Beyond Good and Evil

God is beyond good and evil; man moving Godwards must become of one nature with him. He must transcend good and evil.

God is beyond good and evil, not below them, not existing and limited by them, not even above them, but in a more absolute sense excedent and transcendent of the ideas of good and evil. He exceeds them in his universality; they exist in him, but the values of good and evil which we give to things is not their divine or universal value, they are only their practical value created by us in our psychological and dynamic dealings with life. God recognises them and seems to deal with us on the basis of this valuation of life, but only to such an extent as may serve his purpose in Nature. In his universal action he is not limited by them. But into his transcendent being of which his highest universal is the image, they do not at all enter; there in the highest universal which is to us transcendent is only the absolute good of which both our good and evil have in them certain differentiated elements. Neither our good nor our evil are or can of themselves give the absolute good; both have to be transformed, evil into good, good into pure and self-existent good, before they can be taken up into it.

This explains the nature of the universe which would otherwise be inexplicable, inconsistent with the being of God, a forcefully inconscient and violently active enigma. God must be beyond limitation by our ideas of good, otherwise the universe such as it is could not exist whether as the partly manifested being of a divine Existence or a thing created or permitted by a divine Will. He cannot, either, be evil, otherwise in man, his highest terrestrial creature or his highest terrestrial manifestation, there could not be this dominant idea of good and this stream of tendency towards righteousness. He cannot be a mixture
of good and evil, whether a self-perplexed and struggling or a mysteriously ordered double principle, Ormuzd and Ahriman, or at least he cannot be limited by this duality, for there is much in the universe which is neither good nor evil. Perhaps the greatest part of the totality is either supramoral or inframoral or simply amoral. Good and evil come in with the development of mental consciousness; they exist in their rudimentary elements in the animal and primitive human mind, they develop with the human development. Good and evil are things which arrive in the process of the evolution; there is then the possibility that they will disappear in the process of the evolution. If indeed they are essential to its highest possible point of culmination, then they will remain; or if one of them be essential and the other non-essential, then that one will remain and its opposite will disappear.