

CHAPTER II

NATURAL THEOLOGY

'Natural Theology' is the favourite term in eighteen and nineteen centuries. It is an attempt to prove the existence of god provided by observation of the ordinary course of nature. The expression 'natural theology' seems to have been first used by Augustine with reference to the deepest philosophical insights of the classical philosophers. "Natural theology is the knowledge of God accessible to all rational human beings without recourse to any special or supposedly supernatural revelation". It is the knowledge of god accessible to all rational human beings. Natural theology is a theology based on reason and ordinary religious experiences. This is distinguished from revealed theology which is based on scripture and religious experiences of various kinds and also from transcendental theology of Immanuel Kant which is based on a priori reasoning. The truth of the division of 'natural theology' is derived from nature by the use of Aristotolian logic. The deists relied exclusively on natural theology on the ground that the being and attributes of God could be ascertained from the constitution and course of world.

Theology:

'Theology' literally means 'discourse about God'. In theology we do not talk to God, but about God. The word 'Theology' is derived from the Hellenistic Greek but its use is found in the European Christian Thought of the middle ages. The term 'theologia' is used in the classical Greek literature with the meaning 'discourse on the Gods or cosmology'. Aristotle used the term Metaphysics to include discussion of the nature of the divine. The Latin writer Varro afterwards distinguished three

forms of the discourse: Mythical (concerning Greek Gods), Rational (philosophical analysis of the Gods) and civil (concerning the rites and duties of religious observation). In patristic Greek sources, Theologia could refer narrowly to the discussion of the nature and attributes of god and also could refer narrowly to the discussion of the attribution of divine nature to Jesus. "Others would simply claim that theology involves taking seriously claims internal to a religious tradition on their own terms, as topics for investigation and analysis – studying people's beliefs about God, rather than necessarily studying God, perhaps – even if that inquiry is not carried out by one who is committed to the relevant tradition, or involved in practice flowing from it"².

Theology is the philosophy of a religion. In between the religious and non-religious activities, the integrated life demands to make use of religious and secular experiences into a system. This is intellectual categorizing which is known as philosophizing. The clarification, elucidation and systematization of one's religious beliefs and practices are known as theology.

Theology is different from religion and religious philosophy. Theology is the interpretation of religious experiences: Religion is the system of lived experiences whether religious philosophy analyses and elucidates religious concepts in terms of general conceptual framework with detached objectivity. Religious statements are treated as the first order statement in which we communicate our thought. "Theological statements are second-order statement with religious statements as their subject-matter"³. Philosophical statements are treated as the third order statements with theological statements are their subject matter. In religion we talk to God. In theology we talk about God while in philosophy we talk about god with disinterestedness and detachment.

Divisions of Theology:

1. Firstly, Theology can be divided into (a) Natural and (b) Revealed

(a) Natural Theology is based on ordinary course of nature.

(b) Revealed theology is based on scriptures and religious experiences of various kinds.

2. Secondly, Theology can be divided into (a) Comparative, (b) Christian and (c) Philosophical Theology

(a) Comparative Theology is the theological study of two or more religious traditions without a particular theological commitment. It is a comparative enterprise of secular study of history of religions in which different theologies are compared by means of some comparative method developed in the discipline. "In general term, therefore, comparative theology always accords explicit theological attention to religious pluralism, despite radical differences in theological conclusions"⁴.

(b) Christian theology is designated as the knowledge of the Christian God.

(c) Philosophical Theology is the meta-theology which tries to elucidate the concepts of various theologies.

In many Christian seminaries, theology can be divided into four great departments— (a) Exegetical Theology, (b) Historical Theology, (c) Systematic Theology and (d) Practical Theology.

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(a) Exegetical theology includes Biblical studies, Biblical introduction, canonics and biblical theology.

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(b) Historical theology includes Patristic period, middle ages and modern period.

(c) Systematic theology includes the existence of God, the attributes of God, the trinity, creation and Eschatology and after life.

(d) Practical theology includes moral theology and pastoral theology.

Concept of God: An Overview

Belief in God is maintained from religious and from purely metaphysical perspective. Though the belief of God is popular and universal phenomenon, but only a few people have a conception of God as could be found in metaphysics. The religious beliefs of God seem to have its root in human desires, fears and helplessness. "Belief in the gods seems to have its roots in human desires and fears, particularly those associated with self-preservation"⁵. The fundamental notion is that there exists some superhuman power that is supremely good and wise who demands from man an attitude of worship.

In religious belief regarding God, the logic of worship implies that God must be the highest and infinite Being greater than whom nothing can be conceived by the worshipper. God is believed to have attributes due to which he is worshipped. From metaphysical point of view, God has the attributes of unity, spirituality, omnipotence, eternity, immutability and absoluteness. Religiously speaking, God is conceived to be a person, creator, eternal, omnipotent, infinitely wise, good and holy.

Today in west, the term 'God' typically refers to a monotheistic concept of a Supreme Being. Classical theism asserts that God possesses every possible qualities such as omniscience, omnipotence and perfect benevolence. In Advaita Vedānta of Indian philosophy, Saguna Brahman or Īśvara is the way to talk about Brahman. Īśvara, in turn, is described as having the qualities of omniscience, omnipotence and perfect benevolence from ordinary practical standpoint. "If we look at God from the ordinary practical standpoint (vyavahārikadrsti) from which the world is believed to be real, God may be regarded as the Cause, Creator, the Sustainer, the Destroyer of the world and, therefore, also as an Omnipotent and Omniscient Being"⁶.

In religion, there are different opinions regarding God from the standpoint of nature and attitudes. Deism, Pantheism, panentheism and theism assume the existence of one God as an adequate object of worship. On the other hand, Polytheism, Dualism, Henotheism assumes the existence of more than one God.

The ordinary and popular beliefs and practices are directed towards lived God. The lived idea of God can be found in the Folk-Religion: There is a difference between lived idea of God and philosophical idea of God. The philosophical idea or understanding of God is often alleged to be too abstract as Wittgenstein believes. He offers an anti-rationalistic concept of God.

The ordinary belief in the attributes and nature of God has difference with the belief of the agnostic who approaches God negatively. God for an agnostic is not what ordinarily is conceived and any attribution to Him is thought to be a falsification of the essence of God. According to an agnostic, any enquiry about 'God' is futile.

No rigid distinction can be drawn between the nature and the attributes of God as the nature is revealed in the attributes. Traditionally the attributes of God can be classified into Metaphysical and moral. The former arises from the comprehension of God as the Absolute or the infinite. The latter, the moral attributes, which have a bearing on the religions or the moral aspirations of a man, arises from God's being a person.

God is regarded as self-caused. It means that it exists but does not depend upon something else for its existence. It is a being which is such that it can neither come into being nor perish. A being that depends for its existence upon nothing but itself is called self-caused or eternal.

God can be said as the 'First cause.' First cause does not mean first in time. He is literally a Primary rather than a secondary cause. He is a Being upon which ultimately all other things and heaven and earth depend for their existence.

He is the Manipulator of this universe. He is called a Manipulator because of His sovereignty and control over the universe. God's active control in the world is for the benefit of the mankind. The Bible also indicates that God fully controls this Universe.

God and Gods

God and gods are two important philosophical, metaphysical and religious concepts. The concept of God or of gods is the active, living and religious belief and has been maintained purely from metaphysical grounds. "The concept of God or absolute is the most important, most universal and central concept of religion"⁷⁷. The concept of God is referred as the Supreme reality who is understood in different terms

like Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent etc.. In Advaita Vedanta of Indian philosophy the concept of God is referred as Brahman who is the supreme reality. God is accepted as the ultimate and unquestioned Truth who is the Creator and Controller of the world. "Most religious persons do, in any case, think of God as being at least the creator, as that being upon which everything ultimately depends, no matter what else they may say about Him in addition"⁸. Concept of God and gods are clearly distinguished in Hindu mythology and religion. The Hindu concept 'Ram', 'Hari', 'Krishna' etc. are used to believe as the supreme reality. In Hindu Mythology different gods and goddesses are regarded in different terms like deity, Īśvara, deva or devata etc. Gods and goddesses are believed not as a supreme reality but as an authority of certain field or area. "In Hindu Mythology and popular theology many gods appeared, though Vishṇu and Śiva (Rudra) became dominant"⁹. An avatāra is the reincarnation of gods or goddesses like Śiva, Vishṇu, Durgā. "Traditionally each avatara appears in order to perform a specific cosmic duty that is necessary to maintain or restore cosmic order"¹⁰.

Distinction between God and gods are clearly found in Hindu Trinity. Brahmā, Vishnu and Śiva are assumed as Hindu trinity. Brahmā is the creator, Vishṇu is the preserver and Śiva is the destroyer. Among them the status of Brahmā is regarded as the supreme reality or creator God while the status of Vishṇu and Śiva is a deity or dev or devata. Gods are the lesser manifestation of Supreme reality or God. In the Hindu devotional movement Lord Krishna and Rāma are assumed the position of supreme deity.

In vedic theology we have different gods and goddesses like Mitra, Varuna, Agni, Vāyu, Indra, Uṣas, Prithivī, Aditi etc., but among them a monotheistic tendency seems to be present.

Popular Greek religion shows various groups of gods like Demeter the corn goddess, Kore the goddess of vegetation, Dionysos the fertility god. Athena (Athene) was the Greek goddess of war.

Distinction between God and gods are found among the religions in our society. Hindu Trinity like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are the three aspects of godhead. Religiously Hinduism is monotheistic and philosophically non-dualistic. Different deities or gods are included into one God. Sikhism believes one God. He is one without a second. "Others insist that the concept of God in Judaeo-Christian thought is that of the Lord of Israel, or alternatively that the concept of God in Christian theology is that of an almighty, triune creator, redeemer, and sustainer of all—Father, son and Holy spirit"¹¹. In Islam Allah (God) is the supreme reality. Here God's message is revealed through Muḥammad. Islam believed the God's supremacy through Quran which is the immediate and complete revelation of Gods message through Muḥammad. "It is the heavenly book of revelation, the word of God par excellence"¹². Ahura Mazda is the supreme Lord of Zoroasterianism. Ahura Mazda and Ahirman are two polytheistic nature of Zoroasteriaism. "Judaism holds that God cannot be many because He is the supreme Power and Existence"¹³.

God in the Hebrew Scriptures

God of Israel is the main character of Hebrew scriptures. In Hebrew Bible God is depicted as creator, provider and lawgiver. The biblical author use the proper term of God as YHVH the meaning of

which is lord. "For YHVH is a great god, a great king over all the gods"¹⁴. The original pronunciation of YHVH is reconstructed as 'yahveh' or 'yahweh'(Jehovah as it is called in English) with the help of early Greek transcriptions. YHVH is usually translated as 'lord of hosts'. YHVH sometimes combined with elohim. Elohim is the most common generic word for god in the form Yaveh Elohim. Actually Elohim refers to the God of Israel is thus synonymous with Yahveh. Certain writers of Israel prefer Elohim to Yahveh as the proper name of god of Israel. When Elohim refers to the God of Israel it is always treated as plural. Plural is generally referred to gods worshipped and for this Israelities is condemned by biblical authors. Elohim aherim (other gods), elohim hadashim (new gods), eloheihanekhar (foreign gods) and elohei nekhar haarets (foreign gods of the land) are the references for plural gods. EI is the scriptural designation of divinity. EI functions corresponding to that of elohim. Like Elohim, EI is the substitute name for Yahveh, a proper name for the God of Israel. The original meaning of the term YHVH is unknown to modern scholars. One biblical writer demanded that the term has relation with the verb hayah (be, exist).

Hebrew scriptures are coloured by the belief of Yahveh who was the legitimate object of Israelite worship from earliest times. The German scholar Julius Wellhausen said that originally Israelite religion was polytheistic though Yahveh was a national god to whom every Israelite owed allegiance. "The Bible notes time and time again that Israelites worshipped other gods alongside Yahveh"¹⁵. Some other scholars like William F. Albright, Yahezkel Kaufmann etc. disagree with Wellhausen and said that Monotheism is the mosaic of Israel's official religion. According to them, the attention to other gods was sinful. As a result monolatry was seen in practical in Israelite religion. Monolatry was not completely unknown. In fourteenth century BCE, Akhenaten,

king of Egypt, inaugurated solar monolatry for family worship to worship god Aton, the sun disk. The various gods are the proper object of worship, in turn which are nothing other than the attributes or limbs of the God addressed.

Some biblical writers took the existence of other gods for granted, though all agreed that Yahvah was superior to the other gods. Writers like Amos, Isaiah and Jeremah spoke Yahvah as the only object of worship. Second Isaiah was the most consistent monotheist, insisting that Yahvah was the sole god in existence.

God in Postbiblical Judaism

Regarding God Postbiblical Judaism can be divided into four different periods like--The rabbinic or Talmudic, the philosophical or theological, the quabbalistic or mystical, and the modern. Though each period is independent but there is considerable overlapping idea of God. In rabbinic period all the rabbis are committed the statement that God is one who is the creator of heaven and earth. The most frequently used name for God in the Talmud are 'Ribbono Shel Olam' (Lord of the universe) when addressing God in the second person and ha-Quadosh barukh hu (the Holy one, blessed be He) used when speaking of God in the third person. There are some rabbinic names for God which were intended to suggest either his distance from man or his nearness. The name ha-Maqom (The place) defined as He is the place of the world indicates nearness. The name Shamayism (heaven) suggests his remoteness. The name Shekhinah, the feminine form means to dwell indicates Gods indwelling presence. Both idolatry and dualism were strongly condemned by the rabbis. The medieval Jewish theologians influenced by Greek philosophy had aim to refine the concept of God. They had a systematic way. For these theologians, the doctrine that

God is one means not only that there is no multiplicity of gods but that God is unique, utterly beyond all human comprehension, and totally different from his creatures, not only in degree but in kind. According to them God is omniscient and omnipotent. The mystical movement or tendency in Jewish thought is known as Qabalah. Qabbalists made a distinction between God in himself and God in manifestation. Mystics felt a need to have a relationship with God of living religion. God as he is in himself is Ein Sof (the limitless). Ein Sof has the powers of potencies (Sefirot) of the godhead in manifestation, conceived of as a dynamic organism. Qabbalists refuse to allow negative attributes of Ein Sof, but God is thought of in the positive aspect of manifestation. The living God of the Bible and of religion is godhead as manifested in the sefirot. The sefirot represent various aspects of life of godhead like wisdom, justice and mercy. Through them the whole world is controlled, the whole order is conceived as a chain of being from the highest to the lowest reaching back to Ein Sof. Sefirot represented two principle of male and female. Tiferet (beauty) and Malkhut (sovereignty) are male and female principle. The sacred marriage between these two means that there is complete harmony on high, and the divine grace can flow through all creation.

The mystical movement in eighteen century known as Habad tended a panentheistic understanding. God is the only true reality. There is a basic difference between panentheism (all is in God) and pantheism (all is God). God is the universe and universe is-in God. "In Habad thought, without God there could be no universe, but without the universe God would still be the unchanging same"¹⁶.

Modern Jewish thinkers have faced challenges to the traditional theism. From Renaissance onward the thinking is shifted from God

centric to mancentric. They are influenced by the modern trends, and compell to rethink the traditional views about God. Mordecai Kaplan (1881-1983), a modern Jewish thinker says God is not a supernatural, personal being but the power in the universe that makes for righteousness. In the pre-scientific age when spoke of God, people refer to the supreme being as the creator of the world.

Martin Buber (1878-1965) best known Jewish thinker stresses the personal aspect of deity. Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) had a existentialist approach. According to him, there are three elements in the Universe.....God, the world and man.

Different statements about the concept of God are thus found in the Western and Indian Philosophy and in _ different religions. In Western Philosophy, different conceptions and opinions regarding the nature of God are found in (a) Greek Philosophy, (b) Medieval Philosophy, (c) Modern Philosophy and (d) Contemporary Philosophy.

On the other hand, not only in the Western Philosophy but also in the Indian philosophy, specially the Vedic period, we have different conceptions or ideas of God.

Concept of God in Greek Philosophy:

In ancient Greece, gods are associated with various aspects of the Universe, are presented as super human immortal beings endowed with human passions, frequently behaving in undignified and amoral ways. Nevertheless, the worship of these gods in temples and other holy places, especially by means of sacrifice, constituted the state religion of Greece. Poetry of Homer depicted the anthropomorphic and moral representations of the gods.

The first Greek thinker, **Thales** (624-550 B.C.) has hylozoistic opinion. Hylozoism is a doctrine predicating life of all matter, specially propounded by Thales. According to him, water is the fundamental staff of the universe. Aristotle claims that Thales philosophy is conjectural as Thales is said to have said that all things are full of Gods. "Hence Windelband holds that the Philosophy of Thales and of other Milesians to be hylozoistic"¹⁷.

God is treated as infinite, boundless matter in the philosophy of **Anaximander** (611-547 B.C.). He was a cosmologist like Thales. For him the primary matter was boundless something – a formless infinite and eternal mass not yet parted into particular kinds of matter. This is the first philosophical concept of God. His God is no doubt a matter but is not mythological or anthropomorphic. Besides, the doctrine regarding the creation of the Universe by God has been completely ignored.

The God is regarded as a World-God in the works of **Xenophanes** (570–480 B.C.). He described God as 'One'. His famous utterance is 'All is one' and 'The One is God'. This World-God is immovable and perfectly homogeneous and is said to guide the Universe rationally.

In Xenophanes Philosophy, God is assumed as eternal without beginning and without end. God is said to abide in one place and does not move at all, sees all over, things all over and hears all over. He is said unlimited in the sense that there is nothing beside him, but limited in the sense that He is a perfect form not a formless infinite.

God's existence is found in the philosophy of **Democritus** (460-370 B.C.) as composed of atoms. Here Gods are mortal like men though longer live. Gods are more powerful than man and possess reason of a

high order. Gods are known through dreams. They do not interfere in the affairs of men and hence they need not be feared or propitiated. Like all other things, the Gods are subject to the impersonal law of the motion of the atoms. Sceptical position of God's existence is found in the philosophy of **Protagoras** (485-1120 B.C.). Here traditional worship of God is found as a measure of prudence.

Socrates (469 – 399 B.C.) believed the existence of one supreme God. He denied the idea of national Gods. In his philosophy, a new idea of God is found, known as 'daemon' which is regarded as his guardian God.

The concept of God is found as a perfect and transcendental entity in **Plato's** (428-347 B.C.) philosophy. God is demiurge. He is regarded as the best. He has maximum beauty and excellence. He is unlimited, free and self-existent. He is not a combination or mixture, but simple and pure. He is eternal and immutable. He is homogenous. He has purity, self-sufficiency, completeness and eternity which are not found in the physical world. He is naturally graceful. He has good will towards all. He is the highest limit of virtues. There can be no higher virtues than him.

God is said as the source of all good things and provides food and the means of enjoyment for men. God is a creator of the whole world. In the beginning, there was nothing but chaos. "He creates the world not because of some need but because of abundance"¹⁸. He created the world out of the four elements of water, air, fire and earth. God has created the time which is the moving image of eternity. The created time has come into being along with the creation of the world.

Thus, God can be said to be an architect not a creator God, for God created the world not out of himself but with the four elements. The world has been designed as a work of art by God. It is also said that God has created the soul with intelligence so that man may have fellowship with him.

God is ascribed as Unmoved Prime Mover which moves every thing without itself being moved in **Aristotle's** (384 – 322 B.C.) philosophy. God is self-dependent being, all perfect, eternal and exist of his own necessity. God is form of forms; its own thought of thought. God is the eternal unmoved mover. "A given motion in the universe is produced by some other motion; this motion by a third motion and so on, and since an infinite regress is impossible, it is necessary that there should be, as the first cause of the series of motions, an unmoved mover or God"¹⁹. God thinks of its own thought, so, God is said to be self-conscious. Therefore, God is mind. God is unchangeable, immovable, incorporeal at the same time the final cause of generation. God is wholly immaterial as he is without matter, body and potentiality. As without senses, He is said to be pure spirit. Again, He is stated to be spiritual because He is pure rationality. God is transcendent to the whole universe, for He is at the top of the hierarchical order in which this universe is found. He knows Himself directly and the world indirectly.

God is regarded as the final cause which moves the world by which He appears as the efficient cause. He is the first cause of motion as He moves the Heaven first then all other things through it. So, Heaven is regarded as near perfect God. God is the Apex of world process because He is the complete actuality and substance par

excellence. God is pure form and is looking in particularity. Therefore, God cannot be a person.

Plotinus (204 – 270 A.D.) regards the nature of God as the transcendent, eternal, unchanging and absolute. He is infinite and first cause of the world.

The world created by His immanent aspect. God is a spring from which the world flows like a stream. God is the sun from which the universe emanates in the form of light without losing the sun. The world depends on God but God does not depend upon the world. Though the world is the result of immanent–aspect, but the world is not the result of a voluntary action or idea on the part of God. The world is not an evolution from God. Thus the universe is an emanation and overflow of His infinite power.

Concept of God in Medieval Philosophy:

Augustine, Thomas, Martin Luther, Zwigli, Calvin, and Schleiermacher agree with naturalistic view of God. Naturalistic view holds that God is the creative ground of everything. He is the infinite and unconditional power of being.

God is believed and accepted as eternal, transcendent and absolutely good and is found an object of worship and adoration in **Aurelius Augustine's** (353 – 430 A.D.) philosophy. God is regarded as Absolute majesty, power and untrammelled free activity. God is all-powerful, all-good, all-wise is omnipotent and infinitely beneficent. It is also claimed that god establishes church which teaches the way to find rest and happiness in God.

God creates the world out of nothing but of his will. His creation is a continuous creation through which He sustains the whole Universe. We can not say that the world was created in time and space. He created time and space. He Himself is timeless and without space. The important thing is to maintain that God creates matter too. So, there is no lingering dualism in the theology of St. Augustine.

God is explained as an uncreated creator or uncreated creating principle in the philosophy of **John Scottus Eriugena** (c. 810 – 877). God is the beginning, middle and end of all things. God is a source which creates but not created. God does not come within the categories of nature. He can not be seen. He can not be known what He is, only that He is. "We know more about him through negative rather affirmative theology"²⁰. what God is not then what he is. The biblical Book of Genesis given an account of creatures and human beings how they were made. One can say that all things always were, are, and in God's wisdom. We should not understand God and the creature as two things removed from one another, but as one and the same thing.

God created the world out of nothing. God made all things out of himself according to the will or plan or eternal pattern of His mind. God is eternal and is the essence of all things. But the world remains within the God. Hence, creatures and God are one and the same. All things come from God and all things return to Him.

God is accepted as perfect being in **Anselm's** (1033 – 1109) philosophy also.

God is regarded as the ultimate unity of all things by **Marsilio Ficino** (1433–1499). The one (God) is the absolute and uncontradicted original essence prior to the plurality of all things.

St. Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225 – 74) explained God as wisdom, a prime mover, a first efficient cause, a necessary being and a designer or governor of the Universe. God is infinite, creator and transcendent to the world or man. All finite things are produced by God as their first cause. God is good and only good. God has created the world out of nothing. So, God is the creator not an architect. World is not necessary for God but God is necessary for the world. The world depends on God but does not depend on anything. There is nothing besides God.

God can be explained in two ways. In negative way, God is said to be immutable (without change), eternal (not in time), pure act (with potentiality) and simple (without composition). In positive way, God is said as having intelligence, living, having will, loving goodness etc.

Concept of god in modern philosophy:

God is found as infinitely perfect being, immutable, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent in **Descartes'** (1596-1650) Philosophy. God is the source of all goodness and truth. The idea of God is the innate idea. Time is irrelevant to His nature. He is causa sui (self-caused). His essential nature is incomprehensible. "God is Ens entium; as Unum, He can be said to endlessly rich in the varacity of His attributes; as Verum, He is omniscient and there is nothing that escapes his knowledge; as Borum, He is unchanging in the constancy of His benevolence"²¹. God is the creator of all things. God is the cause of all existence. This veracity of God is the Ultimate gurantee of all knowledge.

Benedict de Spinoza (1632-77) explains the concept of God as One, single, eternal, infinite, self-caused and necessary principle of all things. God is the perfect being, the sovereign and uniquely self-dependent reality. God is the ultimate or universal substance. God or

substance is all inclusive whole, outside of which nothing can be. All things are in God and everything that happens does so only by the law of the infinite nature of God. God is the ultimate, immanent and comprehensive source of the universe. He is infinitely absolute and omnipresent. Hence, God and Nature are identical. "There are places where Spinoza says that the nature is God and the God is nature"²².

God is said to be the cause or self-creative. In Western Theology God is taken to be a personal being, having will, intellect and feeling. God does not create anything out of some pre-existing matter. So, matter is the co-eternal with God, which would ultimately lead to dualism not to monism. As there is nothing over and above God, all is God and everything follows from God. So, God is said to be the indwelling and pervading principle of the universe. God or Nature as the self-creating Reality is known as *Natura Naturans* means free cause.

God does not create the world in a theistic fashion. God is a pervading principle and the indwelling cause of the world. From a theological standpoint, this interpretation can be called as pantheism.

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz (1646 - 1716) believed God as the giant, grand harmonizer and the principle of unity. God is the supreme monad. God is the very crown in the series of monads. Monads are the eternal principle and as real as the single substances. God is the centre of monadology and monads can be destroyed on the part of God. "God creates them and God annihilates them. Otherwise they are uncreatable and indestructible"²³.

God is beyond nature and reason. Man can have no perfect nature of God because man is limited. But God is the infinite and

perfect. God is the creator of the universe. God has established the laws that governs the physical world.

God is described as a spiritual substance in the philosophy of **John Lock** (1632 - 1704). There is no innate idea of God. God is knowable and His nature is purely immaterial. God is believed as the natural powers like time, knowledge, power, pleasure and happiness. Notion of God is believed due to the infinite qualities or the attributes and God is imagined to embody the attributes.

George Berkeley (1685 - 1753) regards God as the infinite spirit. God's will is sufficient to produce any effect. God alone is the cause of all ideas. The whole nature is the living language of God. God is the real cause of the spirit and things. The reality of the physical world is essentially spiritual and manifests the goodness of God's will. In Nature, there is nothing like cause and effect. God arranges the succession of events according to this own fiat of will. Of course God maintains the laws of nature. This fixed character of events follows from the will of God, though it is arbitrary yet, it is not whimsical. So, God is the necessary ground and designer of the universe.

Concept of God in Contemporary Philosophy:

God is explained as the symbol of unity, harmony and power in **Paul Tillich's** philosophy. God is a dynamic and creative centre of reality. God is the highest being than any other being. God is the name for the power and meaning of reality. He is not identified with the totality of things.

Contemporary Philosophers like William James (1842-1910), Henri Bergson (1859 - 1941), Samuel Alexander (1859 - 1938), Alfred North Whitehead (1861 - 1947), Henry Nelson Wilman (1884 - 1975)

and Charles Hartshorne (b. 1897) however, attacked on theism. They conceived God as a limited being.

We also find anti-rationalistic view of God in **Ludwig Wittgenstein's** (1889 - 1951) Philosophy. Rationality has nothing to do with regard to religion or God. Rationality has a role in the language game of science not in religion. So, Religious belief or belief of God is irrational.

Concept of God in Indian Theology:

Different conceptions of God are found in Indian Theology, specially in the Vedic period. A great many gods have been mentioned in the Vedic mantras and invocations. Among these gods, Indra, Agni, Vāyu and Varuna are the chief. The mantras give a description of the nature and activities of these gods. From the description of these gods, it is evident that different objects of nature, viz. storm, cloud, lightning, rains, fire etc. have been deified. The conscious reality lying behind each natural object is a god. The mantras eulogize these gods in a expectation of getting some favours from them.

The word 'deva' is used to indicate many things. The word 'deva' is derived from the root verb 'div' which has different meanings. 'Div' means light or effulgence. Another meaning of 'div' is to manifest. He who manifests, who is bright, self-manifesting is god. God is deva; since He gives the whole world. The Sun, the Moon and the Sky are also gods because they give light to the created beings. The gods are effulgence and they help to manifest other things. Father, mother and spiritual guides and even a guest are also devas. But of all these meanings, we shall accept only that meaning of the word 'deva' which roughly

answers to the modern conception of God. The word 'deva' in this sense means bright or shining.

Hindu Trinity:

According to Hinduism, God has the three aspects within him – the creative aspect is personified as Brahmā, the preservative aspect is personified as Vishṇu and the destructive aspect is personified as Śiva (Mahesha). "These three were regarded as forms of the neuter absolute Brahman, or corresponding to the three gunas of the Absolute"²⁴. They are three deities within the one Lord. They, three are called as the Hindu Trinity or Trimūrti. In the theistic sense they are worshipped separately by distinct sects. Among the three, Śiva and Vishṇu are widely worshipped in India giving rise to Śiva cults and Vaisṇava cults.

Brahmā:

Brahmā is regarded as the authority of all creation. "As creator, Brahmā is sometimes said to have been the first of the gods, the framer of the universe and the guardian of the world"²⁵. He is not worshipped as the principal deity by the Hindus. At one time Brahmā worship was popular but later on He was overthrown by the Vishṇu and Śiva worshippers.

Brahmā was also said to be himself the creature of the supreme being. In the puranas He is said as the son of the supreme being; he is thought to have hatched out from the golden cosmic egg; which floated on the cosmic water; or to have been born from a lotus which sprang from Vishṇu's navel. He is depicted in as a kingly personage with the five heads, riding on a white swan. Brahmā is said as the god of wisdom, the four Vedas are said to have spring from his heads.

Vishṇu:

Vishnu is considered by the Hindus as the authority to preserve all creatures. He is the benevolent God. He is essentially conceived as loving, compassionate, kind and good. He is very popular among the masses. He is believed by his devotees that he comes to the earth as the incarnation of God when unrighteousness reigns supreme on the earth. Lord Vishṇu has the capacity to incarnate in other forms to rescue the human society. Hindus pray to Him first as He is the cause of all incarnations. He is incarnated nine times in different forms. In puranas and the Upaniṣhads, Vishṇu has appeared in the form of a dwarf to restore heaven and earth to the Gods. In the Rāmāyaṇa, Vishnu appeared as the prince hero Rāma, while in Mahābhārata, He came as the 'charioteer' of Arjuna. He appeared as a fish to rescue manu, who was being swept away in universal flood; then as a tortoise to assist the gods; as a boar to lift the sunken earth with its tooth just above the depths of the sea; as a man-lion (Narasimha) to rescue to life of a small child Pralhada from the demon father, the king Hiranya kassipu; as the Brāhmin-hero (Parāśurāma) to defeat the Kṣatriya caste and establish Brāhmanic supremacy; as Gautama to establish 'Buddhism'. As nine incarnations are over the tenth avatāra (Kāli) is yet to come to the world. This avatāra will be a messiah with a sword of flame, riding on a white horse, to save the righteous and destroy the wicked at end of this world period.

Vishṇu as the authority of preserver, is the object of devotion rather than of fear. So, He is worshipped in the different religious rites, pilgrimages and festivals.

Vishṇu's eight avatāra, Krishna has a dominant place in the Hindu society. He is very popular. Krishna is the most widely worshipped

avatāra of Vishṇu. Krishna is considered by many devotees to be the perfect manifestation of Vishṇu. In the fourth book of the Brahmavaivarta purāṇa Krishna is exalted as the God above all gods, the creator of the world. His favourite wife, Rādha is believed not as a separate being but as Krishna's sakti.

Śiva:

The third member of the Hindu triad is Śiva. His followers call him Mahadeva. He was called Rudra in the Vedas. Śiva is believed as superior to Brahmā. For this reason Śiva is known as or Īśvara, Supreme Lord. Śiva is regarded as the authority of the destruction. Śiva, the third deity of the trinity, is the most popularly worshipped deity amongst the Hindus. Though Śiva is the deity of destruction but He is most popularly known as a beneficent deity. He is regarded as the god of regeneration. He is believed to be pleased by a little prayer and devotion. He is the god of ascetics as well as the god of ordinary domestic life. He is also believed to have the creative power. So, His supreme creative power is celebrated in the worship of the lingam or phallus. The main object of the Śiva worship is the linga. He is invoked as the master of life and death.

Śiva is worshipped in the form of a linga, an ancient symbol, probably older than the Aryan culture having divine power and as a figure of fertility. Śiva worship is mostly found in Linga purāna.

God in the Upaniṣads:

Upaniṣads may be regarded as the end of the Vedas. Upaniṣads are the last literary products of the Vedic period. They contain the concluding portion of the Vedas, hence they are called the Vedānta or end of the Vedas. In respect of study also Upaniṣads come last or

treatises of the Vedas. All Philosophical thoughts including Vedānta are developed through Vedānta. Early Upaniṣads are regarded as the very root of Indian spriritual tradition and as the basis of Indian Philosophy. They contain the Philosophical system of Vedānta. The Vedic gods like Indra and Āditya, the Sun-god were the background gods of early Upaniṣads. They are rightly speak as the cream of the Vedas. "Samṁkarācārya, in his notable commentary on Taittirīya Upaniṣad says that the true knowledge of Brahma is called Upaniṣad"²⁶. The word Upaniṣad derived from three terms 'Upa', 'Ni' and 'Ṣad'. 'Upa' means 'near by', 'Ni' means 'devotedly' and 'Ṣad' means 'to sit down'. So, Upanisad means to sit down near the teacher devotedly to know the knowledge of highest reality which destroys all doubts and ignorance. " 'Upaniṣad' means 'what destroys ignorance and gets man near to God' or 'what gets man near to the teacher (upa-ni-sad)'"²⁷. "The usual explanation of 'Upaniṣad' however, is that it represents the instruction given to the pupil 'sitting under the teacher' "²⁸; Upaniṣads were the subsidiary works of the ritualistic Brāhmanas contained in the Āranyakas or Forest Books.

In the early Upaniṣads the Sun is the One God of Vedas. All Vedic gods are the forms of the Sun-god. Here Vedic God means the Deva or Sun and Goddess means the Devi or Dawn, the Sun-goddess. "The Sun is the image of totality in Veda, the integral reality of the absolute and creation, the God who is one in all and all is one"²⁹.

Upanisads contain the germ of orthodox schools of Indian Philosophy. They are part of the Vedas. There are four Vedas – R̥g Veda, Śāma Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda. Each Veda has three divisions, viz, the Samhitas, the Brāhmanas and the Āranyakas. The Samhitas are the verses. The Brāhmanas are commentaries in prose. The

Āranyakas are the forest treatises. The Upaniṣads are mostly parts of Āranyakas.

The number of God mentioned in the Vedas is indefinite. In Ṛg Veda Gods are reckoned as thirty three and classified into three groups of eleven each, Viz – (i) Gods of the sky or upper gods like Sūrya, Mitra and Varuṇa, (ii) Gods of the mid air or middle gods like Indra and Maruts, and (iii) Gods of the earth or lower gods like Agni and Soma. The classification indicates desire on the part of the Vedic series to discover the interrelations of the gods. The variable form of anthropomorphism has been exhibited by the Vedic deities.

The Vedas represent different philosophical assignments--polytheism, henotheism, monotheism and monism. Different gods and goddesses are personified as useful aspect of nature. They are the deities presiding over the diverse phenomena of nature. The different gods are personification of the different powers of nature. They are sometimes worshipped individually. This is the anthropomorphic polytheism of the Vedas. The gods are super natural and super human powers endowed with spiritual qualities. Sometimes they are worshipped in group. This is the organised polytheism. Monotheistic reflection is seen among the gods of the Vedas. Here one god is treated as supreme among the gods for the time being. Henotheism is seen in Vedic interpretation. Henotheism is a step from polytheism to monotheism. In henotheism one god is identified with many others and treated one as supreme. Monotheism leads to monism. Here one reality is conceived as supreme. He is the Parama Purusa. There was nothing other than it. "That One is not personal; it is neither male nor female; it is neuter. It is an impersonal principle"³⁰. That One was later identified

as Ātman or Brāhman in the Upaniṣads. The monism of Ṛg Veda is developed into idealistic monism in the Upaniṣads.

Upaniṣds are methods of philosophical approach through dialogues, questions and answers. All problems relating to self, God and world are put and discussed. "The first attempt at philosophical speculation is to be found in the Upaniṣads, where problems about self, God and the world are clearly put and discussed"³¹.

The Upaniṣads concern with the following problems, such as, what is the reality from which all things originate and into which all things dissolve after destruction? What is that by which everything can be known? What is that by which what is unknown becomes known? What is that by which one can attain immortality? What is Ātman? What is God? What is Brahman? Very natures of the questions imply the Upaniṣadic answer that there is an eternal all-pervasive reality from which all things arise, exist and return to it.

Upaniṣads are the foundations of Vedānta. The metaphysical teachings of Vedānta are the Upaniṣadic view of God or Brāhman. On the other hand Vedānta divided into various schools in regard to the nature of relation between Self (Jīva) and God (Brahman). Madhava holds that the two are totally different in nature. His view is known as dualism (dvaita). Śaṅkara holds that the two are absolutely identical. His view is known as monism (advaitism). Rāmānuja holds that the two are related as part and whole. His view is known as qualified monism (Viśiṣṭādvaita). The main teaching of the Upaniṣads may be termed as "monistic idealism" or "idealistic monism".

In Upaniṣads Brahman is the ultimate reality who is eternal, omnipresent, omniscient and pure spirit. The ultimate reality may be

viewed from two aspects – objective and subjective. From objective aspect it is Brahman. The word Brahman has been derived from the root Brha means to grow, to develop, to expand, to evolve. According to Upaniṣad, the essence of the world and ultimate reality is Brahman, which is infinite, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient and pure consciousness. Brahman is the essence and substratum of all things of the world. Upaniṣads speak of two aspects of Brahman – Para Brahman or Absolute and Apara Brahman or God. Para Brahman is higher Brahman. Para Brahman is indeterminate, unconditioned and devoid of attributes. He is transcendent and non-phenomenal. It is one and without any second. It is devoid of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. "It is one, undivided, partless and devoid of duality and plurality"³². Though Para Brahman is indeterminate, unconditioned and attributeless, yet it has three essential characters. It is pure being, pure consciousness, and pure bliss. Apara Brahman or God or lower Brahman is determinate conditioned and endowed with attributes. Apara Brahman is immanent in the phenomenal world. He is the infinite, eternal, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, creator, preserver, destroyer of the universe, and the moral governor. "Apara Brahman is the determinate Lord or Īśvara related to the empirical world and the individual souls"³³. He is the material cause and the efficient cause of the world. God is the ruler and governor of the world. The sun, the moon, the earth and the sky are kept in their places by His command.

Upaniṣads describe Brahman as having two aspects – one without attribute or Nirguṇa Brahman or unconditioned Brahman and on the other, Saguṇa Brahman or with attributes or conditioned Brahman. Nirguṇa Brahman is designated as 'It' (Tat). It has no limiting adjuncts. It is beyond space, time causality and world. It is infinite, attributeless, without any name and It is transcendent. The Kathopaniṣad says that

Brahman is without beginning, eternal, permanent and ancient. According to Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, Nirguṇa Brahman is neither gross nor subtle, neither big nor small. In it there is no distinction of subject and object. It is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Brahman is Saccidānanda. These are the essences. Positive nature of Brahman is established by using negative senses of these words. 'Sat' indicates Brahman is not non-being, 'cit' indicates Brahman is not matter and 'ananda' indicates Brahman is not mere absence of pain. Brahman is not an empirical object. It is the absolute existence. Brahman is not a knower but knowledge. Brahman does not have bliss but itself is bliss. The Indian contemporary Philosopher Radhakrishnan admits that Brahman has been described in Upaniṣads as the only reality. Brahman is infinite and in that sense there can be nothing outside Brahman. As contrast to unconditioned Brahman, Saguṇa Brahman is limited with attributes, with name and form and immanent. Saguṇa Brahman is always pronounced as 'He'. He is the master of universe and concerned with causal relations. Saguṇa Brahman or God is eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient of this world. Chāndogya Upaniṣad describes Saguṇa Brahman or God or Determinate Absolute as 'tājjalan' which means the Absolute from which everything springs and everything returns after dissolution. Nirguṇa Brahman and Saguṇa Brahman are not two separate reality but two aspects of one and same reality. Nirguṇa Brahman is the basis of Saguṇa Brahman or personal God. Personal God is immanent and transcendent to the world. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad says that He is realized through the worship by yogins.

Upaniṣads explain individual soul as having two aspects – outer husk and reality. Reality aspect is the Real Self which is the pure consciousness. The Real Self is called Ātman. The individual soul is

different from the body, the sense organs, manas and buddhi. The body is treated as chariot guided by the self, mind as the bridge, buddhi is driver and sense organs as the horses. It is imperishable and immortal. It has no birth and death. The individual self is the Ātman who is one, non-dual, transcendental. It is identical with Brahman.

Reality is sometimes known as Brahman (God), sometimes Ātman (Self), Sometimes simply Sat (Being). According to Aitareya and Br̥hadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, at first there was the Ātman alone. According to Chāndogya Upaniṣad, there was only one Being (Sat) at the beginning. Mundaka Upaniṣad says that all is included in Brahman. The Upaniṣads conceive Brahman not only as the pure ground of all reality and consciousness, but also as the ultimate source of all joy. All the Upaniṣads unanimously hold the view that Ātman (Brahman or Self) is both the creator or material cause of the world. The multiplicity seen in different field is not really multiple but names and forms of the one substance. Upaniṣads hold that the creation is totally unreal, is the appearance of Brahman. Upaniṣads say that the supreme God appears to be many through Māyā. Māyā is the magical power of Brahman. Brahman conditioned by Maya is God (Īśvara). God is determinate Brahman.

In Br̥hadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Brahman is used to denote the substantial basis of the separate groups of homogeneous phenomena. Brahman has two forms – Sat and Tya. Sat is the material or bodily being; it is inert, transient, and mortal. Tya is the immaterial being; it is eternally in motion and immortal. According to the teachings of Yajnavalkya, Brahman is described as the common basis. Everything proceeds from Brahman and returns to Brahman.

Upaniṣads refer three gunas like Sattva (purity), rajas (passion) and tamas (dullness). The Maitrī Upaniṣad affirms that at the beginning the three gunas were differentiated within the Supreme Self (Brahman). The Supreme Self is indicated by the syllable 'Om' by recitation of which every Veda begins. 'Om' consists of three units: /a/u/, and/m/. Aum is the sound form of this being. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad says that there is only one God, that is, Brahman. In the same Upaniṣad Prajāpati said regarding three kinds of offsprings – gods, man and demons. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad said that physical breath or Prāṇa are identical with all the gods. Prāṇa is also identical with Brahma. Prāṇa is used to be same with the Spirit. In the Ṛg Veda it is said that all comes from the breath of God.

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad says Air and Atmosphere as the Supreme Brahman. Brahman are of two types – formed and formless. Sun is the formed Brahman. Air and Atmosphere are the formless Brahman. Breath or Prāṇa is not just the vital force but equated with the formless Brahman. Brahman is the Self, revealed symbolically through the air or Vāyu and the atmosphere. Air is a poetic principle to reveal Brahmā. The Vedic god Indra is based on the common atmospheric symbolism. "The atmosphere is Brahmā as the all-comprehensive world, as the all comprehensive world spirit"³⁴.

According to Chāndogya Upaniṣad, the world has beginning and end due to the Brahman. The Brahman cannot be predicated. Chāndogya Upaniṣad regarded Sun as Brahman. The Divine word Aum and the Divine light, Sun, are one. Aum is the Exalted song of the Sun. This Sun is not just the material Sun but all the principles of light. In terms of our embodied being, embodied Sun is prāṇa. In terms of the cosmos, the Sun is the world soul. The Self is spoken as the Sun in

terms of its creative being. The Vedic Sun and sun gods represent the Self and the Self has a higher creative nature beyond evil and ignorance. Self is four fold as Being, Consciousness, Bliss and Supermind, and Saccidānanda and Vijnāna which are again represented by four great gods of Rg Veda – Indra, Agni, Soma and Surya. The creative Self of the Sun is also the same with the Self who is the Lord of the whole universe. The gods in the Veda are causal powers and principles of the Self. The Self is the Lord of all the gods and their wisers. He is the Lord of all Divine Wishes.

The Vasus are one of the major classes of Vedic gods. In late Vedic times they came to know for the basic outer powers of the cosmos. They were said to be Earth, Fire, Atmosphere, Wind, Heaven, the Sun, the Stars and the Moon. They are the basic powers of the material world and the waking state. They are the manifestations of the Solar Self which act for the benefit of living beings.

The Rudras are another major class of Vedic gods. In Upaniṣadic system they are said to be 11. Indra is the Divine hero who is their leader. They are the life forces that arouse people to action. They are the powers of the dream state, the Atmosphere and the mind. Through the powers of our sacrifices we build these Divine powers of action within us.

The Vedic gods Ādityas are the uplifting powers as they are the gods through whom we rise up. Out of 33 Vedic gods they are the 12 months of the year. They are the basic energies of time and creation, the state of deep sleep, Heaven and the breath. The movement of the Sun from the west to east represent the life force in the state of deep sleep, just opposite of waking state. Ādityas represent the forms of the night sun.

According to Chāndogya all this (Universe) is Brahmā. Man has the intelligent force or will. After death of the body the Will exist. This Spirit or Will is that mind-making, breath-bodies, light-formed, ether-spirited one. This Will is the Ego, Spirit or Brahman (Absolute Being). Highest being is the true (being). True being is happiness; true being is ego, ego is all; ego is the Absolute. "This (Universal being) is my ego, spirit, and is Brahmā, force (absolute being). After death I shall enter into him"³⁵.

According to Taittirīya Upaniṣad, Brahman is too great to be described by man. Brahman is truth which cannot be described. Brahman is the existence, knowledge and infinity as dwelling within the cavity. He is the creator of all. He is the supreme Spirit and source of all reality. "He is the supreme, the absolute Existencē, because there is nothing else that is outside of Him. He exists by Himself; subject to nothing. Space, Time, causality are created by Him, out of himself as conditions of manifestation; they donot contain Him, they are contained in Him"³⁶.

Praśna Upaniṣad regards Sun as the life (Prāṇa and Spirit). Moon is the substance (Wealth, matter). The Sun and Moon or Spirit and matter are Divine couple which is the basis of all creation. The Sun is the Universal God (Vaisvanara), the Universal form (Vaisvaruūpah); the flame of Awareness (Agni). Brahman is the Universal God conceived as the creator of the world. 'Om' is verbal symbol of knowledge of Supreme Brahman. If the 'Om' is meditated upon in its parts, the knowledge of Brahma is incomplete and if it is meditated as a whole the absolute nature of Brahman is understood.

According to Pranava Upaniṣad, 'Om' is the symbol of power of Brahman. Without 'Om' He is powerless. It is found that the gods

defeated asuras by uttering the 'Om' sound when asuras stormed the city of Indra. Pranava Upaniṣad explains 'Aum' in the following way. The first letter 'a' sound is the earth and the fire, the plants, the Ṛg Veda, two Gāyatrīs, the Earth, the spring, the language, the speech. The 'u' sound is the atmosphere, the wind, the Yajurveda, the west, the summer, the breath, the nose, the smell. The third moral 'm' sound is the heaven and the sun, Sāmaveda, the north, rainy season, the light, eye, the sight. The fourth moral the Anusvara, is the water and the moon, the Atharva Veda, the autumn, the sound, the heart, the knowledge and the known.

Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad says, Self is the truth of beings (Satyam). What is different from the gods and breaths (Prāṇas) is the truth (Sat) while the gods and breaths is the Being (Tyam). Sun was the solar Self from which the seed was gathered. Solar self impregnates all the world with life and the spirit. Moon is the reflected light of the Sun. Moon is the mind of creatures. Human being and its birth is identified with the moon. The self or the spirit in the Sun is Brahman, or personified as Brahmā. The self is not only the transcendent but also the essence of all creative powers. That transcendent creative Divine reality is the truth of Being, the ultimate truth itself, Satyam.

Mundaka Upaniṣad says that the knowledge of Brahman is detained by meditating the word 'OM'. The soul is identified with Brahman. This is all wise, omniscient and it is within the heart and the ruler of the senses. He is not comprehended by senses and devotion but through intellect and meditation. "Brahman is the spirit from whom individual soul sparks. He is all pervading, without cause, unchangeable, without attributes and not to be comprehended as any finite forms. He is the inner soul of all beings (the Virāt)"³⁷.

According to Kena Upaniṣad, Brahman is the one absolute spirit. He is the absolute end of all beings by the knowledge of whom a state of perfection and immortality is obtained. He is infinite and cannot be comprehended by common knowledge. Brahman is to be comprehended by one instrument, the intellect.

The Katha Upaniṣad regards Brahman in one, infinite, great and all-pervading. He has placed in the cavity of the heart of the living creatures. The knowledge of Brahman is not easy to obtain, it is possible by the union of Upaniṣads. The most perfect means to acquire the knowledge is the meditation on the word 'OM' which is the substance of all the Vedas, and which refers to the supreme Brahman to the absolute nature. Here the individual soul is some with the supreme Brahman or infinite soul. There is no real difference between them. Īśa Upaniṣad says that Brahman is the supreme ruler, the supreme soul, independent of all relations to the world. Brahman alone is absolute knowledge and bliss. He has the contradictory character. "He moves he doesnot move; He is far, and also near; he is within this all, he is out of this all"³⁸. He is all-pervading brilliant, without body, without muscles, pure, all wise and above all. Here Brahman is expressed as 'the Truth' which is specially considered to abide in the disc of the Sun. Pūsan is the another name of the deity of the Sun.

Māndukya Upaniṣad says, Brahman is the soul or spirit which comprehends all things. Brahman or soul has four modes of existence -- ---- the waking state, the state of dreaming, the state of profound sleep and the fourth is different from the former. In the waking state the soul has contact with the material through the senses. In the dream state, it is conscious through the mind. In profound sleep there is no desire, no thought and all impressions have become one. Here Brahman

is the creator and all things proceed from him. In fourth state Brahman returns to his absolute and infinite nature.

'OM' is the verbal representative of Brahman. It consists of A; u and m. A, u and m corresponds to the different moods of existence of Brahma – 'A' with his complete manifestation (the waking state), 'u' with his internal manifestation (the state of dreams) and 'm' with his existence when not manifested (profound sleep). By meditation on 'OM' in its last form man becomes identical with Brahman.

Aitareya Upaniṣad says, the soul is the knowledge. It is the foundation of the whole world. It is the Brahman. It is the creation. The gods and all the beings are produced from Him.

Sri Aurobindo says that Kena Upaniṣad is the Brahma Vidya or knowledge of Brahman. Here the relation of Brahman to the cosmos and the human consciousness are discussed. The Upaniṣad described Brahman as the Mind of minds, Sense of our senses etc.. Gods are the powers of Brahman. Indra is the power of the Mind.

Sri Aurobindo regarding Taittirīya Upaniṣad says that each god of the Vedas has a specific purpose to fulfill in the cosmic scheme. Mitra is the god who promotes harmony among man and gods. Varuna is the god of purity and vastness, he is the keeper of Law of Truth. Aryaman manifests the Consciousness Force of the Sun-God who symbolizes the Supreme Truth. Bṛhaspati presided over the potent world. Indra is the Lord of Divine Mind. 'OM' is the secret syllable of Brahman. 'OM' is the sound symbol of Brahman consciousness. "Brahman is Truth, Brahman is knowledge, Brahman is infinite"³⁹. Brahman is not merely the substratum of Truth but it is also the knowledge. Prāna or life-force is

experienced and realized as Brahman. Brahman is supreme Bliss. He is both the determinate and the indeterminate. He is the All and all is He.

The philosophical writings or Upaniṣads hold that there is a power of world spirit. Everything is a part of It or Him. The Absolute Being or Brahman is equated with the personal spirit (ego, self, ātmā). He is the God of power.

The Upaniṣadic view of God and world is not pantheistic but panentheistic. Pantheism holds that God is wholly immanent and transcendent to the world. All is God and God is all. The world and God are both not identical. God may be all but all is not God. We can say that all is in God which is included in the theory of panentheism. Radhakrishnan rightly says that Upaniṣads are not panentheistic in nature but where there is the view of abstract monism. Upaniṣads preach pantheism in the sense of God to be the fundamental reality. After all knowledge is key to know Brahman. Brahman is knowledge. Gods are the forms of ego; and their heaven is mortal. Upaniṣads do not deny the existence of gods. All the Upaniṣads arrived at the same conclusions that there is one world spirit (Man's Spirit or Self). World Spirit is all. Everything is a part of It or Him.

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