

his very eyes on the summit of the mountain, at the foot of which he may have lived, and with the legendary history of which he was intimately acquainted.

## GOLGOTHA AND THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

By Major-General Sir C. W. WILSON, K.C.B., F.R.S., R.E., &c.

(Continued from p. 153.)

ON the supposition that there was no definite tradition with regard to the position of Golgotha, can any reason be suggested for the selection of the present site by Macarius?

The possibility of some connection between Golgotha and the name *Ælia Capitolina* has already been mentioned.<sup>1</sup> According to a fanciful etymology the word *Capitolium* is derived from the head or skull of a certain *Olus*, or *Tolus*, *caput Oli regis*, which was discovered when the rock on the summit of the Capitoline Hill at Rome<sup>2</sup> was excavated for the foundations of the temple of Jupiter; and there is an ancient legend that Golgotha was so called from the skull of Adam, which was found in a tomb beneath the "rock of the Cross."<sup>3</sup> The two words *Capitolium* and *Golgotha* have the same meaning, and the *Capitolium* was regarded at Rome, as Golgotha was at Jerusalem, as the chief place or centre of the world.<sup>4</sup>

On the Capitoline Hill at Rome, near the temple of Mars, stood a temple of *Venus Capitolina*; and above the assumed rock of Golgotha rose a temple of *Venus*, or *Aphrodite*, the Syrian *Astarte*. At Rome the goddess was known as *Venus Victrix*, the giver of victory to lovers and Roman armies, and she was called *Calca*, "the bald," a word from which *Calvaria*, "Calvary," is derived. One of the chief seats of the worship of the Oriental *Aphrodite*, or *Astarte*, was *Golgi*<sup>5</sup>—the same word as *Golgotha*—in *Cyprus*. In building

<sup>1</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1902, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> The connection of a head, or skull, with a city is not uncommon, e.g., that of the head of St. John Baptist with *Samaria*, *Damascus*, and *Emesa*. See also the legends connected with the heads of *Bel*, *Dionysos*, *Orpheus*, and *Osiris*, and the oracle-giving head at *Harrân*.

<sup>3</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1902, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1902, pp. 67-70.

<sup>5</sup> Γολγοθῆ, Γόλγος, from Γόλγος (*Golgos*), the son of *Aphrodite* and *Adonis*, and the reputed founder of the town; or, according to *Sepp* (*Das heilige Land*, i, 419), from the rock-cones (*Heb.* *Gatgal*, *Golgol*) which played an important

the great temple of Venus and Rome at the capital, Hadrian identified the goddess with the well-being of the State. The crowned goddess on the imperial coins of Ælia Capitolina<sup>1</sup> has been called Astarte by De Saulcy, Madden, and others, but this identification is by no means certain. The type occurs at cities where Astarte is impossible, and the figure is apparently the local Tyche, or city-goddess, holding in her hand the head or bust of the reigning Emperor,<sup>2</sup> and resting on a sceptre.

It may be inferred from the expressions "a gloomy shrine of lifeless idols" and "profane and accursed altars," used by Eusebius,<sup>3</sup> that the temple of Aphrodite at Jerusalem contained several statues, and it has been suggested<sup>4</sup> that one of them may have been a representation of Jupiter.<sup>5</sup> Is it possible that we have here the Capitolium of Ælia Capitolina containing, like the Capitolia of other large towns of the Empire, *e.g.*, Carthage, a temple of Jupiter and Venus; and, if so, could the legend of the skull of Adam, and even the name Golgotha, have had their origin in the Jerusalem Capitol?

part in the rites connected with the worship of the goddess who was called *ῥολυῶν ἀνασσα*. The ruins of the large temple of Aphrodite, or Astarte, in Cyprus, were excavated in 1871.

<sup>1</sup> On the coins of Antoninus Pius and his successors. The goddess is represented standing, sometimes alone, sometimes in a temple, with a sceptre or spear in her left hand, a human head in her outstretched right hand, and with her right foot on a human figure. The head is supposed by some writers to be that of Adonis, and the human figure to be a river-god or a vanquished Jew.

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted for this suggestion to Dr. Barclay V. Head, Keeper of Coins, &c., at the British Museum, who has referred me to "a coin of Cremna in Pisidia (*B.M. Cat.*, p. 218 and cii): reverse, FORTUN. COL. CREMN., with this type of Fortuna crowned, with sceptre in left and human head in outstretched right hand, and with right foot on upper part of human figure. Also a coin of Adraa (Edrei), in (the Province) Arabia (De Saulcy, *Num. de la Terre Sainte*, p. 374), where a coin of the same type bears the inscription, **ΑΔΡΑΗΝΩΝ ΤΥΧΗ**.

<sup>3</sup> *V.C.*, iii, 26; see *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, p. 64 (App. 4).

<sup>4</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, p. 55.

<sup>5</sup> Sepp suggests (*H.L.*, i, 421) that the statue of Jupiter mentioned by Jerome and Paulinus of Nola was really one of the Egyptian Serapis, whose head appears on coins of Antoninus and his successors. It would appear from a dedicatory inscription at the Sion Gate that Serapis was worshipped at Jerusalem in the reign of Trajan, whilst the city was still only a Roman camp. The temple of Serapis was probably in the southern quarter of the camp, not far from the Sion Gate. (*Q.S.* 1895, pp. 25, 130; 1896, pp. 133-152).

The manner in which Jerome connects Jupiter and Venus with the Tomb and Golgotha<sup>1</sup> suggests the idea that the Capitolium of Ælia was at Golgotha. But the statement of Dion Cassius<sup>2</sup> that Hadrian built a temple of Jupiter Capitolinus on the site of the Temple of God, supported as it is by the reference of Jerome<sup>3</sup> to a statue of Jupiter in the Temple precincts, is strong, but not conclusive evidence that the Capitolium was on Mount Moriah. The view that the Capitolium gave rise to the name Golgotha and to the Adam legend involves the theory that the spot where Christ suffered was situated in the Capitolium of Ælia; that the place was first called Golgotha in the second century; and, as a consequence, that the references in the Gospels to the "place of a skull," and "the skull," were inserted in the text at a later date than the reign of Hadrian. But the general tendency of recent criticism has been to strengthen the opinion that the Gospels assumed their present form long before Hadrian came to the throne, and, apart from this, it is not easy to believe that the place of the Crucifixion only received its distinctive Aramaic name a century after the death of Christ, and that Golgotha was then, for the first time, mentioned in the Gospels.<sup>4</sup> The Adam legend is, in all probability, of much earlier date than the second century.<sup>5</sup> There would thus appear to be no direct etymological relation between Golgotha and the Capitolium of Ælia, and no reason to believe that the name, Golgotha, was derived from, or caused by, the Capitolium.

The view that Golgotha was well known in the time of Hadrian, and that, apart from any hostile feeling towards the Christians, the name itself would have led to the selection of the spot for the erection of a temple of Venus, has been advanced by Sepp.<sup>6</sup> But the evidence of a continuous tradition is so uncertain<sup>7</sup> that the alternative theory, that the presence of the temple influenced, to a certain degree, the identification of Golgotha with the present site, seems preferable.

The Church historians, later than Eusebius, evidently believed that some inquiry preceded the identification.<sup>8</sup> There may, perhaps,

<sup>1</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1903, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1903, p. 52, and note 2.

<sup>4</sup> The slight variations of wording in Matt. xxvii, 33; Mark xv, 22; and John xix, 17, and the omission of the word Golgotha in Luke xxiii, 33, seem opposed to the theory of an authorised interpolation at such a late period.

<sup>5</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1902, p. 70.

<sup>6</sup> *H.L.*, i, 420.

<sup>7</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, p. 63.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1903, p. 147.

have been some vague idea amongst the Jews of Palestine<sup>1</sup> that Golgotha lay to the north of the citadel, and, the castle of Antonia, which protected the Temple, having been destroyed, Macarius may have taken it for granted that the citadel referred to was on the western hill. On this hill the three towers left standing by Titus marked the position of Herod's fortified palace; and to the north of the towers lay an ancient Jewish cemetery, which possibly included amongst its rock-hewn tombs the sepulchre of John the High Priest. In the midst of the cemetery, and partly covering it, stood a temple of Venus. May not Macarius, in his selection of the present site, have been influenced, in the absence of any definite tradition, partly by an uncertain legend of Jewish origin,<sup>2</sup> partly by the existence of an ancient cemetery north of the three towers, and partly by a fancied connection between Golgotha and Golgi suggested by the temple? The solution proposed above is put forward with some hesitation as an alternative to the improbable view that the Bishop simply made a guess at the site, and that his identification was accepted at once, and without question, by Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Syrian Christians.

The history of the official identification of Golgotha and the Tomb is not fully known, and an attempt to reconstruct it is perhaps hazardous. But the importance attached by the Church historians of the latter part of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century to the action of the Empress Helena, and to the discovery of the Cross, seems to need some explanation. The statements in the early ecclesiastical histories must have had some foundation in fact, and the theory which seems best to meet the difficulties of the case may be stated as follows:—

1. After the Council of Nicæa Constantine, for motives to which allusion has already been made,<sup>3</sup> commanded Macarius, who was then returning to Jerusalem, to search for the Cross of Christ.

2. The first step was to find the place of the Crucifixion, near which, under ordinary circumstances, the Cross would have been buried or cast aside. Macarius, after consultation with his suffragans, and after making inquiry amongst the native Christians

<sup>1</sup> See the statements by Sozomen, and Gregory of Tours (*Quarterly Statement*, 1903, pp. 147, 148), and the quaint Syrian legend given by Abu el-Faraj in his ecclesiastical history.

<sup>2</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1903, p. 145.

and Jews, came to the conclusion that Golgotha lay beneath the temple of Aphrodite.

3. Constantine, having been informed by Macarius of the result of this investigation, sent his mother, the Empress Helena, to Jerusalem with full power to demolish buildings and make the necessary search.

4. The Empress, on her arrival at Jerusalem, employed labourers and soldiers to clear away the temple of Aphrodite and its sub-structures. By this means a portion of the ancient Jewish cemetery, hitherto concealed from view, was uncovered, and a rock-hewn tomb,<sup>1</sup> prepared for the reception of a single body, was identified as that in which the body of Christ had rested. A spot on the terrace above<sup>2</sup> was at the same time assumed to be Golgotha.

5. Constantine, on being informed of the discovery, ordered the erection of a church which should enclose the Tomb. Meantime the excavations were continued with unabated vigour, and at last the three crosses, the nails, and the title, which had become separated from Christ's Cross, were found. The true Cross was then identified by its "life-giving" properties.

6. The Emperor, on hearing of the recovery of the Cross, wrote the letter preserved by Eusebius,<sup>3</sup> in which Macarius was directed to build two churches with lavish magnificence.

7. The rock was cut away so as to isolate the Tomb and Golgotha, and the Anastasis, or Church of the Resurrection, and the Basilica, or Great Church,<sup>4</sup> were built.<sup>5</sup>

*The Second Wall.*—The question whether the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was inside or outside the second wall of Josephus is one which cannot, from want of space, be adequately discussed in the *Quarterly Statement*. It will be sufficient to state here that the course of the wall has not yet been certainly ascertained, and that, so far as the topographical features are concerned, the wall may have run so as to exclude or include the ground upon

<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested that the tomb was really a cave sacred to Adonis, but there seems no reason for the selection of an Adonisiac cave by Macarius when there were so many tombs close at hand. Nor is it likely that the builders of the temple of Aphrodite would have turned a Jewish tomb into a cave of Adonis.

<sup>2</sup> See below.

<sup>3</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, pp. 143, 144. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1903, p. 142, note 1.

<sup>5</sup> The theory stated above is that of Clos, *Kreuz und Grab Jesu*, p. 7, slightly modified.

which the church stands.<sup>1</sup> From an archæological point of view the question is equally uncertain, for there is no sufficient proof that the masses of masonry which are supposed to have formed part of the wall ever belonged to it. In some instances they almost certainly did not.

A strong argument in favour of the opinion that the site of the church was outside the wall is its selection by Macarius. The search for Golgotha and the Cross was ordered by the Emperor, and it may be regarded as a public work carried out by the State. Supposing that the remains of the wall were then visible,<sup>2</sup> is it at all likely that the Bishop and his advisers would have deliberately placed Golgotha inside the wall when every educated Christian knew that Christ had suffered "without the gate"? Would the higher clergy throughout the empire, who were at variance upon many points, have accepted without protest a site that was obviously impossible?<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, it may fairly be urged that Josephus, who, in his description of the *first* and *third* walls, refers to places which they passed, would almost certainly have mentioned Golgotha in connection with the *second* wall if it had been a well-known spot, and so near a marked change of direction in that wall as it is usually assumed to have been.

*Natural Features of the Ground covered by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.*—Is there anything in the nature of the ground upon which the church stands which renders it an impossible site for Golgotha and the Tomb? The rock was so cut away for the con-

<sup>1</sup> The view that a wall excluding the church would have a faulty trace is hardly to the point. There are several Greek towns in Asia Minor where the city walls or parts of them are quite as badly traced according to modern ideas. In ancient towns the Acropolis was the principal defence; the city wall was often weak.

<sup>2</sup> The curious and rather obscure reference of Cyril to the Tomb seems to place it between the "outer wall," apparently that of Hadrian, and the "ancient walls." "But where is the rock which has in it this cleft (or cave)? Lies it in the midst of the city, or near the walls and the outskirts; and is it in the ancient walls, or in the outer walls which were built afterwards? He says then in the Canticles (ii, 14), *In the cleft of the rock near the outer wall*" (*Cat.* xiv, 9; Migne, *Pat. Gr.* xxxiii, col. 833, translation in Pusey's *Liby. of the Fathers*).

<sup>3</sup> The argument that the existence of a Jewish cemetery shows that the site was outside the second wall is not sound. Intra-mural burial was not uncommon in the time of the Jewish monarchy, and there is no trace of any aversion to it in the historical books of the Bible.

struction of Constantine's churches, and is so covered with rubbish and buildings in the vicinity of the present church, that its original form cannot be accurately ascertained. Originally the hillside must have risen up in a series of terraces of greater or less height according to the thickness of the strata<sup>1</sup>; and there appear to be traces of two such terraces in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and its immediate vicinity. The level of the upper terrace is marked by the top of the rock of Golgotha, and its vertical face, now cut away, evidently contained the entrances to several tombs.<sup>2</sup> Amongst these tombs that known as the "Tomb of Nicodemus,"<sup>3</sup> and that in the Coptic Convent,<sup>4</sup> north of the "Prison of Christ," are genuine Jewish tombs of not later date than the time of Christ. The first was entered on the level of the lower terrace, and a few steps led down to the second. Other tombs of which the form can no longer be traced were the present Holy Sepulchre, and possibly the "Tomb of Adam" and the "Prison of Christ."<sup>5</sup> In the same terrace or in the one above it was probably the tomb of John the High Priest, which is mentioned by Josephus in connection with the siege by Titus. In front of these tombs was the level surface of the lower terrace, utilised as a garden,<sup>6</sup> and probably planted with shrubs or trees. The vertical face of this terrace can be seen in the houses built against it on the west side of the street Khân ez-Zeit. So far then as the nature of the ground is concerned, there is nothing impossible in the view that Christ may have been crucified on the surface of the upper terrace (Golgotha) and buried in a tomb in its vertical face. A tomb in this position would be in the "place" Golgotha, and its entrance in "the garden" of the lower terrace.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1902, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> Terraces with tombs in their vertical faces may be seen in the Valley of Hinnom, and elsewhere near Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> For a description of this tomb and its tomb chambers see *P.F. Mem.*, Jerusalem Vol., pp. 319-329, and *Quarterly Statement*, 1877, pp. 76-84. 128-132; Clermont-Ganneau, *L'Authenticité du St. Sépulcre*, 1877.

<sup>4</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1877, pp. 154, 155.

<sup>5</sup> These places and the two tombs mentioned are all on the same level.

<sup>6</sup> The existence of the garden is attested by Cyril. "For though it be now adorned, and that most excellently, with royal gifts, yet it was before a garden, and the tokens and traces thereof remain" (*Cat.*, xiv, 5; Migne, *Pat. Gr.*, xxxiii, col. 829, translation in Pusey's *Liby. of the Fathers*).

<sup>7</sup> The suggested relationship betw. en the place of crucifixion and the tomb is seen in the photograph of tombs with terrace-garden (*Quarterly Statement*, 1902, p. 292). A man crucified on the upper terrace could easily be buried in one of the tombs beneath.

The form of the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea is unknown, and various attempts have been made to reconstruct it. A discussion of the whole subject would occupy more space than is available. My own view has always been that Joseph's tomb was an ordinary rock-hewn sepulchre in the vertical face of a rock terrace, with an entrance *θύρα* of the usual form and size. The sepulchre probably consisted of an ante-chamber,<sup>1</sup> round which ran a low bench of the usual type, and of a tomb-chamber in which there was at the time one grave.<sup>2</sup> The ante-chamber was entered on the level from the terrace or garden outside, and an opening in one of its sides led to the tomb-chamber. There is nothing in the Bible to show whether the entrance to the Tomb had a vestibule, or whether the grave was a "bench" grave, an "oven" grave (*kok*), or a "trough" grave. The present "Holy Sepulchre" may have been either.<sup>3</sup> The Body of Christ was probably laid on the bench of the ante-chamber until the Sabbath was over. There is no evidence that the entrance to the Tomb was closed by any mechanical contrivance such as a concealed rolling stone<sup>4</sup> like that at the "Tombs of the Kings" near Jerusalem. It was probably closed, like most of the rock-hewn tombs, by a large stone, either carefully dressed and fitting into a reveal, or roughly hewn and rolled or pushed against the aperture.

(N.B.—*These papers will end next number with a short summary of the views of those who do not accept the traditional sites of Golgotha and the Tomb as genuine.*)

<sup>1</sup> It is not quite clear whether Cyril refers (*Cat.* xiv, 9) to an ante-chamber or to a vestibule when he writes that "the outer cave" had been cut away to allow of the decoration of the Holy Sepulchre.

<sup>2</sup> It may perhaps be inferred from the description of the Holy Sepulchre by Eusebius in the Theophania (see *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, p. 152) that there was only one grave in the traditional tomb.

<sup>3</sup> See note on the Tomb of Nicodemus (*Quarterly Statement*, 1877, pp. 128-132).

<sup>4</sup> According to Keim, the great stone of the Gospels was simply the Jewish Gola, which is often mentioned by the Talmudists, *antiquam claudatur gola super eo* (Buxt., p. 437). The words *προσ-κυλίω*, *ἀπο-κυλίω*, *ἀνα-κυλίω*, used by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, do not necessarily imply that the stone was shaped like a large cheese, and was rolled backwards and forwards in a groove. Cyril's reference (*Cat.* xiii, 39) to the "stone which was laid on the door" (*ὁ ἐπιτεθείς τῇ θύρᾳ λίθος*) would hardly apply to a circular stone, and St. John's expression, "and seeth the stone taken away from the tomb" (xx, 1), is quite applicable to a roughly hewn stone.