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ARCHEOLOGY

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The last seven years have witnessed an unusual series of discoveries in Palestine. In the entire history of Archeology there have never been more thrilling developments than those which followed the original discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

In the spring of 1947 an Arab shepherd happened upon a cave in the wilderness of Judaea, a little west of the north end of the Dead Sea. In this cave he found some ancient clay jars, which contained inscribed scrolls wrapped in linen cloth. He took these scrolls to Jerusalem and tried to sell them. Some were purchased by the Hebrew University, while others came into the hands of the Archbishop of the Syrian Church in Jerusalem.

In February, 1948, a representative of the Syrian Archbishop went to the American School of Oriental Research to ask if its members could identify some old Hebrew scrolls which, the messenger said, had been found uncatalogued in the library of the Syrian Monastery. When the scrolls were examined, it was discovered that one of them contained a practically complete text of the book of Isaiah. Its type of writing suggested that it came from the time of Christ, or even a little before.

This was rather hard to believe, since our earliest dated manuscript of any portion of the Old Testament in Hebrew came from the tenth century A. D., and there was little reason to consider *that* any of our existing Old Testament manuscripts, aside from one small piece of papyrus, had been written earlier than the ninth century A. D. The possibility that a Biblical manuscript had been found which was almost a thousand years earlier, was truly exciting.