

through Palestine and Asia Minor to Rome. Luke shows that the Gospel was increasingly accepted by Gentiles and rejected by Jews.

If, as Paul says, the resurrection was God's seal of approval and acceptance upon the atoning work of Jesus, the present age is the outworking of that "resurrection power" in and through the church to accomplish his work. This is the burden of the book of Acts.

Questions:

Is Acts the second volume of a two or three volume set? Why does Acts concentrate on Peter (1-12) and Paul (13-28) and virtually ignore the rest of the Apostles? What is the relationship between Acts 15 and Galatians 2?

Archaeology:

For many years it was "fashionable" in scholarly circles to dismiss Luke's work as that of a pious imagination, without any historical value. That opinion was changed almost single-handedly by Sir William Ramsay, one of those scoffing scholars. He traveled throughout Asia Minor and Greece, excavating and examining the ruins of the scenes of Luke's history and concluded that Luke was, if anything, "a historian of the first rank."

Luke wrote, for example, about incidents that took place in 32 countries, 54 cities, and 9 Mediterranean islands. Many of these used different titles for their civic officers, titles which changes (in some cases) from time to time. Never once did Luke use a title incorrectly, nor did he fail to note local customs and flavors which often give his writings a vivid first-person tone.

Luke called the rulers of Thessalonica "politarchs" (17:6,8), a Greek term unknown from any contemporary sources until Ramsay's work. An inscription named the pro-consul of Cyprus: Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:7,8,12). These examples could be multiplied many times.

A major source of income and fame for the city of Ephesus was the temple of Diana (or Artemis), which stood on a hill outside the city. The temple served as a place of licentious worship, as well as a banking center and as the goal of many pilgrims. Paul's preaching threatened the livelihood of several groups of Ephesians who, when aroused, were easily able to fill the 25,000 seat theatre found at Ephesus.

Keys: