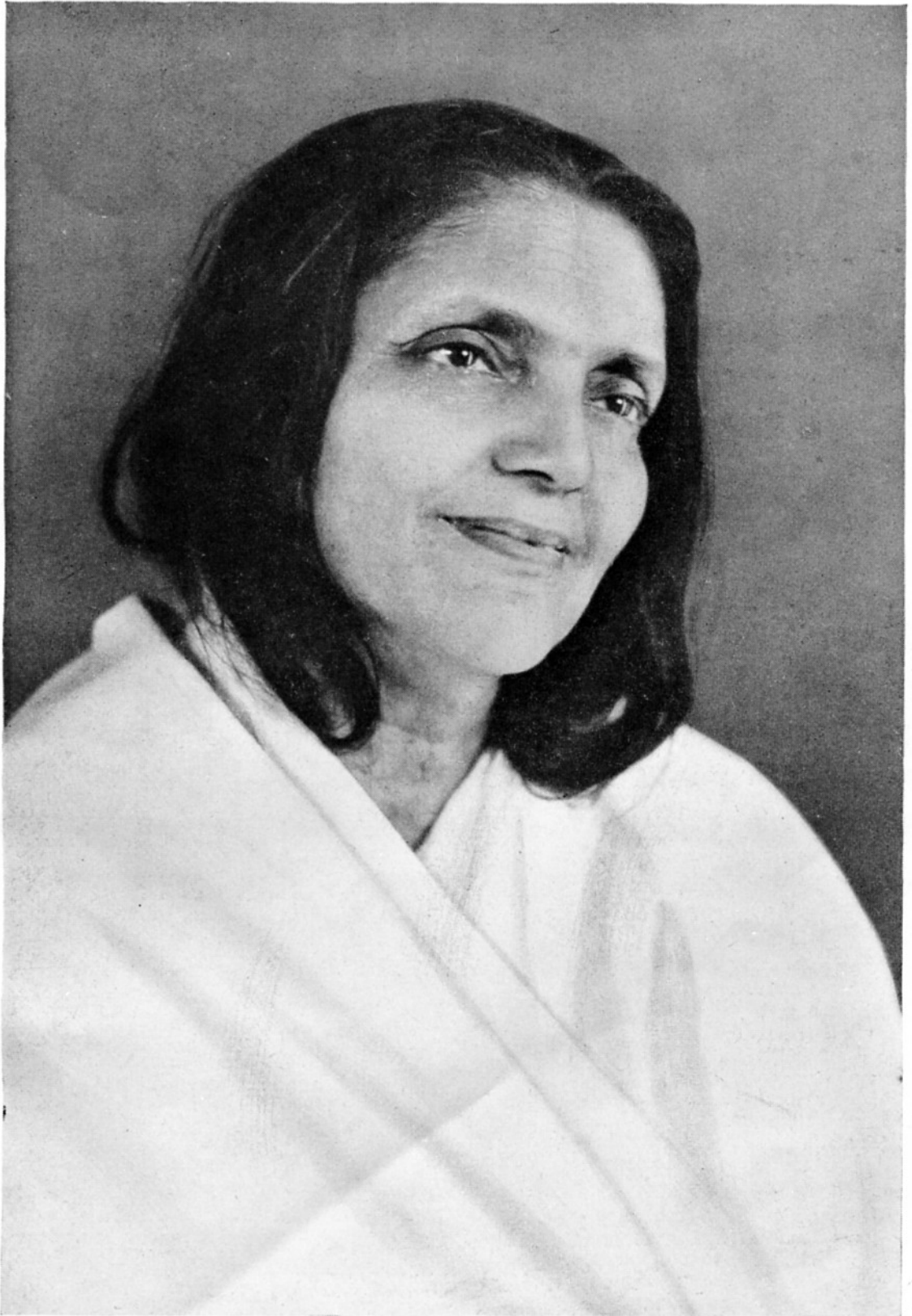


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The ONE who is the Eternal, the Atman,
He Himself is the traveller on the path of Immortality,
He is all in all, He alone is.

MATRI VANI

Look, in order to pluck a rose one has to put one's hand into the midst of thorns. But if the rose is a person's aim and he has a keen desire to pluck it, he will not refrain from doing so for fear of being pricked. Moreover the Great Mother arranges whatever is necessary for each one: She certainly knows the real need of every individual. If one has at least this much faith, there is no reason at all to feel distressed.

* * * *

HE at all times lavishes His Grace on everyone. Only in order to acquire the capacity to understand this, one must tenaciously fix one's gaze at Him as Goal.

* * * *

Who is 'Anandamayi Ma'? Who indeed is '*Anandamayi*' (permeated with Divine joy)? HE is eternally enthroned in the hearts of all beings, verily He dwells *everywhere*. Having seen Him, reached Him, everything is seen, everything attained; in other words one becomes fearless, certain, free from conflict, immutable, imperishable.

* * * *

To live in a foreign country is in itself painful; but to be in one's own home together with one's near and dear ones is happiness. This is why there is the search for one's real Home, for one's true Beloved. How much longer will you remain in this alien land and suffer misery ?



Do you imagine that you are liberated ? In order to become actually liberated, that is to realize Him, one has to set apart a little time. If you live in the spirit of "He is engaging me in His service," there is no cause for bondage. But if this attitude of mind is absent the desire for praise and fame awakens. The serving is He, the server is also He and the one who is served is likewise He alone : there is none apart from the ONE.



Who is going whither and from whence does he come ? For this body there is no going and no coming. That which existed before exists even now. What does it matter whether one dies or remains alive ? Even after having died he still exists, so why worry ?

Conversations with Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee

RECORDED BY PROFESSOR B. GANGULY

(Translated from Bengali.)

(1)

Question : In *satsang** who keeps company with whom ?

Mataji : You keep company with your Self.

Question : To what purpose ?

Mataji : So that Truth, Supreme Knowledge may be revealed. You should seek *satsang* in order to attain to Self-realization.

Question : Which aspect of my being associates with what other aspect ?

Mataji : Your being has innumerable aspects, you in your aspect of ignorance associate with yourself in your aspect of Knowledge : in other words your outer self concentrates and makes contact with your innermost Self.

Question : Is it right to have faith when seeking *satsang* ?

Mataji : Certainly. It is you yourself who exist also in the form of faith.

**Satsang* : The company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, either the actual physical company or in an applied sense by reading holy Scriptures or the lives of saints. Also a religious meeting and in its widest sense the practice of the presence of God.

Question : It is surely appropriate to seek *satsang* with full consciousness ?

Mataji : The objective of *satsang* is to awaken to full consciousness, to progress from unconsciousness to consciousness.

Question : “Where a superman has walked that is the Path”—what does this mean ?

Mataji : The superman is ever present within you. A superman is not any particular person, no one external—it is HE Himself. The inner superman, who is the real superman, follow His Path ! The superman is Self-effulgent, it is beside the point to ask who He is. Are you aware of the superman within you ? Then why your question ? Speak of that which you can perceive directly. It is imperative that the superman within you should become revealed to you. If you say : “I am the instrument and He wields it,” this is all right. Once you have come to know that superman, questions will no longer arise, but because you are unable to grasp Him, you need an outer superman. He who is sublime among sages, who is a superman, a divine incarnation—what He says, the path He treads, that is the Path. Do you know why one has to accept a Guru ? It is necessary to be initiated by an outer Guru so as to be able to find the Guru who dwells within. This is why you make contact with a superman. If you ask : “How can one recognize Him ?” When the time is ripe He will let you find Him. If you are eagerly longing for Him, He will allow you to recognize and understand Him and to make close contact with Him. What will be the ultimate outcome of this ? You will find your Self,

the superman who is hidden within you will be revealed to you. Then you will understand that your own superman appeared to you in such and such a guise. Unless He Himself lets you grasp Him you cannot do so.

Question : Can the *prārabdha** be obliterated if there is desperate eagerness ?

Mataji : Unless one has reached the shore the *prārabdha* cannot be obliterated. Eagerness† is the means, not the fulfilment, it is but the way to fulfilment. There are degrees also of eagerness.

Question : Who is called a mother and what are the characteristics of a mother ?

Mataji : Nobody is called a mother. A mother is just a mother. Those who become her children know what she is like.

Question : Does one understand the mother by becoming her child or by becoming oneself a mother ?

Mataji : Either way. When a spade is dug into the earth, has the earth been pierced by the spade entering into it, or will you say that the spade has entered because the earth has been pierced ? Likewise it is one and the same whether you say the child has recognized his mother or the mother her child.

**Prārabdha karma* is that portion of one's past action, which is bound to fructify in the present life and cannot be averted.

†A play upon words : "Kul" means shore, 'vyakulta' restless yearning, eagerness. Thus unless the shore has been reached there is restless longing for it.

Question : What is the means to blot out the *prārabdha karma* ?

Mataji : To kindle the fire of Supreme Knowledge.

Question : How will Self-realization come about ?

Mataji : By receiving and holding the power of the Guru. What is already within you becomes revealed. A person whose brain is not clear cannot be taught. In a similar way the inner power to know your Self is realized by engaging in *sadhana*. It is like an electric connection. If it were not within you, you could never discover it. Just as some persons—but not all—possess the gift of writing poetry or of elocution and so on. If it be someone's fate the scales will fall from his eyes, the veil will drop away. It happens by itself, another cannot give Realization; one has to become possessed of one's inner Knowledge. Everyone is born with his innate tendencies and talents. Just as one can acquire worldly knowledge so also is Reality known by becoming possessed of one's inner power—and then there is Awakening. The Guru's power is bestowed on the disciples, but one among millions can be found who is capable of holding it. The *mantra* has a power of its own and its repetition will not be in vain, but the power of the Guru is not conferred upon all.

Question : What actually is "the Grace of the Guru ?"

Mataji : When together with His instructions the Guru bestows the capacity to translate them into action—this is His Grace. Grace is being poured out at all times. But it cannot enter because the receptacle is turned upside down. When one becomes receptive one is able to receive Grace.

The means to turn the receptacle the right way up is to obey the Guru's orders to the very letter. By virtue of the yoga of sustained practice the veil will be torn asunder, and the Self stand revealed—one will advance towards one's real home. So long as there is craving one will be born again and again, in other words physical existence continues due to the sense of want. Through sustained spiritual practice one may be released from it. In order that the fact of man's eternal union with the One may be revealed the commands of the Guru must be followed. By so doing one becomes worthy of His Grace. The Guru in His mercy points out each one's own path, the path that leads to Self-realization. There are two kinds of grace, namely with and without cause or reason. The first is obtained as the result of one's actions ; but when it is understood that one cannot get anywhere by one's own effort, then Grace without cause or reason (*ahetuk kripa*) is received. From the state of utter helplessness He lifts one up.

Question : Who has the capacity to confer power and who to receive it ?

Mataji : He who can liberate one from the ceaseless round of birth and death He is indeed a *Sad-Guru* ; it is He who wields the authority to confer power. Just as a child cannot beget until he grows into a young man, likewise is there a stage when one becomes a receptacle and then at the right moment the Guru transmits power into it.

Question : Can the power be conferred no matter what be the nature of the receptacle ?

Mataji : HE can mould the receptacle.

Question : Thus if the receptacle is not ready, does the Guru withhold the power ?

Mātaji : No, when a flood comes it carries everyone along with it.

Question : What is the means of entering the tide ?

Mataji : To ask this question with desperate eagerness.

Question : How can such eagerness be called forth ?

Mataji : By keeping *satsang* for a great length of time. Where that which is doomed to destruction is destroyed, there the Beloved stands revealed. For those who have received initiation it is fitting to devote much time to the repetition of their *mantra* and to meditation—then only will there be awakening.

Question : Does the repetition of God's Name also amount to *satsang* ?

Mataji : Most certainly; for He is present as the Name. Verily, the essence of Truth is He, the essence of the *mantra* is He. The significance of the Name is that its constant repetition will make it easy for the aspirant to advance towards God. It is He who is present in the form of the Name, the letter (*akshara*) and the *mantra*. Therefore to be with any of them is also *satsang* : you have found Him in the guise of the Name. If *japa* is practised with faith the benefit will be much greater, but even when adhered to without faith it will yield some result. Ever keep the Name in your mind, ever foster it in the depth of your heart. Just as a seed has to be buried in the earth, so the Name has to be firmly

implanted in the soil of the heart and repeated constantly. As a result a tree will develop out of the seed. The tree signifies Self-realization. God's names and forms are of infinite number and variety ; by the sustained repetition of His Name His innumerable shapes will be revealed. Having been implanted in the heart the Name will quite naturally reveal its essence. To know Oneself means to know God. Thus one should proceed by constant practice. Just as after passing one's examinations one automatically becomes a professor or an engineer, so by engaging in *sadhana*, Realization will come of itself. But it is incumbent to set to work according to the Guru's instructions.

Question : Will it be effective if one has found the Guru in a dream ?

Mataji : Yes, it will. Is not that which is known as the waking state of the world but a dream ! The only difference is that the one is the dream of sleep and the other the dream of waking. If one has received a *mantra* in either of these dreams there will be no more doubt (as to one's having been initiated). However, the *mantra* that has been received in the dream of sleep must be practised and brought to fruition in the dream of waking.

Question : If this world is God's own manifestation, how can it be dismissed as a mere illusion ?

Mataji : When this question has ceased to exist, this is the manifestation called Self-revelation (*Swayam Prakash*). Where the Realization is of the One-Brahman-without-a-second, there can be no question of dismissing anything.

