Date: 2026-11-04

Bible Translations and Canon

A printer-ready guide: from word-for-word to paraphrase, and which books each church counts as Scripture

I wrote this guide because people ask me two questions more than almost any others. Which Bible should I read? And why does my friend's Bible have more books than mine? Both questions have honest answers, and both get muddied fast online. So I went to the sources: the published translation guides, the publishers' own statements, the church documents themselves, and the scholars who study them. Where the sources agree, I say so. Where they disagree, I show you both sides and tell you which source said what.

The Bible I read and quote is the SLB (Steadfast Literal Bible), my own word-for-word translation, free at trinfinityenterprises.com/slb. The NASB 1995 and the BSB (Berean Standard Bible) are highlighted where it helps.

What is inside

- Part 1. Translations: the five bands, where 59 English Bibles sit on the spectrum, where the guides disagree, and how to choose.
- Part 2. Canon: which books the Jewish, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and Ethiopian traditions count, how the lists took shape, the Ethiopian canon, and books that are outside every major canon.
- Sources and acronyms at the back. Every claim traces to the full workbook, "Bible Translations - Literal to Interpretive Comparison - 2026-11-01".

How I labeled things

Each claim in the workbook carries one of these labels, and I use the same words here:

Label	What it means
Verified fact	Shown by a primary document or a reliable reference, and not in dispute.
Scholarly interpretation	What scholars conclude from the evidence, such as a date. Reasonable people can differ.
Church position	What a church teaches about itself or its Bible. Reported, not judged.
Disputed claim	Sources disagree, or the claim is widely challenged.
Editorial synthesis	A comparison choice I made to line sources up, such as matching two names for one book.
Commercial claim	A claim made to sell something, with no independent support found.
Not verified / not placed	I could not confirm it, or no guide places that translation.

Source ratings: A = official church or primary document, or a publisher speaking about its own Bible. B = a well-documented reference. C = comparison chart, ministry article or open encyclopedia. D = seller or promotion. A rating judges the source as evidence, not the tradition behind it.

Part 1. Translations

Every Bible is a translation

The Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek. Every English Bible is a translation, and every translator has to choose how closely to follow the original wording and word order, and how much to reshape it into natural English. That choice is the whole spectrum. A Bible on the left keeps closer to the words. A Bible on the right works harder to give you the meaning in plain modern English.

Here is the part people miss: more literal does not automatically mean more accurate. Hebrew and Greek don't line up word-for-word with English, so even the most literal Bible interprets. Formal and functional translations aim at different goals, and both can be faithful. Plenty of serious readers keep one of each.

The five bands

Band	What it means
1 Interlinear or very literal	Follows the original word order and wording as closely as English allows, sometimes word under word. Best as a study tool, hard to read straight through.
2 Formal (word-for-word)	Formal equivalence. Keeps the wording and structure as far as English grammar allows.
3 Balanced (mediating)	Mediating. Stays close to the words but smooths them where a literal rendering would confuse.
4 Functional (thought-for-thought)	Dynamic or functional equivalence. Translates the meaning of each sentence into natural English.
5 Paraphrase	Restates the text in contemporary, everyday language. Reads like a retelling.

How a translation gets its band: I read what each guide says about it (Logos/Faithlife spectrum, Christianbook, Bible Gateway's 2025 guide, Tyndale, Olive Tree) and put each guide's words into a band. The overall position is the median, the middle value, of those guide bands. A result like 2.5 means the guides split between two bands. The publisher's own description is shown in its own column and is not counted, because a publisher describing its own product is a different kind of evidence. I gave no 0-100 scores and built no scoring system of my own.

Where the Bibles sit

Sorted from most literal to most interpretive. Band = median of the guides. "Guides" = how many guides place it. Bold rows are in the ECPA (Evangelical Christian Publishers Association) top 10 for September 2026. Popularity is sales, not quality. The ECPA counts all NASB editions together, and all NRSV editions together.

Abbrev	Translation	Year	Band	Position	Guides	Agreement	Publisher says	Confidence	ECPA
ASV	American Standard Version	1901	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
Coverdale	Coverdale Bible	1535	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
Darby	Darby Translation	1890	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
Douay-Rheims	Douay-Rheims Bible (Challoner revision)	NT 1582; OT 1609; Challoner 1749-1752	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
EOB-NT	Eastern/Greek Orthodox Bible New Testament	2011	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
ESV	**English Standard Version**	**2001 (text updates 2007, 2011, 2016)**	**2**	**2 Formal**	**4**	**Guides agree**	**2 (Matches)**	**High**	**2**
Geneva	Geneva Bible	NT 1557; complete 1560; 1599 edition	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
JPS Tanakh	Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures (JPS, 1917 and 1985)	1917; 1985	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
KJV	**King James Version (Authorized Version)**	**1611; standard text 1769 (Blayney)**	**2**	**2 Formal**	**3**	**Guides agree**	**Not stated**	**Medium**	**3**
LEB	Lexham English Bible	2012 (Logos date)	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
LES	Lexham English Septuagint (1st ed. 2012; 2nd ed. 2020)	2012; 2020	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
LSB	Legacy Standard Bible	2021 (NT February; complete Bible November)	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	2 (Matches)	Medium	-
MEV	Modern English Version	2014	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	2 (Matches)	Medium	-
NASB 1995	**New American Standard Bible, 1995 update (I read this one)**	**1995 (first NASB 1971; updated 1977)**	**2**	**2 Formal**	**4**	**Guides agree**	**2 (Matches)**	**High**	**9**
NASB 2020	**New American Standard Bible, 2020 update**	**2020**	**2**	**2 Formal**	**4**	**Guides agree**	**2 (Matches)**	**High**	**9**
NETS	New English Translation of the Septuagint	2007	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
NKJV	**New King James Version**	**1982**	**2**	**2 Formal**	**2**	**Guides agree**	**Not stated**	**Medium**	**5**
NRSV	**New Revised Standard Version**	**1989**	**2**	**2 Formal**	**2**	**Guides agree**	**2 (Matches)**	**Medium**	**10**
NRSVue	**New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition**	**2021 (submitted for approval 2021)**	**2**	**2 Formal**	**1**	**Single source**	**2 (Matches)**	**High**	**10**
RSV	Revised Standard Version	1952 (Apocrypha 1957; NT 2nd ed. 1971)	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
RV	English Revised Version (Revised Version)	NT 1881; complete 1885	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
Tyndale	Tyndale Bible	NT 1526; parts of OT before 1536	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
WEB	World English Bible	1997 (Logos); 2000 (Pastor Daniel)	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
Wuest	The New Testament: An Expanded Translation (Wuest)	1961	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
YLT	Young's Literal Translation	1862; revised 1887, 1898	2	2 Formal	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
AMP	Amplified Bible	1965; 2015 update (Classic Edition AMPC 1987)	2.5	2 Formal / 3 Balanced	2	Guides disagree	Not stated	Medium	-

Abbrev	Translation	Year	Band	Position	Guides	Agreement	Publisher says	Confidence	ECPA
BSB	Berean Standard Bible	2016 first printing; printings 2020, 2022, 2025 (3rd edition copy)	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
CEB	Common English Bible	2011	3	3 Balanced	2	Guides agree	Not stated	Medium	-
CSB	**Christian Standard Bible**	**2017**	**3**	**3 Balanced**	**3**	**Guides agree**	**3 (Matches)**	**High**	**7**
EBR	Rotherham's Emphasized Bible	NT 1872; complete 1902 (Logos lists a 1959 edition)	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
EHV	Evangelical Heritage Version	2019	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
ERV	Easy-to-Read Version	1987; 2004/2006; revised 2015	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible	NT 1999; complete 2004; revised 2009/2010	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
ICB	International Children's Bible	1986	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
NAB	New American Bible (1970; revised NT 1986, Psalms 1991)	1970	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
NABRE	New American Bible, Revised Edition	2011	3	3 Balanced	2	Guides agree	Not stated	Medium	-
NET	New English Translation	2005/2006; NET2 2019	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
NIrV	**New International Reader's Version**	**1996/1998**	**3**	**3 Balanced**	**1**	**Single source**	**Not stated**	**Low**	**8**
NIV	**New International Version**	**1978; 1984; current text 2011**	**3**	**3 Balanced**	**4**	**Guides disagree**	**3 (Matches)**	**High**	**1**
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible	1985	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
TBfE	The Bible for Everyone (John Goldingay and N. T. Wright)	2018 (Logos wiki)	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
TLV	Tree of Life Version	2015	3	3 Balanced	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
TNIV	Today's New International Version	2005	3	3 Balanced	2	Guides agree	Not stated	Low	-
CEV	Contemporary English Version	NT 1991; complete 1995	4	4 Functional	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
CJB	Complete Jewish Bible	1998 (Jewish New Testament 1989/1997)	4	4 Functional	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
GNT	Good News Translation (formerly Today's English Version, TEV)	NT 1966; complete 1976; 2nd ed. 1992	4	4 Functional	2	Guides agree	Not stated	Low	-
GW	GOD'S WORD Translation	1995	4	4 Functional	1	Single source	3 (Differs from)	Low	-
ISV	International Standard Version	2011 (copyright 1994-2008 on Bible Hub page)	4	4 Functional	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
NCV	New Century Version	1987/1991 (not verified); Logos 2005	4	4 Functional	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
NEB	New English Bible	NT 1961; complete 1970	4	4 Functional	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
NLT	**New Living Translation**	**1996; 2nd ed. 2004; updates to 2015**	**4**	**4 Functional**	**3**	**Guides agree**	**4 (Matches)**	**High**	**4**
REB	Revised English Bible	1989	4	4 Functional	1	Single source	Not stated	Low	-
TPT	The Passion Translation	Portions from 2011; NT 2017; complete Bible projected 2029 (Wikipedia)	4.5	4 Functional / 5 Paraphrase	2	Guides disagree	Not stated	Low	-
CPG	Cotton Patch Gospel	1992 (Logos date)	5	5 Paraphrase	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
Harwood	Harwood's Liberal Translation of the New Testament	1768	5	5 Paraphrase	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
MSG	The Message	2002 complete (Pastor Daniel); Logos lists 2005	5	5 Paraphrase	3	Guides agree	Not stated	Medium	-

Abbrev	Translation	Year	Band	Position	Guides	Agreement	Publisher says	Confidence	ECPA
Phillips	J.B. Phillips New Testament in Modern English	1958 (Logos date)	5	5 Paraphrase	1	Single source	Not verified	Low	-
TLB	The Living Bible	1971	5	5 Paraphrase	2	Guides agree	5 (Matches)	Medium	-
Voice	The Voice	2012	5	5 Paraphrase	1	Single source	3 (Differs from)	Low	-

Not placed (no guide I could read places them): AB, ABP, BIB, Bishops', BLB, CW, EMTV, Green's Interlinear, KJ3, KJVer, Knox, LITV, LSV, MKJV, NLV, Readable, Webster, Wycliffe. Interlinears belong in band 1 by format, but no guide places any translation there.

Confidence: High = two A or B sources (the publisher and Bible Gateway) support the band; Medium = one; Low = none. Most rows are Low because only one guide names them.

Where the guides disagree

- NIV: Logos, Bible Gateway and Christianbook put it in the balanced middle; Tyndale calls it thought-for-thought. Median: 3.
- AMP (Amplified Bible): Logos says word-for-word; Bible Gateway says it balances word-for-word and paraphrase. Median: 2.5.
- TPT (The Passion Translation): Logos says paraphrase; Christianbook says dynamic equivalence. Median: 4.5.
- GW (GOD'S WORD) and The Voice: their publishers describe a mediating method, but the guides place them further right (GW 4, The Voice 5).
- BSB: only one guide (Olive Tree, a seller blog) places it, in band 3. Treat that as tentative.

Readability

I kept three kinds of readability apart: what guides say (grade levels), what publishers say, and a measure I ran myself on texts I could read in full. My measure is the Flesch-Kincaid grade over all of Genesis, Psalms and John. It runs low for every Bible, because verse punctuation uses many colons and semicolons, so compare these numbers only with each other.

Text	Measured grade (sample)
BSB	4.8
NASB 1995	6.0
SLB	6.0
Darby	6.4
Webster	6.4
KJV (1769 text)	6.6
ASV	6.9
YLT	8.5

Every other Bible is Not measured, because its full text is under copyright and was not available to me.

The Bible I use, and why

For years I studied from the NASB 1995. Every guide that places the NASB calls it word-for-word, and the Lockman Foundation, its publisher, says the same.

Today I read and quote the SLB (Steadfast Literal Bible), a word-for-word translation in today's language that I prepared from the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. My books and handouts quote it too. No guide has rated it yet, so I have not placed it on the spectrum myself. It is free to read at trinfinityenterprises.com/slb. The BSB is dedicated to the public domain and reads easier than the NASB, and the one guide that places it puts it in the balanced middle.

How to choose

- Start with your purpose. For close study, use a formal Bible (band 2). For daily reading, a balanced or functional Bible (band 3 or 4) reads easier.
- Read two side by side. A formal Bible next to a functional one shows you exactly where the translators had to choose.
- Older English has changed. Words in the KJV (1611) can mean something different today, which is a readability issue, not a question of the translators' care.
- Don't build doctrine on a paraphrase alone. Check it against a formal translation.
- Popular is not the same as best. The ECPA list measures sales.

Part 2. Canon: which books are in the Bible

"Canon" means the list of books a church accepts as Scripture. All the traditions below agree on the 27 New Testament books, except that the Ethiopian broader canon adds 8 more. They differ on the Old Testament. The table shows each book or group, then what each tradition does with it.

Book or group	Jewish Tanakh	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Eastern Orthodox	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo
The 39 Old Testament books in Protestant Bibles	Yes (counted as 24)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tobit	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Judith	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wisdom of Solomon	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Baruch	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Letter of Jeremiah	No	No	Yes (with Baruch)	Yes	Yes (part of "the rest of Jeremiah")
1 Maccabees	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	Yes	Yes	Not verified (sources conflict)
2 Maccabees	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	Yes	Yes	Not verified (sources conflict)
3 Maccabees	No	No	No	Yes	No (not listed)
4 Maccabees	No	No	No	Appendix	No (not listed)
1 Esdras (Greek Esdras A)	No	No (Anglican: read as "3 Esdras")	No	Yes	Yes
2 Esdras / 4 Ezra (Ezra Apocalypse)	No	No (Anglican: read as "4 Esdras")	No	No (not listed)	Yes
Prayer of Manasseh	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	No	Appendix	Not verified (sources differ)
Psalm 151	No	No	No	Yes (in Psalms)	Not verified
Additions to Esther	No	No (Anglican: read as "the rest of Esther")	Yes (as part of Esther)	Yes	Not verified
Additions to Daniel (Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon)	No	No (Anglican: read, not for doctrine)	Yes (as part of Daniel)	Yes	Yes
1 Enoch	No	No	No	No	Yes
Jubilees	No	No	No	No	Yes
1, 2 and 3 Meqabyan	No	No	No	No	Yes (per Wikipedia and Mahibere Kidusan)
Paralipomena of Jeremiah (4 Baruch)	No	No	No	No	Yes (per Wikipedia)
Pseudo-Josephus (Joseph ben Gorion)	No	No	No	No	Broader canon only
The 27 New Testament books	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sinodos (4 books), Book of the Covenant (2), Ethiopic Clement, Didascalia	No	No	No	No	Broader canon only
TOTAL	**24 (the same content as the Protestant 39)**	**66 (39 + 27)**	**73 (46 + 27)**	**Varies; no single fixed list for all Orthodox churches**	**81 (narrower: 54 OT + 27 NT; broader: 46 OT + 35 NT)**

Green = Scripture in that tradition. Yellow = appendix, broader canon, or read for life but not for doctrine (the Anglican position). Orange = Not verified. Each row is cited in the workbook (Canon Comparison tab). Ethiopian 1-2 Maccabees is marked Not verified because Cowley (1974) lists "1 and 2 Maccabees" while Wikipedia says the Ethiopian books are the three Meqabyan, which Cowley himself says are not the Greek Maccabees.

The same content, counted differently: the Jewish Tanakh counts 24 books by joining Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah and the twelve minor prophets. Josephus counted 22. The content matches the Protestant 39.

How the lists took shape

Two slogans get repeated a lot: "Catholics added books" and "Protestants removed books." Neither holds up against the record. Here is what the documents show.

The books were read long before Trent. Carthage 419 (repeating Hippo 393 and Carthage 397) lists Tobit, Judith, two books of Maccabees and five books of Solomon. *[Verified fact]*

Early leaders also set them apart. Athanasius (367) said they are "not indeed included in the Canon" but are "appointed ... to be read". Jerome (392) set them "among the apocrypha". Catholic Encyclopedia: Jerome "strongly doubted" them. *[Verified fact]*

The Reformers did not all throw them out. Luther (1534) kept them, printed between the Testaments. The KJV of 1611 printed them. Article VI keeps them for reading but not for doctrine. Westminster says they are no part of the canon. *[Verified fact]*

When English Bibles dropped them. The British and Foreign Bible Society printed its English Bibles without the Apocrypha from its start in 1804, and in 1826 it decided to stop printing the Apocrypha in any of its Bibles. *[Verified fact (via C source)]*

Trent made it binding for Catholics. Trent (1546) listed the books and placed an anathema on anyone who rejects them "with all their parts, as contained in the old Latin Vulgate". Catholic Encyclopedia says the Council of Florence (1442) had already given a complete list; that list itself could not be read. *[Church position; not verified (Florence list)]*

Orthodox practice is not one single list. OrthodoxWiki: the Council in Trullo (692) reached no binding conclusion, and Jerusalem 1672 was a regional synod. Greek editions include the books named in 1672. *[Church position (via C source)]*

Why "Catholics added" and "Protestants removed" both fall short. Both slogans skip the record above: the books were read and listed by some early churches and doubted by others, and each tradition settled the question at a different time and for its own reasons. *[Editorial synthesis]*

No single council created "the Bible"

The First Council of Nicaea (325) is often credited with choosing the books. Its 20 canons deal with church order and say nothing about which books belong in Scripture. The canon took shape over centuries, through church use, the lists of leaders like Athanasius (367), and regional councils like Hippo (393) and Carthage (397, 419).

The words themselves

"Deuterocanonical" (second canon) is the Catholic and Orthodox term for these books; "Apocrypha" is the usual Protestant term. The Catholic Encyclopedia notes that both "protocanonical" and "deuterocanonical" are 16th-century terms.

Key dates

Date	Event	What it does not show	Label
3rd century BC	Torah translated into Greek in Alexandria (start of the Septuagint, LXX); the rest in the 2nd-1st centuries BC	A fixed Septuagint canon: the great codices differ in contents. The Letter of Aristeas story (72 translators) is widely judged pseudepigraphal.	Scholarly interpretation
About AD 90-110 (disputed)	"Council of Jamnia" closes the Hebrew canon (theory of Graetz, 1871)	A council that fixed the canon. The theory is largely discredited (Lewis 1964, Leiman 1976, Bruce); Philip Davies points to the Hasmonean period instead.	Disputed claim
144	Marcion excommunicated in Rome; his canon is a shortened Luke plus 10 letters of Paul	That the church had no list before Marcion (Harnack's view is debated)	Verified fact; Scholarly interpretation
About 180-200 (disputed)	Muratorian fragment lists New Testament books	Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 3 John are not mentioned. Some scholars date it to the 4th century (Sundberg, Hahneman) or call it a later forgery (Rothschild 2022).	Disputed claim (date)
Early 4th century	Eusebius sorts books into accepted, disputed, spurious and heretical	A final decision	Verified fact
325	First Council of Nicaea	Any list of Scripture. Nicaea did not choose the books of the Bible.	Verified fact
367	Athanasius, Festal Letter 39: 27 New Testament books; Old Testament of 22; other books to be read	Acceptance of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Sirach or Esther as canon	Verified fact
392	Jerome, Prologus Galeatus	That the Western church followed him	Verified fact
393, 397, 419	Councils of Hippo and Carthage list the books, including Tobit, Judith, Maccabees and the 27 New Testament books	A decision binding on the whole church; these were regional councils	Verified fact; Church position
1442	Council of Florence, Bull of Union with the Copts	The book list itself could not be read	Not verified (list)
1522 / 1534	Luther's New Testament (1522) and full Bible (1534)	That Luther removed the Apocrypha from his Bible	Verified fact

Date	Event	What it does not show	Label
8 April 1546	Council of Trent, Session IV	That Catholics invented these books in 1546: the same books were listed at Carthage	Church position
1563 (final English text 1571)	Thirty-Nine Articles, Article VI		Church position
1611	King James Version printed with the Apocrypha	That the KJV translators counted them as canon	Verified fact
1646	Westminster Confession, chapter 1		Church position
16 March 1672	Synod of Jerusalem (Confession of Dositheus)	A pan-Orthodox list (regional synod)	Church position
1804 / 1826	British and Foreign Bible Society prints its English Bibles without the Apocrypha (1804) and decides to stop printing it in any of its Bibles (1826)		Verified fact (via C source)
1974	Cowley describes the Ethiopian narrower and broader canons		Scholarly interpretation

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo canon

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church counts 81 books, the largest canon of any church. The scholar Roger Cowley (1974) showed that the 81 is reached in more than one way. In the narrower canon, 54 Old Testament books plus the 27 New Testament books make 81. In the broader canon, 46 Old Testament books plus 35 New Testament books make 81. Cowley says the narrower canon is undisputed and that the broader books may be treated more like commentary.

Books found in the Ethiopian canon and nowhere else among the major churches include 1 Enoch, Jubilees, the three books of Meqabyan, and the Ezra Apocalypse (4 Ezra). The broader New Testament adds church-order books: the Sinodos (4 books), the Book of the Covenant (2), an Ethiopic Clement, and the Didascalia.

Two cautions. First, no single printed Ethiopian Bible has been declared the complete canon, and the old law code, the Fetha Negest, says 81 but lists 73. Second, you will see "88 books" on some sellers' and popular sites. Neither Cowley, Wikipedia, nor the church's own Mahibere Kidusan teaching page gives 88, so I treat it as an unsupported commercial claim.

Books outside the major canons

These books are not in the Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox Bible. Some were widely read in the early church; others were written later or rejected early. Dates are scholarly estimates and most are debated. Most entries rest on Wikipedia (rating C), so treat them as a starting point.

Book	Written (scholarly view)	Status today	Bible mention
1 Enoch	Sections from about 300 BC to about AD 100; the Parables (chapters 37-71) are latest and their date is disputed	Canonical: Ethiopian and Eritrean Tewahedo churches, Beta Israel. Not canonical elsewhere.	Jude 14-15 names Enoch and quotes a prophecy found in 1 Enoch 1:9
Jubilees	About 160-150 BC	Canonical: Ethiopian and Eritrean churches, Beta Israel	None
Book of Giants	Before the 2nd century BC	Not canonical in any church	None
Book of Jasher - the book named in the Bible	Unknown (lost)	Lost. No surviving text.	Joshua 10:13; 2 Samuel 1:18
Sefer haYashar (Hebrew midrash sold as "Book of Jasher")	Printed in Venice in 1625; Joseph Dan dates it to early 16th-century Naples	Not canonical. Some Latter-day Saints value the 1887 Parry edition; the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not officially endorse it.	Not the book named in Joshua or 2 Samuel
Pseudo-Jasher (Jacob Ilive, 1750)	November 1750	A forgery. Rosicrucians in 1934 called it "inspired" (their claim).	Not the book named in Joshua or 2 Samuel
Psalms of Solomon	1st-2nd century BC	Not canonical	None
Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs	Final form 2nd century AD; Jewish or Christian origin debated	Not canonical	None
Shepherd of Hermas	First half of the 2nd century, Rome	Not canonical (Cowley: not canonical in Ethiopia today)	None
Didache (Teaching of the Twelve Apostles)	1st century (some say 2nd)	Not canonical; the Ethiopic Didascalia draws on it	None
1 Clement	About AD 96	Not canonical	None
Epistle of Barnabas	AD 70-132	Not canonical	None
Gospel of Thomas	About AD 60-250; most place it in the 2nd century	No church uses it as Scripture	None
Infancy Gospel of Thomas	Mid to late 2nd century	Not canonical. A different work from the Gospel of Thomas.	None
Gospel of Peter	Before about AD 200 (Serapion of Antioch knew it)	Not canonical	None
Gospel of Judas	2nd century	Not canonical. April DeConick disputes the 2006 translation.	None
Gospel of Mary	Early 2nd century	Not canonical	None
Apocalypse of Peter	AD 100-150	Not canonical	None

Three different things called "Jasher"

The Book of Jasher (the SLB and the BSB both spell it Jashar) is named in Joshua 10:13 and 2 Samuel 1:18. That book is lost; no copy survives. The books sold today under that title are something else. One is Sefer haYashar, a Hebrew retelling printed in Venice in 1625 and translated into English in 1840. The other is a 1750 English forgery by Jacob Ilive, exposed by the Monthly Review the next month. Neither is the book the Bible names.

Enoch and Jude

Jude 14-15 names Enoch and quotes a prophecy found in 1 Enoch (1 Enoch 1:9). Quoting a book is not the same as calling it Scripture; Paul quotes Greek poets too (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12). The Ethiopian and Eritrean churches count 1 Enoch as Scripture; the other major churches do not.

Sources

All web sources accessed 2026-11-01. Full details, limits and what could not be read are on the Sources tab of the workbook.

Key	Title	Author or publisher	Rating	Link
LOGOS	Bible Translation Spectrum (Faithlife/Logos), read in three copies: Logos forum thread (community.logos.com/forums/t/182774.aspx), Logos wiki page (wiki.logos.com/Bible_Translation_Spectrum), and a fuller copy of the same table hosted by Central Church NC (Comparing_Bibles.pdf)	Faithlife (Logos) community; table author not named	C	https://community.logos.com/forums/t/182774.aspx ; https://wiki.logos.com/Bible_Translation_Spectrum ; https://www.centralnc.org/Content/ExternalSite/Photos/PDFs/Comparing_Bibles.pdf
CB	Bible Buying Guide	Christianbook.com	D	https://www.christianbook.com/page/bibles/bible-buying-guide?event=Bibles|1000153
BG	Complete Guide to Bible Versions: Comparison, History, and Philosophy of Top Bible Translations [Updated 2025]	Jacob Edson, Bible Gateway, 2025-02-21	B	https://www.biblegateway.com/learn/bible-101/bible-versions-guide/
TY	How to Choose the Right Bible for You	Tyndale House Publishers (author not named)	C	https://www.tyndale.com/stories/how-to-choose-a-bible
OT	Look Inside: Berean Standard Bible	Brad Hoffman, Olive Tree Blog, 2022-07-01	C	https://www.olivetree.com/blog/look-inside-berean-standard-bible/
C3	Bible Translations Comparison Charts	Sharon Lareau, Chapter 3 Ministries (modified 2022-04-14)	C	https://www.chapter3min.org/bible-translations-comparison-charts/
NJAB	Bible Translation Comparison chart, version 12	Brent MacDonald, Lion Tracks Ministries (notjustanotherbook.com)	C	http://www.notjustanotherbook.com/biblecomparison.htm
PD	Bible Translation Comparison and Bible Translation Matrix 2018 (PDF and Excel)	Daniel McFeeters (Pastor Daniel), page 2017, modified 2022	C	https://www.pastordaniel.net/bible-translation-comparison/ ; https://www.pastordaniel.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Bible-Translation-Matrix-2018.pdf
ECPA	Bible Translations Bestsellers, September 2026	ECPA (Evangelical Christian Publishers Association), data from Circana BookScan	B	https://readgoodbooks.com/bestseller/translations.php?id=0926
BGV	Bible Gateway Version Information pages (publisher-supplied descriptions)	Bible Gateway, text supplied by each publisher	A	https://www.biblegateway.com/versions/ (one page per version)
LOCK	NASB 1995 - History, Updates, and Translation Philosophy; NASB page; Permission to Quote	The Lockman Foundation	A	https://www.lockman.org/?p=3338 ; https://www.lockman.org/?p=765 ; https://www.lockman.org/permission-to-quote-copyright-trademark-information/
LSBP	LSB FAQs	Legacy Standard Bible (Lockman / Three Sixteen Publishing)	A	https://lsbible.org/faqs/
ESVP	Translation Philosophy	Crossway (esv.org)	A	https://www.esv.org/translation/philosophy/
CSBP	CSB Translation Philosophy	Lifeway	A	https://www.lifeway.com/shop/bibles/csb/translation-philosophy
NIVP	Translation Philosophy of the NIV	The NIV Bible (Biblica / Zondervan)	A	https://www.thenivbible.com/?p=1479
NLTP	NLT Translation Process	Tyndale House Publishers	A	https://sites.tyndale.com/nlt/translation-process/
BSBP	Berean Bible home page; Berean Standard Bible 3rd Edition (Bible Hub 2025 printing) copyright page	Berean Bible Translation Committee / Bible Hub	A	https://berean.bible ; https://biblehub.com/bsb/
LSVP	What Is the Literal Standard Version?	Covenant Press	A	https://www.lsvbible.com/p/what-is-literal-standard-version.html
ISVP	International Standard Version - About	ISV Foundation (hosted by Bible Hub)	A	https://biblehub.com/isv/about.htm
TPTP	The Passion Translation: Dr Brian Simmons responds to his critics	Premier Christianity, 2018-12-13	B	https://www.premierchristianity.com/interviews/the-passion-translation-dr-brian-simmons-responds-to-his-critics/2767.article
CHI	Pre-KJV English translations	David Lyle Jeffrey, Christian History magazine, Issue 100 (2011)	B	https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/pre-kjv-english-translations
ISBE	English Versions (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, 1915)	J. Hutchison, ed. James Orr; hosted by Bible Study Tools	B	https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/english-versions/
WIKI	Wikipedia articles: Green's Literal Translation; Young's Literal Translation; Webster's Revision; The Living Bible; The Passion Translation; Holman Christian Standard Bible; New English Bible; New Jerusalem Bible; Legacy Standard Bible; Emphasized Bible	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green%27s_Literal_Translation (and the other article titles above)
SAT	Q68: Literal Translations by Sovereign Grace Publishers	Tony Garland, SpiritAndTruth.org	C	https://www.spiritandtruth.org/questions/68.htm
OTB	What's the Best Bible Translation?	Olive Tree Staff, 2016 (modified 2019)	C	https://www.olivetree.com/blog/?p=34121
SCROLL	scrollmapper bible_databases (public-domain texts: KJV 1769, ASV, YLT, Darby, Webster)	scrollmapper (GitHub)	B	https://github.com/scrollmapper/bible_databases

Key	Title	Author or publisher	Rating	Link
TRENT	Council of Trent, Session IV, Decree Concerning the Canonical Scriptures (8 April 1546)	Council of Trent; English text hosted by EWTN	A	https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/decree-concerning-the-canonical-scriptures-1494
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraphs 120 and following (The Canon of Scripture)	Holy See (vatican.va)	A	https://www.vatican.va/content/catechism/en/part_one/section_one/chapter_two/article_3/iv_the_canon_of_scripture.html
WCF	Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 1, sections 2 and 3	Westminster Assembly; text hosted by CCEL (Christian Classics Ethereal Library)	A	https://www.ccel.org/creeds/westminster.htm
ART39	Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, Article VI	Church of England; text read on britainexpress.com and checked on victorianweb.org	A	https://www.britainexpress.com/History/tudor/39articles-text.htm ; https://victorianweb.org/religion/39articles.html
DOS	Confession of Dositheus (Synod of Jerusalem, 16 March 1672), Question 3	Synod of Jerusalem; English text hosted by crivoice.org	A	https://www.crivoice.org/creeddositheus.html
OWIKI	Old Testament Canon	OrthodoxWiki contributors	C	https://orthodoxwiki.org/Old_Testament_Canon
JOS	Josephus, Against Apion 1.37-43 (Whiston translation)	Flavius Josephus; hosted by lexundria.com	A	https://lexundria.com/j_ap/1.37-1.43/wst
JE	Bible Canon (Jewish Encyclopedia, 1906)	Emil G. Hirsch, Ludwig Blau, Kaufmann Kohler, Nathaniel Schmidt	B	https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/3259-bible-canon
JAMW	Council of Jamnia	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_Jamnia
LXXW	Septuagint	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Septuagint
ATH	Athanasius, Festal Letter 39 (AD 367)	Athanasius of Alexandria; New Advent (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers translation)	A	https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2806039.htm
MURCE	Muratorian Canon (Catholic Encyclopedia, 1911)	Catholic Encyclopedia; New Advent	B	https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10642a.htm
MURW	Muratorian fragment	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muratorian_fragment
CARTH	Code of Canons of the African Church (Carthage, AD 419), Canon 24	New Advent (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers translation)	A	https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3816.htm
EUS	Eusebius, Church History, Book 3, chapter 25	Eusebius of Caesarea; New Advent	A	https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/250103.htm
NIC	First Council of Nicaea (AD 325), the canons	New Advent (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers translation)	A	https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3801.htm
JER	Jerome, Preface to Samuel and Kings (Prologus Galeatus), AD 392	Jerome; translation hosted by fourthcentury.com (Wisconsin Lutheran College)	A	https://www.fourthcentury.com/jerome-samuel-392
CECAN	Canon of the Old Testament (Catholic Encyclopedia, 1908)	George J. Reid; New Advent	B	https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03267a.htm
MARC	Marcion of Sinope	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcion_of_Sinope
NTCW	Development of the New Testament canon	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Development_of_the_New_Testament_canon
LUTH	Luther's canon	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luther%27s_canon
APOCW	Apocrypha controversy	Wikipedia contributors (citing Ewert)	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocrypha_controversy
COWLEY	R. W. Cowley, 'The Biblical Canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Today', Ostkirchliche Studien 23 (1974): 318-323	Roger W. Cowley; copy hosted by islamic-awareness.org	A	https://www.islamic-awareness.org/bible/text/canon/ethiopican
EOTW	Orthodox Tewahedo biblical canon	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orthodox_Tewahedo_biblical_canon
EOTCMK	The Ethiopian Orthodox Bible: A Unique Biblical Canon (7 January 2026)	Mahibere Kidusan USA, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Sunday School Department (byline 'Unknown')	B	https://nextgeneration.eotcmk.org/learn-geez/blog/the-ethiopian-orthodox-bible-a-unique-biblical-canon
NCW	Wikipedia articles: Book of Enoch; Book of Jubilees; Book of Giants; Book of Jasher; Sefer haYashar (midrash); Pseudo-Jasher; Psalms of Solomon; Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs; Shepherd of Hermas; Didache; First Epistle of Clement; Epistle of Barnabas; Gospel of Thomas; Infancy Gospel of Thomas; Gospel of Peter; Gospel of Judas; Gospel of Mary; Apocalypse of Peter	Wikipedia contributors	C	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Enoch (and the other article titles above)
BSBTXT	Berean Standard Bible 3rd Edition and NASB 1995 text (verse checks)	Bible Hub (BSB); The Lockman Foundation (NASB 1995)	A	https://biblehub.com/bsb/ ; https://www.lockman.org
SLB	Steadfast Literal Bible: preface and text	Andrew Dominguez, Trinfinity Enterprises	A	https://trinfinityenterprises.com/slb
LBFE	The Bible for Everyone (resource page)	Logos Bible Software	B	https://www.logos.com/resource/LLS$BIBLEFOREVERYONE

Could not be read: Chapter 3 Ministries and notjustanotherbook chart images; Pastor Daniel matrix marks; Olive Tree 2016 chart image; Logos original topic page; Council of Florence 1442 book list; Melito's list (Eusebius 4.26); Bava Batra 14b on Sefaria; Britannica (Book of Enoch).

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning	Acronym	Meaning
4Q	Qumran Cave 4 (Dead Sea Scrolls catalog prefix)	**MKJV**	Modern King James Version
AB	The Apostles' Bible	**MSB**	Majority Standard Bible
ABP	Apostolic Bible Polyglot	**MSG**	The Message
AMP	Amplified Bible	**NA27**	Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece, 27th edition
AMPC	Amplified Bible, Classic Edition	**NAB**	New American Bible
ASV	American Standard Version	**NABRE**	New American Bible Revised Edition
BCE	Before the Common Era (same years as BC)	**NASB**	New American Standard Bible
BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society	**NCC**	National Council of Churches
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia	**NCPB**	New Cambridge Paragraph Bible
BIB	Berean Interlinear Bible	**NCV**	New Century Version
BLB	Berean Literal Bible	**NEB**	New English Bible
BSB	Berean Standard Bible	**NET**	New English Translation
CC BY-SA	Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike	**NETS**	New English Translation of the Septuagint
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church	**NIrV**	New International Reader's Version
CCEL	Christian Classics Ethereal Library	**NIV**	New International Version
CE	Common Era (same years as AD)	**NIV-A**	New International Version, Anglicised
CEB	Common English Bible	**NIVI**	New International Version, Inclusive
CEV	Contemporary English Version	**NJAB**	notjustanotherbook.com
CJB	Complete Jewish Bible	**NJB**	New Jerusalem Bible
CPG	Cotton Patch Gospel	**NKJV**	New King James Version
CSB	Christian Standard Bible	**NLT**	New Living Translation
CW	The Clear Word	**NLV**	New Life Version
EBR	Rotherham's Emphasized Bible	**NRSV**	New Revised Standard Version
ECPA	Evangelical Christian Publishers Association	**NRSVCE**	New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition
EHV	Evangelical Heritage Version	**NRSVue**	New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition
EMTV	English Majority Text Version	**NT**	New Testament
EOB-NT	Eastern/Greek Orthodox Bible New Testament	**OT**	Old Testament
EOTC	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church	**P.Oxy**	Oxyrhynchus Papyrus (catalog number)
ERV	Easy-to-Read Version (Logos also uses ERV for the 1895 English Revised Version)	**PDF**	Portable Document Format
ESV	English Standard Version	**R#**	Reading level (Logos)
ESV-CE	English Standard Version Catholic Edition (The Augustine Bible)	**REB**	Revised English Bible
FK	Flesch-Kincaid (readability grade)	**RNJB**	Revised New Jerusalem Bible
GNB	Good News Bible	**RSV**	Revised Standard Version
GNT	Good News Translation	**RSV2CE**	Revised Standard Version Second Catholic Edition
GNTa	Good News Translation with Apocrypha	**RSVCE**	Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition
GW	GOD'S WORD Translation	**RV**	Revised Version (English Revised Version)
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible	**SBL**	Society of Biblical Literature
ICB	International Children's Bible	**SBLGNT**	SBL Greek New Testament
ISV	International Standard Version	**SLB**	Steadfast Literal Bible
JNT	Jewish New Testament	**TBfE**	The Bible for Everyone (Goldingay and Wright)
JPS	Jewish Publication Society	**TEV**	Today's English Version
KJ3	KJ3 Literal Translation (2006)	**TLB**	The Living Bible
KJV	King James Version	**TLV**	Tree of Life Version
KJVer	King James Version Easy Read	**TNIV**	Today's New International Version
LEB	Lexham English Bible	**TPT**	The Passion Translation
LES	Lexham English Septuagint	**TV**	The Voice (Logos abbreviation)
LITV	Green's Literal Translation	**UBS**	United Bible Societies
LSB	Legacy Standard Bible	**USCCB**	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
LSV	Literal Standard Version	**WEB**	World English Bible
LXX	Septuagint	**YLT**	Young's Literal Translation
MEV	Modern English Version		