

Adam, Eve, and the First Easter

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Traditions about Golgotha and the Tomb of Jesus Christ

Among the most venerated sites in all Christendom is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, reputed by many to be the place where the Redeemer was crucified and buried. Under an 1852 agreement called the *Status Quo*, the administration of each area of the Church is divided among several Christian communities. The sole exception is the main entrance. To avoid the possibility of sectarian quarrels, the key to this entrance has been under the care of two Muslim families since 1192. A close-up of one of the massive doors is shown above.

The site of the Church has a long and complex history.¹ Following the Bar Kokhba revolt that ended in 135, the Roman Emperor Hadrian expelled the Jews from Jerusalem and commenced a new building program for the Roman city of Aelia Capitolina. This move was seen by the fourth-century Christian Bishop Eusebius to be motivated by a desire to eradicate remains of the Holy City's sacred sites. Eusebius² claimed that a cave, reputed to be the location of the Savior's tomb, was deliberately covered over by Hadrian with a pagan temple:

It was this very cave of the Savior that some godless and wicked people had planned to make invisible to mankind, thinking in their stupidity that they could in this way hide the truth. Indeed, with a great expenditure of effort they brought earth from somewhere outside and covered up the whole place, then leveled it, paved it, and so hid the divine cave somewhere down beneath a great quantity of soil. Then as though they had everything finished, above the ground they constructed a terrible and truly genuine tomb, one for souls, for dead idols, and built a gloomy sanctuary to the impure demon of Aphrodite;³ then they offered foul sacrifices there upon defiled and polluted altars. They reckoned there was one way alone and no other to bring their desires to realization, and that was to bury the Savior's cave under such foul pollutions.



Catholic Clergy Circle the Aedicule with Lighted Candles
<http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnn/2009/images/04/10/holy.sepulchre.jpg> 9 April 2009

In about 325, Constantine, the first Roman Emperor favorable to Christianity, razed and re-excavated the site. The accounts of the Bordeaux Pilgrim⁴ (333) and Egeria⁵ (381-384) provide early firsthand perspectives from lay Christians about the progress of the building program, whose centerpiece became the edicule that covered over the cave where Jesus was thought to have been buried. The entire complex was destroyed in 1009, but rebuilt to reach more or less its current form by the mid-twelfth century. The photograph above shows Catholic clergy with lighted candles moving in a circle around the rectangular edicule, recalling the ancient form of the prayer circle.

Over time, John Lundquist writes, “the Church of the Holy Sepulchre would draw to itself all the symbolism, the cosmic symbolism, of the Jerusalem Temple itself, including the idea that the Temple was the Navel of the World, thus reestablishing Jerusalem as the pivot and center of the world, and distinctly downgrading the importance of the Temple Mount itself.”⁶ Karen Armstrong observes:⁷

When they visited Golgotha, pilgrims were now shown the place where Adam had been created by God at the beginning of time. Golgotha was thought to be on the site of the Garden of Eden. It had become a symbol which gave pilgrims that experience of returning to Paradise...

Further connecting the story of Adam to the crucifixion of Christ were legends that recounted the fate of Adam’s remains after their burial. Before the Flood, Noah is said to have retrieved Adam’s skull from the Cave of Treasures so it could be preserved on the ark. According to Christian stories that claimed Jewish precedents:

When Noah the righteous left the ark... he came with his sons first to Mount Moriah... On a nearby hill, Shem, the son of Noah, interred the skull of Adam, which he had taken with him into the ark and guarded during the flood. Since then the hill is called [*Golgotha*] – the Skull.⁸

Christian tradition, supposing that the New Testament term *Golgotha*⁹ (= Latin *calvaria*, English “skull”) referred to the place where Adam was buried, inferred that Jesus Christ was later crucified over the exact spot of the ancient grave. For example, the Christian scholar Jerome (ca. 347-420) commented:

The place where our Lord was crucified is called Calvary, because the skull of the primitive man [Adam] was buried there. So it came to pass that the second Adam, that is the blood of Christ, as it dropped from the cross, washed away the sins of the buried protoplast, the first Adam.¹⁰

For this reason, the figure of Adam is frequently represented in depictions of the crucifixion, either as a skull in a cavelike tomb beneath the cross or, more dramatically, as ascending from his tomb as the blood of the Atonement effects his resurrection from the dead. In such paintings, the skull is often superscripted with “SA” for “Skull of Adam.” Sometimes the rib from which Eve was created is shown lying nearby.



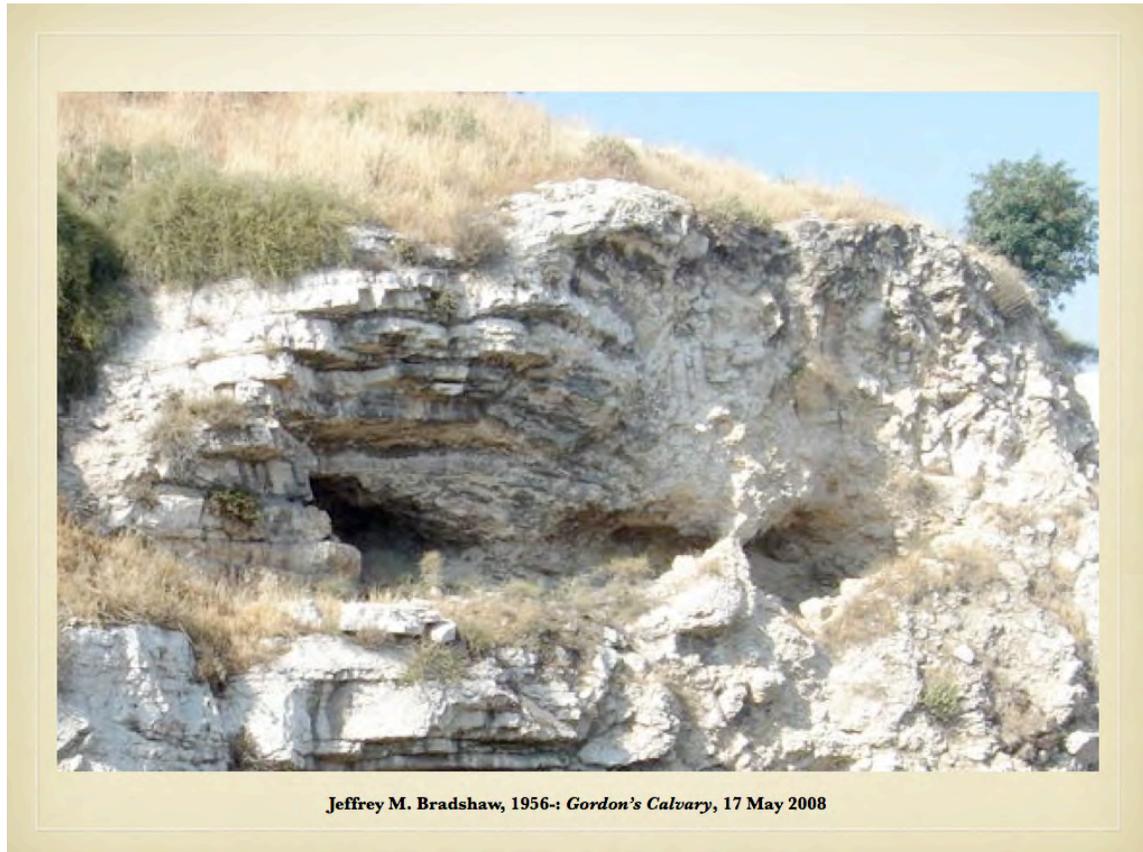
The Chapel of Adam, ca. 1167 Photo: Laura E. Hoffman, 1961-

Today, pilgrims to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem can still visit, beneath the traditional spot of crucifixion, what has become known as the “church and tomb of Adam.”¹¹ The chapel surrounds the cavity where tradition says that Adam’s bones were deposited to await the redeeming blood of Christ.¹² A small window at the back of the chamber displays a fissure said to have been created at the moment of the Savior’s death, when the earth shook and the temple veil was rent. The general lesson, though not the doubtful speculations regarding the skull of Adam, is echoed in the words of the Apostle Paul:

For as in Adam all die [i.e., through Adam’s eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge], even so in Christ shall all be made alive [i.e., through the “tree” on which the Savior was crucified].¹³

Though many non-Mormon scholars take seriously a connection between the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the crucifixion and burial of Jesus Christ,¹⁴ LDS scholarship usually have not been as sympathetic to this possibility.¹⁵ Apart from questions of archaeology, Catholic scholar Raymond E. Brown admits the “emotional drawbacks” of the traditional site, including “the nasty squabbling among the priests or monks who represent the ancient churches that celebrate rituals there, oppressive grime, darkness, and (through much of the last century) ugly scaffolding because Christians could not agree on repairs. For Protestant evangelicals in particular, the incense and music of exotic liturgies have seemed almost idolatrous.”¹⁶ The “Garden Tomb,” an

alternative favored by many Protestants, has been the subject of approving comments by some LDS Church leaders.¹⁷ However, after more than a decade of study, BYU Professor Jeffrey Chadwick, a senior fellow at the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem, and a member of the board of trustees of the American Schools of Oriental Research, agreed with the prevailing view of scholarship to conclude that this could not have been the place of Christ's burial.¹⁸



Chadwick has adduced evidence favoring the “Golgotha” site (“Gordon’s Calvary”) near the Garden Tomb (shown above) as the location of the crucifixion.¹⁹ He argues that the northerly position of the site with respect to the city walls was consistent with contemporary concerns about ritual purity and wind direction, and that, as expected, it would have been highly visible—in this case, from both the heavily-travelled Jericho and Nablus roads. Moreover, Chadwick avers that the “skull feature” of the site has not changed substantially for three thousand years. Though, to his credit, Chadwick’s research has nearly singlehandedly kept the debate alive on the viability of Gordon’s Calvary as Golgotha in the LDS community, there are currently no other qualified scholars outside of BYU who have continued to advocate for it.²⁰

Though scholarly consensus currently favors the general site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as an alternative, agreement on specifics is still lacking. For example, following extensive studies of the Church undertaken during the 1990s, Martin Biddle, Professor of Medieval Archaeology and Astor Senior Research Fellow and Tutor in

Archaeology at Oxford, came to accept the site traditionally pointed out to visitors.²¹ On the other hand, based on a close examination of the physical evidence, Shimon Gibson, a senior associate fellow of the W. F. Albright Institute and adjunct professor of archaeology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, concluded that while the rocky outcropping “may have been a monument marking the general place of Golgotha—almost like a signpost—it was definitely not the actual *place* of crucifixion.”²² Instead, Gibson favored a rocky area under the apse of the Church, arguing that gardens at that place could have been fed by a large, open reservoir.²³

Though additional research will no doubt uncover evidence to rule out sites currently seen as promising, a positive and definite answer to the question of where Jesus was crucified and buried is likely, in my opinion, to remain forever elusive.²⁴

Traditions about the Garden of Gethsemane

To Mormons, the image of Christ’s sufferings in Gethsemane overshadows the memory of His agony on the cross.²⁵ Though the exact location of the garden cannot be identified,²⁶ no one disputes the claim that it was situated somewhere on the western slopes of the Mount of Olives, facing the Temple. The name “Gethsemane” testifies to the presence of a nearby oil press (Hebrew *gath* = press; *shemen* = oil).



Oil Press at Capernaum

Providing meaning for the symbol of the olive tree, the Greek title “Christ” (= Hebrew “Messiah,” English “Anointed One”) is explained in Pseudo-Clement’s *Recognitions* 1:45:2 as an anointing of oil from the Tree of Life, sometimes equated with the cross of Christ.²⁷ One may also see this symbol of the Atonement in Jesus’ miracles of healing and forgiveness—for example, His driving out of evil spirits and His use of oil in blessing the sick.²⁸ This symbolism of the Atonement is also prominent in the parable of the Good Samaritan, where the “half dead” victim was administered to by having oil and wine poured in his wounds.²⁹

Besides its primary meaning in Hebrew, Truman G. Madsen³⁰ observes that the word “Messiah” has:

... another root, *tsahar*, meaning to glow with light as one glistens when one is anointed. To earn the name, the holiness of the name, [Jesus Christ] had to tread the press. The image of the press permeates Isaiah, as it does modern revelation.³¹ One day He will say, “I have trodden the press” (in this case the wine press, but the two merge) “I have trodden the wine press alone; I have trodden the wine press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God.”

Kevin Barney further explains the imagery: “As the grape in the press releases its liquid contents to produce wine, Christ was pressed under the weight of the sins of the world until His blood extruded from his body.”³²

Though the unbearable agonies of death on the cross or its excruciating equivalents in physical torture have been experienced by an untold number of human victims,³³ no other individual has ever had to endure the crushing load of all griefs, sorrows, transgressions, and iniquities.³⁴ Of the nature, magnitude, and scope of the portion of the Atonement that Christ voluntarily took upon Himself in Gethsemane, Elder James E. Talmage³⁵ writes:

Christ’s agony in the garden is unfathomable by the finite mind, both as to intensity and cause. The thought that He suffered through fear of death is untenable. Death to Him was preliminary to resurrection and triumphal return to the Father from whom He had come, and to a state of glory even beyond what He had before possessed; and, moreover, it was within His power to lay down His life voluntarily.³⁶ He struggled and groaned under a burden such as no other being who has lived on earth might even conceive as possible. It was not physical pain, nor mental anguish alone, that caused Him to suffer such torture as to produce an extrusion of blood from every pore; but a spiritual agony of soul such as only God was capable of experiencing. No other man, however great his powers of physical or mental endurance, could have suffered so; for his human organism would have succumbed, and syncope³⁷ would have produced unconsciousness and welcome oblivion. In that hour of anguish Christ met and overcame all the horrors that Satan, “the prince of this world”³⁸ could inflict...

In some manner, actual and terribly real though to man incomprehensible, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world.

We get a small glimpse of what Christ suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane in the intimate firsthand account of D&C 19. “There is something curious about the narrative. Verse 18 ends with a dash”³⁹ immediately following the word “shrink”—perhaps the longest and most poignant dash in all the written word. When “Christ drank from the cup of suffering,” it was so painful that He, “the greatest of all,” “shrank from doing it. The cut-off sentence suggests that the suffering was beyond what Christ here wishes to reveal, which makes it all the more forbidding”:⁴⁰

18 Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

19 Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.

Those preparations were so painful that even when He recalled them as the resurrected Lord—so many hundreds of years later—He could not speak of them to us. Might that pregnant pause between “shrink” and “nevertheless” represent the culminating moment of the atonement, when He trod “the wine-press alone, . . .and none were with [Him]”?⁴¹

No doubt crafted in order to teach early Christians about the necessity of the Atonement, tradition preserves a story about Adam’s intense sufferings as he approached death from the old wounds inflicted as a result of the Fall, and of the efforts of Eve and Seth to relieve his anguish. They prayed to God that “He might . . . send His angel to give them some oil from the tree of his mercy . . . to anoint . . . Adam on account of the pains of his body.”⁴² Eventually, in addition to a branch of a tree from the Garden of Eden,⁴³ Seth was said to have received the promise that the oil of mercy will flow for mankind through the atoning sacrifice of Christ.



The Quest of Seth for the Oil of Mercy, 1351-1360

The story is pictured in the sculpture above, preserved at the Holy Cross Minster in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany. According to the description by Assaf Pinkus:

Adam lies on the ground, on his sickbed, supporting his head in his hands. Eve sits behind him. Her right hand grasps his shoulder while her left is held to her breast, exhibiting her storm of emotions. Behind them one can see a sprouting tree. To their right Seth receives a branch from an angel standing at the entrance to a Gothic structure symbolizing Paradise. Inside the canopy is a tree.... Seth [is] an almost abstract figure, existing exclusively to perform his mission: “to fetch for mankind the gift of God’s mercy”...⁴⁴

Thus, according to Pinkus, Seth represents Christ himself, and these scenes of Eve’s mourning over the death of Adam and Seth’s journey to paradise, can be seen as “prefigurations of the Pieta and Crucifixion.”⁴⁵

In some early Christian traditions, a similar idea of “reversing the blows of death” was also represented by a special anointing with the “oil of mercy” prior to (or sometimes after) baptism or washing, as the candidate is signed upon the brow, the nostrils, the breast, the ears, and so forth.⁴⁶ A related pattern is still preserved among Armenian Christians—first, the anointing with olive oil “in the different parts of the body,” then

baptism, then the dressing of the “new Adam,” then, following prayer, an anointing with perfumed oil representing “the seal of the covenant.”⁴⁷

“The Fellowship of His Sufferings”

All those who receive the Gospel become “partakers of the divine nature”⁴⁸ and by virtue of this fact participate in Christ’s sufferings as well as His glory.⁴⁹ Nowhere is this fact more apparent than in the temple where, as Truman G. Madsen points out, “a full-scale covenant relationship, the atonement of Christ may be written, as it were, in our very flesh.”⁵⁰ “One is... obliged” to become not only “‘one flesh’ with Christ, but [also] *one life, one sacrifice*, thus participating actively in the eternal act of love which began in the heavens.”⁵¹ The Apostle Paul, in Philippians 3:10 calls such participation “the fellowship of his sufferings.”

How has the Lord asked each of us to demonstrate our determination to enter into “the fellowship of his sufferings”? Our sacrifice cannot be as universal in scope as was His, but it must be of the same nature—an emptying of our soul from any selfish motive, and a whole-hearted devotion to the happiness of others—in other words, a fulness of charity, the “pure love of Christ.”⁵²

Though Elder James E. Talmage, who so poignantly described Christ’s sufferings in Gethsemane, was renowned for his work as a geologist and an apostle, his devoted personal service to individuals in need is a story of more quiet and majestic proportion, as illustrated by the following:⁵³

In the spring of 1892 diphtheria ravaged Utah communities. Talmage had returned home on Memorial Day from ministering to people when he learned of the plight of the non-Mormon Martin family, who had been unable to get anyone to go to the house to help for fear of catching the disease. James immediately left for the Martin home. He recorded:

One child, two and a half years old, lay dead on a bed, having been dead about four hours and still unwashed. Two other children, one a boy of ten and the other a girl of five, lay writhing in the agonies of the disease. A girl of 13 years is still feeble from a recent attack of diphtheria... The father, Mr. Abe Martin, and the mother, Marshia Martin, are dazed with grief and fatigue; and the only other occupant of the house, a man named Kelly who is a boarder in the family, is so ill and weak as hardly to be able to move about.

He cleaned the house and prepared the young child for burial. Food and clothing had been donated by the Relief Society. The soiled clothing and rags had to be burned. A woman came by and offered to do the work for \$5 a day, which she then lowered to \$4.50, still a large sum for a family so destitute. Talmage dismissed her as a “vulture.”

When he returned the next day, he found that the ten-year-old boy had died during the night. The five-year-old girl was now near death. Talmage took her in his arms. “She clung to my neck, oftentimes coughing bloody mucus on my face and clothing, and her throat had about it the stench of putrefaction, yet I could not put her from me. During the half hour immediately preceding her death, I walked the floor with the little creature in my arms. She died in agony at 10 a.m.”

The three children were placed in wooden coffins and buried in a local cemetery. Talmage delivered the graveside blessing. After seeing to the well-being of the grieving family, he bathed in a zinc solution, burned his soiled clothing, and quarantined himself from his family for several days to prevent spread of the disease.

May our gratitude for the examples of Christlike service that have blessed our lives inspire us to more frequent and heartfelt sacrifice on behalf of God’s children. At this time of Easter—and another General Conference—I gratefully sustain President Thomas S. Monson whose example, in an age where “the love of many [has waxed] cold,”⁵⁴ bears the very hallmark of charity.

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Endnotes

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- 1 K. Armstrong, Jerusalem, pp. 153-193; M. Biddle, Tomb; M. Biddle, History; C. Morris, Sepulchre to 1600.
- 2 Eusebius, Constantine (1890), 3:26:2-3, p. 132.
- 3 Biddle notes that while Constantine's account was penned more than ten years after the demolition of the temple, the "coins of Aelia Capitolina—by contrast, strictly contemporary evidence—depict neither Venus nor her temple. They show instead two different temples of Tyche. Eusebius may have chosen to identify one of these with Venus to heighten the supposed defilement of the site. For Jews and Christians, Tyche was a 'bearable' pagan deity who even appears on coins of Agrippa II; Aphrodite/Venus was an abomination. The Christian sources go further and accuse Hadrian of a desire to conceal and dishonor the sites of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus, but this seems more likely to reflect fourth-century assumptions about pagan attitudes toward Christianity than second-century reality" (M. Biddle, History, pp. 28-29).
- 4 Included in Egeria, Travels, 594, p. 31.
- 5 See *Ibid.*, 30:1ff., pp. 151ff.
- 6 J. M. Lundquist, Temple of Jerusalem, pp. 156-157; cf. Wilkinson in Egeria, Travels, p. 11.
- 7 K. Armstrong, Jerusalem, p. 213.
- 8 Z. Vilnay, Sacred Land, p. 70, cf. p. 213. See also E. A. W. Budge, Cave, pp. 104-110, 122-129; W. L. Lipscomb, Repentance, 99-103, p. 233; S. C. Malan, Adam and Eve, 2:8, p. 115, 3:5-7, pp. 149-153, 3:13-19, pp. 161-169; H. W. Nibley, Teachings of the PGP, 21, p. 259; Shelemon, Book of the Bee, 21, p. 35. Similar Muslim traditions about the

reburial of Adam can be found in Ibn Kathir in I. Ibn Kathir, *Stories, Stories*, p. 54; B. M. Wheeler, *Prophets*, p. 34. Ibn Kathir also records the tradition that “Noah, when it was time for the Flood, carried Adam and Eve in the Ark and reburied them in Jerusalem” (B. M. Wheeler, *Prophets*, p. 34). See also M. i. A. A. al-Kisa'i, *Tales*, p. 347 n. 69; al-Tabari, *Creation*, 1:162-163, pp. 333-334. The *Ka'bah* in Mecca was also said to have been preserved during the Flood (al-Tabari, *Creation*, 1:164, p. 335).

9 Matthew 27:33; Mark 16:22; Luke 23:33; John 19:17.

10 Jerome, Letter 46, 3, p. 61, after Origen's *Commentary on Matthew 27:33*; cf. R. E. Brown, *Death*, 2:937 n. 9; C. W. Wilson, *Golgotha*, pp. 2-7.

11 A. Parrot, *Golgotha*, p. 77.

12 Z. Vilnay *et al.*, *Vilnay Guide*, pp. 99, 104; cf. A. Parrot, *Golgotha*, p. 77; Z. Vilnay, *Sacred Land*, pp. 212-213. For references to discussions of the veneration of “mystic caves” by pagans and Jewish Christians, see Eusebius, *Constantine* (1890), p. 276 n. 25-8, pp. 277-278 n. 26-2. Cameron and Hall note that Eusebius' narrative, “with its elaborate insistence on three caves, and his stress on victory and salvation, leads him to emphasize the resurrection rather than the death of Christ, which was in any case the eastern understanding” (cited in Eusebius, *Constantine* (1890), p. 283 n. 30-1). Consistent with this emphasis (and perhaps the fact that the tradition had not yet taken hold), the cave of the tomb of Adam was not mentioned by Eusebius.

Although Jerome had earlier accepted the Church as the site of Adam's burial, he later became critical of that view, no doubt being aware of the Jewish tradition that Adam was buried in Hebron (Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew 27:33*, cited in C. Morris, *Sepulchre to 1600*, p. 28. See also M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti*, 23:2 and n. 1, p. 120; J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah* 2, 58:4, p. 297; M.-A. Ouaknin *et al.*, *Rabbi Éliézer*, 20, pp. 127-128, 36, p. 224; H. Schwartz, *Tree*, 445, pp. 343-344, 639, pp. 504-506). Wrote Jerome:

I have heard somebody expound how the place of Calvary is where Adam was buried and that it was so called because the head of the first man was located there... It is a nice story and ordinary people like it, but it is not true. For outside the city and the gate were the places in which the heads of criminals were struck off and they took the name of Calvary, that is, of the beheaded.

Though Ambrose accepted the story of Adam's burial at Golgotha, “the powerful influence of Jerome ensured that the Adam legend did not appear much in Latin literature before the time of the Crusades” (C. Morris, *Sepulchre to 1600*, p. 28). In a related tradition, a fifteenth-century Christian source has Adam being buried at Hebron, with his skull being washed to Calvary at the time of Noah's flood (M. Herbert *et al.*, *Irish Apocrypha*, p. 16).

13 1 Corinthians 15:22, cf. vv. 46, 47, 49.

14 See, e.g., M. Biddle, *Tomb*; M. Biddle, *History*, pp. 28-31; R. E. Brown, *Death*, 2:1279-1283; S. Gibson, *Final Days*, pp. 116-122; C. Morris, *Sepulchre to 1600*, p. 28-

31; H. Shanks, Temple Mount. Keener summarizes the prevailing view favoring the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (C. S. Keener, John, 2:1134-1135):

Golgotha (John 19:17) was undoubtedly near the site of the Holy Sepulchre; that traditional location was outside the city walls but only roughly a thousand feet north-northeast of Herod's palace, where Pilate was staying. The traditional Protestant "Garden Tomb" is a substantially later site and cannot represent the site of Jesus' burial; by contrast, the Catholic Holy Sepulchre and tombs in its vicinity date to the right period. The tradition of the latter vicinity is as early as the second century (when Hadrian erected a pagan temple there; he defiled many Jewish holy sites in this manner) and probably earlier. Good evidence exists, in fact, that this site dates to within the first two decades after the resurrection. This is because (1) Christian tradition is unanimous that Jesus was buried outside the city walls and no one would make up a site inside (cf. Hebrews 13:12; John 19:41); (2) Jewish custom made it common knowledge that burials would be outside the city walls; (3) the traditional vicinity of the Holy Sepulchre is *inside* Jerusalem's walls; (4) Agrippa I expanded the walls of Jerusalem sometime in the 40s CE.

Obviously, no historical connection can be made with any of these sites and the burial of Adam and Eve.

15 J. R. Chadwick, Golgotha.

16 R. E. Brown, Death, 2:938.

17 For a collection of statements by LDS Church leaders about holy sites in Israel, see D. B. Galbraith *et al.*, Jerusalem, pp. 500-507.

18 J. R. Chadwick, Golgotha. Note that this was a reversal of Chadwick's earlier position, presented in an article in the prestigious *Biblical Archaeology Review* (*BAR*), where he took issue with another scholar and came out in vigorous support of the Garden Tomb. Chadwick candidly explains: "I was not a trained archaeologist but did hold a master's degree in near eastern studies, had taught in three BYU Jerusalem student programs, and reasoned myself qualified to comment on the authenticity question surrounding the Garden Tomb. In my *BAR* comments, I took Barkay to task... Since offering those original comments, however, I have learned a good deal more about the tombs and burial customs of the region, having since become a practicing field archaeologist in Israel with a doctorate in near eastern archaeology and anthropology. Although still maintaining that Barkay could have argued his case better..., I must now agree that on every issue Barkay addressed concerning the Garden Tomb, he was right."

19 Ibid..

20 Affirmed in a personal conversation with Professor Chadwick in his office at BYU, 2 April 2010. In publications authored by BYU faculty, opinions on Gordon's Calvary as the site of Golgotha have been mixed. Andrew C. Skinner admits that there are both "pros and cons" to each of the major alternatives, though ultimately tending to "regard as a primary factor the important geographical symbolism behind the ancient Mosaic

requirement that all animal sacrifices and offerings of the Tabernacle and the Temple be killed 'on the side of the altar northward before the Lord' (Leviticus 1:11)" (A. C. Skinner, *Golgotha*, p. 122). However, in a more recent publication, Skinner co-authored with D. Kelly Ogden, the only mention of the issue is in a caption to a photograph of Gordon's Calvary: "Skull Hill, possible site of Golgotha where Jesus was crucified. Some see the semblance of a face in the hillside" (D. K. Ogden *et al.*, *Gospels*, p. 647). Similarly, in a book by Richard N. Holzapfel, Eric D. Huntsman, and Thomas A. Wayment, the sites are identified without commentary on a map of Jerusalem as "Traditional Catholic and Orthodox Christian Site of Golgotha and Tomb" and "Traditional Protestant Site of Golgotha and Tomb" (R. N. Holzapfel *et al.*, *Jesus Christ*, p. 107). Cecilia M. Peek briefly reviews arguments for and against Gordon's Calvary, noting in conclusion, on the one hand, that the "objections... have persuaded the majority of scholars to reject the Garden Tomb as a candidate for the actual execution and burial site of Jesus" and, on the other hand, citing the positive spiritual impressions of President Harold B. Lee as he visited the site (C. M. Peek, *Burial*, p. 376). Kent Jackson seemingly rejects the site of Gordon's Calvary, stating that "the lack of tradition relating to the site and the improbability that it has retained its appearance for two thousand years combine to make the identification uncertain, if not unlikely (K. P. Jackson, *Crucifixion*, p. 324). Doing away with any requirement for a skull-like appearance of the hill of crucifixion, Jackson notes that "the Joseph Smith Translation at Matthew, Mark, and John changes 'skull' to 'burial,' suggesting that the term [Golgotha] has nothing to do with the place's appearance but with its function" (K. P. Jackson, *Crucifixion*, p. 324; see also D. B. Galbraith *et al.*, *Jerusalem*, p. 178; D. K. Ogden *et al.*, *Gospels*, p. 645).

21 M. Biddle, *History*, p. 27. See also M. Biddle, *Tomb*, pp. 55-64.

22 S. Gibson, *Final Days*, p. 117.

23 Gibson posits that the place was "not far from the road extending along the Transversal Valley (from the direction of the *Praetorium*) and close to the Gennath Gate, that the execution grounds would have been situated.... The actual place where a patch of the rock of Golgotha was shown to visitors and venerated [in the earliest times of record] was probably located at the west end of the [Church] within the sarea of its domed apse... [U]nfortunately, the central part of the apse... has not yet been excavated so we do not know what the rock looked like" (Ibid., pp. 121, 122). See p. 119 regarding the reservoir. For Gibson's discussion of the Garden Tomb and additional details about his proposed site for Golgotha, see pp. 150-151. See also N. G. de Vartavan, *Jérusalem Nouvelle*.

24 Note that my conclusion with respect to the sites of crucifixion and burial is stated negatively. I do not see the evidence as definitive at this time for any of the sites, and, indeed, it is hard to conceive of incontrovertible evidence ever being found. Note, however, that Chadwick is very confident of Gordon's Calvary as the crucifixion site. In response to my query as to whether he wished to qualify his conclusions in any way before they were published in this article, he replied: "I would stick with my original statements, in my 2003 article in the *Religious Educator*: 'evidence is quite positive for the skull feature (Gordon's Calvary) having been Golgotha, or 'the place of the skull'"

where Jesus was crucified' (p. 14); 'the skull feature ... is the best candidate for the site called Golgotha in the New Testament' (p. 45); 'There can be little doubt, as demonstrated above, that the skull feature was the site of the Crucifixion' (p. 45 also)" (J. R. Chadwick, March 29 2010).

25 Though not questioning the sincerity of those who honor the crucifix as a representation of Christ's sacrifice, Mormons also find the empty tomb, paralleling the empty cross in many Protestant traditions, as a more meaningful symbol for their faith (G. B. Hinckley, *Symbol*; R. R. Keller, *Cross*; J. Martin, *Last Station*, p. 97; J. F. Smith, Jr., *Answers*, 4:16-18).

Snyder notes that "The suffering Christ on a cross first appeared in the fifth century, and then not very convincingly" (G. F. Snyder, *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life Before Constantine* (Mercer, 1985), pp. 56, 165, cited in J. Z. Smith, *Drudgery*, p. 113). According to Frizzell, it was not until medieval times that "Christian devotion and theology... began to shift in emphasis from Jesus' resurrection as the key moment in salvation history, to the pains that Jesus suffered in the course of his brutal death. This theological shift placed attention less on the narratives of Christ's resurrection and more on the events of his Passion" (L. Frizzell, *Death of Jesus*, p. 73; cf. L. Wiesteltier, *Worship*, pp. 256-257).

26 "Josephus (F. Josephus, *Wars*, 6:1:1:6) reports that the trees on the east side of the city were cut down in the Roman siege of Jerusalem (some forty years after Jesus' death), and so it is impossible to be sure exactly where on the Mount of Olives Gethsemane was. Since the 4th century a site at the bottom of the Mount (where olive trees grow more abundantly than on the upper slopes) has been venerated and, in particular, a rock formation or cave that might have housed an oil press" (R. E. Brown, *Death*, 1:149).

27 Pseudo-Clement, *Recognitions*, p. 89; cf. F. S. Jones, *Recognitions* 1995, pp. 76-77.

28 Mark 6:13.

29 Luke 10:30, 34. See H. W. Nibley, *Message* 2005, pp. 175-77; J. W. Welch, *Samaritan* (1999); J. W. Welch, *Samaritan* (2007).

30 T. G. Madsen, *Olive Press*.

31 See Isaiah 63:3; D&C 76:107, 88:106.

32 K. L. Barney, *NT Footnotes*, John 6:54, 1:526 n. d.

33 See S. Thistlewaite, *Mel*, p. 137; J. Wallis, *The Passion*, pp. 111-112.

34 See Isaiah 53:4-5.

35 J. E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, pp. 568-569.

36 John 5:26-27; 10:17-18.

37 I.e., a “temporary loss of consciousness caused by a fall in blood pressure” (Oxford English Reference Dictionary, <http://www.wordswarm.net/dictionary/syncope.html> (accessed 24 March 2010)).

38 John 14:30.

39 T. B. Griffith, *Root*, p. 430.

40 D. Packard *et al.*, *Feasting*, p. 139.

41 See E. England, *Easter*, pp. 52-53.

42 G. A. Anderson *et al.*, *Synopsis*, Latin 40:1, 41:2, p. 44E. Versions of the story in the Adam literature differ in various respects that cannot be described here. For Islamic versions of this story, see M. i. A. A. al-Kisa'i, *Tales*, pp. 78, 82-83; A. I. A. I. M. I. I. al-Tha'labi, *Lives*, pp. 60-62; B. M. Wheeler, *Prophets*, p. 33.

43 Although most Christian sources see this branch, which later became the cross of Christ, as coming from the Tree of Knowledge, some Gnostic sources see it as a Tree of Life. Ryen writes: “The tree motif is found about 80 times in the Nag Hammadi codices, and quite many of these examples talk about the *cross* as a ‘tree.’ But only Sylvanus (M. L. Peel *et al.*, *Sylvanus*, 106:21-23, p. 390) says the cross is a Tree of Life. The Tree of Life is here connected to Christ who again is identified with wisdom (cf. Proverbs 3:18, 1 Corinthians 1:30)” (J. O. Ryen, *Mandaean Vine*, pp. 216-217; cf. Proverbs 3:18, 1 Corinthians 1:30). Ryen sees another possible example in the *Gospel of Philip* (W. W. Isenberg, *Philip*, 73:15-19, p. 153).

44 A. Pinkus, *Impact*, pp. 167-168.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 168.

46 H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 174; B. T. Ostler, *Clothed*, p. 2; cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Five*, 21:1-6, 7:149-150; H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, 3:1-6, pp. 516-517; M. von Wellnitz, *Liturgy*, pp. 10-11, 13, 28-29.

47 M. E. Stone, *Angelic Prediction*, p. 125. See also Stone's discussion of *2 Enoch* 22:8-9 (M. E. Stone, *Angelic Prediction*, pp. 126-127; cf. F. I. Andersen, *2 Enoch*, pp. 138-139) and Nibley's discussion of the Egyptian rite of the “Opening of the Mouth” (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, pp. 164-182). For a comprehensive survey of early and medieval baptismal liturgies, see B. D. Spinks, *Baptism*.

Similar anointings are performed today by the Roman Catholic Church in the sacrament of “Extreme Unction,” more recently given the preferred name of the “Anointing of the Sick.” The rite includes anointing of “the organs of the five external senses (eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands), of the feet, and, for men (where the custom exists and the condition of the patient permits of his being moved), of the loins or reins.” In the Eastern Church, the “parts usually anointed are the forehead, chin, cheeks, hands, nostrils, and breast” (P. J. Toner, *Extreme Unction*).

48 2 Peter 1:4.

49 Romans 8:17.

50 T. G. Madsen, *Suffering*, p. 234; see Romans 8:17; 2 Corinthians 4:10; Galatians 2:20, 6:17.

51 J. E. Seaich, *Ancient Texts* 1995, p. 550. See Revelation 13:8.

52 Moroni 7:47.

53 J. E. Talmage, *Essential*, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

54 Matthew 24:12.