

## Jesus and the Jewish Roots of Mary

### Introduction

1. The *Catechism* on Jesus and Mary:

*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)*

### 1. The New Eve

#### Eve in the Old Testament

1. Question: If Jesus is the new Adam, then who is the new Eve? (cf. 1 Cor 15:45)
2. Adam and Eve are created “very good”—i.e., without sin (Gen 1:27-28, 31)
3. Before the Fall, Eve is called “Woman” 12 X! (Gen 2:23, etc.)
4. After Fall, named “Eve” (Hb *Havah*; Gk *Zōē*) = “Mother of the Living” (Gen 3:20)
5. Adam and Eve fall *together*—her husband “*was with her*” (Gen 3:6)
6. Prophecy: The Battle between the Serpent and the Woman:

I will put enmity between *you* and *the woman*, between *your seed* and *her seed*; *he shall strike your head, and you shall strike his heel.*” (Genesis 3:15)

#### Eve in Jewish Tradition

From *a woman* sin had its beginning, and *because of her* we all die. (Sirach 25:24)

#### The New Eve

1. The Gospel of John: Why does Jesus call Mary “Woman”? (John 2:4; 19:26)

##### Eve

1. Called “Woman” (11 times)
2. Invites Adam to commit the first sin.
3. With Adam at the Fall; tempted by the Devil to sin
4. Mother of the “offspring” who conquers the “serpent”
5. Becomes “mother of the living” (Genesis 3:1-6, 15, 20)

##### Mary

1. Called “Woman” (2 times)
2. Invites Jesus to perform his first sign.
3. With Jesus at the Crucifixion; “casting out” of the Devil
4. “Woman” whose “child” conquers the Devil
5. Becomes “mother” of Beloved Disciple (John 2:1-12; 19:25-27)

2. The Book of Revelation:

A great sign appeared in heaven, *a woman clothed with the sun*, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars... And another sign appeared in heaven; behold, *a great red dragon*... And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear *a child*, that he might devour her child when she brought it forth... (Rev 12:1-5)

1. <u>The Serpent</u>	=	The Devil	Individual (Satan)
2. <u>The Child</u>	=	The Messiah	Individual (Christ)
3. <u>The Woman</u>	=	Mother of the Messiah	Individual (Mary)

3. If Mary is the new Eve, then it makes sense that she is created without sin and commits no sin her entire life; otherwise, old Eve would be greater than new Eve! (see CCC 411)

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### 2. The New Ark

#### The Ark of the Covenant

1. If Jesus is the new Manna, then where is the new Ark? (cf. John 6:48-58)
2. The Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25-40)
  - a. Dwelling Place of God: on earth (Exod 25:9)
  - b. Sacred Container: 10 C's, Manna, and Aaron's staff (Heb 9:4)
  - c. Holy: "Incorruptible Wood" (Exod 25:5 LXX; Josephus, *Ant.* 3.134)
  - d. Gold: covered in "pure gold"—absolute holiness of the Ark (Exod 25:11)
  - e. Blue: covered in "cloth of blue" (Num 4:7)
  - f. Glory Cloud: place where the "cloud" of glory comes down from heaven:

[Moses] brought *the ark* into the tabernacle... *Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.* (Exodus 40:17-18)

3. David brings the Ark up to Jerusalem; Temple is eventually built (2 Sam 6; 1 Kings 8)
4. 1<sup>st</sup> Century: the Ark is lost; Holy of Holies has "nothing" in it (Josephus, *War* 5.219)

#### The Ark in Jewish Tradition

[Jeremiah] ordered that *the tent and the ark should follow with him*, and that *he went out to the mountain where Moses had gone up and had seen the inheritance of God.* And Jeremiah came and found a cave, and he brought there the ark..., and he sealed up the entrance. Some of those who followed him came up to mark the way, but could not find it. When Jeremiah learned of it, he... declared: "*The place shall be unknown until... the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear...*" (2 Maccabees 2:4-8)

#### The New Ark

1. The Gospel of Luke:

And the angel said to her, "*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." (Luke 1:35)

##### The Ark

The glory cloud  
"overshadows" (Greek *epeskiazen*)  
the Tabernacle.  
(Exodus 40:35 LXX)

##### The Virgin Mary

The holy Spirit  
"overshadows" (Greek *episkiasei*)  
the Virgin Mary.  
(Luke 1:35)

2. The Book of Revelation:

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and *the ark of his covenant* was seen within his temple... And a great portent appeared in heaven, *a woman clothed with the sun...* (Revelation 11:19-12:1)

3. If Mary is the new Ark, then it makes sense that her body would not experience corruption but was brought up into the heavenly Holy of Holies (see Benedict XVI, "Homily," August 15, 2011)

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### 3. The New Queen

#### The Queen Mother

1. If Jesus is the new Davidic king, then who is the new Queen Mother? (cf. Matt 1:1-18)
2. The Queen Mother in Ancient Israel:
  - a. Queen = the king's mother (Hebrew, *Gebirah* or "Great Lady") (1 Kings 15:13)
  - b. Royalty: queen mother wore a "crown" (Jer 13:18)
  - c. Office = queen sits at the king's "right hand" (Psalm 45:6-9)
  - d. Royal Intercessor: the king will not "refuse" his mother's request

So Bathsheba went to King Solomon, to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her, and *bowed down to her*; then he sat on his throne, and had a *throne* brought for *the king's mother*; and she sat on his right. Then she said, "I have one small request to make of you; do not refuse me." And the king said to her, "*Make your request, my mother; for I will not refuse you.*" (1 Kings 2:19-20)

#### The Queen Mother in Jewish Prophecy

1. The Royal "Virgin" conceives and bears "Immanuel" = "God with us" (Isaiah 7:13-14)
2. Mother of the Messiah: "gives birth" to the "Ruler" in "Bethlehem" (Micah 5:2-3)
3. Jewish Women in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century A.D.: who will be the new "queen mother"?

#### The New Queen

1. The Nativity:
  - a. Royal Genealogy: Mary included in genealogy of Jesus (Matt 1:1-18)
  - b. Mother of the King = Mary is mother of "Immanuel" (Matt 1:20-23)
  - c. *Theotokos*: Mary "bears" (*tikto*) child who is "God (*theos*) with us" (Matt 1:23)
2. The Visitation:
  - a. Elizabeth calls Mary "the mother of my Lord" (Greek *kyrios*) (Luke 1:41-45)
  - b. Mary declares God has "exalted" the lowly to "thrones" (Luke 1:52)
3. The Woman Clothed with the Sun: is wearing "*a crown* of 12 stars" (Rev 12:1)
4. If Mary is the new Queen Mother, then it makes sense that we would *honor* her—not worship her!—and ask her to *intercede* for us with her Son (cf. CCC 971; Collyridians)

### Conclusion

#### The Catechism on the Jewish Roots of Mary

It is at the hour of the New Covenant, at the foot of the cross, that Mary is heard as the Woman, *the new Eve*, the true "Mother of all the living." (CCC 2618)

Mary, in whom the Lord himself has just made his dwelling, is... *the ark of the covenant*, the place where the glory of the Lord dwells. (CCC 2676)

[T]he Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as *Queen over all things*... (CCC 966)