Hello. My name is John Strong and welcome to Literature and World of the Hebrew Bible. This is session 35 and this is part one — we're gonna have two parts — but part one of our discussion of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

There is been no bigger — no more major discovery in biblical studies than that of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It is clearly the major archaeological find of the 20th century, at least in regard to biblical studies and we want to take a couple of lessons and look at this discovery. Even though the Dead Sea Scrolls — they do impact the study of the Hebrew Bible, but they have much more of an impact into New Testament studies and that sort of thing. Nevertheless, it is a worthwhile topic to close out this course with.

Today I think we have something very interesting for you. For both these sessions we're going to be — I'm going to be interviewing Dr. Steve Fahn and he is the director of the Institute of Holy Land Studies, but moreover he’s one of the world’s leading experts on the Dead Sea Scrolls and Dead Sea Scrolls studies, and so he really brings a treasure trove of information to us about the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947. They came to light in 1948, about the same time that the nation of Israel was founded and going through its war of independence. In fact, there are certain events that coincide precisely with the war of independence for Israel. The Dead Sea Scrolls changed what we know about Second Temple Judaism. In other words, Judaism from about 3rd century B.C.E. until the destruction of the temple in around 70 C.E. in the first century. And they also changed what we know about the Hebrew Bible, about the texts of the Hebrew Bible. They influence what we think and know about how people used the texts and the books of the Hebrew Bible, how they treasured them, what kind of interpretations they gave to these texts, how they copied them, how accurate the copying was, and these sorts of issues. So it's a significant area of study.

I want you to be aware of a few definitions. First of all, I want you to know what
we mean by the Dead Sea Scrolls. These were the collections of scrolls that came from the caves in and around a little community called Qumran. There are 11 caves -- actually 12 -- but there are 11 caves, caves 1 through 11, and we're gonna be talking mainly about caves 1 and 6 and 3 and 11 and cave 4. But I want you to be aware that it's the scrolls and the scroll material and the fragments of scrolls that came from these caves. I want you to be aware of what Qumran is. Qumran is a settlement. Archaeologically, there's been some excavations of it. It was the settlement in the area of caves and the activity that went on in this settlement of Qumran produced the scrolls and the scroll material that was then hidden away in these caves. And so it's the -- Qumran is the community or the settlement that's associated with the caves.

Another term that we're going to throw out is the term Essene. Essene was a sect within Judaism. We know about the Essenes from the writings of Josephus but we didn't know much about them, just a little bit. Suddenly with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we get them writing what they believed and we get to have preserved what they read and interpreted, and so we know a lot more about the Essenes because of the Dead Sea Scrolls. We'll also hear about a group called the Zealots which again is another sect within Judaism, apparently again a priestly sect, and we learn an awful lot about the Zealots from the Dead Sea Scrolls as well.

Some things to watch for in these next two sessions. Number one, understand and come to realize that many different communities lived at Qumran over the scope of about three centuries or so, that three centuries that really cover the life of these scrolls that came out of these caves. These communities had different characters, different beliefs. They had different dogmas and different expectations and different views of reality. And so there were different communities that had settled at Qumran during this time period.

These communities, number two, stored their scrolls in the caves in the area and
that means that the caves — that the scrolls that are found in a particular cave have their own kind of theological character and the caves have theological characters. And so the character of cave 1 and 6, for example, may differ from that of cave 3 and 11. Because the material that comes out of those caves — the literature, the ideas that come out of those caves, are different and have a different character in those two sets.

Number three, these communities may have at times differed in their theology from what we might consider to be orthodox or the authoritative beliefs of Jerusalem and the Jerusalem priesthood or different from even the Pharisees that we read about in the New Testament. And so there was a diversity within Judaism during this period of time and we see that clearly illustrated in the scrolls.

Number four, these communities to a large extent had strong apocalyptic expectations. These were apocalyptic movements. And so that is something to understand.

These communities — number five — had strong beliefs and rituals relating to purity, and how they understood purity and how it was used and what rules of purity they applied were very important.

And finally, one of the things to watch for in these next two sessions is that what you’re looking at at this period of time is the dissolution of the Nation of Israel as an autonomous political entity. That’s one reason why it’s appropriate to close out this course and this session with a look at Qumran. Because the literature that we’ve been looking at — it rose up and the ideas grew out of the Nation of Israel and its creation, and now we see how the Nation of Israel is dissolved and is overtaken by the Roman Empire and destroyed, and yet its ideas go on. But what we see in the dissolution of the nation is a chaotic scene that breaks out. We will see various bands of outlaws and religious fanatics and religious fanaticism taking over the territory and that’s well illustrated through what goes on and what went on at Qumran.
All right. Let’s start off. And for our first little film clip, we’re going to have a conversation with Steve Fahn, Dr. Fahn, and he’s gonna be talking about the discovery of the scrolls. It’s an interesting, fascinating story. He really only — we only get about so far deep into it. There’s so many twists and turns to this thing, it’s impossible to cover it all in a brief course like this. But it’s one of the more interesting and fascinating stories in biblical studies so it’s worth looking at.

Things to pay attention to. In 1947, that’s the date when the scrolls were found. Note that they were found originally by Bedouin shepherds who were in the area and taking care of their sheep. Pay attention that originally they took these things to an antiquities dealer named Kando, and so pay attention to that. Kando took it to a patriarch of his church named Metropolitan — that was its title — the Metropolitan Samuel and he’s the one who first saw these. And then they were shown to a Dr. Eleazar Sukenik. Dr. Sukenik was a professor at the Hebrew University and he was the first to realize the significance of these. And so pay attention to these characters and this course in the story as you look at this film clip.

Dr. Steve Fahn in bold typeface; Dr. Strong in italics

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But it was back in 1947 that this shepherd was going up these cliffs, chasing after his goats and possibly sheep, coming up over these very stones here. You can hear the sound of the sheep’s feet knocking little rocks down as they walked up. The goats tend to go out and stray a little more than the sheep do.

They are more nimble-footed than we are.

That’s true. They didn’t keep their eyes down at their fee like we’re doing right now.

And so this is the first cave in which a scroll was discovered, cave 1.
It was originally named — not cave 1 because it was only one cave. They called it the manuscript cave. It was just up here and you couldn’t see it from the road. It’s behind this rock. And it was there that the Bedouin took a rock and threw it inside, curious because there was a curious hole there about the size of one body going through. And then we’ll go up there and talk a little bit more about how he reacted when he saw what he saw inside.

And he — if I remember correctly, he threw the stone, heard pottery breaking, and that’s what caused him to go up and look inside.

Yeah. Whether the pottery was breaking or whether the rock was glancing off the side of the pots, it’s not always clear. But that’s become part of the story. He told his — he didn’t go in there right away. He was afraid that there was a genie inside. If there was treasure inside there’d be a genie protecting it. And so he went down and got his brother and cousin and came back here. His cousin stayed outside while his brother and he went inside. His cousin could go running for help if the genie trapped them.

Now, in terms of treasure and what he really thought the treasure might be, he probably wasn’t thinking manuscripts, was he? Was he thinking about artifacts or trinkets or —

Oh, sure. Gold, any number of things that come out in the stories they would tell of treasure hidden in desert places. But they didn’t find any of that here. They found treasure of a different type.

But they didn’t make much money off of it, did they?

No. They probably got less than $100 for all the scrolls that he found here. Seven that they took out that were nearly intact. But it was through this hole here — see, this dirt was way up past our waists here. It was all filled up to here. And he threw the rock in through that hole. Just imagine that going through
there. There must’ve been jars up at about this level because the floor of the
cave was up much higher. After he heard that, he decided he’d go down and tell
us brother and see if they couldn’t come back and find some treasure.

Okay. As Muhammad Adib, the first Bedouin and his brother, walked in —
climbed into the cave, they found jars lining both sides. There were also broken
jars. There was also pieces of scraps of things on the ground which they walked
over and looked past very carefully. They knew the jars were gonna contain the
treasure. They pulled the lids off the jars. Most of them were empty but there
was perhaps some organic material in some of the jars that weren’t of any use to
them. But there was one jar in particular that contained a number of rolled up
pieces of parchment or leather. They became frustrated because there wasn’t
any treasure to be found in here.

But they took two jars out of here along with the scrolls that were found in
the one jar and brought it back to their tent. They unrolled the Great Isaiah scroll
from one end of the tent to the other. You never knew. There might be some
things hidden inside the rolls of the scroll. But still it was just script on top of
parchment.

Inside this cave — it was visited several times after, once by the antiquities
dealer named Kando. He received the first scrolls, got them for less than $100.

*Did he know what he had?*

Not really. When he brought the scrolls to the patriarch of his church, the
Metropolitan Samuel, he had the idea that these were ancient Syriac manuscripts.
It was sold to them probably for the equivalent of about $150 for the four scrolls
that he received. Those were the nicest ones. Three more deteriorated scrolls
were sold to Illes or Suchinik or the Hebrew University through Illes or Suchinik
who was Igalia Dean’s father.
How did Suchinik find them or hear about these to buy them?

It was through one of the associates of Kando who came looking to the Hebrew University to find out whether or not — first of all, seeing a fragment. This was something valuable or worthwhile if he being from the Hebrew University could actually identify this. He was really the first to recognize that these were probably from back in the Hasmonean period, the first century, second centuries B.C., and that this was probably from a collection of manuscripts and even thought to identify them with the scenes that they read about in Josephus.

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In this next clip I really want to hammer home the thesis of these next two sessions, and that thesis is that many different peoples lived here in this area and stored their scrolls in these caves. This is just a little film clip taken as Dr. Fahn and I were kind of organizing ourselves to go visit one of these caves. But in this little organizational discussion, he really nails the thesis down clearly. And so take a look at this.

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Cave 11— a very complete scroll from cave 11. Not complete but rollable scroll from cave 11 is here. That’s where the [inaudible]. Turns out now that these were not part of the same people or same library, but nevertheless it tells us more about the history of the site. That we’ve had many people here. That’s okay. It tells us more of second temple period history. It tells us more about the production of the scrolls, as to why they hide scrolls in different places, differences. We don’t have any intact library here. We have libraries or collections that have been taken. We have absolutely no archives here at all.

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Okay. In this next section or this next little film clip, Dr. Fahn and I are discussing and what I really want to emphasize here and get you to see here is this discussion that the — what the nature of these caves are. Number one, make sure you hear and get down in your notes that these caves were hidden libraries. They were basically vaults. They were not really for everyday use. And, number two, that each cave has their own character and here’s where we start to hammer home this theme of diversity within Judaism, but diversity of different communities that lived at Qumran. Therefore, each cave will have its own character and he starts to bring this home in this clip.

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A number of libraries are out here, right?

Yes. These are the remains of hidden libraries, not ones that were in use. They were actually hidden libraries.

And they were accumulated over the years from a number of different communities?

There are different — each of the different caves has a different character.

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In this next clip again we’re wanting to look at the fact that these caves were places to hide texts. There was an expectation to come back to these caves and to pick the texts up, and they were only meant for temporary storage. They weren’t meant to discard the texts. I think Steve brings home a very interesting point: that the people, for whatever reason, weren’t able to come back and weren’t able to return to pick them up. And so they sat for nearly 2,000 years.

Notice what he says about caves that are in the cliffs — that is, away from the community — and caves that are very near the site, near Qumran, such as cave 4. And just to hopefully help you out — I can’t remember exactly which caves he mentions
in this clip, but caves 11 and 1 are caves in the cliff away from the community. Cave 4 is a cave that’s right there close to the community. So keep that distinction. The scrolls in the caves in the cliffs were not intended to be readily used or accessible. The scrolls in the caves near the community could be readily accessed. But in each case, the people weren’t able to return to retrieve their scrolls.

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Most of the caves we have — not all, but most — at least one visit to the cave that took place. What we have from the caves in the cliffs is different than what we know of the caves near the site itself. At the site they were very readily accessible. They continued to take beaten and torn up manuscripts, old manuscripts, and put them in a kind of a resting place for scrolls which is one of the interpretations as to what cave 4 was as well as cave 5 near the site. These could be added to over a period of time and be added to by more than one group. And that is different than what we have in the cliffs. Here in the cliffs — these are not intended to be readily accessible to the members at Qumran. This seems to be a place where, because there were people coming, they were moving out, they wanted to readily and very quickly hide their precious documents in a place so that when they’re escaping, they can’t be robbed from them by the group they’re trying to escape from. Whether it’s the Romans, whether it’s the Zealots, whether it’s the robbers, any of a number of groups. So we have cave 1. There was one period in which people had to hide scrolls.

So something like a vault?

Yeah. It’s like a safe or a vault in which they are keeping things for safekeeping, looking forward to a time when they could return to retrieve them. But in each case they didn’t live or survive to return to get those scrolls.

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In this section we want to look at — we’re sitting in and part of this section we’re gonna be — it’s taking place in cave 1. Cave 1 should be associated with cave 6. They share a similar character. The group that they should be associated with in your notes are the Essenes. And so in this first clip you get just a brief summary, my own summary and introduction, and something that you might get down in your notes to help you remember, something that helps me, is that cave 1 was used as a vault for the community.

So cave 1 is something of a vault and there was a community who had some previous documents. A Torah document, Prophets, and then some documents peculiar to itself. These are precious documents. They put them in cave 1 as a vault to hope to return and retrieve them later. They never got back. In this next section, Dr. Fahn talks a little bit about the inventory of what was found in the caves. Just remember a few of the broad numbers. I’m not gonna worry too much about some of the details.

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So there were seven scrolls and they were all pulled out of cave 1?

Out of cave 1 came the seven scrolls, but there were over 70 more scrolls that were found laying on the floor of the cave in fragmentary form. Small fragments of various books all the way from a Pentateuch to the Book of Daniel, sectarian scrolls, and a number of other things.

No papyrus?

No Greek and no archival, personal documents.

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Okay. In this next section Dr. Fahn talks about the core group that stored their scrolls in cave 1 and in cave 6, and these were again the Essenes. He talks a little bit about their nature. He talks about caves 1 and 6 being associated and going together
and he also talks about how cave 1 really held the scrolls for the core group of the Essenes and cave 6 held the scrolls for the laity of the Essenes so that there was a distinction even there being made that can be seen in the character of the scrolls coming out of these two respective caves.

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Well, in cave 1 there were 72 scrolls that were found, that in the list of things discovered by both Bedouin and the excavators that came to the caves. There’s also about three to four others that were part of a rolled-up scroll collection that were not part of that. So we’re looking at about 75, 76 scrolls altogether found here, plus miscellaneous fragments that are unidentified that may be from still other scrolls. So we may have more than 75 scrolls here, but 75 identifiable scrolls. Of course the main core would be the Pentateuch, the Book of Moses. So they have a complete collection of the Books of Moses. Some multiple copies of them, maybe two copies of each book within the Pentateuch. But then you would have beyond that some of the scrolls of the prophets. But you have two copies of the Book of Isaiah. You have the Book of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, you find in this cave. You have a number of the major prophets that were found here. Also commentaries, a set of commentaries on the Prophets and on the Psalms. The Book of Psalms was found in this cave and also commentaries on the Book of Psalms were found in this cave.

There were — there’s at least one calendrical document. We have a number of other works that are connected with them. Liturgical works, especially the — at least two copies of the Thanksgiving hymns that go back to the founder of the group, at least in their own mind, went back to the teacher of righteousness. And then they have a copy of a couple of other scrolls which aren’t necessarily within the character of what we call the Yahud, the scenes from
Qumran, the war scroll and the Genesis Apocrypha. So you find a number of different scrolls of different characters here. But almost ideally, kind of one copy each of all the major books that this group held dear to themselves. It was taken from library shelves in a user’s library, put into jars, and carted off somewhere and put there for storage.

Just to reiterate, even though we’re in cave 11, and 11 and 3 are together, but cave 1 and 6 go together. And what community are they associated with?

Well, in cave 1 we find ourselves in a cave where — although there’s more than one visit to the cave, the main deposit of scrolls there go with the people known as the Yahud, the main core group of the Essenes, the priestly Essenes. And then when you go further to the south, closer to the site, near the site there’s another cave and that also has Essene compositions in it. But they go with the leity, the married Essenes, because it talks about what married Essenes should do. It also has in it the Song of Songs in a pocket scroll fashion, and they are mainly papyrus documents when there were no papyrus documents found in cave 1. So even though they seem to be of a similar derivation, the status within the overall Essene community seems to be different for these two caves.

So 1 and 6 are both associated with Essenes, one with — but they’re different classes within the Essenes. One would be associated with the priestly class and 6 more the leity class. They had some different rules associated with those two classes.

And we know this within the writings of the Essenes themselves. The Damascus document which was found in cave 6 was associated with the married group. And then the priestly abstaining group — we don’t know if we want to call them celibates yet, but abstaining group of priests were associated with those scrolls found in cave number 1. This is confirmed also by the writings of Josephus who speaks about both groups of married Essenes and unmarried
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Essenes, priestly Essenes.

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Okay. Now, let’s move on and listen to a few comments about caves 11 and 3. And in cave 11 and 3, these are the caves and the material that belonged and was created by and was treasured by the Zealots. In this first section, again there’s just a brief little summary and recap. Again, I want to get it sort of hammered home that caves 3 and 11 should be associated together. Notice also what Dr. Fahn says about the different kind of textiles and how even the textiles in the caves distinguish them from the material in the other caves.

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And it is 3 and 11 are associated together and associated with the Zealots.

Yes. This is probably the easiest thing to say at this point. Also it separates these caves here on the north away from the southern caves that are closer to the site of Qumran, is that the textiles here are of a total different type. They’re bleached white as to being just natural white textiles so the material culture is different here as well as the nature of the libraries themselves.

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Okay. In this section here — again, we’re going to be looking at how the Zealots used cave 11. We’re also going to focus a little bit on the copper scroll. So as you listen to this next clip, you’ll get a little bit of my summation but then you’ll also get — the crux will be the conversation with Dr. Fahn, and notice what he says about the separation of the caves. Notice what he says about how the Torah played a core function within the kinds of texts that the community read and treasured and it was the core. Notice how there are no rulebooks of the Essenes but different rules were found in the texts in cave 11. Notice how the dates are a little bit different and that also distinguishes caves 3 and 11 from 1 and 6. And notice what he says about the copper
scroll, that it contained temple treasuries. And then also note that — what he says about the Zealots, that this was actually a class of priests and that they were temple guards. And so these are not just soldiers or fanatics out there. They had a much more centralized role than I think sometimes we think.

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All right. Steve, let’s focus in on — without getting into the complexities — on some of the character of the caves. You’ve talked a little bit about how the caves have certain characters, the collection of text in there and collection of ideas in the caves give them a certain character. In order to kind of keep it simple and straightforward to students, why don’t we focus in on 11 and 3, 1 and 6, and cave 4A and B, and talk about — let’s take 11 and 3 first. How would you define in sort of a thumbnail way the character of the texts in caves 11 and 3?

Well, first of all, of all the caves that bear manuscripts that are literary manuscripts from the second temple period here in the Judean desert, this is the furthest north, the caves furthest to the north. So these are separated out by a larger wadi and from the other caves to the south just geographically. And also in these caves, as would be expected in any group, any library, is a core of the Torah itself, Books of Moses. But when you go out from there, you look at other compositions that are found and many of these are not really found in any significant quantity or maybe at all. In other caves are considered to be typically Essene. In particular, the rulebooks. The Essenes had rulebooks that were significant for their own practice but those rulebooks oftentimes disagree with the rules of the rulebooks here in cave 11 that actually represent this other group. It’s a pseudograph which means it was written by God or Moses. It’s another Book of the Torah almost. It has rulings in it that separate it from the doctrine of the Essenes themselves.
So when you say the group — the community that stored its literature in 11 and 3 is different in nature?

Well, from the contents it would seem to separate them. Cave 11 also has three copies of the temple scroll yet almost all of the manuscripts found in this cave are from the first century C.E. The vast majority which is unusual. Similarly cave 3 has a set of manuscripts that are nearly all from the first century C.E., so it’s a rather recent library we would say. From cave 3 also we have the copper scroll which lists items that are taken from what must’ve been the temple treasuries because the silver and gold listed there is equivalent of what a small nation would have in their treasury during that time.

Oh, it’s taken from the temple treasury when?

This would’ve been — well, the scribal hand is from the mid to late first century C.E.

This is what they think was taken from the temple treasury by the Romans?

No. It’s what they themselves — whoever it was that was hiding these things, who was protecting what was in the temple, took things from the temple, including the treasury, including vessels and priestly garments. They’re listed in this treasure list, speaking of the place where these were hidden to keep them probably from the hands of the Romans and from the hands of others.

So this group would be the temple guard?

Yes. By definition — from outside it looks that way and our best candidate for that would be the political group known as the Zealots.

But they would consider themselves priests, but their priestly role would be that of defending the temple and —

Absolutely. That’s what they felt their whole reason d’etre was, was to protect the temple from being profaned by the Gentiles. And so they hid many
things in caves, it seems from this treasure list. There were two treasure lists. The second one was kept in Jerusalem, according to the copper scroll, and it was more complete. But you can imagine if the Romans came and found the temple and the treasury unloaded of all this stuff, that somehow they were gonna get that second list and force somebody to show them where all the rest of this is.

And you think that’s what happened? Because we’ve never found the temple treasuries.

Well, actually we have. I think we have evidence of it anyway. I can’t say we found the treasury, but we found what the treasury built. According to an inscription — at least what’s left of an inscription on the site of the colliseum in Rome that was built by Titus — it says that this was built from the proceeds of the booty. And what booty came out under Titus’s reign, out of what nation? I mean, this is the one showing the other golden vessels from the temple which were left there, being carted into Rome and carried into Rome on the shoulders of Roman soldiers.

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In this next section we want to look a little bit about how the different communities — and here we’re contrasting mainly the Essenes and the Zealots — how they established authority. And specifically, the Zealots used pseudopigrophy. Pseudopigrophy is the attribution of a text to another writer. In other words, someone writing down a story but then saying this came out of the mouth of Joseph, or something like that. And that that was the means that the Zealots used. So pay attention to these issues of establishing authority and the importance of establishing authority in this next segment.

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And what was the content — you mentioned the temple scroll. Tell us a little bit
Well, every group has its own way of making its own doctrines and giving them authority, establishing authority. The Essenes from Qumran, what we find in cave 1, established authority by merely saying that God gave us this interpretation and that’s enough. In this cave we have an actual conversation of God with Moses and God himself is speaking. And on these three copies of the temple scroll. It’s evidence of a certain group who felt that it was necessary to establish authority by activating a method known as pseudopigraphy. In other words, you say that it’s written by a great prophet or by Enoch or by Isaiah or by God himself if you can go up to that authority, so that everything in that scroll is established as a necessary act of life that you do to obey God. And in that scroll known as the temple scroll there’s the dimensions of the temple, there’s the tasks of the priests associated with the temple, there’s the rules for the king, what you do to traders by hanging them alive on trees, other types of things which let us know a little bit more about the character of the group that produced the scroll. Probably more importantly for the time when these scrolls were hidden here, the character of the group that kept these scrolls and reinscribed scrolls of the temple scroll in the first century as well. So we have earliest copies going back to the second century B.C.E. The latest copies are from this cave and they were from the group in Jerusalem who is holding to this doctrine and holding dear to themselves the scrolls that we have here.

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And now in this coming segment Dr. Fahn takes a little more time to define the Zealots and who they are, and what their nature was, and I think it’s worthwhile reviewing this and taking some good notes on this.

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Tell us about the community that — I think we mentioned before it was the Zealots.

Now the word “zealot” is used for anyone who has zeal for the Torah and that could be used all the way from the time when the texts of the Hebrew Bible were written all the way up until — through the days of the destruction of the second temple. There was a group — a political party that was in Jerusalem who called themselves Zealots. This was a group made up of priests who pushed the existing priesthood out of the temple, took over the temple, had their own rules and regulations, and believed it was their cause to protect the temple from any outside influences and especially from coming under control of the Gentiles.

Now, this group was so zealous for this that they were — in many ways we really call them extremists, extremists in an almost terrorist fashion, where people who they considered to be traitors or those who worked with the Romans they would kill on the spot within the city of Jerusalem, going from house to house and murdering people. And they were joined by a group of leity who were — who felt pushed out of their homes with the presence of the Romans and joined them in the temple.

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Now let’s talk a little bit about cave 4. There’s gonna be — in this next segment we’re gonna talking about cave 4. Specifically, cave 4 is identified as a geneza. A geneza is a resting place for old, sacred scrolls. I don’t think it’s in this segment. I think it’s a little bit later in the next lesson where Dr. Fahn actually refers to it as a sacred dump. It’s not just a trashcan but it is a place where important sacred texts can be put to rest and disposed of. Maybe they’ve been too tattered to read anymore but they can’t be just thrown out with the trash. They have to be put and disposed of properly as is appropriate for a sacred text. That’s what cave 4 — apparently that was
its character. It does not seem to have been a working library but rather than the working library was in the community itself. This is a very important point and a point that we’ll pick up in the very next lesson.

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Well, cave 4 — if it was as they speak of, if we think of it as being a — if we’re thinking about cave 4 being a geneza, a resting place for old scrolls. These weren’t put there to be readily accessible. They were there because they were precious. They could go back for them if they wanted to, but they weren’t the working library. The working library would’ve been at the site itself. And there we have what’s probably the rooms that have the niches in the wall but comprise the central library for the Essenes that were living there. When the excavators came, of course there were no manuscripts left there because they were evacuated before the place was destroyed.

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Okay. As we conclude this session that has focused most on the scrolls and the caves, I want to emphasize again that these groups used the caves as vaults, intending to come back and pick up their precious scrolls but they never made it back. And that’s the crux of this next and final scene.

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One significant deposit here — it seems that we have only one other period represented in this cave which is from the Iron Age, and so then the next period we have is related to one group who hid these scrolls believing that maybe someday they would return to get them. But they didn’t live to be able to return and retrieve their precious documents.