

Let us examine the basis upon which these revolutionary statements are made. The Qumran sect held in high esteem an individual whom they called the "Teacher of Righteousness". It is reasonable to think that he must have been a man of ability and energy, whose ideas found expression in the organisation and continuance of the Qumran sect. But nowhere do we find an orderly account of His life and achievements. His name is never given, nor is there any clear indication of the time at which he lived. Many attempts have been made to identify him with some person known from other sources, but none of these can be proven. These attempts select individuals scattered over a period of more than two hundred years. A few hints of the opposition that he faced are given, but these are rather vaguely stated. Almost every movement that has continued for any length of time has had a leader and founder, and Qumran was no exception. Christianity also has a leader, whose memory it reveres, and whose teaching it seeks to follow. Is there enough similarity to say that one was derived from the other? Those already noted could be found in almost every movement that ever existed.

Those who claim that the Qumran material destroys the basis of Christianity, insist that the outstanding ideas of Christianity, instead of representing actual facts, are simply taken over from the ideas of the Qumran sect. But one looks in vain in the Qumran material for the basic features of Christianity. Only an overactive imagination can find them there.

Christians believe that Jesus was God Himself, incarnate in human form. He was miraculously born. He was tempted of Satan. He went about through Judea and Galilee preaching. He was no ascetic, but took part in the happy occasions of life. He Himself said, "The Son of Man came eating and drinking" (Matt. 11:19). The New Testament declares that He performed great miracles of healing, even raising people from the dead. He claimed to be the Messiah, and declared that He would return on the clouds of heaven (Mark 14:62). He said that He would give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). He was seized, accused of blasphemy for declaring Himself to be God, crucified, and buried. On the third day He was raised from the dead. His disciples went all through the world declaring these facts, and asserting that all who would accept His atoning death as the propitiation for their sins could be saved, and that He would come to dwell in their hearts.