

G. Ramachandran's Vision of the Ultimate Reality

Sister Mythili

GOOD morning and greetings to everyone on the dais and greetings to all sitting before me to hear our speech.

I hope you must have seen the panels hung in the opposite hall depicting the life and work of Dr. G. Ramachandran. Ramachandran was Hindu, born in Kerala as the third child of their parents. His mother Smt Madhavi Tankachi, was pious lady and father was a very strict disciplinarian. He educated his children with perfect English and modern system of education in Mission schools. Ramachandran was wrapped by Christen teachings in CMS High School, Kottayam. At that two might figures came into his widening horizon. One was VIVEKANANDA—a religious leader. The other was MAHATMA Gandhi—a political leader. The remarkable qualities of utter realism, courage and selflessness in Gandhi's speeches had a blend of both religious depth and political knowledge. From that time his vision of the ultimate reality started blossoming. You can read all about his childhood stories from the book "The Story of Dr. G. Ramachandran."

Today my duty is to express our GR's vision of the Ultimate Reality from my perspective.

I joined in my Comrade Guru GR, when he was 73 and mine was 28. From my 13th year I was searching something **knowing which, we can know everything**. I was reading all sorts of books, tried to do all sorts of practices to understand for what my mind longing. Dr. GR used to give talks every evening after the inter-religious community prayer at Gandhigram. One day as a worker, I requested him, "I want to know in a mathematical way to reach the Ultimate Reality you are talking about." That day he gave me the book "Autobiography of a Yogi" by Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda, to read. That night itself I finished reading the book. He after a detailed evaluation made me a member of YOGODA. He was a guard by my side guiding my *sadhana*. He used to address all the Yogoda meetings we conducted. At that time it did not occur to my mind to enquire, what the concept of Almighty he had in his mind.

After we established our institution in Neyyattinkara, G. Ramachan-

dran began writing his autobiography 'ADVENTURING WITH LIFE'. I was surprised to understand that he at his age of 18 was an intellectual being who questioned everything and anything and naturally about the concept of GOD.

When he was in this third year in Viswabarathi, his Professor C.F. Andrews was summoned by Shri Maulana Mohammed Ali to take care of Gandhi during the famous 21 days fast at Dilkush in Delhi. At his call Ramachandran went to assist his Professor in Delhi.

The young Ramachandran saw for the first time, the Roman figure of Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajaji, Chitaranjandas, Sarojini Naidu, Ali brothers and many other leaders. He did not have a *dharsan* of Mahatma till then.

On the 13th day of the fast he accompanied his Professor C.F. Andrews to attend the evening prayer. In that room every one and everything was silent. A frail thin figure of Gandhi was surrounded by Muslim, Christian, Sikh and Hindu leaders. The prayer started and ended with every one in complete silence.

Ramachandran started watching the scene and heard the prayers with all his critical and intellectual awareness. In that young mind something came like a flash of light and illuminating Ramachandran's inner world and changing it forever. Let us hear that beautiful experience in his words:

"I said to myself that I should not be swept away. I tried to keep a hold on myself. But even as the prayers were going on, something began to pound inside me. It was not a physical experience, but a mental one completely. I saw the frail figure on the bed and looked the many mighty men of India's destiny sitting with heads bowed in reverence around that central figure on the cot. The question came to me: how did this little man succeed in becoming the unquestioned leader of India's political revolution and how did he perform the miracle of linking that revolution with non-violence? How could, at all a man of prayer become the leader of revolution? All distinctions of caste, religion and creed melted away in the power of devotion to the unseen God. My mind caught fire."

"This truth came to me in a flash that God existed and ruled the conscience of mankind. The intellect might not reach God and reason might also fail to know God.

But, God did exist. No Myth could hold and rule the hearts of millions of men and women.

God was truth and love in one. He who lay on the bed fasting, so that

Hindus and Muslims might come together in good will, peace and understanding, was the symbol of that truth and love.

The spirit of God appeared to hover close with in that room.

This MAN had brought GOD into the room. I felt it unmistakably within my mind.

I said to myself, I may never see God, nor know God, but this human symbol proved the truth of Godhood. I would follow the man who had brought God into the room.”

“More than once during these last many years, I have sometimes shocked or amused my friends by telling them that if I had not known Gandhi, I would have been life-long atheist. The moment I understood that a man of God could at the same time become the unhesitant and valiant leader of a great political and social revolution, I ceased to be an atheist.”

Ramachandran kept the pledge with all his strength till his last breath.

The second expression of the experience of God he speaks in his biography was in Jamia. Let me quote from the book the story of GR Mama.

The usual story was that Islam was forced upon people. But, Ramachandran discovered on the contrary that **Islam was a powerful liberalising influence bringing to the common people the message of the equality and freedom of man before God.**

He used to recite Muslim prayers. I have heard him reciting *Bismilla ir Rahmanir Rahim* just as a good Muslim. He appreciated that prayer very much.

A very pleasant memory was the celebration of Ramzan. Ramachandran took no time in deciding that since he was living within a Muslim community of fellow teachers and students, he should also join the fast and prayers. Prof. Mujib welcomed the idea. It was a wonderful experience to keep the fast and to break it at the proper time.

Ramachandran joined the prayers. He had the same sense of ecstasy as in the prayers in Sabarmati. Ramachandran used to remember this experience again and again. He clearly said with conviction:

“The outward forms were different but the inner core was the same, devotion to the one and only almighty God and the determination to live according to HIS will.”

He never bothered about the stir among the Hindus outside the Jamia. With the Santiniketan and the Sabarmati traditions in his mind

Ramachandran was convinced that he was doing the right thing. He was very happy to share in the religious devotions of Ramzan.

In the same way Ramachandran when he studied in Kottayam and Nagarcoil in Christian missionary schools and when he was with SK George enjoyed the Bliss in Christian Dharma.

Of course, in his childhood he used to attend on his beloved mother while she was doing her elaborate *puja*. In those days he never thought of the almighty but only about his mother's devotion. After that he recollects at his age of 10 or 11 that one young sanyasin similar to Mahavatar Babaji, the great Guru of Yogananda, called him and gave a practice of *pranayama* saying that would help him during his stomach upsets. He remembered the technique while he got a stomach ache in Santiniketan. Poor child; he was far far away the house because of his own will; when he was ill, he may be while brooding over the past he might have remembered the sanyasin's words. But it cured him. Not only in that occasion but during his Jail periods stomach upsets were the sufferings and he came out. [These are the stories he told me whenever we sit outside the house for an hour or two in the evening.]

Thus started the faith of God in the young Ramachandran's mind.

In the ninety years of life his faith in God was experimented, sharpened, polished and given a shape—GRian concept of Almighty.

HE - who rejected his aristocratic life for the service of Nation

HE - who joined Mahatma in the freedom struggle

HE - who had gone to jail during freedom struggle 11 times for 7 years

HE - who met almost death more than once in his adventures

HE - who dared to accept his failures bravely and was ready pay the price

HE - who had collected so much wisdom and knowledge in that bald head

HE - who was moulded like gold in the fire of life

HE - who adventured with life to gather vast experiences

That "HE" appeared to me as a great Saint and Sage of our ancient India

He must have thought about and experienced the bliss of Almighty many times and at the last phase he was merged in that supreme bliss almost all the 24 hours. We used to ask him when we see him sitting with folded hands "what are you doing Mama?" With a childlike smile he used to reply "talking to God, my child."

Now let me come back to topic GR's concept of Almighty:

He was never interested in identifying himself with religious names and forms. He sought the ultimate truth; he said "you do not have to

profess any particular religious belief; the important thing is to know the method of contacting God.”

“GOD is the most familiar word we have, yet very few people realise its importance. Even though the scriptures say that God is beyond the comprehension of mind and senses, He is knowable through the intuitive perception in man” explains GR.

Like developing all the powers of senses GR wants us develop the sixth sense—intuition. **Intuition** is the all-knowing faculty of the soul. Intuition is the sixth sense that comprehends those truths beyond the grasp of the five physical senses.

By reading his writings, hearing his speeches and personal conversations Mythili understands the following about what he thinks about God:

The usual conception of God is that He is superhuman, infinite, omnipresent, and omniscient; but in this general conception there are many variations. Whatever conception we have of God, if it does not influence our daily conduct, if our everyday life does not find an inspiration from it, and if it is not found to be universally necessary, then that conception is useless. If God is not conceived in such a way that we cannot do without Him in the satisfaction of a want, in our dealings with people, when earning money, in reading a book, in passing an examination, in the doing of the most trifling or the highest duties, then it is plain that we have not felt any connection between God and life. We read about God in the various scriptures. We hear of His presence and listen to His praise in the sermons of religious men and saints.

We imagine Him behind the veils of the beauty of Nature.

We think about His existence through the logic within us.

But all of these windows, through which we try to see God, are fitted with an opaque glass of uncertain inference drawn from untested, unscrutinized data. We cannot have full or direct knowledge of God through the limited powers of the intellect, which give only a partial and indirect view of things. To view a thing intellectually is to view it by being apart from it. It is by intuition that God consciousness is realised.

God is bliss. He is ever increasing heart-bursting joy—“Satchitananda.”

GR Mama loved that word.

God is that invisible factory of “intelligence” from which all manifest things are created, born and harmoniously developed. Why do the seasons come on time? Why do we have hunger in the body and food out-

side to satisfy that hunger? If there were no Cosmic Intelligence, we might have hunger but no food. Throughout the universe—in spite of the many mischievous pranks of nature—there always seems to be a rhythm, and all things are products of the one factory of One All-ruling intelligence.

God is the Supreme Intelligence that governs everything.

GR Mama used to admire the energy concept in Nature. Even if you destroy things in this world, they blossom in some other manner. From where does this energy come GR used to wonder. He used to explain this cosmic energy bubbling through every thing. Thus

God is the reservoir of energy—macro cosmic energy.

After explaining the concept of almighty in these three sentences he explains the truth that “God has made us in his image.” It is not about the physical body he used to ponder over this. **THE JOY, INNATE INTELLIGENCE AND THE ENERGY all these three are in any living thing.** That is what is meant by saying God has made us in his own image.

I used to ask him about the material possessions and attachment.

GR used to quote from *Esopanishad*:

“Attachment to possessions and not possession itself is the source of misery. In this world we do not own anything; some have more to use than others; but remember the millionaire and poor man alike have to leave everything all possessions when death comes. One should not live a one sided life thinking only of God and neglecting one’s duties in the world. You keep your attention on God; and yet devote part of your attention to thoroughly performing the God-given duties of maintaining yourself and other given into your charge”

Regarding discrimination, cultivating good habits and curbing bad ones, and about the day to day life GR had given us clear-cut formulae. These are explained well in his writings.

GR Mama never missed a day without prayer. He encouraged group prayer—community prayers. He would wait even for the servant maid to join the prayer. His faith in prayer is beyond comprehension. His own prayer was a strange but a sweet one. He talks to God as if He is his beloved.

*Deivame, Jagadheesane, Karunya roopane, karunakarane,
Ninre karunyam onnu kondu mathram Jeevikunna adiyankale Kaathu
rakshikkenum.*

“Beloved Almighty, Ruler of this universe, Compassionate and embodiment of love, because of your compassion alone we live & please bless us and protect us.”

His soul left the body on Thaipooosam full moon day, a very auspicious day for Hindus, 17th January, 6:05 am after uttering the above prayer.

GR had no blind belief. Unless the concept is clear he would not accept or act.

GR always wanted every one to use their reason and intelligence.

The service to mankind gave him peace and happiness especially service for suffering women and children.

He never went to any temple to pray.

But at the same time to comfort us he used to come with us to the Krishna temple Neyyattinkara on his birthday kanni-choti. [Kanni - name of Malayala month and Choti - name of the star on which he was born.]

During the last visit, he told that it was the last visit.

He might have known the fact that he would merge with macrocosmic power soon.

He gave a special advice to us: There are three types of **LAWS**.

1. Man-made law; 2. Social law; & 3. God's law. You can break a man-made law for the sake of Keeping up Social laws. And if it comes to the God's law, all social laws can be broken and we should abide by God's Law only—GR used to say.

Occasionally when I lacked the moral courage needed during the struggle of maintaining an organization, he used to comfort me saying.

“This is so with most of us, our moral courage fails sometimes and we become afraid. The only remedy is prayer to GOD. Prayer is not a mechanical process. When prayer comes from the depth of our spirit then it never fails to give us the moral strength from which we might slip. You have enough foundational moral courage to build upon. Do so consciously in your prayer and meditation.”

He was fearless to the core. And he wanted us to be free, frank and fearless. Always he quoted the message from his Master Gandhi:

**“Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality.
The coward can have no morals.”**

We have to be afraid of fear only. Overcome FEAR; Overcome ANGER.

Were the repeated mantras of GR.

In the same way GR never liked rituals. Religion minus rituals is spirituality he used to say. One should raise their minds above these rituals which were made just to purify oneself in the beginning and not to immerse themselves only in the rituals and forget the Almighty.

He explained idol worship of Hindus as the one which goes beyond the idol to the ideals for which it stands.

I consider my beloved Mama as a great man—great *Rishi* of the *Sanadhana* period, who had qualified himself as the *Sthithaprajnya* i.e., a man with equanimity of mind.

Just because of the right understanding of the macrocosmic power GR's life had become a whole life.

About death also he explained a lot.

About rebirth or post birth he never argued.

“I do not know about these; so we do not discuss these” he replied.

Let me give the essence of G. Ramachandran's vision of Ultimate Reality—GOD:

**“God is the Supreme bliss,
The reservoir of Cosmic Energy &
The Supreme Intelligence
which governs every thing in this Universe.”**