



St. Mary in the OT
Code: 9/FE/5

1. General Aims of the unit

To celebrate the feast of St. Mary by understanding more about her symbols in the OT

2. Special aims of the lesson

1. To review the life of St. Mary
2. To highlight the symbols of St. Mary as recorded in the OT and explained by the fathers of the church
3. To study carefully the similarity in each one of these symbols to St. Mary
4. To remember how the church uses these symbols in her service.

3. Outcomes:

By the end of this lesson the teens are able to:

1. Remember by heart the symbols of St. Mary in the OT and where these symbols are recorded in the bible.
2. Debate in small groups the similarities between St Mary and each of these symbols
3. Establish a list of these symbols and when we mention each of them in our worship either in church or in our own worship

4. Verses : Luke 1:28 , 48 ; Ps. 45:9 ; Gen. 3:15; Isa 7:14

5.References : St. Mary in the Orthodox concept

The Holy Virgin St . Mary

(Both references are in the Christian Orthodox Library CD)

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Memory Verse:

“Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Emanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).

Introduction:

Christ is the pivot of the Old Testament. Prophets’ prophesied of incarnation and crucifixion. We shall speak of the symbols and signs of the Virgin in the Old Testament in brief. Many of the symbols of the Old Testament stand for the Virgin and refer to her order and role as she gave the Lord the dough of humanity. There were many symbols and signs that were interpreted by the fathers and understood by the following generations.

Lesson Outline:

The following is a brief presentation of the symbols of the Virgin in the Old Testament.

I. The Woman’s Seed (Genesis 3:5)

The prophecy did not say that salvation would be by a man, but it said that salvation would be by the woman’s seed and this indicates that Christ has no human father and the evidence of the virgin’s conception is clear. “He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.”

II. Noah’s Dove (Genesis 5:11)

“The dove came back to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth a freshly plucked olive leaf” This refers to the beautiful dove that gave birth to the Prince of Peace.

III. Jacob’s Ladder (Genesis 28:12,13)

“There was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.”

This stands for Mary as she conceived the Lord in her womb and the Lord rose on the cross and opened the heaven and muted the heavenly and the earthly into one. (In her hymn of praise the church says: You are the Ladder that Jacob saw set on the earth, the top of it reached to heaven and the angels of God are ascending and descending on it).

IV. The Bush (Exodus 3:2)

“And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and he looked, and lo, the bush was burning yet it was not consumed.”

This refers to Mary who bore the fire of Godhead and was not consumed and her virginity was kept. This also refers to the unity of the Lord’s Divinity and Humanity as the Lord’s Humanity is One with His Godhead without mingling, without confusion, nor alteration.

(In this, the church says in her hymn of praise: You are the bush that Moses saw burning yet not consumed and Godhead did not consume your body.)

V. The Rod of Aaron (Numbers 17:8)

“The rod of Aaron had sprouted and put forth buds, and produced blossom and it bore ripe almonds.” This refers to Mary who gave birth to the Lord Jesus at a miraculous level.

VI. Aaron’s Censor (Numbers 16:46)

“And Moses said to Aaron: Take your censor, and put fire therein from the altar, and lay incense on it”. The censor of pure gold is Virgin Mary and the ember stands for the bush that Moses saw in the wilderness, the bush was on fire. The bush refers to Blessed Mary the Mother of Light who bore the fire of Godhead in her womb for nine months without being harmed. The incense (the

Godhead) is our High Priest who offered Himself as a sacrifice and an acceptable oblation on the cross, the scented fragrance rose up to the heavenly Father from Golgotha in the evening. The scented fragrance that spread is the Nativity of Christ and His Preaching to the world.

VII. The Ark of Covenant (Exodus 25:10,11)

“And you shall make an ark of acacia wood, two cubits and a half shall be its length... and you shall overlay it with pure gold, within and without shall you overlay it.”

The wood that never rots refers to her perpetual virginity, overlaying it with pure gold within and without, refers to the purity of Mary and to the fact that the Lord’s Divinity and His Humanity never part. The manna in the ark refers to Mary when she conceived Christ the heavenly manna.

VIII. The Jar of Manna (Exodus 16:33)

“And Moses said to Aaron: Take a jar, and put an omen of manna in it and place it before the Lord, to be kept throughout your generations.” Mary is the gold jar of manna. She carries the mental manna, the Bread of Life.

IX. The Rock of Horeb (Exodus 17:6)

“I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, that the people may drink”. This refers to the Virgin who gave birth to Christ in a miraculous way and Christ is the Living water and whoever drinks of it never thirsts.

X. The Prophecies of Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14)

“Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emanuel.”

Another prophecy is, “Behold, the Lord is riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt” (Isaiah 19:1).

XI. The Outer Gate: Ezekiel’s prophecy (Ezekiel 44:1,2)

“Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east; and it was shut. And he said to me: This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it shall remain shut.”

This refers to the perpetual virginity of the Virgin. In the hymn of praise, the church says: “Virgin Mary is the gate that Ezekiel saw and it was shut. It shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; therefore it shall remain shut.”

XII. Daniel’s Dream (Daniel 2:34)

“As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand.” The stone that was cut out by no human hand refers to Christ who was born of the Virgin, the everlasting mountain, without human seed. His kingdom will replace the fourth kingdom. This kingdom will never be destroyed and shall stand forever.

The church says: You are the mountain that Daniel saw. The stone that was cut from a mountain by no human hand and filled the whole earth is Christ.

XIII. All what is said of Zion in the Psalms of David (Psalm 49:2, 75:1, 131:10, 86:5)

Conclusion:

The Virgin was a model of the dwelling of God in man. So that Christ may not only be with us but also in us. This demands a higher level of purity and a higher standard of piety. No one could reach that level except Mary the Virgin. But we are all invited to reach that level so that we may

be like Virgin Mary; a dwelling place for Christ, not in a symbolic way but in a practical way. He dwells among His people, abides in them, and become their God and we become His people and His beloved.

Applications:

- ⌚ Draw all the symbols and write about how they refer to Virgin Mary.
- ⌚ Read the church hymns that refer to the order of the Mother of Light and the Symbols that refer to her.
- ⌚ Make a wall Chart to elucidate the symbols of the Virgin in the Old Testament and write your own contemplation on each symbol.
- ⌚ Intercede with the Lord in your prayer and study some hymns that honor the Virgin.
- ⌚ Practice glorifying the Virgin before her Icon in the church under the supervision of the priest, the deacons and the psalmist.

The Sunday Theotokia

Part 1

And whenever we, gather for prayer, let us bless the Name, of my Lord Jesus.

We bless You, O my Lord Jesus, deliver us through Your Name, for we have hope in You.

That we may praise You, with Your good Father, and the Holy Spirit, for You have risen and saved us.

Glory be to the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto, the age of all ages. Amen.

You are called righteous, O blessed one, among women, the second tabernacle.

Which is called, the holy, of holies, wherein are the tablets.

Of the covenant, and the ten commandments, which are written, by the finger of God.

They have directed us, to the Iota, the name of salvation, of Jesus Christ.

Who was incarnate, of you without change, and became the Mediator, of a new covenant.

Through the shedding, of His holy blood, He purified the faithful, to be a justified people.

Wherefore everyone, magnifies you, O my lady the Mother of God, the ever holy.

And we also pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

Who can speak of, the honor of the tabernacle, which Moses had made, on Mount Sinai.

He made it with glory, as commanded by the Lord, and according to the pattern, shown unto him.

Therein Aaron, and his sons served, the example of the highest, in the shadow of the heavenly ones.

They likened it to you, O Virgin Mary, the true Tabernacle, wherein dwelt God.

Wherefore we, magnify you befittingly, with prophetic, hymnology.

For they spoke of you, with great honor, O holy city, of the great King.

We entreat and pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

Part 2

The Ark overlaid, roundabout with gold, that was made, with wood that would not decay.

It foretold the sign, of the God the Word, who became man, without separation.

One nature out of two, a holy divinity, co-essential with the Father, an incorruptible.

A Holy humanity, begotten without seed, coessential with us, according to the economy.

This which He has taken, from you oh undefiled, He made one with Him, as a hypostasis.

Wherefore everyone, magnifies you, O my lady the Mother of God, the ever holy.

And we also pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

All the souls together, of the children of Israel, brought offerings unto, the tabernacle of the Lord.

Gold and silver, and precious stone, purple and scarlet, and fine linen.

And they made an ark, of wood that would not decay, overlaid with gold, within and without.

You too O Mary, are clothed with the glory, of the Divinity, within and without.

For you have brought, unto God your Son, many people, through your purity.

Wherefore we, magnify you befittingly, with prophetic, hymnology.

For they spoke of you, with great honor, O holy city, of the great King.
We entreat and pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

Part 3

The Mercy Seat, was overshadowed by, the forged Cherubim, from all sides.

Was a symbol of God the Word, who was incarnate, of you without change, o undefiled.

He became the purification, of our sins, and the forgiveness, of our iniquities.

Wherefore everyone, magnifies you, O my lady the Mother of God, the ever holy.

And we also pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

The two golden Cherubim, continually cover, with their wings, the mercy seat.

Overshadowing, the place of the Holy, of the Holies, in the second tabernacle.

You too O Mary, thousands of thousands, and myriads of myriads, overshadow you:

Praising their Creator, who was in your womb, and took our likeness, without sin or alteration.

Wherefore we, magnify you befittingly, with prophetic, hymnology.

For they spoke of you, with great honor, O holy city, of the great King.

We entreat and pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

Part 4

You are the Pot, made of pure gold, wherein was hidden, the true Manna.

The Bread of Life, which came down for us, from heaven, gave life unto the world.

Wherefore everyone, magnifies you, O my lady, the Mother of God, the ever holy.

And we also pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

It befits you, to be called, the golden Pot, where the Manna was hidden.

For that was kept, in the tabernacle, as a testimony, to the children of Israel.

Of the good things, that the Lord God, did unto them, in the wilderness of Sinai.

You too O Mary, have carried in your womb, the rational Manna, that came from the Father.

You bore Him without blemish, He gave unto us, His honored body and blood, and we live forever.

Wherefore we, magnify you befittingly, with prophetic, hymnology.

For they spoke of you, with great honor, O holy city, of the great King.

We entreat and pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

Part 5

You are the lampstand, made of pure gold, carrying, the ever-burning lamp.

That is the unapproachable, light of the world, that proceeds from, the unapproachable light.

The true God, out of true God, who was incarnate, of you without change.

By His coming, He gave light to us, who were sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death.

And He guided our feet, in the path of peace, through the communion, of His Holy sacraments.

Wherefore everyone, magnifies you, O my lady the Mother of God, the ever holy.

And we also pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

All the ranks on high, cannot resemble you, O golden lamp stand, that

carries the true Light.

That was made of, pure and chosen gold, and was placed, in the tabernacle.

That was managed, by the hands of men, who brought oil for its lamps, by day and by night.

He who dwelt in your womb, O Virgin Mary, gives light to every man, who comes into the world.

For He whom you gave birth too, is the Sun of Righteousness, and He has healed us, of all our sins.

Wherefore we, magnify you befittingly, with prophetic, hymnology.

For they spoke of you, with great honor, O holy city, of the great King.

We entreat and pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

Part 6

You are the censer, made of pure gold, carrying the blessed, and live coal.

That is taken, from the Altar, to purge the sins, and take away the iniquities.

Which is God the Word, who was incarnate of you, and offered Himself as incense, to God His Father.

Wherefore everyone, magnifies you, O my lady the Mother of God, the ever holy.

And we also pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

Wherefore truly, I do not err, whenever I call you, the golden censer.

For therein, is offered, the chosen incense, before the Holiest.

Wherein God takes away, the sins of the people, through the burnt offerings, and the aroma of incense.

You too O Mary, have carried in your womb, the Invisible, Word of the Father.

He who offered Himself, as an acceptable sacrifice, upon the Cross, for the salvation of our race.

Wherefore we, magnify you befittingly, with prophetic, hymnology.

For they spoke of you, with great honor, O Holy City, of the great King.

We entreat and pray, that we may win mercy, through your intercessions, with the Lover of mankind.

