



PUBLIC RELATIONS

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DEAD SEA SCROLLS LECTURE SERIES KICKS OFF OPENING WEEKEND, RUNS THROUGH OCTOBER

Seven lectures by world-renowned scholars explore the importance of the ancient relics that helped shape modern society, the largest exhibition to-date outside of Israel

Philadelphia, PA, May 3, 2012 – Presented in conjunction with The Franklin Institute's *Dead Sea Scrolls: Life and Faith in Ancient Times* is a series of opening weekend lectures and Thursday night lectures held throughout the exhibit's duration.

Taking place in Franklin Theater located just inside The Franklin Institute, 222 N. 20th Street, the series of seven lectures will be presented by 10 experts in unique fields of study including Judaic studies, Near Eastern studies and members of the Israel Antiquities Authority. These captivating lectures – beginning Sunday, May 13 – will further explore the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and their sociological and educational influence today.

Sunday, May 13th, 3:00-4:00pm: Jerusalem in the First Temple Period, City of God, City of Kings – In the age of kings David and Solomon, Jerusalem rose to its immortal status as a sacred city for three of the world's largest religions. Despite subsequent destruction of the city and deportation of its people, the silent remains of archaeological finds continue to tell the story of ancient Jerusalem loud and clear. Join Debora Ben Ami from the Israel Antiquities Authority as we explore the cultural, spiritual and everyday life of Jerusalem in the 1st millennium BCE through artifacts that symbolize the special bond between a people, their land and their God.

Speaker: Debora Ben Ami, Israel Antiquities Authority

* Free with museum admission

Sunday, May 13th, 4:30-5:30pm: Preservation, Conservation and New Imaging of the Dead Sea Scrolls – The Dead Sea Scrolls are a universal cultural heritage – their conservation and preservation have concerned both scholars and conservators ever since their discovery. The duty to safeguard them is ongoing, making use of the most up-to-date conservation methods known worldwide. Join us as Pnina Shor, Curator and Head of Dead Sea Scrolls Projects, discusses the Israel Antiquities Authority's conservation efforts, including a new digitization project that allows non-invasive yet precise monitoring of the scrolls.

Speaker: Dr. Pnina Shor, Israel Antiquities Authority

* Free with museum admission

Thursday, June 14th, 7:00-8:00pm: the Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls – An illustrated account of the discovery of an ancient library of almost 900 manuscripts recovered between 1947 and 1956 from 11 caves near Khirbet Qumran in the Judean Desert. On the basis of a survey the various types of documents found in the Qumran library, the lecture will offer an introduction to the unique importance of the scrolls for our understanding of ancient Judaism and the origins of Christianity.

Speaker: P. Kyle McCarter, William Foxwell Albright Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies, the Johns Hopkins University

* \$5.00 per person. Pre-register at 215-448-1200

Thursday, July 12th, 7:00-8:00pm: At the Intersect of Religion and Science – Science and religion both grapple with mysteries of the universe and our place in it. How do we respond as science and religious studies unfold new understandings, which challenge conventional beliefs? Join us as we attempt to see how these seemingly disparate fields might work together to deepen our understanding of the universe.

Speaker: Reverend Jay Gardner, youth Minister, white Rock Baptist Church and Microbiologist, University of Pennsylvania

Speaker: Dr. Michelle Francl, Professor of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr College and Columnist, The Catholic Standard and Times

* \$5.00 per person. Pre-register at 215-448-1200

Thursday, August 9th, 7:00-8:00pm: Stars, Scrolls, and Angels: Astronomy in Ancient Times – In an age before telescopes, what did ancients know and think about the stars? What did they imagine when they looked up into the starry night? New evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls has revealed lost traditions of Jewish observation and speculation about celestial cycles, exposing the forgotten place of ancient Jews between Babylonian and Greek scientists. This talk opens a window on ancient astronomy, as seen from the perspectives of ancient history and modern science alike.

Speaker: Dr. Annette Y. Reed, Department of Religious Studies, University of Pennsylvania

Speaker: Derrick Pitts, Chief Astronomer, The Franklin Institute

* \$5.00 per person. Pre-register at 215-448-1200

Thursday, September 13th, 7:30-8:30pm: The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls – The Dead Sea Scrolls represent a collection of Jewish religious works, including early copies of the Hebrew Bible, which were discovered in caves surrounding the site of Qumran, by the northwest shore of the Dead Sea. The scrolls were deposited in the caves by members of a Jewish sect that inhabited Qumran in the first century B.C.E. and first century C.E. In this slide-illustrated lecture, we examine the archaeological remains of the Qumran settlement, and discuss the connection of the site with the scrolls and the sect's identity.

Speaker: Dr. Jodi Magness, Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

* \$5.00 per person. Pre-register at 215-448-1200

Thursday, October 11th, 7:00-8:00pm: Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls – The Dead Sea Scrolls have been described as the greatest archaeological discovery of the 20th century. Join a discussion of how the scrolls have changed our understanding of ancient Judaism and the Bible, and the significance of the scrolls to the Jewish and Christian faiths. Dr. Schiffman, of Yeshiva University, who worked on the full publication of the scrolls and Dr. Collins, of Yale Divinity School, who specializes in Second Temple Judaism, will lead the talk.

Speaker: Dr. Lawrence Schiffman, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Professor of Judaic Studies at Yeshiva University

Speaker: Dr. John Collins, Holmes Professor of Old Testament, Yale Divinity School

* \$5.00 per person. Pre-register at 215-448-1200

**Ticketing for the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit is neither included nor required for above lectures.*

About the Exhibition

In 1947, a shepherd stumbled upon a hidden cave along the shore of the Dead Sea – concealed inside were ancient scrolls that had not been seen for 2,000 years. After extensive excavation, a total of 972 remarkably preserved scrolls were found, including the earliest Biblical texts ever discovered. Now known as the Dead Sea Scrolls, they have been called the most significant archaeological find of the last century.

The Franklin's Institute's *Dead Sea Scrolls: Life and Faith in Ancient Times* presents one of the most comprehensive collections of ancient artifacts from Israel ever organized, featuring twenty scrolls including the oldest known copies of the Hebrew Bible and four never-before-seen-scrolls. With more than 600 items on display, visitors will experience firsthand the traditions, beliefs and iconic objects from everyday life more than 2000 years ago. These fascinating artifacts, such as an actual three-ton stone from Jerusalem's Western Wall, highlight the millennia-old traditions that continue to impact modern religions and society today. Included among the collection's artifacts are the limestone capitals used in the architecture of the administrative centers during the first temple period

(1006-586 BCE). Visitors will see artifacts from Jerusalem's City of David, limestone Ossuaries from the early Roman period, and an ancient signature preserved for millennia on the Archer Seal. Together these artifacts reveal precious details about the culture, rituals, and beliefs of ancient Israel, spanning thousands of years.

The limited engagement of *Dead Sea Scrolls: The Exhibition Life and Faith in Ancient Times* will only be on view in the Mandell Center at The Franklin Institute from May 12, 2012 to October 14, 2012. PECO is the Presenting Sponsor of the exhibition.

About the Franklin Institute

Located in the heart of Philadelphia, The Franklin Institute is a renowned and innovative leader in the field of science and technology learning, as well as a dynamic center of activity. Pennsylvania's most visited museum, it is dedicated to creating a passion for learning about science by offering access to hands-on science education. Considered one of the great science centers in the nation and the world, The Franklin Institute is known for blockbuster exhibits, one-of-a-kind theatrical experiences, and cutting-edge community learning with national influence. All are aimed at explaining science in ways that impact people's lives. For more information, visit www.fi.edu.

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