

John 19:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

He bearing his cross (βαστάζων ἑαυτῷ τὸν σταυρόν/bastazōn heautō ton stauron)—the participle bastazōn means carrying, bearing as a burden. What He told disciples to do (Luke 9:23), He does literally. The cross He bears is simultaneously wooden timber and cosmic weight—the sin of the world (1 John 2:2).

Went forth (ἐξῆλθεν/exēlthen) echoes His going forth from the Father (16:28) and going out to the garden (18:1). Each 'going forth' moves Him toward the appointed hour. The destination: **place of a skull** (Κρανίου Τόπον/Kraniou Topon), in Hebrew **Golgotha** (Γολγοθᾶ/Golgotha), from Aramaic gulgaltā (skull). Why 'skull'? Perhaps the hill's shape, or tradition that Adam's skull was buried there—fitting symbolism, as the second Adam dies where the first Adam's race was buried.

Historical Context

Golgotha was outside Jerusalem's walls (Hebrews 13:12), as required by Jewish law—executions occurred outside the city to prevent defilement. The site was probably along a major road for maximum public visibility. Church tradition identifies it with the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre, though Gordon's Calvary is an alternative site. Wherever its precise location, Golgotha became history's hinge-point.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus literally bearing the cross reveal about His willing acceptance of suffering for us?
2. How does the location 'outside the camp' connect to Levitical sacrifice and our call to bear His reproach (Hebrews 13:13)?
3. What significance do you see in the 'place of a skull' becoming the site of resurrection victory?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	βαστάζων	τὸν	σταυρὸν	αὐτοῦ	ἐξῆλθεν	εἰς	τὸν
And	he bearing	G3588	cross	G846	went forth	into	G3588
G2532	G941		G4716		G1831	G1519	

λέγεται	Κρανίου	Τόπον	ὃς	λέγεται	Ἑβραϊστὶ
called	the place of a skull	a place	which	called	in the Hebrew
G3004	G2898	G5117	G3739	G3004	G1447

Γολγοθᾶ,
Golgotha
G1115

Additional Cross-References

Luke 23:33 (Cross): And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Luke 14:27 (Cross): And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Luke 23:26 (Cross): And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

Acts 7:58 (Parallel theme): And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

Mark 15:32 (Cross): Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

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