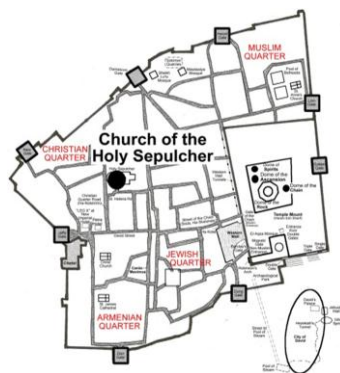
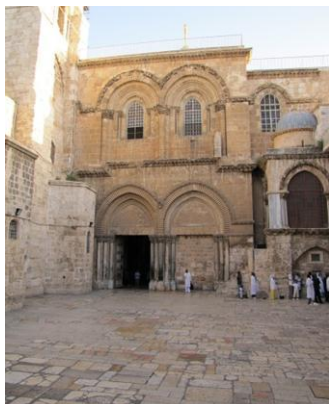


Holy Sepulcher

The Church of the Holy Sepulcher has been destroyed and rebuilt several times through. The area where the Church sits today was a limestone quarry in 600-700 BC. The city of Jerusalem was to the SE and expanded first to the west before it came north toward this quarry. In 30 AD, this was the perfect place to cut new graves because of the bedrock left exposed around the quarry, because it had only



recently become available so still had lots of available space, and because it was close to the city yet still outside the walls. Jerusalem was, and still is, surrounded by graves that had used for a thousand years leading up to 30 AD. This new garden was indeed a great opportunity for Joseph to be able to cut a grave so close to the city. Four tombs from this period have been excavated. One of the tombs was a kokh, a long, narrow recess carved for the placement of a body. In 135 AD Hadrian built a huge raised platform (a rectangular retaining wall filled it with dirt) on the location of this ancient quarry covered with gardens and tombs in an effort to bury Calvary and the tomb of Jesus, an honored site of the Christians. The platform was needed to level the stone surface that was cut up by the quarry and the tombs. Hadrian built the retaining wall of this platform with Herodian ashlar (most likely from the Jewish Temple Mount). These stones are identical in size and facing to the Herodian ashlar in the retaining wall of the Temple Mount, which made Hadrian's wall look like Herod's Western Wall. Hadrian then built a temple to Venus on top of this platform. In 325 at the Council of Nicea, Macarius, the bishop of Jerusalem from 314 to 333, petitioned Constantine to demolish Hadrian's temple and uncover the tomb of Christ. In 326 AD Helena, Constantine's mother, visited Jerusalem and was told the site of Hadrian's temple was the site of Jesus burial and resurrection. Constantine ordered a rotunda built around Jesus' tomb, and on the side of Calvary. Constantine built a long basilica church.



The church we see today was constructed by the Crusaders. The small grey dome covers the rock of Calvary, and the large dome covers the site of Jesus' burial/ resurrection.

Holy Sepulcher Floor Plans

