

*Why did Jesus call the Blessed Mother “woman”?  
Was he being disrespectful? Or is it a translation issue?*



While it might sound strange to us in the contemporary world where such an address would be considered rude, in the language and custom of the time it was actually a respectful way to address someone.

It is unusual in that Jesus addresses his mother in this rather impersonal (though polite) address. However, this could be simply because mere biological connection to Jesus is of little importance (Matthew 12:46-50, Luke 8:19-21). Whereas Eve brought the first/original sin into the world by her disobedience to God’s will, Mary seeks to right that wrong in human history, by her obedience to God’s will in order to help usher in the New Covenant through her son, Jesus the Christ.

[In the divinely inspired revelation of sacred scripture, these serve as proverbial “bookends” of the beginning and end of Jesus’ ministerial history. Mary, like the first Eve, was called "woman" (Genesis 2:22) at the beginning of Jesus' life of ministry (Wedding Feast at Cana) John 2:4) and at the end while hanging on the Cross (John 19:26).]

Jesus' calling Mary "woman" has a deeper theological meaning. Church scholars preach that the reason Jesus called His Mother "woman" was to refer to her as the "Woman" foretold in the Book of Genesis. In Genesis 3:15, after banishing Adam and Eve from the heavenly paradise, God made a promise to the serpent. He said that He will "put enmity between you and the woman, between her offspring and yours. She will crush your head, and you shall bite her heel."

In other words, God promised to send a "woman" whose offspring will crush the head of the serpent. That "woman" is Mary and the "offspring" is Jesus.

In closing, whenever Jesus calls Mary "woman", therefore, He exalts her by pointing out to us that Mary is the fulfillment of the prophecy and promise that God made at the very beginning of human history. Mary is the "woman" who will crush the head of the serpent! She is the victorious "woman" who will give birth to Jesus, her offspring, who will triumph over Satan.

(SR: <https://aleteia.org/2018/06/09/why-did-jesus-call-the-blessed-mother-woman/> and <https://www.facebook.com/notes/totus-tuus-maria/why-does-jesus-call-his-mother-woman-in-the-bible/151036958253216/>)