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Religion

Rabbi Rami Guide to God: Roadside Assistance for the Spiritual Traveler
Rami Shapiro
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Opening this new edition to his Rabbi Rami Guide series with the loaded question, “Do you believe in God?”, Rabbi Rami presents that he and you and all of us are God, as understood in panentheism through the prism of Perennial Philosophy. Rabbi Rami openly acknowledges that his views are not widely held and that they might be upsetting to readers who already hold strong religious views.

He begins with a brief review of the various types of concepts about God—theism in its major forms, followed by atheism, agnosticism, pantheism, and panentheism. Throughout, he extensively quotes spiritual leaders and scripture passages from world faiths ranging from Christianity and Buddhism to Islam and Sikh to demonstrate his view of the universal Truth. He communicates that all that exists and each of us are God and yet that God is more than all that we are and all that we can experience or measure. Multiple metaphors relating our relationship with God are offered to help explain his panentheist views, including that of waves to the ocean, knots in a rope, and the classic two faces/vase optical illusion. While otherwise largely avoiding complex theological or philosophical terms, phrases such as “spacious Self,” “eternal Subject,” and “egoic self” are among the few terms that might cause confusion. He encourages readers to recite mantras daily and offers suggestions from six religions along with practical tips to aid readers in applying what they have read. The last chapter answers seven frequently asked questions about panentheist views on related topics, including evil, the afterlife, and prayer.

The author’s credentials include earning a PhD in religious studies, serving for twenty years as leader of a Jewish congregation as an ordained rabbi, directing the interfaith Wisdom House in Nashville, writing a monthly column for *Spirituality & Health* magazine, and being inducted into a Ramakrishna Order in 2010.

Rabbi Rami explains his views on God well in this short introductory work that makes a good read or gift for anyone searching for a non-traditional spiritual path, or for a book to further an understanding of interfaith issues, or who is broadly interested in philosophy or

religion.

C. William Gee