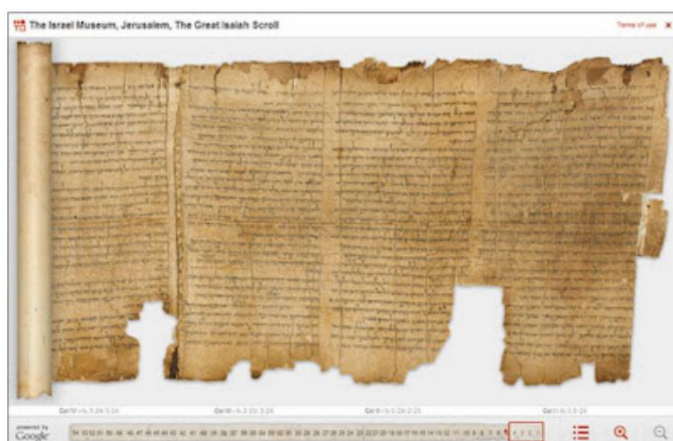


ON ESSAYERS AND ONE FORGERY DEAD SEA SCROLLS

There are few places in the world as eerie as the Dead Sea. Its name says a lot. Once upon a time, there were two cities here: Sodom and Gomorrah. Their fate is terrifying. The locals call it a cursed place. In 1947, a Bedouin boy named Muhamed ed-Dib, from the Taamire tribe, exhausted from a long search for a missing goat, unexpectedly discovered a cave. Thinking that the goat might be there, he threw a stone into the opening. Then, instead of the bleating of the goat, he heard the sound of a breaking clay pot. Having climbed onto the cave and entered it, he saw a number of clay pots, in which h



Muhammad ed-Dib*





Between 1947 and 1956, the famous Qumran scrolls were discovered on the shores of the Dead Sea. They revealed even more about the Essenes. They introduced the world to this truly unique Jewish community. These scrolls were one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, revealing new insights into the Old Testament, the history of Judaism. The Qumran Bible manuscripts The age dates back to the 3rd century BC - 2nd century AD (dating varies in different sources). More than 900 manuscript fragments were discovered at Qumran (other sources state that thousands were found...), written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

Almost all the books of the Holy Scripture that have been found had several copies. Of those finds During the research, there was tension in the scientific world: would the Qumran Bible differ from those previously discovered? This was the most important question. The manuscripts from Qumran confirmed that the Bible had remained unchanged! The impressive stability of the Bible text testified that this is a special Book, the Author of which is GOD Himself.

Thus, the Dead Sea Scrolls belonged to a single community whose settlement was located near these caves. **Some scholars tend to consider this community identified with the Essenes - an ascetic branch of Judaism, which paid much attention to moral and spiritual purity.** The lifestyle of this community, according to the writings, was strictly regulated: members had to follow precise rules, participate in rituals, learn and practice the principles of faith. The scrolls reveal that they devoted much space to reflections on the coming of the Messiah and the final confrontation between good and evil. Some texts drew apocalyptic images, proclaimed prophecies, and spoke of the workings of the forces of heaven.

It is known today that *the Essenes* (ייִשׁוּבֵי קִמְרָן), *the Essenes*, were a semi-monastic sect of Judaism that existed during the late Second Temple period (2nd century BC - 1st century AD). They

was spread throughout various parts of Israel, but mainly on the western shore of the Dead Sea. Other sources state that the Essenes were most likely founded around 150 BC.

During the reign of Antiochus IV, after the Maccabean revolt. The Essenes lived apart from the exegetes of the Scriptures, calling themselves "poor" or "unlearned" and "**sons of light.**"

The Essenes were mentioned by Pliny the Elder and Josephus. The Essenes were distinct from the Sadducees and Pharisees. The most interesting thing is that the Essenes had a unique social structure, a unique lifestyle, traditions, and even awaited the coming of two messiahs: from the lineages of David and Aaron, and the imminent end of the world. The Essenes did not accumulate wealth, emphasizing the importance of poverty. They placed the greatest importance on the study and copying of the Bible.

Some historians have claimed that the Essenes took vows of chastity, but Josephus wrote, that two trends prevailed among the Essenes: the more moderate ones lived in families and did not isolate themselves from the people, and the representatives of the more radical branch, it is believed, were the followers of the Qumran manuscripts. authors. The latter shunned worldly life.

The essay community was organized on a hierarchical basis: in order to join, community, had to pass a long probationary period, and once they joined they had to observe strict discipline and completely obey their elders. The community could

adult men belonged, and children could be taught the principles preached. Essays

They were engaged in agriculture and crafts. All their property was shared, and their clothing was poor.

Josephus Flavius writes that they changed their clothes and shoes only when they were completely worn out.

The standard was simply extreme - no one could own any property. Without the permission of the elders, it was not even possible to give anything to relatives - all property was distributed by the elders. There were no slaves in the community,

Everyone cared for the sick together.

The Essenes despised the satisfaction of bodily pleasures. Those who did not renounce the family, valued it only as an opportunity to continue the lineage. In addition, they practiced baptism and believed in the Apocalypse.

The Essenes were most concerned with ritual cleanliness: they washed themselves regularly, ate only "clean" food. food" and only together. They emphasized ritual purity by wearing white clothes.

They had their own calendar and were waiting for the decisive battle between the sons of "light" and "darkness".

The Essenes believed that their teachings would replace the Temple rites. The Essenes considered the temple servants in Jerusalem to be blasphemers and the temple itself to be defiled. Unlike the Pharisees, the Essenes believed in fate, and thus rejected free will. They observed the Sabbath with extreme strictness— even stricter than the Pharisees. Blasphemy against the name of Moses was punishable by death, and other offenses were punishable by excommunication. A member who was

excommunicated simply died of starvation, because, according to Josephus,

Due to oath and custom, he could no longer eat ordinary food prepared by non-members of the community. They studied ethics and Torah especially carefully, but they also had their own holy scriptures.

Although the Essenes could be found among the Jewish soldiers during the Great Revolt against Rome (66-70 AD), the strictness of their teachings kept them apart from the people. Their

The teaching was essentially the opposite of the Sadducees, but they themselves remained in the role of the "chosen ones." After the destruction of the Temple, with the beginning of Jewish life in the diaspora, the Essene movement disappeared and remained only immortalized in writings.

With the disappearance of the Sadducean aristocracy, which was closely associated with the Temple, their party lost all foundation. The "sons of darkness" also destroyed the Essene monasteries. The Essene community disappeared without taking deep enough roots in the nation. Many died Pharisees and many ordinary Jews. The surviving Pharisees kept their schools, zealously spreading their teachings, which laid the foundations for the tradition of rabbinical Judaism and these days for Orthodox Judaism.

A new era that had dawned several decades earlier had changed world history: the cross of Christ had opened the way to God not only for Jews but also for Gentiles. The cross of Christ had abolished any differences of origin, nationality, status, or culture, except for one thing — the difference between a believer and an unbeliever in the Redeemer.

I have already mentioned that the Essenes considered themselves children of light. Unfortunately, those children lived in the tension of the struggle with the children of darkness. They were waiting for the final battle and they got it. After that they disappeared...There's something to think about!

On the "gospel" of the essayists

That falsification – “The Gospel of the Essenes’ World”¹ most likely arose from a good-natured desire to help Christians *live differently*. It is not about faith or Revelation, but about simple life on earth. In ancient times, communities and nations lived according to strict traditions. Family relationships, raising children, finding and cooking food – everything was regulated. No one even thought that it was possible to live in any other way, because it would have been unsafe: the community would collapse. People do not think even now: they live *inertly*. Only one other person escapes *to freedom*: by consciously and radically changing his lifestyle. Now there are no more old traditions, moral norms,

respect for the elderly, respect for others, for those who are different. Individualism has taken hold in the democratic world. The most important thing is me and "my opinion", equated with "the truth".

Although in ancient times all the nations and communities of the world tried to adhere to their traditions so that the community would not fall apart, their unity was not maintained out of love for their neighbor. In that world, there lived a small community of Jews (about 4,000 people), whose way of life still amazes us. Interestingly, they called themselves “children of light.” Although their internal relations were based on strict piety and discipline in all areas of life, they were not Christians. Jesus, as you know, also called all people *children of light*.

When I became interested in the so-called "gospel" of essays, I read a number of different texts.

There are authors who believe in it, and let them believe if they want. However, there are serious scholars who have established **who** its author is and for what purpose it was created. In a word, it was a naive attempt to encourage people of modern times to imitate the lifestyle of the "clean Essayists", emphasizing a healthy diet, namely vegetarianism. Be that as it may, the "gospel", unfortunately,

in quotation marks, has no connection with Christianity and the Teachings of Jesus. It is a pure forgery. Not an apocrypha.

Today it is known that the "Gospel of the Essay World" was created by the Hungarian Edmond Bordeaux Sheckley (grandson of the famous Alexander Sheckley, poet and Unitarian bishop). EB Sheckley was a highly educated man, fluent in Sanskrit, Aramaic, Greek, Latin and other languages. He received his doctorate from the University of Paris, and others from the universities of Vienna and Leipzig. He was a professor of philosophy and experimental psychology. In 1928, together with the writer Romain Rolland, who was "deeply inspired

"The Gospels of the Essenes", founded the Biogenic Society. Since among his most important translations were selected texts from the Qumran scrolls, he was probably familiar with the Essenes lifestyle and their legacy, EB Sheckley was impressed by their lifestyle, piety, and, wanting to ignite people's hearts to seek God, live righteously and wisely, and most importantly, to live healthily and disciplined, he created...that "gospel". He himself distributed it in a million copies in 26 languages. Since his scientific works were related to biogenic life, they attracted the interest of the whole world.

Throughout his life

Edmond Bordo Sheckley wrote over 80 books on philosophy and ancient cultural histories that have been published in many countries.



Edmond Bordeaux Sheckley

Edmond Bordo Sheckley compiled his translations from Aramaic into four books, and he himself spread the myth that he had discovered the "Gospel of the Essenes" in the "secret Vatican archives"... The first book he compiled included his own forgery, "The Gospel of the Essenes of the World." Its English version appeared in 1937. Since then, that little booklet has spread throughout the world, conquering an ever-increasing

readership. The mystical story of the discovery of the gospel was written by Sheckley himself: "How the Gospel of the Essene was Discovered". Later, translations of the other parts appeared (they formed the second and third volumes) entitled "The Unknown Books of the Essene" and "The Lost Scrolls of the Essene Brotherhood", which quickly became as popular as the first book. In 1981, after his death, in accordance with Sheckley's will, a translation of the last part - the fourth book "The Essene Gospel" - was published.

teaching". Some of the titles of the sections are as follows: "Essay communities", "The Sevenfold World", "The Sacred Currents of Life, Light and Sound", "The Gift of the Simple Grass".

It should also be added that, in addition to copies of Old Testament books – such as Isaiah, Psalms or Deuteronomy – the Qumran finds also included the "Community of the Rule" (1QS), "War Scroll" (1QM), "Temple Scroll" (11QTemple) and commentaries (pshers) explaining the prophecies. For example, in the "Community Rule" It discusses how the Qumranites (Essenes) should behave in the community, what moral and ritual principles they should observe. The "War Scroll" arouses interest in apocalyptic imagery, describes the eschatological confrontation of good and evil, and the "Temple Scroll" presents an idealized vision of the temple cult and liturgy, as if extending the teaching found in the Bible about the abode of God. The significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for religious, historical and cultural heritage is enormous. They confirm the fidelity of the biblical text to the originals, illuminate the previously little-known work of the Essenes and other similar communities' activities and ideas. These manuscripts also encourage respect for textual study and interpretation - they reveal how carefully the biblical texts were copied, thus ensuring their continuity. Perhaps most striking is how many echoes of living faith from ancient times remain within us. The Qumran Scrolls speak of the faith the constancy and the desire of the human spirit to know God and His will. Even after For millennia, these writings testify to the power of the Word, which was important both for the wise men of that time and for our society today.

However, the reflections of the essayists' lives have reached us, they have taught us another lesson: Do not live in struggle with others, the "dark" and the alien... because you will perish yourself. Children of Light are not children of war, but of Love.

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***I also found "The Gospel of the World Essays" by a Lithuanian:** <https://raimundasbakutis.blogspot.com/2014/05/eseju-evangelija-apie-motina-zeme.html>

If you're interested, read about the essayists and their lifestyle:

[here](#)

<https://www.prizme.lt/zurnalas/?p=627>

[here https://www.aidai.eu/index.php?view=article&id=1303%3Afi&tmpl=component&layout=default&option=com_content&Itemid=148](https://www.aidai.eu/index.php?view=article&id=1303%3Afi&tmpl=component&layout=default&option=com_content&Itemid=148)

Sources used in the text: Wikipedia and spauda.lt