

# Our Lady in Scripture

## Introduction

When trying to explain important concepts about the life and the role of Our Blessed Mother in God's plan for salvation, we often meet resistance. The most fundamental argument against the truths about Mary stem from the belief in *sola scriptura* – that the ONLY truths of Christianity are stated explicitly in the Bible. From this error, protestants often ask: “Where in the Bible do we find your beliefs about Mary?”

The question might seem reasonable if *sola scriptura* were correct, but the Bible is NOT a complete “manual” for or description of God or of any human to which the Bible also refers. Although much could be written to refute *sola scriptura*, space permits only a few basic concepts relevant to this issue:

1. *The Catholic Church compiled the Bible.* Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church Fathers and several successive popes (because of the time span involved) decided which books contained the full Word of God and which did not.

2. The Catholic Church never “added” any books to the Bible after it was originally compiled in the 300s AD. It can also be fully documented that Martin Luther *removed* some books of the Bible and altered a few others if they contained defenses for sacraments and teachings that he didn't like.

3. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that the *Bible alone* is either the sole means of salvation or that it contains the *only* truths/facts needed as we try to learn about either the Holy Trinity (which isn't even mentioned by name in the Bible) or Mary, the Mother of Jesus (and thus the Mother of God). In fact, the Bible directly opposes *sola scriptura* when it says in:

- Jn 16:12-14<sup>1</sup> that even the Apostles weren't ready for all that they needed to learn when Jesus was ready to ascend to heaven.
- Jn 21:25 that “...there are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written.”

4. With all of this considered, it is definitely appropriate to study, correlate, and apply Biblical concepts to better understand the Holy Trinity (Whom we *worship*) and Mary, whom we *honor* as the God-bearer. God expects us to use our minds in conjunction w/prayer so that we can respond to the Holy Spirit's inspiration as we decide and correlate concepts w/Scripture,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.usccb.org/bible/john/16>

12 I have many more things to tell you, but you aren't ready – the holy spirit will come and help you to learn and pass on what the Spirit tells you

“I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now.

13 But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears, and will declare to you the things that are coming.

14 He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.

historical facts, and other related concepts passed to us from the Church Fathers. This is the only way that Christ's Church could grow and flourish, and in fact, the Truths of the Church are like that mustard seed of Faith spoken of in Mt 17-20 (<http://www.usccb.org/bible/matthew/17>):

*"...Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."*

The mountains moved by these "seeds of Faith" are the most important mountains to move: the hearts and minds of countless people throughout the ages.

5. It's definitely important for us to study, correlate, and apply these greater understandings to learn more about Mary (and the Trinity), because the Bible reveals only a few overtly stated facts about the lives of Jesus and Mary. We can also *imply* more sophisticated concepts about the Holy Trinity and Mary by reviewing and connecting the basic concepts found in the Bible, even though these conclusions are not explicitly stated in the Bible.

6. All conclusions about any article of Faith must be vetted, however, so we also rely on the final word of the Magisterium to decide what is true, including any greater understanding about an issue, as various people develop advanced conclusions from any theological study. We saw this process:

- in the Bible itself in Acts 15:4-12<sup>2</sup> at the Council of Jerusalem when St. Peter, the first pope, stood, spoke, and made decision about an issue for all of the apostles (who were the first bishops of the church)
- when the Church (popes and bishops together) decided which books would be in the Bible to begin with (as mentioned above).

One criterion for deciding if every greater understanding about Our Lady (or any higher concept of the Faith) is true is that the concept **MUST BE** consistent w/Scripture and often represents an aggregate of understandings woven together from various Scripture passages. In other words, in conjunction w/prayer and the Holy Spirit-guided vetting process at the magisterial level,

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.usccb.org/bible/acts/15>

4 When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, as well as by the apostles and the presbyters, and they reported what God had done with them.

5 But some from the party of the Pharisees who had become believers stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and direct them to observe the Mosaic law."

6 The apostles and the presbyters met together to see about this matter.

7 After much debate had taken place, Peter got up and said to them, "My brothers, you are well aware that from early days God made his choice among you that through my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.

8 And God, who knows the heart, bore witness by granting them the holy Spirit just as he did us.

9 He made no distinction between us and them, for by faith he purified their hearts.

10 Why, then, are you now putting God to the test by placing on the shoulders of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?

11 On the contrary, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they."

12 The whole assembly fell silent, and they listened while Paul and Barnabas described the signs and wonders God had worked among the Gentiles through them.

theologians (and ordinary faithful like us) can develop a greater understanding of an issue by *carefully* evaluating any and all related concepts.

Compare this approach with listening carefully to what someone says about himself; you then begin to know and understand a little more about that person, even when he doesn't directly SAY what you can SEE is true. And after all, the Bible is a love story – the perfect love between the Persons of the Holy Trinity and of God's same perfect love for us. It's also a story about various people, one of whom was FILLED (and "filled" does mean "totally") w/the Holy Spirit. That one person is Mary, the Mother of God.

## **What can we know about Mary?**

Mary's life and purpose are intimately connected with those of her Son, as is true for any mother and son, regardless of whether either one realizes or wants these relationships. Yet both Jesus and Mary fully embraced their connections, which are perfect and everlasting between this Son of God Incarnate and His Holy Mother.

In one way or another, every word of the Bible reflects the reality of Jesus; we also find direct or indirect references to Mary in many passages throughout the Bible. Specific Scripture passages with related analyses below help us to better understand the:

- scriptural basis for proclaiming Mary's various roles in our salvation.
- related doctrines that are directly or indirectly consistent with these Scripture passages.<sup>3</sup>  
(*Note: To save space, specific Bible passages are provided as references ONLY when needed for clarity*)

### **I. As the Mother of God, Mary's role is unique**

*Gn 3:15*: From the very beginning, God gives Mary a unique role in salvation history when He says "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed."

- The "enmity" refers to Jesus.
- Mary is the "woman".
- The phrase "her seed" (spermatozoon) appears nowhere else in Scripture.

*Gn 3:15 / Rev 12:1*:<sup>4</sup>

- The Scriptures begin and end with the woman opposing Satan. God permits her opposition through His Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

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<sup>3</sup> This content has all been edited and adapted from: [http://www.scripturecatholic.com/blessed\\_virgin\\_mary.html](http://www.scripturecatholic.com/blessed_virgin_mary.html), unless noted otherwise.

<sup>4</sup> A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.

- This battle:
  - points to the power of the woman (Mary) with the seed, Jesus.
  - also teaches us that Jesus and Mary are the new Adam and the new Eve, respectively.

*Jn 2:4*<sup>5</sup>; *Jn 19:26*:<sup>6</sup>

- Jesus calls Mary "woman", which is the same designation seen in *Gn 3:15*.
- Eve was the mother of the old creation, but Mary is the mother of the new creation, and her seed crushes the serpent's skull, which is a depiction of satan.

*Is 7:14*<sup>7</sup>; *Mt 1:23*<sup>8</sup>: A virgin (the Greek word used is "parthenos") will bear a Son named Emmanuel, which means "God is with us". God Incarnate dwelt among us (*Jn 1:14*)<sup>9</sup> through Mary, the Virgin Mother of God.

*Mt 2:11*:<sup>10</sup> Luke tells us that Mary holds Jesus, as the magi fall down before both of them. This is also an honor for Mary as the magi worship Jesus. We, too, are permitted to fall down before Jesus and Mary to:

- *worship* Him AND
- *honor* Mary for what she did for us by her willingness to serve the Lord according to His will for her and for us.

*Lk 1:35*:<sup>11</sup>

- The child will be called holy, the Son of God.
- Mary is the Mother of the Son of God, which is equivalent to the:
  - Mother of God
  - "Theotokos" – the God-bearer.

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<sup>5</sup> (And) Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come."

<sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw his mother\* and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son."

<sup>7</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

<sup>8</sup> "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means "God is with us."

<sup>9</sup> And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

<sup>10</sup> and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

<sup>11</sup> And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

*Lk 1:28:*

- God spoke the words: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you."
  - The angel, Gabriel,
    - is a messenger of God.
    - delivered these words to us.
  - Thus when Catholics recite this verse while praying the Rosary, we utter God's own words.
- The phrase "full of grace" is:
  - translated from the Greek word "kecharitomene."
  - used in Scripture to describe only one other person: Jesus Christ in *Jn 1:14*.<sup>9</sup>
- This unique title for Mary suggests a perfection of grace from a past event (saving her *from* Original Sin at her conception).
  - Mary is not just "highly favored."
  - She has been perfected in grace by God.

*Lk 1:38:*

- Mary's fiat is "let it be done to me according to thy word"
- She was and is:
  - the perfect model of faith in God
  - worthy of veneration, which is:
    - high honor
    - NOT adoration or worship

*Lk 1:42:* "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb[, Jesus]."

- The phrase "blessed are you among women" really means "you are most blessed of all women."
  - A circumlocution is used because no superlative exists for comparisons in the Greek language.
  - Note also that Elizabeth praises Mary first, and then Jesus, just as God permits Mary's fiat to precede Jesus' Incarnation. This approach to praising Mary is:
    - *hyperdulia*, which is:
      - greater veneration than for any other creature
      - reserved for Mary alone, among God's creatures.
    - NOT "latria", which is worship that can be given ONLY to God.
- Just as Elizabeth did, we can also praise Jesus through Mary.
- In the Rosary, we repeat Elizabeth's divinely inspired words.

*Lk 1:43:*

- In Hebrew when saying "Mother of my Lord", Elizabeth used the word "Adonai", which is Hebrew for "Lord God".
- Her words are then the equivalent of "...Mother of God", which Catholics pray in the Rosary.
- Clear and simple logic then connects the associated concepts here that we believe and pray in the last part of the Hail Mary:
  - Jesus is a divine person, Who is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity of God.

- Mary is Jesus' Mother, so Mary is the mother of God Incarnate.
- Mary is NOT JUST the Mother of Jesus' human nature; *mothers are mothers of persons, not natures.*

*Lk 1:44:* Mary's voice causes John the Baptist to leap for joy in Elizabeth's womb. Luke is teaching us that Mary is our powerful intercessor for the action of the Holy Spirit in our lives, just as Mary was for John the Baptist.

*Lk 1:46:*

- Mary claims that her soul magnifies the Lord.
- This is a:
  - bold statement for a young Jewish girl from Nazareth.
  - strong testimony for her unique role.
- Mary, as our Mother and intercessor, also magnifies our prayers.

*Lk 1:48:*

- Mary prophesies that all generations shall call her blessed, as Catholics do when we pray the "Hail Mary".
- No other religions or Christian faith communities:
  - have existed during ALL of the generations since Mary spoke those words
  - properly call Mary "blessed".
  - recognize what God has done for us through Mary by honoring her role (NOT worshipping her) with:
    - appropriate prayers
    - devotions.

*Lk 2:35:*

- Simeon prophesies that a sword would also pierce Mary's soul.
- Mary thus plays a very important role in our redemption.
- Jesus' suffering was all that we NEEDED for redemption, but God DESIRED that:
  - Mary participate on a subordinate level in her Son's suffering (*Jn 19:25*).<sup>12</sup>
  - we also participate through our own sufferings, as we hear in *Lk 9:23*:  
*Then he said to all, "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."* <http://www.usccb.org/bible/luke/9#50009023-n>

*Lk 2:19, 51:*

- Mary considered all these things as she pondered them in her "heart" (i.e., pondered them lovingly in her mind and soul).
- Catholic devotion to Mary focuses upon remembering (i.e., meditating upon):
  - what Mary:
    - did for us
    - pondered in her Immaculate "Heart" (mind and soul)

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<sup>12</sup> Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.

- all the treasures, wisdom, and knowledge that she possessed because of her pondering.
- This meditation is NOT the same as worship, which is reserved for God alone.

*Gal 4:4:*

- God sent His Son, born of a woman, to redeem us.
- The term "co":
  - is from the Latin word "cum" which means "with".
  - can:
    - be used with "redemptrix", which means "redeemer".
    - then identify Mary as co-redemptrix, which simply reminds us that:
      - Mary is "the woman *with* the redeemer".
      - Mary's role in salvation is unique *but subordinate* to Jesus' role.

*Eph 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2:* The word "saints" (in Hebrew "qaddiysh") means "holy" ones. Mary is Holy and the greatest of all saints because:

- God saved Mary from Original Sin at her conception
- She never had a day of sin (because she is the Ark of the New Covenant – see **II** immediately below)
- by God's plan for her and her fiat (i.e., acceptance of that plan) she:
  - chose to live totally for Jesus
  - succeeded in God's plan

## **II. Mary is the Immaculate Ark of the New Covenant**

*Ex 25:11-18:*<sup>13</sup>

- The Ark of the Old Covenant:
  - held God's Word in the 10 Commandments.
  - was made of the purest gold.
- Mary is the:
  - Ark of the New Covenant
  - purest human vessel for the Word of God made Flesh.

*2 Sam 6:7:* The Ark is so holy and pure that when Uzzah touched it, the Lord slew him.

- This event shows us that the Ark is undefiled.

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<sup>13</sup> 11 Plate it inside and outside with pure gold, and put a molding of gold around the top of it.

12 Cast four gold rings and fasten them on the four supports of the ark, two rings on one side and two on the opposite side.

13 Then make poles of acacia wood and plate them with gold.

14 These poles you are to put through the rings on the sides of the ark, for carrying it;

15 they must remain in the rings of the ark and never be withdrawn.

16 In the ark you are to put the commandments which I will give you.

17 "You shall then make a propitiatory of pure gold, two cubits and a half long, and one and a half cubits wide.

18 Make two cherubim of beaten gold for the two ends of the propitiatory,

- As the Ark of the New Covenant, Mary is:
  - immaculate
  - *completely* undefiled in life
- God saved Mary from Original Sin at her conception, so that she could bear His eternal Word in her womb.

*1 Chron 13:9-10:*<sup>14</sup> This is another account of Uzzah and the Ark.

- For God to dwell within Mary the Ark, she had to be conceived without sin.
- When protestants (and some misinformed Catholics) argue otherwise, they are saying that God would let Satan's finger touch His Son made Flesh. This is incomprehensible.

*1 Chron 15 and 16:* These verses show how tremendously the Jews revered the Ark through veneration, vestments, songs, harps, lyres, cymbals, and trumpets.

In the following verses found in *2 Samuel* and *Luke 1*, a clear parallel exists between the Ark of the Old Covenant and the Ark of the New Covenant:

- In *2 Sam 6:2*, David “arose and went” to the Ark that was in the hill country, while in *Lk 1:39*, Mary (who is the Ark holding Jesus within her) “arose and went” to that same hill country.

Luke's conspicuous comparisons between Mary and the Ark described by Samuel underscores the reality of Mary as the undefiled and immaculate Ark of the New Covenant.

- *2 Sam 6:16/ Lk 1:41:*
  - King David and John the Baptist leap for joy before the Jewish Ark of the Old Covenant and Mary (the Ark of the New Covenant), respectively.
  - We should also leap for joy before Mary, the Immaculate Ark of the Word made Flesh.
- *2 Sam 6:9/ Lk 1:43:*
  - How can the Ark of the Lord/Mother of my Lord come to me? (said by David and Elizabeth, respectively)
  - It is a holy privilege, and Our Mother wants to:
    - come to us
    - lead us to a deeper and more substantive knowledge of and love for Jesus.
- *1 Chron 13:14 and 2 Sam 6:11/ Lk 1:56:* The Ark of the Old Covenant and also Mary, the Ark of the New Covenant, remained in the house for about 3 months.

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<sup>14</sup> 9 As they reached the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah stretched out his hand to steady the ark, for the oxen were upsetting it.

10 Then the LORD became angry with Uzzah and struck him; he died there in God's presence, because he had laid his hand on the ark.



*Rev 11:19*:<sup>15</sup> At the time when St. John was exiled on Patmos and received the visions that he described in Revelation, the Ark of the Old Covenant had not been seen for six centuries (see 2 *Macc.* 2:7).<sup>16</sup> During John's visions on Patmos, he finally sees the Ark in heaven.

- The Jewish people would have been absolutely amazed at this scene.
- However, John:
  - immediately passes over this fact.
  - describes the "woman" clothed with the sun in *Rev 12:1*.<sup>4</sup>
  - emphasizes that Mary is:
    - the Ark of the New Covenant
    - like the Old Ark, now worthy of veneration and praise.
- Also remember that *Rev 11:19*<sup>15</sup> and *Rev 12:1*<sup>4</sup> are tied together because no chapters and verses existed when these texts were written.

*Rev 12:1*:<sup>4</sup>

- Mary is the:
  - "woman" whom John describes.
  - Ark of the New Covenant, with:
    - the moon under her feet
    - a crown of 12 stars on her head.
- Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, so Mary
  - ,with the moon under her feet,
  - reflects the glory of the Sun of Justice, Jesus Christ (and also seen so beautifully in the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe).

*Rev 12:17*: From this verse we see that:

- Mary's offspring are those who:
  - keep God's commandments
  - bear testimony to Jesus.
- Mary is the Mother of all Christians (as Catholics have always believed) because she is the Mother of God.

### **III. Mary's immaculate state is consistent with her absence of labor or labor pains (birth pangs) when delivering her only Child, Jesus.**

The Closed Gate of *Ezk 44:1-3*<sup>17</sup> and the closed garden of *Canticles 4:12*<sup>18</sup> show us that the womb of Mary is shut and closed even though God comes in and out.

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<sup>15</sup> Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant could be seen in the temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, and peals of thunder, an earthquake, and a violent hailstorm.

<sup>16</sup> When Jeremiah heard of this, he reproved them: "The place is to remain unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows them mercy.

<sup>17</sup> 1 Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary facing east, but it was closed.

2 The LORD said to me: This gate must remain closed; it must not be opened, and no one should come through it. Because the LORD, the God of Israel, came through it, it must remain closed.

*Is 66:7:*

- prophecies that, BEFORE:
  - she (Mary) was in labor, she gave birth.
  - her pain came upon her, she was delivered of a son (Jesus).
- is a Marian prophecy of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

*Mt 28:2-6* tells us:<sup>19</sup>

- The angel rolled back the stone:
  - NOT to allow the risen Jesus to leave the tomb (He had already done so)
  - to show Mary Magdalene and the other Mary that the tomb is empty.
- From this passage, we can deduce that:
  - , just as Jesus passed through the tomb while it was intact,
  - He passed through His Mother's womb at birth, leaving her womb intact to preserve her virginity.<sup>20</sup>
  - Birth pangs (travail) are usually used metaphorically in the Scriptures.
- *Gal 4:19*: Paul describes his pain as birth pangs to help form disciples in Christ.
- *Rom 8:22*: Paul says that:
  - the whole creation has been groaning in travail before Jesus returns to us.
  - we all undergo birth pangs, because we are being reborn into Jesus Christ.
- *Jer 13:21*: Jeremiah describes Israel's birth pangs as being like a woman in travail.
- *Hos 13:12-13*: Ephraim travails in childbirth for his sins.
- *Micah 4:9-10* describes Jerusalem as being seized by birth pangs like a woman in travail.
- *Rev 12:2*: Some protestants (and misinformed Catholics) argue that Mary must have sinned, because she had birth pangs.
  - Revelation:
    - is apocalyptic literature unique to the first century.

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3 Only the prince may sit in it to eat a meal in the presence of the LORD; he must enter through the vestibule of the gate and leave the same way. (Marshall, T. Mary's Painless Delivery of Christ (Scripture, Church Fathers, Popes, and Doctors of the Church) <http://taylormarshall.com/2010/12/marys-painless-delivery-of-christ.html>)

<sup>18</sup> A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Marshall, T. Mary's Painless Delivery of Christ (Scripture, Church Fathers, Popes, and Doctors of the Church) <http://taylormarshall.com/2010/12/marys-painless-delivery-of-christ.html>

<sup>19</sup> 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it.

3 His appearance was like lightning and his clothing was white as snow.

4 The guards were shaken with fear of him and became like dead men.

5 Then the angel said to the women in reply, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified.

6 He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.

<sup>20</sup> Marshall, T. Mary's Painless Delivery of Christ (Scripture, Church Fathers, Popes, and Doctors of the Church) <http://taylormarshall.com/2010/12/marys-painless-delivery-of-christ.html>

- contains varied symbolism and multiple meanings of the “woman”, which (depending upon context) include “woman” as:
  - Mary
  - the Church
  - Israel
- Within the context of *Rev 12:2*, the birth pangs as described refer to both:
  - the birth of the Church
  - Mary's many spiritual offspring being formed in Christ.

In *Rev 12:13-16*<sup>21</sup>, we see that the devil still seeks to destroy the woman even after the Savior is born, because:

- one of Mary’s eternal roles has been and is to be Satan’s primary adversary among all created beings through:
  - her role as Mother of God
  - all roles that flow from her maternity.
- Mary is a danger to satan, even after the birth of Christ,
- God has given her the power to intercede for us, so we can then invoke her assistance in our spiritual lives (see other reasons in **Parts I and X** in this document).

#### IV. Mary is Ever Virgin

*Ex 13:2, 12*: Jesus is sometimes referred to as the "first-born" son of Mary, but:

- this phrase does NOT mean that the mother had or must have additional children.
- "first-born" is a common Jewish expression meaning the child who opened the womb.

*Ex 34:20*: Under the Mosaic law, the "first-born":

- son had to be sanctified.
- status does not require a "second"-born child.

Two passages from the Old Testament pre-figure Mary’s perpetual virginity:

- *Ezek 44:2*: Ezekiel prophesies that no man shall pass through the gate by which the Lord entered the world.
- *Wis 7:25*: This passage provides similar support: “For she is a breath of the power of God...therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her”

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<sup>21</sup> 13 When the dragon saw that it had been thrown down to the earth, it pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.

14 But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she could fly to her place in the desert, where, far from the serpent, she was taken care of for a year, two years, and a half-year.

15 The serpent, however, spewed a torrent of water out of his mouth after the woman to sweep her away with the current.

16 But the earth helped the woman and opened its mouth and swallowed the flood that the dragon spewed out of its mouth.

*Mt 26:2-6*: see **page 9**: “III. Mary’s Immaculate state is consistent with her absence of labor or labor pains (birth pangs) when delivering her only Child, Jesus.”

*Mk 6:3*: Jesus was always referred to as "the" son of Mary, not "a" son of Mary.

- "Brothers" could have theoretically been Joseph's children from a former marriage dissolved by death.
- Joseph was also possibly a life-long virgin, although that is not stated in the Bible.
- Nonetheless, he was virginal for Mary because she was a perpetual virgin with whom he had no sexual relations. Together, these three family members:
  - embodied the true Holy Family
  - were fully consecrated to God.

*Lk 1:31, 34*: The angel tells Mary that you "will" conceive (using the future tense).

- Mary’s response ("How shall this be?") demonstrates that she had taken a vow of lifelong virginity with no intention of having relations with a man.
- If Mary did not take such a vow of lifelong virginity, her question would make no sense at all (for we can assume she knew how a child is conceived).

*Jn 1:13*: Christ was “born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God”.

*Lk 2:41-51*: No siblings for Jesus are ever mentioned when Mary and Joseph search for Jesus and find Him in the temple.

*Jn 7:3-4*: We see here that younger "brothers" were advising Jesus, but this would have been extremely disrespectful for devout Jews if these were Jesus' biological brothers, because whichever “other son” would become the oldest living son when Jesus was crucified would then be held in high esteem, and be responsible for “their” mother, Mary.

*Jn 19:26-27*:<sup>22</sup> If Jesus would have had biological brothers, then committing His mother’s care to a friend (the apostle John) would have been unthinkable.

The following verses show us that James and Joseph are Jesus' cousins and NOT his brothers:

- Mary, the wife of Cleopas (Clopas), is the:
  - sister of the Virgin Mary (*Jn 19:25*)<sup>12</sup>
  - mother of James and Joseph (*Mt 27:56; Mk 15:47*)
- *Mt 27:61, 28:1*: Matthew even refers to Mary, the wife of Cleopas, as "the other Mary".
- *Mt 10:3*:
  - James is also called the son of "Alpheus", but this does NOT disprove that James is the son of Cleopas. One of several situations are likely:
    - The name Alpheus might be Aramaic for Cleopas, OR
    - James took a Greek name like Saul (Paul), OR

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<sup>22</sup> 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son."

27 Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

- Mary (the wife of Cleopas) remarried a man named Alpheus.
- Thus when *Mk 6:3* mentions James and Joseph in reference to Jesus, we then know that these are His cousins, because:
  - no word for “cousins” existed in Aramaic
  - the lineage of these men is described above as such.

## V. Misunderstanding about *Mt 1:25*<sup>23</sup> (Joseph knew her "not until")

Claiming that Mary had relations with Joseph is a serious error for a several reasons. This error insults:

- the:
  - Holy Spirit, whose shrine was the virginal womb of Mary, which could not be desecrated by intercourse with man.
  - holiness and gratitude of the Virgin Mary, who would have:
    - not been satisfied with having Jesus alone
    - forfeited her virginity that God miraculously preserved when Jesus was conceived at the Annunciation. Lk 1:34:  
*But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?”* <http://www.usccb.org/bible/luke/1>
- Joseph, who would have been guilty of sinful presumption for attempting to violate Mary, whom he knew had conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Even though Mary and Joseph didn’t have physical relations, they had a valid marriage because:

- the consummation of their love was in Jesus.
- they:
  - had no need for union of the flesh, for they already possessed the Divinity.
  - surrendered their rights to the flesh to enjoy the ecstasy of the spirit, which is the eternal end of true marriage.

*Mt 1:25*:<sup>21</sup> This verse says Joseph knew her "not until ("heos", in Greek)" she bore a son.

- Some protestants (and misinformed Catholics) assume from this verse that Joseph had relations with Mary after she bore a son.
- This interpretation is incorrect, and anyone who uses *Mt 1:25* to deny the virginity of Mary has completely misunderstood the text because "not until" (*heos*):
  - does NOT mean "did not...until after."

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<sup>23</sup> He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

- refers to the past up to a specific time point, NEVER the future, and with no implication that the status on this issue will change at the end of the given time period.<sup>24</sup>
  - "Not until" she bore a son then means "not up to the point that" she bore a son without considering the future.
  - "Heos" confirms that Mary was a virgin when she bore Jesus, but this doesn't imply that the status changed afterwards.
- Other Scripture texts using "heos" are consistent with its meaning as described above:
  - *Mt 28:20*: I am with you "until the end of the world" does NOT mean Jesus is not with us after the end of the world.
  - *Lk 2:37*: Anna was a widow "until she was eighty-four" years old DOESN'T mean that Anna was no longer a widow after she was eighty-four years old, because it simply doesn't talk about the future.
  - *Lk 20:42,43*: Jesus says, "take your seat at my hand until I have made your enemies your footstool." Jesus WON'T require the apostles to sit at His left hand after their enemies are their footstool.
  - *Gn 28:15*: The Lord won't leave Jacob " ...until I have done what I promised you". This does NOT mean the Lord will leave Jacob after He has fulfilled His promises.
  - *Dt 34:6*: But "until this present day" no one knows Moses' burial place. This does NOT mean that "they did not know place until today."
  - *2 Sam 6:23*: Saul's daughter Micah was childless "to the day of" (until) her death. She was NOT with child after her death.
  - *1 Macc. 5:54*: "...because not one of them was slain, till they had returned in peace. They were NOT slain "after" they returned in peace.

## VI. Misunderstanding about *Rom 3:23* ("All have sinned")

*Rom 3:23*:<sup>25</sup>

- Some protestants (and misinformed Catholics) deduce from the phrase "all have sinned" that Mary had also sinned. But "all have sinned" means only "all" who are:
  - subject to Original Sin.
    - God saved Mary by sparing her from Original Sin; she could not do this for herself; God is still her Savior.
    - Consider this useful analogy:
      - God
        - let us fall in the "mud puddle" of Original Sin through Adam and Eve
        - cleaned us up afterward through baptism.

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<sup>24</sup> Hahn S. *Mary: Virgin and Ever Virgin* <http://www.catholicapologetics.org/ap080300.htm>

<sup>25</sup> 23 all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God.

- In Mary's case, God:
    - never let her fall into the “puddle”.
    - saved her by *preventing* her from falling into the “puddle” of Original Sin.
  - able to commit *personal* sin.
    - This is NOT everyone, such as,
      - infants
      - younger people with severe cognitive disabilities
      - older people with dementia.
      - Jesus, the Second Adam.
    - Thus we can infer from these realities that Mary, the Second Eve, can also be an exception.
- Note that the Greek word for “all” is “pantes”.
  - *1 Cor 15:22*: In Adam “all” (“pantes”) have died; in Christ, “all” (“pantes”) shall live. This passage shows us that “all” does NOT mean “every possible person, because not “all””:
    - have died (such as Enoch and Elijah who were taken up to heaven).
    - will go to heaven (because Jesus told us this in Mt 7:21: Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.  
<http://www.usccb.org/bible/matthew/7#48007021-n>
  - St. Paul tell us in:
    - *Rom 5:12* that death spread to all (“pantes”) men. Again, this shows us that “all” does not mean “every possible person”, because as said above, Scripture reveals that Enoch and Elijah did not die.
    - *Rom 5:19* that “many (not all) were made sinners,” which demonstrates that when Paul says “all”, he’s referring to “all” from a *specific category* (e.g., among the *fools* [Ps 14:1]<sup>26</sup>, also mentioned below).

*Lk 1:47*:<sup>27</sup> Mary calls God her Savior. Some protestants (and some misinformed Catholics) assume from this declaration that Mary sinned. We must realize, however, that:

- while Mary needed God as her Savior as much as the rest of humanity
- she was freed from Original Sin @ the moment of her conception (that’s why she is the Immaculate Conception), unlike we who are freed from Original Sin at Baptism.

*Rom 3:10-11*:<sup>28</sup>

- Protestants (and some misinformed Catholics) misapply this verse to conclude that:
  - all humans commit personal sin

<sup>26</sup> For the leader. Of David. Fools say in their hearts, "There is no God." Their deeds are loathsome and corrupt; not one does what is right.

<sup>27</sup> ...my spirit rejoices in God my savior.

<sup>28</sup> 10 as it is written: "There is no one just, not one,  
11 there is no one who understands, there is no one who seeks God.

- Mary must be sinful.
- However, review *Psalms 14 and 53*, which:
  - are the basis for *Rom 3:10-11*.
  - do not teach that all humans are sinful. These psalms teach only that:
    - *among the wicked*, all are sinful (14:1).
    - "there is none that does good" expressly refers to those who have fallen away.
    - the righteous ("my people" [14:4<sup>29</sup> and repeated in 53:5]; "the poor", [14:6<sup>30</sup>] continue to seek God.
- Thus:
  - people who:
    - separate themselves from God by doing evil, will not seek God
    - remain faithful do good
  - Jesus calls such faithful people "good." (*Mt 12:35*<sup>31</sup> or *Lk 6:45*)

*Rom 9:11*: God distinguished:

- between Jacob and Esau in the womb before either one committed personal sin.
- Mary from the rest of humanity in the womb, as God saved Mary from Original Sin at her conception.

*Lk 1:48*: Mary calls herself lowly (humble), but any creature is lowly compared to God.

- For example, in *Mt 11:29*<sup>32</sup>, even Jesus says that He (in His human nature) is lowly (humble) of heart.
- Humility:
  - is the greatest virtue of holiness.
  - allows:
    - all of us (including Jesus and Mary) to empty ourselves for God's will.
    - all sinners to receive God's grace and then change our sinful lives.

### **VIII. Jesus' "Brothers" (adelphoi) are actually either cousins or kinsmen beyond cousins.**

In *Gn 11:26,27*<sup>33</sup>, Lot is Abraham's nephew or cousin ("anepsios") (son of his brother, Aran); yet in *Gn 13:8; 14:14,16*, Lot is called Abraham's brother (adelphos"), which indicates that, although

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<sup>29</sup> Will these evildoers never learn? They devour my people as they devour bread; they do not call upon God.

<sup>30</sup> They would crush the hopes of the poor, but the poor have the LORD as their refuge.

<sup>31</sup> A good person brings forth good out of a store of goodness, but an evil person brings forth evil out of a store of evil.

<sup>32</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves.

<sup>33</sup> 26 When Terah was seventy years old, he became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.



anepsios” is a Greek word for cousin, Scripture also uses "adelphos" to describe a nephew or cousin.

*Gn 29:15*: Laban calls Jacob "brother", even though Jacob is his nephew. This verse again shows us that their use of the word “brother” refers merely to “kinsmen” or “cousin”.

*Dt 23:7; 1 Chron 15:5-18; Jer 34:9; Neh 5:7*: "Brethren" (or “brother”) means kinsmen; Hebrew and Aramaic have no word for "cousin."

*2 Sam 1:26; 1 Kings 9:13, 20:32; Amos 1:9*: Here we see that "brethren" (or “brother”) can even involve someone who is unrelated (no bloodline), such as an ally (*Amos 1:9*) or a friend.

*2 Kings 10:13-14*: The 42 "brethren" (or “brothers”) of King Ahaziah's were really his kinsmen.

*1 Chron 23:21-22*: Eleazar's daughters married their "brethren" (or “brothers”) who were really their cousins.

*Neh 4:14; 5:1, 5, 8, 10, 14*: Here are more examples of "brothers" (or “brethern”) meaning "cousins" or "kinsmen".

*Tobit 5:11*: Tobit asks Azarias to identify himself and his people, but still calls Azarias "brothers" (or “brethern”).

*Lk 1:36*:<sup>34</sup> Elizabeth is Mary's kinswoman. Some versions of the bible improperly translate kinswoman as "cousin"; no word exists for "cousin" in Hebrew and Aramaic.

*Lk 22:32*: Jesus tells Peter to strengthen his "brethren" (or “brothers”), which clearly refers here to the other apostles, not biological brothers.

*Acts 1:12-15*: The gathering of Jesus' "brothers" includes about 120 men, which is an unrealistic number of biological brothers. "Brothers” means “kinsmen” in Hebrew.

*Acts 7:26; 11:1; 13:15, 38; 15:3, 23, 32; 28:17, 21*: These verses also provide some of many other examples where "brethren" (or “brothers”) does not mean blood relations.

*Rom 9:3*: Paul uses "brethren" and "kinsmen" interchangeably. Thus "brothers" of Jesus does not prove that Mary had other children.

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<sup>27</sup> This is the record of the descendants of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran became the father of Lot.

<sup>34</sup> 36: And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren

## IX. Misunderstandings about Jesus "rebuking" Mary

Some protestants (and misinformed Catholics) assume that, within several biblical passages, Jesus rebukes:

- Mary
- any role that we might identify as having been given to her by God.

Consider the following passages and the correct way to interpret them:

- *Mt 12:48*<sup>35</sup>; *Mk 3:33*; *Lk 8:21*<sup>36</sup>
  - We realize that the larger family of Jesus is not constituted by physical relationship with Him but by obedience to the word of God.
  - To assume, however, that Jesus rebukes Mary in these passages is actually blasphemous, because then Jesus would have sinned as He violated the 4th commandment by dishonoring His Mother, especially in public.
  - Jesus' comments in these passages must be read in light of the parable of the sower (*Lk 8:5-15*), which Jesus taught right before asking His rhetorical question. Jesus is:
    - actually saying indirectly that Mary
      - has already received the Word as the sower of good ground.
      - is bearing fruit.
    - teaching that others must, like Mary,
      - also receive the Word
      - obey the Word.
  - By reading *Lk 1:38* in particular, God has already shown us that Mary is the obedient handmaid of the Lord who fulfills the requirement for belonging to the eschatological family of Jesus.
  - Jesus' question about "who are my mother, and sisters and brothers" also refers to *Ps 69:8-9*.<sup>37</sup>
    - Jesus:
      - as the ultimate Prophet, was answering the psalmist's prophecy that those closest to Him would betray Him at His passion.
      - is emphasizing the:
        - spiritual family's importance over the biological family.
        - importance of being faithful to Him.
    - While many were unfaithful to Jesus, Mary was faithful to Him
      - before His Conception.
      - throughout her life.
      - even to the point of remaining at the foot of the Cross.
      - after His Ascension.

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<sup>35</sup> But he said in reply to the one who told him, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?"

<sup>36</sup> He said to them in reply, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and act on it."

<sup>37</sup> 8 For your sake I bear insult, shame covers my face.

9 I have become an outcast to my kin, a stranger to my mother's children.

- Jesus essentially says the same thing described in the passages above when He states in *Lk 11:27-28*<sup>38</sup> while replying to a woman in the crowd. In these verses,
  - Jesus indirectly exalts Mary by emphasizing her obedience to God's word as being even more critical than her biological role of mother (even though that role was also essential for Jesus' mission on earth).
  - the Greek word for "rather" is "menounge", which really means "*Yes, but in addition,*" or "*Further.*" Thus, Jesus is:
    - saying, "Yes my mother is blessed indeed, but further blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it."
    - encouraging others to follow Mary's example in order to build up His kingdom.
    - the one being complimented, not Mary. Therefore,
      - Jesus is refocusing the attention from Himself to others who obey the word of God.
      - His comment CANNOT be a rebuke of Mary, His mother, if He is refocusing the attention away from Himself to others.

*Jn 2:4*:<sup>5</sup> This is another example that protestants (and some misinformed Catholics) use to diminish Mary's significance.

- Jesus' question to Mary, "...what have you to do with me?":
  - is not a rebuke.
  - indicates that "what happens to me happens also to (or "affects") you".
- To the contrary, Jesus' question:
  - illustrates the importance of Mary's role in the kingdom.
  - is actually an invitation to His mother to:
    - intercede on behalf of all believers
    - begin His ministry.
- Mary understands Jesus' question, so:
  - she immediately intercedes
  - Jesus
    - obeys her
    - performs the miracle that started His ministry of redemption.

*Lk 8:28*: The demons within the possessed Gerasene ask the same question when they force the Gerasene to say ... "what have you to do with me?"

- The demons are not rebuking Jesus, for God would not allow it.
- Instead, the demons are acknowledging Jesus' power by their question to Him.

*Jn 2:4*<sup>5</sup>; *19:26*:<sup>6</sup> When Jesus uses the title "woman" (*gynai*),

- it is:
  - a title of dignity and respect

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<sup>38</sup> 27 While he was speaking, a woman from the crowd called out and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that carried you and the breasts at which you nursed."

28 He replied, "Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."

- the equivalent of Lady or Madam.
- He honored His Mother, as God requires us to do.

## **X. Mary is our Mother and Queen of the New Davidic Kingdom**

*Jn 2:1-11:*<sup>39</sup>

- This whole passage is only one of MANY biblical examples by which we realize that it's acceptable to ask Mary to intercede on our behalf when praying for what we need. Consider these verses most especially:
  - *Jn 2:3*:
    - As our mother, Mary tells all of us to do whatever Jesus tells us to do.
    - Further, Mary's intercession at the marriage feast in Cana:
      - triggers Jesus' ministry.
      - foreshadows the Eucharistic celebration of the Lamb, which unites all the faithful into one family through the marriage of divinity and humanity.
  - *Jn 2:7*, Jesus:
    - allows His mother to intercede for the people on His behalf.
    - responds to His mother's request by ordering the servants to fill the jars with water.
- Some larger concepts are also reinforced when we read about the wedding feast at Cana.
  - We see that Jesus is also the bridegroom of salvation.
  - The Apostles and then all the people of the Church are the bride of Christ.
  - The groom and bride are united through the sweet wine of faith.
  - This union occurs through Mary's intercession ("Do whatever He tells you.").

*Jn 19:26:*<sup>6</sup>

- All of Jesus' words from the Cross have a divine purpose for us.
- Jesus:
  - said "behold your mother", but He did NOT say "*John*, behold your mother" because, through John, Jesus gave Mary to ALL of us, His beloved disciples.

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<sup>39</sup> 1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding.

3 When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

4 (And) Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come."

5 His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."

6 Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons.

7 Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim.

8 Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it.

9 And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom

10 and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now."

11 Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

- makes Mary the Mother of us all by saying "Behold your mother" as He dies on the Cross.

*Rev 12:17:*<sup>40</sup>

- The "woman's" (Mary's) offspring are those who follow Jesus.
- Thus if we follow Jesus, then:
  - Mary is our Mother.
  - we are her offspring in Jesus Christ.
- God's master plan of covenant love for us is as eternal family. We:
  - have the:
    - Fatherhood of God
    - Brotherhood of Christ.
  - cannot belong to a complete family, however, without the Motherhood of Mary.
- This verse shows us the meaning of *Jn 19:26*.<sup>6</sup>

*Ps 45:10:*

- The psalmist teaches that the:
  - Queen stands at God's right hand.
  - Queen's role is important in God's kingdom.
- Mary, the Queen of heaven, is at the right hand of Jesus, the Son of God.

*1 Kings 2:17-20:*<sup>41</sup>

- In the Old-Testament Davidic kingdom, the
  - king does not refuse his mother. We know that:
    - Jesus is the eternal Davidic King,
    - He does not refuse the requests of His mother Mary and our eternal Queen by virtue of Mary being the Queen Mother for our eternal King.
  - Queen intercedes on behalf of the King's followers (*1 Kings 2:18*).
    - She is the Queen Mother (or "Gebirah").
    - Mary is our eternal Gebirah.
  - King bows to his mother, and she sits at his right hand (*1 Kings 2:19*).
- We, as children of the New Covenant,
  - should imitate our King.

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<sup>40</sup> Then the dragon became angry with the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commandments and bear witness to Jesus.

<sup>41</sup> 17 He said, "Please ask King Solomon, who will not refuse you, to give me Abishag the Shunamite for my wife."  
18 "Very well," replied Bathsheba, "I will speak to the king for you."

19 Then Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah, and the king stood up to meet her and paid her homage. Then he sat down upon his throne, and a throne was provided for the king's mother, who sat at his right.

20 "There is one small favor I would ask of you," she said. "Do not refuse me." "Ask it, my mother," the king said to her, "for I will not refuse you."

- pay the same homage to Mary, our Mother.
- By honoring Mary, we honor our King, Jesus Christ.

*1 Kings 15:13*:<sup>42</sup>

- The Queen Mother occupies a powerful position in Israel's royal monarchy.
- In this Scripture verse, the Queen is removed from office, but now:
  - Jesus has eternally perfected the Davidic kingdom.
  - our Mother Mary is forever at the right hand of Jesus.

*2 Chron 22:10*: When Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she began to kill off the whole royal family of the house of Judah.

- Again, the Queen mother plays a significant role in the kingdom.
- In this verse, Queen Mother Athalia destroys the royal family of Judah after she sees that her son, King Ahaziah, is dead.
- While our eternal Blessed Mother would never do this, we see the power and respect wielded by the Queen Mother.

*Neh 2:6*: Then the king, with the queen seated beside him, asked me, "How long will your journey take and when will you return?" My answer was acceptable to the king and he agreed to let me go; I set a date for my return. (<http://www.usccb.org/bible/nehemiah/2>)

Again, the Queen Mother sits beside the King.

## **XI. Mary's Assumption into Heaven**

God would do no less for Mary, the Ark of the New Covenant, than He did for:

- Enoch, who was assumed bodily into heaven without dying (*Gn 5:24*<sup>43</sup>, *Heb 11:5*<sup>44</sup>).
- Elijah, who was assumed into heaven in a fiery chariot (*2 Kings 2:11-12*<sup>45</sup>; *1 Mac 2:58*).

*Ps 132:8*:<sup>46</sup> This verse prefigures Jesus' Ascension and the fact that Mary (the Ark) is in heaven with Him, because both Jesus and Mary entered eternal life in heaven with body and soul together.

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<sup>42</sup> He also deposed his grandmother Maacah from her position as queen mother, because she had made an outrageous object for Asherah. Asa cut down this object and burned it in the Kidron Valley.

<sup>43</sup> Then Enoch walked with God, and he was no longer here, for God took him.

<sup>44</sup> By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and "he was found no more because God had taken him." Before he was taken up, he was attested to have pleased God.

<sup>45</sup> As they walked on conversing, a flaming chariot and flaming horses came between them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

<sup>46</sup> When Elisha saw it happen he cried out, "My father! my father! Israel's chariots and drivers!" But when he could no longer see him, Elisha gripped his own garment and tore it in two.

2 Cor 12:2: Paul speaks of a man in Christ who was caught up to the third heaven. God also brought Mary up into heaven w/body and soul intact. "*I know someone in Christ who, fourteen years ago (whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows), was caught up to the third heaven*)" <http://www.usccb.org/bible/2corinthians/12>

Lk 23:42: Jesus replies to the good thief that "...today you will be with me in Paradise". Would He do less than this for His Immaculate Mother, who has been faithful to the end?

Mt 27:52-53:<sup>47</sup> Nothing in Scripture precludes Mary's assumption into heaven, as we see in this verse, because the bodies of saints were raised when Jesus died on the Cross.

1 Thes 4:17: We shall be:

- caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.
- always with the Lord.

Rev 12:1: We see:

- Mary, the "woman," clothed with the sun (Rev 12:1).<sup>4</sup>
- both body and soul for Mary (Rev 12:1).<sup>2</sup>
- only the souls for the martyrs in heaven (Rev 6:9)

## **XII. Mary's Coronation in Heaven**

- 1 Pt 5:4: When the chief Shepherd is manifested, we will receive the unfading crown of glory.
- Jesus promises a crown of glory for all of the righteous. Would He have done any less for His beloved Mother? Consider other scripture verses below:
  - 2 Tim 4:8: Paul says that the crown of righteousness is laid up for him. The saints are crowned in heaven, and Mary is the greatest saint of all. Would Jesus do any less for His Mother, the first among believers, than to give her the ultimate crown of righteousness?
  - James 1:12: Those who endure will receive the crown of life that God has promised. Mary has received the crown of life by faithfully enduring to bring eternal Life to the world.
  - Rev 2:10: If Jesus will give the crown of life to those who try to live faithfully unto death, then He has surely given the crown of life to Mary, His Mother, who never waivered as she lived faithfully for Him throughout her life.
  - Wis 5:16: We will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord. Mary is:
    - with Jesus
    - crowned forever in His glory.

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<sup>46</sup> Arise, O Lord, and go to thy resting place, thou and the Ark of thy might.

<sup>47</sup> 52 tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised.

53 And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many.

- John saw that this coronation has been fulfilled already. In *Rev 12:1*<sup>4</sup>, Mary, the "woman," is crowned with twelve stars. She is:
  - Queen of heaven and earth.
  - the Mother of the Church.

### **XIII: General observations and conclusions:**

#### *Observations:*

1) We might see our relationship to Jesus and Mary as an hourglass. We exist in the bottom chamber of the hourglass; Jesus' gifts and graces to us (the sand) exist initially in the top of the hourglass. Mary is the thin neck through which Jesus' graces (the sand) always flow.

The gifts and graces (sand) pass through this thin neck of the hourglass, whether we believe this fact or (sadly) reject it. Let's accept it so that we can know Jesus for what He is and our relationship to Him through Mary, His Mother and our advocate, because this is what God wishes for us, not what we wish God to be. Satan is very happy when we distort and deform our relationship with God in His truth, and that's the last thing that any of us want.

2) Another "neck" analogy relates to the human head and neck. Our Lady can be compared with the neck, which turns the head in any possible direction, so that the eyes can focus on a specific item or general location. Our Lord is the head, and through Mary's intercession (as a "neck"), she "guides" Our Savior to our needs when we pray for her help.

Again, Jesus does not *need* her to do this in the strict sense of making him capable of focusing on each of us and our needs. Jesus is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and she is a mere creature like us (although sinless, as Eve was before Fall in the Garden). Jesus allows Mary, however, to intercede in this way, because He wants honor her and give her the influence that she deserves after fulfilling (in perfect love) Her duties to Him in His Human Nature and thus to us so that He might be our Savior.

#### *General Conclusions*

1) God:

- chose Mary for Jesus.
- transformed her flesh and blood alone into that of Jesus' Flesh and Blood.

2) Mary:

- has known and loved Jesus since His conception.
- carried Him within her, including on the rough trip to Bethlehem
- gave birth to Him under very challenging circumstances
- cared for Him
- suffered for Him:
  - because of Simeon's prophecy when Jesus was presented in the Temple
  - during:



- the flight to Egypt.
  - life in Egypt as refugees.
- in countless ways:
  - that we know nothing about until (God willing) we reach heaven.
  - throughout His entire life.
- courageously, quietly, and lovingly lived life with dignity despite all of the:
  - prophecies
  - suffering during her life.
- ushered in His ministry at the wedding feast in Cana.
- quietly supported Him throughout His ministry
- stood by Him as He suffered and died on the Cross.
- held His body when He was taken down from the Cross
- was separated from Jesus at His death.
- likely rejoiced when He rose, but then had to watch Him leave again when He ascended into heaven before the end of her earthly life.

For all of these reasons and so many more not listed here, Mary is worthy of honor, respect, and veneration, as we adore and worship her Son, Jesus Christ and will do so MORE DEEPLY if we love His Mother.

Thus we honor Mary and stay close to her to honor what she did for us, and most especially because God He tells us throughout Holy Scripture that this is His will.