Before beginning the class Mother spoke for a few minutes about the “sphere with spirals” which the children had constructed to give an idea of what She had explained the preceding week:

... The sphere is touched only by a part of the curve, the rest is evolved inside. It cannot be made. This one is opaque. But it was... there was at the centre of the sphere an intersection of all the spirals.

What you have done there makes it flat, the way it is done. It is flat. As I saw it, the edge was touched by a section of the curve. Each curve has one part of the edge as section. And the colours were seen distinctly and one could see right through.... I think you could do this geometrically. The whole surface is taken up by one section of the curve of the spiral.

Pavitra: Are these spirals on the surface of the sphere or inside?

No, the spirals are inside.

Hence towards the centre.

They are intersecting. Their direction is such that the whole sphere is formed by sections of each spiral.

Is the whole of the inside of the sphere filled with spirals?

The whole inside was naturally full of spirals. But as there was no substance (there were only spirals), one could see through. They were not so joined up as to make an opaque mass. And
one could follow: the colours were brilliant, they were luminous. One could follow the line inside. And so it should be inferred that they were countless.

*Were they drawing closer inwards forming smaller and smaller curves?*

Not regularly as to have all the first rounds at the centre. It was not a series of spirals beginning with the first circle and working towards the centre.

*And beginning again from the centre outwards?*

No, not at all. The finishing-point was not the same as the starting-point. Still, in this way, seen from far, it gave that impression a little. It was much more complex than that. And then there were none of those dull things.

*Mother, what do the colours represent?*

Here you have three greens and only one blue. That one is blue, but greenish blue. Then there are two browns, one black and one grey, two reds... These colours are dead colours, aren’t they? They can be given a particular meaning.

There was no black.

After reading the part of the conversation of 4 August 1929 on sacrifice and self-giving, the Mother continues:

“The spiritual life reveals the one essence in all, but reveals too its infinite diversity; it works for diversity in oneness and for perfection in that diversity. Morality lifts up one artificial standard contrary to the variety of life and the freedom of the spirit. Creating something mental, fixed and limited, it asks all to conform to it. All

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must labour to acquire the same qualities and the same ideal nature. Morality is not divine or of the Divine; it is of man and human. Morality takes for its basic element a fixed division into the good and the bad; but this is an arbitrary notion. It takes things that are relative and tries to impose them as absolutes; for this good and this bad differ in differing climates and times, epochs and countries.”

Questions and Answers 1929–1931 (4 August 1929)

In the past, why did men offer human sacrifices in temples?

I don’t quite understand the question. Why should they not do it! There is not much difference between killing a goat and killing a man. I don’t know. In any case, what has come down to posterity and what really happened may be two very different things. When they spoke of sacrifice, it was perhaps only symbolic. Certain religions, we are told, have massacred men by thousands. It is possible, it is the same instinct which makes men destroy things. And these were certainly religions which tended towards destruction. Now, there are many different cases, and if someone asks why people offered material sacrifices, one should first be sure about it. As for me, I am not sure of it. It is possible. It depends on the way one looks at life. And in any case, if one arrogates to oneself the right to make use of another man’s existence to offer a sacrifice to the Divine, or if one looks at it in a certain way, it is a pretty bad attitude. I was saying at the beginning I don’t see why one should make a difference between any other animal and a human animal. It is a very strange thing.

In the majority of religions, I believe it used to be as it still is here in the temple of the headless Kali¹ — it is an extremely dark

¹ In whose honour, every year, men wring the necks of a huge number of chickens.
and ignorant affair. It comes from a sort of unhealthy fear of a monstrous god who needs either blood or force or no matter what in order to be satisfied and not to do harm. And all this comes from a dread and a conception of the Divine which is a monstrosity. But should it be admitted, there would be only one tolerable sacrifice, the sacrifice of oneself. If one wants to sacrifice something to the Divine, I don’t see by what right one can seek the life of another, be it human being or animal, to offer it in one’s own stead. If one wants to sacrifice, it is one’s own self one must sacrifice, not others. And as the movement itself is sufficiently ugly and obscure and unconscious, I don’t see why there should be such a difference between sacrificing a goat and sacrificing a human being. From the goat’s point of view it is an intolerable idea — if a goat were to be asked why.

Men have strange ideas about their own importance in the world and the respective worth of their person. It does not make much difference. If they are told, “You have no right to take the life of another”, it is acceptable; but then do not offer sacrifices, or if you want to sacrifice, sacrifice your own self; if you believe there is a terrible God who needs to be given blood or whatever else it may be, vital forces to satisfy him, do it. But by what right are you going to take the life of others to give it? That is an intolerable tyranny. Even were it only all those chickens one kills! But I believe there is another reason for that — it is that people can enjoy a good feast! It is simply an opportunity to swallow a considerable amount of food.

I don’t know, for me it does not make a great difference.

*Is it possible to feel the divine Presence even when one is surrounded by a bad atmosphere, a mental and vital disturbance?*

Provided the atmosphere is not within oneself! For if so, it is difficult. And yet! We have had frequent instances of people who used to lead a more than doubtful life and who had revelations.
Questions and Answers

There is the instance of a drunkard who, in his drunkenness, suddenly had a contact with the Divine — which, moreover, changed his life and, I must tell you, prevented him from drinking in future. But still, at the time he had the revelation of the divine Presence, he was in an intoxicated state. I don’t think — here again we fall back into the same things — I don’t think the Divine is a moralist. It is man who is a moralist, not the Divine. If it happens that, just then, at that moment, there is a concurrence of events and perhaps an opening in the being, the Divine, who is always present, manifests himself. On the other hand, for the sage or the saint who is quite infatuated with his own importance and his own worth, and full of pride and vanity, there is not much chance that the Divine will manifest in him, for there is no place for the expression of the Divine! There is no place except for the important personality of the wise man and his moral worth.

Naturally, there is a state in which one may be perfectly pure, perfectly wise, and be in contact with the Divine! But then, that means that one has reached a certain degree of perfection and lost the sense of one’s personal importance and personal worth. I believe that’s most important. The greatest obstacle to the contact with the Divine is pride and the sense of one’s personal worth, one’s personal capacities, personal power — the person becomes very big, so big that there is no place for the Divine.

No, the one truly important thing is the intensity of the aspiration. And this intensity of aspiration comes in all kinds of circumstances.

There are two things we must not confuse: certain necessities (which are purely necessities if one wants to succeed in completely controlling physical matter), and then moral notions. These are two very different things. One may, for instance, refrain from poisoning one’s body or besotting one’s brains or annulling one’s will because one wants to become master of one’s physical consciousness and capable of transforming one’s body. But if one does these things solely because one thinks one will gain moral merit by doing so, that will lead you nowhere,
to nothing at all. Because it is not meant for that. One does it for purely practical reasons: for the same reason, for instance, that you are not in the habit of taking poison, for you know it will poison you. And then, there are some very slow poisons taken by people (they think, with impunity, because the effect is so slow that they cannot discern it easily), but if one wants to succeed in becoming entirely master of one’s physical activities and capable of putting the light into the reflexes of one’s body, then one must abstain from these things — but not for moral reasons: for altogether practical reasons, from the point of view of the realisation of the yoga. One must not do this with the idea of gaining merit, or the idea that because you will gain merit God will be very pleased and come and manifest within you! It is not at all that, not at all! Perhaps even, He feels closer to him who has made mistakes, who is conscious of his faults and has the sense of his weakness, and aspires sincerely to come out of it all — He feels perhaps closer to him than to one who has never made a mistake and is satisfied with his external superiority over other human beings. In any case, that does not make a great difference. What does make a lot of difference is the sincerity, the spontaneity, the intensity of the aspiration — the need, that need which seizes you and which is so powerful that nothing else in the world counts.

As I have said elsewhere about surrender and sacrifice, if one regrets something, that means that one is not in a spiritual state of consciousness. If one regrets that one can no longer satisfy one’s desires, that means the desires are at least as important as, if not more than, the thing one aspires for. You may say, “Desires are something of which I am quite conscious, whilst if I give up my desires with the idea of getting the Divine, I am yet not sure that I shall have Him; hence I call this a sacrifice.” But I, I call that bargaining! It is bargaining with the Divine. One tells Him, “Give and take; I, I give You the joy I have in satisfying my desires, You must give me in exchange the joy of feeling You within myself, else it is not just.” — This is not self-giving, this is bargaining.
Questions and Answers

This is something I have heard so often, so often: “I have sacrificed so many things, I have made so much effort, have taken so much trouble, and now see, I have nothing in exchange.” All that I can answer is, “No wonder!”

Can a very proud person have a great aspiration?

Why not? The very proud person may receive blows and become sensible; besides, when he receives a blow, that may awaken him a little! Then he has an aspiration. And if it is someone who has intensity in his nature and some strength, well, then his aspiration is powerful.

And without receiving blows?

That may happen. Only in that case it will be very mixed up. In all instances it will be very mixed — but always everything is mixed. A long time is necessary for things to become clear. One may begin anywhere at all, at any stage whatever and in any condition. One can always begin. Only, in some cases it takes a very long time. For the mixture is such that with every step forward one takes half a step back. But there is no reason for this. Fundamentally, as it is the true raison d’être of life and of individual existence to become aware of the Divine, that may emerge anywhere at all, at any moment whatsoever. If there is the least possibility, it springs up. Naturally, if one is perfectly satisfied, then that is an obstacle, because one sleeps in self-satisfaction. But that cannot last. In life, in the world as it is at present, an egoistic satisfaction, a personal satisfaction cannot last, and — as long as it lasts, yes, one may grow hard, not aspire at all. But it does not last.

Anything else?

Nobody has anything to say?

Then, au revoir my children, good-night!

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