

Mary: The Bible & the Mother of God

Outline

I. Three principles for studying Mary in Scripture

A. Mariology rooted in Christology

- What the Catholic faith believes about Mary is based on what it believes about Christ, and what it teaches about Mary illumines in turn its faith in Christ. (CCC 487)

B. Typology

C. Teaching of the Church Fathers—Marian teachings are not new

II. Jesus as New Adam (Romans 5:19; 1 Corinthians 15:5)—Jesus comes into the world to undo effects of the Fall and inaugurate a new creation as a New Adam

III. First Eve (Genesis 1-3)

A. Eve called "woman" eleven times

B. Adam and Eve fall together/cooperate

C. Genesis 3:15 prophecy of the messiah—four characters: the serpent, the serpent's offspring, the woman, and the woman's offspring

IV. Mary as the New Eve (John 2:1-11)

A. Mary called "woman" two times

B. Mary invites Jesus to perform his first miracle; Mary with Jesus at the Crucifixion

- Jesus answered, *"Woman, what is that to me? My hour is not yet come."*
- Whenever Our Blessed Lord used that expression "hour", it was in relation to His Passion and His death.
- In other words, he was saying accord to Fulton Sheen, *"My dear Mother, do you realize that you are asking me to proclaim my Divinity—to appear before the world as the Son of God and to prove my Divinity by my works and my miracles? The moment that I do this, I begin the royal road to the Cross. When I am no longer known among men as the son of the carpenter, but as the Son of God, that will be my first step toward Calvary. My hour is not yet come; but would you have me anticipate it? Is it your will that I go to the Cross? If I do this, your relationship to me changes. You are now my mother. You are known everywhere in our little village as the 'Mother of Jesus'. But if I appear now as the Savior of men and begin the work of redemption, your role will change, too. Once I undertake the salvation of mankind, you will not only be my mother, but you will also be the mother of everyone whom I redeem. I am the Head of humanity; as soon as I save the body of humanity, you, who are the Mother of the Head, become also the Mother of the body. You will then be the universal Mother, the new Eve, as I am the new Adam."*
- Further, *"To indicate the role that you will play in Redemption, I now bestow upon you that title of universal motherhood; I call you— Woman. We are in this work of redemption together. What is yours is mine. From this hour on, we are not just Mary and Jesus, we are the new Adam and the new Eve, beginning a new humanity, changing the water of sin into the wine of life. Knowing all this, my dear Mother, is it your will that I anticipate the Cross and that I go to Calvary?"*

C. Mary is the mother of the offspring (Jesus) who conquers the devil

V. Mary as the New Eve (Revelation 12)—just as the serpent (devil) and the child (Jesus) represent individuals, so too the woman must represent an individual (Mary)

12:1-6 The woman of Revelation 12 is both an individual person and a collective symbol. She is Mary, the Mother of the Messiah and the spiritual mother of his disciples (Jn 19:26-27). But she also represents the faithful of Israel, crying out for the Messiah (Rev 12:2), as well as the Church, attacked by the devil for witnessing to Jesus (12:17) (CCC 501, 507, 1138). • The depiction of the woman is rich in biblical symbolism. (1) Antagonism between the woman and the **dragon**, the "ancient serpent" (12:9), recalls Gen 3:15, the first prophecy in Scripture to foretell the demise of the devil through the offspring (Messiah) of a woman (a new Eve). (2) Images of the **sun, moon, and stars** call to mind Gen 37:9-10, where they symbolize the family of Israel, namely, Jacob, his wife, and his twelve sons. (3) The **pangs and anguish** of child birth recall Isaiah's description of Daughter Zion, a maternal figure that represents the holy remnant of Israel groaning for redemption (Is 26:17; Mic 4:9-10). (4) Because the woman is a queen who wears a **crown** and a mother who bears a royal **male child**, she is also the Queen Mother of the Davidic kingdom reestablished by Jesus, the Davidic male child (1 Kings 2:19-20; Jer 13:18) (CCC 489). The woman is clearly the Church, endowed with the Word of the Father, whose brightness outshines the sun. Like the moon she is adorned with heavenly glory, and her crown of twelve stars points to the twelve apostles who founded the Church (St. Hippolytus, On the Antichrist 61). The vision speaks of the Mother of our Savior, depicting her in heaven, not on earth, as pure in body and soul, as equal to an angel, as one of heaven's citizens, as one who brought about the Incarnation of God. She has nothing in common with this world and its evils but is exalted and worthy of heaven, despite her descent from our mortal nature (Oecumenius, Commentary on the Apocalypse 6, 19).

12:1 the moon: Can symbolize both maternal dignity (Gen 37:9-10) and feminine beauty (Song 6:10). twelve stars: Represent both the twelve tribes of Israel (21:12) and the twelve apostles of Jesus (21:14).

12:2 pangs of birth: This is probably related to the Passion Of Jesus, which pierced the heart of his Mother (Lk 2:35) and seized his disciples with the distress of a woman in labor (Jn 16:20-22).

12:3 red dragon: Represents Satan, the murderous arch enemy of God (Jn 8:44). His horns are symbols of his strength (Dan 7:7), and his diadems (crowns) are symbols of his ruling power over the fallen world (Jn 12:31). He is doomed to burn forever in the lake of fire (Rev 20:10). • The draconic serpent was a mythological symbol of evil in the ancient Near East. Called Leviathan (Is 27:1) or Rahab (Job 26:12-13), he was pictured as a sea monster with multiple heads (Ps 74:14).

12:4 a third of the stars: A flashback to the fall of the angels at the dawn of creation (2 Pet 2:4). The imagery hints at how Satan led the rebellion, dragging a host of demons down with him (CCC 391-92). In the Bible, stars often represent angels (Rev 1:20; 9:1; Judg 5:20; Job 38:7).

VI. Early Church Fathers recognized Mary's unique role; because of this unique role it is fitting that Mary be created without sin (CCC, 411)