

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 over-active imagination can find them there.

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 reincarnation of the Teacher of Righteousness". This is a tremendous statement, but what are the facts?

Christians believe that Jesus was God Himself, incarnate in human form. He was miraculously born. He was tempted of Satan. He went about through Judaea 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.

These are the outstanding things that were claimed by Jesus and taught about Him by His followers. This is "the Galilean teacher, as He is presented to us in the New Testament writings". Is He "an astonishing reincarnation of the Teacher of Righteousness"? Just how many of these features do we find in the Qumran picture of that individual?

We find only this, that he was a teacher, who gathered disciples and established a sect, and that he was persecuted by those who disapproved of Him. This much could also be found in the history of almost every man who ever founded a sect.

In all the Qumran material that has yet been discovered and published, there is nowhere any statement that the Teacher of Righteousness was God, or that he claimed to be God, or that anyone else ever thought him to be God. There is no statement that he was born in any different way than other mortals. There is no reference to his having been tempted by the devil. It is true that he, like many another, was interested in spreading his views, but whether he went about preaching, as Jesus did,