St Mary in the Orthodox Concept

Our mother St Mary is given many titles in the Church - "the salvation of Adam and Eve" - "the healing of Jeremiah."

Sometimes when people hear a title given to our holy mother, St Mary, they might stumble with it - they might think that we regard her at the same level (or even higher) than the Lord Jesus Christ. God forbid!

So what is St Mary's status in our beloved Orthodox Church? What did St Mary really do, and is the Lord still using her now to accomplish His will?

We will look at it through three points:

- Past
- Present
- Future

St Mary: The Salvation of the Human Race [Past]

- "Hail to you, Mary: the salvation of our father Adam" - "Hail to you Mary: the salvation of Noah" - "Hail to you Mary: the redemption of Saint Isaac" - "Hail to you Mary: the redemption of Isaiah" - "Hail to you Mary: the healing of Jeremiah"
- Who is the one who accomplished our salvation? Was it the Lord Jesus Christ, or St Mary? Of course, our Lord Jesus Christ - He is God and Man, He died on the Cross. It's all Him! But here, we need to focus on a single word that St Mary said, in the last word of today's gospel reading:
- "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." After the angel announced to her that the Lord would be born from her, this was her response. "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38)
- The Church has always taken this verse and put it side by side with a verse from Genesis: "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate." (Genesis 3:6)
- **St. Irenaeus:** "The knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve had bound fast through unbelief, the Virgin Mary set free through faith." (Against Heresies Book III, Chapter 22:4)
- **St. Ephraim:** "In her virginity, Eve clothed herself with leaves of ignominy. Your mother has clothed herself in virginity with the garment of glory" (On Nativity 35:17)
- https://notes.morcous.com/books/harmony-of-the-gospels/page/luke-1b-hg-bishop-youssef See bottom

St Mary: Our Mother [Present]

"Hail to the saint, the mother of all living, you are the one we entreat, to intercede for us" (Tuesday Theotokia Part 3)

- "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living." (Genesis 3:20)
- Eve lost the meaning of her name - "mother of all living" because by her disobedience, she obtained only death for her children. But her daughter, St Mary, took her place!
- St Mary became the mother of "Life" Himself.

What does a mother do?

- A mother intercedes for her children (Wedding at Cana)
  - We hear about mothers in the church that when their son gets a bad grade in school, they RUSH to the principal's office and RUSH to the emails and phone calls.
  - Or when the son gets in a fight at school or gets in trouble, mom is ready to go fight the administration
  - This is St Mary with us. She is ALWAYS interceding for us. ALWAYS praying for us.
- A mother gathers her children (Zeitoun)
- A mother comforts and gathers her children
- A mother leads her children to Christ
- A mother teaches by example

St Mary: Intercessor on Judgment Day [Future]

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