



Map of the Holy City of Jerusalem

Generously donated to the Classical Iconography Institute from the private collection of Dr. Thomas and Darlene Dunham

This icon genre called “Proskynetaria” is a revered souvenir from the Holy Land produced in the early 18th century for pilgrims. It was painted with egg tempera and natural earth pigments on a wood panel specifically for the Russian faithful as it is inscribed in Church Slavonic. It is both hagiographic and geographic, meaning it tells the stories of saints and sacred events from both Old and New Testaments on the sites of their geographic location in and around Jerusalem. The meaning of some events are lost to antiquity; however, scholars in Jerusalem are analyzing scenes in this icon that are not in white boxes to try decode their meaning.

“Shine, shine Jerusalem, your light will come, and the day and night (they) are not closed.”

Isaiah, Chapter 60, verses 1, 11

This text is created from fragments of verses in Isaiah, beautifully written in Slavonic Calligraphy around the icon’s frame.

Overall Layout

- ✦ The City of Jerusalem is depicted inside the zig zag walls.
- ✦ A cross section of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is shown in the center.
- ✦ Major events in Jesus’ ministry are depicted from left to right at the top of the icon.
- ✦ Scenes dedicated to Jesus, Mary and Joseph are in the icon’s right vertical register.
- ✦ The left side of the icon depicts Old Testament landmarks through representative saints and events.
- ✦ Directly under the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the gold arches, are sacred Paschal events.

Top Left Corner to The Right Corner

Dormition of the Virgin - The swaddled infant Christ holds in His hands is the soul of Mary, signifying her ascent to Heaven.

Peter Severs Malchus’ Ear - at the time of Christ’s betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter’s impulse was to defend the Lord and he drew his sword. This tiny scene is distilled to the essence of Peter, the sword and Malchus.

The Betrayal of Christ - Shown are Christ, Judas and a soldier when Judas turns Christ over to the authorities.

Agony in the Garden - Christ is consoled by an angel as Peter, John and James are asleep instead of watching guard. Caves represent ignorance and sin in iconography, which tells us that the apostles were not doing what Christ asked.

The Resurrection of Christ - In the center of the icon is Christ ascended and resurrected above Holy Jerusalem.

Entry into Jerusalem - On Palm Sunday, the Lord rides a donkey (an animal representing peace) into Jerusalem as children lay down their cloaks before Him.

Baptism of Christ - John the Baptist baptizes Christ in the Jordan as an angel holds the Lord’s garment. Notice that the tree in the background bows to Christ.

Temptation of Christ - in the 40 days that Christ fasted in the desert, he was tempted by Satan on the Mount of Temptation.

The Annunciation - Archangel Gabriel announces to Mary that God has chosen her to be the Mother of Jesus. She is shown in a position of humility, crossing her arms over her chest.

The Transfiguration - Apostles James, John and Peter tumble down Mt. Tabor, blinded by the brilliant light of the transfigured Lord as He discusses His fate in the heavens with Elijah and Moses.

Church of the Holy Sepulcher - Center

Saints Constantine and Helena - Roman Emperor Constantine the Great was the first ruler to stop Christian persecutions with the Edict of Milan in 330, after his conversion to Christianity. His mother, Helena, was said to have found the True Cross and endowed building of churches on holy sites in Jerusalem, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. They are both honored with the chapel of Constantine and Helena above the Holy Sepulcher.

The Binding of Isaac - Reminds us of the story of Abraham and marks the location of the Chapel of Abraham the Patriarch.

Christ Carries the Cross - We know this is Christ because of the shape of the cross inside His halo, called a “cruciform halo.”

The Resurrection of Christ - shows Christ ascending from His sepulcher.

The Crucifixion - Mary and St. John the Beloved stand at the foot of the cross.

Finding the True Cross - This is the chapel of the True Cross, believed to have been found by St. Helena.

Jesus Ordains James - the First Bishop of Jerusalem. The Cathedral of St. James is right outside the Holy Sepulcher.

The Lamentation of Christ - this scene provided a clue to the authorship of this icon. Often, the individuals present at an important event, (here, the Lamentation of Christ) indicate for whom the art was created. In this case, the individuals venerating the body of Christ are Russian Orthodox priests. We know this from the color and style of their vestments. In many other Proskynetaria, the individuals in attendance are dressed in black, which would be Greek Orthodox vestments.

The Doors to the Crusaders’ Staircases - these are the steps that take pilgrims to the stone of unction.



Map of the Holy City of Jerusalem, cont.

Right Side Top to Bottom

Lot Filling a Jar From the Jordan to Water the Tree of Salvation - Lot was instructed to fill a jar of water from the Jordan to water a small tree growing at Adam's grave. The tree would become a grace for all mankind.

Raising Lazarus - This scene shows Christ with two apostles as witnesses, raising Lazarus who has been dead for four days. The position of this scene corresponds to the place where Lazarus lived.

Presentation of Mary to the Temple - Saints Joachim and Anna present Mary to the temple when she turned three, keeping their commitment to God in gratitude for bearing a child late in life.

The Multiplication of the Loaves - this event documents another time Christ raises His eyes to Heaven to bless the bread and multiply the five loaves to feed thousands.

The Tiberian Sea - Christ reveals Himself to Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, James and John who are fishing on the Sea of Tiberius after His Resurrection. Only Christ and the sea are shown.

Hospitality of Abraham - an early representation of the Holy Trinity, this scene tells the story of Abraham and Sarah who were visited by three strangers (angels), to whom they offered hospitality. The strangers turned out to be the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It reminds us to be hospitable to strangers because you never know when God may be at your door.

The Samaritan Woman at the Well - this scene shows us Christ's ministry to gentiles.

Presentation of Jesus to the Temple - Joseph and Mary presented Christ to the Temple as part of Judaic tradition. Simeon's prophesy revealing that he had seen the Lord and could now die, marks the site of the St. Simeon Monastery.

St. Demetrios Monastery - St. Demetrios is always depicted on horseback; the difference between him and St. George is that St. Demetrios lances the devil, while St. George lances the dragon. This marks the site of the St. Demetrios Monastery.

St. Sabbas, Mar Sabba Monastery - a Cappadocian hermit and leading figure in early monasticism, St. Sabbas established the order of the Byzantine rite. The Lavra of Mar Sabba is one of the oldest continuously operating monasteries in the world.

St. Nicholas - St. Nicholas is identified by his bishop's robes, white curly beard, high forehead and bald head ringed with white curls. His icon marks the location of his namesake monastery.

Joseph is Warned by the Angel - the sleeping St. Joseph is forewarned in a dream to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt for safety.

Flight into Egypt - next to the warning by the angel is the scene where Joseph leads Mary and Jesus to Egypt, escaping Herod's killing of the innocents.

Nativity of Christ - the three kings adore Our Savior, with Mary and Joseph present, marking the location of the Church of the Nativity of Christ. In icons, the infant Christ is shown swaddled in linen and lying in a stone manger to foreshadow the burial shroud in the stone tomb.

Flight of Elizabeth & The Massacre of the Innocents - two scenes are shown in this box. On the left is St. Elizabeth in a cave holding John the Baptist, saved from Herod's soldiers by the spider web covering the cave's entrance, reminiscent of David hiding in a cave from Saul, also saved by an undisturbed spider web covering the cave's entrance. The scene to the right represents the Massacre of the Innocents and marks the sites of both Rachael's tomb and St. John the Baptist's home.

Left Side Top to Bottom

Martyrdom of St. Stephen - first deacon of the church, St. Stephen was also her first martyr who died by stoning. This scene marks the site of the St. Stephen's Gate into Jerusalem.

Monastery of St. Basil - St. Basil was an early church father and influential theologian who supported the development of the Nicene Creed and opposed heresies of the early Christian church.

Martyrdom of Simon the Zealot - site of where Simon the Zealot, one of the apostles, was martyred by being sawn in half.

Monastery of the Theodoroi - plural for Theodore, this monastery is dedicated to Saints Theodore Tyro and Theodore Stratelates, warrior saints for their defense of the early church.

St. George's Monastery - St. George is depicted in art riding a white horse, often lancing a dragon. His namesake monastery began as a lavra with 6 monks in the 5th century on the road connecting Jerusalem to Jericho, the site of Christ's baptism.

St. Onouphrios Monastery - Onouphrios, a 3rd/4th century hermit monk, traveled from Egypt to live and pray in one of the caves near Jerusalem. He was famed for wearing only a loincloth of leaves, an extravagant beard that reached his feet and for being fed by birds and angels on Sundays. His namesake monastery is believed to be the site where Judas Iscariot hung himself.

Monastery of the Holy Archangels - St. Michael the Archangel is listed in the inscription and shown to represent the monastery of Holy Archangels, believed to be constructed on the site where God destroyed the Assyrian army.

Lot Watering the Tree of Salvation - Remember seeing Lot in the upper right corner filling a jar from the Jordan? Here he is watering the Tree of Salvation, which becomes the "True Cross". His presence in two places gives pilgrims directional advice.

Bottom Left Corner to the Right Corner

Jaffa - the port of Jaffa marks a pilgrim's entry into Jerusalem. This symbol appears in the lower left corner of every icon of this Pilgrim Map genre, to identify it as a map of the Holy City of Jerusalem.

Solomon Builds the Temple & Lot's Tree - Solomon is shown giving orders to build the temple, specifying the wood to be used. In the next scene, Lot's Tree has been harvested, but rather than be used to build the temple, it was said to have become the True Cross, hence "The Tree of Salvation." The image marks the Dome of the Rock, the site of Solomon's Temple.

Golden Inset - Events of Easter

The Last Supper - Christ is shown with four apostles establishing the foundation of Holy Eucharist at the last supper.

Christ Washes the Apostles' Feet - Christ is shown washing the apostles' feet as an act of sacrificial love.

Denial of Peter - In fulfillment of the scripture, Peter denies Christ as he warms himself by the fire.

Descent of the Holy Spirit - the fire of the Holy Spirit shown above comes down over Mary and the apostles at Pentecost.