

OMNIPERVASIVENESS OF GOD

GOD is more than man and the world. He is beyond the relative terms of our existence. He is above the world and its vicissitudes and evolutionary processes. His will omnipotent has brought into being all creatures and things. As the Ultimate cause of all, He is untouched by the imperfections of the world and the souls, by their changes and their sorrows. Having created the world He governs it by His law immutably and ruthlessly. But being essentially good the reign of God is good and righteous. The world in which we dwell is the best possible of all worlds. Browning described such a God in the line

“God’s in his heaven –

All’s right with the world!”

God is God because He is transcendent to the world, uniquely different from the world and the souls.

Mystics and Rishis however knew of another aspect of God. God, though undoubtedly transcendent in the sense of being the Creator and Ruler, is also immanent in the creation. He could be realized not merely as the law immanent in Nature and in oneself but also as present within each and everything. The world and the souls are

not naturally acting according to an original law conferred on them and thus mechanically going round their functions, but are being constantly impelled from within. This impulsion from within in each is the cause of progress that we observe in each soul. Every soul aspires to be greater than what it is. The cause of this aspiration is God within who impels every soul to great endeavour, and this is the urge within Evolution. God is the self of all beings, seated within the heart of each soul, who could be realized if only one yearns for Him, opens out to Him, loves Him with all one's being and dedicates oneself to His service. God can be loved, known and entered into through devotion. Religion includes this immanent realization of God, this knowledge of the fullness of God in His creation – *sarvam vishnumayam jagat*.

The Chandogyopanishad expresses this in the passage: *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*: All this is verily Brahman. The Bhagavad Gita proclaims this as the acme of jnana, to know all this to be Vasudeva: *Vasudevassarvam iti*. Vasudeva is the Self of the world and all, and all these are His body (sarira).

The Isavasyopanishad varies this instruction to suit the realization of God within oneself and all by the seeker, who is ignorant of this saving truth. He has to realize the presence of God within himself. He must strive to bring

down the presence of the Transcendent God into each. The Rishi declares that it could be done, for all things moving and unmoving can become fit for the indwelling of the Lord: *Isavasyam idam sarvam yat kinca jagatyam jagat*. This realization of the possibility of God indwelling actually in each individual makes the meaning of God-filling each, satisfying. **It is not merely the immanence of the Law of God, of His original fiat in things, but the realization of the actual residence within oneself as Self and Soul, atman, that makes religion meaningful to man. Else a rational naturalism would be sufficient for man.**

Hinduism has given several names to God; each name reveals a particular aspect of His unique and eternal Nature. Three popular names however have survived among us, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, answering to the logical existential, the volitional, ethical, and the aesthetic affective ultimate aspect or modes of the One supreme God. Vishnu brings out the aspect of Brahman's personality as the Regnum or Sovereign-principle, who is the Upholder of both the Outer law of Nature and the inner law of the souls. As the name signifies, He is the pervader or omnipervasive Spirit capable of indwelling all creation; He confers and maintains the reign of Dharma and harmony in and through the evolutionary process. As immanent in the process He is eternally actively liberating the souls by making them conscious

of their ultimate Destiny in the world and beyond. As the avatar He uplifts and establishes the reign of dharma, by liberating dharma, in various ways.

Each soul has a dual responsibility, of realizing God within itself as its Self and of regarding Him in others. Thus each individual becomes the body of God, a temple of His presence. This is the realization of God as all this, as filling all this without remainder.

This experience is a transcendent one got through the grace of God but earned through devotion, and selfless dedication to one's inner nature (svadharma) as the body of God, and by intelligent performance of one's duty by one's station in the cosmic and social scheme.