

JUST WHERE IN JERUSALEM DID OUR SAVIOR DIE?

By John D. Keyser

As a tourist in the holy city of Jerusalem, the tour guides will take you to all the customary points of interest. If your interest is history, you will probably be shown the archaeological sites of the city, including Hezekiah's tunnel and the Temple wall. If you are seeking your traditional Christian roots, all the places Jesus trod with sandaled feet will be shown to you, marked by some sort of Catholic shrine or church.

Without a doubt, you will end up, sooner or later, at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre where, according to Catholic tradition, Christ suffered and died on the cross.

If your beliefs are more fundamentalist, you will probably be shuttled over to the rapidly eroding hill outside the Damascus Gate -- known as "Jeremiah's Grotto" - - with its outline and caves that somewhat resemble the human skull. Here, you will be told, is the ACTUAL place where Christ died! A short distance from this small hill the Garden Tomb of Christ will be pointed out to you.

It seems as if there is a site for every taste or belief in this city of "peace"!

Whichever site you choose to believe is the scene of the greatest death in history, you will probably stand there with bated breath and awe written all over your face as the tour guide goes through his or her ritual spiel! In all probability, as you stand there, you will little realize that NEITHER SITE REPRESENTS THE PLACE OF CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH! Furthermore, most of you will be totally unaware that the site covered by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre represents one of the greatest Jewish hoaxes in the last 2,000 years!

Over the centuries various alternate sites have been suggested. In 1730 Korte of Altona suggested one west of the Jaffa Gate; and in 1812 one south of the Zion Gate was suggested by Clarke, and one east of St. Stephen's Gate by Dr. Barclay. However, these sites are wanting for hard evidence proving their authenticity; and the sites at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and Jeremiah's Grotto are the only two receiving any consideration today - until now, that is!

Jeremiah's Grotto and the Garden Tomb

The hill at Jeremiah's Grotto, alongside the present-day bus station, was suggested by Otto Thenius in 1849. This theory, with the addition of the Garden Tomb nearby, had many supporters, including the scholarly General Gordon of Khartoum fame.

Known as Gordon's Calvary, this hill was successfully promoted by the British general in 1882; but what about all the centuries before? Does the exposure of this

hill, as we know it today, even reach back to the time of Christ? Rocky hills or bluffs are quite common to the whole area around Jerusalem. It is not as though this hill has been identified as Calvary for centuries!

It must be admitted that no site lends itself better to a spectacular reconstruction of the last hours of Christ. The hill itself has natural caves that give the appearance of eyes; and below the rock wall recently built by the Arabs, another set of gaping holes, representing a nose and mouth, are apparent. Hence "Golgotha" or the "Place of the Skull." The Garden Tomb, immediately to the left, adds credence to this being the actual site of our Savior's death.

However, there are some problems! If the skull-like appearance of Jeremiah's Grotto had these same features back in the early centuries after the crucifixion, why is there no mention of it in the literature of the time? It seems strange that Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, was not directed to this spot when she was seeking the site of Christ's death to build her Church of the Holy Sepulchre. A hill with features such as this would have STOOD OUT as clearly being Golgotha, or "the Place of the Skull." (John 19:17). Instead the local Jews directed Helena to a site just west of the Second Wall and north of the Garden Gate. It turns out that the features that were so evident in this hill by the Damascus Gate during Otto Thenius' time WERE NOT THERE during the time of Christ! In fact, evidence shows the caves were not there as late as 1610 A.D.

During this particular year a European traveller, by the name of Sandy, drew a picture of Jerusalem featuring some of the geographical landmarks in and around the Holy City. This drawing, which is still extant, shows the hill just outside the Damascus Gate as having NO FEATURES or caves representing the human skull. Evidently, erosion SINCE 1610 has created these unique features which led to Thenius' choice. Even in the last twenty or so years the skull-like features of Jeremiah's Grotto have eroded to such an extent that they are hardly recognizable anymore!

According to Harper's Bible Dictionary "there is little to substantiate the view of those who accept the skull-like hillock called 'Gordon's Calvary,' with its eye-socketed caves recognized in 1849 by Otto Thenius." (P. 87).

"O.K.," you might ask, "what about the Garden Tomb close by the Grotto? Surely that's authentic!" Unfortunately, research in the last twelve years has revealed this tomb, along with others in the area, to be products of the seventh-century B.C. An article in the Biblical Archaeology Review for March/April of 1986 details this discovery, thus proving the Garden Tomb could NOT be the resting place of Christ. John 19:41 clearly states that it was a NEW TOMB -- recently hewn out of the rock (Luke 23:53, Matthew 27:60) -- that received the battered body of the Messiah.

Moreover, this tomb is actually a DOUBLE one. There are places cut out in the rock for TWO bodies. "A rich man, it is explained, might have had a tomb for himself and his wife. But the Bible simply says that Joseph placed the body of Jesus 'in HIS OWN new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock' (Mt. 27:60)." (Amazing Discoveries Within the Book of Books, by Ralph Woodrow. P. 50). There is absolutely NO MENTION in the Bible of it being a tomb for two.

Interestingly enough, the custodians of the Garden Tomb area do not insist that Christ was buried there. Rather, they explain that this tomb probably dates from the first century and if this was not the tomb, it was one very similar to this. Instead, emphasis is placed on the fact that the tomb -- wherever it might have been -- is an EMPTY tomb!

Outside the Camp

There is another factor that precludes this site from being authentic. In Hebrews 13 we read:

We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat. The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned OUTSIDE THE CAMP. And so Jesus ALSO suffered OUTSIDE THE CITY GATE to make the people holy through his own blood. Let us, then, GO TO HIM OUTSIDE THE CAMP, bearing the disgrace he bore. - Verses 10-13.

Here we see Jesus died "OUTSIDE THE CITY GATE" and "OUTSIDE THE CAMP."

Just what does "outside the camp" mean? Numbers 15:35-36 makes it clear that the death penalty UNDER THE LAW OF MOSES was to be administered "outside the camp." If we can determine the LIMITS of "the camp" this will give us a clue to the site of the crucifixion.

During the time the Israelites were moving through the wilderness, they encamped, at the end of the days march, in a certain manner - a certain order. Numbers 2 states that "the people of Israel [were] to camp around the tent of meeting though at a DISTANCE, each under his respective standard and by their clans' ensigns." This "distance" is defined in Joshua 3:3-4: "When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God with the Levite priests bearing it, leave your places and follow it; so that you may know the way to go, because you have never walked this path before. BUT KEEP A DISTANCE OF 3,000 FEET [2,000 CUBITS] BETWEEN IT AND YOURSELVES; do not get nearer to it." The sanctity of the ark was thus maintained.

Ernest L. Martin, in his book *Secrets of Golgotha* expounds on this:

But why 2,000 cubits [3,000 feet]? It was determined that the "place" of a person's residence could extend outward 2,000 cubits from his central "place" of abode. If, for example, one lived in a tent in the desert, one could consider his "place" as extending 2,000 cubits from the tent itself. If one lived in a town with walls around it, then his "place" was reckoned as being 2,000 cubits from the walls because the whole of the town was looked on as a corporate "place." This reckoning was arrived at by noting that there were about 2,000 cubits between the Ark of the Covenant (where God symbolically resided) and the rest of the Israelites while they were on their march toward the holyland. From this it was determined that God considered his own "place" (or residence) as having an extension of 2,000 cubits

from the Holy of Holies wherein was supposed to be the Ark of the Covenant. Similarly, each of the Levitical towns was allowed 2,000 cubits surrounding its walls as being their "CITY LIMITS" (Numbers 35:5,6). ASK Publications, 1983. Pages 44-45.

From this we know, then, that the place of execution was "OUTSIDE THE CAMP" - AT LEAST 2,000 CUBITS OR 3,000 FEET AWAY FROM THE SANCTUARY OR TABERNACLE.

At the time of Christ the Sanhedrin (Jewish governing body) used the SAME rule of thumb for the city of Jerusalem. With the Court of the Sanhedrin as the center, they took a radius of 3,000 feet encircling it as the LIMITS OF THE ENCAMPMENT! Anything beyond this radius was "OUTSIDE THE CAMP"; and somewhere, beyond this line, Christ was executed. THIS ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITS JEREMIAH'S GROTTO AS BEING THE LOCATION OF CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION; because it is well within the 3,000 foot zone! IT IS NOT "OUTSIDE THE CAMP"!

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre

The site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre has an even more intriguing background!

This traditional site of Christ's burying place has long been honored by Christians of all lands as the indisputable place where Joseph of Arimathea laid the body of the Savior following His death at Golgotha.

It is startling to realize that this belief is based entirely upon a tradition that emerged as late as 333 A.D. -- after a lapse of more than three centuries from the date of the actual event! The tradition becomes the more shadowy when it is recalled that, between the time of the crucifixion and the date of the supposed discovery of the tomb, the city of Jerusalem had been reduced to a virtual rubble-heap by the Romans and, a century later, completely replanned and rebuilt. Not only that, but the ruins became the center, for scores of years, of a Roman army camp. The presence of this camp would have prevented ANYONE from searching for the site of Christ's death and burial -especially Christians who would NEVER have been allowed by the authorities to venture anywhere near the ruins!

It was THREE HUNDRED YEARS after the death of Christ that Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, excavated a tomb beneath a Roman temple of Venus and, on the SLENDER evidence of the members of a then existing local Christian community, it has been accepted as the authentic sepulchre of Jesus.

In 135 A.D., following the Bar-Kokhba uprising in Palestine, the emperor Hadrian erected this pagan temple of Venus over a spot in Jerusalem that the theologians have since claimed was the site of the crucifixion and burial of the Savior. Were they right?

Many scholars today believe Hadrian hated the Christians so much that he decided to DESECRATE the most holy place of their religion. However, as truth

would have it, the emperor was UPSET AT THE JEWS, not the Christians! The early church had nothing to do with the Bar-Kokhba revolution because it didn't accept Kokhba's claims of being the promised Messiah.

In fact, there also is evidence to show that Hadrian considered Christ a holy man and a god; and Aelius Lampridius mentioned a report that Hadrian proposed to the Roman Senate that temples to Christ should be erected throughout the empire. The priests of Rome, however, were afraid that the entire world would become Christian if this was approved; so the proposal was squashed.

This doesn't sound like a man who would purposely desecrate a site of great importance to the Christian faith.

So whose tomb was he desecrating?

The works of Josephus contain the answer. Prior to the Roman destruction of 70 A.D., Josephus visited this area of Jerusalem and mentioned a significant TOMB four times, using it as a FOCAL POINT in his description of the war with the Romans. This "significant landmark" was none other than the tomb of John Hyrcanus, the famous high priest ruler of the Jews who reigned from 135 to 104 B.C.! This leader had the deep respect of most Jews and symbolized the quest for Jewish liberation from their hated Gentile oppressors.

In his distaste for the Jews, WHAT BETTER PLACE for Hadrian to desecrate with the Temple of Venus than this?

The years slipped by. In 306 Constantine came to the throne of the Roman Empire and, after seeing the famous vision of the flaming cross just before the Battle of Milvian Bridge, he became touted as the first Christian emperor. From 312 onwards these visions became a regular part of Constantine's life; and he began to think of himself as divinely selected to set up the Kingdom of God on earth. All of his major decisions were guided by visions and dreams; and in 326, after he had executed his wife and son, Constantine was led to believe that he should erect a church at the place of Christ's death and resurrection in Jerusalem in atonement for his actions against his own family.

In a dream or vision he was informed that the site of Hadrian's Temple of Venus was where he should erect his Church of the Holy Sepulchre; and he dispatched his mother Helena to the Holy City to determine where this site was.

Upon her arrival in Jerusalem, an incredible sequence of events took place. Paulinus of Nola, writing in 403 A.D., recounts what happened next:

She [Helena] became eager to obtain information solely on the site of the crucifixion. So she sought out not only Christians full of learning and holiness, but also the most learned of the Jews to inform her of their native wickedness in which, the poor Jews, they even boast. Having summoned them she assembled them in Jerusalem. Her resolve was strengthened by the UNANIMOUS WITNESS OF ALL ABOUT THE SITE. There was then, undoubtedly under the impulse of a revelation

she had experienced, that she ordered digging operations to be prepared on that very site. Letter 31.5.

The wily Jews, knowing full well that the Temple of Venus covered the tomb of John Hyrcanus, went along with Constantine's dream and confirmed that this was indeed the place of Jesus' death and burial! In actuality, Helena wanted confirmation of the visions and dreams which she and her son Constantine had experienced; and the Jews were more than willing to oblige!

Sozomen, the famous 5th-century church historian, adds some detail: "Some say that the facts [about Christ's tomb] were first disclosed by a Hebrew who dwelt in the East, and who derived his information from some documents which had come down to him by paternal inheritance. (Ecclesiastical History, II.1).

Ironically, the man who supposedly had this historical evidence for the site of Christ's passion, was a Jew by the name of JUDAS! According to Ernest L. Martin:

This Judas told Helena that the Temple of Venus was the proper site of Christ's crucifixion. Helena then, "by an impulse of revelation," had her attendants dig into the ground at the place where Judas told her. And amazingly, they came upon three crosses superimposed upon one another. But that wasn't the end of it. Nearby was found a tablet which had upon it the exact words which the New Testament said Pilate placed above Christ's head. Also found in the same spot was a sponge and a reed like those associated with Christ's passion. - Secrets of Golgotha, p.127.

Nobody, it seems, questioned the fact that these items were in an excellent state of preservation after being buried in the ground for some 295 years!!

This clinched the matter for Constantine's mother - the visions were verified, this was the site of Christ's death!

The story doesn't end here! Gregory of Tours, in his History of the Franks, records that "the venerable wood of the cross was discovered through the zeal of Helena, the Hebrew Judas revealing the spot, WHO WAS AFTERWARDS BAPTIZED AND NAMED QUIRIACUS." (I.36). This wily Jew, who was not even a Christian at the time of the "discovery," became famous and was eventually made a bishop of Jerusalem!

As a result of Judas' "information" and the visions of Constantine and his mother, the Christian world has been worshipping at the tomb of the Jewish high priest John Hyrcanus for 1,664 years!!

What a fantastic hoax, what irony! The last laugh truly belongs to the Jews!

Finally, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre CANNOT be the site of the crucifixion because IT FALLS WELL WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE CAMP! Remember, Christ was put to death "OUTSIDE THE CAMP"!

The Tearing of the Curtain

So, then, where does this leave us? What is the CORRECT SITE of the death and burial of our Savior? The gospel of Luke affords a clue:

It was now about the sixth hour and, with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE WAS TORN RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE; and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." With these words he breathed his last. WHEN THE CENTURION SAW WHAT HAD TAKEN PLACE, he gave praise to God and said, "This was a great and good man." And when all the people who has gathered for the spectacle SAW WHAT HAPPENED, they went home beating their breasts. All his friends stood at a distance; so also did the women who had accompanied him from Galilee, AND THEY SAW ALL THIS HAPPEN. - Luke 23:44-49.

What was it that caused the centurion present to praise God? What did the people gathered there see that caused them to head for their homes beating their breasts - the sign of extreme humiliation, distress and grief? What was it His friends saw? It wasn't the death of Christ, the centurion was there to oversee Christ's death - that was the expected outcome. It was NOT our Savior's last breath that caused the people to beat their breasts, they also were there to witness His death. WHAT was it that all these people saw that affected them so dramatically? THE TEARING OF THE TEMPLE CURTAIN!

Notice what Matthew says:

Again Jesus cried out with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. And BEHOLD [TO HAVE IN SIGHT, SEE], THE CURTAIN OF THE HOLY PLACE WAS RENT IN TWO FROM TOP TO BOTTOM, and the earth quaked and the masses of rocks were split...But the centurion and the others with him watching Jesus having SEEN the earthquake AND THE THINGS OCCURRING, became very much afraid, saying: "Truly, this was God's son." - 27:50, 51, 54.

What was it the centurion and the others saw? The earthquake and "THE THINGS OCCURRING." And what were these "things occurring"? The death of Christ AND THE TEARING OF THE TEMPLE CURTAIN!

The gospel of Mark makes this point even clearer: "But Jesus having let out a loud voice died. And the curtain of the Holy Place was rent in two from top to bottom. But the centurion standing alongside and opposite of him HAVING SEEN that he expired THUSLY [that is, He died at the exact time the curtain tore in two], said: 'Truthfully, this man was a Son of God.'" (15:37-39).

It is absolutely clear that those who were gathered around Christ as He hung on the tree SAW THE CURTAIN TEAR at the time of His death.

THE ONLY PLACE IN THE ENTIRETY OF JERUSALEM WHERE THE TEMPLE CURTAIN COULD BE SEEN FROM, AND A PLACE THAT WAS "OUTSIDE THE CAMP," WAS THE SLOPES OF THE MOUNT OF OLIVES!

Why? Because the Temple was aligned in an east-west direction, with the HUGE curtain (80 feet tall and 24 feet in breadth) hanging in the EASTERN portal of the inner Temple.

The crucifixion had to have taken place NEAR THE SUMMIT of the Mount of Olives because this was the ONLY AREA in all of the city and environs where the curtain of the Temple could be seen from, and where the "camp" ended (3,000 feet from the Court of the Sanhedrin on the Temple Mount). The 3,000 feet ended JUST SHY of the summit!

The "Place" of the City

There is even more evidence for this location of the crucifixion:

Therefore many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was impaled was NEAR THE PLACE OF THE CITY [original Greek]; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, in Greek. - John 19:20.

What was this "place of the city" John was talking about?

We can find the answer to this if we take the Greek word for "place" (TOPOS) and see where and how it occurs in other scriptures. Notice Acts 6:13-14:

And they brought forward false witnesses, who said: "This man does not stop speaking things against this HOLY TOPOS and against the Law. For instance, we have heard him say that this Jesus the Nazarene will throw down this TOPOS and change the customs that Moses handed down to us."

The word "topos" can only refer to the TEMPLE!

And again, in Acts 21: "Men of Israel, help us. This is the man who teaches everywhere against the People, and the Law, and THE TOPOS, and what is more, he has brought Greeks into the temple [enclosure] and defiled THE HOLY TOPOS." (Verse 28).

What an exciting discovery!

Let Ernest L. Martin explain:

These scriptures show that the common designation for the Temple and its holy areas was "The Place" (i.e. The Topos). There was absolutely nothing strange to the Jews of the first century in using such a name for the Temple. There are a host of references from the Old Testament (both in Hebrew AND Greek), and from other Jewish works as well as from Gentile accounts which show that the expression "The Topos" meant the Temple in Jerusalem. The phrase was also used to refer to Gentile sanctuaries throughout the world (see Kittel's Theological Dictionary, vol.VIII, pp.187-208 for many such references). In the middle of the fourth century, Athanasius simply called the Temple at Jerusalem "the Place" (The Topos) without the slightest elaboration. "Aliens had invaded the Temple at Jerusalem.... Aliens

indeed had held THE PLACE, but know not the LORD OF THE PLACE....What profit then is THE PLACE to them? For behold they that hold THE PLACE are charged by them that love God with making it [the Place] a den of thieves" (Letter XXIX, fragment). -- Secrets of Golgotha, p.22.

Christ died EAST OF THE "PLACE," OUTSIDE OF THE CAMP -- in other words, just below the summit of the Mount of Olives and DIRECTLY EAST of the Temple curtain.

The Altar Outside the Camp

Going back to Hebrews 13 we read again:

We have our own ALTAR FROM WHICH THOSE WHO SERVE THE TABERNACLE [TEMPLE] HAVE NO RIGHT TO EAT. The bodies of the animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for the atonement of sin are burned outside the camp, and so Jesus too suffered outside the gate to sanctify the people with his own blood. Let us go to him, then, outside the camp, and share his degradation. -- Verses 10-13.

What is this ALTAR, OUTSIDE THE CAMP, where the animals were burnt for the atonement of sin?

Leviticus 16 shows this was the altar where the sin offerings were burnt on the Day of Atonement: "The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the HOLY PLACE, shall be carried OUTSIDE THE CAMP. And they shall BURN IN THE FIRE THEIR SKINS, THEIR FLESH, AND THEIR OFFAL." (Verse 27).

There were THREE TYPES of sin offerings that were killed within the precincts of the Temple, that had their blood sprinkled BEFORE THE INNER CURTAIN of the Temple and then had their bodies CARRIED OUT OF THE CAMP TO BE BURNED TO ASHES. The first one, for the sins of the high priest, was burned IN A CLEAN PLACE OUTSIDE THE CITY, where altar ashes were put - see Leviticus 4:11-12. The second type of offering was that of the entire assembly or congregation of Israel; and similarly, as Leviticus 4:21 shows, the offering was carried "outside the camp" and burnt just like the first type. The third category of offering was that of the Day of Atonement. Here also, the bull and the goat were carried OUTSIDE THE CAMP and burnt in their entirety. (Lev.16:27).

Notice what Ernest L. Martin says about the important Day of Atonement sacrifices:

The main symbolic emphasis of the Book of Hebrews to the rituals of the Old Covenant deals with Christ's fulfillment of the Day of Atonement sacrifices for sins. "But into the second [the second compartment of the Temple, that is, into the Holy of Holies] went the HIGH PRIEST alone once every year, NOT WITHOUT BLOOD, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people" (Hebrews 9:7). This happened on the Day of Atonement. The symbolic theme of this holy day continues through chapters nine and ten and is finally concluded with Hebrews 13:10-13

the verses we have been concerned with. Recall that priests could not eat from the altar mentioned in Hebrews. "Whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle" (Heb.13:10). Indeed, none of the sacrifices offered on the Day of Atonement could be eaten (which day, by the way, was a FAST DAY in which no food of any kind could be consumed). The bodies of the animals offered for sin on that day were burnt to ashes ON THE ALTAR LOCATED OUTSIDE THE CAMP. It was this OUTSIDE ALTAR that became the important altar for Christians to which they were expected to retreat to have the forgiveness of sins. WHY THIS PARTICULAR ALTAR? Because the sacrifices on THIS altar were the prime ones which dealt with the sins of Israel and they PREFIGURED PRECISELY what Christ would be doing for mankind at his crucifixion. -- Secrets of Golgotha, pages 28,29.

Read Hebrews 13:12-13 again: "And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to MAKE THE PEOPLE HOLY THROUGH HIS OWN BLOOD. Let us, then, go to him OUTSIDE THE CAMP, bearing the disgrace he bore."

The "Clean Place" and the Altar of the Red Heifer

Leviticus 4:12 mentions "the whole bull he shall carry OUTSIDE THE CAMP TO A CLEAN PLACE, where the ashes are poured out..." What's the significance of the "CLEAN PLACE"? Or, more importantly, WHERE is this clean place?

During Moses' day the HOLIEST REGION within the camp of the Israelites was in front of the entrance to the sanctuary -- on its EAST side. And WHY was this area EAST of the sanctuary holy? Because the sin offering known as the RED HEIFER was killed and burnt to ashes, and the blood sprinkled, in the area just OUTSIDE THE CAMP! The Red Heifer was the HOLIEST of all the Israelites' offerings, and was a sacrifice that was offered ONCE FOR ALL. Notice Alfred Edersheim's explanation:

As the direct manifestation of sin which separates man from God, defilement by the DEAD required a SIN-OFFERING, and the ASHES OF THE RED HEIFER are expressly so designated in the words: "It IS A SIN-OFFERING." [Numbers 9:17]. But it DIFFERS from all other sin-offerings. The sacrifice was to be of PURE RED COLOR; one "upon which never came yoke; and a FEMALE, all other sin-offerings for the congregation being males...But what distinguished it even more from all the others was, that it was a sacrifice offered ONCE FOR ALL (at least so long as its ashes lasted); that its blood was sprinkled, not on the altar, but OUTSIDE THE CAMP TOWARDS [WESTWARD] THE SANCTUARY; and that it was WHOLLY burnt, along with cedarwood, as the symbol of IMPERISHABLE EXISTENCE, hyssop, as that of PURIFICATION FROM CORRUPTION, and "scarlet," which from its colour was the EMBLEM OF LIFE. Thus the sacrifice of HIGHEST LIFE, brought as a sin-offering, and, so far as possible, ONCE FOR ALL, was in its turn accompanied by the symbols of IMPERISHABLE EXISTENCE, FREEDOM FROM CORRUPTION, AND FULLNESS OF LIFE, so as yet more to intensify its significance. But even this is not all. The gathered ashes with running water were sprinkled on the third and seventh days on that which was to be PURIFIED. Assuredly, if death meant "the wages of sin," this PURIFICATION pointed, in all its details, to "the gift of God," which is "eternal life," THROUGH THE SACRIFICE OF

HIM IN WHOM IS THE FULLNESS OF LIFE. The Temple, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Michigan. 1987, pages 348-349.

Do you grasp the depth of meaning and the significance of the sacrifice of the Red Heifer? It pointed DIRECTLY to the sacrifice of Christ. It was offered up ONCE FOR ALL; and realize this, the high priest was PROHIBITED from offering up the Red Heifer himself because it represented Christ -- our HIGH PRIEST!

And WHERE did this sacrifice take place? "In order to sacrifice the Red Heifer, the selected animal was taken from the Temple through the EASTERN GATE ('without the gate' -- Hebrews 13:12) and then led further EAST ('without the camp' -- Hebrews 13:11) to the 'CLEAN PLACE' where it was killed and burnt to ashes." (Secrets of Golgotha, page 30).

The Mishnah (Jewish collection of religious-legal decisions developed from the laws of the Old Testament) also points this out:

There were five gates to the Temple mount: the two Huldah Gates on the south, that served for coming in and going out; the Kiponus Gate on the west, that served for coming in and going out; the Tadi Gate on the north that was not used at all; the EASTERN GATE on which was portrayed the Palace of Shushan. THROUGH THIS [GATE] THE PRIEST THAT BURNED THE [RED] HEIFER, THE HEIFER, AND ALL THAT AIDED HIM WENT FORTH TO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. -- Middoth 1:3.

This plainly shows that in the time of Christ the place for burning the Red Heifer -- the "CLEAN PLACE" -- was located EAST of the Temple ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES! Edersheim backs this up without equivocation:

Seven days before [the Day of Atonement], the priest destined for the service was separated and kept in the Temple - in "the House of Stoves" - where he was daily sprinkled with the ashes as the Rabbis fable - of all the red heifers ever offered. When bringing the sacrifice, he was to wear his WHITE priestly raiments. According to their tradition, there was an ARCHED ROADWAY leading from the EAST GATE of the Temple out UPON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES - double arched, that is, arched also over the supporting pillars, for fear of any possible pollution through the ground upwards. Over this the procession passed. ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES the elders of Israel were already in waiting. First, the priest immersed his whole body, then he approached the pile of cedar-, pine-, and fig-wood which was heaped like a pyramid, but having an opening in the middle, LOOKING TOWARDS THE WEST. Into this the RED HEIFER was thrust, and bound, with its head towards the south and its face looking TO THE WEST, the priest standing east of the sacrifice, his face, of course, ALSO TURNED WESTWARDS. Slaying the sacrifice with his right hand, he caught up the blood in his left. SEVEN TIMES he dipped his finger in it, sprinkling it TOWARDS THE MOST HOLY PLACE, WHICH HE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE IN FULL VIEW OVER THE PORCH OF SOLOMON or through the eastern gate. -- The Temple, pages 352-353.

The author of the apocryphal work of Barnabas (late 1st or early 2nd century) makes mention that during the ritual of the Red Heifer the priests tied a CRIMSON

THREAD to a nearby TREE an act that has tremendous symbolic meaning when one understands HOW Christ was put to death.

From this area on the slopes of the Mount of Olives the priest could LOOK OVER the eastern wall of the Temple into the sanctuary itself. The Mishnah states that the "walls were high, SAVE ONLY THE EASTERN WALL, because the Priest that burns the [Red] Heifer and stands ON THE TOP OF THE MOUNT OF OLIVES should be able to LOOK DIRECTLY INTO THE ENTRANCE OF THE SANCTUARY when the blood is sprinkled." (Middoth 2:4).

The enormous curtain hanging in front of the Holy of Holies could also be clearly seen. That is why the centurion and the others present at the crucifixion SAW the curtain tear from top to bottom.

Since the Red Heifer was burnt to ashes at this site on the Mount of Olives, this spot was, then, the point of origin for the MAIN PURIFICATION RITES of the Israelites; and therefore Christ the SUPREME sacrifice, represented by the Red Heifer, had to die right here FACING the Holy of Holies! He had to sprinkle His blood BEFORE the sanctuary. The blood of the Red Heifer was sprinkled OUTSIDE THE CAMP TOWARDS THE SANCTUARY; whereas the blood of the other sacrifices was sprinkled on the altar situated IN the Temple! In other words, Christ had to shed His blood before the presence of His Father in the Temple -- in the Holy of Holies. That is why He died facing the curtain, looking west towards the presence of His Father!

The fact that Christ died facing WEST towards His Father's House has come down to us in various traditions. Damascenus, the eminent 8th-century theologian of the Eastern Church, stated that "Jesus' eyes were turned toward the West..." (Lib.IV., cap.13); and the English Bishop Hall (1574-1656) echoed this in a sermon to his congregation: "Our Saviour was crucified WITH HIS FACE TO THE WEST (XXXV)." Even the Venerable Bede (673-735) concurs with this (in Lucum, cap.93)!

Why do you think Christ cried out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Because Christ sensed that His Father had averted His gaze as His only Son died on that hillside facing the Holy of Holies!

Further understanding of the sacrifice of the red heifer is offered by Edersheim:

Thus, also, we understand WHY the red heifer is, so to speak, the most INTENSE of sin-offerings, was WHOLLY burnt outside the camp, and other sin-offerings only partially so. For this burning SIGNIFIED that "in the theocracy there was no one, who by his own holiness, could bear or take away the sin imputed to these sin-offerings, so that it was needful, as the wages of sin, TO BURN THE SACRIFICE WHICH HAD BEEN MADE SIN." The ashes of this sin-offering, mixed with living water and sprinkled with hyssop, SYMBOLIZED PURIFICATION FROM THAT DEATH WHICH SEPARATES BETWEEN GOD AND MAN. This parallelism between the blood of Christ and the ashes of a heifer, on the one hand, and on the other between the purification of the flesh by these means, and that of the

conscience from dead works, is thus expressed in Heb.9:13,14: "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the defiled, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purifying your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" -- The Temple, pages 350-351.

Paul's statements in Hebrews 13 now become intelligible when we realize that to symbolically retrace Christ's steps and "go to Him OUTSIDE THE CAMP, bearing the disgrace He bore," Christians in Paul's day would have to go symbolically EASTWARD from the literal Temple in Jerusalem, pass through the EASTERN OR BEAUTIFUL GATE, travel over the TWO-TIERED ARCHED BRIDGE over the Kidron Valley, and proceed on to the summit of the MOUNT OF OLIVES for the forgiveness of their sins. It was here - not far from the altar named MIPHKAD -- where the GREATEST SIN OFFERING of all time sprinkled His blood on the ground before the sanctuary and the presence of His Father, to PURIFY all people everywhere and from all ages. Our Savior died in the HOLIEST AREA surrounding the city of Jerusalem (Berakoth 9:5).

Where Did the Jews Execute Criminals?

In Numbers 15:35,36 we read that those deserving the death penalty had to be killed "OUTSIDE THE CAMP" of the Israelites. Notice:

Then the Lord said to Moses, "The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall STONE HIM with stones OUTSIDE THE CAMP." So, as the Lord commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him OUTSIDE THE CAMP and STONED HIM with stones, and he died.

We have already determined that the limits of the "camp" were within a 3,000 foot or 2,000 cubit radius from the Court of the Sanhedrin on the Temple Mount. With this in mind, all we have to do is discover where - outside of this radius -- the place of execution was.

The Mishnah records that in the time of Christ there was a "place" for execution (or stoning), and this "place" was well known because the records (Sanhedrin 6:1-4) indicate that certain judicial matters were consummated at designated distances away from the Temple. Just WHERE was this "place" of execution? "Secrets of Golgotha" brings out an important principle:

....all UNCLEAN things associated with the Temple, with Jerusalem or with the people of Israel (whether of animals or human beings) had to be disposed of EAST of sacred areas. Recall that the sin offerings killed in the Temple had to be taken EAST to the MIPHKAD ALTAR [altar of the Red Heifer] for burning to ashes (Lev.4:1-21). The bullock and the goat (both sin offerings) which were sacrificed on the Day of Atonement had to be taken EAST to the same altar and burnt into ashes (Lev.16:27). Even the live goat (the scapegoat) was led by a fit man into the wilderness EAST of Jerusalem (Lev.16:20-22). The sin offering called the Red Heifer was also burnt to ashes at the MIPHKAD ALTAR which, of course, was EAST of the Temple and Jerusalem.

Even the ashes of all the sacrifices offered at the Altar of Burnt Offering in the Temple itself had to be taken EAST to the same "CLEAN PLACE" at the Miphkad Altar (Lev.4:12). Ashes to the early Jews were a symbol of sorrow and repentance and these had to be deposited EAST of Jerusalem in the area where the main animals bearing the sins of Israel were also burnt to ashes. -P.47.

All things considered to be "UNCLEAN" were taken EAST of the Holy City. Therefore, the site of execution for murderers and blasphemers (this was the charge against Christ - see Mark 14:64) had to be located in an area that would not affect the SACREDNESS AND PURITY of the HOLY CITY of Jerusalem! Doesn't that make sense? Note that ALL "unclean" things, including the major sin offerings laid down by God, were taken East of Jerusalem (the HOLY CITY) and the Temple itself.

In actual fact, in the theological thinking of the Jewish authorities in the first century, it was determined that EACH PERSON who committed a capital crime and was executed for his criminal act was RECKONED AS BEING A SIN OFFERING TO HIMSELF. It was believed that NO ANIMAL COULD TAKE THE PLACE of such a heinous person but that he (or she) had to be a SIN OFFERING himself (or herself) for the sins that had been committed. "May MY DEATH be an ATONEMENT for all my sins," said the one being executed (Cohen, Everyman's Talmud, p.317).

This shows that NO ANIMAL SACRIFICE for sin could act as a substitute for the criminal himself, but that he had to be HIS OWN SIN OFFERING to atone for the crimes he had committed. The Mishnah clearly shows that the sacrificial animals burnt "OUTSIDE THE CAMP" as sin offerings set the EXAMPLE for a criminal who was also put to death as his OWN SIN OFFERING "OUTSIDE THE CAMP"! The situation here was ANALOGOUS (see Sanhedrin 42b and 52a).

Since the execution of the criminal was analogous to the sin offering, then the criminal had to be executed in the SAME AREA as the sin offerings -- outside the camp and EAST of the Temple near the summit of the MOUNT OF OLIVES!!

All those convicted under the Law of Moses and worthy of the death penalty were considered to have received the judgment of God; and the resulting execution was enacted in the "presence" of God -- on the side of the Temple that God faced, that is, THE EAST SIDE! "Since the sanctuary was considered the house (or residence) of God on earth, and the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies was reckoned as the THRONE OF GOD, He was always depicted as sitting on His throne FACING EASTWARD where all the entrances of the Tabernacle were situated." (Martin, Secrets of Golgotha, p.50).

Numbers 5:16-31 reveals that women accused of adultery were brought "BEFORE THE LORD" for judgment (notice particularly verses 16 and 18) -- to the EAST entrance of the sanctuary where the priest took a grain offering from the woman's hand and burnt it on the altar. And where was the altar? EAST of the Holy of Holies, before the Court of the Levites. Leviticus 10:1-7 indicates that the sons of Aaron were judged and punished on the EAST SIDE of the tabernacle for offering strange fire "BEFORE THE LORD"; and Korah and the Levites were punished on the EAST SIDE also -- see Numbers 16:41-50.

Psalms 96:13 and 98:9 show that when God judges the world from Jerusalem, those to be judged will come "BEFORE THE LORD" which, once again, means on the EAST SIDE of the Eternal's throne. To support this understanding, many Jews and Moslems over the last few centuries have been buried in this region east of the Temple Mount so that they will be the first of the "righteous" to be resurrected when God comes to judge the world.

How does this pertain to the death of Christ? Simply, this: "Since the New Testament makes it abundantly clear that Christ bore all the judgments for sin and that he endured the wrath of God in place of the whole world (II Cor.5:14-21), it was necessary that Christ bear his judicial punishment in the area where 'all the world' is destined to be judged. For Christ to be executed 'IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD' for the sins of the world, he had to bear those sins IN THE REGION designed by God for that purpose." (Secrets of Golgotha, p.51).

It was for this very reason that the sin offerings were taken "OUTSIDE THE CAMP" to the slopes of the Mount of Olives to be burnt to ashes. And this is ALSO why the HOLIEST OF ALL the sin offerings -- known as the RED HEIFER -- was taken "OUTSIDE THE CAMP" and burnt to ashes on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, directly EAST of the Temple (Topos -- Place). It was ALSO in this same area "where CRIMINALS deserving the death penalty were taken "OUTSIDE THE CAMP" to become a SIN OFFERING FOR THEMSELVES."

We have seen that during our Savior's time the OFFICIAL Jewish place for execution was "near the southern summit of Olivet but facing the EASTERN ENTRANCE to the Temple so that the evildoers would be executed "IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD." It has become abundantly clear that the only region in all of Jerusalem that fulfills all of the Mosaic requirements regarding the execution of criminals, is the area near the MIPHKAD ALTAR where the sacrifice of the Red Heifer took place. CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED IN THIS SAME AREA!

Where Did the Romans Execute Criminals?

Roman records indicate that there were a number of ways to determine WHERE a malefactor was to be crucified. The first one is that criminals, particularly pirates or enemies of the state, must be executed AT THE SCENE OF THEIR CRIME. (Digest 48:9.19.28.15; cf. Collectio Legum Nosaicarum et Romanarum, I.6). Notice some examples:

...he crucified the soldiers in the spot WHERE THEY HAD COMMITTED THEIR CRIMES. ("Scriptores Historiae Augustae" 6, Vulcarius Gallicanus, "Avidius Cassius," 4:1f). The proconsul of Africa punished the priests of Saturn "by crucifying them ON THE VERY TREES of their temple, in the shadow of which they had COMMITTED THEIR CRIMES" (Tertullian, "Apologeticus," 9:2). In "Chaereas ad Callirhoe" we read: "A great proportion of the crowd followed Theron as he was led away, and in front of Callirhoe's tomb he was crucified upon the cross, and from the cross gazed out upon the sea OVER WHICH HE HAD CARRIED CAPTIVE the daughters of Heromcrates." (Chariton, 3:4:18).

Secondly, if it was not possible to return the malefactor to the site of his crime, then the PLACE WHERE HE WAS ARRESTED was acceptable. We find an example of this in the Acts of Pilate: "According to the law of the pious emperors...hanged on the cross in the garden IN WHICH YOU WERE SEIZED." (IX.5).

Now, if either of these two possibilities was untenable, it was common to select an AREA OF HIGH GROUND or a BUSY CROSSROADS for the crucifixion. This was to provide a visible deterrent to the people passing by not to commit such crimes. And since this form of death represented the ultimate form of humiliation for the criminal, his naked body had to be on public display in a prominent location. This is verified by Quintilian: "The crowded roads are chosen...penalties relate not so much to retribution as to their EXEMPLARY EFFECT" (Declamations, 274). In Alexander Severus we read: "As a deterrent to others he had them crucified on the street that his slaves used most frequently." (23:8).

DO YOU REALIZE CHRIST FULFILLED ALL OF THESE REQUIREMENTS?

Where was Christ arrested? In the Garden of Gethsemane! And where was this garden located? Prof. J.A. Thompson explains:

The site of Gethsemane is not known with certainty, although it was across the Kidron Valley on the SIDE OF THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. There are today several rival sites for the place. The confused visitor will be shown the scene by the Roman Catholics, the Greeks, the Armenians, and the Russians. The oldest tradition places the scene [of Christ's praying] on the ground now occupied by the Tomb of the Virgin. -- The Bible and Archaeology, third ed. 1982. Pages 356-360.

Since the Roman army stripped the area surrounding Jerusalem of all trees during the siege of the Holy City (70 A.D. and just prior), it is difficult to identify the exact location of the Garden of Gethsemane.

However, the New Testament clearly states that it was on the Mount of Olives where Christ was arrested. Following the Last Supper (or Seder) Matthew states that "Jesus went with his disciples to a PLACE CALLED GETHSEMANE..."(26:36). And WHERE was Gethsemane? Luke provides the answer: "Jesus went out AS USUAL to the MOUNT OF OLIVES, and his disciples followed him." (22:39). This is verified by John: "When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and CROSSED THE KIDRON VALLEY. On the other side [on the Mount of Olives] there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it." (18:1)

Whatever the EXACT location of the garden, the New Testament reveals that Christ was arrested on the MOUNT OF OLIVES; and we have just seen that Roman custom was to crucify a criminal AT THE PLACE OF HIS ARREST!

Furthermore, the Garden of Gethsemane was also the SCENE OF A "CRIME"! Notice Luke 22:

He [Jesus] said to them, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a SWORD, sell your cloak and buy one. It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment." The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are TWO SWORDS." "That is enough," he replied. -- Verses 36-38.

Christ always forbade the carrying of weapons by His disciples; but when He was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane they had at least two swords in their possession. Why? To make Christ appear as though He were indeed a "criminal," and by so doing the Garden became the "scene of a crime" -- the crime of SEDITION against the Roman authorities.

We must also realize that there was a more serious charge against Christ than that of sedition -- TREASON!

Christ allowed Himself to be proclaimed king at the time of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on what is now known as "Palm Sunday." And WHERE did He allow this to occur? ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES! Notice what Mark says: "As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany AT THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, Jesus sent two of His disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which NO ONE has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here"...When they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks over it, he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread branches they had cut in the fields. Those who went ahead and those who followed shouted, "Hosanna!" Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the COMING KINGDOM OF OUR FATHER DAVID!" (11:1-2, 7-10).

Christ left no stone unturned to ensure that His death would occur AT THE SCENE of His alleged criminal acts!

The final requirement according to Roman Law was also met. He was put to death at a PROMINENT LOCATION for all to see. At that time of year, just prior to the Passover, the road leading into the EAST GATE of the Temple from the villages of Bethphage and Bethany, was probably the busiest in all of Jerusalem. Countless numbers of people were passing by with their Passover lambs under their arms or over their shoulders as they headed to the Temple for the ritual slaughter.

Can you picture the scene? The very Passover lambs that PICTURED the very PASSOVER LAMB Himself passed by Him on the road to the Temple as He hung there sacrificing Himself for those very same people who were carrying them! What incredible fulfillment; what a mind-boggling scene when you understand what happened on that afternoon almost 2,000 years ago!

Christ MADE SURE that the Romans would have no reason whatsoever to crucify Him at any other location but right there on the slopes of the Mount of Olives where He committed His "crimes" and was arrested.

Christ, at His death, FULFILLED ALL OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE RO- MAN LAW!!

What About "The Place of the Skull"?

It is plainly indicated that our Savior was led to a place known as "Golgotha" for His crucifixion: "They came to a place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull)." (Mat.27:33). "Carrying his own cross, he went out to The Place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha)." (John 19:17).

The word "Golgotha" is also used in the Old Testament and signifies a "skull" in two places (Judges 9:53; II Kings 9:35), the human "head" once (I Chron.10:10) and nine times it denotes "poll" or "head-count." The New Testament, however, indicates the connotation of "skull" -- "The Place of the Skull."

Is there any indication in the records of history of a small hill or outcropping on the slopes of the Mount of Olives facing the east gate of the Temple? Indeed there is. A Christian pilgrim known as the Bordeaux Pilgrim visited the area in 333 A.D. In his written itinerary of the trip he mentions that on top of the Mount of Olives there was a MONTICULUS or "little hill."

Then, to the puzzlement of scholars over the ages, he claims the TRANSFIGURATION of Christ took place at this spot. This is a BLATANT GEOGRAPHICAL MISTAKE because the New Testament makes it quite clear that the "transfiguration" took place in Galilee -many miles to the north of the Holy City! So why, then, did he make this claim? Probably because of a MISUNDERSTANDING of the Latin! There are several different words in Latin used to denote the act of crucifixion. One of these is TRANSFIGERE -- meaning to "transfix a person with nails or some other sharp instrument." This word, which means TRANSFIXIATION, is very close phonetically to the word which means "TRANSFIGURATION" -TRANSFIGURARE! Dr. Martin claims that "In spoken Latin (and with various Latin accents found among the pilgrims and residents of Jerusalem when the Pilgrim was there) the words TRANSFIGERE and TRANSFIGURARE could well have sounded similar to the Bordeaux Pilgrim...But even the Latin people in Jerusalem at the time of the Pilgrim were also making the mistake of thinking the transfiguration occurred on Olivet." (Secrets of Golgotha, p.61).

It is highly probable, though, that this MONTICULUS on top of the Mount of Olives was indeed the site of Christ's death, or TRANSFIXIATION.

A verse in II Samuel speaks of this very hill: "And David went up by the ASCENT OF MOUNT OLIVET, and wept as he went up..." (15:30). The Septuagint version of the Old Testament calls this "ascent of Mount Olivet" The Place of the Ros (Head). Now just what does this refer to? Notice that the verses in question call the site The Place of THE Skull or Head (Ros) -- NOT The Place of A Skull or The Place of Skulls (plural)! It is very definitely referring to A PARTICULAR SKULL OR HEAD! Many people have conjectured, over the centuries, that this phrase indicates a geographical feature that looks like a skull or the top of a skull. But is this correct?

Is it just possible this small hillock on the Mount of Olives was called The Place of THE Skull because it was the burial place of A PARTICULAR SKULL?

Let's see what history and tradition reveal: "It was an EARLY TRADITION that Christ was crucified IN THE SAME PLACE WHERE ADAM WAS BURIED. S. Chrysostom alludes to it. 'Some say that Adam died there, and there lieth, and that Jesus, in that place where death had reigned, there also set up the trophy.'" (The Cross in Tradition, History, and Art, by William Wood Seymour. P.99).

Tentzelius' "Numial Treatise," quoted in Southey's "Omniana," vol.i.,p.281, records this amazing episode in ancient history: "The tree [of life], WITH THE BONES OF ADAM, was preserved in the ark by Noah, who divided the relics among his sons. THE SKULL FELL TO THE SHARE OF SHEM [Noah's son], WHO BURIED IT IN A MOUNT OF JUDEA CALLED FROM THIS CIRCUMSTANCE CALVARY AND GOLGOTHA [THE PLACE OF THE SKULL]."

Isn't that remarkable?

In early art Adam is frequently shown as rising up (from the grave) at the very foot of the cross, holding a chalice or cup to catch the blood of Christ as it fell from the tortured body. Many paintings or drawings of the crucifixion scene show THE SKULL OF ADAM beneath the stauros or cross of Christ.

With this newly discovered knowledge it's easy to see WHY the site of Christ's death was called Golgotha -- THE PLACE OF THE (ADAM'S) SKULL!!

This belief that Adam's skull was buried at Golgotha was common in the early church. Origen speaks of it as well known in his time; and St. Augustine wrote: "The ancients hold that because Adam was the first man, and was buried there [at Golgotha], it was called Calvary, because it holds the HEAD of the human race." (De Civitate Dei, cap.32).

St. Basil said, "Probably Noah was not ignorant of the sepulchre of our forefather [Adam] and that of the first born of all mortals, and in that place, CALVARY, the Lord suffered, the origin of death there being destroyed." (Isa. cap.5).

The fact that this spot outside Jerusalem is called The Place of THE Skull in the gospels, would tend to support the tradition of Shem having buried Adam's skull there.

According to Dr. Martin:

In the Hebrew language this highest summit of Olivet was known as the "Bamah." It was the "high place" on the Mount of Olives and this is where King David went to worship God overlooking the city of Jerusalem to the WEST. It also answers to the SAME MONTICULUS that the Bordeaux Pilgrim talked about. Indeed, this highest point on the southern summit of Olivet became known as the IMBOMON (which comes from the Greek "en bommo" which means "high place" or "altar"). It is this name which has been attached to THIS MONTICULUS on Olivet for the past

1600 years. At the present there is a small Moslem shrine built over the site. -- Secrets of Golgotha, p.61-62.

As we shall see, this "monticulus," or "Golgotha" as it later became known, is the same spot where Adam and Eve worshipped God after being thrust out of the Garden of Eden!

The Chinese Border Sacrifice

For forty centuries -- stretching back into the dim, distant mists of time -- the reigning emperors of China traveled ANNUALLY to the border of their country or the imperial city. There, on an OUTDOOR ALTAR, they sacrificed and burned young UNBLEMISHED bullocks and lambs to ShangTi -- the "Heavenly Ruler."

The BORDER SACRIFICE, as it came to be known, was a ceremony that reached back in unbroken sequence to the time prior to the first dynastic rule beginning in 2205 B.C. This unusual ceremony ended in 1911 after a continual observance of more than 4,000 years!

What was this "border sacrifice" that so commanded a centuries-spanning loyalty and devotion?

According to the Historical Records compiled by Ssu Ma Ch'ien, the Chinese emperors celebrated this mystical rite at MOUNT TAI in Shan-tung, AT THE EASTERN BORDER OF CHINA!

This is significant!

Believe it or not, the ancient written characters of the Chinese language - known as pictographs - preserve the true meaning of this annual "border sacrifice." Ethel R. Nelson and Richard E. Broadberry, in their fascinating book *Mysteries Confucius Couldn't Solve*, make this assertion:

We believe that a beautiful history of the beginnings of the human race on the newly [re] created planet earth have been perfectly preserved in the ancient written characters of the Chinese language!...With the passage of century after century, the origin and true meaning of these characters were lost and became mysterious, even as ShangTi also became mysterious.- *Read Books*, Dunlap, Tn. 1986. Pp.13-14.

After a careful study of the most ancient Chinese character forms, especially the Bronzeware and Oracle Bone scripts, these authors came to the following astonishing conclusions:

Interestingly, in one of the ancient books of the Chou dynasty, it is recorded: "because man sinned in ancient times, the God of Heaven ordered Chung and Li to BLOCK UP THE WAY BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH." Perhaps "Chung" and "Li" were the two angels on either side of Eden's gate!

So God expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden. As they passed through the EASTERN GARDEN GATE, they realized that this meant their exclusion from

the life-giving Tree of Life and immortality....A barrier, fence had been set up past which they could not go to eat from the Tree of Life. There were two angels [cherubim] guarding the way. Instead of "hands" at the gate entrance, some ancient forms [of pictographs] depict "the presence of God." It seems, therefore, that the GATE OF EDEN became the new PLACE OF WOR- SHIPPING GOD, since sin had prevented a face-to-face visit with God on the Holy Mount inside the Garden. -- Mysteries Confucius Couldn't Solve, pps. 80-81.

Authors Nelson and Broadberry continue:

An UNBLEMISHED LAMB, symbolizing the SAVIOR TO COME, was sacrificed and burned AT THE GATE. Animal sacrifices became an important part of their worship. The pictograph reveals the person bending in obeisance, and offering with a hand something to God. A Bronzeware figure for the same character, sacrifice, portrays a person kneeling before God. That the offering to God WAS ALWAYS MADE OUTSIDE THE GARDEN is quite obvious in yet another form of the same character...-- Ibid, p.83.

With these startling revelations, drawn from the ancient Chinese pictographs, it becomes evident that the new site for worshipping God, after our first parents were expelled from the Garden of Eden, was at the EAST GATE. This gate became a new holy place and was later represented by the MIPHKAD ALTAR mentioned by the apostle Paul!

Nelson and Broadberry expound further on their researches:

After Adam and Eve had been expelled from Eden, the NEW LOCATION for worship, therefore, was the GARDEN BOUNDARY, BORDER. A boundary had been set up at the gate, a barrier, to keep the first couple from the Tree of Life. There are a number of Oracle Bone renditions for this....

Eden's gate was now the border or boundary past which they were prevented going by the presence of the cherubim angels. There are many [Chinese] characters meaning border or boundary. All have the same reference, THE BORDER OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN, MORE SPECIFICALLY, AT THE EAST GATE....

How amazing that there are so many Chinese characters for BORDER, each of them denoting the BORDER OF EDEN: the Garden, the Garden enclosure, the gate or in yet another, the Holy Mountain BORDER! This is not difficult to interpret....

WE MAY CONCLUDE THAT THIS...SERVICE OUTSIDE OF EDEN'S EAST GATE, WAS A "BORDER SACRIFICE" INITIATED BY SHANGTI [GOD], HIMSELF. After Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden, they could ask forgiveness for sin by a symbolic animal sacrifice at the border or gate of the Garden of Eden. THE BORDER SACRIFICE AT EDEN'S CLOSED GATE LOOKED FORWARD TO THE SACRIFICE OF THE "SEED OF THE WOMAN" [CHRIST] ON BEHALF OF ALL THE DESCENDANTS OF ADAM. -- Ibid, pps. 90, 91, 92-93.

The ancient Chinese border sacrifice thus pictured the sacrifices Adam and Eve made at the EAST GATE of the Garden of Eden.

Because of the long passage of time, a true understanding of the meaning of this sacrifice was lost - along with the true knowledge of ShangTi or God. The Chinese border sacrifice survived in name only, to become a mysterious ritual, a national custom of unknown significance and origin.

According to the authors of *Mysteries Confucius Couldn't Solve*, the death of Christ at Calvary (the "Place of the Skull") was a DIRECT FULFILLMENT OF THE CHINESE BORDER SACRIFICE:

The place of crucifixion was on a small hill, called Calvary.

Calvary was located OUTSIDE JERUSALEM'S GATE. How important this fact is, for the Hebrew Scriptures relate:

So Jesus also suffered OUTSIDE THE GATE in order to sanctify the people through His own blood.

Even as Adam's sacrifice of unblemished lambs had been OUTSIDE EDEN'S GATE, so also was the Lamb of God to be offered OUTSIDE of Jerusalem, the holy Hebrew city. This too was a fulfillment of the ancient Chinese BORDER SACRIFICE, the "Border" being Eden's gate, TYPIFYING JERUSALEM'S [EAST] GATE WHERE THE GREAT SACRIFICE FOR ALL MANKIND WAS TO BE MADE. -- P.116.

It now makes perfect sense why Shem buried Adam's skull in the hill outside Jerusalem - it was the very same spot Adam sacrificed to God at the EASTERN GATE of Eden!

How wondrous are the ways of our God!

All Evidence Leads to the Same Conclusion!

All the evidence we have examined proves BEYOND A SHADOW OF A DOUBT that our Passover Lamb was slain EAST of the Temple on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, near the summit. At this site, and this site ONLY, could Christ have fulfilled all the requirements of the Law of Moses and the Law of the Roman authorities.

The presently accepted sites hold no water, and one, as we have seen, is the result of nothing less than a giant hoax!

Just an understanding of the sacrifice of the Red Heifer alone proves that Christ -- the HOLIEST SACRIFICE OF ALL -- had to die in the vicinity of the MIPHKAD ALTAR. Any other location would make so sense whatsoever.

As a final, CROWNING PROOF I present the evidence of the Acts of John -- a work probably written in the late second century. Within this work we find Christ talking to the apostle John at a cave ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES at the exact time

of the crucifixion-- thus showing that Christ's death did indeed occur on the Mount of Olives: "Jesus said to John ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES at the MOMENT OF THE CRUCIFIXION: 'John, someone must hear this from me; for I have need of one who will hear it.'" (The New Testament Apocrypha, by Hennecke & Schneemelcher. Vol.I, p.301). This gnostic work actually places the apostle John (whom the New Testament puts in eyesight of Christ on the tree -- see John 19:25-26) standing opposite a cave on the Mount of Olives at the EXACT TIME our Savior was crucified.

This cave was the actual tomb where Christ was laid after His death, and constituted the only "holy" spot in Jerusalem up to the time of Constantine -- but that is another story!

The Acts of John, then, can only be considered as FURTHER PROOF that Christ died on the Mount of Olives on that Wednesday so very long ago.