

The Doctrine of Mary

1. The first reference to the mother of the Messiah is in Gen 3:15 indicating that the destroyer of Satan would come from the seed of "the woman."

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman (Mary), and between your offspring and hers; He (Christ) will crush your head, and you will strike His heel."

2. Isa 7:14 is interpreted by Matthew (1:22-23) as a prediction that the Messianic birth should come about through a virgin.

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin (**Almah**) will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Mat 1:22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

Mat 1:23 "The virgin (**Parthenos**) will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"-- which means, "God with us."

3. The incarnation of God by means of a virgin birth was promised to the house of David as a miraculous sign.

3.1 The fulfillment of these prophecies came to pass in Mary of Nazareth, a virgin betrothed to a carpenter named Joseph.

3.2 Though she was frightened when the angel announced she would become pregnant before her marriage to Joseph, she accepted with dignity and humility the announcement from the angel.

Luk 1:38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

3.3 The royal genealogy of Mary is given in Luke (3:23-38).

4. Her rare appearances during the life of her Son reveal her graciousness but Scripture also reveals her peccable nature: for example she failed to comprehend the actions of her son as described in Luk 2:41-50.

Luk 2:41 Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.

Luk 2:42 When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom.

Luk 2:43 After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.

Luk 2:44 Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends.

Luk 2:45 When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

Luk 2:46 After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

Luk 2:47 Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.

Luk 2:48 When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

Luk 2:49 "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

Luk 2:50 But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

5. Later she elicited a tender rebuke for her assertiveness.

Joh 2:3 When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

Joh 2:4 "Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

5.1 Later she was lovingly committed to the Apostle John's care by the dying Christ, and is last mentioned joining with the disciples in waiting for the outpouring of His Spirit.

Joh 19:25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Joh 19:26 When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son,"

Joh 19:27 and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Acts 1:14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

6. While the biblical narrative is as reserved as Mary herself, ecclesiastical teachings about Mary became many, controversial and problematic.

6.1 Very early in church history there were those who used the Greek term **Theotokos**, meaning "the bearer of God" when speaking of Mary.

6.2 In the 4th century, Nestorius, shrinking from Nicene orthodoxy, wished to deny the deity of Christ at the incarnation; he insisted on calling Mary **Christotokos** (bearer of Christ) but not **Theotokos** (bearer of God).

6.3 Cyril of Alexandria and other orthodox men recognized that Mary herself conceived only the humanity of her child but (since the incarnation took place at the same time) she carried the Godman and was therefore **Theotokos**.

6.4 Once the **Theotokos** doctrine was clearly established by the church, certain deductions began.

6.5 Since Mary was the "mother of God," many deemed it incongruous for her to later have children by ordinary procreation and birth.

6.6 As a result, she was declared **Aionparthenos** (ever virgin) and the other children (the **Adelphoi** of Mat 13:55-56) were forcibly construed as "cousins" of Jesus.

Mat 13:55 "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers (**Adelphos**) James, Joseph, Simon and Judas?"

Mat 13:56 Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

Mat 13:57 And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor."

7. It seemed necessary to the Vatican for Mary to be a virgin and sinless both before and after the incarnation.

7.1 This, they then surmised, meant Mary had to have a sinless birth; hence the doctrine of Mary's sinless conception and birth was advanced.

7.2 In the 13th century it was argued that Mary's sinless condition was necessary; otherwise, Christ's body would have been contaminated. Aquinas and the Dominicans opposed this position.

7.3 Thomas Aquinas wrote, "Christ could not be the Savior of the whole world, including Mary, if she were without sin and not in need of salvation."

7.4 By the 16th century these objections were dismissed and the dogma of Mary's perfection was officially promulgated by the Pope.

7.5 For some reason, or lack of it, it has never seemed necessary to the Roman church to argue for the "sinlessness" of Mary's parents.

7.6 Wycliffe writes: "If it were necessary for Mary to have been sinless so as to not contaminate Christ, why would not the same be true of Mary's parents?"

8. The tradition about Mary's body being without sin and perpetually virgin continues even as I write today.

9. But only after the Immaculate Conception, perpetual virginity and sinless perfection had been defined by "Papal bull" did the Roman Catholic Church dogmatize about Mary's death.

10. On November 1, 1950, it was written, "... when the course of her earthly life was finished, (she) was taken by body and soul into the glory of heaven."

11. After developing a full "Mariology" of her life and character, the Roman church defined Mary's role in salvation.

11.1 Her relation to the Church and her veneration according to the Vatican Council makes Mary "a preeminent and singular member of the Church" and "mother of men, particularly of the faithful."

11.2 The council went on to say: "Because of her acceptance of the divine birth in her being full of grace and truth she "contributed to life as Eve had contributed to death."

11.3 Her life is interpreted as perfectly sinless.

12. Following this "preeminent theory" came the Vatican's formulation of Mary's mediation.

12.1 First, the council made an evangelical insistence on the sole mediatorship of Christ or at the Father's divine pleasure and from the superabundance of the merits of Christ.

12.2 Her own "salvific influence" appears in her cooperation with Christ on earth and the continuance in heaven of her intercession for men.

12.3 Therefore she is invoked as "an auxiliary advocate and mediator."

12.4 The council went on to say that this must "be so understood that it neither takes away from, nor adds anything to, the dignity of an efficaciousness of Christ the one Mediator."

12.5 The Vatican went on to say however, others also participate in a "manifold cooperation." The Church herself becomes a virgin spouse to Christ imitating His virgin mother.

12.6 The term "mediatrix" is used in spite of opposition at the council; the council in fact took great pains to indicate that the term does not mean what it appears to teach.

12.7 Insistence is made that Christ is sole Mediator although Mary is also a "mediatrix."

12.8 It is not clear why Rome, if it desired to teach that there is only one Mediator between God and man, did not deliberately avoid using the term "mediatrix."

12.9 Especially given the fact that there was stubborn opposition within and without the council.

13. Protestants generally and historically have denied and resisted the Mariological development in Rome.

14. Because of the reaction to the deification of Mary, Wycliffe writes: "They (*Protestants*) are probably under-appreciative of the mother of the Lord by virtue of over-reaction."

