

03-01 Field Notes: Biblical Study Tour — Qumran, Jericho & Jerusalem Road

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SITE OVERVIEW

- **Location:** Qumran (ancient name: Qumran, meaning “two moons” per Speaker 2); Jericho–Jerusalem ascent route; Hinnom Valley, Jerusalem
 - **Date of Visit:** Not explicitly stated in transcript
 - **Biblical References:** Psalms 120–122 (Psalms of Ascent), referenced by Speaker 6
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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- **Qumran** is identified as the site associated with communal desert life, irrigation, and the storage/discovery of significant artifacts; the naming etymology (“two moons”) is linked to the moonlight reflection visible over the sea at night
 - **Jericho** is referenced as “the oldest city in the world” and as the starting point of the ascent route to Jerusalem
 - **The Jericho–Jerusalem road** is identified as the general path Jesus would likely have traveled, ascending via a **wadi** from Jericho to Jerusalem
 - **The Hinnom Valley** is noted on approach to Jerusalem, situated to the south, adjacent to **Herod’s Palace**
 - **West Bank settlements** near Jerusalem are briefly noted, with one large settlement estimated at 50,000–100,000 inhabitants
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

- Reference to a discovery in **1947** connected to Qumran — contextually consistent with the **Dead Sea Scrolls** discovery, though the transcript is fragmentary at this point
- Speaker 7 remarks: *“It’s been 70 years. It hasn’t revealed so much and confirmed so much knowledge”* — indicating ongoing scholarly significance of the 1947 finds
- Speaker 1 alludes to the prophetic statement *“knowledge will increase”* in connection with the revelatory nature of the discoveries
- No specific excavation reports or artifact catalogs are detailed in this transcript segment

[SPECULATIVE] The 1947 references and surrounding dialogue strongly imply discussion of the Dead Sea Scrolls, but the transcript is too fragmented to confirm the precise argument being made by the speaker.

DR. SCHILLING’S KEY POINTS

Note: Speaker identities are not explicitly labeled as “Dr. Schilling” in this transcript. Speaker 1 and Speaker 6 appear to serve primary teaching/guiding roles based on context.

- **Qumran community economics:** Discussion of community membership involving either rent-free living or tithing/labor contributions; the community is **not** described as purely communal in the traditional sense
- **Desert agriculture:** Irrigation techniques in the desert result in plants with smaller leaves but **sweeter fruit** (e.g., dates); date palm exports are noted as economically significant
- **Jericho–Jerusalem route:** Jesus likely ascended via a **wadi** — a specific path rather than a formal road — from Jericho toward Jerusalem
- **Psalms of Ascent (Ps. 120–122):** Speaker 6 references singing these psalms while ascending toward Jerusalem, connecting the physical journey to the liturgical practice of pilgrims ascending to the city
- **Hinnom Valley:** Identified on the left as the group approached Jerusalem from the south; noted in proximity to **Herod’s Palace**
- **West Bank settlement context:** One of the largest settlements near Jerusalem is noted; the observation that establishing physical presence may confer ownership rights is mentioned in connection with Israeli settlement policy

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

- Qumran → Jericho → Jerusalem forms the implied travel arc of this session
 - Jericho sits below Jerusalem; the ascent route follows a **wadi** upward toward the city
 - Hinnom Valley wraps around to the **south** of Jerusalem
 - Herod's Palace is situated behind a wall adjacent to the Hinnom Valley approach
 - The **moonlight reflection over the sea** (likely the Dead Sea) at Qumran is cited as the origin of the site's name
 - Camel sighting noted near Jericho; the group was positioned just above/outside Jericho at the time
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QUOTABLE MOMENTS

- *"Qumran, the name means 'two moons.' When you go to Qumran over there and you look at the sea, you see this beautiful reflection of the moon at night. That's why they call it Qumran."* — Speaker 2, on site etymology
 - *"It's been 70 years. It hasn't revealed so much and confirmed so much knowledge."* — Speaker 7, on the ongoing significance of the 1947 Qumran discoveries
 - *"Knowledge will increase."* — Speaker 1, in response, likely alluding to Daniel 12:4
 - *"Where is the road here that Jesus took? Well, he would have probably walked up a wadi. A wadi that goes from Jericho to Jerusalem. But this is maybe a general path that we're looking at."* — Speaker 6, on the Jericho–Jerusalem ascent route
 - *"I get to sing Psalm 120, 121, 122. The Psalms of ascent."* — Speaker 6, connecting the physical ascent to Jerusalem with the pilgrimage psalms
 - *"This is the Hinnom Valley now on our left. It's going to close around to the south. Behind this wall, which is Herod's Palace..."* — Speaker 1, on Jerusalem approach geography
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PERSONAL NOTES

- The transcript contains significant background noise, side conversations, and commercial exchanges that interrupt the teaching segments; key academic content is fragmentary and should be cross-referenced with any supplementary lecture notes or handouts
- The 1947 Qumran discovery discussion is cut off; recommend reviewing the full unedited recording for the complete argument
- The etymology of "Qumran" as "two moons" should be verified against scholarly sources — **[SPECULATIVE]** as this is a folk/popular etymology not universally

accepted in academic literature

- Follow up: What specific wadi is referenced for the Jericho–Jerusalem ascent?
Wadi Qelt is the most commonly cited candidate
- The Hinnom Valley reference warrants further study in connection with its Old Testament significance (2 Kings 23:10; Jeremiah 7:31) and its possible connection to the concept of Gehenna

Summary compiled from tour transcript. Content creation date: 2026-03-01. Academic verification recommended for etymological and archaeological claims marked [SPECULATIVE].