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CONTENTS

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The Discovery of the Scrolls

CHAPTER 1

On April 10, 1948, the Yale University News Bureau released an announcement, which appeared in the major newspapers of the English-speaking world in the following days:

> The earliest known manuscript of the entire biblical book of Isaiah from the Old Testament has been discovered in Palestine, it was announced today by Professor Millar Burrows of Yale University, the director of the American Schools of Oriental Research at Jerusalem.
>
> In addition, three other unpublished ancient Hebrew manuscripts have been brought to light by scholars in the Holy Land. Two of them have been identified and translated while the third still challenges recognition.
>
> The book of the prophet Isaiah was found in a well-preserved scroll of parchment. Dr. John C.

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> Trever, a Fellow of the School, examined it and recognized the similarity of the script to that of the Nash Papyrus – believed by many scholars to be the oldest known copy of any part of the Hebrew Bible.
>
> The discovery is particularly significant since its origin is dated about the first century BC. Other complete texts of Isaiah are known to exist only as recently as the ninth century AD.
>
> All these ancient scrolls, two in leather and the other in parchment, have been preserved for many centuries in the library of the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark in Jerusalem. They were submitted to the American Schools of Oriental Research for study and identification by the Metropolitan Athanasius Yeshue Samuel and Father Butros Sowmy of the monastery.
>
> Aside from the Book of Isaiah, a second scroll is part of a commentary on the Book of Habakkuk (Habakkuk is a Minor Prophet and this is one of the books of prophecy of the Old Testament), and a third appears to be the manual of discipline of a comparatively unknown little sect or monastic order, possibly the Essenes. The fourth manuscript is still unidentified.

The announcement went on to credit Dr. William H. Brownlee, a fellow at the American Schools,

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with the identification of the Habakkuk commentary, and to note that the Scrolls had been photographed, and were being studied further.

This was, in effect, the birth announcement of the Dead Sea Scrolls, although a small number of scholars were already aware of the discovery, and William F. Albright, the reigning authority on Hebrew paleography (and on many other matters relating to the ancient Near East) had already pronounced it "the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times." The announcement was inaccurate in one respect and incomplete in another.

First, these scrolls had not been preserved for many centuries in St. Mark's Monastery. They had been found in a cave near the Dead Sea, south of Jericho, by members of the Ta'amireh Bedouin tribe, some time in late 1946 or early 1947. Burrows claimed that the news release had been edited after it left his hands: what he had written was that the scrolls were acquired by the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark. It is unclear whether someone deliberately changed the wording to conceal the true provenance of the fragments. The scrolls had indeed been brought to the American Schools by the Syrian Metropolitan, and it is conceivable that the editor assumed that they had been found in the monastery. In view of the intrigue surrounding the discovery, it is also quite conceivable that someone

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changed the wording deliberately. In fact, the Syrian archbishop on more than one occasion alleged that the scrolls were found in a monastery.

Second, the press release was misleading as to the number of scrolls that had been discovered, since not all of them had been brought to the attention of the American Schools. The initial discovery had been made by a Bedouin known as Mohammed ed-Dib ("the wolf") with at least one companion. This discovery involved three scrolls:

- a copy of the biblical book of Isaiah,
- a rule book for a community that was initially dubbed "the Manual of Discipline," and would later be called the Community Rule or referred to by its Hebrew name as *Serek ha-Yaḥad*, or as 1QS (i.e., the Serek from Qumran Cave 1), and
- a commentary, or *pesher*, on the biblical book of the prophet Habakkuk, relating the words of the prophet to events in the author's time, which was believed to be "the end of days."

Mohammed had brought them to Bethlehem in March 1947, and had shown them to antiquities dealers. Eventually, they were shown to Khalil Eskander Shahin, better known as Kando, a Syrian Orthodox merchant and cobbler from Bethlehem, apparently because the scrolls were written on leather. In April

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1947, they were brought to the attention of Mar Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan, or Archbishop, at St. Mark's Monastery in the Old City in Jerusalem. The Metropolitan was aware of ancient reports that manuscripts had been found in a cave near Jericho, in a jar. One such report was attributed to Origen of Alexandria, who knew of a scroll that had been found "at Jericho in a jar" in the time of Antoninus, son of Severus, about 200 CE (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.16.4). Another, about 800 CE, was reported by Timotheus I, the Nestorian patriarch of Seleucia. In that case an Arab huntsman followed his dog into a cave and discovered books of the Old Testament, as well as others. The archbishop, then, had grounds to suspect that the scrolls were ancient and might be valuable.

In the meantime, in early summer 1947, four more scrolls were discovered by Bedouin, who brought them to the Syrian monastery but were turned away because of a misunderstanding. Three of these scrolls (a second Isaiah scroll, and previously unknown texts that became known as the War Scroll [1QM] and the Hodayot, or Thanksgiving Hymns [1QH]) were then sold to another antiquities dealer, Faidi Salahi. (The War Scroll was a manual for an apocalyptic battle between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness. The Hodayot was a collection of hymns in a distinctive style, giv-

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ing thanks to God for deliverance and exaltation.) The fourth scroll, later identified as the Genesis Apocryphon (a paraphrastic retelling of Genesis, in Aramaic), was acquired by Kando. In July 1947, Kando sold the original batch of scrolls to the Syrian Metropolitan. The three scrolls in Salahi's possession were brought to the attention of Eliezer Sukenik, a professor of archeology at the Hebrew University, in November of that year, just before the United Nations passed its resolution authorizing the creation of the state of Israel. Initially Sukenik had to peer at a fragment through a barbed wire fence. He asked his contact, an Armenian antiquities dealer, to bring some more samples. In the meantime, Sukenik got a pass to cross over to the zone where the dealer had his shop. After a brief examination, Sukenik was convinced that the fragments were genuine and decided to buy them for the Hebrew University. The initial purchase consisted of the Hodayot, or Thanksgiving Hymns, and the War Scroll. He thus became the first scholar to authenticate the scrolls. A little later he was able to purchase the second Isaiah scroll (1QIsaiah^{b}; 1Q designates scrolls found in Cave 1 near Qumran).

Mar Samuel, the Metropolitan, had also contacted Hebrew University a few months earlier. He told the people sent by the University that the manuscripts had been lying in the library of a monastery

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near the Dead Sea. They were not impressed, and recommended that he consult an expert in Samaritan studies. In January 1948, Kando's scrolls were shown to Sukenik by a member of the Syrian Orthodox community, Anton Kiraz, who had entered into a partnership with Mar Samuel. In this case, however, no purchase was negotiated. The Syrians decided to wait until the hostilities between Jews and Arabs subsided, and try to get an independent assessment of the value of the scrolls.

Only in February 1948 did the Syrians approach the American School of Oriental Research. The director, Millar Burrows, was away on a trip to Iraq, and John C. Trever, a recent PhD who had studied with Burrows at Yale, was in charge in his absence. There was also another young Fellow of the School in residence, William Brownlee. Trever was initially told that the scrolls were found in St. Mark's monastery. The Syrian emissary, Butros Sowmy, returned by taxi, carrying in his briefcase the great Isaiah scroll, the Manual of Discipline, the Commentary on Habakkuk and the Genesis Apocryphon. Trever, who pursued photography as a hobby, managed to persuade the Syrians to allow him to photograph the scrolls. Trever recognized the similarity of the script to that of the Nash Papyrus, a sheet of papyrus containing the Ten Commandments and the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4–5: "Hear, O Israel") in Hebrew,

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that had been acquired from an Egyptian dealer and published in 1903, and had been dated to the second century BCE. Trever promptly sent sample photographs to Albright, expressing his belief that the Isaiah scroll was the oldest Bible document yet discovered. Albright promptly dated the script of the Isaiah scroll to the second century BCE, and wrote to Trever, congratulating him on the discovery. The Syrians now disclosed to Trever what they knew about the provenance of the scrolls, and also mentioned that they had some communications with Professor Sukenik. The Americans, however, did not know that Sukenik had already seen the manuscripts, or that he had other manuscripts from the same find. Sukenik disclosed his own knowledge of the scrolls in a press release of April 26, 1948. Descriptions of the scrolls were published in the September 1948 issue of the *Biblical Archaeologist* and in the October 1948 issue of the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*. Sukenik also published in Hebrew a preliminary survey of the scrolls he had acquired.

Eventually, the scrolls that had been acquired by the Syrian Metropolitan would also find their way into Israeli hands. Mar Samuel took them to America in January 1949, and continued to seek a buyer. In the polarized situation that followed the partition of Palestine, he did not want to sell them to a Jew. Moreover, the legal ownership of the scrolls

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had not been established, and the Jordanians considered him a smuggler. In June 1954, an advertisement was placed in the *Wall Street Journal*, under the heading "Miscellaneous for Sale":

> *"The Four Dead Sea Scrolls."*
> Biblical Manuscripts, dating back to at least 200 BC, are for sale. This would be an ideal gift to an educational or religious institution by an individual or group.
> Box F 206, *The Wall Street Journal*.

This led to the purchase of the four scrolls for $250,000, by a banker named Sidney Esteridge. Unknown to the archbishop, Esteridge was acting on behalf of Sukenik's son, Yigael Yadin, who was lecturing in the United States at the time. Sukenik himself had died the previous year. Thus, the original "Dead Sea Scrolls" were reunited in Jerusalem, where a special building of the Israel Museum, The Shrine of the Book, was built to house them, in 1965.

Enter the Archeologists

Further fragmentary manuscripts from Qumran Cave 1 came to light in the course of 1948, including fragments of the Book of Daniel, 1 Enoch (an apocalyptic text known in full only in Ethiopic),

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and a scroll of prayers. The Jordanian Department of Antiquities decided that it was time to excavate the cave, which was identified by soldiers of the Arab legion in January 1949. The first excavation, in February–March 1949, was a joint project of the Palestine Archaeological Museum, the École Biblique, and the American School of Oriental Research. It was led by Roland de Vaux, a French Dominican priest based at the École, and overseen by Gerald Lankester Harding, an Englishman who was in charge of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. They identified fragments of about seventy documents, including fragments of two of the original seven. There were also pottery shards and scraps of linen. The main items of value in the cave had already been recovered by the Bedouin.

The cave in question, known as Cave 1, is about three-quarters of a mile north of the ruins of Khirbet Qumran, which is itself a little less than a mile west of the Dead Sea, near its northern end. It was not immediately obvious that the scrolls were related to the ruins. Only at the end of 1951 were soundings made at the site. These brought to light pottery that was identical with what had been discovered in Cave 1, and also coins that established the approximate date. At that point de Vaux undertook a complete excavation of the ruins, and this was continued in four additional campaigns from 1953 to 1956.

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The major scroll discoveries, however, were a result of the activities of the Bedouin. In the fall of 1951, they discovered scrolls in the caves of Wadi Murabbaʿat, far to the southwest of the first cave. De Vaux and Harding investigated, and found fragments of Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic texts, as well as cloth, ropes, and baskets. These included letters of Simeon ben Kosibah, Prince of Israel, better known as Bar Kochba, who led the last Jewish revolt against the Romans in 132 CE, and also marriage contracts. These texts are not related to those found near Qumran, and are not usually included in the Dead Sea Scrolls, but they are of enormous importance for Jewish history. Murabbaʿat also yielded an important scroll of the Minor Prophets, but this was not discovered until 1955. A Greek scroll of the Minor Prophets was recovered from another location, Naḥal Ḥever, in summer 1952.

While the archeologists were busy with Wadi Murabbaʿat, the Bedouin returned to Qumran. In February 1952, they discovered manuscript fragments in a cave a few hundred yards south of Cave 1, which became known as Cave 2. This led to a systematic exploration of the cliffs above Qumran by the archeologists. Much pottery and some evidence of tents or shelters was discovered, but only one new cave, more than a mile north of the ruins, produced written material. This was Cave 3, which yielded the

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Copper Scroll: two oxidized rolls of beaten copper on which text was inscribed. This scroll proved difficult to open. Eventually—in 1956—it was cut into small strips at the University of Manchester. Even before that, however, scholars had gotten an impression of its contents from the reverse impressions of the letters visible on the exterior. It appeared to contain a list of treasures and their hiding places.

As spring 1952 advanced, the archeologists again withdrew from Qumran, and the Bedouin returned to the scene. The ruins at Qumran sit on top of a marl terrace, and to this terrace the treasure hunters now turned their attention. In late summer 1952, they discovered a cave on the edge of the terrace, less than 200 yards from the ruins. This cave became known as Cave 4, and it contained fragments of hundreds of manuscripts. De Vaux and Harding promptly returned and excavated Cave 4 during September 1952. While the Bedouin had already removed many of the fragments, the archeologists discovered a small underground chamber that contained fragments of about one hundred different manuscripts. De Vaux proceeded to excavate five more caves on the marl terrace, one of which, Cave 6, was also discovered by the Bedouin. Small numbers of manuscripts were recovered from these caves. The final scroll cave, Cave 11, was discovered

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by the Bedouin in February 1956. This was located near Cave 3, more than a mile north of Khirbet Qumran. Like Cave 1, this cave contained well-preserved scrolls. Several of these were taken by the Bedouin. Only a small number were recovered *in situ* by the archeologists. Eventually fragments of thirty-one manuscripts from Cave 11 would be published.

With the discovery of Cave 11, the bulk of the Dead Sea Scrolls had been brought to light. The Bedouin continued their searching, and several archeological investigations were undertaken in the Judean desert in the following years. Important discoveries were made in Naḥal Ṣe'elim (Wadi Seiyal) and Naḥal Ḥever, some of the latter relating to the Bar Kochba revolt. Papyri from Samaria, dating to the time of Alexander the Great, were discovered in Wadi Daliyeh, less than ten miles north of Jericho, in 1962. These discoveries, however, are peripheral to our present story. More relevant are some manuscripts discovered during the excavation of Masada by Yigael Yadin in 1963–65. These included fragments of biblical books, and also of the apocryphal book of Ben Sira. Most interesting was a manuscript of *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, a mystical text about angelic liturgy, of which a copy was also found in Qumran Cave 4, and which is usually included in editions of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

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Yadin was also responsible for the recovery of another major scroll. For several years in the 1960s he had attempted to negotiate with Kando for the purchase of a complete scroll whose contents were unknown. In June 1967, in the course of the Arab-Israeli war, the Israelis gained control of all Jerusalem and its suburbs as far south as Bethlehem. Yadin was personal military adviser to the prime minister of Israel. He and a small group of Israeli intelligence officers located Kando in Bethlehem, and after an interrogation that has been described as "unpleasant," they took possession of the scroll. This turned out to be the Temple Scroll, one of the largest and best preserved of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Yadin eventually agreed to a settlement with Kando of $105,000. Most of the sum was provided by an English industrialist, Leonard Wolfson.

One other important text that is usually included with the Scrolls had been known for a half century before the discoveries of 1947. Two copies of it were found in the trove of material taken from the Geniza or storeroom of the Ben Ezra synagogue in Cairo in 1896, and published in 1910, under the title *Fragments of a Zadokite Work*, by Solomon Schechter, a Moldavian-born rabbi who had served on faculties at Cambridge and London, and was the second president of the Jewish Theological

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Seminary in New York from 1902 to 1915. This document referred to "a new covenant in the land of Damascus" and to its members as "sons of Zadok." Hence Schechter dubbed it a Zadokite work. Later, it came to be known as "the Damascus Document" or CD (Cairo Damascus). Schechter observed that the annals of Jewish history contained no record of a sect agreeing in all points with the one depicted. When the first Dead Sea Scrolls were made public, however, it was immediately apparent that there was some relationship between them and the so-called Damascus Document. The "sons of Zadok" also figure prominently in the Manual of Discipline or Community Rule. A figure called the "Teacher of Righteousness," who played an authoritative role in the early history of the sect, appears both in the Document and in the commentary on Habakkuk, as does one of his adversaries, the "Man of the Lie." The relationship between the Damascus Document and the Qumran scrolls was subsequently confirmed when fragments of the Damascus Rule were found in Qumran Cave 4, but it was established before Cave 4 was discovered at all. How this document found its way to Cairo in the Middle Ages is not clear. Perhaps it was one of the texts that had been found in a cave near Jericho around 800 CE, as reported by Timotheus of Seleucia.

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The Task of Publication

If the Dead Sea Scrolls had consisted only of the manuscripts found in Cave 1 and the Damascus Document, their story would have been quickly told. Facsimiles of the great Isaiah scroll and the Habakkuk commentary were published by the American School of Oriental Research in 1950, and the Manual of Discipline the following year. Sukenik published extracts of his texts already in 1948, and at the time of his death in 1953 had prepared full transcriptions, which were published, with plates, posthumously. The French scholar André Dupont-Sommer published a book-length study of the scrolls already in 1950. By the mid-1950s, detailed analyses had begun to appear, based mainly on the texts that were available by 1950. These texts were well preserved, easy to read, and promptly published. The trove of fragments recovered from Cave 4, however, was an entirely different matter. Here was a huge quantity of fragments, in an advanced state of decay. In the words of Frank Moore Cross, who was involved in the editorial process from an early point: "Many fragments are so brittle or friable that they can scarcely even be touched with a camel's-hair brush. Most are warped, crinkled, or shrunken, crusted with soil chemicals, blackened by moisture and age. The problems of cleaning, flat-

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tening, identifying, and piecing them together are formidable."[1]

Over 1953–54, an international team of scholars was assembled to work on editing the scrolls, under the leadership of de Vaux. Two Catholic priests—a Dominican Dominique Barthélemy and the Polish scholar Józef T. Milik—had already been enlisted by de Vaux to work on the materials from Cave 1 and Murabba'at. Barthélemy was already working at the École Biblique. Milik had studied in Rome at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, and had attracted de Vaux's attention because of his early articles on the Scrolls. Now the team's numbers increased. Another French priest, Jean Starcky, had served as a chaplain in the Allied forces during World War II, and was expert in Nabatean and Palmyrene studies. Several Protestant scholars were also recruited at this time. From England came John Allegro and John Strugnell. Allegro had served in the British navy during the war, after which he studied first at Manchester and then at Oxford. He was nominated to the Scrolls team by his Oxford professor, G. R. Driver. Driver also nominated Strugnell, who was only twenty-four when he set out for Jerusalem in 1954. Both Allegro and Strugnell will figure prominently in later chapters, for different reasons. Claus-Hunno Hunzinger, the sole German representative, was not trained in epigraphy and paleography, and eventually with-

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drew from the team. Frank Moore Cross, a brilliant student of W. F. Albright, was the first American member. He would go on to a distinguished career as Hancock Professor of Hebrew and Other Oriental Languages at Harvard (1958–92). His book, *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies*, first published in 1958, remains one of the most influential accounts of the Scrolls. Another Catholic priest, Monsignor Patrick W. Skehan, from the Catholic University of America, joined the team in 1954. Skehan was not a prolific writer, but he enjoyed the respect of Albright, who invited him to serve as his substitute at Johns Hopkins when he was away. In 1958, another French priest, Maurice Baillet, was added. He had been a student at the École in 1952–54, and was well acquainted with the Scrolls. No Jewish scholars were included in the team, at the insistence of the Jordanian government, which had legal control over the Scrolls, since they had been found in Jordanian territory.

With funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, the members of the team were able to spend much of their time in Jerusalem, working on the Scrolls. This funding expired in 1960. By then, some of the team members had taken up teaching positions that would absorb much of their energy (Cross at Harvard, Strugnell at Duke). The work of assembling and identifying the fragments had been largely com-

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pleted by that time, and the results were recorded in a concordance, compiled with the assistance of scholars who were not part of the official editorial team—Raymond Brown, Joseph Fitzmyer, Will Oxtoby, and Javier Teixidor. Brown and Fitzmyer, both Catholic priests, had studied with Albright, and would become the leading Catholic New Testament scholars of their generation, and Fitzmyer especially had a distinguished career as a Scrolls scholar. He would eventually be included in the editorial team some forty years after he had worked on the concordance.

The achievement of sorting the fragments and piecing the texts together should not be underestimated. Fragments of some nine hundred manuscripts were distinguished in the material taken from the caves around Qumran. The series established for the official publication, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert*, or *DJD*, would eventually run to more than forty large volumes, and some important manuscripts, including several of the first ones discovered, were published outside the series. Many texts were published in articles in the 1950s and 1960s, but the pace of the official final publication was frustratingly slow. The first volume of the *DJD* series, containing materials from Cave 1, appeared in 1955. Four volumes appeared in the 1960s, including the first volume of Cave 4 materials, edited by John Allegro. De Vaux died suddenly in September 1971, and was re-

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placed as general editor by Pierre Benoit O.P., who was a New Testament scholar rather than a specialist in the Scrolls. Only two volumes appeared during Benoit's term as editor, in 1977 and 1982. He retired in 1984, and died in 1987 at the age of eighty-one. In 1985, John Strugnell became editor-in-chief. By the end of the 1980s there was a furious clamor for the publication of the remaining scrolls, and eventually in 1990, Strugnell was replaced by Emanuel Tov, a well-respected text-critical scholar at the Hebrew University who had studied with Cross at Harvard. Thereafter, the pace of publication was accelerated, and thirty-three volumes appeared in less than twenty years. The upheaval that led to Strugnell's replacement and the reorganization of the editorial team will concern us in a later chapter. For the present, it will be well to reflect on the nature of this huge corpus of manuscripts that had unexpectedly come to light in the decade 1946–1956.

A Library in the Wilderness?

The contents of this corpus were diverse. Every book of the Hebrew Bible except Esther was represented. (A fragment of Nehemiah only came to light years later, but Ezra and Nehemiah are commonly viewed as one book.) Fragments of previously known non-

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canonical books, such as 1 Enoch and Jubilees, were discovered. Some texts were clearly sectarian, most obviously the rule books (the so-called Manual of Discipline or Community Rule and the Damascus Document) but also other texts such as the *Pesharim*, which were commentaries that related the prophetic books to the history of sect, the Hodayot or Thanksgiving Hymns, and the War Scroll. Other texts were not conspicuously sectarian. Several could be described as "parabiblical"—they are related in some way to the canonical books, but are independent compositions. The Genesis Apocryphon, an Aramaic re-telling of stories from Genesis, which was discovered in Cave 1 but not immediately identified, is a case in point. There are texts concerned with the cultic calendar and with religious law, poetic and liturgical texts, wisdom texts, and eschatological texts. There are also narrative texts, such as the fragmentary "tales from the Persian court" (4Q550). A few fragments appear to recall historical events by mentioning names and events (4Q331–3; 468e). Only a handful of texts appear to contain records or accounts of commercial transactions. There are a few exorcisms and magical texts, and some texts written in cryptic script (later deciphered).

Since the initial batch of scrolls included a rule for a sectarian religious community, the immediate assumption was that the scrolls had been

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the property of that community and were hidden for safekeeping in time of upheaval. This assumption appeared to be confirmed by the excavation at Qumran and the discovery of Cave 4, a mere stone's throw from the site. While no manuscripts were actually found in the ruins, the archeologists found pottery identical to that in Cave 1. Consequently, the corpus of texts recovered from the caves became known as "the library of Qumran," a designation popularized by Frank Moore Cross in his classic account of the scrolls in 1958.[2]

The designation of the corpus as a library was not usually accompanied by much reflection about what it might mean to have such a huge library at a location in the wilderness. There was some speculation about the preparation and use of the manuscripts. A room in the ruined site was identified as a *scriptorium*, by analogy with medieval monasteries. The influential German scholar, Hartmut Stegemann, writing in the 1990s, estimated that the supposed library had contained about a thousand scrolls, and tried to distinguish between those that were in constant use and those that were in little demand.[3] Emanuel Tov has argued that there was a distinctive "Qumran scribal practice," which is attested in a group of 167 texts, biblical and nonbiblical, which exhibit distinctive orthography and morphology.[4] These include most of the texts com-

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monly identified as sectarian, but there are exceptions. According to Stegemann, this library was the main basis of the economic existence of the community and the principal locus of their educational opportunities and studies.

Nonetheless, the idea of a library of this size by the shores of the Dead Sea is anomalous. Libraries were rare in antiquity, although they became somewhat more common in the Hellenistic period. The great palace library of the Assyrian king Asshurbanipal and the famous library of Alexandria were exceptional, and Qumran was a far cry from Alexandria. Libraries were often associated with temples, but these were usually of modest size. The largest known Mesopotamian temple library had about eight hundred tablets. At the other end of the spectrum, a temple at Edfu in Hellenistic Egypt had a catalogue with merely thirty-five titles. If indeed the site of Qumran housed a community such as the one described in the "Manual of Discipline" or Community Rule (1QS), then we should expect that there was some library at the site, since the members were supposed to devote a part of their nights to study (1QS 6:6–7). But it is difficult to believe that a community at this remote location had a library equal to that of the largest Mesopotamian temples.

In the early 1960s, a German scholar, Karl-Heinrich Rengstorff, suggested that the scrolls

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were the library of the Jerusalem temple.[5] He supposed that the library had been taken out of Jerusalem and hidden in the wilderness in 68 CE, when the priests realized that Jerusalem was doomed. So they smuggled out a great quantity of gold and silver, now documented in the Copper Scroll, and a library with archives in which the tradition and the spiritual life of Judaism since the time of Nehemiah were preserved. This action, argued Rengstorff, showed their good sense in realizing that books rather than the temple would ensure the future of Judaism.

The idea that the Copper Scroll documented actual treasures that had been hidden for safekeeping had been put forward by another German scholar, Karl-Georg Kuhn in 1954, before the scroll had even been unrolled.[6] Kuhn originally supposed that the treasure was that of the Qumran community. Later, when the scroll was unrolled and fully legible, he changed his mind, and supposed that so great a treasure could only have come from the Jerusalem temple. The scroll contains a list of sixty-four deposits of treasure, some two hundred tons of gold and silver, and also incense and other valuable substances. These were hidden all over the countryside, but were concentrated especially in the region surrounding Jerusalem and the temple. There was an acrimonious dispute about the Copper Scroll

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between members of the editorial team in the late 1950s. John Allegro accepted the reality of the treasures, assuming at first that they came from the community but then agreeing with Kuhn and others who suggested that the temple was the source. In contrast, J. T. Milik thought the scroll was an example of folklore, and de Vaux allegedly dismissed it as the "whimsical product of a deranged mind."[7] Since the scroll is inscribed in copper, however, and is in a dry, documentary style, later scholarship has dismissed Milik's "folklore" theory. Whether a sectarian movement could have amassed such wealth by collecting but withholding temple offerings is uncertain. Cave 3, where the Copper Scroll was found, is the cave farthest from the ruins of Qumran, and it may have been deposited independently.

But the idea that the scrolls came from the Jerusalem temple is also problematic. To begin with, the temple library is not well attested, although it is probably safe to assume that one existed. According to 2 Maccabees 2:13–15, Nehemiah was believed to have "founded a library and collected the books about the kings and prophets, and the writings of David, and letters of kings about votive offerings." (No such activity is reported in the biblical book of Nehemiah.) Likewise Judas Maccabee was said to have collected all the books that had been lost on account of the war. There are scattered references in

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the historical writings of Josephus to books laid up in the temple. The historian says that Titus allowed him to take some sacred books when the temple was destroyed, and the spoils taken by the Romans are known to have included a copy of the Jewish Law (Josephus, *Jewish War* 7.150), which was laid up in Rome in the Temple of Peace (*Jewish War* 7.162). Josephus claims that the records of the Jewish people were kept by the chief priests and the prophets, who ensured their authenticity, but he also says that the number of "justly accredited books" was only twenty-two (Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.31). Some scholars believe that the books that were laid up in the temple became what we know as the canon of Hebrew scriptures. All this suggests that the library in the Jerusalem temple was quite modest in size.

Even more problematic for the temple hypothesis is the fact that so many of the scrolls are clearly sectarian in character, and are highly critical of the Jerusalem temple and the High Priesthood. There are eleven copies of the sectarian Community Rule, seven copies of the Damascus Rule, and six copies of an avowedly separatist halachic document known as 4QMMT, "Some of the Works of the Torah," which sets out the issues on which this sect disagreed with other Jews. The archenemy of the Teacher in the *Pesharim*, or biblical commentaries, is the Wicked Priest, who is universally understood

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to have been a High Priest. In contrast, only one text 4Q448, which has been interpreted as a prayer for "Jonathan the King" (probably the Hasmonean king Alexander Jannaeus) can be construed as positive to the Hasmonean priest-kings, and even that is disputed. It is incomprehensible that the Jerusalem temple would have contained such an archive of sectarian writings, critical of the temple.

Norman Golb, long-time professor at the University of Chicago, who became the most avid defender of the "Jerusalem hypothesis," sought to get around this problem by supposing that the scrolls came from various libraries in Jerusalem. But this is still problematic. It does not explain the high number of sectarian writings, or the lack of writings sympathetic to the Jerusalem priesthood. Neither does it explain the absence of any writings that could be construed as Pharisaic. Golb has made much of the absence of documentary writings (financial records and the like) from among the scrolls. He reconciles this with his Jerusalem hypothesis by recalling that the official archives in Jerusalem were burned by the insurgents in 66 CE, at the beginning of the war against Rome (Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.427). But if the scrolls came not only from the Jerusalem temple, but also from private libraries, we should still expect that some archival material would be preserved, as it was in the Bar Kochba period. Con-

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versely, archival material at Qumran may have perished when the settlement was burned down by the Romans. The paucity of documentary material in the scrolls is surprising in any case, but it lends no support to the theory of Jerusalem provenance.

Nonetheless, the idea that all this material came from the library of one small settlement remains difficult. Golb made a valid observation that the number of scribal hands detected in the scrolls was far greater than one would expect if they had all been produced at a small settlement. Moreover, some manuscripts were clearly older than the settlement at Qumran, so it was evident that they had been brought from elsewhere.

Golb supposed that the inhabitants of the site had merely supplied pots for hiding the scrolls. Yet, in view of the sheer proximity of Cave 4 to the ruins, it is hard to believe that the scrolls did not have a more significant association with the site. Moreover, while the corpus includes a wide range of materials, it nonetheless seems to exclude certain kinds of literature, such as the books of the Maccabees. It is not a random collection, but has a sectarian character.

My own suggestion on the provenance of the scrolls is bound up with my understanding of the sectarian movement attested in the rule books. Too often, "the Qumran Community" has been

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regarded by scholars as an isolated, self-sufficient community, cut off from the outside world. But both the Community Rule and the Damascus Document envision multiple settlements within the same broad movement. The Community Rule speaks of a quorum of ten members for an assembly (1QS 6:3, 6). The Damascus Document speaks of people who live in "camps" according to the order of the land (CD 7:6). The movement is commonly identified with the Essenes, and these too are said to have been spread throughout the land.

The corpus of scrolls found near Qumran has a sectarian character, but is too large and diverse to have been the library of a single settlement. I suggest that these scrolls represent many libraries, but sectarian libraries; the libraries of many settlements of the sect or movement. At the time of the war against Rome, members of the sect from various communities fled to the wilderness, and sought refuge with their brethren, either because of the remoteness of the area or because Qumran was a "motherhouse" as some have proposed. They would have brought their scrolls with them. Hence the multiplicity of rules with minor variations, and the great variety of scribes attested by the handwriting. On this scenario, the scrolls would include the library of the people who lived at Qumran, but also the libraries of many *sectarian* communities that lived else-

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where. Both the sectarian character of the corpus and its internal variety can thus be acknowledged.

Almost from the time of the first discovery, the sectarian movement in question has been identified with the sect of the Essenes, an identification that eventually became a matter of heated controversy.

We shall turn to the Essenes in the following chapter.

Further Reading

The story of the discovery of the Scrolls, and the composition of the editorial team, are described in great detail by Weston W. Fields, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. A Full History* Volume 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

For the roles of Eliezer Sukenik and Yigael Yadin, see Neil Asher Silberman, *A Prophet from Amongst You. The Life of Yigael Yadin: Soldier, Scholar, and Mythmaker of Modern Israel* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1993). (On the acquisition of the Temple Scroll, see pp. 304–11.)

On the Cairo Geniza and Solomon Schechter, see Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole, *Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza* (New York: Schocken, 2011).

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A full inventory of the Scrolls is provided by Emanuel Tov, in collaboration with S. J. Pfann, "List of the Texts from the Judaean Desert," in Tov et al., *The Texts from the Judaean Desert* (DJD 39; Oxford: Clarendon, 2002), 27–114. For an attempt to organize the material by genre, loosely defined, see Armin Lange with Ulrike Mittmann-Richert, "Annotated List of the Texts from the Judaean Desert Classified by Content and Genre," in Tov et al., *The Texts from the Judaean Desert*, 115–64. Tov's theory of a distinctive Qumranic scribal practice can be found in his book, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (STDJ 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 261–88.

Classic statements of the consensus view of the Scrolls and their provenance can be found in Frank Moore Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies* (3rd ed.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, originally published by Doubleday in 1958), J. T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (Studies in Biblical Theology 26; London: SCM, 1959) and Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Qumran in Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977).

The theory that the Scrolls were brought from Jerusalem and hidden in the caves is expounded by K.-H. Rengstorff, *Hirbet Qumran and the Prob-*

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lem of the Dead Sea Cave Scrolls (Leiden: Brill, 1963), and Norman Golb, *Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls? The Search for the Secret of Qumran* (New York: Scribner, 1995).

For the author's views on the nature of the sectarian movement and the provenance on the Scrolls, see John J. Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community. The Sectarian Movement of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

Five of the major Scrolls can now be viewed online at http:dss.collections.imj.org.il/: the Great Isaiah Scroll, the Temple Scroll, the War Scroll, the Pesher or Commentary on Habakkuk, and the Community Rule or Manual of Discipline.

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INDEXES

INDEX OF ANCIENT TEXTS

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INDEX OF NAMES

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INDEX OF PLACES

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INDEX OF SUBJECTS

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