

## Syllabus

Knowledge of the Old and New Testaments was changed forever with the discovery of scrolls in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, beginning in 1948. Over 100,000 fragments have been identified in a total of almost 900 manuscripts. Approximately 220 manuscripts have been identified as “Biblical scrolls,” the very earliest actual witnesses to the text of scripture. The other approximately 650 documents are of direct relevance to early Judaism and emerging Christianity. They confirm or anticipate numerous teachings and ideas found in the New Testament and later rabbinic writings.

### *Course Goals*

1. To understand the methods and conclusions of the archaeology of Qumran concerning the documents and the people who lived there.
2. To understand the formation of the Hebrew Scriptures as seen in the documents found at Qumran and its environs.
3. To understand the social, cultural, political and religious history beginning with the two centuries preceding Christ and the first century following.

### *Class Schedule*

Classes begin January 12.

There will not be class on Feb. 9, 23 (ABHE), Mar. 9 (spring break); there will not be class on the first period of April 6.

### *Course Texts*

Yizar Hirschfeld, *Qumran in Context: Reassessing the Archaeological Evidence*, Hendrikson Publishers, 2004.

James VanderKam and Peter Flint, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, HarperSanFrancisco, 2002.

### *Course Topics*

1. Introduction
  - 1.1 Discovery of ancient texts
  - 1.2 Hiding of ancient texts

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2. Qumran in the History of Judaism
  - 2.1 Judaism in the second temple period
  - 2.2 Settlements at Qumran
  - 2.3 Sects of Judaism in the late second temple period
  - 2.4 The Teacher of Righteousness and the end of the age
3. Qumran and the Bible
  - 3.1 Formation of the Old Testament text
  - 3.2 Formation of the Old Testament canon
  - 3.3 Qumran and the New Testament
4. Non-Biblical Scrolls at Qumran
  - 4.1 Temple text
  - 4.2 Book of Enoch

### *Course Requirements*

The written assignments must show familiarity with the information of the assigned readings as well as class lectures and discussion relevant to each topic. Additional research is encouraged and in some assignments required. In each assignment the student must show familiarity with the issues and various viewpoints. Either parenthetical method or footnotes may be used for documentation. If parenthetical method is used, a reference list of works consulted should be provided; this is not necessary if footnote method is followed.

#### 1. Qumran Settlement (20%; due Feb.2)

##### 1.1 Required Readings

Flint and VanderKam, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 34-54; 239-254.

Hirschfeld, *Qumran in Context*, 1-23, 49-163, 211-243.

Joan E. Taylor, Review Article, "*Qumran in Context: Reassessing the Archaeological Evidence*," *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* 25 (2007) 171-183.

##### 1.2 Written Assignment

Review the settlement periods of the Qumran site and explain how the site developed and changed in each of the periods. Note significant variant interpretations of period times and

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distinctions. Compare and evaluate the views of Hirschfeld with those of Flint and VanderKam concerning the occupation of the site in the various periods. (approximately 1000 words)

### 2. The Biblical Text (10%; due Feb. 16)

#### 2.1 Required Readings

Flint and VanderKam, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 103-153.

Harold P. Scanlin, "Text, Truth and Tradition: The Public's view of the Bible in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," pp. 289-299 in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (ed. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov; The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2002).

#### 2.2 Written Assignment

Compare the story of Saul and Nachash in 1 Samuel 10:25 – 11:15 in the *New Living Translation* (NLT) or the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) with another English translation of your choice. Using a critical commentary or other textual aid, evaluate whether 1 QS<sup>a</sup> contains a lost section of original text or is a later Midrashic addition to the text. How should the texts of the Biblical scrolls be used by translators in determining the original text? (approximately 500 words)

### 3. The Book of Psalms (25%; due March 16)

#### 3.1 Required Readings

James A. Sanders, *Discoveries in the Judean Desert IV*, 53-93.

Peter Flint, "The Book of Psalms in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *VT* 48 (1998) 453 – 472.

#### 3.2 Written Assignment

Compare the text of 11QPs<sup>a</sup> with the book of Psalms in your Bible and the Septuagint (the Bible of the early church). What evidence is there for the process by which the book of Psalms came to be complete as a canonical writing? (approximately 1500 words)

### 4. The Biblical Canon (25%; due April 6)

#### 4.1 Required Readings

Flint and VanderKam, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 154-181.

Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Crystallization of the 'Canon of Hebrew Scriptures' in the Light of Biblical Scrolls from Qumran," pp. 5-20 in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (ed. Edward D. Herbert and Emanuel Tov; The British Library & Oak Knoll Press, 2002).

#### 4.2 Written Assignment

What compositions were used as Scripture during the Qumran period? Describe the differences of Old Testament books used as Scripture by Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christians. Explain why each of these groups has different books in their Old Testament. What were the determining factors in establishing the Biblical canon for the different groups? (approximately 1500 words)

#### 5. Final exam (20%)

A final exam will focus on class content and discussion.

#### *Resources*

The Providence library contains the following resources for Qumran research.

##### 1. Original editions and Publications of the scroll fragments

E. Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Database (Non-Biblical Texts)*, The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Reference Library, vol. 2; Leiden, Brill, 1999.

E. Tov, with the collaboration of S. J. Pfann, *The Dead Sea Scrolls on Microfiche: A Comprehensive Facsimile Edition of the Texts from the Judean Desert*, with a *Companion Volume*; Leiden: Brill and IDC, 1995.

D. Barthélemy, E. Tov, et al., *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*, Oxford, 1955 to the present.

##### 2. Translations

M. Abegg, et al., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*, HarperSanFrancisco, 1999.

F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated. The Qumran Texts in English*, Brill, 1996.

M. Abegg et al, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, HarperSanFrancisco, 1997.

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3. Bibliographies and Concordances

James H. Charlesworth, *Graphic Concordance to the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Westminster/John Knox, 1991.

J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Dead Sea Scrolls, Major Publications and Tools for Study, Revised Edition*, SBL Resources for Biblical Study, 20; Atlanta, 1990.

4. Qumran “Encyclopedia”

Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Second Princeton Symposium on Judaism and Christian Origins*. 3 vols. Waco, Tex. Baylor University Press, 2006.

The Providence library does not contain these volumes, but a detailed review listing all the articles is available in .pdf format. Articles of interest on any particular topics can be obtained through the library. The volumes total over 1500 pages.