

## **4 BUDDHISM**

1. On the philosophic side the disciples of the Great Master dashed themselves against the eternal rocks of the Vedas and could not crush them, and on the other side they took away from the nation that eternal God to which every one, man or woman, clings so fondly. And the result was that Buddhism had to die a natural death in India.
2. Buddha brought the Vedanta to light, gave it to the people, and saved India. A thousand years after his death a similar state of things again prevailed. The mob, the masses, various races, had been converted to Buddhism naturally the teachings of Buddha became in time degenerated, because most of the people were ignorant. Buddhism taught no God, no Ruler of the universe, so gradually the masses brought their gods, devils, and hobgoblins, out again, and a tremendous hotchpotch was made of Buddhism in India.
3. The earlier Buddhists in their rage against the killing of animals, had denounced the sacrifices of the Vedas; and these sacrifices used to be held in every house. There was a fire burning, and that was all the paraphernalia of worship. These sacrifices were obliterated, and in their place came gorgeous temples, gorgeous ceremonies, and gorgeous priests and all that you see in modern times. I smile when I read books written by some modern people who ought to have known better, that Buddha was the destroyer of Brahminical idolatry. Little do they know that Buddhism created Brahminism and idolatry in India.
4. I have every respect and veneration for Lord Buddha, but mark my words, the spread of Buddhism was less owing to the doctrines and the personality of the great preacher, than to the temples that were built, the idols that were erected, and the gorgeous ceremonies that were put before the nation. Thus Buddhism progressed. The little fireplaces in the houses, in which the people poured their libations were not strong enough to hold their own against the gorgeous temples and ceremonies, but later on the whole thing degenerated.
5. The result of Buddha's constant inveighing against a personal God was the introduction of idols into India. In the Vedas they knew them not, because they saw God everywhere, but the reaction against the loss of God as Creator and Friend was to make idols, and Buddha became an idol-so too with Jesus. The range of idols is from wood and stone to Jesus and Buddha, but we must have idols.
6. The Vedanta has no quarrel with Buddhism.  
The idea of the Vedanta is to harmonise all. With the Northern Buddhists we have no quarrel at all. But the Burmese and Siamese and all the Southern Buddhists say that there is a phenomenal world, and ask what right we have to create a noumenal world behind this. The answer of the Vedanta is that this is a false statement. The Vedanta never contended that there is a noumenal and a phenomenal world. There is one. Seen through the senses it is phenomenal, but it is really the noumenal all the time. The man who sees the rope does not see the snake. It is either the rope or the snake, but never the two. So the Buddhistic statement of our position that we believe there are two worlds, is entirely

false. They have the right to say it is the phenomenal if they like, but no right to contend that other men have not the right to say it is the noumenal.

7. The Buddhist tenet, "Non-killing is supreme virtue" is very good, but in trying to enforce it upon all by legislation without paying any heed to the capacities of the people at large. Buddhism has brought ruin upon India. I have come across many a "religious hypocrite" in India, who fed ants with sugar, and at the same time would not hesitate to bring ruin on his own brother for the sake of "filthy lucre"?

8. The master says that selfishness is the great curse of the world; that we are selfish and that therein is the curse. There should be no motive for selfishness. You are like a river passing -a continuous phenomenon. Have no God; have no soul; stand on your feet and do good for good's sake-neither for fear of punishment nor for the sake of going anywhere. Stand sane and motiveless.

9. The great majority of the adherents of Northern Buddhism believe in Mukti and are really Vedantists. Only the Ceylonese accept Nirvana as annihilation.