

A Medieval Mystic who had the same experience

The Fifth Vision of Hadewijch (Had e week) of Brabant

(Quoted from Hadewijch the Complete Works pages 276-277)

Hadewijch was a Beguine mystic of the mid-thirteenth century. The Beguines were a lay order of religious women who met to recite the Hours outside the confines of a convent. She is the most important exponent of 'love mysticism.' The following is an excerpt from her writings concerning one of her 'visions'.

THREE HEAVENS AND THE TRINITY (Digression on Lucifer)

At Matins on the day of the Assumption, I was taken up for a short while in the spirit: and I was shown the three highest heavens, after which the three highest Angels are named - the Thrones, the Cherubim and the Seraphim. Then came to me the eagle from among *the four living creatures* (Ezech. 1:5-6; Apoc. 4:6-8), sweet Saint John the Evangelist, and he said: "Come and behold the things I saw as a man; all that I saw only in symbol, you have seen disclosed and entire; you have understood them, and you know what they are like."

12. And in thinking about what Saint John had said to me here, I fell on my face in great woe, and my woe cried aloud: "Ah, ah! (Jer. 1:6) Holy Friend and true Omnipotence, why do you let those who are ours wander off to alien things, and why do you not flow through them in our oneness? I have my whole will with you besides, and I love and hate with you, like you. For now – since you once again give me assurance – I am no longer a Lucifer, like those who are now Lucifer and wish that good and grace be given them, when they offer entry neither in their lives, nor

in their works, nor in their service; and they wish to get rid of their labor, and they wish to enjoy grace; and they exalt themselves and, because you show them a little of your goodness, they wish to have it as their right. And they fall from your heavenly honor; this you made known to me.”

30. “In one thing I did wrong in the past, **to the living and the dead, whom I with desire would have freed from purgatory and from hell as my right. But for this be you blessed: Without anger against me, you gave me four among the living and the dead who then belonged to hell. Your goodness was tolerant of my ignorance, and of my thoughtless desires, and of the unrestrained charity that you gave me in yourself for men. For I did not then know your perfect justice.** I fell into this fault and was Lucifer because I did not know this, although on that account I did no evil in your eyes. This was the one thing because of which I fell among men, so that I remained unknown to them, and they were cruel to me. **Through love I wished to snatch the living and the dead from all debasement of despair and of wrongdoing, and I caused their pain to be lessened, and those dead in hell to be sent to purgatory, and those living in hell to be brought to the heavenly mode of life.** Your goodness was tolerant of me in this and showed me that for this reason I had fallen in that way among those people.”

52. “Then you took myself into yourself and gave me to know what you are, and that you hate and love in one same Being. Then I understood how I must hate and love wholly with you, and how I must be in all respects. Because I know this, I desire of you that you will make those who are ours all one with us.”

59. And he who sat on the throne in heaven said to me: “These three thrones I am in Three Persons – Throne, Man; the Cherubim, the Holy spirit; and the seraphim, in my fruition, in which I am all.” And he took me out of the spirit in that highest fruition of wonder beyond reason; there I had fruition of him as I shall have eternally.

65. the time was short, and when I came to myself he brought me again into the spirit and spoke to me thus: “As you now have fruition of this, you shall have fruition of it eternally.”

68. And John said to me: “Go to your burden, and God shall renew his old wonders (cf. Ecclesiasticus 36:5) in you.”

71. And I came back into my pain again with many a great woe.

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