



Gary A. Rendsburg

Greetings from Los Angeles

May 2022

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Los Angeles, where Gary is serving as visiting research fellow at the Getty Villa for 2.5 months (through the end of June).

The general theme for the academic year is “Phoenicians, Philistines, and Canaanites: The Levant and the Classical World,” with his specific research project focused on “The Spread of Phoenician Writing Culture to Ancient Greece.”

https://www.getty.edu/research/scholars/years/2020_2021-villa.html

As you can imagine, the Getty Villa is a superb facility in which to conduct one’s research, with an outstanding library, excellent colleagues, and a very supportive staff.

For more on the Getty Villa, see here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Getty_Villa

Recent Lectures

With the return to some sense of normalcy (even as we are well aware that the pandemic is not truly over), Gary has been able to deliver some in-person lectures, most recently at The Bishop's School (La Jolla, Calif.), a premier high school founded in the Episcopal tradition by Elizabeth Browning Scripps in 1907.

We had a most pleasant visit to the school, on April 24–25, as Gary taught students in class, presented to the assembled 11th and 12th grade students in chapel, and delivered a public lecture.

Fortunately, two lectures were recorded, as follows:

Bishop's Lecture (1)

Gary's speech to the 12th grade students – which weaves together lessons from the Bible and lessons from Yom ha-Shoa (which landed that day), is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qg36sINiCyA>



Gary presenting in the chapel of The Bishop's School

(Photo courtesy of Cathy Morrison, The Bishop's School)

Bishop's Lecture (2)

The public lecture, "The Bible in Our Hands," is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sovCJ1b-yko>

The camera remains focused on the podium, and not on the screen, but if you wish to follow along, you may download the PDF version of the PowerPoint presentation here:

<https://jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/docman/rendsburg/930-the-bible-in-our-hands-bishop-s>

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to The Bishop's School, with its commitment to justice, diversity, scholarship, and more: <https://www.bishops.com/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bishop%27s_School_\(La_Jolla\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bishop%27s_School_(La_Jolla))

Special thanks to my colleague Jeff Geoghegan, faculty member at Bishop's, for the kind invitation and the generous hosting.

Upcoming Lectures

Even as Gary returns to in-person lecturing in certain venues, there still are upcoming Zoom lectures, to which we invite you, as follows – one in the weeks ahead, two for later in the summer:



"The Dead Sea Scrolls at 75"

Wednesday, June 8, 2022 (via Zoom)

3:00 - 4:30 p.m. (EDT)

Live and Learn Bethesda (Bethesda, Maryland)

<https://www.rezclick.com/liveandlearnbethesda/index.php?page=classes#1775>

Description:

In 1947, a Bedouin shepherd stumbled upon one of the most remarkable archaeological finds of the 20th century: seven ancient Hebrew manuscripts housed in pottery vessels and stored inside a cave. These precious documents led scholars to explore other caves in the area – an effort which eventually yielded 800+ documents, now known collectively as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Further discoveries and the of these ancient documents has led to nothing less than a revolution in our understanding of ancient Judaism, earliest Christianity, and the relationship between the two religious movements.

We begin the lecture with the remarkable story of the initial finds, the explorations of the caves, the excavations at Qumran, and the progress of scholarly work during the past 75 years. By examining the key documents themselves, we next will uncover the salient features of the Essene community which composed these texts during the last few centuries B.C.E. and the first century C.E. – with a special focus on their unique theological positions, their atypical social and religious practices, their relationship to other Jewish groups at the time, and their connections to early Christianity.

The Dead Sea Scrolls at 75: 1947 – 2022

Gary A. Rendsburg

Blanche and Irving Laurie
Chair in Jewish History

Rutgers University

June 8, 2022



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“The Treasures of the British Museum”

Tuesday, August 2, 2022 (via Zoom)

7:00 - 9:00 p.m. (EDT)

One Day University

<https://www.onedayu.com/>

(details not yet available at the website, though we will keep you posted)



“The Rosetta Stone”

Wednesday, September 21, 2022 (via Zoom)

6:30 - 8:00 p.m. (EDT)

Smithsonian Associates

<https://smithsonianassociates.org/>

(details not yet available at the website, though we will keep you posted)

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GARY'S CORNER



Indeed, as indicated above, life at the Getty Villa is truly wonderful.

Per my research topic, “**The Spread of Phoenician Writing Culture to Ancient Greece**,” I am using the opportunity to reacquaint myself with the large corpus of Phoenician and Punic inscription, spanning more than one millennium (from the Early Iron Age through Roman times), across the entire breadth of the Mediterranean (Lebanon, Cyprus, the Aegean, North Africa [esp. Carthage], Spain, etc.).

While in general we lack extended narratives (which would have been written on perishable papyrus scrolls), the loss is compensated by the quantity of Phoenician inscriptions written mainly on stone, numbering literally in the thousands.

Here is one such inscription (from Cyprus, now in the Louvre), which includes the word דלט (dlt) ‘tablet’, which entered the Greek language as δέλτος (*deltos*) ‘writing tablet’ – as an excellent indication of how Phoenician writing culture informed the world of ancient Greece.

KAI 43 / RES 1211
Larnax tes Lapethou
(Cyprus)
Ptolemaic Period

<https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010134280>



12. . . . כס הדלת הנחשת

13. [אש כ]תבת וסמרת בקר אש בן מנחת חני

12. . . . in accordance with the bronze plaque (DLT)

13. which I wrote and nailed upon the wall, on which
(are recorded) my gracious benefaction.

Though for a true indication of life at the Getty Villa, see here!



The Getty Villa Museum
(Photo Melissa & Gary Rendsburg)

<https://www.getty.edu/museum/about.html>

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Gary A. Rendsburg Lecture Series

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<https://jewishstudies.rutgers.edu/people/core-faculty/gary-a-rendsborg>