

# MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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with the divine life and sayings of  
Sri Anandamayi Ma

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## CONTENTS

1.	Matri Vani	...	1
2.	Conversation with Western Devotees —Vijayananda	...	3
3.	Advent of Lord Gauranga —Sri Sisir Kumar Ghosh	...	9
4.	Anandamayi Ma—Discourse & Dialogue —Richard Lannoy	...	11
5.	The Fundamentals of Indian Philosophy —P.C. Mehta	...	13
6.	The Yoga of Bhagavad Gita —Swami Viditatmananda	...	18
7.	Stories narrated by Ma	...	19
8.	Pages from my diary —Atmananda	...	24
9.	Rainfall —Sri Satya Srava	...	30
10.	Ma's behaviour beyond comprehension —Gurupriya Devi	...	33
11.	From notes taken in Sree Ma's presence —'Kirpal'	...	35
12.	Harmony and discord .....	...	38
	—Swami Bhumananda Giri		





## MATRI-VANI

The path that has been chosen must be pursued with great vigour in order that purity of mind and heart may be developed. When the goal is ever before one as a living reality, all that is needful will come of its own accord.

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The more the heart becomes filled with the love of God, the fainter will grow the appetite for material enjoyments.

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To the extent that we harbour unkind or narrow thoughts we increase the cause of evil in the world. For better be intent on your own improvement.

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If you can develop inner beauty, and enshrine Him in the glorious temple of your heart, you will be able to perceive beauty in everything.

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Wherever you go at any time, go with your whole heart and soul and nobody will seem a stranger to you.

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It is only so long as the mind is filled with the thought of God, with the awareness of the Presence, that there can be real rest.

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One should select activities and surroundings that are apt to induce divine thoughts and aspirations.

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It is of great value to read sacred texts and books of wisdom. Speak the truth. Bear in mind that God's name is He himself in one form. Let it be your inseparable companion .

No evil can ever overcome him who cleaves to God's name. If the flow of God's name is sustained, all work will beget the good.

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Q. Should we meditate on suffering?

A. In true meditation we forget the sensations of the body, we go beyond the consciousness of the body and we go towards a consciousness which is beyond the body and the mind. An argument which reinforces the fact that our fundamental nature is bliss is that when we feel intense suffering, there is a part of us somewhere which feels happy. What weighs on people is the banality of each day. Great suffering brings about a change, and we have something important to tell. On the other hand, we can use catastrophes to progress spiritually.

Q. In spirituality, does missionary activity have a meaning?

A. If Buddha, for example, sent his disciples to preach, it is not because they were realised, or because they wanted to start a new religion, it was only to show that there was a way out of suffering. Most people do not know that, and they resign themselves to it. They even attach themselves to suffering, as if it were some sort of security. If there is a spiritual truth to communicate to people, it is the possibility of a way out of suffering.

### **Kundalini**

Q. Does the awakening of the Kundalini come from yoga practices or from the grace of the guru?

A. More from the grace of the guru. The satguru can open the *nadis* (channels). We then feel an intense happiness which allows us to completely give up sexual desire. It is the nature of the mind to seek happiness. Therefore, it is necessary to have that opening, to be able to give up the ordinary sources of pleasure. Some gurus are able to give a momentary experience of void to the mind, for instance by looking at people in a certain way. But it is not a true awakening of energy.

Q. Where are the sadhus who have obtained this opening of the *nadis* ?

A. Around Ma, they were more common, but this does not mean the awakening was permanent. One must be a very good sadhaka for the opening to remain permanently. However, it is only the first initiation on the path. When the *nadis* are in the process of opening, one must stay a bit isolated. If the sadhaka mixes easily with people, it is either because he is very advanced, or he has obtained nothing.

But what is most important later in sadhana is the opening of the *nadi* itself. The mistake many Westerners make is to think that sexual experiences help the spiritual experiences. In reality, they go in two opposite directions. The subtle physiology of the Kundalini shows this precisely. As long as consciousness stays in the lateral *nadis*, one is at the mental level. The awakening of the lateral *nadis*, *ida*

and *pingala*, helps in stabilising the mind and sublimating sexual energy. But it is only when Kundalini enters the central *nadi*, *sushumna*, that the mind becomes totally silent. One of the effects of this control is the awakening of charisma. Some people believe that because something is tickling them in the back, the Kundalini is awakened. But that is not the case. All those sensations in the back, as well as trembling, may only be some preliminary signs. We must remember that Kundalini is omnipresent. It is not reducible to a given position in the body. When it awakens, the practitioners dress it up according to their cultural context. For Ramakrishna it was Kali, others will call it Krishna or Jesus. It is possible that Freud might have had certain awakening of the Kundalini, and dressed it up as a theory according to the taste of his time, the so-called psycho-analysis. Otherwise, he couldn't have seen the importance of libido and its role in the psychic regions which seem so removed from it. He also developed a certain charisma : when the Nazis came to arrest him in Vienna, he looked at them in the eyes, and they turned around and left without doing anything.

Q. Can Hatha Yoga help with the awakening of the Kundalini?

A. When we look at it closely, almost all the asanas of yoga represent a reversal of sexual union, that is probably why sadhakas who are sufficiently advanced and who follow the Indian tradition assure not to do these postures in front of members of the opposite sex. But the goal of yoga is in fact the awakening of the Kundalini.

Q. How to know if the Kundalini is awakened?

A. It is an event which has so much impact that there is no doubt about it. If you ask whether you have received it or not, that means that you haven't received it. One experiences feelings of joy, strength and consciousness that are not of this world.

Q. Where is the best place to start with the awakening of the Kundalini?

A. This is not to talk about it, but to leave it to the guru. When the right nostril is opened, it corresponds to the stimulation of the left hemisphere. The mental tendency is more active. It is advised for a brahmachari to lie on the left side in order for the right nostril, *pingala*, to open, which will result in an improvement in sexual control.

Q. When I meditate on the *ajna*, as my guru recommends, I sometimes feel tension. Should I continue?

A. Ma used to say that concentration on *ajna* could bring about anger, and that one must have a good mastery over it. If you feel that you are not successful, you can concentrate for some time on the heart.

Q. Gopi Krishna wrote that when Kundalini awakened in him, he could understand all languages and write poetry with great facility. What is your opinion?

A. Those are *siddhis*. We must avoid them, otherwise we will be blocked at this level. In reality, the awakening of the Kundalini is not the problem. The problem is to know what to do with it.

Q. Is Kundalini spoken of in the Vedas?

A. The Hindu Vedics used to awaken Kundalini not through sexuality, which must be a pre-Vedic practice, but through fire sacrifice. They were trained in the practice of brahmacharya and fire sacrifice. For them the symbolism was very powerful. In the early Upanishads the place at the top of the head is much discussed.

Q. Don't sadhakas project the mother onto the guru as they used to do with Ma Anandamayee and now with Mata Amritanandamayee?

A. A woman guru awakens Kundalini in her disciples and they interpret it as a sexual force directed towards her. To fight that they try to transform this impulse into a mother-child relationship.

Q. (An elderly man) Is Kundalini necessary to obtain *sahaja samadhi*?

A. There are different paths. Kundalini is an experience, while *sahaja samadhi* is beyond experience. What is Kundalini? It is sexuality and anger which have been *sublimated*.

Q. I think I am too old for that ! I don't have sexual appetite anymore, and my level of anger is very low.

A. Do you know the story of one of the 84 Mahasiddhas, Tantric sages of the Middle Ages? One of them was called Jalandhari

One day he asked for hospitality in a big mansion. The owners of the place, who were not very generous, told him to go and sleep in the stables. There, sleeping on the straw, was an old man, who told him that he was the father of the people living in the mansion, but they had excluded him because he was too old. The sage had compassion on him and gave him initiation then, when he was eighty years old. When the old man's daughter came in to the stables she had a vision of divinities, and understood that her father had become a mystic. Later, he became one of the eighty four Mahasiddhas, and helped a lot of people.

Once, Ma used a gesture which gave me a whole sadhana. She put her two index fingers in opposite directions and told me: "On one side is sexual desire and anger, on the other is divine energy, and they go together, on the same axis, but in

opposite directions. It is possible that the anger of Krishnabai and Nisargadatta Maharaj towards their disciples when they were older was because they couldn't awaken the energy in them through sexuality so they used anger instead to awaken that energy.

Q. When we meditate, on which part of the body is it best to concentrate?

A. At the beginning, concentration on the *chakras* can help. But later we start to feel the limitation of this practice. When we are better at meditation, we can go towards the absolute by starting from any point within the body.

### **Happiness**

Q. In some christian mystical treatises, it is said that we should be careful with experiences relating to bliss in meditation, as these could be traps.

A. Spontaneously, I would say that an experience of bliss in meditation is always good. These experiences start causing problems because they don't last. Even then, they remain an encouragement. Perhaps what the authors of these treaties meant was that the excess of emotional religious feelings should be avoided, because they can disturb the psyche, but they probably weren't criticising quiet bliss, *ananda* in Sanskrit, *gaudium* in Latin. Bliss is the fundamental nature of Man, Whatever we think, we become. So it is not advisable to concentrate on a man of sinful nature. The bliss we can feel during meditation is a million times greater than what we can feel during sexual union.

Q. What is said about ananda in the Upanishads?

A. Without happiness, nothing would be possible. Bliss is the very substance of the world and of the sage himself. We cannot say that the sage has the experience of bliss, but that he is bliss itself. On the other hand, Therevada considers joy as a quality of *sadhana*, certainly indispensable, otherwise who would go and start spiritual practice if this joy wasn't there? On the other hand, this is inferior to the state of *nirvana*, which is natural, and lies beyond joy and suffering. In the Gita there is a distinction made between pleasure and suffering in general, and bliss. A distinction is also made between *tamasic* pleasure, which starts with satisfaction and ends in frustration, and *sattvic* pleasure, which goes the opposite way. Sexual pleasure is of *tamasic* type. For people who do not engage in intense spiritual practice, marriage and family life are still the best way to get out of the narrow circle of the ego. Celibacy centered on spiritually remains an unusual path.



Q. What does Nisargadatta Maharaj mean when he says that he has a consciousness that goes beyond experiences ?

A. In the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, it is stated that the *Rasavada*, the taste of experience, is an obstacle one must go beyond. At a certain point, I wanted to experience *Rasa*. This intense savour of psychic phenomena, which can come abundantly when we are progressing. Ma told me, "Don't, that still pertains to the domain of experience," i.e. those are bye-products of meditation and one shouldn't dwell on it. It is better to ask oneself, "Who is it who experiences these phenomena?" We then reach a very subtle sensation, which corresponds to consciousness itself.

[ To be continued ]

***"Patience has the same relation with faith, as has the body with heart. There is no good in faith, which is devoid of patience."***

**—Swami Bhaskarananda**

## ADVENT OF LORD GAURANGA\*

—Sri Sisir Kumar Ghosh

The first conception of god by the hindus is to be found in their sacred writings, the holy Vedas, composed thousands of years ago. This is how they described god :

'Perfect truth, perfect happiness, without equal, immortal, absolute unity, whom neither speech can describe nor mind can comprehend, all-pervading; all transcending; delighted with his own boundless intelligence; not limited by space or time; without feet, moving slowly; without hands, grasping all worlds; without eyes, all-surveying, without ears, all hearing; without an intelligent guide, understanding all; without cause, the first of all causes; all-ruling; all-powerful; the creator, preserver, transformer of all beings; such is the great one.' —Sir W. Jone's works, vol VI.

As a description of the first cause and the creator of the universe, it has never been equalled: it is as grand as the object.

But the Being described above, did not meet the natural requirements of the man, who hankered after a friendly protector, a companion, and an object of love. There is, in the heart of man, an ardent desire for a communion with god, more or less developed according to his constitution or training. The desire is universal, and is felt by almost every one at one time of his life, for a closer intimacy with the mysterious Being, who had given him life. Generally, however, cares of the world get a preponderance in the heart, and eventually crush out this hankering after god.

This awakening in the heart of a desire for communion with god, is the beginning of *Purva-rāga*. Those who can manage to keep the fire alive in the heart find themselves slowly, though imperceptibly, attracted towards god. But the god, as described in the Vedas, does not suit his limited capacity. The heart of such a man hankers after Him, but he finds that the grand Being, described in the Vedas, is beyond his reach, He feels that a companionship with the Being, described in the Vedas, is impossible for him, His heart seeks realization, but the god of the Vedas is unrealizable by the heart. And thus the hindu saints, says a hindu sacred book, finding the god of the Vedas as beyond reach, felt the necessity of giving definite

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\* Excerpt from the famous book "Lord Gauranga" by Mahatma Sisir Kumar Ghosh.

shapes to the deity, for the purposes of communion with Him, and thus images came into existence, Gods with definite shapes and human attributes.

It was of course believed that God was something higher than man : so the image representing Him naturally came to be presented to the devotee as somewhat different from Him. Thus we have images with several hands and several heads; images representing the different attributes of god, His power, His wisdom, and so forth. We are assured by the saints that these images appeared to the ardent devotees, according to the constitution of their minds. Those who feared god, to them He appeared in frightful shape. And thus the sloka of the Gita, "I serve as I am served" is considered one of the main pillars upon which religion itself is founded.

But some *bhaktas*, by earnest devotion were at last able to realize that it was a libel on god to liken Him to a wilful and all-powerful Sovereign. They came to realize that he was nothing of the kind, but only an object of love. Indeed they felt an irresistible attraction for Him, and this, because of their own character. Themselves pure and possessing a sacrificing and loving heart, and having acquired distaste of worldly pleasures, they hankered after love, and therefore at last realized that the greatest object of love to man was no other than god Himself. He was the superior partner and the nearest and dearest object of his soul. To a devotee, who loves god, He therefore appears as an object of love. Such a Being must be a man, a man physically, intellectually, morally and spiritually perfect.

Thus the seeds of Vaishnavism were planted in solitary human heart. But his fellows not having his disinterested devotion, failed to realize this precious knowledge that god is dearer than all. And then the Messiahs, and latterly Lord Gauranga, worshipped by his followers as an incarnation of god himself, came to bear witness to truth. The devotee can attain to the highest truth by his own exertions; but ordinary people need Messiah to be able to realize and accept it. What Jesus taught was known before-hand, but he confirmed the principles known before and then they were accepted by millions. what Lord Gauranga taught was likewise known to a few before his time, but he distributed it to millions.



## ANANDAMAYI MA— DISCOURSE AND DIALOGUE

—Richard Lannoy

Once when the *satsang* was over, an old man was taking leave, 'It is getting late'; he said, 'I must be going home'. 'Late indeed', agreed Anandamayi Ma, 'there you are right; but go to your real home, not to the *dharmasala* (pilgrim hostel).' 'I am not staying in any *dharmasala*, I have my own house here'; he replied. She shook her head and smiled: 'Do you call that home? You won't be able to stay there for ever. Your days are numbered and when your time is up, you will have to leave. I call it *dharmasala*, There are rules and regulations. You may remain for a while, but then you have to quit. This body tells you to find your real home from which nobody can drive you out, which is not of this world. Dig deep and unearth your real wealth, find your real home in god, who is your own self.

"When you wash your clothes you have to apply soap. It is, of course, true that the clothes will not be clean unless the soap is rinsed off again. But can dirt be removed without soap ? The thought of god is the soap that in the end has to be washed away by the purifying waters of the ganges of Supreme Knowledge. Don't worry about results. In business, you give and you get something in return. This is called a bargain, but it is no real gain, If you adopt this sort of mercenary attitude, you will not get any where. Never leave your practice off until there is illumination. You must be adamant in your pursuit, The remembrance of god is like a flame. In whichever direction it is blown, it will burn up whatever lies in its way. According to your actions you will reap the fruits. No efforts is ever wasted; good works and bad works will yield their harvest in great abundance, for He is extremely generous. Perhaps you will argue: I want to be a king. but my wish is not granted. You get exactly what is due to you—nothing less and nothing more. When a pitcher full of water has a hole, however small, all the water will leak away; this is how it is with you : Your concentration is never complete, there is a break in it, you do not want anything with your whole being.

Creation, preservation and dissolution are constantly in process, and all are within you. Try to fathom the end of yourself, if you can. You exist, and this is why the universe exists: the whole universe is within you. Past and future, this world and the next—indeed, everything is contained in you. Therefore, in as much as you are free—with the entire universe held within yourself. The fact of your

eternal freedom stands revealed and any question of being in bondage no longer arises. You exist, so the universe exists.

An eternal relationship exists between god and man. But in His play it is some times there and some times broken, or rather appears to be broken, but it is not really so, for the relationship is eternal. Again, seen from another side, there is no such thing as relationship. Some one, who came to meet this body, said, 'I am a newcomer to you'. He got the reply: 'Ever new and ever old indeed'.

The light of the world comes and goes, it is unstable, the Light which is eternal can never be extinguished. By that light you behold the outer light and everything in the universe; only because it always shines within you, can you perceive the other light. Whatever appears to you in the universe is due only to that greater Light within you, and solely because the supreme knowledge of the essence of things lies hidden in the depths of your being is it possible for you to acquire knowledge of any thing."

As Anandamayi Ma was moving from ward to ward of a hospital, she remarked: "This also is a temple with god's images. It is He who manifests in the shape of disease as well. In every one of these temples the gods and goddesses are giving darshan."

"The sense of want, of emptiness and one's true being are in exactly the same place infact. They are that and that alone. What is this, "sense of want" and what is 'true being'? He and nothing but He. For the simple reason that there is one single seed, which is the tree, as well as the seed, as well as all its various processes of transformation, truely the one alone. You attempt to appease want with want; thence want does not disappear, nor does the sense of want. When man awakens to the acute consciousness of this want, only then does spiritual enquiry becomes genuine. You must bear in mind that only when the sense of want becomes the sense of the want of self-knowledge, does the real quest begin. Whether you call it the one, the two, or the infinite, whatever anyone may say, all is well.

"Whenever you have the chance, laugh as much you can. By this all the rigid knots in your body will be loosened, But to laugh superficially is not enough: your whole being must be united in laughter, both inwardly and outwardly. Do you know how this is expressed? You literally shake with merriment from head to foot, so that it is impossible to tell which part of your body is most affected, What you usually do is to laugh with your mouth, while your emotions are held in check. Bat I want you to laugh with your whole countenance, with your whole heart and with all the breath of your life.

"Nothing has happened"—to be able to understand this is very fortunate. If you can understand that nothing has happened, you have indeed been blessed with inner vision".



# THE FUNDAMENTALS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

—P.C. Mehta

## CHAPTER- VII

### 1. Monistic & absolutistic view in the Upanisads:

The prevailing view in the Upanisads is monistic and absolutistic. They teach that the ultimate reality is one. It is thus a doctrine of unity also.

### 2. Idealistic view in the Upanisads:

Idealism in its philosophic sense means any theory which holds that things exist only as ideas in the mind, or that things are really imperfect imitations of unchanging models or forms having independent existence apart from the material world.

The teaching of the Upanisads is idealistic, because they affirm that there is nothing in the universe which, if it is not itself mental, does not presuppose mind.

### 3. Pluralism & realism in the Upanisads:

We may as well mention here that, i) pluralism or the belief that the ultimate entities are many and ii) realism or the belief that matter is as real as spirit or mind are not unknown to the Upanisads taken as a whole. They are not prominent, but appear as reminders of the various angles covered in the Vedas.

### 4. Relationship of Brahman to the world and to the individual self & the ontological view of the Upanisads:

What is the relationship of this unitary principle to the world and to the individual selves?

- a) In conformity with the Vedic view, there are several passages, which grant reality to the world, though they maintain that it is never apart from '*Brahman*' or the Absolute. This is '*Sa prapanca*', or cosmic view.
- b) There are numerous passages of great insight in the Upanisads which affirm that the world is but an appearance and that it has no actual place in the Ultimate Reality. This is the '*Nisprapanca*' or acosmic view.
- c) Though the first view does not consider the world as an appearance, it denies ultimate meaning or value to it, except when viewed as an element in *Brahman*. Thus, according to either view, the ontological point of view of the Upanisads is that *Brahman* alone is real and the changes of form and state unreal.

### 5. *Bhartrprapanca's view:*

An eminent exponent of the Upanisadic doctrine *Bhartrprapanca* flourished before Sankara. He interpreted Upanisads to mean that, i) the self and ii) the physical universe are real though a) finite and b) imperfect. They are both identical with and different from *Brahman*: the three together i.e. 1) the self, 2) the physical universe and 3) *Brahman* constitute an unity in diversity.

As *Brahman*, the ultimate reality is one, but, as souls and the world, it is many. The whole universe emerges from *Brahman* and therefore partakes of its character of reality. The richness of its contents indicates that *Brahman*, the source, is complex, only the complexity is sometimes manifest and other times latent. This is the cosmic or *Saprapanca* view of Brahman.

*Srsti* i.e. creation and *pralaya* i.e. dissolution succeed endlessly. During the period of creation the complexity is manifest and during dissolution it is latent.

At the end of each cycle the multiplicity returns to *Brahman*, but re-emerges from it at the beginning of the next cycle. The distinction made here between a latent and a manifest stage of the universe implies the dynamic character of the Ultimate Reality and the view is accordingly described as *Brahma parināma vāda* i.e. "The doctrine of self-evolving Brahman".

This view admits of no reality outside Brahman and therefore is monistic. It is also idealistic for, though it may not explain the world as an appearance, it denies ultimate meaning or value to it, except when viewed as an element in *Brahman*, the absolute spirit.

### 6. Sankara's view:

Sankara (788-820 A.D.) examines the two positions mentioned in section above; viz, a) that the world is real, but never apart from *Brahman*, and b) that the world is merely an appearance and has no actual place in the Ultimate reality and states that, the view which grants reality to the world is only a first step or put forward tentatively, merely for adjusting the final teaching to common or empirical ways of thinking which assume diversity to be quite real.

- (i) It represents the a) *Aparā vidyā* - 'lower truth', which serves as a stepping stone to the comprehension of the b) *Parā vidyā* - higher truth',
- ii) That the Upanisads finally conclude that *Brahman* and nothing beside it is truly real and therefore the world is but an appearance and has no actual place in the Ultimate Reality. This is the acosmic or *nisrapanca* view of Brahman. Sankara, accordingly, expounds the theory of *Vivartavāda* or superimposition.

- iii) This distinction between *aparā* and *parā vidya* is sometimes explicitly endorsed in the Upanisads, e.g. in the Prasna Upanisad.
- iv) As regards the individual self, Sankara takes it to be *Brahman* itself, appearing as finite, because of its adjuncts like the body which, as parts of the physical universe, are not real in the true sense of the term. Sankara's theory of *vivartavāda* or superimposition is ably expounded by Sri. J. C. Chatterjee in his book, 'The Wisdom of the Vedas'.

## CHAPTER - VIII

### 1. Psychology as the science of soul or psyche i.e. '*Jiva*'.

Psychology is used in Indian philosophy as the science of soul or psyche. In India, this study never branched off from philosophy and every system has its own psychology. To the Upanisadic seers the existence of the soul is a presupposition.

The soul or '*Jiva*' is often described as '*Purusa*', (not to be confused with *Purusa* of the *Purusa-Sukta*), which is explained as '*puri-saya*' or 'that which dwells in the fortress of the body'. Another reason for the existence of the soul based on the theory of '*karmā*' is that since we cannot account for all the good and evil that befall man in one lifetime, we must admit the transmigration of soul.

According to the cosmic view, the relation of *Jiva* to *Brahman* is an actual transformation of *Brahman* and is as such both identical with and different from it. According to the acosmic view, it is *Brahman* appearing as the *Jiva* and therefore not different from it. In either case, *Jiva*-hood consists in the forgetting of its identity with *Brahman*.

The Upanisads recognize two facets of the soul, the conscious and the unconscious. Throughout its empirical existence, every soul is endowed with these two adjuncts. The word '*Jiva*' for soul is derived from the root '*Jiv*' which means 'to continue to breathe', and thus covers the unconscious aspect. The other terms '*bhoktā*' and '*kartā*' for soul cover the conscious aspect of the activity. The unconscious activity is carried on by '*prāna*' and the conscious activity by '*mānasa*'. This is housed in a physical body, which alone is replaced at every birth. The conscious activity is carried on by '*manasa*' with the help of the ten senses, five of knowledge, called '*jnanendriya*,' consisting of, '*caksus*', '*srotra*', '*tvak*', '*ghrāna*', and '*rasanā*', which are respectively the organs of sight, hearing, touch, smell and flavor, and five of action, called '*karmendriya*' which are, '*vāk*', '*pāni*'.



'pāda', 'pāyu', and 'upastha', which are respectively the organs of speech, holding, moving, excretion and generation. Though other functions of *manasa* like 'vijñāna' and 'ahankāra' are mentioned, the Upanisads emphasize their unity. The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad specifically points out that all these are *manasa* only. 'Manasa' is regarded as the central organ of consciousness.

## 2. The theory of Cognition according to Upanisads :

Things of experience being '*nāma-rupa*' signifies that whatever is thought of or spoken about is the particular. Therefore, the mind and the organs of sense function only within the realm of names and forms. This means that empirical knowledge can only be of the finite.

Brahman transcends the very conditions of knowledge and consequently cannot be known. '*Yato vaco nivartante aprapya manasa saha*' (Taittiriya Upanisad ii. 4). In his commentary on 'Vedanta-Sutras', Sankara refers to a now lost Upanisad, wherein Baskali asks Badhva to expound the nature of Brahman. Badhva does so by keeping silent. When Baskali asks again and a third time Badhva replies, 'I am teaching, but you do not follow. The self is silence, '*Upasantoyam atma*'. This view denies the term '*vidyā*' to empirical knowledge, which from the ultimate standpoint, is not knowledge at all, but only a sort of '*āvidyā*' or ignorance. *Vidyā* is that through which we become Brahman.

## 3. Evil as an error of judgment:

The basis of Upanisadic ethics is in considering evil as a result of error in judgment by seeing variety alone, where there is the unity of Brahman. As mentioned earlier, Indian Philosophy emerged from the practical need to find freedom from evil. This led to the discovery that the 'Atman', though desire laden identification with the ephemeral factors of body, emotions and mind had created a psychological center or a limiting ego which was the root cause of suffering. Therefore, happiness or freedom from evil lay in rooting out this ego and thus freeing oneself from self imposed finiteness. Thus evil is not the result of offending the gods or swerving from sacrificial righteousness but of ignorance. Limiting ego is a blemish on Reality because it cuts it up, distorts it and creates the delusion of variety in place of unity. The action from this ego which is man's lower self, can only be in the interest of the lower self and therefore selfish. They are limiting and therefore cannot be holistic. Evil is due on the practical side to the mistaken imposition of finiteness on Reality. It is thus conditional and has no place in the

Absolute. Thus evil is traceable to '*ahamkāra*'. However, the impulse behind '*ahamkāra*' may be the metamorphosis of the desire for Self-realization.

#### 4. '*Māyā*':

In our everyday life we are convinced that diversity is real and ultimate. Man is distinct from man and matter whether organic or inorganic seems diverse.

According to the Upanisadic view, whether we regard Brahman as '*saprapanca*' i.e. cosmic or '*nisprapanca*' i. e. acosmic, the phenomenal things constituting the universe are mere '*Nama*' and '*Rupa*'. The individuality of each object is its a) '*Nama*' or name, which is the process of identification and b) '*Rupa*' or form. Sometimes one more factor '*karma*' meaning movement, is added to '*nāma*' and '*rupa*', thus explaining the dynamic factor of the world of experience.

Thus, from the monistic point of view, which includes both '*saprapanca*' and '*nisprapanca*' concepts, no part of this diversity is ultimate.

i) As per '*saprapanca*' school, diversity is not the whole truth, because unity is equally real. ii) According to the '*nisprapanca*' school, the diversity found in everyday experience is only an appearance of *Brahman* and therefore false.

We are not aware of this unity, owing to a deep-rooted habit of our mind which can be traced to '*avidya*' or our ignorance of the ultimate reality. This is what is meant by '*maya*'. In the Upanisads, the word '*avidya*' means ignorance about the '*Atman*' being identical with '*Brahman*'. The word '*maya*' is derived from the root '*ma*', which means 'to form' or 'to build'. It is the power or the principle that conceals from us the true character of reality.

The ignorance may be regarded as— i) negative, that is merely a lack of insight: or ii) it may be looked upon as positive in the sense that it gives rise to a misapprehension, making us see diversity where there is only the unity of *Brahman*.

Where we regard ignorance as i) negative, our common knowledge would be correct so far it went, although it did not go far enough to comprehend the unity. ii) In the other case, where we regard ignorance as positive, our common knowledge would be almost completely erroneous.

#### 5. '*Moksa*', the goal of life:

The goal of life, as conceived in the Upanisads is, in either case, to overcome this congenital ignorance, by attaining full enlightenment or '*Jnana*' and thereby realizing the unity of '*Atman*' with '*Brahman*'.

Chhandogya Upanisad says: 'As people ignorant of the presence of a golden treasure, which has been hidden underground, may walk over it again and again

and yet never find it, so all beings, though every moment living in *Brahman*, never find Him, for He is hidden by a covering of ignorance'.

The enlightened state is called release or '*Moksa*', which is release from the empirical state of '*sansara*', or the recurrent round of birth and death and rebirth. It is attaining one's true selfhood in '*Brahman*'.

This enlightenment is not an intellectual understanding, which is but a mediate knowledge, but an immediate or actual realization of that unity. It is in this sense that in India, religion is not different from philosophy. The attainment of it involves discipline of the right kind with impeccable moral life.

[ To be continued]

## THE YOGA OF BHAGAVAD GITA

—Swami Viditatmananda

The word Yoga is derived from the Sanskrit root *Yuj*, which is in the sense of restraining, uniting and concentration. Therefore Yoga generally conveys the sense of restraining and concentrating the mind by which *Jivātmā* is united with *Paramātmā*. Yoga creates an idea in the mind of doing something by which something is to be attained. But Lord Krishna gives a very interesting definition of Yoga in Bhagavad Gita :

'*Tam vidyad dukhasamyogavioyogam yogasamnwitam*'

'What is known as Yoga should be understood as the disengagement from the union with pain' (B.G., VI-23). This clearly states that Yoga is merely a disengagement from something with which we have inadvertently engaged. This definition of Yoga gives us a great relief, because there is always relief in disengagement or giving up. Engagement or acquiring something always involves effort and therefore strain. We have already joined with pain and all we have to do is to disassociate with it. Who wants association with pain anyway ? No one wants to hold on to a hot potato. And so disengagement from pain is what everyone naturally loves. This is the Yoga that we would love to do. This definition altogether changes our attitude towards Yoga.

## STORIES NARRATED BY MA\*

[Translated From Bengali]

A brahmin's son was extremely religious. Though he had no shortage of wealth, he had not got married. He had heard that a guest is verily a form of Narayana Himself and therefore he never ate before serving a guest. Relatives began pressing him to get married but he refused. Finally he was compelled to agree because of their persistence, but he declared, "I agree to get married because of your requests, but I have a condition. The day my wife goes against my wishes, I shall cut off her head." His relatives agreed even to this for they thought this was just a lip threat. Would anyone, after marriage, kill his own wife ? Reflecting thus, they got him married.

To begin with, the brahmin's son told his wife that she should serve a guest everyday before calling him for his meal. After his meal she could eat. She was also to immediately carry out any orders given by the guest. This was his behest and if this was disobeyed he would cut off her head. What was the poor bride to do ? She was a little girl. Everyday she cooked the meal and waited. On some days if the guest did not arrive at lunch time she began feeling very hungry and felt like weeping. But there was no solution for she had to obey her husband's orders or death was certain.

One day no guest turned up. The poor wife sat waiting. It was getting very late when she suddenly saw a man with a terrifying appearance approaching. He carried a stout stick with a cow's head tied to it. Blood was dripping off the cow's head. Seeing such a guest the girl was struck with terror but she had no way out. Remembering her husband's behest, she timidly washed the guest's feet and spread a mat for him and requested him to have food.

The guest gravely told her to cook the cow's head that he was carrying. The girl had never done such a thing before because she was a brahmin's daughter. At the mention of cutting and cooking a cow's head she did as she was told and cut and cooked the cow's head and offered it to the guest. Now the guest commanded her to eat the beef first, without which he would not touch it. What could she do ? In obedience to the command she was about to place the beef in her mouth when the guest stopped her and said, "Wait, go and call your husband."

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\*. Extracts from "Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee — Part III, published by Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, Varanasi.

The girl went to beckon her husband and wondered what mistake she had made that she was being sent to call her husband in spite of doing all that she had been ordered to do. She feared that her husband would finish her off if she had made a mistake. Yet she thought, "Never mind, I have to obey my husband's behest at any cost." She told her husband about the summons from the guest. The husband enquired if the guest had eaten. The wife replied in the negative and said that he had asked her to call her husband instead. The husband was sure that there had been some shortcoming in the service of the guest.

The couple reached the place where the guest was being served his meal and saw the twin images of Radha and Krishna on the *asana*. These were the deities worshipped by them. As soon as they had this darshan they attained liberation.

Ma explained this story saying, "Work is accomplished only with firm adherence to one's ideal. And it is imperative to obey orders without thinking."

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Ma narrated yet another story : "A man was a professional thief and burglary was his livelihood. He once went to a *sadhu* for *diksha*. After initiating him, the sadhu commanded, "Now you must never tell lies, nor must you steal." The burglar stopped stealing in accordance with his Guru's command and he also gave up uttering falsehood. But he had no other means of livelihood. A few days later the sadhu observed that the burglar's family was dying of starvation, so he said, "Alright, maintain your family with your burglary, but do not tell lies." The man resumed burglary but, as instructed by his Guru, he did not tell lies.

One day the burglar went to burgle the king's palace. The king heard the footsteps of the thief and assuming the garb of a commoner went to him and said, "Listen brother, I have also come to burgle, but this is my first day at this job. Therefore you teach me what is to be done. You take two parts of the loot and give me one." The thief agreed and posted the king out side the treasury while he went in and broke open the chest and brought out a bag of gold coins. He calculated the number of coins so that he could give exactly one third to the king. As dawn broke out he hastily rushed out of the treasury, handed the king's share to him and ran away with two thirds of the loot. The king witnessed the entire incident.

As he ran, the thief was arrested by the king's men. The next day he was summoned to the court and the king was to decide upon the punishment to be awarded for theft." The thief replied, "Yes, Your Majesty, I have burgled." The king questioned, "What have you acquired ?" The thief declared the exact number of coins that he had taken with him. The king noticed that the man was speaking the

truth and had announced correctly the amount that he had stolen. The king now asked him what had happened to the rest of the gold coins. The man described all that had happened and said that the other man had been standing outside and he had just handed over one third the number of coins to him and ran away. The king asked for those coins and confirmed that the thief had not uttered even a single lie.

The king enquired, "If you had so desired you could have retained the amount you had stolen without giving it to your companion. You are a thief and burglary is your profession, then why did you not take more ?" Then the thief revealed, "Yes, your majesty, I am a thief. But my Guru has forbidden me to speak falsehood and therefore I do not tell lies. Since my Guru felt that we would not be able to survive without the only means of livelihood that I had, he gave me permission to steal but forbade me from telling lies. Because of this, I could not belie what I had promised my friend. Nor am I uttering a single untruth to you."

The king was impressed by the man's truthfulness and faith in his Guru and announced, "From today I shall take on the entire burden of your family's sustenance. You can give up burglary also." The thief gave up stealing and bowed to the king and went away. He spent his life serving his Guru and obtained liberation."

After narrating this story Ma said, "Look, having taken absolute refuge in truth, this man was protected on all sides by truth itself. If you catch hold of one thing, everything is achieved gradually."

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Ma narrated one more story which was as follows :

Once there lived a king who had enough wealth and prosperity. But he had absolutely no peace. He had heard from people that if one acquired a mantra from a Guru peace could be attained. So he went in search of his family preceptor. Till then no one had bothered about this Guru and the poor man was living in dire poverty. He was immensely pleased to know that the king had remembered him and convinced the king that if he received a mantra from him and practised austerities and japa, he would surely get peace. The Guru chose an auspicious day and conferred a mantra on the king, and incidentally the Guru's economic condition improved, but though the king practised austerities as required after taking initiation, he failed to attain peace.

So he summoned the Guru again and said, "See, I took initiation as you told me to. You had promised that if I performed japa with the mantra I would get peace. But inspite of doing sadhana as enjoined by you I have not attained peace. I shall

now give you seven days time. If you cannot show me the way to peace within these seven days, I shall have you and your family executed."

On receiving this ultimatum, the Guru became very worried and lost all inclination for food and sleep and seemed to be approaching death through sheer anxiety.

The Guru had only one son who was also a great fool. He did not know to read and write for he just did not like studying. He roamed around forests the whole day long and came home only for meals. One by one six days of the seven given to the Guru passed by. On the seventh day there were no signs of lunch being cooked in the Guru's house. The Guru and his family were lying half dead with worry. At this time the son returned and found no signs of lunch. He flared up and in return was severely scolded by his parents. He then enquired what the matter was and why they were lying down without preparing food and were shouting at him instead. The father then explained the entire situation and concluded that if, by the next day the king was not shown the way to peace, they would all be finished off.

The son heard the story and declared, "What is there to worry about? I shall show the king the way to peace. You get the food ready now. When the king asks you, present me to him and I shall speak whatever is necessary."

The next day the father and son went to the palace together. The king said, 'O Gurudev, today is the last day. For the last seven days I have practised sadhana just as you told me to, but I have not gained even the slightest trace of peace. Today if you are unable to show me the way to peace, you will all be executed!'

The Guru said, pointing to his son, 'O King, my son will answer your question' The king asked the son, 'What, can you solve my problem?' The son replied, 'Yes, Your Majesty, I shall answer your question. You will have to do whatever I ask of you and as soon as you do it you will attain peace.' The king agreed.

Then, as commanded by the boy, the king and the Guru followed the boy to the forest with a rope each. After going very far they saw three huge trees growing near each other. The boy announced this to be their destination and securely tied up the king to one tree and his father to another with the ropes. Then he climbed up the tree and began singing and rocking merrily. The king, tortured by his bondage, called out to the boy and asked him to untie the knots. But the boy did not even glance in his direction and kept up the singing and dancing as if there was no limit to his glee. Then the king looked at his Guru and requested, 'You please release my bonds.' But the Guru replied, 'When I am bound myself, how can I release your bondage?'

Screaming with frustration, the king suddenly had divine knowledge. He thought, 'Why do I aspire for peace when I am in the midst of bondage? And how can one who is himself bound free me? Reigning over my kingdom, ensnared by the lure of sense objects, I desire peace and long for liberation, - how can I be as foolish as this?' The king then beckoned the Guru's son and said, 'Release my bonds now. I have obtained the way to peace.' The Guru's son removed the king's bonds. The king, however, did not return to his home, but became a sannyasi and went to the forest.

Summing up the story Ma said, "Only when the pain of bondage becomes unbearable the path to peace is revealed. If you are bound by sense objects how can you get peace? I do not say that all must go to the forest. You can attain liberation even when you live in *samsara*. *Samsara* is sorrowful only for those who mistake 'sang' for 'sara'. And those who realise that we have only put on this 'sang' (clown) role and that this is not our true nature are not affected by *samsārā*. *Tapasyā* is performed to remove the agony of the threefold *tapa*. I say that *tapasya* means 'tapa' + 'sahā'. By accepting one *tapa*, another *tapa* or sorrow can be destroyed. By acquiring good bonds we can destroy bad ones and finally everything is given up."

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## PAGES FROM MY DIARY

—Atmananda

*Question* : How can one conquer sleep ?

*Mataji* : Sleep cannot be conquered, yet under certain conditions the need of sleep vanishes of itself. When you are keenly interested in something you do not feel sleepy, on the contrary, you remain wide awake without any effort; but afterwards you get a reaction and have to make up for your loss of sleep. When you have not slept enough you cannot do good work. On the other hand sound sleep refreshes you. At least a few out of the twenty-four hours of each day have to be spent in sleep, otherwise you feel tired and wretched. Why ? During sleep the activities of the senses are at rest and moreover, although still covered with the veil of ignorance, you touch your Self. Unless this happens at least once a day, you cannot endure; life becomes an ordeal. This is so for the average person.

However, as one progresses in *sādhana*, the senses get more and more at rest and one draws nearer to one's Self. In proportion to the discovery of one's Self, the necessity for sleep decreases. When the Self has been realized, when one has become absorbed in the Bliss of the Self, then there is no more question of work, of experience or of sleep, because there is only the ONE ! Then sleep will not exist for you anymore, you will have gone beyond it. This is why I began by saying, sleep is not conquered, it ceases of itself. Nevertheless, it is also true that a yogi may conquer sleep by the Divine Energy that awakens in him through his yoga. But, for the one who has become *ātmastha*, established in the Self, the question of sleep can no longer arise.

The amount of sleep a person requires depends on various factors. When *tamas* predominates one needs more sleep, and also when the body is weak or unhealthy. The kind of food one eats also has a bearing on the amount of sleep that is required.

*Question* : How is one to know whether one sleeps too much out of laziness or because the body needs it due to weakness ?

*Mataji* : If you watch yourself carefully you will soon find out.

*Question* : Is it possible to attain to Self-realization by an intensification of emotion, such as love ?

*Mataji* : Yes. *Prema*, the love of God is certainly a way. But what is ordinarily called 'love' is not *prema*, true love, but *moha*, attraction through delusion. *Prema*, real love, cannot exist between individuals. How can one get pure love from that,

which by its very nature is imure, namely, the individual ? Again and again it happens that people come to this body saying, "My love for such and such a person is true love, not worldly love." They are deceiving themselves. Love for that which is mortal is invariably *moha*, attraction through delusion, and leads to death. Quite obviously so. Have you not noticed how, when you find it impossible to get the object of your love you either wish to kill it or die yourself ? Whereas *Prema*, the love of God, takes you to the death of death, to Immortality,

Therefore, it is said, to regard the Guru as an individual is a sin. The Guru has to be loved and revered as God. Some time ago a woman came to this body, who wanted to commit suicide because her Guru had passed away. I said to her : "Does a Guru die ? Because he has left his body it does not mean that he is no more. The Guru is everywhere and never leaves his disciple. The fact that you want to take your life out of grief over your Guru's passing into *mahāsamādhi* shows that you love him as a person and not as a Guru." It was not at all easy to convince the woman of this, and she had passed through much heart-ache and trouble until at last she got over her attachment.

It happens that people fall in love with their Guru. If he has attained to the state that a Guru should have reached, he will be able to canalize the disciple's love, turning it towards the Divine. But, if he himself has not transcended personality, difficulties will naturally arise. This body has come across a number of cases where inexperienced girls, child widows, or even married women have been led into a wrong path by false Gurus.

The injunction of the *Śāstras* is that one has to surrender one's whole being—body, mind and heart to the Guru. To surrender one's body means to surrender one's desires so that they may be obliterated, but not to surrender one's body in the material sense. If it is misunderstood in this way, as occurs sometimes, then this body says, although you may have received *dīkṣā* from him, that person is not your Guru. You should then bathe in the Ganges and purify yourself and make a fresh start. Although the mantra cannot be defiled, there are instances when it becomes imperative to relinquish even that, namely, if it is inextricably associated with the memory of the false guru. In such cases it is advisable to change the mantra to another.

People contract so-called love marriages, but in some cases both parties are disillusioned and after a time each separately come to this body lamenting and repenting.

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**Question :** Is it good to repeatedly call a dead person by his name, to keep his picture and remember him ?

**Mataji :** If one mourns for the person, regretting the loss of the worldly enjoyment one has had together, it is bad both for the departed and for oneself. On the other hand, if the remembrance be an act of worship, as for example, since it is a wife's duty to regard her husband as God, she thinks of the deceased and keeps his picture with this attitude of mind, it may well be beneficial both for her deceased husband and herself.

I knew a couple who had lost their only daughter just a few days before she was to be married. They were broken-hearted. The girl's mother started wearing widow's dress and her husband also deeply grieved after his child and gave up many things he had been accustomed to enjoy. They had a life-size picture of their daughter made and lived only in their memory of her. Before eating they would place the food before the picture and so forth. This body told them, "Just as some flowers bloom and fall off without bearing fruit, so your child passed away young and pure, without having formed any attachments. Look upon her as the servant of the Lord, keep a picture of Him near hers, burn incense in the room and set it apart for worship and meditation." Neither the husband nor the wife were religiously inclined, but by taking their loss in this manner they gradually developed in that direction. This body then said to them : "Your daughter has become your Guru, it is she who has made you turn towards God." This is a case where a whole family benefited.

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Someone wanted to know how detachment ( *vairāgya* ) could be brought about. "If it comes naturally," he asked, "there is no problem. But how can those who feel pulled in two directions, who are half-hearted, be helped to give up ?"

**Mataji :** If you like eating sweets and you find it interferes with your *sādhana*, give it up for a day or two and say to yourself : "I can get those sweets again later, but for these two days, I shall do without them." This will break the habit.

When a boy is intelligent and keen on his studies there is no difficulty. But even a student who is dull and lazy can be made to pass his examinations by the aid of an efficient teacher. All the same, so far as worldly knowledge is concerned, there are people who are quite incapable of learning anything. But in the spiritual field this cannot be so, for everyone without exception has in the end to reach the goal of human existence. Therefore, if he finds the right teacher, he can be pushed up by some means or other.

There are cases when through a combination of factors operating together people are led to drop bad habits or vices. The following is a striking instance of this.

In the Ashram grounds smoking is forbidden. Once when this body was staying in the Kishenpur Ashram a *bhakta* from Delhi, who had come for a short visit, went out on the road to smoke a cigarette. As soon as he had lit it, this body had to tell him something and he was called. He put out his cigarette and came inside. When our talk was over he went back and relit his cigarette. But at that very moment someone shouted that Mataji wanted him at the Ashram. By some coincidence, or whatever it may have been, exactly the same situation repeated itself several times over, until he felt thoroughly disgusted and instead of lighting his cigarette, flung the whole packet away and never smoked again. He had a close friend with whom he used to spend much time. On hearing the story, his experience was communicated to the friend who also left off smoking.

Another incident of a somewhat similar nature occurred several years ago when this body was living in a house-boat on the Ganges at Varanasi. This body then used to get a pain in the arm. One of the people who were staying with me then, said he personally knew an excellent physician and begged to be allowed to call him. The doctor came. When he examined the arm, this body observed that he was enveloped in a strong aroma of cigarettes. He was evidently a heavy smoker. However, I neither remarked on it nor showed by any gesture what I had observed. The doctor offered to prescribe some medicine, but since this body does not take any medicine, nothing could be done and he left after a short while.

On his way home he lit a cigarette. To his surprise he found that he felt an aversion for it; he did not want to smoke. The same dislike arose again in him when he lit another cigarette after returning home. He never smoked again. The craving had simply left him.

When things come about in such a manner, by Grace as it were, nothing need or can be done. But it is possible to accomplish a great deal by determination and sustained effort as well.

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*Question* : Is it right for a man to leave his family and go forth in search of Truth ?

*Mataji* : At the state in which a man's actions are prompted by his sense of duty, he cannot and will not leave his family. He should remain a householder and fulfil the duties incumbent on him, as prescribed in the *Śāstras*. But just as nobody can remain in a burning house, so there is a state in which one feels as if one's

house were on fire and one cannot possibly remain at home. The Lord Buddha's life is an example of this irresistible inner call and there are many other less famous cases. Can you say that the Lord Buddha did wrong ?

*Question* : There are many instances of people who felt that they must leave their families in order to take *sannyāsa*, only to realize after a time that they had been mistaken. Unable to bear the hardships of such a life, their spiritual progress comes to a standstill. Would it not be better for such men to return home and resume their professions ?

*Mataji* : Once a man has renounced the world and become a *sannyāsi*, even though he may not be able to advance in his *sādhana*, still he has taken to this life in search of the Ultimate. At least, at the time of leaving his home he felt the urge to dedicate his life to the Supreme Quest. If he cannot proceed he will have to undergo a great deal of suffering. He may starve, be without shelter and perhaps die somewhere under a tree without anyone to wait on him. But having suffered and died in order to find God, he will continue in another birth where he left off in this one and there is hope that then he may succeed. Are not people who live the ordinary worldly life also subjected to hardships, poverty and illness ? Yet, unless they be intent on discovering their Self these trials are of no special benefit to them. However, one cannot make a hard and fast rule concerning these matters. The same thing is not right for everyone. There are cases where people who left their families had to return to them.

Many years ago, for example, a *sādhu* came to this body. He was still young, not much over thirty. He looked worried and ill. He said, "I find myself on the horns of a dilemma. For a whole month I have had neither sleep nor been able to give my mind to any *sādhana*. I just wander about on the banks of the Ganges, brooding over my problem; sometimes I eat, at other times I forget to do even that." Then he related his story. When almost a child of fifteen or sixteen he had left his parents and lived as a *sādhu* without however formally taking *sannyāsa* ; he just adopted the ochre robe on his own responsibility. After some time he got tired of begging for his food. He had learnt tailoring and decided to do a little work in his profession, just enough to earn his bare upkeep and for the rest to continue with his *sādhana*. He did this for a while. Mind you, he intended merely to provide for himself and not to have anything to do with the world. But man cannot escape the influences of his surroundings. One day, he met an elderly man who could read hands. "There is marriage in your fate," he predicted, "you won't be able to continue this kind of life much longer."

On hearing this the young sādhu thought that if it was his destiny he would not be able to avoid it. The old man described the type of bride that would be suitable for him and eventually suggested giving him his own daughter. The marriage took place, but the girl, a mere child of 12 or 13, motherless and deeply attached to her father, neither cared for her husband nor looked after him. This went on for about a year and a half. At last the young man grew weary of this state of affairs and regretted what he had let himself in for. So he left his home for the second time and resumed his life as a sādhu. This had occurred five or six years before he met this body. "All went well at first," he said, "but for quite a long time I have been haunted by the thought that if my wife, who is a grown-up woman now, gets into the ways of sin, it will be my fault. This worries me so much that I am wondering whether I should remain a sādhu or go back to her." Seeing the condition of the young man, this body felt, if he got ill and died, his last thought would not be of God, but of the worry over his wife, and this was certainly most undesirable. Moreover the man had not taken formal *sannyāsa*. So I advised him to put on ordinary clothes and return to his wife. He was a clever tailor. He went to Calcutta and took up work in his profession. "My son shall be made into a *dandi swami* !" he exclaimed. But whether he ever had a son we have not heard.

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*Question* : Suppose a full-fledged *sannyāsi* repents of having forsaken his home, what should he do ?

*Mataji* : This body has so far never advised a *sannyāsi* to return to *grihastha* ashram. For a *sannyāsi* who has been initiated into a *sannyāsa* mantra and has a Guru there is a path. Even if he has not got the capacity to advance very far, he should never relax his efforts although he dies in the attempt.



## RAINFALL

[According to the Vedic literature]

— Sri Satya Srava

Rain fall, its cause and effect, is well described by the exponents of the *Brāhmanas*, who had exhaustive knowledge of this scientific subject. The primary cause is formation of smoke by fire, formation of clouds by smoke, and clouds in turn cause rain. Fire or heat cause the rainy clouds move towards the sky. Heat of the sun causes rain. Force of air helps rain to fall on the earth. The easterly rays of the sun also cause rain:

(1) *Agnirvai dhūmō jāyate dhūmādabhramabhramadvrishtih.* <sup>1</sup>

(2) *Agnirvā ito vrishtimudirayati dhāmachchaadiva bhūtvā varshati marutas-srishtām vrishtim nayanti. Yadāsā ādityorvāṅ rasmibhih paryāvartate atha varshati.* <sup>2</sup>

(3) *Vidduhidam vrishtimannādyam samprayachchati.* <sup>3</sup>

Heat is more essential for the universe and the human body. Heat alone causes rain and produces cereals and eatables.

(4) *Tasyā ete ghore tanvau vidyuchcha hrādunincha.* <sup>4</sup>

The two dreadful form accompanying rain are thunder and hail-storm:

(5) *Tau yadi krisṇau syātmanyataro vā kṛṣṇastatra vidyavarshishyatyarshavah parjanya vrishtimanbhavishyattyetadu vijnānam.* <sup>5</sup>

Like the black coloured clouds causing rain, if either one or two bullocks of the chariot of soma are black, it rains. What is soma and two bullocks of his chariot? The expression in the *Brāhmaṇas* is not further explained. However, black colour and similar objects are associated with rain fall.

Another factor that causes rain is wind, which is the propelling force for it. The formation of clouds takes place on account of wind which causes them to move in its own direction and rules over the rain fall or the monsoon season, It has been stated in the *Brahmanas*:

1. अग्नेवै धूमो जायते धूमादभ्रमभ्रमद्वृष्टिः, 5.3.5.17. SB

2. अग्निर्वा इतो वृष्टिमुदीरयति धामच्छदिव भूत्वा वर्षति मरुत्सृष्टां वृष्टिं नयन्ति ।  
यदासा आदित्योऽवाङ् रश्मिभिः पर्यावर्ततेऽथ वर्षति, 11.10. KS.

3. विधुदहीदं वृष्टिमन्नाद्यं संप्रयच्छति 2.41. AB.

4. तस्यो एते घोरे तन्वी विद्युच्चह्रादुनिञ्च, 12.8.3.11. SB.

5. तौ यदि कृष्णौ स्यातमन्तरो वा कृष्णस्तत्र विद्याद्विष्यतीत्येतदु विज्ञानम्, 3.3.4.11. SB.

- (6) *Ayam vai varshasyeshte yo ayam pavate.* <sup>1</sup>  
 (7) *Tasmādyām diśam vāyureti tām diśam vrishtīnveti.* <sup>2</sup>  
 (8) *Maruto vai varśasyesate.* <sup>3</sup>

A similar description is available in the Rigveda:

- (9) *Udirayatha marutah samudrato yūyam vrishtim varshayathā pūrīshinah.* <sup>4</sup>  
 (10) *Ito hyagnirvrishtim tanute.* <sup>5</sup>

On this earth, agni or heat causes rain. Karvri Yajna praised in the Sruata Sutras is mentioned in the Brāhmnas, performance of this yajna causes rain to fall. The same fact is repeated in the Maitrayani Saṁhita. These yajnas related to the soma are called *kariri*. The oblations in the *kariri* yajña related to soma causes rain to fall on this earth from the atmosphere:

- (11) *Śaumyani vai karirāni saumi ha u trevāhutiramuto vrishtim chyāvayati.* <sup>6</sup>  
 (12) *Varshya udake yajeta itaddhyannādyasya nedishtam Vrishtikāmo yajeta vāyurvā ime samirayati.* <sup>7</sup>

i. e., it is prescribed to perform a yajna with the rain-water as this water is very near to the eatables. A person desiring to have rain should perform a yajna. It is the wind that carries the clouds. The water in the clouds destroys them as their force or heaviness makes them shed it. It is stated:

- (13) *Āpo ha vai vṛitram jaghnustenaivaitadviryeṇapah syandanate.* <sup>8</sup>  
 (14) *Etasyāmupadichyāndīśī bhūyīshtham vidyotate.* <sup>9</sup>

While describing the rain clouds, the *Brāhmanas* mention lightening as well, which mostly shines in the north direction and is the lustre of water.

- (15) *Vidyudvā apām jyotih.* <sup>10</sup>

Another factor mentioned in the Jaiminiya Brāhmana is the loud noise which causes the clouds to shed water:

- (16) *Tasmād brihatastotre dundudhinudvadayanti varshukah parjanya bhavati.* <sup>11</sup>

1. अयं वै वर्षस्येष्टे योऽयं पवते, 1.8.3.12, SB  
 2. तस्माद्यां दिशं वायुरेति तां दिशं वृष्टिन्येति, 8.2.3.5, SB  
 3. मरुतो वै वर्षस्येसते, 9.1.2.5, SB  
 4. उदीरयथा मरुतः समुद्रतो यूयं वृष्टिं वर्षयथा पुरीषिणः, 5.55.5, RV  
 5. इतो ह्यग्निवृष्टिं तनुते, 3.8.2.22, SB.  
 6. सीम्यानि वै करीराणि सीमी ह उ त्वेवाहुति रमुतो वृष्टिं च्यावयति, 1.10.12,  
 7. वर्ष्य उदके यजेतैतद्भयन्नाद्यस्य नेदिष्टं वृष्टिकामो यजेत वायुर्वा इमे समीरयति, 4.3.3.  
 8. आपो ह वै वृत्रं जह्नुस्तेनैवैतद्दीर्येणापः स्यन्दनते,  
 9. एतस्यामुपदीव्यान्दिशि भूयिष्ठं विद्योतते, 2.4, Shadvimsa-brāhmana.  
 10. विद्युद्वाऽअपाम् ज्योतिः.  
 11. तस्माद् बृहतस्तोत्रे दुन्दुभीनुद्वादयन्ति वर्षुकः पर्जन्यो भवति, 1.143.



The rain fall and its causes were well known to the Aryans. Varahamihir, in his Brihat Samhita has specially treated this subject. The rain water purified by yajnas further purifies good and other waters. Pure water help build a healthy body and end diseases; such a body performs all actions. The exponents of the brāhmaṇas had devoted themselves to the subject and details of the science of rain fall.\*

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\*. [Courtesy: "History of Vedic Literature" by Sri Satya Srava]

***"From the touch of It you become That only.  
That is the nature of the Lord. To manifest in  
all the forms that are touched by That.***

***—Ma Anandamayee***

## MA'S BEHAVIOUR BEYOND COMPREHENSION

[Translated from Bengali]

—*Gurupriya Devi*

Many people start wondering why Ma takes so much trouble and wanders about like this. In so many places such excellent arrangements have been made for her accommodation, but we find that the minute her stay begins to be comfortable she abandons that place. So many people pine for one sight of her, but she makes them weep and sets off like a traveller without any purpose. As soon as the Dhaka ashram was constructed, Ma started travelling to many places. She returned after some days, but did not stay long at the ashram, for when the ashram became well established and the crowds coming for Ma's darshan began to swell, Ma suddenly went off to North India and stayed for about ten months on the verandah of a dilapidated temple in the hilly region of Raipur Dehradun. She never allowed anyone to even get any news about her and when she fell ill there, she did not give permission to anybody to serve her.

Then the devotees at Dehradun built an ashram with such expectations, but within a few days of its inauguration Ma went away. She stayed in the building made by Shogi Baba at Solan. Everyday during the rainy season the house got flooded with water. Shogi Baba was an aged sannyasi and he had the house built to suit him. All the rooms were in the same condition. The Raja Sahib Solan tried to make Ma shift to some other place, but Ma insisted on staying in the temple. She did not go to anyone's house and therefore wandered about in this manner. Earlier she had gone to Solan and stayed in a cave, which also got wet during rains, (I have seen that spot) and she lived somehow in one of the cave corner. In the earlier days when Ma went to everyone's homes, she sometimes visited palaces and sometimes the homes of beggars. She sometimes lived amidst people and sometimes in solitude. But through all this I observed that the varying external conditions never wrought any change in Ma's nature. It appears that no one will be able to say which situation Ma prefers in comparison to anyother. The truth of the matter is that she is just not attached to anything. Those who have known Ma for some time will be able to understand this.

In 1936 Ma left Bengal and went to Dehradun, where she stayed in Krishna ashram for some time. There were excellent arrangements in that ashram for Ma's

stay, but within a few days Ma suddenly left that place and went to Manohar temple where there were no conveniences as in the Krishna ashram. Earlier Ma and Jyotish dada had lived on the verandah of the Manohar temple and had faced even greater inconvenience. In rainy weather the verandah got flooded and in winter it was open to cold winds on all sides. Yet Ma went there and who can say why she did so? At that time Ma had said to Narasimha\* , "Why do you take so much trouble and come here again and again in this scorching sun ? You are crazy. You are a human being and so am I. Then what do you come to see?" Ma said this laughingly and Narasimha replied, "That is true enough, but can you tell me why everybody does not flock to us? We offer so much hospitality and veneration to our guests and you don't even speak to everybody each time. You don't ask them to come either, yet why do so many people come? And look, in this hot weather you could have had an electric fan and lights at Krishna ashram which was certainly more comfortable. Then why have you left that place and come to live in an open verandah here? In the afternoons the verandah is burning hot and intolerable and you have left that cool spot in this heat and come here. We would never have done such a thing. These are all the differences between you and us. We desire comfort and whenever you get the slightest comfort and ease you relinquish that place. Because of these reasons so many people come running to you, uninvited."

To this day Ma wanders about in this way. Ma alone knows what will happen in the future. Those who have been with Ma constantly cannot tell when Ma will suddenly leave them and go away, though they experience immense love from her when they are with her. But in any circumstance Ma does not get bound to anyone. Therefore she is always independent. Whenever she feels like going she breaks up the happy congregation and leaves everyone weeping, while she herself laughingly goes away. She does not pay the minutest attention to the breaking up of this congregation of bliss which had gathered around her.

Sometimes we might conclude from Ma's behaviour that she loves us, or some other individual more than the others. But some other behaviour may lead us to believe that our conclusions were quite wrong. She has gone much beyond love and affection. She mixes with many individuals with many attitudes. She sports in infinite moods and therefore ordinary people like us do not understand and are deluded. But in every instance she says, "You know that I do nothing of my own accord. The body keeps doing whatever you all make it do."




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\* Late Sri N.P. Chatterjee, I.A.S., a staunch devotee of Ma from Dehradun.

## FROM NOTES TAKEN IN SREE MA'S PRESENCE

— 'Kirpal'

**8-6-59 Dehra Dun- Kishenpur Ashram—After 9 P. M.**

Q. What is the meaning of 'base'?

Sree Ma: You perform worship, what is the base ? Because there is the base then only can the puja (worship) be done. Doesn't the base remain in the puja ? You yourself are the base of the baseless.

Q. Receptacle?

Sree Ma: Who is the receptacle— the containing vessel. Who is the base of the baseless, you yourself.

Tapan: If there is a good seed and the ground is suitable.

Sree Ma: Water must be sprayed.

Q. What is the water?

Sree Ma: Everything is god.

Q. How does one realise god?

Sree Ma: God is realised by (reciting) This name. Take the medicine. Take the healing drugs. If there is no taste for medicine then get admitted to a hospital and take injections. The name of God; God and His name are inseparable. The holy syllables (*mantra*) are God's name. The company of the holy saints. (*satsanga*). Remain engrossed in the Holy scriptures

Q. Is that the injection?

Sree Ma: The injection is more effective.

Q. What is that?

Sree Ma: Very well. First get admitted to a hospital then take the medicines prescribed by the doctor. You have to observe certain restrictions.

Q. A serious disease requires very strong medication.

Sree Ma: You yourself are the support of the helpless and no one else.

Q. What is the meaning of you ?

Sree Ma: You yourself are God. How much time you have had to spend for your education. How much strain and trouble you had to endure. Some required 10

years, some 12 years. God and the doctor have excellent medicines. You have to study. He who is contained within oneself. First one has to understand. What is one's own, one has to realise. It is not another's. One's own knowledge. By realising one's inner soul, one's own salvation is achieved.

**Sree Ma:** So much time has been given to you. But you want to get it free. The medicine has a beneficial result, but you do not utilise it properly. That is childish. It is not possible that the medicine will be ineffective. The medicine can never harm one. It will only ensure blessings and salvation.

**Q.** When studying one feels joyful.

**Sree Ma:** That is at the college level. But in school you run away from classes, you cry. That it is so enjoyable, is not so?

**Dr Panna Lal :** At the end of the year the results are declared, one passes in the exams.

**Sree Ma:** Some fail also.

**Q.** In this realm also are there yearly results?

**Sree Ma:** Definitely it is so stage by stage. (Ma says in English) When you yourself practice you will experience the capability and strength. God Himself is the strength and support of the weak.

**Q.** What strength, the support of God?

**Sree Ma:** God is the refuge, for all are God's own. God alone is the support and all others are weak and without strength. God alone is the strength and the refuge.

**Q.** The only one—

**Sree Ma:** Only the one is necessary. Where is the other ? Where there is duality the question of weakness and strength arises, where one is without any support. God is the supreme refuge— there is no one save God.

**Q.** Should one worship the picture of Shiva or the symbol ?

**Sree Ma:** Why the yantra ? There is a yantra for each God and goddess for worship.

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**Q.** How did Gopal (the child Krishna) come to Varanasi ashram.

**Sree Ma:** Ganga didi lost her Gopal (deity). She was very unhappy. This body told her to observe the vow of silence (maun), just to see what God does. She

thought, I have performed the puja for so many years, perhaps Gopalji will return in the *jugal* form, i.e. in the form of Radha-Krishna. Once Batuda told me that there is a moorti of Gopalji in Varanasi, they want to give. The moorti is very old, may be 200-250 years. Those people, where Gopalji was then installed, told that if you wish to take Gopalji take him or we will cover Gopalji in a new cloth and immerse in the Ganga, This body told Paramananda Swamiji and Didi that someone wishes to give Gopalji, they agreed. This body then went to Vrindaban and before leaving told Kanti bhai that if they gave Gopalji then bring Gopalji to Vrindaban, where Gopalji lived, But Gopalji did not then come. After the functions of Sri Haribaba were over this body went to Dehradun and was lying in room. This body had the *kheyal*, Gopalji, you said you would be coming and you made an excuse. Do definitely come.

Dr. Panna Lal—Did Gopalji send some telegram? (Ma also laughed)

Sree Ma: When this body reached Varanasi Gopalji came to the Ashram same day with an worn out cloth around him, a silver crown that also broken on one side. Then the Jhulan celebrations began and elaborate arrangements were made for Gopaljis puja-seva. The nephew of the old priest where Gopalji lived told that Gopalji had appeared in a dream and told—"Do not take me away from Varanasi." Thus Gopalji came and stayed in Varanasi Ashram. There are many incidents of Gopalji's living presence.

[To be continued]

***"All is That. Only That resides in all and besides  
That there is nothing. Only One. It is You and You  
and You only."***

***—Ma Anandamayee***

## **HARMONY AND DISCORD GO HAND IN HAND**

**—Swami Bhumananda Giri**

There is a case in the Magistrate's court. The accused is on the dock before the Magistrate. The accused charges the Magistrate—You are punishing me for this work. I have done no wrong. I simply have worked according to the urge I felt from my mind.

The Magistrate says, — Brother, I have no quarrel with you. I only execute the law framed by the government. The law says, the punishment of this kind should be given to the doer of this work. The Magistrate tells the accused that the quarrel is in yourself. You have some idea about the work and about the punishment. The thief knows very well that the work of stealing is punishable. In spite of that he goes to steal the properties of others. It means that he wants punishment, he wants to be put to jail, 'I do not want to be punished' — it is a feign word. In reality you want punishment and imprisonment.

This is the law of nature. If any body violates this law, he will be punished this way or other. This is the law of the Supreme. We have many discords in ourselves. One of the discords is between appetite and the digesting power. The digesting power of the body says that I can digest the food you put to the stomach upto the limit. If you put excess food to the stomach you violate the limit or law, surely. You will have to undergo punishment. You are to suffer disease and ailments. In the first stage punishment will come in a lesser degree. If any body violates the physical law of the body regularly he will have severe punishment, e.i. serious types of diseases which will end in death. It is the death sentence given by the magistrate of physical law.

Young boys, girls and youths eat whatever food they get. General people eat food without thinking of its necessity to the body. Educated people observe discipline in respect of taking their food. The earth is always in motion. They are also in motion both externally and intrinsically. We go from one place to another, it is external movement. But intrinsic motion is deep and serious in our life. We are always changing. I am eighty years in age. It is not done in a twinkling of an eye. Moment by moment it has come upto this stage and I have a lot of change physically, mentally and spiritually. So we cannot observe a fixed routine in any work of our life. We should change our routine with the march of time. After 45 years of age our physical decay begins. Hence food should be taken according to

the physical condition and necessity. So serious discipline and severe type of routine cannot be followed. It will not be beneficial to our lives.

Our life goes on with a balance or harmony. On the way this balance breaks down after some time. Life has to work hard to form another balance of superior kind and for a period life has to pass through a state of chaos and discord which is inevitable for the next balance. In this way our life-journey is going on. Men are eternal pilgrims. We are marching towards perfection. Absolute perfection is the stage of Absolute Being. So long as we do not reach absolute perfection we are to travel through life and death.



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**—Managing Editor**