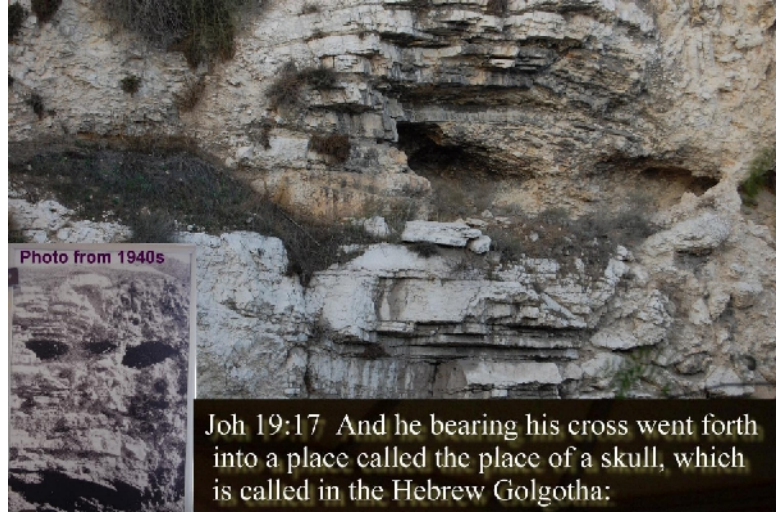


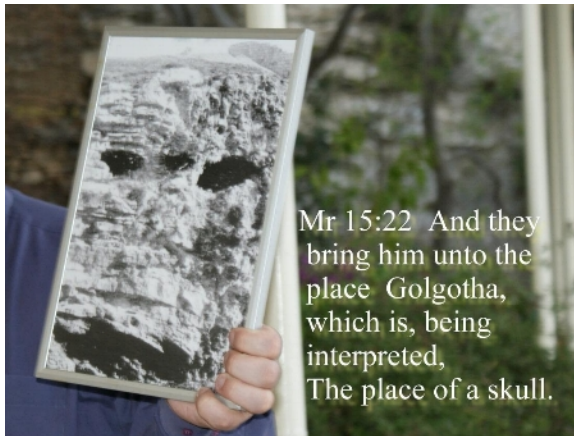


The Half Shekel Journal by Ed Rice
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All of my 49 years as a born again Christian I had heard that there was an empty tomb in a garden near Golgotha and a Catholic Church built on an emptied tomb in Jerusalem; that there was a Calvary on Golgotha's hill and a Catholic Calvary in downtown Jerusalem. (My mom was converted from Roman Catholicism to 'Ye must be Born Again' Baptist's Christianity in 1958) The excitement now built exponentially as we entered the Garden Tomb next to the hill called Golgotha.



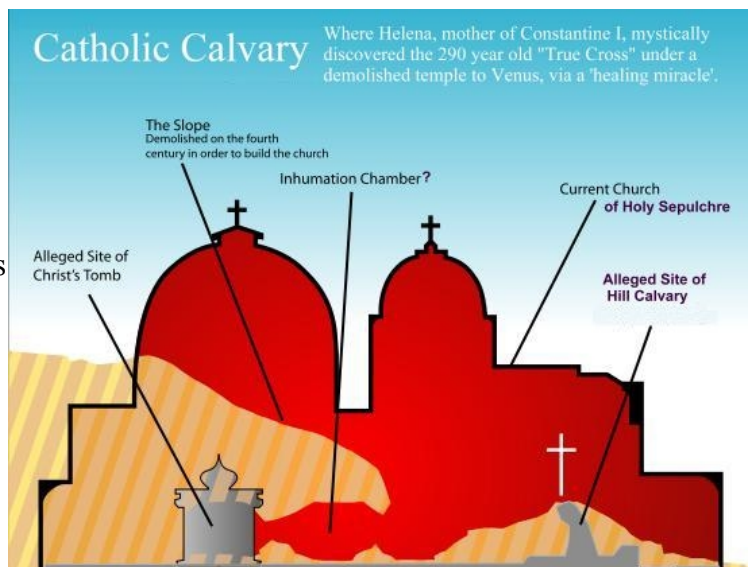
Joh 19:17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:



Mr 15:22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

Constantine was the undisputed Roman Emperor from 324-337 AD, but when he supposedly converted to the Christianity of his mother, Helena, in 313, he reversed Christian persecutions with an Edict of Milan, and began to make an 'ecumenical christianity' mandatory and controlled by the Empire. In 316 AD Constantine acted as the judge against the Baptists, then called Donatists, who broke fellowship with and spoke out against the Churches in Rome which had new leanings toward baptismal regeneration. These Donatists not only

broke fellowship with these errant churches but they proposed that only believers who have made a profession of faith should be baptized, because salvation was by grace through faith and not of works, nor baptism. For this schism, 'intra-christian' persecution was born wherein Constantine, as judge, authorized his 'ecumenical church' in Rome, later called his 'universal church' which in Latin is the 'Catholic Church' to use their swords against these hated Donatists who opposed the sloppy Roman baptismal practices, and broke fellowship with these errant Churches. Constantine actually led an army of his Roman 'christians' against the Donatist Christians, and

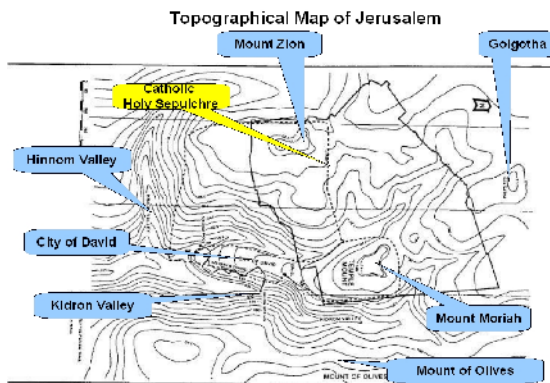


in 325 he summoned the first ecumenical council, the Council of Nicaea. Churches which were true to the Bible, i.e. Baptist Churches, who refused to align with Constantine's new Roman Church were persecuted; their bishops were exiled, banished and killed. Constantine marked the birth of his oppressive, controlling, persecuting 'Catholic' Church, just 280 years after the crucifixion of Christ.

This over bearing emperor took control of the Roman Church and gave his mother, Helena, unlimited access to the imperial treasury in order to locate the relics of Christianity. Traditionally she is credited with finding the relics of the 'True Cross'. The legend goes that Helena entered a temple of Venus, built by Emperor Harrian on a hill in urban Jerusalem, ordered it torn down and thereupon found three crosses underneath. A woman from Jerusalem who was at the point of death, recovered suddenly when she touched, not the first, nor the second, but the third of the three crosses and Helena declared this the "True Cross." Whereupon her son, Emperor Constantine, built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, also called the Church of the Resurrection, upon this hill that they assumed to be the Hill of Calvary. All this myth, superstition, and legend 290 years (325 AD) after the crucifixion and resurrection however, had nothing to do with what the Bible says about "Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull." (Matt15:22)



In 1842 Otto Thesnius, searching for the Greek 'Golgotha', rather than the Catholic's Latin 'Calvary', discovered that the revered hill north of the city wall and still bearing the appearance of a skull on its outcropping was much more likely the place of the crucifixion than the urban area where Helena spent her son's treasury. We passed through the beautiful garden area to first examine this outcropping that resembled a skull. The Mount Golgotha is equal in height to Mount Moriah where the temple mount is located and to Mount Zion, where Herod's palace stood and the tower of David marks the



western city wall. Golgotha stands outside the city wall at the crossroads of the only accessible entrance to Jerusalem. This crossroad area, beside a hill that looks like a skull, outside the city gate of Jerusalem, where crucifixions were regularly carried out fits all the Biblical description of where Jesus was crucified. The only denomination that ever defied the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox authority and tradition to say this out loud was the Anglican Church. After a short period they too withdrew their affirmation of the Garden Tomb and hill of Golgotha, reconformed to the majority, and

bowed to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Baptists are not a denomination but have never bowed to the Roman Sword nor the Roman churches, which it expelled from fellowship in the 2nd century when they went awry about baptismal regeneration. From our view of the skull-like face in the outcropping of Golgotha we proceeded to the Garden Tomb.