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Ānanda Vārtā

VOL. XXI]

JULY, 1974

[NO. 3

*The One who is the Eternal, the Atman,
He Himself is the traveller on the path of Immortality,
He is all in all, He alone is.*

Mātri Vāni

By doing japa and meditation of Krishna, by loving Him, His attraction should become so powerful that even suffering is cherished. Therefore, meditating on Him alone, dedicating all actions to Him, be an instrument in His hands. Keeping your body—His temple—clean and pure, immersed in the thought of Him, endeavour to let all your actions be permeated by Krishna. He is all that is experienced. The man who can be engrossed in Him, in joy and sorrow, in every one of his actions, in the midst of worldly life

that is ruled by the mind—that man will be victorious.

*

* ONLY HUMAN *
* ONLY HUMAN *

*

Bereavement and suffering, pleasure and pain are begotten by delusion (*moha*); whereas man's journey through life must be directed towards God. When

He is found all is found—contentment, peace, bliss!

Evil-mindedness is due to the idea that God is far away. So long as you do not see Him in everything,

make a supreme effort to be vowed to the uninterrupted thought of Him. He is present in all practices

and actions, He Himself manifests as action—try to

remain ever aware of this! Brooding over grief,

which is but the result of delusion, makes it spread

and increase like a creeper—bear this in mind!

To remember that God is in all action, in form as well as without form, and to pray for His grace is man's bounden duty as a human being. In order that Truth may be revealed, concentrate on the practice that brings about inner awakening.

If someone really thirsts for Light, it is impossible that God will not grant it to Him. Be as regular as

you can in your spiritual exercises. Perform japa and meditation, sustain the remembrance of Him, study sacred scriptures. So long as you are steeped in the thought of Him with the help of any of these, you are on your pilgrimage towards Light—be mindful of this ! Read the Bhagavad Gita daily and attempt again and again to grasp its inner meaning.

The search after Truth is man's special duty. Do your duty and strive to know your Self. Among all sentient beings, the human alone is endowed with the power to realize God. Therefore, to tread the spiritual path must be his great object in life.

A Brahmachari should never allow his religious practices, his acts of service, and so forth to be tainted by anger. For has he not chosen the path of God to attain to the love of Him. Travellers on the path are meek, humble and patient—God in His compassion has turned their minds in this direction. Suffering is to be looked upon as God's mercy to exhaust one's evil karma. "Even if Thou wouldst make me Thine own by punishing me, let Thy Will be done !"

Endeavour so remain steadfast and serene. Remembering His presence constantly, do service.

Until and unless you have definitely realized Him you must never abandon your spiritual practice. Be determined about this. He can be realized by japa and meditation. Try to sustain japa and meditation constantly. It cannot be that He will not respond when appealed to—though it may take time. When one's endeavours are very ardent and one forges ahead with great speed, there is hope of Enlightenment.

To invoke God sincerely without a result—this can never happen. He will surely cleanse and purify His own offspring. Pray to Him with heart and soul. To the limit of your power, using all the strength and capacity you possess, endeavour to live constantly in His presence. Surrender yourself at His Feet. He Himself gives His *kriyā* (spiritual practice)—training the aspirant to go beyond all *kriyā* in order to reach His Goal. Therefore try with all your might to concentrate with your whole being on that to which you can give yourself whole-heartedly and without reserve. Time is flying.

Mātri Satsang in Solan

Swami Bhagavananda Giri

(Translated from Bengali)

(5)

In continuation of the evening of
June 12th, 1955.

One of the devotees asks a question : "Can different types of prayers arise from the same person at different times ?"

Mataji : It does happen that at different stages on the path various kinds of prayers emanate from within. In a life of devotion (*bhakti*) one cannot bear to exist without the Supreme Beloved (*Iṣṭa*). "Beloved Lord, where, oh where are you ?" This kind of agitation or keen anguish is bound to be felt. It may become so acute that one forgets the need to wash or eat. Everything seems tasteless and without purpose. Even eating becomes a burden, sleep disappears. This too is a certain stage on the path : saturated with continuous divine thought, with divine intoxication—ycs, absolutely merged in it. To such a person the question of food and sleep becomes meaningless. Look, how wonderful ! The body does not feel any pain or suffering, why ? Because one is completely immersed in the thought of God. Do you know where sleep takes you ? To your own Self under cover of a shroud.

Didi : In deep sleep (*suṣupti*), does one remain in that condition ?

Mataji : As long as you do not fall into a deep slumber your brain cannot function as it should. Do you not say that your headquarters lie in the brain ? If there is trouble in the head-office, then there is trouble everywhere. You have to go daily to your own Self, like a touchstone. But if you do not sleep properly, how can you have this experience ? Uneasy sleep results in a heavy stomach. If you have not been able to sleep, why do you lie down exhausted ? This is why this body (Mataji) always asks you to be aware of the fact that you are ever within your Self. Everything is full of flavour only because of the divine sweetness. Action takes place because He is ever active. You are His tool, you cannot do without Him. You have to live as He wills you to. At least once in twenty-four hours you must go to your touch-stone, whether in deep slumber or in profound, dreamless sleep. That is why it is said, you are always close to your own Self.

When a fervent agitation for God arises, victory over sleep is a natural corollary. Why ? Because then there is constantly the one object in view : Meditation on the Supreme Beloved, absorption in the contemplation of one's own Self. The benefit, the touch you receive in sleep comes now easily and naturally. Worldliness which is due to ignorance leads to continuous births and deaths. Whereas in *that* type of restlessness or agitation of the mind ignorance disappears—the cur-

tains are raised one by one—there you gradually come to know how to obtain the touch of Unconcealed Divinity. When the dark veil covering true Knowledge is removed or shed or dissolved, then mastery over food and sleep becomes natural. Then the Supreme Beloved (*Iṣṭa*) alone exists, He who never causes any harm (*aniṣṭa*). The might of His power is felt more and more; He is omnipresent, but His revelation takes place gradually. As His power manifests, so does the mind resort to less and less sleep.

For example, you are sitting comfortably and you doze off. But if at that time you are watching a cinema show, sleep is far away. So, when you behold the Beloved, how can you possibly sleep? Then there is no need to sleep, for the Supreme Being Himself fulfils the need which sleep satisfies. He Himself meets your desire for enjoyment, He lets you drink a divine nectar. You do not deviate towards the path leading to carnal pleasures, which is the road to death. You fill yourself with divine intoxication. See, how beautifully God's kingdom is devised : In the enjoyment of mere earthly pleasures there is poison leading to death. On the other hand, *There* you obtain the nectar of immortal ambrosia by drinking which hunger and sleep disappear; the way is opened for a meeting of the Lord and His servant. You yourself are the Immortal. It is your own Self that appears as the Supreme Beloved. Even the tears streaming from your eyes represent none but your own Self, In the experiences of

absence or of presence, in joy and in sorrow, in whatever form it be, it is You alone that exist !

God's ways are infinite, His forms are infinite and His attributes, and infinite also are the roads leading to Union with Him. You must be determined to choose the path that will take you to the full and complete Revelation of Him. It is the bounden duty of every human being to await Union with Him with the most intense desire, coupled with deep trust, devotion and faith, to reach His Presence for His sake alone, to realize that everyone is eternally united with Him.

Question : How can such an intense desire arise ?

Mataji : By taking His name again and again, by worshipping Him, by repeatedly listening to the stories of His divine incarnations (*līlā katha*). He first of all appears in the guise of a void, of desperate longing; then He Himself provides instant proof that He is eternally present, through intuitive feeling and in action. That is why one must especially cultivate *satsang*.

Question : Can worldly desire also be fulfilled by prayer ?

Mataji : Dacoits pray to the Goddess Kali, they worship Her and depart after singing Her praises. They then commit dacoity and gain possession of booty. As a result they are jailed. Whatever anyone wants and prays for will be given to him. But the good, the wise, the saintly person says, "How do I know what to ask of Him ? Let Him do whatever He thinks best." Again,

others declare : "It is right to ask for what is good and beneficial for you." This body is of the opinion that you should take the path of not asking for any boon whatever. But if you cannot live without praying, then pray to Him for His own sake. So that when He is found, when He is realized, you will never have to ask anything more of anyone else. "Oh, Almighty God, deign of your own accord to become my own !" This kind of prayer to God for God's own sake is not a desire nor an ambition, this constitutes a certain stage in praying.

Question : Some devotees write letters, such as : "My son's examinations will start on such and such a date. Please ask Mataji to remember the occasion."

Didi : This also is a kind of prayer.

A devotee : A certain devotee falls seriously ill. A letter is written to Mataji, and later news arrives that he has recovered.

By way of a reply, the glimmer of a gentle smile appears on Mataji's face and She folds Her hands while uttering very softy and sweetly the words, "Hari, Hari."

The bell sounds for dinner. All of us bow down in *pranāma* and rise to go.

(To be continued)

Ma-Darshan on Sri Krishna's Birthday

Shunya (Peter Michael Hamel)

(Translated from German)

In summer 1972, I had the good luck of meeting in Berlin a young family who had spent several years in India where they had been fortunate to make contact with Sri Anandamayi Ma, the Mother of Eternal Bliss. They showed me a number of films and photos that impressed me deeply.

I already knew about Ma from the books of revered Paramahansa Yogananda and of Jean Gebser. Since then Her small photo was always on my altar at home and I carried it in my pocket on my concert tours.

In July 1973, when I landed in Delhi on my 26th birthday. I was seized, as it were, by a keen longing for Ma's *daršana*. However, when phoning to Her ashram in New Delhi, the response was not at all encouraging. Later I was given to understand that conservative Hindus (perhaps not without justification) instinctively mistrust western foreigners. The greater was my joy when a few weeks later I was received with sincere cordiality in Ma's ashram at Varanasi. It almost shocked me to hear that Ma was then in Delhi—just when I was planning to leave for Calcutta! The same day I received a delayed postcard from Atmananda, informing me that Ma would be in Delhi for Sri Krishna's birthday.—Now I shall quote from my diary :

August 21st, 1973.

Mother of Eternal Bliss, from my first day in India you have been calling me. I have scraped together every penny; today and tomorrow I shall be allowed to see you. But the aeroplane does not start..... For three long hours I have to wait, the only passenger at the deserted aerodrome. I am longing to behold you. The whole mechanism of impatience and expectation has to be destroyed. When at last the plane is ready to take off, a severe thunderstorm breaks out. I read your words : "To attain to Truth one has to endure all hardships, ever abiding in patience. It is the obstacles that give birth to patience. One must never lose hope....." I am apprehensive that I may miss you. At last we are starting. I have a sinking sensation in my stomach, my pulse is racing. Om Sri Ma, Om Sri Ma. I feel slightly giddy, benumbed. It is 1105 p. m. when we alight in Delhi. I throw myself into a taxi that cannot find the way and takes me here and there. I am almost senseless. Suddenly I feel perfectly calm and at ease. Inner certainty? I stop reflecting, self-scrutiny leaves me. In the open country outside of Delhi there are suddenly cars, a temple illumined by bright red light (that I had already sighted from the aeroplane), many pairs of shoes. An inner courtyard is festively lit up and decorated. About two hundred people, complete inner and outer silence. In the temple Brahman priests are at work, surrounded by carpets of magnificent flowers. Long grey beards and hair, bright orange robes, vigorous personalities. Scintillating lights everywhere, coloured canvas sheets, garlands, scents. Never before have I experienced anything of this kind.

Musicians are sitting motionless. I see cymbals, drums, a harmonium. But there is deep silence. Everything happens for me within a few seconds—eternity with the speed of lightning.

On white cushions embroidered with gold, on a throne between the temple and the meditating men and women, SHE is seated, clad in spotless white, Her eyes closed, Sri Anandamayi Ma. Breathless I remain standing at the back. Throwing myself on my knees, I am losing space, time and eternity too. My eyes are fixed on Her aura. Her stillness descends on me, the greatest ecstatic stillness I have ever known. Then I am back again. Turned practical like a sleep-walker, I find a place for my belongings, I fetch my red Tibetan blanket, a yellow-orange flower-garland hangs round my neck. I feel my way through the throng of silent men. So much quiescence does Ma impart.

Now I am sitting right in front. Ordinarily I would of course not have gone to the very front.....nobody stops me, it just happens : SHE makes it happen. I am gazing at Her. Her hair, which on photos often loosely streams over Her shoulders, is tied up high into a knot; narrow, frame-eye-glasses. She is dressed all in white. Ma sways slightly forwards and back-wards, almost imperceptibly, floating, buoyed up by the Self. She is beyond all being. Her hands are gracefully resting on Her lap, Her head is slightly bent forward. Gradually I am experiencing Oneness with Her. I am sitting lightly in the lotus.....

In the temple, the paradise of flowers, colours, sweets, fruit, incense and decorated statues (Sri Krishna), many

ceremonial gestures are performed in great silence. At first I see nothing but Ma. She returns, or rather, She “pays us a visit”: Her eyes open, a movement surges through the crowd. One of the sisters dressed in ochre approaches Her. Ma has woken up. My heart is throbbing. Her picture that has been with me for so long is crushed in my hands. My hands are folded in front of my chest. My spine feels hot—everything has been awakened. *Kundalini* is rising, *Anāhata* quivers. For some time soft tears are running down my cheeks. As if I had reached home, returning from a long journey. At last, at last, the jubilation of stillness—this is why I was born, exactly for today. The Eternal Now.

Calmly, without expression, Ma looks at Her devotees and disciples. By and by She smiles. Silence. Her quick glance just touches me in passing, it shoots right through me. Kindness and strength. Now I start crying in right earnest, not even making an attempt to suppress it; quite softly I am running out, irresistibly. A similar condition I have known for seconds only on my few L. S. D. trips before getting unconscious. But here everything occurs within the actuality of my five senses. One of my Indian neighbours has just twitched. What I feel, is common to *all* !

Now begins something never before experienced, yet well known deep within from ancient times: Perfumes, lights, colours and chiefly the Divine Presence lead us to the light of *Sunyata**. Ma simply dissolves if one gazes at Her with concentration (*Trātaka Yoga*). Now She is being led to the small temple—about five steps away. She is sitting

* *Sunyata* Void.

in a way that makes Her look in my direction. She is being dressed up most fantastically : ornaments, a crown, garlands; the statue of Sri Krishna is in Her hands. I have seen Her like this on photos in Berlin. Now also cameras are clicking.

Gradually, the people round me are relaxing from their breathless tension, everyone is singing *kirtana* in unison. Infinitely simple tunes that penetrate deep down into the unconscious if sung long enough. I remain in the most concentrated state I have ever known. Ma remains inwardly present, is simultaneously here and "beyond". Only a fragment of Her being seems to follow the ceremony. She repeatedly looks in my direction, now and then a little sarcastically, and like a child. Now She has to put up with much botheration : various special garments are put round Her. She has to submit to certain rites. She always tries to get rid as quickly as possible of the ornaments put on Her head. The singing transports people into a state of devotional trance. Never before have I witnessed devotional ecstasy in a gathering of so many people. There are cymbals, drums, two or three singers with a harmonium, even a mike has been installed. Suddenly Ma beckons—in fact She does not speak at all, yet everything seems to proceed according to Her wishes. To me Her gestures are unforgettable, how She supervises ceremonies, how She causes people to sit in their places, how She makes room with arms and hands. A mere gesture and at once a microphone stands in front of Her. SHE SINGS. "Gopal, Gopal"—one of those *kirtana* songs; litanies of mantras vibrations from the Divine Primeval Ground of Being. I am feeling so very happy now. And the great calm.....

On a higher level of consciousness Ma has an intense personal relationship with every single being simultaneously (also with me a little). She knows the essence of energy of a being, probably She does not see so much the specific individual personality as the level of vibrations on which the soul is centred. Although She very occasionally mentions happenings of the future - one also speaks of miraculous cures, of illnesses but these things are of minor importance to Her.

By acting and reacting in a state of Oneness that actually always exists in Reality and is intensely Her own, She transmits this state of consciousness to those of Her followers who are ready to share and live it. Very likely there may be many others who, full of eagerness for sacred objects and sensations and filled with greedy impatience, pull everything down to the lower stages of divine worship, similar to us Catholics.

The perfumes, the illumination, the timelessness, and also all the circumstances until I could find Ma, create hallucinations, visions.....

Now *prasāda* begins, that is to say, dishes of food, fruit, sweets, also sacred books—everything that has been offered in the temple—is now being distributed by Ma. A quite unceremonial, almost childish crowding and pushing ensues. Each one wants to receive something from Ma's own hands. But Ma's girls, vigorous women in whom kindness and severity blend, manage to maintain a fair amount of order. In this rush for devotional objects I first of all feel a stranger, more a Buddhist than a Hindu.....

The crowd gradually subsides, I am still sitting in

the same position; now I stand up, almost in a trance, and then suddenly, I do not know how it has come about, I am right in front of Ma. I feel quite embarrassed, not knowing how to take it, I simply say "Ma". A few people round me are smiling. She looks at me. SHE LOOKS AT ME—outwardly I am completely helpless. SHE LOOKS AT ME for all eternity, I become senseless, stunned. Ma throws an apple to me which I catch clumsily. The apple hits me right on the chest—into the heart centre. It is too powerful. I feel myself accepted, returned home. ANANDA ANANDA OM SRI MA.

Now I am holding an apple in my hand. My ears are burning. An energetic, affectionate sister presents me with a few nuts. I simply remain standing near Ma. Now She is tired and wants to retire. The last fruits are given to the policeman. Reflecting that Ma's body is not far from eighty and it is now 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning—condensed Cosmic Energy.

Now tiny sandals are put on Her feet. All kneel down and do *pranāma*. I walk behind Her until I am stopped. Then I sit down, almost below Her room, as it were. On the bare stone floor—it does not matter. It is drizzling—nothing matters. A great tranquillity enters into me, desirelessness such as I have never known before. Peace, boundless peace.

22/8/73.

In the morning a bell rouses me. Just in front of me a temple is opened. No change of condition, waking, sleep, dream, meditation—spaceless, timeless. Now singing starts.

I go and have a wash and then sit down in a circular temple. I know nothing about the programme, have no idea of what is to take place. As a rule I always plan everything carefully.—I meet Melita Maschmann who tells me many things. Now something completely unimaginable starts for me. A festival the like of which is quite unknown to Europeans. Ecstasy, childlike joy, rhythm. Costumes, Krishna mythology—and Ma enters, organizes everything, rouses lazy fellows in dark corners, so that all join in and there is no audience. It is getting more and more lively, in spite of the rain, in spite of the throng of people. Ma “distributes” curds. She hits me—dag!—right into my face. I am splashed all over. Never before have I experienced anything like this. Ma dances, rushes about. Everything just happens. She is so affectionate with a child. All are dancing and singing in unequalled ecstasy. These are serious Brahmin families, not hippies.....

Finally Ma disappears in Her rooms, the ageless saint of eighty. Hundreds are shouting. “Anandamayi Ma—ki jai!”—I am smeared all over with curds and some yellow stuff, entirely beyond the limits of my experience up to now. The pilgrimage of life. It is about midday now. Just twelve hours since my arrival.

A kind family takes me to the aerodrome. How infinitely worth while this flight has been !!! I have received more than I could ever expect.

SHE IS THAT—just lives IT; does not merely talk or evoke *siddhis*. The divine experience of Her personal Presence becomes the vehicle for flights to highest regions.

Yogananda wanted to take Mataji to the U. S. A. But Her devotees would not let Her go. What a pity.....

The Hindu festival was the greatest benediction for me. Many travel through India without finding any of this—or perhaps they simply do not notice it. Profound thanks be to Thee, Supreme Lord, that I was allowed to behold IT through HER !

No doubt it is possible to become dependent on Ma if one does not realize that Enlightened Wisdom lies in the Self which Ma “only” redeems. Many recognize Her divinity advancing a single step without themselves. Although the fascination over Ma’s divinity can induce a very important step : namely, the removal of egocentricity, in other words, bhakti. Images, rites, ceremonies, even Enlightened Beings—how quickly are they robbed of their origin if viewed as the purpose instead of the means. Ma would be so very important for countless westerners who are given to brooding, doubting and speculating. *She opens the heart* and makes the clouds of separating duality disappear, at least for the time of Her *darśana* and for longer. She shows the illusion of the three-dimensional, of matter and materialism. Ma is the *Iṣṭa*. It is irrelevant whether the *Iṣṭa* incarnates as a saintly human being or as an *avātāra* or is only a projection in meditation in a certain state of consciousness. An old woman was all the time sitting in front of Ma’s picture although Ma Herself sat outside. The old woman had understood that Ma was in her heart, just like Christ, Mohammed, Buddha, St. Francis, Yogananda and Ramana Maharshi for others.

For me Ma is *Maha, Mahashunya, Mahashunyānanda,*

Amitabha Buddha—one with me in the core of Truth. “And the Oord became flesh and dwelt among us.”

Because Ma is eternal Oneness, the cosmic experience of this radiates into everyone of us. Her glance hits you directly. For me, Ma is beyond all religions. Yesterday She was in *Mahashunyu*, today She affirms and sanctifies the joy of living. Thus in Her the dualism that discriminates between withdrawal from active life and standing right in the midst of it is dissolved. I see in Mataji the manifestation of the unfathomable red light, of the primeval Ground of visionary Knowledge. Aparna sang one of Ma's songs to me, out of which an orchestral composition for the west was produced. While working at it I was aware of Ma's presence in a most wonderful way. More and more men and women from the west are finding Mataji. This is very beautiful.

Let us be with Her !

Om Shanti

The Wisdom of the Ganga Das'ehra Festival

Swami Sharadananda

Ganga Dae'sehra is a religious festival celebrating the birthday of Goddess Ganga Deviji. The birthday of the Goddess should not be understood in a worldly sense, because according to Hindu scriptures the river Ganges is Goddess Ganga. Her birthday is the day when the river first descended from heaven to earth, namely *Jyeshth Śukla Daśamī* which fell on June 10th this year and was celebrated all over India among people devoted to Mother Ganga.

The holy river descended on earth in response to the prayers of Her devotee, Raja Bhagiratha. For ten thousand years Bhagīratha prayed to Ganga Devi, who was flowing in heaven, to come down on earth to wash away the sins of his ancestors who had been burnt to death by their own misdeeds and were lying in a heap of ashes without salvation. The river Ganga has the Divine power to give salvation by washing away all sins and also to cure human ailments. This truth was revealed to Hansuman, the grandson of King Sāgara, when he prayed to Kapil Devaji for the horse which the King had released to perform the (*Aśvamedha Yajña.*)

In those days, a king who wished to become an emperor had to perform the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice. It was a recognized ceremony in which the king who performed it

declared his supremacy over other rulers within his jurisdiction. For that purpose the king had to let loose a special white horse that had some rare signs on its body. A gold plate was fastened to its forehead on which was written that king so and so wanted to become an emperor and all the other kings should bow and pay homage to him. Whoever was against that declaration had to fight, defeating the army assigned to protect and guard the horse against such challengers. If the horse could go round successfully and return safely, the king who had started the *Asvamedha Yajña* would complete it and become an emperor.

King Sāgara was very powerful. He had sixty thousand sons, each of them as powerful as he himself. So he decided to become an emperor and released a *panchakalyani* white horse with a gold plate hung on its forehead as prescribed. To protect that horse he deputed a large army under the command of his sons. Of course there was none on earth to challenge the sovereignty of King Sāgara; but Indra, the king of the Devatas became jealous, fearing that after becoming the emperor of the earth, Sāgara might try to conquer *Devaloka* as well. So he stole the *Yajña* horse and quietly tied it in a corner of Kapilashrām which was in *patāla* (the netherworld). He thought that Sāgara's sons would not be able to find the horse and without it King Sāgara could not complete the sacrifice nor become an emperor. Thus Indra went away to his *loka* happily, thinking that his mischief would remain undetected.

King Sāgara's sons and the army had followed the *yajña* paṣu (horse) and guarded it. Although there was none on earth to challenge the supremacy of Sāgara, yet the procedure

