

## 4th Lesson from the Synoptic Gospels

### St. Joseph and Blessed Virgin Mary - A Biblical and Ecclesial Perspectives

Biblical readings for the lesson - Genesis 37-50; 1 Sam 2:1-10; Mt 1-2; Luke 1-2

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#### St. Joseph

**Rich spiritual meaning of the name Joseph:** Due to St. Joseph's privileged role being the foster-father of Jesus and husband of the Virgin Mary, his name has become one of the most popular names for boys of all time. What does this name mean? The name "Joseph," is derived from the Hebrew verb *Yosef*. Joseph means 'He (God) will add'. This verb becomes a name in the book of Genesis when Rachel, the second wife of Jacob, finally bears a son after many years of infertility.

*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"; and she called his name Joseph, saying, "May the Lord add to me another son!" (Genesis 30:22-24)*

Many other saints have affirmed that devotion to St. Joseph has "added" much to their lives, enriching it through God's abundant grace. The name of Joseph is one with a rich spiritual history and provides much material to meditate on during this year of St. Joseph.

**Joseph of NT first appears in the Bible in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.** In Matthew, Joseph's lineage is traced back to King David. Joseph was born circa 100 B.C.E. and later wed the Virgin Mary, Jesus's mother and he died in Israel circa 1 A.D. Everything we know about Saint Joseph comes from the Bible. Unfortunately, we have a very few passages and information about St. Joseph in the NT. The 13 New Testament books written by Paul make no reference to him at all, nor does the Gospel of Mark, once in John (6:42). He has no recorded words in Scripture. He protected the immaculate Mother of God and helped raise the Lord of the Universe! But he doesn't get even one quote. Rather, he's a silent, humble servant of God who does his task well, and no more. His exit from the story of the Gospels is left unexplained in Scripture. He's an important figure in the Nativity narratives of Matthew and Luke, and he is included in the story of finding the 12-year-old Jesus with the teachers of the Law in the Temple. But that's the last we hear of him. Mary comes up several times during Jesus' ministry, but Joseph is gone without a trace.

The last mention of Joseph, husband of Mary the mother of Jesus, was during the temple visit in Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve years old. Towards the end of their visit, Joseph and Mary got separated from Jesus and were greatly troubled and in anguish. Three days later they finally found Him dialoguing with the religious leaders at the temple. Relieved yet regretful of the worry they suffered, Mary said to Jesus, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:48, 49). After being in the temple and understanding the nature of His life on earth, Jesus apparently became more

aware of His relationship to His heavenly Father and His mission. It was appropriate then that His earthly “father” Joseph should fade from the gospel picture. The silence of the Scriptures concerning Joseph from this time forth suggests that he did not live to see the opening of Christ’s public ministry. There are several reasons that support this idea:

Jesus started His ministry when He was thirty years old probably because He needed to be home to take care of His mother and family. At the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry, the Bible records the story of the wedding at Cana (John 2). The Bible mentions how Mary played a role in asking Jesus to provide for the guests, but there is no reference to Joseph. When Jesus was on the cross, He asked His disciple John to take care of His mother (John 19:26-27). If Joseph was alive, Jesus wouldn’t have asked a non-kin to take care of His mother. This would not have been appropriate. There is no mention of Joseph being alive during the ministry of Jesus in the other books of the New Testament.

**What are the biblical qualities of St. Joseph?** St. Joseph serves as the perfect model of catholic fatherhood.

**St. Joseph was Righteous:** The Gospel of Matthew describes St. Joseph as a “righteous man” (Mt 1:19). In the first century, a righteous man was one who obeyed the laws of God. We know St. Joseph was obedient because he and Mary took the infant Jesus to the temple for consecration in accordance with the Mosaic law (Lk 2:22-24). We can imitate St. Joseph by obeying the Divine Law as contained in the Ten Commandments and Eight Beatitudes. We also obey the Five Precepts of the Catholic Church.

**St. Joseph was Chaste:** The Catholic Church teaches Mary was a perpetual virgin. It follows St. Joseph did not have conjugal relations with her. He was chaste throughout his marriage. We follow the example of St. Joseph when we regulate our sexual desires. For single persons, chastity requires abstinence from any type of sexual activity; for married couples, it includes mutual fidelity between spouses, as well as an openness to the gift of life.

**St. Joseph was Industrious:** He was a carpenter by trade (Mt 13:55). As such, he knew the value of a hard work. He also understood the challenges of providing for a family. His industriousness inspires us to greater diligence in our professions. Regardless of our respective career paths, we should always strive to imitate St. Joseph and put forth our very best efforts. Christ promises to repay us for the conscientious performance of our duties. We read in Col 3:23-24, “ Whatever you do, do from the heart, as for the Lord and not for others, knowing that you will receive from the Lord the due payment of the inheritance; be slaves of the Lord Christ” The righteousness, chastity, and industriousness of St. Joseph make him the perfect model of Catholic fatherhood.

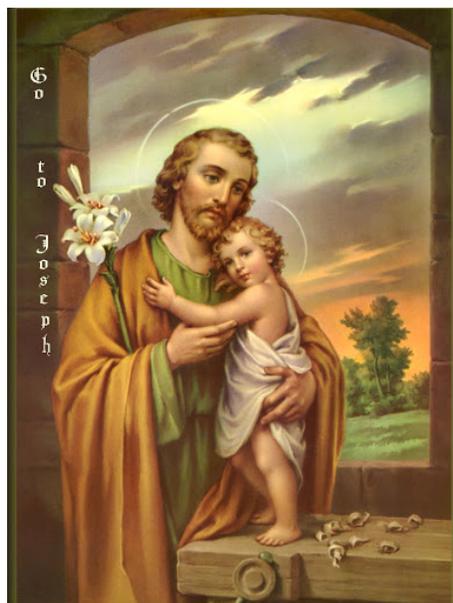
**So what happened to him afterwards?** Various traditions explain this gap by saying that Joseph died around Jesus’ 20th birthday. He may have been an old widower. Scripture doesn’t tell us how old Joseph was when he married Mary, or really anything about his previous life. An early tradition claims that he was about 90 years old, and that he had been previously married, had children from that previous marriage, and that his wife had died, leaving him a widower. In this account, he knew that Mary had taken a vow of virginity, and he was chosen to marry Mary and serve as her protector in part because he was old and not interested in starting another family. This helps to explain why he apparently died while Jesus was a young man, as well as explains

why some people are referred to as Jesus' "brothers" and "sisters" in the Gospels: they could have been Joseph's children from a previous marriage, and so were Jesus' step-siblings.

**Veneration of St. Joseph seems to have begun in Egypt.** The earliest Western devotion to him dates from the early 14th century, when the Servites, an order of mendicant friars, observed his feast on March 19, the traditional day of his death. An early title used to honor him was *nutritor Domini*, meaning "guardian of the Lord". He has 2 feast days. The Solemnity of St. Joseph is March 19th (if this falls on a weekday during Lent, we can break our fast!), and the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker is May 1st. He is a Silent Saint. Of course, he is included in the Feast of the Holy Family (December 30th, or thereabouts), and he's certainly a part of the Christmas story.

**He is the patron of a bunch of stuff:** He is the patron of the Universal Church (in 1870 by Pope Pius IX), a happy death, families, fathers, expectant mothers, travelers, immigrants, craftsmen, engineers, and workers. He's also the patron of the Americas, Canada, China, Croatia, Mexico, Korea, Austria, Belgium, Peru, the Philippines and Vietnam.

**St. Joseph in Legends and Stories:** The church gets some of the legendary stories of St. Joseph such as the wooden stick that blooms for Joseph but not others? In many of our Catholic churches, we have altars (or at least statues) on either side of the main altar, dedicated to St. Joseph and to the Blessed Virgin Mary. When we look at St. Joseph's statue, image or picture, we will notice him holding a wooden stick out of which flowers are blooming. The gospels do not mention anything about flowers blossoming in a wooden stick. So where does this image come from?



First of all, the story of the wooden stick and the blooming flowers goes like this from the 'non canonical' gospels *protoevangelium of James* and *the Gospel of Pseudo- Matthew*. After Joachim and Anna, Mary's parents, presented Mary in the Temple when she was 3 years of age, they allowed her to remain there as a temple virgin dedicated to God's service. When Mary was on the verge of womanhood, the high priest announced that it was time for all of the temple virgins of that age to return home so that marriages could be arranged for them. Mary, however, said that she could not do this since her parents had dedicated her to the service of the Lord and that she herself had made a vow of virginity to God. When the high priest sought guidance from God, a loud voice called forth all of the men of the House of David who had not taken a wife, instructing them to come to the Temple and to bring a branch to lay on the altar. The voice said that one of the branches would bloom forth with flowers and that the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, would land upon the branch. Joseph was one of the men who came and when he placed his branch on the altar, it immediately bloomed into flowers and a dove descended from heaven and landed on it, thus revealing that Joseph was to take the virgin Mary as his spouse.

In both of these accounts, a dove flies forth from the rod (stick) belonging to Joseph, indicating that he is to be the spouse of Mary. Over the centuries, this scene has been depicted in sacred art, both paintings and sculptures, showing St. Joseph holding a staff, stick, or rod, from which flowers are blooming. In the final analysis, theories about who Joseph was and how old He was when Jesus was born are speculation since we have no evidence. What we do know is that Joseph was a godly man who was entrusted by God to care for Mary and her Son Jesus.

**The Two Josephs:** What's in a name? Do people with the same name sometimes have much in common? We can look at two Josephs and their similarities. Joseph of the Old Testament is the first Joseph. The Church refers to him as a type of Christ (foreshadowing Christ). But many saints hold that the first Joseph is also a prefigurement for St. Joseph.

**Parallels between Joseph of the OT and Joseph of the NT.**

Qualities	Old Testament	New Testament
Name	Jacob was the father of Joseph (Gen 30:23-24)	Jacob was the father of Joseph (Matt 1:16)
Royalty	The first Joseph was a patriarch, following the great line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He was the last and perhaps the greatest of the Old Testament patriarchs	St. Joseph also was royalty since he was a descendant of King David.

<p>S u f f e r i n g (sometimes God allows us to go through suffering and pain for a greater good (Joseph, formerly a shepherd boy, was now one of the most important men in Egypt)</p>	<p>Joseph was minding his own business going out into the fields to see his brothers, and they plotted to kill him. They seized him, stripped him and threw him into a well. Then, when they saw a caravan of gypsies going to Egypt, they sold him into slavery. Joseph was very patient</p>	<p>St. Joseph had to go through many sufferings as well. Mary was well along in her pregnancy when, as members of the House of David, they had to journey to Bethlehem to take part in the census ordered by the Roman rulers. That involved a difficult journey of perhaps 85 miles on a donkey with no advance lodging reservations. But Joseph obeyed the law.</p>
<p>Fleeing to Egypt</p>	<p>Joseph was sold into slavery and taken to Egypt.</p>	<p>St. Joseph fled to Egypt with his family to escape Herod's wrath.</p>
<p>Ability to interpret dreams (the message of God)</p>	<p>Joseph gained fame for his ability to interpret dreams. While still in prison, he was able to interpret the dreams of the baker and the cupbearer of Pharaoh. When Pharaoh had a strange dream of 7 fat cows being devoured by 7 skinny cows, he couldn't understand it. Pharaoh had heard of Joseph's ability, so he sent for him and asked him to interpret these dreams. Joseph gave Pharaoh the interpretation - that God was going to bless Egypt with 7 years of plenty, but after that would come 7 years of terrible famine. Because of this insight into the future, Pharaoh picked Joseph to be the manager of his house and ruler over all his possessions.</p>	<p>St. Joseph also understood the meaning of his dreams. The New Testament relates four dreams, which St. Joseph understood and unhesitatingly acted upon. The first was when he had doubts about whether to take Mary as his wife. The angel said "Fear not, Joseph, to accept Mary as your wife. It is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived this Child." Joseph recognized the guidance in the dream as coming from God and followed the angel's bidding. Likewise, he recognized the urgency of the message conveyed in the second dream - "flee into Egypt. Herod is trying to kill the Child." In the third dream, Joseph understood that it was safe to return to Palestine since Herod was dead. Lastly, in the fourth dream, Joseph accepted the angel's advice to return to Nazareth because Herod's son had become king. St. Joseph's ability to recognize the divine guidance sent to him in dreams literally saved the Holy Family on several occasions.</p>

<p>Purity and Chastity</p>	<p>Joseph was a very strong man, a very handsome man, and Potiphar's wife fell in love with him and tried to seduce him. Day after day she would ask him and try to lead him into having an adulterous affair, but Joseph steadfastly refused. Eventually, she lied and told Potiphar, "Look what this Hebrew tried to do to me." Potiphar put Joseph into prison, where he stayed for two years.</p>	<p>St. Joseph is the virginal husband of Mary. St. Joseph, the most pure and chaste man that God ever created, married the Blessed Mother. They lived a virginal life their entire marriage.</p>
<p>Experience of Poverty</p>	<p>Joseph of the Old Testament had everything material taken from him - his brothers stole his inheritance, he was sold into slavery and owned nothing, and he was unjustly imprisoned for a few years.</p>	<p>St. Joseph knew poverty as well. We are told in the gospels that he was a carpenter, a member of the working class. When he uprooted his family and went to Bethlehem and then to Egypt, he probably took his tools with him so he could continue earning a living, but that is about all he had in terms of material goods. We also know that the Holy Family was poor because at the Presentation they gave two turtle doves, the offering of the poor.</p>
<p>Feeding the world</p>	<p>Egypt was the only country in the world that had grain during the famine. The other nations came to Egypt to buy their grain. Thanks to Joseph, the peoples of the world had food, and Pharaoh became even richer and more powerful.</p>	<p>St. Joseph was the nurturer and the one who fed Jesus. He practiced his trade and earned the money to buy the food, which fed Jesus. St. Joseph, as head of the Holy Family, taught Jesus a trade and provided his initial religious instruction. He helped Jesus grow to manhood and become for us the Eucharist, feeding us with his own Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. Thus, indirectly Joseph has fed the entire world with the Bread of Life</p>

Go to Joseph in need	The people of Egypt and the other nations went to Joseph for the grain they needed during the great famine. During this time of suffering there was a saying, "Go to Joseph for what you need." Because Joseph had such tremendous influence with the Pharaoh, many peoples' petitions were answered.	We can go to St. Joseph in our time of need. Whatever difficulties and sufferings we have, we go to Joseph because he has great influence with his Son Jesus, the King of the Universe who still follows the precepts of the Fourth Commandment (honor your father and mother)
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### Blessed Virgin Mary

**Blessed Virgin Mary's Birth:** The book '*protoevangelion of James*' speaks about her virginal birth. According to this book, Mary's parents, Joachim and Anna, were childless for many years but they remained faithful to God, continuously praying for a child. One day, when Joachim came to the temple to make an offering, he was chased away by the High Priest because of his childlessness. He felt ashamed of himself and went to the hill country to live among the shepherds and their flocks. Both Joachim and Anna were praying at their house in Jerusalem. An angel appeared to both of them and announced that Anna would have a child whose name would be known throughout the world. Anna promised to offer her child as a gift to the Lord. Joachim returned home, and in due time Anna bore a daughter, Mary. She was born sinless for giving the savior to redeem the sinful humanity. God had a special purpose for the humanity through the birth of our blessed Mary.

**Meaning of the name Mary:** For the ancient Hebrews, naming a child was a serious business. A child's name distinguished his or her character and destiny. According to the Hebrew way of thinking, a person's name represents their soul. The name Elijah, for instance, means, "The Lord (YHWH) is my God." This accurately fits the fiery prophet who defended proper worship of God rather than Baal. Likewise, the name Yeshua (Jesus) means, "God saves." This well accords with the patriarch Joshua (Jesus), who led the Israelites across the Jordan, as well as Jesus, whom we accept as our Savior.

**Mary as the Star of the Sea:** We, Catholics, have long-honored Jesus' mother, Mary, as a very special person. What does her name signify? While there is wide ambiguity about the correct translation, the most popular understanding of the name Mary among Catholics is *Star of the sea*. How? The word *maris* in Latin means sea and is quite similar to Maria. However, the name Mary is clearly not Latin in origin but finds its roots in the Egyptian name, Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* mentions that this title of Mary originated from St. Jerome's fifth century translation of Eusebius of Caesarea's *Onomasticon* (dictionary of proper names) in which he translates Mary's name in Hebrew – *Miryam*, meaning drop of the sea – into the Latin *Stilla Maris*, which later became *Stella Maris* due to a dialect of the Latin peasants.

**Spiritual Significance of Mary as the Star of the Sea:** Star guided sailors across the sea and travelers across the desert. Because it remains apparently fixed in the same location throughout the night, it served as a sure reference point in the heavens. Purity, radiance, and beauty are qualities of the star which are also applicable to the Blessed Virgin Mary spiritually. As our life on earth is similar to a tempestuous sea journey, so Mary remains firm in the heavens, guiding us to eternal life promised by her Son Jesus.

**She is the Star of Heaven:** We think of Mary occupying the center of Heaven, as the greatest of the saints. For us, Mary's importance is primarily because of her relationship to God, as Jesus' mother. The understanding of Mary's name as *Star of the sea* took firm hold among Western Christians during the Middle Ages.

**St. Bernard** (11th c.), composed an inspired homily regarding Mary as Star of the Sea. He recommends that all who are traveling on the troubled waters of life should look to Mary. "Mary's name is said to mean, 'star of the sea,'" he says, "If the winds of temptation surge, if you run aground on the shoals of troubles, look to this star, call upon Mary! If you are tossed by the winds of pride or ambition or detraction or jealousy, look to this star, call upon Mary! If anger, greed, or the allurements of the flesh dash against the boat of your mind, look to Mary! In dangers, in straits, in perplexity, think of Mary, call upon Mary... Let her name be always in your mouth, and in your heart, and if you would ask for and obtain the help of her prayers, do not forget the example of how she lived."

**Presentation of Blessed Virgin Mary:** We have a very clear and detailed account of Jesus' birth and his presentation in the Jerusalem temple in the gospels. Regarding her presentation in the temple, The apocryphal book 'the Protoevangelium of James or the infancy narrative of James' helps us with some interesting information. According to this literature, Mary's parents, Joachim and Anne were childless. They received a heavenly message that they would have a child. In thanksgiving for the gift of their daughter, they brought Mary to Jerusalem temple when she was 3 years old and consecrated her to God. According to the Jewish tradition, all young Jewish girls were left in the care of the temple for a period of time, during which they were educated. So Blessed Mother also remained there to be educated in preparation for her role as Mother of God.

**Note on Apocryphal books:** These books, although they are not canonical, give us lot of information about biblical characters. There is a whole bunch of apocryphal books with plenty of information. Although they are not canonical and historically proven, we cannot easily rule them out as unauthentic sources because they help us to understand the historical background, culture and context of the biblical times because they were written during the biblical times.

**Annunciation of the angel Gabriel to Mary:** The word *annunciation* comes from a Latin word meaning "to bring news." The Latin Vulgate uses the phrase *annuntiatio navitatis Christi* ("the announcement of Christ's birth") to refer to the announcement made by the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary about the impending birth of Christ. The Annunciation brought news of the Incarnation. The Annunciation is dear to us because it is a prophecy of the Savior's birth. The annunciation is the herald grace and peace that would come to mankind from God through Jesus Christ. The Feast of Annunciation is observed on March 25 by both the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church, where the emphasis is placed on Mary as the *Theotokos*, or "mother of God."

**Magnificat:** The Magnificat is Mary's prayer/poem/hymn of praise found in Luke 1:46-55. Luke 1:39-45 records the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth. Elizabeth, who is about 6 months pregnant at this time, is filled with the Holy Spirit and reports that, the moment she heard Mary's voice, her unborn baby (John) leaped in her womb. Elizabeth then goes on to bless Mary. In Luke 1:46-55 Mary responds to Elizabeth's blessing with what is now commonly called the Magnificat. The Latin translation of Mary's response begins with the word *magnificat*, which

simply means “magnify” (or “exalt,” “glorify,” etc.). The Magnificat is a poem of praise to God, praising Him for His blessing to Mary and His faithfulness to Israel.

**What Is the Significance of Mary’s Magnificat?** Her song speaks of who she is and how deep her faith is. In verses 46-47 she says, “My soul praises the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” Mary’s faith is rooted in Jewish tradition. We can surmise that she had come from a devout Jewish family and she believes in the God of her ancestors. Her faith is further established in verses 48-50. Here she speaks of God looking on a humble servant with favor. She acknowledges that God is taking her humble status and using it to exalt her for generations to come. In verse 49 Mary says that she will be called blessed because “the Mighty One has done great things for me, and his name is holy.” She praises God for the mercy he bestows on all who will fear him. In the last four verses of her song, she speaks of the wondrous things God has done for her ancestors, for her, and for all who will believe. Her recognition of the mighty deeds God has performed and the mercies He has given to the people of Israel is significant.

**The Revolutionary Magnificat 1:51-53:** Generally we look at this song as a song of praise for God. But when we pay closer attention to her song, we can see moral, social, and economic threads, woven in verses 51-53 as she praises God for the blessing he has bestowed upon her.

**Moral revolution:** Her words in verse 51, “He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart” convey a moral revolutionary thought.

**Social revolution:** Secondly, we can look at her song in a social revolutionary frame of mind. Mary says, “He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly”, empowerment of the poor people.

**Economic revolution.** Luke 1:53 says, “The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty” A Christian society should abolish hunger and poverty.

**What Is Mary Teaching us with Her Song?** The primary message for us is that we are to have faith. We are to trust in our God. No matter the situation or circumstance, God has it all in his hands. We should strive to imitate the heart and mind of Mary in every situation. Her words are not just for the Advent season, they are for all seasons. Secondly, her song is an inspiring piece of Scripture because they are very profound, prophetic, revolutionary, posing a great challenge and demanding a christian response from us.

**The Old Testament:** Typology in Christian theology and Biblical exegesis is a doctrine or a theory concerning the relationship of the Old Testament to the New Testament. Events, persons, or statements in the Old Testament are seen as types pre-figuring events or aspects of Christ or his revelation described in the New Testament.

Thus the following passages, events and people in the OT prefigure Blessed Virgin Mary in the NT mystically, directly or indirectly.

**The Old Testament**

Gn 3:15 - Fight between the serpent and the woman  
 Is 7:14 - Virginal Prophecy of Emmanuel  
 Mic 5:23 - O Bethlehem Ephrathah  
 Gen 3:20 - New Eve  
 Gen 6 Ark of Noah  
 Gn 17:16 Sarah  
 Gn 27:15 Rebecca  
 Gn 37:28 Rachel  
 Ex 37 Ark of the Covenant  
 Num 12:4 Miriam  
 Jud 6:36-39 Fleece of Gideon  
 Tob 3:13-23 Sara  
 Jud 8-15 Judith  
 Esther 4:16 Esther

**The New Testament**

Lk 1:26-38 The Annunciation  
 Lk 1:39-56 The Visitation  
 Lk 2:4-20 - The Nativity of Jesus  
 Lk 2:22-39 The Purification of Mary  
 Lk 2:41-52 The Child Jesus in the Temple  
 Mt 1:18 The Betrothal of Mary  
 Mt 1:20- The Ordeal of Joseph  
 Mt 2: 1-12 The Arrival of the Magi  
 Mt 2:13-18 The Flight of the Holy Family into Egypt  
 Mk 3:31 The Mother and brethren of Jesus  
 Jn 2:1-10 The Wedding at Cana  
 Jn 19:25-27 Mary at the Foot of the Cross  
 Acts 1:12-2:4 Mary in the Upper Room at Pentecost  
 Gal 4:4 St. Paul's Profession of Faith  
 Rev 11: The Woman Clothed With the Sun

**Examples of Typology:** Early Christians understood that the Old Testament was full of types that were fulfilled in the New Testament, thus St. Augustine wrote, "the Old Testament is the New concealed, but the New Testament is the Old revealed" Here are a few more examples of biblical typology: 1 Peter 3:18-22 - Noah's ark is a type of baptism. Colossians 2:11-12 - Circumcision is a type of baptism. John 3:14 - Bronze serpent is a type of the Crucifixion of Christ. 1 Corinthians 5:7 - The Passover lamb is a type of the sacrifice of Christ.

Ark of the Covenant in the OT	Ark of the Covenant in the NT
God the Holy Spirit overshadowed and then indwelt the Ark. The Ark became the dwelling place of the presence of God [Exo 40:34-35]	God the Holy Spirit overshadowed and then indwelt Mary. At that time Mary's womb became the dwelling place of the presence of God [Luke 1:35]
What was contained within Ark of the Covenant? "A golden jar of manna, and Aaron's rod and the tables of the covenant" (Hebrews 9:4).	What was contained within the womb of Mary? Manna - the bread of life" (John 6:35). Aaron's rod - reigning over Jacob's descendants for ever (Lk 1:32). The stone tablets of the Ten commandments -the word incarnate (John 1:1).

The ark traveled to the house of Obededom in the hill country of Judea (2 Sam 6:1-11)	Mary traveled to the house of Elizabeth and Zechariah in the hill country of Judea (Lk 1:39).
Dressed as a priest, David danced and leapt in front of the ark (2 Sam 6:14).	John the Baptist of priestly lineage leapt in his mother's womb at the approach of Mary (Lk 1:41)
David asks, "How can the ark of the Lord come to me?" (2 Sam 6:9)	Elizabeth asks, "Why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Lk 1:43)
David shouts in the presence of the ark (2 Sam 6:15)	Elizabeth "exclaimed with a loud cry" in the presence of the Mary (Lk 1:42)
The ark remained in the house of Obededom for three months (2 Sam 6:11)	Mary remained in the house of Elizabeth for three months (Lk 1:56).
The house of Obed-edom was blessed by the presence of the ark (2Sam 6:11).	The word "blessed" is used three times; surely the house was blessed by God (Lk 1:39-42).
The ark returned to its home and ended up in Jerusalem, where God's presence and glory is revealed in the temple (2 Sam 6:12)	Mary returned home and eventually ended up in Jerusalem, where she presented God incarnate in the temple (Lk 1:56, 2:21-22).

**Athanasius of Alexandria:** "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"

**Difference between OT and NT Covenant:** It seems clear that Luke has used typology to reveal something about the place of Mary in salvation history. In the Ark of the Old Covenant, God came to his people with a spiritual presence, but in Mary, the Ark of the New Covenant, God comes to dwell with his people not only spiritually but physically, in the womb of a specially prepared Jewish girl. As we are awaiting the glorious birth of our Lord Jesus, the Emmanuel, God with us, let us prepare our minds, hearts and homes that he might come and dwell with us, bless us, protect us with Holy Presence. Mary, the Ark of the New Covenant, Pray for us. When the Ark was outside the Holy of Holies, it was to be covered with a blue veil [Numb 4:4-6] In Mary's appearances outside of heaven visionaries testify that she wears a blue veil. OT: John sees the Ark of the Covenant in heaven (Rev 11:19). John sees Mary in heaven. It is the same vision, clothed with the sun and standing on the moon (Jn 12:1)