

The ONE who is the Eternal, the Atman,  
He Himself is the traveller on the path to Immortality,  
He is all in all, He alone is.

## MATRI VANI

*( Replies to letters on various subjects from different people at different times. )*

53.

After all these days this kind of question has occurred to him ? Of course it has happened because he is at a stage when questions arise, and there is nothing wrong about it—for is not everything God's creation ? Things are different for different people. It is well to remember that what looms as a formidable problem may at times be resolved in a very easy way and so the further question may arise : Was it after all but a trifling problem ? The Creator of all things alone knows how to appraise it, He alone knows what is great and what is small.

54.

In whatever condition God may keep man at any time, he must remain content. He should wholly rely upon God and let his mind be occupied with Japa and meditation. It is when one's desires remain unfulfilled that one feels disappointed or frustrated. The only desire to be cherished is that His will may be done. Let him say to himself : "I shall call out to the Almighty, for no matter what He does, He does it for the best." To live in this spirit is man's duty as a human being. One has to aspire at the realization of Truth.

## 55.

How can this little girl\* possibly leave her father\* ? Even if he pushes her far away this obstinate little girl will still be with him. The father will have to realize that such is the nature of his little daughter : in fact all her father's qualities are to be found in her, and he should make her use these very qualities in the service of her ailing† father.

If one feeds upon the things that aggravate the disease, is it not natural that the illness should grow worse ? Medicine will have to be taken and also a change of air will be beneficial.

## 56.

By doing service heart and mind are purified—be convinced of this ! To engage in service is a very powerful *Sadhana*, do not become impatient. Rather serve your people with the utmost calm and have a kind word for everyone. Whenever you do or say anything wrong, beg to be forgiven and try your best not to let a similar error occur in future. Even though others may be unjust to you, you yourself should neither do nor say anything unseemly.

## 57.

Worldly occupations and business are bound to cause worry, it cannot be otherwise. The only way to meet it is by endurance, endurance and more endurance. He who can endure wins in the end. One has to dive down among the waves of the sea and rise up again. The talents and the work God has entrusted to you are meant for His service and for nothing else—bear this in mind !

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\* Mataji addresses every man as 'father' and speaks of Herself as everyone's little daughter.

† The illness obviously here means '*bhava roga*', the disease of every man who looks upon himself as a separate individual. The medicine to cure this ailment is *Sadhana* : a change of air signifies a change from worldly surroundings to *Satsang*, the company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth.

58.

Man must behave as a hero. During spells of misfortune he must abide in fortitude and patience. Time never stands still.

Suicide is a most heinous sin. To whom belongs the body that you speak of destroying? Is this the way a human being talks? For shame!

59.

To indulge in what seems pleasurable means to choose that which appears lovely on the surface and therefore attractive. Yet unlawful, ill-fated, degrading actions that give expression to one's animal nature lead to misery. The rules and regulations pertaining to the householder's period of life (*Grihastha Ashram*) have to be observed as fully as possible. To live up to the highest ideals seems irksome at first, but ultimately brings real well-being and peace. One must learn to find enjoyment in the Sublime—then only does one deserve to be called a human being. Having been blessed with a human body it is only right that one should behave in a fitting manner. Why give way to animal instincts?

If you cannot sustain *Japa* at all times, at any rate complete two rosaries twice daily, morning and evening. The search after Truth is man's real vocation.

60.

To a human being the most noble, irreproachable line of conduct is alone acceptable. If anyone strives to mould his life accordingly it is a matter of great rejoicing. In the case of a woman it means preserving her integrity and purity by being completely faithful to her husband. Not to let even her glance fall on any other man must be her endeavour. Only actions that kindle man's Divine nature are worthy of the name of action, all the rest is non-action, a waste of energy. Any pattern of behaviour that fails to quicken the Divine in man should be eschewed, however enticing it may be, but any that helps to awaken man's inherent Divinity must be resolutely adopted as one's own, even though seemingly uninviting. Man's calling is to

tread the excellent path that leads to Immortality. What appears pleasing to the senses later develops into a hot-bed of poison, generating inner turmoil and disaster, for it belongs to the realm of death.

## 61.

Force of character is man's great strength. If he uses it in his dealings with the world he will indeed be victorious along most lines.

## 62.

Everything comes to pass according to each one's destiny. You will have to accept this. The Creator has so regulated the universe that everyone has and ever will have to reap the fruits of his actions; there is no way out of it. If because of your physical unhappiness you feel disinclined to and consequently do not meditate on the name of Him who is the Supreme Father, Mother, Friend and Lord -- do you call this creating good Karma? That you may have to suffer the same kind of trouble over and over again? Your father and mother arranged what, after careful consideration, they believed to be for your welfare. *Karma*, the consequences of one's past actions are one's own liability.

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# MATAJI'S AMARA VANI

( 14 )

When the *Bhagavata Saptaha*\*, held in September 1948 at Solan, was over the Raja of Solan asked :

Has the person for whose sake the *Bhagavata* was read, really benefited by it ?

*Mataji* : Yes, certainly. You see, whatever anyone does, be it good or bad, is supposed to affect fourteen generations, namely back to the seventh generation of his ancestors and down to the seventh generation of his descendants. For there is a saying that fourteen generations of the relatives of an evildoer (seven of the past and seven of the future) will have to suffer in lower states of existence as a result of his misdeeds ; on the other hand if one person attains to perfection fourteen generations of his family will thereby be saved.

Although nowadays so much money is squandered on pleasures and amusements, yet should anyone spend any on a religious function such as we have just witnessed, people call it a sheer waste of money.

All the same a great number of refugees had to flee from the Punjab leaving millions of rupees behind—and why ? Because this was destined to happen. A combination of various factors brought it about. When circumstances co-operate there is no knowing who may come from where and in what manner to be present at a particular function. At this *Bhagavata Saptaha* those who were meant to come did attend and each derived whatever profit he was entitled to. It is a case of various causes intermingling. All that occurs, good or bad,—if it was predestined to happen—comes about through the mysterious working together of certain forces.

*Question* : How do those forces operate ? Do they cause the beginning of one's actions or their completion ?

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\* *Bhagavata Saptaha* denotes the ceremonial chanting in Sanskrit and the explanation in the vernacular of the whole of the *Srimad Bhagavata* in seven days. This is usually arranged by the relatives of someone who recently passed away, for the purpose of helping the deceased person on his or her upward path.

*Mataji* : For one thing there is eternal relationship among all that exists. Secondly when there is a want it may be satisfied to some extent by the uniting of certain factors. Then again by a specific concurrence of factors something new may be begun ; Creation, Preservation and Dissolution continue ever side by side. Some part may be brought to a finish and another part started anew. In the one case something that was due to be obtained was obtained ; in the other case what was destined to become has begun to take shape ; and furthermore what is, continues to be. Besides there are certain standpoints from which beginning is immediately followed by end—without any continuance. There are still other points of view where beginning and end coincide, where the beginning fulfils itself in a single moment.

So long as full enlightenment has not come there will be a sequence (actual or logical) of creation, preservation and dissolution. Actions are bound to be related. But why say : 'bound to be' ? The relation is simply there, is inherent in action. Nothing has ever been, is now or ever will be unrelated to anything else existing.

*From the audience* : All this sounds most interesting, but it does not give us the personal experience of what has been said.

*Mataji* : By listening repeatedly to discussions and discourses on topics of this kind the path to first-hand knowledge of what has been heard, gradually opens out. You know, it is as when water uninterruptedly dripping on a stone finally makes a hole in it, and then a flood may suddenly surge through, which will bring enlightenment.

Be it the perusal of Sacred Texts, listening to religious discourses, engaging in Kirtan—God must be the alpha and omega of whatever is done. When reading, read about Him, when talking, talk of Him and when singing sing His praises. These three practices are intrinsically the same—the same expressed in three different ways, because people respond differently, to suit each person's temperament and capacity for assimilation. But essentially there is only He and He alone, although everyone has his own individual path that leads to Him. What is the right path for each person depends on the degree of his maturity and on his predilection.

Take for instance the study of Vedanta. Some seekers become completely drowned in it. Just as others may so lose themselves in Kirtan

as to fall into a trance. A student of Vedanta may become wholly absorbed in his texts, even more so than the one who gets carried away by Kirtan. According to one's specific line of approach one will be able to achieve full concentration through the study of a particular Scripture or by some other means.

First comes listening, then reflection and last of all the translation into action of what has been heard and pondered over. This is why one has first of all to listen, so that later on each may be able to select Vedanta or Kirtan or whatever else be in his own line.

Have you never come across people making light of Kirtan, saying: "What is there to be gained by it?" Nevertheless after listening to it for some length of time they actually develop a liking for it.

This is why one must listen before one can reflect and then later what has been heard and reflected upon will take shape in action. To listen to discourses on God or Truth is certainly beneficial, provided God does not let the speaker disparage or condemn those who are of another sect. To find fault with others creates obstacles for everyone all round, for him who criticizes, for him who is blamed as well as for those who listen to the criticism. Whereas what is said in a spirit of equality is fruitful to everybody. For only where there is no question of regarding anything as inferior or blameworthy (*asat*) can one speak of *Satsang*. \*

Who is known as a *Vaishnava* \*\*? One who sees Vishnu everywhere. And as a *Shakta* †? One who beholds the Great Mother and nothing save Her. In truth all the various creeds and philosophies spring from one source—who then is to be blamed, who to be reviled or suppressed? All are equal in essence.

Thou art Mother, Thou art Father,  
Thou art Friend and Thou art Master,  
Truly thou art all in all.  
Every name is Thy Name  
Every quality Thy Quality,  
Every form Thy Form indeed.

\* A play upon words: *Sat* means True Being, the Good; *Satsang*, the company of the Good and also a religious gathering. *Asat*, the opposite of *Sat*, means non-being, wrong, evil. Therefore to find fault (*asat*) in a religious meeting (*Satsang*) is a contradiction in terms.

\*\* Vaishnava—worshipper of Vishnu, the Preserver.

† Shakta—worshipper of Shakti, Divine Energy.

Yet He is also without form, pure unmanifested spirit—all depends on one's avenue of approach.

Is it not said that the great Shiva of the Shaivites\* is the Brahman Itself? And for those whose method is self-inquiry, everything is but the ONE SELF. In reality there is no contradiction; so long as the slightest difference is perceived — even by a hair's breadth — how can one speak of the state of Pure Being?

For this reason no matter what path anyone may choose, it is THAT. *Vedanta*\*\* actually means the end of difference and non-difference.

While engaging in Sadhana one must concentrate in a single direction, but after it has been completed, what comes then? The cessation of difference, distinction and disagreement. Differences do indeed exist on the path, but how can there be a difference of Goal?

( 15 )

One evening a Punjabi lady came for Mataji's Darshan. Mataji asked her :

*Mataji* : Are you attending to your Japa regularly every day ?

*Reply* : I do indeed, but I cannot concentrate.

*Mataji* : Do not relax your efforts !

*The Punjabi Lady* : My children are very noisy. Even if at other times they may be quite well behaved, no sooner have they noticed that their mother has sat down to do her puja, the hullabaloo starts.

*Mataji* : Listen, is not the sea made up of innumerable waves, small and big? Dive deep down in the midst of them.

*The Punjabi lady* : Ma, I get very angry.

*Mataji* : Anger is not a good thing.

*The Punjabi lady* : What am I to do? I cannot help it.

*Mataji* : You can do one thing. On the day that you have lost your temper like this, see which is the most tasty dish on your dinner table and do not eat of it. Because you did wrong. You will remember to do this, won't you?

*Reply* : Yes, Ma, I will.

\* Shaivite - worshipper of Shiva.

\*\* Vedanta—the end or culmination of Vedic wisdom. Mataji here plays upon words: *Veda* and *Bheda* — difference. In Bengali the letters B and V sound alike. 'Anta' means 'end'.

# On the Teaching of Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma

By

Vijayananda (Dr. Adolphe Weintrob)

( Translated from the French )

What is Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma's teaching? This is a question one can often hear, for it is put by most newcomers. All who are close to Mataji must of course have been present at some of the meetings in public or in small groups when Mataji with profound wisdom replies to questions on religious and spiritual subjects, often displaying a keen sense of humour. Many of these discussions have been recorded, noted down and published by men far better fitted for the task than myself. It is not this teaching that I want to talk about in the following few lines, but rather another aspect of Mataji's teaching, much simpler and more direct, which has nothing or very little to do with big philosophical problems. In fact this side of Her teaching might well appear to be commonplace and as such often pass unnoticed; although in my opinion it appeals to a much deeper layer of our being and can therefore be extremely helpful in our spiritual search, if only we will listen to it and open ourselves to the Divine Blessing that pours down on us constantly in Mataji's presence.

To be in Mataji's company almost invariably brings us in touch with people of every psychological type. In western countries the saying that the face is the mirror of the soul is quite proverbial. Actually all our thoughts are reflected in our countenance, the slightest mental vibration produces a contraction of one or several facial muscles. I have watched a great many faces and never, not even for a fraction of a second, have I seen reflected in them the state "beyond desire and fear." Swiftly the thought waves follow one another just like the billows on an expanse of water agitated by the wind. But in Mataji's face the mouth expresses a state of completeness, of wholeness in which everything is included. Never can even the slightest trace of fear or irritation be detected in Her eyes. They ever radiate the same love, the same sweetness, regardless of the most trying circumstances. This is real beauty. What a great joy it is to contemplate such a countenance! To watch and lovingly remember it will unconsciously make us try to imitate its expressions and these will

in due course lead us to the attitude of mind to which they correspond.

A reader who has never had Mataji's Darshan might perhaps imagine that Her features are always set in a static expression of peace and serenity. But this is not so. An endless variety of emotions pass over Her face like ripples which a light breeze produces on the surface of a quiet lake, while the immutable calm of its depths remains ever undisturbed. Mataji plays with feelings, but never Herself becomes their plaything as most of us do. An intelligent observer will soon notice how She mirrors the emotional states of Her surroundings, without ever really being affected by them—like a crystal that assumes the colours of the objects entering its field of refraction.

Mataji's conversation about trivial everyday matters is never trivial. For those who know how to listen, it almost always contains some profound teaching. On several occasions, both in public meetings and in small gatherings, I have remarked how Mataji suddenly utters a sentence that appears incomprehensible to us and sometimes perhaps even beside the point. I have repeatedly been able to discover afterwards that this sentence was meant for someone in the audience in reply to a query that had been tormenting him, or that it

represented the solution of a problem that until then had seemed insoluble to him

Last summer at Solan after the celebrations of Mataji's birthday, She was one day as usual taking Her evening stroll just outside of the Ashram veranda. At that hour a dog used to come and beg for *prasad* from Mataji. The entrance of the Ashram veranda is guarded by two wooden tigers, realistically painted, with their jaws wide open, ready to bite. Jokingly Mataji placed the sweets that were meant for the dog into the tiger's mouth. Everyone was highly amused to see the poor dog standing in front of the tiger, torn between the desire to snatch the sweets and the fear of being bitten by the wooden beast. Mataji then made a remark of which I do not recall the exact words. Its meaning was that the fear which keeps man fettered to the world was just as illusory as the dog's fear of the wooden tiger. Apart from the general teaching this statement conveyed, it was meant for a particular person present. Like an infallible arrow it hit the centre of the target and did its work.

It happens frequently that people coming to Mataji with distressing questions, problems or difficulties find a clear and simple solution merely

by sitting in Her Presence—the solution presenting itself quite naturally, convincingly and with obviousness. For, what a great Sage, a real Guru brings about spontaneously is not only to clarify the mind and to transmit power, but above all to disperse the mists that hide our true Self, our Eternal Being, and to put us in communion with THAT. Once this contact has been established, it is THAT which advises and guides us with unfailling certainty.

Many of those who live near Mataji have probably like myself, experienced that when we approach Her with questions concerning our Sadhana, She most assuredly replies with wisdom and kindness, yet often only briefly, in a detached manner, as if it were a matter of secondary importance. When on the other hand we become the actors in some little incident of everyday life and display anger or quarrelsomeness, etc., She seems to take great interest: She summons those involved in it, inquires carefully into the details and sometimes spends hours over the solution of some apparently petty difficulty.

Spiritual practices such as meditation, japa and so forth are undoubtedly of great importance. Nevertheless, as I have heard Mataji point out on various occasions, their sole purpose is to assist us in removing

the veil that conceals Reality from us. That veil is made up of desires, anger, fear etc. and it is in one's daily life that one has the chance to study these obstructions as they arise, to bring them into the field of one's consciousness, so as to get rid of them.

One day, for some insignificant reason, I lost my temper in Mataji's presence. Impetuously I blurted out a few irreverent words, of which I repented immediately afterwards. She replied, as She always does, with great gentleness, although it appeared to me tinged with a shade of irony. I felt ashamed; the same evening I asked for a private interview in order to apologize. I was naturally anxious that the whole matter should be forgotten as quickly as possible and that nobody should mention it anymore. But Mataji on the contrary dwelt on it at length, minutely examining the details and questioning the persons involved, which made me the more deeply ashamed.

A competent surgeon does not feel satisfied by merely making an incision when treating an abscess, but cuts a wide opening so as to be able to drain the sore completely, straightening out the folds in the skin and carefully removing any hidden trace of pus. Similarly Mataji does not merely settle a particular difficulty, but penetrates to the root of the evil and deals

with it, so that it may be destroyed with all its ramifications and never sprout up again.

Later I came to understand the psychology of what had happened that day. The rage that had been smouldering within me was bound to explode against someone or other. Mataji Herself had deflected it towards Her own person, so as to direct its karmic results. This is how, again and again, She arranges things for our good. Many of Her devotees must have had similar experiences. I am told that She says: "If you must be angry, be angry with me, for you will not be able to keep it up for long." And also: "By *moha* (strong attachment) for this body (meaning Herself), all *moha* will be destroyed."

Wrath or affection felt for an ordinary person must inevitably produce a reaction in that person and set in motion a whole series of karmic consequences. Whereas if the object of one's anger or attachment is a perfect Being, the waves of the emotion will find no resistance and therefore exhaust themselves and die away like fire that has nothing to consume anymore.

Anyone who wishes to remain with Mataji for a lengthy period of time, will have to spend a good part of his life at railway stations and in trains, for Mataji rarely stays in one place

for long. The agitation of a railway station, the mental fever that usually accompanies the preparations for a journey are difficult to bear. Most people are unconsciously carried away completely by the current of excitement surrounding them. A few will now and again have bright moments in which they may be able to observe their own and other people's reactions; but those who in the midst of such mental whirlpools can stand aside and watch as disinterested spectators are surely exceptional.

As to Mataji Herself, She is ever calm, unperturbed and cheerful, like a rock that no storm can affect.

However when travelling with Mataji things automatically arrange themselves: the train that one was afraid to miss arrives an hour late; the carriages are packed and it seems impossible to find a place, but somehow, as if by miracle, everything is managed; one feels exhausted and longs to lie down and sleep—lo and behold, just then a berth becomes vacant. All the same, it is human nature to wish to direct everything by one's own strength, while it would be so much simpler to let oneself be guided by the invisible Hand of the Divine.

Yet sometimes Mataji calls us to order. Once for example we were waiting for a train that would in all probability

be overcrowded. We were to reach our destination only the next day, which meant passing the whole night in acute discomfort. I had purchased an Inter class ticket and was, as it were lying in wait for the train, ready to jump into the first compartment and occupy a berth if possible—an attitude of mind no doubt quite unworthy of a *Sadhaka* and even more so of one who had been travelling with Mataji for some time. At the very moment the train came into the station Mataji passed in front of me and, pointing to a large heap of luggage, requested me with a peculiar smile to see it safely into the train. Patiently I stood and waited until the last of the numerous baggages had been stored away in the compartment, imagining in advance the sleepless

night I would have to pass amidst the dense crowd. In the meanwhile everyone had boarded the train and I thought I might deem myself fortunate if I could secure sitting-accommodation of some sort. But exactly where I was standing and guarding the luggage there happened to be an Inter class carriage. Someone whom I hardly knew had reserved an upper berth for me and helped me to get in with my bags.

These few lines will give the reader but a vague and limited idea of that which I call Mataji's direct teaching. It is in Her presence that one has day after day to experience for oneself Her Divine radiation. All one has to do is to see with one's eyes, to hear with one's ears and to understand with one's heart.

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# मातृ-दर्शन

## Matri-Darshan

By a Devotee from Bombay.

भवानि त्वं दासे मयि वितर दृष्टिं सकरुणा-  
मिति स्तोतुं वाञ्छन् कथयति भवानि त्वमिति यः ।  
तदैव त्वं तस्मै दिशसि निज-सायुज्य-पदवीं  
मुकुन्द - ब्रह्मोन्द्र - स्फुट - मुकुट - नोराजित - पदाम् ॥

( आनंद लहरी )

“Oh Bhavani, do Thou cast a compassionate glance upon me, Thy servant”. To him who thus praying says “भवानि त्वं” i. e. “Oh, Bhavani do Thou ( or let me be Thee ),” then and there Thou dost give the state of Union with Thee, that state adorned by the brilliant crowns of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra.”

I had the good fortune of having Sri Sri Anandamayi Ma's Darshan on the 23rd of November 1954. That was the first time I saw Her. I do not recall having heard or read about Her prior to that date. Mataji was then staying at Juhu in Bombay. I went to Juhu for Mataji's Darshan almost every evening until Her departure from Bombay on December, 4th 1954.

During such a short contact with Mataji, She in Her infinite compassion

showered Her blessings and Her grace on me. What the nature of such an experience was, I have attempted in short to describe in the following. Being a mystic experience, its description is bound to suffer from the usual drawbacks characteristic of a narrative of experiences at a higher level of consciousness in terms of experiences at the usual level of human awareness.

I experienced the full force of the descent of this Grace on the 30th Nov. 1954 and onwards. In the morning I felt a tremendous outpouring of Divine Force rushing down into me like a waterfall from above the brain, I was conscious of a vast nothingness from the “Sahasrara”. This Force permeated every particle of my body. In Its descent It broke through obstacles, purified the mind and circled round the brain. At that moment the

mind was separated and indrawn, charged with the Divine Force and kept steadily pulled within. The mind was held out as a mere instrument of the Divine and remained fully consecrated to It. It was impossible for the mind to wander. It was quite obvious to me that the mind was not myself but merely an instrument serving a purpose, like the other senses.

As soon as the Force entered the heart, the obstacles in the heart burst asunder as if by an explosion. The passions and desires fled and the heart pounded vigorously. The soul was freed from its age old ignorance and its burdens and for the first time danced in its sublime purity and newly found freedom.

गुरु तो वही सराहिए, जो सिकली गर होय ।

जनम जनम का मोरचा, छन में डाले धोय ॥

Prayers to the Divine arose from the heart spontaneously, without any volition on my part. In fact to pray was the natural condition of the soul and I felt that the heart would burst unless I prayed. I realized that knowledge ( ज्ञान ) and devotion ( भक्ति ) were the same. I also knew that anything I touched would be purified.

I was immersed in a sea of pure existence and rapture ( आनंद ), the nature of which it would be futile to attempt to describe. I experienced waves upon waves of blissful delight or rapture. That existence and rapture was the true condition or

the very essence of my soul or self. My consciousness was drawn in and held between the eyebrows ( *Ajña Chakra* ), where I was aware of particles moving in a clockwise direction in a flame which extended from between the eyebrows to over the middle of the forehead. As I concentrated on a letter, I found a force emanating from within the middle of my forehead and literally grasping the paper. My consciousness had extended and I experienced the Divine Existence-Delight which was myself, as the substratum of everything around me. I experienced everything as Divine. As I looked at a stone in a wall I observed that my consciousness was extending and I felt in part identified with the inner substance of the stone and the very 'Raison d'etre' of its being. I knew that the Divine was the only Reality and all else an 'illusion', that the material things were really made up of nothing, but were forms grafted on the inner substance of Existence-Joy and had no independent validity. Everything was the Divine with illusory forms swimming as it were in the Divine Sea.

During Sri Haribabaji's Kirtan, I experienced a powerful force ( भक्ति-रस ) descending into me from above the head, from the 'Sahasrara'. The beauty and delight of this experience

