutes their canon, the official list of books included in their Bible. Church leaders have worked on identifying which books of the Bible are included since the second century. Although the books of the New Testament were more controversial at the beginning, there is more variation in the books included in the Old Testament.



Oldest copies of the Old Testament include...



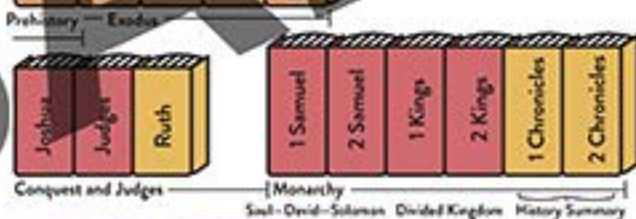
A codex is an ancient manuscript text in book form.

The order of books in our contemporary Bible follows the order of the Septuagint, which placed the books in chronological order based on events described.

## Torah or Pentateuch "The Law"



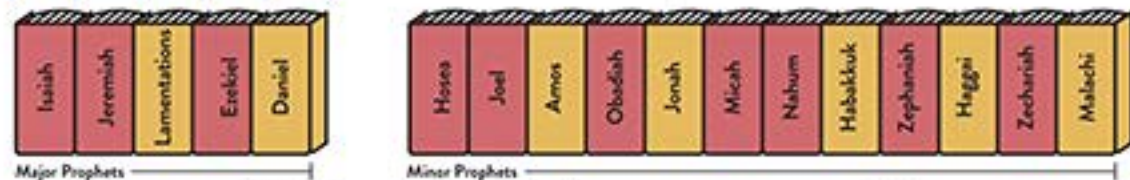
## Histories



## Wisdom Literature



## Prophets



● Torah ● Nevi'im ● Ketuvim

In the Jewish tradition, the books are divided into three major sections: the Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), Ketuvim (Writings). These divisions also represent an interpretive hierarchy with the Torah as most authoritative followed by the Nevi'im and Ketuvim.



## What about the Apocrypha?

"(these books) are useful and good to read"  
—Martin Luther

The Apocrypha is also called the Deuterocanonical (Second Canon) by the Catholic and Orthodox communities. These books are included in their canons, though not holding the same authority as the other books of the Bible. These books were originally included in the Greek Septuagint but were not included in the Jewish tradition. They are still seen as informative but not authoritative.

