



"Hail to you, O full of Grace, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women." (Luke 1:28)



HAIL TO MARY

MAGDO MARIAM



Hail to Mary

1. Hail to Mary, Mother of God;
From sunrise to sunset,
Magnify her, glorify her,
Put her always in your heart.
2. She has born unto us,
The Savior of the world,
He came and saved our souls
and forgave us our sins.
3. She's the Lady and the Virgin
Our queen in Heaven
She's above the Cherubim,
And praised by the Seraphim.
4. She is famous and well known
As the best shelter to rest,
Try her and you will find that,
for your help she's always there.
5. Please O Mary, Pray for us
And the sinners to return.
Teach us and guide all of us,
For you are the faithful saint.

The Symbols of Saint Mary, Mother of God, In the Old Testament

*Written by: 2 Mighty Angels Mother,
St Mary & St Mina Church, Clearwater FL*

The Old Testament is filled with symbols of our Lord Jesus Christ. For example, Moses is a symbol of our Lord Jesus Christ because he led the Israelites from the land of bondage to the Promised Land. Our Lord Jesus Christ also leads His people from the bondage of the enemy (Satan) to the true Promise Land (Heaven).

St. Mary the Virgin is also seen in the Old Testament through symbols and prophecies. The prophet Isaiah said about the



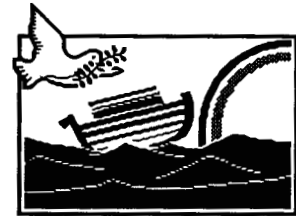
Prophet Isaiah

Mother of God, **“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Emanuel.”**
(Isaiah 7:14)

The following are some signs in the Old Testament that symbolizes the holy Mother of God, St. Mary.

1. *The Ark of Noah*

Noah was a symbol of our Lord Jesus Christ. While by Noah eight people were saved through the ark, by our Lord Jesus Christ, we are all saved through baptism (water). As the ark carried Noah through the stormy seas, our lady, St. Mary, carried and cared for our Lord Jesus Christ.



In our Orthodox tradition St. Mary symbolizes the Church. This is because St. Mary gave birth to our Lord Jesus Christ in the body and the body of our Lord Jesus Christ is the Church. Also, both St. Mary and the Church are called ‘mother’ and ‘bride’. The Church, which gave birth to all of us through baptism as children of God and members of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the new ark. Inside the Church is salvation and outside is the flood of sin and despair in this passing world.

The next time you go to Church take a look at the inside of the building. You may notice that it looks like an ark. This is because we know the Church as the only place where we can be saved from our sins through the sacraments.

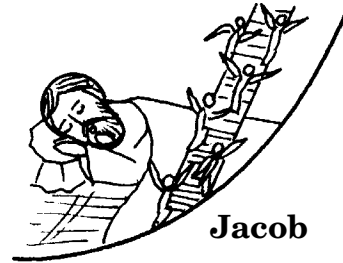
2. *The Ladder of Jacob*

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When Jacob ran away from his brother Esau he came to



a certain place and stayed there all night because the sun had set. He took a stone and put it under his head and went to sleep. Then he had a dream. In this dream he saw a ladder that was set on the earth and reached all the way up to Heaven, and there were angels going up and coming down on it. On top of the ladder he saw the Lord. When Jacob awoke from his sleep he said, **“Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it.”** And he was afraid and said, **“How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God and this is the gate of Heaven!”** (Genesis 28:10-17)



The Lord stood above the ladder expressing His desire to come down to earth. It is through His incarnation that the Lord came down from Heaven, took a body and revealed to us Himself. Saint Mary is the Ladder of Jacob because through her, our Lord Jesus Christ came down from Heaven and bound Heaven with earth.

St. Mary is also known as the ‘Gate of Heaven’. In the Prayer of the Third Hour in the Agpeya we say, “Whenever we stand in Your holy sanctuary, we are considered standing in Heaven. O Theotokos, you are the Gate of Heaven, open for us the gate of mercy.

3. *The City of God*

In the Holy Book of Psalms, St. Mary symbolizes Zion, the City of God. “His foundations are in the holy mountains. The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things have been spoken of you, O City of God.” (Psalm 86:1-3). St. Mary is the mother whom the Most High God has founded (or chosen) and where He was living as man.



David the King also writes, **“My mother Zion! A man will say, and a man was living in her and the Most High Himself has founded her forever.”** (Psalm 86:4-5)

The Church applies this Holy Psalm to St. Mary. The Theotokia of Sunday addresses her saying,

***They spoke of you
With great honor
O Holy City
Of the Great King***



holy mountains

It is important to know that we too are dwelling places of our God. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, **“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make Our home in him.”** (John 14:23) When we love God with all our hearts and we listen and obey His commandments, He will come in us and make His home in our hearts and we will live forever with Him. We can live in Heaven while we are here on earth if we have the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit in our hearts and in our lives.

4. *The Tabernacle of Meeting*

God told Moses, **“I will consecrate (make holy) the Tabernacle (a large tent) of Meeting...I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God.”** (Exodus 29:44, 45) St. Mary is like this Tabernacle of Meeting because the Lord dwelt in her, and through her He dwelt among the people in the flesh.

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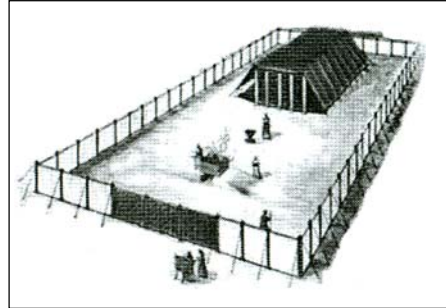
When Moses built the Tabernacle of Meeting and placed the Holy Altar in it (the altar is called the ‘Holy of Holies’) a



“cloud covered the Tabernacle of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.” (Exodus 40:34)

A similar thing happened to our lady, St. Mary. Gabriel the Archangel told her that **“the Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Highest will overshadow you.”**

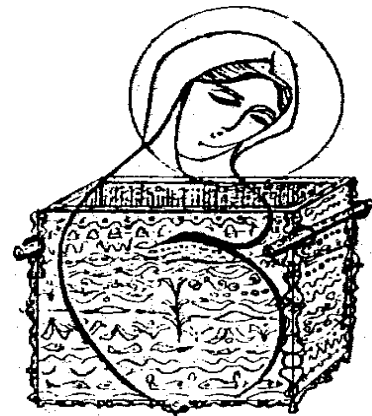
(Luke 1:35) As with the Tabernacle, when the glory of God filled it, so was St. Mary when God, through His Holy Spirit, filled her with His Holy glory.



5. *The Ark of the Covenant*

God commanded Moses to make the Ark of the Covenant with acacia wood, overlaid inside and outside with pure gold (Exodus 25:10,11; Hebrews 9:4) The Church attributes this quality to St. Mary when we pray the Theotokia saying,:

***They made an ark
of unrotting wood
Overlaid with gold
inside and outside.
You are also clothed
O Mary the Virgin
With the glory of the Divinity
inside and outside***



There are a lot of similarities between the history of the Ark of the Covenant and the life of St. Mary. The Ark, which also represents the presence of God remained three months in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite before David the Prophet brought it to his

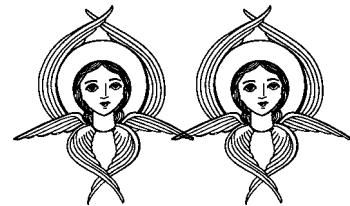


house. This is like St. Mary who, after having the Lord in her womb, remained three months at the house of Zechariah and St. Elizabeth.

Also, the arrival of the Ark of the Covenant made the people rejoice and David leap and whirl before the Lord. Similarly the arrival of St. Mary to Zechariah's house made St. Elizabeth rejoice and the baby, who was St. John the Baptist, leap for joy in St. Elizabeth's womb.

6. *The Cover of the Ark*

Moses was also ordered by God to make a Mercy Seat of pure gold, with two cherubim of gold at its two ends to be put on top of the Ark. The cover was called, 'dwelling place'. It represents God's seat of mercy, overshadowed by the cherubim. God would appear above the cherubim, and there He used to meet with Moses and speak with him. "And there I will meet with you and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the Ark of Testimony, of all things which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel." (Exodus 25:22)



The Cover of the Ark is a symbol of St. Mary because she carried the incarnated God in her womb and the hosts of angels were praising Him even when He was in her womb.

7. *The Pot of Manna*

While the Israelites were in the wilderness they could not plant food nor go to the market to buy anything to eat. So God in Heaven sent them manna from above. **"Behold I will rain bread from Heaven for you . . . Take a pot and put**



an omer of manna in it and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations.” (Exodus 16:4,33) This pot was kept in the Ark of the Covenant along with the two tablets carrying the 10 commandments and the Rod of Aaron.

In the Gospel, the Holy Book of St. John, we read the Lord saying to the Jews, **“I am the Bread of Life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread, which comes down from Heaven that one may eat of it and not die. I am the Living Bread that came down from Heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever, and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world...He who feeds on Me will live because of Me.”** (John 6:48-57)

If the manna represents our Lord Jesus Christ, then the pot carrying the manna represents our lady St. Mary the Virgin who carried our Lord in her womb. It is important we understand that St. Mary the Theotokos was not just a pot carrying the Lord in her womb but our Lord Jesus Christ took his human body from the Virgin Mary. She is not just a vessel that the Lord used and is no longer important but she is a very important part in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ who took His body from her.

8. *The Burning Bush*

One day, when Moses was taking care of some sheep, the Lord God appeared to him in a flame of fire from the middle of a bush. **“So he looked and behold, the bush was burning with fire but the bush was not consumed.”** (Exodus 3:1,2)

The Burning Bush is a symbol of St. Mary because while she carried our Lord Jesus Christ in her womb for nine



Moses and the Burning Bush



St. Mary carried our Lord Jesus Christ in her womb for nine months, the fire of His Divinity did not consume her.



months, the fire of His divinity did not consume her. (God is so pure and holy He is like fire. No one can even look upon the face of God but yet He came down in to St. Mary's womb and she was not burned by His Holy Divinity)

9. *The Rod of Aaron*

During the time of Moses, a man named Korah and his followers began to rebel against God, Moses and Aaron. They wanted to be priests, even though God had already chosen the tribe of Levi, Aaron's tribe, for the priesthood. God told Moses, **"Speak to the children of Israel and get from them a rod from each father's house – 12 rods. Write each man's name on his rod. And you shall put Aaron's name on the rod of Levi...Then you shall place them in the Tabernacle of Meeting before the Testimony, where I meet with you. And it shall be that the rod of the man whom I choose will blossom. It came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the Tabernacle of Witness and behold, the rod of Aaron of the House of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds and had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds."** (Numbers 17:1-8)



Rod of Aaron

Remember that Jacob had 12 sons and each son had more children. The 12 tribes of Israel came from the 12 sons of Jacob. Levi was the third son born to Jacob and the children that came from Levi made up the tribe that the Lord chose to be priests among the people of Israel.

The dead rod of Aaron brought forth a living flower. It symbolizes St. Mary because she was just a mere human



being who brought forth the Fruit of Life. The Rod of Aaron also symbolizes the Church and each human soul; weak in itself but through God's grace it may bring forth the **Fruit of the Spirit**.

10. The Golden Lamp Stand

St. Mary is a symbol of the golden lamp stand because she carried the True Light that came into the world.

11. The Golden Censer

Aaron, the high priest, used the golden censer. It symbolizes St. Mary because the live coal inside the censer represents our Lord Jesus Christ and the unity of His Divine and human nature. The aroma of the incense coming out of the censer points to the sacrifice of our Savior. As a mother, St. Mary was burning with pain when she saw the Holy Cross of our Lord. The Prayer of the Ninth Hour says, "When the mother saw the Lamb and Shepherd, the Savior of the world hung on the cross, she said while weeping: 'The world rejoices in receiving salvation, while my inward parts burn as I look at Your Crucifixion which You are enduring for the sake of all, my Son and my God.'"



Like the censer carried the burning coal, so the Virgin Mother carried the Lord Jesus Christ.

12. The Gate of Ezekiel

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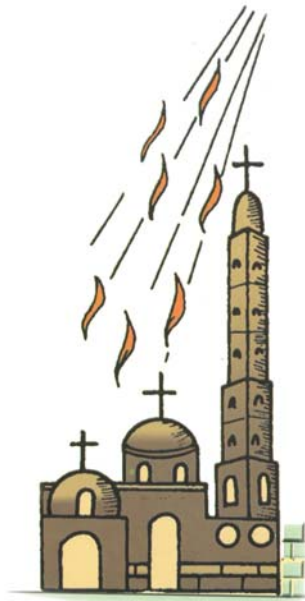
Ezekiel the prophet writes, "**Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces**



toward the east, but it was shut. And the Lord said to me, **‘This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it. Therefore, it shall be shut.’**” (Ex. 44:1,2)

At the moment St. Mary answered the archangel, **‘Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word’** (Luke 1:38), the Lord entered into her womb. She became the gate opened for the human race to become members of the Lord Jesus Christ’s Body taken from her. Therefore we address her in the Prayer of the Third Hour saying, “O Theotokos, you are the Gate of Heaven. Open for us the gate of mercy.”

“Shape of the Church”



Like a ship,

To remind us of Noah’s Ark.



Like a circle,

To remind us of Eternity that has no beginning nor end.



Like a Cross,

Topped with half-circled domes to remind us of Heaven.