“In sum, it may be safely affirmed that no solution offered can be anything but provisional until a supramental Truth-Consciousness is reached by which the appearances of things are put in their place and their essence revealed and that in them which derives straight from the spiritual essence. In the meanwhile our only safety is to find a guiding law of spiritual experience — or else to liberate a light within that can lead us on the way until that greater direct Truth-Consciousness is reached above us or born within us. For all else in us that is only outward, all that is not a spiritual sense or seeing, the constructions, representations or conclusions of the intellect, the suggestions or instigations of the Life-force, the positive necessities of physical things are sometimes half-lights, sometimes false lights that can at best only serve for a while or serve a little and for the rest either detain or confuse us.”


The necessities of physical things also? I don’t understand.

All this, not only physical necessities. All these things are at times lights, that is to say, knowledge diminished and mixed with ignorance, at times false lights, that is, no knowledge at all: simply ideas, conceptions, ways of seeing, ways of feeling — all these things considered as knowledge by the ordinary human consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo speaks even of physical needs, the needs of the body, which are generally considered as imperative and which have their own truth; he says that even that can be only quite
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a partial light, that is to say, a semblance of knowledge or even something false.

That goes against all modern ideas.

People always have the impression that what they call the needs of the body, what the body demands, is an absolute law; that if it is not obeyed, well, one commits a great wrong against one’s body which will suffer the consequences. And Sri Aurobindo says that these needs in themselves are either very partial lights, that is to say, only a way of seeing things, or even no lights at all — completely false.

If one were to study the problem attentively enough, one would find out to what an extent these so-called needs of the body depend on the mental attitude. For example, the need to eat. There are people who literally die of hunger if they have not eaten for eight days. There are others who do it deliberately and observe fasting as a principle of yoga, as a necessity in yoga. And for them, at the end of eight days’ fasting, the body is as healthy as when they started, and sometimes healthier!

Finally, for all these things, it is a question of proportion, of measure. It is obvious that one can’t always live without eating. But it is as obvious that the idea people have about the need to eat is not true. Indeed, it is a whole subject for study: The importance of the mental attitude in relation to the body.

Sri Aurobindo does not recognise the needs of the body as things true in themselves. He says: it is not true, it is only an idea you have, an impression, it is not something true which carries its truth in itself.

_Sweet Mother, what is this “imperious law”, this “spiritual and supramental law”?

_It is the truth of each being.

Each being carries in himself his own spiritual law, his supramental law. It is not the same for everyone, it is not one single identical law. For each one it is the truth of his being, that is to
say, the thing he must realise in the universe and the place he must occupy in the world.

That is the truth of his being.

“Inadequate too is the very frequent attempt at a misalliance between the vital and the spiritual, a mystic experience within with an aestheticised intellectual and sensuous Paganism or exalted hedonism outside leaning upon it and satisfying itself in the glow of a spiritual sanction.”

*The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 128

What does Sri Aurobindo mean by “an aestheticised Paganism”?

That is how Sri Aurobindo describes the different pantheons of different countries, specially of Greece or India. That is to say, it is an aesthetic and intellectual way of transforming all things into divine creatures, divine beings: all the forces of Nature, all the elements, all spiritual forces, all intellectual forces, all physical forces, all these are transformed into a number of godheads and they are given an aesthetic and intellectual reality. It is a symbolic and artistic and literary and poetic way of dealing with all the universal forces and realities. That is how these pantheons came into existence, like the Greek or Egyptian pantheon or else the pantheon of India.

All these gods are representations which Sri Aurobindo calls “aesthetic and intellectual” — a way of conceiving the universe. This is not to say that they do not correspond to a truth — to a reality rather than a truth. There are beings like that; but this is a particular way of approaching the universal world or rather the universal worlds.

*Sweet Mother, hasn’t morality helped us to increase our consciousness?*
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That depends on people. There are people who are helped by it, there are people who are not helped at all.

Morality is something altogether artificial and arbitrary, and in most cases, among the best, it checks the true spiritual effort by a sort of moral satisfaction that one is on the right path and a true gentleman, that one does one's duty, fulfils all the moral requirements of life. Then one is so self-satisfied that one no longer moves or makes any progress.

It is very difficult for a virtuous man to enter the path of God; this has been said very often, but it is altogether true, for he is most self-satisfied, he thinks he has realised what he ought to have realised, he no longer has either the aspiration or even that elementary humility which makes one want to progress. You see, one who is known here as a sattwic man\(^1\) is usually very comfortably settled in his own virtue and never thinks of coming out of it. So, that puts you a million leagues away from the divine realisation.

What really helps, until one has found the inner light, is to make for oneself a certain number of rules which naturally should not be too rigid and fixed, but yet should be precise enough to prevent one from going completely out of the right path or making irreparable mistakes — mistakes the consequences of which one suffers all one's life.

To do that, it is good to set up a certain number of principles in oneself, which, however, should be for each one, in conformity with his own nature. If you adopt a social, collective rule, you immediately make yourself a slave to this social rule, and that prevents you almost radically from making any effort for transformation.

_Sweet Mother, Sri Aurobindo has said that one must find_

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\(^1\) According to the Indian terminology, a sattwic person is one who is moved by the principle of knowledge, equanimity and light, as opposed to a rajasic man who is moved by his desires and passions and a tamasic man who lives in inertia and obscurity.
a light within, then surrender to the divine Shakti. Now that the Supermind has come down, will this be easier?

Well, that is the light within, now.

What is the difficulty? Where do you see any objection or contradiction? What is your difficulty?

How can we understand that it has become easier? What is the effect of this descent?

Well, wait until it occurs in you and you will know it!

All right. Imagine that in a dark room you have put an oil lamp, one which burns oil, as we used to have fifty years ago — we had oil lamps in the rooms, as now there are lanterns; they were a little better but it was the same thing. So you were lighting your room with that, and then suddenly somebody invented the means of lighting it by electricity. So your oil lamp is replaced by a beautiful electric lamp which gives ten times more light.

What is your difficulty, your problem?

You have always had a light to illumine your room — your inner room — but instead of an oil lamp it has become an electric lamp. That’s all.

You don’t understand? No? It is not very difficult to understand.

One wants to see that light.

To see? Ah!... Enter the room, you will see it.

(Silence)

Is that all?

Mother, after the first question there is a sentence I don’t understand: “And for the rest they either detain or confuse us.” What is this “rest”? 143
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Sri Aurobindo is speaking of the mental constructions, representations or conclusions of the intellect, of the suggestions and instigations of the Life-force, of the needs of the body. Now, all this, these half-lights or false lights can serve a little on the path, can help us a little, and only for a while. And all that is not this, all the rest, that is to say, all the countless thoughts and movements, sensations and feelings one has, well, all this is of no use at all. And worse than being quite useless, it detains us on the way, that’s all. It confuses us. That is to say, it creates an inner confusion and must be altogether ignored.

All the countless things one thinks, experiences, feels, sees, does... all that is of no use at all. Naturally, if one looks at it from the point of view of yoga.

(Turning to the child who wanted to see the light) You have still another question?

How to enter the room?

You take a key and open the door!
You must find the key.
Or you sit down in front of the door until you have found the word, the idea or the force which opens it — as in the Arabian Nights tales.

It is not a joke, it is very serious. You must sit down in front of the door and then concentrate until you have found the key or the word or the power to open it.

If one doesn’t try, it doesn’t open by itself. Perhaps after thousands of years, but you want to do it immediately — so? To do it immediately, you must sit down obstinately before the door until you have found the means. It may be a key, it may be a word, it may be a force, it may be anything at all, and you remain there before the door until it opens.

And you do not think of anything else.
Only of the door.
Is there no key-hole through which the light can escape?

A key-hole! What do you mean? A chink through which the light can escape?... Perhaps it is escaping, but perhaps no one sees it either!

It is escaping.
But then that’s another problem: you must open your eyes. You must learn to open your eyes, to look.

Very small babies do not see, even very small animals do not see, tiny baby kittens do not see. It takes them several hours or several days — they don’t see.

You must learn to see.