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# Seventeenth Samyam Saptaha Mahavrata

(Devotional Week)

We have great pleasure to announce that the 17th *Samyam Saptaha Mahavrata*, organised by Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha will be held this year from 20th to 26th November at Mata Anandamayee Ashram, Vrindaban.

The aim of the *Saptaha* is the realisation of one's own Self and the Supreme object of one's love. By observing the vows of truthfulness, continence and non-violence during the period one should try to further one's spiritual development. Such observance, it is hoped, will help the spiritual advancement of all concerned.

Mother is expected to be present in Vrindaban during the period.

Those who are unable to participate in the function at Vrindaban may follow the programme in any of our Ashrams, or in some sacred place, or in their respective homes, according to their convenience.

**DURGA SINGH**

(Raja of Baghat)

*President*

Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha

*Note:—*

1. Those who intend to participate in the function in the Ashram at Vrindaban are requested to send an intimation by the Second week of November at the latest to :

**Swami Paramananda**

**Mata Anandamayee Ashram**

**P.O VRINDABAN, MATHURA**

2. There is no restriction to any one, even if he cannot participate in the entire programme of the function, joining the *Sat-Sang* subject to its rules of discipline.



—Vrindaban, September, 1966.

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

## MATRI VANI

It is necessary to try and dedicate every action of one's life to Him. You are indeed a tool in His hands and therefore whatever is being done by you must be consecrated to Him. If you continue to do this, you will gradually come to feel : how can I offer such hideous things as greed, anger, possessiveness, etc. to Him who is so very dear to me, who is my own ? Does one give anything undesirable to one's beloved ? By thinking in this strain one will become incapable of engaging in anything that is not impeccable. Then, when you have poured out at His feet every bit of the strength and capacity that you possess, so that nothing remains that you may call your own, do you know what He does at this blessed moment ? He makes your littleness whole. Then nothing at all is left to be desired or fulfilled. At the instant in which your dedication becomes complete, at that very instant that which is eternally revealed, unimpaired perfection flashes into being.

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The fact that you are aware of your incapacity to concentrate on God's name is also His grace. Even though not interested take the name as a medicine. This also will have a good result. You will improve. God's name is not like worldly medicine that acts at times and at other times fails ; God's name invariably bears fruit. This is why it is said, either get yourself admitted into the hospital, take the medicine prescribed by the doctor, regulate your diet and your illness will be cured. Or use the doctor's medicine and diet while remaining at home. That is to say, either

renounce everything and seek refuge solely in His name, or else, while remaining with your family, act according to your Guru's instructions and live a regulated life. Thereby also you may hope to get rid of your disease. Who ever likes to take injections? Yet they are beneficent. Which child enjoys learning to read? All the same, by studying regularly with the assistance of one's parents and teachers one becomes an educated person. This is where learning is concerned that serves worldly ends. Again, if you can acquire *brahmavidyā*, the Knowledge of Reality, there is hope of your recovering Supreme Wealth. What is Supreme Wealth? None but God Himself.

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It you can love God there will be no more sorrow. Even the feeling of separation from Him is joy. It is because of your love for Him that you are aware of the anguish of being apart. Only the man in whom God abides in a very special way is capable of this painful awareness (*viraha*) of separation from Him.

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# Conversations with Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma

Recorded by PROFESSOR B. GANGULI

(Translated from Bengali)

Ranchi Ashram, May 30th, 1965.

*Questions :* Are Kali, Durga, Chandi, Krishna distinct from one another or one? If they are one, why then have they different forms?

*Mataji :* God is indeed one. Just as man is one but of different forms. Thus Kali, Krishna and so forth are one as the *Brahman*, but where outer manifestation (*Śakti*) comes in, they are different. Men vary in character and temperament and therefore manifest in different shapes. By His grace God shows you the particular form under which you will realize Him. But in essence God is one. There is only one *Ātmā*—with form and formless—both are but the *Ātmā*. With form (*sākāra*) means He Himself as Form. Just as water and ice are eternally of one substance, even so God Himself appears in various shapes, yet He is one. On the plane of action He appears divided, as the *Ātmā* He is one without a second.

*Question :* If the Self is one, why then is the sorrow of one man not felt by the others?

*Mataji :* Only while there is the sense of separation this is so. So long as there are others, experience is divided. But when there is no more question of difference, then the sorrow of all will be felt as one's own. When the distinction between knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower has been obliterated, oneness is realized. Until then experience varies for each individual. What you receive depends on your attitude of mind. That which is in constant flux is called the world. And what is bound is called the individual. In the world of individuals one reaps as one sows. How wonderful is God's dispensation! He plays in an infinite variety of shapes and forms.

*Question* : What actually is a festival ( *utsava* ) ?

*Mataji* : Nārāyaṇa, what according to the *Śāstras* is a festival ?

*Nārāyaṇa Swāmī* : There are various kinds of festivals, such as a birthday celebration, the festival of Durga, a wedding and so on. The manifestation of joy created by a reunion of people is a festival. A function held in order to call forth this joy is styled festival.

*Mataji* : Where there is no more question of festival or function, there is the *puṛṇāhuti* ( final offering ) of a festival and therefore it is called supreme festival.

*Question* : At what level does a festival become more than a rite ?

*Mataji* : Where levels are, the question has not been solved. When questions cannot possibly arise anymore, then ! Where there is no more difference between diving deep and floating on the surface, where there is only one constant state.

*Question* : Are spiritual experience ( *anubhāva* ) and remembrance the same ?

*Mataji* : These two different words express two different states. When remembrance ( *smṛiti* ) is roused, the question of forgetfulness does no longer exist. Once remembrance is awakened, forgetfulness cannot arise, because forgetfulness is due to ignorance while remembrance is due to Knowledge. When supreme remembrance awakens, the experience and the experiencer merge into one. To be roused to the remembrance : I am eternal and indivisible is indeed called supreme remembrance. Then divided experience ceases—in the realization of supreme Knowledge the threefold division of knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower is annihilated.

*Nārāyaṇa Swāmī* : Ma, today it was discussed with Sri Gopinath Kaviraj, how while the child is in its mother's

womb it has knowledge of its true being, but the moment it sees the light of day, forgetfulness supervenes. How is it that at the moment of birth breathing becomes divided into four parts ?

*Mataji* : It is for you to know what your *Sāstras* say. This body speaks in its own higgledy-piggledy way. When, the other day, I went for a drive, air was pumped into the tube of a wheel. When there was no air in it, the tube seemed shrunk, as if divided into bits, but when it was blown up again it became round and everywhere equally full of air. Similarly, by practising God's name, kirtan, meditation and so forth, in the case of some aspirants, *prāṇāyama* comes about of itself and the body suddenly trembles and becomes straightened ; a divine power begins to have its play and yogic postures, etc, manifest spontaneously. When this condition becomes permanent, the breath is no longer divided into four parts, everything merges into one undisturbed bliss, and Knowledge is awakened.

Not only by *haṭhayoga* and similar kinds of *tapasyā* can this be accomplished, but also by the practice of the name of Hari. The Name is itself God. One should give serious attention to God's name. By continuous *kirtan* of 'Hari bob' other mantras also are uttered spontaneously and one's manner of sitting changes. When this body played the play of *sādhana*, something like this happened. When bhakti arises, a purified body may—nay, does have a similar experience. If one proceeds exactly according to the rules, the body will certainly experience vibration and shivering. Thereupon follow other divine realizations. The subtle *nādis* of the body will not each be separate anymore, one force will flow through all of them. So as to break all bondage, the knots of the heart will open automatically, each in the way that is needed. No matter what line of *sādhana* you may have adopted, when the 'switch' is pressed at the *mūlādhāra*, there will first of all be vibration and shivering

and then visions of light may be seen and divine sounds of various kinds heard.

While the child is in its mother's womb, its inner power is united with that of his mother and thus there is knowledge of Reality. By the *yogas* of meditation or inquiry or by *krīyāyoga*, and other *yogas* one must again reach the state of the child in its mother's womb. The *sādhaka*, the *bhakta*, the *yogi* must become the child-yogi in the womb of the Divine Mother. Then the breath will not be cut up anymore. All along there will be only one goal, one aspiration, one inner experience, one Realization.

No matter from what point the wrinkled tube may be filled, it will become straightened and equally full of air in all its parts. When by practising *prāṇāyama*, *kīrtana*, meditation in the right manner the mind becomes one-pointed, body and life-force are steadied, or one may also put it the other way round and say, when the movement of the life-force is stilled, the mind becomes one-pointed, Then the life-force flows evenly through the *sushumna nādi*. At that moment remembrance is awakened, the state of Knowledge is achieved.

While in its mother's womb, the individual has no connection with the outer world ; there is thus no impediment and the blood circulation is not conditioned by the functioning of the breath but evenly flows straight in and out of the mother's blood stream. By the sight of outer things and by breathing the outer air, man's concentration is destroyed and the remembrance of his true nature vanishes. It is necessary for the aspirant to hide himself from the obstacles of the outer world by entering the Divine Mother's womb in the cave of his own heart. Thereby lost remembrance will be restored. Then the Mother will take on Herself all his burdens.

Today rather much has been disclosed by this body, even though the secret has been merely hinted at in broad outlines. He who is ready for it will understand it rightly.

## From the Diary of a European

Melita Maschmann

( *Translated from German* )

*Varanasi, November 1963.*

Mataji does not assume the role of a Guru for anyone, in any case not in the formal sense. She does not give initiation and therefore, in the strict sense of the word, has also no disciples. But she does not contradict if someone declares : "I see in you my Guru." Many of her friends and followers have taken *dīkṣa* (initiation) from Didima, Mataji's mother. Sometimes in the early morning, I see Didima sit in a corner of the Ashram temple, giving instructions to a disciple. The disciples are mostly young men. They sit at Didima's feet and listen intently to the penetrating whispers of their master.

The other day I asked someone why Mataji did not herself give initiation. I do not know whether the reply covered the most important reason. It was as follows : "Where Mataji dwells, namely in the oneness of the *Brahman*, the distinction between Guru and disciple does not exist anymore. The relationship between Master and pupil still belongs to the realm in which we think there is duality."

In the records about Mataji's sayings, I find the following : "Since this body has no personal will and no fixed ideas or plans, there can also not be any such thing as initiation for it. On occasions *mantras* are suddenly pronounced by this mouth. It may then happen that someone hears these *mantras* and makes use of them. That is to say he adopts the *mantra* and considers himself as initiated, although no initiation has been intended or taken place. It even happened at times that people who knew very little about me, were convinced that everything had been prepar-

ed beforehand. Actually there was nothing of the sort. Only what is meant to be, comes about."

As to my relationship with Mataji : I feel, in her I have found the most important 'partner' of my life. Yet I cannot talk to her directly about anything essential. It is a relationship which has to forgo almost hundred percent the exchange with the help of words. For what are conversations through the mediation of an interpreter ? A miserable makeshift. Even if the interpreter is good. How much misunderstanding will not be caused by translation. All subtleties are lost at any rate. Because English is, for my translator as well as for me, a foreign language. Thus it may be said that I am dumb for Mataji and Mataji is dumb for me. Sometimes this is intensely painful to me, at other times I feel that it is good and salutary. In any case, that I am unable to talk to her is surely beneficial. To be for once entirely reduced to what one is without the masquerade of speech. Not that Mataji could be deceived by beautiful phrases ! But I could deceive myself through my words. How much does one not conceal by chattering, without noticing how superficial one is. To be forced to renounce language is healthy asceticism, at least for a time. We owe almost all our deceptions and lies to our dexterity in the use of words.

However, this is only one side of the medal. For on the other hand, I receive here an impressive lesson about the divinity of the word. "In the beginning was the word"—this has its counterpart in Hindu philosophy : the *Śabda Brahman*, explained by Sri Gopinath Kaviraj as follows : "*Śabda Brahman* is the eternal sound that is the first manifestation of the Supreme Reality and lies at the root of all subsequent creation." (Not by mistake does it say 'is' instead of 'was', and 'lies' instead of 'lay'. For the Hindu, creation, preservation and destruction are processes going on side by side eternally without beginning or end). The divinity is not only invoked but actually represented by the

