

According to Eusebius, the Roman Emperor Constantine's mother Helena founded churches at the spot of three "mystic caves" associated with the life of the Savior.¹³⁴² One was located in Bethlehem at the supposed site of Jesus' birth, one in Jerusalem where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands,¹³⁴³ and a third on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.¹³⁴⁴

Englebert argues that the site on the Mount of Olives is "the most easily shown to be authentic."¹³⁴⁵ He depicts the spot as a safe resort for the Savior during times of persecution,¹³⁴⁶ there being "no other place in Jerusalem where He could 'lay his head.'¹³⁴⁷ After telling of a stormy scene that took place in the Temple, St. John writes: 'And they went each to his home, and Jesus to the Mount of Olives.'¹³⁴⁸ It would appear that, for Jesus, 'going home,' meant returning to this grotto, and that it was here that the Pharisee Nicodemus came for the nocturnal meeting he had requested."¹³⁴⁹ At this location, "a stone's throw from the place of His Ascension,¹³⁵⁰ and from where, in the sight of the Temple, He foretold the ruin of Jerusalem and the end of the world,"¹³⁵¹ early traditions record that Jesus found a place "where He could teach His disciples those things that were beyond the understanding of His usual hearers."¹³⁵² More specifically, Eusebius passed on "a true report... that in that cave the Savior of the Universe initiated the members of his guild in the ineffable mysteries."¹³⁵³ An instance of such an initiation may have occurred on the night Jesus was arrested,¹³⁵⁴ He having perhaps repaired to the grotto to give His final instructions to His apostles¹³⁵⁵ before going down to Gethsemane.¹³⁵⁶ According to the *Acts of John*, these instructions were concluded with a choral prayer in which "he told us to form a circle, holding one another's hands, and himself stood in the middle."¹³⁵⁷ Initiation into the "ineffable mysteries" was also a prominent theme in accounts of the teachings of Jesus Christ to his apostles during the forty days following his resurrection.¹³⁵⁸

The Eleusinian Mysteries

The original cult at Eleusis probably began in some form during the Mycenaean period (ca. 1500 BCE)¹³⁵⁹ The environs of the original altar, gradually developing into the famous site of the Eleusinian Mysteries, became a center of worship that endured over a period of nearly two thousand years and, in later times, included pilgrims from throughout the ancient world.¹³⁶⁰

1342 Eusebius, *Constantine*, 3:43:3, p. 138.

1343 See *Figure 36-1*, p. 616.

1344 See *Endnote E-257*, p. 769.

1345 O. Englebert, *Grotto*, p. 1.

1346 Cf. 1 Kings 19:9.

1347 See Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58; cf. D&C 109:5; S. Rigdon, *Kirtland Temple*; J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 6 April 1841, 4:329; B. Young, *et al.*, in J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 12 October 1841, 4:436; B. Young, 6 April 1853 - B, pp. 29-31, 33.

1348 John 7:53-8:1. See also Luke 21:37, 22:39.

1349 O. Englebert, *Grotto*, p. 1. See John 3:1-5.

1350 Acts 1:12.

1351 O. Englebert, *Grotto*, p. 1. See Matthew 24:1-26:2; cf. Egeria, *Travels*, 33:2, p. 152; Eusebius, *Constantine*, p. 294 n. 43-3; E. Hennecke, *et al.*, *Apocalypse of Peter*.

1352 O. Englebert, *Grotto*, p. 1; cf. A. Storme, *Mont des Oliviers*, pp. 24-27.

1353 Eusebius, *Constantine*, 3:43:3, p. 138.

1354 J. Dart, *Decoding*, pp. 102-116; W. J. Hamblin, *Initiation*, p. 207; M. Smith, *Secret Gospel*, pp. 15-16.

1355 John 15-17.

1356 O. Englebert, *Grotto*, p. 1.

1357 E. Hennecke, *et al.*, *Acts of John*, 94, p. 227. Consistent with such symbolism, in *ibid.*, 97, p. 232, John, during Jesus' sufferings on the cross, is said to have "fled to the Mount of Olives" where he was visited by the Lord, "who stood in the middle of the cave and gave light to it"

1358 See Acts 1:1-3, H. W. Nibley, *Evangelium*; H. W. Nibley, *Return*, p. 66; cf. 1 John 2:27; Basil, *Spirit* 66, p. 41.

1359 M. B. Cosmopoulos, *Megaron B*, pp. 18-20.

1360 See *Endnote E-259*, p. 770.