

PaRDeS (Jewish exegesis)

Pardes refers to (types of) approaches to biblical exegesis in rabbinic Judaism (or - simpler - interpretation of text in Torah study). The term, sometimes also spelled **PaRDeS**, is an acronym formed from the name initials of the following four approaches:

- **Peshat** (פְּשָׁט) — "plain" ("simple") or the direct meaning.
- **Remez** (רֵמֵז) — "hints" or the deep (allegoric: hidden or symbolic) meaning beyond just the literal sense.
- **Derash** (דְּרָשׁ) — from Hebrew *darash*: "inquire" ("seek") — the comparative (midrashic) meaning, as given through similar occurrences.
- **Sod** (סוּד) (pronounced with a long O as in 'bone') — "secret" ("mystery") or the esoteric/mystical meaning, as given through inspiration or revelation.

Tanakh

The Tanakh (Hebrew: תַּנ"ךְ, pronounced [ta'nax] or [tə'nax]; also *Tenakh*, *Tenak*, *Tanach*) is the canon of the Hebrew Bible. The name *Tanakh* is an acronym of the first Hebrew letter of each of the Masoretic Text's three traditional subdivisions: **Torah** ("Teaching", also known as the Five Books of Moses), **Nevi'im** ("Prophets") and **Ketuvim** ("Writings")—hence *TaNaKh*. The name "*Miqra*" (מִקְרָא), meaning "that which is read", is another Hebrew word for the *Tanakh*. The books of the Tanakh were passed on by each generation with the accompanying oral tradition, called the Oral Torah, also known as the Masoretic Text or *Miqra*.

Torah

Torah (/ˈtɔːrə/; [Hebrew](#): תּוֹרָה, "Instruction", "Teaching") is a central concept in the [Jewish tradition](#). It has a range of meanings: it can most specifically mean the first five books of the [Tanakh](#), it can mean this plus the [rabbinic commentaries](#) on it, it can mean the continued narrative from [Genesis](#) to the end of the Tanakh, it can even mean the totality of Jewish teaching and practice.^[1] Common to all these meanings, Torah consists of the [foundational narrative](#) of the [Jewish people](#): their call into being by [God](#), their trials and tribulations, and [their covenant](#) with their God, which involves following a way of life embodied in a set of religious obligations and civil laws (*halakha*).

In [rabbinic literature](#) the word Torah denotes both the [five books](#), *Torah Shebichtav* (תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִכְתָב, "Torah that is written"), and an [Oral Torah](#), *Torah Shebe'al Peh* (תּוֹרָה שֶׁבְעַל פֶּה, "Torah that is spoken"). The Oral Torah consists of the traditional interpretations and amplifications handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation and now embodied in the [Talmud](#) and [Midrash](#).^[2]

According to [religious tradition](#), all of the teachings found in the Torah, both written and oral, were given by God to [Moses](#), some of them at [Mount Sinai](#) and others at the [Tabernacle](#), and all the teachings were [written down by Moses](#), which resulted in the Torah we have today

(Extra) Traditionally, the words of the Torah are written on a [scroll](#) by a *sofer* on parchment in Hebrew. A [Torah portion](#) is read publicly at least once every three days, in the [halachically prescribed](#) tune, in the presence of a [congregation](#).^[5] Reading the Torah publicly is one of the bases for Jewish communal life.

Nevi'im

Nevi'im ([Hebrew](#): נְבִיאִים *Nəbī'im*, "Prophets") is the second main division of the [Hebrew Bible](#) (the *Tanakh*), between the [Torah](#) (instruction) and [Ketuvim](#) (writings). It contains two sub-groups, the Former Prophets (*Nevi'im Rishonim* נְבִיאִים רִאשׁוֹנִים, the narrative books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings) and the Latter Prophets (*Nevi'im Aharonim* נְבִיאִים אַחֲרֹנִים, the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the [Twelve Minor Prophets](#)).

(Extra) Many of the writings of the Latter Prophets are thought by scholars to be older than the narratives of the Former Prophets which precede them in the [canon](#), and were profoundly influential on the direction and development of Hebrew religion. The Latter Prophets have also had a wide influence on literature and on political and social activism in cultures outside of [Judaism](#).

Ketuvim

Ketuvim (in [Biblical Hebrew](#): כְּתוּבִים *Kəṭūbîm*, "writings") is the third and final section of the [Tanakh](#) ([Hebrew Bible](#)), after [Torah](#) (instruction) and [Nevi'im](#) (prophets). In English translations of the Hebrew Bible, this section is usually entitled Writings.

The Ketuvim are believed to have been written under the [Ruach HaKodesh](#), but with one level less authority than that of [prophecy](#).

Found among the Writings within the Hebrew scriptures, I and II [Chronicles](#) form one book, along with [Ezra](#) and [Nehemiah](#) which form a single unit entitled "[Ezra-Nehemiah](#)".

Ketuvim ([Hebrew Bible](#))

Three poetic books

[Psalms](#)

[Proverbs](#)

[Job](#)

[Five Megillot](#)

[Song of Songs](#)

[Ruth](#)

[Lamentations](#)

[Ecclesiastes](#)

[Esther](#)

Other books

[Daniel](#)

[Ezra – Nehemiah](#)

[Chronicles](#)

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The following list presents the books of Ketuvim in the order they appear in most printed editions. It also divides them into three subgroups based on the distinctiveness of *Sifrei Emet* and *Hamesh Megillot*.

The Three Poetic Books (*Sifrei Emet*)

- Tehillim ([Psalms](#)) תהלים
- Mishlei ([Book of Proverbs](#)) משלי
- Iyyôbh ([Book of Job](#)) איוב

The [Five Megillot](#) (*Hamesh Megillot*)

- Shîr Hashîrîm ([Song of Songs](#)) or (Song of Solomon) שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים ([Passover](#))
- Rûth ([Book of Ruth](#)) רות ([Shābhû'ôth](#)) Shavout
- Eikhah ([Lamentations](#)) איכה ([Ninth of Av](#)) [Also called *Kinnot* in Hebrew.] Tish b Av destruction of the first and second temple.
 - Qōheleth ([Ecclesiastes](#)) קהלת ([Sukkôth](#))
 - Estēr ([Book of Esther](#)) אֶסְתֵּר ([Pûrîm](#))

Other Books

- Dānî'ēl ([Book of Daniel](#)) דָּנִיֵּאל
- 'Ezrā ([Book of Ezra-Book of Nehemiah](#)) עזרא
- Divrei ha-Yamim ([Chronicles](#)) דברי הימים

The Jewish textual tradition never finalized the order of the books in Ketuvim. The [Babylonian Talmud](#) ([Bava Batra](#) 14b-15a) gives their order as Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations of Jeremiah, Daniel, Scroll of Esther, Ezra, Chronicles.

Midrash

In [Judaism](#), the *Midrash* ([Hebrew](#): מדרש; plural *midrashim*) is the body of [homiletic](#) stories told by [Jewish](#) rabbinic sages to explain passages in the [Tanakh](#). Midrash is a method of interpreting biblical stories that goes beyond simple distillation of religious, legal, or moral teachings. It fills in gaps left in the biblical narrative regarding events and personalities that are only hinted at.^[1]

The purpose of midrash was to resolve problems in the interpretation of difficult passages of the text of the Hebrew Bible, using Rabbinic principles of [hermeneutics](#) and [philology](#) to align them with the religious and ethical values of religious teachers.

the etymology of *midrash* to the [Qal](#) of the common Hebrew verb *darash* (דרש) "to seek, study, inquire". The word "midrash" occurs twice in the [Hebrew Bible](#): 2 Chronicles 13:22 "in the midrash of the prophet [Iddo](#)", and 24:27 "in the midrash of the Book of the Kings".

Methodology

According to the [PaRDeS](#) approaches to [exegesis](#), interpretation of Biblical texts in Judaism is realized through *peshat* (literal or plain meaning, lit. "plain" or "simple"), *remez* (deep meaning, lit. "hints"), *derash* (comparative meaning, from Hebrew *darash*—"to inquire" or "to seek") and *sod* (hidden meaning or philosophy, lit. "secret" or "mystery"). The Midrash concentrates somewhat on *remez* but mostly on *derash* (Some thinkers divide PaRDeS into pshat, remez, *din* (law) and sod. In this understanding, midrash aggada deals with remez and midrash halakha deals with din).

Exegesis

Exegesis (from the [Greek](#) ἐξήγησις from ἐξηγεῖσθαι 'to lead out') is a critical explanation or [interpretation](#) of a text, especially a [religious text](#).

Traditionally the term was used primarily for exegesis of the [Bible](#); however, in contemporary usage it has broadened to mean a critical explanation of any text, and the term "biblical exegesis" is used for greater specificity.

Exegesis includes a wide range of critical disciplines: textual criticism is the investigation into the history and origins of the text, but exegesis may include the study of the historical and cultural backgrounds for the author, the text, and the original audience. Other analysis includes classification of the type of [literary genres](#) present in the text, and an analysis of [grammatical](#) and [syntactical](#) features in the text itself.

The terms exegesis and [hermeneutics](#) have been used interchangeably. However, hermeneutics is a more widely defined discipline of interpretation theory: hermeneutics includes the entire framework of the interpretive process, encompassing all forms of communication: written, verbal and nonverbal, while exegesis focuses primarily on the written text.

Views of Christian exegesis

Different Christians have different views on how to perform biblical exegesis. The two most common views are revealed and rational.

- Revealed exegesis considers that the [Holy Spirit \(God\)](#) inspired the authors of the scriptural texts, and so the words of those texts convey a divine [revelation](#). In this view of exegesis, the principle of [sensus plenior](#) applies - that because of its divine authorship, the Bible has a "fuller meaning" than its human authors intended or could have foreseen.
- Rational exegesis bases its operation on the idea that the authors have their own inspiration (in this sense, synonymous with "artistic inspiration"), so their works are completely and utterly a product of the social environment and human intelligence of their authors.

Etymology

Etymology is the study of the [history](#) of [words](#), their origins, and how their form and [meaning](#) have changed over time. By an extension, the term "the etymology of [a word]" means the origin of the particular word.

For languages with a long written history, etymologists make use of texts in these languages and texts about the languages to gather knowledge about how words were used during earlier periods of their history and when they entered the languages in question. Etymologists also apply the methods of [comparative linguistics](#) to reconstruct information about languages that are too old for any direct information to be available.

Who is a Jew?

"**Who is a Jew?**" ([Hebrew](#): מיהו יהודי pronounced [['mihu jehu'di](#)]) is a basic question about [Jewish identity](#) and considerations of Jewish [self-identification](#). The question is based in ideas about Jewish personhood which have [cultural](#), [religious](#), [genealogical](#), and [personal](#) dimensions. The definition of who is a Jew varies according to whether it is being considered by Jews based on normative religious statutes or self-identification, or by non-Jews for other reasons. Because Jewish identity can include characteristics of an [ethnicity](#), a religion, or conversion, the definition depends on many aspects that must be considered. According to the simplest definition used by Jews for self-identification, a person is a Jew by birth, or becomes one through religious conversion.