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Let His Name be ever with you ; imper-  
ceptibly, relentlessly time is creeping away.

In one form or another the grace of the  
Guru must be obtained. Until the Guru is  
found it is man's duty to invoke and try to  
realize God by looking upon all forms as  
His Form, all names as His Name, and all  
modes of being as His.

—Sri Sri MA Anandamayi

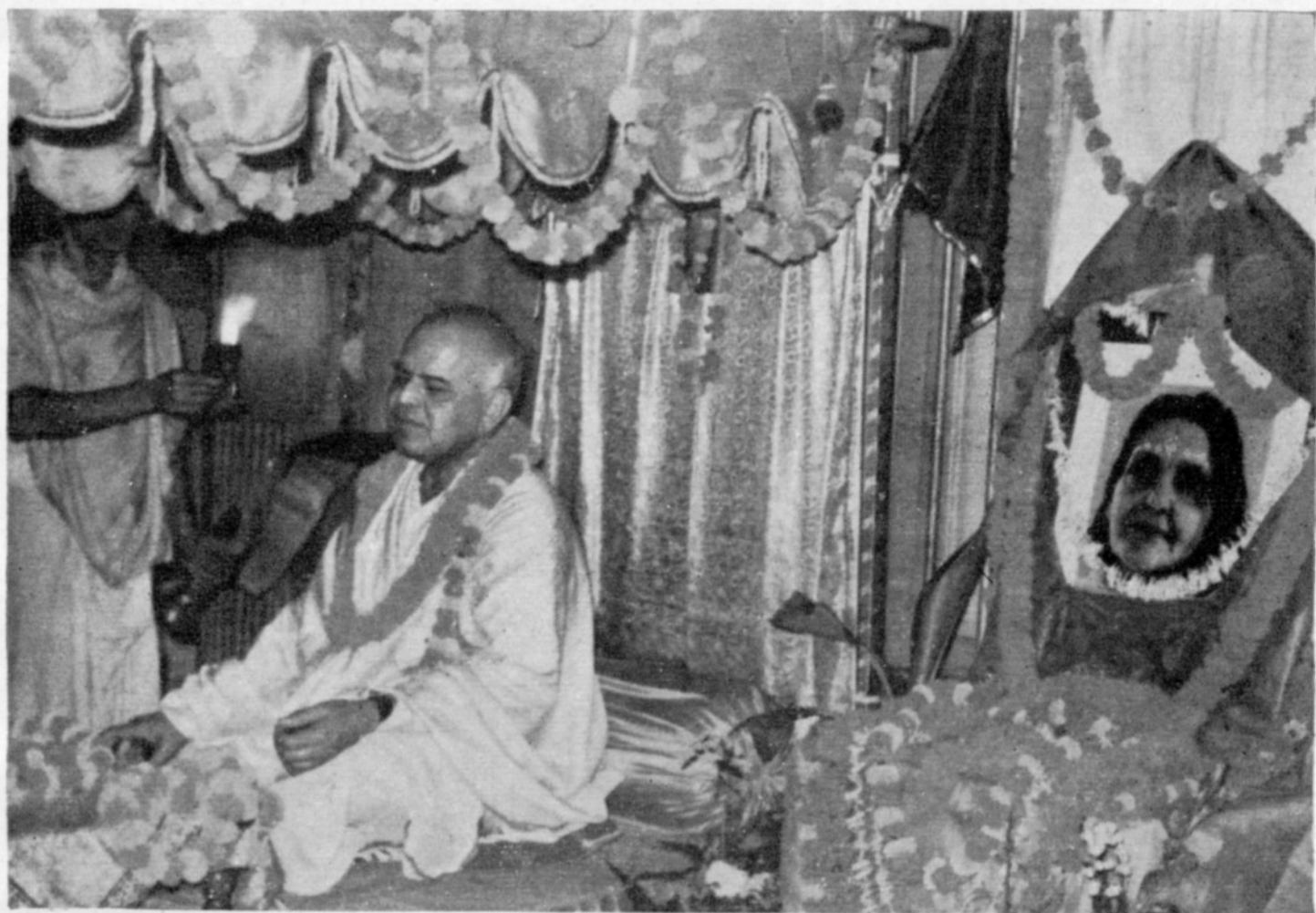
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Prof. Narayan Goswami interpreting Bhagvat in Agarpara Ashram



Photo at Agarpara Ashram, April 1982

# ĀNANDA VĀRTĀ

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

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## Sri Sri Ma's Utterances

(Reported by Sri Gurupriya Devi in "Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi," Vol. V.)

On one occasion a *sannyāsi* asked the following :  
Ma, it is said that all of us have emanated from the One and will go back to the One, that all are one and the same, then why is there in us this feeling of difference ?

*Ma* : The feeling of difference is born out of karma, and again, karma itself will put an end to it.

"Where is the centre for thought in the human body ?" the *Sannyāsi* queried again.

With a gentle smile, Ma pointed to the top of the head, saying, "It comes from here." He said, "I believe it comes from the heart." Ma smilingly replied, "Baba, the heart is the centre for experiencing joy and sorrow. God should be enthroned in that very place. Everything is contained in the root and the root is located in the head. Again, the root pervades everywhere."

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A certain gentleman asked, "Should we observe caste distinctions ?"

*Ma* : What do you feel ?

He replied, "I think we should."

*Ma* : In that case you should. For one's *bhāva* must not be spoiled. Your particular *bhāva* emerges from your *saṁskāra*. You must progress on that very path. The same path is not prescribed for all. For instance, you see that the Muslims or the Christians do not give importance to a number of purificatory rites current among the Hindus. But are there no great and pure Beings born among them on account of this? One should indeed behave according to whatever *saṁskāra* one has. Again, one should also try to find out how at all a particular *saṁskāra* has been formed. Sometimes it so happens that you do not observe certain rules of good conduct due to laziness. On the other hand, it is sometimes seen that a person has been observing particular codes of conduct since childhood, and has got accustomed to them, but inwardly he has a different *saṁskāra*. His various doubts arise out of that *saṁskāra*. But his habit does not permit him to act according to his true *saṁskāra*. Like this, there are various other cases.

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*Question* : *Ma*, we can very well feign some of your *bhāvas* as if they were our own. Suppose someone pretends to be like you, how can we detect it?

*Ma* : If someone does so, he will hurt himself. For whosoever has had even the slightest experience in this field will detect him as an imposter. And the one who behaves hypocritically will also fall

with a crash, getting all the more injured (while he will injure others). You see, you should hold on to the advice of the great Beings (*Mahāpurusha*) with one-pointed attention. Do not try to imitate them in what they do.

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*Question* : Ma, I have heard that you do not initiate anyone, but if without initiation the transference of spiritual power is not possible, then those who are holding on to you in complete reliance are not really gaining anything.

*Ma* : Look, whatever one really needs, automatically comes to him. For it is not true that nothing is gained unless one has been initiated by a mantra. Do you know how it is? Just as a tree is born out of a seed, and again from a cutting of the tree another tree grows. No seed was required this time and yet from the very tree grown out of the cutting people get flowers and fruit. In a like manner, the same result can be obtained in various ways. There are lots of things to be said about it.

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*Question* : Well, Ma, does God really exist? Is it possible to see Him?

*Ma* : Yes, He does exist and can also be seen. That I clearly see you and you see me is an undoubted fact—but God is 'seen' with much greater clarity, as a much greater truth than all else.

*Question* : Then does He not understand our problems ? Why is He so insensitive ?

*Ma* : He is not insensitive, He wants to make you perfect through the experiences of joy and sorrow, that is why He is processing you through happiness and unhappiness. Apart from that it is also true that He is playing with Himself—all this is His *Līlā*.

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*Question* : Why am I unable to quieten my mind ? I have gone on pilgrimage, I have invoked God in silence, and yet why is my mind never at rest ?

*Ma* : Do you know the secret ? In fact, penance means the endurance of suffering. That you are suffering in this way because of your yearning to realize Him—*that is tapasyā*.

Upon this someone asked, “What does one gain by going on pilgrimage ?”

*Ma* : It does have a certain impact. Moreover, if you see all places, you will not have the curiosity again, and will be able to sit quietly. Everything is important. It is also possible to have the *darshan* of saints and ascetics in holy places. There is hope of particular spiritual gains accruing from pilgrimage to different places according to one's destiny. The holy places also bestow their grace. I cannot call anything wrong or bad, you know ! Do you know what I see ?—everything has its importance ; and whosoever is saying whatever, is saying the truth from his own viewpoint.



It is not that all people are stationed at the same spot.

In another context, Ma observed, "You see, children at a very early age, just babble and gurgle a few indistinct sounds before they learn to talk properly. At first he is only an ignorant babe. Then he slowly develops the ability to utter just one or two words ; even at this stage, his parents and elders have to take care of him. When he grows up a little more, he learns to say a few things in indistinct sentences. He starts to ask, 'What is this ?' 'What is that ?' and so on. Then all the people answer his questions. He also goes on learning. The world now becomes his Guru, and he is an inquisitive disciple. A *sādhaka* also finds himself in a similar position.

*Question* : Now, as to all those *Avatāras* — those who descend on earth, such as *Rāma* and *Kṛṣṇa* — had they been born previously as ordinary *jīvas* ? Who are they that descend on earth ? Is there any previous birth for *Avatāras* ? For example, *Rāma*, and *Kṛṣṇa* — had they taken any birth previous to their incarnation ?

*Ma* (smiling) : Yes, all of you present here are verily so many *Avatāras* !

The person who had asked the question said again, "Please explain it in such a way that we may grasp the meaning."

*Ma* : Look, if you ask whether the *Avatāras* like *Rāma* and *Kṛṣṇa* had any previous births, then it may be said in reply that so many *Rāma* and *Kṛṣṇas* keep coming and going ; but their birth is not like yours.

*The Questioner* : Do they come down to this earth as *jīvas* like us ?

*Ma* : Look, a *jīva*, by evolving to higher and higher levels, gradually becomes like God ; and God by taking incarnation makes only an external show of *jīva*-like behaviour.

“Of these two, who is it that comes as *Aāv̄tara* ?”

*Ma* : God Himself becomes manifest as an *Avatāra*. Because He is self-manifested, because He is everything—in all modes and forms of existence. He who is the One is also manifested in parts. Previous birth and rebirth are true to *you* only. But so far as He is concerned, all births are His births, and again, He has no birth whatsoever. Where is the question of previous birth and rebirth ?

*Question* : Then those who attain to the God-like state by gradual self-purification, do they not come again ?

*Ma* : How can there be any coming and going for them ? The practice of self-purification is the very means by which one can cross the level of coming and going. Again, in another sense, you may say that they do come. Do you know how ? Suppose into the stream of Ganges falls water from a fountain and also from a gutter ; when you fill your jar with water from the river, you will get water from the fountain and the gutter mixed with *Gangā*-water, nevertheless you will say, ‘I have fetched a jarful of *Gangā* water.’ Water from the fountain and the gutter, after having merged into the river Ganga, has now become water of *Gangā*. Now there is no difference at all. But this also is just looking at one side of the question. Again,

you see, all those *sādhakas* who have attained to perfection may come when God comes as an *Avatāra* for they have now become indistinguishably one with God. Whoever looks in whichever direction will see different aspects of the truth—in differentiation and also in unity.

*Question* : It is said that God is perfect ; then what are compassion, grace and so forth ? It is stated in the *Gītā* that whenever dharma suffers a setback and *adharma* is rampant, He takes incarnation. Why are such things written there ? Does He feel compassion at the sorrow of the people ? Does he descend because of this. Is it true then that He is full of kindness and compassion ?

• *Ma* : Look, since you have kindness, compassion and so on, they are manifested as God's. But in reality they are not. Again, from another point of view, if compassion and kindness were not there in Him, from where have you got them ? He is everything, in all things is He Himself ; the question of kindness and compassion does not arise. Also, kindness and compassion are in Him only—both are in Him. All things are made possible in Him because He is perfect. You know how it is ? It is just a natural manifestation in Him. Just as when the sky is overcast with clouds, thunder and lightning will automatically be there ; it will not need any exercise of will to invoke them. Again, the will, too, gradually becomes a natural manifestation in Him. In a like manner, whenever the people fill the firmament with the storm cloud of their agonised outcry, His manifestation (like lightning etc). naturally takes place. Whatever is

being said now—that, too, is like this (a natural expression of grace); to tell you the truth—why will He come at all? He is already everywhere. Whomsoever you worship as your chosen deity, His manifestation to you makes sense as an expression of your own natural proclivity. That is why it is said that by knowing oneself one knows all.

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*“There is only one real life, namely the one that is dedicated to God; there is only one real death which is the death of death. After that there is no more birth and no more death.”*

—Sri Ma Anandamayi

# From Sri Sri Ma's Correspondence with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Srimati Indira Gandhi

(Translated from Hindi)

Letter of Sri Ma to Pandit Nehru about five years before his demise.

*Kalkaji, New Delhi,  
24th August 1959*

Pitāji,

For how much longer will it be possible to serve God in the guise of man (*Janjanārdhana sevā*) in this life which is so fleeting? There is no certainty of one's next breath. Sages and saints say: "Service is the highest religion (*Sevā hi parama dharma*)." You Pitāji are devoted to the service of the world. Real service means to serve God alone in everything and everyone. Such selfless service becomes the service of God the Almighty Himself. Dharma is also this—that which is consciously or unconsciously ever retained and upheld—eternal truth. One has to be steeped in the adoration of one's Divine Beloved (*Iṣṭa*), so that there may be no room left for anything undesired (*aniṣṭa*)—in other words—He alone becomes revealed in everyone and everything. Embrace the highest and relinquish mere pleasure. A human

