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# Hildegard von Bingen

A Journey into the Images

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#### **II.1**

#### The Word

#### The Word of God and his salvific acts

This is my Beloved Son, whom I sent to die for the people (II.1,15, 122; Matthew 3:17).

God appears in the form of flames, one inside the other, like the viscera in the human body. God Omnipotent, the MOST LUCID FIRE [1], has the Word within him, the FLAME THE COLOR OF AIR [2], the infinite, sole, full Word of God, celestial.

The DARK AIR [3], which represents the creation, instrumentum, 1 issues from the now incandescent flames. The sky, Earth, creatures, and MAN/ADAM [4] issue from the flames of God, as if from a blacksmith's blows. The birth of creation is depicted in the six circles representing the six days of Genesis (Genesis 1:1–31). The MAN/ADAM [4] emerges from the depths of the DARK AIR [3]. He rises from a small CLOD OF MUDDY EARTH [5], upon which the flame places its fire and ardor.

Finally, the flame offers a MOST CANDID<sup>2</sup> FLOWER [7], sweet obedience, to the LIVING HUMAN BEING [6]. Its perfume reaches the nostrils of man, but he does not taste it and does not touch it; he rejects it and thus sinks into the DARKNESS [8] of the vices that, having grown, expand and spread.

THREE LARGE STARS [9] appear here, the manifestation of the Trinity on Earth. They are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who, united by the Faith and their blood bond, fight the darkness. MANY OTHER STARS [10]<sup>3</sup> appear after them, the Prophets; finally, THE BIGGEST STAR OF ALL [11] appears, John the Baptist (see Matthew 11:11), the last of the Prophets who announce the coming of the Son of God.

It is at this moment that God sends to the Earth a FULGOR LIKE THE AURORA [12]4 (Song of Songs 6:9), the Virgin Mary, indissolubly tied to the heavenly flame. Christ rises from her (his birth), the MOST SERENE MAN [13] who, with the Light of CLARITY [14]—the Blessedness of the doctrine and salvation—lights up the darkness, which, however, rejects him. The Son of God then turns against it, but the non-believers reject him (the Passion) and lead him to death. With his blood, he defeats the demon

and frees from Hades the PALLID<sup>5</sup> MAN LANGUISHING IN THE DARKNESS [15] (See 1 Peter 3:19–20). He then appears in great CLARITY [14] (his Resurrection) and, finally, he soars in the resonant nobility of the sublime sounds of infinite glory (his Ascension).6

<sup>1</sup> Instrumentum: firmament (I.3); Creation (II.1).

 $^2$  Candid: cloud/Eve (I.2); globe/Moon (I.3); cloud (I.5); flower (II.1); garment (II.3); splendor (II.5); cloud/Wisdom (III.1a); sparks (III.1b); three wings (III.5); steps (III.10); feet of the Church (III.11); seat of Christ the Judge (III.12a).

<sup>3</sup> Stars: humanity (I.2); Prophets (II.1); John the Baptist (II.1); Lucifer (III.1b); stars (III.12b).

<sup>4</sup> Aurora: Only Son (I.4a); circle (I.5, III.1a, and III.2); Thrones (I.6); Virgin Mary (II.1); fulgor (II.3); splendor (II.5).

<sup>5</sup> Pallid: Poverty of Spirit (I.1); pallid from head to navel (I.5); man languishing in the darkness (II.1); face (III.10); horse

<sup>6</sup> The four moments of Christ's life are recalled in four circles in The Crucifixion (II.6).

MOST LUCID FIRE [1] The Omnipotence of God

FLAME THE COLOR OF AIR [2] The Word

DARK AIR [3] Creation, instrumentum, at its beginning (The six days of creation)

MAN/ADAM [4]

CLOD OF MUDDY EARTH [5] Weak, fragile humanity

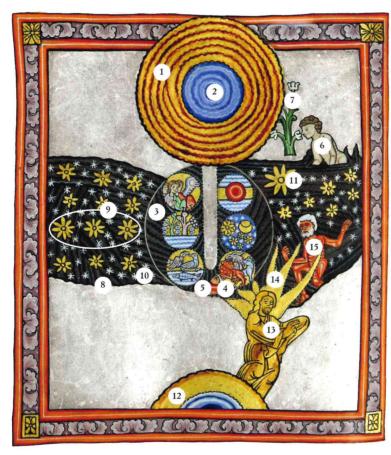
DARKNESS [8] The mortal power of the darkness

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob

MANY OTHER STARS [10] The Prophets

THREE LARGE STARS [9]

THE BIGGEST STAR OF ALL [11] John the Baptist



Part II.1 - Vision 7 - Miniature 10 - Chapters 17 - Fol. 41v - Whole

LIVING HUMAN BEING [6] Adam

MOST CANDID FLOWER [7] The sweet precept of obedience that keeps us close to the Word

FULGOR LIKE THE AURORA [12] Incarnation of the Word in the Mother (Mary)

MOST SERENE MAN [13] The Word of God

HIS CLARITY SHINES ON DARKNESS [14] The most lucid Blessedness of the doctrine and salvation brought by the Word

MAN LANGUISHING IN THE DARKNESS [15] He gets up and leaves it es the PALLID<sup>5</sup> MAN LANGUISHING 5] (See 1 Peter 3:19–20). He then RITY [14] (his *Resurrection*) and, *re resonant nobility of the sublime ory* (his *Ascension*).<sup>6</sup>

nent (I.3); Creation (II.1).
2); globe/Moon (I.3); cloud (I.5); flower plendor (II.5); cloud/Wisdom (III.1a); rings (III.5); steps (III.10); feet of the Christ the Judge (III.12a).
2 rophers (II.1); Lohn the Benriet (II.1).

Prophets (II.1); John the Baptist (II.1); II.12b).

ı); circle (I.5, III.1a, and III.2); Thrones ; fulgor (II.3); splendor (II.5). it (I.1); pallid from head to navel (I.5); 2 darkness (II.1); face (III.10); horse

Christ's life are recalled in four circles

G HUMAN BEING [6]

CANDID FLOWER [7]
veet precept of obedience that
us close to the Word

OR LIKE THE AURORA [12] ation of the Word in the r (Mary)

SERENE MAN [13]

Yord of God

ARITY SHINES ON DARKNESS [14] ost lucid Blessedness doctrine and salvation brought Word

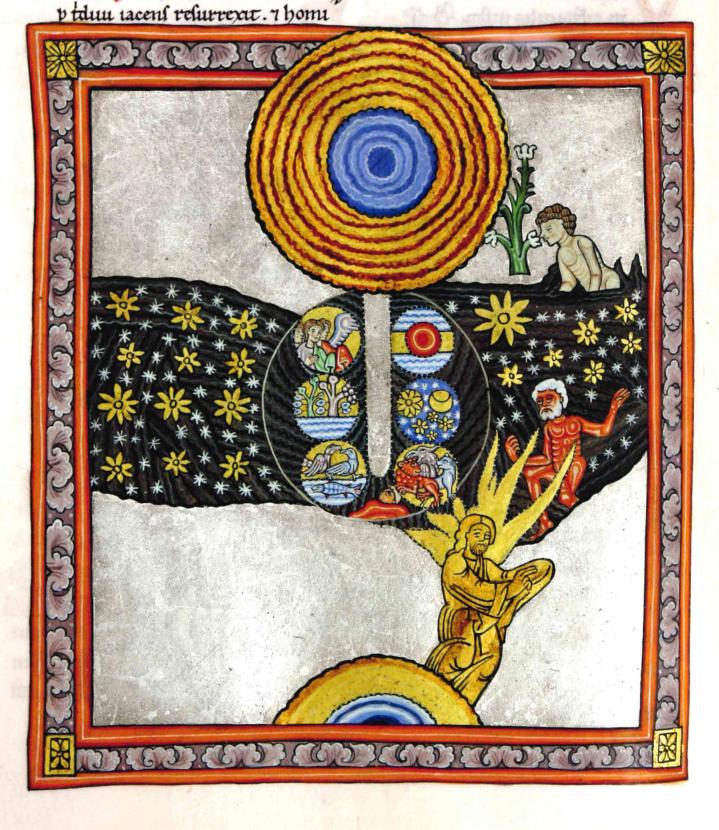
ANGUISHING
DARKNESS [15]
s up and leaves it

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p tdun sacens resurrexit. 7 homi

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Q'd' sill' di a morte resurgent d' cipulis sims srequent ad corroboran.

Q'd' sillo di ascendente ad pares sponsa el dimersis ornantins sim Idata é.



#### **II.2**

## The Three Persons

The Three divine Persons

Thus you see a MOST SERENE LIGHT [1] that, free from the stain of deception, defect, or error, represents the Father, and in it the SAPPHIRE-COLORED FIGURE OF A MAN [2] who, free from the stain of rigidity, envy, or wickedness, signifies the Son, eternally begotten of the Father, according to his divinity, but made flesh in the world and in time according to his humanity. And that light is all ablaze with a most gentle red fire, that, free from the stain of dryness, mortality, or darkness, designates the Holy Spirit, from which the Only Son of God, conceived according to the flesh and born, in time, of the Virgin, spreads the splendor of true clarity through the world. And then the fact that the serene light permeates all the GLOWING FIRE<sup>1</sup> [3], and the glowing fire, in its turn, all the serene light, and the serene light and the glowing fire permeates the whole

figure of the man, being a sole splendor in the unique force of power, means that the Father, who is supremely just equality but not without the Son nor without the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit, which kindles the hearts of the faithful but not without the Father nor without the Son, and the Son who is fullness of the fruits but not without the Father nor without the Holy Spirit, are inseparable in the majesty of divinity (II.2,D, 125).

The One God makes himself visible to man as Three Persons

Against the blue background of the empyrean, the Trinity stands out in the form of concentric circles: the Father, in the "gray/silver" outer circle; the Spirit, in the "red-gold" inner circles; and the Son, the "sapphire-colored" human figure that emerges from the flames.<sup>2</sup>

The Lux vivens describes the Three Persons as Stone, Flame, and Word with their respective characteristics: The three persons are indivisible in the unity of divinity [Athanasian Symbol]. What does this mean? There are three forces in the stone, three in the flame, three in the Word. What does this mean?

In the stone, there is humid fecundity and tangibility and glowing fire. [...] The flame is made of splendent clarity, purple fecundity, and fiery ardor [...]. The word has sound, meaning, and vocal emission (II.2, 5–7, 127–29).

- $^{\rm I}$  Glowing: globe/Sun (I.3); fire (II.2); circle of the aurora (III.1a and III.2); head (III.5).
- $^{\rm 2}$  These three colors are recalled in the Three Splendors of the Church (II.5).

MOST SERENE LIGHT [1]
Father

SAPPHIRE-COLORED FIGURE OF A MAN [2]

GLOWING FIRE [3] Holy Spirit



Part II.2 – Vision 8 – Miniature 11 – Chapters 9 – Fol. 47 – Whole



ribes the Three Persons as Stone, ith their respective characterisms are indivisible in the unity of 1 Symbol]. What does this mean? is in the stone, three in the flame, What does this mean?

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