

book of the Acts or in any of the Epistles.

The situation of New Testament archeology is vastly different from that of Old Testament archeology. Most of the history of the nations that faced Israel in Old Testament times was completely unknown before the rise of archeology, but quite a number of the books written on papyrus in the Roman Empire in the first century A.D. have been copied and thus preserved. Consequently the greater part of our information about the background of the latter part of Acts comes not from archeological discoveries but from manuscripts that have been passed on through the ages. This material is of great importance for the understanding of the Book of the Acts, but does not really come under the head of Biblical archeology. Discussion of it will be found in the articles in this encyclopedia about the various cities involved.

Considerable archeological work has been carried on in just about every city named in Acts. While a few of these have continued to be important places through the centuries, some are today comparatively deserted. In the case of a few, the very location was forgotten, but all of these have now been located.

During the closing years of the nineteenth century, a brilliant English scholar, Sir William Ramsay, undertook to study the ancient geography of Asia Minor. Ramsay had been taught that the Book of the Acts was a forgery of the late second century, untrustworthy in its picture of the early Church and Empire. He thought it would be interesting to prove from actual observations on the field that the author of the book had fantastically misconstrued the geographical and historical situation that he professed to describe. To Ramsay's amazement, he soon began to find evidence that the statements in Acts reflected accurately the precise situation in the middle of the first century A.D. Ramsay made extensive explorations and investigations, and wrote numerous books in support of his