

# SEEING GOD.

We are told that Vivekananda, averse to lead the humdrum life of the world ling, went in search of God; and he asked many whom he met, *pandit* and *pamar*, whether they say God. None could give him an answer. In the end he met Paramahansa Ramakrishna, and he was the only man, he found, he says who could boldly say: “Yes I have seen God”, and Vivekananda was satisfied.

This incident suggests many reflections:-

(1) Vivekananda was an original man. What necessity was there for him to go and ask another man for God? Most men have no faith in truth or God but have only faith in the faith of others. The original, *soi-disant*, man also then fell into the net into which many fall!

(2) If Ramakrishna said: ‘he saw God,’ could that *ipse dixit* constitute a ground for undoubting belief? Supposing any other man in the place of R. K. had said it, would or should it not be believed in? If not, why not?

(3) If 99 men said they did not see God, and one said, he saw, whose is better evidence? Or might the former be stigmatized as creatures of mendacity, and alone the latter the paragon of truth? If the believer in the one or the other is the judge himself in discriminating the one from the other, the true from the false, the possessor of such power of discrimination scarcely need go the others for intelligence. If he believed in one, it is psychologically his own belief. *Ergo*, he need not go in search of a thing which he finds in himself.

(4) If R. K. saw God, did he show Him to Svami Vivekananda? And did V. in turn show God to others, if not to his own countrymen (who probably did not see God) at least to his American friends, who gave him the warm shoulder?

(5) What is the meaning of *seeing* God? If God could be *seen*, He could also be *heard*, *smelt*, *tasted* and *touched*? All put together, it means that God is an object of sensuous perception? If so, Ramakrishna’s senses alone need not see Him, for by virtue of its being an object of sensuous perception, everyone endowed with senses ought to see God; and V. ought to have *seen* Him, say *sensed* Him without the aid of R. K.?

(6) If God can be seen, then is God possessed of form and color? If so, how; if not, how could he be seen? Is seeing God, again, of any of such description as anthropomorphic? Zoomorphic? Theomorphic? Vedas declare:-

*Na mamsa-chakshur abhivikshate Tam.* i.e., ‘the fleshly eye cannot see him.’ Did R. K. then see God with his *fleshly* eyes? Did he make V. see with his *fleshly* eyes again? If not how did V. see God, and how was he *shown* God

(7) Had not anyone else seen God, before R. Krishna? If not, then God ever since the beginning of creation denied Himself to all His creatures and by becoming existent or

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apparent in the case of R. K. alone, proved Himself to be the most partial Entity that could thus claim Godship! In fact, such an entity is something else but God; for in the idea of God which mankind has conceived, is involved the distinguishing characteristic of *impartiality*, the absence of which deprives God of his Godhood? Sir William Jones wrote:-

“One great end of Revelation was not to instruct the wise and few, but the many and the unenlightened.” Hence God would be more God, did he reveal himself to the poor and many all along eternity; than if He did disclose Himself but to a favored person and hardly once in time.

(8) Is God abstract or concrete? As concrete He could be seen; and concretization means limitation; but God is unlimited, it is alleged. If abstract, is He something abstracted away from all concrete existences, beginning from the mineral, and up along the vegetal, animal, human and meta-human species? Thus abstracted from, one after another, God is driven to a *cul de sac*, where stern metaphysics pronounces Him to be a non-entity! As concrete, God is limited, as abstract He is more limited, so much as to deserve reduction into negation! How then was God seen?

(9) The ninth reflection that suggest itself is this: can men after seeing God, die? If so, they have not seen God – the Elixir of Life; if not, - but that they have died is a fact! And then how is Life and Death compatible or consistent with each other?

(10) Many men came and taught God but the teachings were forgotten and God also with them! What will be the fate of the latest arrivals, who simply said they saw God, but failed to prove Him to others. But then there were teachers who proved no God like Kapila and Buddha and all the rest of those who may be subsumed under the category of materialists!

(11) If honesty lies on the side of the majority who disclaimed sight of God, fits of hallucination, or freaks of hypochondriasis must *pro tanto* be laid at the door of the microscopic minority who could boldly sight the Unseeable? It seems as if some men can *make* God at their will and pleasure, and others again with their sweet will *unmake* Him! Is God then an entity, which is but a creature of man?

A. G.

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