

# Bible 101

## Words for the Bible

### Bible



Bible comes from the Greek word *τὰ βιβλία*, *tà biblía*, meaning "the books." The Christian Bible is a collection of between 66 (for Protestants) and 76 (for most Orthodox) books written in three languages over hundreds of years.

### Scripture



Scripture comes from the Latin word *scriptura* meaning "writings" or "things written." Often identified as sacred or holy scripture (*sacra scriptura*), scripture refers to a religion's sacred writings, which is the Bible for Christians.

### Canon



Canon comes from the Greek *κανών*, *kanón*, meaning "measuring rod" (related to the word for cane or reed used for measuring). Applied to the Bible, it is a standard or measure for evaluating Christian belief and practice.

## Biblical Canons

*Note: The Episcopal Church's canon falls between the Protestant and Catholic ones, and its lectionary has selections from Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch, Tobit, and 1 Maccabees.*

### Tanakh (Jewish Bible)

24 Books



Tanakh is an acronym for its three subdivisions: the Law (Torah), Prophets (Nevi'im), and writings (Ketuvim). The Protestant Old Testament includes all the content of the Tanakh but orders the books differently and divides some of the books into multiple works.

### Protestant Canon

66 Books



Comprised of 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament.

### Catholic Canon

73 Books



One of the earliest Christian canons. Includes the Protestant Canon plus Tobit, Judith, 1 & 2 Maccabees, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, and additions to the books of Esther and Daniel.

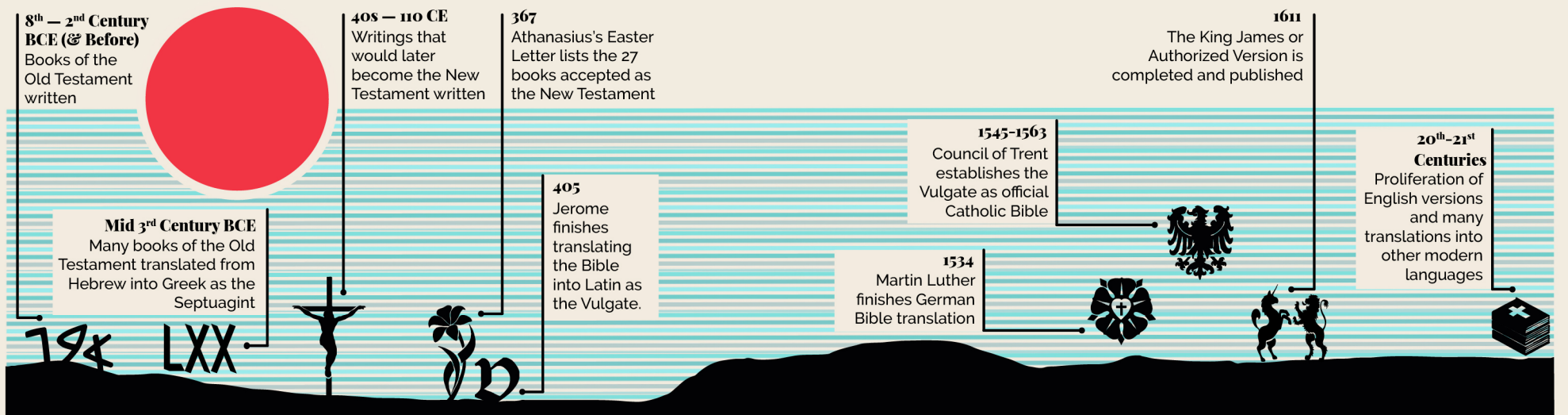
### Orthodox Canon

76+ Books



Catholic Canon plus 1 Esdras, the Prayer of Manasseh, 3 Maccabees, a 151<sup>st</sup> Psalm, and 4 Maccabees (as an appendix). The largest canon is from the Ethiopian Tewahedo Church and includes 1 Enoch, 4 Baruch, 3 Ethiopian books of Maccabees, and Jubilees.

## Timeline of the Bible



## Biblical Authority

There are a number of different approaches to how and why the Bible is authoritative for Christians. Some consider it inerrant, meaning it contains no errors. Some people go so far as to see the Bible as dictated by God without any errors regarding religion, science, or history. Others go the other direction and see the Bible as a collection of books written by fallible humans trying their best to respond to and interpret God's activity in the world. All Christians agree that the Bible is inspired by God, meaning God was especially involved somehow in its creation. Episcopalians generally view the Bible as a collection of books in different genres written by many people guided by God. The Bible records both how God interacted with people in history and how people responded to God (both in good and bad ways). It records God's interaction with humanity throughout history, culminating in God's definitive self-revelation in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## Biblical Genres

### Gospels



Matthew  
Mark  
Luke  
John

### Law



Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy

### Wisdom & Poetry



Job  
Psalms  
Proverbs  
Ecclesiastes  
Song of Solomon  
(Wisdom of Solomon)  
(Ecclesiasticus [Sirach])

### History



Joshua  
Judges  
Ruth  
1 & 2 Samuel  
1 & 2 Kings  
1 & 2 Chronicles  
Ezra  
Nehemiah  
(Tobit)  
(Judith)  
Esther  
(1 & 2 Maccabees)  
Acts

### Prophecy



Isaiah  
Jeremiah  
Ezekiel  
Daniel\*  
Hosea  
Joel  
Amos  
Obadiah  
Jonah  
Micah  
Nahum  
Habakkuk  
Zephaniah  
Haggai  
Zechariah  
Malachi  
Revelation\*

### Letters



Romans  
1 & 2 Corinthians  
Galatians  
Ephesians  
Philippians  
Colossians  
1 & 2 Thessalonians  
1 & 2 Timothy  
Titus  
Philemon  
Hebrews  
James  
1 & 2 Peter  
1, 2, & 3 John  
Jude

\*may more properly be considered Apocalypse or Apocalyptic  
(Books in parentheses are Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical)

## Biblical Languages

### Original Languages

The Bible was written in three primary languages: Hebrew, the language of the people of ancient Israel; Aramaic, a language that became the common language of the Ancient Near East; and Koine Greek, the common language of the Roman Empire. In Protestant Bibles, most of the Old Testament's 23,145 verses were written in Hebrew, with just over 250 in Aramaic. All of the New Testament's 7,957 verses were written in Koine Greek.



### The Bible Today

692

Number of languages the whole Bible has been translated into

1,547

Number of additional languages with at least the New Testament translated

1,123

Number of additional languages with some selections and/or stories translated



3,362

Total number of languages with some of the Bible

*Statistics about translations from the United Bible Societies. "Key facts about Bible access." <https://www.unitedbiblesocieties.org/key-facts-bible-access/>*