



The Bible and the Virgin Mary

I. INTRODUCTION

“Most Christians know that the life of Jesus is foreshadowed throughout the Old Testament. Through a close examination of the Bible, as well as the work of both Catholic and Protestant scholars . . . , [this study shows] that just as Jesus is the “New Adam” so is Mary the “New Eve.” (From Scott Hahn’s book *Hail, Holy Queen*, back cover).

This study should help us to better understand the importance of the Blessed Virgin Mary in salvation history and in Christian piety, and thus deepen our own devotion and love for the Blessed Virgin.

II. COURSE OVERVIEW

To help you have an idea of where we’ll be going over the next six sessions, here’s a roadmap of sorts.

Week 1: How to Read Scripture from the Heart of the Church

- We’re going to start by talking about how to read [or interpret] Scripture with the mind and heart of the Church, and specifically, how to interpret the passages about Mary.

Week 2: Mary as the New Eve

- In the next session, we’ll start putting those interpretive skills to use and see how Mary, as the New Eve, fits into God’s plan to save us.

Week 3: The Ark of the Covenant and Mary’s Perpetual Virginity

- After that, we’ll explore Mary’s relationship to the Ark of the Covenant and see what that has to tell us about Mary’s



Perpetual Virginity.

Week 4: Mary, Mother of God

- In Week Four, Mary's motherhood (including her title as Mother of God) will be front and center in our discussion.

Week 5: The Immaculate Conception

- In Week Five, we'll unpack the Scriptures that give us the doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception and her title, "All Holy."

Week 6: Mary's Assumption and Coronation

- Finally, in our last session, we'll see how the Church's belief in Mary's Assumption and her Coronation as Queen of Heaven and Earth is rooted in the Bible.

III. COMMON THEMES

Throughout the study, we'll look not only at what the Bible says about Mary, but also at what the earliest Christians believed about her.

- We'll address some of the most common objections against Marian devotions and doctrines, and talk about the biblical justification for the devotions themselves.
- By the end of the study, you'll understand why Catholic devotion to Mary, rooted in the biblical witness of Christ's first followers, is far from blasphemy.
- In fact, you'll probably be thinking that it's wrong not to honor Mary as the human person who most perfectly conforms to the image of God.



Week 1: A Biblical Introduction to Mary

Mary, the Mother of Christ, the Mother of God, is without question the most important woman who ever lived. And that's true even from a purely historical and secular viewpoint.

Thousands of books, songs, and poems have been written about her and almost every great (and not so great) artist has painted, drawn, or sculpted her image.

Likewise, the name of Mary has been invoked by soldiers going into battle, by kings and presidents as they've led their people, and by the simplest and humblest of souls as they've gone about the business of their everyday lives.

But for all that, the New Testament only records about fifteen different episodes involving the Blessed Virgin Mary.

I. TWO CONCLUSIONS

There are two possible conclusions we can draw from that.

- First, we could conclude that Mary actually isn't an important part of Salvation History, that all the stories and songs and artwork are just an afterthought, an add-on to the true message of the Gospel
- Or we could conclude that there is more to those few passages than meets the eye.

And that their meaning isn't hard to see if you know how to read [interpret] Scripture the right way. It's not hard to see if you know how to "read" Scripture with the mind and heart of the Church.



And that is why we're here today. We're going to learn how to read Scripture from the heart of the Church so that we can unpack all that the New (and the Old) Testament has to say about Mary.

We're going to learn that Mary is not an afterthought or an add-on to the Gospel. Rather, she is at the very center of the story of Salvation History. She is at the very center of God's plan to bring life, eternal life, to you and to me.

Mary of the New Testament

Before we go any further, let's quickly review those New Testament episodes that refer to Mary, either directly or indirectly. Again, there aren't that many.

Basically, this is what we're told about her.

- In addition to Matthew's genealogy which mentions her as the mother of Jesus (Mt. 1:16),
- We learn in the Gospel of Luke that an angel announced to Mary, "a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph," that she would bear a son, Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit (1:26-38).
- While pregnant with this son, Mary pays a long visit to her cousin Elizabeth. (Lk 1:39-56)
- In the Gospel of Matthew, we learn that she bears this son in the city of Bethlehem (Mt 1:18-25).



- And was present as shepherds and magi paid him homage (Lk2:15-20; Mt 2:11).
- When the evil King Herod orders the death of all male children under the age of two, Mary and her husband Joseph flee with the child to Egypt. (Mt 2:14)
- Scripture also tells us that Mary presented Jesus in the temple, when he was a small baby (Lk 2:22-35)...
- And that later, when he was 12, Mary found Jesus teaching in that same temple. (Lk 2:41-52)
- Mary also was at a wedding in Cana, where she watched Jesus perform his first public miracle. (Jn 2:1-11)
- She came looking for him when he was teaching in Matthew 12 (46-50; Mk 3:31-35, Lk 8:19-21), and was present later in Nazareth when he was rejected by his own people (Mt 13:54-58; Mk 6:1-6).
- Later, Mary watched her Son die on the cross (Jn 19:25-28)...
- And was among those gathered with the Apostles in Jerusalem awaiting the promised Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:14).

More indirect references to Mary:

- Luke (11:27-28), where an anonymous woman cries out to Jesus: “Blessed is the womb that bore you.
- Paul mentions her, but not by name, in Galatians 4:4: “But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law...”



- And lastly, she appears in Revelation, the woman clothed with the sun who brought forth the male child “who is to rule all the nations.” (Rev 11:19-12:17).

The Mary of Doctrine and Devotion

And that is the last word the Bible has to say about Mary.

- Again, depending on how you count it, Mary is mentioned about 15 times in the New Testament. That’s less than most of the Apostles and far less than Peter, who gets 155 different mentions.

But it’s Mary, not Peter, who makes it into the Apostle’s Creed. In fact, she’s one of only two people (besides Jesus) who are mentioned in the creeds.

How did that happen? How did a woman who Scripture names barely a dozen times come to inspire some of the Church’s earliest liturgies and prayers, as well as some of its most controversial and misunderstood beliefs?

Those are good questions!

- And, not surprisingly, they’ve been sticking points for many non-Catholics who struggle to find a scriptural basis for what Catholics believe about Mary and how we honor her.

At best, those non-Catholics look upon our Marian beliefs and devotions as products of a pious but misguided imagination.

- At worst, they call it “Mariolatry”—a false worship that undermines the perfect saving work of Christ and robs him of his glory.



That's a pretty serious charge. And it deserves a serious answer!

I. CONNECTING THE DOTS

Over the next six sessions, we're going to find that answer.

- We'll see how prayers such as the "Hail Mary" are composed largely of biblical words.
- And we'll see how the Church's teachings about Mary are definitive interpretations of Scripture passages pertaining to Mary.
- In fact, through the close study of the Bible, we're going to find the seeds for nearly all Catholic devotions to Mary, including the Rosary.

II. READING MARY

We have a lot of ground to cover, but before we can appreciate the connections between the Mary of Scripture and the Mary of doctrine and devotion, we first need to learn how to read/interpret the Scriptures.

More specifically, we need to learn how to read what the Scriptures have to say about Mary.

Once we've learned that lesson, we'll see that while the direct biblical references might seem scant on the surface, they are quite profound and rich with meaning.

We'll also see that Mary is deeply woven into the fabric of the inspired text.



- Now, it's important to understand, that when we talk about "learning to read" the Scriptures, we're not talking about some secret Catholic method of decoding the Bible.

This part of the Bible study is not "The Da Vinci Code for Catholics."

Rather, the goal of this lesson is to give you the time-tested tools that Catholics have always used to read and interpret the Bible.

- These are the methods the pope uses when he writes about Scripture.
- They're the methods the Church Fathers and Doctors used when they wrote about Scripture in the first centuries after Christ.
- They are, in fact, the same methods the Apostles and Evangelists used when they penned the actual pages of Scripture.
- Finally, this is the way Jesus "read" the Scriptures [Luke 24:27].

Only by understanding how the Bible's authors intended us to read what they wrote, can we actually understand what they wrote.

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT, INTERPRETER OF SCRIPTURE

The following is taken from the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), paragraphs 109 ff.

- *In Sacred Scripture, God speaks to man in a human way.*
- *To interpret Scripture correctly, the reader must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm, and*
- *to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words.*⁷⁵

In order to discover the sacred authors' intention, the reader must take into account

- *the conditions of their time and culture,*
- *the literary genres in use at that time, and*
- *the modes of feeling, speaking and narrating then current. "For the fact is that truth is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing, in prophetic and poetical texts, and in other forms of literary expression."*⁷⁶

But since Sacred Scripture is inspired, there is another and no less important principle of correct interpretation, without which Scripture would remain a dead letter.

- *Sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted in the light of the same Spirit by whom it was written.*⁷⁷

A. Three Criteria of Interpretation

*The Second Vatican Council indicates three criteria for interpreting Scripture in accordance with the Spirit who inspired it.*⁷⁸



- *Be especially attentive "to the content and unity of the whole Scripture."*

Different as the books which compose it may be, Scripture is a unity by reason of the unity of God's plan, of which Christ Jesus is the center and heart, open since his Passover.⁷⁹

- *Read the Scripture within "the living Tradition of the whole Church".*

According to a saying of the Fathers, Sacred Scripture is written principally in the Church's heart rather than in documents and records, for the Church carries in her Tradition the living memorial of God's Word, and it is the Holy Spirit who gives her the spiritual interpretation of the Scripture (" . . . according to the spiritual meaning which the Spirit grants to the Church"⁸¹).

- *Be attentive to the analogy of faith.⁸²*

By "analogy of faith" we mean the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of Revelation.

B. The Senses of Scripture

According to an ancient tradition, one can distinguish between two senses of Scripture: the literal and the spiritual, the latter being subdivided into the allegorical, moral and anagogical senses. The profound concordance of the four senses guarantees all its richness to the living reading of Scripture in the Church.

C. Literal Sense

The literal sense is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture and



discovered by exegesis, following the rules of sound interpretation: "All other senses of Sacred Scripture are based on the literal."⁸³

D. Spiritual Sense

Thanks to the unity of God's plan, not only the text of Scripture but also the realities and events about which it speaks can be signs.

1. The allegorical sense.

We can acquire a more profound understanding of events by recognizing their significance in Christ; thus the crossing of the Red Sea is a sign or type of Christ's victory and also of Christian Baptism.⁸⁴

2. The moral sense.

The events reported in Scripture ought to lead us to act justly. As St. Paul says, they were written "for our instruction".⁸⁵

3. The anagogical sense (Our Destiny).

We can view realities and events in terms of their eternal significance, leading us toward our true homeland: thus the Church on earth is a sign of the heavenly Jerusalem.⁸⁶

IV. OF HER WAS BORN...

We're going to begin this “reading lesson” simply by taking a look at the literal—or “literary”—sense of the texts.

- In other words, what do the words on the page tell us about Mary?

Mary's first appearance in the New Testament comes in its very first chapter, at the end of the long genealogy that opens the Gospel of Matthew.

- There, she is introduced as “Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.” (Mt 1:16)

To understand what Matthew tells us with those words, we have to read them in context.

- They conclude a genealogy that Matthew has primarily presented to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is “the son of David, the son of Abraham.” (Mt 1:1)

Why does demonstrating that fact matter so much to Matthew? Why does he have to bring David and Abraham into the opening verse of his Gospel?



V. THE COVENANTS OF SALVATION HISTORY

Because of God's covenants with Israel, the covenants of Salvation History.

The story of Jesus, and therefore, the story of Mary, cannot be understood apart from the story of Israel. And their story is a story of covenants.

For those of you not familiar with the term, a covenant may seem like it's similar to a contract, but it's actually quite different.

To start with, a covenant is more binding than a contract.

- The punishment for violating a covenant is death, not a mere fine or penalty.
- Covenants are also more powerful.
- Contracts form temporary business partnerships. They involve the exchange of goods and services - "This is mine. That is yours."
- Covenants, on the other hand, involve the exchange of persons - "I am yours. You are mine."
- In other words, covenants make families.



VI. GOD'S STORY

Accordingly, throughout Salvation History, God has used covenants to bring men and women into his family—the family of God.

- For those of you not familiar with the term, “Salvation History” refers to history from God’s perspective.
 - It’s the story of how, in time, God has made men and women part of his family.

God himself tells us that story in the pages of the Bible.

- And God, as the Catechism tells us, is “the Principle Author of Scripture.” (CCC #304)
 - Likewise, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us that all Scripture is “inspired.”

W Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

- The Greek word Paul uses for “inspired” in that passage is *theopneustos* (thay-uh-nu-stos), which means “God-breathed.”

So when we talk about the Bible being inspired, we mean the words of Scripture are the very words of God.

2 Peter 1:20-21 tells us that the human authors of Scripture were moved to write by the Holy Spirit. They wrote down exactly what God wanted and nothing more.

Nevertheless, the sacred books still bear marks of their own personal style and individual perspectives.

VII. SALVATION HISTORY TIMELINE

Now that we've got all our terms straight, we need to take a quick look at the covenants God used to bring men and women into his divine family.

- God made his first covenant with humanity in the Garden of Eden, with *Adam and Eve*.
- He made his family a little bit bigger with the second covenant of Salvation History—his covenant with *Noah*. This time, he didn't just make a covenant with one married couple, but rather with Noah's entire household.
- That family got even bigger when God made his covenant with *Abraham*, thus welcoming Abraham's tribe into His family.
- God then made his fourth covenant with *Moses* and the entire nation of Israel...
- And his fifth covenant with *David* and David's kingdom, which included people from many tribes and many nations.
- All of those Old Testament covenants foreshadowed the New Covenant of Christ, the covenant through which God would invite all humanity into his Divine Family.



VIII. SON OF ABRAHAM, SON OF DAVID

Even though all those covenants foreshadowed the New Covenant, God's covenants with Abraham and David have special significance.

- Abraham was the founding father of God's chosen people, Israel.
- And when God made his covenant with him, he promised Abraham that through his descendents all the nations of the earth would be blessed. (Gen 22:18)
- God also promised Abraham that kings would stem from his line. (Gen 17:6)
- Later, God swore an oath to one of those kings, King David, that his kingdom would have no end...
- He also swore that David's son would be God's own son...
- And that he would reign forever over Israel and all the nations of the world. (See 2 Sam 7:12-13; Ps 89:27-28; Ps 132:11-12)

Less than 500 years later, however, the Davidic Kingdom collapsed and its people were sent into exile. That was an exile from which many never returned.

From a human perspective, it seemed like God hadn't held up his end of the bargain



And yet, despite how things seemed, Israel's prophets still spoke about a "Christ" or a "Messiah." This Christ, they promised, would liberate Israel's scattered tribes and reunite them in a new and everlasting kingdom.

And that kingdom, they said, would be a light to the nations. (See Is 9:1-7, 49:6, 55:3; Ez 34:23-25, 30, 37:25)

- They also said that the "Christ" would be the son God promised to Abraham and David.

A. Mary at the Centre of Israel's History

- Read in context then, the few words that Matthew gives us about Mary at the beginning of his Gospel are no trifling matter.
 - In one short sentence—"Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ"—Matthew effectively positions Mary at the center of Israel's history.

Of her was born the Christ through whom God would fulfill his covenant promises to Abraham and David.

But Matthew didn't just position Mary at the center of Israel's history with that little sentence.

- He also positioned her at the center of human history.

The fruit of Mary's womb is the source of the world's salvation. Through Christ, born of Mary, God bestows his divine blessing upon all nations and peoples.



IX. THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Matthew reiterates that point a few verses later when he writes that Mary was “found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.”

W Read Matthew 1:18-25

- What Matthew tells us there is that Mary’s virginal conception of Jesus fulfills a promise made by God through the prophet Isaiah.

In fact, verse twenty-three quotes Isaiah 7:14: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel’ (which means, God with us).”

- In chapter two, Matthew repeats a passage from Micah showing us that the long-awaited Messiah has come through Mary.

W Read Micah 5:2-3 (Note: Micah 5:1-3 in the NAB version)

W Read Matthew 2:6

- Mary is she who has “brought forth.” And through Mary “God is with us.”

Again, to grasp the full import of what Matthew tells us about Mary in this passage, we have to understand the Old Testament context Matthew assumes.

Matthew expects that his readers will hear in those words one of the great promises of Salvation History:

- The promise that God will one day come and dwell with his people.

We see hints of that promise in:

- Isaiah 43:5: “Fear not, for I am with you...”
- We also see it in Ezekiel 37:24-28: “My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Throughout Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus himself reinforces the notion that, in him, the fulfillment of that promise has come:

- For example, Jesus describes how he will be “with us,” for all time especially in the Eucharist. (see Mt 18:20, 25:40,45; 26:26-28)
- And his last words to his disciples before his Ascension into heaven resound with the promise: “I am with you always, to the close of the age.” (Mt 28:20)

That’s why Matthew’s reference to Mary as the virgin prophesied by Isaiah places her at the center of God’s saving plan for Israel and the world.

- The literal meaning of the text here is that Mary is the divine “sign” that God long ago promised to give his people.
- She is the sign of God’s eternal faithfulness to his covenant with David.
- She is the sign that God has finally come to bring about the fulfillment of his plan for all creation.

X. THE LORD IS WITH YOU

For the next part of our “reading lesson” we’re going to turn to the Gospel of Luke and his account of the Annunciation. It’s a bit long, but it’s important that we read the whole story.

W Read Luke 1:26-38

Here again, our first objective is to understand the account in context. We want to understand what the literal words written tell us about Mary.

- Luke, like Matthew, introduces Mary as a virgin betrothed to Joseph, a descendant of David.
- Luke also tells us that the Angel Gabriel greets her with the words, “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!”

The first thing we need to understand about that sentence is that the word “hail” is not intended to be a synonym for “hi.” Luke isn’t saying, “Hey there, full of grace.”

- Rather, the word which is translated as “hail”—and which is also sometimes translated as “rejoice”—is the same word that Israel’s prophets used to begin prophecies about the promised Messiah and the joy he would bring God’s people.
 - We see that, for example, in both Joel 2:23-24 and Zechariah 9:9.



In fact, the angel's announcement in Luke seems to be drawn almost word for word from a prophecy of Zephaniah's. (3:14-18)

First, in Luke 1, we have:

- “Hail (or Rejoice), full of grace, the Lord is with you!...Do not be afraid, Mary...you will conceive in your womb...the Son of the Most High.”

Compare that to what we see in Zephaniah 3:

- “Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion... The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst...Do not fear, O Zion...the Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory.”
- By comparing those two passages, we can see that Luke seems to be depicting Mary as the Daughter of Zion.

He is depicting her as the representative of her people—the one who is called to rejoice because God, as her Savior and King, has come into her midst.

Luke, again like Matthew, is telling us that the historic hopes of Israel are focused in Mary. She is the one who is first privileged to hear the words that all of Israel has been longing to hear.



XI. SON OF THE MOST HIGH

Luke's account also tells us that Mary's son will be the "Son of the Most High" and will be given "the throne of his father David."

To grasp the literal meaning of that passage, we have to return to the Old Testament and take a closer look at God's covenant with David.

W Read 2 Samuel 7:12-16

Do you see the similarities between Luke's account of the Annunciation and that passage?

- God swore to David that David's son "shall be my son."
- And Gabriel promises Mary that her son will be the "Son of the Most High," which is another way of saying, "Son of God." (See Mk 5:7, Lk 1:35, and 8:28)
- God also swore to David that his son would rule on David's throne forever.
- Likewise, Gabriel promises Mary that her son will be seated on "the throne of David his father... forever."



XII. THE SON OF THE PROMISE

We'll focus on other elements of Luke's Annunciation story in future lessons, but for now, let's jump to the conclusion of this account.

- Mary has asked how she, being a virgin, will conceive the child promised by the angel. Gabriel replies: "For with God, nothing will be impossible."

All of us here in this room have heard those words a thousand times. Whenever we come up against a seemingly insurmountable obstacle, someone is sure to say, "Nothing is impossible with God."

But when first century Christians and Jews heard those words, they didn't connect them with a Hallmark card. They connected them with the Old Covenant and the Old Testament.

B. Sarah

- An angel spoke almost those exact same words to Sarah, Abraham's wife, when she laughed at the idea that she could bear a son in her old age.

W Read Genesis 18:14

By using those words, Luke shows us that Mary, like Sarah, is being called to bear the son of God's covenant promise.

C. Rebekah

Those words, however, don't just connect Mary's son to Sarah's son. They connect her to all the other miraculous births in salvation history.



- In addition to the birth of Isaac, we can hear echoes of Rebekah's conception of Jacob and Esau:

“And Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.” (Gen 25:21)

D. Rachel

- We can also hear echoes of Rachel's conception of Joseph:

“Then God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her and opened her womb. She conceived and bore a son, and said, ‘God has taken away my reproach.’” (Gen 30:22-23)

XIII. THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD

The angel's words to Mary connect her to those three mothers and their miraculous conceptions. Likewise, Mary's response to the angel connects her to yet another mother who miraculously conceived a son: Hannah.

She's the mother of Samuel, the priest and prophet who anointed David, king of Israel.

Hannah, like Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, was barren.

- Desperately wanting a child, she promised God that if he gave her a son, she would give that son back to him. She would consecrate the boy to the Lord's service.

W Read 1 Samuel 1:11-18

- Five times in that passage, Hannah described herself as the Lord's maidservant or “handmaid.”



- And in presenting herself as the “handmaid of the Lord” Mary recalls Hannah and her oath.

Mary too will consecrate her son to God’s service.

She too will give him back to God so that he can be a priest and prophet, anointed to be a Davidic King.

E. The Visitation: Mary and Hannah

Luke draws the connection between Mary and Hannah even more clearly in his account of the Visitation.

When Mary goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth, Elizabeth greets her with the words: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”

- Mary’s response is a song of praise for God’s saving plan.

W Read Luke 1:46-55

That song is the prayer we call the Magnificat.

- And it closely resembles the “Song of Hannah” in 1 Samuel, which Hannah prayed after she conceived and bore a son. (cf. 1 Sam 2:1-10)

By drawing all these comparisons, Luke does more than connect Jesus with the other miraculous births of salvation history.

- He demonstrates that Jesus is the last and greatest of these births. He is the true son of the promise, the Messiah come at last.



And in doing that, Luke also demonstrates that Mary is the greatest mother of Salvation History.

- She is the woman of the promise, the woman who all the other great mothers of the Old Testament foreshadowed.

XIV. LITERAL, HISTORICAL, DIVINE

We said that this first session was going to be a “reading lesson”—a lesson designed to give us the tools we need to read the Bible and understand what it has to say about the Blessed Virgin Mary.

So, what tools have we picked up so far?

- First, we’ve seen that a literary reading—reading the literal text in context—gives us knowledge of **historical truth**.

In the passages we’ve read today, that historical truth has been that Jesus was born through the Holy Spirit to a virgin named Mary.

- But this historical truth also conveys a divine meaning.
- That is to say, the historical events and the manner in which the events are written about, communicate far more than just facts.
- They reveal the existence of a plan of salvation that God is working out in human history.

Matthew and Luke’s accounts assume the existence of a divine plan, in which the covenant oaths God swore to Abraham and David are meant to find their ultimate fulfillment in the coming of Christ.



The two seem to envision a sort of golden thread connecting the events, figures, and institutions of the Old Testament with those of the New Testament.

- The reason for the evangelists' careful use of quotes and allusions to Israel's past is to reveal the unity between the Old and New Testaments.
- They want to show how what happens to Mary is the continuation and culmination of what has come before.

XV. TYPOLOGY

This way of reading and writing is broadly known as typology. And when it comes to understanding what the Bible has to say about Mary, typology is one of the most important tools in your toolbox.

- Typology connects the persons, places, and events of the Old Testament to the persons, places, and events of the New Testament.
- It studies how God's work in the Old Covenant prefigured what He accomplished through Christ in the New Covenant (CCC 128)
- Accordingly, a "type" is anything in the Old Testament that points to the coming of Christ and his work in our redemption.

Jesus himself taught the Apostles to understand him by using typology in their reading of the Scriptures.



A. Examples of Typology

- For example, he showed them how Jonah was a sign that prefigured him:

“But he answered them, ‘An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.’” (Mt 12:39-40)

- He also showed them how Solomon was a “type” of him:

“The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.” (Mt 12:42)

- ...As well as the temple:

“Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’” (Jn 2:19)

Of course, he wasn’t talking about the Jerusalem Temple where the Jews came to sacrifice and worship. He was talking about himself - the New Temple of the New Covenant.

Jesus summed up this way of reading the Scriptures in Luke 24:44-45, when he said:

- “Everything written about me in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled.”



What he showed them was that the persons, places, things, and events of the Old Testament were written to prepare us for him.

XVI. LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Even in Jesus' day, this way of reading the Scriptures was nothing new. In the Old Testament, particularly in the writings of the prophets and the psalmists, we often find typology used to prepare Israel for its coming savior.

- Isaiah spoke of a new creation:

“For behold I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.” (Is 65:17)

- Isaiah also referred back to Israel's exodus from slavery in Egypt during the time of Moses. He said that first exodus foreshadowed a new exodus:

“And the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt; and will wave his hand over the River with his scorching wind, and smite it into seven channels that men may cross dry shod. And there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant which is left of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.” (Is 11:15-16)

- Isaiah, as well as Ezekiel and Jeremiah, also spoke of the coming of a new Davidic shepherd-king and the restoration of the kingdom. (See Is 9:1-7; Jer 23:5-6; and Ezk 16:59-63, 34:24-30, 37:23-28)



The New Testament writers saw each of these great “types”—creation, the exodus, and the kingdom of David—gloriously fulfilled in the New Covenant of Jesus.

- Jesus was the “New Adam,” the first born of a new creation. (Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:21-22, 45-49)
- His cross and resurrection mark a new exodus from slavery to sin into glory. (Lk 9:31; 1 Cor 10:1-4)
- While his Church is the New Jerusalem and the New Kingdom of David. (Gal 4:26; Acts 1:6-9; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6)

XVII. LIKE MOTHER, LIKE SON

And typology doesn’t just illuminate our understanding of Jesus. It also illuminates our understanding of Mary.

As we’ll see in the lessons ahead, the New Testament writers developed a typological understanding of Mary’s role in Salvation History.

- They saw her as:
 - the New Eve,
 - the Ark of the New Covenant,
 - and the new Queen Mother of the Kingdom of God.
- When we understand how the writers use typology, we find that Mary is depicted as mysteriously inseparable from the saving mission of her son.



What the New Testament has to say about Mary fills only a few verses. But read in the context of the rest of the story, it tells us all we need to know:

- Mary was made holy,
- destined from all eternity to give the Word flesh, to bear God's only begotten Son,
- and to be crowned mother over all who enter into his kingdom.

Preparation for the Next Lesson

Hail, Holy Queen, Chapters 1 & 2

Matthew 1

Luke 1

John 2:1-11

Additional study resources can be found on the St. Paul Center website at: www.salvationhistory.com.