

says: "The monastery of the Essenes, more than Bethlehem or Nazareth, is the cradel of Christianity." An English scholar, J. M. Allegro, has declared over the radio that Christian ideas about Christ were derived from the Qumran sect's ideas of their own teacher, who, he says, they thought of as "persecuted and crucified, and expected to rise again as priestly Messiah." A French scholar, Professor Dupont-Sommer, says that "the Galilean Teacher, as he is presented to us in the New Testament writings, appears in many respects as an astonishing re-incarnation of the Teacher of Righteousness." A Swedish journalist has concluded as follows: "Christianity has come into existence in a completely natural way, as a Jewish sect. It is not necessary to believe in the miracle that God has interfered by a special act of mercy in order to save humanity."

These assertions rest upon the fact that the Qumran sect seems to have 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 organization 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 proven. Guesses as to his identity range over a period of two centuries. It has even been suggested that "the Teacher of Righteousness" represents a succession of men at the head of the sect rather than a particular individual who founded it.

Dupont-Sommer declares that "the Galilean teacher, as he is presented to us in the New Testament writings, appears in many respects as an astonishing re-incarnation of the Teacher of Righteousness." This is a tremendous statement, but what are the facts?