

The Books of the Old Testament

The Old Testament designates the first major part of the Christian Bible, which records God's dealing with his ancient covenant community, Israel.

It covers a period of roughly 1,500 years (2,000 - 450 B.C. not counting Genesis 1-11). In the Protestant tradition, the Old Testament is comprised of 39 canonical books (that is, books that were recognized as inspired). The number is greater in the Catholic and Orthodox traditions.

I have found it helpful to organize the books of the Old Testament into one of four categories or types:

- Law
- History
- Poetry / wisdom
- Prophecy.

The table below lists each of these categories, the number of books within each set as well as the names of the individual books.

Law (5)	History (12)	Poetry/Wisdom (5)	Prophecy (5/12)	
			Major (5)	Minor (12)
Genesis	Joshua	Job	Isaiah	Hosea
Exodus	Judges	Psalms	Jeremiah	Joel
Leviticus	Ruth	Proverbs	Lamentations	Amos
Numbers	1 Samuel	Ecclesiastes	Ezekiel	Obadiah
Deuteronomy	2 Samuel	Song of Solomon	Daniel	Jonah
	1 Kings			Micah
	2 Kings			Nahum
	1 Chronicles			Habakkuk
	2 Chronicles			Zephaniah
	Ezra			Haggai
	Nehemiah			Zechariah
	Esther			Malachi