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The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible: New Evidence from Ancient Texts

By Dr. Peter W. Flint

Edited by Debra Fisher

This article is an excerpt from a lecture presented by Dr. Peter Flint as part of Canyon Institute for Advanced Studies Public Lecture Series. Dr. Flint received his Ph.D. in Old Testament and Second Testament Judaism from the University of Notre Dame. He is Director of the Dead Sea Scrolls Institute at Trinity Western University in British Columbia, Canada.

The Dead Sea Scrolls show that our Old Testament has been faithfully and accurately transmitted over the centuries, and that the scribes who copied it made every effort to avoid mistakes. To put it another way, they show that the text of the Hebrew Bible is extremely reliable and 99% accurate. But what about the remaining 1% of readings, which present challenges for Bible scholars and readers? The Hebrew text that is used by most scholars today (the Leningrad Codex) contains some mistakes, since all manuscripts are copied by humans and contain some errors. This means that scholars should take older manuscripts into consideration when trying to determine the earliest or original text of the Bible. The most significant of these "older manuscripts" are the Dead Sea Biblical Scrolls.

Martin Luther urged the people of his time and, in turn, us through his written legacy to return to Scripture as originally given. The Dead Sea Scrolls now get us as close to the original Scriptures as possible. But better than just providing us with ancient knowledge, these texts can make a difference in how we read our contemporary Bibles. An example of how the scrolls can affect our understanding of the Scriptures can be found by examining Psalm 22:16.

The King James Version (KJV) of Psalm 22:16 reads: "...they pierced my hands and my feet." Yet there is a problem because when the writers of the KJV translated the traditional Hebrew text (which was almost identical to the Leningrad Codex, the oldest preserved complete copy of the Hebrew Bible), in this rare case, they were not completely faithful to the text. The traditional Hebrew text actually reads: "...like a lion are my hands and my feet." So how can the Dead Sea Scrolls help reconcile this textual discrepancy?

Of primary importance here is a little background in textual theory. In Biblical analysis, scholars work with three main texts: the Masoretic (Hebrew), the Septuagint (Greek), and the Samaritan (Hebrew). The Masoretic text was most likely formed by Jews who were exiled to Babylon; most of the Septuagint was translated in Egypt, and the Samaritan text is believed to have originated in Palestine. The Scrolls contain representatives of each of these texts; however, the Leningrad Codex belongs exclusively to the Masoretic family of ancient texts.

During the Middle Ages, when codifying the Hebrew Bible, Masoretic scholars were concerned that the pronunciation of Hebrew words might be lost since the spoken language was becoming extinct. Therefore, they established a system for

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From the Director's Desk

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to an important new Canyon Institute for Advanced Studies undertaking. **Starting Points** is a new pilot education outreach project presently under development. Its objective is to assist leadership and laity in the Christian faith community in understanding and better engaging the dynamic world of new information, discoveries, insights, opportunities and challenges emergent at the intersection of science and faith. The overall goal of Starting Points is the development of stronger stewardship of the day in which we live.

We are motivated to create Starting Points because many of the issues that are emerging at the interface of science and religion are among the most complicated and consequential we have ever faced. As a society and as communities of faith, we are in clear need of the fullest measure of human wisdom in understanding and responding to these issues. But there is a discernible and increasing gap between the worlds of invention/discovery and basic public understanding of their substance and implications, and the Christian community is not immune to this growing chasm.

Because of these gaps in understanding, Christians experience tensions related to the need to reexamine their understanding of the world and how it operates in relation to long-held faith traditions and understandings. Particularly prominent are the struggles with emergent information and issues surrounding cosmological and biological origins, beginnings and endings of life, and the explosive dynamics of the biogenetic domain.

Christian leaders and laity alike are regularly confronted with unsettling questions to which there are no immediate considered answers. Yet, there continues to be difficulty in readily accessing sound and current information that responds to perspectives of both science and faith, while at the same time exploring in a balanced way the very real diversity of Christian perspectives and concerns. Some struggle as well with finding a venue that is "safe" for thoughtful exploration and discussion of these sensitive subjects.

Another contributing motivation for Starting Points is the troubling rising profile of adversarial science versus religion rhetoric in some sectors of the Christian community. The prominence of this public voice and activism increasingly lends definition to the stereotype image of the Christian community. Both inside and outside the Christian community, such rhetoric is effectively obscuring many more moderate (and even historical) believer positions that embrace science and religion simultaneously as legitimate, complementary, and harmonious searches for truth. This rhetoric also reveals that, within the Christian community, the essential nature, histories, and relationships of church and science are not generally well taught and understood.

Finally, Starting Points is a response to four relatively unrecognized costs that are of particular relevance to leadership and laity of the Christian community. The first of these costs is **unnecessary crises**. Many young Christian men and women are needlessly confronted with an often tragic either/or choice between acceptance of some of the most profound findings of

science and their very belief in deity and inspiration. While many Christians hold more moderate positions, discussion of this range of alternatives and their underlying perspectives is virtually absent in many church settings.

A second cost is **misdirected young talent**. Silence or misinformation with respect to the nature and substance of the dynamic intersection of science and religion fails to convey respect for and importance of commitments to lifetime work in scientific disciplines, deflecting gifted young people of faith from life-changing and future-altering scientific endeavor.

Compromised witness and influence is the third cost. A philosophical wedge of contention driven between the realms of scientific and religious thought significantly diminishes the influence and spiritual witness of highly trained and devout men and women who choose to engage the challenges of today's world armed with a balance of science and faith perspectives.

The fourth cost is the **illusion of irrelevance**. In the absence of sound information and meaningful dialogue in the venues of faith regarding the emergent challenges at the intersection of science and religion, there is an unintentional affirmation of a sense of partitioning between the domain of faith and the "happening" world. This division is detrimental to the objective of teaching and nurturing integration of faith and discipline in life, and it could arguably contribute significantly to the unsettling statistic that over 50% of youth leave church community behind as they complete high school.

Starting Points is our response to these concerns. It is currently in its definition stage with a number of specifics yet to be determined, some of which will be developed in collaboration with church community leadership and laity. However, the central objectives are clearly defined, and each is related to the critical nexus of science and religion:

1. Improve situation awareness of the Christian community with respect to the tempo and nature of new discoveries and insights reported daily in the news; improve awareness of the unrecognized costs previously described.
2. Inform/educate leadership and laity in order to facilitate greater understanding of the substance and implications of emergent discoveries and issues and how they relate to thoughtful and responsible Christian life and stewardship. Education outreach will include short courses and workshops on basic subjects such as the nature of knowledge as well as topical studies on origins (including Christian perspectives, cosmology, and biology) and studies related to science and the church.
3. Facilitate dialogue, which is critical for the assimilation of new information and perspectives and has far-reaching implications for both activities and venues.
4. Create resources and facilitate access to these information and educational supports that can contribute to

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improved situation awareness and can expand responsible study and dialogue.

As a pilot project, Starting Points is a first step, initially addressing these objectives through a modest and malleable project. However, it is also laying the groundwork for subsequent growth in content and types of delivery formats, as resource availability and opportunity permit. If you have questions or wish to consider participation in this project in some way, we invite you to contact us as we prepare to launch this vital new program.

Bill R. Williams
Director



Starting Points Objectives

1. **Improve situation awareness** of the Christian community with respect to the tempo and nature of new discoveries and insights reported daily in the news; improve awareness of the unrecognized costs previously described.
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Study of Interpersonal Forgiveness

Historical periods of violence stemming from the clashing of ideologies bring to mind the need for forgiveness and reconciliation at the macro level, and today's turbulent times are no different.

"We know that forgiveness can happen at the macro level," said Dr. Douglas Kelley, associate professor of communication studies at Arizona State University West. Dr. Kelley referenced Desmond Tutu's book, *No Future Without Forgiveness*, which chronicles the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the healing of post-apartheid South Africa, as an example of forgiveness happening between peoples at the macro level. Yet Kelley added, "There is almost no work on how forgiveness is actually communicated."

As a guest speaker at Canyon Institute for Advanced Studies' Public Lecture Series, Kelley drew substantially from his recently completed collaborative research project with Vince Waldron, Ph.D. Recognizing a void of extensive research by social scientists into the behaviors used to communicate forgiveness, Kelley and Waldron launched a study of 60 couples who have been married between 30 and 80 years. The focus of the study was to examine everyday interpersonal relationships in a non-therapeutic context to glean definitive knowledge about the nature of forgiveness and practical advice for how persons can forgive on a day-to-day basis.

Kelley drew from the words of moral philosopher Hannah Arendt in her book *The Human Condition* to distinguish between forgiveness and reconciliation. "Arendt said there are

two persistent challenges of human existence. First, we were created with the power to remember the past, but left powerless to change it," explained Kelley. "Second, we were created with the power to imagine the future, but left powerless to control it." Kelley elaborated further on Arendt's writings, "The only effective response to the first challenge that dealt with the past is forgiveness, and the only effective response to the second challenge that dealt with the future is the ability for us to make promises and keep them, which is closely related to the idea of reconciliation."

Several effective strategies for forgiving were gleaned from the study's 60 couples' narratives, including practical dealings with the phase of acceptance (moving toward understanding and empathy) and the process of reframing (understanding the event in a different way—inside versus outside context).

Kelley concluded his talk by addressing the dangers of apologies used as manipulative devices and by referencing Bonhoeffer's well-articulated idea that there can be no cheap grace—that forgiveness is, indeed, costly.

Note: This article is a summary of a lecture presented by Dr. Douglas Kelley as part of Canyon Institute for Advanced Studies Public Lecture Series.

What Philosophers Don't Seem to Know about Knowledge

By Dr. David F. Siemens, Jr.

This article is an excerpt from a lecture presented by Dr. David F. Siemens, Jr. as part of Canyon Institute for Advanced Studies Public Lecture Series. Dr. Siemens received his doctorate in philosophy from Claremont Graduate School and retired as Professor of Philosophy from Los Angeles Pierce College..

Some years ago I was in a philosophy meeting in which the author of a paper mentioned God's knowledge. Someone asked if God's knowledge was discursive, that is, verbal, whereupon another philosopher in the audience asked, "Do you mean he was acquainted with it?" The questions represent the ambiguity of the English verb "to know." Other languages make a clear distinction between "knowing that" and "knowing someone." Every student of French has to recognize *savoir* and *connaître*; of German, *wissen* and *kennen*; of Spanish, *saber* and *conocer*. When we refer to "knowledge," we are normally specifying the former--unless we add qualifications. Additionally, most hold that knowledge is restricted to what one's language contains.

The common definition of knowledge goes back to Plato. It claims that something is known if, and only if, (1) it is true, (2) it is believed by the knower, and (3) the knower has evidence to support it. Though Plato challenged them, these three characteristics have been widely accepted as adequately defining knowledge. However, in 1963 Edmund Gettier published a short paper demonstrating their insufficiency. What remains is that the three requirements are necessary conditions for knowledge, but not sufficient. One needs to specify that the evidence is relevant, but no adequate criteria have been given. Alternatively, we can begin with something known in order to derive further knowledge, but this is obviously circular. As a consequence, I propose that knowledge is of the nature of an undefined primitive term. Consequently, we cannot analyze every term down to its absolute foundation. In keeping with this, definitions have to start somewhere.

Simple recognition is obviously different from discursive knowledge. Then there is a further distinct kind of knowledge, knowing how to do something, first discussed by Gilbert Ryle in 1946. What one knows how to do may be very difficult to verbalize. Nevertheless, the languages which distinguish knowledge from acquaintance tie "knowing how" to "knowing that" rather than to "knowing someone." Clearly, there is this third kind of knowing, a non-verbal understanding that has not been universally recognized by philosophers.

There is at least one other kind of knowledge which I have never seen discussed by philosophers. I encountered some material from Dr. Temple Grandin, professor at Colorado State University. She primarily thinks visually, doing it so well that she has designed a third of the stock-handling equipment in this country. But she says she has had problems communicating her insights. Her thinking is clearly effective. Yet she does not think

of definitions or descriptions, intensions or extensions, when she encounters a class term. "Dog" for her is a rapid sequence of specific images of dogs she has encountered.

A different approach considers a reasonable picture of Newton's gravitational theory, though it takes a good imagination to include in the picture the ether through which the force is communicated. Consider two masses orbiting each other. They are held together by a force, which may be pictured as a cord joining the masses. This all takes place in a universe with Cartesian coordinates in three dimensions.

This was the standard picture for all the physical forces for a couple centuries. Then along came Michael Faraday, who apparently *saw* things differently. He appears to be the first person to see electrical phenomena as occurring in a field, like that formed by iron filings affected by a magnet, though the fields are continuous rather than stringy. Apparently only one contemporary who had a good grasp of mathematics was able to understand this new view fully. During the 1860s and '70s, James Clerk Maxwell presented the equations that connect electrical, magnetic and light phenomena, and predicted the lower frequency electromagnetic radiation, Hertzian waves, that would not be observed until several years after his death.

The dominant English scientist of the time, William Thomson, better known as Lord Kelvin, said he did not understand this new approach. Of course, he said he didn't feel he understood anything until he had a mechanical model. In contrast, Faraday had rejected the need for the ether, though this was not appreciated until many decades later.

This change from force to field is evident in Einstein's revision of gravitational theory. There, instead of Cartesian coordinates, we have coordinates distorted by matter. So we get pictures of a distorted sheet, or of stuff sliding down a curving slope rather than pulled on by a force. How did Einstein come up with this view when physics professors did not teach him Maxwell's field equations? For one thing, Einstein on his own read Maxwell's papers. But in response to questions about how he thought, he wrote that words played no role. Instead, he manipulated certain signs and more or less clear images, some visual and some muscular. Words or equations were acquired laboriously later. Clearly, Einstein did not come to understanding by manipulating mathematical or verbal symbols. He had to find words afterward to communicate his view to others.

Further, Einstein had to know what he had discovered before he could put it into words or other symbols in order to communicate it. He literally saw and felt it.

While additional examples of creative non-verbal understanding may be given, these fully support my claim that there is more to knowing than verbalization or manipulation of mathematical and logical symbols. Consider, did Faraday understand

Did Einstein understand relativity before he found the words and equations to communicate it? The answer has to be "Yes!" Indeed, I suggest that both Faraday and Einstein understood better before they tried to communicate than did those who received their later writings. Knowledge is broader than speech, formulas and knowing how.

What Philosophers Don't Seem to Know

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the electromagnetic phenomena before he set down his conclusions? Were the insights clear before Maxwell formulated them in equations? Did Einstein understand relativity before he found the words and equations to communicate it? Does Grandin know, even though for her words are transformed into pictures and pictures live in her thoughts? The answer has to be "Yes!" Indeed, I suggest that both Faraday and Einstein understood better before they tried to communicate than did those who received their later writings. Knowledge is broader than speech, formulas and knowing how.

In connection with knowing, we often say, "I see," when something is explained to us. Even verbal thinkers get visual help. Consider inspecting piles of printouts versus checking a graphic presentation. Most of us may not think in visual patterns, but we are visually oriented and very quickly perceive patterns presented visually.

If we see this among our fellow human beings, must we not

acknowledge that God's knowledge may be broader and different from what I have illustrated among his creatures? Consequently, philosophers need to recognize that there is more, much more, to knowledge than what can be verbalized. Granted, philosophy is confined to language, whether it presents knowledge or slips into nonsense. But philosophers need to recognize that understanding is not restricted to language.



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Presenter(s)

Topic

Rabbi Albert Plotkin	<i>Ethics in a Pluralist Society</i>
Dr. David F. Siemens, Jr.	<i>Ultimate Foundations of Ethics: Beyond Values, Rules and Denial</i>
Dr. Norbert Samuelson	<i>Implications of Evolutionary Psychology for Jewish Ethics</i>
Dr. Jeffrie Murphy	<i>Vengeance, Justice and Forgiveness</i>
Dr. Fred Hickernell <i>Modern Technology</i>	<i>Treasures of the Sand: God's Gift in Scripture &</i>
Dr. Mary Puglia/Rev. Carl Alzen Mr. Charles Roberts	<i>Revelations of the Human Genome Project</i> <i>Isaac Newton: Dissenter and Hermetic Philosopher</i>
Dr. Bill Williams/Mr. Mark Dickerson Dr. Gil Stafford <i>Presence</i>	<i>A Mathematical Analogue for a Model of the Trinity</i> <i>Christian Higher Education Praxis in a Trinitarian</i>
Dr. Howard Van Till <i>the Design vs. Naturalism Debate</i>	<i>Do We Live in a Right Stuff Universe: The Roots of</i>
Rev. Dr. George Murphy Dr. Jeff Moore	<i>The Cross and Creation</i> <i>The Icy Galilean Satellites</i>
Mr. Jim Klemaszewski	<i>Life and Meaning in the Cosmos</i>
Mr. Surrendra Gangadean Rev. Dr. John Polkinghorne	<i>Origin of the Moral Law</i> <i>Cosmology and Creation</i>
Dr. Bill Williams	<i>Gaps Matter</i>
Mr. Charles Roberts <i>The Theology of SS. Augustine and</i>	<i>Historical Christianity and 21st Century Science:</i>

The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible

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marking consonants (no true vowels in Hebrew) with “vowel points” and “accents” to act as punctuation and musical notations. Their work became known as the Masoretic text.

When recording Psalm 22:16, the translators of the King James Version of the Bible departed from the Leningrad Codex reading of “...like a lion are my hands and my feet,” choosing instead to draw from the Septuagint text: “...they have pierced my hands and my feet.” Amazingly, the only preserved translation of Psalm 22:16 from the Dead Sea Scrolls reads: “...they have pierced my hands and my feet.” Because the Dead Sea Scrolls are older than the Leningrad Codex, this is a case where the scrolls help us get closer to the original meaning of the Scriptures while confirming the KJV translators’ original decision to depart from the traditional Hebrew text. When comparing the consonants in Psalm 22:16 as written in the Leningrad Codex with the consonants in Psalm 22:16 as written in the Dead Sea Scrolls, there is an important difference: *k’ry* in the Masoretic text (“like a lion”) versus *k’ru* in the Septuagint text (“they have pierced”). However, the Septuagint text is in agreement with the scrolls. Therefore, it is likely that the error with the consonants was made by the Masoretes when coding their text.

Most modern Bibles include information relative to new discoveries like the translation of Psalm 22:16 from the scrolls, not because scholars and publishers are adding to or changing Scripture, but because they are trying to get back to original readings.

Another means of learning more about the Bible is to look at the people who embraced it as part of their culture. Through textual analysis of the Dead Sea Scrolls and comparisons with New Testament writings and the Jewish writings of the Mishna, we gain a profile of the people of Qumran (the location where the first scrolls were found in nearby caves), the early Christians, and the Jewish people who lived about two thousand years ago.

The first question to ask is: What were the books of the Bible that were found at Qumran? The answer to this question is important because one can tell a lot about a group of people by examining their favorite books. In order to determine the top ten Biblical books of the Qumran people, scholars have counted the number of manuscripts found representing each book and developed the following list of favorite books:

#10 (tie)	Minor Prophets (8 manuscripts)
#10 (tie)	Daniel (8 manuscripts)
#8	Leviticus (9 manuscripts)
#7	Exodus (14 manuscripts)
#6	Jubilees (15 manuscripts)
#5 (tie)	Enoch (20 manuscripts)
#5 (tie)	Genesis (20 manuscripts)
#3	Isaiah (24 manuscripts)
#2	Deuteronomy (27 manuscripts)
#1	Psalms (34 manuscripts)

The analysis revealed that the top three books found among the Dead Sea Scrolls were Psalms, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah. With an awareness of their three favorite books, we gain a profile of the people of Qumran.

The next question to ask is: What were the favorite books of the New Testament writers? Scholars determined this by counting the number of times each of the Old Testament books was quoted in the New Testament. The analysis revealed the following

list of favorite books among New Testament writers:

#10	Proverbs (4 quotations)
#9 (tie)	Jeremiah (5 quotations)
#9 (tie)	Daniel (5 quotations)
#7	Leviticus (17 quotations)
#6	Minor Prophets (30 quotations)
#5	Genesis (39 quotations)
#4	Exodus (44 quotations)
#3	Deuteronomy (54 quotations)
#2	Isaiah (66 quotations)
#1	Psalms (79 quotations)

From this list we glean a profile of the New Testament writers’ use of Scripture. Extending the analysis by comparing the lists of favorite books of the Qumran people and the New Testament writers, we learn that they had the same three favorite books. This reveals an indirect relationship or some similarity in outlook between these two distinct groups of people.

Lastly, scholars compared the favorite books of the Mishna with the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament. The Mishna is a compilation of writings by Jewish rabbis completed in the third century CE. It represents the codified collection of Jewish oral law. Following are the top ten books of the Hebrew Bible of pre-third century Jewish rabbis as determined by the number of quotations in the Mishna:

#10	Ezekiel (12 quotations)
#9	Minor Prophets (14 quotations)
#8	Proverbs (16 quotations)
#7	Isaiah (26 quotations)
#6	Genesis (35 quotations)
#5	Psalms (41 quotations)
#4 (tie)	Exodus (133 quotations)
#3 (tie)	Numbers (133 quotations)
#2	Deuteronomy (234 quotations)
#1	Leviticus (349 quotations)

Whereas the people of Qumran and the New Testament writers had common focuses (e.g., the messiah) as indicated by their shared three favorite books of Psalms, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah, the rabbis who developed the Mishna were very much focused on the Torah (the law) as revealed to Moses.

In summary, the Dead Sea Scrolls confirm the accuracy of the Scriptures and yet give us a lot of new readings that really are ancient. Also, through analysis and comparison, the scrolls help scholars gain insights about the profiles of generations of people who have embraced the Bible as part of their culture.

Top Ten Favorite Books of the Hebrew Bible

Qumran People (Dead Sea Scrolls)	New Testament Writers	Third Century CE Jews (Mishna)
#10 (tie) Minor Prophets (8 manuscripts)	#10 Proverbs (4 quotations)	#10 Ezekiel (12 quotations)
#10 (tie) Daniel (8 manuscripts)	#9 (tie) Jeremiah (5 quotations)	#9 Minor Prophets (14 quotations)
#8 Leviticus (9 manuscripts)	#9 (tie) Daniel (5 quotations)	#8 Proverbs (16 quotations)
#7 Exodus (14 manuscripts)	#7 Leviticus (17 quotations)	#7 Isaiah (26 quotations)
#6 Jubilees (15 manuscripts)	#6 Minor Prophets (30 quotations)	#6 Genesis (35 quotations)
#5 (tie) Enoch (20 manuscripts)	#5 Genesis (39 quotations)	#5 Psalms (41 quotations)
#5 (tie) Genesis (20 manuscripts)	#4 Exodus (44 quotations)	#4 (tie) Exodus (133 quotations)
#3 Isaiah (24 manuscripts)	#3 Deuteronomy (54 quotations)	#4 (tie) Numbers (133 quotations)
#2 Deuteronomy (27 manuscripts)	#2 Isaiah (66 quotations)	#2 Deuteronomy (234 quotations)
#1 Psalms (34 manuscripts)	#1 Psalms (79 quotations)	#1 Leviticus (349 quotations)

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- Develop insights that lead to a more integrated view and understanding of the world around us, and of our stewardship of its emergent challenges;
- Disseminate information and perspectives to assist people of faith in the global community in developing sound, coherent, and informed foundations for engaging the exciting opportunities that lie before us.

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