

Review: *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, International Masters Publishers, 2007

Pages: 24

Important Palaeographical Facts

This documentary DVD and short book cover the famed scrolls in depth from an archaeological and palaeographical viewpoint, making it easy to grasp why they claim certain ages and authenticity.

The main theological discussion is of the Essenes, who they suggest were the authors (the “Sons of Light”) and keepers of the scrolls at the Qumran complex.

In 1947 the first of over 900 scroll were found at Qumran in the Judaeen desert near the Dead Sea. They were in Hebrew and Aramaic and written by a group calling themselves the “Sons of Light”, the “Poor”, or the “Community”. They have been dated c135BC and are 1,000 years older than the previous Masoretic Hebrew manuscripts.

The Maccabaeen revolt against the Seleucid Greeks happened c165BC. A community of Jews inhabited Qumran from c135BC and wrote the scrolls. In 68BC they were hidden during the Jewish revolt.

In 1952 more finds were uncovered with the 11th, and last being in 1956. In 1991 they were published to the world.

The Seleucids were victorious over the Ptolemies.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes set up a pagan altar in the Temple in 167BC.

Cave three contained a copper scroll with details of hidden treasure never found.

Father Roland de Vaux and Gerald Harding led work on the scrolls and found an additional ten caves.

The Essenes numbered about 4,000 and rejected temple worship.

The Qumran complex had intricate aqueduct and water systems.

Pliny the Elder records the Essenes living on the western shores of the Dead Sea.

The Jewish revolt spanned 66-73AD including Masada.

Animal DNA from parchment pieces were used for matching, also chemical analysis of storage urn clay against that around Qumran was positive.

The scrolls predate Jesus' incarnation, and 23 of the 24 books were found (Esther was missing).

The Great Isaiah Scroll is in Jerusalem's Shrine of the Book.