

## **Item #97 (The Assumption As Portrayed in Scripture)**

**In my book** *Hebrews--An Interpretation* (Subsidia Biblica 47; Gregorian & Biblical Press, Rome, 2016) I argue in 12.5.3.2 (Hebrews 11,11-12, pp.233-238) that the verses are to be taken as part of the authentic text precisely because they seem improbable. The improbability is willed by the author to show the importance of what they refer to. They refer to the ability of Sarah as a woman to produce seed as does a male, provided the seed is understood spiritually and not physically. The argumentation is complicated, and is to be understood as referring ultimately to Mary, the mother of Jesus. (Here the reader should recall that I claim no proof in what I assert, only plausibility. Further, mine is not the only interpretation offered for the text, as can be seen in a variety of commentaries on Hebrews.) As I mulled over the plausibility of such an interpretation I suddenly realized that as a believing Catholic I believed in the Assumption of Mary, and thus as a believer believed in the fact that Mary is living with her Son Who is not only risen from the dead but ascended into heaven. Thus one can say that in Scripture (Hebrews) that argumentation in favor of the Assumption is to be expected if it is about Mary. Whether the one give by me as an interpretation of Hebrews is, of course, open to debate. **(James Swetnam, S.J., June 18, 2022)**