The history of archaeology is generally told as the making of a secular discipline. In nineteenth-century Britain, however, archaeology was entangled with questions of biblical authority and so with religious as well as narrowly scholarly concerns. In unearthing the cities of the Mediterranean and Near East, travellers, archaeologists and their popularisers transformed thinking on the truth of Christianity and its place in modern cities. This happened at a time when anxieties over the unprecedented rate of urbanisation in Britain coincided with critical challenges to biblical truth. In this context, cities from Jerusalem to Rome became contested models for the adaptation of Christianity to modern urban life. Using sites from across the biblical world, this book evokes the appeal of the ancient city to diverse groups of British Protestants in their arguments with one another and with their secular and Catholic rivals about the vitality of their faith in urban Britain.

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Cities of God

The Bible and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Britain

DAVID GANGE
AND
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