

**MARIA VALTORTA READERS GROUP**

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**THE SUPPLEMENT No. 85 – MARCH 2017**



St. Anne and Mary



Jesus in the Temple



Marta Diciotti

**Part One**

The following excerpts show how *The Poem of The Man-God* gives more details on the prophecies in the Bible. The *Poem* reveals that the seventy weeks prophecy of Daniel about the Birth of the Messiah fits the exact timeline if the lunar years are used instead of solar years. The *Poem* reveals that Our Lady's prayers and her holy vows hastened Christ's coming by this means and that prophecies are never wrong.

The Child Mary is conversing with Her mother, St. Anne

"...Mummy, will you tell Me another story?"

"Oh, my dear! Which story do You wish to know?"

Mary is thinking, deeply absorbed in Her thoughts. Her expression should be immortalized in a portrait. The shadows of Her thoughts are reflected on Her childish face. There are smiles and sighs, sunshine and clouds, thinking of the history of Israel. Then She makes up Her mind: "Once again the story of Gabriel and Daniel, where Christ is promised."

And She listens, with Her eyes closed, repeating in a low voice the words Her mother says, as if to remember them better. When Anne comes to the end, She asks: "How long will it be before we have the Immanuel?"

"About thirty years, my darling."

"Such a long time! And I shall be in the Temple... Tell Me, if I should pray very hard, so hard, day and night, night and day, and I wanted to belong only to God, for all My life for this purpose, would the Eternal Father grant Me the grace of sending the Messiah to His people sooner?"

"I do not know, my dear. The Prophet states: 'Seventy weeks'. I do not think a prophecy can be wrong. But the Lord is so good," she hastens to add, seeing tears appear on the fair eyelashes of her child, "the Lord is so good that I believe that if You do pray very hard, so hard, He will hear Your prayer."

A smile appears once again on Her little face, which She has lifted up towards Her mother, and the rays of the sun, filtering through the vine branches, cause Her tears to shine like dew-drops on very thin stems of alpine moss.

"Then I will pray and I shall be a virgin for this."

"May God bless You! But then You will never have any children, and yet You love babies and little lambs and doves so much..."

"It does not matter. I shall belong to God. I shall pray in the Temple. And perhaps one day I will see the Immanuel. The Virgin who is to be His Mother must be already born, as the great Prophet says, and She is in the Temple...I will be Her companion... and maidservant.

*(The Poem, Vol 1, pp. 38-39; The Gospel, Vol 1, pp. 51-53)*

Mary is conversing with Anna of Phanuel (the prophetess) in the Temple.

I see a very young Mary, twelve-years-old at most, Her face no longer roundish, as is typical of children, but already showing the future outlines of a woman in a perfect oval. Also Her hair is no longer falling loose on Her neck in soft curls, but it is plaited and two thick braids fall over Her shoulders down to Her waist. Her hair is a very pale gold colour, so light that it seems to be blended with silver. Her face is more pensive and mature, although it is the face of a young girl, a beautiful and pure girl, all dressed in white.

Mary is speaking:

"...The time is nearer than you think, I tell you. Because when I was reading Daniel, a great light came to Me from the depths of My heart and I understood the meaning of the enigmatic word. The seventy weeks will be shortened because of the prayers of just people. Does this mean that the number of the years is being changed? No. A prophecy is never wrong. But the measure of the prophetic time is the course of the moon, not of the sun. Therefore I say: "Near is the hour when the Baby born of a Virgin will be heard crying". Oh! Since this Light that loves Me tells Me so many things, I wish it would tell Me where the happy mother is that will give birth to the Son of God and Messiah of His people! Barefooted I would travel all over the world, neither cold nor frost, neither dust nor heat, nor wild beast nor hunger would prevent Me from reaching Her..."

*(The Poem, Vol 1, pp. 51, 54; The Gospel, Vol 1, pp. 67, 70)*

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The next excerpt shows the dialogue that took place between the Child Jesus (12-years-old) and the doctors of the Temple where Jesus talks about the prophecy of Daniel concerning Himself.

Maria says:

I see Jesus. He is an adolescent. He is dressed in a tunic which I think is made of white linen, and it reaches down to His feet. Over it, He is wearing a pale red rectangular piece of cloth. He is bare-headed, His long hair reaches down to half His ears and it is somewhat darker in hue than when I saw Him as a child. He is a strong boy and very tall for His age, he is still relatively young, as is obvious from His countenance...

I understand that I am in the enclosure of the Temple in Jerusalem. I see Pharisees, ...priests...[and] others [who] belong to the sacerdotal caste and are surrounded by younger disciples. I realize that they are the doctors of the Law...

Amongst the 'doctors, there is a group headed by one whose name is Gamaliel and by another old and almost blind man who is supporting Gamaliel in the dispute. This man, whose name I hear is Hillel ...seems to be a teacher or relative of Gamaliel, because the latter treats him with familiarity and respect at the same time. Gamaliel's group is more broad-minded, whereas another group, and it is more numerous, is led by one whose name in Shammai, and is noticeable for its conservative, resentful intolerance which the Gospel has clarified so well.

Gamaliel, surrounded by a compact group of disciples, is speaking of the coming of the Messiah, and founding his observations on Daniel's prophecy. He states that the Messiah must have already been born because the seventy prophesied weeks, from the time the decree of the reconstruction of the Temple was issued, expired some ten years before. Shammai opposes him stating that, if it is true that the Temple has been rebuilt, it is also true that the slavery of Israel has increased and the peace, which He Whom the prophets called "Prince of Peace" was to bring, is quite far from being in the world and in particular, is far from Jerusalem...

The dispute, full of captious objections, is dragged on endlessly. All the doctors show off their learning, not so much to beat their opponents as to display themselves to the admiration of the listeners. Their aims are quite obvious.

From the close group of the believers, the clear voice of a boy is heard: "Gamaliel is right."

There is a stir in the crowd and in the group of doctors. They look for the interrupter. But it is not necessary to search for him, because he does not hide. He makes his way through the crowd and goes near the group of the "rabbis". I recognize my Jesus adolescent. He is sure of Himself and open-hearted, His eyes are sparkling with intelligence.

"Who are You?" they ask Him.

"I am a son of Israel, who has come to fulfill what the Law prescribes."

His bold and frank reply is appreciated, and it gains Him smiles of approval and favor. They take an interest in the young Israelite.

"What is Your name?"

"Jesus of Nazareth."

The feeling of benevolence fades away in Shammai's group...

"On what do You base Your certainty?" asks Hillel. ...

*Jesus:* "On the prophecy which cannot be wrong about the time and the signs which took place at the time it came true. It is true that Caesar dominates us, but the world and Palestine were in such peace when the seventy weeks expired, that it was possible for Caesar to order the census in his dominions. Had there been wars in the Empire and riots in Palestine, he would not have been able to do so. As that time was completed, so the other period of sixty-two weeks plus one from the completion of the Temple is also being completed, so that the Messiah may be anointed and the remainder of the prophecy may come true for the people who did not want Him. Can you doubt that? Do you not remember the star that was seen by the Wise Men from the East and stopped over the sky in Bethlehem of Judah and that the prophecies and the visions, from Jacob onwards, indicate that place as the one destined as the birthplace of the Messiah, son of the son of Jacob's son, through David who was from Bethlehem? Do you not remember Balaam? 'A Star will be born of Jacob'..."

*Shammai,* glaring at Him: "Do you mean that the Messiah was born in Bethlehem-Ephrathah at the time of the Star?"

*Jesus:* "I do."

*Shammai:* "Then he no longer is. Don't you know, Child, that Herod had all the born of woman, from one day up to the age of two years, slaughtered in Bethlehem and surroundings? You, Who are so wise in the Scriptures, must know also this: 'A voice is heard in Ramah...it is Rachel weeping for her children'. The valleys and the hills in Bethlehem, which gathered the tears of the dying Rachel, were left full of tears, and the mothers have wept again on their slaughtered children. Amongst them, there certainly was the Mother of the Messiah."

*Jesus:* "You are wrong, old man. The weeping of Rachel turned into a hosanna, because there, where she gave birth to 'the son of her sorrow', the new Rachel has given the world the Benjamin of the Heavenly Father, the Son of His right hand, Him Who is destined to gather the people of God under His scepter and free it from the most dreadful slavery."

*Shammai:* "How can that be, if He was killed?"

*Jesus:* "...could the Lord God not have saved his Immanuel that He might be the Messiah of His people? ...I solemnly tell you: *the Christ is alive and is amongst you, and when His hour comes, He will show Himself in His power.*" Jesus, in saying these words, has a sharp sound in His voice which fills the air. His eyes are brighter than ever, and with the gesture of command and promise, He stretches out His right arm and hand and lowers them as if He were swearing. He is a boy, but is as solemn as a man.

And they make Jesus sit on a high stool between Gamaliel and Hillel and they give Him some rolls to read and explain. It is a proper examination. The people throng and listen.

*Jesus* reads in His clear voice: "...A voice cries in the wilderness: 'Prepare a way for the Lord... then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed...'"

*Shammai:* "See that, Nazarene. It refers here to an ended slavery, but never before have we been slaves as we are

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now. And there is the mention of a precursor. Where is he? You are talking nonsense.”

*Jesus:* “...And I add, rabbi, that the slavery of which the Prophet speaks, and of which I am speaking, is not the one you think, neither is the royalty the one you consider. On the contrary, by the merits of the Messiah, man will be made free from the slavery of Evil, which separates him from God, and the sign of Christ will be on the spirits, freed from every yoke and made subjects of the eternal kingdom...all good people will know the Lord and the Sanctuary of God will no longer be demolished and destroyed.”

*Shammai:* “Do not blaspheme, Child! Remember Daniel. He states that after the death of Christ, the Temple and the Town will be destroyed by a people and a leader who will come from afar. And You hold that the sanctuary of God will no longer be demolished! Respect the Prophets!”

*Jesus:* “I solemnly tell you that there is Someone Who is above the Prophets. ...And I tell you that what I said is true. *The true Sanctuary will not be subject to death.* But like its Sanctifier, it will rise to eternal life and at the end of the world, it will live in Heaven.”

*Hillel:* “Listen to me, Child. Haggai says: ‘...The One Expected by the nations will come...great then shall be the glory of this house, and of *this last one* more than of the previous one’. Does he perhaps refer to the Sanctuary of which You are speaking?”

*Jesus:* “Yes, master. That is what he means. Your honesty leads You towards the Light and I tell you: when the Sacrifice of Christ is accomplished, you shall have peace because you are an Israelite without wickedness.”

*Gamaliel:* “Tell me, Jesus. How can the peace of which the Prophets speak be hoped for, if destruction is going to come to this people by war? Speak and enlighten also me.”

*Jesus:* “Do you not remember, master, what those said who were present on the night of Christ's birth? That the angels sang: ‘Peace to men of good will’ but this people is not of good will and will not have peace. It will not acknowledge its King, the Just Man, the Savior, because they expect Him to be a king with human power, whereas He is the King of the spirit. ...Because of its evil will, Israel will lose its peace and suffer for centuries and will cause its King to suffer and will make Him the King of sorrow of Whom Isaiah speaks.”

*Shammai:* “...Tell me: where is the Precursor? When did we have him?”

*Jesus:* “He *is*. Does not Malachi say: ‘Here, I am going to send My messenger to prepare the way before Me; and the Lord you are seeking will suddenly enter His Temple, and the angel of the Covenant Whom you are longing for? Therefore, the Precursor immediately precedes Christ. *He already is, as Christ is.* If years should elapse between him who prepares the ways for the Lord and Christ, all the ways would become obstructed and twisted again. God knows and arranges beforehand that the Precursor should precede the Master by *one hour only*. When you see this Precursor, you will be able to say: ‘The mission of Christ is beginning’...” (*The Poem, Vol 1, pp. 212-219; The Gospel, Vol 1, pp. 262-267*)

(Ed: This ends the discussion on the prophecy of the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ...or does it?)

**Part Two:** Here are more excerpts taken from Marta Diciotti's book called *Una Vita con Maria Valtorta (Life with Maria Valtorta)*. As this book has not been translated into English yet, here are more passages for your perusal, all of which tell us so much more about this victim soul. (NB: The following is not a full translation of the content on these pages)

Marta says:

When Maria was dying, I was very concerned about her because I remembered the words that the devil had said to Maria: “I will be waiting for you till the hour of your death and everyone will believe that you were possessed.” So in the last days of Maria's life, I kept expecting something to happen to forewarn me of her death or the very moment she died, such as, a violent and sudden shattering of a window or a drinking glass, or a vase or any object breaking without an apparent reason. However, this did not happen. I also expected to see Maria struggle during her final moments, but her death was peaceful. (pp. 23-4). Maria had the greatest faith and was not superstitious at all. Her outlook on life and events were realistic, she had common sense, she was prudent and she was so loving. She was light-hearted and had a good sense of humour. She was very observant. Nothing escaped her. She had insight into people's intentions, she could read their hearts and she was never wrong. (p. 26)

The most frequent argument in the house between Maria and her mother, Iside, was about Mario. That rejection from Mario caused Maria intense pain and it cost her dearly. I think it was the most severe rejection in her life. Before I came to live here, Maria's mother Iside never liked to leave Maria alone in the house if she had to go out because in the event of an emergency, Maria would not be able to move to get help. So she would call Ida, (a neighbour whom I never met), to come stay with her. While her mother was still there, Maria spoke to Ida about how she met Mario. They both heard Iside say that she wished she had never written that letter to Mario. Maria could not believe her ears and she would ask Ida on other occasions to confirm what her mother had admitted. Even in her *Autobiography*, it is not stated what was in that letter. When her mother died, Maria asked me to bring her the drawer in her mother's room in which she kept everything. In it, we found a little bundle wrapped in a silk handkerchief with Iside's name embroidered in the corner. When we untied it, we found a draft of the letter she had written to Mario ripped into tiny pieces. Maria tried to put the pieces together but gave up and asked me to burn it because it was better that she couldn't read it. So that was the end of that. Her own father would ask her: “Why didn't you marry Mario?” On one occasion she replied: “Go on. Ask your wife that question.” (pp. 27-8)

On one of my visits to the monastery, Fr. Leccisotti, a writer and historian, and an enthusiastic reader of the writings of Maria Valtorta said that he loved the *Poem of the Man-God* but he loved her *Autobiography* the most because in it is Maria with all her defects and her qualities, along with other information that women would not talk about but that Maria does. She shows great courage and sympathy which appealed to Fr. Leccisotti greatly. According to Fr. Leccisotti, most people love the *Poem of the Man-God* because of the way it is written (its greatness and splendour) and the origin of the

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information. But he felt that her **Autobiography** was authentically Maria, completely about her, which was written and not dictated. He believes that many have tasted its beauty, especially those who were not scandalised by what she wrote about her mother. I can add that what Maria wrote about her mother in her **Autobiography** was nothing compared to what she could have written about the hard reality in which she lived in that house hour after hour, day after day, year after year. In fact, many have said that it was a shame that the story of her life did not have a sequel. Fr. Leccisotti said that in this book, he found his best friend, and that a sequel to her **Autobiography** would have benefitted whoever read it. Fr. Leccisotti ended by saying that Maria's is the greatest model of a Christian life. (pp. 30-32, 34)

It is interesting that Fr. Migliorini was dying to meet Maria but he didn't know on what basis he could introduce himself. So he was always looking for the right excuse. When Fr. Pennoni, who had a back problem, was advised to go and visit Maria by one of his own parishioners, he was told to consult Fr. Migliorini (from our parish) for permission to go and see this woman who was bedridden and sick, etc. Fr. Migliorini told him that he would go instead. He jumped at the opportunity. He told Maria he was there on behalf of Fr. Pennoni who had asked his permission to see her, but that he decided he would come personally instead. Maria would never have dreamt of writing her **Autobiography** had not Fr. Migliorini insisted that she write it, so that she would open up to him as her spiritual advisor and therefore, he could guide her better. (p. 32)

However, when Fr. Migliorini would visit Maria, her mother Iside would not leave them alone to talk. She would remain in the room. Even when Maria wanted to have Confession, Iside would say, "I will just sit here in the corner. I won't bother anyone." But Maria insisted that she leave because Confession was confidential. However, as Iside was around all the other times, Maria had to tell her story by writing long letters to Fr. Migliorini. It is a paradox that we should be grateful to Iside because without realising it, she was responsible for launching the unique mission of Maria Valtorta's writings about herself and the sacred writings about the life of Jesus. Furthermore, the originals of these precious letters are still preserved today (pp. 31-32).

One day when Fr. Migliorini came for Confession or to give her communion, he said, "Now listen, write something about yourself." We don't know why he said this – if it was to get to know her better, to get to know her particular skills, or if he was inspired by the Holy Spirit. We don't know. Maria's response was: "For goodness sake, Father, let's not talk about it. What do you want me to write? I am a poor woman...I have had so much pain and nothing else." But Father repeated: "Write something about yourself." With that deep, penetrating look (I can still see it now) she answered: "Okay, Father. Yes. I will write. But let me tell you, I will bare my conscience." (pp. 33-4)

Despite being bedridden, Maria did not want to be a burden on anyone who helped her so she tried to do as much as possible in the daily running of the house. She would sew, mend, and iron (I gave her a board). She even used the sewing machine. (I had a hand-held one, which would be a real antique now!) She would cut and sew, and

she would make dressing-gowns, bed-jackets, full aprons, half aprons and lots of other things. She made some beautiful things because she was good at sewing, crocheting and embroidery. She gave all these things away as gifts so if these people still have them, you could witness the skill and talent she had. She made these delicious sweets and I would bring her everything she needed. It was tiresome having to clean up, but I did it willingly because it served as a real distraction for her. She would never postpone things such as mending and writing letters, etc. Everything had to be done instantly. (pp. 38-39)

When she wrote, she never had any airs about her. I believe she was the most simple and the most humble person God ever put on this earth. She knew she was an instrument and never gave herself any importance. One day her window was open for some fresh air and Maria was in the middle of writing a deeply important theological entry when a woman popped her head in the open window asking for a recipe. Maria was not annoyed at the interruption but looked at it as having the opportunity to look out the window at the beautiful sky. (pp. 40-42)

Maria used to welcome anyone into her house. She had a way with people and they always felt at ease. She had an aura about her and people loved being around her. Maria did not like to talk about herself and she was not inclined to talk about her personal life. She knew that there would be chaos in the town, so she didn't tell people of her visions and writings from Jesus. One day, she really wanted to meet with Archbishop Torrini who was in the area so that she could show him the writings and clarify a few things. Monsignor Rocchiccoli met with him to ask. The Archbishop said nothing. He didn't even acknowledge what the Monsignor had said. The next day he asked again. Archbishop Torrini told the Monsignor to tell Maria that he didn't want to have fanatics around him and there would be grave sanctions put on her. Maria was really upset, so much so that she never had visitors in the house again. I was like a watch dog. In fact, over the years, we noticed that the biggest adversaries were those who never even read a single word of her writings, and never knew its substance. (pp. 57-8)

On many occasions, when people suffered, especially children, Maria would take that pain on herself in order to free that child of the illness. I can testify to the readiness with which Maria took upon herself the illness of others. The case of the little girl with pleurisy told in the **Autobiography** is strictly true: the little girl was my goddaughter and she was healed completely after being close to death. She survived and later lived a normal life, giving birth to three or four children.

The crafty devil tried to induce Maria to write under his dictation, but she always resisted by not picking up the pen. Proof of the immense and all-consuming hatred and fear of the devil toward Valtorta's written works was given by Monsignor Galileo Arinci, a great exorcist who told me that he gave a few volumes of the work to a possessed person who was exorcised, and the devil, by the mouth of his victim, began to shout: "Take them away from me – they are burning me!" This could be the one of the most convincing demonstrations of the divine origins of the writings, namely, the diabolical nature of the opposition to them.

(to be continued next edition)