On Thoughts and Aphorisms

succeeded in escaping from the finite to plunge into the Infinite.

And yet, as Sri Aurobindo has written, the Infinite alone exists; only the falsehood of our superficial perception makes us believe in the existence of the finite.

20 May 1961

62 – I heard a fool discoursing utter folly and wondered what God meant by it; then I considered and saw a distorted mask of truth and wisdom.

How can folly be a distorted mask of truth?

It is the very definition of folly that Sri Aurobindo gives here. A mask is something that conceals, that makes invisible what it covers. And if the mask is distorted, it not only renders invisible what it conceals but also totally changes its nature. So, according to this definition, folly is something that veils and distorts beyond all recognition the Truth which is at the origin of all things.

23 June 1961

Does Sri Aurobindo mean that there is no absolute falsehood, no absolute untruth?24

There can be no absolute untruth. In actual fact it is not possible, because the Divine is behind all things.

It is like people who ask whether certain elements will disappear from the universe. What could “the destruction of a universe” mean? If we come out of our folly, what can we call “destruction”? Only the form, the appearance is destroyed — and indeed, all appearances are destroyed, one after another. It is also said — it is written everywhere, so many things are

24 The Mother replied orally to this question.
Jnana

said — that the adverse forces will either be converted, that is to say, they will become conscious of the Divinity within them and become divine, or they will be destroyed. But what does “destroyed” mean? Their form? Their form of consciousness can be dissolved, but that “something” which makes them exist, which makes all things exist — how could that be destroyed? The universe is an objectivisation, an objective self-discovery of That which is from all eternity. So? How can the All cease to be? The infinite and eternal All, that is to say, That which has no limits of any kind — what can go outside That? There is no place to go! Go where? There is nothing but That.

Furthermore, when we say, “There is only That”, we are locating it somewhere, which is absolutely stupid. So, what can be taken away from there?

One can conceive of a universe being projected outside the present manifestation. One can conceive of universes having succeeded each other and that which was in the earlier ones would no longer be in the later ones — that is even obvious. One can conceive that a whole mass of falsehood and untruth — things which are falsehood and untruth for us now — will no longer belong to the world as it will be in its unfolding; all this one can understand — but “destroy”? Where can it go to be destroyed? When we speak of destroying, we think only of the destruction of a form — it may be a form of consciousness or a material form, but it is always a form. But how could what is without form be destroyed?

So to speak of an absolute falsehood that will disappear would simply mean that a whole set of things will live eternally in the past but will not belong to future manifestations, that is all.

One cannot go outside That!

But they will remain in the past?

We are told that there is a state of consciousness, when we rise
above, when we are able to go beyond both the aspect of Noth-
ingness or Nirvana and the aspect of Existence — there is the
Nirvana aspect and the Existence aspect, the two simultaneous
and complementary aspects of the Supreme — where all things
exist eternally and simultaneously; so one can conceive — God
knows! This may well be another stupidity — one can conceive
of a certain number of things passing into Non-Being, and that
to our consciousness would be a disappearance or a destruction.

Is that possible? I do not know. You would have to ask the
Lord, but usually He does not answer such questions. He smiles!

There comes a time when really one can no longer say
anything: one has the feeling that whatever one says, even if
it isn’t absolutely inane, is not far short of it, and that it would
actually be better to keep quiet. That is the difficulty. In some
of these aphorisms you feel that he has suddenly caught hold of
something above and beyond everything that can be thought —
so what can one say?

(Silence)

Naturally, when one comes down here again, one can — oh, one
can say many things!

As a joke — one can always joke, but one hesitates to do
so because people take your jokes so seriously — one could very
well say, without being completely wrong, that one sometimes
learns much more by listening to a madman or a fool than by
listening to a reasonable man. I am quite sure of it. There is
nothing that withers you more than reasonable people.

27 June 1961

63 – God is great, says the Mahomedan. Yes, He is so great
that He can afford to be weak, whenever that too is
necessary.