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The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Personages of Earliest Christianity

Arthur E., Jr. Palumbo

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Who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls? Paleographical dating has tended to downplay the Scrolls' importance and to distance them from the personages of earliest Christianity, but a carefully worked out theory based on radiocarbon dating and other tests connects Scroll allusions to personages and events in a specific time period and suggests a new view on how and why the Romans crucified Jesus. Part I of this study is an attempt to deal more realistically with the evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls; very few scholars have ever examined the period from 37 BC to AD 71 as the possible setting for the scrolls. Nevertheless, everyone would admit the existence of scroll allusions that only have real relevance in this time period. Part II takes up Jesus and the beginnings of Christianity. Admittedly, the explanation put forward in this work as to how and why the Romans crucified Jesus is a surprising one and we will not divulge it in this synopsis. However, the way the author sees it, if something like that explanation did not take place, then it is simply inexplicable why the Romans would have crucified Jesus - a peaceful teacher and healer - as a rebel. The only alternative would then have to be that the historical Jesus was really a political revolutionary who attempted in some way to free Israel from the Romans and become its King, a theory that has been offered in various forms beginning in the 18th century. But if he was indeed a rebel, then the later Christians, who strenuously strove to live at peace with Rome, must have been the actual creators of the pacifistic Jesus of the New Testament -- and these unique and time-honored teachings of peace, non-violence, and love were fabrications. That seems less credible than the compelling hypothesis proposed in this work. Bibliography, Index

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