Accessing the Dead Sea Scrolls at Goddard Library

Brief Overview of the DSS Numbering System:

Originally, when they were first written, the scrolls were documents with columns and lines, and were deposited in different caves. Over the past 2,000 years the scrolls deteriorated and fell apart. Some were stored in jars; many were buried under several inches of dirt and guano.

Even though the scrolls could be reconstructed, many were still fragmentary with various “lacunae” (gaps), where information was lost.

The organization of the scrolls reflects the above situation. So, the citation, 4Q521 2ii1 represents the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cave</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Fragment</th>
<th>Column</th>
<th>Line</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Q(umran)</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Names, or abbreviations for names are sometimes given instead of document numbers, for instance 4QS = “4QMessianic Apocalypse” or “4QSigns of the Messiah”.
- Some documents do not use either cave, location or document numbers but are known only by title or an abbreviation (e.g., 1QS = 1QSerek haYahad = “1QRule of the Community” = “Manual of Discipline”; CD [for Cairo Damacus] = “Damascus Document”).
- Fragment and line numbers are typically represented with “Arabic” numerals (1,2,3,4,…).
- Columns are typically represented with Roman numerals (i,ii,iii,iv,… or I,II,III,IV,…).
- Sometimes a document does not have fragments or columns. In this case, they will only have two numbers (e.g. 4Q521 8.5 or CD II 5).
- Sometimes a document has been pieced together. The “piecing together” of these documents is represented by a plus “+” (7+5ii6 = line 6 of col. 2. of frag. 7 pieced together with frag. 5).
- Often brackets “[]” are used to indicate places where there are gaps & the editor has restored the text using other parallel documents or by “taking an educated guess.”

Primary Resources for Reading the Dead Sea Scrolls (a non-exhaustive list):

Concordances & Indices:

*Abegg, Martin G., Jr., et al. *Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance: Volume One, the Non-Biblical Texts from Qumran.* 2 Parts. Ref. *Oversized BM487.A72 2003 v.1 pts. 1 & 2.* This concordance surpasses both Charlesworth & Kuhn, and is much easier to use, providing both location information and a brief English definition.


Washburn, David L. *A Catalog of Biblical Passages in the Dead Sea Scrolls.* This is a helpful index of where to find a particular Old Testament passage in the DSS for the sake of text criticism. Ref. BS1099.H4.W37 2003b.

Braun, Herbert. *Qumran und das Neuen Testament.* 2 vols. While in German, vol. 1 discusses parallels between the NT and DSS. These parallels are listed in the order in which they appear in the NT. Ref. BM487.B738 v. 1 & 2. Use Google Translate!

Texts & Translations:


†Abegg, Martin, Jr., Peter Flint & Eugene Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible.* This text contains an English trans. of the biblical scrolls with footnotes indicating differences with the MT and LXX. Ref. BS895.A24 1999. Available in Accordance and BibleWorks.
**Discoveries in the Judaean Desert Series.** This set is the critical edition of the DSS, containing photos & transcriptions of both biblical and non-biblical scrolls and papyri. Some vols. are in French or German. Ref. BM487.A05 1955.

* García Martinez, Florentino & Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition.* 2 vols. This is the “standard” translation of the non-biblical texts, with Heb. text. This edition has both the Hebrew text and English translation. It is easiest to use, because the scrolls are listed in numerical order by cave and document number. Ref. BM487.A3 2000 v. 1 & 2.


*Ulrich, The Biblical Qumran Scrolls: Transcriptions and Textual Variants collects all Hebrew fragments of biblical texts, and arranges them in canonical order along with footnotes highlighting differences with the MT and LXX. Ref. BS1136.B52 2010

†Wise, Michael, Martin Abegg Jr., Edward Cook. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation.* 2nd ed. This is a good translation, arranged by genre. Particularly helpful is the index to OT citations & allusions in the non-biblical scrolls. Ref. BM487.A3 2005. The 1st ed. is available electronically in Accordance and BibleWorks.

**Going from Greek to Hebrew:**

1. Familiarize yourself with the Hebrew alphabet. This is one instance where Wikipedia is actually reliable: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/hebrew_alphabet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/hebrew_alphabet). Remember that Hebrew is written from right to left.

2. Find the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word you are studying...
   a. Use Hatch & Redpath’s *Concordance to the Septuagint* (Ref. BS1122.H3 1998).
      i. Note that some Greek entries have multiple Hebrew equivalents.
      ii. Note that each passage listed is numbered according to the corresponding Hebrew word.
   b. Check Hatch & Redpath against Muraoka’s *A Greek-Hebrew/Aramaic Two-Way Index to the Septuagint* Ref. BS1122.H32 M872 2010 This is the most up-to-date Greek-Hebrew/Aramaic index, and uses the Göttigen LXX as its base text and incorporates recent document discoveries.
   c. You can also use the Parallel BHS-LXX module in BibleWorks to find the Hebrew equivalents. (Available in the computer lab)

3. Look up Hebrew equivalents in the DSS.
      i. Note the use of the numbering system mentioned above.
      ii. Note that an English gloss is given for each Hebrew word.
      iii. Some of the listed occurrences of a word will contain identical content, but point to different copies of a particular document.
   b. In the Qumran Sectarian Manuscripts database (see above).

4. Look up texts listed in Garcia Martínez’ *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* Ref. BM487.A3 2000 v. 1 & 2; see also link below.

**Searching Electronically:**
The non-biblical texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls are available electronically in several formats.

- BibleWorks has the Hebrew text of the non-biblical scrolls as an add-on. It also has Wise, Abegg & Cook and Abegg, Flint & Ulrich. BW9 is available on the library computers.
- Accordance has the Hebrew texts of both Biblical and sectarian scrolls; translations by Wise, Abegg & Cook as well as Abegg, Flint & Ulrich.
- García Martínez’ translation is available online through EBSCOhost in PDF format. Only one simultaneous user is allowed. See link at [http://www.gordonconwell.edu/library/dss.cfm](http://www.gordonconwell.edu/library/dss.cfm)
- See also Dr. Ciampa’s list of links to Amazon & GoogleBooks resources: [http://www.viceregency.com/STJudaismatAmazon.htm](http://www.viceregency.com/STJudaismatAmazon.htm)