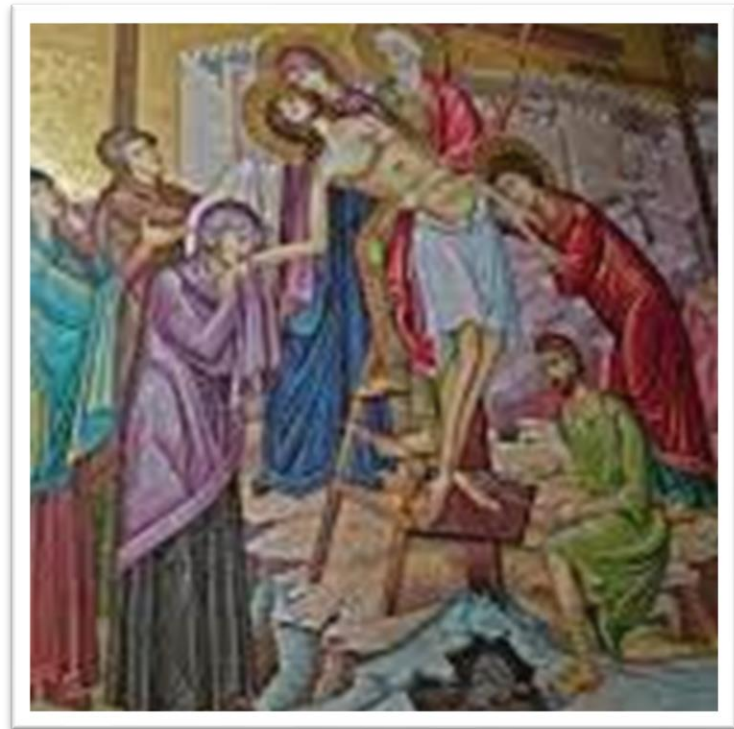


# Jesus on Mount

**Golgotha** Sixth and Seventh Falls of Jesus. The procession again moved on; the road was very steep and rough between the walls of the town and Calvary, and Jesus had the greatest difficulty in walking with his heavy burden on his shoulders; but his cruel enemies, far from feeling the slightest compassion, or giving the least assistance, continued to urge him on by the infliction of hard blows, and the utterance of dreadful curses. At last they reached a spot where the pathway turned suddenly to the south; here he stumbled and fell for the sixth time. The fall was a dreadful one, but



the guards only struck him the harder to force him to get up, and no sooner did he reach Calvary that he sank down again for the seventh time. Simon of Cyrene was filled with indignation and pity; notwithstanding his fatigue, he wished to remain that he might assist Jesus, but the archers first reviled, and then drove him away, and he soon after joined the body of disciples. The executioners then ordered the workmen and the boys who had carried the instruments of the execution to depart, and the Pharisees soon arrived, for they were on horseback, and had taken the smooth and easy road which ran to the east of Calvary. There was a fine view of the whole town of Jerusalem from the top of Calvary. This top was circular, and about the size of an ordinary ridingschool, surrounded by a low wall, and with five separate entrances. This appeared to be the usual number in those parts, for there were five roads at the baths, at the place where they baptised, at the pool of Bethsaida, and there were likewise many towns with five gates. In this, as in many other peculiarities of the Holy Land, there was a deep prophetic signification; that number five, which so often occurred, was a type of those five sacred wound of our Blessed Saviour, which were to open to us the gates of Heaven.

The horsemen stopped on the west side of the mount, where the declivity was not so steep; for the side up which the criminals were brought was both rough and steep. About a hundred soldiers were stationed on different parts of the mountain, and as space was required, the thieves were not brought to the top, but ordered to halt before they reached it, and to lie on the ground with their arms fastened to their crosses. Soldiers stood around and guarded them, while crowds of persons who did not fear defiling themselves, stood near the platform or on the neighbouring heights; these were mostly of the lower classes—strangers, slaves, and pagans, and a number of them were women.

It wanted about a quarter to twelve when Jesus, loaded with his cross, sank down at the precise spot where he was to be crucified. The barbarous executioners dragged him up by the cords which they had fastened round his waist, and then untied the arms of the cross, and threw them on the ground. The sight of our Blessed Lord at this moment was, indeed, calculated to move the hardest heart to compassion; he stood or rather bent over the cross, being scarcely able to support himself; his heavenly countenance was pale and was as that of a person on the verge of death, although wounds and blood disfigured it to a frightful degree; but the hearts of these cruel men were, alas! harder than iron itself, and far from showing the slightest commiseration, they threw him brutally down, exclaiming in a jeering tone, 'Most powerful king, we are about to prepare thy throne.' Jesus immediately placed himself upon the cross, and they measured him and marked the places for his feet and hands; whilst the Pharisees continued to insult their unresisting Victim. When the measurement was finished, they led him to a cave cut in the rock, which had been used formerly as a cellar, opened the door, and pushed him in so roughly that had it not been for the support of angels, his legs must have been broken by so hard a fall on the rough stone floor. I most distinctly heard his groans of pain, but they closed the door quickly, and placed guards before it, and the archers continued their preparations for the crucifixion. The centre of the platform mentioned above was the most elevated part of Calvary,—it was a round eminence, about two feet high, and persons were obliged to ascend two or three steps to reach its top. The executioners dug the holes for the three crosses at the top of this eminence, and placed those intended for the thieves one on the right and the other on the left of our Lord's; both were lower and more roughly made than his.

**They then carried the cross of our Saviour to the spot where they intended to crucify him, and placed it in such a position that it would easily fall into the hole prepared for it. They fastened the two arms strongly on to the body of the cross, nailed the board at the bottom which was to support the feet, bored the holes for the nails, and cut different hollows in the wood in the parts which would receive the head and back of our Lord, in order that his body might rest against the cross, instead of being suspended from it. Their aim in this was the prolongation of his tortures, for if the whole weight of this body was allowed to fall upon the hands the holes might be quite torn open, and death ensue more speedily than they desired. The executioners then drove into the ground the pieces of wood which were intended to keep the cross upright, and made a few other similar preparations.**