

SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMA HAMSA'S VIEWS ON UNIVERSAL RELIGION

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ABSTRACT

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa the great saint or rather a prophet gifted to the nation. A universal religion, that is the religion of oneness and tolerance, which is accepted by the people even today. To quote the words of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, "Greeting to the feet of jnani! Greeting to the feet of the bhaktha! Greeting to the devotee who believe in the formless God! Greeting to those who believes in the formless God! Greeting to those who believe in God with form! Greeting to men old who knew Brahman! Greeting to the modern knower of truth!" These words show that he accepted one and all, irrespective of caste, creed, status and wealth, alike. His heart and mind were open to receive all kinds of material and spiritual philosophies. He lived only for fifty years but had the spiritual experiences and attainments of five thousand years. His life is itself an open book filled with truthful and be seen that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa began from just as any other ordinary devotional experiences. When compared with other Indian thinkers, it can man, but his spiritual fame grew and spread its wings to the whole world.

KEYWORDS: Religion, Universal, Spirituality, God, Worship So On

Article History

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INTRODUCTION

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was an encyclopedia of knowledge of religion. The religious pluralism brought to the world reality. He had not read books, but his ideas and thoughts are very supernatural. Mahabharata Ramayana, Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, is very much approached his life but he has not read any books, only by hearing and experience he acquired the supreme knowledge. He quoted the words that his life experience is not a book. He says that "I have not read but I have heard the learned. I have practiced all religions, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and I have also followed the paths of the different Hindu sects...I have found that it is the same God towards whom all are directing their steps, though along different paths." This is an extraordinary quality which makes him different from others.

He lived only for fifty-one years but had the spiritual experiences and attainments of five thousand years. His life is itself an open book filled with truthful and be seen that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa began from the rural Bengal, just as any other ordinary devotional experiences. When compared with other Indian thinkers, it can man, but his fame grew and spread its wings to the whole world. The modern renaissance leaders of the nineteenth century had remarked that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was, the God, devotee, Sakti, Siva, Vishnu, Allah and Jesus, all in one.

The essence of all religions was percolated in by him. His heart and mind were open to receive all kinds of material and spiritual philosophies. He was a staunch devotee of mother Kali, but this was not an end, but he was so broad-minded as to accept the non-dualistic thoughts too. India, being a land of lofty philosophical ideologies and well-known sages who had propagated this philosophy of hers had proclaimed that “truth is one but sages call it variously.” This was proved by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He did by experimenting the truth of that era by practicing the spiritual rites and rituals of various religions like a true follower of that religion. The great Experiment led him to attest the validity and genuineness of the truths of Vedas.

The different religion takes different ways but the goal is the same. Hinduism, Islam, Christianity etc follow different paths. They realize that the truth is only one. The name Krishna, Siva etc are energy. Jesus and Allah are the ones and the same. The substance is one and the names are different. The aim and religion claim to the process of the ultimate reality of God, it does not mean merely a way of life. It means the ultimate truth.

The religious knowledge is always internal and intellectual, rational or scientific knowledge. Supreme reality is possible through mystic revelation. Religious affirmation is divine knowledge. The Upanishads say that the supreme knowledge cannot be gained by mere study of text. It is attained by the supreme self. The supreme self is the achievement of humans. Every great religion is the warehouse of the knowledge of god. The realization of God is the highest end of life. He learnt the secrets of all religions and his experience was to reach the reality through the paths of Hinduism and Islam.

The religion which lays importance on thoughts will be brilliant and not concrete. The action or deed based on religion gives prominence to deed. The real or factual religion is the experience one gets when thought, emotion and action are combined. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was a seer who had changed the conception of seers. He was not a mere yogi or thinker but the one who revolutionized the human community with the upliftment of humanitarian concern. His disciples were made able to revive the Indian culture and traditions by discarding the conventional methods. He said that “I had to practice each religion for a time, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity. I realized that there is only one God toward whom all are travelling, but the paths are different.

The most prominent necessity of a human is to obtain the bond with the Divine. If one is able to reach this liberated stage; he should be able to help others also to reach the stage of liberty. The noble and great seers all around the world are the ones who have known all the religions to the core and speak out about the eternal truth in different languages. The understanding of this fact will help one to be tolerant towards all religions which will lead to the same circle of Paramatma. The most important Dharma is the ultimate freedom, happiness and jnana.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was the practical image of all the rites and rituals of religions which existed in India. The main lesson which was taught by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was humanity. The sense of humanity was based on the principles of religious harmony. He always stressed the point, “as many faiths, so many paths to God.” Almost all schools of thought have come up with this idea, that is, there are different or several paths to realize the eternal truth or spiritual reality.

The most remarkable thing is that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa did not proclaim off-hand that “as many faiths so many paths to God.” But he lived in all these religions and arrived at this statement. He also experienced the rigorous struggle with earnestness and sincerity which the followers of these religions practiced attaining God.

As a founder, teacher and propagator of a harmony of religions, he was of opinion that mutual respect and cooperation will surely be able to put an end to the war between faiths. He was a man of universal outlook and his mind was like a sponge absorbing every minute details. Besides religious tolerance, he also taught dynamic acceptance. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's view on humanity is each faith has one unique mode of living, leading to God. Distinct characteristics can be seen in all faith. This leads to the difference among religions. The difference in turn leads to the economy of an enriching divine life. Even though he was a great devotee and also realized God many a time, he never wavered from the path of serving mankind.

The prime importance which Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa gave to spiritual experiences was based on true religion. The spiritual experiences are the one which gives birth to religious harmony. As said earlier, "as many faiths so many paths to God" was the thread in which he threaded the gems of different religions. He, by establishing the harmony of religion and by proving the truth of Vedanta, exhorted the people to respect and salute all the sages and prophets who have established and given humanity the exalted position of truth.

Humanity, according to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, is to know God in all his dimensions; one must experience truth by practicing other faiths. His famous parable of the description of an elephant by a group of blind men illustrates this concept; His unique contribution of religious harmony has enriched collective life.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's messages and sayings are unique as they can be expressed in action. The messages of this great saint were the perpetual messages of Indian thought. The words, messages, sayings and the life of this great mystic saint have marked a great impact on the society then and it continues even now.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa also follows the noble teachings of Buddha and Jaina Teertankaras. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa could speak with the authority of the ideas and ideals of different religions of the world. He had practiced not only the sense of Hindu religion, but also those of Christianity, Islam and all other religions. The spiritual experience of different religions reaches the same goal was found out by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's fundamental practice and principle have not merely an imagination but the living presence of life. He is the embodiment of all faiths; his method is entirely different that is Sarvadharmasvarupa. The practicing of the tenets of Christianity made him have the vision of Jesus. He believes in the true vision of God. He realizes Rama, Siva, Kali, Krishna, Jesus and every other god or goddess or prophets is one and the same. Through the experience, he spoke of each of them as the akha,da sacchidananda. It can be seen that he was a great religious man of the entire universe.

The real religion which is considered to be truthful is the hidden halo in every human. Rites and rituals are the not the ones which alone forms religion but the philosophical, enjoyable experiences, must also be added to get the full essence of the religion. It is often said that a man or a saint will usually follow the religion he likes and takes the path of liberation according to the religion. It was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who opened the window of great truth, that the aim and essence of all religions are one and the same. It can be said that all religions are born from the same mother but having different qualities and different attitudes.

The most remarkable thing about Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa is that he never stuck to one sadhana but practiced many sadhanas and succeeded in all these. Through the tantric sadhana, he raised his Kundalini Sakti and he used various methods to awaken it. In the affectionate practice, he got the darsana of Sri Rama. He had imbibed the Buddhist teachings to a certain extent. He also knew in depth the Jain and Sikh religion. According to him though the Thirthankara. As of Jainism and the gurus of Sikhs had the godliness in them; they were not the incarnations of any Gods. He also

acclaims that when practicing on sadhana a person has to live and breathe in that only. For example, if one follows Islamic sadhana he has to live as an Islam and follow it.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa is really a candle bearer or the guide to the history of spirituality. It is acclaimed so because in the entire world he was the only soul to say, that as many religions as many paths for liberation. His disciples were keen to give his teachings or rather his sayings to all the human beings in the universe. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was one who contributed otherworld of spirituality, not by words or magic but by the experiences he had. His main aim was to build a society based on the principles of faith and devotion. He always gave importance to moral values, spiritual outlook, and tolerance towards other religions sacrifices, universal brotherhood and universal love. The human being however rich and wealthy he may be, should always be one with the divine, says this saint of India.

CONCLUSIONS

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa though a villager and an illiterate person became one of the practical saints of India. No written works can be credited to his name because it was his word of mouth that was heard. He was the one who made people understand that all religions are one- the realization of God. To become a prophet though not willingly, he had to undergo many hardships with whole heartedness. He detached himself from all worldly comforts and pleasures. Even his wife was a Goddess to him.

He viewed Kali in everything he came into contact with. He practiced all religions according to their rites and rituals. He then came to the conclusion that the essence of all religions is one and the same. The concept of God is also the same and the aim of life is also the same. This led him to the formation of a new religion based on oneness and brotherhood.

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