

Ananda Vartā

A quarterly journal dealing mainly with the divine life and teaching of Mata Anandamayee and with other religio-philosophical topics



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

Mātri Vāni

Nothing has happened—to be able to understand this is very fortunate. If you can understand that nothing has happened, you have indeed been blessed with inner vision.

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Having turned to this side, the sense of want awakens. And proceeding further there is the first stage of passing from this condition of want and emptiness to one's true nature: the realization that without Him the world is darkness: nothing of this world seems attractive. It cannot be said that you have reached that state. To yearn for Him also indicates progress.

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All the time you have the desire to find, the acute feeling of lacking something. Just persist in your *sādhana* and for the rest, He will make it complete. By perfect grace comes perfect illumination. In the measure as you exert yourself you will receive.

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Action is necessary in order to remove the veil of ignorance. Using to the full the intelligence He has given you, proceed with your work. His grace is without motive or cause. Why He has not shown His mercy to you He knows best. Verily, all is His and He does according to His Will. Where there is a motive, there is the desire for fulfilment and the enjoyment of the fruit. I have acted and therefore I

have reaped the fruit. The fruit of what? The action is one's own and thus the consequences are equally one's own. God is everyone's, there is but one Self (*Ātmā*). To begin with, one does not realize this and therefore questions arise. At the stage at which you are at the moment, from there it looks as you have described.

* * * *

No matter what be anyone's line of approach, at first there is torment and perplexity, one is unable to find. After that comes a state of suspense, of emptiness as it were; one cannot penetrate within neither does one derive satisfaction from worldly enjoyment.

* * * *

Take care not to be contented at any stage. Some aspirants have visions, others realizations. Or someone experiences bliss, great happiness and thinks he has himself become God. On the spiritual path, before true Realization supervenes, one may get caught in supernormal powers (*vibhūtis*). To become entangled in his kind of thing constitutes an obstacle.

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The Beloved (*Iṣṭa*) has to be realized as the aim of life. The whole creation is a manifestation of God's supernal power (*vibhūti*)—He Himself as creative power. The *Ātmā* is one—yet again, who appears as duality? None but He. It is impossible that no experience should come to one who treads the spiritual path. The fact that one has chosen this line proves that there is already some connection from before. Forgetting that God is the sole Beloved, one has come to love sense objects. When anything besides God is contem-

plated, there is divided affection—*du iṣṭa*, *duṣṭa**. When will this pernicious misunderstanding be uprooted? It is important to discriminate minutely. If you examine yourself you will see : what have I been doing the whole of today? For how long have I remained without the remembrance of God? How much you think of the Beloved and how much of that which is harmful (*anīṣṭa*), which takes you towards death—become aware of this.

In Kishenpur, on September 20th, 1968, Mataji gave some rules for the behaviour of the inmates of the Ashram, in response to someone's remarks and questions. The following is the translation of what Mataji said in Bengali.

(1) When elders or superiors talk do not interrupt by commenting on what is spoken about. You may give your opinion only if you are asked. If you have anything to say on the matter, you may afterwards in private tell the elder : "In connection with what was said, such and such thoughts have occurred to me".

(2) When an elder or superior is conversing with some one, one should not disturb by saying something or by chatting. If one has something important to say, one may do so after the elder has stopped talking.

(3) When conversing with one's companions one should neither make fun of anyone, nor pass critical remarks about others.

(4) With antagonism at the back of one's mind, one should not talk about anyone in either praise or blame.

(5) Do not judge your companions or discuss them with others.

(6) If someone insults or abuses you or accuses you unjustly, think : "Lord, Thou hast in this manner given me a blow to teach me a lesson. Be pleased with me again !" Do not hate the person who has dealt the blow.

* *Du iṣṭa* two Beloved ; *duṣṭa* wicked.

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- (7) Do not feel or speak unkindly about anyone,
 (8) Be truthful in speech and action.
 (9) Speak little and only when necessary.
 (10) Be always cheerful.
 (11) Remain calm, firm, serene and serious.
 (12) Talk to everyone with calmness, serenity, steadiness and equal consideration.
 (13) Cherish only what pertains to the Supreme Quest (*Paramārtha*).
 (14) Your conduct must be gentle and exemplary.
 (15) Be honest and frank in what you say.
 (16) The search after Truth must continue at every moment. When by the accumulated force of the sustained practice of discrimination between the Real and the unreal, of *japa*, meditation, ceremonial worship, the study of scriptures, singing the praises of God—whichever of these be the main line of approach for any particular person—one becomes engrossed in the Supreme Quest, then one cannot remain without the remembrance of God, and consequently foolishness, wrong knowledge and suffering are removed. To be a human being means to aspire to God-realization. Man's calling as a human being is to find God.
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Conversations with Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma

RECORDED BY PROFESSOR B. GANGULY

(*Translated from Bengali*)

Ranchi, 20th June 1965.

Question : How will in your absence the devotees derive the greatest benefit from this spiritual gathering ?

Mataji : Ma Kali, Gopal and Lord Siva have their abode in this Ashram. If you wish to benefit by their nearness, you must keep in mind that they are actually present here. Every day remember this at some time or other. They never stop giving *darsāna*, as it were; practise their presence all the time. You may not hear or see them, yet you will receive the blessing of their *satsang* from this. And whenever you feel the urge, sit in meditation near the statue of Kali. The more you meditate the better for you. Ma Kali is here for your good. In dream or during meditation She sometimes speaks to one or the other.

There is another thing to be remembered: Whatever exists, exists in your mind, Therefore try to see Him within your mind as much as possible. To man alone has been given the privilege and the capacity to attain to God-realization. Know your Self! Try to find out who you really are! Not to try for this amounts to suicide. So long as one harbours desires one cannot realize the Self. If desires prevail at the time of leaving the body, one has to take a return ticket and will be born again. To pass away while desires are lingering means death. Living for the gratification of one's desires is like slow poison. By that poison one is gradually delivered to death. Sense objects (*vishai*) are poison (*vish hai*) and they provide man with a return ticket for rebirth. Having obtained the rare boon of

a human body, if you wish to stop this round of birth and death, you must engage in *sādhana*. Desires ever generate new desires. Just as a creeper spreads, so also does the creeper of sense enjoyment expand and increase.

Mahātmā means great soul. *Jīvā* (individual) means that which is bound; and 'world' signifies constant change and flux. Like a leech, the *jīvā*, by its very nature, on leaving anything hooks on to something else. This is how the world of the individual is fashioned : birth, death and rebirth. And thus it appears as if God were far, far away. From this idea of God's remoteness arise foolishness, suffering, bereavement, agony, sorrow. Wife, son, daughter do not stay according to one's wish. So long as one is not independent of circumstances there is bound to be sorrow. The world (*duniya*) is based on duality; duality breeds pain, conflict, darkness. And in darkness there is the fear of falling. The learned men, the scholars of the world are all in danger of falling. Someone gets angry about a lie, yet he himself also tells lies. You should at least speak the truth, since Truth is your real nature. Lies come automatically to the individual. All the same you are longing and searching for Truth, because you are in fact pure, true, enlightened, free and tranquil. In order that That may shine forth which you actually Are, you must give up the notion of God's remoteness. Renounce that foolishness, that misery. If a person is fortunate enough to understand that he has to know Himself, then only *sādhana* will begin. Know your Self, that is to say, know God! One has to establish a relation with Him : either that of Master and servant, or of Mother and son, or as a part of Him. The spark is a particle of fire, but both have the power to burn. Similarly, the world, God and the individual are not separate. Wherever a *jīvā* is there is Siva and every woman is Gouri. You are father, son and husband all in one. Likewise, God Himself is the master as well as the servant. Water, ice and steam are of one and the same substance. The Formless and form

are both *Brahman, Brahmagopal*. Behold Him everywhere, sing His name. He appears as Sitaram, as Radhakrishna, Siva-Sakti and as Sakti and Her worshipper. It lies in the nature of the *jiva* to desire woman if he is a man, and to desire man if a woman. But when one becomes aware of one's divinity then the *jiva* is transformed into Siva. The inner and the outer are in fact one. But to make it intelligible to the mind, one has to talk of them as separate.

There are people who say : "Let God remain where He is, I am enjoying my life fully"—as if this enjoyment could last ! This is called foolishness, the fallacy that God is very distant. In order to get rid of it one has to obey the Guru's instructions and cultivate the company of saints, sages and seekers after Truth. In the midst of the attractions of form, sound, touch, taste and smell sustain the remembrance of Him. In the *mantra*, in the name received from the Guru, God Himself is present; repeat His name ! *Aksara** (letter or syllable) is that which is beyond decay. In the *aksara* also God is present. So long as an aspirant has not found a Guru, he should repeat whatever name appeals to him or her most. Or if someone prefers, he may contemplate light. What is light ? A reflection of the inner Light. When that inner Light becomes revealed, then there will be full illumination. All power is located within the head. There His form has to be revealed. Every single one of the innumerable forms existing are reflections of Him; why then should one clamour for a special name and form ! While you move in the sphere of name and form, hold on to Him as name and form. Or if name and form be foreign to your temperament, contemplate the light of the *Atma*. The outer light is a reflection of His Light. He is present also in every *kraya*. Make use of the *kraya* received from your Guru. In all beings is He alone, be they plants, animals, birds or hu-

* *Aksara* means both 'letter' and 'undecaying'.

man-beings—He resides in them all. Live with the remembrance of him.

This body does not advise you to renounce your home and repair to the forest. Wherever you may go, as long as you are not free from desire, there will be your home with all that it entails. No matter where you may be placed, there itself meditate, engage in *sādhana*. Just as when drops of water keep on falling, even stone is pierced, so by sustained practice the veil of ignorance will finally be rent.

For the aspirant who is a householder, his wife is an embodiment of the divine *Śakti*, his son of Balgopal. While leading a family life do your work as the manager of the Lord. When the call comes for you to leave, none can accompany you. Of course, it has happened many times that husband and wife who dearly love one another get drowned together. But this is the fruit of delusion and not a desirable death. They are suicidals. One should drown for God. The human body is meant to be dedicated to God, to be employed in the service of Him. The householder has to mould his life after the model of the ancient *Rishis* who had wives and children equally worthy, and lived as prescribed in the *Sāstras*. And one who has taken *Sannyāsa* must observe the rules and regulations of the *Sannyāsa Āsrama*. God is my very Self, the breath of my life, He is not distant but exceedingly near. Wherever you are and in whatever condition, there itself begin to practise *sādhana*. Hold on with tenacity to Him who will liberate you from all worldly ties. You need not abandon anyone, only cling to God with all your strength. The bonds of family life caused by delusion (*moha*) are not to be fostered. With detachment, rising above delusion, live a life of service.

Why are *sādhus* called *mahātmās*? Because they have grasped the Sublime and hold on to It. *Paramātmā* means Supreme Self; none is above or beyond It, none outside of It. The *Paramātmā* Itself is present within you. Tread the path that will reveal your inner being, that line must

you choose. Act precisely according to your Guru's instructions. And until you have secured a Guru, meditate on the name and form that attracts you most, that gives you peace and bliss.

This body (Mataji) is like a musical instrument: what you hear depends on how you play. What is gone never returns. What you have to do, do it today, do it at once.

Question • Mataji has said, what has to be renounced amounts to very little, but that which has to be embraced is the really great thing. Is this correct ?

Mataji: That which can be renounced and that which can be embraced—both are transitory. Where there is no question of renouncing or embracing, there He stands revealed. Embrace what eternally IS. Embrace THAT which, when gripped annuls the duality of renouncing and adopting. Embrace Him who is unembraceable. He cannot be grasped by the mind. You alone ARE, you, poised within yourself. Thus grasp THAT which, when caught hold of, leaves no question of embracing or relinquishing.

Question: Why does the mind change from moment to moment ?

Mataji: This is its very nature. One has to go beyond the mind. But this has already been discussed at length.

This body (Mataji) does not go anywhere does not take anything from anyone, does not look, does not eat or speak. As you play the instrument so you hear the sound,

