

VISIO



DIVINA

The Wisdom of Contemplative Vision

BLINDNESS AND SIGHT

MEISTER ECKHART

Blindness of any kind is a terrible incapacity. Someone who loses sight suffers grievously. Those born blind have never had the benefit of sight, and so perhaps suffer in a different way. Suppose we are surrounded by a vastness of possibility and multiple dimensions that lays outside common sight, but that exists nevertheless. Imagine though that humankind is largely blind to any other dimension of reality than the contours of space and time that we normally inhabit; in this regard we could all be considered disabled.

Blindness to these dimensions is not because of the limitation of common sight but because of level of one's consciousness. Higher levels of consciousness can perceive realities beyond the sensorial world. Lower levels, however, do not believe anything exists that cannot be examined by the senses or tested by the rational mind. The result is that we are made blind, living in a universe filled with unseen realities whose Source is the divine Consciousness itself, but which we are unable to perceive. This is a terrible disability for the human spirit.

Sometimes we are told of vistas and realities that the spiritually sighted have seen and known. Tales of visionary journey have circulated among us throughout human history. Religion abounds with sacred stories from unseen realms told by those who have visited there. Dare we believe them? Most do not, or if they do, the telling makes little difference to the way they live.

One day, however, Eckhart suggests, it will not be so. Either in this realm or beyond it, the Winds of Spirit

will lift the veil and remove the blinders from our spiritual eyes. Then we will see all the way through the heavens into the divine Reality which will become more real to us than we are to ourselves. This will be a great grace, one that entirely changes our consciousness and radically shifts our perceptions of the worlds around us.

Something like this great grace is often described by those who have undergone Near Death Experience. Because of advances in medical technology, this phenomenon is becoming more and more common. There are thousands of individuals living today who have left the boundaries of normal consciousness (and their own bodies), and have traveled, however briefly, to other realms. They are certain these worlds exist. When they return, they do so with their eyes wide open and the veil lifted. For them, there is no doubt because they have experienced other dimensions filled with intelligences and beings like themselves. The majority have met God in at least one of the many manifestations of the Divine. Their sincerity is beyond question. How and what they see when they are out-of-body defies logic, for they often see, hear and report things beyond the room where their body lies which were later verified to have been accurate.

The great mystic, Meister Eckhart, testifies to this entire experience. He too has perceived unseen worlds. He too has met God. And as a venerable sage of perennial wisdom, he proclaims the hope of sight for the spiritually blind—which is nearly all of us. He suggests that now, perhaps, the Winds of Spirit are blowing and that the veil is being lifted from our eyes.

Reflections on Image and Text:

1. *Do you agree with Meister Eckhart's assessment of the human condition? Are we indeed spiritually blind?*
2. *How does this form of blindness affect our perceptions? In your estimation, how does consciousness affect spiritual sight?*
3. *Have you ever had an experience where you have seen, understood, or felt something coming from other worlds?*
4. *What might have caused this lifting of the veil for you, even if only temporarily?*
5. *Even if you have not directly experienced them, what is your sense of these other worlds or dimension? How have you experienced or imagined them to be?.*
6. *Might it be true that you could know God even better than you know yourself? Have you ever experienced knowing another person better than you know yourself?*
7. *Notice the illuminations and how they illustrate this text. Which image speaks most directly to you?*
8. *Do you know anyone who has had a Near Death Experience? If you have not heard of these reports, visit the YouTube channel and listen to some of the testimonies of people who have undergone them. What are your reactions to hearing their stories?*

A Place for Notes and for Journaling your Answers:

This reflection, text and its illumination have been provided by Alison Hine and Lynn Bauman as a means for contemplative prayer and spiritual vision.

LECTIO DIVINA

The Contemplative Reading of a Sapiential Text

Someone born blind
can easily deny
the magnificence
of a vast landscape
or any of the wonders
that cannot be touched, smelled,
tasted, or heard.

One day the Wind
will show us all a great kindness
and remove the patches
that have covered our eyes.

Then we will see God
more clearly
than we have ever seen ourselves.

*—Arranged and edited
for public reading and illumination by
Lynn C. Bauman
from Daniel Landinsky's
Love Poems from God*

Contemplating
THE ILLUMINATIONS





