

The Science of Upanishads - Part 11:

(May 29-June 4, 2017)

Is God a Father, Mother, Kin, Friend, All of the Above or None of the Above?

In Christianity, Judaism, and many other religions of the world, God is often referred to as Father or as Heavenly Father. In Hinduism, God is sometimes referred to as Father, sometimes as Mother, and some other times as Kin or a Friend (For example, Twameva Maata, Pita Tumhi Ho, Twameva Bandhu, Sakha Tumhi Ho). Similarly, Saints of various persuasions have successfully communed with God by idealizing other human relations — such as Sweet Heart or Beloved (For example: Meerabai). **But what do our Upanishads say who God is? Is God a Father, Mother, Kin, Friend, Sweetheart, All of the Above, or None of the Above? THE CORRECT ANSWER IS NONE OF THE ABOVE!**

It makes no difference what you call God! Because as soon as you attach gender and other human or animal attributes to God, you are really not talking about God at all, but instead you are talking about God's numerous manifestations! God, who is normally referred to as **Brahman or Paramatman** in Hindu Philosophical Scriptures including Upanishads, is simply a composite of three absolute entities called **Truth, Conscience, and Love** (together described as **Sachhidananda**), and has no shape, form, or material characteristics (**Nirguna, Nirvikaara**). When one feels the gravity of wisdom, one speaks of God as the Father. When one feels the unbounded, unconditional love, one calls God as the Divine Mother. When one feels God as the nearest of the near, supporter and confidant, one calls God as the Friend. Thus, it is a misnomer to refer to God as "He or She". Ultimately, **God is simply a Spirit, neither masculine nor feminine.** Spirit is above any human correlation. Similarly, the Soul is neither male nor female, though

karmic inclinations cause it to incarnate either with the body of a man or a woman. Any personalized communion with God or worship of a conceptualized aspect or attribute of Divinity maintains the duality of worshiper and Worshipped, the ecstatic relationship sometimes preferred by saints. But the even higher state beyond dualistic devotion, is Oneness with the Object of worship, and specifically, the ultimate union: oneness of the Soul with the Spirit. God as Spirit, the Absolute, beyond form, qualities, manifestations, cannot be perceived, but only experienced by the supreme realization of Spirit and Soul union. This ecstasy, a supernatural Bliss that no human tongue can tell or no rational thought can conceive, is described simply by India's greatest Rishis: "It is only by worshiping God and God's ubiquitous presence in Nature, and then by worshiping God as unmanifested Spirit, by Spirit-and-Soul union, that the devotee can reach the final state of emancipation, from which there is no fall or come-back".

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