

## FAMOUS APOSTOLIC CHURCHES OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE

### **1. Church of Jerusalem:**

It is the mother Church of all Christian churches during the Apostolic Age. Also, Jerusalem was the home of Judaism to which all Jews directed their visions and hopes. Jerusalem also was the first city sanctified by the Lord Jesus Christ in His flesh and His own precious blood.

In Jerusalem, the Christian church was born and from which the Gospel of Salvation spread outward, everywhere in the world and was further honored by the ministry of the Apostles and blessed by their miracles and the blood of the early martyrs, St. Stephen, St. James the son of Zebedee, St. James the Just and many martyrs whom we do not know their names.

In Jerusalem, the first Ecumenical Council was held and it is called the “Mother Church” in St. James’ Liturgy. When waves of persecution hit the church after the martyrdom of St. Stephen believers with the exception of the Apostles scattered in Judea, and Samaria (Acts 8:1). From Jerusalem, the Apostles oversaw the ministry throughout Samaria (Acts 8:14&15) and Antioch (Acts 11:22).

The believers in every Church would send gifts to the poor in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30). St. James the Just was the first bishop for this Church until his martyrdom in 62 AD, and was then succeeded by his brother St. Simon the son of Kolb who was martyred by crucifixion 106 AD. After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman commander Titus in 70 AD, this See lost its prestigious rank until the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century when Christianity became the official religion of the state.

### **2. Church of Antioch:**

Antioch was the 3<sup>rd</sup> famous city in the Roman Empire behind Rome and Alexandria and it was the political capital of Syria. Its population was a mixture of Greeks, Syrians and Jews. Antioch was the first Gentile Church and the first Church where the believers were called Christians. St. Paul and St. Barnabas ministered in Antioch first (Acts 11:22-26) and then St. Peter went to Antioch after Council of Jerusalem (Galatians 2:11). It was the base of St. Paul ministry’s trips.

### **3. Church of Alexandria:**

Alexandria was the 2<sup>nd</sup> city in the Roman Empire after Rome, and was the 1<sup>st</sup> city for education, philosophy and science. Its population was a mixture of Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews, Persian, and Syrians. Some Egyptians were in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10) and of course some of them believed and ministered in Egypt even before St. Mark came to Egypt. The Holy Book of Acts mentioned Apollos from Alexandria who was a Jew converted to Christianity and was full of Holy Spirit, wisdom and knowledge (Acts 18:24&25). St. Luke presented his Holy Gospel to Theophilus a rich man from Alexandria (Luke 1:3 &4). It was mentioned that St. Simon the Cannite ministered in Upper Egypt. However, the See of Alexandria belonged to its founder St. Mark. St. Mark was one of the seventy disciples and founded the Church around 57-59 AD. The Christian life in Alexandria was characterized by holiness, purity, and asceticism as Philo, the Jewish philosopher specifically referred to in his book “Life of Meditation”. St. Mark founded the Theological School of Alexandria to replace the pagan school.

### **4. Church of Rome:**

Rome was the 1<sup>st</sup> city in the world during the Apostolic Age and considered the political capital of the world. The first ministers to Rome were those who were in attendance the Day of Pentecost. However, Roman Church was founded by St. Paul (Romans 1:5, 13, Galatians 2:7-9, Acts 9:15, 22:18-21, 23:11, Galatians 2:7-9, Romans 15:20, Acts 28:30, 16:3-16, 1:7).