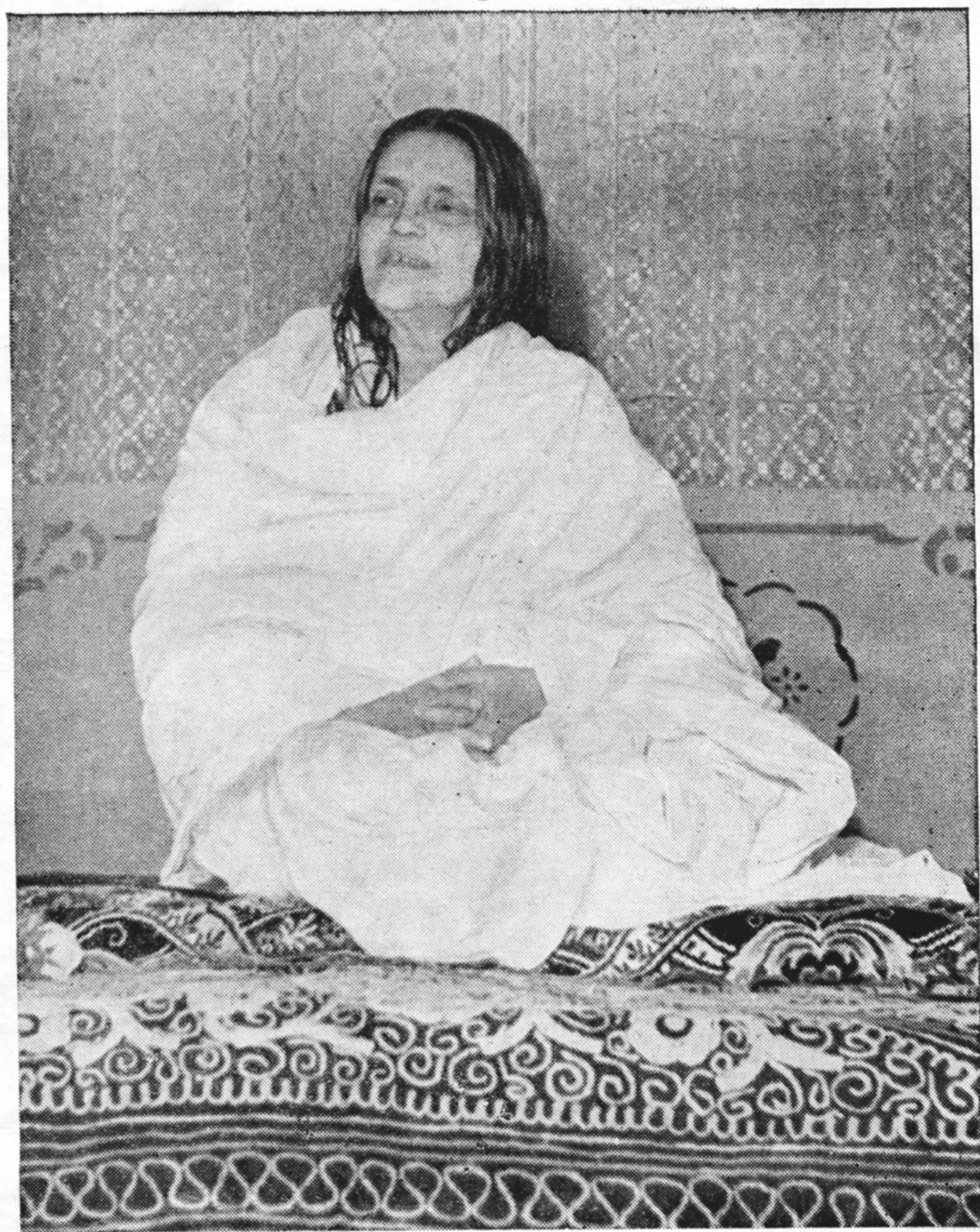


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*The Self, self-contained,
calling to Itself for its own Revelation—
this is happiness.*

MATRI VANI

Pilgrims of the Supreme Path must advance swiftly on
their way to the Goal.

The Will of the Almighty is indeed everything. Be-
coming the allies of this great Will, all should strive for Self-
realization, praying for God's grace.

He who has created the universe is Himself present in
all circumstances and conditions. The action, its effective
cause, and the doer—all are truly He. In order to realize
this fact, Yogis and Rishis performed *yoga* and *tapasya*.
The One Himself appears as the Name, the *mantra*. His
presence and the remembrance of Him must be sustained
unceasingly.

You all have ever been good—not become good just
newly. Unless there is inward goodness, it cannot materialize,

The endeavour to mould one's desires so as to fall in with God's Will is man's duty. In the whole of your work depend entirely on Him. Skill in action—everything is He, His. In this spirit try to complete your task.

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The One who has created this world is on every side. Rely on Him in all matters.

Man is born in order to experience the happiness and sorrow of this world. Those who have the good sense of wanting to go beyond happiness and pain must take their sole refuge in Him.

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The Supreme Power Itself is directly present in all forms under which It is worshipped. Cry out to It and to It alone. The Supreme Power *mahāmāya* cannot remain indifferent to the inconsolable weeping of its offspring. Thus, the One who deals severe blows—yet again Himself consoles by His loving embrace.

The search after Truth is incumbent on man. God's grace streams forth at all times.

Pages from my Diary

GURUPRIYA DEVI

(Translated from Bengali)

Suktal, 7th November 1961.

This time the *Samyam Mahavrata* will be held here in Suktal. Together with Mataji we all left Dehradun by train at about 11 a.m. and reached Muzaffarnagar at about 5 p.m. At the station, Swami Kalyandeva had arranged for a grand reception with a musical band, flowers, and so forth. Suktal is 14 miles from Muzaffarnagar and Mataji was taken by car from there.

She has been put up in a room on the roof of the *dharmasāla*. There are several rooms downstairs in which the girls and women of the Ashram are to stay. Ma's room looks out on a very large garden that is surrounded by a wall. A huge pandal with tents all round it has been erected in the centre of the compound. At a little distance there is another *dharmasāla* which, together with the tents, will provide accommodation for all the participants of the *Samyam Vrata*.

Suktal is a very ancient and holy place of pilgrimage. According to the *Srimad Bhāgavata*, Sri Sukadevaji related the whole of the *Bhāgavata* to King Parikshit at this very spot. For this reason it became famous under the name 'Sukthārta' in subsequent times. It was here that Sri Charandas Babaji had *darśana* of Sri Sukadevaji under an old

banyantree which still exists. Swami Kalyandeva is a Mahatma of repute in this part of the country. He has taken immense trouble to construct in the midst of this jungle very beautiful temples dedicated to Sri Krishna and Sukdevaji respectively. Near the *dharmasāla* there is an Ashram for *Dandiswamis*. No other human habitation is to be seen anywhere near. It is therefore a solitary place specially suited for *sādhus*. At a short distance the Ganges is flowing majestically.

I am told that Swami Kalyandeva had attended many of our functions, without disclosing his identity. He had up till now never tried to make personal contact with Mataji. On the occasion of this Samyam Vrata, he at last openly made Ma's acquaintance.

10th November 1961.

Yesterday the 12th *Samyam Mahavrata* started. Thanks to the untiring efforts of Swami Paramananda a small town of tents has been raised in the midst of the jungle, with electricity, a tube-well and all other amenities provided. As in preceding years, a large number of people have come for this function from all over India, prepared to brave whatever hardships they would have to encounter. Everyone considers it a rare privilege to be able, by Mataji's grace, to practise austerities in such a sacred place. Several well-known Mahatmas have assembled, among them Swami Akhandanandaji of Vrindaban, Mahamandaleshwara Swami Maheshwaranandaji of Bombay, Swami Narayanandaji of Naimisharanya, Sri Chakrapaniji. Swami Vishnuashramji lives here itself.

Just as during other *Samyam Saptahs*, participants have the good fortune of Mataji's *daršana* in the pandal for

many hours daily. To practise collectively renunciation, forbearance, fasting, penance and voluntarily forgo physical comforts is the special note of the *Samyam Krata*. Is not this the blessed place where, without taking food or drink for seven days, King Parikshit listened to the immortal story of the *Bhāgavata*, told by the blessed Sri Sukadeva ! Thus the *sādhus*, *brahmachāris* and *brahmachārinis* of our Ashram, the devotees and *erotics*, all began the week by a whole day on Gangeswater only. Even those who had never in their whole lives fasted in a similar manner, felt no difficulty throughout these 26 hours, since they could most of the time be in Mataji's presence or close proximity. Spending the major part of the day in the pandal in the midst of the participants, Mataji thereby greatly enhanced their perseverance and determination. The calm and quiet atmosphere of this place finds response in the hearts and minds of many.

15th November 1961,

Today is the last day of the *Samyam Saptah*. The whole week has been spent in great peace and joy. Everyone feels rather sad that the function is coming to an end. Just as last year in Naimisharanya so also this time most people have experienced an ever deepening bliss.

Mataji wished to attend the *satsang* as much as possible. Since her health is indifferent, a place for her to lie down has been improvised behind her seat. Mataji said to Swami Akhandanandaji "Bhaiji, here the question of etiquette does not arise. Lying or sitting—somehow the *satsang* has to be attended." Akhandanandaji laughed : "All such considerations exist for human beings, but certainly not for Mataji !"

Sri Vishnuashramji has daily been expounding about Sri Rama in a most lucid and interesting manner. His simple and clear language makes it easy for the audience to assimilate the subject matter. One day he explained to us that things that are considered impure from a worldly point of view are nevertheless used for the most sacred rites. As for instance, as soon as the newly born calf has drunk its mother's milk, the milk which is regarded as impure, can immediately be employed for purposes of worship, such as the preparation of *panchāmrita*, or to bathe the image of a deity. Further, honey which is ejected by the bee is always used in religious ceremonies. The silkworm spins a cocoon with the help of its saliva and then dies inside the cocoon out of which silk is manufactured that serves as material for clothes worn by priests while officiating. The crow, after eating the fruit, of the banyantree, spits out the seeds and wherever they take root, the holy tree grows up. Swami Vishnuashramji gave many beautiful and instructive examples of this kind.

Swami Akhandanandaji talked daily for an hour on the *Srimad Bhāgavata* in his unique, enthralling way. At 9 p.m. after the 15 minutes of silence, some very interesting discussions with Mataji took place. Today Mataji said in the course of the conversation : "You say that although you are staying in Sri Sukadevaji's place, you have not been conscious of his presence. But if he had not been so gracious as to call you to his place, could you have come? He is everywhere and resides in all beings. yet, so long as the sense of 'I' and 'mine' persists, one is not aware of this fact."

Mataji added : "This, I am told, is the 12th *Samyam Vrata*. When you go back to your homes or ashrams you should always keep the memory of this place of pilgrimage

alive within you. And if you wish, you may observe *Samyam* once a month or once a week. On those days you should pay special attention to self-control in eating and drinking, in speech and conduct, and adhere strictly to truth."

Last year, when immediately after the *Samyam Vrata* a *Bhāgavata Saptah* was observed in Naimisharanya, Kumari Shanta conceived the desire to arrange for a *Bhāgavata Saptah* at Suktal. The ceremonial reading of the whole of the *Srimad Bhāgavata* in seven days, is usually organized by the relatives of a deceased person for the benefit of his soul. But in this case, it is, according to Shanta's wish celebrated for no particular motive or purpose, just for the love of God. For the last six months Shanta has been preparing for this function. She holds the *Bhāgavata* in great veneration and daily reads a portion of this scripture.

Shanta's father, mother and all her sisters have arrived for the occasion. Today being the last day of the *Samyam Vrata*, the *Bhāgavata Saptah* has begun. Sri Vishnu-ashramji will be responsible for the daily exposition in Hindi in the pandal, while Batuda will recite the Sanskrit original in the newly built *Gītā Bhavan*, which is an addition to the Sukadeva temple.

This morning Shanta presented to Ma a bright yellow sari, a green wrapper and a red searf, all of silk, and performed *ārati* to her. She also put a black spot on Mataji's chin, just as it used to be put on Sri Krishna's chin or cheek to protect him from the evil eye. This is what we read in the *Bhāgavata*. On being told, Mataji broke out into loud laughter. Dressed up in the colourful clothes offered by Shanta, Mataji walked to the place where the Sanskrit reci-

tation was in process. Mataji discovered that several mistakes had been made in the ceremony that precedes the recitation. Addressing Batuda, she asked: "Why has the *achāryadeva* (spiritual preceptor) allowed all these inaccuracies to creep in?" Batuda replied, "Ma, you yourself are the *achārya*." Brāhmachari D. was unable to perform the *ārati* according to the prescribed rules and Mataji showed him in person how it had to be done.

29th November 1964.

An enormous crowd has collected here on the occasion of *karṭik purnima*. Several thousand villagers have flocked, some from considerable distances. There are two other factors that have further increased the concourse of men and women: Mataji's presence and the *Bhāgavata Saptah*. Suktal has never witnessed so much festivity at any one time. Thus the whole place is swarming with the multitude. Mataji's room is situated just above the gate of the Ashram. In the grounds below, groups of hundreds of villagers gather at intervals for Mataji's *daršana*. Such a vast sea of human beings we have rarely witnessed. Their shouts of: "Hail to the benefactor of humanity! Hail to the Mother of the World!" rend the sky. From time to time Mataji appears on the terrace outside of her room. Standing with folded hands, she says: "*Janjanārdhana* (God in the guise of the multitude) has come to give *daršana*. With both hands she throws sugar balls into the throng of people, or sometimes fruits or sweets or even tiny booklets containing the thousand names of Vishnu. How exuberantly happy these villagers are to be able to have Mataji's *daršana*."

Today is the final day of the *Bhāgavata Saptah*. But

Shanta feels sorely disappointed. Due to some indisposition she is prevented from performing her daily service for the function. Her mother is attending to the work on her behalf. Mataji remarked: "Everything is for the best. This obstacle has made your mind turn with even greater eagerness towards Him. Your disappointment makes you more God-centred. Then also, the Lord is taking service from your mother today. The laudable desire to celebrate this *Bhāgavata Saptah* has first awakened in Shanta's heart and therefore the entire fruit of this action will be hers. Yet her mother will also get her share of it for what she has done today on Shanta's behalf. That Shanta was prevented from completing the whole of the task all by herself is indeed beneficial, for she will not be able to feel proud at having accomplished everything without the help of anyone."

Later Mataji added: "Although you were kept from doing the actual physical service today, the Lord has accepted your goodwill for the deed—on the plane where there is neither purity nor impurity.

At Mataji's direction, the *Srimad Bhāgavata* together with its golden throne have on behalf of our Ashram been presented to Sri Vishnuashramji in the pandal in Mataji's presence. Thus by Ma's grace, the whole function proceeded most beautifully and harmoniously.

In this connexion Mataji suggested: "May be, one day all the Ashram girls will by a joint effort perform a *Bhāgavata Saptah* entirely out of the their own strength and resources; one of them doing the recitation in Sanskrit, another one the explanations in Hindi, and so forth."

