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Life —

A Journey and an Ascent

*The ascent to the divine Life is the human journey,
the Work of works, the acceptable Sacrifice. This
alone is man's real business in the world and the
justification of his existence...*

CWSA 21: 48

Sri Aurobindo

Flower on the cover:

Life Energy

Powerful and manifold, meets all needs.

(Spiritual significance and explanation of the flower given by the Mother)

Botanical name: Dendranthema Xgrandiflorum

[Chrysanthemum Xmorifolium]

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Life — A Journey and an Ascent

(Central Motive of the Terrestrial Existence)

Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face. — Sri Aurobindo

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Our endeavour has been to discover what is the reality and significance of our existence as conscious beings in the material universe and in what direction and how far that significance once discovered leads us, to what human or divine future.

CWSA 21: 1051

Sri Aurobindo



To live, to love are signs of infinite things,
Love is a glory from eternity's spheres.

Savitri, p. 397

What is Happening in the Universe

[O Lord]

What words will ever tell the splendour of Thy Law and the magnificence of Thy Glory? What words will express the perfection of Thy Consciousness and the infinite bliss of Thy Love?

What words will sing Thy ineffable Peace and celebrate the majesty of Thy Silence and the grandeur of Thy all-powerful Truth?

The entire manifested universe cannot suffice to speak Thy splendour and tell Thy marvels, and in the eternity of time this is what it is trying to do more and more, better and better, eternally.

CWM 1: 306

Has creation a definite aim? Is there something like a final end to which it is moving?

No, the universe is a movement that is eternally unrolling itself. There is nothing which you can fix upon as the end and one aim. But for the sake of action we have to section the movement, which is itself unending, and to say that this or that is the goal, for in action we need something upon which we can fix our aim. In a picture you need a definite scheme of composition and colour; you have to set a limit, to put the whole thing within a fixed framework; but the limit is illusory, the frame is a mere convention. There is a constant continuation of the picture that stretches beyond any particular frame, and each continuation can be drawn in the same conditions in an unending series of frames. Our aim is this or that, we say, but we know that it is only the beginning of another aim beyond it, and that in its turn leads to yet another; the series develop always and never stop.

CWM 3: 31-32

The world is perpetually changing, perpetually; not for a second is it like itself, and the general harmony expresses itself more and more perfectly; therefore nothing can remain as it is and in spite of all appearances to the contrary, the whole is always constantly progressing; the harmony is becoming more and more harmonious, the truth becoming more and more true in the Manifestation. But to see that, one must see the whole, and man sees only... not even the human domain, but only his personal domain, quite small, quite small, microscopic — he cannot understand.

It is a double thing that is going on completing itself (*same gesture of intermixture*) and with a mutual action: as the Manifestation becomes more conscious of itself, its expression perfects itself, becomes also more true. The two movements go together.

(26 Aug. 1967)

CWM 11: 76

... all that happens is necessary for the full unfoldment of the goal of the creation. One might say: the goal of the creation is that the creature must become conscious like the Creator. There! It is a phrase, but it is in that direction. The goal of this creation is this Consciousness of the Infinite, the Eternal who is Omnipotent — Infinite, Eternal, Omnipotent (called God by our religions: for us, in relation to life, it is the Divine) — Infinite and Eternal, Omnipotent... beyond time; each individual particle possessing this Consciousness, each individual particle containing this same Consciousness.

It is division that has created the world and it is in division that the Eternal manifests itself. Our language is... (or our consciousness) inadequate.

(25 Dec. 1971)

CWM 11: 289

The whole creation must want nothing but the Divine, nothing but to manifest the Divine. And all that it does, even all its so-called errors, are only means towards making it inevitable for the whole creation to manifest the Divine — but not the “Divine” as man conceives him to be, “this and not that”, with all kinds of restrictions: a Totality of tremendous power and light. It is truly the Power in the world, a new and tremendous Power that has come into the world and must manifest itself and must make “manifestable” (if one may so put it) this Divine All-Power.

... I have come to this conclusion. I have looked, I have observed and I have seen that what we call “supramental”, lacking a better word, this Supramental makes the creation more sensitive to the higher Power; we call that “divine” because we... It is divine in relation to what we are, but... It is something (*gesture of descent and pressure*) which must make Matter more sensitive and more... “responsive” to the Force.

CWM 11: 315

(6 May 1972)

All is mute in the being, but in the bosom of the silence burns the lamp that can never be extinguished, the fire of an ardent aspiration to know and to live integrally the Divine.

CWM 14: 474

The Mother

Only Thou — that is all.

*And it is quite evident that the creation has that as its goal, **that wonderful delight... of feeling itself to be Thou.***

CWM 11: 268

The Mother

Central Motive of the Terrestrial Existence

The Mother begins the reading of the last six chapters of *The Life Divine*, in her Wednesday class:

A spiritual evolution, an evolution of consciousness in Matter in a constant developing self-formation till the form can reveal the indwelling spirit, is then the keynote, the central significant motive of the terrestrial existence. This significance is concealed at the outset by the involution of the Spirit, the Divine Reality, in a dense material Inconscience; a veil of Inconscience, a veil of insensibility of Matter hides the universal Consciousness-Force which works within it, so that the Energy, which is the first form the Force of creation assumes in the physical universe, appears to be itself inconscient and yet does the works of a vast occult Intelligence.

Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, SABCL Vol. 19, p. 824

The first thing to understand is precisely this first sentence which states the fact, the *raison d'être* and the very principle of universal existence. You see, we are beginning here at the end of the volume, these are the last six chapters. Throughout the beginning of the book Sri Aurobindo has taken one after another all the theories explaining the how and why of the universe and of existence; he has carried them to their extreme limits in order to explain fully what they mean, and at the end he has shown how far they were incomplete or imperfect and given the true solution. All that is, as it were, finished with; it lies behind our reading. It would have taken us something like ten years to go through all that! And you would have required all kinds of knowledge and a great intellectual development to be able to follow it with any profit. But for our part, we are beginning from where he has shown, from the purely intellectual point of view, what the purpose of existence is, and he formulates it like this: “the central significant motive of the terrestrial existence.”



The Divine Consciousness emerging
from the Inconscious
(Painting and caption by the Mother)

For he is not concerned with the entire universe, he has taken terrestrial life, that is, our life here on Earth, as a symbolic and concentrated representation of the purpose of the entire universe. In fact, according to very old traditions, the Earth, from the deeper spiritual point of view, has been created as a symbolic concentration of universal life so that the work of transformation may be done more easily, in a limited, concentrated “space” — so to say — where all the elements of the problem are gathered together so that, in the concentration, the action may be more total and effective. So here he speaks only of terrestrial existence, but we can understand that it is a symbolic existence, that is, that it represents a universal action. It is a symbolic, concentrated representation. And he says that “the central motive”, that is, the purpose of terrestrial existence is to awaken, to develop and finally to reveal in a total manifestation the Spirit which is hidden at the centre of Matter and impels this Matter from within outwards towards a progressive development which will liberate the Spirit working from within. So, in the outer appearances as you see them, at first you find the mineral kingdom with stones, earth, minerals which to us, in our outer consciousness, appear absolutely unconscious. Yet, behind this unconsciousness there is the life of the Spirit, the consciousness of the Spirit, which is completely hidden, which is as if asleep — though that is only an appearance — and which works from within in order gradually to transform this Matter that is completely inert in appearance, so that its organisation may lend itself more and more to the manifestation of consciousness. And he says here that at first this veil of inert Matter is so total that, to a superficial glance, it is something that has neither life nor consciousness. When you pick up a stone and look at it with your ordinary eyes and consciousness, you say, “It has no life, no consciousness.” For one who

knows how to see behind appearances, there is, hidden at the centre of this Matter — at the centre of each atom of this Matter — there is, hidden, the Supreme Divine Reality working from within, gradually, through the millennia, to change this inert Matter into something that is expressive enough to be able to reveal the Spirit within. Then you have the progression of the history of Life: how, from the stone there suddenly appeared a rudimentary life and through successive species a sort of organisation, that is, an organic substance capable of revealing life. But between the mineral and vegetable kingdoms there are transitional elements; one doesn't know whether they belong to the mineral or already to the vegetable kingdom — when one studies this in detail one sees some strange species which belong neither here nor there, which are not quite this and yet not quite that. Then comes the development of the vegetable kingdom where naturally life appears, for there is growth, transformation — a plant sprouts up, develops, grows — and with the first phenomenon of life comes also the phenomenon of decomposition and disintegration which is relatively much more rapid than in the stone: a stone, if protected from the impact of other forces, can last apparently indefinitely, whereas the plant already follows a curve of growth, ascent and decline and decomposition — but this with an extremely restricted consciousness. Those who have studied the vegetable kingdom in detail are well aware that there is a consciousness there. For instance, plants need sunlight to live — the sun represents the active energy which makes them grow — so, if you put a plant in a place where there is no sunlight, you see it always growing up and up and up, trying, making an effort to reach the sunlight. In a virgin forest, for instance, where man does not interfere, there is this kind of struggle among all the plants which are always growing straight upwards in one way or another in their effort

to catch the sunlight. It is very interesting. But even if you put a flower-pot in a fairly small courtyard surrounded by walls, where the sun doesn't come, a plant which normally is as high as this (*gesture*), becomes as tall as that: it stretches up and makes an effort to find the light. Therefore there is a consciousness, a will to live which is already manifesting. And little by little, with species that are more and more developed, you again reach another transitional passage between what is no longer entirely a plant and still not yet an animal. There are several species like that, which are very interesting. There are those plants which are carnivorous, plants like an open mouth: you throw a fly inside, snap! they swallow it. It is no longer quite a plant, it is not yet an animal. There are many plants of this kind.

Then you come to the animal. The first animals, yes, it is difficult to distinguish them from plants, there is almost no consciousness. But there you see all the animal species, you know them, don't you, right up to the higher animals which, indeed, are very conscious. They have their own completely independent will. They are very conscious and marvellously intelligent, like the elephant, for instance; you know all the stories about elephants and their wonderful intelligence. Therefore, it is already a very perceptible appearance of mind. And through this progressive development, we suddenly pass on to a species which has probably disappeared — traces of which have been found — an intermediate animal like a monkey or of the same line as the monkey — something close to it, similar, if not the monkey as we know it — but already an animal that walks on two legs. And from there we come to man. There is an entire beginning of the evolution of man; we can't say, can we, that he shows a brilliant intelligence, but there is already an action of the mind, a beginning of independence, of independent reaction to the environment and the forces of Nature. And so, in man there is the whole

range, right up to the higher being capable of spiritual life.

That is what Sri Aurobindo tells us on this page.

... at his highest stage, man begins to be altogether independent of Nature —“altogether” is an exaggeration: he can become altogether independent. A man who has realised the spiritual consciousness in himself, who has a direct relation with the divine Origin is literally independent of Nature, of the force of Nature.

(It begins to rain.) Ah! That is to cool down our minds!

(Laughter)

And that is what he calls “exceeding itself”, that is, that the Being, the inner divine Consciousness, the supreme spiritual Reality in its effort to develop... *(It rains harder.)* Oh, oh! We shall have to stop talking... in its effort to develop a conscious means of manifesting itself has arrived at a being capable of having a direct contact with It without going through the whole process of Nature.

CWM 9: 209-13

The Mother

Sri Aurobindo came upon earth to teach this truth to men. He told them that man is only a transitional being living in a mental consciousness, but with the possibility of acquiring a new consciousness, the Truth-consciousness, and capable of living a life perfectly harmonious, good and beautiful, happy and fully conscious. During the whole of his life upon earth, Sri Aurobindo gave all his time to establish in himself this consciousness he called supramental, and to help those gathered around him to realise it.

CWM 12: 116

The Mother

Here to Fulfil Himself is God's Plan

What happens most often when one makes the inner effort that's needed to discover one's soul, to unite with it and allow it to govern one's life, is a kind of marvellous enchantment with this discovery, as a result of which the first instinct is to tell oneself, "Now I have what I need, I have found infinite delight!" and no longer to be concerned with anything else.

In fact this is what has happened to almost all those who have made this discovery, and some of them have even set up this experience as a principle of realisation and said, "When you have done that, everything is done, there is nothing more to do; you have reached the goal and the end of the road."

Indeed, a great courage is necessary to go farther; this soul one discovers must be an intrepid warrior soul which does not at all rest satisfied with its own inner joy while comforting itself for the unhappiness of others with the idea that sooner or later everybody will reach that state and that it is good for others to make the same effort that one has made or, at best, that from this state of inner wisdom one can, with "great benevolence" and "deep compassion" help others to reach it, and that when everybody has attained it, well, that will be the end of the world and that's so much the better for those who don't like suffering!

But... there is a "but". Are you sure that this was the aim and intention of the Supreme when he manifested? (*Silence*)

The whole creation, the whole universal manifestation appears at best like a very bad joke if it only comes to this. Why begin at all if it is only to get out of it! What is the use of having struggled so much, suffered so much, of having created something which, at least in its external appearance, is so tragic and dramatic, if it is simply to teach you how to get out of it — it would have been better not to begin at all.

But if one goes to the very depth of things, if, stripped not only of all egoism but also of the ego, one gives oneself totally, without reserve, so completely and disinterestedly that one becomes capable of understanding the plan of the Lord, then one knows that it is *not* a bad joke, *not* a tortuous path by which you return, a little battered, to the starting-point; on the contrary, it is to teach the entire creation the delight of being, the beauty of being, the greatness of being, the majesty of a sublime life, and the perpetual growth, perpetually progressive, of that delight, that beauty, that greatness. Then everything has a meaning, then one no longer regrets having struggled and suffered, one has only the enthusiasm to realise the divine goal, and one plunges headlong into the realisation with the *certitude* of the goal and victory.

But to know that, one must stop being egoistic, being a separate person turned in on oneself and cut off from the supreme origin. That is what must be done: to cast off one's ego. Then one can know the true goal — and this is the only way!

To cast off one's ego, to let it fall off like a useless garment.

The result is worth the efforts that must be made. And then, one is not all alone on the way. One is helped, if one has trust.

CWM 9: 426-28

The Mother

... this is not a creation made with something foreign to the Divine: it is simply the Divine who has emanated himself, as though he were looking at himself – he objectivises himself in order to become aware of all that he is; instead of being in an inner static state of concentration in which all is unmanifested, he projects that outside himself “in order to see”, as though he wanted to see all that is within him, that is, all the infinity of possibilities.

CWM 5: 374-75

The Mother



*He made great dreams a mould for coming things
And cast his deeds like bronze to front the years.*

Savitri: 45

Our Origin & the Purpose of the Creation

The Infinitesimal Infinite

Out of a still immensity we came.

These million universes were to it
The poor light-bubbles of a trivial game,
A fragile glimmer in the Infinite.

It could not find its soul in all that Vast:

It drew itself into a little speck
Infinitesimal, ignobly cast
Out of earth's mud and slime strangely awake,—

A tiny plasm upon a casual globe

In the small system of a dwarflike sun,
A little life wearing the flesh for robe,
A little mind winged through wide space to run.

It lived, it knew, it saw its self sublime,

Deathless, outmeasuring Space, outlasting Time.

(CWSA 2: 589)



Life — A Journey and an Ascent

The life of the human creature, as it is ordinarily lived, is composed of a half-fixed, half-fluid mass of very imperfectly ruled thoughts, perceptions, sensations, emotions, desires, enjoyments, acts, mostly customary and self-repeating, in part only dynamic and self-developing, but all centred around a superficial ego. The sum of movement of these activities eventuates in an internal growth which is partly visible and operative in this life, partly a seed of progress in lives hereafter. This growth of the conscious being, an expansion, an increasing self-expression, a more and more harmonised development of his constituent members is the whole meaning and all the pith of human existence. It is for this meaningful development of consciousness by thought, will, emotion, desire, action and experience, leading in the end to a supreme divine self-discovery, that Man, the mental being, has entered into the material body. All the rest is either auxiliary and subordinate or accidental and otiose; that only matters which sustains and helps the evolution of his nature and the growth or rather the progressive unfolding and discovery of his self and spirit. ...

CWSA 23: 89-90

There are **three stages of the ascent**, — at the bottom the bodily life enslaved to the pressure of necessity and desire, in the middle the mental, higher emotional and psychic rule that feels after greater interests, aspirations, experiences, at the summits first a deeper psychic and spiritual state and then a supramental eternal consciousness in which all our aspirations and seekings discover their own intimate significance. In the bodily life first desire and need and then the practical good of the individual and the society are the governing consideration, the dominant force. In the mental life ideas and ideals

rule, ideas that are halflights wearing the garb of Truth, ideals formed by the mind as a result of a growing but still imperfect intuition and experience. Whenever the mental life prevails and the bodily diminishes its brute insistence, man the mental being feels pushed by the urge of mental Nature to mould in the sense of the idea or the ideal the life of the individual, and in the end even the vaguer more complex life of the society is forced to undergo this subtle process. In the spiritual life, or when a higher power than Mind has manifested and taken possession of the nature, these limited motive-forces recede, dwindle, tend to disappear. The spiritual or supramental Self, the Divine Being, the supreme and immanent Reality, must be alone the Lord within us and shape freely our final development according to the highest, widest, most integral expression possible of the law of our nature. In the end that nature acts in the perfect Truth and its spontaneous freedom; for it obeys only the luminous power of the Eternal. The individual has nothing further to gain, no desire to fulfil; he has become a portion of the impersonality or the universal personality of the Eternal. No other object than the manifestation and play of the Divine Spirit in life and the maintenance and conduct of the world in its march towards the divine goal can move him to action. Mental ideas, opinions, constructions are his no more; for his mind has fallen into silence, it is only a channel for the Light and Truth of the divine knowledge. Ideals are too narrow for the vastness of his spirit; it is the ocean of the Infinite that flows through him and moves him for ever.

CWSA 23: 208-09

Sri Aurobindo

*When naked of ego and mind it hears the Voice;
It looks through light to ever greater light
And sees Eternity ensphering Life.*

Savitri: 272

Sri Aurobindo

Seven Grades of the Divine Consciousness

Descending from Pure being to Physical being

(An excerpt from Sri Aurobindo's Analysis of *Isha Upanishad*)

Brahman is the goal; for it is both the beginning and the end, the cause and the result of all movement.

But the idea of a final goal in the movement of Nature itself is illusory. For Brahman is Absolute and Infinite. The Gods,¹ labouring to reach him, find, at every goal that they realise, Brahman still moving forward in front to a farther realisation. Nothing in the appearances of the universe can be entirely That to the relative consciousness; all is only a symbolic representation of the Unknowable.

All things are already realised in Brahman. The running of the Others² in the course of Nature is only a working out (Prakriti), by Causality, in Time and Space, of something that Brahman already possesses.

Even in Its universal being Brahman exceeds the Movement. Exceeding Time, It contains in Itself past, present and future simultaneously and has not to run to the end of conceivable Time. Exceeding Space, It contains all formations in Itself coincidentally and has not to run to the end of conceivable Space. Exceeding Causality, It contains freely in Itself all eventualities as well as all potentialities without being bound by the apparent chain of causality by which they are linked in the universe.

1. The Gods are Brahman representing Itself in cosmic Personalities expressive of the one Godhead who, in their impersonal action, appear as the various play of the principles of Nature.

2. The "others" are *sarvāṇi bhūtāni* of a later verse, all becomings, Brahman representing itself in the separative consciousness of the Many.

Everything is already realised by It as the Lord before it can be accomplished by the separated Personalities in the movement.

...

What then is Its intention in the movement?

The movement is a rhythm, a harmony which That, as the Universal Life, works out by figures of Itself in the terms of conscious Being. It is a formula symbolically expressive of the Unknowable, — so arranged that every level of consciousness really represents something beyond itself, depth of depth, continent of continent. It is a play³ of the divine Consciousness existing for its own satisfaction and adding nothing to That, which is already complete. It is a fact of conscious being, justified by its own existence, with no purpose ulterior to itself. The idea of purpose, of a goal is born of the progressive self-unfolding by the world of its own true nature to the individual Souls inhabiting its forms; for the Being is gradually self-revealed within its own becomings, real Unity emerges out of the Multiplicity and changes entirely the values of the latter to our consciousness.

This self-unfolding is governed by conditions determined by the complexity of consciousness in its cosmic action.

For consciousness is not simple or homogeneous, it is septuple. That is to say, it constitutes itself into seven forms or grades of conscious activity descending from pure Being to physical being. Their interplay creates the worlds, determines all activities, constitutes all becomings.

CWSA 17: 26-27

Sri Aurobindo

3. This is the Vaishnava image of the Lila applied usually to the play of the Personal Deity in the world, but equally applicable to the active impersonal Brahman.

The End ?

Is this the end of all that we have been,
And all we did or dreamed,—
A name unremembered and a form undone,—
Is this the end?

A body rotting under a slab of stone
Or turned to ash in fire,
A mind dissolved, lost its forgotten thoughts,—
Is this the end?

Our little hours that were and are no more,
Our passions once so high
Dying mocked by the still earth and calm sunshine,—
Is this the end?

Our yearnings for the human Godward climb
Passing to other hearts
Deceived, while sinks towards death and hell the world,—
Is this the end?

Fallen is the harp; shattered it lies and mute;
Is the unseen player dead?
Because the tree is felled where the bird sang,
Must the song too hush?

One in the mind who planned and willed and thought,
Worked to reshape earth's fate,
One in the heart who loved and yearned and hoped,
Does he too end?

The Immortal in the mortal is his Name;
An artist Godhead here
Ever remoulds himself in diviner shapes,
Unwilling to cease

Till all is done for which the stars were made,
Till the heart discovers God
And soul knows itself. And even then
There is no end.

CWSA 2: 643-44

Sri Aurobindo

A Long Dim Preparation is Man's Life

A long dim preparation is man's life,
A circle of toil and hope and war and peace
Tracked out by Life on Matter's obscure ground.

In his climb to a peak no feet have ever trod,
He seeks through a penumbra shot with flame
A veiled reality half-known, ever missed,
A search for something or someone never found,
Cult of an ideal never made real here,
An endless spiral of ascent and fall
Until at last is reached the giant point
Through which his Glory shines for whom we were made
And we break into the infinity of God.

Across our nature's border line we escape
Into Supernature's arc of living light.

Savitri: 24

Sri Aurobindo

Life — Mystic daughter of Delight

Mystic daughter of Delight,
Life, thou ecstasy,
Let the radius of thy flight
Be eternity.

On thy wings thou bearest high
Glory and disdain,
Godhead and mortality,
Ecstasy and pain.

Take me in thy bold embrace
Without weak reserve,
Body dire and unveiled face;
Faint not, Life, nor swerve.

All thy bliss I would explore,
All thy tyranny.
Cruel like the lion's roar,
Sweet like springtide be.

Like a Titan I would take,
Like a God enjoy,
Like a man contend and make,
Revel like a boy.

More I will not ask of thee,
Nor my fate would choose;
King or conquered let me be,
Vanquish, Life, or lose.

Even in rags I am a god;
Fallen, I am divine;
High I triumph when down-trod,
Long I live when slain.

CWSA 2: 541

Sri Aurobindo

Key of the World-enigma

(The original passages have been spaced out below by the compiler in order to lay emphasis on the ideas. At places emphasis is also added by using bold typeface. As usual title and subtitles are of the compiler.)

What is creation:

Existence that acts and creates by the power and from the pure delight of its conscious being is the reality that we are, the self of all our modes and moods, the cause, object and goal of all our doing, becoming and creating.

As the poet, artist or musician when he creates does really nothing but develop some potentiality in his unmanifested self into a form of manifestation and as the thinker, statesman, mechanist only bring out into a shape of things that which lay hidden in themselves, was themselves, is still themselves when it is cast into form, so is it with the world and the Eternal.

All creation or becoming is nothing but this self-manifestation. Out of the seed there evolves that which is already in the seed, pre-existent in being, predestined in its will to become, prearranged in the delight of becoming.

The original plasm held in itself in force of being the resultant organism. For it is always that secret, burdened, self-knowing force which labours under its own irresistible impulse to manifest the form of itself with which it is charged.

Only, the individual who creates or develops out of himself, makes a distinction between himself, the force that works in him and the material in which he works. In reality the force is himself, the individualised consciousness which it instrumentalises is himself, the material which it uses is himself, the resultant form is himself.

In other words it is one existence, one force, one delight of

being which concentrates itself at various points, says of each “This is I” and works in it by a various play of self-force for a various play of self-formation.

What it seeks:

What it produces is itself and can be nothing other than itself; it is working out a play, a rhythm, a development of its own existence, force of consciousness and delight of being.

Therefore whatever comes into the world, seeks nothing but this, to be, to arrive at the intended form, to enlarge its self-existence in that form, to develop, manifest, increase, realise infinitely the consciousness and the power that is in it, to have the delight of coming into manifestation, the delight of the form of being, the delight of the rhythm of consciousness, the delight of the play of force and to aggrandise and perfect that delight by whatever means is possible, in whatever direction, through whatever idea of itself may be suggested to it by the Existence, the Conscious-Force, the Delight active within its deepest being.

What is the goal:

And if there is any goal, any completeness towards which things tend, it can only be the completeness — in the individual and in the whole which the individuals constitute — of its self-existence, of its power and consciousness and of its delight of being.

But such completeness is not possible in the individual consciousness concentrated within the limits of the individual formation; absolute completeness is not feasible in the finite because it is alien to the self-conception of the finite.

Therefore the only final goal possible is the emergence of the infinite consciousness in the individual; **it is his recovery**

of the truth of himself by self-knowledge and by self-realisation, the truth of the Infinite in being, the Infinite in consciousness, the Infinite in delight repossessed as his own Self and Reality of which the finite is only a mask and an instrument for various expression.

Key of the world-enigma

Thus by the very nature of the world-play as it has been realised by Sachchidananda in the vastness of His existence extended as Space and Time, we have to conceive **first** of an involution and a self-absorption of conscious being into the density and infinite divisibility of substance, for otherwise there can be no finite variation; **next**, an emergence of the self-imprisoned force into formal being, living being, thinking being; and **finally** a release of the formed thinking being into the free realisation of itself as the One and the Infinite at play in the world and by the release its recovery of the boundless existence-consciousness-bliss that even now it is secretly, really and eternally. This triple movement is the whole key of the world-enigma.

CWSA 21: 121-23

Sri Aurobindo

The universe is not only a material but a spiritual fact, life not only a play of forces or a mental experience, but a field for the evolution of the concealed spirit. Human life will receive its fulfilment and transformation into something beyond itself only when this truth is seized and made the motive force of our existence and the means of its effective realisation discovered.

CWSA 29: 374

Sri Aurobindo

Thoughts and Glimpses

The Goal:

When we have passed beyond knowings, then we shall have Knowledge. Reason was the helper; Reason is the bar.

When we have passed beyond willings, then we shall have Power. Effort was the helper; Effort is the bar.

When we have passed beyond enjoyings, then we shall have Bliss. Desire was the helper; Desire is the bar.

When we have passed beyond individualising, then we shall be real Persons. Ego was the helper; Ego is the bar.

When we have passed beyond humanity, then we shall be the Man. The Animal was the helper; the Animal is the bar.

Transform reason into ordered intuition; let all thyself be light. This is thy goal.

Transform effort into an easy and sovereign overflowing of the soul-strength; let all thyself be conscious force. This is thy goal.

Transform enjoying into an even and objectless ecstasy; let all thyself be bliss. This is thy goal.

Transform the divided individual into the world-personality; let all thyself be the divine. This is thy goal.

Transform the Animal into the Driver of the herds; let all thyself be Krishna. This is thy goal.

* * *

Thought is not essential to existence nor its cause, but it is an instrument for becoming; I become what I see in myself. All that

thought suggests to me, I can do; all that thought reveals in me, I can become. This should be man's unshakable faith in himself, because God dwells in him.

Not to go on for ever repeating what man has already done is our work, but to arrive at new realisations and undreamed of masteries. Time and soul and world are given us for our field, vision and hope and creative imagination stand for our prompters, will and thought and labour are our all-effective instruments.

What is there new that we have yet to accomplish? Love, for as yet we have only accomplished hatred and self-pleasing; Knowledge, for as yet we have only accomplished error and perception and conceiving; Bliss, for as yet we have only accomplished pleasure and pain and indifference; Power, for as yet we have only accomplished weakness and effort and a defeated victory; Life, for as yet we have only accomplished birth and growth and dying; Unity, for as yet we have only accomplished war and association.

In a word, godhead; to remake ourselves in the divine image.

* * *

The End:

The meeting of man and God must always mean a penetration and entry of the divine into the human and a self-immersion of man in the Divinity.

But that immersion is not in the nature of an annihilation. Extinction is not the fulfilment of all this search and passion, suffering and rapture. The game would never have been begun if that were to be its ending.

Delight is the secret. Learn of pure delight and thou shalt learn of God.

What then was **the commencement** of the whole matter? Existence that multiplied itself for sheer delight of being and plunged into numberless trillions of forms so that it might find itself innumerably.

And what is **the middle**? Division that strives towards a multiple unity, ignorance that labours towards a flood of varied light, pain that travails towards the touch of an unimaginable ecstasy. For all these things are dark figures and perverse vibrations.

And what is **the end** of the whole matter? As if honey could taste itself and all its drops together and all its drops could taste each other and each the whole honeycomb as itself, so should the end be with God and the soul of man and the universe.

Love is the keynote, Joy is the music, Power is the strain, Knowledge is the performer, the infinite All is the composer and audience. We know only the preliminary discords which are as fierce as the harmony shall be great; but we shall arrive surely at the fugue of the divine Beatitudes.

CWSA 13: 203-04

Sri Aurobindo

Souls that do not aspire are God's failures; but Nature is pleased and loves to multiply them because they assure her of stability and prolong her empire.

Those who are poor, ignorant, ill-born or ill-bred are not the common herd; the common herd are all who are satisfied with pettiness and an average humanity.

CWSA 13: 208

Sri Aurobindo

Personal Salvation Not the Purpose of Creation

Of *moksa* we have no personal need; for the soul is *nityamukta* and bondage is an illusion. We play at being bound, we are not really bound.

CWSA 13: 71

We regard the world not as an invention of the devil or a self-delusion of the soul, but as a manifestation of the Divine, although as yet a partial because a progressive and evolutionary manifestation. Therefore for us renunciation of life cannot be the goal of life nor rejection of the world the object for which the world was created.

CWSA 23: 328

A prevalent idea would persuade us that the sole aim of liberation is to secure for the individual soul freedom from physical rebirth in the unstable life of the universe. If this freedom is once assured, there is no further work for it in life here or elsewhere or only that which the continued existence of the body demands or the unfulfilled effects of past lives necessitate. This little, rapidly exhausted or consumed by the fire of Yoga, will cease with the departure of the released soul from the body. The aim of escape from rebirth, now long fixed in the Indian mentality as the highest object of the soul, has replaced the enjoyment of a heaven beyond fixed in the mentality of the devout by many religions as their divine lure. Indian religion also upheld that earlier and lower call when the gross external interpretation of the Vedic hymns was the dominant creed, and the dualists in later India also have kept that as part of their supreme spiritual motive. Undoubtedly a release from the limitations of the mind and body into an eternal peace, rest, silence of the Spirit, makes a higher appeal

than the offer of a heaven of mental joys or eternised physical pleasures, but this too after all is a lure; its insistence on the mind's world-weariness, the life-being's shrinking from the adventure of birth, strikes a chord of weakness and cannot be the supreme motive. The desire of personal salvation, however high its form, is an outcome of ego; it rests on the idea of our own individuality and its desire for its personal good or welfare, its longing for a release from suffering or its cry for the extinction of the trouble of becoming and makes that the supreme aim of our existence. To rise beyond the desire of personal salvation is necessary for the complete rejection of this basis of ego. If we seek the Divine, it should be for the sake of the Divine and for nothing else, because that is the supreme call of our being, the deepest truth of the spirit. The pursuit of liberation, of the soul's freedom, of the realisation of our true and highest self, of union with the Divine, is justified only because it is the highest law of our nature, because it is the attraction of that which is lower in us to that which is highest, because it is the Divine Will in us. That is its sufficient justification and its one truest reason. ...

The true salvation or the true freedom from the chain of re-birth is not the rejection of terrestrial life or the individual's escape by a spiritual self-annihilation, even as the true renunciation is not the mere physical abandonment of family and society; it is the inner identification with the Divine in whom there is no limitation of past life and future birth but instead the eternal existence of the unborn Soul. He who is free inwardly, even doing actions, does nothing at all, says the Gita; for it is Nature that works in him under the control of the Lord of Nature. Equally, even if he assumes a hundred times the body, he is free from any chain of birth or mechanical wheel of existence since he lives in the unborn and undying spirit and not in the life of the body.

CWSA 23: 270

Our first absorbing impulse when we become inwardly aware of something entirely beyond what we now are and know and are powerfully attracted to it, is to get away from the present actuality and dwell in that higher reality altogether. The extreme form of this attraction when we are drawn to the supreme Existence and the infinite Ananda is the condemnation of the lower and the finite as an illusion and an aspiration to Nirvana in the beyond, — the passion for dissolution, immersion, extinction in the Spirit. But the real dissolution, the true *nirvāṇa* is the release of all that is bindingly characteristic of the lower into the larger being of the Higher, the conscious possession of the living symbol by the living Real. We discover in the end that not only is that higher Reality the cause of all the rest, not only it embraces and exists in all the rest, but as more and more we possess it, all this rest is transformed in our soul-experience into a superior value and becomes the means of a richer expression of the Real, a more many-sided communion with the Infinite, a larger ascent to the Supreme. Finally, we get close to the absolute and its supreme values which are the absolutes of all things. We lose the passion for release, *mumuṅṣutva*, which till then actuated us ...

CWSA 23: 507-08

Sri Aurobindo

The world is not an unfortunate accident, it is a marvel which moves towards its expression.

The world needs the certitude of the beauty of the future. And Sri Aurobindo has given that assurance.

CWM 13: 15

The Mother

To Be and to Be Fully Is Nature's Aim in Us

To become ourselves is the one thing to be done; but the true self is that which is within us, and to exceed our outer self of body, life and mind is the condition for this highest being, which is our true and divine being, to become self-revealed and active. It is only by growing within and living within that we can find it; once that is done, to create from there the spiritual or divine mind, life, body and through this instrumentation to arrive at the creation of a world which shall be the true environment of a divine living, — this is the final object that Force of Nature has set before us. This then is the first necessity, that the individual, each individual, shall discover the spirit, the divine reality within him and express that in all his being and living. A divine life must be first and foremost an inner life; for since the outward must be the expression of what is within, there can be no divinity in the outer existence if there is not the divinisation of the inner being. The Divinity in man dwells veiled in his spiritual centre; there can be no such thing as self-exceeding for man or a higher issue for his existence if there is not in him the reality of an eternal self and spirit.

To be and to be fully is Nature's aim in us; but to be fully is to be wholly conscious of one's being; unconsciousness, half-consciousness or deficient consciousness is a state of being not in possession of itself; it is existence, but not fullness of being. To be aware wholly and integrally of oneself and of all the truth of one's being is the necessary condition of true possession of existence. This self-awareness is what is meant by spiritual knowledge: the essence of spiritual knowledge is an intrinsic self-existent consciousness; all its action of knowledge, indeed all its action of any kind, must be that consciousness formu-

lating itself. All other knowledge is consciousness oblivious of itself and striving to return to its own awareness of itself and its contents; it is self-ignorance labouring to transform itself back into self-knowledge.

But also, since consciousness carries in itself the force of existence, to be fully is to have the intrinsic and integral force of one's being; it is to come into possession of all one's force of self and of all its use. To be merely, without possessing the force of one's being or with a half-force or deficient force of it, is a mutilated or diminished existence; it is to exist, but it is not fullness of being. It is possible, indeed, to exist only in status, with the force of being self-gathered and immobile in the self; but, even so, to be in dynamis as well as in status is the integrality of existence: power of self is the sign of the divinity of self, — a powerless spirit is no spirit. But, as the spiritual consciousness is intrinsic and self-existent, so too this force of our spiritual being must be intrinsic, automatic in action, self-existent and self-fulfilling. What instrumentality it uses, must be part of itself; even any external instrumentality it uses must be made part of itself and expressive of its being. Force of being in conscious action is will; and whatever is the conscious will of the spirit, its will of being and becoming, that all the existence must be able harmonically to fulfil. Whatever action or energy of action has not this sovereignty or is not master of the machinery of action, carries in it by that defect the sign of an imperfection of the force of being, of a division or disabling segmentation of the consciousness, of an incompleteness in the manifestation of the being.

Lastly, to be fully is to have the full delight of being. Being without delight of being, without an entire delight of itself and

all things is something neutral or diminished; it is existence, but it is not fullness of being. This delight too must be intrinsic, self-existent, automatic; it cannot be dependent on things outside itself: whatever it delights in, it makes part of itself, has the joy of it as part of its universality. All undelight, all pain and suffering are a sign of imperfection, of incompleteness; they arise from a division of being, an incompleteness of consciousness of being, an incompleteness of the force of being. To become complete in being, in consciousness of being, in force of being, in delight of being and to live in this integrated completeness is the divine living.

But, again, to be fully is to be universally. To be in the limitations of a small restricted ego is to exist, but it is an imperfect existence: in its very nature it is to live in an incomplete consciousness, an incomplete force and delight of existence. It is to be less than oneself and it brings an inevitable subjection to ignorance, weakness and suffering: or even if by some divine composition of the nature it could exclude these things, it would be to live in a limited scope of existence, a limited consciousness and power and joy of existence. All being is one and to be fully is to be all that is. To be in the being of all and to include all in one's being, to be conscious of the consciousness of all, to be integrated in force with the universal force, to carry all action and experience in oneself and feel it as one's own action and experience, to feel all selves as one's own self, to feel all delight of being as one's own delight of being is a necessary condition of the integral divine living.

But thus to be universally in the fullness and freedom of one's universality, one must be also transcendently. The spiritual fullness of the being is eternity; if one has not the con-

consciousness of timeless eternal being, if one is dependent on body or embodied mind or embodied life, or dependent on this world or that world or on this condition of being or that condition of being, that is not the reality of self, not the fullness of our spiritual existence. To live only as a self of body or be only by the body is to be an ephemeral creature, subject to death and desire and pain and suffering and decay and decadence. To transcend, to exceed consciousness of body, not to be held in the body or by the body, to hold the body only as an instrument, a minor outward formation of self, is a **first condition** of divine living. Not to be a mind subject to ignorance and restriction of consciousness, to transcend mind and handle it as an instrument, to control it as a surface formation of self, is a **second condition**. To be by the self and spirit, not to depend upon life, not to be identified with it, to transcend it and control and use it as an expression and instrumentation of the self, is a **third condition**. Even the bodily life does not possess its own full being in its own kind if the consciousness does not exceed the body and feel its physical oneness with all material existence; the vital life does not possess its own full living in its own kind if the consciousness does not exceed the restricted play of an individual vitality and feel the universal life as its own and its oneness with all life. The mentality is not a full conscious existence or activity in its own kind if one does not exceed the individual mental limits and feel a oneness with universal Mind and with all minds and enjoy one's integrality of consciousness fulfilled in their wealth of difference. But one must transcend not only the individual formula but the formula of the universe, for only so can either the individual or the universal existence find its own true being and a perfect harmonisation; both are in their outer formulation incomplete terms of the Transcendence, but they are that in their essence, and it

is only by becoming conscious of that essence that individual consciousness or universal consciousness can come to its own fullness and freedom of reality. Otherwise the individual may remain subject to the cosmic movement and its reactions and limitations and miss his entire spiritual freedom. He must enter into the supreme divine Reality, feel his oneness with it, live in it, be its self-creation: all his mind, life, physicality must be converted into terms of its supernature; all his thought, feelings, actions must be determined by it and be it, its self-formation.

CWSA 21: 1059-1063

If there is an evolution in material Nature and if it is an evolution of being with consciousness and life as its two key terms and powers, this fullness of being, fullness of consciousness, fullness of life must be the goal of development towards which we are tending and which will manifest at an early or later stage of our destiny. The self, the spirit, the reality that is disclosing itself out of the first inconscience of life and matter, would evolve its complete truth of being and consciousness in that life and matter. It would return to itself — or, if its end as an individual is to return into its Absolute, it could make that return also, — not through a frustration of life but through a spiritual completeness of itself in life. Our evolution in the Ignorance with its chequered joy and pain of self-discovery and world discovery, its half fulfilments, its constant finding and missing, is only our first state. **It must lead inevitably towards an evolution in the Knowledge, a self-finding and self-unfolding of the Spirit, a self-revelation of the Divinity in things in that true power of itself in Nature which is to us still a Supernature.**

CWSA 21: 1107

Sri Aurobindo

Our Deepest Aspiration & the Inevitable Goal

The Golden Light

Thy golden Light came down into my brain
And the grey rooms of mind sun-touched became
A bright reply to Wisdom's occult plane,
A calm illumination and a flame.

Thy golden Light came down into my throat,
And all my speech is now a tune divine,
A paean song of Thee my single note;
My words are drunk with the Immortal's wine.

Thy golden Light came down into my heart
Smiting my life with Thy eternity;
Now has it grown a temple where Thou art
And all its passions point towards only Thee.

Thy golden Light came down into my feet;
My earth is now Thy playfield and Thy seat.

CWSA 2: 605



At Last I Find a Meaning of Soul's Birth

Krishna

At last I find a meaning of soul's birth
Into this universe terrible and sweet,
I who have felt the hungry heart of earth
Aspiring beyond heaven to Krishna's feet.

I have seen the beauty of immortal eyes,
And heard the passion of the Lover's flute,
And known a deathless ecstasy's surprise
And sorrow in my heart for ever mute.

Nearer and nearer now the music draws,
Life shudders with a strange felicity;
All Nature is a wide enamoured pause
Hoping her lord to touch, to clasp, to be.

For this one moment lived the ages past;
The world now throbs fulfilled in me at last.

CWSA 2: 608





... [Know] the true motive of existence, the purpose of life on earth, the discovery to which this life must lead and the result of that discovery: the consecration of the individual to his eternal principle.

CWM 12: 30-31

The Mother



*Our Gratitude and consecration to the
Mother and Sri Aurobindo*

Sri Aurobindo Society, Nairobi Centre, Kenya

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY
Notice for the Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the members of Sri Aurobindo Society will be held on Saturday, the 21st September 2024, at 4.00 p.m. at its registered office, Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, 8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071, to transact the following business:

1. To confirm the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 23rd September 2023.
2. To consider and approve the audited Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Account of the Society for the year ended 31.03.2024.
3. To consider and adopt the Executive Committee’s Annual Report of Activities for the year 2023–2024.
4. Confirm Formation of Executive Committee.
5. To appoint an auditor for the Society for the year 2024-2025.
6. To consider any other matter with the permission of the chair.

04.07.2024
Puducherry

Sd/-
(Pradeep Narang)
Chairman

Note: The members are entitled to appoint proxy. Proxies must be deposited at the Registered Office of the Society, No. 8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071, during office hours, in advance but not less than 48 hours before the time of the meeting. The proxy should be a member of the Society. Proxy form is printed below.



PROXY

SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY,
Regd. Office: 8, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700 071.

I, being a member of Sri Aurobindo Society, having membership No. valid upto do hereby appoint having Society’s membership No. valid upto as my proxy in my absence to attend and vote for me and on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Society, to be held on Saturday, the 21st September 2024, at 4.00 p.m. and at any adjournment thereof.

In witness whereof, I have set my hand this
..... day of 2024.

Revenue Stamp
(Signature of the member across the stamp)

SRI AUROBINDO

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*With wind and the weather beating round me
Up to the hill and the moorland I go.
Who will come with me? Who will climb with me?
Wade through the brook and tramp through the snow?*

~Sri Aurobindo



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