

# Dr. Jeffrey Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 25, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 3 Resources from NotebookLM

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

## **1. Abstract of Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 25, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

This lecture excerpt from Dr. Jeffrey Hudon's "Biblical Archaeology" course focuses on the individuals involved in the discovery and study of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It highlights the challenges in acquiring and preserving the scrolls, including the roles of key scholars like Roland de Vaux and Frank Moore Cross. The lecture also explores the lives and contributions of other important scholars, such as Józef Milik and John Strugnell, while noting their diverse personalities and eventual fates. Finally, the lecture discusses the Essenes, a Jewish sect believed to be connected to the scrolls, their lifestyle, and their possible relationship to Jesus. The presentation includes numerous images and archaeological evidence to support its claims.

**2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 25 – 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  
sion25.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a briefing document summarizing the key themes and information from the provided source, "Hudon\_BibArch\_EN\_Ses25.pdf":

#### Briefing Document: Dead Sea Scrolls and Qumran Archaeology

**Overview:** This document summarizes Dr. Jeffrey Hudon's lecture on the Dead Sea Scrolls, focusing on the scholars involved in their study, the community believed to be associated with them (the Essenes), and key aspects of their lifestyle and beliefs. The lecture emphasizes both the academic work and the human stories behind the scrolls' discovery and interpretation.

#### Key Themes and Ideas:

##### 1. The Scroll Editing Team and Their Challenges:

- **Formation:** After the scrolls' discovery, a team of international scholars was assembled in Jerusalem to piece together, translate, and interpret the thousands of scroll fragments. This was a lengthy process, requiring decades of work at the Rockefeller Museum.
- **Initial Team:** The initial team of seven scholars worked primarily during the summer months.
- **Political Context:** The political climate of the time, with Jordanian control over East Jerusalem, meant that no Israeli or Jewish scholars were initially invited to participate.
- **Financial Hurdles:** Acquiring the scroll fragments from Bedouin middlemen was costly, requiring constant fundraising efforts. They eventually agreed on a price of \$2.80 per square centimeter of text.

##### 1. Key Scholars and Their Contributions/Controversies:

- **Roland De Vaux:** A French Dominican priest and archaeologist, he directed the excavations at Qumran. He interpreted Qumran as a monastic community, drawing criticism for being influenced by his Catholic background. His interpretations, though attacked, were "sound and carefully considered." *Quote: "His interpretations of Qumran, I think, were sound and carefully considered, but they were very much attacked by many scholars because they thought he was interpreting the site based on his own understanding of monastic living."*

- **Frank Moore Cross:** An American scholar and paleographer. He was able to date texts by their script and paleography, and his results matched that of the Carbon 14 testing which came at the same time. He demonstrated instances where early biblical texts (Septuagint) may be more original than the Masoretic text. *Quote: "But one of the things he discovered, and he showed Albright, and Albright agreed, was that sometimes early biblical texts have passages or words that seem to follow the Septuagint closer than the Masoretic text."*
- **Józef Milik:** A Polish priest known for his speed and prolific writing, particularly regarding sectarian texts. He later left the priesthood and his work was eventually passed to other scholars. The early lack of conservation was highlighted by his picture, smoking directly over the fragments, and the use of scotch tape on fragments.
- **John Strugnell:** A British linguist, who initially contributed by including Jewish and Israeli scholars on the team. He was eventually removed from the team after being interviewed while intoxicated and making controversial anti-Jewish statements.
- **Patrick Skehan:** A Catholic scholar who focused mostly on biblical scrolls. His work was completed by his student, Eugene Ulrich.
- **Jean P. Starkie:** A French Dominican scholar and expert in Aramaic and Nabataean script.
- **John Allegro:** A controversial British Protestant scholar who later became an atheist/agnostic. He was criticized for plagiarism, sensationalizing the scrolls, and developing outlandish theories. He "died in disgrace" after publishing absurd and unreadable books. *Quote: "He was a person that Frank More Cross called one of the few amoral people I've ever met in my life. He would take material from other scholars, take scrolls, borrow them and then publish them without any kind of permission."*

#### 1. The Essenes and Qumran:

- **Identification:** Most scholars identify the Qumran community with the Essenes, a pious Jewish sect described by Flavius Josephus. However, some scholars do not agree.
- **Beliefs:** They were strict Orthodox Jews devoted to the law, believing that the coming of the Messiah was hindered by the lack of righteousness.

- **Separation:** They separated themselves physically from other Jews to attain moral perfection and ritual purity.
- **Apocalyptic View:** They believed in an imminent end of the world, particularly in a war between the "Sons of Light" and the "Sons of Darkness." The Essenes saw themselves as priestly apocalyptics preparing the way of the Lord.
- **Lifestyle:** They lived rigorous, simple lives, often communally. They practiced ritual bathing and shared meals and possessions. They lived in isolated communities, sometimes with individual dwellings, but also coming together for certain ceremonies.
- **Mikvehs:** Ten ritual baths have been found at Qumran.
- **Relationship to Christianity:** While it's likely they were aware of Jesus and John the Baptist, their expectation of a different type of Messiah led to their rejection of Jesus.
- **Essenes in Jerusalem:** Josephus wrote that there was an Essene quarter located in Jerusalem on Mount Zion with access through the Essene gate, and that they would run outside the city to relieve themselves.

#### 1. **Key Essene Documents:**

- The "Rule of the Community" (Serek Ha Yahad) and the "Damascus document" give insight into this group's rules and beliefs.

#### 1. **Significance of the Scrolls:**

- The scrolls provide invaluable insight into Jewish life, religious beliefs, and the development of biblical texts during the Second Temple period.
- The Essenes have a number of parallels with the Christian monastic movement, which came after them.
- The scrolls have challenged previous assumptions regarding the transmission of biblical texts, showing that the Masoretic text isn't necessarily the oldest text.

**Conclusion:**

Dr. Hudon's lecture provides a valuable overview of the Dead Sea Scrolls, contextualizing their discovery within both historical and personal narratives. He illuminates the challenges faced by the scholars working on the scrolls, the complex personalities involved, and the significance of the scrolls for understanding ancient Jewish life and the texts of the Hebrew Bible. He also gives insight into the sectarian literature and life of the Essenes, and how they understood their place in the history of Israel.

This briefing document should give a comprehensive overview of the key information discussed in the source.

## 4. Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 25, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 3

### The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

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

1. Who was Roland De Vaux, and what was his role in the Dead Sea Scroll project?
2. Why were Israeli or Jewish scholars initially excluded from the Dead Sea Scroll team?
3. What was Frank Moore Cross's significant contribution to the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls?
4. Describe the early practices in working with Dead Sea Scroll fragments.
5. What caused John Strugnell's downfall, and what is one positive aspect of his involvement?
6. What was controversial about John Allegro's approach to the Dead Sea Scrolls?
7. What was the name given to the Essene community and what were their main beliefs about the Messiah and the world?
8. What were some of the distinguishing practices of the Essenes, and what was their goal in adopting these practices?
9. Why is the location of the Essenes' gate in Jerusalem significant?
10. How did the Essenes' expectations differ from the message of Jesus?

#### Answer Key

1. Roland De Vaux was a French Dominican priest, archaeologist, and biblical historian who was the director of the Ecole Biblique. He recruited and led the initial team of scholars who were tasked with studying and publishing the Dead Sea Scrolls fragments.
2. The West Bank, including East Jerusalem, was under Jordanian control at the time the initial team was assembled, and pressure from the Jordanian government led to the exclusion of Israeli and Jewish scholars.

3. Frank Moore Cross was a brilliant scholar who made significant contributions to the field, including his ability to date the texts based on their script and paleography and also identifying discrepancies between the Masoretic Text and Septuagint.
4. Early practices in working with the Dead Sea Scroll fragments were notably sloppy and careless concerning conservation, including practices like smoking near the texts and using scotch tape to piece fragments together.
5. John Strugnell, despite being a brilliant scholar, faced downfall due to alcoholism and making derogatory remarks about Judaism. However, some scholars note that he was responsible for bringing Jewish and Israeli scholars into the Dead Sea Scrolls project.
6. John Allegro, a controversial scholar, was known for his sensationalist approach, often publishing without permission, and his interpretations were considered ridiculous by many, such as his "Sacred Mushroom and the Cross."
7. The Essenes called their community HaYahad and they believed the coming of the Messiah was hindered by the lack of righteousness in the Jewish community.
8. Essenes practiced communal living, shared resources, ritual bathing, and self-imposed poverty to attain moral perfection, ritual purity and wait for the coming of the Messiah.
9. The Essenes' gate location is significant because they saw Jerusalem as so sacred that they would not relieve themselves inside the city, thus the gate had to be located at a point where they could exit quickly and easily.
10. The Essenes, as priestly apocalyptics, were looking for a war and a different apocalyptic ending, rather than a rabbi from Nazareth preaching love and allowing himself to die on the cross.

## Essay Questions

**Instructions:** Answer each question in a well-structured essay format, drawing upon the source material.

1. Discuss the challenges and controversies that plagued the initial team of scholars responsible for editing and publishing the Dead Sea Scrolls. Consider the political, personal, and methodological difficulties they faced.
2. Compare and contrast the contributions of at least three individual scholars involved in the Dead Sea Scroll project. What were their strengths and weaknesses, and how did their work impact the study of the scrolls?
3. Analyze the relationship between the Essenes and the broader Jewish community of the time. What was their motivation for separating themselves and what significance does the Essene gate in Jerusalem have?
4. Evaluate the evidence presented in the source material to support the claim that the community at Qumran was Essene. What arguments are made for this identification, and what other possibilities exist?
5. Explore the potential connections between the Essenes, John the Baptist, and Jesus as referenced in the provided source material. How did the Essenes' expectations of the Messiah differ from the message of Jesus?



## Glossary of Key Terms

**Bedouin:** Nomadic Arab peoples, particularly those living in the deserts of the Middle East; known for their early discovery of some of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

**Ecole Biblique:** A French biblical and archaeological institute in Jerusalem, where Roland de Vaux was the director.

**Essenes:** A Jewish sect during the Second Temple period, known for their ascetic practices, communal living, and apocalyptic beliefs.

**HaYahad:** Hebrew for "the community," used by the Essenes to refer to their group; thought to be based at Qumran.

**Hasidim:** A group of pious Jews in the Maccabean period devoted to strict observance of the Law.

**Masoretic Text:** The authoritative Hebrew text of the Old Testament, upon which many modern versions are based.

**Mikveh (Mikveot - plural):** A ritual bath used in Jewish practice for purification.

**Paleography:** The study of ancient writing systems and the decipherment of old texts; used by scholars like Frank Moore Cross to date texts.

**Qumran:** The site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered; theorized to be the settlement of the Essenes.

**Rockefeller Museum:** A museum in East Jerusalem, where the initial team of scholars studied and worked on piecing together the Dead Sea Scrolls fragments.

**Sectarian Text:** Writings produced by a particular religious group, such as the Essenes, rather than canonical biblical texts.

**Septuagint:** The ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

**Serek Ha Yahad:** The Rule of the Community; the primary rulebook for the Essenes' community life.

## **5. FAQs on Hudon, Biblical Archaeology, Session 25, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)**

### **FAQ on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Community**

- 1. Who were the primary scholars involved in the initial study and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and what were their backgrounds?**
2. The initial team of scholars assembled to study the Dead Sea Scrolls included Roland De Vaux, a French Dominican priest and archaeologist, who led the team; Frank Moore Cross, an American scholar who was a paleography expert; Józef Milik, a Polish priest; John Strugnell, a British linguist; Patrick Skehan, an older Catholic scholar; Jean P. Starkie, a French Dominican scholar specializing in Aramaic; and John Allegro, a controversial British Protestant scholar. These scholars came from diverse religious backgrounds, some were Catholic priests, others Protestant, and one later became an atheist/agnostic, but all were experts in their respective fields. Their collaboration was primarily based in Jerusalem at the Rockefeller Museum, with the initial funding of the project primarily coming from John D. Rockefeller. Initially, no Israeli or Jewish scholars were involved due to the geopolitical situation of Jordanian-controlled Jerusalem during that time period.
- 3. What was the process of acquiring the Dead Sea Scrolls fragments, and what were the associated challenges?**
4. The majority of Dead Sea Scroll fragments were acquired through purchases from Bedouin tribes who initially discovered the caves. The Bedouin often found the scrolls first, leading to higher prices for fragments when scholars tried to acquire them. The prices were negotiated with a Palestinian middleman named Kondo. The scholars had to raise funds by any means necessary to purchase these fragments, which were often sold at prices of \$2.80 per square centimeter. The process was challenging due to the high cost and the initial lack of care in handling the delicate fragments. This led to a period of intense purchasing of many scrolls over the course of many years.

5. **What were the working conditions of the initial team of scholars, and how did their methods affect the preservation of the scrolls?**
6. The initial working conditions were quite different from modern standards. The scholars often worked in a relatively casual setting in the Rockefeller Museum in East Jerusalem, even smoking cigarettes over the ancient scrolls and using scotch tape to piece fragments together. These methods, while considered careless and sloppy by today's standards, were standard at the time. The early lack of conservation awareness necessitated restoration work in later years to undo the damage done, including removing tape residue.
7. **How did the scholarship of Frank Moore Cross contribute to the understanding of the biblical texts found at Qumran?**
8. Frank Moore Cross made major contributions to the understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls, especially through his paleographic expertise, which allowed him to accurately date the texts based on the shape of their letters. His work often confirmed carbon dating results of the parchment or papyrus used to write the texts. He also discovered, through his study of a copy of Samuel, that some early texts, such as the Septuagint, might preserve older versions of biblical texts than the Masoretic Text, which was considered controversial at the time.
9. **What was controversial about the work of John Allegro, and how did it impact his reputation?** John Allegro was a highly controversial scholar known for his sensationalist interpretations of the Dead Sea Scrolls. He was accused of taking materials from other scholars and publishing them without permission. His later works, such as "The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross," were considered absurd and discredited within the scholarly community. Allegro was viewed as amoral by his colleagues, and ultimately died in disgrace.

**10. Who were the Essenes, and what was their relationship to the Qumran community and the Dead Sea Scrolls?**

11. Most scholars believe the Qumran community, from whom the Dead Sea Scrolls originated, were closely associated with, if not the Essenes, an ancient Jewish sect. The Essenes were a highly pious group of Jews who separated themselves from mainstream society to live simple, rigorous lives in communities, often in the desert. The Essenes are believed to have been looking for an apocalyptic change and had specific practices of communal living, ritual purity, and study of the scriptures. They believed they were living righteously to hasten the arrival of the Messiah and engaged in a sort of "holy war" with those who did not follow their belief system.

**12. What unique aspects of the Essenes' beliefs and practices are highlighted in the Dead Sea Scrolls?**

13. The Dead Sea Scrolls offer insights into the Essenes' unique beliefs and practices. They lived communally, shared meals, clothing, and a common treasury, and they practiced self-imposed poverty. Ritual bathing and purification was very important, and the mikvehs found at Qumran attest to this. They also had an apocalyptic worldview, expecting a final battle between the "Sons of Light" and the "Sons of Darkness." The Essenes focused on intense study and believed they were preparing the way for the Lord.

**14. How do the texts and practices of the Essenes relate to the biblical text and early Christianity?**

15. The Essenes' practice of living in isolation, rigorous discipline, and ritual bathing have parallels with later Christian monasticism. The texts also provide insight into how the Essenes interpreted biblical prophecy. Some scholars speculate that John the Baptist may have had some kind of association with the Essenes, because of the Essenes' practice of ritual bathing and emphasis on righteousness, as well as their location in the wilderness. However, it is posited that the Essenes were likely not among the followers of Jesus, as his teachings on love and his death on the cross did not align with the Essenes' expectations of the Messiah. They would not have seen Jesus as their expected Messiah.