

scholar, J.M. Allegro, has declared over the radio that Christian ideas about Christ were derived from the Qumran sect's ideas their own teacher, who, he says, they thought of as "persecuted and crucified, and expected to rise again as priestly Messiah". A French scholar, Prof. Dupont-Sommer, says that "the Galilaeen 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."

Such sweeping statements make one wonder what has been discovered, that has so destroyed the foundations of Christianity. The answer is, Nothing. The statements quoted represent the imaginations of their authors. Perhaps they are the result of wishful thinking. Ninety per cent of the serious scholars who have studied the Dead Sea Scrolls will readily agree that no evidence has been found that warrants such statements.

Let us examine the basis upon which these revolutionary statements are made. We have noticed that 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 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 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 teachings 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.