

**Swami Omkarananda**  
**The Metaphysical Nature  
and Dignity of Man**



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**Grown Enormously, Reason leaves  
Science no Alternative to Conscious  
Acknowledgement of the Being of God**

The rapid and extraordinary growth in the soul of science has rendered it increasingly sensitive in this twentieth century, to the reality of the Infinite, and has forced on it issues for which it does not yet feel mature enough to deal with. Just observe what H. Weyl says in the book Space, Time and Matter.

"And now, in our time, there has been unloosed a cataclysm which has swept away space, time and matter, hitherto regarded as the firmest pillars of natural science, but only to make place for a view of things of

wider scope, and entailing a deeper vision."

As a matter of fact, since the times of Copernicus, Galileo and Kepler, science has been growing more and more conscious of its own limitations, and of the need for the rational acceptance of some ultimate Cause, the Creator, behind the universe it studies. At the conclusion of the 17th century, Sir Isaac Newton wrote in his greatest work, Principia Mathematica, thus,

"This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being...As a blind man has no idea of colours, so have we no idea of the manner by which the all-wise God perceives and understands all things."

And, for the inspiration and edification of humanity, the famous German astronomer, Johannes Kepler, has bequeathed this hymn:

"Great is our Lord, great is His Power, and there is no end to His Wisdom! Praise Him, sun, moon and planets, in whatever language your hymn of thanksgiving to the Creator may ring out! Glorify Him, you the celestial harmonies, and also you the testimonies and corroborators of His unveiled Truths! And thou, my soul, sing the glory of the Lord as long as thou liveth! From Him, through Him, and to Him are all things, the visible and the invisible ones. To Him alone be praise and glory, from eternity to eternity! Amen."



### **Higher Dimensions of Human Personality**

A New World of Peace and Happiness Rests upon the Right View of Man

A scientific self-analysis of the observing Consciousness in the subjective and objective activities of the human individual, discloses the truth that man is the imperishable Essence of the all-creative Infinity, which is infinitely more than all that man can be as an artist, as an aesthetician, as a scientist, or philosopher, or administrator, or as a prophet.

Man is not merely a biological phenomenon. There is in him a psychical apparatus packed with latent potentialities, powers and possibilities. Greatest men and individuals of spiritual experience are a living proof of this fact. A deeper insight into the psychical being of man compels us to accept the reality of the Cosmic Consciousness, or the divine Life-Force, as the basis of the psychical entities. We need to understand man not only at his biological, physiological, social and mental, but also at his psychical and spiritual levels.

Not until we abandon all the erroneous, partial, misleading notions of man, and his possibilities, his aspirations, his tendencies, his motives, and embrace a new scale of values, a new system of ideals, a new vision of life, can we allay human agony, ensure real human progress, bring in general human welfare, resolve the riddles modern mind has burdened all men with.

It is upon this foundation alone that we can restore to man the light that is his, and raise a race of decent men, men capable of creative morals, sane views, constructive labour, a dignified poise of life.



## Metaphysical Significance of Man

The saying that man is the measure of all things is perfectly true. Man is a many-levelled being, and has various sheaths which conceal his real personality. He may identify himself with the gross physical body and look to its needs as an animal does, or he may identify himself with the self-conscious reason, or he may feel his oneness with his real Self which is the eternal witness of both.

The 'vital' aims, however valuable they may be in their own place, cannot take control of the spiritual being for a long time without complete disorder to one's personality.

In the modern man, self-conscious intellect, with all its natural limitations, takes the highest place, and suicidal scepticism is the result. Intellect can move only in a vicious circle of possibilities. It hovers round an object. Deeper, it can never go. It cannot enter into, and be one with it. And be it noted, without complete identity, knowledge is impossible. Intellect accepts the evidence of the senses and the result of inference, but it rejects as spurious the deepest subjective intuitions.

Profound insight tells us that there is something more in man than is apparent in his ordinary consciousness, something which originates all thoughts and emotions, a finer spiritual presence which keeps him ever dissatisfied with mere earthly pursuits.

The doctrine that the ordinary condition of man is not his final state, that he has a deeper Self, an immortal Spirit, a Light that can never be extinguished, has engaged the highest intellectual attention of the best of mankind, through the ages.

All the greatest thinkers of the world unite in asking us to know this Self. While our bodily organization undergoes change every moment, while our thoughts gather like clouds in the sky and disperse again, the real Self is never lost. It is all-pervading, though distinct from all. It is the source of the sense of identity through numerous transformations. It remains itself, though it sees all things. It is the one constant thing which remains unchanged in the multiple activities in the universe. Our limited personality is conscious only by fits and starts; there are large gaps in it. Even if death overtakes a man, the Seer in him cannot die.

Nothing on the objective side can touch the inner subjective Being. This ever-persisting Self which is the eternal Subject, is not capable of proof, nor does it need any. It is self-proved. It is the basic substratum of every act of knowledge, and vivifies every organ and faculty. This universal Self becomes confused with the empirical self owing to mental impurities. When we break through the ring of the smoke round the Self, unwrap the sheaths which cover it, we achieve here and now, in the physical body, the destiny of our being.

The inner divine Self, the "I", which is infinitely simple, is a trinity of transcendent Reality, Awareness, and Freedom.



## **Scientific Writers on the Nature of Man**

The real Self within man is infinite. It is the absolute Existence, Knowledge and Delight. The Self is the infinite creative ether of Consciousness which has within itself all orders of time, space and activity. Everything in the universe is a part of the infinite Self in man. Modern thought is increasingly approaching these views and conclusions derived from inner spiritual experience.

A modern scientist and writer, Haldane, says, "there is no special limit to the life of the organism, just as there is no special limit to what can be perceived."

Myres, in his Human Personality says, "The conscious self does not comprise the whole of consciousness, or of the faculty within us. There exists a more comprehensive consciousness, a profounder faculty which for the most part remains potential only."

Another modern writer asserts, "Man appears as a being of groundless depth reaching with its roots into the metaphysical region."

Science is rapidly succeeding in demonstrating the unbroken oneness and perfect internal unity of the entire, all-inclusive being of the world. "The universe is an integrity, a perfect whole and an indivisible organism of being", says Randall. Randall further states, "There are no such things as private separate, exclusive, individual beings, or selves, save in the false, or illusory thinking. All individual selves are One Self."

Edward Carpenter says that it seems to him more and more clear, that the word "I" has a practically infinite range of meaning.

Kingsland writes, "Every so-called atom is nothing less in substance than the One Substance which cannot be divided or cut."



## **The Nature and Destiny of Man According to the Bible**

We read in the Genesis 1,27, "So, God created man in His own Image, in the Image of God created He him."

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord."

"Man is", says the Greek mystic-philosopher Plato, "potentially a participator in the eternal mode of being, which he can make his own by living in detachment from the fleeting shadows of the world."

These are the statements of Jesus Christ: "I and my Father are one", John 10, 30. "All that the Father hath are mine." John 16, 15.

In the Gospel according to Matthew 5, 48, Jesus sums up the various ethical demands by saying, "Be ye therefore perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Many a time Socrates declared that we should strive to become "like unto the Divine".

The Quakers believe in the divine Spark in the human being. Eckhart said, "There is something in the soul, which is above the soul, divine,

simple, an absolute nothing. There, there is no distinction, neither Father nor Son nor Holy Ghost."

"I entered", says St. Augustine, "even into the very innermost Self. Thou being my Guide, I entered, and beheld with the eye of my soul ...the Light unchangeable."

"The individuals are the reproductions of an eternal consciousness", wrote Green. Cudworth asserted, "All minds partake of the universal Mind".

The unity of God and man is the fundamental thesis of the great traditions of perennial philosophy and timeless wisdom subsistent both in the East and in the West.

The destiny of man is unity with God, for man is essentially inseparable from God. Man is a part of the world and the world is rooted in God; it cannot exist if God is not. The reality of the world is the Reality of God. Whatever has any value in the world belongs to the nature of God.

Only to a spiritually blind individual the world seems to be different from God, and also from himself who also seems to be different from God. The moment the veil of spiritual blindness is rent asunder, it will be seen that what really is, is an ocean of pure divine Consciousness, the infinite Reality wherein the world and the individual are no more distinct and separate entities, but one with the splendour of the Absolute.

This is the grand destination of life, the purpose of everyone's existence, the goal of all aspirations and endeavours.



### **Biblical View of Man as an Image of God**

The assertion that man is made in the Image of God was inspired by no philosophical speculation. It did not proceed from the mouth of a mind absorbed in idealistic fancies. It is the verdict of a nature that lived in the Kingdom of God while living on earth.

We appreciate the phenomenon of Jesus Christ better when we reflect over some of the best facets of the truth of man, furnished for our thought by Ralph Waldo Emerson and others. He quietly wrote that "everyman is a divinity in disguise, a god playing the fool".

Henry Giles affirmed that man is greater than the systems of worlds.



### **The Infinite Dimensions in Man's Consciousness**

Young coined his phrases on the nature of man such as, "the insect infinite", the "dim miniature of greatness absolute". John Davidson sermonized that man is the universe become conscious, and that even the simplest among men should consider himself too great to be called after any name.

Thomas Carlyle taught that there are in man heights that reach to the highest heaven. He asserted that man's far-reaching spirit stretches outward to the infinite, and there alone finds rest.



### **The Idea of Man According to the Modern Western Mind**

Far from living by the conception of man presented by that embodiment of wisdom and knowledge, Jesus Christ, the modern Western mind continues to live by the idea of man it has derived from Adam Smith, as a bargaining animal, from Aristotle, as a rational animal, from Herbert Spencer, as a social animal, from Karl Marx, as a sheer economic unit.



### **Man as our Inner Experience Finds Him**

That every man is a conscious power of the infinite Being, a dynamic manifestation of the absolute Reality, is the voice of our inner spiritual experience.

This is in harmony with the divinely revealed truth presented in the Bible, concerning man. Bible sees man in relation to God, the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is the view of man as the Image of God, that could form the one solution to the many problems of modern life.



### **The Inner Life and Light in Jesus Is the Potentiality and Goal of Man**

They ill-read man who read into him the Darwinian half-truths. They read man aright who read him against the background of Jesus the Christ, of the true Man, the Man of Nazareth, who is the destiny of all mankind.

Jesus is accepted even by the most fastidious reason as the highest that humanity can reach. He is not only the perfect Image, but also the Lord of Humanity, "the condescension of divinity, and the exaltation of humanity." Without Jesus, all history is, as Renan concludes, incomprehensible. A rejection of the existence of Jesus reduces, as Napoleon maintained, the world to an inexplicable riddle, and the history of our race, to a phenomenon baffling satisfactory explanation.



### **A Study in the Relation between Man and God**

God is the Creator, and man is the creature. But the matter is not as simple as that. Man is a strange creature. For, the whole of the Creator is in His creature called man! Therefore, the relation between God and man

is the same as the relation between God and Himself.

Having created man in His own Image, God has taken His residence in man, with all His Being, with all His Power, Beauty, Peace, Joy, Perfection. Therefore, it is a unique relation. It is God looking at Himself in a mirror.

When a sculptor creates an object of beauty, what is the relation between it and himself? The relation is that of the creator and the object created. It is a distant, external, non-essential, non-vital, destructible relation. Whereas the relation between God the Creator and man the creature, is internal, subjective, vital, dynamic, essential, indestructible, eternal and immediate. Otherwise how could the Kingdom of Heaven be in man, how could God be closer to man than his own veins and breath, how could we say that man cannot survive the moment God withdraws Himself from man?



### **The Imperishable Essence in You Is Your Real Strength and Wealth**

Whatever it is that matters in you is imperishable. What does it matter if things that are not essential, that are not the real you, change, alter, and are subject to mortality? The conscious Being behind the flux and operations of your surface physical consciousness and mental experiences, is imperishable.

That inner Essence which your intellect does not know and without which your intellect cannot function, that is immortal. That you are. That is your real treasure. That is the biggest bank, the highest pleasure-garden, the source of all creative powers, unlimited peace, undying joy. Live in, and from, the vivid consciousness of this real face of yourself, this real Being of yourself, this real imperishable You!

This Essence, this real inner imperishable You, is from the Heaven, the bearer of the Heaven. This is the Mother of all sounds and the Light of all forms of life. Walk this world with the radiance, the wealth, the peace, the power of the Heaven that is the real You!



### **The Urge of Spiritual Evolution in the Formula of the Human Existence**

The inner urge in man to build himself beyond all that he is in the present, the inner compulsion man experiences for surpassing himself, the hunger he has for the right that resolves the many contradictions involved in all forms of empirical life, these are essentially activities occasioned and determined by the genius of empirical evolution inherently operative in the formula of human existence.

Jesus Christ Illuminates the Nature and Ultimate Destiny of the Inner Urges in Man which can be Easily Misread as they have been by Modern Psychologists

The desire and dynamism in man to transcend his own normal manhood,

and put on the poise, the peace, the power of a mighty Divinity, can neither be suppressed nor given wrong turns without disastrous effects. It does not matter whether one outgrows one's normal manhood by growing divine love, or by expanding divine knowledge, or by increasing activity of the creative intelligence, or by a total and complete surrender to the infinite Godhead.

Incapable of responding rightly to the working of these spiritual urges, factors and dynamisms, man has given them many wrong turns. Modern psychologists have misread these basic dynamisms and factors and have mistaken them for what they describe them to be.

Jesus Christ, the eternal Light of the world, and the great spiritual guide to mankind, forming in Himself the one real destiny of the noblest manhood, the end and aim of all evolution, as also the beginning and the conclusion of the dynamic divine beneficence on earth, has illustrated by His own life, and illuminated by His teaching, the exact nature of the denouement of the drama of the developmental unfoldment of the highest Consciousness latent in man.



### **How does a Great Man Work?**

Unless an all-galvanizing enthusiasm, an inspiration that renders one all-dynamic, a force of will that accomplishes with incredible speed everything that it is intent on, becomes the settled and normal nature of the great men, they would never be so great.

Pale and maudlin faces are not the faces of the real Sages, they are, in truth, death-defying and miracle-working men, who make of every moment of their lives a wonder, a splendour; and every second of other people's lives, a blessing, a benediction, a beauty steadily growing into final beatitude.



### **The Two Tests of Greatness**

Humanity assesses the greatness of a contemporary great man in terms of the measure of good, happiness, peace, comfort, light he brings to it; and Time judges the duration of that greatness by the amount of energy, will, force, divine Grace with which such beneficent works were wrought.



### **Constituents of Greatness**

How does a man grow into the greatness he seeks to represent to others?

**one**, by commanding deepest insights into the realities of life,

**two**, by gifting to humanity broad perspectives, penetrating perceptions, ideas that live in the lives of men and sublimate them, views that spread light and make for human development and happiness, thoughts that



keep the being of mankind above all pettiness, trifles and turmoil, and turned towards objects that evoke creative activity and nourish the soul.



### **The Greatness of Christ Emanated from the Kingdom of Heaven within Him**

The Godlike Consciousness within us alone can produce and express the Godlike qualities and characteristics. All that is excellent in our outer character is a working of the Kingdom of Heaven within us. That Kingdom emerges and works, when the obstacles to it are removed.

From within, the Light of the Soul streams forth. That all the greatness and beauty of Jesus Christ arose from Himself, is made clear by the fifteenth century German mystic and monk of the St. Augustine order, Thomas á Kempis, in his immortal work Imitation of Christ,

"All His Glory and Beauty come from within, and there He delights to dwell, His visits there are frequent, His conversation sweet, His comforts refreshing; and His peace passing all understanding."



### **The Development of Fivefold Greatness**

This, then is the joy of our growth by the development of the fivefold greatness:

**one**, the greatness of a Heart that is full of the conquering power of all-inclusive Love;

**two**, the greatness of a Mind from which emanate the purifying rays of a wisdom above the farthest height of human knowledge;

**three**, the greatness of a Will that exercises itself with amazing sweet prowess in an unstinting giving of its energies, in self-sacrifice, in spontaneous and constant endeavour for securing peace, happiness, light and strength for all around it;

**four**, the greatness of a Soul that wraps itself in an austere vision and a deep awareness of the transcendent Reality immanent in the essence of its own being;

**five**, the greatness of aureate eyes tranquillised by an intimate experience of the universal Consciousness, of the spiritual Being in man.

Let this superman of fivefold greatness stand revealed in you, the true lover and knower of God, - of God in Nature, God in Mankind, God in Himself, - that you are.

This is the way to honour the Image of God in ourselves, and acknowledge the Breath of God in all. This we feel is the right way to follow the footsteps of the supreme superman Jesus the Christ and celebrate His blessed Birth on earth, and in ourselves, for the salvation of all mankind.

Swami Omkarananda



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