

Kedarnath, May 23-26, 1980

Friday 23 May

Ambikananda spoke till 2.30 am to Satchidananda, Sada Siva, Gayatri, Mahalakshmi, and Jai Narain:

‘You are a ray from the Sun of God. Send light where there is darkness in yourself. Day light, night light, music at eventide. While fiddling about, think of the Seer. You don’t know who is going to grab you close to your heart. The body is a bottle, empty. Inside is the essence. Disappear in the cosmos and let Existence alone exist in you. No one is lost in Mother’s womb, even though they might be forgotten for a little while.

‘Self-effort is necessary. Devotees think they are safe, but there are crocodiles on the shore of life. The guru is the lifeboat, uncoiling the rope. You must be alert and watchful. Human birth is the greatest boon. When the senses speak through the tongue it’s sacrilege to Sarasvati, goddess of speech (*Vak*).

‘Those who have transplanted their hearts in the form of a seed in the garden of God live by fragrance. Disciples are altar flowers offering themselves to God. No rite and ritual – just both hands to God: two hands, negative and positive. God plays in the palm of the devotee’s hand. He jumps from one to the other, and then to the head.

‘Certain gardens are tended by elephants.¹ I just saw it! Maybe the elephants water these flowers themselves.’

Swami’s attention was on Mahalakshmi. His hands traced her.

‘You must be doing, you must be good. You must be paining for others at the same time. No one is a stranger. But a lot of people are lost – with full consciousness.

‘God keep His devotees constantly in a state of happiness, joyful bliss. Wisdom is grace. A tip!

‘Even if you don’t know God you must pant for Him. ‘He, I. I, He. I He, He I. A true devotee’s soul is always thirsty. You must pant for God. Even if you haven’t seen God, what He is, what She is, what It is, it’s our forcing love to love Her, Him.

‘We are born to love God, there is no other thing. Through desires we have this body, but really the soul should be born to love God, not for anything else. By loving God, karma will minimize itself, and very little effect will be caused. A man is born to love God, not to realize Him. To love God is to realize Him.

I don’t care for vision, for liberation. I am a slave, a devotee. I love God, I can’t help it.

‘There is work and work. Work for God. Work for My sake. Work to please God, then it’s work with a capital W. But real work starts after work. When work is finished hold fast to the Feet of God with both hands. You must love your work.

‘God is in the palm of your two hands. The pure mind uplifted is just that distance – between the palm of the two hands.

‘When you have attained consciousness, everything around you is sacred. Till then, everything around you is attachment.

‘There’s a vast distance between love and love consciousness. Love consciousness is beyond the body. Losing body consciousness, but you can’t lose consciousness, the reshaped body becomes a

¹ In Hindu iconography elephants bathe Goddess Lakshmi in amrita.

temple fit for a future dwellingplace of God. Therefore, dig at a certain place – there was a town there once, a city, Atlantis! Bridge to immortality!

‘Those who are thinking of the Seer with sight are doing these things with heart. A true devotee has no desire. How can you have desire after you have seen?’

‘The devotee has two hearts – on the left Brahma, on the right Vishnu (and at the Third Eye Mahesvara).

‘Mother is the last word in spirituality.

‘The best guru is he who has held God as a child.

‘Skanda is Shiva Himself.

True love is a mad dog who grabs the bone, the leg, and won’t let go. It’s a game....

‘The son can liberate the mother if he is closer to the object of Reality. So maintain a ‘keep-in-touch’ relation.²

‘One way to give yourself to the Sun is to face the Sun, expose yourself to him. Then take the path of the Sun who is carrying you to God. Don’t go to the Moon, the loka of the *pitris*.³

May 24 (Saturday), 9.50a.m.

A warm summer morning. Devotees enjoyed breakfast outside the back door. Birds were singing. After listening for a while Ambikananda spoke:

‘OM – from sound to experience. As your search, so your experience. A man digs the field of his heart and finds the *bija* [seed] mantra: A-U-M... A-u-m is an eternal family.

‘When the mind is still the heart mustn’t move, but watch the steering mind.

‘God alone is the farmer, we are His seed/children. He throws the seed *bija* in the (cultivated) heart of the devotee.

‘OM is sabda, it will take you to ancestors. Subramanyam [Skanda/Kartikeya] had knowledge of the Pranava OM, and explained it to Brahma.

‘When a man is not chanting OM the echoing subconscious is doing it.

‘Among all dreams only the dream of God is real.

‘OM gives energy. The mind must be still and the heart still. Be everywhere, be nowhere, be still. Reject the objective, go up to the absolute, come down and embrace the relative.

‘When the mind is well controlled soma comes from the head [and] the yogi controls [it] by the *bija* mantra RAM (fire mantra) so that fire doesn’t consume it, and thus the yogi nourished by it.

‘But you have to fight nature if you want to become superman. Start from OM... “O man, if you want to live in bliss repeat Lord Hari’s Name.”.

‘Work for work’s sake if you don’t know God.

² Swamiji’s mother may have passed away at about this time.

³ spirits, ancestors

‘Think you’re a drop of water and join the ocean. You become one – individuality merges in the Great Cause.

‘In this waking dream we are giving everything to God that belongs to Him.

‘The dog never leaves his master, fed or unfed. “Do with me as it pleases Thee.”

‘Love speed is faster than light and sound, knows no limits or boundaries, revives dead darkness, enlightens...

‘First nullify karma condition to *gunatita [beyond the gunas]* – when the mirror is cleaned it reflects exactly.

‘Have no idea of expecting anything in this life – this life is itself a great boon. You must have patience, and this kind of idea : “May Thy will be acceptedly done to me!”

‘The best language is the language of revelation from the heart. And revelation comes not just from austerity but on the soft cushion of Mother’s tummy or breast.

‘Creation, Preservation, Destruction. Just these three thoughts. God’s power magnifies the glory.

‘Sri Ramakrishna was very pleased when M said, “God fabricated you with His own hand.”

‘You are a butterfly of multifarious colours, but still a caterpillar. You would fly in the firmament if you could break the cocoon of confusion and delusion.

‘I am everywhere yet I am here. I am here yet I am everywhere. In the gallery. In the galaxy. “Because you can’t see the stars in daytime don’t think they aren’t there.”

‘Too many ripples, too many waves. If you want to see the moon properly let the water be still. Or else your writing will try to describe all the moons you can see – and such a writing is still writing in fairy thought – look up and see the moon within yourself.

‘Man is a daytime creature, he depends on energy, gets tired. You place yourself in your bed to get refreshed again.

‘One who has consciousness worships animate and inanimate. A little discrimination, a little wisdom – the gift must be given with discrimination. A gift given at the wrong time is inauspicious.

‘From here to eternity is a long journey. As Sri Ramakrishna says, it’s better to abide by a guide who has been there already. Where will you find another place like this on the unending journey?...

‘After one end you restart the game, the work of art, the sculpture. An artist keeps correcting his work. The beginning and the end are like the two posts of a tightrope holding the rope to support you. You must get the balance right, worry about the strain on the rope.

‘The 24 tattvas⁴ are like the 24 letters of the alphabet. The vowels: I AM SHIVA A E I O U

‘Feed the Man in His picture, and He will immediately acknowledge it. He may do anything, you may not notice, but He will acknowledge it... The Man is singly universal. Beyond Man He is Brah...

‘Memorize the beginning of the last kirtan: “In the beginning there existed God, the source of light.”

⁴ Principles

‘Nothing ventured, nothing gained! “At every age I incarnate Myself” - mainly to take devotees up, high, in His own image, and let them fall like shooting stars, glittering.

Sunday morning (25 May)

‘Without love, meditation is no good – a tip.

‘There are two kinds of devotees: those who seek and learn from God, and those who don’t understand and have to be told over and over even when God tells them.

‘... Lord Shiva taught the rishis in silence, seated in *Chin* mudra.⁵ There can be no greater knowledge than love...

‘For an ordinary being it’s important to know how to die, because death moulds the next birth. But the liberated soul is already a “living dead”. Everywhere he identifies, unifies; yet he is above...

‘Meditation is a word for a beginner, because for a man who is always thinking of God, emptying the vessel of his mind, pouring from one vessel to another, the Other fills it. Sri Ramakrishna said, “As soon as one word finishes, Mother gives another.”

The yogi keeps talking, purifying, while grinding karma senses. Hearing is a great thing. Speaking, pondering, taking delight, all are good.

‘*Ganga tattva*. Great rishis will purify as well as ordinary people. Ma purifies with the idea of originality, like fire burns, cracks, purifies. The yogi sees everything as That. And because of That, eyes can see. But Brahma condition can be felt in blind faith. Brahma has written so many lines in your palm. The whole universe is in your hand, and the yogi’s hand reaches everywhere.

‘Before you meditate, remember what Sarada Devi said: “Think always of your helplessness.”

‘And you must think also of Brahma the Creator because you are in creation. Then Vishnu the Preserver who preserves the body that has been created.. Remember, when God created you He made you perfect, not as creation but as the Uncreated One, the immortal uncreated Self – that’s your divinity, your reality, your originality...

‘When we speak about building here it’s not for you but for your children – they don’t have to bring the bricks. You mustn’t lose the link. By solidifying the present you are benefiting the future.

‘A bhakta is no fool, even though he becomes a child, a babe, innocent and guileless – “Theirs is the kingdom” (Jesus). Drop body consciousness for a second ‘

‘He whose mind is presently mad, never losing consciousness of his madness, such a man is mad but sane. Such consciousness is beyond intellect, beyond sattva. One must lose consciousness to get superconsciousness...

‘Our soul and your soul is the same. See the many as One and the One as many – that’s the foundation and the roof ... therefore you must be united in duality.

“*Gross, subtle, spirit, matter*⁶...” then words cannot express.

‘You have attained human birth – that means you have attained here. Even with lack of knowledge you have attained.

⁵ Thumb and forefinger touching

⁶ “Self, gross, spirit, matter/Consciousness, oneness./God, the Lord, master of created things, matter or spirit./Love incomprehensible, transcendental,/Cosmic consciousness, oneness, reality,/God alone is.” Poem by Ambikananda, 1971

‘Honey is not for the bee. The comb is for others to eat.
Sweet are His ways. Sweet to finish, hard to start.

‘A Secret: Jesus taught, “*Our* Father which art in Heaven...” So we are all brothers and sisters. Jesus taught in a sweet way if hard to accept. But truth stays as truth. In the end it will conquer.
Eyes of *jnana*, heart of love.’

Swamiji spoke:

The yearning of an unripe devotee is coiled. The thread I am uncoiling is not a spiderweb – it’s unbreakable.

‘The individual soul, if not one with the great Soul, is not aware of its greatness, gets tangled, and dies like a caterpillar in its cocoon. I have not come to teach but to nourish and awaken.

‘Wisdom is grace, grace is bliss, knowledge is love, love is truth.

‘Mary was like Kumari Devi.⁷ She and Jesus both lived in Truth, died in Truth, and were illumined.

‘God says: “Do you love Me as I love you?” Write it down and give it to Me if no one else will take it, understand it.

“When I come down I shall never leave you. My tomb shall speak” (Sai Baba). For a divine soul to come down, to love everyone, and embroil himself in the world – what a great thing!

‘You must know God to your heart’s desire - no further.

‘Self-effort, willingness and lethargy – they are like the *gunas* [*rajas*, *sattva*, *tamas*]. God also dwells in the same prison of the body, but He is free, He is the Witness.

‘God is so attentive. He says, “Take good care of that. It’s an amulet. Keep it well.” Sri Ramakrishna appeared (in a vision) to Sarada to warn her not to wear a gold bracelet because thieves were coming. Therefore, holy things are not given to everyone.

‘Show me your readiness. The pure mind sees God. When you’re sleeping the (pure) mind goes to dwell in the heart, where God dwells - in yoga sleep.’

Later there was kirtan in the special ‘Shrine caravan’ where Ambikananda kept his most holy image of Mother Kali, and where much sublime music and discourses took place.

‘Music is very difficult to follow and keep the beat in time, but music melts, cools the nerves, oils rusty condition, makes you take a break but reaches the heart, concretizes all thought in one Thought – at least for a minute you are dead and living at the same time.

‘No need to test here, the river becomes a necklace of sacred beads going down through earth, enriching, immortal nectar, united with pure mind – the mind even dies. Purity incarnate.

‘Sai Baba is God come down to take you to His realm – He’s opening your Third Eye ... There’s no need to see Him, hearing is enough.

“My heart you do not know.” So says Sai Baba. He is very right. Better to hear God’s inner voice. By hearing Him I learn, and I take delight. So if you want to see God, seek Him in the company of the holy. Not only a pure mind but a pure mind working – awake, dreaming, sleeping.

Monday morning (May 26)

Swamiji spoke to Raja Ram, Sita Devi, Mahalakshmi, Jai Narain, Sada Siva, Gayatri, Satchidananda:

⁷ Manifestation of the Divine Energy

‘Love with concentration, that’s the match struck in darkness which strikes light in the etheric plane. High experience comes down from the Formless to the heart, becoming commingled in form...

‘Beside mind there are many subminds, with the ego as the original grandfather.

‘God likes external cleanliness so as to show what beautiful stuff there is inside.
“Purity and impurity are in the mind,” says Sri Ramakrishna.

‘You cannot be more of everything than God – more feeling, more sensitive – yet when you hear of someone’s hurt, you are hurt too. Therefore, He is the heart of hearts. You borrow your heart from Him, and He dwells in that heart.

‘He leaves anyone who says “I” and “mine”. The best pairing is: I-Thou. *Aham-Sa, Sa-Aham*, breathe-in breathe-out. First I, then companion of love, then child companion, then all of us

‘It’s the will of Rama that He is born in such and such a town, has such and such a friend. You are lucky. Didn’t God send one who is like yourself? Read Parvati’s diary.⁸ Otherwise, God is very strict and hard to please.

‘In daytime I worship God the Light, to find God by light. Night time is the dark fortnight. I find even greater help in darkness.

[Sings:] “*In dense darkness, O Mother, Thy formless beauty sparkles...*”

‘Find the invisible through sound. Within that image God has given permanent sight ... Clip the wings of desires – the bird stays in the form of a flame, singing for others.

‘Man is not the body, not the mind, this leg, this chest, etc. He has shaped it to enjoy. The idea of creation has come into His mind.

‘The devotees’ discrimination has been polished so they can love everyone but not be attached.

‘A’s nature is sweetness; B is a different quality. So B to A causes slight perturbation. When B has attained, he rises to equality like a bubble from the depths of the sea. Then there reigns the language of silence, when there is no ego. Come to the surface level, and burst.

‘So every night is like a crumb, a grain of sand. It takes many nights to make a beach to the shore of Immortality.

‘Fill the tank, mix cement in the heart with good sand, and make the image according to your liking... The Mother of Ganesha knows how beautiful that Son is.

‘Words are spiritual ladders. We give a long word. Small words are like the frets of a guitar, the neck too has to be solid – the long word. You need them both. It’s your faith that makes you climb the rungs of the ladder. Faith is yours, not his. The enlightened guru will make you build it – so the guru dies before the disciple. He exposes his life. “I will give my head for my devotee,” says Shirdi Sai Baba.

“Our Mother is Kumari Devi. Our Father is Maha Deva.” So says Swami Ambikananda.

‘A great spiritual ladder connects earth to heaven. But to challenge heaven you have to be made of more than clay and sandalwood... You are not dead, only buried – the reverse of Sita who got in the Earth to find herself in heaven; get in the coffin box and find your Self there.

⁸ Diary of Parvati, a leading devotee who passed away January 1974

‘Whenever it is possible in your life, drink a dose of our word. If you are faithful to Me and My word with good *conscience* [consciousness?] you will respect My wishes. Carry out his orders at all costs.

‘Even the worldly get boons. How much more His own children! “I stay by his side,” says Sai Baba. Raise your hand and the impossible becomes possible.

‘Anyone who is giving his life and mind, and giving it to His hand – he is already free and away from tanglement. “My love is not just for you but for those you haven’t seen yet – the child of your child. Through the success of your child you will doubly succeed.

‘We have broken away from all the stupid, vagabond, vagary ways of questions. There is only One, so questions don’t arise here... At least you can find a bubble in eternity.’

Devotee: ‘Didn’t even Vivekananda sometimes question Sri Ramakrishna?’

Ambikananda: ‘Vivekananda was a divine rationalist, entangled by Maya to be like that. I live by essence of Vedanta and share it at kirtan. My signature is in the form of Time: the ‘T’ is the cross, the ‘I’ is I, and then the little ‘me’.

‘A true son is not far from a true father. Find out; that explains everything. Love your real Father above all. What belongs to the Father is good for the Son – it’s all yours, just walk about in the field, pluck whatever you want.

““In the wise I am wisdom”⁹ – not dry intellect subject to perversity. Choose your company.

““God is the slave of the devotee.” So a true devotee has no vasanic¹⁰ qualities, because whatever he wishes isn’t far from fulfilment. He only yearns for your becoming. He is floating, crossing the ocean. When the worldly wind comes he goes under water like a frog, when the wind goes he comes out, croaks with the devotees ... he is happy here, happy there, happy everywhere. He wants your happiness in the essence of happiness itself – the source of light.

‘You must catch up from where you’ve strayed... You have to be fair, honest, straight to yourself.

‘My experience is a book I am reading every day.

‘He who withdraws his heart from the world – that’s the way to live! When your heart is lit you will understand everything more and more...’

‘The mind must be like a compass to keep the boat going [on course] day and night. The captain doesn’t stop the boat when you’re sleeping.

‘The child condenses both parents’ divine qualities into one. It’s a little bud. God isn’t interested in big men. He keeps little children near.

‘As long as you see petals you know the fruit hasn’t ripened. But once the soul is nourished by that fruit, then everything is insipid.

‘These devotees are like trees in an orchard. Here and there fruits have come – let’s share them. Distance is your misconception. The Divine Mother has friends, not guru, disciple, etc. God, guru and disciple are one. Shiva has become all these things. It’s God has become guru, guru becomes disciple, father becomes son, son becomes great grandson. Thus the One becomes many.

⁹ Bhagavad Gita 10.38

¹⁰ Latent tendencies of desires

‘I am a devotee of God, permanent. Nothing else. I’d like to be a slave of God as Mother, Father, Friend. I don’t care for Teacher God but I have to know – knowledge is a cyclone.

‘The individual has to be fed. When he eats, you’re filled.
Yearning must not be lacking. It’s the cork in the bottle of divine liquid. When Paramatman is gained nothing is lacking.

‘The bee sucks from many a flower, but always comes back to its comb.

‘United we stand. But divided we stand spiritually. The flight is alone to alone. Always keep contact with that point. What I yearn for is not just liberation, but detachment in liberation.

‘Never mind where we were. Here we are, a few yards apart, at Kedarnath. We are the Witness Consciousness. All are sucked into the vacuum. Rubbish has gone into the bin.

‘Many trees are in the orchard; few fruits are plucked, offered to God. The rest must stay where they are, you don’t know when the gardener is coming.

‘You must have faith. Without faith you have no point. It’s stability. Faith is your pivot. But faith depends on patience. Faith is light, patience is its shadow. Sit in the shadow of faith and meditate. That light doesn’t burn. Be patiently under the shade in one lifetime. Keep going till you reach.

‘First become a prisoner. Then become free. This is the law of love – be a voluntary prisoner. undemonstratively active. Word of God is given to everyone, man, woman – you have been liberated before. Kick the goal again, man!

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