“Turns Holy Writ into fresh, understandable, contemporary language. A landmark of Jewish religious scholarship.”
— Time
Overview

The Tanakh is the canon of the Jewish Bible (also known as the Hebrew Bible, the Holy Scriptures, or the Old Testament). “Tanakh” is an acronym for the text’s three sections: the Torah (the Five Books of Moses), Nevi’im (Prophets) and Ketuvim (Writings).

The JPS Tanakh is widely recognized as the most authoritative and preferred English translation of the Hebrew Bible in the Jewish world and beyond.

Editions

The JPS Tanakh is available in print in various sizes, colors, and styles in both a Hebrew-English edition and an English-only edition. The English-only version is also available through most e-book vendors. Print editions of portions of the Tanakh are also available, such as The Torah, The Book of Psalms, and The Five Megilloth and Jonah. The JPS Audio Bible is an audio version of the English-only edition available through audible.com and iTunes.com.

About the Translation

Regarded throughout the English-speaking world as a landmark English translation of the Holy Scriptures, the JPS Tanakh has been acclaimed by scholars, rabbis, lay leaders, Jews, and Christians alike. The JPS Tanakh is an entirely original translation of the Holy Scriptures into contemporary English, based on the original masoretic (traditional Hebrew) text. The JPS Tanakh emerged from the collaborative efforts of an interdenominational team of Jewish scholars and rabbis working together over a twenty-year period. The translators made use of the entire range of biblical interpretation, ancient and modern, Jewish and non-Jewish. The resulting text is a triumph of literary style and biblical scholarship, unsurpassed in accuracy and clarity.

About the Hebrew Text

The Hebrew text of the JPS Tanakh is based on the famed Leningrad Codex, the masoretic text traceable to Aaron ben Moses ben Asher, ca. 930. Ben Asher researched all available texts to compile an authoritative Bible manuscript. In 1010 his work was revised by Samuel ben Jacob, a scribe in Egypt. Lost for centuries, the manuscript was eventually discovered in the mid-nineteenth century and became known as the Leningrad Codex. JPS has adapted the latest BHS edition of the Leningrad text by correcting errors and providing modern paragraphing.
Editions

HEBREW-ENGLISH

JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh

The JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh features the oldest-known complete Hebrew version of the Holy Scriptures, side by side with JPS’s renowned English translation. Its well-designed format allows for ease of reading and features clear type, an engaging and efficient two-column format that enables readers to move quickly from one language to another, and an organization that contemporary readers will find familiar. It opens as a Hebrew-language book (from left to right).

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the camels, and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and went his way.
62 Isaac had just come back from the vicinity of Beer-lahai-roi, for he was settled in the region of the Negeb. 63 And Isaac went out walking in the field toward evening and, looking up, he saw camels approaching. 64 Raising her eyes, Rebekah saw Isaac. She alighted from the camel and said to the servant, “Who is that man walking in the field toward us?” And the servant said, “That is my master.” So she took her veil and covered herself. 66 The servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. 67 Isaac then brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he took Rebekah as his wife. Isaac loved her, and thus found comfort after his mother’s death.

25 Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. 2 She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. 3 Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Asshurim, the Letushim, and the Leummim. 4 The descendants of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Enoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah. 5 Abraham willed all that he owned to Isaac; but to Abraham’s sons by concubines Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and he sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the East.

7 This was the total span of Abraham’s life: one hundred and seventy-five years. 8 And Abraham breathed his last, dying at a good ripe age, old and contented; and he was gathered to his kin. 9 His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, facing Mamre, the field of Machpelah being the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite.

e Others “to meditate”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.
a Or “Hanoch.”
What remains on either side of the sacred reserve and the city property shall belong to the prince. The prince shall own [the land] from the border of the 25,000  of the reserve  up to the eastern boundary, and from the border of the 25,000 on the west up to the western boundary, corresponding to the tribal portions. The sacred reserve, with the Temple Sanctuary in the middle of it  and the property of the Levites and the city property as well, shall be in the middle of the area belonging to the prince; the rest of the land between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin shall belong to the prince.

As for the remaining tribes: From the eastern border to the western border: Benjamin—one.

Adjoining the territory of Benjamin, from the eastern border to the western border: Simeon—one.

Adjoining the territory of Simeon, from the eastern border to the western border: Issachar—one.

Adjoining the territory of Issachar, from the eastern border to the western border: Zebulun—one.

Adjoining the territory of Zebulun, from the eastern border to the western border: Gad—one.

The other border of Gad shall be the southern boundary. This boundary shall run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-kadesh, to the Wash [of Egypt], and to the Great Sea.

That is the land which you shall allot as a heritage to the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions—declares the Lord God.

And these are the exits from the city: On its northern side, measuring 4000 cubits, the gates of the city shall be—three gates on the north—named for the tribes of Israel: the Reu...
ENGLISH-ONLY

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1 The prophecies of Isaiah son of Amoz, who prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

2Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth,
   For the LORD has spoken:
   “I reared children and brought them up—
   And they have rebelled against Me!
3An ox knows its owner,
   An ass its master’s crib:
   Israel does not know,
   My people takes no thought.”

4Ah, sinful nation!
   People laden with iniquity!
   Brood of evildoers!
   Depraved children!
   They have forsaken the LORD,
   Spurned the Holy One of Israel,
   Turned their backs [on Him].

5Why do you seek further beatings,
   That you continue to offend?
   Every head is ailing,
   And every heart is sick.
6From head to foot
   No spot is sound:
   All bruises, and welts,
   And festering sores—
NEVI’IM II KINGS 9.36

they came back and reported to him; and he said, “It is just as the LORD spoke through His servant Elijah the Tishbite: The dogs shall devour the flesh of Jezebel in the field of Jezreel; 27 and the carcass of Jezebel shall be like dung on the ground, in the field of Jezreel, so that none will be able to say: ‘This was Jezebel.’ ”

10 Ahab had seventy descendants in Samaria. Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the elders and officials of Jezreel¹ and to the guardians of [the children] of Ahab, as follows: 2 Now, when this letter reaches you—since your master’s sons are with you and you also have chariots and horses, and a fortified city and weapons—³ select the best and the most suitable of your master’s sons and set him on his father’s throne, and fight for your master’s house.” ⁴ But they were overcome by fear, for they thought, “If the two kings could not stand up to him, how can we?”
³ The steward of the palace and the governor of the city and the elders and the guardians sent this message to Jehu: “We are your subjects, and we shall do whatever you tell us to. We shall not proclaim anyone king; do whatever you like.”
⁴ He wrote them a second time: “If you are on my side and are ready to obey me, take the heads of the attendants of your master’s sons and come⁵ to me in Jezreel tomorrow at this time.” Now the princes, seventy in number, were with the notables of the town, who were rearing them. ⁶ But when the letter reached them, they took the princes and slaughtered all seventy of them; they put their heads in baskets and sent them to him in Jezreel. ° A messenger came and reported to him: “They have brought the heads of the princes.” He said, “Pile them up in two heaps at the entrance of the gate before morning.” ⁹ In the morning he went out and stood there; and he said to all the people, “Are you blameless?° True, I conspired against my master and killed him; but who struck down all of these? ¹⁰ Know, then, that nothing that the LORD has spoken concerning the House of Ahab shall remain unfulfilled, for the LORD has done what he announced through His servant Elijah.” ¹¹ And Jehu struck down all that were left of the House of Ahab in Jezreel—and all his notables, intimates, and priests—till he left him no survivor.
¹² He then set out for Samaria. On the way, when he was at Beth-eked of the shepherds, ¹³ Jehu came upon the kinsmen of King Ahaziah of Judah. “Who are you?” he asked. They replied, “We are the kinsmen of

¹ Emendation yields “of the city.”
¹° Targum and Septuagint read “and bring them.”
¹ Youth are blameless.”
**Gift Edition – Leatherette**

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The JPS Audio Bible is the English audio version of the JPS Tanakh, produced and recorded for JPS by the Jewish Braille Institute. It features thirteen narrators who together have created sixty-one hours of listening. The readers include stage and television actors, radio personalities, teachers, and voiceover talents, including Theodore Bikel, Tovah Feldshuh, Bruce Feiler, and Harold Kushner.

The JPS Audio Bible is an audio version of the English-only edition available through audible.com and iTunes.com, and soon other online sellers, as the entire Tanakh, the Torah, the Five Megilloth, and Jonah, and as individual biblical books. The weekly reading (the parasha) can be listened to for free from the home page of the JPS website.
The JPS Tanakh-FAQs

1. What is the Tanakh?

The Tanakh is the canon of the Jewish Bible, also known as the Hebrew Bible, the Holy Scriptures, or what Christians refer to as the Old Testament. “Tanakh” is an acronym for the text’s three sections: the Torah (the Five Books of Moses), Nevi’im (Prophets) and Ketuvim (Writings).

2. What is the difference between the Torah and the Tanakh?

The Tanakh consists of all three sections of the Jewish Bible. The Torah is the first of these sections. It is also known as the Pentateuch, the Law of Moses, or the Five Books of Moses. The Torah contains these five books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

3. What is the JPS Tanakh?

The JPS Tanakh is available in both English-only and Hebrew-English editions. The Hebrew text of the Hebrew-English version is based on the famed Leningrad Codex, the masoretic text. Both versions include an entirely original translation of the Holy Scriptures into contemporary English, based on this traditional Hebrew text. The translation used is a slightly updated version of the 1985 JPS translation, commonly referred to as “the New JPS Translation.”

4. What is the difference between the new and old JPS translations?

The old JPS translation (OJPS) of the Tanakh was published in 1917. This translation is based on the Protestant Revised Version with the “un-Jewish and anti-Jewish” phrases replaced with traditional Jewish interpretation to reflect Jewish feeling, law, faith, and tradition. The OJPS translation uses some archaic language, such as “shalt,” “thee,” and “thou,” because it borrowed heavily from the King James Version. Several passages in the 1917 version are much more poetic in tone than the later translation. The 1917 edition, now in the public domain, is not available from JPS in print form. It is available as a free downloadable pdf from the JPS website.

The new JPS translation (NJPS) of the Tanakh’s three parts (Torah, Prophets, Writings) were published over a twenty-year period. The JPS Torah was published first in 1962. The Prophets (Nevi’im) was published in 1978 and the Writings (Ketuvim) in 1980. The three parts were then combined into the JPS Tanakh in 1985. See this article written in 2012 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the “New JPS Translation” of the Torah.
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With its clear, fresh language, the *JPS Tanakh* is widely recognized as an essential Bible resource by Jews and Christians, scholars and lay leaders. It has been chosen by many religious and secular groups as the definitive edition of the Holy Bible.

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- The *JPS Tanakh* is the official Jewish version in the “Bible as Literature” curriculum for American public schools and for its Jewish Bible website.
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