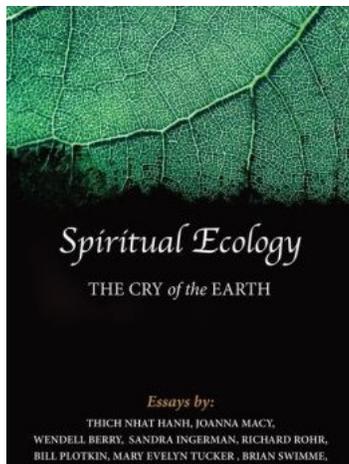




Discussion Guide

About the Book



Book Title: *Spiritual Ecology: The Cry of the Earth*

Author: (Editor) Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee

Published 2013, The Golden Sufi Center

About the author: http://www.goldensufi.org/about_lv1.html

Book Website: spiritualecology.org

Available on Amazon/Kindle, Barnes and Noble/Nook

Book trailer: See link on Question #1 below

Questions for Discussion

1. **View the book trailer at <http://spiritualecology.org/video/spiritual-ecology-cry-earth-book-trailer>. What is your initial response to this book? What was Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee's purpose in developing this collection?**
2. **Which of the essays was most memorable to you and why?**
3. **Sometimes, thinking about the ecological crisis can be overwhelming. It seems that avoidance and denial are part of the grief process. Are you experiencing grief about the destruction of our environment and climate change? If so, in what stage are you in?**
4. **Many poets contribute to this book. Read some of these selections out loud and discuss why you believe that Vaughn-Lee included it in the collection. What does the poem mean to you?**

E. E. Cummings (Page 13 - before chapter 2)

Rumi (Page 47 - before Chapter 6)

Mechthild of Magdeberg, (Page 75 - before Chapter 8)

Wendell Berry, (Page 78 - Chapter 8)

Black Elk (Page 83 - before Chapter 9)

Gerard Manly Hopkins (Page 233 - before chapter 19)

Ibn 'Arabi (Page 234 - before chapter 20)

5. **Do you agree with the writers in this book that there is a deep spiritual mystery and wisdom within creation. If so, what spiritual practice or great work does this call you to do?**
6. **Read the MAMs comments on this book. With whom do you most agree with and why?**
7. **In what ways, if any, will this book change your life?**
8. **On the author's website there are wonderful resources, videos and articles by the writers in this book. Check them out at: <http://spiritualecology.org/resources>. Watch something together, or read some more articles and discuss.**

Nancy and the MAMs discuss the book...



Nancy: I chose this book for the MAMs Book Club because I believe it is a prophetic treatise for our time. Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee brings together modern prophets who explain our future depends on our ability to listen and honor the sacred nature of life. The book calls for movement toward sustainable earth, a call which emerges from the heart of our mysterious and miraculous universe. The universe birthed us and now becomes conscious of itself through our awareness – as we are all integrally part of the original fabric of creation.

Come, read and meet amazing people. Thomas Berry, a Catholic priest, tells us that this is “our great work.” Wendell Berry, a Christian poet who farms the land and critiques our culture. Thich Nhat Hanh, a Buddhist monk, – who teaches mindfulness and waking up to how we are destroying our earth. Mary Tucker and Brian Swimme who teach us the value of the new scientific cosmology. Native Americans, Winona LaDuke and Chief Oren Lyons who call us back to an understanding of nature and Spirit in their people’s history.

When I consider the ecological crisis, I quickly become overwhelmed and depressed. But when I read this book, when I meditate, when I encounter the wise Spirit at the heart of creation, I am hopeful and I begin to tune into my own role in leading us to a sustainable path. So, I’m working on a sequel to *Revelation in the Cave* on this topic. I have a website and a blog; and a MAMs Book Club website... and I will start promoting the MAMs Book Club website soon, because I believe this is the defining moment for all of our lives. Will you join me in this quest? Together, we can work to make a difference for our children and grandchildren.



PRISCILLA: This will take time for me to digest this book. I keep wondering what Jesus would say about this book. I know the Bible teaches that we should be stewards of the earth and that God speaks to us through the mountains, waters, out of the nature. It’s such a different viewpoint than I’ve been taught. I’m trying to reconcile it with my beliefs.



ABIGAIL: The Quakers listen for that still, small voice within. That’s why we have silent meetings. Truth arrives when we open ourselves to hear. Yes, I believe the earth is deeply spiritual and as we listen, we will find the answers. I find this book deeply encouraging.



MOLLY: God led the people out of slavery in Egypt. He led my people out of slavery in the USA. God is about leading people into a better place; so I’m with Hushpuppy from *The Call of the Wild*. I believe we need to listen to God within creation to find our way.



SALLIE: Wendell Berry is my hero! An academic who went back to farming, and yes, a prophet. He slams the stock market, war, modern inventions, even human genius wanting instead to be a true human being, focusing on “the intelligence of the heart that we gather from the world, from the creatures, from the angels of inspiration, from the dead.” I’ve loved his poetry for years. And he’s right. I want to be a true human being with him. (p. 78-82)



KATHERINE: Thank you, Nancy, for choosing this book. I hadn’t seen it yet. I’m going to have my students read it in our Spiritual Ecology seminar next semester. A great collection of spiritual teachers, who all teach spiritual reverence for the earth. Unfortunately, the Christian church has not been a leader in this area. I’m hoping that is changing. It must.



JANE: Yes, Priscilla. I don’t usually agree with you, but I do find myself wondering a little when I read this book. Really? Is God within the inherent nature of the universe, speaking to us and showing us the way to solve the ecological crisis? I hope so, but I’m a little skeptical.