

# ANANDA VARTA

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

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Vol. XXXXII ●

JULY, 1995 ●

No. 3

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## CONTENTS

1. Sri Sri Ma's Utterances	...	1-2
2. Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee—Tara Kini	...	3-12
3. Sai Ram Sahay	...	13-20
4. Holy Reminiscences—Swami Joyananda Giri		21-25
5. Pundit bags Manoj Mody Foundation Award		26
6. Prayer always has an effect and Practical Advice—Brahmachari Atmananda		27-29
7. "Mother" as I know Her —Prof. (Dr.) Amal Chandra Roy	...	30-36
8. Mahanam Procession	...	37-38
9. Om Ma—Diana Rodriguez	...	39-40
10. How could we fully realise God	...	41-43
11. A lovely tree that I saw—Niti Chatterjee	...	43
12. Sree Sree Anandamayee Ma and the Great Tradition—Prof. Debiprasad Bhattacharya		44-56
13. Matri Lila	...	57-72
14. Ashram News	...	73-74
15. Obituary	...	75-76

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Merely to assume the robes of a Sadhu while the spirit of renunciation is lacking will not do. Taking Sannyasa and becoming a Sannyasi spontaneously, are certainly not one and the same thing.

**Shree Shree Ma Anandamayi**

Nama is the highest gift, Nama is the best of all actions, Nama is best of all Dharmas and Nama is the best result.

**Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath**

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## Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

Ma says, "He is the only Being existing in all. There is no second besides that One. In all circumstance, even in disease and the pain of bereavement, one should contemplate *Him* only, and do His japa, at all moments.

Visitor : "Ma, I see so many terrible dreams. What are all these ?"

Ma : "Karma gets attenuated even through dreams. Do you realize how many karmas of how many births of yours are thus getting exhausted ? Otherwise you would have had to take more births in order to exhaust those *bhogas*."



About disputes and quarrels, Ma once observed : "Stop quarrelling. Quarrel (*Vivada*) means that doctrine (*Vada*) by which one does not realize Him. Awaken *sattvika bhava*, the pure state of mind. God is present; verily, He is present."



A brahmachari once wrote to Ma that he had performed various *kriyas* during the *Navaratri*. Ma dictated the following in reply :

"The *kriyas* of *Navaratri* have been well done; He who is the objective of these *kriyas* has Himself made them done—it is a matter of joy."

In fact, for Him each and every day is *Navaratri*—newer and ever newer *kriyas*. For the revelation of the Infinite Unity—only *that*, only *that*, only *that* ! In this life one should try to be always engaged in His work, at all times. In order to become steeped in His *rasa*, so that the mind does not get diverted towards the pleasures of the

downward path, one has to keep the mind eagerly turned upward. Only the acts conducive to eagerness for Brahman (should be performed).

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**PROGRAMME OF CEREMONIES**  
**July 1995 to November 1995**

1. Guru Purnima — 12th July, Wednesday
2. Shree Shree 1008 Swami Muktananda Giri's (Didima) Tirodhan Tithi — 18th July, Tuesday
3. Bhaiji's Samadhi Utsav — 8th August, Tuesday
4. Jhulan Purnima — 10th August, Wednesday
5. Janmastami — 17th August, Wednesday
6. Radha Astami — 2nd September, Saturday
7. Shree Shree Durgapuja — 30th September to 3rd October
8. Shree Shree Laxmi Puja — 8th October, Sunday
9. Shree Shree Kali Puja — 23rd October, Monday
10. Annakut — 24th October, Tuesday
11. Sanjam Saptaha — 31st October to 6th November, Tuesday to Monday

# Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Volume VI

(Translated by Tara Kini)

(Continued from previous issue)

## March 26, Saturday

Today Ma looks better. Turiyananda Swami from Puri and Ramratan Babu from Calcutta have arrived. In the morning a gentleman asked Ma, "Ma, why is it that this place was named Brahmakunda when a drop of nectar fell here? It should have been named Amritakunda." Ma replied, "*Amrita* (nectar) cannot live without *Brahman* (the Supreme Soul). Everyone has to dip into the Brahmakunda in order to obtain the flow of nectar." So saying she laughed.

The process of taking Ma's hand and foot prints has been on for the past two or three days. Yesterday when the print was being taken both her palms had been painted thoroughly and Ma had made the impressions. On observing Ma then it appeared as if she was deeply engrossed in the job. Many impressions were taken on paper. When making the prints Ma had said, "Let me see how many more prints you will take?" And as she said that she made print after print.

We know that sometimes when we start on a certain job Ma cooperates in such a fashion that it appears that she is involved in the work day in and day out. She does not appear to have any other thought. After some time, however, when the job is halted, a hundred pleas may not result in our being able to make her do the job even once. And it is also necessary to explain that at present this *kheyal* to give impressions is going on. Casual observers may surmise that Ma is eager to make the prints. But a closer look would reveal the inner condition prevailing within her. As Ma made the prints she said, "See, may be some people feel embarrassed to make prints. They may

even fell shy. But what is this body doing at present ? You can see it, can't you ? It is as if I have discovered a game. Why should there be any embarrassment or shyness ? You want an impression made by this body ? Take it. You people watch and so will I." Saying this Ma made many impressions with both hands. Whenever Ma does anything her whole body expresses its involvement in the work. Today I observe the same phenomenon. This is yet another aspect of Ma's wonderful being.

This sport continued for some time. Ma then said, "But everything has its own allotted time. After the allotted time is finished that job will not be accomplished again." Ma explained further, "Just as I sit and speak or listen to *kirtan* so also is this yet another form of *kirtan* that goes on. You people must spend your time in doing good work."

The same topics came up when Ma came down after lunch. She said, "Alright, about these imprints that are being made—do not think that Ma is very keen to make imprints to further her fame." So saying she laughed very softly. I said, "Ma, an opinion has to be expressed only after viewing all characteristics. It is not right to draw conclusions after viewing just one fraction of the subject's characteristics."

Ma was quiet for awhile. Then she said, "See, there are many kinds of *bhava*. It is difficult to recognize them all. Do you know what happens at first ? The *sadhaka* (one who is attempting spiritual practices) is full of humility—he feels, 'I am so insignificant, why do people give me so much respect?' And in this *bhava* he is embarrassed by the respect shown to him by people. If anybody does anything in his honour he naturally feels shy; some such people do not even mix in society as a consequence. The feeling that prevails is, 'What will people think ?' Then again there are some who go to any extent in order to acquire fame. These are all levels of a

*sadhaka*. The characteristics manifested may be beautiful, but the feeling of humility is necessary otherwise the bondages will not be severed.”

“Then again, do you know what yet another stage of a *sadhaka* is like ? It is like that of children who paint their own bodies and then make impressions on the wall. They are not bothered whether anyone sees them or not. They just laugh and play, immersed in their own *bhava* as they paint. If someone catches them doing mischief, they feel no embarrassment or a sense of guilt; their *bhava* is unaltered. There is no covering anywhere within—it is all open. Such a *bhava* is a little difficult to understand. Like you people see someone in trance during *kirtan* and think it is *samadhi*.” She smiled, looked towards us and then continued, “It is difficult to understand *bhava*. It is not possible for an ordinary person to all who is at what level, therefore he commits mistakes.”

By the time this conversation was concluded it was twelve o'clock; Ma immediately assumed silence and lay down. The devotees departed and the doors were shut. Actually if Ma had not herself assumed *mauna* between twelve and four in the evening and also after ten at night, it is difficult to say how long this practice of shutting doors would have continued. Ma said, “You people have accepted this rule laid down by the Doctor and this body also does sometimes listen to what everyone says. But then again at times it refuses to obey. As long as it has to be observed it should be done methodically.”

This evening Ma went up to the terrace and at dusk she went into the room upstairs. A young man arrived and questioned her about incarnations and Brahman. Ma replied, “Look, it is all a matter of experience. It cannot be explained in words and even if it is explained you will not be able to accept it implicitly. Therefore try to experience these matters within yourself.” After discussing one or two other topics the young man left.



Ma told Ramratan Babu, "Do you know how this conversation proceeded ? I have not even passed the matriculation examination and I went to understand a complicated subject at the M. A. level. How would he understand ? So it is better to meditate. All this exists and can be understood, but without first hand experience all doubts are not cleared."

Then Ma spoke about the real essence of Krishna — "Krishna *tattva* (real essence) lies beyond the senses and man wants to understand it with his senses. It is not an object that can be grasped with the senses, so how can be understand ? So people interpret it according to their capability." Saying this Ma laughed lightly and then fell silent. After eating at nine p.m. Ma strolled about a little and then sat on her bedding. All the people sat around her till ten p.m. When Ma lay down they did *pranama* and left.

### March 27 Sunday

Last night again Ma's body was unable to calm down for a long time and she could not sleep at all. But Ma says, "When ordinary people sleep their bodies become still and when this body assumes that kind of stillness you observe it as being at rest. But this body's condition is unchanged whether it lies down, sits, or walks about." This morning Ma got up at eight a.m. After making her drink some milk I began taking imprints of her hands and feet. Ma appeared to treat this as a new-found game. She made impression after impression on quires and quires of paper sheets saying, "Bring more paper, bring more ink."

People who had come for *darshan* became extremely eager to meet Ma and so the doors were opened. As the people entered Ma's *bhava* was disturbed and so even after the doors were shut once more and the job of taking impressions was resumed, the imprints did not turn out properly. Ma said, "Now the mood is gone. Having been obstructed it seems to have changed." After Ma's meal

some more imprints were taken. Then Ma lay down and the doors were closed as usual.

At four p.m. Ma rose. A person from Dhaka who sings *kirtan* very well had come to sing for Ma. Many people had come. Ma sat on the terrace. Then the *kirtan* was started and it went on for nearly two hours.

At eight p.m. Ma sat down to eat. In the course of conversation with Ramratan Babu and others the topic of taking imprints came up. Ma said, "Look, all this that is being said — 'Bring more paper, bring more ink' and this imprinting on sheet after sheet—it is not as if I am doing this of my own will. This just happens. When Khukuni took those prints on the first two days, such a *kheyal* did not arise. From the third day when she started to take the impressions this *kheyal* arose. In spite of bringing more paper and ink repeatedly she was not able to meet the demand. Such a situation arose earlier in connection with food. On being coaxed to eat and when the feeding started, the *kheyal* that, 'I would eat more', 'bring more food', would arise. As people kept feeding me I would eat it all up."

Ramratan Babu asked, "Cannot such a grace be aroused?" Ma assumed a grave posture and replied, "I cannot say that it cannot be aroused. It has happened sometimes—these people have seen it. If the *kheyal* is there it can happen." Saying this she pointed towards us. Ramratan Babu said, "Alright Ma, then let the *bhava* of grace be aroused." Ma said, "What happens is what you people get done. Khukuni got paper and ink and took the footprints and handprints of this body. At that time there was no *kheyal*. Only on the third day when the job was resumed did the *kheyal* to make the prints arise. If you people can induce such a *kheyal* by dint of your actions then a similar thing can happen. I do nothing by my own will. Whatever you people get done, happens. Everything is alike to this body. Whatever happens at any time is

alright." Observing Ma's *bhava* and the manner in which she spoke, all those present gazed at her face.

Ma continued, "Listen further. Do you know what happend earlier ? When some unusual *bhava* occurred, then the face also assumed an unusual expression. Everybody discerned it. But now it all happens most naturally and no one can make out anything by looking at my face."

Yesterday at four p.m. we took in to the banks of the Ganga. Suddenly she said smilingly, "Look, do not trust me. I may just start walking in the river. I can see the other shore and I am standing on this shore. The fact that the river lies in between never enters my *kheyal*. Such a *bhava* has occurred earlier but then an unusual *bhava* also occurred within this body. And watching the expression on my face people were forewarned. But now that does not happen. I speak and laugh in an ordinary manner and an extraordinary rhythm begins simultaneously."

After this conversation Ma came downstairs. People sat around her till ten p.m. Then they did *pranama* and left for the night. The doors to Ma's room were closed and the light was extinguished.

### **March 28 Monday**

This morning the person from Dhaka sang *kirtan* till about nine a.m. Then Ma's face and hands were washed and she was made to drink some milk. People sat surrounding her once again. Women living here perform Ma's *arati* almost everyday, with incense and camphor. Today again they did so. At eleven a.m. Ma was offered *bhoga*. Ma then conversed for some time and at twelve the doors were shut.

One incident that occurred when Ma's hand prints were being taken is as follows. On the third and final day when I went to take Ma's hand and foot prints, the whole exercise had become a kind of game for her. I conjectured that she would probably let no more prints be made after

this and that it would, therefore, be best to make as many as possible straight away. Ma started making print after print on quires and quires of paper as if she could think of doing nothing else. she did not even bother to notice which imprint had come out well and which had not. She just made prints one after the other just like a child who had discovered a new game of colours. She went on in this manner most eagerly. Ma had explained ever so often earlier, "You people come to this body with some emotion and just like a mirror reflection, the same emotion blossoms within this body." I seem to be responsible for having concretized the *kheyal* to make prints for I had been taking the prints for the last two days. The third day when Ma's *kheyal* was roused she made prints continuously as if it was a great job. The *bhava* was manifested in her whole body. Hand and foot prints were made with black and red colours and Ma was delighted to see these colours. I was interested in getting the imprints of the lines on Ma's palm. The lines were not clearly visible on all the prints, but Ma just did not notice. She seemed greatly delighted to see each print. As she continued to make the imprints a strange *bhava* manifested within Ma's body. Looking at the black and red prints of her feet she suddenly commented, pointing towards her own body, —"Oh god ! You have made an excellent decoration—you have made half this body Krishna and the other half, Radha." With this comment there was a sudden change in her demeanourshe fell silent.

When the imprints were done Ma came downstairs. Seemingly a bit flustered she said to me, "What did I blurt out ? That day I made Gola and Godavari perform ten thousand repetitions of japa to atone for their mistake. Today I too should do *japa* because I mentioned Krishna and Radha in connection with the imprints. That was wrong on my part and it is necessary for me to atone for this by doing japa. But I will not be able to do so much

japa-perhaps it will cease as I start doing it—or then again it may go on throughout the day. As the body has been unwell you people want to feed it and rest it at specified times, but it may not be so, for the *japa* may continue ceaselessly and the *bhava* to lie down may not exist at all. What can I do in such a situation ?”

I replied, “Ma, a representative can do the job.” Ma said, “Will you do it ? Then you do ten thousand *japa* for my sake.” I said I would do just that.

I saw this as one more of Ma’s sports. She played it for the benefit of the people. For otherwise, why was there anything wrong in what she said when she was in that mood ? But for the benefit of others she arranged for the atonement.

In the afternoon Gopinath Babu and some others arrived. A girl called Shobha from the Raha family of Kumilla, is a disciple of Santadas Baba. We heard that she is in an exalted state. Today one of her brothers came for Ma’s *darshan*. His name is Shishir Kumar Raha. He narrated several stories about Shobha. He is also a disciple of Santadas Baba and has lived with him for a long time. The *brahmachari* is very simple and straightforward. He wished to speak alone with Ma and that was arranged.

In the night Ma told me a number of things about *samadhi*. From what I understood of Ma’s words, the gist is this. *Samadhi* is of many kinds. Yet again *samadhi* is unique. In between there is only mention of some direction. A gross state may be reached by concentration on an idol. But that is not *jada samadhi*—it is forgetting oneself. Then rising from that *bhava* the *bhava* of that idol is acquired. This is just the state of that *bhava*—it cannot be called *samadhi*. A kind of *samadhi* state can be achieved. The *brahma bhava* could blossom in the *bhava* for the idol and that could be called a kind of *bhava samadhi*. This is the form manifested prior to *savikalpa*

*samadhi*. Again, when embedded in the *brahma bhava*, there may be a *bhava samadhi*—like manifestation.

Ma said, “When the sadhaka reaches a state of truth then what you people call *savikalpa samadhi*—that is what it is.”

“This body never had a chance to hear the different names of *samadhi* for it is not literate. Hearing whatever you all say, I repeat a little here and there. Ofcourse if the *kheyal* were to occur, everything would appear for sure. The fact is that if you people sit nearby and think about *samadhi* then this body resolves the subject to some extent. You know already that whichever *bhava* you bring forward, this body reveals something in the same *bhava*. And then again, sometimes, nothing at all is said. May be then there is no use for it at that time.”

Saying so much, Ma again revealed, “You people mention so many names like *nirvikalpa*, *chaitanya*, *samadhi*, *mahabhava* and *mahashunya*. Their radiance is wonderful.”

Once a gentleman questioned Ma, “How is it that *leela* (divine sport) can occur after *Brahma bhava* (realization of oneness with the Brahman) ?” Ma replied, “Did you not understand that ? Unless that *Brahma svarupa* (nature of Brahman) or that *Atma svarupa* (nature of Atman) is not experienced, how can one enter the realm of *leela* which lies beyond the senses ? It can happen only if the former has been attained. Just as water turns into ice and ice turns into water, so that ice lies in water and water lies in ice—so does is *leela*, His sport, manifest in an expressly unique fashion. Where do *Nityadham*, *Nityaleela* manifest ? Tell me. You have perhaps understood it to be the unbroken, unmanifest Brahman. That is something that lies in that direction. That which is within a form (*Sakara*) also resides in the formless (*Nirakara*). He has to be attained in all forms (*Sarvakara*). Is he not unbroken (*Akhanda*)? Just as innumerable (*ananta*) seeds and

innumerable trees reside within one seed. Then again, within that countless (*ananta*) entity, there is an end, only One. He has to be reached from every direction, in different aspects. Then one has to go beyond the many—all forms, all directions. He has to be attained in all parts—outside, inside. Whatever you perceive, that is whatever you see, is from within your spectacles. Therefore it is not quite correct. Do not keep your goals limited. Keep your sight on that supreme state. You have to attain that which is replete with all forms (*sarvangina*) manifest, unmanifest, unbroken and complete.”

“Do you know how that is? In between there are many states, many details, their description is endless. It is just like climbing from one step to the next in a stair—for a moment you are in space and yet there is a joint between the step you just left and the one you are about to mount. One matter is to climb on to a stair, the other is to remain there. In between these two, again there are innumerable states. Look, at first, the identification with the idol arouses the grosser *bhava* but it later leads to the higher *bhava* yet it may appear to be the gross *bhava* with its associated restlessness.”

“This is very difficult to understand. So many points are left out. However much I may say, there is always still more to be said. Nor can it be understood properly. Just as it is impossible to describe the beauty of a flower in words—it remains unexpressed—this too is just like that, what else? And, do you know? I do not understand the language of your scriptural texts and therefore it cannot be explained in that language though in truth it cannot be explained in any language. Only a mere sign can be made. Therefore I say that much has been written in the scriptures. Without understanding all that do not mistake the forcefulness of *bhava* to be *samadhi*.”

In this manner Ma spoke at length about *bhava*. I listened and mused that all this is *ananta* (endless).

# Sai Ram Sahay

## Part - I

### **Philosophy - Spirituality**

Philosophy means the pursuit of wisdom of knowledge. Philosophy in action is religion i.e. the practical side of religion is philosophy.

### **Hindu Religion**

Hinduism is one of the oldest religions of the world. Many thinkers have tried to define Hinduism but, it is true that it is extremely difficult to make clear what Hinduism is ? Is it a way of life or is it a school of study? What can be defined as Hinduism in the modern sense all these have made the problem more complex. If it is a religion what is religion ?

Hinduism is not a bundle of superstitions as many of us are asked to believe or are forced to believe by the practices of some people who claim to be Hindus. There is hardly any scope for superstition in the text accepted as authoritative by the Hindus. The traditional school of the Hindus accepts the Vedic authority and Upanishadic values for leading their life. The various schools of Hindu philosophy show that Hinduism was not accepted without any serious analysis. Its secular concepts are well known.

### **Philosophies and Religions : (Philosophy or Siddhantha) :**

From the very beginning of creation learned men have been trying to investigate the truth behind the creation, namely, the creator of the world, the relationship between men, world and God, the aim of life and so on.

Several great sages and men of extraordinary calibre in ancient India observed severe penance and sat in meditation for years in silence, and with the Grace of God



realised some truths each one in his own way and gave out what they realised. Their experience and realisation go by the name of philosophies or darsanas or siddhantha. Six of such darsanas were considered important. They were :

1. Charvaka
2. Sankhya
3. Yoga
4. Nyaya or Viseshika
5. Purva Meemamsa
6. Vedantha

In addition, there were others like Jaina, Bouddha, Pasupatha etc.

It is not intended here to go into the details of all these philosophies except the last two of the six, namely purva-meemamsa and vendantha which have a bearing on our subject.

Purva-meemamsa is the karma kanda of the vedas dealing with rituals. Vedantha or the upanishads deal with the God-knowledge and salvation.

A religion may be defined as a combination of a philosophy and sanathana dharma codes of conduct adopted by any sect of people. Each religion has (1) a philosophy of its own : (2) a general code of conduct and (3) a religions code of life, special for each religion. The general code of conduct is more or less same for all religions. The religious special code for each religion is so framed as to adopt the life of the people of each religion to blens harmoniously with their philosophic belief.

Every religion aims at people of various casts and creeds living together in perfect harmony, develop a high sense of moral character and devotion to God, and obtain spiritual development. If any one hates other religions and their God it indicates that he has not understood his own religion properly.

We have in India Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians,

Buddhists, Zoroastrians etc. Each religion calls its God by its own name and give it some form. It has its own philosophy and mode of worship, prayers, religions customs etc. But the code of Sanathana Dharma is such that they have all been able to live as one society.

Our Hindu religion consists of different sects of people with different philosophies and a common sanathana dharma. With regard to philosophies in India we have Adwaitha, Dwaitha, Visishtadwaitha, Saiva, Jaina, Bouddha, etc. In spite of so many different philosophies and different modes of living food habits etc., the Hindu religion has been one of the most tolerant of all the religions of the world. Even during the life time of the religious leaders like Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhwa there have been tough arguments between them and leaders of other faiths. But there has been no personal hatred. There have been instances of the leaders who were defeated in the arguments and got convinced having accepted defeats gracefully and some of them having become the disciples of the victors. (Basis Suplagiri).

I am a simple and humble devotee of Shiradi Sai Baba. A question may arise to what school of philosophy Sai Baba belongs? Ordinary men as well highly advanced souls like Baba have no school of philosophy and can be said that he belongs to no school or to all schools.

What is Babas teaching? It is the same teaching in his Gitas, The Arjun Gita and Uddhava Gita. What are his margas? The same margas as are advocated in the above two. That is practically all the margas. All roads lead to Rome. All margas lead to God is the object of all teaching. Sai devotion means tolerance, towards all faith in God and in Sai as Guru and acceptance of the basic principles found in all religions.

Writing a forward to the book life of Sai Baba by H.H. Narasimhaswamiji Volume I His Holiness Sri Swamy Sivananda says. He (Sai Baba) lived his saintly life of

tyaga and seva. He has created a powerful centre of spiritual awakening and Divine Life in the holy precincts of Dwaraka Mayee and the Samadhi Mandir in Shirdi. He taught people to overcome meaningless barriers of separation between man and man and made them realise the brotherhood of all humanity.”

Spirituality means state of being spiritual concerning with spirit or soul.

Spiritual life is conscious life. In fact, spiritual life is nothing but a struggle for higher consciousness, and this is what distinguishes it from ethical life and ordinary conventional religious life. The central process in spiritual life is the transformation of human consciousness. All spiritual disciplines, all yogas, are special techniques which transform the unconscious into the conscious and the conscious into the superconscious. This was what yajna did for the Vedic man. Yajna was the yoga of the Vedic Age. In the hands of unworthy people any spiritual endeavour may undergo degeneration. As yoga was misused for the acquisition of occult powers, as the Tantras were misused for the enjoyment of sense pleasure, so too yajna was in later years degraded by ignorant people into a ritual for the attainment of heaven. But during the early Vedic period it served primarily as a spiritual discipline, a yoga, a technique for the transformation of consciousness.

In order to know how yajna brings about the transformation of consciousness we have to understand three principles on which it is based: ritualism, symbolism and the connection between thought and action.

Vedic yajna was centred on the external fire ritual performed every day in every home. It was a simple rite of offering milk or ghee or cakes into an altar containing one or three or five fires. The whole life was regarded as a yajna, and the ritual was only meant to serve as an aid in the concentration of mental energies and in under-

standing the nature of the universe. The fire altar acted as a physical frame of reference for the working out of certain mental concepts. It was a kind of mandala or yantra. In his auto-biographical work the great psychoanalyst Dr. Jung mentions how he came to an understanding of mandalas. In his own personal life he used to visualize his mind as a circle and, whenever a conflict or tension arose, he would diagram it as a projection or distortion of the circle. In due course he found that this diagrammatization of his mental life had assumed a complex symmetric pattern, which, as he later on discovered to his astonishment, had a striking resemblance to the Chinese and Tibetan mandalas. A mandala is thus an externalization of a person's intuitive understanding either about his own psyche or about the nature of the universe. A yantra is a specific type of mandala associated with a deity a pattern of the deity's power-structure.

The Vedic altar, was a three-dimensional mandala or yantra. It was the external projection of a mental construct or paradigm of Reality, which the *rsi* had developed through deep contemplation. the inner mental construct was called vidya and the external physical construct was called yajna (In later upanisadic literature yajna came to be designated avidya). The external ritual was only an acting out and reinforcement of the inner meditation. By externalizing our inner thoughts we can study and control our mental life and our relationship with the world around us more easily. The fire alter served the same purpose to the Vedic *rsi*—it enabled him to anchor his life in the real world, to concentrate his mind and energies, and to orientate himself to life and reality. Above all, it served to remind him of the unity and dynamism of life and that all life is one, that the entire universe is alive as one organism throbbing with divinity, that life is a constantly self-renewing steady-state system which every living being has to maintain through constant giving

up and self-sacrifice.

In fact, the Vedic altar was the concretization of Vedic meditation. The real power lay in meditation, not in the external ritual—in the mind of the *rsi*, not in the altar.

‘I want peace of mind’, we frequently hear people say. What do they mean by peace of mind? Life is full of uncertainties, conflicts and day-to-day problems, and by ‘peace’ most people mean a life without these difficulties. But polarity (that is, the occurrence of all experiences in pairs: joy and sorrow, good and evil, love and hate, etc), impermanence, and ignorance are inseparable attributes of life and, as long as these persist, troubles and afflictions are unavoidable. True peace is not a form of enjoyment, nor is it like sleep. Rather, it is a state of transcendence, remaining unaffected by the polarity, impermanence and ignorance of the world and the pleasures and sorrows that spring from them. Real transcendence is not seclusion or escape, but is the attainment of a higher state of consciousness which harmonizes all polarities and integrates individual life with universal life. Real peace is thus a state of transcendental harmony.

Peace is not something we get by shouting I want peace or by worrying about peace. It is one of the paradoxes of life that peace eludes the person who hunts for it. Peace is a result, an effect, that follows sincere effort and fulfilment. When we hear the call of the ideal or duty, we cannot get peace until we have responded to it in the best way possible for us. This is all the more true of spiritual life. Supreme everlasting peace is the result of higher spiritual experience which can be attained only through intense effort and struggle, and until it is attained, one of the first things that a spiritual aspirant should do is to sacrifice that illusory peace of mind that mundane life offers. (Basis Prabuddha Bharata 1983)

### **Sai Baba's spirituality**

Sri Sai Baba who identified himself with God had the same observation to make. He was treated as the Ishta Devata by many devotees as Rama, Datta, Vittobha, Khandoba, Ganapati and Maruti, and was approached as a great saint by Hindu philosophers and saints, and as an avalia by Muslims, and as a weird person by the ignorant outsiders. To each he gave the response suitable to him or her.

Baba's teachings are so common that when set out they may look like copy book maxims, and some may wonder why these should be set out at all, as everyone knows these moral teachings. What Baba taught was not something new and strange. It is the old, old truths of morality and spirituality that have to be rubbed into each soul and lived up to, and, therefore, Baba would place these truths before the devotees when the appropriate occasion offered itself. Anyhow, in order, that a curious reader, wanting to know what sort of teachings Baba's were, might get some satisfaction, we shall give below a few of his teachings and hope that the reader will not stop with more curiosity but really proceed to read, digest absorb, and live upto them and make them part of himself. For instance, about contentment and surrender, Baba used to say, 'God is great. He is the Supreme Master'. (The Arabic equivalent of it is "Allah Malik", which phrase was constantly on Baba's lips). Baba also said occasionally. When people thought that he was great, "How great is God? No one can compare with him. God creates, supports and destroys. His lila (sport) is inscrutable. Let us be content to remain as he makes us, to submit our wills to his'. This is the most important doctrine, the doctrine of submission and surrender. Baba said, 'Allah Rakega Vahisa Rahena'. This means 'As God places us, let us remain'. Baba also said, 'Take what comes. Be contented and cheerful. Never worry. Not a leaf

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moves but by His consent and will. We should be honest, upright and virtuous. We must distinguish right from wrong. We must each attend to his own duty. But we must not be obsessed by egotism and fancy that we are the independent causes of action. God is that Actor. We must recognise his independence and our dependence on Him, and see all acts as His. If we do so, we shall be unattached and free from karmic bondage.

This is the most essential point in all religions. Baba's whole life was governed by it. He appeared to be ever active. But throughout he knew that God was acting, and he was merely an instrument in the hands of God. He said at times, 'God has agents everywhere, and they have vast powers; and I also have vast powers'. But abhimana, the idea that I am doing, has to be completely suppressed in order that one may really have spiritual elevation, peace and happiness. (Basis Sai Baba's life by H. H. Narasimswami)

Sai Baba said,

"I always think of him who remembers me. I have to suffer for my devotees. Their difficulties are mine. Worship me always who is seated in your heart".

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# Holy Reminiscences

Swami Joyananda Giri

*(Continued from the last issue)*

## **4. Mother's Birthday Celebrations, 1958.**

Soon after the Darshan of Grace, Ma's birthday celebrations began at the newly acquired Ashram at Agarpara. Now, I was in Calcutta on official duty to relieve Sri S. K. Sen, the officer-in-charge of the Calcutta Branch Office of the Indian Standards Institution (ISI), who had suddenly fallen ill. Since the Branch Office was near Esplanade, not very far from Ballygunge where Ma had been staying prior to the celebrations, I was able to go there for Ma's darshan and satsang in the evening after office hours. But Agarpara was a long way off, and if Ma had not wrought another miracle, it would have been impossible for me to participate fully in the birthday function.

### **Participation With Ma's Grace**

Since it was Ma's kheyal\* which had brought me to Calcutta, I could not be deprived of such participation. But for that I had to live at Agarpara, which, in turn, could be possible only if Sri Sen were to relieve me of official work immediately and that was exactly what happened. He became fit enough to resume duty just in time for me to hand over charge and shift to Agarpara Ashram on Friday, May 2nd, 1958 the very day on which the celebrations began, But that was not all.

Since ISI works for 5 days in a week, the following two days, being Saturday and Sunday were available to me without leave. Further, the leave rules of Central Government by which ISI is governed, permit that officers on

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\*see Ananda Varta : Holy Reminiscences, Vol. 22, No.2.



