

# Ananda Vārtā

*A quarterly journal dealing mainly with the divine life and teaching of Mata Anandamayee and with other religio-philosophical topics*



## BOARD OF EDITORS

Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Gopinath Kaviraj, M. A., D. Litt.  
*Padma Vibhushan*

Brahmachari Nirmalananda, M.A., Shastri.

Kumari Lalita Pathak, M. A.

Brahmacharini Atmananda.

Sri K. Bose,—*Managing Editor.*



## \* ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION \*

India—(Postage free) Rs. 6/- only

Foreign—(By Sea Mail) Rs. 10/50 or 15 shillings or \$ 2.00

“ (By Airmail)—Rs. 25/- or £ 1-10-0 (Europe etc.)

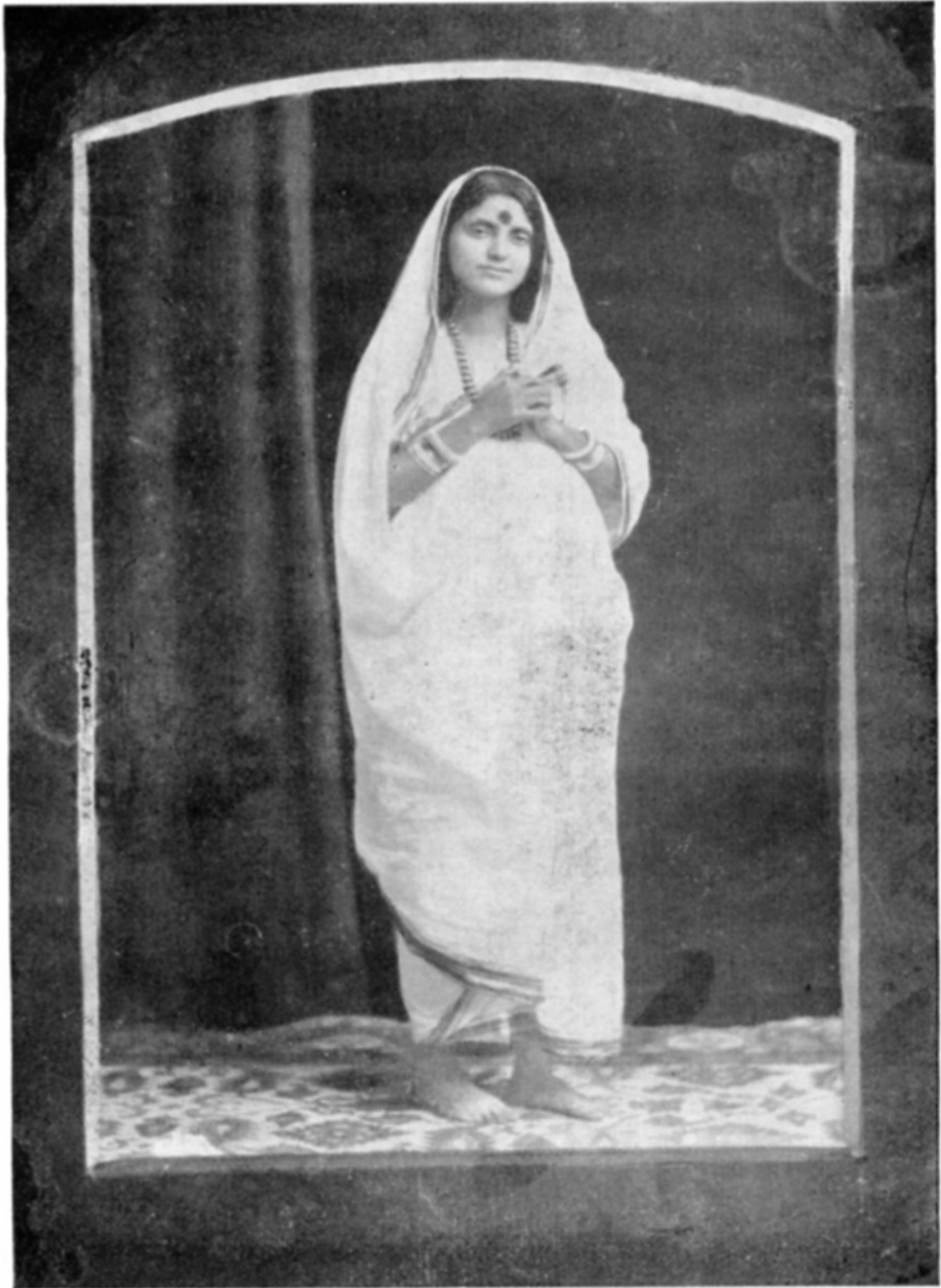
“ —Rs. 35/- or \$ 5.50 (North & South America.)

## CONTENTS

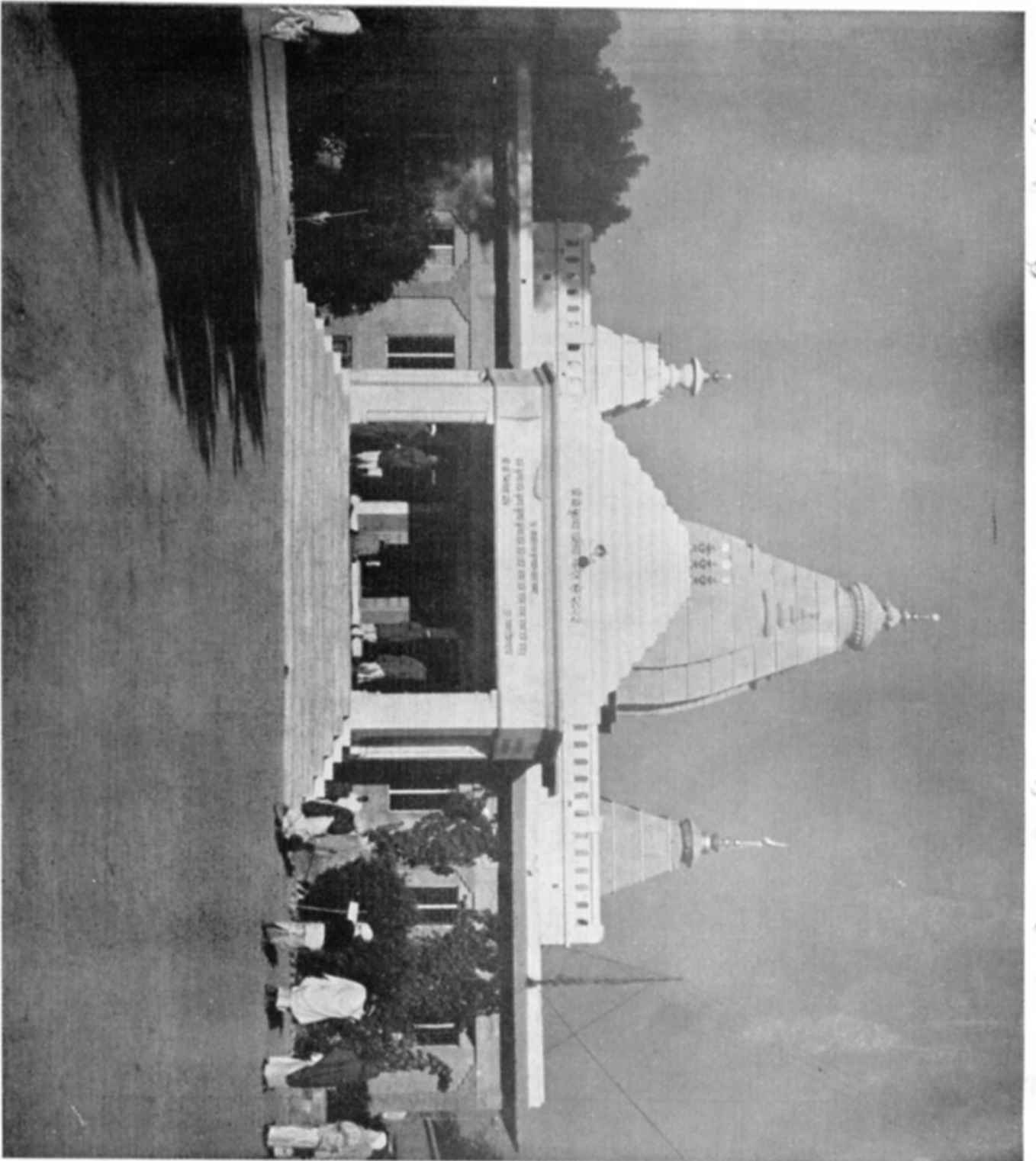
### English Section

1. Mātri Vāni	...	...	...	1
2. Sri Sri Mataji's Amara Vani	...	...	...	3
3. Mātri Satsang—Swami Bhagavadananda Giri	...	...	...	7
4. Desirelessness	...	...	...	16
5. In Remembrance—A Jewish Devotee from Germany	...	....	...	22
6. Bhakti Yoga—Prof. Shanti Prakash Atreya	...	...	...	25
7. Sacred Places of Kashmir, Jammu & Ladhak— A Devotee	....	....	...	29
8. Matri Līlā	....	....	...	39

---



*Mataji in her thirties during her first visit to Calcutta*



*Front view of the three temples in Vrindaban Ashram.*

*Just as there is a veil of ignorance for the individual,  
So there is also a door to Knowledge.*

## **Mātri Vāni**

**Earthly love causes intense suffering and does not last.  
Whereas the love of God gives extremely great happiness.**

\* \* \* \*

**It lies in God's very nature to keep the door to Him-  
self ever open. If the amount of energy and time spent in  
worldly pursuits is given to the search after God, the path to  
Self-knowledge will of a certainty open out of itself.**

\* \* \* \*

**God is the breath of life, the Heart of hearts, the Self.  
To find Him means to find oneself. What is called the world,  
is dragging man towards foolishness and misery—away from  
God. Therefore, the only excellent path is the one that  
leads to Self-knowledge, Self-realization.**

\* \* \* \*

**Always remain calm and remember that whatever God  
does at any time is beneficent. When circumstances change  
in the course of events, what is there to worry about?  
Everything that happens at any moment happens by  
His Will.**

\* \* \* \*

**Why allow yourself to become agitated and excited?  
This is not the attitude fitting for a pilgrim on the spiritual  
path. On the contrary, by spending one's life in the aware-  
ness of God, seeking the company of sages, saints and seekers  
after Truth, one's hopes and aspirations will be fulfilled.**

\* \* \* \*

If service is your ideal, be constantly engaged in the service of God. Attachment will keep you in the realm of the transitory. His Law is truly wonderful.

\* \* \* \*

Contemplation of the *Atmā* takes one to one's ultimate Goal; while worldly action creates nothing but ugliness.

\* \* \* \*

So far as this body is concerned, nothing happens unknowingly or by mistake : be it right here or far in the distance. Whether it is perceived outwardly or not, whatever is destined to occur, does come about.

---

## Sri Sri Mataji's Amara Vāni

(REPORTED BY BRAHMACHARI VIRAJANANDA)

( *Translated from Bengali* )

*Question* : Where in the body is the heart ?

*Mataji* : Where is the heart not ? Take for instance a tree : from the roots to the leaves it has sprung from one seed. Of course, no simile is applicable in all respects. In what branch of a tree are there no seeds ? The seed that is in the earth, where in the tree is it not ?

*Question* : There are various centres in different parts of the body—the centres of hearing, seeing and so forth. Similarly there are also spiritual centres from where God may be revealed.

*Mataji* : Just as in a tree various developments and static states can be perceived, so also are there centres all over the body.

*Question* : Is not a centre of necessity in the middle ?

*Mataji* : Of course, the centre is in the middle. Wherever God becomes revealed, there is the heart. There is only one heart, yet again there are hearts without number. Every man speaks of his own heart, but actually the heart is in one.

*Question* : Where is the heart according to the *Śāstras* ?

*Mataji* : Baba, this body has not studied the *Śāstras*. The place of the heart is one. Where is the middle and where is it not ? If you say : "The centre lies here !" this body will say : "It is so". From the ordinary point of view the heart is situated in the middle of the chest; that is to say, everyone will speak from the state he has reached. This body also maintains : "Yes, everyone experiences from his

own stage of achievement.’ Where is God not ? Therefore, the heart also is one and yet of infinite number—whichever way you wish to put it.

*Question* : When the heart fails, the end has come.

*Mataji* : The heart that fails and the real heart (*hri-daya*) are not identical. As regards the body, seen from this angle, whatever seed you sow, will come back to you in progressive development. Again, where in the whole tree is there no seed ? From this point of view, where is the heart not ? In the one are contained the many and the many in the one : wherever anyone experiences his heart, there it is.

*Question* : How did the seed come into being ?

*Mataji* : He Himself manifests as the seed. Can there be a seed apart from Him ?

*Question* : What is the secret of the *līlā* in the *Bhāgavata*\* ?

*Mataji* : In all action the question “why” is present. What has to be done to find the solution ? One has to pass I. A., B. A. and M. A. And here to pass means to unveil. When the veil is rent, the ‘why’ disappears. For this reason you are asked to read the *Bhāgavata*. He who does not study anything has no questions to ask and neither has he who has passed all exams. What is the *Bhāgavata* ? The *Bhāgavata* and God are one. God’s entire play—as far as He manifests with form and with attributes is contained in the *Bhāgavata*.

*Question* : Why did God play the *Rāma Līlā* ? Was it not below His dignity ?

*Mataji* : This body does not say anything personal. God acts His play with Himself alone. Some say He creates with the help of His *māyā*, others say it is His pleasure. With whom can He sport ? With Himself, with His *māyā*,

---

\* *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*—One of the main 18 *Purāṇas*, dealing with the *Avatāras* of *Viṣṇu*, especially and in great detail with the life of *Sri Krishna*.



His power to appear as many separate beings. Another point : You say the Rishis requested the Lord to show His special *Līlā* as Vāmana Avatāra. But Ramachandra replied : "Not as Vāmana, the play will be enacted by Krishna Avatāra." Everything verily belongs to God, thus He Himself stages the play with His own Self alone. Another point : You say a man who has supernormal powers can do anything at all. This is not so on all levels. Śiva alone is able to digest poison.

*Question* : In the Bhagavad Gita, we are asked in one place to engage in action and in another again to renounce everything. How is this to be reconciled ?

*Mataji* : Look, there are different chapters—at one stage action is advocated and at another total surrender. Is it possible to surrender merely by saying so ? There is a stage of surrender and another of renunciation.

The Bhagavad Gita should be read every day. Reading it over and over again—what will be the result ? Just as a divine being appears and gives you a message, so the Gita will have mercy upon you as the word. You may say : "How can words show mercy ?" Well, this is why one speaks of sacred scriptures. By constantly doing God's work, a certain stage is reached. Generally speaking, there is no greater work than that.

Read the *Gītā* and engage regularly every day in some spiritual practice and the answer to your questions will come to you. When a sincere question arises, it is bound to find its solution. Without one-pointedness nothing can be achieved. One has to aim at one goal, but the mind aims at many things. Only when single-minded, one is on the way to enlightenment. Therefore, so long as you have not realized deep within you the significance of the *Gītā*, do not stop reading it.

*Question* : Immersed as we are in *māyā*, how can we be saved from its grip ?

*Mataji* : By cutting down the jungle one has to create a clearing: one has to go right into the jungle in order to cut it down. Whose *māyā* is it ? God's *māyā* is without beginning. Even so there is a path out of it. By entering the jungle and cutting it down a clearing is produced; just as vessels show their true quality only when scrubbed clean—so when the veil is removed, THAT which IS shines forth. What then is the means of removing the screen of *māyā*, of delusion ? *Satsang*, to act according to the instructions of one's *Guru*.

And so long as no *Guru* has been found : all names are His Name, all forms His Form, all qualities are God's. And constantly to meditate on the question : How can I become free from delusion ? What is the path, what the expedient ? Somehow or other He must be kept in mind. Of God alone must be all thought and word, the rest is but futility and pain.

*"Wherever God may place you at any time and under whatever circumstances, recollect that it is all for the best. Endeavour to go through life leaving your burdens in His hands. He is the Preserver, He is the Guide, He is the All in All."*

—*Mata Anandamayi*

# MĀTRI SATSANG

SWAMI BHAGAVADANANDA GIRI

(Translated from Hindi)

December 4th, 1947.

*Question :* Are all our activities due to destiny ?

*Mataji :* In the world of destiny everything is due to destiny. As things are fated to happen so they come about. From one point of view one will have to say, everything is as it should be. What exists in Reality manifests in the material world.

*Question :* Is spiritual progress also fated ?

*Mataji :* Spiritual progress is also fated. This can be clearly seen by astrology. If the exact time of birth is known, astrology is able to foretell a man's future. Some have seen by direct perception that this is so. If a Yogi foretells something by his yogic vision, it is a different matter. Suppose someone walks in the street and has an accident. It was fated to happen, this is why it occurred. This much can be known by the astrologer. However, beyond this it may be that by the power of the Guru all that was destined to happen has been changed. There is also a level which is unaffected by fate. But there is a place where destiny exists, from which an adverse planetary constellation can be neutralized. By such neutralization something that was destined to happen can be averted and by the power of the deity invoked in the process, one may be saved. The fire of knowledge by which everything can be consumed is self-revealed. There, everything is possible—there, the impossible becomes possible. God is indeed Self-luminous. Always and everywhere is He.

*Question :* How can the restlessness of the mind be overcome ?

*Mataji* : By increasing restlessness it is overcome. The restlessness of the world only enhances duality.

So long as your mind is busy with the things of this world, your desires for worldly things will never be satisfied. When the mind is given its real nourishment, then only will it be at peace. When attaining to the supreme wealth of God-realization, the mind will be perfectly still. There is only God everywhere. HE alone IS ! HE alone and none else ! Man's duty is to provide the mind with pure food. Do not put your mind into dirt. When defiled it becomes agitated with yearning. Where Rama is, there is rest and peace, where Rama is not, there is unrest and disease.

*Question* : Has one to reap the fruit of all one's good and bad actions ? How did action begin ?

*Mataji* : ( laughing ) From where it began ? God is without beginning and without end.

*Question* : How did action (*karma*) originate ?

*Mataji* : The world (*jagat*) is verily the Lord's. By His will, His imagination He has created it. God Himself is sporting with His own Self. He Himself loses Himself and then again searches for Himself. Creation has neither beginning nor end. One cannot say : When did it start ? All this is nothing but God's play. God is here, right in front of me, but I am not aware of it. He cannot remain without losing Himself—losing and again finding Himself. Finding gives bliss and losing misery. When a small child grows into an adolescent, the child disappears in the young man. To change thus is called to die. Births without end and deaths without end. How many times will you change your clothes ! In the *Ātmā* no change occurs. The *Ātmā* is beyond form. Who is it that dies ? And who that weeps ?

*Question* : Who prompts the intelligence ?

*Mataji* : God does; He is the actor. Again, one can also say, He is not the actor, He is only the witness of

action. In the ever moving world God is staging His play. HE pulls the strings and we are the puppets. As He directs so we have to move.

*Question* : Does God induce my mind to engage in bad deeds ?

*Mataji* : What fruit you reap depends on what kind of tree you have planted. Perform pure action and you will get pure results. Wrong action will have bad consequences. If you become attached to money, property and so forth your true nature will be covered by want. By doing actions pertaining to man's true nature, he becomes established in his Self. Later the actions born of want are not attractive any longer. When you make efforts to realize your *Atmā*, you are desiring to find your true nature by its own momentum. But in actual fact you are trying to find your true nature while being attached to the realm of want. How wonderful ! You are craving for the power of Knowledge, but are actually attracting the power of ignorance. You are out for complete and perfect Knowledge, but as a matter of fact are acquiring fragmentary knowledge. The path of want is full of sorrow and the path of your true nature gives happiness—God-realization. All power is God's. It is He who gives you the power to reason, the power to act. Just as you provide food and other necessities by your own exertion, so you must use your capacity and your talents to find God. He who does not advance towards God, is on the road to death. The path of God-realization is full of ambrosia, it is the path of Immortality. This body says, if your mind feels drawn to God, use all your strength and energy in the duty of finding Him. The Supreme Mother, Supreme Father, Supreme Friend—one must endeavour to approach Him. Where is your home ? Your true home is in God. Who is your own ? Only God and none else. In whichever form your desire God—be it as the Lord whom you serve, be it as your own Self—on realizing Him, everything will become as it should be.

The body has to experience pleasure and pain. You have to bear want and emptiness. God-realization is supreme enjoyment. One who has renounced God (laughing ironically) he indeed is the greatest renunciate. The man who renounces the spiritual path is the most rigorous renunciate. If you move along the current of want, you will remain wanting. Endeavour to find the Supreme and you will attain to supreme bliss. Supreme bliss is immortal. But death is lurking in worldly enjoyment. When you were a child you were playing and romping about, now your childhood has passed away. In this manner there is death all along.

*Question* : Since God is doing everything, why does He not endow us with right intelligence ?

*Mataji* : The world is round and in continual flux. In God's play there are a great variety of shapes and modes. There are darkness and light and many different paths. There, everything finds its consummation in infinite movement, infinite manifestation and an infinite variety of states of being. Action aiming at God-realization is alone truly propitious. Become engrossed in such beneficent action and you will surely find God. Why is God not found ? Ask yourself this question ! Cultivate the attitude of mind that whatever happens, happens by God's Will. Decide definitely to perform actions directed towards God from now on. Something has to be explained here : From the point of view of Reality there is no such thing as good or bad. So long as you are identified with the body, you must not do anything bad. God never causes anyone to commit any wrong. This is only due to misunderstanding. The result of wickedness is misery. One has to purify one's vision. If you grasp the fact that all this is God's play, nothing will seem bad.

*Question* : How can one alter one's outlook ?

*Mataji* : By the contemplation of God.

*A Pandit* : The realm of want and one's true nature ( *abhāva* and *svabhāva* ) are talked about in the Isha Upanishad " *Vidyām cha avidyām cha !* "

*Mataji* : Pitaji, what you say about the Upanishad I hear from you. This body does not know about it.

*Pandit* : Mataji ! I am only learned. One learns like a parrot. Of Reality I know nothing at all.

*Mataji* : While fixed at the standpoint of inequality, how can one come to know of the state of equality ?

*Question* : Has one to change one's clothes in order to attain to equality ?

*Mataji* : No, not one's clothes, only one's spectacles : in other words, one's vision has to be corrected.

*Question* : When some great evil is committed by someone and God induces another person to start a fast in order to reform the evildoer, why does not God cause the sinner himself to mend his ways ? Why should an "agency" have to intervene ?

*Mataji* : Pitaji, if someone receives an inspiration of this kind, what is there to ask ? A sick man takes the help of a doctor and a nurse to get well. The physician and the nurse try to restore the patient's health. According to your question, what need is there of a doctor or a nurse ? God Himself will cure the disease. Therefore it is said that God's play is of infinite variety.

*Question* : The evil-doer can also say : God has prompted me to do the wicked deed.

*Mataji* : No, he cannot. Why does one get ill ? In sickness there is no well-being. Where Rama is there is rest and ease and where Rama is not there is great uneasiness. But where is Rama not ? God's play has infinite variations. Good and bad, saint and sinner—through all of them God acts His play. To find fault is bad. Revise your outlook ! Why ! The wicked person is also one of God's manifestations. In the eyes of a saint nothing is bad. Look at all manifestations as God's. Where the pairs of opposites

are, there evil is seen : remove this attitude ! To see evil brings sorrow.

*Question* : Suppose I want to kill someone, is it a wicked attitude of mind ? What can I do about it ?

*Mataji* : You say to see evil is itself an evil. Do you see murder ? This is a harmful outlook—it is not the vision that sees God everywhere. Where God is perceived in everything, there cannot be even the slightest trace of anything evil. I see wickedness because my vision is blurred. There are countless aspects to every single matter. According to a man's outlook things come into being. The one who perceives virtue will perform virtuous deeds and he who sees vice will do base actions. Suppose some *mahātmā* is absorbed in *samādhi*. The one who criticises everything will say : "Nonsense ! This is no *samādhi*, the *mahātmā* is sleeping." But he who sees goodness everywhere will understand that it is *samādhi*. Seeing evil is itself a sin. One has to correct one's vision.

*Question* : If someone's desire for a man or a woman remains unfulfilled when he or she dies, will such an one have to be reborn as a ghost ?

*Mataji* : One has to be reborn to fulfil one's desires. What the *Śāstras* say about this is for you to tell. If you behave like one belonging to the world of ghosts, you will be born in that world. Birth occurs according to one's tendencies and inclinations.

*Question* : I have heard it say that if a person is greedy for wealth, he will be reborn as a snake. How can the desire for riches be fulfilled in the body of a snake ?

*Mataji* : Due to one's desire for it in countless former births, one is blessed with a human body. In the human body lies the power to realize God. Your behaviour will determine your next birth. By behaving like a snake one obtains the body of a snake. In God's creation everyone is born in perfect justice in keeping with all his actions. It depends on your state of mind at the



moment of death what kind of body you will receive. One may also be reborn through the wish of doing a particular work. The fire of the Guru's power can consume the tendencies accumulated through many former lives. So long as all desires are not burnt up by the fire of knowledge or melted by *bhakti*, the inclination to perform action will certainly persist. If God is remembered at the time of death, this will bring about God-realization. What happens to the soul after leaving the body is determined by a person's state of mind at the last moment. If one has been a transgressor all one's life, how will virtuous desires occur at the end ?

Once upon a time there was a queen who was deeply religious. Much of her leisure was spent in worship and devotion and she was full of generosity and compassion for all. Her one great grief was that her husband, the King, was an atheist. He never pronounced the name of God. People therefore were under the impression that he was a disbeliever, while actually he was profoundly spiritual. Secretly he spent his life in constant communion with the Divine. Only he would never exhibit his true attitude of mind and thus appeared to be an agnostic. Once it so happened that he pronounced the word 'Rama' in his sleep. The queen who was by his side, heard it and was stunned with surprise. Overwhelmed with extreme joy, she, the next day, started big celebrations and distributed gifts all round. When the king asked her what what was the occasion for so much festivity, the Queen related to him what had happened in the night. The King said : "Oh, has the word 'Rama' escaped through my lips ? This was my well-guarded and most secret treasure—it is gone !" With these words he left his body.

Occasionally it may also happen that someone spends his whole life in misbehaviour, but due to hidden good tendencies accumulated in former lives, a complete change comes over him at the moment of death.

*Question* : What is the difference between *Ātmā* and *Paramātmā* ?

*Mataji* : That which is *Ātmā* is indeed *Paramātmā*. *Ātmā* actually means *Paramātmā*.

*Question* : Are then *Ātmā* and *Paramātmā* one and the same thing ?

*Mataji* : There is a famous saying : "Wherever there is an individual ( *jīva* ) there is Siva and in every woman there is Gouri." This is perfectly correct. The *Ātmā* is indeed the *Paramātmā*. Just as there is pure water and polluted water. The water is the same in both of them. The essential quality of water is equal in both. To drink pure water gives comfort and promotes health. When contaminated water is filtered, boiled and strained, it will be transformed into pure water. Stagnating water breeds germs. One *jīva* generates other *jīvas*. The *jīvātmā* may be compared to impure water. By the contemplation of God he is purified and finally revealed as the *Paramātmā* Himself. This is why God is in fact the Supreme *Ātmā*. The individual is that which is bound and where bondage is, there is misery. With the help of the *Ātmā*, having purified the *jīva* by the vision of the *Paramātmā*, transform it into the *Paramātmā*. That is to say, the water has to be filtered.

*Question* : How is the filtering achieved ?

*Mataji* : In order to filter, you must go to the Guru.

*Question* : How to search for the Guru ?

*Mataji* : The longing to seek God does not awaken in everyone. The yearning to find God must be roused within oneself. By the grace of Rama everything is possible.

*Question* : Why is God gracious to some and not to others ?

*Mataji* : What are you saying ! For God the distinction between one and another does not exist at all.

*Question* : How can one obtain the grace of Rāma ?

*Mataji* : God's grace is showered on all. God knows no partiality. Just as a mother gives to her children what-

ever they need. To the small infant she will give milk only and to the big boy solid food. She feeds her children what they can digest and assimilate. Likewise does God grant His grace to His devotee according to his condition and state. Everything is indeed God's. Your whole family is His and His alone. Work with your hands and at the same time repeat God's name. You have chosen Rama as your refuge, therefore constantly repeat His name. Rāma is making you work. In order to exhaust your *karma*, march forward, seeking the shelter of God's name.

*"God alone is Truth, Happiness, Bliss. Do not set your hopes on anything except Supreme Beatitude, the Bliss of the Self. Naught else exists. What seems to exist outside of it is merely illusion. Try to find your Self !"*

*—Mata Anandamayi*

## Desirelessness\*

Discrimination ( *viveka* ) makes it plain to a thinking man that he is not the body, and starts him on his voyage of self-discovery. The seeker henceforth knows no rest till he realizes the truth of his being, and in that process of discovery consists the whole gamut of his psychic evolution. The awakening of *viveka* marks the spiritual unfolding of man.

A fundamental test—a veritable touchstone—of one's progress on the path is the measure of his desirelessness; for when *viveka* illumines the mind, all dark corners of desire vanish.

Desire is born of *aviveka*, by man identifying himself with the body. There is no desire which has not its root in man's body-consciousness. Indeed, desire is the direct product of one's identifying oneself with, or attaching oneself to an individual, an object or an environment. This is the symptom of *aviveka*. Man has truly and firmly set his foot on the spiritual path only when, through *viveka* he has awakened to his not being the body. Therefore, desirelessness is the first and foremost fruit of *viveka*. It is the base on which alone the temple of spirituality can be raised. Desire throws us outwards; love of the Divine takes us inwards. To love the Divine, one must be free from the desires of the senses. "One cannot eat the cake and have it."

Desire cuts both ways. If indiscriminately fulfilled, it produces attachment, which causes it to rise again and again. If suppressed, it produces anger and resentment, which cloud and confuse the mind. Thus, either way it produces disharmony.

---

\* Reprinted from : "A Saint's Call to Mankind", published by the Manav Seva Sangh, Vrindaban.

Even as the outgoing waters of the river flow into the sea, then evaporate in the form of clouds, rain down and rejoin the rivers and again flow back into the sea; similarly the man of desires continues to be drawn into the sea of *māyā*, revolving in the vicious circle of so-called life and death. In a life of indulgence in desires there is strain, not rest; motion, not equanimity; *bhoga*, not *yoga*; excitement, not peace. In the life of Self-realization, on the other hand, there is *yoga*, peace, joy and immortality.

When one truly despairs of the world giving one's lasting happiness, one's desires die and one practically gets a foretaste of death. A desireless soul is not afraid of death, but awaits death as a prospective passenger awaits the train when the signal is down. That, in reality, is *vairāgya* (desirelessness). *Vairāgya* is like a fire that burns the wood of *rāga* (attachment). As the fire subsides after burning the wood, so does *vairāgya* also subside after consuming attachment—when only *jñāna* (Knowledge) shines self-luminous.

There is no *viveka*, no *tyāga* (renunciation) no *tapas* (austerity) higher than true *vairāgya*. True *vairāgya* raises one above one's physical, subtle and causal bodies and ushers one into Life Eternal. Further, as a by-product, it beautifies and illumines the fleeting life while it lasts. That is to say, all the virtues associated with divinity spontaneously flower in the aspirant. *Vairāgya* does not mean hatred or contempt for the body or the world but only equanimity by giving them their right places. Like sewage, it irrigates the world and leaves it more prosperous.

True *vairāgya* means the raising of the value of the enjoyer above the transitory objects of enjoyment.

Many persons pose *vairāgya*, detachment from the world, because they have had disappointments, frustrations and bereavements. They, however, retain their attachment to their bodies. This is false *vairāgya*, and only produces *dvesha* (animosity) towards others, which is another name for *rāga* (attachment). For *rāga* and *dvesha* are two sides

of the same coin. The body is the world in miniature and is made of the same stuff; and indeed, for the individual consciousness the world is a projection of one's body-consciousness. True *vairāgya* springs from one's realizing the phantasmagoria of the body. Then only one is truly detached from the world and is dissociated from it completely. It is impossible to be detached from the world while one is attached to one's body. As long as one is identified with one's body, one is bound to be attached to the world and the pose of *vairāgya* is a passing reaction, a remedy worse than the disease.

What distinguishes desire from the true want of the soul is this. Desire is a pursuit which allures, but from whose course the soul achieves nothing : a mirage. The true want of man restores one to the Beloved, through single-minded and one-pointed aspiration. Indeed, what distinguishes a *sādhaka* from the ordinary man of the world is that whereas the latter runs after manifold objects of desire, the desires of the former have fused into one central desire : intense aspiration to realize God or Truth.

The man of many desires casts long shadows over his fellow-beings. Only a desireless soul can be a true servant of mankind. Creative energy flows out of the desireless soul, not from the mud of desire. Desire is a dissipation of energy.

Desire is the food, the source of sustenance, of the ego. The cessation of desire makes for the disappearance of the ego. With the disappearance of the ego opens the flood-gate of Live Divine.

The natural want of man is covered over by the unnatural phantom of desire. When the natural want of man consumes the artificial desire, he becomes desireless; and Life Eternal follows desirelessness even as day follows night.

The *sādhaka* should ponder over what makes any object or body in the world of appearances glow with beauty or loveliness. The truth of the matter is that whatever the object to which the Self lends itself, that object glows

with the light of the Self. The wise one does not run after the shadow. The *sādhaka* who is still distracted by the objects of the senses has not yet realised that just as the sweetness in all sweetmeats is of the sugar, so whatever taste or attraction appears anywhere in anything is His.

The world seems to be indispensable to man only as long as he is bound to it by attachments. When attachments are dissolved, the *sadhaka* realises his freedom. Desirelessness is the key to fearlessness.

The world does not love one who constantly begs from the world. A moment lived in desirelessness is more significant than a hundred years lived in desire.

The pleasures of the senses—to which desires cater—are an animal or sub-human target, not human. As a gardener removes the weeds from the grass, even so the *sādhaka* removes desires from his mind.

Desire can only die a natural death when we are not in a state of want. The state of want is caused by our identifying ourselves with individuals, objects and environment. Detachment from these releases our true nature that is the Self and which is free from any want. For a *sādhaka*, however, whose *viveka* is not enough of a flame to burn out all desire, a few useful ideas are suggested.

The first step towards freeing one's self from desire is to introspect one's desires; to fulfil only such desires as relate to the present; which it is in our power to fulfil and the fulfilment of which does not involve harm to another. At the same time, in the fulfilment of such desires too one should refrain from indulging in the sense of excitement thereof, for that would bind us and cause such desires to recur again and again and form a vicious circle. The rest of the desires must be surrendered by deep thought. Restricting ourselves to the fulfilment of inescapable desires only gives the strength to renounce superfluous desires, and releases *viveka*. The only place that a limited fulfilment of desires has in the life of an aspirant is to allow the same, within limits as laid down

by *dharma*, with the purpose of outgrowing them through experience. Otherwise, the fleeting sensation of pleasure in the fulfilment of desires would cause a chain of ever-fresh rounds of desire and produce a vicious whirlpool.

The fulfilment of such desires should not, however, leave any trail of *samskāras* on one's mind for being reaped in the future. There must be no contemplation of the objects of desire with reference to the past or future. Contemplation of desired objects is worse than the fulfilment of desires.

Secondly, the *sādhaka* should engage himself solely in discharging the obligations to others which he has incurred as a result of his former identifications. This means that he must fulfil the rights of others by the performance of his duties to them; and that whatever rights he has imagined to be his as a result of *aviveka* must be renounced by him. The sense of one's rights in a *sādhaka* only betrays his own sense of poverty. The man who claims rights from another has in fact subordinated himself to another, for he has made his satisfaction and happiness dependent on another's mercy. The *sādhana* of man consists in his yearning to meet his Beloved or to realize Truth. When the *sādhaka* is freed from desire, he is freed from all bondage and attains life in Truth and Freedom.

The fulfilment of others' rights by our service, and the renunciation of one's own so-called rights, is thus the first step towards desirelessness. This implies selfless service to others. The *sādhaka* should not indulge in any undertaking that is not service to another.

Paradoxical as it may seem, complete discharge of one's duty to another frees one from attachment to the other.

Atonement and prayer, control of the senses, contemplation of God, quest after Truth are some of the other useful aids to the *sādhaka* seeking to rid himself of desires.



True renunciation is of the whole, not of a part. As long as a single desire remains to pollute the mind, it is a potential nucleus of disease. The ending of desire does not come from any change in one's environment but by the right use of one's existing environment. Right use of one's environment is the surest means of release from the environment as well as from desire and outgoing activity.

The desireless man hears for the pleasure of the speaker; speaks for the pleasure of the listener; eats for the pleasure of the feeder; meets for the pleasure of the other; indeed, he lives only for the service of others or for the pleasure of his Lord.

*"All is His, all is He ; to leave everything to Him must be your sole endeavour. Invoke His name, meditate on Him ; ever abide in the remembrance of Him. Not praying for anything that is of this world, strive to abandon yourself without reserve to Him. In Him no want of any kind exists, no pain, no agony—in Him is all attainment, the summit of fulfilment, rest, repose , tranquility."*

*—Mata Anandamayi*