

**MA ANANDAMAYEE**  
**AMRIT VARTA**

A quarterly journal dealing mainly  
with the divine life and sayings of  
Sri Anandamayi Ma

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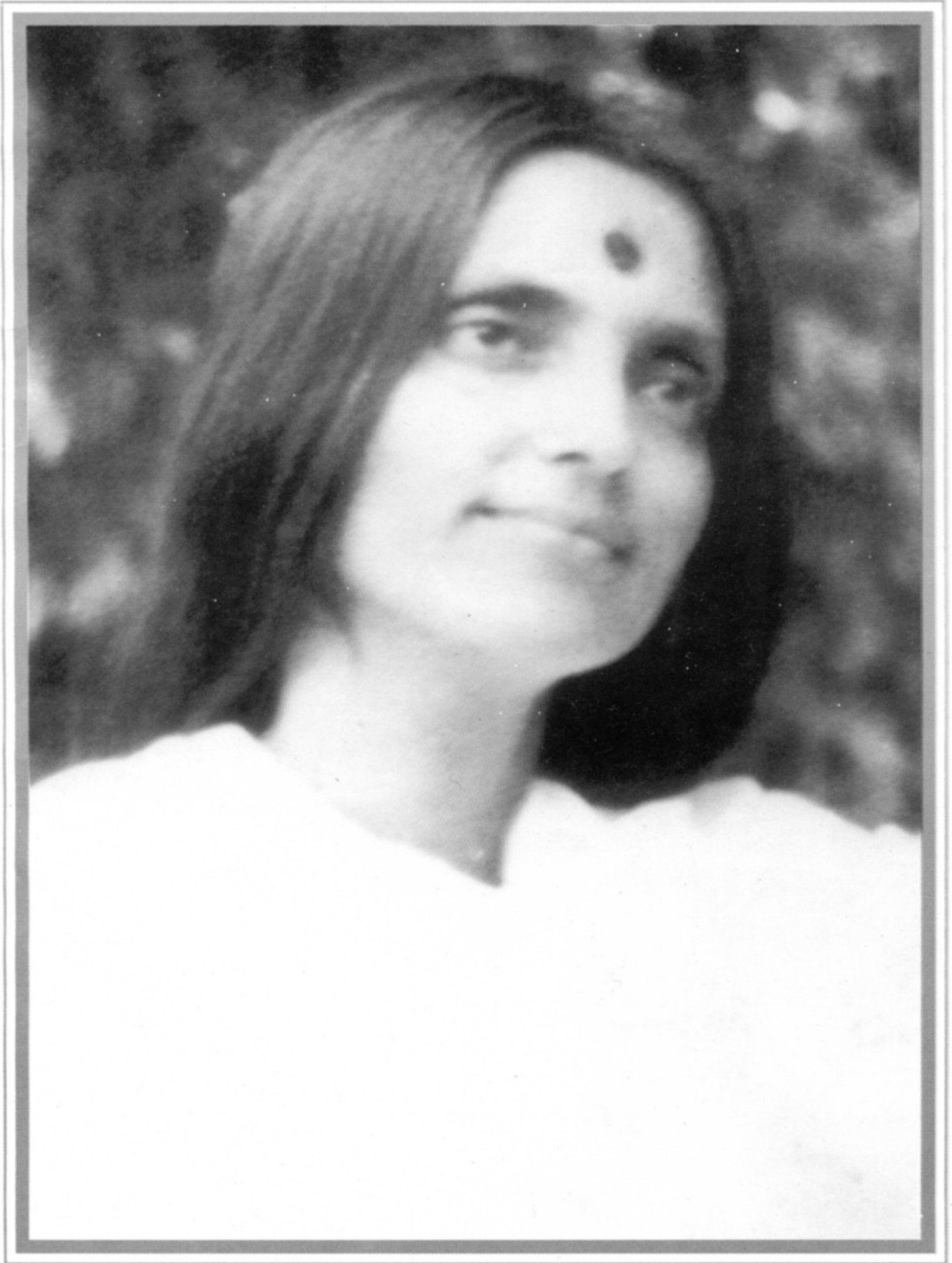
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## *Sri Sri Ma's Self composed Song*

*The ultimate state will not be reached by the jiva without detachment. Therefore, make renunciation and discrimination your sole objective, giving up all desires.*

*What is the extent of renunciation,  
You will know when you are engrossed in action,  
Then you shall see constantly,  
In which direction your mind will be drawn.*

*Offering all your activities,  
Adhere to man's dharma*

*You are the eternal, changeless Brahman,  
Meditate on this in your heart repeatedly.*

*Beckon the mind which wanders outwards,  
Keep it within your heart continuously,*

*Mount the raft of Brahman  
And cross the ocean of samsara.*

*When your ego is annihilated.*

*And all duality transcended*

*You shall see that you repose in your true nature,  
Which is the Supreme Truth to be realised.*

*—Vindhyachal, March 1936*

**With best wishes**

**MINDFUL INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT COMPANY**

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## MATRI VANI

Accepting all conditions of life—whatever they be—as His gift, abide in fortitude and do service.

\* \* \* \* \*

Endcavour to keep your thought centred at all times on the Divine Name or Form that appeals to you most. Let your mind be turned exclusively towards God—then, and then only, may you hope for peace.

\* \* \* \* \*

How can a man who is harbouring thoughts of suicide expect to become a Sannyasi ? The idea of suicide does not even enter the mind of those who consider themselves candidates for sannyasa. A spirit of extreme self-denial and renunciation is the attitude that affords the greatest aid towards this exalted state. Vow to be truthful in speech and refrain from letter-writing. Do not talk to women, nor allow your gaze to rest on them.

\* \* \* \* \*

To live in the joy that springs from the mind's constant occupation with things divine is man's duty. Thinking of anything other than God is what creates sorrow. Be it Mantra Japa, be it meditation, worship, the perusal of Sacred Texts, the simple awareness of God or a like device, be it Kirtan or religious music — all these are different modes of the Divine Presence. One should always remain engaged in one of them, in fact make it a point never to be without Him. Bear this in mind ! This is what this little child requests from Her friends and also Her fathers and mothers.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is by seeking to know oneself that the Great Mother of all may be found.

\* \* \* \* \*

God's holy Name is in itself the rite for exorcising undesirable influences. In the presence of God's Name ghosts and evil spirits cannot exist.

\* \* \* \* \*

Life's journey is bound to proceed inevitably in the manner you describe. Search in every home and see how many people can be found who have never known bereavement. This is why the one and only way out of the misery is the path towards Self-realization.

\* \* \* \* \*



**PAGES FROM**  
**"MA ANANDAMAYEE PRASANG"**

—Prof. A.K. Dutta Gupta

[Translated from Bengali]

[Continued from before]

**29<sup>th</sup> May, 1941, Dehradun, Raipur Ashram—**

At eight in the morning Sri Ma came and sat in the hall. It has already been mentioned that we had made arrangements for us to sleep in the same hall and our beds also used to remain spread as during night. Our bed consisted of only one small *durrie* and one blanket each, upon that there was one thick coloured bed sheet, which used to look quite dirty due to dust etc. Sri Ma's attention fell on our beds today. She enquired.— "Are you habituated to sleep on such a small bed or trying to adjust with all situations after coming over to this place"?

Jitenbabu replied - "Manmohanbabu has told me that while sleeping in his home he needs six pillows and here managing with one only. We stay in our homes in a different manner, because there we are the monarchs. I am the monarch in my home. Amulyababu is also the monarch in his own home. No one is there higher than us. So, everything depends on our status, and here we are very insignificant beings". Therefore, our beds also are of the same condition." Everyone laughs.

Ma replied laughingly, "Monarch of one's own house signifies the ruler of only a limited area. You are not the monarch of all regions and also of all situations. You should further note that if in your home your children are sick then you won't be able to have a wink of sleep even while lying on a cushioned bed. Then at times it may come to your mind that even if you had to lie on the floor and the children would get well you would be prepared for that as well. So, you see that you are only the "monarchs of wants". If good sleep comes that won't wait for a bed. Whereas if you are in mental distress even good beds won't give you comfort. The nature of worldly things is such, when you crave for comfort, discomfort also will come. So, one should try to be the "monarch" in all conditions - both comfort and discomfort."

"That's why I am telling you that, what I tell others also. Keep apart for Him atleast one day in a week, or in a fortnight, or even in a month. On that day, you should remain in a room, will not talk useless talks, spend the whole day in

meditation, japa and reading of scriptures etc. The *asan* or bed upon which you will spend that day to be put apart. If you follow in this manner, you may be much benefited."

I- Will there be any benefit through this ?

Ma - (Turning to Jitenbabu) Do you also say like that ?

Jitenbabu - (Smilingly) No, I don't want to say so, because Amulyababu has fallen in danger by saying that."

Ma - (To Manmohan) Baba, what do you say ? Do you also say that no benefit is derived ?

Manmohan - I don't say that. Benefit may be derived through this, again may not be derived.

Ma (with a smile) - Baba wants to please Amulya and me as well. (Everyone laughs). (Turning to me) You cannot say that nothing is achieved. If you say so then hereafter if the children are not inclined to study then you won't be able to make them study. Because when children after trying to learn their lessons once or twice escape after leaving their books you try to make them learn their lessons by even scolding or beating them and afterwards you find that even by studying unwillingly they become scholars later on.

I- Ma, the advice on *samyam* which you are giving has not been heard for the first time today. Have heard it before also and have even tried to at accordingly. But no result was obtained. On the other hand it was found that all sorts of problems increase on that particular day of *samyam*. No spiritual feeling is obtained. Seeing all this it comes to the mind that there is no need of all this. When time will come all this will happen automatically.

Ma - I will say that you have not done anything of the *samyam vrata*. Because your attention has always been directed towards the fruit. If you want to obtain hand to hand result then doing a particular work or not doing is almost the same. You do not want to bear any trouble for spiritual matters, but you never step backward while trying to gain reputation and recognition.

I- It is not that I do much for those things also.

Ma-That also does not speak of a high state. There is no endeavour - no enthusiasm towards anything, this is a state of inertia. Is it good to remain in a state of inertia ? What one has to do towards spiritual progress has to be done with a sense of duty. One has not to think about the result. But know it certain that result will surely be achieved if one really works. Even by saving one *paisa* after one, the total will come to one rupee. Every action has a result. Why speak about doing something only ? To see something, to touch something - everything has an



influence of its own. Because of all this the question of *satsang* and good influence of a particular place comes up. And because of this a *sādhaka* does not allow to get his *āsana*, cloth and bed etc. to be touched by any-one. The qualities of what we eat or what we think about enter within us and those things transform us too.

"It has been said before also that whatever we see in this world, if seen only from the point of view of happiness or sorrow, then that only creates the sense of bondage in us. While perceiving trees, mountains, flowers etc. we think - "Oh, how beautiful these are !" Then the qualities of those things enter into ourselves and as a result of that more and more new feelings generate in us. But perceiving those things if we are able to accept them as different forms of God, if we are able to consider that God Himself is in the form of this beautiful flower, fruit etc. then only pure thoughts will develop in us. So, nothing should be seen or done with an hankering for worldly pleasures. Because till you are saved from the feelings which are generated from such desires there is no question of salvation. Of course, through God's grace the root of all desires can be destroyed in a single moment. That is, however, a different thing. We should better proceed on the path of gradual development. From that point of view one has to nourish pure feelings through repetition of *Nama*, *japa* and *dhyāna* according to one's capacity."

"One should not feel disheartened by seeing that no result is soon achieved by doing something in this path. *Samskāras* accumulated through lives after lives have created heaps of garbage in our midst. Until they are removed completely the hope of divine feelings being developed is not there. However, it is seen that even through only a few day's endeavour some may realize something. In these cases it has to be considered that such persons have taken birth with good *samskāras*. So, their path is being unfolded easily. If one goes on working, result must be achieved - one has to work with this feeling. If there is no *Guru* of anyone, there is no harm, because *Guru* is present among all. If one goes on working, He will come up Himself. But while speaking from the general point of view, it is better to work under the shelter of the *Guru*."

It was past nine in the morning while such discussions were going on. Nepaldada commenced the reading of the "*Sādhan Samar*" After the *Path* was concluded Nepaldada asked Ma - "Ma, there are rules mentioned in the scriptures for doing *japa* etc. sitting on *āsana*. But if anyone continues to do *japa* without sitting on the *āsana* will there be no result ?"

Ma - What have you said ? Why there will be no fruit ? Which *āsana* did this body use ? While at Bajitpur whatever *japa* etc. was done was done by sitting on the mud ground only. That ground also was damp and wet, and furthermore as I

used to sit in one place for a long time the colour of the ground also used to be changed. An *āsana* was used first by me at Dhaka and that also as per the words of Sri Atul of Sadhan Samar Ashram. Whenever I sat on the ground, he used to say, "Ma, by sitting on the open ground the body current gets lost by entering into the ground". But when I did not agree to sit on an *āsana* even after all this, then he said - "Ma, if you don't sit on an *āsana* then we are also much inconvenienced, because we also cannot then sit on *āsanas*. Upon these words I did not disagree to sit on an *āsana* and since then *āsanas* are in vogue. (Laughingly) Now, it has become such that whenever I go out even on a car an *āsana* is put upon the cushioned seat. However, as per *sāstric* injunctions use of an *āsana* is better for the purpose of *japa* etc. First a *Kushāsana*, upon that a blanket or any other *āsana* which is available in the market, and that is to be covered by a silk cloth. Sadhus say that if this is followed then the body current is not lost and remains within the body. That is why while doing *japa* some type of silken cloth and *chāddar* are used.

I - The Yogis advise to be very cautious about purity of *āsanas* etc. Such rigidity is not in vogue among the Vaishnavas.

Ma - Yes, but all the *sādhakas* do not allow others to touch their clothes & *āsanas*.

Nepaldada - It is said to be mentioned in the *sāstras* that in the *Kali Yuga dikshā* should be taken according to the *Tantra* system. But those who have been initiated only with the Vedic *mantras*, will they not be able to do any progress through their work ?

Ma - This body will say that if the initiation according to the Vedic rules becomes alive then the fruits of *Tāntric dikshā* will also be revealed in that. Some may attain salvation by doing *japa* of *Gayatri mantra* alone. One can reach the destination if one proceeds correctly on any path.

I - In course of time *Tantric mantra* may become more fruitful than Vedic *mantra*.

Ma - Yes, that can also be. There may be different systems for different periods. But there is difference of opinion among sadhus regarding *Kāla* (period of time). You also say that certain sadhus have remarked that *Satya Yuga* has already arrived. Again some say that - "This is the evening of *Kali Yuga*." The real thing is - One *Kāla* (period of time) may seem to be different to different persons. To someone this is *Kali Yuga*, again to another this is *Satya Yuga*. As for example, it is said that perhaps it is mentioned in the *sāstras* that *sannyāsa* is not possible in the *Kali Yuga*. But you see that even in this *Kali Yuga* some have become *real sannyasis*. It may be so said that the words of the *sāstras* are being falsified. But in

fact that is not. It should be understood that for whom *sannyāsa* is being arranged, this is not the *Kali Yuga*. The recognition of a *Kāla* is through one's own feelings. This *bhāva* has connection with *āsana* and other things also; when bodily action and *bhāva* become one then there remains no body complications. The fact that you cannot sit in one *āsana* for a longer period is because of the fact that your action has not been unified with your feelings. when that becomes unified then you will see that there will be no fatigue in whatever you do. When you sit at a stretch; when you move, you move without any break."

"At times this body is made to sit in a train in a certain position. I sit in the same position for even eight or nine hours. When they come and make me sit in a different posture then I sit accordingly. On certain occasions when I am looking at something in front I look on and on; there are many a decorated shop on the right and left, but there is no attention towards that. Look does not move even towards the top or the bottom of which I am looking at. There is no body movement also. Don't you speak about '*Trātaka*' - looking at things for long without any movement of eye lids ? But '*Trātaka*' may also be of various types. The conditions of this body about which it has been spoken, may be termed by you as '*trātaka*' of the body. The gist is that if one proceeds through one path that itself shows in time direction for countless paths."

[To continue]

*"From me the world streams out  
And in me it dissolves,  
As a bracelet melts in gold,  
A pot crumbles into clay,  
A wave subsides into water."*

—*From Ashtavakra Gita*

## SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY\*

—Prof. T.R. Anantharaman

It is an undeniable fact that our country achieved many wonderful things in the scientific, cultural and spiritual fields during many millennia of its ancient and pre-historic periods. However, as a rule, with our mundane pre-occupations and our eyes turned to the affluent Western nations, most Indian of today do not evince much interest even in knowing when and how these remarkable achievements were accomplished. One such area where our forefathers could record their truly stunning insights over three thousand years ago relates to Science and Spirituality, referred to in modern Hindi as विज्ञान and अध्यात्म, and in our ancient Sanskrit scriptures as अपराविद्या and पराविद्या.

The word 'Spirituality' is used a great deal nowadays in newspapers, books and conferences, but if we go round and talk to our countrymen, even the so-called educated ones, we realize what vague notions most people have on this highly important and extremely relevant subject. Of course, most people will swear that they have great interest in spiritual values and some will even point out to us that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has recently included "Spiritual health" in its definition of total health. Thus, we must all be concerned with cultivation of not only physical and mental health, but also spiritual health. However, with the widespread ignorance in regard to Spirituality in theory and practice, where and how do we start in our quest for the appropriate way to understand, interpret and propagate the essentials of Spirituality ?

Incidentally, the word "Spirituality" seems to have been coined and used for the first time by Swami Vivekananda, the most famous disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1863-1902). Following his memorable and stirring addresses at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1892, the Swamiji returned to India to a glittering and heroic welcome, and told his countrymen at a meeting that "there is one great truth that India has to teach the world, because it is nowhere else." He called it "Spirituality, the Science of Soul." It was his view that "in this land of ours, the fountains of spirituality are still there, they will have to overflow and flood the world to bring in new life and vitality to the nations, which has almost worn down, half killed and degraded by political ambition and social scheming."

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\*. Courtesy : *Jnana Pravāha* Bulletin No. 6

Swami Vivekananda said further that "our life blood is Spirituality; if it flows clear, vigorous, strong, everything is right; political, social, any other material defect, even the poverty of the land, all can be cured if the blood is pure." We admire him very much, but we must also listen to him. We must get back to our Spirituality.

Where is this Spirituality, how do we get to know about it ? Here again this very simple question if we ask Indians, where do you get information about Spirituality ? They may quote some western people who have learnt something from India and they will not put in their own word. Swami Vivekananda, on March 4<sup>th</sup> 1897, in a crowded public lecture at Star Theatre, Calcutta talking on Vedānta and Upaniṣad said, "Vedānta, the Philosophy of the Upaniṣad has been the first, as well as the final message on the spiritual plane that has ever been given to man." Briefly, what he says is : a great message was given to us and you find it now in the Upaniṣads, it has not been bettered, not been improved, there has not been any real addition to its original, thus it is also the final message.

And, what is an Upaniṣad ? Bring Upaniṣad in our educational system. Most of our students do not know even what Upaniṣads are, what are the names of the Upaniṣads, what these contain. I quote, another great Indian Sri Aurobindo: Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo were outstanding intellectuals, who were concerned with the society and had their own spiritual experiences also. They were able to understand the currents and cross currents of our society, which is given more and more to science and technology. So, what they said is even more important than what people said 400-500 years ago. So, Sri Aurobindo said, "The Upaniṣads are the supreme works of the Indian mind, the highest self-expression of the genius. It is a sublime poetry, greatest creation of the talk and word, not a literary poetic master piece of ordinary kind, but a large spiritual revelation of the most direct and profound character. They are a record of the deepest spiritual experiences, documents of revelation and intuitive philosophy of an inexhaustible light, power and largeness." Even this language shows that the man was inspired while writing it. "An inexhaustible light, power and largeness", so he wrote around 1920, in the *Foundations of Indian Culture*, which appeared in a series of articles in the 'Arya'.

Prof. Max Müller, was a very well known scholar who served for many years as the Professor for Comparative Religion in University of Oxford. Originally from Germany, he ended up in England and he is known as pioneering translator of the *R̥gveda*, *Sacred Books of the East*, etc. Writing on the Upaniṣads, he observed, "these philosophical treatise will always maintain place in the literature world as among the most astounding production of the human mind in any age and any country". What do we do to this treasure ? We are not taking them out, leave alone, the common people, the labourers, even to the intellectuals. The people have no

chance to learn anything, because Sanskrit is gone. So now, we will learn German, we will learn Russian, we will learn many things to go abroad and finally to get more increments and to be recognized as a person who knows the foreign languages. But our own language, the greatest of all languages, how we have neglected it? It is a sin and high time to realize it.

Prof. A.A. Macdonell, who succeeded him in Oxford University as the Professor, wrote a well-known book '*A History of Sanskrit Literature*'. Amazing, how the western scholars, mostly sitting far away, could do so much library work on India? They did not have today's Internet and so on, they had to collect their data, very painstakingly and yet they wrote wonderful books. This is also a very wonderful book, written in 1899. When he comes to the Upaniṣads, he says: "Here for the first time in the history of human thought, we find the Absolute grasped and proclaimed." *Brahman* is not simply an idea, a thought, it is grasped, That is the great thing. Brahman has to be grasped, It has to be realized. *Brahmavit*, is not the person possessing intellectual knowledge, but who experiences It, who realises It. He has used many expressions.

Let us go back to 3000 years or more. We do not know, when the Upaniṣads were written and where they were composed. I am also looking into this to see whether we can get some clear ideas when these things came out, when it was written, it is different matter. For a long time there was a system of oral transmission. This is the Indus Valley civilization. For now we find a teacher and disciple for a beautiful dialogue, father and son, husband and wife, it is full of such wonderful beautiful conversation, like the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, like the discussion of Gautam Buddha with his disciples. A disciple, named Śaunaka, who goes to his teacher Āṅgīrasa. Now, Āṅgīrasa is the *ṛṣi* who comes as *pravara* in many Brahmin families, he asked him (Muṇḍ. Up. I.3). What a beautiful question, no student will like to raise such a question, but he asks him and with great respect, ..... by knowing what, all that is, all the things becomes known. I want to know everything, what I am to do. I think, if this question is posed now, many of our teachers will go to library and finally say, I am sorry, I cannot give you the answer, But Āṅgīrasa responds, as we see in the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*.

द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यत् ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति परा चैवापरा च । (Muṇḍ. Up. I.4)

Very clear and straight to the point answer. Two types of knowledge are there to be mastered, one is called *aparā vidyā*, and the other is *parā-vidyā*.

Here, अपराविद्या is called Science and पराविद्या is called Spirituality by Brahmanvid. Humility of the *ṛṣi* is noteworthy, they will never say, they have found

something. He says, this is what we have heard. This is what our forefathers have given us. But in recent days, when you write something, first you are very keen to put your name in capital letters. There they didn't even mention and they simply told this. So, there are two types of knowledge. As you know, *Vidyā* comes from root *vid*, *vid* is to know. The word science comes from *Sire*, a Latin root, which means to know. So, both science and *vidyā* have the same derivation, so, two types of knowledge. They are two different things. It is brought out very clearly.

And then he defines, what is *parā-vidyā*. सा पराविद्या यया तदक्षरम् अधिगम्यते (Muṇḍ. Up. I.5). That is Spirituality, the science of the Supreme, the science of the Self, the science of the Spirit. He can use so many words. Again the word *adhigamyate*, it is not talking about it, you grasp It, you realize It. That is Spirituality. That by which finally the Imperishable is grasped and then he tried to show. Then what is *aparāvidyā*? Every thing else is *aparāvidyā*. So, he mentioned everything at that time known, everything written, everything intellectual 'तत्रापरा ऋर्वेदः सामवेदः अथर्ववेदः शिक्षा, कल्प, व्याकरणम् निरुक्तम् छन्दो, ज्योतिषम् इति ।' (Muṇḍ Up I. 5) All that is *aparāvidyā*, which consists of the Vedas, phonetics, ritual, grammar, etymology, metric and astrology. In fact even the Vedas, they may talk of *Brahman*, the moment they put in word and try to imprison, something which cannot be imprisoned in word, निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह (Taitt. Up. II. 4). The moment he put it in intellectual framework, it becomes *aparāvidyā*. This is a very great analysis in depth, done by our people well over 3000 years ago.

Now, I go to another very well known Upaniṣad, ईशावास्योपनिषद्. It has only 18 verses. But the meaning, the depth of the meaning, the poignancy of the words is amazing. You go on reading again and again eighteen verses. No one knows who the author is. Each verse is so full of meaning that you can write a chapter on it, and there are three verses which deal with *aparāvidyā* and *parāvidyā*. The first one.

अन्ध तमः प्रविशन्ति, येऽविद्याम् उपासते । ततोभूयोऽिव ते तमः य उ विद्यायां रताः ॥ (Iśa.9)

Those who worship altar of science only, enter into blinding darkness. And those who meet spirituality only, enter into still more blinding darkness. It's a fantastic statement and we have to ponder over it. Why he puts it like this? Those who worship at the altar of science, you find lots of people, who give importance to science only, ignore everything else. They will face problems in life, sometime blinding darkness, they don't know in which direction they are to go. This is applicable even today also. Many problems are there which cannot be sorted out by science.

What about spirituality ? Those who swear by the spirituality, who condemn science, ignore science, push it into background, they will face more problems in life. You know, what we call *Śarīra-yātrā*, the body grows, the body also itself becomes qualified for many things, and for that the main contributions are from science, technology and engineering. People shout about things, but they use cell-phones, they travel in jet planes and they live in five-star comforts, they want good food, Spirituality has not given all these things. Science has given it. So, the *Śarīra-yātrā* is the main base of your life, without it what you have achieved, that is provided by science. So, give due respect to science, technology and engineering, which has made it possible for you, the cloth you wear, the seat you sit on, all have been given by science and technology.

अन्यदेवाहुर्विद्ययाऽन्यदाहुर्विद्यया । इति शुश्रुम धीराणाम् येनस्तद विचचक्षिरे ॥ (Iśa. 10)

And then he says these two different things. *Vidyā* has its own, but it has different purpose, different domain. I am not telling you this, thus we have heard, from brave explorers, who have analysed and explained this to us. These are two different things, we have to understand also what does it mean and practise. And then comes the beautiful combination here.

विद्यां च अविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयं सह । अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ (Iśa. 11)

So, one who masters Spirituality and science both together, he conquers death through science and reaches immortality through Spirituality. Very profound statement, here we have to understand also whatever the talks in the minds of ṛṣi who gives the statement. This verse finally says, each will do something, science will help you to overcome limitations of human existence. All problems you face from nature, from violence, everything science will help you to solve. One day it will help you to overcome death. This is fantastic vision. It is coming now that in another 200-300 years, you can keep man alive for centuries. Our people think for शतम् only for hundred autumns, now you see that man can live for much longer time. But living, what is the use of it! Elephant also lives, animals live, birds live. But man lives for some purpose. He is happy, he has sense of fulfilment, but it has not come through science. It विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते— It is only through Spirituality and through cultivation of Spirituality, proper understanding of Spirituality, through the experiences which come where you taste the bliss of immortality. Wonderful message in just three verses.

[To continue]



## ANANDAMAYEE MATA

— Dr. M. Hafiz Syed

It will not be unreasonable to suppose that this outer solid seeming world has not been created or has emanated without any definite purpose. The all-powerful, the all-wise, the all-compassionate *Ishwara* must have had some definite reason and objective in manifesting this world. It may appear *Mayic*, illusory, because it is constantly changing, but it has an underlying *Divine Life* immanent in it. The real purpose of this manifestation may be rightly said to be known only to Him, who is the Source of our being. Many guesses have been made and many explanations have been offered as to the Why and the Wherefor of this Universe. But no one has yet given a satisfactory and convincing answer. It is rightly said that unless one becomes one with the Reality one cannot possibly understand the real purpose of this outer world. Suffice it to assume that as it has sprung from a wise source it must have some definite objective.

According to ancient Hindu thought, there are two paths for man to tread: the *Pravritti* and *Nivritti marg*, the former for the spiritually backward and the latter for the spiritually advanced.

In response to recurring spiritual need of mankind various teachers of spiritual eminence have come and gone. They come from age to age to elevate mankind and to destroy the evils that may have crept in the society.

Only such beings are called *Siddha Purushas* (Perfect Beings) who by virtue of their strenuous *Sadhana* and intense moral purification and spiritual realization attain a state of being which awakens in them cosmic consciousness. They have no separate will of their own. They merge their individuality in the Supreme Reality and are more guided by it than by their own *Sankalpa*. They are also called *Nitya Siddha*. There is no limit to the spiritual height. They become not only *Ishwara* in course of their spiritual evolution but *Maheshwara* and *Parameshwara* also.

None but a spiritually evolved soul can understand or fathom their spiritual depth. To an ordinary soul the life and activities of such beings appear no better than a mystery. They are capable of doing things which appear impossible to others. Their desire is calmed, their passion eliminated. They are not repelled by anything repellent, nor attracted by the attractive. They come to this world with a pure motive of service of humanity.

If we examine Anandamayee Mata's every day life and Her activities in various spheres in the light of this fact, we find that She comes up to the highest standard of these ideals. No one has yet been able to gauge Her spiritual depth or measure Her spiritual height. She has been a puzzle and engima to so many of us. Even Her devotees fail to understand Her. Only a spiritually realized soul can understand what She is in reality. Those who think that She is an incarnation of the Divine, came down to earth to relieve its sufferings, are not wrong. Perhaps those who identify Her with *Sukadeva* or with Shri Krishna, are right because She appears to tread in the foot-steps of the Lord whom we call by various names. Although Lord Sri Krishna was the fullest manifestation of Maha Vishnu, he lived His life like a normal natural being without asserting His divinity and all that it connotes. He played with children and frolicked with His eternal companions and devotees, the much mis-understood Gopis. When statesmen and men of learning assembled, in their midst He played the role of a mediator. When the time came for waging a war, He first did His best to persuade the warring parties to desist from the internecine course, but finding them adamant and heedless to His advice, He served as a charioteer of Arjuna and took part in the mighty war of Mahabharat in all seriousness. He was ever considerate and helpful to His old friends and playmates. Similarly, Shri Anandamayee Mata plays every role in Her life as a wife, as a daughter and as the *Sakhi* as carefully as Lord Sri Krishna played His own part in different spheres of life. She observes the *Varna* and *Ashram Dharma* scrupulously and yet She treats an Indian and a foreigner alike. She is kind and compassionate to the young and the old alike. Her Grace flows out to every body, of whatever social status he or she may be.

It is clear to an observant eye that the purpose of Her emergence on this earth, is deliverance of the people from the miseries of the world.

There are four kinds of *Karmas*: *Sakām*, *Nishkām*, *Ishwar Arpan* and *Swābhāvik*. Her activities obviously belong to the fourth category. Like Shri Krishna, it may be said of Her that there is nothing in the three worlds that should be done by Her, nor anything unattained that might have to be attained and yet She mingles in action, unwary men all around would follow Her path. She is not content to teach us by words of mouth only, but sets practical examples to us how to do things in right manner. Often in a Kirtan, She recites God's name herself and so inspires us to recite it with the whole of our being. She is one with the Supreme Reality and She sees One Life vibrant in every atom. She sees the indwelling self in all. Once She is reported to have said, "Every body's satisfaction is my satisfaction. Every body's happiness is my happiness."

On another occasion She assured us in the following soothing words :— "The Lord does not wait for your spiritual fitness. Like the flowing Ganges He goes on bestowing His compassion on all. This is His nature. This is His being."

One of the greatest proofs of Her spiritual greatness is that although She has not learnt anything, any sacred scriptures of any religion, yet She is capable of answering subtle philosophical questions put to Her by eminent philosophers or scholars and satisfying them completely. Let us remind ourselves in this connection what Lord Krishna taught us : "All the Vedas are as useful to an enlightened *Brahman* as is a tank in a place covered all over with water." She is in touch with every plane of the invisible world and this outer world as well. While sitting in one place She is capable of knowing what is happening in other places. She knows where Her presence is urgently needed and which soul is crying for Her help and guidance. Outflows Her Grace to bring relief and solace to the distressed. Most of Her work is done in silence which is more eloquent than the discourses of learned men. The best thing for us would be to surrender ourselves to Her and let her utilise us in any way She likes. We must merge our will in Her will, because She has merged Hers in the Divine.

**"It is false to speak of Realization. What is there to realize ? The real is as it is, always. All that is required is this. We have realized the unreal. We have to give up this attitude. That is all that is required".**

**—Maharshi Ramana**

## METHODS OF SELF-REALIZATION ACCORDING TO YOGAVĀSISTHA

—Prof. B.L. Atreya

*Yogavāsistha*, whoever its author and whatever the time and place of its composition, is a work of the utmost value for those who strive after Self-knowledge and Self-realization. Here an attempt is made to present in brief some hints this great work has given on the process of Self-realization.

All those who have tried to probe into the nature of man have found that the depths of human personality are unfathomable. All the little we know about ourselves indicates that we are in reality co-extensive with the infinite Universe and immeasurable in powers; and transcend all the limits of time, space and individuality. A modern writer, John Herman Randall, has given expression to what modern knowledge has discovered about the nature of Self in the following words: "No other view is possible than that the true Self in each individual is a form under which Reality, or the Life-Principle or God, finds expression. We are forced to admit that in their deepest essence all beings are one being, and all individual selves are one Self; and there are no such things as private, separate, exclusive, individual beings or selves, save in the false and illusory thinking" (Randall : *The Spirit of the New Philosophy*, p. 157).

In a recent work, Tyrrel, a great psychic researcher, writes, "Thus actual experience vindicates the view that Selfhood is indefinable, inexplicable in words, incomprehensible to the intellect, which can no one grasp it than an animal can grasp the differential calculus. The monadic view of the Self is a pragmatic illusion forced upon us by the practical mind" (*The Nature of Human Personality*, p. 114). "The great and central fact is that the higher we ascend in the scale of awareness the more reality opens to us. Ascension in this way brings direct awareness; and this is, and always has been the immortal road to Truth" *Ibid*, p. 119).

The author of *Yogavāsistha* who soared very high in Self awareness, has told us on the authority of his own personal experience that the personality of man is nothing short of the Infinite, Absolute and Omniscient *Brahman*, the very being and essence of the Universe. Thus says he : "He knows truly who knows that the Self is Infinite Consciousness, which is immanent in all things, omnipotent and without a second. (Y. V. IV. 22-28) He knows truly who knows that the Self is the Infinite

Ether (of Consciousness) which has within itself all time, space and movements (IV. 22. 25). Like pearls in a thread, all these objects are beaded in me (IV. 22. 31). In fact, everything in the Universe is a part of myself" (IV. 22. 33).

For some reason or other, we have limited ourselves of finite, ignorant and pragmatic individualities with the consequence that there is struggle, conflict and suffering in the world of finite individuals. To get rid of them we have to regain our consciousness as the Supreme Reality and reinstate and reinstall ourselves in our real and really never-lost Godhead. This is the ideal before those who are tired of wandering in the ocean of the miserable world, and the process which leads to the realization of the Ideal (called Self-realization) which is, in India, called *Yoga* which may be translated into English as re-union of the limited self with the unlimited and transcendental aspect of our being. *Yogavāsistha* calls the ideal as the "installation in Godhead" (*Paramatmani Sthiti*—VIa. 128.50) and says that this experience is characterised by "immense joy" (*Mahat sukham*)—(VIa. 128.51).

The process of *Yoga* or the union of the limited with the unlimited or of the pragmatic with the transcendental aspects of the Self is, according to *Yogavāsistha*, to work along all the three levels of the individual life, namely, physiological, psychological and the spiritual. On the physiological level, the physical and electromagnetic forces and powers of the body and its environment should be brought to focus and control; and the mind should redirect them inwards. This is called *Prāna-nirodha*, *Prānāyāma* or *Prānavilaya* in which all the finer physical forces are harnessed for spiritual concentration. On the mental level an effort is to be made to resolve and dissolve all the hidden complexes of desires, aversions, love and hate, etc. by becoming fully conscious of them and by realising that the real and lasting satisfaction of our life can be achieved only when a balanced, peaceful and unagitated state of mind is experienced. This process is called *Mano vinigraha*—bringing the mind under complete control. And on the spiritual level, the individual has to dehypnotise himself into his absoluteness, infinitude, and godhead by a double process of *denial* of illusory limitations, perceptions and conceptions and affirmation of one's Godhead, Infinity, Omniscience, Omnipresence and Blessedness. thus says *Yogavāsistha* : "Yoga, in brief, means three processes, namely, the Inhibition of the activities of *prāna* or the vital forces, the control of mind and affirmation of the One Reality" (VIa. 99-27). The process is described in great details in *Yogavāsistha*. We shall only make a reference to what according to *Yogavāsistha* is not a necessary part of the process. *Yogavāsistha*, unlike other great spiritual works, is very uncompromising on this point.

"It is not necessary for Self-realization to live in a forest, to undergo any penances (VIb. 199-30), to perform or renounce any actions; to perform any ritual (VIb. 99.31). Pilgrimages, distribution of alms, bath in sacred rivers, meditation on any object, performance of any sacrifice, etc. are not required (VIb. 174. 24). Reading of any Scripture, taking shelter of any Guru, or worship of any god or goddess is not necessary (VIb. 197. 18). No Scripture can make us realize the Self if we do not make our own attempt along the right interpretation of our own experience, and thereby have the direct intuition of our Real self" (VIb. 197. 18: VIa. 41. 15). *Bhakti* or devotion to any particular god or goddess is not required for attaining self-realization. Nobody can confer Liberation from limitations as a boon on any person, unless the latter deserves it by his own right. "One is one's own friend or enemy. If one is not one's own saviour, there is no hope for him (VIb. 162. 18). What is not attained through one's own constant efforts, *vairāgya* (indifference to worldly concerns) and control over sense, cannot be attained through anything else in the three worlds (IV 43. 18). Gods, like Vishnu, however long propitiated and however pleased, cannot bestow Self-realization on one who does not think for himself (IV. 43. 10). Nothing great (in the spiritual field) is ever achieved through any god, *guru* (teacher) or wealth (V. 43. 17). If a spiritual teacher could raise one to the height of self-realization without one's own efforts, why can he not raise a bull, an elephant or a camel to that status (IV. 43. 16) ? Those who, leaving the God residing within their own hearts, run after other external gods, are like those fools who throw away the precious gems in their hands and run after ordinary glass pieces ( V. 8. 14). The artificial and showy ways of worshipping God are meant only for the ignorant and for those whose minds are not fully matured and are restless (Via. 38.25).

## TEACHING WITHOUT WORDS

—Arnaud Desjardins

[Translated from French]

From the first day that I met Ma Anandamayi I have had the conviction I was not in the presence of a human being, but of a Being of an altogether different world. This realisation dawned upon me in September, 1959. Since then I have stayed with Ma in 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965 and much later on and every time I have had this feeling. How is one to describe this stupendous impression? 'Divine'? 'Supernatural'? But I falter before the mystery which these terms represent and therefore not dare use them!

I am a European with a Christian upbringing, engaged in my profession and family life. Apart from a few colloquial words, I do not understand either Hindi or Bengali and Mataji does not speak English. With the exception of about one hour in all of conversation with her that I was granted with the help of interpreter, I have thus never understood what she said or replied to questions. And yet have I for her sake undertaken many journeys to India and spent many months close to her, sometimes under rather difficult conditions. This proves the power of her influence even over one to whom the Hindu tradition in which she is rooted is foreign.

For years the photos of Sri Ramana Maharshi have—for me as well as for many others in Paris—been a real teaching. A few minutes of attentive silence in front of his picture—and his sublime look would teach me more than the reading of the best book. (I am speaking of the only real knowledge, the one which transforms those who acquire it.) I have never missed the opportunity of meeting a Frenchman who had had his *darsana*. It is through these living witnesses that I conceived the overwhelming desire—more powerful than all other desires—to meet a Sage, a liberated Being, one who has realized his Self, a *Jivanmukta*.

I expected infinitely much during my travels in India and this meeting and the discovery of Mataji has certainly not disappointed me. Since then I travelled to Kanhangad to be with Swami Ramdas and Krishnabai. Those also were luminous days of intense living. The *rājasic* and *tāmasic* impressions of Paris have not been able to wipe out the cherished memory of those days. But Swami Ramdas spoke English and his replies, his parables and remarks, so full of humour, would give to

the ever insatiable mind the only valuable sustenance. The part that Swami Ramdas played in the lives of so many in the west can be explained even to our modern mentality, enslaved though it be by rational logic.

What on the other hand, appears to me most amazing is the function of a Master, of a spiritual preceptor that Ma has taken on towards a French visitor, who has been and truly remains her pupil. Above all I should say she has gradually made me understand the meaning of the Gospels and of the message of Christ. Thanks to Ma, the word of Jesus has now for me become a word of life. And she also has opened for me the door to that universal treasure-house called 'Bhagavad Gita' and has made me discover Sri Krishna.

Nothing can be further removed from the life at Paris which I lead, working for the cinema and the television, than the atmosphere of Mataji's ashramas. Hindu orthodoxy, the observance of caste rules, the importance attached to rites and ceremonies may seem to have nothing whatsoever in common with the problems that confront modern man in the worldly and materialistic life of a European metropolis. Nevertheless, I can bear witness to the fact that the teaching of Ma, even though it has been communicated without words, has completely transformed my life in Paris. Intellectually, she has given me the conviction that a metaphysical perspective exists, that is unique and universal, a 'Philosophia Perennis' that teaches us that all our problems have already been solved although we are not aware of it: "He is all in all, He alone is." But she also teaches us that Realization must be all-embracing, However far away, I may feel from her ashrams, from the purity of those white robes, from the beauty of the kirtans, amidst the violence, the contradictions and disturbances of professional life in Paris, Mataji or at least what she stands for is always with me within me. And I remember the famous words. "Kurukshetra dharmakshetra ..." and also: "Act is the play of the world" (Yoga Vasista) and I know who is the doer and who is not.

It seems to me that for foreigners the relationship between the master and his disciple is the most interesting feature of Hinduism at the present time. That some people think that the entire significance of their lives has changed because they have had the *darsana* of Ramana Maharshi, Ramdas or Ma Anandamayi is a certainty which can neither be proved nor contradicted. One may verify the recounting of a miracle, one may—in the name of Christian orthodoxy—be surprised to hear Beings other than Christ say "The Father and I are one": one may be flabbergasted at the social phenomenon which the glory of a woman represents who does nothing



else, but teach us to seek God. But the shock of her gaze and the meaning of the slightest of her gestures is a personal experience. Those who have seen have believed. And those who have understood the words of Life Eternal have taken to the Path.

What ally does Ma's Realization find in us that vibrates in tune with her? At what depth of our being are we touched? All those whose experiences I have compared with mine have had the same impression of certainty. That is how it is nothing to be added. All the rest has always been conditioned by 'buts' and 'ifs', by 'moreovers' and 'thens'. Face to face with the Master there is only certainty and clarity and that extraordinary experience of life beyond time, which liberates from all fear. Nevertheless it is not easy to be with Mataji. None of our old tricks works and we are all the time exposed and denuded. Never before have I been so divinely happy as in the presence of Ma Anandamayi, yet also have I never before been so ill at ease and so utterly shattered. I knew that a painful transformation had to be wrought within me: I had come for that purpose and I knew that this transformation had to be accomplished with my consent and active co-operation. It is not enough to remain passive in the presence of a sage: one has to lend, to deliver oneself voluntarily to his influence.

"For none is it easier than for the flies to follow this body wherever it may go" Mataji has said, referring to herself, "but that does not enlighten them." Mataji asks us to work unceasingly and to make tremendous and sustained efforts, so that these very efforts may one day be transcended—and then comes effortless being, the spontaneity of one who has in the very midst of the 'battle field' attained to inner freedom beyond action and reaction.

For years before my first journey to India I asked myself the question: "And if it were true?" How can one help posing this question with a trembling hope, when one hears about the great Sages in India who "by a single look can change a whole life." When one reads accounts, describing their supernatural presence that is a living witness to a world quite different from the one in which we believe ourselves imprisoned? The reply, the certainty: "Yes, it is true!" I found in the *darsan* of Ma Anandamayi. At times her eyes gaze into the far distance and her expression is of a supernatural beauty which defies all description. What does she see at such moments? What is the significance of the presence among us of a Being so totally different? Her face is so powerful that, week after week, lost in the crowd, I was unable to detach myself from it; so irresistible was the impression of intensity and

fullness that I felt with my whole being. In the presence of Ma, at last something actually was happening in my life. And I have gained the certainty that everything is possible for her.

But one has to admit that the almost miraculous aspect of Ma, the attraction she exercises over thousands and thousands of people misleads certain persons who have observed this to see in it more a manifestation of the abnormal than of the supernormal. My gratitude of Ma is even greater for what I feel I receive from her in Paris than for the extraordinary moments experienced in India. I do not seek any explanation: The oneness of the Self, the awakening of the inner Guru are enough. But the fact remains: after returning to Europe from my trips to India my relationship to my own surroundings of which I had suffered for so long changed radically. I have understood that our being conditions our life. I know that by the grace of Ma Anandamayi and Swami Ramdas something has been transformed in my being. Of course, I have kept on the mantelpiece of the room in which I spend most of my time the photo of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, the first picture of a sage I possessed and that I looked at so much for years together. It was this photo that made the desire to visit India grow in me. And at times I have the feeling that it is Ramana Maharshi who has guided me to Ma Anandamayi.

Near her I have found the Life that is beyond all created things, yet is also in all of them and against which no power in the world, no difficulty, no tribulation or anxiety can prevail. Since my first visit to Ma at Varanasi, I have discovered the Life in myself. I can understand that certain people negate the existence of God or of the *Atma*. But Life? Who can object to opening himself to Life and to letting himself be transformed by It? Christ said: "I am the Life. I shall give Life to all who come to me". I know that Ma is Life and that she gives Life to those who come to her. Why then should it be difficult to call her 'Mother', to call her 'Ma'? For not only does a mother protect and guide, scold and comfort, a mother is first and foremost she who gives birth, who brings you to life. And I know—and there has not been a week during these years that has not brought confirmation of this fact—the fact that my life actually started in September, 1959 in Varanasi. A life into which I have no doubt been born with the *samskāras* of existence before that time and which is wrapped up in impurities, fears and contradictions, but which has revealed itself—once for all—as being in truth beyond those limitations.

How many times in France has one not put me the question: "What have you received from this woman saint?" One expects a reply, I know, that will conform to what one reads in books about the *chakras*, *kundalini*, or *nirvikalpa samadhi*. But the answer is much simpler and for myself at least, much more significant.

"What I have received from this woman saint is myself. I was dead and I have come back to Life. I was born of the flesh and I am born of the Spirit." Whatever may be my sin and my impurity, now and for ever, Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi, my mother, and I am your son. Jai Guru, Jai Ma.

*"This body tells of one sovereign remedy for all ills: God. Trust in Him, depend on Him, accept whatever happens as His dispensation, regard what you do as His service, keep satsang, think of God with every breath, and live in His Presence. Leave all your burdens in His hands and He will see to everything; there will be no more problems."*

*—Ma Anandamayee*

