



MA in Dacca.

ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

*The Eternal, the Ātman—
Itself pilgrim and path of Immortality
Self contained—THAT is all in One.*

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SRI SRI MA'S UTTERANCES

(Reported by Sri Gurupriya Devi in "*Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi*", Vol. II.)

Question : On some days the mind can concentrate very well at the time of japa and meditation ; but on other days it is completely out of control. Why should this be so ?

Mataji : This may be due to various reasons. There is surely something in your way of living that distracts the mind and prevents it from concentrating at the time set apart for the practice of japa. For instance something you may have eaten or seen or someone whom you have touched or held conversation with—anything like this may have agitated your mind without your being aware of it. This is why I say, if someone wants to advance in *that* direction it is imperative for him to keep away from society and to live in solitude.

In the beginning one must constantly be watchful to avoid everything that may divert one's thoughts away from God. Of course, for those who live in a family it is not possible to shun the company of others. They should, whenever practicable, seek satsang and talk about divine things. By keeping company with saints and sages and by reading about them the mind is purified and this helps to progress in the direction of God.

One's actions of former births also exert their influence. Due to them different moods or tendencies come to the forefront at different times. If one

practises the presence of God by constantly remembering, “whatever work I am doing is His service”, then just as when new leaves sprout on a tree the old ones fall off, so worldly attachments will fade away and the longing for God will grow strong—outer interests will weaken and give way to the search within. This is the natural course of events. Then again, the old leaves that have fallen off provide manure for the tree. So you see, nothing is wasted in the divine economy of things.

* * *

Question : Ma, it is quite impossible to steady the mind. By what expedient can it be made calm ?

Mataji (laughing) : Suppose there is a vessel full of water. So long as it is moved about, the water will also remain in movement. But when the vessel is kept in one place for some time you will notice that the water has become motionless. Similarly try to keep your body quite still for some length of time ; the longer the body can remain perfectly still in one position, the more will the mind calm down. If it is natural for the mind to flit about restlessly, calm and concentration are its nature as well. Endeavour to sit absolutely still for as long as possible, repeating God’s name. And though your mind may wander here and there, don’t relax your efforts. If the mind does not give up its dharma, why should you abandon yours ?

* * *

Question : What is called *samādhi* ?

Mataji : Bābā, I should say the complete resolution or cessation of thought, feeling and action is

called *samādhi*. Then Ma added: "From the point of view of the world, after having been busy with your various occupations and activities all day long, you then fall into deep sleep."

* * *

Question : Ma, since He is Self-revealed, why then should we have to invoke Him ?

Mataji : I don't know anything, Babā. All the same, as you make me speak, so I speak. Look, when a seed is sown a power manifests in the seed which causes a vibration in the soil so that together with the emergence of the sprout, the earth is also pierced. Similarly, the intense restlessness of your heart, the search for the meaning of life, you should understand to be like the vibration in the earth. This vibration is due to the fact that He will reveal Himself. Man's true nature is to yearn for God.

* * *

Look, when a seed is put into the ground it has to be covered with earth. If you take it out again and again to examine it, it cannot grow into a tree. No matter from whom you may have received a seed-mantra, if keeping it concealed in your heart, you practise it regularly as prescribed, it will in time grow into a tree and bear flowers and fruits. Keep it hidden like the seed of a plant and water it. In its own time it will certainly develop into a tree. Whatever the Guru may be like who has bestowed it on you, it is God's own name that you have been given. So, why should it not serve its purpose ? Just as a small child is unable to distin-

guish one seed from another, you perhaps may not know what kind of seed you have received. But if you wholeheartedly take care of it, you will most certainly come to know what kind of seed it was after it will have grown into a tree and developed flowers and fruits. If one has no idea what kind of seed has been put into the earth but provides it with all the nourishment it needs, will it not thrive and develop into a tree? Similarly regardless of who the Guru may be, if you tend the seed in keeping with the prescribed rules, you will surely reap the fruits.

MOTHER'S DARSHAN

Ma Das

MA has Herself said, "The Atma of this body is everyone's Atma."* All around, everywhere, all the time, the manifestation is all of Ma alone. What we have to do is to "look at MA" and not Her garb.

If we do that, we are filled with joyous surprise at what even these three words 'look at MA' reveal. Representing the pleasant emotion by a note of exclamation and the unified vision by unified words 'at' and 'MA' we have :

LOOK ! ATMA

This is Mother's darshan.

*Matri Vani, Vol. II, P. 289.

MĀTRI SATSANG

Swami Bhagavatananda Giri

(Translated from Bengali)

(Samyam Saptaha Mahavrata at Kanpur continued)

15th November, 1958

Question : Is there any special reason for observing *Samyam Mahavrata* during the month of Kartika (Oct-Nov.)?

Mataji : The *Samyam Saptaha* has begun, so this body has arrived just like everybody else. Jogibhai will reply to this question. (Mataji had given this name to the late Raja Durga Singh of Solan).

Jogibhai : There is no hard and fast rule for observing *Samyam Saptaha* in the month of Kartika. A few times it was performed in other months as well.

Question : Is there any tradition for *Samyam Saptaha* as laid down by the Rishis ?

Mataji : Only a short while ago the subject of *Samyam Saptaha* has been discussed. An invitation has been received to hold the *Samyam Saptaha* in Calcutta next year. It was also suggested that the *Samyam Saptaha* should once be held in Naimisharanya because in ancient times some 88,000 Rishis had gathered there to perform *Yajñas, Satsang, etc.*

Question : Why is the *Samyam Mahavrata* limited to one week ?

Mataji : Ask Jogibhai to reply !

Jogibhai : When Mataji's birthday was being celebrated in Khanna (Punjab), it was suggested that it would be a good idea to hold a *Samyam Saptaha* once a year in Ma's physical presence so that we could perform our meditation, *jāpa*, *satsang*, etc. in front of Her. When this proposal was put before Mataji She agreed to it. It was decided to limit it to seven days so that it could be carried out without obstacles. If many days at a stretch are devoted to such strenuous tasks, there is danger of obstacles arising. Once at Vindhyachal Ashram *Samyam Vrata* was performed for nine days. So there is no definite rule that it should be restricted to seven days. When *Samyam Saptaha* was performed at Saptarishi Ashram near Hardwar, some people made a request to hold *Samyam Saptaha* twice a year. However once a year appears to be best, as too much of a good thing leads to deterioration of its value.

Mataji : It is also difficult to digest it. This body has come to sit here just like all these Babas. (She points to the Mahātmās all around.)

Question : What is the significance of *Namaskāra* or *Praṇāma* ? What is the underlying meaning ?

Mataji : The pandits will be able to furnish an explanation according to scriptural laws. But this body speaks in a higgledy-piggledy fashion ! Did you not mention yesterday that two days of the *Samyam* had elapsed—so would I now point out the mistakes that had been made ?

First it has to be determined how much time should be devoted to talks on knowledge, how much to devotional subjects and how much to discourses on action. You have come here to practise self-restraint, so why should you concern yourselves with questions as to why discussions

should not be held on subjects like knowledge or action? You are here to learn self-mastery, therefore whatever is provided you should thankfully accept. That is, take in whatever is suitable for you and leave what you cannot assimilate. But what is not helpful in your *sādhana* must not be rejected in antagonism. Just do not listen to what is not congenial to you. However, once a topic has been started, be it on Advaita Vedāntā or on the path of devotion, remain in your place and listen calmly. Furthermore, you should cultivate the feeling, "my own *Iṣṭa* (Divine Beloved) is the world's *Iṣṭa* and the world's *Iṣṭa* is my Beloved." Whatever topic is being expounded, whatever opinion is being expressed, you must understand that it concerns your own *Iṣṭa*, that your Beloved has appeared to you in this guise.

Question : So when other sects are being discussed, we have to engage in our *japa* ?

Mataji : Rather should you listen to it gladly, thinking, "my own *Iṣṭa* is being praised." *Samyam* means the action in which *Svayam* (He Himself) is present. Another meaning of *Samyam* is He Himself (*Svayam*) in the shape of self-control (*yama*).

My fathers and mothers are amused at the playfulness of their little daughter because she speaks out everything without hesitation, since she is conversing with her own fathers, mothers and friends. *Samyam* is a path leading to the death of death.

And now listen to the explanation of *Namakāra*.¹ "*Yatra jīva tatra Śiva, yatra nārī tatra*

1. By this quotation the fact that the divine aspects of *Śiva* and *Śakti* are present in every human being is expressed.

Gourī.” “Wherever a man is, there is Śiva, and wherever a woman, there is Gourī.” Nobody exists except Hari, none else but Lord Krishna. Call It Śiva, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Mā or Ātmā, it is all One in essence. To think of God as being far away is foolish.¹ You must get rid of this foolishness during *Samyam Vrata*. People read and listen but they have no direct experience (*bodha*). By listening again and again, the thought arises : “From where have I come ? What exactly is God ?” God is nothing finite, God is whole, integral in Himself. God is not far away from us. As soon as you think of Him as being at a distance, there will be distress and hardship. The mahātmās declare that it is God alone who exists everywhere.

Once there was a discussion with Gopinath Kaviraj on the correct manner of performing *Namaskāra*. When this body went through the play of *sādhana*, a definite ritual came about during *namaskāra* which I described to the savant, who confirmed that it tallied with what was written in the *Śāstras*. But let us leave alone what happened to this body. I am now referring to the topic raised by you. I shall tell briefly whatever occurs to me.

When you perform *praṇāma* to God or Guru, you should, while meditating on His form, let your glance wander slowly from His feet upwards to his head. While doing so, either mentally or physically, try to feel that in the act of beholding His feet, God’s *śakti* (power) is flowing into you and

1. A pun on the words *dūra* (far) and *durbuddhi* (foolishness).

transforming you. Slowly, slowly gaze from the feet to the heart and from there to the face so that all His limbs are embraced in your glance. At the same time control your breathing. While inhaling let your eyes wander from the feet to the head. Have *darśana* of His face and fix your eyes on it for as long as you can gaze steadily. Then let your eyes descend from the face to the feet and finally place your head at His feet. The meaning of all this is that just as a vessel is first washed with Ganges water before being filled with it, so by inhaling while doing *praṇāma* you have acquired the capacity to worship God. When you place your head at His feet, feel that His power is flowing from His feet into your head. Then when exhaling during *praṇāma* imagine that you have surrendered your all at His feet. After having done *namaskāra* to God in this manner perform your meditation or *japa* fully. Some people assert that by correctly doing *praṇāma* you become capable of carrying out worship, meditation or *japa*.

I have given the broad outlines of all this but there are many details. Now to another point : the question is sometimes asked, “why should *praṇāma* be performed with the head ? Where is the necessity to do obeisance with the head ?” Consider only an ordinary happening : If some day you don’t get enough sleep, do you not say : “My brain is not working. I am not feeling fit.” In the head lies the root of the whole body. Just as the roots of a tree are under-neath the earth, so are the roots of the body on top of the head. When

the roots of a tree are cut down, it withers away, so also if the head is cut off, the body cannot live. By placing one's head at the Lord's feet there is a transmission of power from His feet. Through this transference of power you will be fulfilled. You will gain whatever can be derived from God's power. Just as electricity flows through the fingers of a human being, so does power flow from the Lord's feet. But performing *namaskāra* your ego will come down. Deposit your ego at the feet of the Guru. Where do you go when you fall asleep? To your own Self, but unconsciously; this is why you are not aware of it.

For what purpose do you execute all your worldly tasks? In order to be happy. But worldly happiness is merely relative. Where happiness is relative, genuine happiness cannot exist. There one is imprisoned in duality which engenders conflict, grief and death. So long as you remain entangled in duality supreme happiness cannot be attained. Not to depend on anything at all gives real, lasting happiness and joy. So place your head where supreme bliss may be obtained. By practising *samyam* in your daily life vanquish death and set out on the pilgrimage towards immortality—that is, on the pilgrimage to the realization of your Self.

It is easy to explain the relationship between form and formlessness. It may be compared to ice and water. What else is ice but water? So meditate as the Guru has instructed you. Surrendering yourself at the Guru's feet become egoless!

Aspire to the unobscured revelation of God. If the recitation of God's name does not appeal to you, at least sit completely still and motionless and think of God's name with each breath. Everyone must practise whatever he or she likes best. Where Rāma is there is ease and well-being, where Rāma is not there is discomfort and disease.

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16th November 1958

Question : Ma, I do not know how to worship, nor do I know any mantras. So please hold my hand and guide me !

Mataji : How can it be ? The Māhatmās have been preaching to you daily. Have you not retained anything ?

Questioner : Ma, please, let us hear your own flute !

Mataji : This body is like a gong. As you sound it so you will hear.

Question : I have heard it said that when Mahātmās used to perform *tapasyā*, God Indra would send his *apsāras* (heavenly nymphs) to tempt them away from their austerity. Is there no Indra nowadays ? Don't these *apsāras* appear to destroy our *tapasyā* ?

Mataji : So you wish to see *apsāras* ? (Everybody laughs.) Everything is still possible, this is of course very true.

Question : When we try to meditate, do bodiless ethereal beings appear ?

Mataji : Both those with bodies and bodiless beings appear. Just now there is no *kheyāla* to speak on this subject. But something has to be said : Wherever God is talked about or His name

is sung, it is definitely a fact that God Himself is present. Those whose eyes have been opened can behold.

Question : This is all assumption. Please tell us about what can be perceived directly !

Mataji : Those who have no wish to see speak of assumption. This is of course true.

Question : Is it perceptible to the eye ?

Mataji : There is no *kheyāla* at the moment to pursue this subject. But it cannot be said that nothing at all has happened.

Questioner : So please tell us to-morrow !

Mataji : Then you will have to ask me again.

Make an effort to behold God. It is His nature not to remain invisible. But one must have eyes to see. All and everything are God's forms. Everything is proceeding according to plan, like a machine. Is he not actually visible in all this ? Is your desire to behold him genuine ?

Questioner : Certainly.

Mataji : What is the sign for real longing ? "Without God I cannot possibly live !" Have you arrived at such a state ? Certainly not.

Questioner : You make everything seem more complicated.

Mataji : You are His offspring, His server. God is in fact eternally visible. But he cannot be seen because there is a curtain between Him and us. Just as you teach your child until he grows up. You bring him up in such a way that he should not waste his inheritance on coming of age but preserve it carefully. Similarly you must also

teach him to keep away from sin and to think of God. What is God ? What is the significance of *samyam* ? God plays with his own *māyā*. What is God's dispensation ? See how, when you have not found Him, you are utterly restless for Him ! In God's empire He is also present in the shape of yearning for Him. If one is single-minded in one's life of self-mastery, God will certainly be realized. Therefore continue with your spiritual practices and do not concern yourselves with the results. God's causeless grace is always at work. Don't get entangled in sense objects. *Viṣaya* (sense object) means *viṣ*—poison ! If one takes poison one dies and the poison of sense objects is slow poison. Sense enjoyment leads to death. Why should you, the immortal Self, the offspring of the Immortal, proceed in the direction of certain death ?

Originally you were one, later you became two and from the two you have become five or ten. Taking all your burdens on your shoulders, continue steadily your *sādhana* for spiritual wealth and thus attain to your real inheritance. A *samnyāsi* is also called Mahārāj or Swamiji. Swamiji means *swayam ami*—the Self am I.

Question : If God can be realized by our own efforts, what then is the necessity of your presence ?

Mataji : From where does this question arise ? You have not reached that stage. You are engaged in worldly business. That is why you speak in this fashion. So long as there is finiteness your burdens will remain heavy. The sense of "mine and yours" causes the burdens. You must either see

everything as "I" or surrender everything to the "you."

Questioner : Please make us do it !

Mataji : All these are my fathers and mothers. Since He has appeared in the guise of desire, He will surely also manifest as fulfilment. The pilgrimage to the realization of God has commenced.

Question : It is you who are actuating this.

Mataji : It is you yourselves. To realize your own Self you are yourself striving. Enjoyment or fate—God is Himself fate, it is He who apportions destiny.

Question : How should we meditate ?

Mataji : Exactly according to your Guru's instructions.

Questioner : You are the Guru !

Mataji : I am only a little girl—for all times a little girl ! You have placed the little girl on a high pedestal.

Question : I want to learn which *sādhana* to adopt.

Mataji : How does the breath make its exit at the time of death ? It is the Guru who teaches *sādhana*. The breath leaves your body through the *sahasra* on top of the head. It can also emerge from the eyes or the nose.

Once upon a time two yogis got together. This is a tale about yogis. The two yogis started exhibiting their yogic skills to each other. The first one tried to cut off the other one's hands with his sword, which did not even touch. The other one

then struck the farmer with his sword but his body remained unchanged. Such a body is called "*Vajradeho*" (i.e. as strong as the sword of Indra). Yogis say that the last breath can leave the body by any exit. No two human beings are alike. Even two leaves or flowers are not exactly the same. Each one is born with his own particular tendencies. This is why this kind of body is called "*bhogadeho*" i.e. a body for experiencing joys and sorrows "*Deho*" (body) means "*deo, deo*" (give, give!) in other words, continuous wanting. So long as there is identification with the body the sense of want can never be stilled. When God will be revealed then the sense of want will be blotted out. God is one, but the paths leading to the realisation of Him are manifold. Just as all of you have come here from your homes along different routes, while here you are assembled in one place. Similarly human beings pursue various paths towards God, each to his or her own liking, but all of them have to reach God.

The question you asked, how to practise *sādhana*, has to be dealt with in private. As you play the instrument so you will hear the sound. This body never says : "I shall do it."

TEN APHORISMS OF MA AS UNDERSTOOD BY ME

Anil Ganguli

(Continued from the last issue)

Let me now place before the reader some other aphorisms of Ma for the guidance of the common man preoccupied with worldly duties and lacking the time and opportunity necessary for spiritual pursuits.

Sixth Aphorism

“*Ulat jāo*” (Take an about turn)

Ma’s teaching is : Turn yourself from things worldly towards a target which is beyond the world. We are suffering from a chronic malady of a serious type called *bhava roga*, a dangerous symptom of which comprises clinging to things of the world. Indeed, the world is too much with us. *Ulat jāo* is Ma’s radical prescription for complete cure of that fell disease. She lays emphasis on a drastic revolution in our views and attitude from worldliness to inwardness, from material prosperity to spiritual attainment, from man-centredness to God-centredness. In short, *Ulat jāo* is Ma’s positive directive for complete transformation of the spiritual aspirant from pleasure of the flesh to *Ānandam* of Being.

What is it that stands in the way of our tasting such *ānanda*? Ma’s answer is : “*Do mé dukh*” (In duality lies the root of sorrow). “To perceive

duality means pain, conflict, struggle and death.” She has also observed : “Where the *Brahman* is, the One-without-a-second, nothing else can possibly exist. You separate duality from non-duality, because you are identified with the body, which means you are in a condition of constant wanting”.

The question naturally arises : How to find the One ? Ma’s answer is : “It is by crying and pining for Him that the One is found. In times of adversity and distress as well as in times of well-being and good fortune, try to seek refuge in the One alone. Keep in mind : whatever He—the All-beneficent, the fountain of Goodness—does, is for the best”.

Seventh Aphorism

“*Hāte kāma mukhé nāma*”

(Work with your hands and repeat the name
of God with your mouth)

Ma does not necessarily ask the spiritual aspirant to turn away from his worldly commitments or to renounce the world. In fact, action cannot and need not, be avoided. This aphorism only recognizes the principle laid down in the *Gita* that we cannot live for a moment without work. “Verily, no one can remain, even for a moment, without doing work... everyone is made to work, by the impulses of nature, inspite of himself”¹ and “Even the bare maintenance of your physical life will not be possible if you remain inactive”.² In

1. *Gita* III/5

2. *Gita* III/8

its concluding chapter The *Gita* emphatically declares : “It is indeed impossible for an embodied being to abstain from work altogether.”¹

So work we must. But work usually leads to bondage. Hence the antidote prescribed by Ma—work with the hand should be invariably accompanied by repetition of God’s name with one’s mouth. God’s name says Ma, is God Himself. His *Nāma* acts both as a curative and preventive of the disease known as bondage, usually a concomitant of action, as stated above. Constant remembrance of God, through repetition of His Name, turns work into worship and ensures deliverance from attachment to things of the world.

Let me quote some of Ma’s sayings for elucidation of the aphorism “*Hāte kāma mukhē nāma*” :

“By whatever Name you may invoke Him, your effort will be crowned with success. The main thing is to cling to the Name with constancy.”²

“Whenever you possibly can, sustain the flow of a sacred Name. To repeat His Name is to be in His presence. If you associate with the Supreme Friend, He will reveal His true being to you.”³

“The Name and the Named are identical ; for He Himself appears as Name. If the Name that appeals most to a person is constantly repeated,

1. *Gita* XVIII/II

2. *Matri Vani*, Vol. II, page 184, No. 246

3. *Matri Vani*, Vol. II, page 188, No. 251

one arrives at the realization that all names are His Names, all forms His Forms. Furthermore, that He is without name and form will also by and by come to light.”¹

“Endeavour at all times, to remain merged, plunged in the Name. Solely for the sake of God must His Name be repeated.”²

Eighth Aphorism

“*Ek niswāsar viswās néi*”

(One can't be sure of the next breath)

This aphorism is supplementary to the preceding one. It pointedly reminds us that in the midst of life we are in death and, therefore, we must not allow a single moment to be wasted. Breath is the symbol of life which is so transitory ; indeed, one cannot be too sure that the present breath would not be the last one.

It has been laid down that practice of religion must be based on the conviction that death has caught the spiritual aspirant by the forelock. The consequence of departing from this world without preparing one's self for the next has been mentioned in the *Isopanishad* as follows :

“Whosoever slay the Self, departing hence, goes to demoniac worlds, enveloped in blinding darkness.”³

1. *Matri Vani*, Vol. II, page 192, No. 256

2. *Matri Vani*, Vol. II, page 196, No. 263

3. *Isopanishad* 3

Here is Ma's word of caution and sage counsel :
 "The day that is gone returns not. To be a human being means to be Self-aware. Do not squander invaluable time. Beware of becoming a 'Self-murderer' ; realize that you are none other than the immortal Self."¹

The seventh aphorism ("Work with your hands and repeat the name of God with your mouth") and the eighth aphorism ("One can't be sure of the next breath"), if steadfastly observed, give priceless reward. Thus, Lord Krishna has given this assurance to Arjuna :

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः
 तस्याहं सुलभ पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः

"He who constantly thinketh upon Me, not thinking ever of another, of him I am easily reached...."

Ninth Aphorism

"Tapasyā māne tāpa sahā"

"*Tapasyā*" is austerity. "*Tāpa*" meaning "heat", is a symbol of suffering. Let me try to explain the metaphorical meaning of "*tāpa*" as I have understood it—it seems to stand for the trials and tribulations inevitable in the storm-tossed sea of life. For every individual there are in store some spells of distressing rain, some dreary days of

1. *Matri Vani*, Vol. II, pages 61-62, No. 80

unbearable heat. “*Tapasyā*” consists in facing these eventualities with patience and fortitude and with one’s heart fixed on the goal.

Let me quote one of Ma’s sayings on “*tapasyā*” :
 “The kingdom of God is a whole, and unless you are admitted to the whole of it you cannot remain content. He grants you just a little, only to keep your discontent alive, for without discontent there can be no progress. You, as a scion of the Immortal, can never become reconciled to the realm of death, neither does God allow you to remain in it. He Himself kindles the sense of want in you by granting you a small thing, only to whet your appetite for a greater one. This is His method by which He urges you on. The traveller on this path finds it difficult and feels troubled, but one who has eyes to see can clearly perceive that the pilgrim is advancing. The distress that is experienced burns to ashes all pleasures derived from worldly things. This is what is called *tapasyā*. What obstructs one on the spiritual path bears within itself seeds of future suffering. Yet the heart ache, the anguish over the effects of these obstructions, are the beginning of an awakening to Consciousness.”¹

To a weak *sādhaka* suffering is usually a stumbling block ; to a strong one it may be a veritable stepping stone leading to a higher level. Most people are overwhelmed by suffering, some face

1. *Words of Sri Anandamayi Ma*, p. 15

it with fortitude, only a fortunate few can turn it into an asset.

The philosophy of suffering, as understood by me in the light of Ma's sayings and the Scriptures seems to be a panacea for all ills if we can live up to it. The starting point of such a philosophy is that our so-called suffering is the creation, not of God, but of man. For a *sādhaka* who can lift his mind above all things worldly, suffering ceases to have its pinch. One who cannot, has to remember that what he feels as suffering is due to his *prārabdha karma* (results of past actions which cannot be averted). What cannot be cured must be endured. This is a poor consolation for the *sādhaka* who has not seen the light. In most cases he helplessly suffers misery but with bitterness in his sub-conscious mind. Ma teaches that suffering, however unbearable, is nothing but God's gift. She goes a step further—suffering is not only a gift of God but God Himself in this particular guise, because there is nothing—there can be nothing—which is apart from God. This philosophy may be too high for ordinary men for whom Ma has a sweet message, put in an interrogatory form, which soothes all who are heavy-laden and grief-stricken. “Why do you,” She asks, “unnecessarily choose to bear the burden which He bears on your behalf?” This challenge from Ma puts the *sādhaka* to enquiry. If he is alert, he starts self-searching; if he is introspective, he realizes that the root of his suffering is his ignorance of the fact that God is always there to relieve

him of all his burdens. Then he discovers that all his life he has behaved like a foolish passenger in a moving train who carried his luggage on his head because he feared that the railway might carry him to his destination minus his luggage. The upshot is this : suffering proves to be a burden only if we lack faith in God.

Tenth Aphorism

Jā hoye jay (Let what happens happen)

Apart from the literal meaning of "*Jā hoye jay*" mentioned above, it appears from Anandamayi literature that the implication of this aphorism has been variously expressed in English as :

- (1) "Events take their own course"
- (2) "Come what may" and
- (3) "Whatever happens is equally welcome."

Each of these three versions brings out some aspect of the Bengali text which has a profound message, covering all those aspects and conveying something more.

First version : "Events take their own course" means that what is destined to happen cannot but take place, and the pronoun 'their course' implies that events occur according to some course or plan which cannot be stopped nor altered by us. It is God's will that always prevails ; not ours. To quote Ma : "God is not your order-supplier."

Jā hoye jay in the sense that events are controlled not by man but by God is supported by the *Gita* :

“The Lord,” observed Lord Krishna, “dwells in the hearts of all beings, causing all beings, by His *māyā* to revolve, (as if) mounted on a machine”¹ Radha Krishnan’s commentary on this saying in the *Gita* is quoted below. It sheds light on Ma’s aphorism under discussion.

“The power that determines events is not a blind, unfeeling, unthinking will to which we give the name ‘Fate’, ‘Destiny’ or ‘Chance.’” The Spirit that rules the cosmos, the Lord who presides over the evolution of the cosmic plan, is seated also in the heart of every being and will not let him rest. The Supreme is the inmost Self of our existence. All life is a movement of the rhythm of His life and our powers and acts are all derived from Him. If, in our ignorance, we forget this deepest truth, the truth does not alter. If we live consciously in His truth, we will resign all actions to God and escape our ego. If we do not, even then the truth will prevail. Sooner or later we shall yield to the purpose of God but in the meanwhile there is no compulsion. The Supreme desires our free co-operation when beauty and goodness are born without travail and effortlessly. When we become transparent media for the light of God He uses us for Work.”²

Thus, it is our ego that makes us blind to the fact that events take their course according to God’s plan at His pleasure. It misleads us to

1. *Gita*, XVIII/61.

2. *Bhagavad Gita*, edited by S. Radha Krishnan, P. 374.

believe that actions are done by us. Lord Krishna gave Arjuna a warning : "He whose soul is bewildered by the self-sense, thinks 'I am the doer'."¹

Second version : "come what may." With reference to events that happen, the first version of *Jā hoye jay* mentioned above seems to lay emphasis on their inevitability at the instance of God ; the second on the attitude prescribed for the *sādhaka*, that is to say, it enjoins the *sādhaka* to remain unperturbed by the course of events, whatever these happen to be.

Jā hoye jay, understood in the second sense, may be treated as a commentary in a nutshell, on *Sthita prajña* and *karma yoga*. Thus, it is the quintessence of the following principles elaborated by Lord Krishna in the second chapter of the *Gita*.

(a) He whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrow and is free from eager desire amid pleasures, he from whom passion, fear and anger have passed away, he is called a *sthita prajña* (of settled intelligence).

(b) He who is without attachment of any side, who does neither rejoice nor feel dejected at good or evil, is well poised in wisdom.

(c) Fruits of action should not be desired, nor should you be attached to inaction.

(d) Fixed in Yoga, do thy work, abandoning attachment with an even mind in success and failure.

A *sādhaka* relying on the first version of *Jā hoye jay* knows that there is no escape from undesirable

1. *Bhagavad Gita*, III/27.

events and helplessly puts up with them. His surrender to Divine Dispensation seems to be passive. It has every chance of being accompanied by bitterness. After all, he has a negative attitude which gives him light but not necessarily joy. Ma's aphorisms invariably combine light with delight. Judged by this standard, the third version of *Jā hoye jay* most effectively brings out the spirit of the Bengali aphorism welling out of Ma's mouth.

Third version : "Whatever happens is equally welcome." Why should we welcome everything that happens? Because whatever happens in life or in the world has the sanction of God's Will and secondly, God's Will is strictly in accordance with the demands of justice, and truly auspicious.

Let me quote Ma on this subject :

"Perfect resignation gives the deepest joy of all. Accept it as your sole resource. Whatever God does at any time is wholly benign. If you can bear this in mind you will be at peace."¹

"In everything and in everybody is but the One Himself. Try to be constantly aware of the fact that whatever is perceived at any time, in whatever way, are but the manifestations of the Supreme Being."²

Questioner : It is said that God is all-knowing, all-loving and all-powerful. Why then does He allow so much sorrow and grief to continue in the world that is His creation? If He were all-

1. *Matri Vani*, Vol. I, No. 21.

2. *Matri Vani*, Vol. I, No. 121.

knowing and all-loving, but not all-powerful, one could understand, or if He were all-loving and all-powerful but not all-knowing ; or even if He were all-knowing and all-powerful but not all-loving. How can He be endowed with all these three attributes and inspite of it let the misery of the world run its course ?

Ma : Everyone has to reap the fruit of his actions. The suffering is for your own best. A mother occasionally gives a slap to her beloved child for his own good, in order to keep him on the right path. God cleanses you by what you call suffering from the effects of your actions committed life after life. When a fond mother gives her baby a bath, the child may scream desperately, but the mother will not let the baby go until she has thoroughly washed and scrubbed him. Then she will carefully wipe the child, dry his tears and take him on her lap. Likewise, when you have been cleansed, God will comfort you and take you into His arms. Whatever happens in this world is His *Līlā*, His pleasure.

Questioner : Pleasure at our misery ? Where then is love ?

Ma : Who is it that loves and who that suffers ? He alone stages a play with Himself ; who exists save Him ? The individual suffers because he perceives duality. *Duniya* means *du-niya* (based on duality) and it is duality which causes all sorrow and grief. Find the one everywhere and in everything and there will be an end to pain and suffering.

