

Dr. Jeffrey Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 23, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 23, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Jeffrey Hudon's lecture on biblical archaeology, specifically session 23, part 1, focuses on the Dead Sea Scrolls' discovery and history. **The lecture details** the scrolls' unearthing in the Judean desert, highlighting the involvement of Bedouin shepherds and subsequent acquisition by various individuals and institutions. **It also explores** the pre-1947 evidence suggesting prior discoveries of manuscripts in the region and discusses the archaeological excavations at Khirbet Qumran, the site near where the scrolls were found. **The lecture provides** a historical context for the discovery, situating it within the political turmoil of Palestine in the mid-20th century and tracing the scrolls' journey from their initial discovery to their eventual acquisition by Israeli authorities. **Finally**, the lecture examines the history of the settlement at Khirbet Qumran itself, from its origins as a fortified outpost to its later occupation by a Jewish sect.

2. 26 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 23 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introduction & Languages → Archaeology).



**Hudon_BibArch_Ses
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3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Jeffrey Hudon's lecture on the Dead Sea Scrolls:

Briefing Document: Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 1

Introduction:

This document summarizes the key information presented by Dr. Jeffrey Hudon in the first part of his lecture on the Dead Sea Scrolls. It focuses on the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the scrolls, previous finds in the region, and the history of the Qumran site itself. Dr. Hudon emphasizes the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls as "probably the greatest archaeological find related to the Bible in modern times."

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. The Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls:

- The Dead Sea Scrolls comprise nearly 1,000 fragments of manuscripts, as well as several complete manuscripts. These are dated to the centuries before and shortly after the turn of the era.
- The texts include biblical texts, commentaries, and sectarian literature.
- They were found in caves near Khirbet Qumran on the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea.

1. The Landscape and Setting of Discovery:

- The scrolls were found in the Judean Wilderness, "the biblical Hamidbar, Midbar Yehuda."
- The area includes an escarpment and a rugged landscape. The area was close to a highway to Jerusalem.
- The scrolls were found in "a series of at least 12 caves, probably many, many more."

1. Previous Manuscript Discoveries in the Region:

- Dr. Hudon highlights that the 1947 discovery wasn't the first of its kind. He presents evidence of:
- Second/third-century Christian leaders reporting a manuscript find in a jar near Jericho.

- Timothy, patriarch of Seleucia, reporting books found in a "rock-dwelling" near Jericho.
- A 950 AD Karite scholar describing doctrines of "the cave people" found in books hidden in a cave.
- In the 1930s, Bedouins offering to show workers at the Dead Sea Potash Works caves containing ancient books.
- These earlier accounts suggest a long history of manuscript finds in the same general area as Qumran.

1. **The Case of Moses Wilhelm Shapira:**

- Shapira, a 19th-century Jerusalem antiquities dealer, claimed to have found leather manuscripts from the eastern shore of the Dead Sea containing an early version of Deuteronomy.
- He dated them to 850 BC.
- Scholars declared them forgeries, which led to Shapira's suicide.
- There is recent reevaluation and some scholars believe that his claims may have been authentic.
- The original manuscripts were lost after they were photographed.

1. **The Cairo Genizah and Solomon Schechter:**

- Solomon Schechter discovered ancient manuscripts in a *Genizah* (a repository for worn-out religious texts) in the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo.
- He found fragments of a work that contained the teachings of a Jewish sect called the Sons of Zadok who existed around the first century BC.
- A similar work, the *Serekh haYahad*, or Rule of the Community, and the Damascus Document, were found with the Dead Sea Scrolls. This highlights the significance of Schechter's discovery as a precursor to understanding the Qumran texts.

1. **The Political Context of the Initial Dead Sea Scroll Discovery:**

- The discovery occurred during the turbulent period of 1946-1948 in Palestine, marked by violence between Jews and Arabs and a British mandate.
- This political situation made research and excavation efforts difficult and sometimes dangerous.

1. The Initial Discovery of the Scrolls in Cave 1:

- The famous story involves Bedouin boys searching for a lost sheep who threw a rock into a cave and heard pottery breaking, discovering jars containing scrolls.
- The scrolls were initially ignored but were eventually taken to Bethlehem to be appraised.
- The Bedouin who discovered the scrolls was nicknamed "the wolf," Mohammed Ahmed El Hamid or Adib.

1. The Chain of Custody of the Initial Scrolls:

- The scrolls went from Bedouin hands to antiquities dealers in Bethlehem, then to Khalil Iskander Shahin (Kondo), who brought them to Metropolitan Mar Athanasius Samuel of the Syrian Orthodox Church.
- Samuel bought the scrolls for \$100 and attempted to get expert opinions without success.
- Three of the first scrolls were sold to Eliezer Sukenik of Hebrew University while Samuel still had the other four.
- These initial sales demonstrate how quickly the news spread and the high value the scrolls soon had.
- The remaining four scrolls ended up in America. They were eventually purchased by Yigal Yadin (Sukenik's son) in the United States.

1. Early Efforts to Document the Scrolls:

- Two American doctoral students, William Brownlee and John Trevor, were among the first to study and photograph the scrolls.
- John Trevor's photographs, taken in a makeshift photo lab, are still considered invaluable, as they capture the scrolls in a better state than what can be seen today.
- William Albright at Johns Hopkins University called the find "the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times."

1. The Division of Control and Subsequent Archaeological Efforts:

- After the 1948 war, the Judean Wilderness was divided between Israel and Jordan.

- Israel launched expeditions to survey the canyons on their side of the border due to fear of looting.
- Jordan organized excavations at Qumran and searched for more caves under the leadership of the French School in Jerusalem.
- Bedouins continued to search for scrolls, often preceding official archaeological teams.
- Excavations at Qumran were carried out by the French until 1956, and then by Israelis in the 1990s and 2000s.

1. The Site of Qumran and its History:

- Qumran was located on a terrace overlooking the Dead Sea.
- It had a complex system of water channels and cisterns to collect water from the wadis.
- The site was initially a fortified border post in the 9th or 8th century BC, referencing Joshua 15 and 2 Chronicles 26.
- It was reoccupied by a Jewish religious sect around 125 BC, which built workshops, meeting rooms, and ritual baths (mikvot).
- The site was disrupted by an earthquake in 31 BC and then reoccupied until AD 68 when the Roman army approached.
- The sect members likely hid the scrolls in caves and were killed or enslaved by the Romans.

Key Quotes:

- "There's little doubt in the minds of most biblical scholars and archeologists, biblical scholars and archeologists that the discovery and recovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls comprise probably the greatest archaeological find related to the Bible in modern times."
- "The Christian leader, second-century and third-century Christian leaders reported the discovery of an ancient manuscript together with other Hebrew and Greek books in a jar near Jericho."
- "He claimed that these manuscripts contained an early version of Deuteronomy, and he dated them to 850 BC." (Referring to Shapira)

- "Albright immediately responded and said, congratulations on the discovery of the greatest manuscript, the discovery of modern times, something to that effect."
- "And they remain probably the best way to study those texts because since their discovery, they've deteriorated, gotten dark, and they're much harder to read."
(Referring to Trevor's photographs)

Conclusion:

Dr. Hudon's lecture provides a rich background to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The lecture highlights that the 1947 discovery was not the first time manuscripts were found in the region. The initial circumstances were complex and included political and social unrest. This lecture sets the stage for understanding the content and significance of these ancient texts, which will be further explored in later sessions. The history of the Qumran site itself is also outlined and reveals a history of occupation spanning multiple periods.

4. Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 23, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 1

Dead Sea Scrolls: A Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 complete sentences.

1. What is the general consensus among biblical scholars and archaeologists regarding the Dead Sea Scrolls' significance?
2. Where were the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered and how many individual manuscripts are estimated to be among them?
3. Describe the unique discovery of the copper scroll.
4. Besides the 1947 discovery, what evidence suggests that ancient manuscripts were found near the Dead Sea prior to the 20th century?
5. Who was Moses Wilhelm Shapira, and why is he a controversial figure in the history of Dead Sea Scroll discoveries?
6. How did Solomon Schechter's discovery in Cairo contribute to the understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and what key texts did he find?
7. What was the political context in Palestine during the time of the 1947 discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls?
8. How did the initial discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls occur?
9. Summarize the roles of Metropolitan Samuel, Eleazar Sukenik, and John Trevor in the acquisition and preservation of the initial Dead Sea Scrolls.
10. What actions did both the Israelis and the Jordanians take to locate more scrolls in the Judean wilderness after the initial discoveries?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The consensus among biblical scholars and archaeologists is that the discovery and recovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls represent the greatest archaeological find related to the Bible in modern times. These scrolls provide invaluable insights into biblical texts and sectarian literature from the centuries surrounding the turn of the era.

2. The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in caves near the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, close to Khirbet Qumran. It is estimated there are nearly 1,000 fragments from nearly 1,000 individual manuscripts, as well as several nearly complete manuscripts.
3. Unlike most of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were found as fragments, the copper scroll was found as a complete scroll by archaeologists rather than Bedouin, and it is unique in that it is made of metal rather than papyrus or parchment.
4. Early Christian leaders in the second and third centuries, and also a Patriarch from Seleucia, reported discoveries of ancient manuscripts in jars and caves near Jericho, along with a 10th-century Karite scholar who referenced books hidden by a Jewish group known as "the cave people."
5. Moses Wilhelm Shapira was an antiquities dealer who claimed to have found leather manuscripts from the eastern shore of the Dead Sea with a version of Deuteronomy. He was accused of forgery and committed suicide, though recent scholarship suggests his claims may have had some authenticity.
6. Solomon Schechter found ancient fragments in the Geniza of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo which contained the teachings of an extinct Jewish sect known as the Sons of Zadok, including what later came to be called the Rule of the Community and the Damascus Document; a version of which was found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.
7. The political context in Palestine during 1946-1948 was marked by violence between Jews and Arabs, with the British mandate attempting to maintain order. This period of upheaval greatly impacted the discovery and initial handling of the scrolls.
8. The initial discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls occurred when two Bedouin boys looking for a lost sheep threw a rock into a cave and heard the breaking of pottery, leading them to discover jars containing the first set of scrolls.
9. Metropolitan Samuel purchased the first scrolls and brought them to scholars; Eleazar Sukenik purchased three scrolls for the Hebrew University; and John Trevor photographed the scrolls, which are still useful for study because they were made soon after the scrolls' discovery.
10. Israelis launched systematic surveys of wadis on their side of the border, while the Jordanians led expeditions to find more caves around Qumran with the help

of Bedouin guides, leading to both systematic archaeological surveys, and more unsystematic Bedouin led discoveries.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the impact of the political and historical context of the mid-20th century on the discovery, preservation, and scholarly reception of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Consider the roles of various national and religious groups in this process.
2. Discuss the significance of the non-biblical texts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. How do these texts shed light on the beliefs and practices of the Jewish sect thought to have produced them?
3. Compare and contrast the various accounts of manuscript discoveries prior to 1947 with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, evaluating their credibility and impact on the history of manuscript finds.
4. Evaluate the contributions of both professional archaeologists and Bedouin groups to the discovery and excavation of the Dead Sea Scrolls, discussing the challenges and ethical considerations associated with their respective roles.
5. Describe the archaeological site of Khirbet Qumran in detail, noting key structures and elements. Discuss how these discoveries have been interpreted in relation to the scrolls and their origins, considering the evidence for habitation during various historical periods.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Khirbet Qumran:** The archaeological site located near the Dead Sea, associated with the community believed to have produced and preserved the Dead Sea Scrolls.
- **Bedouin:** Nomadic Arab people, particularly those living in the Middle East, some of whom played a critical role in discovering the Dead Sea Scrolls.
- **Judean Wilderness (Midbar Yehuda):** The arid desert region surrounding the Dead Sea, characterized by caves and wadis (canyons), which served as the location of Dead Sea Scrolls discoveries.

- **Ecole Biblique et Archaeologique Francaise:** The French School of Bible and Archaeology in Jerusalem; a highly regarded institution whose members played a key role in the excavation of Qumran and the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls.
- **Dead Sea Scrolls:** A collection of ancient Jewish religious texts, primarily written in Hebrew and Aramaic, dating from the third century BCE to the first century CE. These scrolls were found in caves near the Dead Sea.
- **Copper Scroll:** A unique scroll made of copper rather than parchment or papyrus, found at Qumran and notable for its detailed list of locations of buried treasure.
- **Sons of Zadok:** A Jewish sect identified by Solomon Schechter in manuscripts he found in Cairo, also mentioned in documents found at Qumran.
- **Teacher of Righteousness:** A key leader associated with the group believed to have produced the Dead Sea Scrolls, as found in texts like the Damascus Document.
- **Geniza:** A repository for old, worn-out, and unusable texts found in synagogues, such as the one in Cairo where Solomon Schechter found ancient fragments.
- **Mikveh (Mikvot):** A ritual bath used for purification in Judaism, numerous examples of which were found at Qumran.
- **Haganah:** The pre-state Jewish military organization in Palestine, active during the time of the scroll discoveries.
- **Wadi (Wadis):** A dry riverbed or canyon, often found in arid regions, where many caves containing the Dead Sea Scrolls were located.
- **Metropolitan Samuel:** The Syrian Orthodox Archbishop who first acquired a group of the Dead Sea Scrolls, eventually trying to sell them in the United States.
- **Eleazar Sukenik:** A Hebrew University archaeologist who was among the first scholars to study and purchase Dead Sea Scrolls, recognizing their value.
- **John Trevor:** A young scholar at the American School of Oriental Research who took crucial early photographs of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

5. FAQs on Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 23, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions about the Dead Sea Scrolls

1. **What are the Dead Sea Scrolls and why are they considered significant?** The Dead Sea Scrolls comprise nearly 1,000 fragments and some complete manuscripts discovered near the Dead Sea. They include biblical texts, commentaries, and sectarian literature dating from the centuries immediately before and after the turn of the era. Their significance lies in their status as the greatest archaeological find related to the Bible in modern times, providing a glimpse into the religious and literary landscape of that period. The scrolls offer invaluable insights into the development of the biblical text, Jewish thought, and the origins of Christianity.
2. **Where were the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered?** The Dead Sea Scrolls were primarily found in a series of at least 12 caves near the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, close to a site called Khirbet Qumran. These caves are located in the Judean wilderness.
3. **Were there any prior discoveries of similar manuscripts in the same region?** Yes, there are several documented instances of earlier discoveries of manuscripts in the Judean wilderness. Second and third-century Christian leaders reported finding ancient manuscripts in jars near Jericho. Timothy, the patriarch of Seleucia, mentioned finding books in a cave near Jericho based on a Jew's account. A 10th-century Karite scholar described the doctrines of a Jewish group from books hidden in caves. Additionally, there were accounts of Bedouins offering to show caves with books in the 1930s, and Moses Wilhelm Shapira, a 19th-century antiquities dealer, claimed to have found leather strips with an early version of Deuteronomy.
4. **How were the first Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1947?** The most well-known story involves two Bedouin boys searching for a lost sheep. They threw a rock into a cave, heard pottery breaking, and discovered jars containing the first scrolls. The scrolls initially found their way to antiquities dealers in Bethlehem before being recognized as significant. There is some uncertainty about the precise date, it being anywhere between late 1946 and early 1947.

5. **Who were the key figures involved in the acquisition and study of the first scrolls?** Several individuals were crucial to the early stages of the discovery. The Bedouin were the original finders of course. George Isaiah, a shopkeeper, who referred them to Khalil Iskander Shahin (Kondo), who then sold the scrolls to Mar Athanasius Yeshu Samuel of the Syrian Orthodox Church. The first Jewish scholar to recognize the significance of some scrolls was Eliezer Sukenik of Hebrew University. John Trevor and William Brownlee, American scholars, photographed the scrolls. The scrolls in possession of Metropolitan Samuel were purchased by Yigal Yadin (Sukenik's son) for the State of Israel.
6. **What were some of the challenges in securing and studying the Dead Sea Scrolls?** The political instability in Palestine (1946-1948) was a major obstacle, as the area was experiencing conflict between Jewish and Arab populations. Getting the manuscripts out of the hands of Bedouins who hoped to sell them was difficult. The scrolls themselves were in fragile condition, and the early photographs taken by John Trevor remain some of the best images for study purposes. The scrolls were also discovered in a fragmented state due to looting by Bedouins who recognized their value. The financial cost for excavations and preservation were very high, requiring international cooperation to fund.
7. **What is the connection between Khirbet Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls?** Khirbet Qumran is the archaeological site located near the caves where the scrolls were found. The site was initially a fortified border post and village, likely in the 9th-8th century BCE. It was later reoccupied by a Jewish religious sect around 125 BCE, expanded, and included communal areas, workshops and ritual baths. This sect was likely responsible for producing and depositing the scrolls in the nearby caves. The site was abandoned around 68 AD as the Roman Army approached, leading to the hiding of scrolls in the caves.
8. **What does the history of Khirbet Qumran tell us about the people who lived there?** The history of Khirbet Qumran suggests that the site was occupied by a Jewish religious sect who lived a highly organized communal life focused on purity and religious study. These people built an elaborate system of water channels and cisterns for ritual and daily use, and the archaeological evidence suggests that they were the ones responsible for the Dead Sea Scrolls, which they likely hid in the caves for preservation before they were forced to flee the site. They were a group separate from the mainstream Jewish population, and they had their own religious beliefs and rituals.