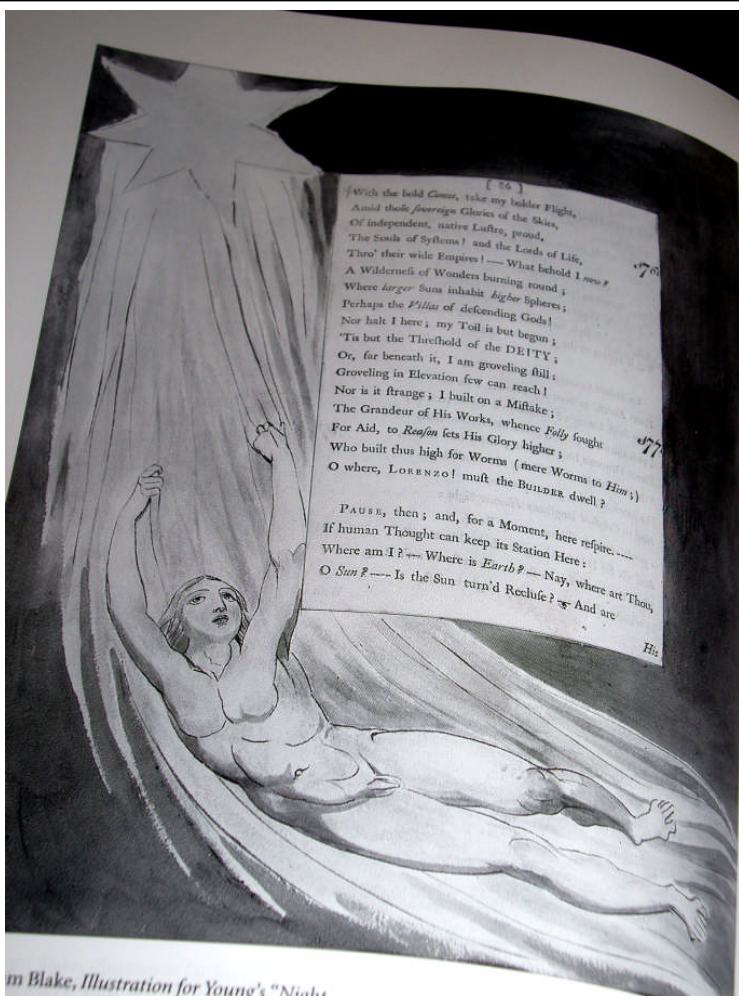


MYSTIC  
CAUGHT UP  
IN COMETS



Blake, Illustration for Young's "Night Thoughts."

With the bold *Comet*, take my bolder Flight,  
Amid the *sovereign* Glories of the Skies,  
Of independent, native Lustre, proud,  
The Souls of Systems! and the Lords of Life,  
Thro[ugh] their wide Empires!  
... 'Tis but the Threshold of the DEITY;  
Or, far beneath it, I am groveling still;  
Groveling in Elevation few can reach!....

Illustration by William Blake (1757-1827) for Young's "Night Thoughts," Olson and Pasachoff 1998:92.

Blake, poet and painter... [and] a mystic of great complexity and singular thought... was captivated by comet/meteor symbolism. In his visual oeuvre, we find at least twenty works with comets, meteors, or shooting stars. ... He belongs to a trend reacting against the rationalism of the Enlightenment ... [as is] shown in his highly imaginative images of comets and meteors." [Ibid,80-81]



Puebloan self-portrait? petroglyph of the upper Rio Grande, NM, has the comet/*mysterious-power zig zag motif above and thru* this figure standing transfixed in an *orans*, or prayerful, position with up-raised arms. Star-maker Coyote is hidden in the pecking marks at the right armpit, and the pincers-comet sign is below the left foot.

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