

The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English

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The first complete edition of the English version of the Dead Sea Scrolls offers direct access to the text of the priceless documents, as well as scholarly information about their history and their significance.

It's been 50 years since a Bedouin youth named Muhammed edh-Dhub went looking for a stray sheep and instead found the Dead Sea Scrolls. In the intervening decades, the scrolls have been enveloped in a storm of controversy and bitter conflict: the scholars entrusted with translating and editing the texts sat on many of them instead, creating suspicions that escalated to conspiracy theories about supposed cover-ups of sensitive, even damaging material. Geza Vermes, a former professor of Jewish studies at Oxford and a noted authority on the scrolls, marks the 50th anniversary of Muhammed edh-Dhub's find with his book *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*; the title, however, is misleading, for the collection of documents is by no means complete.

Vermes has left out the copies of Hebrew scriptures that are available elsewhere, instead focusing on the sectarian writings of the Essene community at Qumran and the intertestamental texts, and these are indeed complete translations. Vermes has also included an overview of five decades of research on the scrolls and a thumbnail sketch of the Qumran community's history and religion. For anyone interested in biblical history, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* is a worthwhile read.

Geza Vermes's pioneering work on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the historical Jesus led to his appointment as the first professor of Jewish studies at Oxford University, where he is now professor emeritus. He is the author of several books, including *The Authentic Gospel of Jesus*.

Other Books

The Dead Sea Scrolls Deception, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* were found in caves 20 miles east of Jerusalem in 1947 and 1956. Now Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, co-authors of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, have succeeded in uncovering what has been described as 'the academic scandal par excellence of the twentieth century': the story of how and why up to 75 per cent of the eight hundred ancient Hebrew and Aramaic manuscripts, hidden for some nineteen centuries, have, until very recently, remained concealed from the rest of the world. Through interviews, historical analysis and a close study of both published and unpublished scroll material, the authors are able to reveal the true cause of the bitter struggle between scholars, for these documents disclose nothing less than a new account of the origins of Christianity and an alternative and highly significant version of the New Testament.

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