

The Spiritual Vision: Meister Eckhart, Jacob Boehme and Angelus Silesius

by

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Meister Eckhart, Jacob Boehme and Angelus Silesius describe their spiritual vision of the sublime and ultimate reality of God, as well as their participation therein, by a dramatic use of the power of imagery of the German language which, although rooted in time and space, seems to be free from the constraints of these elements. Time and space alone are incapable of grasping eternity; only when struck by a shaft of eternal light can they reflect its splendor. Such a reflection of the eternal is present in the language of Meister Eckhart, Jacob Boehme and Angelus Silesius. It is, more-over, the light of eternity that makes it at all possible to see the teachings of these great metaphysicians and mystics as a unity, in spite of their having lived at different times and belonged to differing Christian confessions. The uniformity of their spiritual vision arises from the inner unity of Divine Reality itself. Human language becomes inadequate when confronted with this mystery of the inner unity of the Godhead; “the most beautiful statement about God of which man is capable is his silence in the face of his inner riches.”¹

To achieve this silence rooted in inner riches, the soul must first become still and solitary, and this to such an extent that God’s wisdom can and must enter into this lonely silence and inspire the soul which has liberated and emptied itself, bringing the eternal tranquility and peace that come from God alone. This is the ultimate aim of all language and speech. Language is an essential characteristic of man, since, together with his reason and understanding, it is the factor which distinguishes him from all other creatures. Language also reminds man of his divine origins; the meaning of human existence is to be found only in God, since God created man in His own image and likeness.

This similarity between God and man surpasses that between God and the other creatures, because man, on account of his intellect, is spiritually an image of the divine essence, whereas the rest of creation reflects not the essence of the deity, but only ideas that exist in him.

The realization of the divine image present in man, to the point that his original perfection is

¹ *Meister Eckhart: Deutsche Predigten und Trakate* ed. by Josef Quint. Munich 1963, p. 353; in the following abbreviated as “Quint”.

re-attained, leads him to spiritual vision and to direct participation in God's sublime and ultimate reality. Meister Eckhart, Jacob Boehme and Angelus Silesius proclaim this in their writings; their teachings are basically nothing other than an expression of the eternal teaching of the wisdom of God realizing itself in man.

Meister Eckhart

Meister Eckhart specifies the nature of the image by stating that an image does not originate in itself or belong to itself, but "originates in the object of which it is an image, and owes to it absolutely every-thing it is. It does not belong to that which is foreign to the object whose image it is, nor is it alien matter. An image receives its being in direct fashion only from the object whose image it is; it has one being with it and is the same being."² This definition of the nature of the image as being the same as, and one with, its object is illustrated by Meister Eckhart in his description of the reflection of an object in a mirror. "The question is asked where the being of an image most truly resides, in the mirror, or in the object from which it proceeds? It is more properly in the object from which it proceeds. The image is in me, from me; it is mine. As long as the mirror stands straight opposite my face my image is in it; if the mirror fell down, the image would disappear."³ God, however, remains essentially untouched by any disintegration or decay.

The similarity and unity of the image, and its original form, mean simply that the image is accepted into its original form and is there secure. The more a particular image corresponds to its definition as an image, the more it will empty itself, until it becomes as a mirror, reflecting only whatever stands before it. As applied to man, this means that he corresponds most fully to his nature as an image of God when he strives to remove everything that is foreign to his being an image of God, until this continuous process of purification finally brings eternal union with God. The "locus" or point of this total unification of God and man is hidden in man's soul; it is above the soul and its powers, which tradition distinguishes as reason, memory and will. The soul uses these powers: "what is known, the soul knows through reason; what it remembers, it does so with the memory; if it should love, it does so with the will; the soul works through its powers, not through its essence."⁴ The essence of the soul is that point or that depth in the soul at which unification with God takes place. All human knowledge and science are unable to say "what the soul is in its ground."⁵ Meister Eckhart speaks of this ground of the soul in such a way that all created standards are rejected and negated. For example, he speaks of the eternal oneness of the

² *Meister Eckhart: An Introduction to the study of his works with an Anthology of his sermons*, selected, annotated and translated by James M. Clark. London 1957, p. 146; in the following abbreviated as "Clark".

³ Clark, p. 209.

⁴ Quint, p. 416.

⁵ Clark, p. 193.

soul as having no mode or properties. Here the Master simply uses the expression soul to denote the hidden ground of the soul, but this must not be confused with the three powers of the soul; he says that the soul knows nothing other than “that it is nobler than any image.”⁶ This emphasis on the inner unity and uniqueness of the ground of the soul, and the fact that it cannot be pictured, raises it to such a height that language is only able to hint at its unfathomable nature; between such intimations, silence before God grows. This is made clear in a sermon of Meister Eckhart, in which he says: “I have said at times that there is a power in the soul, which alone is free. Occasionally I have said that it is the guardian of the soul or I have said that it is the light of the soul. Sometimes I have said it is a little spark. But now I say it is neither this nor that; but it is ‘that which eternally is’ higher above this or that than the heavens are above the earth. Therefore I now call it by a nobler name than ever before, but it repudiates this nobility and this mode and is far above them. It is free from all names, and altogether unimpeded, untrammled and free from all modes, as God is free and untrammled in Himself. It is so completely free and simple, as is God, that it cannot in any way be perceived.”⁷

This inaccessibility of the unfathomable ground or little spark of the soul (which, in its simplicity and in the impossibility of its being imagined, is closer to the Godhead than to the soul as such, with its three powers or activities) manifests a distinction in the soul, the importance of which is derived from the teaching regarding the inner and the outer eye. “The soul has two eyes: one inward and one outward. It is the inner eye of the soul that looks into being and takes its being from God without any intermediary. That is its proper work. The outer eye of the soul is that which is turned toward all creatures and which observes them intently and in the form of images.”⁸ This “being”—the essence, or the hidden ground of the soul, whose inner eye is turned towards God’s unimaginable simplicity—stands in relation to the soul with its three outwardly directed powers or activities just as the simple, unfathomable Godhead stands in relation to the three divine persons.

This distinction between God and Godhead is the reason for the distinction in the soul between the outer shell and the kernel. The kernel is the proper image of God in the soul. When the inner eye of the hidden ground of the soul glimpses God, it sees him not as creator of this world, but sees instead the Essence or Godhead. This seeing by the inner eye, as well as the seeing in itself, is connected with the inner “reason” (*intellectus*), which is not to be confused with the outwardly directed reason. The inner reason, or rather, the intellect, is the power of knowledge of the hidden ground of the soul; according to Meister Eckhart, this has five properties, which in reality are five absences of properties. “The first is that it divides off from ‘here’ and ‘now’. The second, that it is like nothing else. The third, that it is pure and unmixed.

⁶ Quint, p. 412.

⁷ Clark, p. 137.

⁸ Clark, p. 200.

The fourth, that it works or searches in itself. The fifth, that it is an image”⁹, namely the proper image of God in the soul which, because it is the same as God, is devoid of images. If, however, the inner reason (that is, the intellect) is the divine image in the soul, then the original image is that highest and single “living, essential, existing intellect, which comprehends itself, is in itself, lives, and is the same.”¹⁰

“To rise up to this intellect and to subject oneself to it means to be united with God. To be unified, or to be one with it, is to be one with God; for God is one, being pure intellect; whatever is outside intellect is created, has been made, is something other than God, is not God. This is because there is nothing in God which is different.”¹¹ God is pure intellect, whose whole being is knowledge (*Deus est intellectus purus, cuius esse totale ipsum intelligere*).¹²

This perfect intellect or knowledge can only be known in and through the absence of images in the ground of the soul; first, how-ever, the soul must have become a clear mirror of the divine intellect or knowledge. Recognition of the eternal divine self-knowledge is based on the perfection of the divine knowledge itself, since in its perfection and omnipotence God’s thought and knowledge have already thought and known everything that can be thought and known, namely itself; thus the soul in its empty ground or depth is able to know God’s essence, since the soul has been known in and by the deepest essence of God from all eternity.

Because of its perfection, the eternal divine self-knowledge occurs not in another image or in a medium, but without medium and without image, “for the image itself is the medium (and not some other object). It is an image without image, because it is not reflected in another image. The eternal Word itself is the medium and the image. It is without medium and without image in order that the soul may understand God in the eternal Word and know Him immediately and without image.”¹³

This highest and unmediated knowledge, which is revealed to the human spirit and which is concerned with the inner essence of the Godhead itself, subsumes both knower and known in the identity and unity of the divine self-knowledge. In the eternal actuality of knowledge, that which has been known from all eternity becomes continuously that which knows. But this is the Son, who continuously comes to know the Father, who has always known the Son. Although in language this appears as a sequence, in the divine reality it is the same throughout all eternity; Meister Eckhart says in a sermon: “The Father begets His Son in the eternal knowledge, and in the same way the Father begets His Son in the soul as in His own nature, and begets Him as His

⁹ Clark, p. 178.

¹⁰ Quint, p. 279.

¹¹ Meister Eckhart: *Die lateinischen Werke*, Vol. IV, Stuttgart 1956, p. 270.

¹² Meister Eckhart: *Die lateinischen Werke*, Vol. I, Stuttgart 1964, p. 314.

¹³ Clark, p. 178.

own in the soul. His being depends upon His begetting His Son in the soul, whether He will or no.”¹⁴

The birth of the Son as participation of the soul in the inner life of the Godhead can only take place in the soul if the soul has become so pure and undefiled that it has become as nothing; it is only into such purity that God can bear his Son or his word. The purification of the soul is the exposure of the divine light or image which was hidden therein, this image being the absence of images; “the more clearly a man uncovers God’s image in himself, the more God is born in him.”¹⁵

Man’s task is thus to extinguish images, space and time, and finally his own identity, so that God himself can take its place. Only by totally renouncing everything which is external can man fulfill his ultimate destiny, which is fulfilled “when man lays aside his formation and is formed then by God’s eternity, forgetting totally this transient life, and being transformed in the divine image, becoming a child of God. There is nothing higher than this; and here is tranquility and joy, since the ultimate goal of the inner man and the new man is: eternal life.”¹⁶

Jacob Boehme

Eternal life, which is the ultimate goal of the inner and new man, was the original destination for the first man who “was created in Paradise to the life eternal in the image of God”.¹⁷

Jacob Boehme compares the way in which the first man was made in the image of God with a mirror in which God’s wisdom can directly behold itself. This vision and presence of the divine wisdom or *sophia* in the center of the first man, in his soul or in his heart, gives rise to the original unity between God and man in a single reciprocal seeing and knowing. Jacob Boehme refers to the soul, which can perfectly know and see God’s inner essence, and also the inner essence of God itself, as eye and mirror. The eye sees when light is reflected in it, and this eye of the soul can see even into the deepest essence of the Godhead, should the light of the divine power and wisdom be reflected in it. God’s eye mirrors his own unfathomable depths, which the *philosophus teutonicus* denotes as his groundlessness. This is the mirror and the “eye which sees, and yet conducts nothing in the seeing wherewith it seems”¹⁸, since the essence of God is His “seeing in itself, for there is nothing before it that were deeper there”.¹⁹ In the depths of his

¹⁴ Clark, p. 174.

¹⁵ Meister Eckhart: *Die deutschen Werke*, Vol. II, Stuttgart 1936, p. 689.

¹⁶ Quint, p. 143.

¹⁷ Jacob Boehme: *Mysterium Magnum*, 18, 4, translated by John Sparrow, Vol. I, London 1924, p. 122.

¹⁸ Jacob Boehme: *Six Theosophic Points*, Point 1, 1, 8, translated by John Rolleston Earle, London 1919, p. 6.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, Point 1, 1, 9.

groundlessness, “He is the One; in reference to the creature, as an eternal Nothing; he hath neither foundation, beginning, nor abode; he possesseth nothing, save only himself; he is the will of the abyss; he is in himself only one; he needeth neither space, nor place; he begetteth himself in himself, from eternity to eternity; he is neither like nor resembleth anything; and hath no peculiar place where he dwelleth; the eternal wisdom or understanding is his dwelling; he is the will of the wisdom; the wisdom is his manifestation”.²⁰ Wisdom as manifestation is, however, the mirror in which the ground-less eye of God sees and beholds itself.

The divine self-knowledge proceeds without beginning from the groundless will,

for the eternal will, which comprehends the eye or the mirror, wherein lies the eternal seeing as its wisdom, is Father. And that which is eternally grasped in wisdom, the grasp comprehending a basis or centre in itself, passing out of the ungroundedness into a ground, is Son or Heart; for it is the Word of life, or its essentiality, in which the will shines forth with luster. And the going within itself to the centre of the ground is Spirit; for it is the finder, who from eternity continually finds where there is nothing. It goes forth from the centre of the ground, and seeks in the will. And then the mirror of the eye, viz. the Father’s and Son’s wisdom, becomes manifest; and wisdom stands accordingly before the Spirit of God, who in it manifests the unground.²¹

The complete and eternal self-knowledge and self-revelation of the Godhead in its tripleness is reflected in wisdom seen as the eye of the divine groundlessness. The tripleness of the Godhead Boehme calls the clear Godhead and also eternal freedom.

God’s eye and his vision is twofold, since

one part goes ahead into still eternity, into the eternal nothingness, into freedom; the other retreats into desire, causes darkness in the desire, and therein the *Centrum Naturae*, and raises this darkness to a great fear and acuteness. For then out of the fear through the darkness the will sinks again into the still Freedom, and accordingly out of the fear brings with it the fury of mobility and the severe acuteness. In this acuteness, the freedom (when the acuteness of the will leads into it) becomes a triumphant, majestic light, namely the Light of God, which eternally shines and can be confined by nothing, since it shines forth into the eternal freedom and desires nothing more.²²

²⁰ Jacob Boehme: *Mysterium Magnum*, 1, 2, translated by John Sparrow, Vol. I, London 1924, p. 1.

²¹ Jacob Boehme: *Six Theosophic Points*, Point 1, 1, 15-16, translated by John Rolleston Earle, London 1919.

²² Jacob Boehme: *Forty Questions*, Qu. 12, 8, translated according to the edition of the complete works of

Thus the circle of the divine self-knowledge and self-revelation is closed, from the groundless depths of the Godhead to the light of God. This revelation is mediated through the eternal nature in God, which must not be confused with temporal, external nature. The eternal nature in God has its ground and beginning in the eternal will of groundlessness, since “God wills to beget God and to manifest himself through Nature.”²³ This movement of the eternal will becomes a desire which contains itself within itself, leading to its own eclipse. Boehme calls this divine emanation the first principle in God and in accordance with this principle of the divine world of darkness, God is named an angry God. In the consuming flash of fire arising out of the anxiety and severity of this darkness, the groundlessness flashes up as consuming fire. The flash reaches from the nothingness of the groundlessness into its totality and therein the divine light bursts forth. This kingdom of light is the second principle in God and, in accordance with this principle, God is named a loving and merciful God. This flash out of the groundlessness is nothing but the vision of the groundless eye of God, which looks both inwardly and outwardly.

Corresponding to the two eyes of God, the soul also has two eyes, a left and a right, “which are situated such that one sees into eternity while the other looks back into (external) nature and goes forth and seeks its desires”.²⁴ The right eye, which is able to see into eternity, has lost its divine power through Adam’s fall and has thus become blind to spiritual vision. Since mankind “in Adam have lost the divine sight, in which Adam saw by the divine power, Christ saith: You must be born anew; else you cannot see the kingdom of God” *John*, 3: 3.²⁵ The mystery of rebirth is indeed associated with the holy names of Jesus and Christ.

The name of Christ originates in the name of Jesus and to invoke these names leads to rebirth. Jacob Boehme explains the metaphysical content of these with the help of natural language. In the name of Jesus,

the syllable JE... [is] his descent from the Father into mankind, and the syllable SUS is the entry of souls through heaven into the Trinity, as the syllable SUS surges through everything into the heights. Moreover, the name Christus is understood thus: it embraces not his anthropogenesis but his passing through death as a born man, since the syllable CHRIS penetrates death and signifies his entry into death and the mighty conflict; the syllable TUS, however, signifies his great might, his penetration through and exit from death. In the word one fully comprehends the truth of how he separates the realm of this world and that of the angelic man, and how the angelic man remains in God; for the syllable TUS is

Jacob Boehme, Stuttgart 1955-1961.

²³ Jacob Boehme: *De Electione Gratiae*, 4, 42, translated by John Rolleston Earle, London 1930, p. 61.

²⁴ Jacob Boehme: *Forty Questions*, Qu. 12, 13, Stuttgart 1960.

²⁵ Jacob Boehme: *Mysterium Magnum*, 8, 28, translated by John Sparrow, Vol. I, London 1924, p. 45.

purely without death.²⁶

God reveals the name of Jesus through Christ. Through the name of Jesus, man is reborn into the divine light and in the repetitive voicing of the name Jesus the wisdom of God or *sophia* becomes manifest in man once more. In the repetitive voicing of the name of Jesus, the soul is purified from all imagery and is then able to wed the heavenly virgin, *sophia* or divine wisdom. This betrothal of God and man is, however, rebirth, which is a rupture of the spirit through the incusted imagery of this world. Jacob Boehme describes his own experience of this breakthrough in his first writing *Aurora*, which he wrote for himself. He narrates the deep distress and tribulation which afflicted him in the face of this world and writes:

“But when in this tribulation my spirit (for I understood little or nothing of what it was) elevated itself earnestly to God by a great assault, my whole heart and soul together with all my thoughts and will being included therein, to wrestle without ceasing with the love and mercy of God, and not give over unless he blessed me, that is, unless he enlightened me with his holy Spirit, so that I might understand his will and be freed from my sadness; then did the spirit break through. But when in my applied zeal I made so fierce an onslaught against God and all the gates of hell, as if there existed in me still more power, being ready to hazard my life upon it (which certainly had not been possible to me without the assistance of the Spirit of God), straightaway after some hard assaults my spirit broke through the gates of hell even to the inmost birth of the Deity, and was there embraced with love, as a bridegroom embraces his dear bride. But what kind of triumphing there was in the spirit, I cannot express either in speech or writing. Neither can it be compared with anything, save with that where life is born in the midst of death, and it is to be likened to resurrection from the dead.”²⁷

In the light of this breakthrough, Jacob Boehme became able to look into the heart of all things. His spiritual vision was, however, the vision of wisdom or *sophia*, which had betrothed herself to his heart. As lover of this truth, as *philosophus* in the true sense of the word, he could write:

Not I, the I that I am, knows it but God knows it in me.

Wisdom is his bride and the children of Christ, in Christ, in wisdom, are also God's bride. So now the Spirit of Christ dwells in the children of Christ, and the children of Christ are grapes on the vine of Christ and with him are one body and also one spirit. Whose then is the knowledge, is it mine or God's? For in the spirit of Christ should I not know from what this world is created, if He who dwells in me is the same as He who created it? Should He not know it? So now I suffer, and want to know nothing, the I (*ich*) that I (*ich*) am, as a part of the outer world, so

²⁶ Jacob Boehme: *Three Principles*, 22, 87-88, Stuttgart 1960.

²⁷ Jacob Boehme: *Aurora*, 19, 10-12, Stuttgart 1955.

that He may know in me what He will. I am not the mother who bears the knowledge, but my spirit is His wife, on which He begets the knowledge in the measure that He wishes. Just as God's eternal wisdom is a body, in which He begets what He will, so begets He now, and I do nothing, but He in me. I am as though dead in the begetting of the high wisdom, and He is my life; I have neither searched for the wisdom nor learnt it. He has a special liking for my person, and my person for him. But now I am dead and understand nothing, but He is my understanding; so I say, I live in God and God in me, and thus from Him I teach and write, dear brothers; otherwise I know nothing.²⁸

Angelus Silesius

Angelus Silesius summarized his spiritual vision in rhymes whose beauty is filled with an inner certainty that derives directly from the knowledge of the divine being. This direct knowledge of God is founded on the identity of essence between God and the soul, which occurs when the soul once more corresponds to its original state of being created in the image of God.

The soul is made in the image of God in that God has imprinted his own essence therein. The essence of God, however, is an unutterable and unfathomable mystery, and therefore Angelus Silesius negates all affirmative statements about God.

What God is one knows not: He is not light, not spirit,
Not joy, not unity, not what one calls Godhead:
Not wisdom, not sense, not love, will, goodness:
No thing, no non-thing either, no being, no mind:
He is what I, and you, and any creature,
Never learned before we have become what He is.²⁹

These negations mainly serve to extinguish all pictures of God and to indicate the divine unity, into which everything must return:

Everything proceeds from the One, and must return to it except that which wishes to be in duplicity and multiplicity.³⁰

In the One all is one: if two returns to the One
then with it is in essence a single One.³¹

²⁸ Jacob Boehme: *II. Apology for Balthasar Tilke*, Stuttgart 1960.

²⁹ Angelus Silesius: *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*, IV, 21, Jena 1914.

³⁰ *Ibid*, V, 1.

³¹ *Ibid*, V, 6.

That the proper essence of God, the inseparable One, is void of definition and picture is imprinted in the soul as an essential characteristic of its being made in the image and likeness of God.

More than the soul is in the body, and more than the understanding is in the mind, is God's essence in you and in your hut³²

The hut is the hidden ground of the soul, whose identity of essence with God consists of its being without picture and definition. In its sameness with God, the ground of the soul is not bound by time and space; it stands in the eternal now of the divine life. If the soul soars into its hidden ground, then it becomes as the "place and eternal word",³³ whereby place signifies the divine Father, who utters and knows himself eternally in his Son or word, which are essentially as He.

The Ineffable which one is accustomed to call God.
Is expressed and made known through a single Word.³⁴

The Father shares totally his complete divine essence with his Son or word, and the Son is eternal as is the Father.

The place and the word are one, and were the place not in eternal eternity! it would not be the word³⁵

The eternal love in this unity of Father and Son is the Holy Spirit. In this tripleness of Father, Son and Spirit, the self-knowledge and love of God takes place in all eternity:

God kisses himself within himself, his kiss is his Spirit;
the Son is he who is kissed, the Father he who kisses.³⁶

Moreover this tripleness remains a unity, without beginning and without end.

There is no beginning, there is also no end,
there is neither centre nor circle, wherever I turn.³⁷

³² *Ibid*, IV, 155.

³³ *Ibid*, I, 89.

³⁴ *Ibid*, IV, 9.

³⁵ *Ibid*, I, 205.

³⁶ *Ibid*, VI, 238.

³⁷ *Ibid*, II, 188.

The soul with its hidden ground is drawn into this inner life of the Godhead, because it is made in the image of God and thus divine. Arising from this ground the ultimate and sole meaning is imparted to the soul, a meaning which comes from God, flows back into God and is in fact God in his deepest essence.

If I am to find my final end and first beginning,
Then I must ground myself in God, and God in me
And become what He is: I must be a light in the light,
I must be a word in the Word, a God in God.³⁸

It is God himself who seeks this knowing unity with the deepest ground of the soul; in this ground the soul knows not what it is.

I know not what I am; I am not what I know;
A thing and not a thing, a point and a circle³⁹

The eternal divine self-knowledge and love rise into this void of definition and occur therein as the birth of the Son, since God has but one knowledge and but one love, and if God eternally knows and loves himself in his Son, then he knows and loves himself to the same extent in the ground of the soul in its divine similarity and sameness.

The spiritual birth which manifests itself in me
is one with her through whom the Father begets the Son.⁴⁰

God himself beholds himself as Son in the eye, which is the soul and which is able to see into the innermost essence of the deity.

Two eyes has the soul: one regards time
the other looks towards eternity.⁴¹
The soul, whose heart God wishes to reach,
looks with only one eye—the right one—at the goal.⁴²

This soul with its right eye, wherein God in his eternal self-knowledge can mirror himself, is the true image of God.

³⁸ *Ibid*, I, 6.

³⁹ *Ibid*, I, 5.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, V, 250.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, III, 228.

⁴² *Ibid*, V, 336.

I bear God's image: if he wishes to contemplate himself;
he can do so only in me, or one like me⁴³

Without this perspicacity for the self-knowledge and love of God, man himself would not be able to know and to love God:

Man, if God did not love himself by means of his presence in you,
never more would you be able to love him as is his due.⁴⁴

God's self-knowledge and love cannot be divided and always remain perfect and complete. In this perfection God has known man from all eternity. The soul must return into the eternity of being known in order to know and love God in their sameness of essence.

It is hereby necessary to have already crossed the threshold of death in this life.

Before I was myself, I was God in God;
Thus I may be so again, when I in myself am dead.⁴⁵

This death means a radical renunciation of this world with all its images and forms and finally a renunciation of oneself. This secret death results in the perfect purity of the soul.

Perfect purity is imageless, formless, loveless.
Stripped of every quality, like the essence of God.⁴⁶

The soul has become as nothing and as nothing it coincides with God. In this sameness it can behold God.

He, to whom nothing is as all, and to whom all is as nothing,
he is judged worthy of the most beloved countenance.⁴⁷

As nothing and as all, the soul submerges into "the colorless ocean of the whole Godhead"⁴⁸, which is the consummation of all spiritual vision.

⁴³ *Ibid*, I, 105.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, V, 297.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, V, 233.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, II, 70.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, II, 169.

⁴⁸ *Ibid* I, 115.