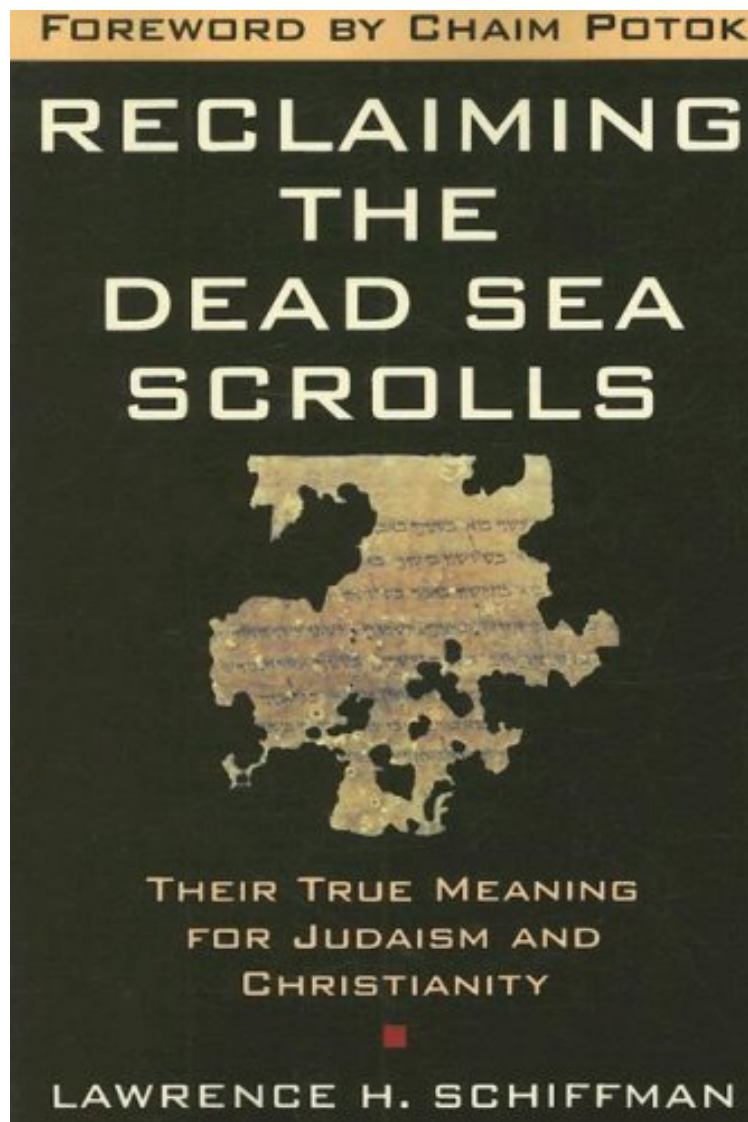


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Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls: The History of Judaism, the Background of Christianity, the Lost Library of Qumran

Lawrence H. Schiffman

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2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Finally: MMT is ExpoundedBy Eagle1Tragically, scholarship has mostly ignored the significance of 4QMMT (Miqsat Ma'ase ha-Torah), since being discovered in 1953. But alas, Professor Lawrence Schiffman has arrived to set the record straight. In this book, Professor Schiffman (thoroughly, simply and undeniably) demonstrates the early existence of specific Pharisaic ideas in 150BCE, that were later attributed to the Beit Hillel school of Pharisees. Thus, the claim that Pharisaic Judaism is some (post 70ce / post Temple) concoction of the Rabbis has now been reduced to the rubbish heap - where it always belonged. Thanks Professor. This is very much appreciated!!!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Shawn McAllisterContent is great, but I'm not a big fan of paperbacks.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Richard F.Good Reference book

Dead Sea Scrolls expert Lawrence H. Schiffman shifts attention away from the sensationalism surrounding who has control of the scrolls by focusing on how these texts shed light on the history of Judaism and early Christianity.

From Kirkus sThe most thorough and authoritative of the flood of new books occasioned by the full release of the Dead Sea Scrolls between 1991 and 1993. Schiffman (Near Eastern Studies/New York Univ.), a Hebrew and Judaic studies expert who now serves on the editorial team that is publishing the scrolls, clearly presents what scholars know and, equally important, what they don't know about the documents that many would agree constitute the greatest archaeological find of the century. He describes in considerable detail the contents and the political and religious historical context of the scrolls, produced between 150 bce and 70 ce during the Greek and Roman conquests of Palestine. But Schiffman also makes the case for a paradigm shift in the manner in which the scrolls should be viewed and interpreted. As he notes: ``The first generation of scroll scholars, primarily Christians interested in either the Hebrew Bible or the New Testament, did not understand the scrolls for what they were: documents illuminating the history of Second Temple Judaism...What resulted therefore, was a Christianized version of the scrolls." Schiffman, in contrast, views the scrolls as Jewish texts. He rejects earlier theories, such as that the scrolls were written by the ascetic sect of Essenes, and makes the case for many of the scrolls being of Sadducee origin (the Sadducees were an anti-Rabbinic group that had links to the priestly class). An updated tale of the discovery, acquisition, and deciphering of the Dead Sea Scrolls would make a great narrative. But this is not Schiffman's aim. For now, Edmund Wilson's 1954 *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, based on his *New Yorker* reportage, remains the classic page-turner about the scrolls. Schiffman's scholarly presentation is plodding, but his arguments and conclusions are well reasoned and reliable. (For more on the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Neil Asher Silberman, *The Hidden Scrolls*, p. TK.) Scholars in religious studies, seasoned scroll amateurs, and newcomers to this fascinating subject can all benefit from immersion in this welcome volume. (40 photos) (Author tour) -- Copyright 1994, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.From the PublisherDead Sea Scrolls expert Lawrence H. Schiffman shifts attention away from the sensationalism surrounding who has control of the scrolls by focusing on how these texts shed light on the history of Judaism and early Christianity.From the Inside FlapDead Sea Scrolls expert Lawrence H. Schiffman shifts attention away from the sensationalism surrounding who has control of the scrolls by focusing on how these texts shed light on the history of Judaism and early Christianity.