

Where/what is Golgotha/Calvary?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Golgotha-Calvary.html>

Golgotha is the Aramaic name of the location where Jesus was crucified outside of Old Jerusalem. In John 19:16-18 we read, “So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.” Golgotha is also mentioned in Matthew 27:32-34 and Mark 15:21-22.

In Luke 23:33 of the King James Version, the word Calvary is used in reference to the same location. In modern translations, the more literal term “the place that is called The Skull” (ESV) is generally used. The word Calvary is derived from the Latin phrase for this location, Calvariae Locus. Counting this reference, all four Gospels make specific reference to this particular hill as the place of Jesus’ death.

According to early church fathers, the location was called “The Place of the Skull” due to the shape of the hill that apparently reminded people of a human skull.

There has been some dispute regarding the precise location of this hill, but the traditional place is underneath the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the northwest (Christian) quadrant of the Old City. The church is built over a point called the Rock of Golgotha, the supposed site of the crucifixion. As the name of the church suggests, the building also includes a cave-like tomb where Jesus’ body was supposedly laid. The church’s construction was overseen by Helena, the mother of Constantine, in A.D. 325 and has long held prominence as the traditional location of the crucifixion of Jesus.

The location of Golgotha is of interest to Christians due to the events that have taken

place there. One fateful day, Jesus carried a cross, helped by a man named Simon, toward a hill where He was hung by nails through His wrists and feet. He hung between two thieves as one of three sentenced to death that day. One of these two men understood who Jesus was and asked the Lord to remember him in the kingdom. Jesus responded with a promise of glory soon to be revealed: "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). It's why Jesus was shedding His blood—to forgive and redeem sinners who placed their faith in Him.

Still today, this hill we call Golgotha or Calvary stands as a reminder of Jesus' great sacrifice—the only sacrifice capable of forgiving sin and reconciling man with God (Hebrews 10:12; Acts 4:12).