

## **~GOLGOTHA (111)**

### **(Gol'go-tha) [Skull Place]**

- The place outside, although near, the city of Jerusalem, where Jesus Christ was impaled.
- And when they came to a place called **Golgotha**, that is to say; Skull Place. (**Matthew 27:33**)
- And, bearing the torture stake for himself, he went out to the so-called Skull Place, which is called **Golgotha** in Hebrew. (**John 19:17**)
- And there they impaled him, and two other men with him, one on this side and one on that, but Jesus in the middle. (**John 19:18**)
- Pilate wrote a title also and put it on the torture stake. It was written; Jesus the Nazarene the King of the Jews. (**John 19:19**)
- Therefore many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was impaled was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, in Greek. (**John 19:20**)
- However, the chief priests of the Jews began to say to Pilate; Do not write; The King of the Jews, but that he said; I am King of the Jews. (**John 19:21**)
- Pilate answered; What I have written I have written. (**John 19:22**)
- Hence Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate. (**Hebrews 13:12**)
- A road and a garden tomb were nearby.
- So the passersby began speaking abusively of him, wagging their heads. (**Matthew 27:39**)
- Incidentally, at the place where he was impaled there was a garden, and in the garden a new memorial tomb, in which no one had ever yet been laid. (**John 19:41**)

- **Golgotha**, or Skull Place, is also called Calvary from the **Latin** *calvaria* or **skull**. The Biblical record does not state that **Golgotha** was on a hill, though it does mention the fact that some observed the impalement from a distance.
- There were also women viewing from a distance, among them Mary Magdalene as well as Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joses, and Salome. (**Mark 15:40**)
- Moreover, all those acquainted with him were standing at a distance. Also, women, who together had followed him from Galilee, were standing beholding these things. (**Luke 23:49**)
- In the **Fourth Century C.E.**, Emperor Constantine assigned the task of determining the place of Jesus impalement and his tomb to Bishop Macarius, who decided that Hadrian's then-existing temple of Aphrodite, Venus, had been erected on the site.
- Constantine therefore ordered the demolition of this temple and the construction of a basilica that later underwent expansion and modification, becoming the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
- Archaeological excavations done since **1960 C.E.** indicate that the area was used as a burial ground, and it is thought that this was true in the **First Century C.E.**
- Thus the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands on one of the traditional sites of **Golgotha** and Jesus tomb. Though located within the present walls of Jerusalem, the site is believed to have been outside the city walls in Jesus day.
- Another location that was proposed as the site of the impalement of Jesus is a promontory 230 meters (755 feet) Northeast of the Damascus Gate, now known as Gordon's Calvary. It was suggested in **1842 C.E.** as the true location of **Golgotha** and Jesus tomb.
- In **1883 C.E.** the location was endorsed by **General C. G. Gordon**, a British military hero. The identification was based on conjecture. On the basis of archaeological evidence available, Gabriel Barkay states that the nearby Garden Tomb that is frequently pointed out to tourists as being the burial place of Jesus was originally hewn and used some time in the **Eighth** or **Seventh Century B.C.E.** That would not fit the description at;

- Incidentally, at the place where he was impaled there was a garden, and in the garden a new memorial tomb, in which no one had ever yet been laid. (**John 19:41**)
- Of a new memorial tomb, in which no one had ever yet been laid. **[Biblical Archaeology Review, March/April 1986, p. 50]**
- Identification of **Golgotha** has often become an emotional religious issue. There is, however, no archaeological evidence that Gordon's Calvary is the place.
- As for the location marked by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, its identification takes into account archaeological findings but is based largely on tradition that dates to the fourth century.
- Regarding the latter location, **Biblical Archaeology Review [May/June 1986, p. 38]** states; **We may not be absolutely certain that the site of the Holy Sepulchre Church is the site of Jesus burial, but we certainly have no other site that can lay a claim nearly as weighty. So the identification remains conjectural.**