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Three Visions Of Light

01/21/1997

by James Clark

Subject

Many mystics have experienced the inner light of the soul. Three excerpts from Maimonides, Dante, and St. Teresa Of Avila are given.

Keywords

mysticism, visions, light

Throughout recorded history, when those who know speak truth, they speak of one thing -- the divine light of God. The focus of love required to cross into this conception of inner being is immense. When all of the fear around accepting the light is released, it comes into view again. The light is deep reality -- we are the vision. We are the metaphor. It is truth.

MAIMONIDES

This first quote is from the Rabbi Maimondes in his "Guide of the Perplexed". Maimonides gives us some traveling tips. He hints at the vision of the light body that is the *Merkabah*, or vehicle of inner light formed from the hidden radiance of the soul, called *Shekinah*.

"You shouldn't think that these secrets are fully understood by any of us. They aren't. Frequently, truth flashes into us so we see like it is daytime, then concern and habit conceal it in form, and we are in the dark again, almost as before. We are like people in the dark of night, with lightning flashing repeatedly. For some here the lightning flashes continually, so they are always in light. They see the night as day." -- Maimonides (1135-1204) The Guide of the Perplexed

DANTE

The second quotation comes from the Italian poet Dante Alighieri and his medieval journal for light travelers called "The Divine Comedy". On his

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journey to Paradise he successfully passes through the hellish underground Inferno, and finally reaches the tenth heaven of the Celestial Rose. There he sees the entire world inscribed like a book written by the flame of Divine Love.

"O Grace abounding, by which I presumed to set my gaze on the Light Eternal so deeply I that was consumed by the sight! I saw profound things inside it bound into a single volume by love the things the universe seems to separate by substance, accident or appearing so because what I say is simplified. I believe I have seen the Universal Form weaving, and in speaking of it I feel great joy." -- Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) The Divine Comedy, Paradiso

ST. TERESA OF AVILA

The third and last quotation comes from Saint Teresa and her classic work on mysticism "*Interior Castle*." She describes the process of spiritual awakening, and the all important transition that occurs when awareness crosses into the divine memory of light. She calls it the *Sixth Mansion*.

"The brilliance of the vision is like captured light or sunlight covered with transparent diamond-like material if such a thing could possibly be woven. This garment looks like the finest printed pattern. Almost certainly the soul who receives this blessing remains in rapture. It is unable to endure such a terrible sight.

I use the word "terrible" because even though it is the loveliest and most delightful sight imaginable, if a person tried to imagine it and lived a thousand years, it would still vastly exceed everything the imagination and understanding can comprehend. It's presence is so great that it fills the soul with fear. -- St. Teresa Of Avila (1515-1582) Interior Castle, Sixth mansion

Saint Teresa gives us a clear warning about light travel. Our blessed entry into the Sixth Mansion may feel like the terrors of hell. We may be faced with personal afflictions. Our intent must be purified before we pass into the blessing of the Seventh Mansion and full union with God. In this process we will become painfully clear of what we really love. We become intimate with our goal -- our mission. The true lover of God has no thoughts of stopping or turning back. There is nowhere to run to. They release the illusions, and the pain goes with it.

light travelers travel lightly

END