



# SYMBOLS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

IN ADDITION TO THE TEACHINGS, WE CAN FIND MEANING IN THE OBJECTS, CULTURE, HISTORY, AND PLACES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

**Mountains:** "Mountains are not easy to climb. Then, as now, the Lord called His disciples to climb mountains to emphasize the efficacy of effort and obedience. He will ask the same of you, figuratively and possibly literally, also."

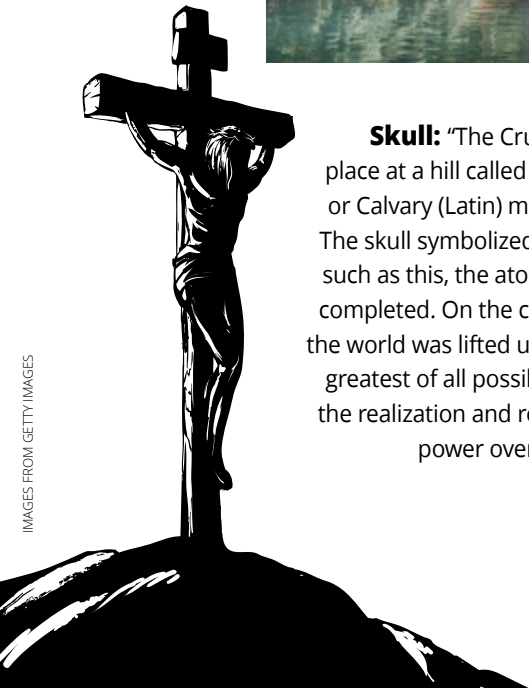
**Olives:** "Jesus came to the base of the Mount of Olives to effect the first component of the Atonement. This He did at the Garden of Gethsemane. The word *Gethsemane* comes from two Hebrew roots: *gath*, meaning 'press,' and *shemen*, meaning 'oil,' especially that of the olive.

"There olives had been pressed under the weight of great stone wheels to squeeze precious oil from the olives. So the Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane was literally pressed under the weight of the sins of the world. He sweated great drops of blood—his life's 'oil'—which issued from every pore. (See Luke 22:44; D&C 19:18.)"



**Water:** "The River Jordan was the site Jesus chose for His baptism by John to 'fulfill all righteousness' [Matthew 3:15]. Is it significant that this sacred ordinance was performed in virtually the lowest body of fresh water on the planet? Could He have selected a better place to symbolize the humble depths to which He went and from which He rose?"

**Skull:** "The Crucifixion took place at a hill called Golgotha (Greek) or Calvary (Latin) meaning 'the skull.' The skull symbolized death. At a place such as this, the atoning sacrifice was completed. On the cross, the Savior of the world was lifted up over death in the greatest of all possible significance—the realization and reality of the Lord's power over death."



*Excerpted from Russell M. Nelson, "Why This Holy Land?" Ensign, Dec. 1989, 15, 16, 17.*