

LC Collections Enrich Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit

In December 1991, Mark Talisman, the President of Washington D.C.'s Project Judaica Foundation, approached the Library of Congress on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority with a proposal to mount an exhibition of Dead Sea Scrolls. That initial contact led to a fruitful collaboration between the Library of Congress, the Israel Antiquities Authority, the New York Public Library, and the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco. The outcome of that collaboration, "Scrolls from the Dead Sea: The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Scholarship," is on view through August 1 in the gallery of the James Madison Memorial Building.

The proposal to mount a Dead Sea Scroll exhibit came on the heels of the very public squabble concerning scholarly access to the unpublished fragmentary Dead Sea Scrolls in the custody of the Israel Antiquities Authority. In late August 1991, two scholars affiliated with Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati--Ben Zion Wacholder and Martin Abegg--published a computer reconstruction of various texts using a decades-old concordance. In September of that year, the Huntington Library, responding to the public outcry, acted unilaterally and opened its microfilms of the Dead Sea Scrolls to the public. And finally, Hershel Shanks, the publisher of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, produced a two-volume facsimile edition of the scrolls. The exhibit that was proposed to LC by the Authority would include scrolls from the very collection that had been the subject of the heated public debate and controversy.

From the outset, the organizers viewed the scroll exhibit as an opportunity to showcase related materials from the collections of each of the respective venues. "Scrolls from the Dead Sea," therefore, highlights not only the scrolls and artifacts on loan from the Israel Antiquities Authority, but also books, manuscripts, photographs, maps, atlases, prints, and even newsreel footage, from the special and general collections of the Library of Congress. Two types of materials were selected to augment the Israeli materials: (1) rarities from the special collections housed in PSCMI and (2) examples of "modern scholarship"--that is, monographs and specialized studies on the exhibited scrolls from the General Collections. The New York Public Library and the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum will follow suit and include materials from their own collections (or materials borrowed from other collections) to supplement the Israeli objects that will form the common nucleus of each venue's exhibition.

The LC materials have been used to highlight a variety of subjects. To illustrate the the chain of transmission of the biblical text, we have placed alongside the two-thousand-year-old Dead Sea Psalm Scroll, a facsimile of the tenth-century Aleppo Codex (which until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls was the earliest known Hebrew Bible manuscript) and the first Hebrew printed edition of the Psalms from 1477--both from the Library's Hebraic collections. A series of views of the Holy Land from atlases and maps from the Geography and Map Division, as well as a 19th-century panorama of Jerusalem from the Prints and Photographs Division, provide visitors with a sense of place for the scrolls and artifacts. Early editions of Flavius Josephus and Pliny the Elder from the Rare Book and Special Collections Division are displayed in the exhibition

section that treats the possible Essene identification of the Qumran community. The Leviticus Scroll, written in the paleo-Hebrew script, is grouped with an 18th-century Torah Scroll and a 19th-century Samaritan Bible manuscript (written in a script similar to the paleo-Hebrew)--all opened to same verses in Leviticus.

Of special interest, are the materials connected with the Library of Congress' first Dead Sea Scroll exhibition in October 1949. A newsreel from the Motion Pictures, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division, titled "Library of Congress ... Oldest Known Bible Scrolls on Display," documents the delivery of the scrolls to the national library, the unrolling of the Isaiah Scroll in the Whitall Pavilion by the Metropolitan of Jerusalem's Syrian Jacobite Church, and the opening of the three-scroll exhibition in the Great Hall of the Library's Thomas Jefferson Building. Completing this section on "LC and the Scrolls" are photographs and memoranda documenting the event from the Manuscript Division.

Interspersed throughout are examples of modern Dead Sea Scroll research drawn from the General Collections. The exhibition features scholarly monographs on the Psalm Scroll, the Book of Enoch, Leviticus, the Damascus Document, the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice, the Community Rule, the phylactery text, the Calendar Scroll, the Hosea Commentary, and the War Rule. A section on the "Dead Sea Scrolls in Translation" includes Indonesian, Japanese, Arabic, Serbo-Croatian, Russian, and Yiddish versions from the Library's Area Studies collections as well as from its General Collections.

Listed below are the supplementary materials from the Library's collections that are included in the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibition. The Israel Antiquity Authority's scrolls and archaeological artifacts are enumerated in the published exhibition catalog, **Scrolls from the Dead Sea: An Exhibition of Scrolls and Artifacts from the Collections of the Israel Antiquities Authority** (Washington, 1993).

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