

12 GOD

1. The Hindu does not want to live upon words and theories. If there are existences beyond the ordinary sensuous existence, he wants to come face to face with them. If there is a soul in him which is not matter, if there is an all-merciful universal soul, he will go to Him direct He must see Him, and that alone can destroy all doubts. So the best proof a Hindu sage gives about the soul, about God, is-"I have seen the soul; I have seen God,"

2. Remember the words of Christ-"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." These words are literally true, not figures or fiction. They were the outflow of the heart's blood of one of the greatest sons of God, who have ever come to this world of ours; words which came as the fruit of realisation, from a man who had felt and realised God Himself; who had spoken with God, lived with God, a hundred times more intensely, than you or I see this building.

3. If conformity is the law of the universe, every part of the universe must have been built on the same plan as the whole. So we naturally think that behind the gross material form which we call this universe of ours, there must be a universe of finer matter, which we call thought, and behind that there must be a Soul, which makes all this thought possible, which commands, which is the enthroned king of this universe. That soul which is behind each mind and each body is called "Pratyagatman" the individual Atman, and that Soul which is behind the universe as its guide, ruler and governor, is God.

4. Whatever may be the position of Philosophy, whatever may be the position of Metaphysics, so long as there is such a thing as death in the world, so long as there is such a thing as weakness in the human heart, so long as there is a cry going out of the heart of man in his very weakness, there shall be a faith in God.

5. The child rebels against law as soon as it is born. Its first utterance is a cry, a protest against the bondage in which it finds itself. This longing for freedom produces the idea of a Being who is absolutely free. The concept of God is a fundamental element in the human constitution. In the Vedanta, Sat-chit-ananda Existence- Knowledge-Bliss is the highest concept of God possible to the mind. It is the essence of knowledge and is by its nature the essence of bliss.

6. From Whom all beings are projected, in Whom all live, and unto Whom they all return; that is God.

7. The whole of Nature is worship of God. Wherever there is life, there is this search for freedom and that freedom is the same as God.

8. We go through the world like a man pursued by a policeman and see the barest glimpses of the beauty of it. All this fear that pursues us comes from believing in matter. Matter gets its whole existence from the presence of mind behind it. What we see is God percolating through Nature.

9. God is still established upon His own majestic changeless Self. You and I try to be one with Him, but plant ourselves upon Nature, upon the trifles of daily life, on money, on fame, on human love and all these changing forms in Nature which make for bondage.

10. When Nature shines, upon what depends the shining? Upon God and not upon the sun nor the moon nor the stars. Wherever anything shines, whether it is the light in the sun or in our own consciousness, it is He. He shining, all shines after Him.

11. After so much austerity I have understood this as the real truth-God is present in every Jiva; there is no other God besides that. "Who serves Jiva, serves God indeed."

12. All beings, great or small, are equally manifestations of God; the difference is only in the manifestation.

13. The sum total of this whole universe is God Himself. Is God then matter? No, certainly not, for matter is that God perceived by the five senses; that God as perceived by the intellect is mind; and when the spirit sees. He is seen as spirit. He is not matter, but whatever is real in matter is He.

14. There are two ideas of God in our Scriptures; the one the personal, and the other the impersonal. The idea of the Personal God is that He is the omnipresent creator, preserver and destroyer of everything, the eternal Father and Mother of the universe, but One who is eternally separate from us and from all souls; and liberation consists in coming near to Him and living in Him. Then there is the other idea of the Impersonal, where all those adjectives are taken away as superfluous, as illogical, and there remains an impersonal, omnipresent Being who cannot be called a knowing being, because knowledge only belongs to the human mind. He cannot be called a thinking being, because that is a process of the weak only. He cannot be called a reasoning being, because reasoning is a sign of weakness. He cannot be called a creating being, because none creates except in bondage. What bondage has He? None works except for the fulfilment of desires; what desires has He? None works except it be to supply some wants; what wants has He? In the Vedas it is not the word "the" that is used, but "It" for "He" would make an invidious distinction, as if God were a man.

15. Personal God is as much an entity for Himself as we are for ourselves, and no more. God can also be seen as a form, just as we are seen. As men we must have God; as gods we need none. This is why Sri Ramakrishna constantly saw the Divine Mother ever present with him, more real than any other thing around him; but in Samadhi all went but the Self, Personal God comes nearer and nearer until He melts away and there is no more Personal God and no more T^ all is merged in the Self.

16. A man who understands and believes in the Impersonal-John Stuart Mill, for example -may say that a Personal God is impossible, and cannot be proved. I admit with him that a Personal God cannot be demonstrated. But He is the highest reading of the Impersonal that can be reached by the human intellect, and what else is the universe but various readings of the Absolute? It is like a book before us, and each one has brought his

intellect to read it, and each one has to read it for himself.

17. All is Brahman, the One without a second, only the Brahman, as unity or absolute, is too much of an abstraction to be loved and worshipped; so the Bhakta chooses the relative aspect of Brahman, that is, Ishwara, the Supreme Ruler.

18. The Personal God is the same Absolute looked at through the haze of Maya. When we approach Him with the five senses, we can see Him only as the Personal God. The idea is that the Self cannot be objectified. How can the Knower know Itself? But It can cast a shadow, as it were, if that can be called objectification. So the highest form of that shadow, that attempt at objectifying Itself is the Personal God.

19. The Self is the eternal subject, and we are struggling all the time to objectify that Self. And out of that struggle has come this phenomenal universe and what we call matter, and so on. But these are very weak attempts, and the highest objectification of the Self possible to us is the Personal God. This objectification is an attempt to reveal our own nature.

20. Man is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere, but the centre is located on one spot; and God is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is everywhere.

21. Today God is being abandoned by the world because He does not seem to be doing enough for the world. So they say, "Of what good is He?" Shall we look upon God as a mere municipal authority?

22. All these forms and ceremonies, these prayers and pilgrimages, these books, bells, candles and priests, are the preparations; they take off the impurities of the soul; and when the soul becomes pure, it naturally wants to get to the mine of purity, God Himself.

23. We have always heard that every religion insists on our having faith. We have been taught to believe blindly. Well, this idea of blind faith is objectionable, no doubt, but analysing it, we find that behind it is a very great truth. The mind is not to be ruffled by vain arguments, because arguments will not help us to know God. It is a question of fact, and not of argument.

24. I have been asked many times, "Why do you use that word, God? Because it is the best word for our purpose; you cannot find a better word than that, because all the hopes, aspirations and happiness of humanity have been centred in that word. It is impossible now to change the word. Words like these were first coined by great saints, who realised their import and understood their meaning. But as they become current in society, ignorant people take these words, and the result is that they lose their spirit and glory. The word God has been used from time immemorial, and the idea of this cosmic intelligence, and all that is great and holy is associated with it.

25. This competition, cruelty, horror and sighs rending hearts day and night, is the state

of things in this world of ours. If this be the creation of a God, that God is worse than cruel, worse than any devil that man ever imagined. Aye, says the Vedanta, it is not the fault of God that this partiality exists, that this competition exists. Who makes it? We ourselves. There is a cloud shedding its rain on all fields alike. But it is only the field that is well cultivated, which gets the advantages of the shower; another field, which has not been tilled or taken care of, cannot get that advantage. It is not the fault of the cloud. The mercy of God is eternal and unchangeable; it is we that make the differentiation. But how can this difference of some being born happy and some unhappy be explained? They do nothing to make that difference! Not in this life, but they did in their last birth and the difference is explained by this action in the previous life.

26. The highest ideal of every man is called God. Ignorant or wise, saint or sinner, man or woman, educated or uneducated, cultivated or uncultivated, to every human being, the highest ideals of beauty, of sublimity, and of power, gives us the completest conception of the loving and lovable God. These ideals exist, in some shape or other, in every mind naturally; they form a part and parcel of all our minds. All the active manifestations of human nature are- struggles of those ideals to become realised in practical life.

27. Three great gifts we have:

(i) First, a human body. The human mind is the nearest reflection of God, we are "His own image"

(ii) Second, the desire to be free.

(iii) Third, the help of a noble soul who has crossed the ocean of delusion, as a teacher. When you have these three, bless the Lord; you are sure to be free.

28. The Lord alone is true; everything else is untrue; everything else should be rejected for the sake of the Lord. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Serve the Lord and Him alone.

29. Be strong and stand up and seek the God of Love. This is the highest strength. What power is higher than the power of purity? Love and purity govern the world. This love of God cannot be reached by the weak; therefore, be not weak, either physically, mentally, morally, or spiritually.

30. The whole universe is a symbol, and God is the essence behind.

31. The mountains of today were the oceans of yesterday and will be oceans tomorrow. Everything is in a state of flux; the whole universe is a mass of change. But there is One who never changes, and that is God.

32. God is an infinitised human being. It is bound to be so, for so long as we are human we must have a human God.

33. We have to sense God to be convinced that there is a God. We must sense the facts of religion to know that they are facts. Nothing else, and no amount of reasoning, but our own perceptions can make these things real to us, can make my belief firm as a rock.

34. Truth has such a face that anyone who sees that face becomes convinced. The sun does not require any torch to show it; the sun is self- effulgent. If truth requires evidence, what will evidence that evidence?

35. What is the proof of God? Direct perception, Pratyaksha. The proof of this wall is that I perceive it. God has been perceived by all who want to perceive Him. But this perception is no sense-perception at all; it is supersensuous, superconscious.

36. This cosmic intelligence is what people call Lord, or God, or Christ, or Buddha, or Brahman, what the materialists perceive as force and the agnostics as the infinite inexpressible beyond; and we are all parts of that.