On Thoughts and Aphorisms

only thing that used to worry me was that it was not a purely psychological experience and that there was some wear in the body by the fact of enduring suffering. But I have asked doctors and I was told that if the body is taught to bear pain when it is very young, its capacity to endure increases so much that it can really resist disease; that is, the disease does not follow its normal course, it is arrested. That is precious.

10 August 1963

94 – All renunciation is for a greater joy yet ungrasped. Some renounce for the joy of duty done, some for the joy of peace, some for the joy of God and some for the joy of self-torture, but renounce rather as a passage to the freedom and untroubled rapture beyond.

I have rarely had this experience of renunciation — for there to be renunciation, one must be attached to things, and there was always this thirst, this need to go further, to go higher, to feel better, to do better, to have something better. And rather than having a feeling of renunciation one has the feeling that it is a good riddance — you get rid of something cumbersome that weighs you down and hinders your advance. That is what I was saying the other day: we are still everything we no longer want to be and He is everything we want to become — what we call “we” in our egoistic stupidity is precisely what we do not want to be any more, and we would be so happy to throw all that off, to get rid of all that, so as to be able to be what we want to be.

This is a very living experience.

The only process that I have known, and which has been repeated several times during my life, is the renunciation of an error: something you believe to be true — which probably was true for a time — on which you base part of your action, but which in fact was only an opinion. You thought that it was a
true evaluation with all its logical consequences, and your action — part of your action — was based on that, and it all followed automatically; and suddenly, an experience, a circumstance or an intuition, warns you that your evaluation is not as true as it looked. Then there is a whole period of observation, of study — or sometimes it comes like a revelation, a massive demonstration — and not only the idea or the false knowledge, but all its consequences must be changed — perhaps a whole way of acting on some point. And at that moment there is a kind of sensation, something akin to the sensation of renunciation, which means that you must break up a whole set of things which had been built — sometimes it can be quite extensive, sometimes it is something very small, but the experience is the same: it is the movement of a force, a power that dissolves, and there is resistance from everything which has to be dissolved, from all the past habits; and it is this movement of dissolution, with its corresponding resistance, which is probably expressed in the ordinary human consciousness as a feeling of renunciation.

I saw this very recently — it is insignificant, these circumstances have no importance in themselves; they are interesting only in the context of the study. This is the only phenomenon that is familiar to me because it has been repeated several times in my life. As the being progresses, the power of dissolution increases, becomes more and more immediate and the resistance diminishes. But I have the memory of a period of maximum resistance — it was more than half a century ago — and it was nothing but that, it was always something outside myself — not outside my consciousness, but outside my will — something which resisted the will. I have never had the feeling of having to renounce anything, but I have had the feeling of having to apply pressure on things to dissolve them. Whereas now, more and more, the pressure is imperceptible, it is immediate; as soon as the force to dissolve a whole set of things manifests, there is no resistance, everything dissolves; on the contrary, there is
On Thoughts and Aphorisms

hardly any feeling of liberation — there is something which is amused again and says: “Oh, again! How many times one limits oneself....” How many times you think that you are advancing, continuously, smoothly, uninterruptedly, and yet how many times you set a little limit in front of yourself. It is not a big limit, for it is a very small thing in an immense whole, but it is a small limit to your action. And so when the Force acts to dissolve the limit, at first you feel liberated, you are glad; but now, it is not even that, it is a smile. Because it is not a feeling of liberation, it is simply like removing a stone from your path so that you can go on.

This idea of renunciation can only arise in a self-centred consciousness. Naturally, people — the ones I call altogether primitive — are attached to things: when they have something, they do not want to let it go! It seems so childish to me!... When they have to part with something, it hurts! Because they identify themselves with the things they have. But this is childishness. The true process behind all this is the amount of resistance in things that were formed on a certain basis of knowledge — which was a knowledge at a particular time and which is no longer so at another — a partial knowledge, not fleeting but impermanent. There is a whole set of things built upon this knowledge and they resist the force that says: “No! it is not true, (laughing) your basis is no longer true, let’s take it away!” And then, oh! it hurts — this is what people experience as renunciation.

The difficulty is not really to renounce, but to accept (Mother smiles) when we see life as it is now.... But then, if we accept, how can we live in the midst of all this and have this “untroubled rapture” — not there, but here?

This has been my problem for weeks.

I have come to this conclusion: in principle, it is the
consciousness and the union with the Divine that bring rapture — this is the principle — therefore, the consciousness and the union with the Divine, whether in the world as it is or in the construction of a future world, must be the same — in principle. That is what I repeat to myself all the time: “How is it that you do not have this rapture?”

I have it — when the whole consciousness is centralised in union; at any time, in the midst of anything, with this movement of concentration of the consciousness on union, the rapture comes. But I must say that it disappears when I am working.... It is a world — a very chaotic world of work, where I act on everything around me; and necessarily, I am obliged to receive what is around me, so as to be able to act on it. I have reached a state in which all that I receive, even the things that are considered most painful, leave me absolutely calm and indifferent — “indifferent”, not an inactive indifference: without any painful reaction of any kind, absolutely neutral (gesture turned towards the Eternal), with perfect equality. But in this equality there is a precise knowledge of what is to be done, of what is to be said, of what is to be written, of what is to be decided, in short, everything that action entails. All that happens in a state of perfect neutrality, with the sense of Power at the same time: the Power flows, the Power acts, and the neutrality remains — but there is no rapture. I do not have the enthusiasm, the delight, the fullness of action.

And I must say that this rapturous state of consciousness would be dangerous in the present condition of the world. Because it produces reactions that are almost absolute — I see that this state of rapture has a formidable power. But I insist on the word formidable, in the sense that it is intolerant or intolerable — intolerable rather — to everything that is unlike it. It is the same thing or almost — not quite the same, but almost — as the supreme divine Love; the vibration of this ecstasy or rapture is a small beginning of the vibration of divine Love, and that is absolutely — yes, there is no other word for it — intolerant, in
the sense that it will not permit the presence of anything that is contrary to it.

So it would have frightful consequences for the ordinary consciousness. I see it clearly, because sometimes this Power comes — this Power comes and one has the impression that everything is going to explode. For it can tolerate nothing but union, it can tolerate nothing but the response that accepts, that receives and accepts. And it is not an arbitrary will, it is by the very fact of its existence which is All-Power, “All-Power” not in the sense in which we understand it, but really All-Power. That is to say that it exists entirely, totally, exclusively. It contains everything, but anything that is contrary to its vibration is compelled to change, since nothing can disappear. So this immediate, almost brutal, absolute change, in the world as it is, is a catastrophe.

This is the answer that I have received to my problem.

Because it was that, I was wondering, “Why? I who am...” At any instant all I have to do is this (gesture upwards) and it is... there is nothing left but the Lord, everything is That — but so absolutely that everything which is not That disappears! But at the moment the proportion is such (laughing), that too many things would have to disappear!

I have understood that.

17 and 24 August 1963

95 – Only by perfect renunciation of desire or by perfect satisfaction of desire can the utter embrace of God be experienced, for in both ways the essential precondition is effected, — desire perishes.

It is impossible to satisfy desire perfectly — it is something impossible. And also to renounce desire. You renounce one desire and you have another. Therefore both are relatively impossible; what is possible is to enter into a state where there is no desire.