

## 4.1 THE REALMS OF CREATION

MYSTICS HAVE DESCRIBED THE LORD'S CREATION as a vast hierarchical system, spanning a multitude of heavens, the lower reflected, projected or emanated from the higher. Within the heart of all, and permeating everything through the divine creative power, lies the eternity of God Himself. At the 'periphery' is the physical world of gross matter, of the mind made physically manifest. Between are realms or heavens of increasing spirituality, where – in the lower heavens – the mind in a subtle form is still prevalent. These are the regions or heavens of the higher or greater mind, the highest point of which has been called the universal mind.

Many mystics, from different times and cultures, have consistently spoken of realms that equate to what in the English language have been called the astral and causal regions. Together with the physical universe, these comprise three worlds, existing within the realm of the greater mind. Within these realms are found the heavens and paradises – as well as the hells and infernal regions – of most of the world's religions.

Some mystics have also spoken of higher spiritual regions beyond the realms of the mind, between the uppermost borders of the greater or higher mind and the eternity of God. Like God Himself, all these worlds lie within. They are realms of being and are travelled – not in space – but in consciousness.

Terms describing this hierarchy of creation are found in this section, including those terms used for hell and some terms used for the physical universe. Some other terms for the physical universe are found in Section 6.2. Terms for the universal mind are in Section 6.1. Terms for eternity or the eternal realm are in Section 2.1.

**KEY ENTRIES: aṇḍa, heavens, mānsarovar, regions, saḥans dal kanwal, ta'ayyun.**















