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One must endeavour to remain constantly engaged in the contemplation of That. All other thought engenders anxiety. He is holding your hand, so why worry? Do not allow your mind to be overwhelmed; be ever steeped solely in the contemplation of the Supreme.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

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गोपाल  
शिवाला

# ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

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

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# Name is God\*

Swami Ram Das

Exalted Name divine  
Few know Thy power.  
Who has drunk nectar  
Can alone its taste enjoy.  
Thou Name of eternal splendour,  
Song or word can ill express  
Thy unique wondrous glory.  
Take the Name, O Friend,  
Name is immortal joy  
That thrills in your veins.  
Name is infinite love  
That wells up from your hearts.  
Name is cosmic vision  
That dazzles in your eyes.  
Name is Truth — Name is God.

## Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

Ma : "Look, — You know how long one wishes to keep secrets ? One wants to guard secrets while there is the feeling of want. What is that feeling of want ? Well, that feeling arises in the mind of a seeker who is afraid that his *sadhana* may be hampered (if he gives out his secrets). And the common people are afraid of losing their prestige. Hence they have that wish to conceal facts. Again, when the *Mahatmas* sometimes do not disclose everything to others, it is because those people are not qualified for hearing everything. A matriculate, for example, will fail to understand if he is told what is learnt by an M.A. student."

Question : "Ma, some people say, Ma has not lived a worldly life like us, yet how is it that she understands our worldly joys and sorrows so much ?"

Ma : "Bah ! You know how it is ? Verily, *I am you. You yourself are myself* — that is all. Where is the question of not understanding ?"

Sadhan Brahmachari, a devotee of Ma of a very long acquaintance, once saw the manifestation of worldly mentality in an aged *sannyasi*. He came to Ma and asked, "Well, Ma, why do these worldly tendencies linger even after being in the discipline of a *sannyasi* for such a long time ? If it is like this, then where do we stand ?"

Ma replied, "Look, during one's youth, one has the capacity for maintaining harmony among various matters, of keeping diverse interests simultaneously intact, but in childhood as well as in old age, one's inner feelings and trends get clearly manifested even outwardly. Attachment, aversion — all that they have in their mind are expressed even in their outer behaviour. They can no longer keep them suppressed. Even then, he (the sannyasi in question) is living this kind of life — there is no doubt hope for him."

Now a days (Didi writes) Ma often says, "You people book a return ticket before coming here ; that is why you keep coming and going. Therefore I say, act in such a manner that there is no return ticket for you."

As a result of being in Ma's company for some time, the nature of an old lady was undergoing a positive change. Observing this, Didi (Br. Gurupriya Devi) said to Ma, "Are you pulling out all that is there inside (the lady) ?"

Ma said, "It is good if what is there inside a person is let out."

Ma quite often says, "Everything that happens is just what is needed, nobody can be blamed."

One day Ma said smilingly, "Finish all your work ; time is passing."

One day Ma asked an aged *sadhu* of a very tranquil nature, "Pitaji, what is the way to quieten the mind ?"

He said, "What can I tell you ? You are already sitting here with full realization of plenti-

tude." On this, all the other persons said to the sadhu, "Please say something for us." Then the aged sadhu said a few things which can be summarised as follows :

"The first spiritual discipline is *sadachar*, pure and virtuous conduct, not only outwardly, but both outwardly as well as inwardly one should observe good conduct. By regular practice of good conduct, the restlessness of the mind gradually decreases. I will not ride the horse, lest I should fall from it — this is not the right way of thinking ; I will ride the horse, and holding the reins tightly in my hand, I will control the horse — this is the proper attitude one should maintain. The mind can be conquered only by continuous practice of self control — this is what the Lord has said in the *Gita*. Those who are in your company — what need they worry about ? They have been fortunate to be associated with you. Such association is rare, inscrutable and infallible. It is rare as it is not easily available — it is a matter of immense good fortune. It is inscrutable, as it is not given to common understanding ; that is why again and again there are doubts, misgivings. It is infallible since such association can never go in vain. I do not usually go to any person, but as soon as I had my very first look at you, I felt that you draw all people towards you. I usually do not tell anyone about these things discussed in the scriptures ; but as you permitted me to do so, I have done it. But what will these words do ? There should be

realization in ones heart.” Saying these words, the old gentleman fell silent.

Talking about the yogic manifestations in the body, Ma once said, “When the *kriyas* manifest themselves in the body, it is distinctly felt how — a current is flowing even in the upper veins of the body, as the knots snap open. Some times it is seen that while Kirtan is going on, a few persons engaged in it experience a slight manifestation of ecstasy, and due to this, they are seen in a state of commotion violently jerking their hands and feet. It so happens because the knots in their body are not untied yet. Since nature’s forces are unable to move about in their normal course, a suppressed impulse agitates within them and, trying to come out, meets an obstruction. And as their knots are not open they knock about restlessly in that manner.”

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Whatever is to happen to anyone, anywhere, at anytime is all fixed by Him ; His arrangements are perfect.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

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# In Association with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

Sri Amulya Kumar Datta Gupta

(Translated from Bengali)

(Continued from previous issue)

## The visit of the Commissioner of Dhaka to Sri Ma :

*Sunday, 3.6.45*

Today there was a Mahotsab. When I arrived at the Ashram in the morning I perceived the Commissioner of Dhaka, Mr. Larkin and his wife, had come to visit Sri Ma. Sri Prafulla Ch. Ghosh had brought them along with him. Mr. Larkin asked Ma why she did not stay on in Dhaka. When we interpreted the question to Ma, she replied, "I do remain in Dhaka".

Mr. Larkin : Then why cannot we see you ?

Sri Ma : (Laughing) You have not the right glasses (every body laughs).

Mr. Larkin : (also laughing) Not in a spiritual sense, but if your body stays on in Dhaka, everybody can see you and thus derive benefit from you.

Sri Ma : I am indeed existing in Dhaka in my own body. It is also heard that at times when I stay elsewhere some people can see me here. Besides, this body has indeed arrived at Dhaka now,

but can all bhakta inhabitants see me ? Only those who are destined to do so can see me.

Mrs. Larkin : The women of Bengal do not know how to minister to people. The women of other countries have joined the Red Cross, and doing a good job in ministering to others. But the Bengalee women are not among them. If you advise them to join the Red Cross, I think many will do so.

Sri Ma : It is not true that Bengalee women cannot minister to others. They minister, even at the cost of their lives to their father, mother, brothers and sisters and other members of the family, and they consider this sort of seva as their religious duty. But they are not trained to minister to people outside their family. Moreover they consider that it is against their belief to mix with outsiders. That is why they cannot be found for work outside their homes. Now of course some are joining in outside work but not all, as they are not used to it. But their menfolk have joined in this type of work.

Mr. Larkin : They are working for monetary gain.

Sri Ma : Yes, the ideal should be to minister to others for the sake of seva alone.

After spending some time in this way the Commissioner and his wife took their departure. While leaving he again extorted Ma to revisit Dhaka. Sri Ma laughed and said, "I am a baby, I can come whenever you bring me here."

She added looking towards us, "Well, can I or can I not speak English ? (everybody laughs).

### Should one pray to one's guru for material gain ?

Sri Promotho Bose was waiting to ask Ma a question. When the Commissioner left, he asked Ma, "Can one not pray to his guru for fulfilment of material benefits ?"

Sri Ma : Why not ? If you have to ask, you should pray to the guru only ; who is there to help you beside the guru ? But if your guru does not like these entreaties, then he will himself discourage them. If you start flinging your feet and hands about, your guru will pacify you.

It looked as if Promotho Babu was very much satisfied with Ma's answer. There was some more discussion after this, thereafter Ma departed to Siddheswari Ashram.

Meanwhile in the Ramna Ashram arrangements for the Mahotsab were continued in right earnest. Bhupati Babu, Nibaran Babu and others were looking after the work with great enthusiasm. Sachin Babu started to sing Kirtan in the Nam Ghar. The Kirtan gradually gained fervour. Sri Ma returned to the Ashram at about 1.30 to 2 p.m. Prasad started being distributed from 3 p.m. In the courtyard of the Ashram about 600 persons sat down to partake of prasad, irrespective of caste, creed and income. Sri Ma watched all this standing in the temple of Shree Annapurna. Those who were serving, or eating or were just the audience, were all expressing their joy. From time to time shouts of "Sri Sri Ma Annandamayee ki Jai" or "Baba Bholanath ki jai" filled the atmos-

phere. Sri Ma stood and watched this scene for a while and then went to lie down alone in the temple of Shree Annapurna.

This distribution of prasad lasted from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. But in the meantime I partook of some prasad and returned home.

### **Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Ma**

At about 9 p.m. I returned to the Ashram with Manoranjan Babu and Jatin. By that time distribution of prasad had been completed. The workers had just sat down to partake of their prasad. Sri Ma was conversing in private with a few persons.

At about 11 p.m. Ma came and sat down in the open field. We also squatted down near her. Bhudeb Babu asked Ma, "Ma, we have heard you had once met Mahatma Gandhi. We wish to hear details of that meeting from you."

Sri Ma : I do not feel inclined to talk about it. Hariram and Abhoy were both present there. You can get the details from them.

Bhudeb Babu : It is our wish to hear it from your lips.

Sri Ma : Let them start, if I feel like it, I will join in. Saying this Ma asked Abhoy to speak on the subject. Abhoy started thus :

"Mahatma Gandhi had heard a lot about Sri Ma from Kamala Nehru. That is why he sent Sri Jamunalal Bajaj to go and meet Sri Sri Ma. Sri Bajaj originally desired to stay only 3 days with Ma. But once he met Ma, his desire to return became less rigid. He sent telegram after telegram

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to Gandhiji requesting him to extend his leave and continued to stay at Raipur Ashram. In this way, in place of 3 days, 15 days elapsed and still he did not wish to return. He went and asked Ma if he should wire Mahatmaji for more leave. Ma said, "If you make such a request of Mahatmaji, he will indeed grant you such leave, but as he has already wired you to return, you should go back."

When Abhoy had reached this stage, Sri Ma herself took up the tale. She said, "Babaji used to request for half an hour daily to be private with the body, there was no conversation; he just wanted to sit in private in front of the body, who also used to sit quietly in front of him. Sometimes he used to lie down with his head in my lap or at other times he used to suck the big toe of one foot. This was his mode of having private speech (everybody laughs).

In order to visit this body from time to time, he expressed a desire to build a small Ashram on the waste land that surrounded Raipur Ashram and so he asked this body's opinion on this subject. This body said, "If you want to buy land, you can do so, but do not harbour any particular desire within yourself." As soon as he obtained my permission, he bought the land. This body had also told him that people did not know when they would breath from one moment to another, so it was best for him to be aloof from his household duties. He obeyed my suggestion to the last letter. When he returned to Ahmedabad he left his home and built himself a small Ashram nearby. In that

Ashram he arranged to keep and nourish cows and let Kumaris stay there. He himself arranged to live in a separate kutia. He accomplished all this within a very short time."

(Looking towards Abhoy) She said, "Now you can continue."

Abhoy : Sri Jamunalal Bajaj's great ambition was to arrange a meeting between Sri Sri Ma and Mahatma Gandhi. For this purpose he started sending telegram after telegram to Ma to visit that place. Furthermore, he started making such an elaborate arrangements for welcoming Ma that such lavish arrangements had never so far been made for any other top political leaders of the country. But Ma then had no kheyal to visit that place. Consequently during the life time of Sri Bajaj, Sri Ma did not meet Mahatmaji !

After some days when Ma was out on her travels, she heard in a station from Jamunalal Bajaj's son that his father has expired. This son kept on requesting Ma to visit Ahmedabad. He said, "My mother is now prostrate with grief, if you now come and give her your darshan, then she will derive some comfort and peace. The son was himself stricken with grief. Sri Sri Ma comforted him saying, "Why do you grieve for Babaji?" He is here in person, he is standing here near me wearing the dress and cap he used to wear while alive."

"Sri Ma happened then to be on the direct route to Ahmedabad. So she had a kheyal this time to visit Ahmedabad, hence together with all

of us she arrived at Jamunalal Bajaj's Ashram at Ahmedabad. At her arrival, there was great joy in the Ashram. At this time Mahatmaji was residing at Sevagram. He was then very busy with some political matters. Leaders of the country were also present with him. So it was not possible for Mahatmaji to come to Ma to meet her. He kept on sending message after message to Ma to visit Sevagram. But Ma expressed no desire to go elsewhere. At this juncture a certain gentleman came and told Ma, "Mataji, if you do not now visit Sevagram, then Mahatmaji in his old age will have to bear the trouble of visiting you here". On hearing this, Ma at once started to make arrangement to visit Sevagram.

When Ma reached Gandhiji's Ashram, it was nearly evening. Gandhiji was seated in his kutia. National leaders were also present. As soon as Sri Ma's motor reached the gates of the Ashram, Gandhiji called out to Ma, "Ao Ao" in a very pleasant mood. Ma also ran to Gandhiji's side. Gandhiji clasped Ma in his bosom, and remained thus for quite some time. When conversation commenced, Gandhiji said, "I have heard from Kamala that you are her guru." Ma replied, "I have no disciples."

Here, Ma resumed the thread of Abhoy's report and said, (Gandhiji said) "Do you know who sent Bajaj to you? It was I who did so. He had said to me, "Mahatmaji, the peace and joy I have received from your company over 15 years, I have obtained from Mataji's company in only 3 days.



“Babaji (Gandhiji) tried his best to persuade me to remain with him, but I did not agree. Then Gandhiji pointed out the leading national leaders around him and said, “I am their leader. They all obey my commands implicitly, today if you do not listen to my bequest, what will they imagine? I said, “My father (meaning Gandhiji) does not care two hoots for it.” Then Gandhiji said, “This is a very obstinate girl”. I said, “Your daughter is bound to imbibe some qualities from her father.”

Abhoy continued his story. “This sort of conversation continued for some time. I cannot recall all the various facts, but I have noted all this down somewhere. Both were soft spoken, so their conversation was so interesting that I cannot describe it.”

Ma resumed her tale, “I told Gandhiji, Pitaji, I will one day quietly enter your room without anybody knowing it.” Gandhiji said, “That is the way of thieves and dacoits”. I said, “I will steal all your belongings”. Later I said, “Pitaji when the time is ripe I will come and take you away as well.”

At the earnest request of Gandhiji Ma spent that night at Sevagram, and departed early next morning.

Thus Sri Ma's meeting with Gandhiji was described in bits and pieces, but because we could not learn about all the important events fully, we felt somewhat dissatisfied.

### **The catching of a thief inside the Ashram.**

At this juncture, there was a commotion inside the Ashram. Somebody came and shouted out to

Ma that a man had been half beaten to death. It was doubtful if the man would survive. Then Jatu Brahmachari came and told Ma, "It was I who beat him. Now let me suffer any punishment. You know last night during Arati somebody had cut off and stolen a necklace belonging to a girl. Today again at my father Bholanath's mandir somebody tried to snatch the ear ring from a sleeping girl. On hearing the girl cry out I went and caught hold of the thief red-handed, and beat him up mercilessly. This thief is no other than one of the temporary hands I had employed to do the Ashram's extra work. Tonight all the other cooks and servants of the Ashram had gone away, so this fellow had stayed behind so late for the sake of taking his chance in stealing. Ma said, "Then should we beat him up so mercilessly? We should have caught him and deal with him as we deal with others in similar circumstances." Having said this Ma went towards the Ashram. Outside the Ashram the man was brought and flung down before Ma. Ma had a look at the man and said, "No, he does not have any serious injury." But the man had pretended to have fainted. I saw something white like a piece of cotton lying near the man's hands. Ma removed it carefully. I could not realise exactly what it was although I moved quite near to Ma. The man was then assisted to his feet and taken towards the Ashram. Gopaldada was informed. When the latter arrived the man fell at his feet and asked for pardon. Gopaldada said, "Very well,

the necklace you stole last night and whatever else you may have stolen from the Ashram, restore them to us, we will then think of pardoning you." The man still continued to deny any theft on his part. At this stage I noticed a few feathers from a pigeon in Ma's hands, strung with a thin piece of wire. I imagined that the white feathers I had seen on Ma's crown on the night of the Tithi Puja would be some of those. Because when the crown was being removed from Ma's head I had noticed some feathers falling down loose from it. Ma said, "I have removed the feathers from the man's hands. When the man was brought and flung down before this body, I had noticed that something white was lying near his hands. As soon as I tried to remove these, I realised they were nothing else but a few feathers strung together with wire. As soon as I pulled the feathers, I realised that the other end of the wire was wound round the man's fingers. That is why I could not remove them easily. As soon as I pulled them, the fingers of his hand were lifted. He then of his own accord straightened his fingers so that I could remove the feathers.

Do you know what was these feathers are for? When somebody is asleep, in order to check whether his sleep is deep enough or not, he lightly touches some part of his face with the feather. If the sleeper moves at this touch, he realises that the person is not sufficiently deep in slumber, and so it is not safe to remove anything from his body. But when he sees that the person does not stir at all, then he removes ornaments etc. from his body."

I was flabbergasted at these words of Ma. So many of us were present but none had noticed any feathers. When Ma discovered them we still did not realise what exactly they were, or for what purpose they could be used. When Ma recounted all this everybody realised that this man himself had stolen the necklace with the help of the feathers. But the man still continued to deny any theft on his part. But the boys did not release him. When they referred to Ma asking what should be done with him Ma said, "Did you not promise to reclaim the necklace from him?" On hearing this, everybody understood that the necklace would be found on him. So he was brought outside in the field, and strapped to the pole of a tent.

We started exchanging our experiences sitting under the tent. After a while somebody came to us from inside the Ashram and informed us that Ma was dressed with a golden crown, any of us who wished to see this could do so. On hearing this we all went inside the Ashram, and observed that the blue sari and the crown with which Ma had been dressed previously had again been worn today. Sri Ma was seated in Bholanath's mandir. Ma had dressed thus for the sake of the girls, because, when she was dressed thus last night, none of the ladies were then present. As there was insufficient space, we remained there only for a short time and then came away.

In a little while Ma came outside. She had meanwhile removed her special dress. Ma went

towards the spot where the thief was roped up. On noticing his condition, Ma told, "Why are you making him suffer in this way?" On these words of Ma, we removed his bondage. Ma asked him to return the necklace. He said, "I have not stolen the necklace. If my words are not true let me be affected by a serious malady." He even denied that feathers had been bound to his fingers with wire. On hearing him lie so blatantly, Ma said no more, but asked us, "What do you wish to do with him now?"

**Birendada :** We will do whatever you tell us.

**Sri Ma :** You can hand him over to the police, but you will yourselves be implicated in red tape. You may even see subsequently that he would not be awarded any punishment. If you do not wish to keep him in the Ashram, then you are no longer responsible for correcting his ways of life. And he is not the type to be corrected. He who is born to steal will continue to steal. So I say just release him.

We carried out Ma's instructions. The man was returned his clothes still into Ashram. He left.

Sri Ma came and sat down in the field, and talked in private to Birendada. We went and slept under the tent. When we awoke, it was daylight. We tendered our pranams to Ma and returned home.

### **The Departure from Dhaka**

*Monday 4.6.45*

Today Ma was leaving Dhaka for Calcutta. I went to the Ashram at about 8.30 a.m. At that

time Ma was approaching the Ashram by car after visiting Siddheswari Ashram and Dhaka Hall. But without entering the Ashram she went to Shahbagh. We waited for Ma out in the field. Ma returned from Shahbagh after about half an hour. Ma was at once taken for her Bhog. After partaking a meal Ma came and sat down on the verandah of the Smriti Mandir. Noticing a huge crowd of ladies surrounding her we stood at a distance. I was thinking I would return home as soon as Ma left the Ashram. At this juncture, somebody came and informed me, "Ma is asking for you." I strode through the crowd to Ma. But from Ma's appearance it did not look as if she had asked for me. I kept on standing inside the crowd. Ma pointed towards a lady and said, "The dead daughter of this woman has come to life again. (Looking towards me) I suppose you have heard the story."

I : I cannot recall anything now.

Thereafter everybody requested Ma to recount the story. Ma started saying, "Her 12 years old daughter had died. She was overcome with grief at her death. When I went to Tarapith she came to me and started crying piteously. This body had then advised her, "Ma you must not cry so much for a dead person, whose soul thereby suffers great pain. It is better to pray to God that your daughter should rest in peace. But if you do intend to cry then cry to God, saying, "Oh God, why did you take her away?"

At this advice, although she obtained temporary relief, she could not entirely forget the memory of

her daughter. Often she used to cry and address her daughter thus, "If I could only see you alive once, and know where you are, I would get some peace." When some days had passed thus, she dreamt one night that her daughter had come to her. She was dressed with flowers in such a fashion that it was not possible for any human being to be so dressed. The daughter came and sat down on the lap of her mother, who wrapped her hands round her daughter saying, "I will never let you go again." After a while she realised that somehow her daughter had slipped away from her. In the same dream she again saw that she had arrived at a large and beautiful field, where Rishis and little girls were singing hymns to the Lord. Her daughter was included among the girls. The place was beautiful and the songs were also very melodious. Narayan himself was present there disguised as an old Brahman. He came and placed his hands over her forehead, and at this stage her dream was broken. On waking up she started grieving, "Oh, I wish I could have seen such a wonderful dream a little longer."

Within a few days of this event the girl's father i.e. her husband experienced on dream where their daughter was saying, "Baba, I could not stay quiet for your continuous crying for me, so I have returned to you." The father took her in his bosom and gave her to his wife. The day this dream was experienced, the woman became pregnant. Later when this body went to Tarapith, the woman brought a one month old daughter to this

body and said, "Ma, I have got my daughter back." Saying this, she recounted the full story to me. The girl was then present in the Ashram and was about 6/7 years old."

After finishing this story Ma said to me, "Now hurry Khukuni to get ready for our departure, it will be better in the train." I went and requested Didi to hurry. The idea arose in my mind, did Ma ask me to accompany her in the carriage? When I spoke to Jatin, he asked, "Should I then attach my saloon to the Calcutta Mail?" I went to Didi to consult her and on hearing our proposition Didi said, "Good, that will be excellent."

On hearing this Jatin and I went along to the station at once in a Rickshaw. When Ma's car arrived at the station, we took her to the saloon. There was such a crowd in the saloon that we were compelled to stand with difficulties in Jatin's kitchen in order to arrive at Narayanganj. We had no opportunity of speaking to Ma. We helped Ma board the steamer, did our pranam to her and took our departure.

*(To be continued)*



