

# The Self and the Spirit

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In the Sanskrit, Hindi and Bengali Bibles the normal translation of the Hebrew word *ruach* and the Greek word *pneuma* (translated in English by *spirit*) is *ātmā*; this translation suggests that *ruach* and *pneuma* in the Biblical writings and *ātmā* in the Upanisads are identical in meaning.<sup>1</sup> This paper is an attempt to examine the relationships between the three words.

## I

### BREATH AND WIND

We must begin our discussion by noting that the peoples of all the four great languages of the ancient world, Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Sanscrit, regarded breath as the vital element in man, as that within man without which he cannot live; the reasons for this are obvious, for as man's breathing gets feebler and feebler his life ebbs away. The words used for this vital breath vary in the different languages; in Hebrew it is sometimes (pre-exilic) *neshamah* as in Genesis 2:7: And the Lord God . . . breathed into man the breath of life; and it is sometimes (post-exilic) *ruach* as in Genesis 6:17: All flesh wherein is the breath of life; in Greek it is either *pnoe* (as in Genesis 2:7) or *pneuma* (as in Genesis 6:17); in the R̥g Veda two words are used to express this idea of vital breath; *ātmā* and *prāna*. One of the meanings of *ātmā* in the R̥g Veda is vital breath, as for example R̥g. Veda I.73.2: The truthful one has become dear like the *breath of life* and worthy to be searched for. In the Upanisads *prāna* is the normal word for the breath of life; and *ātmā* has there its more technical meaning of the self.

It is but natural that breath and wind should be associated together; and both Hebrew and Sanscrit writers use the same word to express both. In both the R̥g Veda and the Old Testament wind (*ruach*, *ātmā*, *pneuma*) was regarded as the breath of God (the gods). So in the R̥g Veda in hymns to Vāta or Vāyu the Wind God, we find the wind described as follows: the *breath of*

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<sup>1</sup> Where *ātmā*, *ruach* or *pneuma* occur in the original, I have italicized in this paper.

the Gods, the germ (*garbhā*) of the world that God moves wherever he listeth (R̥g Veda X.168.4); thy *spirit* is wind (R̥g Veda VIII.87.2).

In the Old Testament we are familiar with passages which describe the breath of God as creative; so Psalm 33:6: By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the *breath* of his mouth; and Job 26:13: By his *spirit* the heavens are garnished; and the vision of dry bones in Ezekiel 37 need only be mentioned as a further example of the breath, wind (*ruach*, *pneuma*) of God as creative. But in the Old Testament *ruach* and *pneuma* when used of God are not only creative; they are also destructive; so II Samuel 22:16: Then the foundations of the world were made bare, by the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of the *breath* of his nostrils. So far as I can judge *ātmā* was not so used in the R̥g Veda.

Thus it is possible to say that *ātmā* (in the R̥g Veda) and *ruach* and *pneuma* are very similar at some points; they can all mean the breath of life; they can all mean wind both in itself and as the creative activity of God or the gods. But when we consider the meaning of *ātmā* in the Upanisads we shall find that parallels are few and far between.

## II

### THE SELF AND THE SPIRIT

If the first stage of our discussion has been concerned with the essential element of physical life, the vital breath, as a gift from God's breath, the second stage is concerned with the essential element of spiritual life. We have to ask: why is it that man is able to enter into a relationship with God, however that relationship is described? The answer of the Upanisads is that man can enter into a relationship with the Supreme Reality simply because essentially he is one with the Supreme Reality, because *ātmā*, his self, is one with the Supreme Self, *Brahman*. The Biblical answer to our question is that man can enter into a relationship with God not only because God has made him capable of such a relationship but also because He has renewed his capacity for that relationship when it has been blunted. There is a world of difference between these two answers, and our discussion of *ātmā* and *spirit* will help us to understand the difference better.

### THE SELF

First let us see the answer of the Upanisads. Man can enter into a relationship with God because essentially he is one with the Supreme Reality. If we ask what is this essential element in man which both transcends and includes all the other elements in man, the Upanisads give us both a negative and a positive answer. Of the many negative attempts to define this essential element in man, probably the most famous is that recorded in Bṛhad

Āraṇyaka Upanisad IV.1 where King Janaka of Videha submits to the sage Yājñavalkya six different definitions of supreme reality given him by his various teachers, namely speech (*vāk*), vital breath (*prāna*), the eye (*cakṣu*), the ear (*śrotra*), the mind (*manas*) and the heart (*hrdaya*). To each of these definitions Yājñavalkya answers: This Brahma is only one-footed; thus indicating that these are inadequate definitions of Brahma. An even fuller account of the enquiry into the nature of the essential self is to be found in Chāndogya Upanisad VII.1. Here Sanat-kumāra instructs Nārada in the nature of the essential self, by progressively revealing the inadequacies of the different elements in man's make-up, until there is nothing left but the self.

If we ask more positively where this essential self is to be found, it is said to be located within the smaller ventricle of the heart; this is not of course a literal location but an analogical one, indicating that, in the words of Chāndogya Upanisad VIII. 1: Now here in this city of Brahma is an abode, a small lotus flower; within it is a small place. What is within that should be sought, for that assuredly is what one should desire to understand. Yet this essential self is to be identified with the Supreme Self: This is my *self* within the heart (*hrdaya*), smaller than a grain of rice, than a barley corn, than a mustard seed, than a grain of millet, or than the kernel of a grain of millet. This is *myself* within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the atmosphere, greater than the sky, greater than these worlds, containing all works, containing all desires, containing all odours, containing all tastes, encompassing this whole world, without speech, without concern, this is the *self* of mine within the heart, this is Brahma (Chāndogya Upanisad III.14.3 & 4); this is the well-known Sāṅdilya Vidya which affirms the oneness of the individual self and the Supreme Self, a oneness that is affirmed even more precisely in such phrases as *Tat tvam asi* (Chāndogya Upanisad VI.8.7), *Aham Brahma asmi* (Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upanisad I.4.10) and in the less familiar phrase from Jābāla Upanisad: I am thou, O great God, and thou art I (*Tvam vā aham asmi bhagavo devate aham vā tvam asi*; quoted by Dr. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upanisads*).

### THE SPIRIT OF MAN

Let us now turn to the Biblical answer to our question: why is it that man can enter into a relationship with God? There are two positions which are not held by the Biblical writers. First they are emphatic that there is no question of man being essentially one with God; God is spirit and man is flesh (as the narrative of Genesis 6:1-4 shows quite clearly); man is a created being, dependent upon God for his very existence. Identity of the essential self of man, whether it be described as spirit, or as soul, with God is impossible for the Biblical writers. Secondly, and to my mind equally impossible, is the idea that the relation-

ship between God and man is an entirely passive one on man's side; one of the effects of the thinking of the Reformation, influenced by Augustine, has been so to stress the idea of *sola gratia* that man seems to play no part whatever in the work of redemption. There surely must be an upward reach of the spirit of man as well as a downward reach of the Spirit of God, if the relationship between man and God is to be a real relationship of sons to the heavenly Father and not one of mere automata moving at the capricious hand of the switch-operator.

The Biblical answer to the question: why is it that man can enter into a relationship with God? is that man can enter into such a relationship with God because God created him as capable of such a relationship. Two Biblical ideas in particular confirm this:

1. The description in Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1-3 and 9:5-6 of man as 'made in the image of God'. We are not concerned here with the vast amount of erudition which has been shown in expounding this conception. Perhaps two things stand out here that are relevant to our discussion. If we lay stress on the word 'made', we shall realize that the phrase asserts man's natural dependence as a created being on God as creator. This dependence he shares with all living creatures. If we lay stress on the phrase 'in the image of God', the least that we can assert is that man is made with a capacity to respond to God; in Kraemer's words: 'God gives to this being a commission, a mandate, that is: He speaks to him, He treats him as a partner, nothing more, nothing less' (*Religion and the Christian Faith*, p. 249). None the less we have to add: the Fall has blunted man's capacity to respond to God in that personal relationship for which man was made, but it is a blunted capacity, not an obliterated capacity.

2. A study of Biblical psychology, such as for example that undertaken by Wheeler Robinson in *Record and Revelation*, reminds us that 'the Hebrew idea of personality is an animated body, and not an incarnated soul' (*Record and Revelation*, p. 362). This means that man is thought of as a unity and that the use of terms like soul (*nephesh, psyche*), spirit (*ruach, pneuma*) and heart (*leb, kardia*) indicates not merely a particular element in man's make-up but the whole self acting or thinking or willing or feeling. Of these terms, only one here is relevant to our purpose, namely *ruach* or *pneuma*.

Wheeler Robinson finds no less than 74 instances of *ruach* being used in the Old Testament to mean, in his words, 'the permanent sub-stratum or entity of man's own consciousness' (op. cit., p. 360). Of these seventy-four instances he notes that there is no clear or well-supported example in pre-exilic usage; here normally 'spirit' is associated with God. He goes on to infer from this that since spirit in the pre-exilic writings refers generally to God, acting with energy and power, the phrase 'the spirit of man' always suggests 'a higher conception of the life of man, as drawn from God' (p. 361). In other words, 'the spirit

of man' in the Old Testament does not suggest in any sense identity or oneness with God, but rather dependence upon Him as a created being for the ordinary activities of life. So Psalm 104:29-30: Thou takest away their *breath* they die . . . Thou sendest forth thy *spirit* they are created.

There is however another side to the usage of *ruach* in the Old Testament. Niebuhr claims that *ruach* gradually became 'the more specific designation of man's relation to God, in distinction to *nephesh* which achieves a connotation identical with soul or psyche, or the life-principle in man' (*The Nature and Destiny of Man*, I, p. 162). This would seem to go a bit further than the Old Testament evidence suggests, and generally speaking 'the spirit of man' would appear to mean no more than 'the active and determining man' (Snaith, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament*, p. 149), 'the centre of man's thoughts, purposes, and moods' (Eichrodt, cited in Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 105), 'the self regarded as conscious or aware', 'the willing and knowing self' (Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, I, p. 207). All these different definitions indicate that when the Bible speaks of the spirit of man it does not mean particularly man in his relation to God, but rather that man is free to act and plan and think and purpose, and that this freedom may be used for God or against God, with God or without God. Yet again however we have to remember that this freedom to respond to God in relationship is a freedom that has been cramped and limited and is virtually not freedom at all but slavery because man is fallen and a sinner.

Thus while the Upanisads understand relationship with the Supreme Reality to be possible because man is essentially one with Supreme Reality, the Biblical writers understand a relationship with God to be possible because God made man in His own image and made him capable of such a relationship with Him, though that image and capacity have been marred and blunted by the fall and man's sinfulness.

### THE BODY

Wheeler Robinson's definition of man as being 'an animated body, and not an incarnated soul', suggests a further contrast between *ātmā* and *spirit*. We have already seen that in Biblical thinking man is thought of as a unity and that the use of different parts of the body in the Bible indicate not so much the separate parts of a man as the whole man acting in a particular way; in fact there is no word for body in Hebrew; in Wheeler Robinson's words: 'it never needed one so long as the body was the man' (p. 366). To speak of the spirit of man in the Bible is not to speak of a distinctive element in the body or of a contrast between spirit and flesh in the body or of a dichotomy of body and soul or of a trichotomy of body, soul and spirit. But when we ask what is the relationship between the *ātmā*, the self,

and the physical body, the Upanisads give us several answers. The *ātmanā* is encased in the body as an active principle ; thus the Kauṣītaki Upanisad says : Just as a razor might be hidden in a razor-case or as fire in a fireplace, even so this *self* of intelligence (*prajñātmanā*) has entered this bodily *self* to the very hairs and nails (IV.20) ; Śākāyanya in the Maitrī Upanisad declares : This body is like a cart without intelligence . . . who is its mover ? He who is reputed as standing aloof amidst qualities, like those of vigorous chastity, he indeed is pure, clean, void, tranquil, breathless, mindless, endless, undecaying, steadfast, eternal, unborn, independent. He abides in his own greatness . . . this one, verily, is its driver (II.3, 4) ; and in the Katha Upanisad we have the famous picture of the chariot : Know the *Self* as the lord of the chariot, and the body (*śarīra*) as, verily, the chariot, know the intellect (*buddhi*) as the charioteer and the mind (*manas*) as, verily, the reins. The senses (*indriyāni*), they say, are the horses ; the objects of sense the paths they range over ; the *self* associated with the body, the senses and the mind—wise men declare—is the enjoyer (I.3.3-4). All these passages in the Upanisads show that *ātmanā* is regarded not as the body or person as a whole, but as a principle which pervades and activates the body, a conception which is quite different from that of the spirit in man, according to the Bible.

### III

The next question which we have to answer from the Upanisads and the Bible is : granted that man is in a relationship to God or is capable of entering such a relationship, how is that relationship realized or established ? The answer of the Upanisads is clear : the individual self must realize its oneness and identity with the Supreme Self ; self-realization is here the key-word.

#### THE SELF AND THE SUPREME SELF

The Upanisads give us many analyses of the way in which this self-realization takes place. Probably the best known is that in the Māṇḍūkya Upanisad where the different stages of the individual's self-realization are likened to :

- (a) The waking state (*vaiśvānara*). Radhakrishnan's comment on this is : 'The waking state is the normal condition of the natural man, who without reflection accepts the universe as he finds it' (*The Principal Upanisads*, p. 695). The Biblical parallel here would seem to be the whole person engaged in activities of the flesh and living in 'the whole sphere of that which is earthly or natural' (Rom. 2 : 28f.), merely animal life.
- (b) The dream-state (*taijasa*). Here we are concerned with consciousness not just of the external natural

world, but with that of mental states as well. Here the Biblical parallels would seem to be both the sphere of the *psyche*, the full human life of a man who has not just biological but human needs as well (I Cor. 2:14), and the sphere of the *pneuma* or *nous*, where the stress is on a person planning and knowing and conscious, capable of distinguishing between good and evil.

- (c) The state of deep sleep (*prajña*). Here the distinction between object and subject, between knowledge and the thing known, which still existed in the previous states, has disappeared; and only knowledge and bliss remain.

Yet the self is still the self even though one with the supreme self; so the Upanisad posits a fourth state, the unconditioned state of *ātmā*, known as *turiya* (the fourth). These four stages in the self's self-realization are described in Maitrī Upanisad as follows: He who sees with the eye, who moves in dreams, who is sound asleep and he who is beyond the sound sleeper, these are a person's four distinct conditions (Maitrī Upanisad VII.11). A somewhat similar discussion of the different stages of self-realization is to be found in Taittirīya Upanisad III.10.5 where we read of the five envelopes (*kosa*) of the self.

How are these gradual stages of self-realization achieved? Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upanisad tells us: Therefore he . . . having become calm, self-controlled, withdrawn, patient and collected sees *the Self* in his own *self*, sees all in the *Self* (IV.4.23). The emphasis throughout the Upanisads is on intellectual and moral and spiritual discipline as the means by which the individual self may realize his identity and oneness with the Supreme Self. In Radhakrishnan's words: 'an ordered disciplined training of all our powers, a change of mind, heart and will is demanded' (*The Principal Upanisads*, p. 102). It is true that there are passages in the Upanisads which suggest that self-realization is a gift from the Supreme Self: so Katha Upanisad I.2.23: This *self* cannot be attained by instruction, nor by intellectual power, nor even through much learning. He is to be attained only by the one whom (the self) chooses. To such a one the *self* reveals his own nature (cf. Mundaka Upanisad III.2.3). But such passages are rare and the emphasis undoubtedly is on the efforts of the individual, whether it be the way of knowledge (*jñāna*) or the way of physical austerities (*tāpas*) or the way of mental concentration and self-discipline (*yoga*).

#### THE SPIRIT OF MAN AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD

Let us now ask our question from the Bible: granted that man is capable of entering into a relationship with God, how is that relationship to be established? There are several points of importance here:

1. In describing man as a being in whom is spirit the Bible maintains that man was made capable of being in a relationship with God, but that this capacity has been blunted by the fall. In Hendry's words: 'Spirit in sinful man becomes the principle of his *lost* relation to God' (*The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 115).

2. The emphasis throughout the Bible is on the Spirit of God acting creatively and with power, sometimes almost so compulsively that strong men like Samson, judges like Gideon, prophets like Ezekiel, are led to act far beyond their ordinary natural powers. This emphasis indicates that in Biblical thinking if man is to regain his capacity to live in a true relationship with God, it can only be when the Spirit of God re-creates and renews that capacity in him; thus in Isaiah 11:2ff. the Spirit of the Lord resting upon the shoot of the stock of Jesse is the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord; and it is this Spirit which enables him to act and deal righteously. It is the Spirit of the Lord put upon the Servant of the Lord which enables him to bring forth judgement to the Gentiles (so Isaiah 42:1; cf. Isaiah 61:1ff.). Re-creation of both the land and of man in general depends on the creative spirit of God (Isaiah 44:3; 32:15; Ezekiel 37); but this re-creation by God's spirit has to be prefaced by a cleansing of man and a removal of the hardness of his heart; so Ezekiel 36:25-27: I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new *spirit* will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my *spirit* within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes . . . and ye shall be my people and I will be your God (cf. Ezekiel 11:19; Joel 2:28f.). So also Psalm 51:11: Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right *spirit* within me.

3. Further, so far from the concept of self-realization is Biblical thinking that, if the Spirit of God is so to cleanse and recreate man's spirit, man has to acknowledge his own poverty of spirit; so Psalm 51:17: The sacrifices of God are a broken *spirit*; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise (cf. Isaiah 57:15).

4. Of the titles which are given to Jesus Christ in the New Testament, three are particularly relevant for our purpose here: He is called the second Adam in Romans 5:12-20 and in 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45, and some scholars have found a reference to Him as the second Adam in Philippians 2:5-11; He is called the Image of God in 2 Corinthians 4:4 and Colossians 1:15. Both these titles indicate that He was regarded by our New Testament writers as perfect man, but His perfection lay in the relationship with God His Father which His every word and deed indicated. But He is also called the Messiah, of whose



characteristic mark it is that the Spirit of God rests upon him (Isaiah 11:2; 61.1ff.); although references to the Spirit of God in connection with Jesus are rare in the Gospels 'in each case the word *pneuma* as the Evangelists use it points to their central interest in the Messianic dignity of Jesus . . . Jesus was the Messiah; as such He was the bearer of the Spirit' (Barrett, *The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition*, p. 120).

Scripturally therefore the relationship between man and God of which we have been speaking throughout is perfectly exemplified in Jesus Christ; the downward reach of the Spirit of God and the upward reach of the spirit of man find perfection in Christ.

5. But the whole New Testament tradition is not just that in Christ the Father-Son relationship was perfectly exemplified, but that through His death and resurrection there was both a cleansing of man and a release of the Spirit of God. Such a passage as Galatians 4:4ff. is sufficient to prove this, though many others could be found to substantiate the statement: When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God sent forth the *Spirit* of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God (cf. also Romans 8:15f.; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5f.; Romans 5:5ff.).

Thus for the Biblical writers the relationship with God for which man had been made and from which the fall had barred him has been re-established by the death and resurrection of Christ and the release of the Holy Spirit of Pentecost; and it is only as a man relates himself or is related by God to these evangelical events that he can know the Father-Son relationship with God for which he was originally made. This is clearly something quite different from the self-realization of the Upanisads.

#### IV

So far we have considered what we may call the conditioned states of *ātma* as we find them described in the Upanisads, and the relationship between God and man as indicated by the use of the word Spirit in the Bible. We have now to come to the unconditioned state of *ātma*, what is called *paramātmā*, and to the Biblical affirmation that God is Spirit (John 4:24). There is no doubt much that should be said here, but we must be content to indicate briefly the main differences.

#### THE SUPREME SELF

When we discussed self-realization, we drew attention to the fact that the Māṇḍūkya Upanisad (and many other Upanisads)

spoke of the fourth State (*Turiya*); the Upanisad reads as follows: *Turiya* is not that which cognizes the internal objects, not that which cognizes the external objects, not what cognizes both of them, not a mass of cognition, not cognitive, not non-cognitive. It is unseen, incapable of being spoken of, ungraspable, without any distinctive marks, unthinkable, unnameable, the essence of the knowledge of the one *self*, that into which the world is resolved, the peaceful, the benign, the non-dual . . . He is the *self* (Māṇḍūkya Upanisad VII). Here everything that is said about the unconditioned *ātmā* is expressed in the negative, hence the state is called 'the Fourth' since there is no other way of characterizing it, except *neti neti ātmā*.

### GOD AS SPIRIT

There could be hardly anything more different from this conception of *ātmā* than the description in the Bible of God as Spirit. When we ask what the Bible means when it says, 'God is Spirit', we shall notice first that there is a contrast implied in the phrase between God and man. In Isaiah 31:3 this contrast is particularly well brought out: Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses are flesh and not *spirit*; and when the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall stumble, and he that is holpen shall fall and they all shall fall together; to quote Dodd on this passage: 'For Hebraic writers the contrast is not so much one of substance (*ousia*), but rather of power and its opposite. God is known as *ruach* because He exhibits His irresistible and mysterious power, as the "living" God, while human flesh is feeble, powerless, the victim of natural processes' (Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 224). He goes on, speaking about John 4:24: 'John defines deity as *pneuma* . . . *Pneuma* denotes reality, or absolute being . . . But it is reality as living, powerful and life-giving, in contrast to the powerless *sarx* . . . The only way for man to rise from the lower life to the higher is by being born *ek pneumatōs*, which is also to be born *ek tou theou*. This re-birth is made possible through the descent of the Son of Man' (op. cit., p. 226). For the Bible, to give life is the characteristic mark of the Spirit (John 6:63; Romans 8:10, 11; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 2 Corinthians 3:6); and for the Christian: This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ (John 17:3). When the Bible speaks of God as Spirit, it means that God is One who gives life, and this life-giving is through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

This radical difference between the Upanisadic concept of Brahma as *ātmā* and the Biblical concept of God as Spirit suggests that even the one point of contact between the two approaches has been removed. For convenience' sake we have been speaking about the way in which the relationship between God, or the Supreme Reality, and man is considered in the

Upanisads and in the Bible. It may surely be doubted whether any one phrase like relationship between man and the Supreme Reality can blanket such completely different conceptions as oneness with the Absolute and adoption into the sonship of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## V

What conclusions then can we draw from such a study as this? First it will have become increasingly clear as we have progressed in the argument that we have been moving in two circles which do not appear at any moment to touch each other, or perhaps, more accurately, along two lines which though apparently starting from the same point (as breath of life) go off at an angle and move further and further away from each other. The fact is of course that we are dealing with two different religions, the religion of the Upanisads and the religion of the Bible, and in the light of what we have seen it is impossible to say that they say the same thing. *Ātmā* means the essential self which is one with the Supreme Self; spirit in the Bible means dependence upon God and a capacity to enter into a relationship with Him. Oneness with the Supreme Self is realized in the Upanisads largely through mental and physical disciplines; in the Bible the relationship for which man was made but from which he has fallen is re-established through the loving activity of God in the sending of the Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The conception of the Supreme Self in the Upanisads is super-personal and primarily negative; nothing could be more personal and positive than the conception of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Bible.

Secondly it follows that when the Hindu who is versed in the Upanisads comes to read the Christian Scriptures he will carry over into his understanding of them meanings which spirit (*ruach* and *pneuma*) does not and cannot bear. It is therefore imperative that translations of the Scriptures into the Sanscritic languages of India should make some attempt to help him to a truer understanding. Over a hundred years ago Dr. Mill, the first Principal of Bishop's College, proposed the use of *sadātmā* 'which can denote no less than the Eternal Spirit of Purity and Truth while it thus points more explicitly to the third Person of the Trinity than if *paramātmā* were used'. A modern translation of the Acts of the Apostles in Bengali (by Father Fallon, S.J.) uses *param ātmā* for the Holy Spirit throughout, and *ātmā* (in Acts 7:59) and *prānaman* (in Acts 17:16) for the spirit of man.

Thirdly our study might suggest that there is no point of contact between the religion of the Upanisads and the religion of the Bible; this would be an erroneous conclusion, for not only are there indications of a more personal kind of religion in the Upanisads themselves, but also it is extremely doubtful whether

the most ardent devotee of the Upanisads has such an impersonal religion as our study of the Upanisads suggests. As a previous writer in *The Indian Journal of Theology* has said: 'Sankara's beautiful and majestic prose and his still more beautiful poetry convince us that religious instincts are inherent in human nature and brook no suppression' (Ashananda Nag in *The Indian Journal of Theology*, Volume IV, Number 1). It is to the man of religious instincts that the Bible speaks.

(All passages from the Upanisads are according to the translation offered by Dr. Radhakrishnan in *The Principal Upanisads*, published by George Allen and Unwin in 1953.)

★

#### MY MOTHERLAND

*Thrice blessed is thy womb, my Motherland,  
Whence mighty rishis, saints and sages spring!  
A Christian I, yet here none taunteth me,  
Nor buffeteth with angry questioning.*

*I meet and greet them, and with love embrace:  
None saith, 'Thou dost pollute us by thy sin.'  
My Guru they delight to venerate;  
They say, 'He is our brother and our kin.'*

*Let no man fancy that I idly prate;  
Such kindness greets me always, everywhere.  
Saith Dāsa, O thou peerless Mother mine,  
Thy generous sons thy generous heart declare.*