

# WHAT IS GOD?

BY

STANWOOD COBB



AVALON PRESS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

**COPYRIGHT—1955 . . . BY STANWOOD COBB  
MANUFACTURED IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

959

C6535

wha

## *Dedication*

**To the Apocalyptic Splendor—**

**The Spiritual Potency that guides and inspires man.**

**May its Tide wax full upon earth's shore,**

**Deep from the Ocean of Omniscience.**

Dedicated to

**SEERS & HIEROPHANTS**

*Inspired by the Almighty*

# Preface

**T**HE FOLLOWING VERSES are an attempt to open up vistas into the Infinite in a way that prose could not accomplish. Let the reader look upon each stanza as a mystic avenue of Light, giving (it is hoped) some faint suggestion of Reality. These poems are intended neither for inculcation nor indoctrination, but as focal points of contemplation on the Majesty, the Omnipresence and the All-enfolding Beneficence of man's Creator, King and Friend.

Let the reader, as he will, pursue whatever flights of spiritual imagination these stanzas lead him to in his own search for God. For man's spiritual search must be individual, his desire individual, and his attainment individual.

No one can find God for another person, but we can lift each other up by sharing our inspirations and our faiths. Our communions with Divinity must be in the silence of our own hearts; but our journey Godward can and should be in gladsome fellowship.

# Prelude

**WHAT IS GOD? The World has ever sought,  
And still must seek, to solve this mystery.  
Here avails but little—scientific thought  
Or fragile cobwebs of philosophy.  
We look, we search the universe, in vain—  
The Whole is not discernible in part:  
But when soul-weary, sore with pain,  
We look within we find Him in our heart.  
Not immense learning but the gift of Grace  
Enables us to see Him face to face:  
The Ancient Beauty is the Holy Grail  
Revealed to Love where other seekers fail.**

---

*Canto One*

---

**THE SEARCH FOR GOD**



I

**D**are we peer into the awesome Infinite  
and question—"What is God?"  
The ancients were more humble—stood abashed  
on ground where He had trod.

II

**T**o the majestic sky they raised imploring hands  
beseeching the Unknown  
To grant protection and beneficence  
from His Almighty throne.





III

Only the priests dared breathe His sacred Name,  
only the privileged approach  
His august Presence where no worldliness  
could venture to encroach.

IV

Does God exist? We do not need the tomes  
of philosophic mists  
To prove the sun. We only need its warmth  
to know that it exists.



V

*A*nd so with God. Discussions cannot prove  
what wisdom has not sown.

The proof of His existence comes from search  
by souls in ripeness grown.

VI

*L*et faith, like healing, be empirical:  
we learn by adept stages.

Experience achieves its certitude  
where doubt its battle wages.



—  
VII  
—

**O**nce we have felt the tenderness, the warmth,  
the love of the Divine—

**We** no more doubt this Spirit of Existence  
than that the sun can shine.

—  
VIII  
—

**H**as God a Personality? We err  
if we say "Yes" or "No".

**He** is not *less* than Personality—  
this much we surely know.



IX

*H*ow could the universe in quality  
surpass its Architect?  
Or life develop attributes and traits  
only its Maker could perfect?

X

*I*f man has purposeful creative will,  
this could not originate  
From atoms which his sovereign will compels,  
nor from a soulless Fate.



—  
**XI**  
—

*I*f man is mind, then God is Greater Mind.

If humans can devise—

Then Deity is the cosmic Architect

both Skilled and Super-wise.

—  
**XII**  
—

*I*f man is capable of selfless love,

whence comes this quality?

It did not rise from matter's catenations,

nor star-dust energy.



XIII

*L*ove underlies existence, from solar heat  
to the life beneath the sod—  
A love that vitalizes matter, yet is not  
matter, but is God.

XIV

*G*od is the Gracious, and His loving thought  
enfolds each living thing.  
He is the radiance of dawn and dusk,  
the joy of birds that sing.



XV

God is the safe Protector. His Wisdom guides,  
His spirit shelters all.

He knows His universe, His angels speed  
at His commanding Call.

XVI

Say God is Peace, but not the peace of death.  
He is the Peace of Power—

A Power that transcends motion and achieves  
infinity each hour.



XVII

The way of God is utter Peace and Power.

Then man should contemplate  
This Cosmic Way, and so transform his life  
to such celestial state.

XVIII

God is Creative Will, the Great Transformer;  
to His Plan all Nature flows.

His Thought inhabits every solid form  
and every wind that blows.





—  
**XIX**  
—

*T*he world moves by the magic of His Mind;  
His secret aim deploys  
All upward growth from minuscule to man  
from grief to cosmic joys.

—  
**XX**  
—

*V*ast cosmic currents move as He designs,  
infinities that terrify.  
He stays forever Inaccessible,  
remoter than the sky.



XXI

*W*ho then can reach His throne, or worship  
at his Holy sanctuary?

Only those who travel on such Beams of Light  
as to defy earth's gravity.



*Canto Two*

**GOD IS THE QUEST OF LEARNING.**



I

*O* God, Thou art not only Knowledge,  
but the quest of every learning:  
The goal of search, the ardent heart's desire,  
the essence of all yearning.

II

*H*e who finds Thee has found the Ultimate.  
What questing further needs he  
Of erudition, vain imaginings,  
arid philosophy?

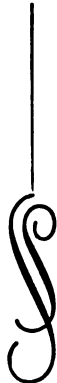


III

God is all Wisdom. Therefore do the wise,  
seeking a cosmic Way  
To truth and wisdom, kindle their white light  
from His Supernal Ray.

IV

Let atheists deny. Let the scholar pour  
over his musty book.  
Seekers of truth glean wisdom from the skies,  
low-learning all forsook.



—  
V  
—

*O* God, our reason cannot bridge Thy gulf,  
nor solve Thy mystery.

The mind falls short:—only the humble heart  
can find its way to Thee.

—  
VI  
—

*H*e is most learned who has plumbed the depths  
of that Reality,

Which like an ocean rims the shores of life  
with vast Finality.



—  
VII  
—

*H*e most is wise whose inmost search is Love.

His knowledge is most vast

Who, sitting at Supper with his Lord of Lords,  
shares a Divine repast.

—  
VIII  
—

*I*t is not merely where the flesh-bound body is,

but where desires fly

That sets the soul's evolving destiny  
nearer to earth or sky.



IX

Say that life has no meaning save in God—  
the temporal is void.

Life is most real when ruled celestially,  
all earthliness destroyed.

X

Immortality is not time's prolongation,  
but Time spiritually betrothed.

And Infinity is not mere endless space,  
but Space suffused with God.





XI

One need not die to reach this Limitless.

Existence can be free.

The bird has but to leave its gilded cage  
to reach Infinity.





---

*Canto Three*

---

**GOD AS CREATOR**



I

*W*hat is God? The Infinite Creator!

By His August Command

Worlds come into being—universes

fashioned by His Hand.

II

*A*ll else is created and conditioned,

He Alone the Uncreate.

All else, as non-existent in His presence,

Is subject to His State:—



—  
III  
—

God is the transcendent universal ONE  
of all plurals that exist.

Every event that links with Time and Space  
at His command keeps tryst.

—  
IV  
—

God is the Absolute, the Primal Cause—  
His Essence a still vortex

From which flows out creation's myriad forms,  
their Source forever Formless.



V

*G*od is all action, yet He is a Calm  
stiller than tropic sea:

The Life-pulse of existence, yet He dwells  
in Peace eternally.

VI

*B*efore creation was the Thought of God:  
within creation is His Love,  
From which flows universal Energy  
and Wisdom interwove.



—  
VII  
—

All that Man has of intellectual power,  
All truth that he can find  
Is but a faint illumination from  
the Universal Mind.

—  
VIII  
—

God lies beyond the far horizons  
of our finite mind and thought.  
We grasp Him only so much and so far  
As the intuitive soul has caught.







*Canto Four*

**GOD AS THE DREAD DESTROYER**



I

*G*od is the maker of the ruthless drought—  
the heat that sickly broods:  
He is the cause of over-copious rains  
and devastating floods.

II

*H*e is the Hurler of the thunder-bolt,  
the Heart of the cyclone:  
All dreaded storms that rage on land and sea  
are sourced from Him alone.



III

*F*or no other being shares His august Rule—  
no partner and no mate;  
He is the Power of the Universe  
and the sole Hand of Fate.

IV

*H*ow can we gladly chant His supreme praise?  
How turn our aching hearts  
In adoration to that Lord of Lords  
from whom such sorrow starts?



—  
V  
—

*J*ob learned we cannot hold our love for Him  
only to sunny days.

“Even though He slay me, will I trust Him!” such  
should be man’s steadfast praise.

—  
VI  
—

*G*od does not need fair-weather friends. He seeks  
within each heart to form

A faithful love, a constant fealty  
in sunshine or in storm.



VII

*T*his is life's chief dilemma—how to keep  
a heart of loving hope  
And see God as the Beloved, even when  
our feet in darkness grope.

VIII

*W*hat is God? He is the dread Destroyer  
Who tears down every form,  
With Time's Assistance all anew to build  
to the more Perfect Norm.





---

*Canto Five*

---

**GOD AS JUSTICE**



I

*G*od is not Vengeance. We personify  
our own proud hearts  
When we apply that quality to Him  
Who only love imparts.

II

*G*od is immortal unrecorded Law,  
that is not merely now  
But always was and will be operative,  
to guide and to endow.





III

*B*ut Divine Law is not that fearsome thing  
we esteem law to be;  
It is the creative flow of Love itself  
ruling eternally.

IV

*G*od is Cosmic Justice—the moral law behind  
an ordered universe.  
His punishment is clear: in each wrong act  
lies its inherent curse.



V

**B**ut God is infinite forgiveness, love  
and tender mercy, too:

No matter what our Karmic weight of sin,  
each day begins anew.

VI

**G**od is the Merciful. If He were not,  
who would be left alive?

To err is human; to forgive, divine.

God's grace helps all to thrive.



—  
VII  
—

*W*hat is God's Justice? It is not legal fiat  
nor punishment for tort.

It is the universal reign of good,  
the splendor of Love's Court.

—  
VIII  
—

*G*od is Equilibration, the fine balance  
of universal life

Holding the atom in its destined place,  
shielding the stars from strife.



IX

Could but this Balance, this Consent-to-Peace  
rule the affairs of man,  
Life would unfold with frictionless design  
under celestial plan.



—  
*Canto Six*

—  
**GOD AS BEAUTY**



I

Wherever we see beauty, we see God.

It is the shining mark  
He traces with indelible love and grace  
on all His handiwork.

II

His Beauty is bewilderment and joy  
to each perceiving soul—  
And for the artist is the occult clue  
to life's dynamic Whole.



III

God is in mountains and the midnight sky,  
in beauty of the stars,  
The crescent moon and the amazing comet  
that through the heaven flares.

IV

The stir of nature in the Womb of Earth  
is the Divine Will to bring  
From barren soil and tired bare-branched trees  
the shining new-born Spring.



V

*G*od is the vigor of the winter months,  
the softness of the spring,  
The luxury of summer foliage,  
the growth in everything.

VI

*H*e is the Painter of the sunset hues—  
His promise in the sky  
That Light—even though darkness intervene—  
has immortality.





VII

*H*e is the Creative Essence of Existence.

All things of Earth and Sky  
Are fashioned by Him into loveliness  
for our adoring eye.

VIII

*A*nd since He made us in His image for  
perfection's distant plan,  
He molds all things to slowly-growing beauty—  
even the Soul of Man.



IX

*L*ife's only ugliness is the lack of life—  
decadence or decay.

Only by constant growth does Beauty hold  
in Earth or Man its sway.

X

*L*et Beauty, then, be the Soul's Inspiration,  
the symbol of moral law;  
God's willing that the Spirit may in time  
raise man above all flaw.



---

*Canto Seven*

---

**GOD AS INSPIRATION**



I

**G**od is the Fire blazing from the Bush,  
the Speaker on the Mount,  
The Wisdom-Source of the Prophetic Word,  
the soul's perpetual Fount.

II

**G**od's Wisdom and His mystic Word are one,  
that through the heavens ride  
And reach the spiritual sense of man  
to counsel and to guide.



III

*H*is Word that was, from time's beginning, old;  
His wisdom that creates,—  
All this lies patent for the need of man,  
stands waiting at his gates.

IV

*L*et him who, yearning for high excellence,  
is sensitive to hear,  
Fling open all the windows of his soul  
to paradise grown near.



V

*M*an was not made for idle ease or joys.

In work he finds God best:  
And in creative tasks he shares with Him  
the Apocalyptic quest.

VI

*G*od is the Giver of Progress, the Divine Source  
of inventions and of arts:  
His spirit breathes upon creative souls  
and kindles ardent hearts.



—  
VII  
—

*H*e is the hidden Cause of all great work,  
the Source of inspiration;  
The Divine Afflatus that imbues the poet  
with vision and creation.

—  
VIII  
—

*T*he invisible impulse of all human progress,  
the Blue Prints of Perfection.  
Man rises to potential cosmic heights  
powered by This Protection.







---

*Canto Eight*

---

**HAPPINESS AND PRAYER**

---



I

The universe is not a hostile waste

where man must walk alone.

Spirit is the tender Friend, the mystic Guide  
of faith full-grown.

II

God is the faithful Answerer of Prayer.

We do not need to know

How our beseechments reach His lofty Throne,  
or how His blessings flow.



—  
**III**  
—

*I*t is enough to pin our faith on His  
ability to hear,  
And guide our actions by the simple trust  
His love and aid are near.

—  
**IV**  
—

*S*ome prayers are never answered, this is true;  
but the cause lies in ourselves—  
We ask for fruits denied by Fate to him  
who neither digs nor delves.



V

*S*eek to develop—pray to grow, to gain  
new values and new power.

For prayer is not a magic to compel  
success beyond man's dower.

VI

*Y*et in God's promise for each gifted soul,  
of destined far perfection,

Our prayers can win a needed cosmic power  
and guarantee protection.



—  
VII  
—

*F*or God is Joy-Bestower. What does He wish  
but happiness for man?  
Existence, even veiled by passing woe,  
has a divine Élan.

—  
VIII  
—

*T*he stars themselves revolve with vital joy;  
the atoms owe their might  
To potencies placed deep within their hearts  
by the Creative Light.



IX

*G*od is the Music of the heavenly spheres,  
the symphony of life;  
His Love begets celestial harmony,  
His will can quell all strife.

X

*L*ife always functions normally with joy.  
Sorrow is but a cloud  
Behind which shines eternally a Light  
that grief can never shroud.



XI

*B*eneath all grief is God—the Breath of Life  
sustaining all creation,  
The Essence of phenomenal existence,  
Eternity's duration.

XII

*S*eek, then, this Eternal Beloved. Once we feel  
His love within our breast  
We enter a new birth, new consciousness  
of divine dynamic rest.







—  
*Canto Nine*  
—

**GOD AS LOVE**  
—



I

**G**od is the abundant Storehouse of all good,  
the bounteous Bestower:

All that life needs is cosmically assigned  
by His creative power.

II

**G**od is the Boundless Ocean of Existence,  
the Reservoir of Force.

One need not fail of Life who daily fills  
his cup at this Great Source.



III

**W**e never need to fail or suffer lack  
if we can reach to Him,  
And bring petition to His inner court  
guarded by seraphim.

IV

**G**od is the Unpossessed, the Unconstrained  
from whom possession flows.  
His Wealth is freely given, His Beneficence  
freights every wind that blows.



V

*H*ow can we conceive this Inconceivable,  
we who live under law?

Man cannot fathom that Remote Control  
whose Throne he never saw.

VI

*H*ow can we find Him in the Universe,  
Who dwells eternally  
Beyond the Universe itself—the Source,  
the primal Will-to-Be?



VII

Say, then, that God is Love, earth's love and the soul's.

He is the Cosmic Love

That warms cold space, and sets the flaming suns  
each in its place above.

VIII

God is Pure Love expanding through the worlds  
to limits of all being.

He is Life's Essence, its sustaining Breath,  
the Sight behind all seeing.



IX

*T*here is no heart throughout His wide domains  
but shares this Divine Love:  
It penetrates all facets of existence  
below, around, above.

X

*T*his Love—this Cosmic Force alone—can bind  
all atoms, every minuscule  
Into a myriad diverse unity  
where harmony can rule.

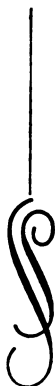


—  
**XI**  
—

**I**his Universe of Love, flooding man's soul,  
giving his spirit sooth,  
Enables his aspiring will to wend  
its way toward Cosmic Truth.

—  
**XII**  
—

**T**o know the Lord is but the mind's avowal;  
only His Presence brings,  
To hearts that yearn, the Cosmic Love and Grace  
that gives man's spirit wings.



XIII

*W*ings to soar up above earth's heaviness—  
Wings to uplift, each hour,  
Man's soul to lofty planes where the soul's love  
is matched with perfect power.





*Canto Ten*

**RELIGION IS MORE THAN RITUAL**



I

God is pure Spirit—so the Gnostics say.

And he who worships here  
Must worship in pure spirit and in truth,  
with heart that's crystal clear.

II

This means that self—with all its eager claims—  
must yield its motivation  
Within a heart that ardent worship lifts  
in humble adoration.



III

**R**eligion is not mere ritual or creed.

It points to Shining Ways;

Opens a Path to our Divinest Lord.

He worships best who prays:—

IV

**W**ho prays with sanctity; who daily yearns  
for downpouring of Grace

And gains a vision that in everything

beholds his Master's face:—



V

*W*ho seeks to draw God's Presence and His Love—  
a tide of joy to fill  
All crooks and crannies of the soul  
till Time itself stands still.

VI

*A*s a young bride prepares her home with Love  
against her dear mate's return,  
So kindle in the altar of your heart  
flames that divinely burn.



—  
VII  
—

**W**hen wrapped in Love the soul can travel safer  
than clad in coat of steel;  
For armored mail has never shown the power of Love  
to radiate, and win, and heal.

—  
VIII  
—

**O**nly through Love can the Creator share  
Infinity with man.  
Only through Love can we become reborn  
and the Divine Vision span.



IX

God is man's Beginning and his Cosmic End.

Each soul must wend its way  
Through countless evolutions toward that Throne  
which holds all *ens* in sway.

X

Man is a being all-submerged in God  
and so shall ever be,—

Until life ends its disparateness, slipping  
glad into the Shining Sea.



