

## **THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

(Luke 1:41-50)

**PART A** -The Maria Valtorta equivalent to the Gospel reading (the Visitation)

**PART B**- the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary as shown to Maria Valtorta

### **PART ONE**

(*Poem* Vol. 1, pp. 100-110, 121-5; *Gospel* Vol. 1, pp. 124-35, 149-54)

***(Returning to the events of the Gospel, Joseph accompanies Mary - each riding a donkey - to Jerusalem, where he finds a trustworthy old man to travel with Her to the home of Elizabeth and Zacharias. When Mary arrives there, She is met at the front gate by a little old man who tells Her how Zacharias has lost his power of speech, and how Elizabeth would be so glad to see Her ...)***

He then shouts: 'Sarah, Sarah! (My wife is a little deaf.) But come, please, I'll show You the way.'

Instead of Sarah, a fairly old woman appears at the top of the staircase on one side of the house. Her face is all wrinkles and her hair is very grey. It must have been very black at one time, because her eyelashes and eyebrows are still very dark... Her present (very obvious) pregnant condition is a strange contradiction to her evident old age, notwithstanding her wide and loose dress. She looks down, shading her eyes with her hand. As soon as she recognizes Mary, she raises her arms to the sky and utters an 'Oh!' of joy and surprise. She then rushes, as fast as she can, towards Mary. Also Mary - who always moves very quietly - now runs, as swift as a little deer, and reaches the foot of the staircase at the same time as Elizabeth. And with great affection She embraces Her cousin, who is crying with joy at seeing Her.

They remain embraced for a moment, and then Elizabeth detaches herself, exclaiming: 'Ah!' - an exclamation of both joy and sorrow - and she places her hands on her enlarged abdomen. She bows her face and turns red and pale alternately. Mary and the servant hold out their hands to support her, because she staggers, as if she were unwell. But Elizabeth, after a moment of concentration, lifts her face - which is now so bright that she looks much younger. She then looks at Mary with evident veneration as if she sees an angel. And she bows in a deep salutation, exclaiming: 'You are blessed amongst all women! Blessed is the Fruit of Your womb!... How did I deserve that the Mother of my Lord should come to me, Your servant? There, at the sound of Your voice, the child leaped out of joy in my womb. And when I embraced You, the Spirit of the Lord whispered deepest truths to my heart.

You are blessed, because You believed: that what does not appear possible to the human mind was possible for God!

You are blessed, because by Your faith You will accomplish the things which the Lord predicted to You, and which the Prophets foretold for our times!

You are blessed, for the Salvation You have brought to the house of Jacob!

You are blessed, for the Holiness You have brought to my son, whom I feel leaping with joy, like a happy little kid, in my womb. Because he feels free from the burden of guilt, and is called to be the Predecessor - sanctified before Redemption - by the Holy One Who is growing within You!

Two tears run down Mary's cheeks - like two pearls - from Her sparkling eyes to Her smiling lips. And with Her face raised to heaven and Her arms raised up - in the attitude that Her Jesus will take so often - She exclaims: 'My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord' and She continues the canticle as it has been handed down to us. At the end - at the verse: 'He has come to the help of Israel his servant' - she puts Her hands on Her breast, kneels down, stooping to the ground, and adoring God.

The servant - who quite wisely had disappeared... when Elizabeth was confiding her thoughts to Mary - is now coming back from the orchard with a solemn old man, whose hair and beard

are completely white, and who greets Mary from a distance with great gestures and loud guttural sounds.

'Zacharias is coming' says Elizabeth, touching the shoulder of Mary, still engrossed in prayer. 'My Zacharias is dumb. God has punished him because he did not believe. (I will tell You later.) But now I hope that God will forgive him, because You have come. You, full of Grace.' Mary rises and goes to meet Zacharias. She stoops to the ground in front of him, kissing the hem of his white robe...

Zacharias welcomes Mary by gestures, and they [all] enter a room on the ground floor. It is a wide room, tastefully arranged, where they make Mary sit down and they offer Her some new milk - there is still foam on it - and some small cakes...

In the meantime, Mary is replying to the questions Zacharias is writing on a wax tablet... From Her answers, I understand that he is asking Her about Joseph, and Her married life with him. I also understand that Zacharias has been denied all supernatural light about Mary's state, and Her condition of Mother of the Messiah. Elizabeth goes near her husband, and laying her hand on his shoulder, in a loving attitude, she says to him: 'Mary is also a mother. Rejoice over Her happiness.' But she does not say anything else. She looks at Mary, Who looks at her but does not encourage her to say any more, and Elizabeth keeps silent...

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(Mary says to Maria:)

'To My eagerness for human help, God, giving beyond measure as He does, added an unforeseen gift of supernatural assistance. I went to give material help, and God sanctified My good intention by sanctifying, through this, the fruit of Elizabeth's womb. And by means of that sanctification - by which the Baptist was pre-sanctified - He relieved the physical pain of the elderly daughter of Eve, who had conceived at an unusual age...

That is why I worked for Elizabeth, postponing My own work. I was not afraid that I would not have time. God is the master of time. He provides for those who hope in Him, also in normal things. Selfishness does not speed matters up, it delays them. Charity does not delay, it speeds up. Always bear that in mind.

How much peace there was in Elizabeth's house! If I had not been worried about Joseph... and my Child, Who was the Redeemer of the world, I would have been happy, But the cross was already casting its shadow on My life, and I heard the voices of the Prophets like a knell... My name was Mary. Bitterness was always mingled with the sweetness that God poured into My heart. And it increased more and more until the death of My Son. But when God calls us, Maria, to the destiny of victims for His glory, oh! it is sweet to be ground like corn in the millstone, to convert our pain into a bread that can strengthen the weak and make them capable of reaching Heaven!...

## **THE ASSUMPTION - PART TWO**

(*Poem* Vol. 5, pp. 509, 931-41; *Gospel* Vol. 9, p. 498, Vol. 10, pp. 530-540)

**(Jesus says to his disciples:)** 'Think of My Mother... Neither can She come where I am going. [...] And yet, no one loves Me as She does. And, notwithstanding all that, I will leave Her and go where She will come only after a long time.'

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**(Mary says to John:)** 'If men knew how to love as is prescribed by the ancient Law, and how My Son loved and taught people to love, they would obtain everything. I love thus. That is why I feel that I shall cease to be on the Earth, I through excess of love, as He died through excess of sorrow. Well! The measure of My capacity of loving is full. My soul and My body are no longer able to contain it. Love overflows from it, it submerges Me and raises Me at the same time towards Heaven, towards God, My Son. And His voice says to Me: "Come! Come out! Ascend to our Throne and to our Trine embrace!" The Earth, what surrounds Me, disappears

in the bright light that comes to Me from Heaven! Noises are drowned by this celestial voice! My moment for the divine embrace has come, My dear John!

John, who had calmed down a little, although still somewhat upset, listening to Mary, and who at the last part of Her speech was looking at Her ecstatically, and almost enraptured as well, as pale in his face as Mary, Whose pallor, however, changes into a very white light, rushes towards Her to support Her, and in the meantime he exclaims: 'You are like Jesus when He became transfigured on Tabor! Your flesh is shining like the moon, Your garments are as bright as a diamond sheet placed before a very white flame! You are no longer human, Mother! The heaviness and opacity of the flesh has disappeared! You are light! ... You cannot stand. Come. I will help You to lay Your tired blessed body on Your little bed. Rest.' And he lovingly leads Her towards the poor bed, on which Mary lies, without taking off even Her mantle.

Folding Her arms across Her breast, closing Her eyelids on Her kind eyes, bright with love, She says to John who is bent over Her: 'I am in God. And God is in Me. While I contemplate Him and feel His embrace, say the psalms, and any other pages of the Scriptures becoming Me, particularly in this hour. The Spirit of Wisdom will point them out to you. Then say the prayer of My Son, repeat the words of the announcing Archangel and of Elizabeth to Me, and My hymn of praise... I will follow you with what I still have of Myself on the Earth...'

John, struggling against the tears that rise from his heart, striving to control the emotion that upsets him, in his beautiful voice, ... intones psalm one hundred and eighteen, which he says almost entirely, then the first three verses of psalm forty-one, the first eight of psalm thirty-eight, psalm twenty-two and psalm one. He then says the Our Father, the words of Gabriel and Elizabeth, the canticle of Tobias, the twenty-fourth chapter of Ecclesiasticus, from verse eleven to forty-six. Lastly he intones the "Magnificat". But when he arrives at verse nine, he notices that Mary does not breathe any more, although She is still natural in Her posture and appearance, smiling, peaceful, as if She had not noticed that life had stopped.

John, with a heart-rending cry throws himself on the floor against the edge of the bed, and calls and calls Mary. He cannot convince himself that She is no longer able to reply to him, that Her body is now deprived of the vital soul. But he has to surrender to evidence! He bends over Her face, still fixed in an expression of supernatural joy, and tears stream copiously from his eyes on that sweet face, on those pure hands so gently folded on Her breast. It is the only washing that Mary's body had: the tears of the Apostle of love and of Her son of adoption by Jesus' will.

When the first transport of sorrow is over, John, remembering Mary's wish, picks up the edges of Her wide linen mantle, which were hanging from the sides of the little bed, and those of the veil, which were also hanging from the pillow, and he spreads the former over Her body, and the latter on Her head. Mary is now like a statue of white marble, laid on the cover of a sarcophagus. John contemplates Her at some length, and more tears fall from his eyes as he does so.

Then he rearranges the room, removing all superfluous furniture. He leaves only the bed, the little table against the wall and he places the chest with the relics on it, a stool, that he places between the door leading to the terrace and the bed on which Mary is lying, and a shelf, on which there is a lamp that John lights, as it is beginning to get dark.

Then he hurries down to Gethsemane, to pick as many flowers as he can, and some branches of olive-trees, with olives already on them. He goes back up to the little room, and in the light of the lamp he arranges the flowers and the branches around Mary's body, as if it were in the centre of a huge wreath.

While doing so, he speaks to the body on the bed, as if Mary could still hear him. He says: 'You have always been the lily of the valley, the sweet rose, the beautiful olive-tree, the fruit-bearing vineyard, the holy ear of wheat. You have given us Your perfumes, and the Oil of Life, and the Wine of the strong, and the Bread that preserves the spirits from death, for those who worthily feed on it. These flowers look lovely here around You, as they are simple and pure like You, adorned with thorns like You and peaceful like You. Now let us put this lamp closer. So, near Your bed, that it may watch over You and keep me company while I watch You, while awaiting for at least one of the miracles that I am expecting and for whose fulfilment I pray. The first one is that, I may see You once again. The second one is that You, ... may wake up,

like Him, within the third day, in order not to leave me an orphan twice. The third is that God may give me peace... But are You really dead? Dead as every man dies? No. I feel it is not so. Your spirit is no longer in You, in Your body, and in that respect we could say it is death. But by the way Your passage took place, I think that Yours is only a temporary separation of Your soul, without sin and full of grace, from Your most pure and virginal body. It must be so! It is so! How and when the reunion will take place and life will come back to You, I do not know. But I am so certain of this that I will remain here, beside You, until God, either with His word, or with His action, will show me the truth on Your destiny.'

John, who has finished arranging everything, sits on the stool, placing the lamp on the floor, near the little bed; and he contemplates the body lying on it, praying.

How many days have gone by? It is difficult to ascertain it. ... But if one judges by the olive branches on which the fresh flowers are lying, branches with leaves already withered, ... one must conclude that some days have by now gone by.

But Mary's body is exactly the same as it was when She breathed Her last. There is no trace of death on Her face or on Her little hands. There is no unpleasant smell in the room. On the contrary an undefinable scent like that of incense, of lilies, of roses, of lilies of the valley, of mountain herbs, all mixed together, hangs in the air of the room.

John, who I wonder for how many days has been awake, has fallen asleep, overcome by tiredness, sitting on the stool. [...]

All of a sudden a strong light fills the room, a silvery light, shaded with blue, almost phosphoric, and it becomes more and more intense, making the light of dawn and of the lamp vanish. A ... dance of sparks of all shades bursts forth from their gently moved wings, which emit a harmonious murmur, as sweet as if it were played by a harp.

The angelic creatures place themselves around the little bed, they bend over it, they lift the immobile body, and flapping their wings more vigorously, which increases the sound existing previously, through a passage opened miraculously in the roof, as miraculously Jesus' Sepulchre was opened, they go away, taking with them the body of their Queen, a Most Holy Body, it is true, but not yet glorified, and therefore still subject to the laws of matter, to which the Christ was not subject, because He was already glorified when He rose from the dead. The sound made by the angelic wings increases and it is now as powerful as the sound of an organ.

John, who, although still asleep, had moved twice or three times on his stool, as if he had been disturbed by the strong light and by the sound of the angelic wings, awakes completely ... to realise what is happening. He notices that the bed is empty and that the roof is open. He understands that a wonderful event has taken place. He runs out on the terrace, and as if by spiritual instinct, or by a heavenly call, he raises his head, shading his eyes from the sun, in order to see, without being prevented from doing so by the rising sun.

And he sees. He sees the body of Mary, still deprived of life, and completely identical to that of a person asleep, that ascends higher and higher, supported by the angelic group. As a last gesture of farewell, a hem of the mantle and of the veil are agitated, probably by the wind caused by the rapid assumption and by the movement of the angelic wings; and some flowers, the ones that John had placed and renewed round the body of Mary, and that have certainly remained among the folds of the garments, rain on the terrace and on the ground of Gethsemane, while the mighty hosanna of the angelic group moves farther and farther away and thus becomes fainter.

John continues to stare at that body that rises towards Heaven and, certainly through a prodigy granted to him by God, to comfort him and to reward him for his love for his adoptive Mother, he distinctly sees Mary, enveloped now in the beams of the sun that has risen, come out of the ecstasy that had separated Her soul from Her body, become alive, stand on Her feet, as She also now enjoys the gifts typical of bodies already glorified.

John looks and looks. The miracle granted to him by God enables him, against all natural laws, to see Mary as She is now, while She rapidly ascends towards Heaven, surrounded, but no longer helped to ascend, by the angels singing hosannas. And John is enraptured by that vision of beauty that no pen of man, or human word, or work of artist will be ever able to describe or reproduce, because it is of indescribable beauty.

John, still leaning against the low wall of the terrace, continues to stare at that splendid shining form of God - because Mary can really be said to be so, formed in a unique manner by God, Who wanted Her immaculate, so that She might be the form for the Word Incarnate - while it ascends higher and higher. And the God-Love grants a last supreme prodigy to His perfect loving disciple: to see the meeting of the Most Holy Mother with Her Most Holy Son, Who splendid and shining as well, handsome with indescribable beauty, descends rapidly from Heaven, arrives at His Mother, presses Her to His heart, and together, more refulgent than two major planets, returns with Her whence He came.

John's vision is over. He lowers his head. On his tired face are visible both his sorrow for the loss of Mary and his joy for Her glorious destiny. But by now joy exceeds sorrow.

He says: 'Thanks, my God! Thanks! I foresaw that this would happen. And I wanted to be awake, in order not to lose any episode of Her Assumption. [...] You have granted me to see Her again, although already so far, already glorified and glorious, as if She were close to me. And to see Jesus again! Oh! most happy, un hoped for and not to be hoped for vision! O gift of the gifts of Jesus-God to His John! Supreme Grace! To see my Master and Lord again! To see Him near His Mother! He like a sun, She like a moon, both most splendid, because they were glorious and happy to be reunited forever! What will Paradise be like now that You both shine in it, You major planets of the heavenly Jerusalem? What is the jubilation of the angelic choruses and of the saints? It is such the joy that the vision of the Mother with Her Son has given me, a thing that cancels every pain of His, every pain of theirs, even more, also mine ceases, and peace takes over in me. [...] I shall be able to tell them, swearing on the most sublime things, that not only the Christ became alive again, by His own divine power, but that also His Mother, three days after Her death, if death it can be called, came to life again, and with Her flesh joined to Her soul took up Her eternal abode in Heaven, beside Her Son. [...]'

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**[Mary says:]** 'Did I die? Yes, if you call death the separation of the choice part of the spirit from the body. No, if by death you understand the separation of the vivifying soul from the body, the corruption of the flesh no longer vivified by the soul, and before that, the lugubrious sepulchre, and before all these things, the pangs of death.

How did I die, or better, how did I pass from the Earth to Heaven, first with My immortal part, then with the perishable one? As it was fair for Her Who did not become acquainted with the stain of sin.

[...] That evening, the uncontainable ardour, the measureless vitality of My spirit was joined by a sweet languor, by a mysterious sensation that matter was moving away from what surrounded it, as if My body, tired, were falling asleep, whilst My intellect, even livelier in its reasoning, was sinking, into the divine brightness.

John, the loving prudent witness of every action of Mine, since he had become My adoptive son, according to the will of My Only-Begotten Son, kindly convinced Me to rest on the little bed and he watched Me praying. The last sound I heard on the Earth was the murmur of the words of John, the virgin apostle. They were for Me like a lullaby of a mother near a cradle. And they accompanied My spirit in its last ecstasy, too sublime to be describe. They accompanied Me as far as Heaven.

John, the only witness of this sweet mystery, arranged Me by himself, enveloping Me in My white mantle, without changing My dress or veil, without any washing or embalming. The spirit of John, as is evident from his words of the second episode of this cycle that goes from the Pentecost to My Assumption, already knew that I would not decay, and it taught the Apostle what to do. And he, chaste, loving, prudent with regard to the mysteries of God and his remote companions, decided to keep the secret and to wait for the other servants of God, so that they could see Me again, and draw comfort and assistance from that sight for the pains and hardships of their mission. He waited, as if he were certain of their coming.

But the decree of God was different. Good as always for the Favourite. Just as usual for all the believers. He made the eyes of the former heavy with sleep, so that he might be spared the torture of seeing also My body abducted from him. [...]

When I was taken out of the little house by the angels, had My spirit already come back to Me? No. My spirit was not to descend again on the Earth. It was, adoring, before the Throne of God. But when the Earth, the exile, the time and the place of the separation from My One and Trine Lord were left for ever, My spirit came back to shine in the centre of My soul, drawing the flesh from its sleep. So it is just to say that I ascended to Heaven in body and soul, not through My own capability, as it happened for Jesus, but through angelic help. I awoke from that mysterious and mystic sleep, I rose, I flew finally, because by now My flesh had achieved the perfection of glorified bodies. And I loved. I loved My Son, Whom I found again, and My Lord, One and Trine, I loved Him as is the destiny of all the eternal living beings.'

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**[Jesus says:]** 'When Her last hour came, like a tired lily that, after exhaling all its scents, bends under the stars and closes its snow-white calyx, Mary, My Mother, lay on Her little bed and closed Her eyes on everything surrounding Her, to collect Her thoughts in a last serene contemplation of God.

Bending over Her rest, the angel of Mary was anxiously waiting for the climax of the ecstasy to separate that spirit from the flesh, for the time decreed by God, and to separate it for ever from the Earth, while the sweet inviting command of God was already descending from Heaven.

John, an earthly angel, bent, in his turn, over that mysterious rest, was watching the Mother Who was about to leave him. And when he saw that She had breathed Her last, he continued to watch Her, so that, not violated by profane curious eyes, She should remain, even beyond death, the Immaculate Spouse and Mother of God, so placid and beautiful in Her sleep.

A tradition says that only flowers were found in the urn of Mary, when it was opened by Thomas. It is a sheer legend. No sepulchre swallowed the corpse of Mary, because there never was a corpse of Mary, according to human sense, because Mary did not die as whoever lived dies.

By divine decree, She was only separated from Her spirit, and Her most holy flesh once again joined the spirit that had preceded it. By inverting the habitual laws, according to which an ecstasy ends when the rapture ceases, that is, when the spirit returns to its normal state, it was Mary's body that went to join the spirit, after a long rest on the funereal bed.

Everything is possible to God. I came out of the Sepulchre with no other help than My own power. Mary came to Me, to God, to Heaven, without experiencing the sepulchre with its horror of lugubrious rotteness. It is one of the most refulgent miracles of God. Not the only one, really, if we remember Enoch and Elijah who, being dear to the Lord, were abducted from the Earth, without experiencing death, and translated elsewhere, to a place known only to God and to the celestial inhabitants of Heaven. They were just, but always nothing as compared with My Mother, inferior, in holiness, only to God.

That is why there are no relics of the body or of the sepulchre of Mary. Because Mary had no sepulchre, and Her body was brought to Heaven.'

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