



The Biblical Heritage Center's  
**DISCOVERING THE BIBLE**

*Our beliefs must be large enough to include all of the FACTS;  
 open enough to be tested; and flexible enough to change when more  
 accurate information is found.*

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# God's Instructions, Old Covenant or History Book

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*Comments and  
 Questions for your  
 Consideration*

(1) Does it make a difference if you call the Torah the "Law" or the "Instructions"?

(2) Do you understand how the Jewish Bible's name was created?

(3) If there is a conflict between the sections, the one with the highest authority is followed.

(4) Does your church follow a cycle that allows members to read through its Bible during the Sunday services?

Many Christians think that their Old Testament is the same as the Jewish Bible. The fact is that none of the contemporary Christian Old Testaments are the same as the Jewish Bible, the Tanakh. The books in the Tanakh are divided into three sections, **Torah, Nevi'im** and **Ketuvim**. The word Tanakh was created by taking the first letter of each section, **T-N-K**, and adding vowels. When some people hear the word "Torah" they think of "Law," but it is more accurately understood by using the word "Instructions." Is there a difference between God's Law and God's Instructions?

<u>Torah (Instructions)</u>	<u>Nevi'im (Prophets)</u>	<u>Ketuvim (Writings)</u>
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms
Exodus	Judges	Job
Leviticus	1 & 2 Samuel	Proverbs
Numbers	1 & 2 Kings	Ruth
Deuteronomy	Isaiah	Song of Solomon
	Jeremiah	Ecclesiastes
	Ezekiel	Lamentations
	Hosea	Esther
	Joel	Daniel
	Amos	Ezra
	Obadiah	Nehemiah
	Jonah	1 & 2 Chronicles
	Micah	
	Nahum	
	Habakkuk	
	Zephaniah	
	Haggai	
	Zechariah	
	Malachi	

In the Jewish Belief System the three sections are believed to carry different levels of authority. *This means that the Torah has more authority than the Nevi'im and the Nevi'im has more than the Ketuvim.* A section of the Torah, followed by a section from the Nevi'im are read in synagogues every Shabbat. Some Jewish groups read through the Torah every year, others complete the cycle in three years.

Now let's compare the Tanakh to three versions of the Christian Old Testament. They are arranged in chronological order. The Tanakh existed first. The oldest Christian version is the Roman Catholic Bible, followed by the 1611 KJV, which was later

(5) What books were added to the Tanakh?

(6) Which books were rearranged? Why do you think a new arrangement was made?

(7) What are differences between the two KJV Bibles?

(8) Members of the Rabbinic Judaism religion consider the first section of the Tanakh, the Torah, as the most important part of their Bible. Would you say that Christians consider the section that comes after the Old Testament, the New Testament, as the most important? How does this affect the way the other books in the Tanakh or Old Testament are read?

(9) When I am asked if I believe the Bible, my response to that question is, "Which Bible? Do you think this a good response, based on the facts that we have before us?"

(10) The facts are that there are different books in Christian Old Testaments and the books in any Christian Old Testament are arranged in a different order than those in the Tanakh.

revised. What are the differences? Which ones have different books? What are the differences in the arrangement of the books?

<b>Tanakh</b>	<b>Roman Catholic</b>	<b>1611 King James</b>	<b>Revised KJV</b>
Genesis	Genesis	Genesis	Genesis
Exodus	Exodus	Exodus	Exodus
Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus
Numbers	Numbers	Numbers	Numbers
Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy
Joshua	Joshua	Joshua	Joshua
Judges	Judges	Judges	Judges
1 & 2 Samuel	Ruth	Ruth	Ruth
1 & 2 Kings	Esther	1 & 2 Samuel	1 & 2 Samuel
Isaiah	1 & 2 Kings	1 & 2 Kings	1 & 2 Kings
Jeremiah	3 & 4 Kings	1 & 2 Chronicles	1 & 2 Chronicles
Ezekiel	1 & 2 Chronicles	Ezra	Ezra
Hosea	1 & 2 Esdras	Nehemiah	Nehemiah
Joel	Tobit	Esther	Esther
Amos	Judith	Job	Job
Obadiah	Esther	Psalms	Psalms
Jonah	Job	Proverbs	Proverbs
Micah	Psalms	Ecclesiastes	Ecclesiastes
Nahum	Proverbs	Song of Songs	Song of Songs
Habakkuk	Ecclesiastes	Isaiah	Isaiah
Zephaniah	Song of Songs	Jeremiah	Jeremiah
Haggai	Book of Wisdom	Lamentations	Lamentations
Zechariah	Ecclesiasticus	Ezekiel	Ezekiel
Malachi	Isaiah	Daniel	Daniel
Psalms	Jeremiah	Hosea	Hosea
Job	Lamentations	Joel	Joel
Proverbs	Baruch	Amos	Amos
Ruth	Epistle of Jeremiah	Obadiah	Obadiah
Song of Solomon	Ezekiel	Jonah	Jonah
Ecclesiastes	Daniel	Micah	Micah
Lamentations	Hosea	Nahum	Nahum
Esther	Joel	Habakkuk	Habakkuk
Daniel	Amos	Zephaniah	Zephaniah
Ezra	Obadiah	Haggai	Haggai
Nehemiah	Jonah	Zechariah	Zechariah
1 & 2 Chronicles	Micah	Malachi	Malachi
	Nahum	1 & 2 Esdras	
	Habakkuk	Tobit	
	Zephaniah	Judeth	
	Haggai	The rest of Esther	
	Zechariah	Wisdom	
	Malachi	Ecclesiasticus	
	1 & 2 Maccabees	Baruch	
		Epistle of Jeremiah	
		1 & 2 Maccabees	

The Bible was never intended to be a historical document. It is a work of theology, law, ethics and literature; and it does contain historical information. However, if we want to evaluate its information we should consider when, how, why and by whom it was compiled. *Answering those questions is an important part of the Biblical Heritage journey.*

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