

Uncovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proof of the Bible's Power

Dr. Bobby Duke, chief curatorial officer at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C., is previewing a new exhibit coming to the museum in November: a powerful exploration of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Duke told CBN News the significance of the biblical manuscripts and why the discovery has revolutionized biblical understanding.

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"Before 1947, our best Hebrew manuscripts came from about 1,000 AD," he said. "And when the first cave was found there at Qumran in 1947, it shaved off 1,000 years of manuscript transmission and let us see what the Hebrew Bible was like, what scrolls were like around the time of Jesus and the disciples."

The scrolls were found by accident in the 1940s, with the discovery transforming understanding of original biblical texts.

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"In late 1946 or early 1947, Bedouin teenagers were tending their goats and sheep near the ancient settlement of Qumran, located on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea in what is now known as the West Bank," History reported. "One of the young shepherds tossed a rock into an opening on the side of a cliff

and was surprised to hear a shattering sound.”

Inside the cave were clay jars filled with scrolls. Other scrolls were later found in additional nearby caves, with every Old Testament book outside of Esther being represented among the findings. The date of the scrolls proves how the texts were well-preserved over time.

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Duke, a biblical expert, said his personal studies of the Dead Sea Scrolls have given him “more confidence in the Bible,” especially regarding the significance of the English translations many read today.

“It does give us a sense that the English translations we’re reading today are based on wonderful manuscripts that go all the way back to the time of the New Testament,” he said.

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