

LEGENDS OF THE VIRGIN MARY - The Vision of Gregory the Wonderworker

As he laid awake, there appeared to him in a vision an aged person in human form adorned with solemn raiment and whose countenance was striking by great virtue and kindness in addition to the integrity his form. [Gregory] was struck by fear at this sight and rising up from bed, realized who he was and why he came.

After quieting his fear, he said in a soft voice that a divine order bade him to appear, the reasons of which were obscure to [Gregory], in order to reveal the truth of correct belief and to encourage him to speak while gazing upon him with both joy and respect. Then the old man suddenly extended his hand and with his finger pointed to something which appeared near him which was a splendid female form instead of a male one.

Once again [Gregory] was terrified and turned his face away, unable to bear its sight. The vision was especially amazing since the night was gloomy, for it resembled something like a light illuminated by another light. Since he could not look upon this spectacle, he heard from those who appeared to him speaking in detail about what he was seeking.

Not only was he revered with regard to true knowledge of faith but recognized the names of each man who appeared when they called each other by their respective names. It is claimed that this vision of a female form told [Gregory] that the evangelist John was exhorted to manifest the mystery of truth to a young man, saying that she was chosen to be the mother of the Lord [Matri Domini] whom she cherished.

He also said that this fitting vision had vanished again from his sight. He was immediately ordered to write down this divine revelation and later proclaim it in the church. In this way it became for others a divinely given legacy through which the people might repulse any evil of heresy”

Against this vision it is said that the Bible teaching is that the dead cannot return to earth unless they rise again. Jesus told the story of the rich man and Lazarus to illustrate that. The story is Abraham listened to the rich man's prayer despite him being in Hell. But his request for his brothers to be warned on earth and to send Lazarus to ease his pain for a second was refused on the basis that Lazarus is there to be comforted and its a waste of time worrying about the brothers.

It seems there was devotion to Mary to some extent in the third century. A fragment dated to the fourth century was found in Egypt that invokes her. With the rise in devotion to Mary, there was a corresponding rise in ridiculous legends about her and even fake gospels. One thinks of superstition leading to lies and bad fruits.

Apparitions of Mary were occasionally reported even though back then nobody - barring a few exceptions - thought she had a body to appear with.

