

Michael Jordan

Last night, Michael Jordan announced his retirement from the NBA and I cried. Dante never watched Jordan play basketball, but I think that he would have known that he was seeing something special. For me, Jordan's performances were about as close to religious experiences as I can imagine. It is rare in my life that something touches me in a truly meaningful way. A speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a song by the Beatles or Simon and Garfunkel, a quiet walk in the woods at night; these are things that make a spring of feeling well up within me. To that list, I add the experience of watching basketball as played by Michael Jordan. I truly believe that in Dante's world, Jordan is one of those people who shines back at God in such a way that thousands of others can bask in that splendor and be filled by it. Dorothy Sayers says that we can't see our essence as God sees it until we reach Heaven," but it seems to me that we can see a little bit of Jordan's essence when he plays basketball. Maybe that is the power that fuels exceptional people, God allows them to show their essence in little glimpses on earth. Jordan's essence is shown in this game, so he moves at what seems an inhuman rate. When Dorothy Sayers talks about Dante/poet's idea of "ingodding," she means that in Heaven we will see as God sees because fruition with God will have happened. Well, I would like to talk about "in-Jordaning." When I watch Jordan play, I can maybe see basketball as he does for an instant, and after seeing that perfect vision, I get a little insight into the game that I love. So I cried last night because I realized that I was losing one of the few things that has given me a glimpse of truth. I wish Michael Jordan luck, and I thank him for the joy that he gave me.