

The  **Watchtower**
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

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**When Will
Peace Really
Come?**





Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est.

DEAD SEA SCROLLS *Unprecedented Treasure*

AT THE foot of Wadi Qumran, on the northwest side of the Dead Sea, lie some ancient ruins. Long considered to be the remains of a Roman fort, they had received little attention from archaeologists. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah in 1947, however, prompted reconsideration of the site.

Soon scholars identified the buildings as belonging to a religious community of the Jews. The immediate assumption was that these people had hidden the scrolls in the caves among the cliffs nearby. But later discoveries seemed to cast doubt on that.

An Unprecedented Find

Bedouin were alert to the value of the manuscripts they had already found. So, in 1952, when an old man recounted that as a youth he had chased a wounded partridge until it disappeared into a hole in the rock face, where he found some pottery and an ancient oil lamp, a fresh search got under way.

The old man was still able to identify the cave mouth among the deep clefts of the precipitous cliff. It

turned out to be a man-made cave, now identified as Cave 4. There the Bedouin found pieces of manuscripts a few feet below the then existing level of the floor. None of the pieces had been stored in jars, so most were badly decayed, blackened, and very brittle. In time some 40,000 fragments were recovered, representing nearly 400 manuscripts. All the books of the Hebrew Scriptures, with the exception of Esther, were represented among the one hundred Bible manuscripts. Much of the material recovered from Cave 4 has not yet been published.

One of the more significant manuscripts was of the books of Samuel, copied in a single roll. Its Hebrew text, preserved in 47 columns out of a probable 57, is very similar to that used by the translators of the Greek Septuagint version. There are also Greek fragments of the *Septuagint* from Leviticus and Numbers that date back to the first century B.C.E. The Leviticus manuscript uses *IAO*, for the Hebrew יהוה, the divine name of God, instead of the Greek *Ky'ri-os*, "Lord."*

In a fragment from Deuteronomy, the Hebrew text includes the portion from chapter 32, verse 43, found in the *Septuagint* and quoted at Hebrews 1:6: "And let all God's

* See the *Reference Bible*, Appendix 1C (5) and the footnote to Leviticus 3:12, where this manuscript is identified as 4Q LXX Lev^b.