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## THESIS PROJECT

(For M. Phil Degree)

Topic:

CATHOLIC AND MUSLIM (*Ahl al-Sunnah*)  
PERCEPTIONS ON MARY (عليها السلام)

“A Comparative Study”

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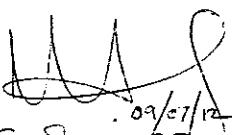
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful."*

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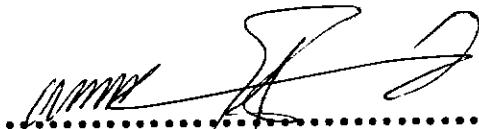
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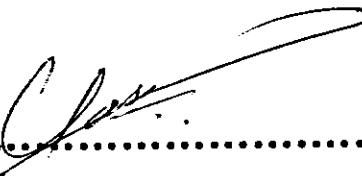
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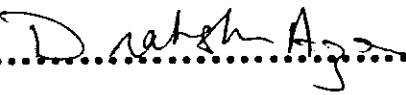
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I pray to Allah almighty. May He increase my knowledge and ability to work and make it fruitful for all the Muslim's *Ummah*. Ameen!

Jamil Akhtar

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## DEDICATION

*It goes to the elders of my family, especially to my beloved parents who always helped me with their precious prayers.*

## TRANSLITERATION TABLE

Arabic	Transliteration	Arabic	Transliteration	Long Vowels	
ا	A	ض	d	ا	ā
ب	B	ط	t̄	ا	ā
ت	T	ظ	z̄	ى	ī
ث	Th	ع	‘	و	ō
ج	J	غ	gh	Short Vowels	
ه	h	ف	f	Single Zabar	
خ	Kh	ق	q	Single Zer	
د	D	ك	k̄	Single Pesh	
ذ	dh	ل	l		
ر	r	م	m		
ز	z	ن	n		
س	s	ؤ	aw		
ش	sh	هـ	h		
ص	sh	يـ	y		

## ABSTRACT

There are a lot of points on which Muslims (Ahl al-Sunnah) and Christians (Catholics) agree and many on which they disagree. The personality of Mary (عليها السلام) is regarded to be one of the areas of encounter and dialogue which has taken place between Catholics and Ahl al-Sunnah. Ahl al-Sunnah points of view in regard to Mary (عليها السلام) did not face any big change or development. That is why, all the groups of Ahl al-Sunnah are almost in agreement regarding Mary (عليها السلام). Whereas the Catholic point of view is concerned, it underwent a great deal of historical development by the passage of time. That is why, in Christianity, different groups have different points of view in regard to Mary (عليها السلام).

According to my understandings, it is also due to changes in the basic Catholic teachings from time to time while the Muslims teachings did not change so their point of view remained the same as it was before 14 hundred years ago. It is also true that Mary (عليها السلام) is a role model for Christians' women as for Muslims'.

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## INTRODUCTION

Praise be to Allah the Sustainer of the Worlds. He is Allah, the One, the Eternal, and Absolute. There is no one like Him. Peace on His servants whom He has chosen for His message. We make no distinction between any of His Messengers. May His Peace and Blessings shower also on His final Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ، his family, his companions and all those who follow the path of guidance.

There are many junctures where Islam and Christianity meet or diverge, agree or disagree. The personality of Virgin Mary (عليها السلام) is regarded to be one of the areas of encounter and dialogue which has taken place between Christianity and Muslims.

The *Qurānic* Mary (عليها السلام) is especially interesting for the Christians. We find a recent notion among Christians' missionaries and scholars that Mary (عليها السلام) is the bridge between the two religions. Mary (عليها السلام) is one of the most highly-regarded women in Islam; there are several verses in the *Qurān* praising her and confirming that she was an extremely chaste and pious woman. *Sūrah Maryam*, the nineteenth *Sūrah* of the *Qurān*, is named after her and talks to some extent about her life.

Whereas the Catholics<sup>2</sup> are concerned, they always consider Mary (عليها السلام) a very important figure for their church. The Church holds many teachings and

<sup>1</sup> All the Muslims hold all the messengers of God and their companions, in high esteem. Therefore the writer of present thesis has written - (عليه السلام) - Peace Be Upon Him - May Allah bless him, (عليها السلام) - May Allah bless her - after their names to show his respect for them.

<sup>2</sup> The term Catholic is derived from the Greek word “*kaqolikj*”. This word means general or universal interest, wide sympathies or broad interests. However, some Christians use this term to refer to all believers in Jesus. The term “Catholic” was first used in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE to emphasize its universal scope. This term was used in 107 in the Letter of Smyrnaeans which was written by Ignatius of Antioch. He said that wherever Jesus is, there must be Catholic Church. Numerous other early writers including Cyril, Augustine and some others further developed the use of the term “catholic” in relation to Christianity. Almost all Catholics believe that bishops are the highest order of ministers within the Christian religion. Finally the word Catholic is used of individual Christians insofar as they belong to the Catholic Church and are orthodox in their belief. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, p. 287-

doctrines regarding her life and role. Marian doctrines have developed over many centuries, and been studied and modified by Councils of the Church. The Catholic Church has established a specific discipline for the study of the person, role and significance of the Blessed Mary (عليها السلام), and her veneration. This discipline is called “the Mariology”.

Whereas my research work concerns, it describes Catholic and Muslim (*Ahl al-Sunnah*<sup>1</sup>) perceptions on Mary (عليها السلام). There are many Catholic Dogmas and Doctrines in regard to Mary (عليها السلام). These are four basic dogmas.

- 1) The Mother of God
- 2) Perpetual Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام)
- 3) Immaculate Conception of Mary (عليها السلام)
- 4) Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام) to Heaven

These dogmas are the central part of Mariology consisting of doctrines regarding Mary’s life and role (عليها السلام). There are also some other doctrines, like as, Mary (عليها السلام) as Co-Redemptrix, Queen of Heaven, etc. These doctrines have been developed

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288; <http://www.catholic.org/>; <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03449a.htm>; <http://www.catholic.com/>; <http://www.aboutcatholics.com/>; <http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/>

<sup>1</sup> The Largest branch of Islam is Sunni Islam. Sunni are referred to as “*Ahl al-Sunnah*” which means the followers of Prophet Muhammad’s (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) sayings and actions. Sometime, this group is referred to as the orthodox group of Islam. *Ahl al-Sunnah* represent those people who follow the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) as well as the Sunnah of *Sahābah* (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) who are on the Way of *Sahābah* (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). *Ahl al-Sunnah* follow those Laws and rules which are derived from Holy *Qurān* and *Hadīth* in addition to applying methods of ‘*Qiyās*’ and ‘*Ij’mā’’. *Ahl al-Sunnah* are the real people of traditions because they emphasize only those things which is according to Islamic Laws. There are many schools of thought in *Ahl al-Sunnah* but the main Sunni schools are just three as *Ibn al-Khuldūn* states that Sunni schools are three: the *Ḥanafī* School, the *Zāhīrī* School and a broader middle school which consist on *Shāfi’ī*, *Mālikī* and *Ḥanbālī* School. See: *Sāleḥ bin Abūl ‘Azīz*, *Sharḥ al-‘Aqīda al-Wāstīyyah*, (Riyadh: *Maktabul Mā’rif*, 1407 H) ; <http://www.islamicteachings.org>; [www.islamweb.net](http://www.islamweb.net);*

by the passage of time. This thesis will discuss all these doctrines by comparing it to Islamic Teachings.

## IMPORTANCE OF THE SELECTED TOPIC

The very fact that Mary (عليها السلام) is occupying a considerable place in Christianity and Islam and that she is a common heritage to both of them, makes this topic important. The subject of Mary (عليها السلام) is quite lively in Muslim-Christian dialogue as well, so there is always need for further elaboration and elucidation of her position.

Another reason for the importance of this topic is that Catholics have given many surnames to Mary (عليها السلام) such as the sinless virgin, Mother of the Church, Mother of Mercies, Door of Paradise, Our Lady of *Fatimah*, The Virgin of the Poor, Lady of the Roses, Co-Redemptrix, Queen of Peace, Mother of God, Gate of Heaven, Queen of Heaven and more. Some of these given names have been accepted later as their doctrine. This study will also discuss these important things about Mary (عليها السلام).

Muslims believe in that she was a very pious woman. She was a God chosen woman. She was a virgin and has been praised by our Holy Prophet (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم). So, we must know about her life. We also must know what the Catholic say about her. And if anyone is wrong and has objections in regard to Mary (عليها السلام) then we must try to inform them and try to remove these objections from her life.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are a lot of places where Muslims and Catholics diverge or converge. Here is the question that what are those points where Muslims and Catholics diverge or converge on the issue regarding to Mary (عليها السلام)?

## METHODOLOGY

My method in this research would be mostly descriptive in first two chapters but sometimes I shall also state my own point of view in my research work. In the

third chapter, I would be comparing the Muslims (*Ahl al-Sunnah*) and Christians' (Catholics) points of view on the said issue by providing my own points of view. The development in the points of view would be studied in a historical perspective, and any change therein would be pointed out. Some important points are as follows:

- The descriptive approach will be applied when Catholic and Muslim perceptions on Mary (عليها السلام) will be stated.
- The historical approach will also be applied when the history and development of the ideas will be discussed.
- Reference Methodology of Islamic Research Institute Islamabad (IRI)<sup>1</sup> will be adopted in my research topic.
- The transliteration of Islamic terms will be applied according to the IRI transliteration rules.<sup>2</sup>

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

When I started to study on this topic, I could not find even one book written by any Muslim about Muslim perceptions on Mary (عليها السلام). Although Christians have written many things about Mary (عليها السلام) but whatever I found regarding this subject is usually a part of a broader study. Anyhow, here I want to draw the attention towards some important books by providing their brief introduction.

### ❖ Mariology: A Guide For Priests, Deacons, Seminarians and consecrated Persons<sup>3</sup>:

This book contains in main four parts. The first part talks about "Mary (عليها السلام) in Scriptures i.e. Old and New Testaments". This chapter talks about her life and her symbols used in Old and New Testaments. In the end of this chapter the writer also mentions Church Fathers' point of view about Mary (عليها السلام). The second Part of this book talks about "Marian Doctrine" which contains these topics in it,

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<sup>1</sup> For details, See: Workshop on Technical Editing, (Pakistan: Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University Islamabad, First Edition, 1986) pp. 67-86

<sup>2</sup> See: Ibid, p. 45

<sup>3</sup> Mariology: A Guide For Priests, Deacons, Seminarians and consecrated Persons , Miravalle, Mark, (Ed.) (USA: Queenship Publishing, 2007)

‘The Mother of God’, ‘Mary’s (عليها السلام) perpetual virginity’, ‘The Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام)’. The third part talks about Marian Dogmas” which contains, ‘Mary (عليها السلام) as Co-redemtrix’, ‘Queen of heaven’, ‘Mother of the Church’, whereas the fourth part of this book concerned, it talks about Marian Devotions, Rosary etc. It is very useful book as it provides the historical background of Mariology.

- ❖ **Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, Church Councils<sup>1</sup>:** This book talks about the Church Council which were held to discuss the theological issues specially regarding to Mary (عليها السلام) and her son, Jesus. This book talks about all those main Church Councils which were held till 7th century CE and it gives us a brief introduction about the Councils and it also talks whatever was discussed in these Councils.
- ❖ **The Brothers’ Controversy<sup>2</sup>:** In this book the writer has discussed with details about Mary’s (عليها السلام) children. He tells the readers whether Mary (عليها السلام) had just one child or she had more than one child. This discussion is useful in getting knowledge whether she remained virgin after the birth of Jesus or she did not remain virgin.
- ❖ **A Virgin conceived: Mary (عليها السلام) and Classical Representations of Virginity<sup>3</sup>:** This book is very useful. Writer discussed about the meaning of virginity and tells what is meant by virginity. He explored a particular dimension of Mary’s (عليها السلام) portrayal, her sexual status and its significance in different literary contexts rather than seeking a normative image of Mary (عليها السلام). He also discussed the several aspects of Mary’s (عليها السلام) virgin body, like, the virgin body as the site of social construction, the virgin body and the economics of marriage, the virgin body

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<sup>1</sup> Yoannis, Bishop, Bishop of Western, Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, Church Councils, (Cairo: first addition, 1994)

<sup>2</sup> The Brothers’ Controversy. B. Fellows (Ed.), (London: Ludgate Street, 1836)

<sup>3</sup> Mary, F. Foskett, A Virgin Conceived: Mary and Classical Representations of Virginity. (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002)

as the body politics, etc. This book helps to know about the virginity of Mary's (عليها السلام) body.

- ❖ **Enlightened Virginity in Eighteenth-Century Literature<sup>1</sup>:** It is a very useful book. The writer, Corrinne Harol, has discussed about the anti-catholic propaganda. He mentioned the Protestants' point of view about the virginity of Mary (عليها السلام). He also discussed about the 'Medical Discourses on Virginity'. Here he presents a physical discussion. In his book he also mentioned Pope Belinda's view about the Virgin Mary (عليها السلام). At the end writer has quoted some others incidents of Virgins' women. This book will help me to know the concept of Protestants and Catholics' churches about the virginity of Mary (عليها السلام).
- ❖ **Catholicism: The Story of Catholic Christianity<sup>2</sup>:** In this book, after discussing about the catholic Christianity with details, the writer, Mario Farrugia and Gerald O'Collins, have presented a brief sketch about the Current Challenges which are going to be faced by the Catholics. Here he also discussed about the Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام). This book tells us that how the virginity of Mary is going to be challenged and who is challenging.
- ❖ **What Are They Saying About Mary?<sup>3</sup>:** In this book the writer, J. Tambasco Anthony, has discussed about Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity. He wrote a lot of things. Although it is very useful book and it will help me but it is not supported by valid arguments. Anyhow it will provide me some ideas.

These are some of those books which are related to my topic. It is very clear that these books are having just a part of broad study. Although these books are very useful yet these are not able to provide enough information on my topic. So I hope that my thesis will fulfill this space and provide enough information and knowledge about Catholic & Muslim Perceptions on Mary (عليها السلام).

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<sup>1</sup> Harol, Corrinne, *Enlightened Virginity in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, (New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN™, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Farrugia, Mario, and O'Collins, Gerald, *Catholicism: The Story of Catholic Christianity*, (USA: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>3</sup> Anthony, J. Tambasco, *What Are They Saying About Mary?*, (USA: Paulist Press, 1984)

## MAIN CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION

- 1) Importance of the Selected Topic
- 2) Statement of the Problem
- 3) Methodology
- 4) Review of the Literature
- 5) Main Contents

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    - 2) Perpetual Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام)
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    - 4) Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام) to Heaven
  - Some Others Doctrines held by the Catholics
    - 1) Mary (عليها السلام) as Co-Redemptrix and Mediatrix
    - 2) Mother of the Church
    - 3) Queen of Heaven
    - 4) Veneration of Mary (عليها السلام)

### CHAPTER TWO

- ❖ MUSLIM'S DOCTRINES ABOUT MARY (عليها السلام)
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  - 4) Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام)

5) Mary (عليها السلام), Leader of the Heaven

6) Veneration of Mary (عليها السلام)

## CHAPTER THREE

### ❖ COMPARISON BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC AND MUSLIM PERCEPTIONS ON MARY (عليها السلام)

1) Mary (عليها السلام), Mother of God or a Human Being

2) Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام)

3) Immaculate Conception of Mary (عليها السلام)

4) Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام)

5) Mary (عليها السلام) as Co-Redemptrix

6) Mary (عليها السلام), Mother of the Church

7) Mary (عليها السلام), Queen of Heaven

8) Veneration of Mary (عليها السلام)

## CONCLUSION

### ➤ Recommendations

## APPENDIXES AND INDEXES

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

# CHAPTER 1

## Major Theological Development Regarding

### Mary (عليها السلام) in the Catholic Church

This chapter will discuss about Marian dogmas and doctrine in Catholicism.

This will also tell us why do they believe in such dogmas and doctrines and how some doctrines turned into dogmas in regard to Mary (عليها السلام).

# CATHOLICS' FIRST MARIAN DOGMA

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MARY (عليها السلام)

AS MOTHER OF GOD

## MARY (عليها السلام) AS MOTHER OF GOD

Mary (عليها السلام), the Mother of Jesus (عليها السلام) holds a very prominent position in Catholicism. A basic dogma of Catholics is her title, "the Mother of God". This part of thesis will discuss some of those arguments which are being described by Catholics. By these arguments they try to prove their first and basic dogma about Mary (عليها السلام). Catholic writings try to prove that she is the Mother of Jesus (عليها السلام). However, before discussing the above mentioned dogma we have to see what do they say about Jesus (عليها السلام)? Whether they believe that Jesus (عليها السلام) is God or not? The Christians present their arguments to prove their point of view. Here are some of those arguments.

- **According to Bible:**

There are a lot of passages in the Bible by which the Catholics try to prove that Jesus (عليها السلام) is a member of the Trinity. Some of these passages are being mentioned here. According to Psalm, Jesus (عليها السلام) describes that Lord said to him: "you are my son..."<sup>1</sup> Isaiah says that a tiding has been given to those people who have fearful heart. They have been promised that God (Jesus) himself will come to save you.<sup>2</sup> Isaiah says at another place that the followers are being advised to follow the path of God (Jesus).<sup>3</sup> After a few verses it is also said that God (Jesus) will come with his force to help you.<sup>4</sup> According to the testimony of the New Testament, Jesus (عليها السلام) himself bore witness to his divine son-ship. According to Matthew

<sup>1</sup> See: The Holy Bible (USA: Zondervan Publications, 1984) Psalm 2: 7; Another resembled verse is also mentioned in Samuel that clearly describes it. God said: "I am his (Jesus) Father and he is my son." See: The Holy Bible: 2 Samuel 7:14; According to another verse of Psalm the writer describes Jesus (عليها السلام) as "Lord". He describes that Lord said to my Load, sit at my right hand. See: The Holy Bible: Psalm 99:1 [NOTE: Wherever the reference of Bible will be mentioned now later in this thesis, the words "The Holy Bible" will not be repeated again in the reference.]

<sup>2</sup> See: Isaiah 35:4

<sup>3</sup> See: Ibid, 40:3

<sup>4</sup> See: Ibid, 40:10

when Jesus (عليه السلام) arrived near the beach of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his followers, who say that he is the son of a man? They answered that some people say him "John, the Baptist", some say "Elias", and some others say "Jeremias", or one of the prophets. He asked them, what do they say about him? Simon Peter answered him that he is Jesus (عليه السلام), the Son of God. When he called him the son of God, Jesus (عليه السلام) answered to Simon! May he be blessed. This thing is revealed unto him by his Father who is in heaven.<sup>1</sup> By this passage, Catholics try to prove that Jesus (عليه السلام) was satisfied with the answer of Simon. That's why he admits that he is the Son of God.

- According to the Early Councils:

The most widely-accepted definitions about the nature of Jesus (عليه السلام) were made by the State church of the Roman Empire at the First Council of Nicaea in 325 CE, the Council of Ephesus in 431 CE and the Council of Chalcedon in 451 CE. These councils stated that Jesus (عليه السلام) was both, fully God and fully man. These two natures, human and divine, were united into Jesus (عليه السلام). Catholics consider him one of the divine personalities of Trinity. They have arguments by which they try to prove that Jesus (عليه السلام) was really God or Son of God. Some of Biblical references have been mentioned in footnote.<sup>2</sup>

- According to the Early Fathers of the Church:

The Fathers are practically unanimous in teaching the Divinity of Jesus (عليه السلام). They do not merely call him the son of God but they also try to prove that he is "the Lord". Here are some of their arguments. The witness of St. Ignatius<sup>3</sup> of Antioch: When he wrote down to the Romans he called Jesus (عليه السلام) as "Our God Jesus (عليه السلام)"

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<sup>1</sup> See: Matthew, 16:13-17

<sup>2</sup> See: Isaiah, 35:4; Isaiah, 40:3; 2 Samuel, 7:14; Isaiah, 40:10; Matthew, 16:13-17; Psalm, 2:7; Psalm, 99:1

<sup>3</sup> A Little bit is known about the early life of Ignatius. He probably was born in Syria around the year 50 and he was dead in 107. See: Guiley, Rosemary Ellen, *The Encyclopedia of Saints*, (Visionary Living, Inc. 2001) pp. 153-154

السلام (Christ". St. Clement<sup>1</sup> of Rome, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, calls Jesus (عليه السلام) as "the Lord Jesus (عليه السلام) Christ". According to St. Augustine<sup>2</sup>, Mary (عليها السلام) was the Mother of God and he evidently differentiates between Mary's (عليها السلام) conceiving and that of her cousin, Elizabeth.<sup>3</sup>

- The Marian Title "Mother of God" in Early Literature and in Prayers:

From the earliest times the Blessed Virgin Mary (عليها السلام) had been selected for the title of "Mother of God". As it is stated in the New Catholic Encyclopedia, this title had been given to Mary (عليها السلام) from the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE. An important figure at the Council of Nicaea, Pope Alexander<sup>4</sup> of Alexandria had written that Jesus (عليه السلام) had a body from Mary (عليها السلام), Mother of God.<sup>5</sup> In the prayers of Catholic ceremony, Mary (عليها السلام) was often referred as "Mother of God". The early 4th-century's prayer, the earliest known Marian prayer, also begins with the words "the Mother of God".<sup>6</sup> Some of the examples are being mentioned here.

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<sup>1</sup> He is also known as Clemens Romanus. He was dead in the start of 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. He is well known by an apostolic letter which was written to the Church of Corinth. See: O'Malley, John W., *A History of the Popes*, (Printed in USA: 2010) p. 14

<sup>2</sup> Augustine was known 'Father of the Church' ...He was born in 354 CE in North Africa and died in 430 CE. His philosophical and theological thought influenced Christianity for at least 1,000 years. See: *The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 34

<sup>3</sup> For Detail See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Carson, Thomas and Cerrito, Joann (ed.) (Washington: The Catholic University Of America, 2003) Vol. 10, p. 13

<sup>4</sup> In the end, before bibliography and Indexes, two Appendixes have been mentioned separately. The Appendix I is related to Christian Popes in which the brief introduction of all those Popes has been mentioned who have been introduced in this thesis. See: Appendix I for detail.

<sup>5</sup> *New Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 13, pp. 936-937

<sup>6</sup> St. John Chrysostom is the greatest of the Greek fathers and a great preacher. He wrote more than any other Doctor of the Church. See: *The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 179. He wrote down in his Eucharistic Prayer in honor of Mary (عليها السلام) that it is really just to declare you blessed, O Mother of God. You are most blessed, all pure and Mother of our Lord. St. Bonaventure said that they are the blessed ones who know you, O Mother of God, because your knowledge is the best knowledge. There is another example resembling it. We fly to thy patronage, holy Mother of God. See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia* Vol. 10, p. 13

- “We fly to thy patronage, holy Mother of God.”<sup>1</sup>
- St. Bonaventure Said: “Blessed are they who know you, O Mother of God, for the knowledge of thee is the high road to everlasting life, and the publication of thy virtues is the way of eternal salvation.” “Mary (عليها السلام), in fine, says Richard of St. Laurence, “is the mistress of heaven; for there she commands as she wills, and admits whom she wills.”<sup>2</sup>

- The Fifth Century CE Objection:

However, objection to the title “Mother of God” arose in the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE due to a major controversy of Nestorius<sup>3</sup>, bishop of Constantinople (428-431 CE). As it is stated in the First Encyclopedia of World Religions that a clash arose when Nestorius did not accept her as God-bearer because he believed in that she is just Christ-bearer (human-bearer). The series for the Council of Ephesus was started in 431 CE to settle this clash.<sup>4</sup> The New Catholic Encyclopedia describes that the denial of this title God-bearer by Nestorius led to the councils of Ephesus. But when Cyril<sup>5</sup> of Alexandria heard that Nestorius was denying this title and he was also preaching that Mary (عليها السلام) was just a Christ-bearer, he started to defend the divine maternity of Mary (عليها السلام). He addressed Nestorius in his letters, sermons, and writings and objected on his opinion. In the first council of Ephesus, fathers approved Cyril’s letter about the doctrine of God-bearer and this letter was sent to the Nestorius.<sup>6</sup> The conflict remained between them even in the second council of Ephesus it was declared that Mary (عليها السلام) must be called the Mother of God. This Council defined Mary (عليها السلام) as

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<sup>1</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia Vol. 10, p. 13

<sup>2</sup> Hunt, Dave, *The Roman Catholic Church and the Last Days: A Woman Rides the Beast*, p. 230,

<sup>3</sup> Nestorius was dead in 451 CE. He was a Syrian priest and monk. He was elected by Emperor Theodosius to become patriarch of Constantinople in 428. See: *The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 398

<sup>4</sup> E. Safra, Jacob & Aguilar-Cauz, Jorge, *Britannica Encyclopedia of World Religions*, (2006: First published in 1768) p. 218

<sup>5</sup> Cyril was born in Alexandria 376 CE and died in 444 CE. He was Patriarch of Alexandria. He is also called ‘Father of the Church’. See: *The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 86

<sup>6</sup> See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, p. 13; *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, pp. 252-253

“Theotokos”, (God-bearer). This Council also declared that Nestorius is a heretic and he must be deposed.<sup>1</sup>

- The Marian Title “*Theotokos*”:

The title of Mary (عليها السلام), “the Mother of God”, was referred as “*Theotokos*”.<sup>2</sup> This term was probably started in Alexandria, Egypt, from the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE and it gained popularity in very short time. In the beginning, this title drew little attraction, but in 428 CE, when Anastasius<sup>3</sup> raised objections to this term there arose a controversy. Anastasius was assisted in his point of view by Nestorius who believed in Jesus’ full humanity. Cyril joined battle over the issue with Nestorius, outflanked him in 431 CE at the First Council of Ephesus. Thus the Council of Ephesus announced that Mary (عليها السلام) was the “Mother of God”<sup>4</sup> and condemned Nestorius. Catholics use the title “the Mother of God” more than the title “*Theotokos*”. Anyhow, her title, “*Theotokos*”, was officially accepted at the third ecumenical council at Ephesus in the year 431 CE and this title was included into prayers. By the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, this title “*Theotokos*” was officially accepted as doctrine at the Council of Chalcedon<sup>5</sup> in 451 CE. The Early Church Fathers were also agreed to say

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<sup>1</sup> So he was deposed by the order of the Emperor Theodosius. See: Flinn, Frank K., *Encyclopedia of Catholicism: Encyclopedia of World Religions*, (USA: New York, 2007) p. 477. The Emperor Theodosius was born in 401 and he reigned from 408 to 450. He succeeded his father while he was still a child of seven years. He lived under the guidance of strong people. See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 13, p. 882; The conflict remained between them. Nestorius refused to accept Mary (عليها السلام) as God-bearer. But Origen, Athanasius and many other figures of 4<sup>th</sup> century CE accepted it and it became common. See: SJ, Gerald O’Collins, and SJ, Mario Farrugia, *Catholicism: The Story of Catholic Christianity*, (USA: New York, Oxford University Press, 2003) p. 33

<sup>2</sup> The 5<sup>th</sup> century CE controversies over the union of the divinity and humanity of Christ had as one of their focal points. Nestorius insisted that, at most, the term Christotokos is proper in speaking for Mary (عليها السلام). See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 13, p. 936

<sup>3</sup> Anastasius was a native of Rome. He was a priest. He was chosen the heir of Pope St. Siricius in 399...He died in 401 after a reign of only two years. See: *The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 17

<sup>4</sup> *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, p. 605

<sup>5</sup> Fourth Ecumenical Council was held at Chalcedon in 451 in the presence of 19 imperial commissioners. See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, p. 363

Mary (عليها السلام) "Theotokos" (عليها السلام) and they had no problem referring to Mary as *Theotokos*.<sup>1</sup> Till to-date Catholics believe in their first dogma. In the year 1931 the Pope Pius XI<sup>2</sup>, reaffirmed the doctrine that Mary (عليها السلام) is "the Mother of God".

Here a question arises that how did this council declare Mary (عليها السلام) as God-bearer? What were the arguments behind it? According to Catholics, the judgment of the council can be described in following manner.

As Mary (عليها السلام) is the mother of Jesus (عليها السلام), and Catholics try to prove that Jesus (عليها السلام) is truly God, thus they also try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) was the mother of God for being the Mother of Jesus (عليها السلام).

In the above mentioned argument, there are two premises and according to the Christians there are various passages in the New Testament which prove the reality of these premises. Here are some of those passages which prove that Mary (عليها السلام) is the mother of Jesus (عليها السلام). Matthew states that when Jesus' Mother, Mary (عليها السلام) was taken up by Joseph she begot him without any intercourse.<sup>3</sup> John says when Jesus (عليها السلام) and his mother Mary (عليها السلام) were called in a marriage, his disciples asked for wine. The Mother of Jesus (عليها السلام) said to him that they had no wine.<sup>4</sup> John also states that when Jesus (عليها السلام) saw his mother he said, Woman! Behold her son. Then he intended to the people and asked them to behold his mother.<sup>5</sup> All of these above mentioned arguments clearly prove and state that Mary (عليها السلام) is called "the Mother of Jesus (عليها السلام)" in various verses of Bible. So according to Catholics, one of the both premises is supported by Bible. Whereas the second premise concerned they also try to prove that it is also supported by Bible. By providing these arguments, they try to prove that Jesus (عليها السلام) is truly God. Matthew tells us when Mary (عليها السلام) will bring forth a son who will grow there people will say about him

<sup>1</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 5, p.274

<sup>2</sup> See: Appendix I, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>3</sup> See: Matthew, 1:18

<sup>4</sup> See: John, 2:1-3

<sup>5</sup> See: Ibid, 19:25-27

that he is God.<sup>1</sup> John states when people asked Jesus (عليه السلام) to show them God. Jesus (عليه السلام) answered to them to believe in that God is in Jesus (عليه السلام) and whenever he speaks he himself does not speak. In fact it is God who speaks through Jesus (عليه السلام) and God dwelleth in him.<sup>2</sup> John also states when Thomas said to Jesus (عليه السلام) that he is me Lord and my God. Jesus (عليه السلام) did not deny his sayings rather than he confirmed it also.<sup>3</sup>

By the above mentioned arguments, Catholics try to show that both premises are supported by Bible and these premises led to this result which is defined as "Mary (عليها السلام) is the Mother of God". They also say that this title does not imply that Mary (عليها السلام) is superior to God, as she is a creature. Like all other women, she gave birth to a person. In her case it was a divine Person. However, when she gave birth to her Divine Son she was not giving birth to his divinity, which had existed from all eternity. These passages clearly indicate that according to Catholic point of view Mary (عليها السلام) is the Mother of God. And those who deny this are condemned by the Catholic Church and Councils.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Matthew, 1:23; Matthew 26:63-65

<sup>2</sup> See: John, 14:9-11

<sup>3</sup> See: Ibid 20:28-29; Col 2:9

# **CATHOLICS' SECOND MARIAN DOGMA**

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**VIRGINITY  
OF MARY (عليها السلام)**

## VIRGINITY OF MARY (عليها السلام)

The Catholics try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) did not lose her virginity throughout her earthly life. She remained Virgin before the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام), during it and even after it. Due to this reason, Catholics call her “ever-virgin”. By the passage of time this idea became the second dogma of Catholicism. This dogma has three parts:

- (1) Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) before the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام)
- (2) Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) during the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام)
- (3) Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام).

This concept thus applies to her virginity before the birth of Jesus as well as her virginity throughout her life even after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) and this belief is attested since the 2nd century CE.<sup>1</sup> We would look at each of these in further detail:

### 1) MARY's VIRGINITY BEFORE CHILDBIRTH (عليها السلام)

Here would be discussed Mary's (عليها السلام) life before giving birth to Jesus (عليه السلام). This discussion would provide a general concept of Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity. According to Catholics' point of view, she was sent to a temple when she was just in the third year of her life. There, she spent most of her time in worshipping God in a room. No one was allowed to enter in her room without her permission. Here are some arguments which serve to indicate this.

- According to The Bible:

Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity before the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام) is well attested in the Sacred Scripture. The prophecy of Isaiah states: Remember a virgin will bring forth

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (Oxford University Press 2005), article *Virgin Birth of Christ*.

to a son.<sup>1</sup> Likewise in the Gospel of St. Luke, the Angel Gabriel was sent by God to a virgin whose name was Mary (عليها السلام)<sup>2</sup>. Angel Gabriel said to Mary (عليها السلام): You will bring forth a son. Mary (عليها السلام) asked: How it is possible because I have not had sexual intercourse with any man.<sup>3</sup> The Angel said the Holy Spirit himself will come upon you...<sup>4</sup> By this dialogue Catholics prove that Mary (عليها السلام) was a virgin before he gave birth to Jesus (عليه السلام).

- According to the Fathers:

This concept was started in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE. Most of the theologians started to use this term, as stated in the Christian Encyclopedia. This concept was started in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE to affirm the virginity of Mary (عليها السلام).<sup>5</sup> From the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE the Christians were getting interest in Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity. The earliest fathers also proclaimed it. The New Catholic Encyclopedia argues, this doctrine was announced by the earliest Fathers: Ignatius, Justin<sup>6</sup>, Irenaeus<sup>7</sup> and Aristides.<sup>8</sup> Hence there are some arguments which will tell us the earliest fathers' point of view about the virginity of Mary (عليها السلام). New Catholic Encyclopedia states that Aristides<sup>9</sup> wrote a

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<sup>1</sup> See: Isaiah, 7:14

<sup>2</sup> See: Luke, 1:27; In different gospels, Mary (عليها السلام) appears as a young girl who was engaged, but as a virgin. See: Kearns, Cleo Mcnelly, *The Virgin Mary (عليها السلام) Monotheism and Sacrifice*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008) p. 4; According to Catholics a little knowledge is known about Mary's (عليها السلام) very early life. The scriptures books tell us that Mary (عليها السلام) was very faithful to God. See: Sword Series™ Collection of Christian Theological Essays, *Mary (عليها السلام) the Mother of Jesus (عليه السلام)*. Page 1 of 3 [www.studychristianity.org](http://www.studychristianity.org)

<sup>3</sup> See: Luke, 1:34

<sup>4</sup> Ibid: 1:35

<sup>5</sup> Encyclopedia of Christian Theology, p. 1001

<sup>6</sup> Justin was philosopher and defender of Christianity. He was born about the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE in Neopolis and died in 168 CE. See: The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 199

<sup>7</sup> Irenaeus was Bishop of Lyons. He was also called 'Father of the Church'...He was born in Asia Minor in 130 CE and died in 202 CE... See: The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 157

<sup>8</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 14, p. 532

<sup>9</sup> Aristides was the author of an Apology for the Christian faith addressed to the Emperor Hadrian. He was the Athenian philosopher of 2<sup>nd</sup> Century CE. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 1, pp. 665-666

letter to the Emperor Hadrian<sup>1</sup>, admitting the virgin conception as an article of Christians' belief. Irenaeus announced Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity as a doctrine of the Church which was received from the Apostles. Origen<sup>2</sup> confirmed that Mary (عليها السلام) is the model of feminine virginity, as Jesus (عليه السلام) is of masculine virginity. He defended the virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) against the Jewish conception of Jesus (عليه السلام).<sup>3</sup> He also has to his credit, being the first father who called Mary (عليها السلام) "Theotokos," and "ever-virgin".<sup>4</sup> Athanasius<sup>5</sup> chose Mary (عليها السلام) as a model for the virgins whereas St. Ambrose<sup>6</sup> devoted one of his writings' series to Mary (عليها السلام) who is a model of Christian virginity.<sup>7</sup> It was a view of the fathers which could not get popularity in the very beginning.<sup>8</sup>

Catholics say that Mary (عليها السلام) does not like to speak with strangers. That's why when the angel came to her in the form of a man, she became frightened. They further say that if she were not pious, then she would not have become frightened. Waddill writes in his book, he says that there is no solid argument in Bible which refutes the belief of Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity. Hence there are a number of arguments by which her virginity is proven as she said to angel 'How shall this happen,

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<sup>1</sup> On the death of his father in 85, Emperor Hadrian became the future Emperor who was himself childless. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 6, pp. 605-606

<sup>2</sup> He was one of the early Church Fathers. He was born in 185 CE in Alexandria and died in 254 CE... See: The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 399

<sup>3</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 14, p. 533; The Ps. Justin said that through Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity God had wanted to show that one can bring forth without the sexual act. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 14, p. 533

<sup>4</sup> Liebeschuetz, H.W.G., Continuity and Change in Roman Religion, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989) p. 281

<sup>5</sup> He was one of the early Church Fathers. He was born in 296 CE and died in 373 CE. He is also known as "Pillar of the Church". See: The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 33

<sup>6</sup> Ambrose was Bishop of Milan. He was born in 339 CE and died in 397 CE. He was also known as the Father, and Doctor of the Church. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, p. 337; The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 14

<sup>7</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, p. 268

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, vol. 14, p. 532

since I know no man?’ Augustine argued that if she had not dedicated her virginity to God she would not have said it.<sup>1</sup> These arguments shew the Catholic point of view that she was a virgin before the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام) and she was preserved from all kind of sins. According to Catholics it was the desire of God that Mary (عليها السلام) would remain virgin.

## MARY's (عليها السلام) VIRGINITY DURING CHILDBIRTH

The last discussion clearly describes the Catholic point of view that Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin before the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام). Now, this part will elucidate whether Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin when Jesus was born or not? Is there any evidence in the Bible which prove that Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin during the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام)? The Catholics try to show that she brings forth Jesus (عليها السلام) without losing her virginity and she was free from any kind of sin.<sup>2</sup> The Encyclopedia of Catholicism describes that doctrine of virgin birth is in fact to believe that Jesus (عليها السلام) was born without the action of a human father.<sup>3</sup>

- According to the Bible:

Bible narrates to us the incident of Mary's (عليها السلام) marriage. It tells us that when she was brought to marry with Joseph, before they could come together she bore a child who was called by the name of Immanuel.<sup>4</sup> This quotation tells us that Mary

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<sup>1</sup> See: Waddill, B. Townsend, *The Perpetual Virginity Of Mary* (عليها السلام), (np), 2006. p. 5; Ronald says in his book about Mary's (عليها السلام) early life that since her birth Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from all kind of sins...It was God's desire that the Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) should be so perfect and complete. See: Ronald L. Conte Jr. “*The Virginity of Jesus (عليها السلام) and Mary (عليها السلام)*”, (USA: Published by Ronald L. Conte Jr., Grafton, 2001) p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 14, p. 538

<sup>3</sup> See” *Encyclopedia of Catholicism, Encyclopedia of World Religions*, p. 630

<sup>4</sup> See: *The Holy Bible*; Immanuel was Jesus (عليها السلام) as J. Armitage Robinson wrote down about this incident. He says when Mary (عليها السلام) was married to Joseph she begotten a child before they come close together. When Joseph realized it he thought that he would leave her but the angel came to him and said to keep her as his wife. Angel further told him that she will bring forth a child, and you people

(عليها السلام) was married with Joseph. When he met her he realized that she is with a child. So he purposed to put her away but the angel came into her dream and said him to be not fear.

It is also indicated in the great prophecy of Isaiah. The Prophecy foretells that a virgin will also bear a son and she will not lose her virginity. When Mary (عليها السلام) was told by the angel that she will bear a child she surprised and asked the angel how is it possible because she was virgin. This view is generally followed by orthodox and Roman Catholic scholars.<sup>1</sup>

- According to the Early Fathers:

The Catholics believe that Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin during the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام). Her talk to the angel proves that she had taken a vow to remain virgin. Catholics present some arguments by which they try to prove it. Catholics say that according to the early Fathers of the Church, Jesus (عليه السلام) had no human father and he was born by Mary (عليها السلام) in a miraculous manner by the power of the Holy Spirit. This idea was supported by St. Ignatius<sup>2</sup> of Antioch, St. Justin the Martyr and St. Irenaeus of Lyon.<sup>3</sup> Among these St. Augustine stated that if she had not taken a vow to remain virgin then there was no need to be surprised after listening the news of child

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will call him Jesus (عليه السلام) who will save his nation from their sins. See: Robinson, J. Armitage. The Gospel of Peter, (This document is taken from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library), p. 60; The same incident is stated in the Early Christian Fathers. It describes that according to bible Mary (عليها السلام) will bear a child without any intercourse because it was God's desire that she will bear a child while she will be remain a virgin...See: Early Christian Fathers, Richardson, Cyril C., (Edited and translated) (The Westminster Press, 1953) p. 263

<sup>1</sup> See: Isaiah, 7:14; Gregory of Nyssa understood this in support of the view that Mary (عليها السلام) had taken a lifelong vow of virginity because if was not so then why she surprised and asked the angel? Then it was also possible for her having a child after her marriage if she had not taken a lifelong vow of virginity. See: Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Holy Generation of Christ*, p. 5

<sup>2</sup> A little bit is known about the early life of Ignatius. He was born in Syria around about 50 CE. At the age of 17, he became the second or third bishop of Antioch. He died in 107 CE. See: The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 152

<sup>3</sup> The Early Church Fathers, p. 131

bearing, because she was going to get married with Joseph.<sup>1</sup> According to St. Augustine, she had already vowed her virginity, and she intended to keep that vow. To have sexual relations with Joseph at a later time would be unfaithful.

Even by the passage of time this thought starts entering in public teaching of the Church. The New Catholic Encyclopedia points out this thing. It states that the doctrine of Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity during the birth of Jesus took its place into the public teaching of the Church.<sup>2</sup>

- According to the Catholics' Writings:

Here are some others arguments which indicate the Catholics' point of view about the virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) during the childbirth. J. Shoemaker Stephen says, O Mary (عليها السلام)! The people who are in the heaven or on the earth must be glad with you. Especially women must be glad that you have borne a child while you did not lose your virginity.<sup>3</sup> George Weigel states that God sent his son, Jesus (عليه السلام), to the earth so that he can bear the sins of his nation and can save them from fire. His son was borne by Mary (عليها السلام) who brought him forth while she remained virgin.<sup>4</sup>

By the above mentioned arguments, Catholics try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin during the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام). Here this question may arise that if she remained virgin then what happened with her body during the birth. How can it is possible that a woman gave birth to a child and she remained virgin? Catholics answer that it happened with Mary (عليها السلام). Jesus (عليها السلام) passed through the womb of Mary (عليها السلام) without the opening of Mary's womb and without any harm to the physical virginal seal of Mary (عليها السلام). The Fathers of the

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<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *De Sancta Virginitate*, in Augustine, trans. and ed. P.G. Walsh (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) p. 69

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>3</sup> Stephen, J. Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions of Virgin Mary's (عليها السلام) Dormition and Assumption*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) p. 398

<sup>4</sup> Weigel, George, *The Truth of Catholicism, Inside The Essential Teachings And Controversies Of The Church Today*, (Published by Perfect Bound) p. 30

Church taught the “miraculous birth” of Jesus (عليه السلام) that resulted in no injury to the Virgin Mary’s physical integrity. Pope Leo I<sup>1</sup> proclaimed that Mary (عليها السلام) gave birth to Jesus (عليه السلام) while her virginity was untouched.<sup>2</sup> Later, St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>3</sup> defends the miraculous nature of Jesus’ birth. He says as light passes through glass without harming it so Jesus (عليه السلام) passed through the womb of Mary (عليها السلام) without opening her womb and without any physical harm.<sup>4</sup>

## MARY’s (عليها السلام) VIRGINITY AFTER THE CHILDBIRTH

Whereas Mary’s (عليها السلام) virginity after the childbirth is concerned, it is a controversial matter among the Christians. But the Catholics agree that she had remained virgin till her death. Virginity after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) means that Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin from all the aspects. New Catholic Encyclopedia states that Mary (عليها السلام) did not ever have any sexual relation even after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) till her death.<sup>5</sup>

- According to Fathers:

As well as the time was passing the thought of “Mary’s (عليها السلام) virginity” was getting better place in the Christians specially Catholics’ faith. The Christian were trying to get better consideration of the Virgin Mary (عليها السلام) in various aspects. New Catholic Encyclopedia states, from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, belief in the perpetual virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) was taught by Fathers. In the times of both, Origen and Jerome<sup>6</sup>, this process of development helped to understand the perpetual

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<sup>1</sup> See: Appendix I, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>2</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 14, p. 534

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Aquinas is called Doctor Angelicus for his great teachings... He was born in 1225 CE at local Italian gentry in Roccasecca and died in 1274 CE. See: The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 326

<sup>4</sup> Introduction to Mary (عليها السلام), p. 57

<sup>5</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 14, p. 536

<sup>6</sup> Jerome was a Scholar. He is also known as the Doctor of the Church. He was one of the greatest thinkers. He was born in 347 CE, in an affluent Christian family and died in 419 CE. See: The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 165

virginity of Mary (عليها السلام).<sup>1</sup> At the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE Mary's perpetual virginity became an article of faith, defended by Ambrose, Jerome, Epiphanius<sup>2</sup> and Augustine against those who refuted Mary (عليها السلام) virginity. The title "ever virgin" is found in Epiphanius in 374 and it spread rapidly.<sup>3</sup>

- According to Catholic Scholars:

Here are some arguments which have been noted in the writings of the Catholic Scholars. Mark said that Mary (عليها السلام) had remained a virgin from her very beginning to the end of her earthly life. She did not have any sexual relations after Jesus' birth.<sup>4</sup> B. Townsend said that according to Catholics' belief, since the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity was, and still it is perpetual. She never had any sexual relation with Joseph.<sup>5</sup>

In the 4th century CE, some groups like Protestants objected to the perpetual virginity of Mary (عليها السلام). They started to say that Mary (عليها السلام) had other children after Jesus' birth (عليها السلام). They are not ready to accept that Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin after the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام). The main problem is caused by the "Brothers and Sisters" of Jesus (عليها السلام) whom are being mentioned in the Bible. Catholics say that those were not his real brothers but they were his cousins. Catholic concept has overwhelmed the Protestant and they are turning back from their non-virgin concept. Townsend said that the perpetual virginity has been objected by Protestants in the last 150 years. Now a lot of Protestants are accepting that Mary (عليها السلام) is perpetual virgin.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 14, pp. 535-540

<sup>2</sup> Epiphanius of Salamis was Bishop of Constantia... He was born in 310 CE and died in 403 CE. He became an expert in scriptural languages and lived as a monk. See: The Encyclopedia of Saints, p. 101

<sup>3</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 14, p. 537

<sup>4</sup> See: Introduction to Mary (عليها السلام), p. 60.

<sup>5</sup> See: The Perpetual Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام), p. 3; Henry Thompson said that when Mary (عليها السلام) was married to Joseph she was not married to him for sexual purpose. See: The Perpetual Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام), p. 6

<sup>6</sup> See: The Perpetual Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام), p. 3.

By the above mentioned arguments, Catholics try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin throughout her life.<sup>1</sup> In the beginning virginity accepted as a doctrine but by the passage of time this doctrine turned into dogma and it became the second dogma of Catholicism. This dogma can be divided into three stages: The first stage is in regard to her virginity before the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام), the second stage regards to her virginity during the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) and whereas the third stage is concerned, it is in regard to her virginity after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام). According to Catholics Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin during all these above mentioned stages and she did not lose her virginity.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Ancient Traditions of Virgin Mary's (عليها السلام) Dormition and Assumption, p. 14; The same writer states that in 1555 Paul IV affirmed the virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) in, during, and after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام). See: Ancient Traditions of Virgin Mary's (عليها السلام) Dormition and Assumption, p. 14; Vatican Council II affirms all three aspects of Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity. See: Encyclopedia of Catholicism, Encyclopedia of World Religions, pp. 630-631

# **CATHOLICS' THIRD MARIAN DOGMA**

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## **IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY (عليها السلام)**

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY (عليها السلام)

The word “Immaculate” stands for the preservation from every kind of sin. The Catholics try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from every kind of sin from her very beginning even since the time when she was born from her mother’s womb.<sup>1</sup> They consider it their third dogma. Some people mix it with the Immaculate Conception of Jesus’ birth (عليه السلام) but this dogma does not stand for it and the Catholics deny it. They say that it refers to the birth of Mary (عليها السلام) herself, not to the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام).<sup>2</sup> This dogma was spread by Pope Pius IX<sup>3</sup> in 1854.<sup>4</sup> According to Catholics, every man is infected with the original sin from his very beginning due to the fall of Ādam. They do not count just Jesus (عليه السلام) and his Mother, Mary (عليها السلام), in the list of those people who were infected by original sin. They say that Jesus (عليه السلام) himself is a redeemer whereas Mary (عليها السلام) was also preserved by a unique Grace.<sup>5</sup> Now, we see what those arguments are by which Catholics try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from original sin?

- **According to The Bible:**

This concept is supported by the Scriptures although the scriptures do not seem to support it directly. Here are some scriptural arguments by which Catholics try to prove their concept.

<sup>1</sup> See: Mullett, Michael A., *The Catholic Reformation*, (London: Routledge, 1999) p. 4

<sup>2</sup> See: Walsh, Michael, *Roman Catholicism*, (London: Routledge, 2005) p. 123, *The Catholicism, Answer Book*, p. 60

<sup>3</sup> See: Appendix I, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>4</sup> This dogma does not refer to Jesus’ birth (عليه السلام). In fact it refers to Mary’s sinless conception. See: *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, Vanhoozer, Kevin J., (Gen. ed.) (North America: Baker Book House, 2005) p. 881

<sup>5</sup> See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7, p. 331

- It is stated in the book of Genesis, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed: He shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel.”<sup>1</sup>
- They also argue the words of Angel, “Hail, full of grace”<sup>2</sup> to prove the Immaculate Conception of Mary (عليها السلام).<sup>3</sup>

The Catholics also represent chapter 1 of Matthew and Chapter 1 and 2 of Luke<sup>4</sup> in the effort to prove Mary’s (عليها السلام) Immaculate Conception.<sup>5</sup>

- **According to the Church:**

Since this Concept is not clearly supported by Scriptures then wonders how it became a Dogma of Catholicism. In fact the church has played a great role in this regard. Here are some arguments which clearly tell us how the church played its role in this regard. The New Catholics Encyclopedia describes that even this Immaculate Conception is not clearly taught by Scripture but it arose in the Catholic Church as a specification of the general doctrine of Mary’s (عليها السلام) holiness.<sup>6</sup> In the beginning, before the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE, a feast was started in the honor of Mary’s (عليها السلام) Immaculate Conception. It then reached England around about 11<sup>th</sup> century CE. It was suppressed during the reform of the Anglo-Saxon Church under William the Conqueror<sup>7</sup>...As a result of this discussion, this Concept was gradually brought to general attention, clarified, and finally accepted by the Church.<sup>8</sup>

- **According to the Fathers:**

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<sup>1</sup> See: Genesis, 3:15; Pope Pius IX cited this text as a prophecy of the Immaculate Conception. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, p. 331

<sup>2</sup> See: Luke, 1:28

<sup>3</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, p. 331

<sup>4</sup> See: Luke, 1:30-31

<sup>5</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, pp. 331-332

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 331

<sup>7</sup> William the Conqueror was born in Falaise, in 1028. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 14, p. 729

<sup>8</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, p. 333

The Fathers of the Church believe in the holiness and purity of Mary (عليها السلام) from every kind of sin. Here are some of the arguments given by the fathers, by which Catholics try to support their belief. Ambrose says Mary (عليها السلام) was unflinching and immaculate.<sup>1</sup> Augustine says due to the honor of Jesus (عليه السلام) she overwhelmed the sins.<sup>2</sup> John of Damascus<sup>3</sup> states that the womb of Mary's (عليها السلام) mother, Anne, is a glorious womb in which a most holy offspring grew."

- According to the Popes:

Catholics say that it is impossible to give a precise date since the belief was held as a matter of faith, but this concept was generally accepted in the 8th or 9th century CE. After the separation of the Eastern Church from Rome, the belief gradually got weaker and finally disappeared altogether from the Byzantine tradition. The doctrine of Pius IX appeared as an improvement.<sup>4</sup> In the history this doctrine was first accepted in council by a Catholic local Synod<sup>5</sup> of Basel<sup>6</sup> in 1439, but it was not obligatory upon the whole Catholic Church since a Pope had not signed it. Pope Sixtus IV<sup>7</sup> encouraged

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopedia of Christian Theology, p. 1003

<sup>2</sup> Ibid; Jacob of Sarug says, God has chosen her to prove that no one is more holy than Mary (عليها السلام). If there were any other holier than Mary (عليها السلام), God obviously chose her. Jacob was a bishop of the Syrian Church. He was born in a village named, Kurtam, which was situated in the district of Sarug. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 10, p. 687

<sup>3</sup> John of Damascus was oriental Monk. He is also called 'Father of the Church'. He was also known with his Surnam 'Chrysorrhoas'. He was born in 645 CE and died in 750 CE. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, p. 951

<sup>4</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, p. 333

<sup>5</sup> The words 'synod' and 'council' are interchangeable when they refer to the first centuries of the Church's history. Although the ecumenical gatherings begin in 325 yet these are called councils whereas gatherings of bishops as well as gatherings of the bishop and clergy are usually referred as synods. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 13, p. 694

<sup>6</sup> It was an ecumenical council which was declared in Siena in 1423, and it convoked at Basel, Switzerland, by Martin V in 1431. In 1437, it was transferred to Ferrara. And in 1439, it was transferred to Florence... See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, p. 133

<sup>7</sup> See: Appendix I, at the end of this Thesis.

the belief in the Immaculate Conception.<sup>1</sup> It did not happen until the 19<sup>th</sup> century CE. In this century Pope Pius IX<sup>2</sup> consulted the majority of Roman Catholic bishops. He wrote letters towards them and finally he announced, on December 8, 1854, in the presence of 200 bishops, cardinals and archbishops that they must accept the concept as a dogma.<sup>3</sup>

First of all, Christians used to keep a feast in this regard. The Eastern Church celebrated this feast of the Holy mother of Jesus (عليها السلام) before the 5<sup>th</sup> Century CE. By the passage of time it was widely known. Even in 15<sup>th</sup> century CE, it was approved by Pope Sixtus IV<sup>4</sup>. In 16<sup>th</sup> Century CE this feast was known by Pope Pius V<sup>5</sup> to the whole Catholic Church as a theological doctrine, not as a Dogma. At the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century CE Pope Clement XI<sup>6</sup> announced that it must be celebrated annually on 8<sup>th</sup> December. Catholics celebrate the Immaculate Conception when she was kept in her mother, Saint Anne's womb i.e. nine months before her birth. By the above mentioned arguments, Catholics try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) was born sinless from her mother's womb and she was preserved from any kind of sin throughout her life.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Encyclopedia of Christian Theology, p. 1003

<sup>2</sup> See: **Appendix I**, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>3</sup> See: Catholicism: the story of catholic Christianity, p. 317; When Pope Pius IX was elected he took actions in favor of this concept. He consulted with all the bishops of the Church as well as several theological committees. He defined it as a dogma of faith. He said that the doctrine of Mary's (عليها السلام) preservation from original sin has been revealed by Lord and it must be believed by all the faithful. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, p. 334; Encyclopedia of Catholicism, Encyclopedia of World Religions, p. 379

<sup>4</sup> See: **Appendix I**, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid

<sup>6</sup>Ibid

# **CATHOLICS' FOURTH MARIAN DOGMA**

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**ASSUMPTION  
OF MARY (عليها السلام)**

## ASSUMPTION OF MARY (عليها السلام)

The word “Assumption” is a Latin word. This word stands for ‘act of taking up’. According to Catholics’ theology Mary (عليها السلام) was taken into heaven when she completed her earthly life.<sup>1</sup> According to Catholics it is the last Marian dogma which was defined by the Church. This dogma has remained a part of the Church’s spiritual and doctrinal legacy for centuries.<sup>2</sup>

- **According to The Bible:**

There is neither any clear historical origin nor scriptural origin for this dogma yet some of the Catholics tried to prove it from the Bible by interpreting its verses as in the mid of 2004, Pope John Paul II<sup>3</sup> cited John 14:3 as one of the scriptural origin for understanding this Marian dogma. In this verse, at the Last Supper, Jesus (عليه السلام) says, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you to myself; that where I am, you may be there also.”<sup>4</sup> According to Catholic theology, Mary (عليها السلام) is the vow for the Christ’s promise. Catholics present another argument in struggle to prove this dogma. They say that Mary (عليها السلام) will be taken to Heaven by someone and that someone is no one else except her own son, Jesus (عليه السلام).<sup>5</sup> However, the Catholics have never affirmed nor refused that its teaching is supported on the apocryphal accounts. The Church documents are also silent in this regard and rely upon other sources and arguments as the origin for this doctrine. There is no direct basis, neither in the scripture nor in the historical record, which support the dogma of Mary’s (عليها السلام) Assumption.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopedia of World Religions, p. 84

<sup>2</sup> Encyclopedia of Christian Theology, p. 1005

<sup>3</sup> See: **Appendix I**, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>4</sup> See: John, 14:3

<sup>5</sup> The Catholicism: Answer Book, p. 65

<sup>6</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, p. 799; The Catholic writer Eamon Duffy states further that there is no clear historical evidence which prove the assumption of Mary (عليها السلام) to Heaven. See: Duffy, Eamon, *What Catholics Believe About Mary (عليها السلام)*, (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1989), p. 17;

- According to the Church and Fathers:

Catholics also used to celebrate a feast to Mary's Assumption (عليها السلام). In the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, the western theologians started to write about the Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام). In the beginning Catholic Church started to celebrate her entrance into heaven. It was later changed into the feast of Dormitio (Falling to Sleep) of Mary (عليها السلام). According to Catholics this feast started its history from the mid of the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE by a different name but at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE Pope Hadrian I<sup>1</sup> gave it the name of the "Assumption of St. Mary (عليها السلام)". This concept was defended by St. Gregory of Tours<sup>2</sup> in the West and Theoteknos of Livia in the East. Nevertheless, the Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام) was not announced as a reliable teaching of the church until PIUS XII issued his "Munificentissimus Deus" in 1950.<sup>3</sup> The early church Fathers say that it was impossible that Mary (عليها السلام) should die. As Germanus<sup>4</sup> of Constantinople argues that due to giving birth to Jesus (عليه السلام), Mary's body was transformed to the highest life and it was not possible that her body taste the early death.<sup>5</sup>

Here a question arises that when there was no Biblical evidence for the assumption of Mary (عليها السلام) then how it became a dogma! Stephen J. Shoemaker tries to clarify that although there were neither historical nor scriptural evidence to

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Stephen J. Shoemaker says that in spite the years of research in early centuries, there is no clear evidence to prove the Virgin's Assumption till yet. The early sources are silence regarding the end of Mary's (عليها السلام) life. See: Shoemaker, Stephen J., *Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 10

<sup>1</sup> See: **Appendix I**, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>2</sup> He was born in 538 CE or died in 594 CE. He was a bishop and historian. He was named Georgius Florentius, but later he changed his name to Gregory due to the memory of his maternal great-grandfather, who was the bishop of Langres. (*The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 141)

<sup>3</sup> *Encyclopedia of Catholicism*, *Encyclopedia of World Religions*, p. 442

<sup>4</sup> He is called Patriarch of Constantinople and Father of the Church. He was born to a patrician family. His father, Justinianus, held various high-level positions in the government. After the death of his father, he was chosen bishop of Cyzicus. He was died in 733 CE or 740 CE. (*The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 132)

<sup>5</sup> Shoemaker, Stephen J., *Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 16

prove this dogma yet the Vatican proceeded to establish the Assumption dogma. It is based on previous well-established dogmas rather than to base on any historical evidence because there were no historical evidences.<sup>1</sup> According to the Catholics it is a punishment to wait until the end of the worldly life. Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from this penalty and she was assumed to heaven as her earthly life completed and she did not have to wait.<sup>2</sup>

So, in 1950, after the closing of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Marian Congress in Rome, this dogma was proclaimed by Pope Pius XII<sup>3</sup> on his Encyclical *Munificentissimus Deus*. This announcement was announced in the presence of 500 Bishops, 40 Cardinals and thousand of priests. According to him, the Mother of Jesus (عليها السلام), Mary (عليها السلام), was assumed into heaven by the power of God. He announced the assumption of Mary (عليها السلام) to Heaven as a Marian dogma by the authority of Jesus (عليها السلام), Peter and Paul, and by his own authority.<sup>4</sup> He himself presents the verses of Luke 1:28 and 42 in 1854 to prove the Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام). He said that the achievement of full grace was not possible without the Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام).<sup>5</sup>

The idea of Mary's (عليها السلام) Assumption was expressed in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. This dogma is not supported by scriptures but it was officially declared as a dogma in 20<sup>th</sup> Century CE as the above mentioned arguments clearly indicate.

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<sup>1</sup> A good explanation of this dogmatic reasoning is to be found in Caspar Friethoff, OP, 'The Dogmatic Definition of the Assumption', *The Thomist*, 14 (1951), 41–58, esp. 42–3. See also Duggan, 'Assumption Dogma', 13; Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's (عليها السلام) Dormition and Assumption, p. 15

<sup>2</sup> *The Catholicism: Answer Book*, p. 64

<sup>3</sup> See: **Appendix I**, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>4</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, pp. 797–799; Pope Pius XII solemnly affirmed on November 1, 1950 that when Mary completed her earthly life her body as well as her soul was taken to heaven. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, pp. 797–799; In 1950, Pope Pius XII announced the Assumption of Mary into Heaven. He declared it by using the papal authority. See: Encyclopedia of Catholicism, Encyclopedia of World Religions, p. 521; Encyclopedia of World Religions, p. 84–85; Walsh, Michael, *Roman Catholicism*, (London: Routledge, 2005) p. 123

<sup>5</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, p. 799

# **CATHOLICS' FIRST MARIAN DOCTRINE**

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**MARY (عليها السلام)**

**AS CO-REDEMPTRIX**

## MARY (عليها السلام) AS A CO-REDEMPTRIX

Before I start to discuss this topic it is needed to explain that what the Catholics mean by redemptrix? And for whom they used this term? The term of Redemptrix is not separated from salvation. In Christianity redemption has two characteristics: Liberation from the burden of sin and return to get relationship with God. We can implicate it in this way that offenders have been sold into slavery to Satan whereas Jesus' (عليه السلام) death brings the offenders back and redeems them.<sup>1</sup> Whereas the term Co-Redemptrix is concerned, according to Catholics, it refers to Mary's (عليها السلام) role and cooperation in the redemption act. It indicates that Mary (عليها السلام) gave donation to give life to Jesus (عليه السلام) as a Redeemer and to offer her sacrifice for the sake of the mankind's redemption. The term Co-Redemptrix is approved by the Catholic Magisterium<sup>2</sup> although it was not included in the dogmatic constitution. As Catholics believe that Jesus (عليه السلام) was a redeemer so they also try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) assisted him in his redemption work. Here are some of those arguments by which they try to prove this doctrine.

- **According to the Bible:**

The Bible does not seem to be explicit on Mary's role in Redemption. Yet a few verses in it appear to be linked to it. Which are:

(1) "In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary (عليها السلام). The angel went to her and said: "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: Encyclopedia of Catholicism, Encyclopedia of World Religions, p. 542

<sup>2</sup> Catholics mean by this word, the teaching office of the Church which consists of the Pope and Bishops. See: Most, William G., The Basic Catholic Catechism, PART FIVE: The Apostles' Creed IX - XII, Ninth Article: "The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints" 1990

<sup>3</sup> Luke, 1:26-28

(2) Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary (عليها السلام), his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."<sup>1</sup>

(3) "Near the cross of Jesus (عليه السلام) stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary (عليها السلام) the wife of Clopas, and Mary (عليها السلام) Magdalene. When Jesus (السلام) saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home."<sup>2</sup>

According to Bible, these above mentioned verses point out towards Mary's (عليها السلام) cooperative role in the act of redemption.

- According to the Fathers and Popes:

According to Catholic Fathers this concept is not a new thing. Even before the year 200 CE, the Church Father Irenaeus referred to Mary (عليها السلام) as "*causa salutis*" (cause of our salvation). But this term was discussed in a wide range after 10<sup>th</sup> century CE. In the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century CE Arnold of Chartres<sup>3</sup> talked about her cooperative role in the act of Redemption. According to him, Jesus (عليه السلام) and Mary (عليها السلام) together achieved the task of man's Redemption. She got the common achievement of the human beings' salvation. Her assistance in this work has been expressed by Catholics in a single word, "Coredemptrix". By the end of the 14<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Luke, 2:34-35

<sup>2</sup> John, 19:25-27; The words addressed by God to the devil in the Garden of Eden as Genesis 3.15 states it, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed". The theologians describe that the mentioned woman is the mother of Jesus (عليها السلام) and enmity between Jesus (عليه السلام) and Satan was in his redemptive work. So this verse tells us that mother of Jesus (عليها السلام) was also a part of that redemption. That is why an enmity occurred between her and Satan as Pius IX states that the prophecy also foretells about Our Lady's struggle in her co-redemptive mission. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, p. 260

<sup>3</sup> He was died in 12<sup>th</sup> Century CE.

century CE, this title had appeared in Catholic literature. But this title was later used regularly during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries CE.<sup>1</sup>

Many theologians have talked about the above mentioned concept by the passage of time, as in the 19th century CE Father Frederick William Faber<sup>2</sup>, and in the 20th century CE Mariologist Father Gabriel Roschini<sup>3</sup>. Some Catholics say that this title emerged in 16<sup>th</sup> century CE and spread rapidly in 17<sup>th</sup> century CE. Pope Pius X<sup>4</sup> declared in 1904 that she was also one of those who saved humanity. Pope Benedict XV<sup>5</sup> states that Mary (عليها السلام) also assisted in Jesus' redemption work so she redeems humankind with Jesus (عليها السلام).<sup>6</sup>

New Catholic Encyclopedia states that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century CE Mary's (عليها السلام) cooperative role in redemption was studied by various aspects. And this doctrine was acknowledged in its present formulation.<sup>7</sup> Particularly in the mid-20th century CE, the theory of Mary's (عليها السلام) cooperative role in redemption attracts the attention of various theologians. According to the Catholics a movement emerges in Catholic history by the collaboration of the Catholic Church. It is stated that six million people and 550 bishops submitted a request to Pope John Paul II<sup>8</sup> in an effort to name Mary (عليها السلام) as Co-redemptrix... According to Catholics it would be the fifth Marian dogma. The 20<sup>th</sup> century CE was very beneficial for this term. Pope Pius XI<sup>9</sup> used this term in 1935 which was broadcasted by the Radio. The authority did not take any

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 259

<sup>2</sup> He was born in 1814 CE and died in 1863 CE. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 5, p. 582

<sup>3</sup> He was born in 1900 CE and died in 1977 CE. He was a Roman Catholic priest and professor of Mariology. See: Gabriel Roschini, The Virgin Mary in the Writings of Maria Valtorta, (English Edition). (Kolbe's Publication Inc, 1989)

<sup>4</sup> See: Appendix I, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>5</sup> See: Appendix I, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>6</sup> See: Encyclopedia of Christian Theology, p. 1006

<sup>7</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, p. 261

<sup>8</sup> See: Appendix I, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

decision about this term due to its controversy as Protestants rejected this term.<sup>1</sup> At the end of this Vatican II, Paul VI stated his affirmation of Mary (عليها السلام) as co-redemptrix.

- According to Christian Theologians:

Anyhow this term was defined in different ways by Christian theologians. They differ in regard to the nature of this term. Their point of views may be reviewed in the following way. The first group claims that Mary (عليها السلام) freely made possible the coming of Jesus (عليه السلام) into the world. It was her cooperative role in the objective Redemption. It is the view of H. Lennerz, W. Goossens, G. D. Smith, and several others theologians of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The second group said that Jesus (عليه السلام) himself alone redeemed the human being. We can just say that Mary (عليها السلام) cooperated in the objective redemption when, at the foot of cross, she acknowledged the sound effects of Jesus' (عليه السلام) redemptive act. The third group says, Mary (عليها السلام) must be called co-redelptrix as she directly cooperated in the redemptive act of Jesus (عليه السلام).<sup>2</sup>

The Catholics say that the term "Co-Redemptrix" may refer that Mary (عليها السلام) is redeemer as Jesus (عليه السلام). But Catholic theologians do not accept this interpretation. According to the Catholics' point of view the Co-Redemptrix does not mean that Mary (عليها السلام) contributes as equivalent part in the redemption of the human being because Jesus (عليه السلام) is the only redeemer. Mary herself was in the need of redemption so she was redeemed by Jesus (عليه السلام). According to the Catholics when she herself was redeemed by Jesus (عليه السلام) how could she get an equal part in the redemption act! It was Jesus (عليه السلام) who accepted her help in the redemption act, and to him alone should redeem be ascribed.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: Encyclopedia of Christian Theology, p. 1006; In the Vatican Council II the renewal of Mariology was called and discussed. The title, Mary (عليها السلام) in the Mystery of Jesus (عليه السلام) and the Church, placed her in close connection with her Son. This was Mary's role (عليها السلام) in the work of Redemption. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, p. 257

<sup>2</sup> See: Ibid, p. 259

<sup>3</sup> See: Ibid

The above mentioned discussion clearly tells us that according to Catholics' point of view Mary (عليها السلام) supported Jesus (عليه السلام) in his redemption activity. The most acceptable standpoint would then be that she played an assistant's role in this regard whereas the real redeemer is just Jesus (عليه السلام) himself.

# **CATHOLICS' SECOND MARIAN DOCTRINE**

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**MARY (عليها السلام) AS MOTHER  
OF THE CHURCH**

## MARY (عليها السلام) AS MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

Catholics believe that Mary (عليها السلام) is the mother of church. They say that the essential connection of Mary (عليها السلام) to the church is maternal. Catholics try to prove this doctrine by presenting some arguments which are summarized here.

- According to the Bible:

In the humble view of present thesis' writer there is no verse in the Bible which clearly testifies this concept. Anyhow, Catholics present a few verses from biblical text by which they try to prove this concept. It is stated in the Luke:

“Mary’s (عليها السلام) obedient response to Gabriel, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word.’”<sup>1</sup>

New Catholic Encyclopedia clearly indicates after mentioning the above verse that it is a central in any Christian theology of the will, whether or not one accepts the ensuing Catholic doctrines of Mary (عليها السلام) as the ‘second Eve,’ Mother of the Church.<sup>2</sup>

- According to the Popes:

According to Catholics, although this doctrine is supported by scriptures yet it was started from the 19<sup>th</sup> century CE. This title was also used in 13<sup>th</sup> century CE in the Marian prayers, for example, “Mother of the Church, Gate of eternal glory, pray for us all, who commemorate you.” Pope Leo XIII<sup>3</sup> used this title before the Vatican Council I. In his writing, he clearly states that Mary (عليها السلام) is the mother of the Church. After that, this title was also used by Pope Paul VI<sup>4</sup> and Pope John XXIII<sup>5</sup> in their writings. Pope John XXIII used this title for more than 4 times in public. He also spoke

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<sup>1</sup> Luke, 1:38

<sup>2</sup> See: Jaroslav Pelikan, Mary (عليها السلام) Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture, (London: Yale University Press, 1996), 39–52; Marian Movements, p. 94

<sup>3</sup> See: Appendix I, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid

<sup>5</sup>Ibid

in one of his speeches in 1960 that Mary (عليها السلام) is the mother of the Church. Moreover, he used this term in 1963. It was Pope Paul VI<sup>1</sup> who formally used this title on November 1964, in the third session of the Vatican Council II. He himself declared Mary (عليها السلام) as Mother of the Church and Mother of the whole people. Pope Paul VI called a number of religious men and women as auditors. He also called some other Christians' groups to attend the session. More than forty Orthodox and Protestant observers were called in the first session of the Council. Their number grew to 100 by the end of the Council.<sup>2</sup>

By the above mentioned arguments, Catholics try to prove that Jesus (عليه السلام) offered himself for the redemption of human beings. Her mother, Mary (عليها السلام), was also supporting him in this purpose. In this way she became the mother of salvation and she got the right to be called "Mother of the Church".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid

<sup>2</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 11, p. 29-30; Pope Paul VI said, to the glory of Mary (عليها السلام) we declare that the Holy Mary (عليها السلام) is 'Mother of the Church'. See: Missing Mary (عليها السلام), p. 166; New Catholic Encyclopedia also describes that in the end of the council the Pope Paul VI announced with his own authority that Mary (عليها السلام) is 'Mother of the Church'. See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 14, p. 414; In 1987, Pope John Paul II used this title, "Mother of the Church" in his encyclical writings and he repeated it on September 1997. According to him Mary (عليها السلام) has the right to be called Mother of the Church. So, according to Catholics this doctrine is an essential doctrine of Catholicism. According to Catholics there are also some other causes which stimulate that she should be called 'Mother of the Church'. Cleo Mcnelly Kearns describes in his book. Mary (عليها السلام) becomes 'Mother of the Church' not only in her ethical obedience, but through her connection with the Eucharist. See: The Virgin Mary (عليها السلام), Monotheism and Sacrifice, p.282

<sup>3</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, p. 257; She also got the right to be called "Mother of the Church" as she was the most prominent disciple of Jesus (عليها السلام). See: Catholicism: the Story of Catholic Christianity, p. 331

# CATHOLICS' THIRD MARIAN DOCTRINE

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MARY (عليها السلام)

AS QUEEN OF HEAVEN

## MARY (عليها السلام) QUEEN OF HEAVEN

According to Catholics, when Mary (عليها السلام) completed her earthly life she was assumed to heaven and there she was honored as a “Queen”. This title “Queen of Heaven” is one of those titles which are being used for Mary (عليها السلام). Catholics are using this title from the ancient times. Catholics try to prove that she occupied the death and her body and soul were taken to heaven whereas being a queen she sits at the right side of her son.<sup>1</sup>

- **According to the Bible:**

This title is supported by the Bible. The Bible indicates that this title, “Queen” is used for Mary (عليها السلام) not only as Mother of Jesus (عليها السلام), the creator, but also by the right of conquest. At the Annunciation, Gabriel said that the son of Mary (عليها السلام), Jesus (عليها السلام), will be a king over the house of Jacob.<sup>2</sup> Catholics say that as being the mother of Jesus (عليها السلام), and due to the right of conquest, Mary (عليها السلام) will be called as a “Queen”.

- **According to the Church and Popes:**

According to Catholics all the titles of Mary’s (عليها السلام) queenship are also stated in church’s documents, especially Pius XII stated this doctrine in his address.<sup>3</sup>

After the mid of the 20<sup>th</sup> century CE Pope Pius XII<sup>4</sup> declared the queenship of Jesus’ (عليها السلام) mother, Mary (عليها السلام). He also said that son of Mary (عليها السلام), Jesus (عليها السلام), was king of the universe...and Mary (عليها السلام) is Queen by grace, by divine relationship, by right of conquest and by singular choice (of God). During the same period the feast of Mary’s (عليها السلام) queenship started by Pius XII in 1954. Originally, this feast was celebrated on May 31.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: **New Catholic Encyclopedia**, Vol. 9, p. 283

<sup>2</sup> See: Luke, 1: 32-33

<sup>3</sup> See: **New Catholic Encyclopedia**, Vol. 9, p. 283

<sup>4</sup> See: **Appendix I**, at the end of this Thesis.

<sup>5</sup> See: *Ibid*, p. 158; Pope Benedict XVI distinguished that Mary’s (عليها السلام) approval of the divine determination is the definitive motive that she is Queen of Heaven. Due to her self-effacing and

According to Catholics, there are many reasons behind this doctrine. They say that Mary (عليها السلام) is given this title because she is the divine mother of Jesus (عليه السلام) and God has chosen her to have an extraordinary responsibility in the work of the salvation of human race. From the ancient times Christians are using this title, "Queen" for Mary (عليها السلام). St. Ephrem entitled Mary "Queen" in the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE. After that, Church fathers started to use this title. This word "Queen" was broadly used after 6<sup>th</sup> century CE. Anyhow this word modified into title "Queen of Heaven" by Catholics after the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE.<sup>1</sup> From 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century CE this title was used in prayers, hymns and devotional literature by the Catholics, for example, "Hail, Holy Queen," "Hail, Queen of Heaven," "Queen of Heaven". After that this title was commonly being used in the Catholics communities and her queenship spread from the middle ages in both the East and the West.<sup>2</sup> Although this title is being used since the ancient times yet the fact is that, in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century CE, L. de Gruyter and C. Friethoff, compared Mary's (عليها السلام) queenship to the kingship of Jesus (عليه السلام) due to her relation in his redemptive work.<sup>3</sup> By the above mentioned arguments, Catholics try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) is called the queen due to her connection in Jesus' (عليه السلام) redemption work.

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unrestricted recognition of God's will, God dignified her over all other beings, and Christ crowned her Queen of heaven.

<sup>1</sup> See: *The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 236

<sup>2</sup> See: *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology*, p. 1007

<sup>3</sup> See: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 9, p. 283

# CATHOLICS' FOURTH MARIAN DOCTRINE

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VENERATION  
OF MARY (عليها السلام)

## VENERATION OF MARY (عليها السلام)

According to Catholics, Mary (عليها السلام) is worthy to be venerated with love and admiration. In the beginning, this veneration was given to her only in prayers but later on the veneration of Mary (عليها السلام) started to appear in art, poetry and music. Although their popes supported this concept yet they also took some steps to reform this concept. This concept started to grow up by the passage of time.

- **According to the Bible:**

This concept is not clearly supported by Holy Scriptures yet there are some arguments which are being presented by Catholics in favour of this concept.

- (1) It is stated in this verse, "All people will call me blessed."<sup>1</sup> So all the veneration specified for Jesus' (عليه السلام) mother, Mary (عليها السلام), is according to the determination of God. Here is another Biblical verse which is being mentioned by Catholics so they can prove her veneration.
- (2) Luke states: "The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." <sup>2</sup>

Like these verses Catholics try to prove her veneration. These verses just indicate Mary's respect and these do not lead to her worship.

- **Bible and the Church Controversy:**

Some other group of Christians i.e. Protestants object on Catholics' concept of veneration. They say that this concept is not clearly mentioned in Holy Scriptures. They also say that Catholics venerate Mary (عليها السلام) by worshipping her. Whereas the Catholics concern that they venerate Mary (عليها السلام) and according to them, the meaning of veneration is to love and admire her. It does not stand for worshipping Mary (عليها السلام) as they say that veneration is a kind of honor. It is something else than worship because God alone has the right to be worshipped.

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<sup>1</sup> Luke, 1: 48

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 1:28

Here a question arises that when they do not worship her then what is the reason behind representing the icons and images of Mary (عليها السلام) on the walls of the Church and homes. The Catholics answer that there are many reason which stimulate us to venerate Mary (عليها السلام). Some of those reasons are:

- (1) She was full of grace as it is mentioned in Luke<sup>1</sup> and this grace supported her to be the most holy and righteous of women.
- (2) She was the Mother of Jesus (عليها السلام), God, and she born him. (3) She participated in the act of redemption and salvation.
- (4) Mary (عليها السلام) was an obedient and pious disciple of Jesus (عليها السلام).

Catholics say that these are the reasons for which they venerate Mary (عليها السلام) too much but they do not worship her.<sup>2</sup> In the II council of Nicaea<sup>3</sup>, the veneration of Mary's (عليها السلام) sacred icons and images was legally announced and established. The Catholics believe that icons and images increase the faith of believers. St. Augustine argues that none of these images presented in churches, houses, and in common places represents the authentic face of Mary (عليها السلام) yet the Catholics believe that these things increase the faith of believers. The council of Nicaea also announced that the veneration is given to the person not to the images.<sup>4</sup>

Christians started to use this concept from 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.<sup>5</sup> By the passage of time they also introduced the feast for veneration of Mary (عليها السلام). This feast was started in Rome during the middle of 4<sup>th</sup> century CE and this feast is still celebrated by Catholics.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: Ibid, 1:28

<sup>2</sup> See: Encyclopedia of Catholicism, Encyclopedia of World Religions, p. 7

<sup>3</sup> It is also called the seventh ecumenical council of the Church which was held from August 787 to October 787...See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 10, p. 349

<sup>4</sup> See: Roman Catholicism, p. 120

<sup>5</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, p. 266

<sup>6</sup> See: Ibid, p. 157

As the time was passing this concept was being objected by various people. In the era of reformation this concept was also questioned.<sup>1</sup> It does not mean that the reformers were against this concept or that they declined it. They just asked to correct this concept under the light of theological changes.<sup>2</sup> The Vatican Council II<sup>3</sup> gave doctrinal explanation to veneration of Mary (عليها السلام) and it requested from all the believers to support this Catholics' concept.

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<sup>1</sup> See: *Marian Movements*, p. 3

<sup>2</sup> See: *Reforming Mary* (عليها السلام): changing Images of the Virgin Mary 11

<sup>3</sup> For detail see: *Appendix II* in the end of thesis.

# CHAPTER 2

## MUSLIM PERCEPTIONS ON

### MARY (عليها السلام)

This chapter will discuss about Marian doctrines in Islam. This will also tell us, are these doctrines and beliefs proved by Quran and Sunnah?

**MARY (عليها السلام)**

**AS MOTHER OF JESUS**

## MARY (عليها السلام)

## MOTHER OF JESUS (عليه السلام)

This part of thesis will discuss that what do the Muslims say and believe about Mary (عليها السلام)? Whether they consider her “the Mother of God” or mother of a Human being? And what are their arguments in this regard? Muslims try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) is the mother of Jesus (عليه السلام) who is just a human being. He is neither God nor the son of God. Muslims have arguments in their sacred scriptures by which they try to prove their points of view. Some of the arguments are as under:

- According to the *Qurān* and its Interpretations:

Here are a lot of arguments by *Qurānic* verses and its interpretations by which Muslims try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) is the mother of Jesus (عليه السلام) and Jesus (عليه السلام) is just one of the Human beings.

- The Holy *Qurān* describes: “Angel said to Mary (عليها السلام) that Allah Almighty gives you good news of your son who will be called ‘*Isa*...’”<sup>1</sup>

Sayyed Qutab wrote down in his *Qurānic* commentary under the interpretation of this verse: “This *Surah* teaches us monotheism...In this *Surah* the birth of Mary (عليها السلام) and Jesus (عليه السلام) has been mentioned in such way which does not leave any space to doubt that Jesus (عليه السلام) was not a human being. This *Surah* tells us that he was a human being or one of Allah’s messengers.”<sup>2</sup>

Another Scholar said: “Attribution of Jesus (عليه السلام) to his mother Mary (عليها السلام) is to inform that he has no father. Allah Almighty called him,

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<sup>1</sup> See: Al-Hilali, Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din, & Khan, Dr. Muhammad Muhsin, *The Noble Qurān*, (Saudi Arabia: Dar us Salam Publications, 1999) *Āl-i-’Imrān*: 45. (NOTE: I used this Noble Qurān’s translation for all Qurānic Verses).

<sup>2</sup> See: Sayyed Qutab, *In the Shade of the Qurān*, Vol. 2, P. 62

“The son of Mary (عليها السلام)”, who was created without the intercourse of any male.”<sup>1</sup> *Ālūsī* said in his *Qurānic Commentary*: “The word “Son of Mary (عليها السلام)” refuses this point of view that ‘Īsā (عليها السلام) is son of God.”<sup>2</sup>

- The Holy *Qurān* indicates: “Verily, the likeness of ‘Īsā (عليها السلام) before Allah is the likeness of Ādam. He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: “Be!” - and he was.”<sup>3</sup>

Muhammad bin ‘Umar al-*Rāzī* said in the interpretation of this verse: The commentators agree that this verse was revealed when the delegation of Najran came to the Prophet (صلی الله علیه وسلم), and said: O Muhammad (صلی الله علیه وسلم)! It is known that ‘Īsā (عليها السلام) has no father so Allah Almighty shall be his father. Muhammad (صلی الله علیه وسلم) replied: Ādam also had neither father nor mother it does not mean that he is the son of Allah. The same saying applies in Jesus (عليها السلام). When Allah may create Ādam from the dust, why it is not permissible to create Jesus (عليها السلام) from the blood of Mary (عليها السلام)? This is closer to the mind.<sup>4</sup>

- The Holy *Qurān* states, O people of the Scripture!... The *Massīh* ‘Īsā (عليه السلام), son of Mary (عليها السلام), was a Messenger of Allah and His Word which He grant to Mary (عليها السلام) so believe in Allah and His Messengers. Do not say, “Three (trinity)!” Stop! (it is) better for you because Allah is (the only) One God.<sup>5</sup>

*Ibn-i-Kathīr* narrated in the interpretation of the above mentioned verse that Allah Almighty prevented the People of the Scriptures to be extremists in

<sup>1</sup> See: *al-Buqāī, Ibrāhīm bin ‘Umar bin Ḥasan al-Ribāt, Naz’mud Durar fi tnāsibil Āyāt wa Sōwar*, Part: 1, p. 401 (NOTE: The researcher himself has translated this text from Arabic to English as researcher is a professional translator and he is the head of Arabic Department at International Translation Center, located in Islamabad – Pakistan. The researcher also has himself translated all the *Āhādīth* and Arabic text which have been mentioned in this thesis, into English.)

<sup>2</sup> See: *al-Ālūsī, Shababuddin Mehmōd bin ‘Abdullah, Tafsīr al-Ālūsī*, Vol. 4, p. 326

<sup>3</sup> The Holy *Qurān*: *Āl-i-’Imrān*, 59

<sup>4</sup> See: *al-Rāzī, Muhammad bin ‘Umar, Mafatīhul Ghāib*, Vol. 4, p. 234

<sup>5</sup> See: The Holy *Qurān*: *al-Nisā*, 171.

religion. It is a common feature of Christians. The Christians overstate 'Īsā (عليه السلام) until they lifted him up to his grade. They lifted him up from the rank of prophethood to being a god, whom they started to worship same like Allah... 'Īsā (عليه السلام) was a word from Allah that He bestowed on Mary (عليها السلام), meaning He created him. Jibril blew the life of 'Īsā (عليه السلام) into Mary (عليها السلام) and 'Īsā (عليه السلام) came to existence as a result.<sup>1</sup>

The above mentioned verses and their interpretation clearly indicate that 'Īsā (عليه السلام) was not son of God. He was just son of a woman without the sexual involvement of any man.

- According to the *Hadīth*:

There are a lot of sayings by Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) which clearly indicate the Muslims' point of view in this regard.

- The Prophet Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said, whoever bears witness that no one has the right to be worshipped but Allah Almighty Alone, and that Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) is His slave and His messenger, and that Jesus (عليه السلام) is Allah's slave and His messenger, and that Paradise is true, and Hell is true, Allah will enter him into Paradise.<sup>2</sup>
- These were Christians who crossed their limits and started to call him son of God, even some of them started to say him 'God' also. As 'Umar Bin al-Khattāb (رضی الله تعالى عنہ) reported that the Messenger of Allah (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said, Do not overly praise me like the Christians overstated 'Īsā (عليه السلام)

<sup>1</sup> See: *Ibn-i-Kathīr, Isma`il bin 'Umar, Tafsīr al-Qurān al-Azīm, al-Nisā*, 171 (Good House for Publishing and Distribution, 1999); Allah Almighty rejected their concept and informed them what Jesus (عليه السلام) himself used to say, O Children of Israel! Worship Allah Who is my and your Lord. Verily, whosoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, Allah will never enter him into Paradise, and he will be entered into Fire. See: *Holy Qurān: al-Māidah*, 5: 72; *Abū Bakar al-Jazā'ī* said in the interpretation of this *Qurānic* verse that Allah Almighty has declared him disbeliever who claims that Jesus (عليه السلام) is God. Allah is Superior. He is not like a human being. 'Īsā (عليه السلام) is just His slave and His messenger, he is not a God. See: *Al-Jazā'ī, Abū Bakar, Easiest Interpretation*, Vol. 1, p. 366

<sup>2</sup> See: *al-Jāmi` al-Sahīb al-Bukhārī*, Vol. 3, p. 1267

السلام), son of Mary (عليها السلام).<sup>1</sup> Sheikh *Saleh bin Fozān* said in the interpretation of this *hadīth*, “And how Christians extolled the son of Mary (عليها السلام)? They said: He is the son of God, or he is God, or he is the third of three. And still they believe in this article, in their speeches and in their writings.”<sup>2</sup>

All of the above mentioned arguments clearly indicate that Mary (عليها السلام) and his son Jesus (عليه السلام) were human beings like other human beings. All the characteristics which they had were not beyond the realm of humanity although they were under the extraordinary care of Allah Almighty. God is alone to be worshiped. No other one has the right to be worshipped. “He is God the Creator, the Maker, the

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<sup>1</sup> See: *Al-Bukhārī*, Muhammad bin *Isma`il*, *al-Jami` al-Sahib al-Bukhārī*, (1987: Beirut: Dar *Ibn-i-Kathīr*) Vol. 3, p. 1271; A group of scholars said in the interpretation of this *Hadīth*, “The meaning of this *Hadīth* is very clear, i.e. do not unduly praise me like the Christians exaggerated over ‘Īsa (عليه السلام). They called him their god and sustainer, but I am ‘Abdullah. So praise me as Allah has described, and say: ‘Abdullah and His Messenger”. See: *Principles of Faith in the Light of Qurān and Sunnah*, by a group of scholars, 1/71 (Saudi Arabia: Published by Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Call and Guidance, 2000)

<sup>2</sup> See: *Al-Fozān*, Sheikh *Saleh bin Fozān*, Books of creed, (*Al-Risālah* Foundation, 2002), Vol. 1, p. 496; When the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: “Do not unduly praise me like the Christians exaggerated over ‘Īsa (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)..., the Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) refers to the fact-finding and to the basis of delusions when people overestimate in love sometimes and when they overestimate in hate, they look one person and raise him to God and they took another person whom they raise him to the devil and the parable is Jesus (عليه السلام) son of Mary (عليها السلام), peace be upon him. Some people loved him and overestimated in his love and made him a god... That's why the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) warned us to exaggerate in his praise and said: “Do not unduly praise me like the Christians exaggerated over ‘Īsa (عليه السلام)”, they entered into polytheism and disbelief due to their praise for Jesus (عليه السلام) to the point of exaggeration, they claim that he is the first light which emerged from the same God, and they started to exaggerate in this theory until they arrived to say that he is the son of God even they said that he is God. This ideology has been discussed in the first Council of Nicaea in 325 CE. See: *Debate between Islam and Christianity*, (Published by General Presidency for Administrations of scientific research, advisory, advocacy and counseling) Vol. 1, p. 239

Shaper. To Him belong the Names Most Beautiful. All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him; He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qurān: Al-Hashar, 24

**VIRGINITY**  
**OF MARY (عليها السلام)**

## VIRGINITY OF MARY (عليها السلام)

This part of the thesis will discuss the Muslims' point of view about the virginity of Mary (عليها السلام). It includes the virgin birth of Jesus as well as Mary's virginity before and after the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام). According to Muslims' point of view Mary (عليها السلام) was a virgin when she was born and when she brought forth Jesus (عليها السلام). She remained a virgin throughout her life.

- According to the *Qurān* and its Interpretations:

There are many arguments by *Qurān* and its interpretations which prove that Mary (عليها السلام) was virgin and she remained virgin throughout her life. Some of these arguments are as under.

- Allah Almighty informed us about the incident of Jesus' birth: He said Jesus (عليها السلام) will be born as it is very easy for Me (Allah). We will choose him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us. So when Mary (عليها السلام) was near to bring forth her, she sent to a far place so people can not know this incident as she was unmarried and she was still a virgin.<sup>1</sup>

According to *Qurānic* Interpretations, Jesus (عليها السلام) was born miraculously. He was born without father. Some of Muslims' arguments are being mentioned here. *Ibn-i-Kathīr* stated in the interpretation of above mentioned *Qurānic* *Āyāt*, when the angel said: "O Mary (عليها السلام)! Verily, Allah gives you the good news of a Word from Him..." i.e. the good news of a newborn... God also called him "Jesus (عليها السلام)", the son of Mary (عليها السلام)". It indicates that he was just born by Mary (عليها السلام) and he has no father. If he had any father Allah may call him with his father's name.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: The Noble *Qurān*: Maryam 22-23

<sup>2</sup> When Joseph saw Mary's belly which was bringing out day after day, he surprised but he did not ask her anything as he knew about her virginity and holiness. But he could not bear it more so he asked her, Mary (عليها السلام)! I want to ask you something but do not hurry. Mary (عليها السلام) said: Joseph! Ask whatever you want to ask but do not say harsh words. Joseph asked her: Do plants grow

- According to the Islamic Scholars:

Islamic sources tell us that she used to worship in the temple. She was very pious. She had devoted her life to Allah. She spent her temple life like a virgin.

- Muhammad Abū Zuh'rah said in his book that Virgin Mary (عليها السلام) became pregnant without any male's sexual intercourse and she born Jesus (عليه السلام).<sup>1</sup>
- Dr. Sa`dī said in his book, Mary (عليها السلام) herself certified that she is a virgin as it is stated in the Holy Qurān. "She said, how can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?"<sup>2</sup> This is a clear proof that she was a virgin.<sup>3</sup>
- Abdul Hamīd said Mary (عليها السلام) grew up and she was in the care of Zechariah. He had been allocated a place in the *mihrāb*. Any person cannot enter it. She used to worship Allah Almighty day and night.<sup>4</sup>
- Ahmad Dīdāt said in his speech which was published later, Muslims believe that Jesus (عليه السلام) is Allah's messengers. He was born miraculous without any sexual intercourse.<sup>1</sup>

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without seed?! Do trees grow without water?! Was any baby born without a father?!!! Mary (عليها السلام) said: Joseph! Yes, it is possible. He asked: How can this be Mary (عليها السلام)?!! She said, as God brought and grew plants without seed!! and the trees without water, and created Ādām without a father or mother!! Joseph said: "I know that God has power over all things! God is great." See: *Ibn-i-Kathīr, Isma`īl bin `Umar, Interpretation of Holy Qurān*, (House for Publishing and Distribution, 1999), Vol. 2, p. 43.

<sup>1</sup> See: *Abū Zuh'rah*, Mohammad, *Lectures on Christianity*, (Cairo: Dar-ul-Fikar al-Arabi), p. 16; Jesus (عليه السلام) came from the essence of the human. He has been born of the Virgin Mary (عليها السلام) that was one of the daughters of Ādām who was created from the dust and the miracle is that God is able to give barren women a child as it gives the virgin women. The Almighty Allah said: "Verily, the likeness of 'Isa (Jesus) (عليه السلام) before Allah is the likeness of Ādām. He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: "Be!" and he was." See: *Holy Qurān: Āl-i-'Imrān*, verse 59; See: *Debate between Islam and Christianity*, Vol. 1, p. 246

<sup>2</sup> The Noble Qurān: Maryam, 20

<sup>3</sup> See: *Abū Ḥabīb*, Dr. Sa`dī, *Juristic Dictionary*, (Syria: Darul Fikar, 1988) Vol. 1, p. 40

<sup>4</sup> See: *Jōda al-Sīhār*, *Abdul Hamīd*, 'Isa bin Mary (عليها السلام), (Elfgala: Egyptian Library), p. 4

- *Imām Ibn ul-Qayyam* said that Muslims believe in Jesus (عليه السلام) who was sent by Allāh Almighty with guidance and the religion of truth. He was a slave of God and His Messenger and His Word to the Virgin Mary (عليها السلام). The Christians believe in that Jesus (عليه السلام) who called the people to his and his mother's worship, and who is the third of three, and who is God or Son of God, and this is a liar Jesus (عليه السلام) if he exists.<sup>2</sup>

These quotations clearly represent the concept of Muslims about Mary (عليها السلام). According to them she (عليها السلام) was virgin. Jesus was born without father. Mary (عليها السلام) had no husband. His birth was like as the birth of A'dam.

Whereas her virginity after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) is concerned the Islamic Sources are quiet in this regard. Anyhow, when a Muslim Scholar was asked, "Is Mary (عليها السلام) married to any man?" He answered: "Mary (عليها السلام), the daughter of 'Imrān, was the best woman. Allah distinguished her by choosing her and honoring her.... Mary (عليها السلام) was cut off for the worship of God, and therefore she was called the Virgin Mary (عليها السلام). She did not marry."<sup>3</sup>

This quotation clearly tells us that Mary (عليها السلام) remained virgin throughout her life. Whereas the question about Jesus' brothers is concerned, Muslims believe that they were not his real brothers as 'Ali bin Naīf said, In the Bible, it has been mentioned that Jesus (عليه السلام) has four brothers, named: Jacob, Moses, Judas and Simon.<sup>4</sup> The Christians were agreed that Mary (عليها السلام) brought her son without the seed of man. When this is the situation then how is it possible that these four were

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<sup>1</sup> See: Jesus (عليه السلام) in Islam, 14-15; When Muslims came to *Najashi*, he asked them: What do you say about Jesus (عليه السلام), the son of Mary (عليها السلام)? *Ja'far bin Abi Talib* answered: we say whatever our Prophet informed us that Jesus (عليه السلام) is a slave of God and His Messenger and His Spirit and His Word to the Virgin Mary (عليها السلام). *Najashi* struck his hand to the ground he took a stick and said, Jesus (عليه السلام) is like as you informed and he is not more even this stick. See: *Al-Shabōd*, 'Ali bin Naīf, Detailed in the response to suspicions of the enemies of Islam, Vol. 1, p. 149

<sup>2</sup> See: Journal of Islamic Research, Vol. 21, p. 340

<sup>3</sup> See: Islamic Network for Legal Opinions, Vol. 5, p. 6542

<sup>4</sup> See: Mark, 6: 3

Jesus' brothers?<sup>1</sup> Muslim's point of view is very clear that Mary (عليها السلام) was virgin before the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام), during the birth of Jesus and even after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام), although her virginity after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) has not clearly been mentioned in Islamic Sources. But those Muslims Scholars who talked about this topic they believe in her virginity even after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام).

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<sup>1</sup> See: Al-Shahōd, 'Ali bin Naīf, Detailed in the response to suspicions of the enemies of Islam, Vol. 4, p. 122; 'Ali bin Naīf also said that on group of Christians say, Mary (عليها السلام) remained a virgin until her death. Four children of Joseph were from his ex-wife. See: Encyclopedia of the defense of Allah's Messenger, Vol. 9, p. 417

# PRESERVATION OF MARY (عليها السلام)

## PRESERVATION

### OF MARY (عليها السلام) FROM SATAN

This chapter will discuss the immaculate conception of Mary (عليها السلام) in Islam. First of all there is need to collaborate that what is the Immaculate Conception? What does it stands for? According to this conception, Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from every kind of sin from her very beginning i.e. since the time of her birth.

**Her Preservation from Sins (According to the *Qurān* and *Hadīth*):**

As far as preservation from every kind of sin is concerned, Muslims believe that she was preserved from any kind of sin from her very beginning because Satan is the cause of falling in evil. But she was preserved from Satan since her mother had prayed to Allah Almighty for it when she was in her mother's womb.

The Holy *Qurān* states, Mary's (عليها السلام) mother prayed to Allah Almighty that she sought refuge in Allah for her daughter and for her descendants from Satan.<sup>1</sup> Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, every child is stroked by the devil as soon as he is born and he cries due to this stroke. Just Mary (عليها السلام) and her child Jesus (عليه السلام) were preserved from Satan at the time of their birth.<sup>2</sup>

From this, many Muslim Scholars have realized and affirmed the principle of Mary's (عليها السلام) original purity and her preservation from Satan. According to Muslims, after her birth she was also preserved from any kind of sin throughout her life. According to them, Mary's (عليها السلام) childhood passed like a miracle. If one studies about Mary's (عليها السلام) childhood in deep, one comes to know the value of her

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<sup>1</sup> See: The Noble *Qurān*: *Āl-i-`Imrān*, 35-36

<sup>2</sup> See: "al-Jāmi` al-Sahih al-Bukhārī", Vol. 4, p. 1655; The Prophet said, every human being is being stroken by Satan except Jesus (عليه السلام) and his mother, they do not commit sin as the sons of Ādām commit it. Jesus (عليه السلام) said: Allah has preserved me and my mother from the accursed Satan, he cannot access us. See: al-Tabarī, Abū Ja`far Muhammad bin Jarir, *Tafsīr al-Tabarī*, Vol. 6, p. 342

personality. Her entire life is found to be full of extraordinary events and she was preserved from the sins even at the time of her birth as she was not touched by Satan.

God predestined Mary (عليها السلام) and purified her, raising her above all women as the Holy Qurān states: "And [mention] when the angels said, "O Mary (عليها السلام), indeed Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the worlds."<sup>1</sup> She thus grew under the direct Divine protection.

Thus she holds a unique position in Islamic Sources. She was announced to be among the best of women. As Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: "Best women of Paradise (1) *Khadijah*, the daughter of Khuwailad, (2) *Fatimah*, the daughter of Muhammad, (3) *Āsiyah*, the daughter of Muzāhim, wife of Pharaoh, and (4) Maryam, the daughter of 'Imrān (رضي الله عنهم)." <sup>2</sup> One becomes the best in Paradise if and only one is among the best in this life, as the women mentioned in this *Hadīth* are.

Allah Almighty chose her family and purified them as He said in His Holy Qurān: "Indeed, Allah chose Ādām and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imrān over the worlds."<sup>3</sup> She never committed any sin as she herself solemnly affirmed it. The Holy Qurān vindicated her through her statement: "She said, "How can I have a baby while no man has touched me and I have not been unchaste?"<sup>4</sup> She was very pious, noble and true as the Holy Qurān called her *Siddiqah*: "The Messiah, son of Mary (عليها السلام), was not but a messenger; [other] messengers have passed on before him. And his mother was a supporter of truth (*Siddiqah*)."<sup>5</sup> A person, who had these mentioned characteristics, can not commit the sin. According to

<sup>1</sup> The Noble Qurān: *Āl-i-'Imrān*, 42

<sup>2</sup> See: *al-Shibāni*, Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal*, Vol. 1, p. 293

<sup>3</sup> The Noble Qurān: *Āl-i-'Imrān*, 33; She was fed by angels as the Holy Qurān states: "Every time Zechariah entered upon her in the prayer chamber, he found with her provision. He said, "O Mary (عليها السلام), from where is this [coming] to you?" She said, "It is from Allah. Indeed, Allah provides for whom He wills without account." See: The Noble Qurān: *Āl-i-'Imrān*, 37

<sup>4</sup> The Noble Qurān: Maryam, 20

<sup>5</sup> The Noble Qurān: al-Maida, 75: It is stated in Archive of *Ahl-i-Hadīth*, Mary (عليها السلام) has been described as *Siddiqah* in place of her praise and virtues. If there were a better description than this Allah Almighty describes her with it. See: Archive of *Ahl-i-Hadīth* Forum 1, Vol. 1, p. 13141

Muslims, these above mentioned characteristics belong to Mary (عليها السلام). All the Muslims are agreed at this thing and there appears no disagreement among them since these are attested by *Qurān* itself in a fairly clear manner.

# DEATH OF MARY (عليها السلام)

## DEATH OF MARY (عليها السلام)

According to Muslims, when Mary (عليها السلام) completed her earthly life she faced death. According to Muslims every soul which is being sent into this world, will have to taste death and no one can escape it.

- According to the *Qurān*:

There are many verses in Holy *Qurān* which form the bases for the Islamic point of view. Some of these are as under:

- Everyone shall taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing).<sup>1</sup>
- The Holy *Qurān* said: "Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!"<sup>2</sup>
- Allah Almighty said in another place, Allah Almighty sends His guardian (angels to write one's good and bad deeds) over you. When death approaches one of you, Our Messengers (angel of death and his assistants) take his soul without any neglect.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: The Noble *Qurān*: *Āl-i-`Imrān*, 185; Sayyed Qutab said into his *Qurānic Commentary* that earthly life is a limited life which will finish. All the people must have to die although they are good or bad, brave or coward, believers or disbelievers. No one can escape death. Every human being must have to taste death. Only there is one distance which will occur on the day of resurrection. Everybody will be paid according to his earthly deeds. See: In the Shade of the *Qurān*, Vol. 2, P. 271

<sup>2</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Nis'a*, 78

<sup>3</sup> See: The Noble *Qurān*: *al-An`ām*, 61; Sayyed Qutab said in the Commentary of this *Āyah* that Every human being will remain alive in this world until a limit assigned to it and nobody can know his specific time of death, although Allah Almighty has specified time of death for everyone. Nobody can escape from his specified time. The angel of death is counting the breath of every one and he does not neglect. When the specified moment comes he has to die. See: In the Shade of the *Qurān*, Vol. 5, P. 165

- The Holy *Qurān* states: “Everyone is going to taste death, and We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good, and to Us you will be returned.”<sup>1</sup>
- Allah Almighty mentions: “Everyone shall taste the death. Then unto Us you shall be returned.”<sup>2</sup>
- “Say (to them): “Verily, the death from which you flee will surely meet you, then you will be sent back to (Allah), the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He will tell you what you used to do.”<sup>3</sup>

These above verses clearly indicate that all the things particularly human beings have to die. Nobody can escape the death. Even Jesus (عليه السلام) who has been ascended by Allah, he will also return in this world and die. Whereas Mary (عليها السلام) is concerned, according to Muslim Scholars, when she completed her early life she also died.

- According to the Muslim Scholars:

When the question about Mary’s (عليها السلام) death was asked from a Muslim Scholar, he answered: “The question about the death of Mary (عليها السلام) itself includes the answer, because if all people will die, even all the prophets died as God said to the Prophet Muhammad, “Verily, you (O Muhammad) will die and verily, they (too) will die.”<sup>4</sup> If Jesus (عليه السلام) himself would die after his second coming, why not can his mother? Did not Allah Almighty say: “Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish. And the Face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honour will abide forever.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Anbiyā*, 35

<sup>2</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *al-`Ankabūt*, 57; Allah Almighty said in another place: “Say (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) to these hypocrites who ask your permission to run away from you): “Flight will not avail you if you flee from death or killing, and then you will enjoy no more than a little while!” See: The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Aḥrāb*, 16

<sup>3</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Jumm`ab*, 8; Allah Almighty said in another place: “Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish.” See: The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Rahmān*, 26; Sayyed Qutab said in the Commentary of this *āyah* that it includes all the things. See: In the Shade of the *Qurān*, Vol. 7, P. 101

<sup>4</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Zumar*, 39: 30

<sup>5</sup> See: Opinions and advices of Islam Today, Vol. 4 p. 290

Another Muslim Scholar stated in his book: “I heard that Mary (عليها السلام) remained alive for five years after Jesus (عليه السلام) and she died when she was Fifty-three years old.”<sup>1</sup> If the Muslims believe that she has died then let’s see what they say about her grave. When a Muslim Scholar was asked about the grave of Mary (عليها السلام) that where she was buried? He answered: “It was stated by a number of researcher scholars that the grave of Mary (عليها السلام) is in the holy city of Jerusalem.”<sup>2</sup> These above mentioned arguments clearly indicate the Muslim’s point of view. According to Muslims she died and she did not assume to heaven.

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<sup>1</sup> Stories of the Prophets, Vol. 2, p. 457

<sup>2</sup> Al-Faqih, Dr. ‘Abdullah, Islamic Network’s *Fatwās*, (Published by islamweb.net, Date of Access: 08-04-2011), Vol. 5 p. 8888

**MARY (عليها السلام)**

**AS LEADER OF HEAVEN**

## MARY (عليها السلام) LEADER OF HEAVEN

According to Islamic Sources, Mary (عليها السلام) has been given various titles. The title “The Leader of Heaven’s Women” is one of those titles which are being used for Mary (عليها السلام), the mother of Jesus (عليه السلام).

- According to *Hadīth*:

According to Muslims, Mary (عليها السلام) was honored as a “The Leader of Heaven’s Women”. Here are some of Islamic Sources which clearly indicate that she was honored as “The Leader of Heaven’s Women” and she was called one of the best women in heaven.

- Anas (رضي الله عنه) reported that Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: “The best women of the world are four: Maryam the daughter of `Imrān, Khadijah bint Khuwailad (The wife of the Prophet Muhammad صلی الله علیہ وسلم), Fātimah, the daughter of the Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم), and Āsiah, the wife of Pharaoh.”<sup>1</sup>
- Ibn-i-Abbas (رضي الله عنه) reported that the Messenger of Allah (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) draw four lines, then said: “Do you know why I draw these lines?” They answered: “No”. Prophet Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said: “The best women of Paradise are four; Mary (عليها السلام) the daughter of `Imrān, Khadijah bint Khuwailad (The wife of the Prophet Muhammad صلی الله علیہ وسلم), Fātimah, the daughter of the Muhammad, and Āsiah bint Muzahim.”<sup>2</sup>
- Abū Sa`id (رضي الله عنه) narrated that The Messenger of Allah (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said: “Hassan and Hussain, are the leaders of the youth of

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Saūti, Jalāluddin, Jamī`ul Abādīth*, Vol. 12, p. 384

<sup>2</sup> *Musnād Ahmad bin Hanbal*, Vol. 1, p. 322

Paradise and *Fatimah* is the leader of the women of Paradise except Mary (عليها السلام), the daughter of 'Imrān (as she will also be leader)."<sup>1</sup>

These arguments clearly indicate that Mary (عليها السلام) is honored as one of the four best women of the world. Even she is also called the "The Leader of Heaven". These are not just Muslims who believe but there are many Christians' Scholars who believe in this Islamic Concept.<sup>2</sup> This title therefore continues to find favor with Muslims.

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Nisa'i*, *Aḥmad bin Shō'ib*, *Sunan al-Kubrā*, (Beirut - Lebanon: Dārul Kutub al-Ilmiyah), Vol. 5, p. 145; *Ibn-i-'Abbās* (رضي الله تعالى عنه) reported that the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: "Leaders of the women of the Paradise after Mary (عليها السلام), the daughter of 'Imrān, are Fātima, *Khadijah*, and 'Asiah the wife of Pharaoh." See: *Al-Asbāḥāni*, *Abū Nu'aim Ahmad bin 'Abdullah*, *Cognition of Companions*, (taken by [www.alsunnah.com](http://www.alsunnah.com), Date of Access: 15-08-2011) part 22, p. 204

<sup>2</sup> Smith, Jane and Haddad, Yvonne, "The Virgin Mary in the Islamic Tradition and Commentary," The Muslim World 79 (July, October 1989): 179 No. 86; Stowasser, Barbara, *Women in the Qurān. Tradition and Interpretation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) 59.

**VENERATION  
OF MARY (عليها السلام)**

## VENERATION OF MARY (عليها السلام)

Mary (عليها السلام), the mother of Jesus (عليها السلام), is venerated by Islam and Muslims. Islam gave her the place of honor and respect. She is one of those eighth people who have a *Surah* in *Qurān* named after them. The 19<sup>th</sup> *Surah* of *Qurān* is named after her whereas the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Surah* of *Qurān*, *Āl-i-Im'rān*, is named after her family and father.

- According to the *Qurān* and its Interpretations:

In the Islamic Sources particularly in *Qurān*, no lady is given more attention than Mary (عليها السلام). There are a lot of arguments which prove this thing. Some of these arguments are as under:

- She holds a very unique position in Islam, and God declares her to be the best woman amongst all human races, whom He chose above all other women due to her piousness and devotion as it is stated in the Holy *Qurān*, when angel said to Mary (عليها السلام)! Allah Almighty has chosen you, He has chosen you above the women of the world.<sup>1</sup>
- God has called her by many good titles. One of these titles is “*Siddiqah*”. It is one of those best titles by which she is called as it is stated Allah Almighty describes Mary (عليها السلام) as *Siddiqah* in place of her praise and her virtues. If there were a better description than this He describes her with it.<sup>2</sup>

- According to the *Hadīth*:

There are several *Aḥādīth* which clearly show us that Islam honors Mary (عليها السلام) more than the Christians do it. Some of these arguments are as under:

- Islamic Sources gave her the status of being one of the most perfect women as it is narrated by *Abū Mūsa* that Prophet Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said, many of the men were perfect. Whereas the women concern, no woman got

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<sup>1</sup> See: The Noble *Qurān*: *Āl-i-Im'rān*, 42-43

<sup>2</sup> See: Archive of *Ahl-i-Hadīth* Forum 1, Vol. 1, p. 13141

her perfection except Mary (عليها السلام), the daughter of 'Imrān, and *Āsiyah* wife of Pharaoh.<sup>1</sup>

- She is also called one of the best women of the world as Prophet Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said that there are just four women who are the best: Maryam the daughter of 'Imrān, *Āsiyah* the wife of Pharaoh, *Khadījah bint e Khuwailad* (The wife of the Prophet Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم), and *Fatimah*, the daughter of the Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم), the Messenger of God.<sup>2</sup>

By the above mentioned arguments it is clearly proven that Islam venerates Mary (عليها السلام) and accords her, her due status. She has been given respect in Islamic Sources. There are many *Āyāt* and *Abādīth* by which Muslims prove her veneration.

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<sup>1</sup> See: *Sunan al-Kubrā*, Vol. 5, p. 93

<sup>2</sup> See: *Abū 'Isa*, Muhammad bin 'Isa, *Sunan-ul-Tirmadī*, Vol. 5, p. 703.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **COMPARISON BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND MUSLIM POINTS OF VIEW**

# COMPARISON BETWEEN CATHOLIC

## AND MUSLIM POINTS OF VIEW

In the first chapter, Catholics' perceptions on Mary have been described whereas the second chapter describes Muslims' perceptions on Mary (عليها السلام). In this chapter the comparison of Catholics and Muslims' point of views will be discussed. In this chapter, all the doctrines and dogmas relating to Mary (عليها السلام) that have been discussed in the previous chapters will be compared.

There are several ways of comparisons but the main method of comparison which is being used in this chapter is as under:

After mentioning both points of view the writer of present thesis tries to prefer that point of view which is supported by scriptures and it is accepted by all the groups of that religion. If I found any contradiction in both points of view by their followers then I prefer that point of view which is stronger by its arguments.

**MARY (عليها السلام) MOTHER OF  
GOD OR A HUMAN BEING?**

## MARY (عليها السلام) AS MOTHER OF GOD OR A HUMAN BEING?

The first concept about Mary (عليها السلام) is related to her maternal status. Both the religious traditions try to answer the question: Is she mother of God or just the mother of Jesus (عليه السلام), a human being? Catholics try to prove her as 'mother of God' whereas the Muslims concern, they call her the mother of Jesus (عليه السلام), a human being. The main point of diversion is Jesus (عليه السلام), is he a "God" or a "Man"? Catholics try to prove him as 'God' whereas the Muslims are concerned, they call him a human being.

According to Muslims, a created person cannot be God. As Jesus (عليه السلام) was born by Mary (عليها السلام) so how could he be God. Muslims also have many arguments in this regard which show that neither Jesus (عليه السلام) was God nor God was Jesus (عليه السلام). Some of these are as under.

- Allah Almighty said in His Holy *Qurān*: "Surely, in disbelief are they who say that Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary (عليها السلام). Say (O Muhammad ﷺ), who then has the least power against Allah, if He were to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary (عليها السلام), his mother, and all those who are on the earth together? And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them. He creates what He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Māidah*, 17; *Imām Tab'rī* said in the interpretation of this Āyah that Allah Almighty is ordering His Prophet Muhammad to tell the uneducated people of the Christians: If Jesus (عليه السلام) were as you claim i.e. he is God and it is not so, he may predestinate to turn back the command of Allah about his and his mother destruction. See: *Tafsīr al-Tab'rī*, Vol. 10, p. 147; *Imām Ibn-i-Kathīr* said in the interpretation of this Āyah that Allah Almighty said informing and governing about the disbelief of Christians in their claim about Jesus (عليه السلام) that he is God whereas he is the slave of Allah and one of His creations. See: *Interpretation of Holy Qurān*, Vol. 3, p. 68

- Allah Almighty said in His Holy *Qurān*, “The *Masīh ‘Iṣa*, son of Mary (عليها السلام), was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary (عليها السلام) and a spirit (*Ruḥ*) created by Him; so believe in Allah and His Messengers. Say not: “Three (trinity)!” Cease! (it is) better for you. For Allah is (the only) One Il’ah (God), Glory be to Him (Far Exalted is He) above having a son.”<sup>1</sup>
- When the Holy *Qurān* has denied the divinity of Jesus (عليه السلام), it also has proved his slavery. Allah Almighty has informed us that the first word uttered by Jesus (عليه السلام) in the cradle, is the recognition of devotion to God. As Allah Almighty said: “Then she pointed to him. They said: “How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle? He (Jesus) said: Verily! I am a slave of Allah, He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet.”<sup>2</sup>

The thing which Jesus (عليه السلام) brought from his God is monotheism, and every prophet of God brought this thing. The recognition of Allah’s straight slavery was made by every messenger but this pure doctrine was mixed by the distortions as it is mentioned in one of the written gospels, the Gospel of Barnabas, which talks about Jesus (عليه السلام) as a messenger from Allah. Then the differences occurred among them. Some people started to say: “Jesus (عليه السلام) is the Messenger of Allah like the other messengers.” Some people started to say: “Yes, he is a messenger of Allah, but he has a particular relation with Allah.” Some people said: “He is the son of God because he was created without a father, but due to his creation he is also a creature of Allah.” Muslims say, if his creation without father is the argument for being him the son of God or God himself then Ādam is also son of God or God himself because he was created without

<sup>1</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Nisa'*, 171; *Imām Tab'rī* said in the interpretation of this *Āyah* that Allah Almighty has called Jesus (عليه السلام) as ‘Iṣa, son of Mary (عليها السلام)’. He wants to say, O, those people who have given the Book (Gospel and the Torah) and who crossed their limits in their religious matters, Jesus (عليه السلام) is not the son of God as you claim or believe. He is just human being, like other creations. See: *Tafsīr al-Tab'rī*, Vol. 9, p. 147

<sup>2</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: Maryam, 19-20; *al-Jāmi` al-Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, Vol. 4, p. 1903

father and mother. Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Qurtabī said in his book, “Who argued that (he is son of God or God himself because) he is created without a father so he has to admit that Ādam also has the divinity because he has also not been created with the sperm of the father but he is the creation of soil, then he breathed into him as he did during the creation of Jesus (عليه السلام) by the breath of an angel.”<sup>1</sup>

These are the arguments which clearly prove that Jesus (عليه السلام) was just messenger of Allah. He has no divinity power in him. Here are some Christians' arguments which also indicate that he is just slave of God.

- Paul who was a patriarch of Antioch before the emergence of Christianity and his saying was monotheism, says that Jesus (عليه السلام) is the servant of Allah and His Messenger as one of the prophets created by Allah in the womb of Mary (عليها السلام) without a male and he was a human being without any divinity in him...<sup>2</sup>
- The Bible tells us, “When Jesus (عليه السلام) entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” The crowds answered “This is Jesus (عليه السلام), the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”<sup>3</sup>

This is the testimony of witnesses who saw his miracles and none of them said that he is God or Son of God. The same thing is narrated in Luke, “The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus (عليه السلام) gave him back to his mother. They were all filled with awe and praised God. “A great prophet has appeared among us,” they said.”<sup>4</sup>

Those who worship others than Allah, as Jesus (عليه السلام) and his mother, without their willingness, these [Jesus (عليه السلام) and Mary (عليها السلام)] are free of this sin because they worship them without their willingness. Jesus (عليه السلام) did not ask them to worship him but he told them to worship God alone who has no partner, and tell them that he is ‘*Abdullah* (Slave of God) and not a son of God, and he

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qurtubi, Muhammad bin Ahmad, Information what is in the Christians' Religion, (Cairo: Arab Heritage House, 1398) Vol. 1, p. 136

<sup>2</sup> Al-Zāhri, ‘Ali bin Ahmad, *Al-Fisal fil Milal wal Abwāi wan Nihāl*, (Cairo: Khanjī Library) Vol. 1, p.47)

<sup>3</sup> Matthew, 21: 10-11

<sup>4</sup> Luke, 6: 41

has no partnership with God, therefore the people who worshiped Jesus (عليه السلام) will cry at the day of Resurrection, and disgrace before the witnesses.

The above arguments clearly prove that all the Muslims believe in Jesus (عليه السلام) as being a human. Where as the Christians believe they are differ in this regard. Their arguments show that they used to believe in his humanity but by the passage of time they started to say him 'son of God' or 'God' himself.

**VIRGINITY**  
**OF MARY (عليها السلام)**

## VIRGINITY OF MARY (عليها السلام)

This part has been divided into three stages; (1) her virginity before the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام) (2) her virginity during the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام) (3) her virginity after the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام). Whereas the first stage concerned, Muslims and Catholics believe that Mary (عليها السلام) was pious and she was virgin in her beginning life before the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام). Here are arguments from both sides.

- Ronald wrote in his book about Mary's (عليها السلام) early life. He said that from the very beginning, Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from all kinds of sins... Allah desired that the Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام) should be so perfect, complete and it was a miracle by Allah Almighty.<sup>1</sup>
- Mary (عليها السلام) herself certified that she is a virgin as it is stated in the Holy Qurān. "She said, how can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?"<sup>2</sup>

Whereas her virginity during the birth of Jesus (عليها السلام) is concerned, both Muslims and Catholics agreed, with a little bit difference, that she remained virgin during this period.

- According to Catholics this verse "Behold, the Virgin shall conceive."<sup>3</sup>, is explained to show that the Virgin would bear a child without sexual intercourse. For if she had had sexual intercourse with anyone, she would

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<sup>1</sup> See: Ronald L. Conte Jr. "The Virginity of Jesus (عليها السلام) and Mary (عليها السلام)", (USA: Published by Ronald L. Conte Jr., Grafton, 2001) p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> The Noble Qurān: Mary (عليها السلام), 20; See: *Abū Ḥabīb*, Dr. Sa`dī, Juristic Dictionary, (1988: Syria, Darul Fikar) Vol. 1. p. 40; Allah Almighty informed us about the incident of Jesus' birth: He said, it is easy for Me (Allah) that a virgin bear a child without any sexual intercourse. It was a sign to mankind which already has been decreed by Almighty Allah...See: The Noble Qurān: Maryam, 22-23

<sup>3</sup> Matthew, 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; 2:47

not have been a virgin. But God overshadowed the virgin Mary (عليها السلام) and she bore a child while still remaining a virgin ...<sup>1</sup>

- Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said: Jesus (عليه السلام) is the servant of God and His Messenger and His Word to Mary (عليها السلام), and the spirit of it, "Jesus (عليه السلام) is the son of Mary (عليها السلام), created by God to a mother without a father, to show His slaves that He has power over all things."<sup>2</sup>

Here, Catholics and Muslims have a little bit difference. According to Catholics, Jesus (عليه السلام) passed through the womb of Mary (عليها السلام) without the opening of Mary's womb and without any physical harm as light passes through glass without harming it. But according to Muslims, Jesus (عليه السلام) was born as other human beings although he and his mother were preserved from Satan at the time of his birth. Whereas the third stage concerned i.e. her virginity after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام), although Muslims and Catholics have a little bit difference here about her marriage to the Joseph but both Muslims and Catholics agreed that she also remained virgin after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام).

- B. Townsend Waddill said, some people say that Mary (عليها السلام) did not remain virgin after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) as Jesus (عليه السلام) has some other brothers. By the passage of time, these people were considered as they did not understand the fact although they studied this topic.<sup>3</sup>
- Whereas her virginity after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) is concerned the Islamic sources are quiet in this regard. Anyhow, when a Muslim Scholar was asked, "Is Mary (عليها السلام) married to any man?" He answered: "Mary (عليها السلام), the daughter of 'Imrān, was the best woman. Allah distinguished her by choosing her and honoring her.... Mary (عليها السلام) was cut off for the worship of God, and therefore she was called the Virgin Mary (عليها السلام). She did not marry.

<sup>1</sup> See: Richardson, Cyril C., (Edited and translated) Early Christian Fathers, (The Westminster Press, 1953) p. 263

<sup>2</sup> See: Books of Creed, Vol. 1, p. 108

<sup>3</sup> See: The Perpetual Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام), p. 11.

According to some Christians, Mary (عليها السلام) did not remain virgin after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام) as she has some more children as Bible describes at many places that Jesus (عليه السلام) called his brothers as well as the names of his brothers have been mentioned in the Bible. But this concept is not supported by Catholics as well as Muslim Scholars. If we considered for a moment that she was married with Joseph, it does not mean that she born some more children after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام). Whereas the mentioning of Jesus' (عليه السلام) brothers concerned, they were not his real brothers as Catholics pointed it. They were some of his followers or they were son of Joseph from his former wife.<sup>1</sup>

We can say that Muslims and Catholics are very close about Mary's (عليها السلام) virginity. There is just a little bit difference about her marriage with Joseph. But it does not affect on this doctrine as Catholics also accept her virginity even after the birth of Jesus (عليه السلام).

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<sup>1</sup> See: Encyclopedia of the defense of Allah's Messenger, Vol. 6, p. 417

# IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY (عليها السلام)

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF

### MARY (عليها السلام)

Catholics' point of view about the immaculate conception of Mary (عليها السلام) is a little bit difference from the *Ahl al-Sunnah*'s point of view. Here is need to know what this term exactly stands for? This concept includes two main things:

- 1) According to this conception Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from every kind of sin from her very beginning.
- 2) This is also includes that she was preserved from the 'original sin' when she was conceived in her mother's womb.

Whereas the first thing concerned, the Catholics and Muslims believe that she was preserved from any kind of sin from her very beginning because Satan is the cause of falling in evil. But she was preserved from Satan because her mother prayed Allah Almighty when she was in her mother's womb. She said to Allah, accept from me whatever is in my womb. I ask protection for her in You and for her children from Satan.<sup>1</sup>

Whereas the second thing of this doctrine concerned, Catholics and *Ahl al-Sunnah* do not agree at this point. According to Catholics she was preserved from the original sin as it is stated in the new Catholic Encyclopedia, this term "Immaculate Conception" stands for that Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from Original Sin from her very beginning i.e. from her birth. The rest of human beings all naturally bear the sin

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<sup>1</sup> See: The Noble Qurān: *Āl-i-'Imrān*, 35-36; According to *Ahl al-Sunnah*, Jesus (عليه السلام) and his mother Mary (عليها السلام) were the only persons who could not be touched by Satan at the time of their birth as Allah Almighty imposed a veil between them and Satan. Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, every new-born is touched by Satan as soon at the time of his birth and he cries due to this touch. Just Mary (عليها السلام) and her Son were preserved from it. See: "*al-Jāmi' al-Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*", Vol. 4, p. 1655

due to the Fall of ĀDAM but Mary (عليها السلام) was preserved from the original sin by the grace of Allah Almighty.<sup>1</sup>

According to *Ahl al-Sunnah*, neither Islam upholds this concept nor does it believe in the theory of “original sin”. Instead of believing in it Islam strongly stresses that none human being shall burden the sin of any other human being. We are responsible just for our own deeds and will not be punished for the deeds of any other person. Therefore, Muslims reject the doctrine of original sin as the Holy *Qurān* emphasizes, “And every soul earns not [blame] except against itself, and no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return and He will inform you concerning that over which you used to differ.”<sup>2</sup>

This discussion tells us that Muslims and Catholics are agreed at the first point, preservation from any kind of sin. Whereas the second point, ‘original sin’ concerns, Muslims agree<sup>3</sup> that no man will be punished due to others faults. Neither they believe in this concept nor do their scriptures support it. Whereas the Catholics concern, although they believe in original sin but there are a lot of verses in their scriptures which reject this concept. Some of these arguments are being mentioned here.

- “The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 7, p. 331

<sup>2</sup> See: *The Noble Qurān: al-An`ām*, 164; Allah Almighty said in another place, no bearer will bear the burden of another faults and man will be reward according to his own deeds. See: *The Noble Qurān: al-Najam*, 53: 38-39

<sup>3</sup> Some Muslims who were affected by Christians, started to say that preservation of Mary (عليها السلام) from Satan at the time of her birth, is the immaculate concept and it resembles to the Catholics’ point of view as the author Shabbir believe in. See: Akhtar, *Shabbir, The Qurān and the Secular Mind: A Philosophy of Islam*, (2007) p. 352. The majority of Muslims do not believe in this concept and Islamic Sources also do not support this concept.

<sup>4</sup> See: Ezekiel 18:20; Deuteronomy 24:16; Genesis 18:25; Ezekiel 18:2-4, 20; Ezekiel 18:17-20; II Chronicles 25:4; Ezekiel 18:25, 29-30; Ezekiel 18:4; Ezekiel 18:30; Isaiah 7:15-16,

- “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”<sup>1</sup>

The above mentioned arguments clearly prove that Catholic scriptures do not support their doctrine but they also reject it. From the above mentioned arguments the writer of present thesis understands that Muslim point of view is more sound than the Christian view.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Ecclesiastes 7:29; Genesis 1:27, 31; Genesis 3:11-12; Genesis 6:7, 12; Genesis 8:21; Psalm 14:1-3; Psalm 53:3; Psalm 82:6-7; Genesis 6:5-7, 11-12; Exodus 32:7-8; Deuteronomy 1:39; Deuteronomy 32:5-6, 18; Isaiah 7:15-16

# DEATH OR ASSUMPTION OF MARY (عليها السلام) ?

## DEATH OR ASSUMPTION OF MARY (عليها السلام)؟

According to Catholic, when Mary (عليها السلام) completed her earthly life she was assumed to heaven, but According to Muslims she was dead as the other people die. Everybody that has come in this world must have die. According to my research, Muslims' point of view is right as Catholics' scriptures also support it. Here are some arguments from Bible.

- James states in the Bible: "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes."<sup>1</sup>
- It is stated in the book of Hebrews, the Bible: "Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment."<sup>2</sup>
- It is stated in Genesis, the Bible: "I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish."<sup>3</sup>

All the above mentioned Biblical verses clearly prove that every one has to die. Islamic Sources also support this concept. In the *Qurān*, there are many arguments which clearly prove this thing. Some of those arguments are as under.

- "Everyone shall taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> James, 4: 14

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews, 9: 27

<sup>3</sup> Genesis, 6: 17

<sup>4</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *Āl-i-`Imrān*, 185; Almighty Allah says in another place, every human being have to taste death. Nobody can escape it. See: The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Anbiyā*, 35; *al-`Ankabūt*, 57; *al-Jumm`ah*, 62: 8

- “Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!”<sup>1</sup>

If she was really assumed then the Islamic Sources must mentioned it. But the fact is that the Christians themselves had no believe in this concept in the very beginning. By the passage of time, they started to believe in it even it became a doctrine for them. If they believed in it from the very beginning, Islam mentions it necessarily by supporting it or rejecting it and Christian’s scriptures also support it clearly. But they themselves are differing in this regard. Some of them say that she died and after her death she was assumed as it is stated in first chapter. According to Muslim every human being has to die even Jesus (عليه السلام) who has been ascended to heaven by Almighty Allah, he will return to earth and will die. Whereas Catholics concern, they are different in their sayings. Some of them say that Mary (عليها السلام) was assumed into heaven and she did not die as death is a punishment. Some say that she died and after that she was arisen to heaven by angels. According to the writer’s understandings, the Muslim point of view seems better as it could not contradictive itself.

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<sup>1</sup> The Noble Qurān: *al-Nisā*, 4: 78; Allah Almighty said in another place, when a person completed his earthly life, Allah sends His guardians who take his soul without any negligence. See: The Noble Qurān: *al-An`ām*, 6: 61

**MARY (عليها السلام)**

**AS CO-REDEMPTRIX**

## MARY (عليها السلام) AS CO-REDEMPTRIX

According to Catholics, human being is born sinful by the sin of Ādam and so everyone was in need of a redeemer who may be cause their salvation. So they try to prove Jesus (عليه السلام) as their redeemer and they also try to prove that Mary (عليها السلام) supported Jesus (عليه السلام) in the redemption of human being from the Satan so she is given this title, coredemtrix. According to them this concept is closely connected to the dogma of original sin. According to Muslims, there is no concept about original sin in Islamic Sources. The Muslims also do not believe that Jesus (عليه السلام) is a redeemer then how they can believe that Mary (عليها السلام) played a role as a coredemtrix.

Islamic Sources teach us that when a person commits a sin, he himself is responsible for that sin then how a new born child can bear the sin of Ādam and Eve. Allah Almighty says in the *Qurān*, “And no bearer of burdens shall bear another’s burden.”<sup>1</sup> Holy Prophet, Muhammad said: “Every child is born in the (state of) nature (*fitra*); then his parents make him into a Jew, a Christian or a Magian...”<sup>2</sup> According to Muslims there is no original sin so human being does not need redemption from sin. As E. E. Elder said: “Islam has no doctrine of sin, but only of sins...”<sup>3</sup>

If Islam does not believe in the concept of redemption then what is the way of salvation according it because salvation is necessary for human being due to committed sins, not due to the original sin. According to Islamic Sources, salvation can be achieved through the worship of God alone. It is the same message preached by all the Prophets. So salvation can be attained through the worship of Allah Almighty as there are many verses in the *Qurān* which support this concept. Some of those arguments are as under.

<sup>1</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *Fātir*, 18; See also: The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Najam*, 53: 38-39; The Noble *Qurān*: *Fātir*, 35: 18

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Jami` al-Sahih al-Bukhārī*, Vol. 1, p. 456, 465

<sup>3</sup> See: E. E. Elder, The Development of the Muslim Doctrine of Sins and their Forgiveness, in: The Moslem World, (1939) p. 188

- It is stated in the *Qurān*, “Those who remember Allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): “Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.”<sup>1</sup>
- “And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allah’s Forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”<sup>2</sup>

These verses clearly prove that everybody can get salvation by worshipping Allah Almighty and by doing the good deeds. If a sinner sincerely asks Allah to forgive him, He will surely forgive him. So it is the way of Salvation. It is also supported by Bible as John said, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”<sup>3</sup> Bible also mentions that if a person repents on his sins, he will be surely forgiven, as it is stated, “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.”<sup>4</sup> These Bible’s verses also support this concept that everybody can get his redemption by the above mentioned acts. From the above mentioned arguments the writer of present thesis understands that Jesus (عليه السلام) should not be considered as a redeemer and when he is not redeemer then how could be Mary (عليها السلام) considered as co-redeemer!

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<sup>1</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *Āl-i-`Imrān*, 191; See also: The Noble *Qurān*: *Hūd*, 52; The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Zumar*, 53

<sup>2</sup> The Noble *Qurān*: *al-Nisā*, 10

<sup>3</sup> 1 John, 1: 9

<sup>4</sup> Acts, 3: 19

**MARY (عليها السلام) AS MOTHER  
OF THE CHURCH**

## MARY (عليها السلام) AS MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

Here a question arises that why they used this title for Mary (عليها السلام). Catholics say that Jesus (عليه السلام) offered himself for the redemption of human beings. Her mother, Mary (عليها السلام), was also supported him in this purpose. In this way she became the mother of salvation and she got the right to be called "Mother of the Church". New Catholic Encyclopedia describes this fact in this way, "While Jesus (عليه السلام) was offering Himself in sacrifice for men's Redemption, His mother offered her Son for the same purpose and, thus cooperating in men's birth to supernatural life, became in a heightened sense the mother of the Church."<sup>1</sup>

She also got the right to be called "Mother of the Church" as she was one of the first disciples of Jesus (عليه السلام). George Weigel describes this point in his book. "In the Catholic view of things, that means that everyone in the Church is formed in the image of a woman: Mary (عليها السلام), mother of Jesus (عليه السلام), the first of disciples and thus the "Mother of the Church."<sup>2</sup> As far as Muslims are concerned they do not believe in these things. They do not believe in the concept of redemption then how they can believe in this Catholics' doctrine.

According to Muslims, although it is not a big issue to call her 'Mother of the Church' but the reasons due to which Catholics call her 'Mother of the Church' are not accepted by Muslims and these are also against the Islamic Sources.

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<sup>1</sup> New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, p. 257

<sup>2</sup> The Truth of Catholicism, p. 45

**MARY (عليها السلام) AS MOTHER  
OF THE CHURCH**

## MARY (عليها السلام) QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Here a question arises that why Mary (عليها السلام) is given this title, “the Queenship of Mary (عليها السلام)?” According to Catholics, there are many reasons behind this title. Some of those reasons are being mentioned as described by Catholics. They say that Mary (عليها السلام) is given this title because she is the divine mother of Jesus (عليها السلام) who is lord and king of humankind due to redemption of human race. When he is a king then Mary (عليها السلام) is a queen because she assisted him in his redemption work. God has chosen her to have an extraordinary responsibility in the work of the salvation of human race. So, according to Catholics, Mary (عليها السلام) got the right to be called Queen.<sup>1</sup>

Although Muslims also say her ‘the leader of Heaven’ but they do not use this title for her due to the above mentioned reasons. Neither they believe in these reasons nor do their scriptures support it. They say her because Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) has informed us that she will be one of the Heaven’s leaders.<sup>2</sup> She has been given this honor due to her purity and piousness.

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<sup>1</sup> See: *The Encyclopedia of Saints*, p. 236; *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology*, p. 1007; *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 9, p. 283; p. 158

<sup>2</sup> See: *Al-Saūti, Jalāluddīn, Jami`ul Abādīth*, Vol. 12, p. 384; Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said, the best women of the world are four: Maryam the daughter of `Imrān, Khadijah bint Khuwailad (The wife of the Prophet Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم)), Fātimah, the daughter of the Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) and Āsiyah the wife of Pharaoh. See: *Jami`ul Abādīth*, Vol. 12, p. 384; *Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal*, Vol. 1, p. 322; The Messenger of Allah (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) draw four lines, then said: “Do you know why I draw these lines?” They answered: “No”. Prophet Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said: “The best women of Paradise are four; Maryam the daughter of `Imrān, Khadijah bint Khuwailad (The wife of the Prophet Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم)), Fātimah, the daughter of the Muhammad (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) and Āsiyah bint Muzāhib.” See: *Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal*, Vol. 1, p. 322; The Messenger of Allah (صلی الله علیہ وسلم) said: “*Hassan* and *Hussain*, are the leaders of the youth of Paradise and *Fātimah* is the leader of the women of Paradise except Mary (عليها السلام), the daughter of `Imrān (as she will also be leader).” See: *Al-Nisāī, Ahmad bin*

# VENERATION

## OF MARY (عليها السلام)

## VENERATION OF MARY (عليها السلام)

The Catholics and Muslims venerate Mary (عليها السلام) but the method of veneration is different. Catholics venerate her by

(1) Loving her and admiring her.

(2) They hang and paste her pictures and images in their Churches, homes, schools and in common place also.

(3) They venerate her because they believe that she is mother of God.

Whereas the first method of veneration is concerned, the Muslims also venerate her as Islamic Sources called her one of those four women who were complete among the women of the world. They sent peace and mercies of Allah Almighty on her when they call her name. One of the Holy *Qurān's Sūrah* is after her name.

Whereas the second and third method of veneration concerned, the Muslims do not agree with Catholics. These methods of veneration were not being used in the early Christianity but by the passage of time these methods started as it is stated, veneration of Mary (عليها السلام) and ordinary people were entered in Christianity later. The worship of images, statues and crosses start in the Churches like the worship of idols.<sup>1</sup>

There are many arguments which clearly prove that Islam totally rejected this way of veneration as it is stated, "The pagans of Quraish hanged pictures and images in the center of the Kaaba, including a picture of Abraham, and Ismail, and the image of Mary (عليها السلام) in her lap Jesus (عليها السلام); Image makers of this nation are like the people of Noah, and the Christians and pagans of Arabs."<sup>2</sup> *Imām Bukhāri* narrated a *Hadīth* in his book. *Ibn-i-Abbās* (رضي الله عنه) said: The Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) entered in a house and he found there picture of Ibrahim and the image of Mary (عليها السلام), he said, "Have they not heard that angels (of mercy) do not enter a house in

<sup>1</sup> See: Detailed in the response to suspicions of the enemies of Islam, Vol. 9, p. 95

<sup>2</sup> Al-Durar al-Šaniyyah, Group of scholars (Eds.), Vol. 22, p. 327

which there are images.”<sup>1</sup> According to Muslims, Mary (عليها السلام) is venerated as “the Leader of the women of the world” but not as the mother of God.

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Jami` al-Sahih al-Bukhārī*, Vol. 3, p. 1223

# CONCLUSION

# CONCLUSION

The topic “Catholic and Muslim Perceptions on Mary (عليها السلام)” is a very important and significant issue. Catholics have historical development in this regard. They have a lot of Dogmas and Doctrines in regard to Mary (عليها السلام) and these were developed by the passage of time. Whereas the *Ahl al-Sunnah* are concerned, they considered her very important lady and also have many doctrines regarding her. *Ahl al-Sunnah* seem very close to Catholics in this regard.

Accordingly, my research work on this topic “Catholic and Muslim Perceptions on Mary (عليها السلام)” will prove to be a beneficial access and it will clear many points in regard to Mary (عليها السلام). This topic can also guide us to establish a good dialogue between *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Muslims) and Catholics (Christians).

Research scholars admit that without mentioning the results and recommendations, it is not possible to complete a good research work. So, in the following lines, results of my research work and some important recommendations have been mentioned.

Some important pieces of conclusion for my research work are as mentioned here.

- Mary (عليها السلام) has a significant place in Christianity as well as in Islam. There are different groups in Christianity which have their own doctrine regarding Mary (عليها السلام) according to their own objectives. The Catholics have an enduring history of theological development in regard to Mary (عليها السلام).
- Catholics have a lot of Marian dogmas and doctrines. Some of the doctrines turned into dogmas with the passage of time.
- According to Catholics, Mary (عليها السلام) is the mother of God, Jesus (عليه السلام) as they believe that Jesus (عليه السلام) has divine power.
- *Ahl al-Sunnah* believes that Mary (عليها السلام) is “Mother of a human being, Jesus (عليه السلام)”. As according to *Ahl al-Sunnah*, Jesus (عليه السلام) was just a human being and he has no divine power.
- Catholics venerate her very much even they call her “Mother of the Church”.

- Christians (Catholics) as well as Muslims (*Ahl al-Sunnah*) believe that Mary (عليها السلام) is the leader of heaven.
- Catholics hang images and icons of Mary (عليها السلام) in their houses, church and sacred places in regard to veneration of Mary (عليها السلام).
- There are a lot of points of agreement between Muslims (*Ahl al-Sunnah*) and Christianity (Catholics) in regard to Mary (عليها السلام). For example: Mother of Jesus, Virginity of Mary (عليها السلام), Leader of Heaven, Veneration of Mary (عليها السلام) etc.
- There are also some points of disagreement between both in regard to Mary (عليها السلام). For example: Mother of God, Mother of the Church, Assumption of Mary (عليها السلام) to Heaven, Mary (عليها السلام) as Co-redemptrix etc
- We can establish Muslim-Christian dialogue in regard to Mary (عليها السلام). As there are many doctrines where Muslim (*Ahl al-Sunnah*) and Christians (Catholics) meet together and converge in regard to Mary (عليها السلام).
- Mary (عليها السلام) is a role model for Christians' women as for Muslims'.

These were some important results of my research work. Now there are some suggestions and recommendations

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

I agree that this research work is not a final and last attempt in regard to my perspective topic. It is just an initial struggle to bring Muslims and Christians close by Mary (عليها السلام). The field is always open for better research. That's why I would like to give my own suggestions and recommendations so that new researcher may get benefits from my research work.

- The Christians (Catholics) are closer to the Muslims (*Ahl al-Sunnah*) in regard to Mary (عليها السلام) than other issues because Islam also gave some special space to her. So this can help us in establishing dialogue between the both religions.
- Muslims (*Ahl al-Sunnah*) and Christians (Catholics) have some points of agreement in regard to Mary (عليها السلام). So we should implement these bases

- for a productive and successful dialogue between Muslims and Christians to bring them close.
- There is need of a research study on Marian Dogma and Doctrine by using the historical perspective.
- There is a need to publish some useful literature in Pakistan by which the Muslim point of view regarding Mary (عليها السلام) should be discussed comparing it to the Christian point of view.
- Some points are unclear as yet, regarding the Catholic Concept of Mary (عليها السلام): If she is as above, what is her status in Catholic creed? Does her presence in the said creed make it a polytheist one, if not, how is it justified? The catholic answer that I found does not seem satisfactory.

In the end, I pray Almighty Allah, may He accept it, may He increase my knowledge and ability to work and make this research work fruitful for me as well as for others. *A'meen!*

## APPENDIX I: CATHOLIC POPES<sup>1</sup>

Names	Descriptions	Date of Death
Pope Alexander of Alexandria	He was the 19 <sup>th</sup> Patriarch of Alexandria. During his post, he solved a number of problems which were faced by the church. He was the leader of the opposition to Arianism at the First Council of Nicaea.	(326 or 328 CE)
Pope Leo I	He is also known as "Leo the Great". He was born in 391 CE. He was the Pope of the Catholic Church from 440 CE to his death in 461 CE. He was the first pope of the Catholic Church to have been called "the Great".	(10 November 461 CE)
Pope Hadrian I	He was a Roman and he was born in a noble family. He was elected unanimously and became pope in 772. Pope Hadrian I was the oldest elected pope at age 80.	(795 CE)
Pope Sixtus IV	His name is Francesco. He was born to a family of modest means in 1414 CE. He remained Pope from 1471 CE to 1484 CE.	(12 August 1484 CE)
Pope Pius V	His name is Antonio Ghislieri. He was born at Bosco in the Duchy of Milan, in 1504 CE. He was pope from 1566 CE to 1572 CE.	(1 May 1572 CE)
Pope Clement XI	His name is Albani. He was born in 1649 CE. He was Pope from 1700 CE until his death in 1721 CE.	(19 March 1721 CE)
Pope Pius IX	He was born in 1792. He remained Pope of the Catholic Church for the period of nearly 32 years. During his preach, he summoned the First Vatican Council in 1869 CE. The Pope defined the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (عليها السلام).	(7 February 1878 CE)
Pope Leo XIII	He was born in 1810, at Carpineto. He introduced the government standards for Secondary School Studies in 1872. He was elected as a pope in 1878.	(20 July, 1903 CE)
Pope Pius X	His name is Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto. He was born in 1835. He was the 257th Pope of the	(20 August 1914 CE)

<sup>1</sup> The Popes have been listed according to their date of birth or death.

	Catholic Church and he remained Pope from 1903 CE to 1914 CE. His most important reform was to publish the first Code of Canon Law which collected the laws of the Church into one volume for the first time.	
Pope Benedict XV	His name is Giacomo della Chiesa. He was born in 1854, in Italy. He wanted to be a priest but his father insisted on the legal career of his son. When he was 21 years old, he acquired a doctorate in Law in 1875. He was a Pope from 1914 CE to 1922 CE.	(22 January 1922 CE)
Pope Pius XI	His name is Achille Ratti who was born in Milan in 1857. After his studies at the Gregorian University, he became a professor in Milan. Ratti was elected Pope on 6 February 1922 CE on the fourteenth ballot, taking the name of Pius XI.	(10 February 1939 CE)
Pope Pius XII	His name is Eugenio Maria Giuseppe Giovanni Pacelli. He was born in 1876 CE. He was a Pope and head of the Catholic Church from 1939 CE until his death in 1958 CE.	(9 October 1958 CE)
Pope John XXIII	His name is Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli. He was born in 1881. He was selected as Pope of the Catholic Church in 1958. He called the Second Vatican Council but did not live to see it to completion.	(3 June 1963 CE)
Pope Paul VI	His name is Giovanni Battista Montini. He was born in 1897. He was elected as a Pope of the Catholic Church in 1963. He decided to continue the Vatican Council II after Pope John XXIII. He encouraged ecumenical relations with Protestants and Orthodox.	(6 August 1978 CE)
Pope John Paul II	His name is Charles Joseph Wojtyla. He was born in 1920 CE. He was a Pope of the Catholic Church from 1978 CE until his death in 2005. John Paul II was acclaimed as one of the most influential leaders of the 20th century CE.	(2 April 2005 CE)

## APPENDIX II: CHURCH COUNCILS<sup>1</sup>

Name	Descriptions	Date
First Council of Nicaea	<p>This council was held by Roman Emperor Constantine I, in Nicaea, Bithynia (in present-day Turkey) in 325 CE. It is the first ecumenical council of the Catholic Church. The council did settle the debate within the Early Christian communities in regard to the divinity of Christ. One of its purposes was to resolve disagreements arising over the nature of the son in relationship to the Father. More than 300 were present in this council although Constantine I had invited all 1800 bishops of the Christian church.</p>	<p>From: May 20, 325 CE To: July 25, (or August) 325 CE</p>
First Council of Ephesus	<p>It is the third ecumenical council of the Christian Church. It was held in 431 in Ephesus, Asia Minor. The council was called due to the dispute over the teachings of Nestorius. Nestorius himself had requested to be held a council but in the end his own teachings were condemned by the council. This council consist of seven sessions which are held as under: First Session (June 22, 431), Second Session (July 10, 431), Third Session (July 11, 431), Fourth Session (July 16, 431), Fifth Session (July 17, 431), Sixth Session (July 17, 431) and Seventh Session (July 31, 431).</p>	<p>From: June 22, 431 CE To: July 31 431CE</p>

<sup>1</sup> These councils have been mentioned according to their dates.

Second Council of Ephesus	It was held in 449 AD by the effort of Emperor Theodosius II. It was not accepted as ecumenical council.	On: 8 August, 449 CE
The Council of Chalcedon	It was a church council which was held in 451 CE, at Chalcedon. This council was summoned by the emperor Marcian.	From: 8 October, 451 CE To: 1 November, 451 CE
Third Council of Ephesus	It was held in Ephesus in 475 by Pope Timothy II of Alexandria. Approximately 500 to 700 bishops were present at this council.	On: 471 CE
Second Council of Nicaea	It is the seventh of the first seven ecumenical councils of Church which was held in the church of St. Sophia, whose restored ruins still survive. This council consist of seven sessions which are held as under: First Session (September 24, 787), Second Session (September 26, 787), Third Session (September 28, 787), Fourth Session (October 1, 787), Fifth Session (October 4, 787), Sixth Session (October 6, 787) and Seventh Session (October 13, 787).	From: September 24, 787 CE To: October 13, 787 CE
Council of Basel	It is also known as "The Council of Florence". It is accounted as an Ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church. It began in 1431 in Basel. This council transferred to Florence in 1439.	On: 1431 CE

First Vatican Council	<p>It was convoked by Pope Pius IX and it met in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, on 29 June 1868, after a period of planning and preparation that began on 6 December 1864. This twentieth ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church, held three centuries after the Council of Trent. Its best-known decision is its definition of papal infallibility.</p>	<p>From: December 8, 1869 CE To: October 20, 1870 CE</p>
Second Vatican Council	<p>This council addressed relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the modern world. It was the twenty-first Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church and the second to be held at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. There were actually four separate sessions: First Session (October-December 1962), Second Session (September-December, 1963), Third Session (September-November, 1964), and Fourth Session (September-December, 1965), all in St. Peter's Basilica. It was called by John XXIII, but he died after only the first session and his successor, Paul VI, was left to finish it.</p>	<p>From: October 11, 1962 CE To: Decmber 8, 1965 CE</p>

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4	Al-Māidah	5	72
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7	Āl-i-`Imrān	3	59
8	Maryam	19	20
9	Āl-i-`Imrān	3	35-36
10	Āl-i-`Imrān	3	42
11	Āl-i-`Imrān	3	33
12	Āl-i-`Imrān	3	37
13	Maryam	19	20
14	Al-Māidah	5	75
15	Āl-i-`Imrān	3	185
16	Al-Nisā	4	78
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19	Al-Ankabūt	29	57
20	Al-Aḥzāb	33	16
21	Al-Jumm`ah	62	8
22	Al-Rahmān	55	26

<sup>1</sup> These Āyāt have been mentioned here in the range according to thesis.

23	Al-Zumar	39	30
24	Āl-i-'Imrān	3	42-43
25	Al-Māidah	5	17
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33	Al-Anbiyā	21	35
34	Al-Ankabūt	29	57
35	Al-Jumm`ah	62	8
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8	Isaiah	35	4
9	Isaiah	40	3
10	2 Samuel	7	14
11	Isaiah	40	10
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13	Psalm	2	7
14	Psalm	99	1
15	Matthew	1	18
16	John	2	1-3
17	John	19	25-27
18	Matthew	1	23
19	Matthew	26	63-65
20	John	14	9-11
21	John	20	28-29
22	Col	2	9
23	Isaiah	7	14

<sup>1</sup> These verses have been mentioned here in the range according to thesis.

24	Luke	1	27
25	Luke	1	34
26	Isaiah	7	14
27	Genesis	3	15
28	Luke	1	28
29	Luke	1	30-31
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<sup>1</sup> These *Ahādīth* have been mentioned here in the range according to thesis.

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