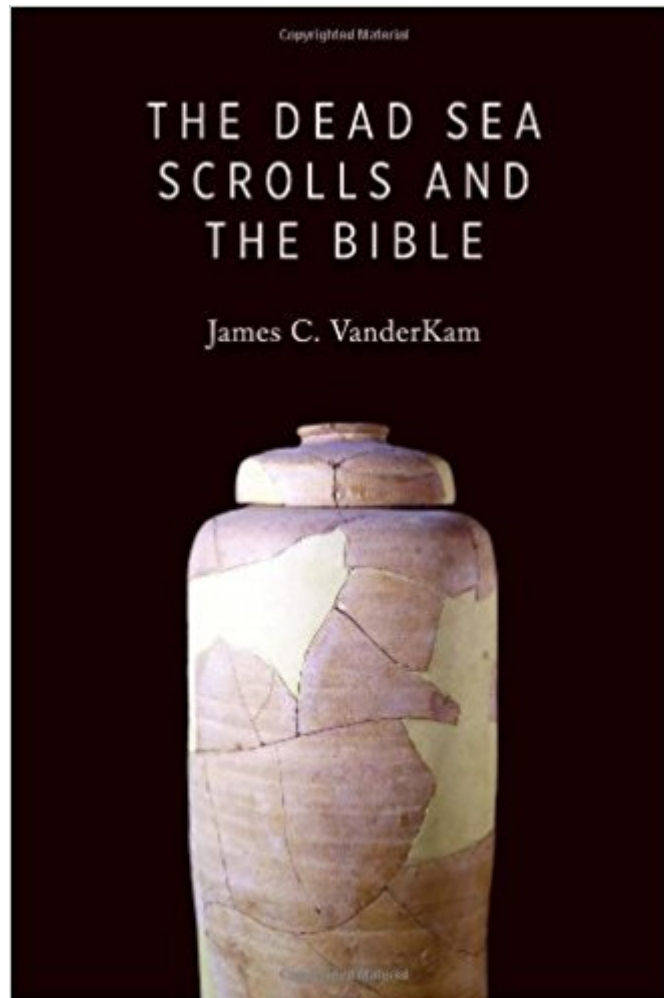




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# **The Dead Sea Scrolls And The Bible**



## Synopsis

The substantial value of the Dead Sea Scrolls for biblical studies is well known. However, it can be difficult to remain on the cutting edge of Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship. In this volume leading expert James C. VanderKam offers detailed summaries of significant ways in which the scrolls can enrich the reading and study of the Bible. Each chapter brings readers up-to-date with the latest pivotal developments, focusing on relevant information from the scrolls and expounding their significance for biblical studies. This rich compendium from a distinguished scholar is essential reading for all who work at understanding biblical texts and their contexts within the ancient world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

William Adler -- North Carolina State University "Written by one of the world's foremost authorities on Second Temple Judaism, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible represents the culmination of a lifetime of devoted study of one of the most important archaeological and documentary finds of the modern age. In this single volume VanderKam explains the contribution of the Scrolls to critical issues in the study of Jewish and Christian scriptures: the authority of biblical and para-biblical books, scriptural interpretation and commentary, messianic hopes, and group controversies during the time of Jesus. Lucid and lively writing, careful textual analysis, and original insights combine to make this book a real pleasure to read." James H. Charlesworth -- Princeton Theological Seminary "With typical succinctness and insight, Jim VanderKam presents a reliable introduction to the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for a better understanding of the Bible." John

J. Collins -- Yale University "VanderKam surveys not only the evidence of the Scrolls for the text and canon of the Hebrew Bible but also their relevance for understanding the New Testament. As usual, he is clear, thorough, and reliable. This will be a standard reference work for all students of the Bible."

Matthias Henze -- Rice University "With characteristic ease, erudition, and authority, James VanderKam expertly guides readers through the difficult terrain of textual criticism and Scrolls controversies. In the end, the reader emerges with a clear and unbiased understanding of the true significance of the Scrolls for the field of biblical studies."

Restoration Quarterly "It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for understanding the origins, early interpretation and reception, and textual shape of the Bible. . . . James VanderKam's brief volume provides an authoritative guide to this material. As a leading scholar of Second Temple Judaism, he combines careful attention to detail with a judicious eye for the overall picture. . . . A learned and readable tour de force. The work is careful but not pedantic, detailed but not fussy, wide-ranging but penetrating."

Journal of Ancient Judaism "The importance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the study of the Bible is undisputed. VanderKam provides a highly informative textbook, which not only introduces this field of study from the perspectives of the textual, interpretive, and canonical histories of the Hebrew Bible, but also presents the Dead Sea Scrolls as an important theological context for the New Testament."

Review of Biblical Literature "This is a splendid contribution to the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls, lucidly written and generally accessible to readers of all sorts."

Journal of Theological Studies "A valuable introduction for all novices in the field of the Dead Sea Scrolls."

Journal for the Study of the New Testament "This volume will be extremely valuable for those seeking an introduction to this subject. It is written in a very clear style, whilst drawing on VanderKam's deep knowledge of the field of Qumran research."

Congregational Libraries Today "These essays provide a substantial overview. They are accessible and will enhance the reader's understanding of the many ways in which these scrolls open windows on the world of the ancient Jewish community."

Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society "Gives authoritative and up-to-date information on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible. . . . It would make an excellent text for various courses on biblical backgrounds or on the Dead Sea Scrolls. . . . VanderKam is to be commended for making this significant information readily available to students of the Bible."

Reviews in Religion & Theology "Short but very interesting book. . . . This is a worthy read into which VanderKam crams some of the most important contributions the scrolls have made to critical analysis. I would thoroughly recommend this book to all students interested in biblical interpretation."

James C. VanderKam is John A. O'Brien Professor of Hebrew Scriptures at the University of Notre Dame and a member of the international team responsible for preserving and translating the Dead Sea Scrolls. His previous books include *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* and *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (both Eerdmans).

Besides the critical scholarship, this text provides a good introduction to the DSS. VanderKam is the expert and reliable source concerning the DSS.

Good summary of Dead Sea Scrolls connection to OT and NT from both a textual and theological stance.

This book is an excellent, clearly-written, and reliable introductory guide to what the Dead Sea Scrolls add to our knowledge of the history of the Bible. I especially like the discussion of the Essenes, the ancient group that wrote some of the scrolls. VanderKam discussed the etymology of the name Essene (pages 100-104) and (rightly, I think) supported the origin that is confirmed in the self-designation in the scrolls, 'osey hatorah, "the doers of Torah." Of course the Pharisees and Sadducees would not grant them that name. A few very minor points. On the page 100 mention of 4Q213a reading claiming an Eastern Aramaic adjective meaning "holy," that reading may have been made from an enhanced photo, and R. Kugler (and Åfâ . P.?) examined the original fragment and concluded that a fold in the skin produced a misreading. On pages 103-4 William Brownlee is quoted correctly mentioning that there were ancient spellings of the group name starting with O as well as with E, but Brownlee mistakenly referred to the writing of Hippolytus rather than to Epiphanius. On page 100 VanderKam wrote, quite correctly, that this etymology "has a long pedigree" including, for example, Philipp Melanchthon. Azariah de Rossi was an important participant in early discussions, one of the first writers to compare extensively and critically rabbinic literature with Josephus and Philo, but took a different view. More than 60 different proposals have been published, ranging from guesses in Akkadian to Persian Avestan. One self-identification found in the scrolls was proposed in 1532 and in each following century before the Qumran discoveries. The medieval book *Yosippon* had replaced Essenes with Hasidim (which can't be the source), following rabbinic disinclination to use the name Essenes (not allowing that Essenes were the observers of Torah), and the modern Hebrew *Issim* is merely a modern retroversion from the Greek. In 1532 Ph. Melanchthon wrote "Essei / das ist / Operarii / vom wort Assa / das ist

wircken."1550 "...to declare the straitnesse and severitie of lyfe with the dede, and would be called Essey, that is workers or doers, for Assa, whence the name commeth, sygnifieth to worke..."1557 David Chytraeus [Kochhaffe], Onomasticon. ESSENI seu Essei, id est, operarii.1559 M. Flacius Illyricus et al. Ecclesiastica Hist., Magdeburg Centuries. Basel.[1573-75 Azariah de Rossi. Me'or Enayim. Mantua. Aramaic proposal][1583 J. Scaliger, De Emendatione Temporum. on hallucination proposals][1605 Scaliger, Elenchus Trihaeresii. different view]1619 Sixtinus Amama ed. De Sectis Iudaicis..., Arnheim.1674 J. Lightfoot, Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae, on Lk. xv, 7.1680 Johann H. Willemer. Dissertatio...Essenis....1703 J. Triglandius ed., Trium Scriptorum...Judaeorum Sectis...Delft. 107: Essenes as factores legis, doers of the law.1743-4 J.C. Happach. De Essaeorum Nomine. Coburg.1745 Johann Ulrich Tresenreuter1839 Isaak Jost, Die Essaer..., Israelitische Annalen 19, 145-7.1858 S. Cohn; David Oppenheim, MGWJ 7, 270-1; 272-3.1862 L. Landsberg, Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthum 26/33, 459.1864 C. D. Ginsburg, The Essenes1875 J. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians...appx.1881 A. B. Gottlober, ...B\$M KT H(SS(N(R)W (SS((R, HaBoker Or [Warsaw] 170-1.1881 Rev. Et. J. 3, 295.1894 Kruger, Theologische Quartalschrift 76 [1887, 69]1938 H.M.J. Loewe in Encyclopedia Britannica (14th ed.) 718. (includes `asah as a possible etymology, soon before the Qumran discoveries).Then in Qumran pesharim appeared the self-designation, `osey hatorah.

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