

Sep 1, 1979

Kirtan at Wales (Brahma and Sarasvati)

Ambikananda sang stotras from Universal Prayers¹:

‘Universal Prayers, from Vedas, Puranas, Mahanirvana Tantra. The Vedas, if you didn’t know, are directly the breath of God given to Lord Brahma.

[Sings:] ‘O Lord, I bow to thee!

Thou art beyond the sea of relative existence. Thou art also in the midst of it; I bow to Thee.

Thou enablest one to go beyond sin by means of holy chants.

Thou takest one beyond the cycle of births and deaths through knowledge; I bow to Thee...

‘O Lord, O Thou the Illuminator, do Thou free us from sins. Do Thou bring to us what is auspicious.’²

‘We contemplate on the Indweller of all. We meditate upon the Lord Supreme. May that destroyer of all ills ever direct us.

‘Whatever sins have been committed by thought, word or deed, may the supreme Lord, the source of strength, wisdom and purity, forgive me and cleanse me of them all.

‘Being freed from sins and impurities, bondages and evils, may I soar up to the highest heavens; may I attain to the same abode as the almighty Brahman...’³

‘May Brahman be realized by us. May the highest bliss be realized by us. May Brahman who is the highest bliss be realized by us.

May we realize Brahman with our purified understanding. May we realize the highest bliss with our purified understanding. May we realize Brahman, who is the highest bliss, with our purified understanding...

May my body become pure. May I be free from impurity and sin. May I realize myself as the light divine.

May my mind become pure. May I be free from impurity and sin. May I realize myself as the light divine.

May my Self become pure. May I be free from impurity and sin. May I realize myself as the light divine.’⁴

‘O Lord, I bow to Thee!

Next he sang a mantra of Shirdi Sai Baba:

‘Om Sai, Om Sai,

God Sai, God Sai,

Sainatha, Sainatha,

Sai Baba my Lord,’

interspersed with repetitions of the name of Allah. At one stage he and two devotees cried out in unison:

‘Allah ho Akbar! Allah Malik Hai!’

This recalled to some devotees the fact that Shirdi Sai had practised both Hindu and Muslim devotion, often repeating, ‘Allah Malik hai!’

Next was a hymn from GSR. ‘This is a song connected with awakening the Kundalini,’ Ambikananda said:

‘Thy name, I have heard, O Consort of Shiva, is the destroyer of our fear.

And so on Thee I cast my burden: Save me! Save me, O kindly Mother!

¹ Compilation from the Sri Ramakrishna Math of Sanskrit scriptural hymns from Vedas, Tantras, Devi Mahatmya and other scriptures, translated by Swami Yatiswarananda, 1933

² Yajur Veda Samhita, XVI, 41; XXX, 3

³ Taittiriya Aranyaka, X, 1, 24, 48

⁴ Taittiriya Aranyaka X, 66

‘Out of Thy womb, the world is born, and Thou it is that dost pervade it.
Mother, in every living creature Thou dost have Thy dwelling-place;
As Kundalini Thou dost live in the lotus of the Muladhara...’

He then sang Shankaracharya’s song to Shiva Mahadeva:

O Great God...O Beloved of Parvati’s heart...

Self-existent One! O Rudra, Wielder of the bow!

Rescue me, helpless as I am, from the trackless forest of this miserable world...’

He closed with another song/chant/mantra continuing for fifteen minutes and combining

‘Om namah Shivaya, Shivaya namah Om’

with

‘Sri Ram, jai Ram, jai jai Ram’,

Finally Gayatri sang ‘Meditation on Sarada Devi’, a poem written by Ramakrishna’s direct disciple Swami Abhedananda (Kaliprasad):

‘Sri Sarada Devi, the grantor of all Knowledge, of golden hue,
sitting at her ease with her hair disshevelled falling on half of her breast,...

her heart melting at the miseries of creatures, full of resplendent light...

Thus should one meditate on her in the lotus of one’s heart.

Sarada, Sarada, Sarada Devi.’

From Ambikananda’s discourse:

‘He bangs at the door of the lay man as much as of the king of kings, and his name is Yama, king of death. Isn’t it so? But “Whoever treads the path repeating ‘Durga! Durga!’ Shiva protects,”⁵ isn’t it? There is a way to escape it. Yama king of death has told all his ‘messaries’, “Don’t approach any devotees of Shiva, fool, they are unconquerable, don’t approach any devotees of Narayana, fool!”

‘You don’t believe me? I have seen them, they look quite nice, what you call the messengers of death. They warn, they know all about us, they know your names, the colour of your hair, they know your ex-house, but not your new house, before changing the name; and the only thing is, they can’t get your name if you have a name of God. They have no power. Where the name of God is taken, all this is put aside. They say, “Yeah, I know this fellow at Keepers Cottage.”⁶

‘There have been cases where messengers of death have been sent by Yama to pick so-and-so, and there are so many of the same name that they pick another, who is also dying. It happens! He is brought there, and then they look through archives and everything and find out – the wrong fellow! So, take him back! The journey takes about 20 minutes from here to there through different [realms]. Nothing is new under the sun.

‘But I tell you, yogis have the power to develop vision to separate the gross world, and they have vision of *gandharvas*,⁷ of devas, *kinnaras*, of all celestial things. Some don’t need trance, they can perceive with their eyes, like that, in a flash. But it doesn’t depend on them, it depends on the disinterested love of matter, spirit, physic and metaphysic. Here I see nothing but darkness wherever I look. It is like night and moonlight.

[Sings] “As the devotees, like stars glitter round Hari...”

All dancing round the moon.. In dense darkness, to have moonlight [is enough]– one moon gives light to the whole world, what need of sun now? It is beautiful to look at the moon, to watch it change colour, become yellow, even golden. Of course, you may say it’s only reflecting the sun, but I am

⁵ GSR song

⁶ Previous name for Kedarnath Ashram

⁷ Divine musicians

happy with my half-moon golden, very happy, and happy without it! It gives me a chance to look through darkness.

‘Read GSR, and see that from the very beginning M. has written Sri Ramakrishna’s words, “Men are hypnotized from very birth by maya.” What is really required is to dehypnotize ourselves and go – I tell you, it’s very hard, my friend! So I say, first pray to Mahamaya. No one can transcend her. This is nothing but the truth. And he who has realized the truth has said it [Sri Ramakrishna].

‘I don’t meditate to force myself, I don’t go by duty, I go by nature, and nature is divine. I don’t go by technique. So much the better if you have technique, but the first technique is love, that’s the only rope that can bind [individual] self to [supreme] Self. If you have got love you have got everything. And on top of that, if purity is added, sincerity, truthfulness! It takes time, but as long as there is no ego, and you know nothing belongs to you. What is yours, tell me? Nothing! How dare! after God has given us colours in the night time to see: a peep in the vacuum, a glimpse, is plenty, to see the reflection, the shade.

‘You don’t have to pray. Why should I pray? Make your acquaintanceship now with God. To ask someone, “O please pray for me” – what becomes of you? Are you a foreigner, you don’t know your father, you don’t know yourself? That’s not right! For a holy man, what is there to pray for? They have got it, and they are very content, and they are also watching, analysing, saying, “O God, I am so grateful for that little corner.”

‘You have to be content. What can be more beautiful than my garden, my little birds, all coming and sitting! You have to be very content with what is provided. Say, “God, all this you have given me. What becomes of me now? How close am I to you? Have I made your acquaintanceship, have I experienced you? Are you talking to me? Am I responding, answering? Am I a good boy, or am I a naughty fellow?” Everyone has a conscience. Watch what your conscience tells you, your heart tells you. It says, “Don’t!” and you still do it. Be good, be kind, but different people have different missions, isn’t it? Different responsibilities. So if your responsibility is to do that, do it, even if it hurts. Truth hurts, but it helps to stay as truth.

‘Now suppose I give you an order, and you are my soldiers, and I order you to shoot. If you happen to kill somebody you are only doing your duty, the responsibility goes to me, because you are killing on my behalf, it is I who have told you. So you have just to do your duty, and the rest goes to God.

‘You don’t have to live in London to suffer from the “din and bustle”; here is din and bustle when you forget your place, forget your child, forget your most beloved, your heart’s content, your object of love, your object of desire, object of realization, the fruit of your meditation, the fruit of immortality. You must practise this. You are taught, “From the unreal lead us to the Real”, but what is unreal? You can’t deny all these things, can you? Therefore, put red light to yourself, say, “Yes, this is a dream, I can say I am dreaming.” I give you a great tip, my friends. Can a man do that when he is not dreaming? Say “This is a dream” many times a day if you want to succeed. Every day, stop and say, “This is a dream, this is a dream. How could I be here? My mind should be on – what? Where should my heart be? Where should my heart be?” Let that word go back into your heart, back into your marrow, your bones, go right further into seven lives, go back into the subconscious, let it be there, “This is really my bones, what I want.” Don’t get tangled, affected. I am only observing. The Sun God himself reveals to us. When I hear the king of death come and knock I tell him, “Yes, I wait, you are not strong enough yet!” If you see him – you collapse! *Ha-ha-ha-ha*! You must meet them, they are very tough! You must be superman.

‘If you really wish, God becomes the servant of His devotees. Krishna says, “I am the servant of my devotees.” If you want to succeed, this is your own realization, your own path. Never be a hypocrite, ‘Don’t force your own nature. If you can’t do something give it up, put it aside, sleep. But while you are sleeping, cradle your mind, let your mind be there. Ramakrishna gives a tip: “When you go to bed,

at least, if you cannot do anything, put your hand on your heart, and think of the Mother. Then you will have a dream of the Mother.”

‘In Garuda Purana it says you have to think of Om constantly all day long lest the king of death come and take you. Then at time of death, with the last thought you have, with that you shall be born. But you can’t just say Om if you haven’t been thinking of it. You can’t belch radish if you haven’t been eating radish. Therefore you have to stop yourself; what is called double consciousness, dual consciousness. You know very well you are not this body, not your causal, not astral, not etheric body, you are this very soul, perfect, immaculate Brahman, you ever were. “I am light.”

‘But what is light? It’s not a bulb! How to think of light? Think of a thousand million suns? No, one spark is enough! When you see that energy, it touches the soul, it’s like touching with electricity, it gives you a shock straightaway into the heart. You hear it loud! It undoes the subtle bodies, and in trance you hear so loud, like thunder. And when you wake up – such stillness! And everything is more real, more real than now. You develop inner sight, inner hearing, all kinds of things. But in your trance don’t get dazzled, don’t get big-headed, stop, concentrate. The more you fly high the more sky there is. It’s called *Infinitum*. Then veil after veil after veil after veil.. The world vanishes, disappears, everything vanishes - what is left is *Akash*, *Akash*.⁸ Light! Light! Light! And you are a little ego witness, a tiny little speck of watching all this. Am I or not, who am I?. You are not the body, not the astral body, not the dreaming body, not the causal body – who are you? What has become of me? Everywhere is Consciousness, omnipotent, omnipresent, all, all. And as you think so you become in that state, you are anywhere, everywhere, nowhere, everything is possible then and there.

‘You have to have this mind, you have to be calm, to receive, to witness, to put all these divine things into your bones, so when you come back to your ordinary life as you look now, you know you are not this, you are soul! You are not this man, this is a dress of karma, of work and different thing. That’s why it is said, once you have tasted this nectar – . Even clad in void⁹ I am very happy, even in my nakedness, I am bound and tied and a slave to my love, to my Self. To me there is no other way unless you become what I am telling you. Otherwise you will just deceive yourself, you will be a hitchhiker on the road, never had a car, not know even how to drive, don’t know the way. Can you always hitchhike? How long? You yourself must drive, isn’t it?

‘Take the dust of the feet of the preceptor, what does it do? Gets rid of the ego, that’s all. When you have got rid of ego you can get some bliss and some flashes, and go higher... [But] you make fate yourself. You are your own witness with the Witness. It’s yourself witnessing your Self. It’s the higher self as God witnessing yourself as this poor little creature who has got a birth as human being. The first greatest miracle and blessing is to be born as man, secondly to have thought of the invisible, inconceivable, unknown Almighty, this is the greatest *kripa*¹⁰ again. And now to strive for attainment, and to love this thing, to renounce hearth, home, kith and kin, and to be true, and to do good even while it hurts.

‘A true devotee never deviates, therefore you have to practise. Then, meditation? – there is no such thing. The greatest meditation is as we are telling you. I cannot tell people how to meditate, it all depends on themselves. Some believe in *pranayama*,¹¹ some in *japa*¹²; you must have strength to do *japa*, you must have concentration. But where is the switch off? Body, mind and soul get tired. Why cannot a realized man do *japa*? He has to force himself. After meditation, why do you have to rest for at least half an hour? Because of experience, isn’t it?

⁸ *Akasha* is Ether in Hindu cosmogony

⁹ i.e. naked - *digambara*

¹⁰ *kripa* - grace

¹¹ Breathing exercises

¹² Repetition of the Name

‘There’s so much loose rope at kirtans, to be frank. It’s not around the clock here, it’s a kindergarten for adults. It takes patience. Patience is again a spiritual ladder. You have been waiting for so long, from 3 o’clock, now it’s nearly midnight, you have been feeding yourself with all these tips, all is loose, steps, do-it-yourself kit, so now go to your bed and take your spiritual ladder from earth to heaven. It depends on yourself. Take a whole life to realize God. So what? Take millions, you’re jolly lucky to be told take a whole life.

‘Read *Guru Gita* and you will understand the greatness, the capacity, the *grandeur* of the guru. It says, if the guru is upset, then that’s it, terminus, reduced to ash. It’s due to the grace of the guru that you have been enlightened, but there is dust, lust and rust. You are very good at dusting the house, but who is dusting the heart, the eyes, the mind? How will you recognize God in *Sayuja*,¹³ where all is God, all is Vishnu? As I am so are you. If you are not very good how will you recognize when all is God? Therefore you have to die now if you want to live in light, live like a living dead. This doesn’t mean you have to go and kill yourself! Think you are already dead, you are waiting – “What becomes of me when I die?”...’

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¹³ *Sayuja* means being in a state of union — perpetual union when the two Selves are inseparable,