

Ananda

Newsletter of the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha
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Video file:

[Concert in homage to Sri Ma Anandamayi.](https://youtu.be/UdqhPOIyCeQ)

<https://youtu.be/UdqhPOIyCeQ> – Shivkumar Sharma, Yogesh Samsi and Bhavani Shankarin concert at Mumbai 15th January 2020.

Text file: [Excerpt from Smaranika \(souvenir at the time of inauguration of Sri Ma's samadhi temple in 1987.\)](http://www.anandamayi.org/new/DrNalinisoufinal.pdf)
<http://www.anandamayi.org/new/DrNalinisoufinal.pdf> (souvenir at the time of inauguration of Sri Ma's samadhi temple in 1987.) Article about Ma by Dr Nalini

Sound file:

[Sri Ma Anandamayi.](http://www.anandamayi.org/mmedia/mp3/Mamavrindaban.mp3)

<http://www.anandamayi.org/mmedia/mp3/Mamavrindaban.mp3> Sri Ma sings Ma, Ma, Jai Ma at Vrindaban.

Sangha website <http://www.shreeshreeanandamayeesangha.org>

deeper instincts in the *sukshma sharir*. Also, there are five *karmendriyas* that represent the physical organs of action and the corresponding subtle organs. They are related to the active solar energy of the *manas tattva*. Five organs include speech, hands, feet, excretion, and reproduction. *Sthul* organs are visible while those of subtle organs exist as imprints in the nervous system.

There are five *tanmatras* (तन्मात्रा). These are the subtle elements which are the objects of the five senses: sound, touch, sight or form, taste and smell. The five *tanmatras* are the way in which people sense the objective, tangible world the subtle elements which are the objects of the five senses- sound, touch, sight or form, taste and smell. The five *tanmatras* are the way in which people sense the objective, tangible world. Five *Panchamahabhuta* are - *prithvi* (earth), *jala* (water), *agni* (fire), *vayu* (air) and *akasha* (ether). And last but not the least there are four inner instruments - *manas* (lower mind), *buddhi* (the intellect), *chitta* (the subconscious mind) and *ahamkara* (the empirical ego). All these subtle elements mingle with *prana* and form *jivatma*. Thus, *sukshma sharir* consists of the 19 elements, namely, five *Jnanendriyas*, five *karmendriyas*, five *Tanmatras*, and four *Antahkarans*, namely, *Man*, *Buddhi*, *Chitt*, and *Ahamkara*. According to many, *mana* and *buddhi* are the parts of *sukshma* or subtle body. Sometimes *ahamkar* and *chitt* are not included as part of *sukshma sharir*, which makes the total of 17 elements for *sukshma sharir*. There exists no difference between the subtle bodies of male and female. This subtle body never perishes though its end comes only when it acquires the Supreme Knowledge

Main part of the subtle body is known as *buddhi* (*buddhi* refers to intellect, wisdom and the power of the mind to understand, analyse, discriminate and decide) which is the first wave in the mind and the root of our existence. It is called *samashthi buddhi*. World is one, but everything in it can be looked at from two levels -the individual and the cosmic. The individual level is called '*Vyashti*' (व्यष्टि) and the cosmic is referred to by the word '*Samashthi*' (समष्टि). Both of these pertain to the micro and the macrocosm respectively. All the micro level *buddhi* or intellect are the parts of *samashthi*. Since *buddhi* or intellect originates from natural force or primal creative hence it is *trigunatmak* (त्रिगुणात्मक)- three intrinsic or inherent properties, qualities, or attributes of *maya*; namely, *sattvaguna*, *rajaguna* and *tamaguna*. Human being becomes rational if inherits *Sattvaguna* that denotes having the natural quality of purity and goodness.

Ahamkara comes next. *Ahamkara* refers to the human ego. It enables human being to search its original root. It is sometimes called "the instrument of the spirit"

and can lead to undesirable feelings such as pride, jealousy and hate. Then there are *sankalpa* (intension) and *vikalpa* (imagination or fancy) of *mana*. Each work gets done through *sankalpa*. Even the act of moving one's arm is preceded by the *sankalpa* in the mind. And last stage is *chitta* which is involved always in the retention act.

The subtle body is formless and hence invisible. Yet, it has its existence. Existence of gross body or *sthul sharir* entirely depends on the subtle or *sukshma* body. Gross body cannot act without the wave of the mind of the subtle body. Subtle body, therefore, is the light of truth. Head of the subtle body is *buddhi* and *mana* is its heart. *Tanmatras* means *shabdā* (sound), *roopa* (vision), *sparsha* (touch), *gandha* (smell) and *rasa* (taste) are its powers of visual, hearing, smelling etc. The *bhoga* of *sukshma sharir* is the macro part of the *panchamahabhuta*. This subtle body consists of numerous *bhava*, *samaskaras*, *brūti*, *ruchi* etc (means the behaviour) of the male and female. This form of subtle body is the true power of the *prakriti* and takes birth and rebirth as male and female.

Sinful acts of the subtle body causes suffering of the gross body while virtuous acts make the human being as good or divine soul. This process is endless in subtle body and is the example of good and bad *karmas* and their ultimate results- good *karmas* taking the being to the *brahmaloka* while the bad *karmas* degrading the human being towards the rebirth as lower beings. There are systems of *shraddha* (obsequial rites) and *pindadaan* (pinddaan is a mandatory ritual which is to be performed post death. *Pinddaan* gives an ultimate relief to the departed soul and paves way into the world of peace) in the Hinduism to enable the subtle body to take rebirth. According to the Indian scriptures, subtle body is located between *muladhar* (the root chakra is one of the seven primary chakras according to Hindu *tantrism*) and *sahasrara* (*sahasrara* is the Sanskrit name for the chakra located in the crown area of the skull. It is the seventh and highest of the seven primary chakras. It is also referred to as the crown chakra in English) while the western concept describes it as unconscious mind. *Jiva* cannot attain the Absolute unless the subtle body is totally pure and without *kamana* (*kamana* or desire assimilates all types of emotions within itself) and *vasana* (*vasana* is a behavioural tendency or *kurmic* imprint which influences the present behaviour of a person.

Buddhi, major part of the subtle body always exists around the soul as a result, soul always influences the mind to think rationally. Soul cannot tolerate if the subtle body becomes sinful. Soul represents the *sat-chit-ananda* and is itself is blissful consciousness; therefore, it remits the sins in the gross body through ailments,

sorrow, affliction, pain and suffering etc. Soul always effortlessly acts to return to its original root- Self. Aim of our routine acts is to return to the Endless and thus, soul is continuously influencing *buddhi* to act accordingly. Every *jiva* is a *jivatma* and all the *jivatmas* are the parts of the Absolute which is one and *akhanda* One. We fail to recognise it because of *avidya* (*avidya* is a Sanskrit term used to denote delusion or ignorance). Only a pure and virtuous *jivatma* can realise this Absolute through its pure *buddhi*. There is no other way to know or realise that *jiva* is itself *paramatma*.

There are hundreds and thousands of sinful latent imprints that are collected through transmigrated cycle of births and rebirths surround *buddhi*. This is known as *avarana* or mantle in the scriptures. Human being is unable to recall the immense perceptions of the eternal soul under the influence of *avarana*. Besides, *avarana* makes the *mana* distracted as a result this world seems to be true and permanent to us. This feeling also makes us sceptic about the existence of god.

However, Vedanta never believes in the falsehood of this world. Instead, Vedanta analyses the whole concept. We are confined or restrained in the desires and attachments of our *mana*. *Kamana* and *vasana* float in the *mana* of every male and female and *samaskaras* are developed following the fulfilment of these desires. Finally, these *samaskaras* are responsible for the confinement of the human being. Condition of the human being is similar to that of a spider which stays happily inside its own web, though the human being declares himself as a free person. Human being who controls the organs by the mind, performs *karma-yoga* with the organs of action, being unattached, can excel and is liberated. This liberation is the natural behaviour of the soul but *avidya* overshadows human being through *maya*. Struggle is continuously going on in this world and victory is possible when vices are overpowered through moral principles. Real confinement of the human being is his *mana* and he can be released from it through his virtuous acts and thoughts. This is the only path of liberation.

All our thoughts and acts through the subtle body and make us pure or sinful according to their status- good or bad. Human being collects *punya* (virtues) through pure thoughts that help him to be nearer to the god while *jivatma* attains the *pret-deha* (evil spirit) through the vices. Hence It is, therefore, people should refer to their conscience while doing any act. None can overcome this cycle of *karma-chakra*. Even god cannot get the people rid of this cycle. However, *tapasya* (it is a practical spiritual discipline that involves deep meditation, austerity, self-discipline, and efforts

to reach Self-realization) can take the human being to higher stage and his sinful act, if any, can be rectified.

Countless rays of the Sun spread out their radiation in the space. Likewise, countless jivas, parts of the *paramatma*, are spontaneously taking birth in the *martyuloka* (*Bhu Loka* is the starting world, which is subdivided into *Martya Loka*, *Preta Loka*, *Naraka Loka* and *Pitru Loka*. The lowest *Martya Loka* is the region in which the human beings live with materialized human bodies). *Jiva* is struggling to merge with the *paramatma* immediately after its birth and this is their destiny. Originally, *jiva* does not restrict itself into the world full with sorrows and sufferings. It restlessly struggles to achieve the original bliss and liberation. This fidgety is known as '*jivan-yatra*' (journey through life) and we are more or less aware of this life in this worldly world.

Jiva acquires different *dehas* (bodies) to meet the *paramatma* and it will take hundreds and thousands of decades to end this journey. A *jiva* takes numerous births during this period of long journey and it is called transmigrated cycle of birth-death-rebirth. This signifies death should not be mourned. But *jiva* in this earth is all bound by worldly relations and loves the worldly bodies. Feeling of insecurity and attachment to the near and dear ones compel the *jiva* to mourn the death. These feelings should be overcome in order to pave the way to the dead to return to this world. This system is known as *shraddha* ceremony (obsequial rites). Now we discuss the *karana sharir*.

***Karana sharir* contains *Sukshma deha*, and where does this *karana sharir* exist?**

Karana Sharir (कारण शरीर): All the elements responsible for the creation of *sthul deha* and *sukshma deha* are known as *karana-deha*, also known as casual body. Both the *sthul deha* or gross body and *sukshma deha* or subtle body are formed by abstract molecules. *Mana* and *buddhi* too are abstract. All these abstract molecules are divided into five elements of *prithvi* (earth), *jala* (water), *agni* (fire), *vayu* (air) and *akasha* (sky or ether). We do not know what exactly are they? These elements seem to be different forms of power of conscience. Undivided abstract molecules are the pre-condition of the formation of *pancha-mahabhuta* and here lie the abstract molecules in equilibrium position. In other words, *karan sharir* is a causal body which is the sole cause for the gross and subtle bodies in the next birth of the soul that is not liberated or detached from the causal body. Causal body carries the information or knowledge acquired during the previous births. The infatuation

and intense or deep desires for the worldly objects and pleasures, called *vasana*, goes along with it. Soul is firmly attached to this causal body or *karan sharir*.

This equilibrium position is called as *karan* or *prakriti* and this *prakriti* is also known as *maya* or *avidya*. Origin of the creation or manifestation of the material cosmic world lies in this position of nature's equilibrium. But *paramatma* is known as conscience desiring Himself to be diffused to many in order to involve in *lila-vilas* (the effortless or playful relation between the Absolute, or *brahman*, and the contingent world). Vibration or motion is created in the equilibrium of nature following this desire of the conscience. *Gunas* (*guna* is an attribute of nature, according to Hindu philosophy. In Hinduism, there are three *gunas* that have always existed in the world in both all living and non-living things) are created out of this vibration. There are three *gunas*, which have always been and continue to be present in all things and beings in the world. These three *gunas* are called: *sattva* (goodness, constructive, harmonious), *rajas* (passion, active, confused), and *tamas* (darkness, destructive, chaotic).

Sattva guna denotes having the natural quality of purity and goodness and *sattvic* individuals often strive to deepen, strengthen and mature the soul. *Raja guna* always wants new sensations and variety. *Raja guna* is full of passion and is born out of "trishna" (thirst or intense desire) and "sanga" (attachment). It binds the soul through attachment with action. *Tamas* is the darkness and the crudeness in man. It binds the soul through recklessness, indolence and sleep. All three *gunas* seldom take break and are responsible for the diversity of nature. When the *gunas* are manifested in creation, individual souls come under their influence and begin their onward journey into the world of matter and death. However, all the elements of the *gunas* lie in the *hiranyagarbha* or golden womb (*hiranyagarbha* is also a name of Lord Brahma, because he was born from golden womb and the source of the creation of the whole universe or cosmos in Hindu philosophy).

Activities of the three *gunas* can be disturbed by the human beings through their *tapasya* following which the *prakriti* returns to her equilibrium status. At this stage, *gunas* lose their power of vibration and their fidgety or restlessness is under wane. This stage is called peaceful position and this position is called as *karan sharir* which helps *jivatma* to have the *darshan* of the god. *Karan sharir* or casual body become illuminated following the influence of the *sattva guna* and it has reflection of the divine rays. *Karan sharir* full with pure *sattva guna*, can be able to have the divine *darshan*. Bliss is the food of this casual body and *jivatma* enjoys the

divinity only after having felt the manifestation of the bliss. Position of the *karan sharir* is beneath the crown area of the skull. *Jiva* can attain the *turiya* state (*turiya* is the background that underlies and transcends the three common states of consciousness. The states of consciousness are: waking consciousness, dreaming, and dreamless sleep. Unless we know who we are, we cannot know who realizes *turiya*, nor can we understand what the state of *turiya* really is) only after crossing the crown area of the skull.

Every male and female in this earth contains gross body, subtle body and casual body. Complete absence of the feeling of 'I' and 'egotism' from these three bodies can only bring the liberation leading to meet the *paramatma*, the Absolute. Human being is known as 'walking shiva' when egotism perishes in these three bodies and the *chitta* becomes free of any *samaskara*. Soul survives along with subtle and causal body where *samskaras* are stored. Man would take birth again and again with the help of gross body till all the *samskaras* are consumed.

Elements of the gross body return to their original state after its death. Destruction means the return to the root. *Panchabhutas* too return to their original elements but the *roopa* (vision) of the subtle body is not perished because it is built of *tanmatras*. It is attracted by the abstract elements of the *kamana-vasana* after a specific period and forms a body to return to the earth. How does *jivatma* come back to this earth?

This universe has been created by the wish of the Creator. There have been millions of stars on the sky before our birth. This universe is attracted by one such star and creatures are created. Numerous powers of the *prakriti* have their influence on the destiny of the creatures. These powers of the *prakriti* include, sun, moon, cloud, wind or air, aqua, food grain, scripture, *yajna*, sage, *veda* etc. All these powers are alive doing their respective duties.

Jiva passes through the stages of childhood, youth, infirmity and ageing and at last meets with the death. Its subtle body starts floating on the air immediately after its natural or unnatural death. Air is extremely thin or microscopic element and cannot be realised by sense organs. Air can be realised through touch sense (*sparsha*) while ether is realised by holding an object. Gross body is visible because it is built of earth, water and fire while the subtle body is invisible because it takes shelter under air and ether. However, subtle body possesses all the latent imprints (*karma samaskaras*). These imprints assimilate

the power of conscience and move towards a particular direction. Now question arises where do the collected aerial imprints go to- *brahmaloka*, *satyaloka*, *janaloka*, *tapaloka*, heaven, *chandraloka*? Or do these imprints acquire *preta-dehu* and take shelter in dilapidated temple or building or tree? *Karmic samaskaras* or imprints of the subtle body are fixed in their proper places. In other words, subtle body will acquire a movement and the *karmic samaskaras* continue to write down the destiny based on good and bad. *Jiva* can attain the heaven following its virtuous deeds and it returns to earth once the virtue or merit exhausted. How will *jiva* take birth on earth?

How does *jivatma* take shelter in the sperm of the male?

It is said *jivatma* takes shelter in the cloud after *jiva* completes its *swarga-bhog* or *naraka-bhogu*. *Jivatma* comes down to earth through rain. Then it takes shelter in the rice plants and corn plants, as herbs and trees, as scsams and bean plants. In next stage, it takes shelter in the male sperm after the male takes food through grains. Male transfers his sperm to the female body during intercourse and the female reproductive organ with the fertilized egg is implanted and a developing embryo and fetus grows. Process of growing the fetus inside the womb is a magical way and the scriptures described this process as 'great *jnyana*' without which this earth would have no existence of rational creature.

It is said that the Creator selects the parents of *jiva* when it was in *manomaya* body before birth based on its karma *samaskaras*- those whose conduct was pleasant will attain pleasant wombs and those whose behaviour was evil, will attain the wombs of the evil and the impure ones. However, these concepts are very complicated. Very few can realise the process of rebirth and the role of deeds or action in human life.

Where does human being come from?

It should be reminded that astral body (*linga deha*) is formed out of the nature's abstract form. *Sukshma deha* or subtle body derives from the influence of the casual body (*karan*) and the subtle body becomes gross body gradually. *Samaskaras*, the latent imprints that exist in the depth of *jiva*'s mind seem to be the *vibhuti* (sacred ash used in Hindu rituals) of tri-*gunas* (three *gunas* already described above) of the Absolute. It seems that He is enjoying His creation by opening up Himself in a new way. It means that god himself stays inside all the human beings while we are treating

them as individual *jiva* and establish different relations with them for the worldly play in this earth. All this world, deluded by these three states composed of the *gunas*, does not know Him, who is beyond these and immutable.

Here lies the concept of *gunas*. There exist nothing like 'I' and 'my'. *Rajas* and *tamo gunas* are intimated closely with 'I' and 'my' that cause egotism. Human beings are attached with these two *gunas* that bring only sorrows and miseries. This subtle body does not belong to *jiva*. *Jiva* is Self itself and hence is born only once and it is liberated too only once when it attains the knowledge of the *Brahma*. It is the *sthal deha* or gross body that takes birth and rebirth again and again.

Those who are constantly in communion and single minded in devotion enjoying virtuous life can excel and get the inner sight to realise the Absolute. A transcendental world is opened before them which is full of mysteries and realities. Now we discuss the reasons why the sages suggest for certain ceremonies like, *shraddha*.

Whether all the thoughts and deeds are floating on the *viswa-manas*?

Yes. All our deeds done through sense organs, mind and intellect, have their immediate reflection on the *viswa-manas*. Wind or air is invisible *mahajagatik* form but touch or *sparsa* is sensible, sky is invisible but *buddhi* or intellect can be sensed. Same way, *karmic samaskaras* are invisible but these can be admissible in the conscience. All our *samskaras* frequent in our mind before the perceiver or impartial witness having full conscience. Here is an example – a young couple is involved in the conversation of love and it becomes clear to the perceiver the feeling of lust that occupied in the mind of the couple. Though feeling of lust appears through external object, inner conscience of the perceiver immediately gets hold of it. This very truth is realised by all through their inner knowledge. World is one, but everything in it can be looked at from two levels- the individual and the cosmic. The individual level is called '*vyashti*' and the cosmic is referred to by the word '*samashti*'. Both of these pertain to the micro and the macrocosm respectively. Therefore, the role of the impartial perceiver is true at both *vyashti* and *samashti* level. Feeling of lust of the young couple reaches through ether to the *virat* or *samashti* and is written on its mind.

Everything of *jivatma* is written in the mind of the universal consciousness. But how? *Vishwa-manas* or cosmic consciousness is full with waves without which *vyashti* means individual mind cannot do anything. This conscience is known as '*Ritam*' that means absolute truth- i.e. fire always provides heat and energy, never

gives the feeling of cold and this is the ultimate truth. Similarly, water is always cool and air is not visible to the eye and the existence of ether is realised at macro intellect level. *Vishwa-manas* or cosmic consciousness eternally exists everywhere and works with *ritam*, hence, every wave of feeling of *jivatma* reflects on it. It is the reason that cosmic consciousness immediately gets that wave. It is the total identification with body-mind-intellect. All these processes pave the way to one result- collection of good *samaskaras* or bad *samaskaras* based on the deeds of *jivatma*. *Puranas* describe it as '*Chitragupta's Record Book*' (*Chitragupta* is a Hindu god assigned with the task of keeping complete records of actions of human beings on the earth).

All the past lives of *jivatma* including its previous births, form of births (human being or other creatures), places of births, deeds etc. are recorded in a micro chip in the mind of the *vishwa-manas* and these recorded information reflect on the fore once manifested by pure consciousness.

Are the impure or sinful deeds and thoughts responsible for non-liberation of the subtle body?

Yes. Liberation means realisation of God, realisation of the Absolute and above all Self Realisation. In other word, it means human being should try to realise the divinity inherent in him - his relation to God is enmeshed within him and not without. In fact, *vrittis* (*vrittis* refers to the thoughts that surface in the mind, often described as a whirlpool) of the mind influence the Self realisation (*atma-gyan*). Pure state of mind can have the power of fire (*teja-tatva*) that takes it to the stage of illumination. This stage of illumination is placed in the region of milky way of the world of stars. It should be kept in mind that we all are the citizens of this universe, notwithstanding that we reside at different countries and continents. We move around the circumference of the Sun. This solar system exists in the galaxy of stars. Gravity of the Sun abides us. This world consists of 220 nations recognised by the United Nations. Similarly, more that 13,000 crore of galaxies exist on the sky. Energy of these large galaxies touches the pure mind which reaches the *vyom-tattwa* through the constant thinking of the *Brahma*. It means the *mana* becomes the form of ether and it enters the macro form of the *karana* before taking round of the *maha-vishwa*. This macro *karana* is called as *vishwa-manas* which shelters the ether. In other word, man is distanced from himself. His thoughts and perceptions and are influenced by the external forces, the unholy *samaskaras*.

Visible and Invisible thoughts always are playing hide and seek

We think we are alive. But, it is the air that automatically passes through nose and mouth helping the lungs to keep the creatures alive. Birth and death are beyond

anybody's control. Human being cannot know what happens next moment; whether he will survive or meet the death and becomes subtle body. It is the *vishwa-manas* that entirely control all the births and deaths; every minute is under its control. It is beyond our realisation. However, those having acquired the extreme stage where their mind concentration merges with the wave length of *vishwa-manas* through their *sadhana*, can have transcendental experience or feeling. They are able to feel a mysterious relationship between the gross objects of this earth and the objects of invisible world. These invisible objects are the forms of inexpressible bliss reflecting the mind.

Right from the birth we try to perceive everything in this world in material "form" or body as well as within the span of day, month and year. Even using the word "I", we refer to our physical body. Same happens when we look outside to the world, identifying to all the forms of physical entities. We cannot relate to anything without a physical "body" or structure. Even those things we cannot perceive with our sense organs, we try to objectify as an image with our imagination. So our world is only full of objects, bodies, entities and images. These perceptions are the world of *maya* which fastens us so tightly that we are unable to enter into the periphery of *vishwa-manas*. Infact, cycle of birth and death are the riddling creations of *maya*.

Reason of performing shraddha ceremony after death

One of the *mantras* uttered during the cremation of a Hindu body prays to pave the way of *jivatma* towards salvation. However, actual situation is otherwise. Leaving the body the soul now adopts the form of subtle body. *Shraddha* ceremony (obsequial rites) is performed in the honour of this invisible subtle body. It is said that the *Shraddha* ceremony can provide momentum to the deceased soul to ascend to a higher plane of existence. In addition, it is also believed that this ceremony can also satisfy the unfulfilled wishes of the departed so that they are relieved of the traps binding them and preventing them from entering the higher planes. Once their desires are fulfilled, they can progress in pursuing next their goal.

This ceremony is taken place after the completion of mourning period (*ashaucha*). Why is mourning period or *ashaucha* observed? In India when someone dies, close relatives are said to be *ashaucha* for 10 or 15 days because they are very sad. Near ones and the relatives distant themselves from all worldly pleasures and pray for the soul during this period. All types of worldly comforts are given up and the persons confine themselves into pure life during that period. Period of *ashaucha* differs from region to region and caste to caste. However, *sanyasis* do not perform

this rite, neither their *shraddha* ceremony is performed because they have renounced the world. They attain their final status as per their *dharma-samaskaras*.

In Hinduism, mantras or hymns dominate the *shraddha* ceremony. It is believed that subtle bodies, *jivatmas*, accept the items offered in the ceremony and the hymns are the medium of offering and acceptance. Family of the deceased, whose *shraddha* ceremony is performed, offers all the items he was fond of when he was alive. Recital from the religious scriptures is organised and offerings are made. It is believed that the prayers (through mantras) performed by the priests and the relatives of the deceased, take *jivatma* to next stage. It means an ideal *shraddha* is the process through which *jivatma* takes rebirth in a new body. In other word, it means soul gets peace. It is said that *jnyana-yajna* and *nama-yajna* are two media that can pave the way for the soul to get peace immediately.

Sri Krishna says in Bhagavat Gita, “For whatever objects a man thinks of at the final moment, when he leaves the body - that alone does he attain”. And the last thought of the dying person inevitably reflects his inmost desire. These different courses after death have been described to warn people against neglecting the path of Self-knowledge, which alone can confer immortality and eternal peace and happiness.

It is generally found that most of the people try to remember god while taking last breath. However, it is also observed at the same time that general intellect of the people becomes weak and inner *samaskaras* or imprints start floating on the mind restraint the people to utter the name of god. It is advised by the gurus to be religious and virtuous in the life that helps the people remembering god in the end. Leading a religious and virtuous life means not to surrender under worldly pleasures, taking consecration, reciting religious scriptures and doing other religious rituals as part of daily chore. All these activities help people to acquire good results that are taken by *jivas* to next life. According to Hinduism, only present *karma samaskara* passes through life after life. *Jiva's* fate to ascend or descend after death entirely depends on this *samaskara*. As the beings accumulate *karma* continuously, they are bound to the cycle of births and continue their mortal existence birth after birth. It is the biggest truth in the life of a human being, according to Hinduism.

Why is suicide not allowed?

As already described that we all are floating on the big universe riding on the earth. All the *jivatmas* exist in this universe with their conscious Self. *Jivatmas* are

spreading all over in the form of the Absolute like the fire engulfs all over with its sparks. All these are eternal with no birth and death.

Hindus believe that it is only their physical form, which is mortal and can be destroyed. They believe soul ascends to heights inaccessible to humans and it returns to live in a new body. Under the influence of *avidya*, *jivatmas* acquire material body which is restricted by *maya*. However, *jivatmas* desire to return back to their original form, that is *paramatma*, through the cycle of birth and death. When one understands the implications of this knowledge in the proper light, desire to get out of the cycle of birth begins to take root.

Jivatma is eternal, hence it is not perished. It is not slain when the body is slain. These bodies of the eternal, imperishable and embodied Self are said to have an end in order to get their ultimate end. *Jivatmas* are the parts of the infinite. This body consists of both positive and negative *samskaras*. Virtues lead to liberation. In other words, it means virtuous acts take *jivatma* to the lap of *paramatma*.

All *jivatmas* take birth in this universe in the forms of human being who commit virtuous deeds for their self development. Formation of human body provides *jivatmas* an opportunity of self realisation. However, many men and women end up their lives under doleful circumstances and this act is called suicide which is said to be a great sin in Hinduism. Suicide creates obstructions on the path of *jivatma's* advancement towards *paramatma*. Devotion, divine qualities, and worship, which break the bonds of the world, are indeed sufficient to take one to the highest truth. Every person is born with *samskaras* already, which are embedded and imprinted in their minds from past lives. During a person's lifetime, they will gain many more *samskaras*. In this way, *samskaras* are associated with *karmic* theory. Actions or karma that one accumulates in one lifetime will be passed on to one's future reincarnation through one's *samskaras*. Bad *samskaras* lead the human being, if commits suicide, to adopt *preta-deha*. In this *preta-deha*, subtle body of this person passes through untold miseries and sufferings before a new birth. It is because soul is eternal while body is temporary. Therefore, efforts should always be made to make the life fruitful through virtuous deeds to reach the eternal bliss. On the other hand, subtle body that adopts *preta-deha* following suicide, has to wait for long to take a new body. *Shraddha* and *pinda-daan* are two methods that clear the bondage of the *preta-deha* helping him to come down to this earth for a new life.

It is to be remembered that subtle body takes shape after gross body is perished and it again comes down to the earth in the form of gross body after certain time depending upon its *karma-samskaras*. In this way, cycle of birth and death continues

until soul is liberated. This process becomes longer in the suicidal cases. It is advisable not to commit suicide under any circumstances. Nobody has the right to perish his own body. Instead, people must take refuge to god to overcome miseries. It will provide enormous joy preventing people to destroy themselves before natural death.

Reasons of *pinda-daan* in Gaya

Human birth is the rarest gem in this earth because human birth can alone fulfil the life in real sense. Acharya Shankara has termed human birth, wish for the liberation (*moksha*) and *satsang* (being in the company of the truth or seeker of truth) are the rarest opportunities in human life.

Pinda-daan is a mandatory ritual which is to be performed post death. *Pinda-daan* gives an ultimate relief to the departed soul and paves way to next birth because liberation is possible only through *sadhana* of the *paramatma* in life after life. Now, question arises about the importance of Gaya as the supreme place of *pinda-daan*. Is the transmigrated soul satisfied with this *pinda-daan* in Gaya and does *jivatma* come back to this earth again and again? Or does the *pinda-daan* process in Gaya expedite the path of *jivatma* to reach the *paramatma*?

There is a story about the importance of Gaya and its reference to *pinda-daan*. There was a demon named as Gaya whose father was Tripurasur and mother was Pravabati. Gaya was stoic since childhood and went on to perform severe penance on the mountain Kolahal. Indra and other gods became afraid of losing their position. The holy Trinity then approached Gaya wishing to offer a boon. At this, Gaya asked for a unique boon that whoever touches him, no matter he belongs to any caste or race or whether he is qualified for or not would get immediately purified and achieve liberation in this very life. The boon was granted to him.

After sometime, Brahma wanted to perform *yajna* in a purified place and asked whether Gayasur could offer his body for the purpose. Gayasur's body is purified by Vishnu's boon and can be the best place for performing *yajna*. Happy at this opportunity, Gayasur agreed upon.

Gayasur laid down on the ground and a rock was placed on his head where Brahma started his *yajna*. But his body started shaking and Vishnu got the body to rest by his *gada* (*gada* is a club or blunt mace) and put his feet on the rock. He declared the place holy naming it as Gaya after the name of Gayasur. He further

announced that anyone who bathes, offers *pinda* and offers charity will get benefitted and purified immensely more than any other holy places. And that by taking Vishnu's *darshan* as *Gadadhar*, they will be further purified of all accumulated sins. Anyone who performs *shraddha* and offer *pinda-daan* to his forefather here, the deceased ancestors will be absolved from all his sins and will get placed in his next life in *Brahmaloka*. It is said that most of the great men since that time came to Gaya to offer *pinda-daan* to their ancestors.

According to the *vedic* scholars, millions of the Hindus offer *pinda-daan* through *mantras* (hymns) in Gaya and the subtle bodies receive that offering. Hymns are most powerful process or method to pass anything from this world to another world. It's like the remote of modern age that passes the current through ether. Hymns too function in same way and take the offerings (*pinda-daan*) of the subtle bodies through ether. Subtle bodies then reach either of *martyaloka* or *swargaloka* or *brahmaloka* depending on their deeds of previous lives. However, devotion, divine qualities, and worship, which break the bonds of the world, are indeed sufficient to take one to the highest truth. It means all the worldly senses i.e. body, mind, intellect and egotism will have to be offered in the fire through *pinda-daan* to reach the *brahmaloka*. In other words, *pinda* represents gross body, subtle body and casual body.

However, there exists no doubt that sinful soul can take rebirth as human being through proper process of *pinda-daan* in Gaya. Also, virtuous *jivatmas* suffering in hell because of their sinful deeds in previous births can proceed to heaven through the process of proper *pinda-daan*. Infact, final redemption in Hinduism is the detachment of soul from its three bodies consisting of *maya* and its attributes.

Process of Self Realisation

This earth is the world of action (*karmabhumi*) where *jivatmas* come down after having passed their time in heaven or hell. Rebirth of these *jivatmas* as human, animal or other creatures depends upon their past deeds in previous lives. According to Hindu scriptures, individual souls pass through many cycles of births and deaths, and live upon earth as humans, animals and other living beings until they are liberated from the bonds of Nature. Rebirth facilitates the gradual progression of souls from ignorance to knowledge, untruth to truth, darkness to light, and death to immortality. It gives an opportunity to the souls to start a new life on the path of liberation to use the lessons learned in the past lives and work for their liberation. Only few persons can perceive the mystery of *paraloka* based on their *sadhana* (adoration). *Sadhana*

takes them to *hiranyagarva* (cosmic egg or golden egg) or *vishwa-manas* (cosmic mind). Infact, concept of the cycle of birth and death, theory of action and mystery of *paraloka* are very complex subjects and only a handful of *sadhaks* who have attained the highest realm can realise these.

We owe our existence to our physical body. This is why the ancient people referred the body as the earth element, because our life exists in earth. Anything that is gross, solid, inert, it is referred to as body or earth. All the *samaskaras* of our mind are connected to earth. Our mind gets attracted towards water following *sadhana*. *Apa* means water and it represents cloud. This mind, however, is not solid like the body. The mind can change rapidly and flow or alternate between various sense perceptions. The mind also can flow backward in time and leap forward in time. Because of this fluid nature, it is attributed the mind to the water element and it is placed in the region between earth and *chandra-loka*. Next come fire or *teja*. Fire is the source of energy and light. Waves in the mind become illuminated following long *sadhana* and the fire dominates the body. Thus, fire represents intelligence. Without intelligence, mind would just be a random flow of thoughts without any logic in it. In other words, intelligence illuminates the path for the mind to flow logically as a result, *manomaya deha* or *kosha* (*manomaya kosha* is the third of the five layers, or sheaths, of the body. *Manomaya kosha* is the mental sheath, composed of *manas*, meaning "mind". Instinctual consciousness, thoughts and perception are all linked to *manomaya kosha*) becomes larger following the attraction of *hiranyagrabha*. Ether comes in next stage where *manomaya deha* spreads over ether or sky. The sky is the vast open space that accommodates everything. The clear blue sky above us acts as a shelter to the earth in the day, while in night it serves as a gateway to the starry galaxies that exist light years ahead of us. Therefore, sky is associated with consciousness. Without consciousness nothing can exist. Since sky is vast and pure hence mind of the *sadhaka* become pure and it starts adopting the form of *hiranyagarva* though its gross body still exists in earth.

Other name of this *hiranyagarva* is *vishwa-manas* which remain in subtle body in the form of *samasti* (cosmic level). It is the conscious witness that is God. World is one, but everything in it can be looked at from two levels- the individual and the cosmic. The individual level is called '*Vyashiti*' and the cosmic is referred to by the word '*Samashiti*'. Both of these pertain to the micro and the macrocosm respectively. *Jivatma* or *jiva* is the conscious element of *vyasti mana*. This macro element is infinite and full but it is seldom perceived because of the existence of *raja* and *tamo gunas* in subtle body.

Surrender to the Divine Will with complete humility and prayer is the way to go through it all with peace. Inner strength to go through this will come by absolute refuge and constant prayer. Constant prayer and *sadhana* should be for Divine's grace to realise the Self. At this stage, all dirts of the *chitta* (चित्त) are washed away and *jivatma* feels itself in the form of the Absolute. It is known as Self Realisation or *Ishwar darshan* in the term of theology and philosophy.

Anyone can have this *Ishwar darshan* once the *manomay* body becomes totally pure. *Chitta suddhi*, (purification of mind and heart) is therefore, termed as the lone process through which God realisation is made. It is to be kept in mind that God realisation is possible to have certain elements- respect, truth, self restrain, tolerance, concentration, meditation, *japa*, *puja*, prayer etc. All these elements keep the mind peaceful and concentrated and a concentrated mind starts ascending the higher realm breaking the power of gravity.

Earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, intellect and egotism are the eight divine elements that are said to be imminent to complete the process of *sadhana* in spiritual world. All these elements are regarded as gross and subtle bodies of the god. Among these eight elements, earth means soil, water and fire are visible, air is touchable (feel) and sky or ether related to mind while intellect and egotism are experienced through conscious. Consistency in *sadhana* makes the mind pure which enters into cosmic mind after having crossed the elements of *pancha-mahabhuta*. The pure mind then reaches the *samasti* intellect through pure wave of the cosmic mind. Image of the *paramatma* manifests on the pure *samasti* intellect and a *sadhak* having pure mind, heart and intellect enjoys the Absolute. At this stage, he realises the true form of *jivatma* as well as the cycle of birth and death. In other word, it become crystal clear to him that *jivatma* and *paramatma* are identical. This realisation is called as *brahmagyan* or Self Realisation and it is the goal in everybody's life. Self Realisation makes *jivatma* the epitome of love, purity, knowledge, compassion, respect and bliss. It feels the presence of infinite or the Absolute in all *jivas*. *Jivatma* is always surrounded under divine ecstasy. According to *Shakta* theory (*shaktas* are the worshippers of the goddess, called *Shakti* or *Devi*), it is the total refuge to the *Anandamayee*, Mother Goddess. *Sadhak* feels blessed at this stage.

Ashram Varta

Anandaswarupeshu,

Sharadiya Durgapuja was organised in Kolkata, Agarpara, Kankhal and Ranchi ashrams of the Mother. Likewise, Lakshmipuja and Kalipuja too were organised in all the ashram of the Mother. Annakut festival was observed on November 8 in Varanasi, Delhi, Kankhal and Kolkata ashrams. Religious fervour prevailed all through in all these celebrations.

The week long 69th Sri Sri Samyam Mahavrat (संयम महाव्रत) program was organised from November 16, 2018. Inauguration ceremony of this program was held in Kankhal ashram on November 15 and was attended by many spiritual luminaries including President of Sri Sri Anandamayee Sangh, Swami Achyutanandaji, Swami Parameshwaranandaji of Sadhana Sadan, Dr. Shyamsundar Dasji of Garibdasji Math, Swami Madhavanandaji of Chinmaya Mission of Ranchi, Swami Samatmanandaji of Bhavnagar Chinmaya Mission and Swami Vijayanandaji of Kailas Math. Female inmates of Kanyapeeth chanted from the Veda and Vishuddhadi presented the inaugural songs composed by the Mother. Srimati Gayetri Banerjee (Buludi) recited a composition of Swamis Muktananda Giriji (mother of the Mother)

This song describes Mother as *anadamayee*, a person full with divine joy and bliss. She is our own and we see ourselves as her own. She controls whole of the universe as she is the driving force in our lives and we all are just her followers in this journey. She is pure and unqualified bliss attained through union with the Highest Self. We, however, fail to recognise her though she is always caring. Oh Mother, give us power that we can always keep you in our hearts.

Sri Swapan Ganguly, general secretary of Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee Sangh, welcomed the guests and participants while Sri P.K. Mandal, assistant secretary of the Sangh narrated the rules and regulations of the *samyam* (*samyam* literally means that all the dimensions of human personality are taken through process of transformation and beautification, and that state is maintained and developed). Swami Parameshwarananda of Sadhana Sadan said goal of *samyam* is to realise the own self as described in the preaching of the Mother. Swami Madhavananda

of Ranchi Chinmaya Mission stressed on the adoption of '*shat sakar*' (षट् सकार) in our *samyam* (control, integration or restraint). He further explained the words *sadhya* (साध्य - goal), *dhyay* (ध्याय - intense aspiration) and *sadhak* (spiritual practitioner). He said those driven by *dhyass* for the *sadhya* (साध्य) are *sadhaks*. Physical body, mind and intellect lead to *sadhana* (disciplined and dedicated practice or learning, especially in religion) to achieve the spiritual goal that is known as *siddhi* (सिद्धि).

Shyamsundardasji spoke on *samyam* while Swami Achyutananda offered *ashirvachan* to the *vratis*. Session concluded with a song and *pranam* mantra presented by Buludi and her team.

Next morning, on November 16, began with *ushakirtan*. Also held puja of the Mother in Anandajyoti Peetham, Veda recital in Shankaracharya hall, meditation, recitation from Gita, Chandi and Upanishad. Swami Madhavananda explained Kathopanishad with its meaning by breaking each syllable. The name Upanishada is composed of the terms of *upa* (near), and *shad* (to sit) meaning something like 'sitting down near'. It is inspired by the action of sitting at the feet of an illuminated guru or teacher to engage in a session of spiritual instructions. He further threw light on the depth meaning of Upanishadas that remove *ahamkara* (egotism) and *agyan* (ignorance) and help human being to merge with the Absolute. In other words, it is the path through which *atma* (soul) merges with *paramatma* (Absolute). He selected as many as 37 slokas of Kathopanishada's 119 slokas and explained in a simple way. In a nut shell, Swami Madhavananda explained the following:

Nirgun Nirakar (निर्गुण निराकार) : (*Brahma Paramatma*- ब्रह्म परमात्मा)

Sagun Nirakar (सगुण निराकार) : (*Ishwar Mayadhish* - ईश्वर मायाधीश)

Sagun Sakar (सगुण साकार) : (*Avatar* - Jagannath is *parambrahma* (परब्रह्म), Balbhadra is *shabdabrahma* (शब्दब्रह्म) and Subhadra is *brahmadevidya bhakti swarupa* (ब्रह्मविद्या भक्तिस्वरूपा)

He then spoke on four core words of the Vedanta:

Aham Brahamsmi (अहं ब्रह्मस्मि) : from Yajurveda-Vrihadaranyaka Upanishada (it's a statement of experience)

Ayamatmabrahma (अयमात्माब्रह्म) : from Atharvaveda-Mandukya Upanishada (it's a suggestive meaning)

Prgyanmbrahma (प्रज्ञानंब्रह्म) : from Rigveda-Aitreya Upanishada (it's a technical statement)

Tattvamasi (तत्त्वमसी) : from Samaveda-Chhandogya Upanishada (it's

a preaching statement)

Next came Swami Divyananda, Mahamandaleshwar of Kailash Math. He said that *manushya yoni* (human species) is the best one in the world and it will take the human being to the *paramatma* means God. Therefore, human being must do virtuous deeds to reach to the *paramatma*. Swami Vijayananda explained Matsya Purana in the evening session.

Second day started with the recital of Upanishadas followed by the lecture of Swami Parameshwarananda of Sadhana Sadan. He explained the aims of observing the *samyam* - संयम (it is progressively deeper state of absorption). He called upon the participants to take refuge to that immortal who is full of knowledge and bliss and is wholly existent. It simply means that everybody must take refuge to the Absolute, the ultimate goal. He said there was no need to reform others, instead every one must reform him/herself. You are all fortunate to have the grace of the Mother and observing this vow, he stated.

Swami Padmanabhananda of Divya Jivan Sangh and Swami Shivananda of Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee Sangh spoke in English on the third day. Sri Mohanchaitanya of Sadhana Sangh too spoke on this occasion.

Br. Samatmananda of Bhavnagar Chinmaya Mission delivered discourse on *Karmayoga* of Bhagavat Gita daily in the evening during the program. Besides, Swami Madhavananda Puri nicely explained 51 slokas on Jagannathdev described in *Utkalkhand* of Skanda Purana in all the seven nights. All the participants recited the slokas with him. Swami Achyutananda, Br. Vishuddhadi, Br. Gunita, Br. Geeta, Sri Patanda, Sri Swapanda and Sri Sumuda narrated their reminiscences on the Mother every night.

Br. Geeta said this *samyam mahavrat* (संयम महाव्रत) is the result of the grace and blessing of Sri Sri Mother. *samyam vrat* simply means to know myself and to go deep into myself. She then read out the diary of Gurupriyadidi as well as the book of Sri. Amulya Duttgupta:

Once one foreign woman asked the Mother whether she would get any result following the japa of *pranava mantra*? Mother replied, "*Pranava* is the root of everything, so, it covers all the things and people. However, concept of our *sanatana* Hindu religion is not totally reflected in the Christianity and Islam". The woman again said that she did'nt have the Hindu *samaskaras* (संस्कार). Mother said she already explained and there should not be any other question.

Br. Geeta quoted from the diary of Gurupriyadidi:

Grandmother (mother the Mother), Virajananda, Lalita (Miss Pathak) and

myself were sitting together and writing a book of Bhaiji when the reference of the birth of the Mother was raised. Grandmother explained different stages of her pregnancy (when the Mother was in her womb). She said, "Many gods, goddesses, avatars, saints etc. used to come in my dreams very often at that time. After her birth, I saw these figures came to my home and I welcome them in our traditional way. I visualised different mudras (hand gestures used to represent different deities) of the gods and goddesses and found your Mother in the midst of them. Some of them were in folded hands." Our Mother was lying by our side but she all of a sudden moved upwards and said, "Don't tell such thing to this physical body. To whom the deities and avatars pray in folded hands?" We told they offered their respect to themselves. Mother smiled like a child and agreed with us. But immediately she became restless and her fingers became stiff and hard like iron and tears rolling down her cheek. I found both of her hands too stiff. Her hands became normal after some time and those became '*vajra mushthi*' (one who is grasping a thunder bolt or one whose clenched fist is like a diamond).

We simultaneously remembered another incident of '*vajra mushthi*'. It happened near Parade Ground in Dehardun on July 16, 1966. Mother was travelling along with her disciples and devotees in a car. A bus suddenly moved towards the car and was about to head on collision. Mother was in front seat by the side of the driver in the car. Her small hand automatically moved upwards to prevent the bus. A vibration was created from head to bottom in her body immediately after her hand gesture. It is because that the action was linked with the root, Mother explained later with a smile exclaiming how it was possible to prevent a big bus merely by raising hand! Her hand then became '*vajra mushthi*'. Philosophically, it means Mother first raised her hand to prevent an accident and then fist the hand to bring back the '*sthit*'- the life-giver, duration of life of the maintenance of universal creation. Mother explained later on this incidence, "Hand gesture brought the driver to his sense and he successfully controlled his wheel averting an accident. His move saved lives of both the vehicles," Mother's hand was injured but she did not explain the reason.

Extracts from the book of Sri Amulya Duttgupta were read out. Topic was 'how the *guru* stays always with his disciples'? To this question, Mother said, "Existence of *guru* is everywhere-both in molecule and in atom. Thus, *guru* always stays with his pupils or disciples. In another sense, *guru* and *shishya* are identical, therefore, *guru* stays with his disciples. *Guru* gives *mantra* to his disciples, hence always stays with them. *Guru* whose form is one whole which is indivisible present everywhere."

Homage

ENTRENCHED IN BHAKTI OF MAA



UTTARABEN CHINUBHAI

The life of Smt. Uttaraben, who was totally entrenched in the devotion of the venerable Shree Shree Anandamayee Maa has become a beacon of light for people in the path of Bhakti.

Being the grand-daughter of the famous litterateur and critic, the late Rao Bahadur Keshavlal Harshadray Dhruva and the daughter of the late Smt Vinodineeben and Shri Vilochan Dhruva, sister of Shri Amal Dhruva, Uttaraben was married in the year 1967 to Shree Achyut Chinubhai, the son of Sir (Girijaprasad) Chinubhai Madhowlal, 2nd Baronet and the grandson of the noted philanthropist and one of the three or four known initiated "Poornabhishikta" of that time in the path of Shree Vidya. Sir Chinubhai Madhowlal the 1st Baronet.

The inherent qualities of erudition and devotion were in her genes and because of her deeds of the past, her lifespan of 74 years from 1944 to 2018 turned out to be the one befitting an accomplished devotee.

She did M. A. in Hindi from Banaras Hindu University and 'Sahitya Ratna', also in Hindi, conducted by Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samitee. During her visit to Banaras for her M. A. examination in the year 1967 accompanied by her husband Achyut, she had her first 'Darshan' of Shree Shree Maa. Her husband Achyut Chinubhai as well as her own grandmother Smt. Jasvidya were disciples of Paramahansa Hansdevji Avadhoot, but she was destined to be blessed by Shree

Shree Maa. Mysterious are the ways how divinity leads one to the destination.

Being interested in our ancient scriptures, initially she used to go to Swami Chinmayanandaji. It was Swami Chinmayanandaji who first suggested to her that she should go to Shree Shree Anandamayee Maa.

After gaining her first darshan, she would often visit Shree Shree Maa. Her attraction towards Maa gradually became intense. It is not necessary to narrate to Maa's devotees how that attraction to Maa pulls one to Her. Even to feel that pull towards Maa is a divine experience in itself.

She appeared as 'Cover Girl' of the famous magazine *Femina* sometime in the year 1965-66 and after her marriage, who can forget the photographs of their wedding published in *The Illustrated Weekly* of India of the Times group for an article covering various traditions of the Naagar community wherein she appeared as a bride in full splendour? The same Uttaraben appeared transformed in a simple white attire after 1975. And on the occasion of the reception pursuant to the *Upanayana Samskara* of her two grandsons, Aniruddh and Aadya, the two sons of her son Aneesh, though she put on a silk sarce, we saw her in the white attire.

Her white attire reflected her virtuous persona. Her detachment from worldly matters was so profound that she wanted to lead the life of a 'Brahmcharini' with Shree Shree Maa. But at the indication of Shree Shree Maa, she continued her family life with an attitude of detachment. She got the much needed cooperation from her daughter-in-law Chaitali who took over the responsibility and duty of the household.

Her daily routine commenced with prayers and meditation from early morning and she sincerely adhered to a fixed schedule thereafter. Evening 6 PM to 9PM was also dedicated to her pious activity in solitude within the confines of her room that the family had on a lighter note named her "Goofa".

Bhavabhooti writes in "Uttar-ramacharita" that the life of an individual leading family life, but undertaking daily religious commitments, cannot remain independent and is regulated by specific set of rules.

"Kintvanushthaana nityatvam swatantryamapakarshati"

Since the last about seven years she used to hold Geeta Satsang once a week from 11AM to 1PM wherein she would chant the Geeta with other participants and explain the meaning.

She also wrote poems wherein she would pour her emotions like the rising waves of an ocean. She had also written in 1996 a thesis in Hindi with the title "Johan se Akash Shuru Hota Hai Aur Kai Hisson Vala Aadmi". In some of her poems there is a touch of Upanishads.

She used to paint and had held a solo exhibition of her paintings in the School of Architecture, Ahmedabad. She taught fabric painting and took painting classes for children.

In the year 2007 she toured Bangladesh, the birthplace of Shree Shree Maa. She went along with eight other devotees to see the places that were blessed by the lotus feet of Shree Shree Maa for 36 years. After experiencing the divine vibrations in the atmosphere there, she wrote a beautiful booklet in Gujarati describing that journey. The title of the booklet was: 'Sri Sri Anandamayee Jambhumi-Lilabhumi, Bangladeshi Yatera'.

In 2017 she translated the book of the late Geeta Bhattacharya from Bengali into very simple and lucid Gujarati. This book is published by Ramakrishna Seva Samiti under the title 'Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee Pad Prantama'.

She was editing the quarterly magazine "Amrutvarta" very efficiently. Her views on Hindu philosophy reflected therein have been useful. She was so committed to her work that she had already prepared and finalized the January 2019 edition of the magazine.

Finally her transition to "Matrulok" took place on 10th December, 2018.

Does death come wearing a cloak of darkness to make one shed the old body and to replace it with new and make one realize that "I am not this body but an entity quite distinct and separate from this body"? Or is it a divine play of Maa to settle the account of past Karma of Her devotees and lead them from the bondages to ultimate liberation? Be it as it may, for who can fathom what divinity has in store for one? We can only bow down in reverence and humility before Maa and her dedicated devotees of the like of Our Uttaraben.

Vaidehi Adhyaru