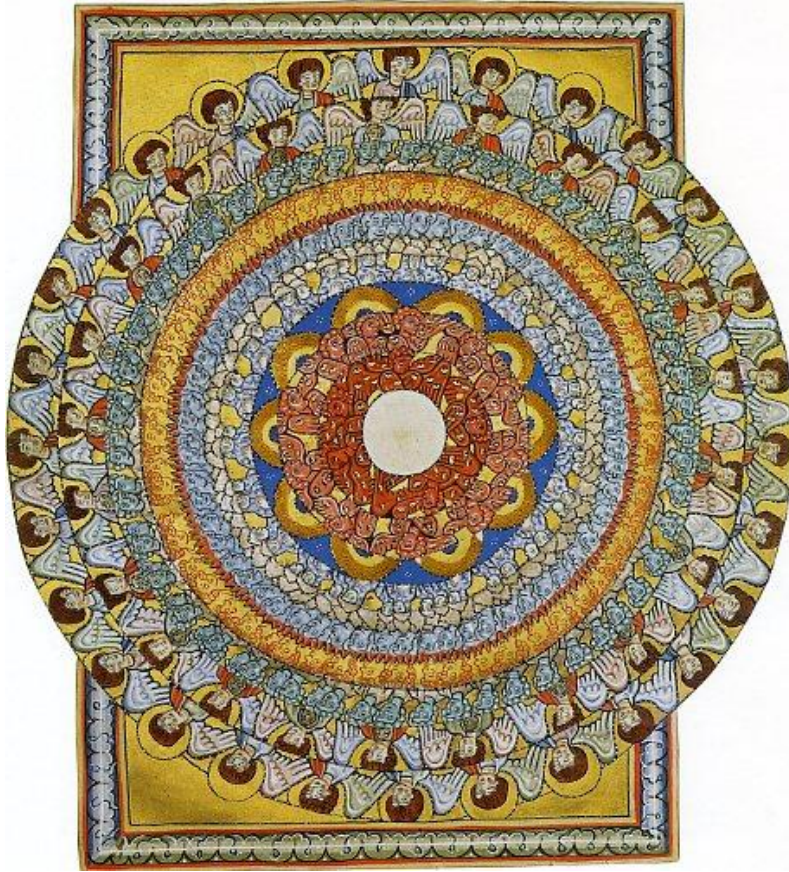


Reflection on Hildegard von Bingen's "All Creation is a Song of Praises to God"



"All creation praises the Lord", the nine choirs of the angels, from "Liber Scivias" (Know the ways of the Lord) by German mystic Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

And God spoke: 'If you come ever closer to me and do so with complete surrender, until you become one with My love, then I am the ear you listen with, the eye you see with, the hand you hold with, the foot you walk with.'

From the sayings of the Prophet

Listen with all your senses

By surrendering to the divine we can merge with His love, and all our senses will be suffused by the One. Reality, however, tends to get in the way: we live in a restless environment, and this disquiet affects our mood and demands much of our attention. To expand our field of perception, as suggested by this poem, we would have to surrender completely to the divine. The question is, how do we achieve this state of complete surrender? This is why it is important to learn to be silent and calm down. If, for example, we assume an attentive, serene inner attitude, we enter our inner being, allowing the physical awareness to grow intensely and activating every cell in our body. It is like *'seeing with a hundred thousand eyes'* as depicted in this drawing by Hildegard van Bingen, a 12th-century German mystic. In this illustration she wanted to express the mystical experience of reality. This involves seeing more, not just with our physical eyes but with our whole being. Each cell in our body becomes an eye, and we ourselves become one giant eye. Sights infuse our body, and we actually undergo the experience. That is what the poem quoted above describes: a surrender of body and soul so that the essence can penetrate every aspect of our being. We need to use all our senses to discern the subtle movements of this God in ourselves, in others, in all that is alive.

From: Brigitte von Baren, Live the Power of Compassion – Eight Spiritual Principles for Compassionate Earth Behaviour

Available at: <http://innersense.nl/PDF/PowerOfCompassion.pdf>

A Call to Prayer

Hildegard of Bingen

The earth is at the same time mother,

She is mother of all that is natural, mother of all that is human.

She is the mother of all, for contained in her are the seeds of all.

The earth of humankind contains all moistness, all verdancy, all germinating power.

It is in so many ways fruitful.

All creation comes from it. Yet it forms not only the basic raw material for humankind, but also the substance of the incarnation of God's son.

From: Interfaith Declarations and Worship Observance Resources; The North American Conference on Religion and Ecology;

A Prayer of Awareness

Hildegard of Bingen

God is the foundation for everything

This God undertakes, God gives.

Such that nothing that is necessary for life is lacking.

Now humankind needs a body that at all times honors and praises God.

This body is supported in every way through the earth.

Thus the earth glorifies the power of God.

From: Interfaith Declarations and Worship Observance Resources; The North American Conference on Religion and Ecology