

Christianity from this Jewish sect. However, it does show that many ideas that have been alleged to show pagan influence were actually common in the Jewish culture at the very time of the rise of Christianity.

In the second place, we note the relation of archeological evidence to the widespread claim that pagan religions and mystery sects were struggling to fill a vacuum in the Roman Empire during the first century. During the first half of the present century extensive excavations were carried out in Egypt, in Syria, in Palestine, and in other regions. These excavations have brought to light many evidences of the well established pagan religions, of the presence of Jewish groups, and of early Christian developments, but practically nothing in the way of other types of religious writings or religious structures from this early period. The mystery religions and Gnostic groups that struggled against Christianity in the second and third centuries A.D. are scarcely evidenced at all for the first century. Some of these rose as an attempt to combat the rising power of Christianity; many of them show borrowing from Christianity; most of them were not even in existence when Christianity began. Thus archeological evidence helps to show that the rise of Christianity is a unique historical phenomenon, and not simply one of many competing mystery cults filling a vacuum in the Roman empire.

F. Conclusion regarding Biblical Archeology.

At the end of section V a brief conclusion regarding Old Testament archeology was given. We have noticed that New Testament archeology is different in some regards. Yet it involves the same four general areas of interest. Archeology has produced many bits of interesting confirmatory evidence as to the accuracy and dependability of both the Old and New Testaments. Nothing has