

Mary

the Mother of Our Saviour



The Bible first introduces us to the mother of our Saviour Jesus Christ forty centuries before she was born! The very first prophecy of the Redeemer, given in the Garden of Eden at the dawn of history, spoke clearly of her: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15). “Her seed” is an unmistakable reference to the virgin birth of Christ and therefore to Mary as His virgin mother. By natural generation, a child is born of the seed of a man, but Christ was virgin-born, “made of a woman” (Galatians 4:4), without a human father, by the supernatural power of the Holy Ghost. Isaiah gives us the most definitive reference to Mary in the Old Testament: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). The Gospels complete the story and plainly identify that virgin as Mary the mother of Jesus (Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38).

Just what was Mary like? The Scriptures tell us that she was of the tribe of Judah, of the royal house of David. However, despite her royal lineage she was a woman of little means, as is evident from the circumstances in which she brought forth her firstborn child, the Lord Jesus. But though poor as to worldly goods she was not poor in moral and spiritual character. She was a young woman of sterling qualities, pure, moral, and of great faith, as her response to the message of the angel of the Lord that she would bear a son clearly shows: “The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. . . . And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden:

The real Biblical character of Mary the mother of Jesus is a very different person from the Roman Catholic presentation of her as reflected in Michelangelo’s sculpture.

for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name" (Luke 1:35, 46-49).

In this song of rejoicing at the news that she was to be the mother of the Redeemer, Mary draws attention to the most important fact in her biography: "my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." The virgin mother of Christ here confesses herself a sinner in need of salvation and rejoices in the knowledge of God her Saviour.

This is a very different picture of Mary from the one popularized by the Roman Catholic Church—the notion that Mary was

the mother of our Lord Jesus. Soon only her name remained unchanged. The very apostasy that Jeremiah had warned the Jews against (Jeremiah 44:25-29) was blatantly brought into the Christian church.

To a very large degree the Reformation rooted out the errors of Babylonianism, and the Protestant churches reintroduced the Bible's teaching about Mary. But to this day, two Marys exist: the Mary of the New Testament and the false Mary proclaimed and worshipped by the world's Roman Catholics.

The prominent place given to Mary in the Roman Catholic Church is in sharp

prayer in the upper room after the Saviour's ascension (Acts 1:14). From the evidence of the New Testament we must conclude that she received no special prominence among the members of the early church. Nor was she mentioned in the inspired writings of Peter, Paul, John, or James. With the New Testament giving her so little prominence, it is impossible to accept the Roman Catholic Church's dogma that she is the sinless mother of God, the Queen of Heaven, and a co-redemptrix and co-mediatrix with Christ.

Mary was just what she herself tells us she was—a sinner rejoicing in the mercy of God her Saviour. She was favoured by God in being chosen to be the mother of the Lord Jesus, but she was blessed and favoured even more by being chosen unto salvation through Him and being brought to faith in Him. She is a fellow-believer with all other believers and a sister in Christ to all who are members of the family of God.

Elisabeth's eulogy of Mary was well spoken. Referring to her as "the mother of my Lord," Elisabeth said, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. . . . And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord" (Luke 1:42, 45). Elisabeth was right and Mary's faith was rewarded as the Lord did all He had promised in her virgin-born Son. ■

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immaculately conceived and therefore sinless and in no need of being saved. The creation of this anti-scriptural view of Mary has a long history. Some one hundred and fifty years after Mary's death, the Christian church's view of her was corrupted by false ideas about her and about her role as the mother of Christ, ideas drawn directly from Babylonian idolatry. The Babylonians had a female deity whom they called the "Queen of Heaven." Superimposing the idolatrous ideas surrounding this heathen goddess on the Biblical character of Mary, heretics introduced the basest idolatry into the church under the guise of honouring

contrast to the place given her in the New Testament. During Christ's recorded ministry, we meet Mary only twice: at the wedding in Cana (John 2) and on the occasion when she and the Saviour's brothers sought to meet with Him and were met with His rebuke (Matthew 12:46-50). Though she was present at Calvary where the sword of unspeakable sorrow passed through her soul (Luke 2:35), no words of hers are recorded. From the cross the Lord Jesus committed her to the apostle John's care for the rest of her life (John 19:25-27). Later, she was one of the women attending the special season of

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