

The Blessed Virgin Mary As Biblical Fulfillment Of The Ark Of The Covenant



Miraculous Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe¹
(Image given to humanity on December 9th, 1531 via St. Juan Diego)

Let's begin this study with a prayer.

The Come, Holy Spirit Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful;
And enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created.
And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let Us Pray . . .

O God, Who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful,
grant that by the gift of the same Spirit that we may always be truly wise and ever rejoice
in His consolation, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the
fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of
our death. Amen.

¹ The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe approximates the Woman of Revelation 12, therefore I used this image here.

Notes

Introduction/Outline

In this study we will observe the parallels between the Ark of the Covenant and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

We will begin by touching on some Biblical principles concerning prefigurements (“types” or “shadows”) and fulfillments. Then we will remind ourselves that Jesus fulfills all good things and loves to work in and through His creation (the Incarnation itself points to His love for His creation).

We will look specifically at “The Fall” and see that Adam (Adam in addition to being a real man, was also a “**type**” or prefigurement of Christ—Romans 5:14) and Eve BOTH fell but in a sense, ALSO their own “Domestic Church” fell too, and that all are now in need of restoration.²

Christ works in and through His creation for this restoration. Part of that involves Him working in us and through us. We see how fallen “powers and principalities” and other fallen angels etc. are impediments to our doing the will of God. This was true in the Old Covenant, and is true now in the New Covenant.

And in that Old Covenant the ancient Israelites often augmented or increased their battle power by using the Ark of the Covenant. We will see there was a proper way to use the Ark (at least trying to conform to God’s will with God’s grace). Likewise, there was an improper way to use the Ark in battle which bordered on the superstitious.

We will see that many aspects of the Ark that contained the Covenant, correspond to the Blessed Virgin Mary who had within herself the New Covenant in His flesh. And how this correlating is particularly strong with 1—the Angelic Salutation to Mary concerning the Incarnation. And 2—Elizabeth’s proclamations under the influence of the Holy Spirit concerning Mary. And also how the Hail Mary prayer encapsulates BOTH those sets of passages.

We will see in the Book of Revelation St. John look into Heaven, SEE “THE ARK”, but he then goes on to describe NOT a gold-gilded box, but rather the “woman” who gives birth to Jesus!

Lastly we will see just a sample of the Patristic (ancient “Fathers”) evidence of seeing Mary as the Ark, right from the get-go in Christianity.

We will then close with comments and a word of prayer.

² ALL creation is in need of restoration after The Fall of course. But we will just be focusing on certain aspects of that fall/restoration for this study’s purposes.

Biblical Principles

In “The Fall” of mankind, Adam and Eve not only fell on their own, but they had a prototype of their own “Domestic Church” (Adam and Eve’s “Ecclesia Domestica”) that had effects from this.

Since Adam and Eve were the only humans on earth, it at least suggests their “Domestic Church” was ALSO their “Institutional Church”.

- **Adam involved in the Fall**
- **Eve involved in the Fall**
- **Adam and Eve’s Domestic/Institutional Church involved or at least effected in the Fall**

Jesus Must Fulfill All

When Jesus fulfills the Old Covenant, He fulfills all that needs fulfilling, including “The Fall”.

MATTHEW 5:17 17 "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. (emphasis mine.)

So in the Fall, Adam needs fulfilling, Eve needs fulfilling, and Adam and Eve’s “Church” needs fulfilling, therefore we EXPECT to see the New Adam (Jesus, who of course is God AND man) involved in the restoration of humanity. That’s easy.

Since any “Fulfilled Eve” or “New Eve” (Mary) and fulfillment of “The Church” could never “deliver” redemption on their own (because Jesus is God and Mary and the Church are not God) . . . and any “New Eve” and any “Church” is NOT God), any “New Eve”/Church fulfillment MUST be **intimately united with Jesus** to fulfill ALL aspects of “The Fall”.

So part of our task here is to see how Jesus, “the incarnate Word”, UNITES Himself with Mary and the rest of humanity via the Church to accomplish His restoration.

I would suggest that one of the ways Jesus shows us His intimate uniting to Mary in the Restoration, is via seeing Marian (Mary) typology in the Ark of the Covenant, with the Ark being the prefigurement, and the Blessed Virgin Mary (united to Jesus of course) as the fulfillment.

For example, Jesus unites Himself to even to us in ways that are beyond our understanding and allows us to PARTICIPATE in our own Redemption in a secondary sense (i.e. with St. Paul being mysteriously “Crucified with Christ” — more on that in a moment).

Consider in Genesis 3 how the prophecy concerning “He” (Jesus) “**crushes**” (or “**bruises**” in the RSVCE translation) the head of the serpent.

GENESIS 3:15 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

But did you know, the Hebrew here for “he” in Genesis 3:15 is ambiguous enough to be translated as “she” too? And the Hebrew here can ALSO correctly be translated as “**THEY**”!

I would suggest God worded it that way (he, she, and they) on purpose to show not only the Blessed Virgin Mary's role in redemption, but even our role through the Church too.

Perhaps that's WHY St. Paul talks about the Christian Church at Rome ALSO crushing the head of Satan (the serpent):

ROMANS 16:19-20 19 For while your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I would have you wise as to what is good and guileless as to what is evil; 20 **then the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet**. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And that's part of WHY St. Paul says HE (Paul) was CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST! (Galatians 2:19-20)

And that's also part of WHY St. Paul tells us WE are UNITED to Christ's "newness of life" too! (Via our Baptism which puts US mysteriously INTO Jesus' death too: See Romans 6:3-5)

Adam was a historical person, but **Adam is ALSO a "type" of Jesus** (Romans 5:14). Adam is a prefigurement of Jesus. So we expect the FULFILLMENT—Jesus—to always be GREATER (Hebrews 9:11-12) than the PREFIGUREMENT—Adam³.

ROMANS 5:14 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of **Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come**.

So we see Jesus as the New Adam typologically (in typology) with the help of St. Paul here.

Without going into all the Old Testament prophecies (because that is a whole study unto itself), I will just tell you, **the Blessed Virgin Mary is the New Eve**, and since Eve had a key role in the Fall, it is part of Jesus' plan that the NEW Eve, has a key role in the restoration of humanity.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of the Church (CCC 975) and as the "new Eve"⁴ and CONTINUES in that work of restoration. Incidentally, Mary is also a **type** the Church (CCC 967).

CCC 975 "We believe that the Holy Mother of God, **the new Eve**, Mother of the Church, continues in heaven to exercise her maternal role on behalf of the members of Christ" (Paul VI, *CPG* § 15).

³ Jesus IS the New Adam but ALSO is infinitely GREATER than the Old Adam because Jesus is God and man.

⁴ Other places you can see the Blessed Virgin Mary described as **the "New Eve"** can be seen in CCC 411, CCC 511, CCC 726, CCC 2618, and CCC 2853 and the Vatican II Document "The Constitution of the Church" ("Lumen Gentium") section 63.

The Fall

- Adam
- Eve
- Their Ecclesia Domestica (their Church)

The Fulfillment/Restoration

- Jesus (the New Adam)
- Mary (Jesus working in and through Mary—the New Eve)
- The Church (Jesus working in and through the Church, especially the Church at Rome which we saw in Romans 16:20 already. The one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.)

So HOW Do We Do Spiritual Battle In This Process Of Fulfillment/Restoration?

Q: So how are we to do battle in this process of fulfillment and restoration?

A: By putting on the WHOLE armor of God.

EPHESIANS 6:11-12 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but **against the principalities, against the powers⁵**, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against **the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places⁶**.. . .

We see military language (“armor”) in this spiritual battle. I would also suggest; intercession for one another IS PART of “putting on the whole armor of God” (concerning doing spiritual battle).

So we should be able to look to the Old Testament and see NATURAL battles that the Israelites had, and learn from these battles as they can be viewed historically (both good and bad). These battles can be viewed as a prefigurement or shadow of how WE in the New Covenant are to carry out our interior and exterior spiritual battles.

One of the things the Israelites did successfully (at times) is live a good life AND take the Ark of the Covenant INTO BATTLE with them. This greatly **MAGNIFIED** their safety and ease of success in battle (remember this “MAGNIFIED” concept as we will come back to it later in the study).

What Is The Ark Of The Covenant?

The Ark of the Covenant was a very special vessel, which holds signs and symbols of the Old Covenant. It was also a symbol of the presence of God and was meant to reflect God. The Ark was NOT God and was not to be worshipped.

Does the Church see the Ark as having any significance in pointing symbolically toward the New Covenant fulfillment too? Yes it does . . .

⁵ “Powers and principalities” are just two among the nine choirs of angels. In this case “powers” and “principalities” refer to FALLEN angels. All of the “spiritual hosts of wickedness” want to do us harm.

⁶ “Heavenly places” in the sense of ultimate HEAVEN is not where “spiritual hosts of wickedness” reside. “Heaven” in Scripture has DIFFERENT meanings (for brevity, we won’t get into the depth of this here).

CCC 2130 Nevertheless, already in the Old Testament, God ordained or permitted the making of images that **pointed symbolically toward salvation by the incarnate Word**: so it was with the bronze serpent, **the ark of the covenant**, and the cherubim.⁶⁹

The Old Testament Ark of the Covenant had to be made perfect and without blemish as it pointed toward the presence of God and therefore used the BEST materials such as gold.

To carry out such a task, God called a man with **supernatural (from God) craftsmanship gifts**. His name was Bezalel, of the tribe of Judah (a Jew, the Kingly Tribe). He made the Ark with help of others. Keep the fact that Bezalel is of the Tribe of Judah because we will see AFTER the Ark is overshadowed by God, no person except certain men of the Priestly Tribe (Levi, not Judah) would be allowed to even touch it (lest they die). (See Exodus 31:1-5)

There was a “mercy seat” between graven images of Heavenly Angels on the Ark.

For a further description of the Ark, read Exodus 37 on your own, but here I do have Exodus 37:1-2 as an introduction (“feet” in the parenthesis below are my additions for size clarity).

EXODUS 37:1-2 1 **Bezalel made the ark** of acacia wood; two cubits and a half (**3.75 feet**) was its length, a cubit and a half its breadth (**2.25 feet**), and a cubit and a half its height (**2.25 feet**). 2 And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and made a molding of gold around it.

Also within the Ark was contained three things.

- **A gold pot that had manna from Heaven.**
- **Aaron’s rod that budded.**
- **The tablets of the Ten Commandments of the Covenant.**

HEBREWS 9:3-5 3 Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, 4 having the golden altar of incense and **the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant**; 5 above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. **Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.**

The Old Testament Battles Of War And The Ark

The Ark was used in battle **successfully** for the Israelites **when they were obedient** (see Joshua 6, and the fall of the Walls of Jericho utilizing the Ark for example).

The Israelites would use the Ark in battles of war so successfully in fact, that when the Israelites brought the Ark into battle, eventually their enemies had great fear (1st Samuel 4:6-7) via its reputation.

The Ark could MAGNIFY the Israelites military victory or even make it or break it. Dr. Rabbi Tzemah Yoreh puts it this way . . .

Twice, Moses says that YHWH is or will not be with them. Whereas this could be understood metaphorically, in the sense of God will not help you in your battles, the following verse implies that this is a reference to the Ark:⁷

NUMBERS 14:44-45 44 But they presumed to go up to the heights of the hill country, although neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD, nor Moses, departed out of the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that hill country came down, and defeated them and pursued them, even to Hormah.

We know from earlier in Numbers, the Israelites sent out the Ark three days in advance of them, and WHEN TRUE TO THE Lord, the Ark would MAGNIFY their battle victories.

Q: What physical thing did the Israelites take into battle with them so that under proper conditions, it **MAGNIFIED** and sped-up their battle victories?

A: The Ark of the Covenant.

NUMBERS 10:33, 35-36 33 So they set out from the mount of the LORD three days' journey; and **the ark** of the covenant of the LORD went before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting place for them. . . . 35 And whenever **the ark** set out, Moses said, "Arise, O LORD, and let thy enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee." 36 And **when it rested**, he said, "Return, O LORD, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel."

(Other victories can be seen at least implied with the Ark in Numbers 21:2-3 against the king of Arad, and over Sihon in Numbers 21:21-25, and in Numbers 31 over the Midianites.)⁸

Q: WHY would God give the Israelites the Ark, a prototype of a “sacramental” to Magnify these victories, (a physical thing that renders grace) when He could just carry out the battles Himself?

A: Almost certainly because God WANTS to associate Himself with His creation such as His good angels and human saints. He even associates Himself with non-living aspects of His creation occasionally (such as the Ark itself, also when Jesus uses **mud** and spittle to cure a blind man—John 9:6-7, etc.). God obviously WANTS TO associate Himself with His creation that He loves.

Even when God slew 185,000 of the pagan enemies of the Israelites, **He used an angel** to do it. (See Isaiah 37:35-36 and 2nd Kings 19:35)

Again: Why does God often work through intermediaries?? He wants to unite Himself to His creation.

Objection: “But there is ONE mediator between God and man—Jesus!” (See 2nd Tim. 2:4)

⁷ Dr. Rabbi Tzemah Yoreh <https://www.thetorah.com/article/the-two-arks-military-and-ritual>

⁸ *ibid*

Answer: And that ONE mediator—Jesus—works IN and THROUGH His people in the New Covenant as well. That’s exactly WHY in that SAME 2nd Timothy 2, St. Paul teaches us **we can intercede with God** on behalf of others (because “God is at WORK IN YOU”)

2nd TIMOTHY 2:1-3 1 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings **be made for all men**, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. 3 This is good, and it **is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior**

PHILIPPIANS 2:13 13 for **God is at work in you**, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. (See also Ephesians 3:20-21 and Hebrews 13:20-21).

This held as long the people were not committing idolatry and had good holy leadership. Again, the Israelites utilizing the Ark (properly) in battle was associated with success.

Q: So is there anything WE can learn from these Old Testament battles and the Ark?

A: One thing we can learn is this is not to be used with ignoring sin. You at least need to TRY to conform yourself by free will to the GRACE offered you by living a good life. Otherwise use of the Ark is essentially mere superstition and bad things befall the ones doing this. For example:

In 1st Samuel 2-4, two of the high profile priests, the sons of the prophet Eli himself(!), Hophni and Phinehas, were having illicit intimate relations with the women of sanctuary service (1st Samuel 3:22). These Temple (tent) priests, Hophni and Phinehas, also stole belongings from God and the Church (meat sacrifices which they treated with “contempt” – See 1st Samuel 2:12-17).

1st SAMUEL 2:12a 12 Now the sons of Eli were worthless men . . .

Eli when informed of this, allowed them to continue on in ministry and did NOTHING to “restrain them” (except ask them “why” they do this kind of thing 1 Samuel 3:13-25).

In 1st Samuel 2:33-35 the Lord tells Eli that Hophni and Phinehas will die by the sword of men on the same day as a sign to Eli because Eli “did not restrain them” (1st Samuel 3:13).

Eli and his household are to be punished for this and the effects of this punishment even befall the Israelite people as a whole to an extent.

Soon afterward, the Israelites were losing a series of battles against the Philistines.

The Philistines are a real historical people, but in 1st Samuel, they are also symbolic of among **“the world rulers of this present darkness”** and those Philistines almost certainly also **represent** demons or **“the spiritual hosts of wickedness”**.

So to win this losing war, the Israelites decided to go get the Ark of the Covenant and take it into the next battle with them. Naturally Hophni and Phinehas were there with the Ark. (See 1st SAMUEL 4:4-8)

The Philistines KNEW of the Ark and were now frightened as it was brought into battle ("Woe to us!" - 1st Samuel 4:8). But the Philistines could have relaxed because recall the curse the two bad Temple priests (Hophni and Phinehas) brought upon the Israelites . . .

How do you think THAT turned out?
Fortunately, Scripture tells us . . .

1st SAMUEL 4:10-11 10 So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home; and there was a very great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. 11 **And the ark of God was captured; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.**

When a 98 year-old, Eli was informed of this, he fell off his chair, broke his neck and he too died (1st Samuel 4:13-22).

By the way, the Ark turned out to be a curse for the Philistines, their phony god Dagon, and the city of Gath which they moved it to trying to stop the curses. The Philistines later recognized this curse and brought the Ark back to the Israelites (1st Samuel chapter 5).

The Ark was not to be misused by ANYONE.

So taking the Ark into battle has consequences. Good consequences for the good, and bad consequences for the bad.

And these good and bad consequences can spillover to others ("The glory has departed from **Israel!**" **NOT** "The glory has departed **only** from Eli, Hophni and Phinehas!") as blessings or curses. (St. Paul in 1st Corinthians 12:14-26 states the same principle applying it to Christianity.)

HOW Can WE Take The Ark TODAY In Our Spiritual Battles In A Way That MAGNIFIES Our Victories?

Q: Well all of this prefiguring of the Ark is great. But HOW can that be useful for ME TODAY? I have no access to the Ark.

A: Because the Blessed Virgin Mary is the FULFILLMENT of that Ark. And we can ask the Blessed Mother's intercession, such as when we meditated upon the Incarnation of Christ in the beginning of this Bible study when praying the "Angelic Salutation" or "Hail Mary" prayer. THAT IS taking the Ark into battle with us (CCC 2676 which we will look at later).

WHY Would We See Mary As The New Ark?

Q: Why would we see the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Ark of the Covenant? Isn't Jesus the Ark?

A: Well in a sense yes Jesus is represented by every good thing. But because Jesus UNITES Himself to the Blessed Virgin Mary, she is in a fulfilled sense, the Ark too.

So let's look at the prefigurements of the Ark and then the fulfillments in the Blessed Virgin Mary. One or two of these parallels might be "coincidental", but all of these taken together are beyond coincidence. Let's begin by reading the Annunciation and portions of the Magnificat.

The Annunciation

LUKE 1:26-38 (DRV) 26 And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

29 Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God.

31 Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name **Jesus**. **32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father;** and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. 33 And of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man?

35 And the angel answering, said to her: **The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee.** And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

36 And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren: 37 Because no word shall be impossible with God.

38 And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

The Magnificat

LUKE 1:39-50, 56 (DRV) 39 In those days Mary arose and went with haste **into the hill country**, to a city of Judah, 40 and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, **the babe leaped in her womb**; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit 42 and she exclaimed with a loud cry, **"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy. 45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."** 46 And **Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,** 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; 49 for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 50 And **his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation. . . . 56 And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her home.**

Parallels Of The Ark To The Blessed Virgin Mary

Recall that the Ark is a consecrated vessel. Not to be used in a common manner.

Likewise, the Blessed Virgin Mary is consecrated. This married woman is not only a virgin, but Mary anticipates REMAINING a virgin (“How can this come about?” she asks in Luke 1:34 when the Archangel Gabriel tells Mary she is to have Jesus. Married women WOULDN’T ask “HOW can I have a baby?” [unless they are a consecrated Virgin]). Mary is also “the handmaid of ~~Joseph her husband~~ the Lord” (Luke 1:38).

- **Prefigurement:** The cloud covered (Greek = episkiazein or επισκιαζω) the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle of which the Ark was in (Exodus 40:20-21, 34).

EXODUS 40:34 34 Then the cloud covered (Greek = episkiazein or επισκιαζω) the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

- **Fulfillment:** The Blessed Mother was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit.

LUKE 1:35a 35 And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow (Greek = episkiazein or επισκιαζω) you . . .

- **Prefigurement:** Recall the Ark held the manna from Heaven (Hebrews 9:4).
- **Fulfillment:** The Blessed Mother held within her, the FULFILLED Manna from Heaven—Jesus (John 6:31-32, 51).

- **Prefigurement:** Remember that the Ark held the budded rod of Aaron the High Priest (Hebrews 9:4).
- **Fulfillment:** The Blessed Mother held within her, the FULFILLED High Priest—Jesus (Hebrews 3:1, 4:14).

- **Prefigurement:** We know the Ark held the Tablets of The Law.
- **Fulfillment:** We also know that Mary had within her, Jesus, the fulfillment of the law (Matthew 5:17).

- **Prefigurement:** King David was at Hebron with the Ark (this borders the hill country). When the Ark was brought out of the house of Abinadab, where Scripture tells us *The Ark was even placed on a hill* (2nd Samuel 6:3).
- **Fulfillment:** Immediately AFTER the Blessed Virgin Mary was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit she set out and went to the hill country to visit and aid Elizabeth (Luke 1:38-39).

- **Prefigurement:** When King David brought the Ark from the house of Obed-edom, he went rejoicing and dancing (2nd Samuel 6:12-14).⁹
- **Fulfillment:** The Blessed Virgin Mary goes to the home of the high Priest, Zechariah to see her cousin Elizabeth. And note, **St. John the Baptist**, who is still in the womb of Elizabeth, “leaps for joy” (Luke 1:39-41, 44).

- **Prefigurement:** While traveling with the Ark, Uzzah brought God’s wrath upon himself (he was a non-Levite and impulsively perhaps, disobediently grabbed the falling Ark and was immediately struck dead—2nd Samuel 6:6-7). Then King David, puzzled at how the Ark should come to him given this situation said what? . . .

2nd SAMUEL 6:9 9 And David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, “How can the ark of the LORD come to me?”

- **Fulfillment:** When the Blessed Virgin Mary arrived at Elizabeth and Zechariah’s home what did Elizabeth ask?

LUKE 1:43 43 And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

- **Prefigurement:** King David shouts in the presence of the Ark of the Covenant (2nd Samuel 6:15).
- **Fulfillment:** Elizabeth exclaims with “a loud cry” in front of (the Ark) Mary. (Luke 1:41-42)

⁹ Incidentally, when King David “danced” here he was girded with a linen ephod, priestly clothing (despite being of the Tribe of Judah, the Kingly Tribe, not the Tribe of Levi, the Priestly Tribe). These events point to future priestly fulfillments. Here is an easy one. St. John the Baptist was of the Priestly Tribe of Levi. As a matter of fact, his Father, Zechariah was presumably a high priest when St. John the Baptist was conceived (Luke 1:5-9) as he was chosen to go into the Holy of Holies to offer incense that year. There are others, but they are beyond the scope of this study to unpack.

- **Prefigurement:** Before eventually coming to Jerusalem, The Ark was taken to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite where it remained for how long? Three months.

2nd SAMUEL 6:11a 11 And the ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; . . .

- **Fulfillment:** When the Blessed Virgin Mary visits Elizabeth, how long does she stay with Elizabeth and Zechariah and John the Baptist?

Three months. WHY would St. Luke tell us how long the Blessed Virgin Mary stayed there? Is this mere trivia? No.

LUKE 1:56 56 And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her home.

- **Prefigurement:** There are blessings involved associated with the presence of the Ark (2nd Samuel 6:12).
- **Fulfillment:** There are (thrice) blessings involved associated with the BLESSED Virgin Mary. In fact we find out “ALL generations will call me “BLESSED” (Luke 1:39-48)!

And as Catholic Evangelist and convert from the Baptist faith, Steve Ray also states:

- The Ark returns to its home and ends up in Jerusalem where God’s presence and glory is revealed in the Temple (2 Sam 6:12; 1 Ki 8:9-11)
- Mary returns home and eventually ends up in Jerusalem where she presents God enfleshed in the Temple (Lk 1:56; 2:21-22)

So we see the Blessed Virgin Mary as a fulfillment of the Ark of the Covenant. Jesus IS the Covenant. The Blessed Virgin Mary carried within her, the New Covenant enfleshed.

In summary we just saw many Old Covenant Ark teachings and saw their fulfillment largely in the two passages that make up the meditation of the Incarnation—**The Hail Mary Prayer**.

LUKE 1:28b “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!”

LUKE 1:42b “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!”

Is it any wonder the Church associates these very verses which make up the crux of the “Hail Mary prayer” with Mary as the Ark in the Catechism (see CCC 2676 [below])!

I would suggest to you, that when YOU are doing spiritual battle, and pray the Hail Mary, AND are in a state of grace, YOU TOO are bringing THE Ark into YOUR battles, but in a FULFILLED AND BETTER WAY; and Mary’s soul MAGNIFIES the Lord in those battles!

The Church Sees Mary As The Ark, And Implicitly Associates Her/It With The Hail Mary Prayer

The Church likewise sees the Blessed Mother as the Ark of the Covenant. And the Church at least associates Mary as “Ark” with the Hail Mary prayer (the Ave Maria) in CCC 2676.

CCC 2676¹⁰ a, c This twofold movement of prayer to Mary has found a privileged expression in the *Ave Maria*:

Hail Mary [or Rejoice, Mary]: the greeting of the angel Gabriel opens this prayer. It is God himself who, through his angel as intermediary, greets Mary. Our prayer dares to take up this greeting to Mary with . . . **his dwelling, is the daughter of Zion in person, the ark of the covenant, the place where the glory of the Lord dwells. She is "the dwelling of God . . . with men."**³² Full of grace, Mary is wholly given over to him who has come to dwell in her and whom she is about to give to the world. . . .

I would suggest frequent recitation of the prayer of the Incarnation of Jesus, the Hail Mary, is OUR WAY to carry the Ark into OUR battles and benefit from Mary’s soul **MAGNIFYING** the Lord.

But wait! There is even more!

¹⁰ **CCC 2676** This twofold movement of prayer to Mary has found a privileged expression in the *Ave Maria*:

Hail Mary [or Rejoice, Mary]: the greeting of the angel Gabriel opens this prayer. It is God himself who, through his angel as intermediary, greets Mary. Our prayer dares to take up this greeting to Mary with the regard God had for the lowliness of his humble servant and to exult in the joy he finds in her.³⁰

Full of grace, the Lord is with thee: These two phrases of the angel's greeting shed light on one another. Mary is full of grace because the Lord is with her. The grace with which she is filled is the presence of him who is the source of all grace. "Rejoice . . . O Daughter of Jerusalem . . . the Lord your God is in your midst."³¹ **Mary, in whom the Lord himself has just made his dwelling, is the daughter of Zion in person, the ark of the covenant, the place where the glory of the Lord dwells. She is "the dwelling of God . . . with men."**³² Full of grace, Mary is wholly given over to him who has come to dwell in her and whom she is about to give to the world.

Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. After the angel's greeting, we make Elizabeth's greeting our own. "Filled with the Holy Spirit," Elizabeth is the first in the long succession of generations who have called Mary "blessed."³³ "Blessed is she who believed. . . ."³⁴ Mary is "blessed among women" because she believed in the fulfillment of the Lord's word. Abraham, because of his faith, became a blessing for all the nations of the earth.³⁵ Mary, because of her faith, became the mother of believers, through whom all nations of the earth receive him who is God's own blessing: Jesus, the "fruit of thy womb."

Perhaps ALL These Parallels Should Be Clues To Us As To WHY St. John In The Book Of Revelation Sees “The Ark” . . . Yet Describes The “Woman”

Perhaps these parallels are WHY the ancient Christians saw Mary as the Ark of the Covenant and should be clues to us as well.

Consider one of St. John's visions in the Book of Revelation.
St. John looked into Heaven and he SAW the ARK!! The long lost Ark.

Let's review his vision but before we do, recall that Bible chapters and verses were appropriately added to the Scriptures by Monks in the Middle Ages for text descriptive purposes. We still use this system today for the most part. **Chapters and verses were not in the original texts.**

St. John was peering into Heaven and here is what he saw . . .

REVELATION 11:19-12:1a 19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and **the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple**; and there were flashes of lightning, voices, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail. 1 And a great portent appeared in heaven, . . .

At this point you would **expect** the verses to say something like . . .

NOT revelation 11:19 and following 19 Then God's temple **in heaven** was opened, and **the ark of his covenant was seen** within his temple;. . . 1 And a great portent appeared **in heaven**, the Ark was made of acacia wood. And the wood was gilded with the shiniest purest Gold imaginable. And two golden angels in adoration made up the mercy seat of the ark and covered their view with their wings because the glory of the Lord overcame them . . .etc., etc.

But this is NOT what John sees or describes.
Let's read on and see what St. John DOES describe

REVELATION 11:19-12:1-5a 19 Then God's temple **in heaven** was opened, and **the ark of his covenant was seen** within his temple; and there were flashes of lightning, voices, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail. 1 And a great portent appeared **in heaven**, **a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars**; 2 she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery. 3 And another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. 4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. 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; 5 **she brought forth a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron**, . . .

St. John looks into Heaven, sees “**the Ark**”, then describes the Blessed Virgin Mary!

Some will object to Mary as the Ark in Revelation 12 and say, “Well this is a vision of the Church”.

We agree in so far as there are layers of meaning.
But we disagree when they say it isn’t Mary.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is a type of the Church (see CCC 967) so we would expect this secondary Mary/Church imagery to be at least somewhat interchangeable (not perfectly because there are also things unique to Mary and unique to the Church, but somewhat)—and it is.

4 Persons Explicitly Described in Revelation 12

- Jesus
- Satan
- Michael
- Mary

If you look at Revelation 12, “the male child” is a real person—Jesus.

The “dragon” is a fallen-angelic real person—Satan.

The good angel (in Rev. 12:7) is a real (good angelic) person— Michael.

So as Dr. Scott Hahn frequently asks: why wouldn’t “the Woman” who gives birth to Jesus be a real person—Mary?¹¹

Just A Sample Of The Patristic (The Fathers) Evidence For Mary As The Ark

ST. HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME (c. 170-c. 236) “At that time, the Savior coming from the Virgin, the Ark, brought forth His own Body into the world from that Ark, which was gilded with pure gold within by the Word, and without by the Holy Ghost; so that the truth was shown forth, and the Ark was manifested. . . . And the Savior came into the world bearing the incorruptible Ark, that is to say His own body” (S. Hippolytus, *In Dan.vi.*, Patr. Gr., Tom. 10, p. 648) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 77).

St. Gregory of Neocæsarea (St. Gregory Thaumaturgus or “the wonder worker,” about 213 A.D. to about 270 A.D.) had this to say concerning the Ark and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

¹¹ WHY would Mary have “birth pangs” in Revelation 12:2? Catholics always say the Blessed Virgin Mary experienced no birth pangs when giving birth to Jesus.

Q: Well how can Mary be giving birth to Jesus, then birth pangs refer to the birth of the Church?

A: The “birth pangs” refer to the birth of the Church and Mary at the foot of the Cross as Pope John Paul II and others have explained.

Remember, this is apocalyptic literature. It is a mystical vision with many layers in few sentences and not in the realm of time necessarily.

Jesus is ALSO described as being a child, then being caught up to Heaven in the same sentence! So we see these layers of teachings are one upon another with rather generalized time-frame references. This is what we often see and expect with apocalyptic literature.

ST. GREGORY THAUMATURGUS “The ark is verily the holy Virgin, gilded within and without, who received the treasure of universal sanctification. Arise, O Lord, from the Father’s bosom, to raise up again the ruined race of our first parent” (*Orat. in Deip. Annunciat.* Int. Opp. S. Greg. Thaumaturg) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 89).

St. Athanasius (296-373 A.D.) was one of the main defenders of the Trinity and the deity of Christ against the 2nd century Arian heretics.

ST. ATHANASIUS “O noble **Virgin**, truly you are greater than any other greatness. For who is your equal in greatness, **O dwelling place of God the Word**? To whom among all **creatures** shall I compare you, O Virgin? You are greater than them all **O (Ark of the) Covenant, clothed with purity instead of gold! You are the Ark in which is found the golden vessel containing the true manna**, that is, the flesh in which Divinity resides.”
— St. Athanasius. *Homily of the Papyrus of Turin*.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (about 315-386 A.D.) who was also quite early said this about the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Ark.

ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM “The Ark would be the type and image of Christ: for if we look back to the way of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten, we shall see that **it is in the temple of the Virgin, as in an ark that the Word of God took up His abode**. For in Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, as the Scripture saith. But the testimonies in the ark were the word of God, and the wood of it was imperishable, and with pure and choicest gold was it beautified within and without”
— St. Cyril, *De ador. In Spir. Et Verit*, p. 293, St. Maximus of Turin and other Fathers apply the Ark of the Covenant to the Blessed Virgin Mary (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 76).

St. Jerome (about 345-420 A.D.) matter of factly saw this fact too.

ST. JEROME “Behold one in truth, **the handmaid of the Lord**. Holy she is, in whom is no guile, all simplicity....**The spouse of Christ is the ark of the covenant, within and without overlaid with gold, a keeper of the law of the Lord**. As in the ark there was nothing but the tables of the Testament, so too in thee no one from outside should be thought of. Over this propitiatory, as though upon the Cherubim, the Lord is pleased to sit. . . .
— Epist. Xxii., Ad Eustoch. Nn. 18, 19, 21, 24) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 216).

Here is a quote concerning Mary as Ark of the Covenant from St. Ephrem (from the 300’s A.D. A.D.).

ST. EPHREM “O Virgin Mother of God, Gate of heaven, **and Ark**, in thee I have a secure salvation. Save me out of the pure mercy (δωρεάυ, gratis), O Lady”
— St. Ephrem. *Precat.* ix. Opp. Gr. et Lat. Tom. iii. P. 522
(*Blessed Virgin*, p. 294).

There is MUCH MORE patristic evidence, but that is beyond the scope of this study to attempt to present more than we have.

In Closing

In this study we saw the parallels between the Ark of the Covenant and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

We looked at Biblical principles concerning prefigurements (“types” or “shadows”) and fulfillments and related that to “The Fall” and the need for restoration.

We saw how Christ worked and is working in and through His creation for His restoration.

We saw both proper and improper uses of the Israelites taking the Ark in battle as a help.

We saw many aspects of the Ark that contained the Covenant, correspond to the Blessed Virgin Mary who had within herself the New Covenant in His flesh. And how this correlation is particularly strong with:

1—the Angelic Salutation to Mary concerning the Incarnation.

And 2—Elizabeth’s proclamations under the influence of the Holy Spirit concerning Mary.

And also how the Hail Mary prayer encapsulates BOTH those sets of passages. (Is it any wonder WHY St. Padre Pio called the Rosary, “The Weapon”?)

We saw in the Book of Revelation St. John look into Heaven, SEE “THE ARK”, but he then goes on to **describe** NOT a gold-gilded box, but rather the “woman” who gives birth to Jesus!

And we reviewed just a sample of the Patristic (ancient “Fathers”) evidence of seeing Mary as the Ark, early in Christianity. Table 1 has more Patristics on this subject.

Table 2 tells us where the Old Testament Ark currently is.

Just a thought for a future personal meditation for yourselves. Here in this study we considered the Ark as a type of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as Mary carried Christ Himself within her.

Prayerfully meditate on the Tabernacle and the Chalice, that also hold Christ, as types of the Blessed Mother.

Let’s close with a prayer.

God bless you.

TABLE 1

More Patristic Evidence as the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Ark

Let's review some more of the Patristic evidence of this seeing Mary as the New Ark. Some of this will be redundant with the study portion here.

Let's listen to St. Hippolytus of Rome (c. 170-c. 236) who was at one time an anti-Pope, and later became the real Pope.

ST. HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME "At that time, the Savior coming **from the Virgin, the Ark, brought forth His own Body into the world from that Ark**, which was gilded with pure gold within by the Word, and without by the Holy Ghost; so that the truth was shown forth, and the Ark was manifested. . . . And the Savior came into the world bearing the incorruptible Ark, that is to say His own body" (S. Hippolytus, *In Dan.vi.*, Patr. Gr., Tom. 10, p. 648) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 77).

Saint Dionysius who eventually became a Pope was also very early (the mid 200's A.D.).

ST. DIONYSIUS "As Christ our priest was not chosen by hand of man, so neither was His tabernacle framed by men, but was established by the Holy Ghost; and **by the power of God is that tabernacle protected**, to be had in everlasting remembrance, **Mary, God's Virgin Mother**" (S. Dionysius of Alexandria, *Respons. ad Quoest. v. Pauli Samos*) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 81).

Again St. Dionysius.

ST. DIONYSIUS "Not in a servant did He dwell, but **in His holy tabernacle not made with hands, which is Mary the Mother of God**" (*lb. ad Quoest. vii.*)

Notice St. Dionysius refers to the Blessed Virgin Mary as God's "tabernacle" (σκηνηχειροποιη).

Let's look at more patristic evidence of Mary as Ark of the Covenant.

St. Gregory of Neocæsarea (St. Gregory Thaumaturgus or "the wonder worker," about 213 A.D. to about 270 A.D.) had this to say concerning the Ark and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

ST. GREGORY THAUMATURGUS "The ark is verily the holy Virgin, gilded within and without, who received the treasure of universal sanctification. Arise, O Lord, from the Father's bosom, to raise up again the ruined race of our first parent" (*Orat. in Deip. Annunciat. Int. Opp. S. Greg. Thaumaturg*) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 89).

Another translation renders this (quoting Psalm 132 as the Catholic Liturgy of the Vigil Mass for The Assumption of Mary has):

ST. GREGORY THAUMATURGUS "Let us chant the melody which has been taught us by the inspired harp of David, and say, "Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest; Thou, and the Ark of Thy sanctuary.¹²" **For the holy Virgin is in truth an Ark, wrought with gold both within and without, that has received the whole treasury of the sanctuary.**^[1]

Remember what the acacia wood was covered with in the Ark of the Covenant?

It was wrought with Gold and contained the treasury of the whole sanctuary (the manna, the tablets of the 10 Commandments, and Aaron's staff).

St. Gregory Thaumaturgus again.

¹² See also 2nd Chronicles 6:41

ST. GREGORY THAUMATURGUS “The tenor of his message was as follows. I am moved by My compassion to descend to earth in order to recover the lost Adam. Sin made him to decay who was made to My image, and hath corrupted the work of My hands, and obscured the beauty which I formed....Go therefore to the Virgin Mary. Pass thou on to the animate city whereof the prophet spake these words: *Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God*. Go, then, to My rational paradise, to the Gate of the East, to the place of sojourn that is worthy of My Word, that hath appeared as a heaven upon earth ; go to the light cloud, and announce to it the shower of My coming ; **go to the sanctuary prepared for Me**, to the hall of the Incarnation, to the pure chamber of My generation according to the flesh. **Speak in the ears of My rational ark**, so as to prepare for Me the accesses of hearing. But disturb not nor vex the soul of Mary. Manifest thyself in such wise as becomes that sanctuary, and salute her first with the voice of gladness” (*Homilies*, il, ii., iii. *On the Annunciation*, Int. Opp. S. Greg. Thaum., 5th century) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 123).

St. Hesychius of Jerusalem who lived in the late 300's A.D. to about 433 A.D. states:

ST. HESYCHIUS “**The ark is without doubt the Virgin Mother of God**. For if Thou art the gem, **with reason is she the ark**; and because Thou art the sun, the Virgin will necessarily be called heaven: since Thou art the unfading flower, the Virgin must assuredly be the plant of incorruption and paradise of immortality. Which things Isaias, seeing from afar, exclaimed later on: *Behold a Virgin shall conceive in her womb, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel*. Behold a Virgin. Who is she? The most noble of women, the elect from among virgins, the splendid ornament of our nature, the glory of our mould, who freed Eve from her shame and Adam from the curse, who cut off the bold insolence of the dragon, she whom the smoke of concupiscence touched not, nor the worm of pleasure harmed” (*Is.vii. 14*). (Hesychius, *Orat. De Virginis laudib.* Biblioth. PP. Græco-Lat. Tom. ii. p. 423) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 89).

St. Hesychius again . . .

ST. HESYCHIUS “*Arise, Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the Ark of Thy sanctification, which is very evidently the Virgin Mother of God*. For if thou are the pearl, with good reason is **she the Ark**” (Serm. V. *De S. Maria Deip.* Patr. Gr. Tom. 93, pp. 460-4) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 227).

St. Athanasius (296-373 A.D.) was the main defenders of the Trinity and the deity of Christ against the 2nd century Arian heretics.

ST. ATHANASIUS “**Be mindful of us, most holy virgin, who after childbirth didst remain virgin**; and grant to us for these small words great gifts from the riches of thy graces, O thou full of grace. Accept them as though they were true and adequate praises in thy honor; and if there is in them any virtue and any praise, we offer them as a hymn from ourselves and from all creatures to thee, full of grace, Lady, Queen, Mistress, Mother of God, and **Ark of sanctification**”

— *Orat. In Deip. Annuntiat, nn. 13, 14.* Int. Opp. S. Athanasii (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 80).

St. Athanasius again . . .

ST. ATHANASIUS “O noble **Virgin**, truly you are greater than any other greatness. For who is your equal in greatness, **O dwelling place of God the Word**? To whom among all **creatures** shall I compare you, O Virgin? You are greater than them all **O (Ark of the) Covenant, clothed with purity instead of gold! You are the Ark in which is found the golden vessel containing the true manna**, that is, the flesh in which Divinity resides.”

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ST. JEROME “Behold one in truth, the handmaid of the Lord. Holy she is, in whom is no guile, all simplicity....**The spouse of Christ is the ark of the covenant, within and without overlaid with gold, a keeper of the law of the Lord.** As in the ark there was nothing but the tables of the Testament, so too in thee no one from outside should be thought of. Over this propitiatory, as though upon the Cherubim, the Lord is pleased to sit....The Apostle thus defines a virgin, that *she should be holy in body and in spirit...*

— Epist. Xxii., Ad Eustoch. Nn. 18, 19, 21, 24) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 216).

Here are several St. Ephrem (about 306 A.D. – 373 A.D.) quotes concerning Mary as Ark of the New Covenant.

ST. EPHREM “O Virgin Mother of God, Gate of heaven, **and Ark**, in thee I have a secure salvation. Save me out of the pure mercy (δωρεάν, gratis), O Lady”

— St. Ephrem. *Precat.* ix. Opp. Gr. et Lat. Tom. iii. P. 522
(*Blessed Virgin*, p. 294).

ST. EPHREM “Concentration of the hierarchies, crown of all saints and virgins, approached for thy exceeding brightness and splendor, censer of God, lamp most bright, **urn must beautiful containing the heavenly manna; table bearing the written law for men, true ark**, book of writing most divine, princess, of all most prudent and wise, light-giving Virgin, most holy consoler and directress of all, most sacred Maid. . .

— St. Ephrem. *Is.* Xxv. 9, vii. 16) (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 297)

ST. EPHREM “The woman ministered before the man, because he is her head. Joseph rose to minister before His Lord, who was in Mary. **The priest ministered before Thy Ark by reason of Thy holiness.** Moses carried the tables of stone which the Lord wrote, and **Joseph bare about the pure Tablet in whom the Son of the Creator was dwelling.** The tables had ceased, because the world was filled with Thy doctrine”

— St. Ephrem *Serm.* xi., *Natali Domini*, Opp. Syr. Tom. ii. p. 429. Morris, pp. 51, 52. (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 383).

ST. EPHREM “With the rib that was drawn out of Adam, the wicked one drew out the heart of Adam. There arose from the rib, a hidden power which cut off Satan as Dagon. **For in that ark** (Mary), a book was hidden (Jesus) that cried and proclaimed the Conqueror. There was then a mystery revealed, in that Dagon was brought low in his own place of refuge. The accomplishment came after the type (Adam), in that the wicked one was brought low wherein he trusted. . . . Fulfilled was the mystery. Blessed is He who by the true Lamb redeemed us, and destroyed our destroyer as He did Dagon”

— S. Ephrem, *Rhythm* iii, *On the Nativity*, Morris, p.20
(*Blessed Virgin*, p. 66).¹³

ST. EPHREM “Hail, most tranquil haven, and most ardently longed for rescuer of the tempest-tossed from billows and storms. Hail, succor of those in danger. Hail, resurrection of our first father Adam. Hail, sweet liberty. Hail, parent of all. Hail, fountain of grace, and of all the solace. Hail, refuge and hospice of sinners. **Hail, mercy-seat of the afflicted. Hail, place of sanctuary in Jerusalem.** Hail, most glorious throne of our Creator. Hail, most illustrious splendor of the age. Hail, hope of all the good who suffer under

affliction. Hail, sweet solace and protection of the converted. Hail, of men and women alike Queen and Patroness. Hail, best mediatrix between God and man.

— St. Ephrem. *Threni B. V. M.* Opp. Gr. et Lat. Tom. iii. p.575 sq
(*Blessed Virgin*, p. 298)

Let's look at some more quotes from different patristic sources. Notice the dates of these quotes, because these are still quite ANCIENT venerable Christian teachings that we have been fortunate enough to have passed down to us.

St. Proclus (died 446 or 447 A.D.) of Constantinople (who personally knew St. John Chrysostom) had this to say regarding Mary as the Ark. . . .

ST. PROCLUS OF CONSTANTINOPLE "Let the woman haste hither, for the woman shows not the tree of death, but brings forth the tree of life: the virgins...the mothers also, for the Virgin Mother has amended the tree of disobedience by the tree of life. The female sex is no longer in execration, for it has obtained whereby it shall surpass even the angels in glory. Eve has been healed...and Mary is venerated (adored), because she has become mother and handmaid, cloud and chamber, **and ark of the Lord**....For this cause let us say to her: *Blessed art thou amongst women*, who alone hast healed the grief of Eve; who alone hast borne the world's price"

— St. Proclus of Constantinople. Orat.iv.and v. *In Natal. Dom.* P.G. Tom. 65, p.710 (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 58).

St. Theodotus of Ancyra (died in 432 A.D.)

ST. THEODOTUS OF ANCYRA "O Dove, all-white and innocent! **O holy temple** of our hopes, wherein dwells all sanctity and magnificence"

— St. Theodotus of Ancyra. Hom. iv. *In S. Deip. et Simeon. Ib.*, p. 1395 (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 223).

St. Zeno (c. 450-491) implies Mary as Ark while explicitly referring to the Blessed Virgin Mary as "tabernacle" and "temple".

ST. ZENO "God, the Son of God, at the time appointed, concealing for the while His majesty, comes forth from His ethereal throne, and **prepares for Himself a tabernacle in the temple of the predestined Virgin; wherein He hides Himself**, about to become man; and there whilst preserving what He was, He meditates to be what He was not. Mingles thus with human flesh He forms Himself an infant. The womb of Mary swells forth with pride, not by conjugal gift, but by faith; by the Word, not by seed. She knows not the tediousness of the ten months"

— St. Zeno. Lib. li., *Tractatus viii. Et ix. Pat. Lat. Tom. 11, pp. 413-417* (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 126).

AN ETHIOPIAN HYMN "Though shalt be named the Beloved One, O thou blessed among women. Thou art that second Chamber which is called the Holy of Holies, where were the tables of the Covenant of the ten commandments, writ by the finger of God . . ." "**Thou art the pure chest of gold in which was laid up the manna, that bread which came down from Heaven and the Giver of life to all the world**" (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 462).

Let's listen to Venantius Fortunatus (c. 530-c. 610) who is regarded as a Saint by many . . .

ST. VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS "How blest that Mother in whose shrine, The great Artificer Divine, Whose hand contains the earth and sky, **Vouchsafed, as in His ark, to lie!** Blest, in the message Gabriel brought, Blest, by the work the Spirit wrought; From whom the great Desire of earth, Took human Flesh and human birth. All honor, laud, and glory be, O Jesu, Virgin-born to Thee! All glory, as is ever meet, To Father and to Paraclete. Amen"

— Venantius Fortunatus. (*Blessed Virgin*, p. 458).

The Eastern Orthodox also have this Ark concept correct.

According to one Eastern Orthodox Website concerning the liturgical prayer in the Eastern Church, the Akathist, . . .

The Akathist Hymn is a profound, devotional poem, which sings the praises of the Holy Mother and Ever-Virgin Mary. It is one of the most beloved services in the Orthodox Church. It was composed in the imperial city of Constantinople, "the city of the Virgin," by St. Romanos the Melodist, who reposed in the year 556¹⁴.

Let's look at a couple of segments of the Akathist.

ORTHODOX HYMN: THE AKATHIST HYMN

Priest: Extolling your birth-giving, **we all praise you as a living temple**, O Theotokos. For the Lord whose hand sustains the world, having dwelt in your womb, sanctified and glorified you, and instructed all people to cry to you:

Rejoice, **tabernacle of God** the Logos;
Rejoice, holy one, **holier than the holies**.
Rejoice, **ark that was gilt by the Spirit**; . . .

. . . People: Alleluia.

This is the end of the FOURTH Stasis¹⁵

And this portion from the Akathist as well.

Most glorious, **ever virgin**, blessed Theotokos, present our prayers to your Son and our God, and plead with him, that through you he may save our souls. My hope is the Father; my refuge, the Son; my protection, the Holy Spirit. Holy Trinity, glory to You. My every hope I place in you, Mother of God, keep me under your protection¹⁶.

TABLE 2

Where Is The Old Testament Ark Of The Covenant Now?

2nd MACCABEES 2:1-8 1 One finds in the records that **Jeremiah the prophet** ordered those who were being deported to take some of the fire, as has been told, 2 and that the prophet after giving them the law instructed those who were being deported not to forget the commandments of the Lord, nor to be led astray in their thoughts upon seeing the gold and silver statues and their adornment. 3 And with other similar words he exhorted them that the law should not depart from their hearts. **4 It was also in the writing that the prophet, having received an oracle, 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. 5 And Jeremiah came and found a cave, and he brought there the tent and the ark and the altar of incense, and he sealed up the entrance.** 6 Some of those who followed him came up to mark the way, but could not find it. 7 When Jeremiah learned of it, he rebuked them and declared: **"The place shall be unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows his mercy. 8 And then the Lord will disclose these things, and the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear, as they were shown in the case of Moses, and as Solomon asked that the place should be specially consecrated."**

¹⁴ http://lent.goarch.org/akathist_hymn/learn/

¹⁵ http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/vaporis_akathist

¹⁶ Ibid.