



INTRODUCTION TO THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS NEJS 117B – SPRING 2015

Instructor

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Course Description

The Dead Sea Scrolls have revolutionized the study of the Hebrew Bible's formative stages as well as our understanding of Jewish religion before the age of the Rabbis and of Christianity. The discovery of these texts nearly 70 years ago at Khirbet Qumran and other sites around the Dead Sea has led to a flurry of scholarly activity along with a host of interpretations and hypotheses which we are still now struggling to evaluate. Through a careful reading of select texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls corpus, we will begin to interact with many of the unanswered questions at the heart of Qumran studies: who wrote the scrolls, who stored them away in caves, who was the iconic teacher of righteousness, and what exactly do the scrolls teach us about the creation of scripture and early usage of some texts that would eventually become the Bible and other texts that would largely fade out of existence? We will also read some of the latest research on Qumran in order to better understand the nature of the settlement at Khirbet Qumran and its interaction with the world around it.

Course Objectives

1. To discuss the relevance of the Dead Sea scrolls to the usage and dissemination of religious texts prior to the creation of the Bible.
2. To better understand the various theories about the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls and how the manuscripts came to be deposited in various caves around the Dead Sea.
3. To work through some of the Qumran scrolls either written by or deeply concerned with the teacher(s) of righteousness, and to better understand the sect of Judaism for which that group of texts appears to be foundational.
4. To investigate the latest research into the nature of the settlement at Khirbet Qumran and its relationship to the scrolls found in nearby caves.
5. To provide students with the tools to work with Hebrew Dead Sea Scrolls in their original language, to read photographs of the manuscripts, and to critically evaluate the

formation of a text from manuscript fragments and the restoration of text where manuscript evidence is lacking.

Course Requirements

1. Class Participation (15%): Each student will be required to read Hebrew text in class and to contribute to class discussion.
2. In-Class Presentation (30%): Each student will be required to make an in-class presentation introducing a Dead Sea Scrolls text. This will involve gathering both primary editions of the text and the most relevant secondary sources that discuss it, and then making a presentation in class that provides a synthesis of the discovery of the manuscript, a brief history of the text's publication, and an introduction to some of the main issues raised in the scholarly discussion of the text as well as its relevance to the overarching interests of the course. The student will be graded on the quality of preparation and synthesis of materials as well as on the oral presentation itself.
3. Participation in group project (25%): There will be a mid-term workshop in which the students will prepare for and execute the creation of a DSS manual that provides an up-to-date discussion of issues related to the authors of the Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls (i.e. Qumran sectarians), the explanations for the storage of the scrolls in caves near Khirbet Qumran, and the various hypotheses related to the function and nature of the site of Khirbet Qumran itself. It is hoped that there will be time to finish with a concluding chapter to the volume that will provide a synthesis and critical evaluation.
4. Final Examination (30%): There will be a cumulative final examination which will include translation (with commentary) of a passage studied in class and a choice of essay questions related to the course objectives.

Required Texts for all Students:

1. James VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today*, 2nd ed., Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2010. (abbreviated DSST)
2. Timothy Lim and John Collins, *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. (abbreviated OHDSS)
3. Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999 (also published in hardcover by Brill in 1999).
4. Elisha Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Harvard Semitic Studies 29, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.

Required Texts for Graduate Students:

1. Eugene Ulrich, *The Biblical Qumran Scrolls*, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 134, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010.

Recommended Texts:

1. David Clines ed. *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, 8 vols., Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2011. (There is a concise version of this dictionary, but it will be of little value for our purposes)
2. Louis Feldman, James Kugel, and Lawrence Schiffman eds., *Outside the Bible*, 3 vols., Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2103.

Other Readings will be available online via Latte or reserve. Many readings will come from the Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls (ed. Lawrence Schiffman and James VanderKam (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), abbreviated EDSS, and available online through the library.

Policies

Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability at Brandeis University and if you wish to request a reasonable accommodation for this class, please see me immediately. Please keep in mind that it is not necessarily possible to provide accommodations retroactively.

Absences: Regular attendance will be necessary for successful progress through this course. Thus, students will be afforded only two absences for legitimate, but undocumented, reasons. In the event of an absence, the student is responsible for arranging a time during office hours to catch up on the missed class material. Excused absences may be granted at the discretion of the instructor, all reasonable documented absences will be respected, though special arrangements will need to be made in the event of any extended leave from the course.

Passes: Each student will be afforded two in class passes. This means that the student may come to class but will not be required to participate, nor will that class be counted towards the class participation grade.

Academic Integrity: You will be expected to abide by the terms of academic integrity outlined in Section 4 of the Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (available at <http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/sdc/rr/>). This means that you are expected to cite the sources for all work that is not your own original contribution to scholarship. If you have questions about plagiarism or academic standards of originality, please see me. Violations of the University standards will be referred to the Office of Student Development and Conduct and could result in failure of the course.

Course Schedule**Introduction:**

Read: DSST “Introduction” and “Controversies about the Dead Sea Scrolls.”

Unit 1: Dead Sea Scrolls before the Dead Sea Scrolls

Read: DSST “Survey of the Manuscripts”

1.1 Primary Text: Sir 44 (Read the Cairo Geniza MS B XIII verso–XIV recto and Masada 1h VII, pp. 77–79, 120–121, and 174–176 in Beentjes)

1.1 Secondary Texts: Beentjes, “The Praise of the Famous and its Prologue.”

1.2 Primary Text: Damascus Document (read CD A I:1–II:1 in Hebrew [= 4QD^a (4Q266) 2 I-II; 4QD^c (4Q268)], read the rest in English)

1.2 Secondary Text: Bernstein, “The Contribution of the Qumran Discoveries to the History of Early Biblical Interpretation.”

Unit 2: Normative Texts for the Qumran Sect

Read: DSST “The Identification of the Qumran Group,” Schiffman, “Origin and Early History of the Qumran Sect,” Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, ch. 2, García Martínez, “The Gröningen Hypothesis Revisited,” and Satlow, *How the Bible Became Holy*, pp. 171–190

2.1 Primary Text: Damascus Document (CD-A IV:10–V:17)

2.1 Secondary Texts: OHDSS ch. 5 (especially pp. 133–8).

2.2 Primary Text: Community Rule (read 1QS III:13–IV:1 in Hebrew, read the rest in English)

2.2 Secondary Text: OHDSS ch 6.

Unit 3: Interpretation of Scripture at Qumran

Read: DSST “The Qumran Essenes,” EDSS “Interpretation of Scripture”

3.1 Primary Text: Habakkuk Peshar (read 1QpHabakkuk cols. II and VII in Hebrew, read the rest in English)

3.1 Secondary Texts: EDSS, “Pesharim” and Williamson, “Peshar: A Cognitive Model of the Genre”

3.2 Primary Text: 4QTestimonia (4Q175)

3.2 Secondary Text: Brooke, “Thematic Commentaries on Prophetic Scriptures”

3.3 Primary Text: Jubilees (read 4Q216 col. I and 11Q12 in Hebrew)

3.3 Secondary Text: EDSS “Jubilees”

Unit 4: History at Qumran

Read: Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, ch. 3 and skim through Charlesworth, *The Pesharim and Qumran History*.

4.1 Primary Text: Nahum Peshar (4Q169)

4.1 Secondary Texts: Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State*, 117–190.

4.2 Primary Text: Hymn to King Jonathan (4Q448)

4.2 Secondary Text: Vermès, “The So-Called King Jonathan Fragment (4Q448),” and Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State*, 101–116

Workshop: Qumran Sect, Library, and Dwelling

Meeting 1: Students will prepare for the group project by: electing an editorial board along with a chief editor, working out the structure and style of the final written volume, breaking the work up into major sections that will each be managed by a member of the editorial board, and allotting individual research assignments.

Meeting 2: Complete any unfinished business from the last session and discuss any necessary refinements to the volume or editorial structure, work in individual section groups to compile/manage bibliography.

Unit 5: Apocalypse at Qumran

Read: DSST “The Scrolls and the New Testament”

5.1 Primary Text: Ages of Creation (4Q180) (read 4Q Ages of Creation A in Hebrew)

5.1 Secondary Texts: EDSS “Ages of Creation,” and Tzoref, “*Peshar* and Periodization.”

5.2 Primary Text: War Scroll (1Q33) (read col. I in Hebrew, read the rest in English)

5.2 Secondary Text: EDSS “War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness”

5.3 Primary Text: Messianic Apocalypse (4Q521)

5.3 Secondary Text: Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp. 1–11, 110–165.

Unit 6: Psalms and Songs at Qumran

Read: OHDSS ch. 26.

6.1 Primary Text: Psalm 145 in 11Q5

6.1 Secondary Texts: EDSS “Psalms, Book of: Biblical Text.”

6.2 Primary Text: Hodayot^a (read XV:6–25)

6.2 Secondary Text: read the introduction to the Hodayot in DJD 40, and Szpek, “On the Influence of Job on Jewish Hellenistic Literature.”

Unit 7: Wisdom at Qumran

Read: Goff, “Qumran Wisdom Literature and the Problem of Genre”

7.1 Primary Text: 4QSapiential Work (4Q185)

7.1 Secondary Texts: OHDSS ch. 19

Unit 8: Science at Qumran

Read: Popović, “The Emergence of Aramaic and Hebrew Scholarly Texts” and Drawnel, “Between Akkadian *ṭupšarūtu* and Aramaic ספר”

8.1 Primary Text: 4QHoroscope (4Q186)

8.1 Secondary Texts: Popović, *Reading the Human Body*, pp.17–51.

Unit 9: Texts at Qumran Known from the Bible

Read: DSST “The Scrolls and the Old Testament”

9.1 Primary Text: 4QpaleoGen–Exod^l (4Q11 f1+39)

9.1 Secondary Texts: Tov, *Textual Criticism*, pp. 100–117.

9.2 Primary Text: Exodus 15 in 4QReworked Pentateuch (4Q365)

9.2 Secondary Text: White-Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture*, pp. 19–59, and Tov, “From 4QReworked Pentateuch to 4QPentateuch (?)”

9.3 Primary Text: 4QSam^a (4Q51)

9.3 Secondary Text: Tov, “The Composition of 1 Samuel 16-18 in the Light of the Septuagint Version.”

9.4 Primary Text: 4QTobit (4Q200)

9.4 Secondary Text: EDSS “Tobit, Book of” and “Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha”

Unit 10: Variant Versions of Texts at Qumran Known from the Bible

10.1 Primary Text: Joshua Apocryphon (read 4QApocryphon of Joshua^a [4Q378] in Hebrew, read the other Joshua Apocryphon mss [4Q379, 5Q9?] in English)

10.1 Secondary Texts: Tov, “The Rewritten Book of Joshua as Found at Qumran and Masada”

10.2 Primary Text: Pseudo-Ezekiel (4Q385, 4Q385^c, and 4Q386)

10.2 Secondary Text: Patmore, “The Shorter and Longer Texts of Ezekiel,” and Popović, “Prophet, Books and Texts: Ezekiel, Pseudo-Ezekiel and the Authoritativeness of Ezekiel Traditions in Early Judaism”

10.3 Primary Text: Temple Scroll (read col. LI [11Q19 LI = 11Q20 xiv - xv])

10.3 Secondary Text: Schiffmann, *The Courtyards of the House of the Lord*, pp. xvii–xxxvi.