

Library of Congress Materials Relating to the World of the Scrolls

The Origin of the Scrolls and the Qumran Site

In "The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Perspective," Professor Norman Golb of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago presents evidence to support his view that the Dead Sea Scrolls do not derive from a sect that copied or wrote the manuscripts that were found in the nearby caves. According to Professor Golb, there is no persuasive evidence to support the commonly held view that a sect inhabited the Qumran plateau. Dr. Golb states that the scrolls are from Jerusalem libraries, encompassing a wide variety of non-sectarian as well as sectarian materials. In his view, the preponderance of archaeological evidence supports the existence of a Roman fortress at Qumran rather than a sectarian community.

Norman Golb *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Perspective* **The American Scholar** (Spring, 1989) Bound serial. General Collections, Library of Congress.

The Sectarian Calendar

Displayed here, from Hebrew University Professor S. Talmon's "The World of Qumran from Within," is a table outlining the sectarian solar calendar, which, unlike the lunar calendar of non-sectarian Judaism, is remarkable for its regularity. The first day of the New Year always falls on Wednesday. This meant that the Day of Atonement always fell on a Friday; Tabernacles on a Wednesday; Passover on a Wednesday; and the Feast of Weeks on a Sunday.

Shemaryahu Talmon **The World of Qumran from Within** (Jerusalem, 1989) Printed book. General Collections, Library of Congress

Pliny on the Essenes

Pliny the Elder, a Roman historian, described the Essenes in his encyclopedic work, "Natural History" (Chapter V:17,4). In locating the Essenes just west of the Dead Sea--but north of Ein Gedi--Pliny provides a key support for the hypothesis which advances the Essenes as the inhabitants of the Qumran plateau:

To the west (of the Dead Sea) the Essenes have put the necessary distance between themselves and the insalubrious shore Below the Essenes was the town of Engada (Engedi).

Pliny the Elder **Naturalis historiae** (Parma, 1481) Printed book. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

Pliny the Elder **Naturalis historiae** (Parma, 1481) Printed book. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress.

Pliny on the Essenes

In characterizing the Essenes, Pliny describes a people similar to the sect whose regulations are outlined in the Community Rule:

They are a people unique . . . and admirable beyond all others in the whole world, without women and renouncing love entirely, without money

[Translation from "The Essenes According to Classical Sources" (1989)]

Pliny the Elder **Naturalis historiae** (Venice, 1472) Printed book. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

Sadducees and Pharisees

The Mishnah and Talmud record various disagreements between the Sadducees, the priestly and aristocratic party, and the Pharisees, which included the lay circles. The following disagreement on the laws of purity is reported in tractate "Tohorot:"

The Sadducees say: We complain against you Pharisees that you declare an uninterrupted flow of a liquid to be clean. The Pharisees say: we complain against you Sadducees that you declare a stream of water that flows from a burial ground to be clean? (Mishnah Yada'im. 8)

Talmud Tohorot (Venice, 1528) Printed book. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress

Flavius Josephus

The ancient historian Flavius Josephus (ca. 38 C.E.- 100 C.E.) is the primary historical source for the late Second Temple period. In 66 C.E., at the outbreak of the Jewish rebellion against Rome, Josephus was appointed military commander of Galilee. Defeated, he betrayed colleagues who had chosen group suicide and surrendered to the enemy. His life spared, he was taken to Rome and became a pensioner of Vespasian, the Roman general who later became emperor.

In 75 C.E., at age thirty-eight, he wrote "The Jewish War," which he claimed was "the greatest of all [wars], not only that have been in our times, but, in a manner of those that ever were heard of." This volume is opened to the beginning of Book Four of "The Jewish War," in which Josephus describes the Jewish rebellion, and an illumination of the battle between the Roman and Judean forces. After Rome's victory, scholars believe that the Qumran settlement ceased to exist.

Flavius Josephus **L'histoire ...** (Paris, 1530) Printed book. Rosenwald Collection, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

Josephus on the Essenes

From his "Antiquities of the Jews" 18, 18-22:

The Essenes like to teach that in all things one should rely on God. They also declare that souls are immortal They put their property in a common stock, and the rich man enjoys no more of his fortune than does the man with absolutely nothing. And there are more than 4000 men who behave in this way. In addition, they take no wives and acquire no slaves; in fact, they consider slavery an injustice

[Translation from "The Essenes According to Classical Sources" (1989)]

Flavius Josephus **De antiquitate Judaica** (Augsburg, 1470) Printed book. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

Why Herod Honored the Essenes

From "Antiquities of the Jews" 15, 371-9

Among those spared from being forced [to take a loyalty oath to Herod] were those we call Essenes It is worth saying what caused [Herod] to honor the Essenes. There was a certain Essene whose name was Manaemus This man once saw Herod when the latter, still a boy, was on the way to his teacher's house, and addressed him as 'King of the Jews.' Herod thought he was ignorant or joking and reminded him that he was a private citizen. But Manaemus smiled gently and tapped him with his hand on the rump, saying: 'But indeed you will be king and you will rule happily, for you have been found worthy by God.'

[Translation from "The Essenes According to Classical Sources" (1989)]

Flavius Josephus **Ioudaikes ...** (Basel, 1544) Printed book. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

Josephus on the Essenes

From "The Jewish War" 2, 119-120

There exists among Jews three schools of philosophy: the Pharisees belong to the first, the Sadducees to the second, and to the third belong men, who have a reputation for cultivating a particularly saintly life, called Essenes The Essenes renounce pleasure as evil, and regard continence and resistance to the passions as a virtue. They disdain marriage for themselves, but adopt children of others at a tender age in order to instruct them

[Translation from "The Essenes According to Classical Sources" (1989)]

Note the Hebrew manuscript bound in the inside covers of the volume. It is a late fourteenth or early fifteenth century copy of a liturgical poem recited on the Feast of Weeks.

Flavius Josephus **De bello Judaico** (Verona, 1480) Printed book. Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress

Panoramic View of Jerusalem

Displayed here is an early panoramic photograph of Jerusalem looking west from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem's wall and its distinctive skyline.

W. Hammerschmidt [A View From the Mount of Olives], c. 1860. Albumen print. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

The Essene Identification

The first scholar to associate the Qumran community with the Essenes was Hebrew University Professor E.L. Sukenik. In this 1948 publication, Professor Sukenik wrote:

Whose cache [of documents] this is still requires investigation. But I found a clue that leads me to a hypothesis. When I examined the scrolls held by the Assyrians, I found in one of them a kind of book of regulations for the behavior of members of a sect or community. I am inclined to suggest that this hidden cache is from the Essene sect, which, as is known from the ancient sources, resided on the western shore of the Dead Sea, in the vicinity of Ein Gedi.

Eleazar Lipa Sukenik **Magillot Genuzot** (Jerusalem, 1949) Printed book, photograph of the War Rule Scroll. Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress.

Adam's Time Line

This "synchronological" chart, compiled by Sebastian C. Adams, is a sweeping examination of biblical history. Printed by Stobridge & Co. of Cincinnati, Adam's time line went through at least ten editions attesting to its enormous popularity. Adam's explained the structure:

The stream of time is represented by the long black flowing line from left to right. The end of each hundred years is marked by the upright black pillars. . . The Nations and Kingdoms are represented by parallel streams When conquered or absorbed into another government, its stream terminates.

An "Explanation of the Plan of the Chart" is located at the top of panel 8, which depicts the early history of Christianity. The ancient sources consulted by Adams included Flavius Josephus, Pliny the Elder, Eusebius, and Origen--historians whose works are cited in this exhibition.

Sebastian C. Adams **A Chronological Chart of Ancient and Modern Biblical History** third edition (Cincinnati, 1898) Chromo-lithograph, the first nine panels of twelve. Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.

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