

Hazrat Bibi Maryam ~ Honored Mother Mary

What a long strange trip it's been...

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** Sheet music and mp3 files will be available to purchase through Music is Elementary by mid-November, email Laura Webster for further information.*

Composer: Zuleikha Choreographer: Suzanne Mitten-Lewis (Sitara)

“This is a peaceful greeting song, which is an invitation to open the window of your heart and let the sunshine of kindness flow through.” - Zuleikha

Text:

Hazrat Bibi Maryam, Asalaam Aleikhum
Hazrat Bibi Maryam, Asalaam Aleikhum
Asalaam Aleikhum, Asalaam Aleikhum
Asalaam Aleikhum, W'aleikhum Asalaam

Translation:

Honored Mother Mary, peace be with you...and also with you.

Dance Directions (as written by Suzanne Mitten-Lewis)

Movements:

“Hz Bibi Maryam” 4 steps toward the centre of the circle, starting right foot. Hands rising palm-up from the heart, as if offering the heart to Mary.

“As-salaam aleikum” 4 steps backward, pouring received blessing over head, face, downwards to feet. End with arms at the sides, fingertips downwards. Could be in “Mary full of grace” position if you wish (optional) with palms forward.

“Hz Bibi Maryam” 4 steps toward the centre of the circle, starting right foot. Hands rising palm-up from both sides, as if offering one’s whole self to Mary. At the end, arms are fully extended with palms upward, fingertips pointing towards the sky.

“As-salaam aleikum” turning to the left, spiral back to starting position in the circle, bringing arms down in Dervish-fashion, to end with hands on opposite shoulders and arms crossed over the heart. A slight bow at the end of the phrase. The hands cross the face only as part of the arc from extended turning to Dervish bow. It is a gesture of surrender and self-effacement.

“As-salaam aleikum” partners make a crescent of their arms and join right wrists. They are oriented so that their sides are facing each other – one is more-or-less facing into the circle and the other is facing out. They make a half turn together exchanging places.

“As-salaam aleikum” looking away from the previous partner, to the other side, there is a new partner. Engage left wrists (whilst disengaging right wrist from previous partner) and make a half turn together exchanging places.

“W’aleikum as-salaam” turn to the left in place and end with Dervish bow.

Historical Background of the Song:

Christian: Mary is a figure revered in the Christian culture as being the mother of Jesus and a saint. The New Testament of the Bible states:

"Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved (John) 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." (John 19:25-27)

Legend has it that John then traveled north to the area we now call Turkey to a place near Ephesus. This story claims that Mary lived the rest of her life there until she was assumed into heaven.

The **House of the Virgin Mary** (Turkish: *Meryemana* or *Meryem Ana Evi*, "Mother Mary's House") is a Christian and Muslim shrine located on Mt. Koressos (Turkish: *Bülbüldağı*, "Mount Nightingale") in the vicinity of Ephesus, 7 kilometers (4.3 mi) from Selçuk in Turkey.^[1]

The house was discovered in the 19th century by following the descriptions in the reported visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich which were published as a book.^[2]

Pilgrims visit the house based on the belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken to this stone house by Saint John and lived there until her Assumption (according to Catholic doctrine), or Dormition (according to Orthodox belief).^{[3][4]}

1. *Frommer's Turkey* by Lynn A. Levine 2010 ISBN 0470593660 pages 254-255
2. *The Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary's Dormition and Assumption* by Stephen J. Shoemaker 2006 ISBN 0199210748 page 76
3. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume XIV, Copyright © 1912 by Robert Appleton Company, Online Edition Copyright © 2003 by K. Knight [1]
4. *Home of the Assumption: Reconstructing Mary's Life in Ephesus* by V. Antony John Alaharasan 2006 ISBN 1929039387 page 38

Islam: Mary is also honored in the Islamic culture. When Mohammed named the best woman to have ever lived, he named Mary (*Maryam* in Arabic), the mother of Jesus. **Mary** (مريم *Maryam* in Arabic), the mother of Jesus, is considered one of the most righteous women in the Islamic tradition. She is mentioned more in the Qur'an^[1] than in the entire New Testament and is also the only woman mentioned by name in the Qur'an.^[2] According to the Qur'an, Jesus was

born miraculously by the will of God without a father. His mother is regarded as a chaste and virtuous woman and is said to have been a virgin. The Qur'an states clearly that Jesus was the result of a virgin birth, but that neither Mary nor her son were divine. In the Qur'an, no other woman is given more attention than Mary and the Qur'an states that Mary was chosen above all women:

"And when the angels said: O Mary! Lo! God hath chosen thee and made thee pure, and hath preferred thee above (all) the women of creation."^[3]

The nineteenth chapter of the Qur'an is named after her and is, to some extent, about her life. Of the Qur'an's 114 suras, she is among only eight people who have a chapter named after them. Mary is specifically mentioned in the Qur'an, alongside Asiya, as an exemplar for all righteous women.^[4] Mary plays an important role in Islamic culture and religious tradition, and verses from the Qur'an relating to Mary are frequently inscribed on the *mihrab* of various mosques, including in the Hagia Sophia.^[5]

1. Esposito, John. What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam. New York: University Press, 2002. P31.
2. Concise Encyclopedia of Islam, Cyril Glasse, *Mary*
3. Qur'an 3:42
4. Qur'an 66:11-12
5. *Dimensions of Islam*, F. Schuon, *Wisdom of the Virgin*

Other Marys:

Miriam (Hebrew: מִרְיָם, Modern *Miryam* Tiberian *Miryām* ; Arabic: مريم (Mairyam)); see Miriam (given name)) was the sister of Moses and Aaron, and the daughter of Amram and Jochebed. She appears first in the Book of Exodus in the Hebrew Bible.

At her mother Jochebed's request, Miriam hid her baby brother Moses by the side of a river to evade the Pharaoh's order that newborn Hebrew boys be killed. She watched as the Pharaoh's daughter discovered the infant and decided to adopt him. Miriam then suggested that the princess take on a nurse for the child, and suggested Jochebed; as a result, Moses was raised to be familiar with his background as a Hebrew. (Exodus 2:1-10)

Miriam is called a prophetess, and is traditionally believed to have composed a brief victory song after Pharaoh's army was drowned in the Red Sea (Exodus 15:20-21).

Mary Magdalene or Mary of Magdala (original Greek Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνή)^[2] was one of Jesus' most celebrated disciples, and the most important woman disciple in the movement of Jesus.^[3] Jesus cleansed her of seven demons ^{[Lu 8:2] [Mk 16:9]}. She became most prominent during his last days, being present at the cross after the male disciples (excepting John the Beloved) had fled, and at his burial. She was the first person to see Jesus after his Resurrection,^[3] according to both John 20 and Mark 16:9.

1. "Saint Mary Magdalen". *New Catholic Dictionary*. 1910. <http://saints.sqpn.com/ncd05121.htm>. Retrieved 2007-02-28.
2. Μαρία η Μαγδαληνή in Matt 27:56; 27:61; 28:1; Mark 15:40; 15:47; 16:1; (16:9replaces "η" with "τη" because of the case change). Luke 8:1 says "Μαρία ... η Μαγδαληνή" and 24:10 says "η Μαγδαληνή Μαρία." John 19:25, 20:1 and 20:18 all say "Μαρία η Μαγδαληνή."
3. "Saint Mary Magdalene." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011. Web. 04 Mar. 2011.

Song Context:

This song was written by Zuleikha (a western woman) who lived and studied in the east and Afghanistan. She studied many different religions and was attracted and inspired by all the figures of Mary in the different religions and the archetype of Mary as a representation of all the mothers of the world. She wrote this song as a devotion to Mary, but not attached to any one religion, rather as a representation of the divine feminine in the world. It is in honoring what nurtures us and sustains us that helps us to see what unites us as people on this planet instead of what divides us.

Here's what Zuleikha wrote about the song:

When I lived in Afghanistan, the people there referred to Mary, mother of Jesus, as Hazrat Bibi Maryam. Hazrat is a title of someone who has been a master while on the earth, and is no longer living. Bibi is a term meaning, dear one, used for a woman who is a relative. This zikr came to me as a friend. The name Maryam comes from the root Maror (check spelling Hebrew) or bitter herb. In the case of this zikr, the name Maryam serves as a symbol for all the Mary's, the mother of Jesus, the Magdalene, the sister of Moses, Miriam, and mainly as a window through the friendship of the heart, the landscape of all suffering into Love which washes away suffering and sorrow. This zikr also serves as a window encompassing the active feminine past and future. The zikr Hazrat Bibi Maryam is an offering into the sobriety of Love, and through the sobriety, a walk into the well of one's Self. One may use this phrase to let go the veil of ignorance and drink from the well of Love.