

28 May 1958

*“It is quite true that to a surface view Life seems only an operation of Matter, Mind an activity of Life, and it might seem to follow that what we call the soul or spirit is only a power of mentality, soul a fine form of Mind, spirituality a high activity of the embodied mental being. But this is a superficial view of things due to the thought’s concentrating on the appearance and process and not looking at what lies behind the process. One might as well on the same lines have concluded that electricity is only a product or operation of water and cloud matter, because it is in such a field that lightning emerges; but a deeper inquiry has shown that both cloud and water have, on the contrary, the energy of electricity as their foundation, their constituent power or energy-substance: that which seems to be a result is, — in its reality, though not in its form, — the origin; the effect is in the essence pre-existent to the apparent cause, the principle of the emergent activity precedent to its present field of action. So it is throughout evolutionary Nature; Matter could not have become animate if the principle of Life had not been there constituting Matter and emerging as a phenomenon of Life-in-Matter; Life-in-Matter could not have begun to feel, perceive, think, reason, if the principle of Mind had not been there behind life and substance, constituting it as its field of operation and emergent in the phenomenon of a thinking life and body: so too spirituality emerging in Mind is the sign of a power which itself has founded and constituted life, mind and body and is now emerging as a spiritual being in a living and thinking body. How far this emergence will go, whether it will become dominant and transform its instrument,*

## Questions and Answers

*is a subsequent question; but what is necessary first to posit is the existence of Spirit as something else than Mind and greater than Mind, spirituality as something other than mentality and the spiritual being therefore as something distinct from the mental being: Spirit is a final evolutionary emergence because it is the original involutory element and factor. Evolution is an inverse action of the involution: what is an ultimate and last derivation in the involution is the first to appear in the evolution; what was original and primal in the involution is in the evolution the last and supreme emergence.”*

*The Life Divine, SABCL, Vol. 19, pp. 852–53*

Today I have been asked to speak to you about the Avatar.

The first thing I have to say is that Sri Aurobindo has written on this subject and the person who has asked me the question would do well to begin by reading what Sri Aurobindo has written.

I shall not speak to you about that, for it is better to read it for yourself.

But I could speak to you of a very old tradition, more ancient than the two known lines of spiritual and occult tradition, that is, the Vedic and Chaldean lines; a tradition which seems to have been at the origin of these two known traditions, in which it is said that when, as a result of the action of the adverse forces — known in the Hindu tradition as the Asuras — the world, instead of developing according to its law of Light and inherent consciousness, was plunged into the darkness, inconscience and ignorance that we know, the Creative Power implored the Supreme Origin, asking him for a special intervention which could save this corrupted universe; and in reply to this prayer there was emanated from the Supreme Origin a special Entity, of Love and Consciousness, who cast himself directly into the most inconscient matter to begin there the work of awakening it to the original Consciousness and Love.

In the old narratives this Being is described as stretched out in a deep sleep at the bottom of a very dark cave, and in his sleep there emanated from him prismatic rays of light which gradually spread into the Inconscience and embedded themselves in all the elements of this Inconscience to begin there the work of Awakening.

If one consciously enters into this Inconscient, one can still see there this same marvellous Being, still in deep sleep, continuing his work of emanation, spreading his Light; and he will continue to do it until the Inconscience is no longer inconscient, until Darkness disappears from the world — and the whole creation awakens to the Supramental Consciousness.

And it is remarkable that this wonderful Being strangely resembles the one whom I saw in vision one day, the Being who is at the other extremity, at the confines of form and the Formless. But that one was in a golden, crimson glory, whereas in his sleep the other Being was of a shining diamond whiteness emanating opalescent rays.

In fact, this is the origin of all Avatars. He is, so to say, the first universal Avatar who, gradually, has assumed more and more conscious bodies and finally manifested in a kind of recognised line of Beings who have descended *directly* from the Supreme to perfect this work of preparing the universe so that, through a continuous progression, it may become ready to receive and manifest the supramental Light in its entirety.

In every country, every tradition, the event has been presented in a special way, with different limitations, different details, particular features, but truly speaking, the origin of all these stories is the same, and that is what we could call a direct, conscious intervention of the Supreme in the darkest matter, without going through all the intermediaries, in order to awaken this Matter to the receptivity of the Divine Forces.

The intervals separating these various incarnations seem to become shorter and shorter, as if, to the extent that Matter

## Questions and Answers

became more and more ready, the action could accelerate and become more and more rapid in its movement, more and more conscious too, more and more effective and decisive.

And it will go on multiplying and intensifying until the entire universe becomes the total Avatar of the Supreme.