

# ***The Discoveries of the Vedic Rishis***

Lecture

by

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I.

Last time I spoke to you on *Dharma*. Perhaps you may remember a few things of what I said and in continuation of it I thought I will speak to you of the *Vedic literature*. I said last time that Dharma, the concept of Dharma was rooted in the *Veda*. So I thought, let's explore this Veda to some extent.

There are many reasons, apart from this, as to why I have selected this topic. One important reason is that all students of Auroville are to become world citizens. They have to vibrate with world consciousness. They need to know therefore what is this world, and the whole world. And to answer this question there are many approaches. One of them is to find the origin of the world, origin of species which are all around in the world, origin of humanity, original thought of humanity, original aspiration of humanity. This is one of the ways by which we can enter into world consciousness. There are many other approaches also. If you are asked the question: how did humanity think in the beginning of history? Do we know enough of how human beings thought, aspired, worked? What was the motive of human beings? Today we have quite a good idea as to what present humanity is thinking, what are its preoccupations. Much literature is available to find out what we are thinking, what we are about. But if we are asked the question: do we know what was the first thought of humanity? If you open some history books, we are told of prehistoric man, regarding whom we do not have any records. Paleolithic man and Neolithic man, you might come across these two words, — the Neanderthal man. There are speculations as to what this Paleolithic man or the Neolithic man, the Neanderthal, what they were thinking, there are speculations. But if you are asked the question: do we have any certainty, as to what they were thinking? Not speculations, not imaginations, not what we think they were thinking. Do we have records, so that we can be certain that they were thinking of this?

Now we know that there were many civilisations which flourished in ancient times, when people think civilisation started. So it is on a large scale that this question has to be raised, in the context of which what I am going to say will have some meaning. I do not want to present Vedic literature as Indian literature, which is how it is very often presented. We had in earliest times, some civilisations, like the Egyptian civilisation, we had a civilisation in Mesopotamia, civilisation of China, civilisation of India, and then we hear also of the civilisation of Persia, civilisation of Greece. Unfortunately even though these great civilisations flourished, we have no definite historical evidence as to what were their thoughts and aspirations among all these ancient records that are available in one form or in the other. In Egypt we had the Pyramids, and we have paintings in the Pyramids which are available. These paintings are being interpreted in many ways, and we imagine what the people of Egypt might be thinking of. But among all these ancient civilisations, there is only one literature available which can give you a definite idea with certainty as to what those ancient people thought, what they aspired for. And that is Vedic literature. If you ask the question what are the ancient, most ancient records which we can open and where we can find out, with definiteness, what exactly were

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the thoughts and aspirations of ancient people — this is the literature available to us. So I want to present Vedic literature as world literature. It is a common heritage of the whole world, relevant to everybody in the world. Anybody, whether he is European, or American, or African, or Indian, or Asian, or Australian, whatever, if anybody wants to know with definiteness, what ancient people thought and aspired for, they have to refer to this literature, because it is available. It is available now in written form. For a long time it was available only in the oral form. We are going to explore the thoughts of the ancient people, aspirations of the ancient people, as evidenced in the Vedic literature. That is one aspect of what I am going to say. There is another aspect. Why should we at all inquire into what the ancients have thought? Why? What is the usefulness of it? Relevance of it? There are three answers to this question. What we are today can very often be known when we know better and better what we were yesterday. There is what is called, a question of identity. When we ask the question: "What are we today?" What you are asking basically of what is our identity, what are we? This is our first question. And if what we are today is dependent upon on what we were yesterday, and even the day before yesterday, then it is worthwhile exploring that ancient time, and what the Ancients thought and aspired for. Maybe what we are doing today is rooted in it. May be, may not be. But if we know what was, we can find out whether we are rooted there or not, and our identity can be known better. That is the first answer to the question.

The second answer is that we are today in search of a solution. Why? because today we are confronting what may be called critical problems, not only problems, but critical problems. There is a difference between a problem and a critical problem. A problem is a question regarding which we have a hope to find a good answer, more or less with some difficulty, with some easiness. But a critical problem is a problem regarding which the answer must be found, and yet that answer is extremely difficult to find. There are many problems in regard to which answers may not be found, and yet it doesn't matter, but a critical problem is a problem regarding which the answer must be found. If its answer is not found we cannot move forward. That is the meaning of a critical problem. Now we are facing today a series of critical problems, and we are not able to find answers easily; and yet answers must be found. That is one of the reasons why many people today are looking backward, looking into history. Very often the question is asked: "Why should we study history at all?" One of the basic reasons why we should study history today is that we are confronting critical problems and answers must be found. Therefore we go back into history to see whether anything was thought of, in ancient times, if anything was discovered but lost later on, and which you can recover now, and which can be useful today to find the answers. This is one of the special reasons why the study of history becomes very important today. And that is why many serious people of the world are turning to ancient times, to medieval times, to the past. Not necessary to belong to the past, but knowledge of the past can be useful to us to the present day, to open the doors of the future. It is a study of the past to aid the future. This is the reason why we should study history. Not to belong to the past, but to create a gateway to the future. It is in that context that the study that we are going to make now, to some extent, in a preliminary manner, could be very useful.

And there is a third answer to this question: why should we study these ancient times? The third answer is: whenever we stand at the threshold of the future, at the gateway of the future, we find ourselves automatically summarizing ourselves. This is the psychological process. Whenever you want to move forward, psychologically we always tend to summarize our past. It is as it were the law of the psychological development of mankind. You cannot move forward towards the future unless in a synoptic manner, in a summarizing manner, in a very brief manner you can overview, a very rapid overview. Since we are now standing facing very consciously towards the future; we are all speaking of the millennium, isn't it — the next millennium, and we are all visualising it. So when we stand at a such critical moment, at a very important moment of the future, it is good to summarize the past in a very rapid manner. I don't like the study of history as a record of so many battles, so many conquests, so many dynasties, and quarrels of various kinds, intrigues of various kinds. What is very interesting in history is what can stand out in the summary. Ultimately, what is the essential experience that we gained from the past, which will give us an idea where we are today and how we can move forward.

So, it is from these three points of view that I selected this particular topic: "Glimpses of Vedic literature". Because the Veda contains definite evidence, not speculation, but definite evidence as to what the ancient people thought and aspired for. And those who have studied the Veda feel that there is something in the Veda which is very useful to the future, so we can study that aspect, while making a leap towards the future. You know Sri Aurobindo spoke of the mutation of the human species. Sri Aurobindo said: "*Man is a transitional being.*" There is going to be on the earth a new race, new type of beings, superhuman beings. He spoke of super-humanity, not a humanity but a super-humanity.

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And particularly because Auroville is designed to be the cradle of that super-humanity, I feel it is very necessary that we know in a summary manner what we are, what kind of apes we are, how much we can jump now, or if we want to make a jump how shall we jump into the future. Because we need to know this, therefore, I suggested that we can share together, open a few pages of the Veda, and learn a bit of it, not so much, because there is so much in it. I cannot propose that we should study at present all that much, but something. You have still many, many years of study ahead of you and if at this stage you have a few germs, it will be a great aid to you for the future. This is the reason why I selected this topic, and I invite all of you to share some of the things that I want to present to you.

So first let me say, the word 'veda' is a very meaningful word, it is a word which has a meaning, etymologically. The word 'veda' is a Sanskrit word. I know that some of you started learning Sanskrit, recently. There is a root word in Sanskrit called 'vid' — to know. So, the book which is known as Veda, is so called, because it is claimed to be the book of knowledge. Veda means "knowledge". Now many of you might not have even seen the book "Veda". One day there might be an exhibition here, where we can present the Vedic literature, and you can have the first hand perception, at least a visual perception. And the first thing that you will see will be four books.

Veda, as it is known, consists of four books, and these four books have each one a separate name. The most important and most ancient of these four is called "*Rig Veda*", the second book is called "*Yajur Veda*", the third book is called "*Sama Veda*", and the fourth book is called "*Atharva Veda*". These are the four books. Don't try to memorise these names, because I will come to them so often that even without an effort you will be able to remember these four names: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda. Now each Veda is called *Samhita*. This is another, Sanskrit word: Samhita. Samhita, means collection, anthology. I do not know if you have seen anthologies of poets, anthology of many writers, fiction writers, and prose writers. You know when you make a selection from a large body, and put them together, collect together in a collection — that is called Samhita, is an anthology. So each book is an anthology. In another words, none of the four books is a complete book, it is only an anthology. It is said that there was a time, a very ancient time, how ancient one doesn't know. Let's say five thousand years ago, six thousand years ago, ten thousand years ago, one doesn't know, there is a lot of speculation about it, and we do not go into the speculation. We can say ? in very ancient times there happened to be a number of poets. It is a great historical event that there happened to be a number of poets who lived in India and they composed some of the most marvelous poems. And there were plenty of poems, plenty of them. It seems, as it were, a great flood of poetry. And a number of poems were written and composed. Then a time came when it was felt that that whole flood was vanishing, that flood of poetry. Fewer and fewer people were now composing poems, and it seemed as it were — because at that time there were no written words or things were not written down — it was felt that there should be an anthology. A great man called Vyasa, this is one name you should remember, Vyasa. He himself was a great poet, and he felt that before this poetry is lost, (because most of the communications were done orally only, not by written words but by oral tradition) Vyasa felt that there should be at least a selection out of such a huge literature which was available orally. Some of the most important things should be put together. And he made these four collections. Therefore Vyasa is also called Veda Vyasa: Vyasa who put all the Vedas into the present form. So these four books are only incomplete books, in the sense that they don't contain all the literature that was available at that time. Actually it is said: *Vedah Anantah*, that is in Sanskrit: 'Vedas are limitless'. The Vedas which are available now in the books are only a selection. But this selection was done by a very wise poet. So, you can expect that this collection will contain the most essential ideas, and they will give us an insight into what the ancients thought, what they discovered. The *Rig Veda* is the largest collection. Sama Veda is the smallest collection.

Rig Veda consists of ten thousand verses. I have got one edition of Rig Veda which is in twelve volumes, ten thousand verses printed in twelve volumes, that is in itself a large, large amount. Even to glance at twelve volumes is a very big work, not many people have been able, even to browse through these twelve volumes.

Atharva Veda has six thousand verses, and Yajur Veda and Sama Veda have a smaller number. I shall come to this aspect of quantity later on, I am just now touching only at the fringes, some of the important ideas regarding these Vedas.

Let's turn to Rig Veda itself which is the largest book, and is supposed to be *the* Veda, actually. If you do not know Rig Veda, other Vedas are difficult to know, because Yajur Veda repeats two thirds of Rig Veda. Sama Veda has most of the Rig Veda repeated excepting only seventy-five verses. Only seventy-five verses are unique in Sama Veda, all the others are repetitions of the Rig Vedic verses. Atharva Veda consists of half of the Rig Veda, with only half something unique. So, this

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means that if you do not know Rig Veda, you cannot know the other Vedas very well. That is why most people turn to the Rig Veda, and that is most significant.

So I shall do a little more on the Rig Veda. It has ten chapters. Usually when you open any book, you will find chapters in the book. In the Veda, a chapter is called *Mandala*, a Sanskrit word. In Sanskrit there are many words for chapter: *Mandala*, *kanda*, *adhyaya*. In Rig Veda a chapter is called Mandala, so there are ten Mandalas in the Rig Veda. Now these Mandalas have been organised in a particular manner, it is not a selection done pell-mell in an haphazard manner, there is a system, there is an organisation. The first verses are of one kind, the second batch of verses are still of another kind, the third batch of verses are of yet another kind. There is a system. The first chapter and the tenth chapter collect the poems of a number of poets, the second chapter to the eighth chapter collect the poems of only one poet, one poet or his progeny, poets who are born in the same family. And the ninth chapter is a very special chapter of which I will speak to you later on. It is not a collection of poems of many poets, or even of one poet, it is specialised only on one subject, ? the subject of immortality. While speaking of Dharma, I had spoken to you about immortality as one of fundamental aspirations, along with permanence and certainty. So that subject of immortality is specially treated in the ninth chapter, the ninth Mandala.

And then if you want to know some of the special poets who are very famous, most of the Indians know two of these poets, one is *Vasishtha* another is *Vishwamitra*. These two names are very well known in India, even the common people know Vasishtha and Vishwamitra. The third chapter consists of the poems written by Vishwamitra, and the seventh chapter consists of poems written by Vasishtha. Then there is another poet who is very famous, he is called *Vamadeva*. The entire fourth chapter is given to Vamadeva. Poems written by *Atri*, are in the fifth chapter. The sixth chapter is given to *Bharadvaj*. These are some of the important names of the poets. In other words, these poets were the leaders of humanity of ancient times. We are absolutely certain about this, there is no speculation about it. It is definitely known that Vamadeva was a great leader and a great poet, that Vasishtha was a great poet, Vishwamitra was a great poet, Atri was a great poet, Bharadvaj was a great poet, and many others names such as *Madhuchandas*, and many others. Even today, stories of Vasishtha and Vishwamitra, are known to the children of India. There was a great battle between Vasishtha and Vishwamitra according to historical stories that have come down. Vishwamitra particularly was opposed to Vasishtha. There is a story written by Sri Aurobindo in Bengali and which is available also in English translation (you can ask Deepti, she will tell you the story). It is a story of forgiveness, how Vishwamitra was angry and terribly angry with Vasishtha and how his anger was wiped out by the great act of forgiveness on the part of Vasishtha, (I will not tell you the story because then you will lose interest and you will not ask Deepti. I would like you to ask her about this story because it is a very interesting story.)

But when you read the poems of these great poets, you enter into a kind of a world of knowledge which is like a brilliant sun. Normally we think that ancient people must have been rather barbaric, primitive, uncivilised, uncouth, without manners. But surprisingly we find that the most ancient literature available to mankind is so civilised. It is a surprise. Actually historians may not be able to explain how this happened: how is it that the most ancient people of the world, like Vasishtha and Vishwamitra, and Bharadvaj and Atri and Vamadeva, Madhuchandas and *Dirghathamas*, how do they happened to be so civilised, so cultured.

How can we say that they were very cultured, what is the proof that they were very cultured? The first proof is their language. One of the marks of a civilised or cultured person is the capacity of linguistic expression. One who cannot speak well, in chaste language, clearly, with decoration of beauty, is not a cultured person. The mark of culture is capacity of language and its expression. Now if you read what Vasishtha has written, what Vishwamitra has written, it is so beautiful, it is as if these people had such a huge vocabulary. For expressing one idea, they were capable of expressing it differently, variously. Just to take one example: while describing the mind, the human mind, Vishwamitra (in the third chapter which is allocated to him) compares Mind with women who are neither nude nor clad. If you look at the mind, it is an accurate example of something that is neither nude nor clad. Mind is an instrument, and it is transparent. When the mind becomes absolutely clear, there is transparency. This is what Descartes has said: "When certainty comes, mind is absolutely clear, transparency is the quality of the mind." When you have a glass which is absolutely transparent, it is a glass, therefore it is something, it is a vehicle, it is an instrument, it is a medium. Therefore you cannot say it is completely nude, it is clad, and yet it is nude because it is transparent. Now, this kind of understanding of the mind, Vishwamitra just puts it in a very casual manner, a kind of analogy or simile of the mind in the third chapter. This is only one small example I am giving.

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Then there are so many ideas which are so profound. Let's take only one small example of one the profoundest ideas. In one of the verses the poet says: "The reality is strange and wonderful." Reality is strange and wonderful. Why it is strange and wonderful? The reason that is given is: it is one and yet different from one. It is one and yet it is other than one. It is a kind of a riddle which is given by the poet. Simple understanding is, one is one, and two is two. If it is two, then of course there is one and another also. But being one, it is still another, such is the nature of the reality, and therefore it is wonderful. This is one of the profoundest ideas that we find in the Vedas. How is the reality one and yet different from itself. It is itself and yet is different from itself. It is a riddle. One day we shall discuss this in detail. How can the reality be one, and yet be different from itself. This is one example of profundities.

The third characteristic of the Veda is: it is beautiful, not only in linguistic expression but beautiful in its poetic expression. Rig Veda is nothing but sheer poetry. Now what is poetry? One must be able to understand that this is a great poetry. I can also write poems, Jivatma can write poems, Fanny can write poems, Vishwamitra can write poems. Is there any difference? There is a difference. First of all, good poetry must have rhythmic words. I spoke of this once before, but it can be repeated, because it is very important. Poetry is poetry only when it consists of rhythmic words. If the words are not rhythmic, it is not poetry. In prose writing, the words may not be rhythmic, but in poetry, if the words are not rhythmic, it is not poetry. That is one mark of poetry. The expression must be rhythmic. There must be rhythm. The second is, it must have style. In prose also there is style, but it is not a necessary element of prose. In poetry there must be style. And what is style? What you want to express and the manner of expression should coincide. The substance of what you want to say, and the manner of saying, must gel with each other. That is called style. What you are and the manner of your being should be consistent with each other, then it is style. To take a very small example: if you are very tall and your dress is short, it is not style. To have style, what you are and the manner of your expression should have some kind of harmony. Similarly in the case of poetry, what you want to say and the way of saying, must be harmonious. And the third characteristic of poetry is, that it must have images. This is very important. In prose, you may not have images. But poetry without images is out of question. Image is the fundamental thing in poetry. Whatever you want to say must have a very concrete image. I want to express laughter, for example, and then you may give an image of the fall of Ganges from the Himalayas. It is like laughter. In laughter there is a kind of rhythm of fall, and an image of it would be something like the fall of Ganges from the Himalayas. So you might say; Himalayas are laughing. The Ganges is nothing but the laughter of the Himalayas. This is an image. Poetry must have images of whatever is to be expressed. But what image? That is very important. and that is the crux of the matter. The image must image profounder and profounder and profoundest reality. If it is an image of an ordinary thing, poetry is ordinary. If what is imaged is of a profounder thing, it is a profounder poetry. If the image is an image of the profoundest reality, poetry is profoundest. That is how you can judge poetry. Is it ordinary poetry, or is it profounder poetry or profoundest poetry? It depends upon what is the substance which is imaged. Now, when all the three: rhythm, style, image and the substance that is imaged are of the highest order, then that is the best poetry. There are many poets who are rhythmic, but they don't have style. There are poets who have got great style, but no sense of rhythm or very little rhythm; there are poets who are profound, their images are good, but style is poor and the rhythm is poor. That is how many poets can be understood. When you read any poetry you ask these three questions and you will find out the value or evaluation of a good poet. Poets like Shakespeare, or Shelley or Keats, or like Milton for example, are very great poets and have great merits. And then if you read Sri Aurobindo's poetry, *Savitri*. *Savitri* is the one poem which has intensest rhythmic expression. Most wonderful rhythm in English literature that you find is be found in *Savitri*. The style in *Savitri* is most marvelous. What is to be expressed and the manner of expression, they completely harmonise. And the images — abounding images! One of the best images of *Savitri* you find in the very beginning of the book: as a young girl how she is growing up, (one day we shall read together these particular few lines of *Savitri* and you will see the abundance of images, and the image is so profound, the profoundest reality of *Savitri* is brought out. That is why *Savitri* is regarded as the highest poetry that we have in the world literature.

Now if you judge Vedic poetry from this point of view, Sri Aurobindo himself has written on this, and he has himself said that when these three things are of the highest order, poetry becomes *mantric*, poetry becomes full of mantra. And Vedic poetry is mantric poetry. The word mantra is very important. What is mantra? Mantra is poetic expression which has a highest rhythmic value, whose style is most appropriate, and whose images reflect the highest reality, highest experience of reality. When the three combine together and these are expressed, then that expression is called mantra, and



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mantra has power. Actually every sound has a power, every word has power. But there are different kinds of power. You must yourself have seen how a powerful dialogue, may be very short, very pithy, and it make an effect like a bolt upon you. Even twenty lines cannot produce that effect which one line can produce, because the power of it is so great. So different kinds of words and sounds have different kinds of power. But mantra has the highest power. When it is uttered, then the substance of it is realised, that is the meaning of mantra. You just recite a mantra and what is excited is itself experienced by you on the spot, that is the power of mantra. And Sri Aurobindo has said that Vedic poetry is mantric poetry. *Rishis* themselves who composed poetry, called that poetry mantra.

I have taken much of your time already but if you are tired we can stop here; if you are not tired I can take a little more time, depends on your free will. We go on for sometime? All right.

Among all the mantras of the Vedas, one which is most famous and most common is the one I shall give you. It is known very widely in India, it is written by Vishwamitra, in the third chapter. I shall first speak the Sanskrit, it has the mantric power and then I shall give the translation of it: “*Om bhur bhuvah swah. Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayat.*” This is the mantra. It starts with *Om*. Now *Om* is a discovery of the Vedic Rishis, this word, this sound, *Om*. Vedic poets were discoverers. In fact every poet has to be a discoverer. Modern poets very often are not, but a real poet is one who discovers. A poet is a poet when he wants to describe his discovery in a rhythmic manner, with a style, with an image which is so powerful, as to describe the discovery accurately. It is said that only scientists describe accurately, but it is not true. The poets also have to be very accurate. Only when their description is accurate, when the image accurately describes, then only he is a great poet. That is the mark of a great poet. Now, *Om* is a discovery of the Vedic poets. The Vedic poets went into depths, in search of the power that is the root of the creation of the world, and when they reached the depths, inner depths, the inmost depths of the creative power, then they heard the sound “*Om*”. It consists of the sounds: a, u, m. You combine these three sounds; a, u, m, that gives you the total sound *Om*. And they found out that “*Om*” is a sound which is prevalent all over the world. The world is nothing but this sound, “*Om*”. The entire world is vibrating with this word, the sound: “*Om*”. And if you yourself repeat this word, this sound, you will be able to go deeper and deeper until you reach the original power of creation, and then you yourself become creative, this is the promise of the Vedic Rishis. This is the discovery. If you repeat the sound “*Om*”, let’s say a million times, (and there are many people in India who practise this). I was myself told the word “*Om*” when I was only three years old and you might say I have repeated this sound, I do not know how many times, but from the age of three I have been repeating this sound, whenever I have the time, this is the one sound which I have been repeating. And the promise of the Vedic Rishis is that if you can repeat it with your utmost heart, with complete concentration, then you will chisel out your own personality, your courage, your strength, your will-power, or your creativity, you will be creative. So this is the one sound with which this mantra starts “*Om*”. Mother herself has said: “*Om* represents the Divine himself.” If you repeat this word “*Om*”, ultimately you will realise the Divine. It is the way of sound. It is the way of the sound by which you can arrive at the Divine. Whenever you want to address the Divine, if you want to address him in a sound form, then *Om* is sufficient invocation of the Divine. Mother herself has said that when she heard for the first time the sound *Om*, recited by somebody in France in a particular theater, She herself saw vibrations. It was pronounced in a such magnificent manner, the whole hall became luminous for the Mother. That was her first experience of *Om*. She did not know anything about India at that time, but her own sensitivity was so great that she immediately got the vibration of that sound and saw the power of that sound. You should find somebody who can recite *Om*, one day we shall try to bring some people who can recite *Om* so well, merely we can have one session of listening to the sound *Om*, it will be a marvelous experience. Some people have recited this word, the sound *Om* so deeply and so constantly, some of them have done it incessantly, for years, doing nothing else than reciting the sound *Om*, and the power of that recitation is so great that they can give you the same kind of an experience as Mother had.

Then next words are: *bhur bhuvah swaha*. I now go rapidly. *Bhur* means the earth, *bhuvah* means the open space, and *swaha* means that which is higher than mind and that which is heavenly. When you recite this mantra, you are told that in one stroke you must become aware of everything. Now, how to become aware of everything? This is the small formula given by the Vedic Rishis. *Bhur bhuvah swaha*. With these three words, you remember the earth, the external space that is all around, and that which goes beyond this space. If you remember all the three together, you are becoming widest, automatically. And one of these conditions of entering into reality is to become as wide as possible. And this was the mark of the Vedic Rishis, to be as wide as the Divine himself. Even the sky

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is not enough to describe that wideness, it is beyond the sky. *Swaha* is beyond the sky, wider than the sky. So this is the first condition of your recitation: *Om bhur bhuvah swaha*.

Now comes the main substance of the mantra: *tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi*. *Dhimahi* means: we are meditating. So the whole science of meditation is summarized in one word: we are meditating. Upon what? *Tat savitur varenyam bhargah*. We are meditating upon the light, Supreme light. Supreme light of what? Of the sun, which is the highest source of light. We are contemplating upon the Supreme light of the Supreme source of light. For what purpose? *Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat*. So that our intellect (*dhiyah* means intellect) is guided. *Prachodayat* means guided. So that our intellect is guided by that light. In a sense this is a very simple statement. We are contemplating upon the Supreme light of the Supreme source of light, so that our intellect is guided by that light. Now you see the profundity of this statement. First of all, this mantra, I said earlier, contains the science of meditation. *Dhimahi*: What is meditation? And what is the object of meditation? There can be many objects of meditation. Descartes wrote a book call *Méditations*, meditations. And he contemplated on many important subjects. But Vishwamitra says: "We contemplate upon the Supreme light." Not an ordinary object, there can be contemplation upon many objects. But here, the object of meditation is to be the Supreme light of the Supreme source of light. That is the first thing. The second thing which is very peculiar about this mantra is, it points out that if you want to be perfect, there is one instrument in your totality which you should identify, and which should be connected with that light. Now Vishwamitra discovered that among all the faculties of the human consciousness intellect is the one faculty which is most important. So he identifies it and says: so that the intellect is guided by that light. In fact, in modern science we come to this conclusion now that when consciousness, the intellectual consciousness particularly, gets diminished, the whole personality of the individual gets diminished. Therefore the most important thing that we should do in education is to sharpen the intellect. Others faculties should also be sharpened. But all others faculties can be sharpened much more perfectly if you sharpen the intellect. So this intellect is identified by Vishwamitra as the most important element. What is most modern today was in the most ancient book of knowledge written by Vishwamitra. At that time he had identified among all the organs, among of all the faculties of mankind, intellect as the one faculty which should be attended too. Not only attended too, not only sharpened, but should be united with that Supreme light. It should be guided by the Supreme light. You sharpen your intellect in such a way that you go from stage to stage of its development until it gets connected with the Supreme light. One day we shall go into this particular mantra in a greater depth. Because this mantra is such an important mantra, particularly if you know, Sri Aurobindo himself wrote a new mantra, a new *Gayatri* mantra — this is called *Gayatri* mantra — for our times.

Vishwamitra's mantra and Sri Aurobindo's *Gayatri* mantra are very similar and yet very different. So I shall conclude with the statement of Sri Aurobindo's *Gayatri* mantra. His *Gayatri* mantra is: "*Tat savitur varam rupam jyotih parasya dhimahi yannah satyen dipayet*" — slightly different from the other one. *Tat savitur varam rupam jyotih parasya dhimahi*. We are meditating upon the Supreme light—this is also like Vishwamitra, we are contemplating upon the Supreme light of *parasya* — here is one difference. There it was *savitur*, it was sun-light. Sri Aurobindo goes one step further, *parasya*: the light of the Supreme transcendental reality, which is even beyond the sun-light. And then he says: *Yannah satyen dipayet*. So that we are not only directed by the Supreme light, as in Vishwamitra's *Gayatri*, but *dipayet*: we are illumined, not only directed, we are illumined. And not only our intellect is directed. In the case of Vishwamitra, I identified only the intellect as a fundamental instrument, which was good, but Sri Aurobindo goes further saying: "*Yannah*"; our entire being is illumined. Not only the intellect is to be directed, but every part of the being, totality, every cell of the body, every functioning of our consciousness, every organ of our being, our totality of the being, everything is illumined by that light. This is the mantra for our age. That was for that age. This is the mantra for our age. This is the *Gayatri* mantra that Sri Aurobindo has given for our age. I would like you to remember this particular mantra: "*Tat savitur varam rupam jyotih parasya dhimahi yannah satyen dipayet*". One day Deepti will write it down for you and you will have it in the language in which you understand and I would like you to remember this particular mantra. You will yourself become Vedic, although now living today. Thank you.

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### II.

You know, yesterday I ended with two verses: one from *Vishwamitra* and one from Sri Aurobindo. Now I shall repeat these two because they are very important, and I shall tell you why. It will show us what was the Vedic experience and how far we need to go forward, and how Sri Aurobindo has gone forward, and in what way he has gone forward, and therefore what is directly relevant to us.

When we study history, the important question we should ask is: what was the search of people of any given time? What were they looking for? What was their quest? What was their question? What were they searching for and what did they discover ultimately? The whole world history is a kind of account of a quest. And if you don't ask this question, you don't learn history. So when we study Vedic literature we must ask: what was the quest? What were they looking for and why were they looking for what they were looking for? It seems that *Vedic Rishis* made at least five important discoveries. And I shall come to these five discoveries, but they were all centered on one important question: what is the highest that the human being can attain? That was their quest. What is the highest? You try your utmost, you do your utmost, and as a result, what is available to humanity? That was their basic question. Ultimately they came to realise that what we can do at the most is to attain immortality. I had already spoken about this earlier in my talk on *Dharma*: the search for immortality. They did not like dislocation, disintegration, breaking, falling apart, division, they wanted to find a way by which this dislocation could be prevented. They found the utmost the human being can do was to attain to a state of immortality, to attain wholeness, completeness which does not break. This was their search. And in the discovery of immortality many discoveries were made. I speak of five discoveries which are important in the Vedic experience.

We come to our times, and when we study history we should always keep this in view: our times and those times, now and then, then and now. This is how we should study history all the time. What is our need to study Veda? Because it can help us now and open the gates to the future. So we must ask the question: What do we need now? What is our need? Why should we study the Veda? So it is for this that Sri Aurobindo has made a tremendous study of what we need today. What is our present time? What do we need? Is it sufficient to go back to the Veda and other past experiences, past discoveries, and repeat them, revive them, reestablish them, is it enough? Or do we need to do something more, or something different? Something that was not conceived before at all?

And Sri Aurobindo, after making a great study, an intensive study, came to the conclusion that we need to do something quite different. We can take help from all the past discoveries, and among these discoveries the Vedic discoveries are very important. But merely bringing them back is not enough; we should of course learn of them, acquire them, rediscover them, but that is not enough. Something quite difference has to be attempted, because our times are different. Now what is that difference? Sri Aurobindo called our times a critical moment of evolution. Each word is important: "critical moment of evolution." Sri Aurobindo made a discovery of evolution in a very fundamental way. The idea of evolution is not new, and yet in a certain respect it is new. If you read Sri Aurobindo's book called *The Life Divine* (which one day you will study, in fact you should keep as a program of your life the idea that one day you will read *The Life Divine*, from cover to cover, and very well, very intensively, because that is very important). So if you study *The Life Divine*, you will find that the entire book is actually on the theme of evolution. What is evolution? There are many views of evolution today.

In a very striking manner this idea of evolution was brought forth by a scientist called Charles Darwin. You might have heard his name. Darwin wrote a book called *Origin of the species*. How different species have come into existence. And he spoke of an evolutionary movement by which species have grown and developed. In his studies every creature on earth is a struggling creature, every one here is supposed to struggle, whether he likes it or not, every creature, whether it is a small insect or a bird, or a reptile, or a biped, or a quadruped, whatever it is, there is a struggle. There is a law of struggle as it were. And without a struggle, according to Darwin, no creature can survive, and there is a tremendous urge to survive, this is a basic law as it were. Every creature on this earth wants to survive, and therefore there is a struggle for survival, and unfortunately or fortunately the world is such that a creature confronts a vast system which wants to devour that creature. Whoever comes into existence is being attempted to be devoured. This is a new idea which Darwin put forward in history in recent times. It was in the middle of the Nineteenth century. Now of course we are going into Twenty-first century, but it was in the midst of the Nineteenth century that Darwin put forward this idea.



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It was felt to be a new idea, but it was not entirely new because in India there is a very fine sentence: *"The eater, eating, is been eaten."* "The eater, eating, is been eaten." I am devouring something, I do not know that I myself am also been eaten by somebody, or there is an attempt by somebody to eat me up. But this is the small sentence, that we find, in the Upanishads, and Upanishad is a development from the Veda and we shall talk about it. This is a great sentence: the eater is eating, and that eater is also been eaten. So, you can see that in this world there is a tremendous struggle, everybody trying to devour, without devouring as it were you can't survive, and yet there is a kind of a movement from behind you which is trying to eat you up. Therefore you have to struggle against that — who is trying to eat you up. This is the idea which was known in India, and which Darwin put forward in a very striking manner and he said: *"There is a basic law in this world, and that law is the law of struggle for survival, the struggle for existence."* Each one is struggling. Struggling to eat, and struggling against being eaten. This is what is happening all the time in this world. And then he said there is a second law, and the second law is that only a creature which develops so much strength and power and faculties, it is only when you become fittest as it were, that you can survive. In this struggle you have to develop faculties, you have to develop powers, capacities. He said that these faculties and powers are inescapably physical in character. The better the organ, the better the faculty that you develop, the better is your capacity to be fit and the more fit you are, the greater is the possibility of your surviving. You may have to develop new kinds of organs. There are creatures which don't have hands and feet as we have, therefore they couldn't survive as much as human beings are able to survive. Certain animals developed wings like birds did, and they could survive, because they developed wings: their physical wings were developed. At a certain stage of development a brain was developed. And it is said that the human being, the human body has a great speciality because the brain has been developed. It is this brain power, as it were, which is responsible for directing the body, directing the thought, and thought has many capacities as a result of which, according to Darwin, the fittest instrument has been created, and therefore man is able to survive. He has developed the fittest instrument, and will survive because of this instrument: the brain power. This theory that he put forward has now become very widespread in the world. If you move out in the world, you will find that people are adherents of this theory. There are opponents, no doubt, but by and large this theory has spread all over the world with a great welcome. In his book he showed how, there was gradually, physical development, better and better organisation of the body, until the development of the brain. It is a great story of gradual development. Evolution is — if you ask the question: what is the meaning of evolution — the exact meaning of evolution is: graduated development. Evolution is development but graduated development; there is a step-by-step development. It is not as if everything develops at one stroke. But he admitted that at a certain moment of development, there is what is called, mutation. Here is another word which you must understand: mutation. Mutation means: a very radical development, a sudden change such as the development of the butterfly is a mutation. You know how a butterfly is produced; that is a process of sudden remarkable development which cannot even be foreseen. If you see the precedent event, and then the next event, there is such remarkable change that you cannot even imagine that such a thing can happen. It is as if somebody comes in your surroundings with crutches, unable to even walk on the crutches and within three days you find that person throwing away the crutches and running about and wrestling with you and winning the wrestling bout, that would be a mutation. Suddenly within a short time these capacities developed, that is mutation. Now, Darwin accepted that at certain times in graduated development, mutation takes place, but that mutation can be traced still to the past. In development of flowers also you will see a bud suddenly opens out at a certain time with full glory, as it were. You see a small child also, suddenly a mutation takes place in the child's development. The child has only learned two or three words which the child can utter today and after five days you just meet the child and you see that child speaking six, seven sentences — in a few days time. This we see very often, quite easily. So Darwin said that there is evolution, graduated development, there is a war as it were, there is a struggle for survival, and suddenly after sometime a mutation takes place. These are, you might say, miracles of physical development. So Darwin's theory is a theory of physical evolution.

Now Sri Aurobindo made a study and he pointed out that physical development is dependent upon psychological development. This is the new thing that Sri Aurobindo has presented. Slowly there is a development of consciousness. Behind the physical development there is a push, there is a force of consciousness. He has given a beautiful example of a steam engine. You know the engine of a train. There is a piston and there is a movement coming out as steam. If you are an outsider, you look at the engine and you see that when there is a piston moving like this, on the top steam comes out. So

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you see that the steam coming out is dependent upon the piston movement. But if you are inside the engine, you find that you need to produce steam first, for the movement of the piston. Piston will not move if there is no steam at all. So then you discover that the piston's movement is itself dependent upon the movement of steam, the creation of steam, there must be steam first. Similarly, if you look from outside, you feel that consciousness is produced by physical organs, but when you go inside you find that physical organs develop, work, function, because consciousness is moving them. So Sri Aurobindo made a tremendous study of evolutionary processes and came to this conclusion. Now in a sense this idea was already present in the Veda and Upanishads. So ancient. There was an idea of evolution. But what Sri Aurobindo has presented is a completely comprehensive view of this evolution and much of *The Life Divine* is written to explain this psychological evolution, as against physical evolution.

Now having said this (I am saying it very rapidly because to do full justice to what Sri Aurobindo said one has to give so many lectures on this subject itself, but that we shall do later on after five, six years, not immediately.)... But immediately you can see Sri Aurobindo has made a study of this and he came to the conclusion that the human species... you know the meaning of species? A species is a group of creatures of organisms and the distinction of that group is the fact that its progeny is similar to its parents. That is the mark of a species. The young of the cow is a cow. The young of the human being is a human being. So cow is a species, human beings are a species. A species is a group of creatures whose progeny is similar to the parents. You know there are many kind of species in this world. Even flowers have species, plants are species, trees are species. Any living organism produces its own similar. But at a certain time, there is a sudden change and that changed group or changed organism produces something quite different from its parents. And then again it goes on producing similars, so a new species is created. Now Sri Aurobindo pointed out that humanity is a species and it has been struggling and developing, (there is no doubt, there is a law of struggle) but that struggle is not merely the development of the physical organs. This species has shown that there is so much psychological stress. Human beings are distinguishable from other species in that human beings are aware of psychological stress, psychological struggle. Even a small child has a psychological struggle to make. Even in a classroom the child is supposed to remember and if he doesn't recite the remembered poem, he fails. The struggle for existence implies a psychological struggle as it were. So human beings are in a psychological condition of a struggle. Now this struggle has been going on for thousands of years. And that is why we need to study history. To understand what is this struggle of mankind? What is the psychological struggle?

After studying the whole history of mankind, Sri Aurobindo has thrown a light upon the present struggle of mankind. What is the nature of this struggle of human beings today? And his conclusion is: The brain is not sufficient. According to Darwin the brain is the most important organ, no doubt about it. Sri Aurobindo grants that brain is most important, no doubt, but brain is not the summit. All that we human beings can do with the powers of the brain, human beings have done. It is a tremendous assertion to say this very confidently, that all the brain can do, mankind has done. And mankind can go on doing this, on and on, and on, if it remains only that. But at every movement of going round about, there will be a greater psychological stress. So there is today a psychological stress in mankind which is unprecedented, because all that you could do with the brain power you have done, and you are only repeating that stress again and again, and again, it is a stage of suffocation. You are able to see today, very rapidly, what mankind has done and that is your advantage here, because you can study this history very rapidly as Sri Aurobindo has done this study, and we are beneficiaries of that study. I will talk to you one day about this in a large way, only this subject: what has mankind done? Why do we say that all that brainpower can do has been done? And having done this, you have seen that mankind is not satisfied. If this was the highest that you could do, you would be satisfied. You have done your highest, your best. But having done your best, mankind is still not satisfied. And that is the problem of today. With whatever brainpower you have, you do your best, and yet you find a problem which you cannot solve, and what do you do? This is the critical moment. Yesterday I told you what is a critical moment. You must find a solution: a problem is presented, and that problem has to be resolved, and must be resolved — not only *has* to be resolved but *must* be resolved, and yet you find it very difficult to resolve, that is a crisis. And Sri Aurobindo said: Today we have reached a point of a critical moment of evolution. We have been evolving, we have done our very best, and having done our best, the problem still confronts us, and we are not able to solve it. And we go round and round and we find that we cannot solve the problem. So, we discover a moment of criticality.

This is Sri Aurobindo's study of the present state of mankind. We are all born in this age which is a critical moment of evolution, and therefore Sri Aurobindo said: We have to find a solution to that

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problem. That solution is not to be found in the Veda, is not to be found anywhere in the world. This is a very important point. In the whole history of the mankind, the solution to this problem is not given. So merely study of history is not enough. You should study history, you must know what has been done, you have to acquire that also, you cannot wish it away, all that has been done is not wrong, but we have to know what has been done very accurately, and now, what is new that has still to be done? And Sri Aurobindo is this *New*. That is why Mother said: "*Sri Aurobindo does not belong to history.*" To belong to history means? You take up a link of history and move it forward, that is to belong to history. But if you look at the entirety of humanity's history and the next step is not to be found there and you take that new step: you go outside history, you don't belong to history. This is what Sri Aurobindo did. Once I had written a syllabus in 1964-65 for students of the Ashram, *The Spiritual history of India*. That was the topic I had selected and I had prepared something right from the Veda to Sri Aurobindo, and I sent it to the Mother for her approval, and then the very first word that Mother said after reading the whole thing, it was a long text which Mother took trouble to read. After reading the whole thing she said: "No, this will not do." That was her reply: "No, this will not do. You are trying to show that Sri Aurobindo belongs to history, that Sri Aurobindo is a culmination, this is not true, not at all true." It was such an emphatic proposition that Mother made. I was torn apart when I read this answer of the Mother. But it was a new light in my consciousness, and therefore I am always eager to share this experience with everybody, particular children like you. I want to tell you this as to how I was torn apart by this statement of Mother: "No, this will not do. Not do at all." She said, and then she said: "You should be square, absolutely clear. What Sri Aurobindo has proposed is new." And then I began to make a search myself after receiving it, it is a long answer actually. If you read the Mother's Agenda you will find the complete statement of this answer which Mother had given. You have the complete text. One day Deepti will read it out to you. It is a very powerful statement of the Mother. From that time onwards, as it were, you know, I have been studying Sri Aurobindo in a new light. I am trying to understand Sri Aurobindo in a new way. Then I understood Sri Aurobindo, or I may say that I have begun to understand Sri Aurobindo, why he spoke of the aim of life.

You know there is in *The Life Divine* a very big chapter called *The Aim of Life*. And he speaks of four theories of existence. What are the four theories of existence? The one theory, (I am giving some bombastic words, but they are necessary), the first aim of life is: supracosmic aim of life. It is a very big word, very heavy word, it is a supracosmic aim of life. The second is: supraterrrestrial aim of life. The third is: terrestrial aim of life, and fourth is: integral aim of life. These are the four theories. Now again I will have to tell you at length if I have to explain what are these words: supracosmic, supraterrrestrial, terrestrial and integral. At one time myself, Alain and Deepti and some others met together and we went on making a search in the history of mankind and we produced a small book, perhaps you might have seen it, called *The Aim of Life*. And that whole book is written only to explain these four terms: supracosmic, supraterrrestrial, terrestrial and integral. The whole book — we have only given illustrations. What is supracosmic aim of life? What is supraterrrestrial aim of life? What is terrestrial aim of life? And what is integral aim of life?

Supracosmic is to go beyond cosmos, very easy. Cosmos means the whole world. To go above the world, to leave the world completely, the capacity to leave the world is supracosmic. Where there is no world at all. What is world? World is a system of relationships. It is a very short definition of world. World is a system of relationships. So wherever there is a system of relationships, there is a world. You go beyond all systems of relationships, is it a supracosmic. So there have been some people who have said: go beyond all systems of relationships and that is the aim of life, it is supracosmic. That is the teaching of the Buddha for example, the teaching of Shankaracharya.

Supraterrrestrial, what is that? It doesn't say go beyond all worlds. It says: this world in which you are living is not satisfactory. But there is another system of relationships which is above this world. So leave this world and go to that world that is called supraterrrestrial. Terrestrial means this earthly existence in which we are living. So go above this world, physical world, and enter into another world, in which there is no earth principle, there is no physicality. There is according to them a supraterrrestrial world and you can enter into it. That is another aim of life. So there are some people who have said, this world is of course useless, leave this world, it is a world of evil, of sufferings. But there is another world which is a paradise; everything is so beautiful, so musical, so blissful. This is the teaching of many religions. When you study religion you'll find that every religion tells you that this world is to be thrown away, every religion. This is the mark of religion. You study all religions and you will find a common point: every religion says, this world is to be avoided, to be thrown out. Every religion promises that there is another world to which you can approach and in which you can live forever if you fulfill certain conditions. So every religion has given those conditions and tells its

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adherents to follow those conditions and promised that once you are out of this world you will enjoy the higher world. That is called supraterrrestrial aim of life.

What is a terrestrial aim of life? Terrestrial aim is that this world, whatever its defects or deficiencies, this world alone exists; there is no such thing as going beyond the world. Who knows what is beyond the world, according to these people? This world we see, we know this world. We know this world is full of difficulties, and so what? We can improve it, we can make things better, we make a better life, more happy life. We shall make it; let us work. That is terrestrial aim of life.

Now integral aim of life is — and Sri Aurobindo made a study of all the aims of life, thoroughly. He discovered that all the theories are right, and all theories are wrong. They are all right; are all wrong. They are all right in what they say, but they are all wrong in what they deny. In what they affirm they are right, in what they deny, they are wrong. This is the answer that Sri Aurobindo gives. So he says that that Supracosmic theory is right in saying that there is an existence which is not a system of relations, it is not an imagination; there is a reality which is not a system of relations and you can approach it, you can enter into it, — they are right. But they are wrong in saying that this world is therefore to be rejected. They are denying this world. So Sri Aurobindo says: in that denial they are wrong. Supraterrrestrial aim says there is a different system of world or relationships, much more happy, eternally beautiful — they are quite right, there is such a world. It is supraterrrestrial, there is such a world [...] Cosmic and supraterrrestrial. Then he comes to the Terrestrial aim which states that you can make this a better world. Even you can make a perfect world. Finally there is the Integral aim which combines all the theories. So Sri Aurobindo goes forward in terrestrial theory: Yes this earth is our field, you should not give up this world, you are not called upon to leave this world. This is a tremendous discovery, tremendous discovery. To say that this world is not to be rejected. But he came to this conclusion that you can make it perfect only if you open up to the supracosmic, and supraterrrestrial and bring the powers from all of them and then deal with this world in the right way. What is the right way of dealing with this world? It is also very difficult thing. In the history of the world there was nobody who has told you how to make the best development of this world, so that this world can be perfected. It is true, there have been many people who have said that this world must be perfected. You might say that in a short span of life to make this discovery is absolutely miraculous. Normally if this is allowed to be developed it may take millions of years. To find out this truth, which Sri Aurobindo has done, would normally take millions of years. And Sri Aurobindo did it with such a tremendous rapidity. And this is the knowledge that Sri Aurobindo has given in the great book *The Life Divine*. That's why I told you that you must keep in your program one day to study *The Life Divine*, because you have to find out what is that new knowledge. And we are all students of that knowledge. To be master of that knowledge will take millions of years, perhaps. But we can start studying.

And this is the meaning of our studying Vedic literature. Why do we study the Vedic literature? Because Vedic literature tells you what is supracosmic, what is supraterrrestrial, also tells you what is terrestrial. But it had not found the clue of bringing the supracosmic, and supraterrrestrial into the terrestrial. So you might say that there is a great similarity between the Vedic knowledge and Sri Aurobindo's knowledge; and yet millions of years of a gulf between the two. What Sri Aurobindo discovered is something that could not have been deduced from what was in the Veda. It is not as if you make a premise and then you deduce a conclusion and Sri Aurobindo drew the conclusion. No, this was the mistake that I had committed in presenting that statement to the Mother, where the idea was that here was the history of India, so much was done and now Sri Aurobindo drew the conclusion. Not that. That is why Mother said: "No, it will not do, it will not work." Sri Aurobindo brought a new knowledge as to how to make this earth a divine earth. That it can be done. This was the program of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother: that this physical world does not need to be thrown away in order to attain the spirit. That spirit can manifest in the physical fully, perfectly. The physical can be the instrument of the spirit. One day you will read what Mother wrote on 14th of March 1970, in the Agenda, you remember this date: 14th of March 1970. In this statement Mother said: "*What Sri Aurobindo had asked me to do has been done. It will no more be like the past.*" It is as if a new world has opened up, the spirit can manifest in the world in the physical; this has been done. This is the work, this is the new knowledge. And Sri Aurobindo has said that unless this is done, the world will go round and round in the crisis. Once this is done, a new step is taken, you are no more bound to the brain, something more, something new has developed.

Now I tell you this very briefly and put this idea into your consciousness, let it develop further, and then you will understand the difference between Vishwamitra's Gayatri and Sri Aurobindo's Gayatri. Vishwamitra said: Let our intellect be connected with the sunlight. Now that sunlight is a symbolic way of saying, supramental light; a light which is above the mind, supramental. So



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Vishwamitra had discovered that intellect is the great faculty, indispensable faculty, which has to be connected with the supermind. And he taught people that you should strive towards that end. Sri Aurobindo says that you have to connect not only with the supramental light but *parasya*, you have to go beyond, even the supracosmic. Connect yourself with the supermind and the supracosmic and connect not only the intellect, — he uses the word *naha*. *Naha* is a word in Sanskrit which means, “us”. It is very similar to the French word “nous”. There also “nous” means us. If you see the spelling of “nous”, n-o-u-s is the spelling. And if anybody ask: you spell *nah* in Sanskrit, it will be the similar one: n-o-u-s, it is the same word. So Sri Aurobindo speaks of connecting our totality, not only the intellect, the totality. Vishwamitra says: Our intellect should be united with the supermind, so that the intellect may be directed by the supermind. Here Sri Aurobindo says: *naha*: we should entirely, not only be directed, *dipayet*, we should be completely illumined. Not only directed, but we should be completely illumined by the supramental and supracosmic light. So you can see the difference between the two Gayatri mantras and you see the difference between the Vedic knowledge and Sri Aurobindo’s knowledge, and yet the connection between the two. The connection is so great that it is very important for us to learn in the history what has been done by the great pioneers, so that we learn whatever has been done and yet we are ready to learn what is new and we work for the new. I thought today I shall explain to you Vishwamitra’s Gayatri and Sri Aurobindo’s Gayatri, and not go further because already this is a very important statement which I have made today. And let it be digested till the next time that we meet, whenever you want to meet, I am available any time. Allright, then tomorrow, we shall go further. Today only two sentences: Sri Aurobindo’s Gayatri and Vishwamitra’s Gayatri.

Vishwamitra’s mantra is: *Om bhurbhuvahswah tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayat*. This is Vishwamitra’s mantra. Sri Aurobindo’s Gayatri mantra is: *Om bhurbhuvahswah tat savitur varam rupam jyotih parasya dhimahi yannah satyen dipayet*. This is Sri Aurobindo’s Gayatri. All right. Thank you.

If you have questions you can ask me. I am still available for half an hour more, if you want. Once you had many questions which I had not answered, I know that. Last time there were so many questions.

Question — “I have one question at Bharat Nivas you told us how the students could memorise the Veda. I would like you to explain it once more. If I take the sentence in English “today is”, “to-day-is-day-to -is-one-way?”

Let me answer this question very briefly. I had once spoken at Bharat Nivas perhaps many of you were not present at that time, but the question was, and I can raise this question in a fresh manner: how are we sure that what is written now in the Veda which is printed, available to us, is exactly what was recited many thousand years ago? How are we sure? I told you in the beginning last time, yesterday, that there is one record of history, that is Veda, about which we are certain that that record is authentic, that what was thought in the ancient times is accurately stated and it is now known to us in the most accurate manner. How are we sure? How are we sure that our forefathers did not change those things, and present them to us saying this was what was done in the ancient times. This is the basic question that we should raise. Because like scientists we want solid evidence. The answer is that a system was organised so that whatever was uttered at that time could not be changed by anybody afterwards. A system was found in such a way that when we utter, it was uttered in a such a manner that you cannot change it afterwards. Let me give an example: I spoke to you just now of the Vishwamitra’s Gayatri, *tat savitur varenyam bhargo devas ya dhimahi*. Let’s take only one sentence. How are we to be sure that Vishwamitra said exactly these words, and in thousands of years there has been no change in it. How can we be sure? The surety comes from the following way: It was laid down that when we recite this, you should recite it in many different ways. One way is: first of all you only say *tat*, then you say *tat savitur*, then you say *tat savitur varenyam*, then *tat savitur varenyam bhargo*, then *tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya* — *tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi* — if you repeat it several times in this way then, you can be quite sure that it can’t be changed, if you are required to recite in this way. But they made it doubly sure that you should repeat forward and backward. *Tat savitur, savitur tat, tat savitur varenyam, varenyam savitur tat*. Go backward and then you proceed further until the end. It may be a long way of recitation, but then you can be sure that it should read both, backwards and forwards in the same way. Then nobody can change it, nobody can alter it. I have told one of my institutions called *Rashtriya Veda Vidya Pratisthan* to send us one verse recited in this fashion, in which you go backward and forward. I have told them which mantra to take; it

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is from *Yajur Veda*, one mantra will be taken and they are going to recite on the tape-recorder and they are going to send it to us here. When it comes I will present it here and you will be able to hear it, as to how, even today there are at least two thousand people in India who recite the whole of the Rig Veda in this manner. The whole of the Rig Veda they can recite in this fashion. Even today they are two thousand people in India. Once I made a survey in India and I called those people at one place in Vijaywada, and they had all come and it was a treat to hear this kind of recitation; not the whole of the Rig Veda because it will take years, but a number of verses were recited in this way. I want to give you one taste of it, so I said that one verse I should get to be recited before you on a tape-recorder. So when it comes I shall present to you. All right!

Question — *"Is the ego not required; when we are saying our opinion, is it not the ego in a way?"*

Sri Aurobindo has written *"Ego is a helper, ego is a bar."* There is something like a development of ego. If it was absolutely useless, it would have never have been developed, but there is a great use for it. As long as you remain ignorant, as long as you want to remain ignorant, you can't avoid the ego. So when we say, or when Sri Aurobindo and Mother say: *"Now we must give up ego."*, it is addressed to those people who have decided: we do not want to remain in ignorance. If you have decided, even in principle, if not fully, but if you have decided now: enough of ignorance, I want to come out of ignorance, I want to enter into knowledge, to such people you should say, you must stop ego. But those who need it, for them it is a helper. So ego is a helper as long as you want to remain in ignorance, but once you want to go out of ignorance then you can say, now give up ego, then it's a bar, it will hinder you. So as long as you remain egoistic you cannot go out of it. All right? You cannot enter into knowledge. Fine?

Question — *"Is it enough to read Sri Aurobindo's Secret of the Veda or should one read more?"*

Sri Aurobindo himself has said that that book is incomplete. What Sri Aurobindo has written in *The Secret of the Veda* is a very brief statement. It is only to begin the establishment of the hypothesis. *The Secret of the Veda* was supposed to be a commentary upon a number of verses, only by way of illustration. And Sri Aurobindo himself has said, that if time permitted he would like to translate and even explain each and every verse of the *Rig Veda*. Now that is not done in *The Secret of the Veda*, each and every verse of the Rig Veda has not been commented upon, that is a work for us, if we are interested in carrying out that work, it is a very big work to be carried out. One of the activities in which I am engaged today is to create interest among the people to read the Rig Veda, those who are capable of doing it, to read Sri Aurobindo's *Secret of the Veda* and then work upon on a bigger plan in which following Sri Aurobindo's line they can translate and explain each and every verse of the Rig Veda. Somebody has to do it. But if you really want to understand simply the basics of the Rig Veda and if you want to be convinced of the line that Sri Aurobindo has taken, then that is enough, it is complete. All right? Fine.

### III.

I had said last time that the Rishis had made five main discoveries. So we shall go straight into this subject now, and then compare each discovery of the *Vedic Rishis* with what Sri Aurobindo has said about these discoveries, and what is something new in Sri Aurobindo in regard to these very five discoveries. So we shall have a comparative view of the old knowledge and the new knowledge.

The main subject of the discovery pertains to the question: what is life and what is the aim of life. This you might say is the basic question in regard to which all the discoveries of the Vedic Rishis refer. And the simple answer to this question, for the sake of brevity and clarity I shall tell you in a few words: What is life? The answer of the Vedic Rishis was that human life is a battle, this is their discovery. You might say this is not a very big discovery, but it *is* a big discovery when you ask the question of the entirety of life, not portions of life. You should be able to answer the question which pertains to the entirety of life. Just as Darwin said that human life or all evolution is evolution through the process of struggle for existence. Here too you might say it is not a very big discovery, but it *is* a

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very big discovery. At least all the scientists agree, that to say that the world is an evolution which is taking place through a process of struggle for existence, is a big discovery.

Now Vedic Rishis declared that the human life, all life on earth, is a battle. And the aim of human life, they put down in a few words towards the end of the Rig Veda. They are very important words, so I will repeat those words first in Sanskrit and then in English. The aim of human life is: *Manur bhava janaya daivyam janam*. First, be mental being. *Manur bhava*. *Manas* is the mind. *Manu* is the possessor of the mind. So first be the mental being. This is the first step. But not the last step. The aim of human life is first to be a mental being. And then you go forward. *Janaya daivyam janam*. Generate, produce, create, *daivyam janam*, the divine being. First be the human being, the mental being, and then you become the divine being. This is the answer of the Vedic Rishis. Towards the end of the Rig Veda you get this answer. It is a very significant discovery. This is as far as the individual is concerned. Then it speaks about the collectivity. Collectivity of people ? what should they aim at? *Sam gachchadhwam, sam vadatwam*. Walk together, speak together. It is a long sentence. I am not going to say the whole sentence, but the main point is: You arrive at a harmony, collective harmony, so that you can all walk together, move together, sharing with each other, carrying the same conviction, the same urge for realisation. This is the goal. This is the basic answer of the Veda. First be the human being with mind properly trained, and then move forward to become the divine being. And collectively, walk together, move together, think together, have the same aspiration and realise together. This is the answer.

But to arrive at this answer, there are many details of the discoveries. And these are the five discoveries. The first discovery was that the battle of human life is not an isolated battle taking place among human beings or among the creatures of the earth. It is a very important statement. In Darwin's theory, all struggle is a struggle of the creatures and the environment of the earth, of the physical world. But in the Vedic view — this is their discovery. It is not a speculation, this is the body of knowledge — the battle which is going on in human life is a larger field of battle in which there are invisible forces; there are visible forces of the physical world, which are easy to detect, but there are invisible forces which are not physically perceptible.

These invisible forces are basically of two kinds. There are benign forces on one side, and then on the other side there are malevolent forces, evil forces, adverse forces, hostile forces. This was a great discovery, which they called the discovery of the gods on the one hand, and the discovery of a number of adverse forces, and again they made distinctions among them. It was such a detailed analysis. There is a force of *Vritra*: that is one adverse force who obstructs, whose fundamental function is obstruction. *Vritra*, this is a Sanskrit word, and I don't want to translate into English because there is no easy translation of this word. So there is first *Vritra* who obstructs. Any time you want to make progress in this world, one of the forces, which is *Vritra*, will come to obstruct. It simply wants to obstruct you. This is one of the forces of the battle. You want to move forward? There is an obstruction. Then there are forces which are called *Panis*. They want to negotiate with you, they don't merely obstruct. They are like merchants. They want to negotiate. You give us this, then we shall allow you this. And they will give you great rewards if you decide not to progress. Great rewards, because they are in possession of so much of riches. If you tell them: we don't want to make a progress, then they will give you great rewards. They are *Panis*, they want to attract you, tempt you to remain in the lower world so that you don't make a progress. These are *Panis*. Then there are *Asuras*, they are forces of the mind which can calculate very easily and very powerfully and give you lots of reasons why you should not progress. They are very powerful. They want to keep you down and they are capable of giving you lots of reasonings why you should not make an effort. They are mental forces, they are capable of thinking. Then there are *Rakshasas*. They are different from *Asuras*. *Rakshasas* are those who are very powerful and they simply want to destroy you, or enjoy you, whatever you are. They simply want to enjoy you as you are. They have large ambitions, they want to engulf the whole world if it is possible, engulf the whole humanity, push it down, not only obstruct, ready to destroy you, they want to eat you, enjoy you and become bigger and bigger by your consuming. These are *Rakshasas*. And then there are *Pishachas*, they are of a different kind. *Pishachas* don't have great ambitions, they have small desires, but plenty of desires, plenty of small desires, small aims, little gains but plenty of them. So they are innumerable, you just go into their world and you will find small gains to be obtained and they can keep you for ages and ages in their field, because of the smallness and the innumerable numbers of them. So they are *Pishachas*. And then there are purely dark forces, forces of inconscience, resistance — not only obstruction — resistance, lethargy. They want to keep you down absolutely to sleep, pull you down to sleep, so that you can make no progress, there is not even a proposal of progress. There are forces of inconscience.

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This classification which the Rishis made, and with definiteness, requires a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience of life. It is not easy to make so many distinctions among the hostile forces, adverse forces. Vedic Rishis knew which adverse force is at work, is it Rakshasa, is it Asura, is it Pishacha, is it inconscience, is it Vritra, is it Panis. And you have remedies of dealing with them, and these Rishis found out the remedies, as to how to deal with them. That is a great discovery. How to deal with Vritra? Supposing Vritra obstructs you, what is the remedy? And they came to the conclusion that mere human power is not enough against any one of them. If you just want to conquer them by your human powers, forget about it. This was the conclusion of these great Rishis. Merely by human force you cannot control them. So if any human being says: With my own powers I will be able to conquer the adverse forces, Vedic Rishis told you, after lot of research, that merely with human forces it is not possible. How will you then conquer these forces? How will you make progress? If you want to be a true human being, a true mental being, and then if you want to generate the divine being, if this is your goal, if you want to work together, move together, think together, harmonize together, these forces are bound to come in your battle.

And for this there were found to be different kinds of forces ? benign forces. Now this was a great discovery of the Vedic Rishis: the discovery of the gods. There are cosmic forces, universal forces. There are a number of these cosmic forces. So first of all, you discover that there are cosmic forces which are benign forces, which can help you and which can conquer for you the battle against the adverse forces. Who are these gods? Supposing you are told to go for a mission of work, let us say to Delhi in the Ministry of Education, now you just go to the Ministry. First of all you are not even allowed the entry. You must know how to enter the field. There are rules and regulations of entry. Similarly, there are rules and regulations of entry into the world of gods. If you want to go to the world of gods, there are rules of entry, how will you enter? By what means will you enter? Then you have a certain purpose to fulfil. You don't know who is the Secretary, who is the Under-secretary, who is the Joint-secretary, who is the Deputy secretary, you don't know, but you need to know. In other words, there is a hierarchy. Who takes the final decision? Is there anybody who takes a final decision? Or do you have a meeting of so many Secretaries together for taking a final decision? These are questions you ask when you go to a Ministry. Similarly, there a Ministry of gods. This is the discovery of the Vedic Rishis. That there is a kind of a Ministry of gods, and if you want to make progress in the world, and you are bound to come to these obstructers, these adverse forces, and you want the help of the gods, then you must know which god has what portfolio. What is the work of each god, what is his realm, what is his dominion, what is his capacity, what is his function? Vedic Rishis discovered very minutely, they made so many experiments, it is impossible to describe how much experimentation should have been needed, not just to think about it, but really to find out, to identify them. They discovered a number of gods, and found out their function, each one's function. This is a tremendous task. Today we can speak very freely because they have written down the gods, their names.

The only difficulty is that in a certain sense they have kept the names very secret. Even if you read the Veda, and read thoroughly so many times, you may not be able to find out these secrets. They have written down the formula of these gods, in what we may call algebraic language. You know algebra? You are learning algebra perhaps? Algebra is arithmetic written in a symbolic form:  $x + y = 12$ .  $x$  stands for what, and  $y$  stands for what? If it is equal to 12, then maybe that  $x$  is 5 and maybe  $y$  is 7, so 7 is  $y$  and 5 is  $x$ . Then  $x + y$  is equal to 12. But if you don't know the value, and if you simply are told that there is  $x$  and there is  $y$ , then you won't know what is the value of this. You are not given equations, so you can't even try to find out what stands for what. This is in algebra. Algebra is difficult because unless some clues are given, you cannot resolve the riddles of algebra. Similarly, these Vedic Rishis wrote down the secrets of so many gods which they have discovered and their functions, but they have written in an algebraic language. This is where the problem of the Vedas arises. The language of the Veda is symbolic language, like algebra. But the surprising thing is that even though there are many composers of Vedic mantras, there is a common language among all of them. It is as if a group of mathematicians have agreed to their symbolism. Here you find that there is a group of Rishis who have agreed that to express a certain secret you will use a certain expression, and they commonly follow that. If you read in a very bizarre manner, obvious manner, you will make no meaning out of it. "The cow is standing before the horse", let us say. This is a sentence in the Veda. Cow is standing before the horse. So you might think that the Vedic Rishis must have seen a kind of a field, grazing ground perhaps, and there must be one horse there, and there must be one cow. And he is describing that the cow is before the horse. But if you discover the algebraic language, ? and this is what Sri Aurobindo has done ? if you read the book *The Secret of the Veda*, Sri Aurobindo found out what these algebraic terms meant. "Cow" is an algebraic term in the Veda, and wherever there is the



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word cow, it means light, it does not mean cow, the physical cow, it means light. "Horse" does not mean the horse we know of, it means will-force. "The light stands before the will-force." It is not the cow standing before the horse, it is the light that is standing before the will-force. It says that there is always a double force in the world, wherever there is light, there is always a will-force. This is the secret language of the Veda. There is a bifurcation between the knowledge and will.

Now here arises a tremendous amount of psychology. What is the relationship between knowledge and will. You know in our ordinary life, you will find in our human consciousness, there is one portion which is portion of knowledge, there is one portion which is portion of will-force. Now this distinction you will find very easily when you have a question, a very deliberate question: what should I do in a given situation? Whenever you have a question, "what should I do", you will immediately find out that there is in you a will-force which is backed by some kind of knowledge, maybe full knowledge, maybe partial knowledge, maybe small knowledge, but always there is some knowledge, and there is a tussle between the two. Sometimes you know what is to be done. A patient of diabetes knows that he should not take sugar. He knows it, there is a knowledge given to him, he should not take sugar. But the desire, the will to take sugar, sometimes is very great. The temptation to take sugar is very great. So the will-force is to take sugar. The knowledge says: don't take sugar; the will-force says oh, it doesn't matter, once in a while you can take it and enjoy it. And then once in a while becomes more frequent because the will-force weakens. The more you indulge in the desire, the more you want it. There is always some kind of an equation or inequation between knowledge and will-force. So there is, you might say, in the Vedic terms, a great deal of equation or inequation between the cow and the horse. So if you read in a very ordinary manner, you will say that that these Rishis were only watching horses and cows and seeing how many horses and how many cows and they are discussing the battles between the two, horses and cows. That is how many people who read the Veda, said that Vedas are written by barbarians, primitive people who were interested in cows and horses. But when you read in the depth, you find that there is a tremendous psychological knowledge. They knew what is light and what is will-force, and what is the relationship between the two.

Not only that, they found out that if you want to increase the force of light — if you want the cows more, the horses become more powerful, because they found that the greater the number of cows with you, the greater the power of horses, in other words, the greater the knowledge, the greater is the power of the will-force. If your knowledge increases truly, then the will-force also becomes powerful — How to do that? Is there any power, any god who controls the power of cows? Cow is Sanskrit means *go*. *Go* is the word for cow. So the question was: Is there anybody who can be called *gomat*? *Mat* means having, *wala*, *gowala*, *gopal*, is there anybody who is real *gopal*, who is the preserver, the controller of the cows. They made a lot of research on this and they found that there is one god whom they called *Indra*, this is another algebraic term. *Indra* is another term in the Veda. You often found that when *Vritra* came in your path, (*Vritra*, I told you, is the one who obstructs) they found that particularly when *Vritra* comes in your path, then the one force which can destroy *Vritra* is a good equation between *go* and *ashwa*, the cow and the horse. And the one who commands this is *Indra*. So *Indra* is called *Gomat*. He is the one who has power over the cows, over the light. This is the secret knowledge of the Vedas. If you really want to fight against the *Vritra*, then take the help of *Indra*.

Then how to take the help of *Indra*? In the Veda there are verses written down, if you recite those mantras, *Indra* will manifest. This was also a great discovery. What is the method of approaching *Indra*? Just as if you want to go to the office of a Joint-Secretary, and if you know his name, then you can more easily go into his office. If you simply say, I want to meet the Joint-Secretary, without the name, then there are so many Joint-Secretaries in the Ministry! But if you know his name, it is much more easy for you to enter. And if you know much more about him, then much more easily you can go to him. Identification become much more easy. So here also in the Veda, they found out that if you know that *Indra* is the name of that who has a command over cows and horses, then it is easier for you to approach him. So there are mantras, there are verses in the Veda which, if recited, will give you an access to *Indra*. There are some of the verses that Sri Aurobindo has translated in *The Secret of the Veda*, which sometime you should read. There are very very powerful verses and Sri Aurobindo has explained them also quite well. And Sri Aurobindo has said: *Indra* represents, it is an algebraic name, *Indra* means illumined intelligence. This is the meaning. Whenever the word *Indra* comes, it is to be understood it is equivalent to illumined intelligence. Now Sri Aurobindo had to find this out with a great effort, it is not an easy thing to find out algebraic meanings. Only when you read thoroughly and when you have yourself experienced... There is a very fine sentence given in the Veda itself, that all the words which are important in the Veda are secret words. *Ninya vachamsi*. That is a Sanskrit expression. Secret words. *Vachamsi* means words. *Ninya*, which

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are secret. There are secret words but *kavaye nivachane*, but they reveal themselves before the Rishi. Because he has experienced, he himself has the key, he has the knowledge of Indra. Therefore the moment the word Indra comes up, the Rishi will understand: Indra stands for illumined intelligence. This is how Sri Aurobindo found out, not only about Indra, but about all the gods, which are written in the Veda. All the names of Gods in the Veda are all algebraic terms. So you do not understand normally, what are they? It is only when you understand from inward experience that you can discover their meaning.

If you read the whole book *The Secret of the Veda*, you will find that Sri Aurobindo has given the key to many of the gods. For instance, there is a word, *Brihaspati*. Sri Aurobindo has said, Brihaspati, means power of the soul, the soul-power. So wherever the word Brihaspati comes, it is power of the soul. *Soma* is a word. Very often you find in the Veda, Indra drinks Soma. So you might find, many people think: barbarians, Indra must be a drunkard. He must be drinking Soma. Sri Aurobindo says, Soma is the lord of Delight. It is not wine, it is the Lord of delight. And then the whole ninth chapter of the Rig Veda, is devoted to the secret of the Soma. What is this soma? And the Veda says that unless and until you have mastered your senses, you will not have an access, even a slight access to Soma. You can't enter in the Ministry of Soma unless you have mastered your senses. There is a very beautiful analogy given: if you want a vessel, how do you make a vessel of clay? You heat up, you bake the jar. Now if you have baked the jar, and made a vessel out of it, then you pour into it whatever you want to pour, then if what is poured is ordinary water, it will be retained. But if it is a very powerful kind of a drink put into it, it will break if it is not fully baked. It depends upon the baking, how much baking you have done. So it is said in the ninth chapter that our whole human body is like a jar. Now this jar can contain, can receive all delight, it is capable of receiving delight on the condition that the body is fully baked. If you don't bake the body, then when the delight will come, the body will break down. You will not be able to sustain that delight at all. So Indra is able to drink the soma: it means that Indra is so powerful, he is a master of all the senses... In fact all the senses are nothing but manifestations of Indra. That is why in Sanskrit we have got the word for senses: *indriya*. The word *indriya* comes from Indra. All the senses are nothing but manifestations of Indra. Wherever there is senses, it is the abode of Indra. But this Indra is only in the ordinary form. As you rise higher and higher, Indra becomes greater and greater, until you find the most baked Indra, as it were, fully powerful. And he is so powerful that the highest delight can be drunk by him, can be absorbed. He can be the vessel. And if you yourself invite Indra in your body — that is a secret, how you can invite Indra in your body, that can be done, by a *tapasya*, by a kind of movement of austerity. And the minimum is: control of senses. If you can't control your senses, then forget about Indra. Indra is not available to you. His Ministry is closed for you. You have got to control your senses. You should have a lot of *tapasya* in which all the desires of senses — senses are like horses, you know, they want to run in a wild manner, senses want to satisfy themselves. If you want Indra however to sit in your *indriyas*, in your senses, then you have to exercise a lot of control. Therefore Veda gives you means also how to control your senses. What are the means by which you can control your senses. What is the kind of life you need to lead to control your senses. So if you want to fight with Vritra, don't think that it is a very easy thing to fight. That is why most of the people are obstructed and they remain there. They don't know how to make any effort at all. If you want to fight against Vritra, the first condition, minimum condition is: control of your senses. Then after the senses are controlled, develop your *buddhi*. After development of *buddhi* (this means intellect, power of discrimination), then you go into higher experiences, expand your powers of the mind to a very high degree: *manur bhava*, become pure human mental being. When you reach that point, go beyond it. Illumined intelligence that is not mental intelligence. Veda had found out that there is an intelligence higher than the mental intelligence, that is Indra's intelligence, illumined intelligence. What is the difference between human intelligence and illumined intelligence? There is a beautiful analogy which is given: when you see a thing with one eye, how do you see it? When you see it with two eyes, how do you see it? This is our normal experience. We can either be blind, or you can see with one eye, or we can see with two eyes, that is our highest capacity. But if you have Indra invited in you, then Indra is supposed to be *sahasraksha*, he has thousand eyes, this is the image. So what is the difference between seeing with two eyes, and seeing things with one thousand eyes? That is illumined intelligence. So if you transcend your human intelligence, then you will begin to see with many many more eyes, until you get thousand eyes. I told you yesterday that the present crisis of mankind is that we have reached the maximum of mental intelligence. All that we can do with the mind we have done. And yet problems remain. How shall we solve these problems? The answer is that you have to go beyond mind. Beyond mental intelligence,

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you have to cross the threshold of two eyes. You have to enter into the field of thousand eyes, illumined intelligence. But even this is not the highest. Illumined intelligence is not the highest.

Above illumined intelligence, above Indra, there is Vishnu. That is another algebraic term. *Vishnu*. What is Vishnu? And the image that is given about *Vishnu* is: he is like one single eye covering the whole sky. One single eye covering the whole sky. It is not thousand eyes. Eyes are sockets, small sockets. But Vishnu's eye is so vast, it covers the whole sky. Imagine the whole sky having one eye, how much it can cover, how comprehensive. Illumined intelligence will give you knowledge, but still multiplicity will be there, lot of multiplicity. But when you come to Vishnu, you have one comprehensive knowledge, united knowledge, unity. So whenever the Veda speaks of Vishnu, Veda speaks of an intelligence which is unifying. One unified vision of everything. All things comprehended.

There are many other gods also, Vedic Rishis found out so much, as for instance the hierarchy of gods. That is, Vishnu is higher than Indra. There is a hierarchy. You don't stop merely at Indra, you go beyond Indra also. And the real victory comes when you have Vishnu with you. There is *Rudra* also, Rudra is a counterpart of Vishnu. Vishnu is the light, supreme light, comprehensive light, and Rudra is the will-force of this light which is so powerful that with one mere glance, what is to be done is done. "I came, I saw, I conquered". That is the famous formula of Julius Caesar. "I came, I saw, I conquered." Really speaking, he conquered only a little. But if you really want to conquer, really conquer, and with one mere glance, it is Rudra. I came, I saw, I conquered. That is the power of Rudra.

There is so much of knowledge. I cannot even say briefly. The whole of the Veda is "veda" because it abounds with knowledge. Every word of Veda conveys significant meaning, significant knowledge. It gives a secret knowledge, it gives the means of getting that knowledge, it tells you how to apply that knowledge, how to cultivate yourself to gain that knowledge, how to reach the perfection of that knowledge.

Let me take only the first verse of the Rig Veda, just for a taste. As when you have done lot of cooking, and you want to see what it is like, you just taste a little. Similarly Veda is a big cooked food as it were, huge, and you want to taste a little. So let us take the very first verse of the Rig Veda. In Sanskrit it only says, *Agnimile purohitam yajnasya devamritvijam hotaram ratnadhatamam*. It is a very famous, very well-known verse, because it is the very first verse of the Rig Veda. And if you slightly enter into the Veda, naturally you enter into the first verse of the Veda. So I am giving the first verse.

It starts with Agni. *Agnim ile*: I worship Agni. So it says, First you enter into *Agni*. This is the message of Rig Veda. If you want to enter into the Vedic knowledge, then the first key of that knowledge is Agni. What is Agni? This is also an algebraic term, symbolic term. Agni normally means fire. I worship Fire. That is all that it means. Therefore some people who don't understand the Veda, they don't know the algebra of Veda, they say, Oh! These primitive people they might have just discovered fire. Ordinary fire, by which they can cook food, they can frighten the beasts, and so on. Therefore they worship fire, because fire became so useful to them. But if you go further: I worship Fire, who is the fire? I worship the fire which is *purohita*. *Purohitam yajnasya devam*. He is a god, who is always put in front. Now this is intriguing. If it is only ordinary fire, what is the meaning? It is always put in the front. What does it mean? *Purohitam*, means that which is put in the front. This is a very symbolic language. I worship the fire which is always put in the front. There is a meaning in it. If you want to achieve the highest knowledge, then one who leads you to the highest knowledge is Agni. It is fire. It is not ordinary fire. There is fire, the first indication is: It is always put in front. It is that kind of fire which is always put in front. But front of what? *Yajnasya*. Now this is a very important word. *Yajna* means sacrifice. Whenever you want to make a sacrifice, Agni is put in the front. Now what is sacrifice? Sacrifice is also an algebraic term. You can see how all the Veda is written in algebraic language, that is why it is so difficult to understand. Unless you know the meaning of *purohita*, unless you know the meaning of fire, unless you know the meaning of yajna, sacrifice, you can't make head or tail out of it. That is why Sri Aurobindo said, there is a secret of the Veda you have to find out the secret. What is yajna, what is sacrifice? Now let us deal with it a little.

What is sacrifice? To understand the meaning of sacrifice, we have to go back to the process of austerities which the Vedic Rishis made in their search, in their quest. There is a very important legend, a story written in the Veda. There were nine Rishis who were in search of the highest knowledge. What is the highest? They discovered that knowledge cannot be gained merely by walking about, merely by digging. Knowledge can be gained only on one condition, if you offer, if you burn all that is important in you. If you have brain power, burn all your brain power. Then only you can discover what the brain power can do at the highest. This burning — burning is the means by which you can

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find the answers. You know, when you have mathematical problems to solve, you take your notebook, you put down the sum, go on and on and on, you exercise your mind and if the problem is very difficult, what do you do? You burn the midnight oil, you burn your brain on it. And when you do it, when you are absolutely filled with the data of your sum, when your brain is very very much exercised, you might even feel a fever in your brain, it burns, then suddenly you will find the answer. Very often you might have had this experience if you have done mathematics. You have done mathematics, no? Every student of mathematics has this experience. So the Vedic Rishis found out that you don't find knowledge unless you burn whatever faculties you have, whatever you are, whatever you have, you just burn them. So the first thing that you need to put forward is Agni.

Therefore Agni is *purohitam*. Fire is always put forward. Unless you awake the fire in you, that is the first point: ignite the fire in you, then only you can succeed. This is the secret message of the Veda. For doing anything. Nobody can achieve anything in the world if the fire is not ignited. That is why the Veda begins with the Fire. The beginning of all Veda, the beginning of all Vedic knowledge is ignition of fire. The fire which is within you, which has to be put forward. Now it says that this fire is not an ordinary fire, it is not only something that is put forward. It is *ritvijam*. This fire has a knowledge of *rita*. I had told you in my speech on Dharma that one of the discoveries of the Vedic Rishis was *Rita*. Rita is the knowledge of what is right. All what is right is known, known to whom? To fire. So when you speak of fire, it is not ordinary fire, The fire that is referred to in the Veda is that fire which has the knowledge of rita, of what is right. Ritvijam. It is that fire which is written about — in the very first verse. It is the knowledge of what is right, even of the right time. What is the right time to do it. Certain things cannot be done at the wrong time. Certain things can be done only at the right time. There is a whole science of time in the Veda which is very important. They had discovered what is time, and what is the right time and what is the wrong time. You know, in India there is a big science called astrology. You must have seen horoscopes of many people. And this whole horoscope is based upon nothing but the science of time. Nobody can make your horoscope unless you tell them at what time you were born, exact moment of your birth. That is very necessary before anybody can make your horoscope, because it is thought that the time when we are born gives you a lot of information as to what you are, and what is your fate, what you are going to have in your life. Lot of knowledge is contained in it. People know all this by horoscopy, but if you have awakened fire, if *agni* is awakened in you, then even without horoscopy you can know. You don't need to have horoscopes. That is the power of this fire. This fire can tell you what is going to happen in future, this time or that time or that time. It is *ritvijam*, it is knowledge of the right time, for anything and everything. It is the one who is the sacrificer. He knows how to sacrifice. You can burn midnight oil, even while sleeping, you can burn midnight oil while doing the right effort, or you may go on doing something wrongly. One of my friends used to burn the midnight oil to tell his parents that he is working very hard, and he used to keep the book in his hands while lying down, where it is very easy to doze off. But that was his style of reading, and suddenly he would wake up and suddenly go on repeating and repeating something, without understanding. It is burning midnight oil with a kind of a wrong effort. You can keep awake but you can go on reading, reading, without trying to understand. That is not called burning. You must know how to burn properly. So this fire is one who knows how to burn properly, rightly.

And then it says it is *ratnadhataamam*. This fire is something in which all that is delightful, all that is most blissful — *ratna* is actually jewels and diamonds and all that, all that is delightful — all the greatest fruits that you want are already contained in it. So in the very first verse of the Rig Veda, you are told so many algebraic terms. Ratna does not mean the jewels and diamonds. Wherever the word *ratna* comes, it is the highest delight that you can have, the highest achievement, the highest fruits that you want. *Hota* is one who knows how to burn properly. *Ritvija* is the one who knows the right timings of everything, right seasons of everything. *Purohita* is one who is always capable of running in the forefront. This is the fire.

And when you make a deeper study, you find that this fire is in you. This is what the Rig Veda says ultimately. Later on, in the fifth chapter, there is a lot of knowledge about Agni given, in the fifth chapter particularly. In every chapter there is something, but in the fifth chapter particularly, lot of knowledge about Agni, about fire, is given. And it is said: In every human being there is fire, in every human being. But it is like a spark, which is covered by ashes. And therefore you have to lighten it, ignite it. That spark is what is called normally in later philosophy: soul. You have a soul in you. That soul, if you can awaken it — and the whole of Veda is nothing but the secret of how to awaken the soul, and how to start travelling. You go forward, you discover the truth, you know the right timing of everything, you know how to burn everything, and ultimately you win the highest reward of *ananda*, of joy, complete fulfilment.



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So I told you today only one discovery of the Veda, of Vedic Rishis. First discovery, that there is a battle in this world and this battle is between so many forces, not only visible forces, but also invisible forces, and invisible forces are of two kinds. One which are adverse, and one which are benign. And that you can take the help of benign forces to fight against the adverse forces. This is one great discovery of the Vedic Rishis. We shall see the other discoveries later on, when we meet next. All right?

### IV.

I want to talk to you about the first discovery of the Vedic Rishis. You understand the word *Rishi*, no? Rishi is a sage, who is a poet, who is capable of seeing the truth and expressing the truth in the most sublime manner. Rishi is the guide, the teacher, wise teacher, illumined teacher. That is the Rishi. So the first discovery of the Vedic Rishis was very simple, that life is a battle, but this battle is not merely among the physical living creatures as we know them, but also a battle between invisible forces. These invisible forces are divisible into two categories: one, benign forces, very kind forces, the forces that are for the divinity; the opposite forces are the forces of evil, *Asuras*, *Rakshasas*, *Pishachas*, *Panis*, *Vritras*. I have given so many names, each one having a specific function or a role to play in the battle.

I was telling you about the second discovery and for that I began to tell you a story of a legend. A certain number of Rishis, let us say 9, were in search of the truth. Now how to seek the truth? I told you that they found out the means of finding the truth. What was the means? In one word, it is sacrifice. In Sanskrit it is called *Yajna*. In English we call it sacrifice, and I told you what a sacrifice means. Sacrifice implies fire. All sacrifice implies fire. Without fire there is no sacrifice. Therefore I spoke to you last time about Agni. Agni means fire. I told you that fire is not physical fire. There is an inner fire, and then I gave you the first verse of the Rig Veda when the fire is invited. So that one verse itself gives you a good indication of what sacrifice means. You have first of all to invoke the fire, the inner soul which is the fire in us, awake, ignite the fire. So the very first verse says: I worship the fire; *Agnim ile*. *Ile* means I am worshipping. You invoke the fire by saying I worship the fire. So the first step is invocation. Invocation of the fire, this is the first step of the sacrifice. Then we put it in the front, *purohitam*, it is that which is in the front. So put the fire into the front. Then once it takes up the front role, things become easier. It knows the *rita*, the fire knows what is right. So once he is your leader, you are in the hands of one who can guide you to the Right. It also knows what is not only right but also the right time of right action. In Sanskrit we have got the word *ritu*. *Ritu* is the season, it comes from the word *rita*. *Ritu* and *rita* are combined. The right season of the right action. So you know what is the right action and at what time the right action is to be performed. I told you that in India they developed the science of time. I spoke of astrology also to some extent. The entire astrology is based upon the science of time. And I told you that those who know *Agni*, those who know Fire, they don't need to go to astrology. Inwardly they know what is the right time for the right action. And then it is the one who knows how to sacrifice, the manner of sacrifice — the manner is very important. In the Vedic literature, manner has been given a great importance: how you do it. The question is not only of doing something, but how you do it. This is a *vidhi*. *Vidhi* means rule. What is to be done first, what is to be done second, what is to be done at the end. So *Agni*, the fire, knows. Once you make him your leader, the sacrifice can be done. Now sacrifice implies a journey.

This is another truth they discovered regarding sacrifice. As you make sacrifice, that is to say, as you burn yourself, burn what you are and what you have, by invoking the truth that you want to discover, you simply speak the truth, invoke the truth, aspire for the truth, and as you go on aspiring, you go on burning yourself. Whatever you are and what you have is imperfect. So these imperfect things have to be offered. Whatever we are, we are imperfect. This imperfection is to be thrown into the fire where it is burnt. It is this burning which is of essence, and as you burn, you begin to get pushed. There is a motion that happens. You move from untruth to truth. There is a journey. That is why the sacrifice has been described in the Veda as a path of ascension, as a path of going upwards. As you go on burning yourself, you find that you are moved. There is a progress which is being made.

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This progression of moving from untruth to truth ? there is a famous sentence in the Vedic literature, *asato ma sad gamaya*, "from falsehood lead me to the truth". So this is the path of sacrifice and you go on making a sacrifice. As you go on making a sacrifice, you discover more and more of the truth. You become truthful, not only you discover truth, you become truthful, you become yourself, you become your true Self. The falsehood is shed as it were, it is burnt away, and you emerge out of the burning. Something that is golden in you emerges, which can't be burnt. It is inextinguishable.

Now the story is that nine Rishis began to make sacrifice in search of the truth. and went on and on and on, and for a certain period they went on making sacrifice. And always they reached almost the right point of achieving the truth but could not, this is the legend. Wise people, in Sanskrit, they are called *navagwas*. These nine sages were in search of the truth, and they went on making sacrifice, they burnt themselves to find out the truth. For a certain period, they went on and on. They reached a certain point when the truth was about to be discovered but they could not find it, then they started again. Again burning, burning, burning, again they reached the same point, but they could not enter into the truth. Again they started. Several times they did this, they were failing. Then came a great help. A tenth sage came to accompany them. Then were nine themselves but the tenth sage came to help. His name was *Ayasya*. *Ayasya* is a very famous name in the Veda, he was himself a great sage. The *Navagwas* become now *Dashagwas*. This is a famous legend of the Veda. The nine sages became ten sages. And then they increased the period of their sacrifice. Up till now they were only making sacrifice for a certain period. With the coming of *Ayasya* there was a new advice given, that the period for which you are making sacrifice is not enough. The period was increased and that brought about a certain discovery. We are now coming to the third discovery. The second discovery was only the secret of sacrifice, burn yourself, move forward, make a progression, then you take the help of another one, this also is a part of the discovery. And then, with *Ayasya*, when the period of sacrifice was increased, what happened? *Ayasya* became universal, this was the discovery. That the truth cannot be discovered unless you become universal. This was the discovery made. They were failing all the time because this point of becoming universal was missing. So he became universal. Having become universal there was a rise in universality. There are planes and planes of universality.

And then they discovered *Turiyam swid*. This is the Sanskrit word. Very important Sanskrit expression for the Vedic discovery. They discovered *turiyam swid*. *Swid* means that one which is *turiyam*, the fourth. They discovered that one which is the fourth. As I told you, the language of the Veda is algebraic. So "that fourth" is an algebraic expression. What is this fourth they discovered? The fourth is something above the three, three principles, matter, life and mind. These three were already known, but here there is no truth, it is mixture of truth and falsehood. In matter, life and mind, there is a mixture of truth and falsehood. It keeps you divided, narrow. Unless you become universal you cannot rise beyond these three elements, physical, vital, mental. In Sanskrit, there are names for all the three, the physical is *prithivi*, ... those who find Sanskrit words difficult don't worry, but those who know Sanskrit a little they will enjoy it, therefore I am speaking of this. The physical is *prithivi*, the vital is *antariksha* and the mental is *dyau*. The physical is the ground which you see, that is *prithivi*, *antariksha* is the wide space that you see around and *dyau* is the sky. These three words are often used in the Veda. Even to climb from *prithivi* to *dyau* is a big climb. It is not easy to climb, therefore Veda speaks very often even of the journey from *prithivi* to *dyau*. From earth to the sky. But sky actually represents the mind. To rise from the physical to the mental, that is an ordinary climbing. Although that also is quite a climb. But still it is ordinary climbing, and as long as you continue to climb only to that extent, you fail, you don't get the truth. You need the help, a further help, *Ayasya* must come and then you increase the period of your sacrifice and then you become universal and you discover "that fourth". You go beyond *prithivi*, *antariskha* and *dyau*, you go beyond the physical, vital and mental. And this was the great discovery, that is celebrated in the Veda. This fourth is the greatest discovery of the Veda, you might say, one of the greatest — there is still greater, which I'll come to ? but a supreme discovery as it were, because they found that in "that fourth" there is no mixture of falsehood at all. In the body, life and mind there is a mixture of truth and falsehood, but when you go to the fourth one, in "that fourth", there is no mixture, there is only truth and truth and truth alone, *satyameva*, nothing but the truth. Widest, most universal, no narrowness at all, no crookedness at all. In the lower physical, vital and mental there is all crookedness. When we criticise each other and we say, "oh he is crooked", don't eliminate yourself. As long as we live in the physical, vital and mental, all of us live in a crooked world, and our consciousness is crooked, and we live in a crooked manner, we think in a crooked manner, there is always a kind of a strategy, we want to escape from here, escape from that, make a profit here, drag this here, allow that, we are generous, we are miserly, all mixtures all the time, in this we are all equal, nothing to choose. And then you come to the real thing that has to

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be chosen, where there is nothing but the truth. This was the great discovery. *Mahaspanthah*. The great path was now opened up when they discovered this fourth one. This is the third discovery of the Veda. Sri Aurobindo has called this third discovery, this discovery of that fourth, the discovery of the Supermind. This discovery of the Supermind, that there is above the mind Supermind and that one can ascend into it, one can go into it, one can live in it. Where one can be absolutely straight. *Rijuta*, straightforwardness. It is also concerned with *rita*. *Rijuta* and *rita* are all connected. There is nothing but the right. Everything, all the rays of light are straight. Nothing crooked. You have seen the flower which Mother has called the flower of Supramental action? You have seen that flower? Flower of Supramental action. A kind of a globe in which so many... Yes, there are so many... all straight. That is a symbolic presentation of the supramental, you might say. Everything is straight. You can go into it, you can live in it. All knowledge is manifest there. You don't have to make an effort to know. Whatever is to be known is known immediately, spontaneously. It is almost like a magic. You want to know this, immediately it is known. Nothing is hidden, nothing is concealed. It is all blazing light. This is, as I am describing to you, the third discovery.

It is not that the Veda has written in it: first discovery, second discovery. I am describing the discoveries made by the Vedic Rishis and I am saying they made five basic discoveries. There are many discoveries but I am trying to tell you in brief five main discoveries, among the five discoveries, this is the third discovery. The first is the discovery of the battle, battle between the good and the evil, Gods and *Asuras*. The second is the discovery of sacrifice, the means by which you can make an ascension from the lower levels to the higher levels. The third discovery is the discovery of the supermind. It is a great discovery of the Vedas. In fact in the Vedas what is very often celebrated constantly with a great joy is the discovery of the supermind. All darkness is destroyed. *Tamah neshat*. All the darkness is finished. You can definitely say that all darkness is finished. The everlasting sun has arisen, which is never going to set. In the beginning there is only *Ushas*. Usha the dawn. When you are about to enter into the supermind, the first steps are the steps which are like entering into the dawn. Therefore in the Veda you find sometimes very beautiful descriptions of the dawn, Usha. *Nisha* has gone, the night has gone, and Usha has come, the dawn has come and then gradually you rise, and you enter into the supermind, where the sun never sets. Everlasting sun. Now all knowledge is available.

As a result we come to the fourth discovery. They found that "this fourth one", what we call now the supermind in the light of Sri Aurobindo, this supermind is the universal action of reality. Ultimate reality. This world that we see is not the ultimate reality. It is not ultimate, it is not the original. It is not the cause of itself. It is caused by something else. Whatever is caused by something else is not ultimate. It is a result of a cause and if that cause again is a result of another cause, you go behind it too. And if that is also a result of another cause, you go behind it. You must have seen in many conversations between a mother and a child, the child goes on asking the question: why? Then you give the answer, then he says why, then you say, this is the reason, then the child says why, then the mother says alright this is the answer, then the child says why, and very often mothers are tired and say, now I won't answer you. This happens very often because we have not gone ourselves to the ultimate. So we cannot say why. Then we say, it is like that. And there ends the conversation. But if you are a real seeker of the truth, you really find out why, the ultimate why, the final why, beyond which there is no question arising at all. Why, because it is the cause of itself. What you find if it is the cause of itself. In Latin it is called *sui generis*. *Sui generis*. *Generis* means the result, what is the cause which produces a result, and *sui* is oneself. If the result is produced by oneself, then it is the end of the query. It is final. So having reached this point, having seen the supermind, they discovered that there is still something behind it. It is still not the end. Behind the supermind there is still a further why, because supermind itself is preceded as it were by an ultimate reality. Now that discovery of the ultimate reality is what may be called the greatest victory of the Vedic Rishis. Sri Aurobindo has said, the Vedic Rishis arrived at the loftiest realisation, this is Sri Aurobindo's own words, loftiest realisation which cannot be surpassed. If you have really reached the ultimate, how can the ultimate be surpassed? Therefore they reached the ultimate. Ultimate reality in all its splendour. It is the highest discovery they made. That discovery is one in which you find the explanation of everything else, you find the explanation of the supermind, of the mind, of life, of matter, and that which is below matter, inconscience. You find all explanations by realising that reality. That was the discovery made. Loftiest realisation. Now what is the description of that reality given in the Veda? It is *ekam*, it is one, *ekam sat*.

It is One that exists, that can never be rubbed out. It exists. Many of the things that we see exist for some time and then they vanish. Most of the things that we see in the world are of this kind. We see this flower here, after some time it will wither away. And then it will turn into dust in due

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course. It will no more remain the flower. Most of the things that we see in the world, even if they remain for years and years, hundred years, two hundred years, five hundred years, thousand years, like big mountains, even they can be wiped out. But That Ultimate Reality can never, never, never be wiped out. Therefore they described it as *shashwatam*, it is eternal. *Ekam sat shashwatam*. It is one reality which is eternal.

I told you last time a story of *Indra* and *Agastya*. There is a story between *Agastya* and *Indra*. *Agastya* is the name of a great Rishi, great sage. He was in search of the truth. He wanted to know what is the ultimate reality. He wanted to become that reality. He was making sacrifices and he found that he was being obstructed. Now normally it is *Vritra* who obstructs. But here he found that no, it was not *Vritra* who was obstructing. *Indra* was obstructing, the God, the benign god was obstructing. And I told you last time what *Indra* means. *Indra* is illumined intelligence, one who has got thousand eyes. So one who was having thousand eyes, he was obstructing the path of *Agastya*. So *Agastya* complains and says, "Oh *Indra*, I am your brother, I am your friend, why do you obstruct me?" So *Indra* now replies — this is a dialogue between *Indra* and *Agastya* — *Sri Aurobindo* has described this dialogue (it is a very short dialogue, five verses) and then *Sri Aurobindo* has also given an illuminating commentary on it, one day you should read it. So *Indra*, first of all, to show that he is not obstructing, immediately discusses the ultimate reality. He says, "Look, you are complaining, but what you are looking for, I know. You want the ultimate reality, and I am telling you now what is the ultimate reality". Right from the beginning, the very first verse, is a description of the ultimate reality: I am revealing to you what is the ultimate reality. And he says: "It is neither yesterday, nor today". This is the first description of that reality. It will be neither tomorrow, neither yesterday nor today, nor tomorrow. That is the first expression of that ultimate reality. Meaning thereby that it is not something which is yesterday and which will not be today. It is something that is *na nunamasti na shwah*, neither today nor tomorrow. It is eternal. This is the first description. It is eternal. And then he says, "Who knows That reality, that reality which is wonderful?" *Kastadveda yadadbhutam*. Who knows that reality which is wonderful? Then with the very next sentence he gives the description, why it is wonderful. How to describe the wonderful? It is one and yet it has a motion in another. It is one. There is beside it no other one. And yet it is such a reality that has a motion in the other one. It is a very difficult sentence to understand. One reality which has a motion in the other. *Anyasya chittamabhi samcharenyam*. It is one which has a motion *abhisamcharenyam*, which has a motion, that which has *samchar*, which moves. In what? *Anyasya chittam* : that other one is consciousness. It is itself existence. But that other one is consciousness. There is a distinction between existence and consciousness, which are both one. And yet you can distinguish between existence and consciousness. That is why it is *adbhutam*, it is wonderful, something that you cannot grasp. That which is one and yet different from itself, such is the reality. Reality is really that. It is itself and yet different from itself. It exists, it is existence, it is also consciousness, and there is a difference between existence and consciousness. It is in consciousness that it has a movement. In existence it has no motion. It moves, it does not move, therefore *adbhutam*, it is strange. That which does not move and yet it moves. Therefore it is very strange. Very often you ask the question, what is this statement? In fact some of the people who don't understand the profundities of reality, will dismiss it away, saying that this is written by somebody who does not understand. Primitive, barbaric man. One which is different from itself; one which is static and yet dynamic; that which moves and moves not — what is this?

Only now in recent physics — You know now physicists have found out that when you go, not to the ultimate reality, but when you go down into the matter, which is so much visible, you find that this visible becomes invisible. If you go down into matter, go down and down and down, you come to atom. Atom is not physically visible. But atom exists. Not only, they went further down into matter, and they found in atom that this matter... there is a huge structure, there is a nucleus, there is a proton, there is electron. In that small atom. And then there is a kind of a systematic motion. Electrons are constantly moving round and round and round. And then they found that there are two hundred and fifty other, and many more, elements there. Then they came to the conclusion (now this is the latest), what is the nature of it, is it particle or is it wave? You know the difference between particle and wave? What is particle? Particle is... if you take a little sand, a granule, a little sand, you still feel it, something solid, somewhere some solidity is found. Now you see the wave. You have seen the waves of the ocean. Wave is something which you cannot hold. That is a speciality of it. Particle you can hold, it is something solid. Wave is something not solid. It moves out. You try to catch water in your hand, it cannot be caught, it passes away. It is a wave. Now the question is: this particle which is the smallest particle in atom, is it a particle or is it a wave? It is a question which was raised a few decades ago. And now the answer of the scientists is: it is both, it is both particle and wave. It is something like it is



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itself and yet it is something different from itself. So with regard to reality of matter, modern physicists are now speaking the language of the Vedic Rishis. Vedic Rishis had said: it is itself, yet it has a motion in the other one. Particle stands immobile. Wave moves. It has a motion in the other one. But it is said, it is this very particle which is a wave. It is not that there are two things, there is a wave and there is a particle. No, that thing which is a particle is itself is a wave. Such is the discovery of the modern physicists.

In the light of this, now we can think and understand that the Vedic Rishis were very, very, very wise, so illumined that they had the courage to say — They knew that what they were saying, people will not easily understand and even accept. Therefore Indra says: it is *adbhutam*, it is strange. It is very wonderful. What I am going to tell you, you will not even easily understand. It is something which itself has a motion in another, where there is no other one. There is only one. Reality is only one. It is That which has a motion into another. And then finally it says: *utadhitam vinashyati*. If you try to think it out, it will vanish. It can't be thought out. It is not by thinking that you can grasp it. So *Indra* was telling *Agastya*: look, you are trying to find out the Reality by your mind. You are making a great effort, to think, to think, but that Reality cannot be thought of. You cannot grasp by thought, because it is *adbhutam*, it is strange, it is wonderful. It is something which is, which is not, it is that which is different from itself. It is itself, but yet different from itself. It is static, and yet it has a motion into another consciousness. Such is the Reality. If you think, he says, now you are only trying to have power of the mind, by which you try to understand. I am illumined mind. With my thousand eyes, I have seen, because I have gone beyond the mind. Therefore you should come to me. You are trying to surpass me, to overpass me, you don't care for me. Therefore I am obstructing. Not that I want to obstruct you. I am standing before you. I am obstructing, why? Because you are trying to reach that reality by your mind. But you must come to me. I am not the mind. I have gone beyond the mind. Not that I am supermind. I am not that Reality. I am not *turiyam swid*. But I have thousand eyes. And I know therefore that Reality very well. So I want you to come to me. (It may look egoistic.) He says, you worship me. That means: you offer yourself to me, you come to me, I am like a guide to you, I am a helper to you. You will never get that reality if you don't come to me, because I am the gate. You have to pass through me. Without me how can you reach there? So he says to *Agastya*: You claim that you are my friend and my brother, but you don't look at me. So look at me. Make sacrifice to me, that is to say, burn yourself, throw away your mind and everything. Burn it, make an ascension, make a journey. You cannot reach that reality unless you make a sacrifice. And to make a sacrifice means you distribute yourself. You cannot make a sacrifice without distributing yourself. You want to go straight without distributing, without pouring yourself out, you don't know how to make a sacrifice. (When I am speaking to you, I am distributing myself, I am diffusing as it were, I am pouring myself, I am telling whatever I have read, whatever I have studied. Distributing myself, it is a sacrifice. It is a burning. An effort which is made, which is an upward journey). So *Agastya* is told: you just want to go to the reality without distributing yourself. Distribute yourself, expand yourself, give yourself, make a sacrifice. I am there, and then come to me, and I will take you to that reality. This is the path that is given in the Veda for anyone who wants to know that ultimate reality.

Now let us come to that ultimate reality. This is only a story I told you. But now let us see that ultimate reality. So to repeat, the first discovery was the discovery of the battle, battle not only between visible creatures but also between invisible. The second discovery was the discovery of the sacrifice. The third discovery was the discovery of "that fourth one", *turiyam swid*, of the supermind. The fourth discovery was the discovery of the ultimate reality, beyond beyond, that which is beyond beyond. Ultimate. Final. Now that final reality is one without a second. *Ekam sat*. And yet it is not simple. It is simple-complex. This is Sri Aurobindo's words. That reality is not simple, it is simple-complex. It is at once itself and other than itself. In the Veda we get therefore two names, the name of "that one" and the name of that which is different from that one. "That one" is called in algebraic language the bull. If you read the Veda, you will often find the bull. Bull always means "that one". The other one which is also itself is *dhenu*, the cow. This is one description of it. The other description is: it is he, the Supreme. There are many names of it given in the Veda. He is the *hiranyagarbha*, he is the golden egg, from where everything comes out. The whole world, everything that we see, is originated from it. He is *Prajapati*. He is the father of all the creatures. But apart from that *Prajapati*, there is another which is known as *Aditi*. *Aditi*, this is the one name which I would like you to remember. *Aditi* is the first original mother. That is to say, the original reality is the father, and mother is not different from the father, father and mother are one, and yet mother is different from father. That *Aditi* is the supreme mother, the original mother, and although the original reality is the same as *Aditi*, there is a relationship between the two. That is why it is simple-complex. Simple means that which has no

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relationship in it. That is the meaning of simple. Whenever you say it is simple, it means there is no relationship in it. When you say it is complex, it means there are internal relationships. That is the meaning of complex. It is simple-complex. It has no relationship, yet it has relationships. It is simple-complex. Aditi is the one from whom everything originates. That is to say Supreme can exist without any creation. And yet when there is creation, that creation can come out only from him as Aditi. He himself is Aditi. He, without creation is He. He, with creation is He that is Aditi. That is how you can understand this relationship. Without the knowledge of Aditi, you cannot understand how the whole world has manifested. This is the fourth discovery and I will not burden your mind with so many other details, but this is simple. What I have told you is very simple and something that is not very difficult to understand.

I come to the last discovery, but that we shall do next time. Is it alright? The last discovery I shall tell you because it is a long discovery. The fifth discovery. It will take a long time. But if you have any question so far, you are free to ask questions. Not adults, only children. Adults are not allowed to ask questions. It is because I am only... The questions are only to be asked by you.

Question — *There is a question. They are doing a play which is from the Puranic stories. Vishwamitra is great sage and a writer of the Veda. Why does he play a role equal to humans? This is the story between Vishwamitra and Vasishtha.*

Oh really? There is a question here. Vishwamitra is a great sage. And the whole third chapter of the Rig Veda is attributed to Vishwamitra. It seems that there is a story on which a play is being rehearsed among you, in which there is a conflict between Vasishtha and Vishwamitra. Right? So the question is that if Vishwamitra is so great, why was he quarrelling with Vasishtha. That is the question.

The story that you are now confronting, the story which you are rehearsing is a story of Vishwamitra before he became such a great sage. He became a great sage, but before he became a great sage, he was not such a great sage. So that is why. And Vasishtha was already a great sage. So he was quarrelling with a great sage actually. He was great but not a very great sage. You know, in India, there are many levels of development. The highest level of development is called *Brahmarshi*. Rishi who is *Brahma*, which is in possession of the highest knowledge. There is a lower grade which is a grade of *Rajarshi*. What is *Rajarshi*? He is also Rishi he is also aspiring, he is also a kind of a sage, but not *Brahmarshi*, he is *Rajarshi*. What is *Rajarshi*? *Rajarshi* is a king who wants to become a sage. And king is according to India lower than the man of knowledge. One who knows is the highest. One who is only a king can rule, he can demand order, he can fight, he can protect people, but the knowledge of ultimate reality, the knowledge of the creation, the knowledge of Brahman and Aditi, all that knowledge, he does not possess. And very often *Rajarshi* is marked by a temperament of anger, what is called a great impetuosity. Subject to impulses. You act on impulses, not upon thought, not upon knowledge. A wise man is one who sits quietly in spite of the big storm, he remains steady. He is not like one who moves and one who does not move. That is the mark of a real *Brahmarshi*. He can act, act marvellously, powerfully and yet he is always quiet. The stillness and the power, both of them are combined in a *Brahmarshi*. But in a *Rajarshi*, they are not combined. When he is quiet, there is no force. When there is force, there is no quietude. There is a division between the two. So *Vishwamitra*, before he became the highest sage, was like that. And that is why he was opposed to *Vasishtha*, because he wanted *Vasishtha* to call him *Brahmarshi*, when he was not. He wanted to be called the highest while yet he was *Rajarshi* actually, not a *Brahmarshi*. *Vasishtha* was a man of true wisdom. He said, "I will not call you by a wrong name. When you are not a *Brahmarshi*, I won't call you a *Brahmarshi*. I'll call you *Rajarshi*." And *Vishwamitra* was getting angry. Why don't you call me *Brahmarshi*? That was his main question. And he was very angry. So that was the reason of the conflict and fight between *Vishwamitra* and *Vasishtha*. Now *Vasishtha* knew that although *Vishwamitra* is *Rajarshi* now, he has a great potentiality in him. He can become *Brahmarshi* one day provided he becomes very humble. At present he is very proud, egoistic, vain, he wants falsehood to be pronounced as truth. When he is *Rajarshi*, he wants to be called *Brahmarshi*. But *Vasishtha* knew that one day he has the possibility of becoming *Brahmarshi*.

If you have heard that whole story, you will find that one day *Vishwamitra* came — I wanted *Deepti* to tell you the story, but you are now stealing away that opportunity, what can I do? — One day *Vishwamitra* came to the house of *Vasishtha* with a decision to destroy him. That was his intention, that he would now kill him. Because *Vasishtha* was not responding to his demand. He wanted to be *Brahmarshi* and he was not being called so by *Vasishtha*. So he stood at the gate and was about to enter, when he heard a conversation between *Vasishtha* and his wife. And *Vasishtha* was praising *Vishwamitra* and telling his wife: "He is actually very great. I am very kind to him actually." So the wife

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was surprised. She said, "Even though he has destroyed so much of your progeny, everything, still why do you praise him?" He said, "No he is absolutely on the threshold. He is about to become Brahmarshi. And I don't want that he should be harmed. The moment he becomes free from pride and egoism, he will be Brahmarshi." So when Vishwamitra heard — he was outside, he heard Vasishtha, all his anger went away. He realised that Vasishtha had really no prejudice against him. So he went straight in. Instead of killing him, he went straight in and fell at the feet of Vasishtha. When he fell at the feet of Vasishtha, Vasishtha said, "O Brahmarshi, rise!" Vishwamitra pride had gone! He had become Brahmarshi. He became Brahmarshi at that stage. He gave up his pride and egoism. All his anger passed away and thus he became Brahmarshi. From that time onwards, he became a great sage. And the third chapter written by him is what he wrote after that. Alright?

You have any other question?

You remember now these four truths that have been discovered? Battle, sacrifice, supermind, ultimate reality. Right? Four discoveries. I will ask you at the end all the five discoveries. Then you will tell me all the five discoveries. So remember now. I am repeating again and again: battle, sacrifice, supermind, ultimate reality. The fifth one, I have not told you yet. Alright?

*Question — This was about the year 2000. They wanted to know if there is something significant. The whole world seems to be focussed on the year 2000. Is there something in this idea?*

You know, there is a science of time, and from the Vedic point of view you can't say it is not significant. There is a significance. Not only 2000 but every year has a significance. Every year has a meaning. But when the whole humanity is seized by a moment, it has a very wide significance. There are significances which are local, which are personal, which are regional. But when the whole world is seized by a certain moment, it has a very wide significance. Universal significance. It marks something very definitive. What is that definitive? The whole world today has become very conscious. It has begun to visualise the future. There are so many articles, you must have seen, the third millenium. What is going to happen in the third millenium? We also ask the question: what have we done in the second millenium? If you take account of the whole second millenium, that also is very significant. If you compare with the first 1000 what was achieved by mankind in 1000 years and compare it with what we are now in the second 2000 years, we have seen tremendous change. In 1972, in the month of November, Mother had given me a message. She had written down, and when I went to her she gave me this piece of paper and told me, "Read it". In the Mother's Agenda of 1972, you will find there is a foot-note of this message, the exact terms I will not be able to tell you but if we want word by word you see the conversation that is between me and the Mother when the Dalai Lama came to the Mother. He came on the 18th of January 1973. So if you see the conversation, there is an addendum to this conversation of 18 January 1973. An addendum in which there is an account of questions put by the Dalai Lama to the Mother, and I had put the questions of the Dalai Lama to the Mother and Mother was answering those questions to me. And then one of the questions the Dalai Lama had asked was: There is today a good deal of good will and sincerity in the world, but it is not enough. So his question was: is there some hope in this world? Because good will and sincerity are there, but they are not enough. So with that little good will and sincerity, can we really have a real hope for the future? That was the meaning of the question. I am again not telling you word by word the questions and answers. For that you have to read the text itself. I am only giving the gist of that question. So Mother said: "There will be". That is to say, The Victory is certainly going to happen. This is one absolute assurance given by the Mother, but if more and more people are sincere, more and more people have good will, it will come quicker. But that it will be, there is no question. It will be. And Mother said, "If the Supermind begins to work more and more powerfully, then it will be quicker." Then I told the Mother: "But Mother, Supermind is working now powerfully, isn't it?" That was my question to the Mother. So she said, "Yes, it is, but I had given you the message already". She had given me the message in the month of November towards the end of November, and the text of that message is given at that stage in the Agenda. If you read the Agenda of that date, the questions of the Dalai Lama to the Mother, you will find that message in the foot-note. The message said, "Before dying falsehood rises in full swing." That is to say, she had given the exact stage where we had reached in the world movement, the world progression. That falsehood is about to die. That was the stage, but before dying it is rising in full swing. So today, Mother said, there is not a stage in the history of the world where falsehood was so intense as it is today. That was January 1973. She said, "People are telling lies automatically." As if by

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habit, not even intentionally. Just to tell a lie is just automatically happening to the people. Such is the situation today. So it was in 1973.

Now you are asking the question about 2000. My own view is that between 1973 and 2000, falsehood has risen in full swing, has done its very best to destroy all that is truthful and good in the world. And that battle has now turned towards a stage where truth is overpowering. So to my mind, 2000 represents that moment where falsehood is now down, as it were. In the wrestling, up till now Truth was down and falsehood was on the top, trying its best to throttle the Truth. Now a stage has been reached (this is my personal view), and I think the 2000 marks a point when Truth is overpowering the falsehood. So it is very significant. We can expect that now whoever tries to cling to the truth will have greater chances of victory and of survival. This is my view about 2000. This is the significance of 2000 to my mind. Alright? Thank you.

V.

**W**e have already discussed four great discoveries of the Vedas. The first was that life and the world are a battle, in which there are not only living creatures, our partners, but also invisible forces, consisting of benign and adverse forces. The second was that sacrifice is the means by which you can progress in this battle toward victory. The third discovery was *turiyam svid*, the discovery of the Supermind; and the fourth was the discovery of “the One which is strange and wonderful” ? that that Reality is One that is different from itself, a motion of itself in another consciousness.

So now we come to the fifth discovery. The fifth is much more complex than all the others; it consists of many parts. The fourth discovery ? the discovery of the One that is simple and complex, “that which is wonderful” ? is perhaps the loftiest realization and has never been surpassed in the history of the world. But as a result of this fifth realization the Vedic Rishis obtained a very vast knowledge of the origin of things, the origin and purpose of the world, the origin of the individual, and the means by which the individual can gain the same knowledge that they themselves obtained. It is not a knowledge that is meant for only a few individuals, but a knowledge that can be given to all according to their needs, development, and capacity to receive it. It is a knowledge that can be transmitted, provided that certain conditions are fulfilled.

Let us now take all these one by one. They considered the origin of things, of the world, of individuals ? and what was their reply to these questions?

They discovered that the origin of the world was a manifestation of Joy. At the root of the world is Joy, is Delight. It's a very important discovery, because many people in the world believe that the origin of the world was desire, and not joy. But the Vedic Rishis discovered that desire is not at the root of the world, but joy, a fullness. You know, there is a difference between work impelled by desire and work which is a result of fullness. When you are absolutely full there is joy ? joy and fullness are interrelated. To take a mundane example: I don't know if you have seen a film called *My Fair Lady*. It is a beautiful film that tells the story of a girl who sells flowers, and who draws the attention of a professor of languages, Professor Higgins. Hearing this girl speaking a murderous English, he enters into a bet with a friend; he says, “This girl can master English in six months time.” And then she comes to his house, she is taken in by Professor Higgins, and he starts teaching her. There are a lot of tears in the labor of learning English, at least pronunciation of English, and ultimately, one fine day, after a lot of labor, suddenly she is able to pronounce one line in English beautifully ? you might say that this is the day on which she becomes full ? and she sings that she can dance and dance for the whole of night. It's a dance of joy, not of desire; there is fullness in her. She has mastered a sentence which was so difficult to pronounce earlier, and because of that mastery there is fullness in her being, she is absolutely overjoyed, in ecstasy. In that ecstasy she dances. It is a dance of joy, not of desire.

Now this world is also a dance ? a dance of the Reality. At a later time in India this dance was given great significance, the world has been conceived thereafter as a dance of Shiva (you must have seen statues of *Nataraj* in a dancing pose), but at the root of that dance was the discovery of the Vedic Rishis that this world is a manifestation of the fullness of being. It is not that the Reality needs to manifest. There is no desire to manifest, for desire is a condition in which you attempt to grasp what you do not have, it is not from fullness but from *lacunae*, from want, from some deficiency. The activity of the Reality is not of this kind. The Reality is full, perfect, there is no deficiency in it, but in that



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fullness there is a spontaneous activity. Because it is full it can throw itself out fully, not to grasp something it does not possess ? it is not a movement toward the external to grasp the external into oneself ? but to throw the fullness inside outside as perfectly as possible.

Now, this word *manifestation* is very important. The world is a manifestation. You can manifest only what you have, what is inside, so this world is conceived by the Vedic Rishis as a manifestation. Even the word *creation* is not sufficiently expressive of it. Creation might mean that there is something that is not there that you are now creating ? that is not the concept. The idea is that what is already inside the Reality is manifested.

Along with this there was another concept, called *tapas*. It's a Sanskrit word which means "force of concentration". This force of concentration can be inward, but also can throw itself outward. So this manifestation is by the force of *tapas*; the entire world is a manifestation of *tapas*, the force of concentration. There is a very important verse in the Rig-Veda, of which it is said that if you recite and understand it properly you can be liberated from all difficulties. If you know the origin of the world truly, then you will have only joy left, all grief vanishes. So it starts by saying what is at the origin of things, *tapasah adhyajayata*, "The whole world has come out of *tapas*." *Ajayata* means was born, manifested. *Tapasah*, from *tapas*.

And the first thing that came out of *tapas*, the origin of things, was *ritam cha satyam*, "the True and the Right." In other words, the first thing that manifested was Supermind. *Satyam, ritam, brihat* ? these three words are the formula of the Supermind in the Veda. Wherever you come across these three words in the Veda, they refer to Supermind. So the first thing that came out of the action of force, of concentration, was *ritam cha satyam*, was the Supermind. This was the origin of things, so at the origin of things is the Supermind.

But then a surprising thing happened ? the statement of the verse is rapid, it doesn't state everything fully ? *tato ratryajayata*, "from there arose the Night." And from there *samudro anarvah*, "from there arose an Ocean of Inconscience." So in one sentence there is the whole description. First came the Supermind, then came the Night, and then came the Inconscience. It's only two lines, but this entire process has been described in the Veda in many places, under many circumstances. Actually, this is a subject of which Mother herself spoke to the children of the Ashram. She said, "I will tell you the ancient knowledge of the origin of things which was in the Veda, or even in pre-Vedic times, in Chaldean times." She said that it can be told in a very philosophical manner, or it can be told in a simple manner, and that she would tell it like a children's story. She said that in the beginning of things, the Reality manifested or emanated four Beings. The Being of Life, the Being of Light, the Being of Delight, and the Being of Truth. Life, Light, Delight and Truth were the four Beings, and when they came out there was so much vastness, so much delight. And then happened what Mother called an "accident". An accident occurred. These four Beings severed themselves from the Origin, and by separation from their relationship with the Origin, they became limited. They were vast, but by deviating, by disconnecting with the Origin, they became limited ? so limited that Life became Death, Light became Darkness, Delight became Sorrow, and Truth became Falsehood. And once this happened, from darkness came greater and greater darkness, until there came about the Inconscience.

Now if you read the Veda very carefully you will find this described in one way or the other. And Mother adds that when this happened, the Divine Mother, who is known as *Aditi* in the Veda, went to the Supreme Lord, the Origin of Origins, and said, "An accident has occurred. So much darkness has come about, it has to be repaired! What is to be done?" So the Lord said, "Now you will emanate other beings, who will not sever their relationship with the Origin." These beings are called gods, this is the origin of the gods.

But even that was not sufficient. And so the Divine Mother, threw out her love and delight, and all the crystals of her love and delight fell upon the Inconscience. With the help of these crystals of divine Love, with the help of the gods, in battle with the darkness, the entire world began to move forward, and Matter came, and Life came, and Mind came, and that is where we are now.

Now, out of this story, which you can find in the Veda, many consequences can be derived about the whole world. First, that gods were not present at the origin of the world. This is a very important statement. Gods don't know everything. In the Veda there is a very beautiful verse, the Verse of Creation, it is called, *Nasadiya Sukta*. It is a Hymn of Creation. It is so-called because the very first words are *na asat*, it says that in the beginning there was no Being and no Non-being, there was only One. And then the whole world came out of it, but who knows really the story of the whole

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creation? Even the gods do not know ? this is what it says ? even the gods do not know the secret of creation, because they were not there at that time.

This is a very important sentence because, if you read the very first line of *Savitri* in *The Book of Beginnings*, it is written, “*It was the hour before the gods awake*” What does this mean? That it was a time when the gods were not there as yet. So when you read *Savitri* this will be a very helpful indication. Sri Aurobindo describes the world as it was before the gods were created. They had not yet come, and Sri Aurobindo describes the darkness that was enveloped in darkness, so much Inconscience. The whole beginning of *Savitri* starts with this. This was discovered by the Vedic Rishis, that in the beginning there was this Inconscience, *tato ratryajayata tatah samudro arnavah*, “From there arose the Night, and from there arose a complete Inconscience.” It is that Inconscience that is described by Sri Aurobindo in *The Book of Beginnings*, at the very beginning of *Savitri*.

There is in the Veda a very interesting story, where it is said that the gods “were not the first born,” that they were created later. And when the gods were created, they were told by the Supreme, “Now you go down into the Inconscience and repair it. Bring the Light there.” And the gods said, “It is too dark! We won’t be able to do anything there!” Then they found that in *Aditi*, in the Divine Mother, there was something that they called *Agni*, fire. They found in her a divine element of Agni, of fire, and they said, “If that is put there, that will be able to repair the darkness.” Then Agni was brought out and put into the Inconscience. This is in the Veda, there is a whole *Sukta* on this subject.

There is another story where all the gods summon Agni, summon fire, and they say, “Oh please do this other work that must be done.” And Agni says, “Once upon a time, you summoned me, and I obeyed you and went into the Inconscience, and this work is so difficult that I will not do any other work for you!”

Fire is something that is born out of the Divine. This is the fire which becomes in us what we call our soul. That is why Sri Aurobindo says that the soul is a spark coming directly from the Divine. It is from that spark that the psychic being in us grows, it guides our movements, it is the leader of the sacrifice ? it is the *purohita*, it is a priest, the forerunner of our journey. This is the discovery that the Vedic Rishis made, and this is why they gave so much importance to Agni, to fire. Why should we tend to the fire? Because it is the one element that has been put into the Inconscience to repair it. It’s function is to lead the human journey, and to bring from the Divine directly all that is needed to repair the Inconscience. The purpose of our being on the earth is only this: The Inconscience has to be repaired. We are here to repair the Inconscience, and we can do it with the help of Agni. What we are is this aspiration of fire. That is why we are required to fight the battle. That is why this world is a battle, why our life is a battle. We could have easily gone away from this world, but because our task is to cure this Inconscience, it is not allowed to us to go away. We remain in the world, we fight in the world; and even if you lift yourself from the world, it is only to come back to this world. Even if you go into the highest, loftiest realization, you come back with it and put it into the Inconscience to awaken it.

Connected with this is the last point. As a result of all this knowledge, what is the highest thing they achieved? They discovered the Inconscience, but did they cure the Inconscience?

This is the answer we find in the Veda: They found out that you cannot cure the Inconscience unless you enter into Supermind. That is a very important condition. So the entire process was to enter into Supermind, but entering into it was not enough ? the Inconscience is down here. So there was also the process of descent. To arrive at Supermind there is a process of ascent, you go upwards. But even that movement is not a straight ascent. There are ascents and descents of various kinds. You go upward, you come down, you go up and come down again. You rise up and you distribute whatever you’ve gained, you share with everybody; then you go upward again and again distribute. Sri Aurobindo calls it the law of ascent and integration: You ascend, then you come down, give the benefit of your ascent to the lower levels, and again lift them up to the higher level. Therefore, the whole history of the world is not a straight line going upwards, it is cyclical, but like a spiral.

There is a legend in the Veda of the *Angirases*, it was a group of seven Rishis who went in search of the lost cows. Now I told you last time that “cow” is an algebraic term in the Veda, and that it stands for Light. They were in search of the lost Light. The Angirasa Rishis stand for all of us, we are all Angirasa Rishis because we are all seekers. You might say that we are all in search of the lost cows. We are seeking all the time, and if you ask yourself what we are seeking ? we are seeking something that we once had but that we have lost.

This idea was taken up by Plato in the West. He said that all seeking is a seeking for knowledge, and that all knowledge is remembrance. You remember what you knew, but have forgotten. When you gain knowledge, it is not a new thing, you knew it already somehow. You were

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originally full of knowledge, but somehow you have lost it. Then you seek out what you have lost, and then you remember. “Oh yes, I knew it already!” In fact, all process of true knowledge is of this kind. When true knowledge dawns, you recall that you knew it. You had forgotten, now you have regained it.

Such was the movement of the Angirasa Rishis described in the Vedas. They had lost the cows. They had possessed them at one time, they had Light in them, but now that Light is lost. Where has it gone? Where have the cows gone? Where are they hidden? Are they hidden? Are they destroyed? One doesn't know. But it is very important to find out.

What is the process by which they set about their task? First of all they went upwards. In fact, what we call Yoga ? you have heard the word “Yoga” very often ? is a movement of uniting ourselves with the Light we possessed once, but have lost. It's a re-union, in fact. Yoga comes from the Sanskrit word “yug”, “to join”. In English you have the word “yoke”; when you have a bull, you yoke it to the cart ? this is the same word. So Yoga is a joining. Now, the Angirasa Rishis had lost the cows and they wanted to unite with the cows. This is a process of Yoga, and the Veda is therefore regarded as the origin of Yoga. The whole Yogic process throughout the world ultimately can be traced to this great discovery made by the Vedic Rishis. They gave the first design of Yoga that we find anywhere. And what is the Yogic process? Go upwards first, you climb up. It is called the process of ascent.

As you make an effort upwards, there is a response. This is the law of this world. This also was discovered by the Vedic Rishis: If you try to go upwards, a help will always come from above to lift you up. This is the law which Sri Aurobindo has written down in a small book called *The Mother*. It's a very short book. In the first paragraph you will find: “Aspiration from below and Grace from above, when the two unite, gives you accomplishment.” Whenever there is aspiration the Grace will come from above. The junction of the two gives you accomplishment, you realize what you are looking for. Yoga is nothing but the movement of aspiration, you just aspire.

This law of aspiration was given by the Vedic Rishis. This was the discovery: that if you want to go upwards, you just aspire. All the mantras of the Veda are mantras of aspiration. It's a call from below. As a result of it the Higher Light descends.

As to this Higher Light, I have told you the algebraic terms:

*Surya*, the sun, is the Supermind.

Below Supermind is another region, above our mind and below Supermind, which is the domain of *Indra*, the Illumined Intelligence. So when the Vedic Rishis began to aspire, began to make sacrifice ? because the sacrifice is nothing but an expression of aspiration ? the first thing that happened was that Indra came down. It is said in a legend that Indra came on horseback with his lightning, tremendous force. Indra is supposed to be tremendously powerful. He comes down from above with the force of lightning, thunder and rain. And as soon as he came down to help these Rishis, it was found that Sarama was proceeding forward.

Now *Sarama* is a very interesting term in the Veda; it's also an algebraic term. If you read the description of Sarama, from the external point of view, just as “cow” means Light, the word *sarama* means “a dog”. But the inner meaning of this “dog” is that it is the power of Intuition. The Illumined Intelligence comes down, but that which leads this Illumined Intelligence is Intuition, the intuitive power of consciousness. This Intuition has a tremendous force of penetration ? the special power of Intuition is that it always penetrates. Illumination reveals, does not penetrate, but Intuition penetrates and brings out from below. It is the specialty of intuition. It can go into the darkest corners, penetrate the darkness, and bring out the Light. The Veda says therefore, “Indra was preceded by Sarama, and as she went down...” The power of Intuition went down, it was a process of descent now. Going up to Indra was a process of ascent, the coming down of Indra a process of descent, and now Sarama descends into lower and lower levels to penetrate, to find out where the lost cows are. So they come down.

And then Sarama meets the Panis. I have already spoken to you of the Panis earlier; I said that there are *Asuras*, *Rakshasas*, *Pishachas*, *Panis*, *Vritra*. The Panis are merchants, traffickers or bargainers who work on behalf of the adverse forces. They saw that Sarama was a powerful intuitive Light, and that if she were allowed to go into the cave, into the descending movement, then she would find the lost cows. So the Panis came forward and said to Sarama, “Stop! Stop! We have something to talk to you about.”

So Sarama had a dialogue with the Panis. They said, “Join us, become our ambassador. We are very powerful, we know you. Become our ambassador and don't go farther; be with us.”

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But Sarama belonged to the Divine Force, to Indra, so she spurned the offer. They offered a lot, saying, "We shall give you this, we shall give you that. We have got tremendous wealth!" ? the Panis have a lot of wealth; they are merchants of wealth ? but Sarama refused all that and went ahead into the deep darkness of a hill. She cut across the caves, and in the deepest cavern the Shining Cows were found.

And then Indra came down with his power of thunder and lightning, broke everything open ? the cave was fully broken ? and the lost cows were discovered. That was the achievement.

If you read the Veda you will very often find references to this story. Not the full story that I told you just now ? sometimes it's one part and sometimes another ? but if you put it all together you get this connected story: how the lost cows were found with the help of Sarama, who spurned the Panis' offer and cleared the way for Indra to come down and break open the hill and deliver the cows. That which was lost was regained.

This was supposed to be the great victory of the Veda, of the Vedic Rishis. This was not philosophy, not speculation, but realization; concretely realized. The Vedic Rishis had really repossessed the Light that had been lost. In fact, it is the story of all of us. We have all lost the cows and now we are all searching, we are looking for the cows. Therefore, the Yoga done by the Angirasa Rishis is also that which they prescribe to us. The Yoga is very simple, we know the whole process: You aspire, make a sacrifice, attain the Illumined Intelligence, develop the power of Intuition, rise even up to Supermind; and as you rise upwards you will be better and better able to go downwards. Possess the Supermind, come down with Indra, and Intuition will always help you ? it will go forward, ahead of you ? so develop the intuitive power.

Don't leave the earth: Go down ? you have reached the heights, but you must also go down, descend ? and then by persistent effort, very difficult effort... A big battle takes place here. In the Agenda the Mother speaks of this battle with the Inconscience. As you go down into the cave of darkness of the Inconscience (the Inconscient is nothing but the lost Light itself, so actually speaking the Inconscience is a reversal of Light), by the power of Intuition you go down and you illumine it. That is where you find the lost cows, the lost Light, and then you bring it out. You possess it now fully in your self-consciousness.

This is the simple formula of the Yoga of the Veda. All the Yogic processes that have been developed in the world (there are many such processes) have ultimately, behind them, this basic experience. All are different formulations ? partial formulations, inadequate formulations, exclusive formulations ? but this is the basic formulation. All the others do not follow exactly everything given here, but only follow partially, and therefore some Yogas are exclusive, some are partial, some are narrow and give narrow results, not all the results. They don't give all the results which the Vedic Rishis obtained by following this entire process.

This process consisted of three parts: aspire, make a sacrifice; then there will be a descent from above; the Intuitive power will come with you, will come down and fight in the Inconscience, and then will draw out the Light. This is the general formula.

I'll give you now a more precise formula, because this is very important.

It was the Vedic Rishis who discovered that you cannot achieve all this unless you perfect your capacities ? all your capacities. It is a total sacrifice that you make of all your capacities.

What are those capacities? Basically, there are three kinds.

There is first a capacity of *knowledge*, and there are faculties of knowledge like *buddhi*, *medha*, *dhi*, *mati* ? so many terms you find in the Veda to describe various gradations of this power of knowledge. You must develop all these powers. You will find in the Veda therefore many verses which are given to the understanding of various powers of knowledge and how they can be developed. *Medhavinam kuru*, "make me full of *medha*" ? that is one of the great verses of the Veda. Two days ago I spoke of *Gayatri*, where *dhi* is supposed to be united with the sunlight so that our intellect is directed by the Supreme Light. So there is first powers of knowledge, realities of the powers of knowledge which are described. When you read the Vedas, you feel amazed by the amount of psychological knowledge contained in them. Today we are very proud of our modern psychology, but compared to the Veda it is the a-b-c. Profound psychology is given in the Veda, varieties of capacities are described, and how they can be developed. It is not only a question of the faculties, but of how they can be developed ? that is a great discovery.

The second capacity is that of *will and action*. Everyone has got some rudimentary will, which is normally expressed in the form of desire; everyone is active in a certain way. The most normal movement of action is restlessness, all of us have some kind of restlessness. You must have seen



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that when you have nothing to do you loiter about, you go someplace and you just do nothing ? but many things happen out of doing nothing! You just watch somebody from your balcony, and suddenly some action proceeds out of it. It was not your intention, but on the spur of the moment some activity starts. This is restlessness.

And then there is instinct ? restlessness is not instinct. Instinct is a deliberate movement of action which goes towards an object, it has a purpose. Every instinctive movement has a purpose, while restlessness has none. When I am hungry, automatically I look for food, nobody needs to teach me this; I neglect everything else and I look for food ? it's a very purposeful, directed activity, it goes straight towards its end, the acquisition of food. I strive for food, I discover it, and I gulp it ? this is instinct, it is a second way in which we are active.

The third is desire, which is different from instinct. Instinct is spontaneous, it happens automatically; desire may rise out of instinct, but it is itself learned: I begin to desire because of certain experiences. I may desire to get the highest marks in an examination, because I have found that everyone praises the one who comes in first. Desire is the result of an experience of which you begin to enjoy the fruit. You don't necessarily need it, but you like it. Instincts are needed, they impose themselves, they are imperative, but the objects of desire are not needed absolutely. You find them, you develop them, and they become so powerful that you must have them. So desire is also a motivator of action.

And then there is egoism. In Sanskrit it is called *ahambhava*. You do an action, not because you desire, but because you can affirm yourself, assert yourself. In a debate you have expressed a view, and then you say, "It is *my* view." You have said something, and you become addicted to it because *you* have said it ? you hold on to your view, and afterwards you'll do anything to vindicate it. You'll fight for it. Egoism is another means of action.

And then there is will, the fifth force of action. In desire, there is a movement to grasp from the outside world what you do not possess; in will, you express what you already possess. Will is a power and arises out of power, capacity, while desire arises out of incapacity.

Now all of these were studied by the Vedic Rishis, and they found that all have to be developed in such a way that restlessness stops, instinct is transformed, desire is abolished and egoism is annulled ? until you arrive at the Supreme Will, until the Supreme Will, which is irresistible, which is most victorious, manifests itself through you.

The third capacity is that of *feeling*. The Veda describes various kinds of emotions. You might say that the whole Veda is a science of knowledge, a science of action, and a science of emotions. And the highest emotion they discovered was that of unrestricted joy and unrestricted self-giving: surrender. This was the discovery. The highest is surrender. *Nama uktim vedema*. This word *namah* means surrender. Salutations, bowing down, offering ? this is *namah*. To arrive at the condition of *namah* was the highest achievement that they discovered. If you have this condition of *namah* in your consciousness, if you can always say spontaneously "*namah, namah, namah*", then there is nothing that you cannot achieve. Nothing. All is contained in *namah*. The moment you say "*namah*" truly, all will be available.

The Veda is therefore a synthesis of *Jnana Yoga* (the Yoga of Knowledge), of *Karma Yoga* (the Yoga of action), and *Bhakti Yoga* (the Yoga of Devotion). The first synthesis is found in the Veda. It was repeated later on with various kinds of enrichments, modifications, different kinds of uses, and so on. But the original synthesis is found in the Veda. That is why it is called integral knowledge, synthetic knowledge. This is what the Vedic Rishis have given, not only to India, but to the whole world, because as I've said it is the first available record of humanity. It is a kind of a heritage or patrimony given to the whole world, available to all those who want to be world citizens.

Now comes the last word of my present exposition: When you combine the Yoga of Knowledge, the Yoga of Action and the Yoga of Devotion; when all that is prescribed is done ? you rise to the Supermind, you get the help of Indra and Sarama, you go to the Inconscient, dig out the Light, bring out the lost cows ? when you've done all that, what then happens?

The answer that the Veda gives is that you attain to Immortality, *amritam*. This is the goal which they have fixed. When you do all this, you arrive at the state of Immortality. Until that time you are *martya*, mortal. We are all mortals until all this is done.

There is one verse in the *Rig-Veda* which gives some kind of an idea of this Immortality. It is written by *Parashara*, a great Rishi. It says that "They" ? the Angirasas, our forefathers ? "They made the path of Immortality by ripening everything." That's the first condition ? you ripen your will-power, emotions and knowledge. Then you bring down the power which comes from the gods, who

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are the children of *Aditi*, *Aditaih putrah*. *Aditi* is the Divine Mother, the gods are Her children, and the powers of the gods derive from Her. You must ripen yourself because his power is very great. An unbaked jar breaks down if you put a very hot liquid in it, and this power is not only hot, but super-hot. If this power is to be brought down, you must ripen yourself, and ripen your body also, to such an extent that when it comes down the body remains stable. When the Power comes down into you and the body can hold it ? then you realize that you are indestructible. This is the condition of Immortality described in the Veda. This is what is called the “victory of the forefathers”.

In a sense you might say that the Veda is nothing but an epic. You know there is a difference between a lyric poem and an epic poem: A lyric poem is an expression of intense emotion, but an epic is a description, a narration of a great adventure involving great heroism and great achievement. There is no epic without a great adventure. The Veda is an epic because a great adventure is described in the Veda, a great heroism is manifested, and a great victory is obtained, is secured. So you might say that the Veda is an epic celebration of Immortality.

### VI.

**T**he five discoveries of which I spoke to you during the last few days are extremely important. In a sense, they are stupendous discoveries. Because they are stupendous, there is a tendency to be so overwhelmed by them that it seems that all that is to be known is already known in the Veda. This sometimes puts a brake on new developments and new discoveries.

We have to underline however that the Vedic Rishis never claimed that all that has to be known is known. They themselves claimed that knowledge is infinite, that it is endless. It is stated in the very first chapter of the Rig-Veda that as we rise higher and higher, new vistas of knowledge open before us. In the sixth chapter there is a very special verse by Bharadwaja in which there is a special prayer to *Agni*: “*O Agni, protect those who are the discoverers of new knowledge!*” So the very spirit of the Veda is a spirit of the constant discovery of new knowledge.

Perhaps because of this, there has been in India no dogmatism of the kind that we find in many traditions. There is dogmatism, but not of the kind or of the degree that you find elsewhere. You might say that in India there is a very great deal of the scientific spirit. The scientific spirit consists of a few elements which are distinguishable from many other attitudes.

There is for example a *skeptical spirit*, which is just to remain in a constant state of doubt. This is not the scientific spirit. Skepticism can be a part of science and philosophy, but not the spirit of skepticism. The aim of philosophy or science is not to arrive at doubt — though doubt can be an instrument, a springboard for discovery of new knowledge — but to arrive at the Truth. That is the scientific and philosophical spirit.

There is what is called the *critical spirit*, which always wants to criticize whatever is presented. Now again, this spirit is fine, it has its value, its place. But if you were to take it as a permanent spirit then it would mean that Truth could never be discovered, and that you could never arrive at a point where there would be no criticism. So this also is not a part of the scientific spirit.

At the other end there is the *religious spirit*, which is an advocate of revelation. The Truth is known, according to this spirit, by revelation, and can never be questioned nor criticized. It can never be renewed, it can never be modified, it can never be enriched — it is known once and for all. This is the dogmatic spirit.

Having spoken of these different spirits, now we can say what the scientific spirit is, and also why it is a special characteristic of the Veda.

The scientific spirit consists of a few elements. The first thing is that in all scientific movement there is *freedom to observe* — and to observe as much as possible, as wide, as high and as deeply as possible. Second is *to make experiments*. You observe a fact, then you want to observe the facts under certain special conditions and see how in those conditions the same facts or different facts appear — this is experimental. Then you develop the process of *induction*, in which you try to see if there is a causal connection between one set of facts and another. And if you see a causal connection, then you arrive at a law, at the knowledge of a law. There is a causal connection between the mixture of oxygen and hydrogen — the formula  $H_2O$  gives you water — this is a causal

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connection. And you establish a law that wherever this mixture occurs, this will be the consequence. It's a piece of knowledge; wherever a causal connection is established you arrive at knowledge.

But having arrived at that knowledge the door is not closed; you don't say that this can never be questioned or modified or that we can never go deeper. According to science, you can ask the question, "Why is it that whenever  $H^2$  and  $O$ , that is to say hydrogen and oxygen, come together in such-and-such a proportion, water is produced?" This question is legitimate. You might be able to find the answer to this question as well, and if you do so it will be an addition to knowledge.

So the marks of science are: a movement towards knowledge, a search for the truth, and the establishment of the truth — but with the provision that you are free to investigate further and discover new knowledge, or to confirm, repeat, modify or enrich the old knowledge, or to verify it again and again.

I spoke yesterday of the Yoga of the Veda, which has precisely this attitude. The knowledge which has been obtained can be verified in personal experience, so that you can be personally satisfied about what is contained in the statement of knowledge. You can therefore modify and enrich; you can have new knowledge. That is why Sri Aurobindo speaks of the "Science of Yoga" — Yoga is a science, it is a scientific knowledge, and when we are dealing with the Veda we should do so in a scientific spirit. Fortunately, in India Yoga has been recognized as a science, and there have been lots of developments in the knowledge which has been achieved through Yoga. If you look at the history of Yoga in India starting from the Veda, you can trace a kind of chart and find out, first of all, how the knowledge gained by Yoga has been confirmed. That is one mark of science: You can confirm it again and again throughout history.

So you can see how the yogic knowledge of the Veda has been confirmed in later times, but also how that knowledge has become more specialized. Sometimes, by narrowing the field of knowledge you can discover some special knowledge pertaining to that domain. This also has happened, as in the Upanishads. (The Upanishads were very near the Vedas, and I will tell you more about how the Upanishads developed from the Vedas later on.) In the Upanishads there was a kind of narrowing, a specialization, but as a result there was also an enrichment, even a culmination of the movement of knowledge that you find in the Veda. That is why the Upanishads are called "Vedanta". *Anta* means "culmination" — the culmination of Veda. There was a knowledge that was built up in the Veda and that reached, not a full culmination, but a kind of a culmination in the Upanishads. And we can see further on a great landmark in the development of Yoga when we come to the study of the Bhagavad-Gita.

To make a very brief summary of the history of Indian Yoga, I normally put down five landmarks: the Yoga of the Veda, the Yoga of the Upanishads, the Yoga of the Bhagavad-Gita, the Yoga of the Tantra, and the Yoga of Sri Aurobindo. These are the five big landmarks, but there are others. Take for example the landmark that you find in Sri Chaitanya. I'll take as few names as possible so that your mind does not get blocked up by names, but Sri Chaitanya is one of the very great names in the history of Indian Yoga. He advocated a Yoga of Devotion, and the kind of Love that was underlined by and manifested in him is a very special development which is not in the Veda, the Upanishads or the Gita. It was a new development. The kind of synthesis of Yogas of Knowledge, Action and Devotion that you find in the Bhagavad-Gita is also very special; it is a kind of a new synthesis, all the elements of which are not to be found in the Veda or the Upanishads except in seed form. You might say that the Veda is a seed. As a seed it is very potent — it contains so much! — and the whole of Indian development may be regarded as a banyan tree that has grown from this seed. But still the seed is not the banyan tree itself, there is a difference between them. The tree is a development, and as a development it manifests many things which are not visible in the seed.

The point is that in India, Yoga is not a closed book — that is the difference between religion and Yoga. The religious spirit is to consider the revelations of the past as something unsurpassable, which cannot be questioned further — it is a closed book. In Yoga the book is not closed, there is a constant development of knowledge. That is why in India, those who have surpassed the past are not easily condemned. In many other traditions the moment you surpass the past you begin to be condemned, but in India this has been allowed. There has been an acceptance of the fact that one can move forward, that one can propound something new. The only thing is that when you propound something new, it should be scientific in character; it should be based upon observation, experiment, and verification — and in the case of Yoga, verification by abiding experience. "Abiding" means an experience which constantly lives with you, that is not lost.

Since I want to take you straight from the Veda to Sri Aurobindo, I will not burden you now with the many developments that took place with regard to Vedic knowledge during the intermediate

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period. I will simply take up the discoveries made by the Veda and compare them with the discoveries of Sri Aurobindo, both with regard to those discoveries and to discoveries that were not even contemplated in the Veda.

Let us first of all state them one by one, very briefly. The first discovery I told you about was that *life is a battle*. I spoke to you of the sentence "*The eater eating is eaten*" — that is the formula of the struggle that is there in this battle — and told you that this battle is not only among visible creatures. Behind it there is a battle of invisible forces, which are even greater. Sri Aurobindo confirms this position, first of all. He has declared that this world is a world of battle, and that this battle is not only between living creatures but is fought also among invisible forces, consisting of the gods and the adverse forces such as *Asuras*, *Rakshasas*, *Pishachas*, *Vritra*, *Dasus* and *Panis*. Even this classification of adverse forces is confirmed by Sri Aurobindo. He has written on this question of the battle of life in such a large way that we do not find its equal even in the Veda. Taking advantage of what is given in the Bhagavad-Gita, where there is the great scenario of *Kurukshetra*, he has spoken of the whole world as a *Kurukshetra*, he has spoken of the battle of life.

Sri Aurobindo confirms the Vedic perception that this battle is not the end of human life. The ultimate end is harmony. We are passing through a battle in order to arrive at harmony, and the ultimate message of the Veda is to establish harmony. Sri Aurobindo confirms that we are moving towards greater and greater harmony, and he has dealt with this question of harmony in an even greater way than all that has been done in the whole history of the world. This is a new element, the concept of harmony.

There has been in the past a concept that harmony is almost like a promise, like a dream. But very often in history the overwhelming tendency is to consider harmony as something not attainable in physical life. Although the Veda speaks of harmony here, the question whether it can be established on the earth on a permanent basis is not answered. If you look through the pages of the Veda, there is an incomplete statement. Whereas in Sri Aurobindo there is a new element: that in the physical world, harmony can and will and must be established. This is a very positive statement that Sri Aurobindo makes.

We shall come back to this again ? this is just a brief statement as to what is new in Sri Aurobindo, and this is a very important element ? but let us come to the second discovery of the Veda... I want to warn you about one thing: It is not as if the Vedic Rishis say, "We have made five discoveries." This is my statement. For my expounding of the Veda (for the sake of brevity, for the sake of bringing to you the message of the Veda in a brief, intelligible manner), I have spoken of five discoveries. But there are many-many discoveries. It is in that context that I have spoken to you about the second discovery of the Veda: the discovery of *the power of sacrifice*, the need to offer oneself in order to make progress, in order to attain the Truth, to attain Immortality.

This concept of sacrifice has been confirmed by Sri Aurobindo. He has written at length on this subject. In his book *The Secret of the Veda*, in his *Essays on the Gita*, in his book on the Upanishads, in his great book *The Synthesis of Yoga*, in *The Life Divine* and elsewhere, he has spoken of this principle of sacrifice, he has explained what sacrifice is. But very often the word "sacrifice" gives in India the image of lighting a physical fire and offering the rice and wooden sticks and clarified butter, and reciting mantras, and so on ? this is the idea of "sacrifice" that is prevalent in India. In the Veda itself this concept is transcended. The Veda does not speak only of the sacrifice of the physical fire. I told you the word "fire" is an algebraic term in the Veda: *Agni* is a power of illumined will, and when it is said that you light the fire it means that you give illumination to your inner will. You offer yourself to this Will, make that Will the leader. In the writings of Sri Aurobindo you will find that it is the inner meaning of sacrifice already present in the Veda, in the Gita, etc., which is brought out fully. Whenever Sri Aurobindo speaks of sacrifice he speaks of the inner sacrifice, and he explains this very clearly and very vastly. In the entire literature of India, in the entire literature of Indian Yoga, we do not get the kind of formulation of the idea of sacrifice that you find in Sri Aurobindo. It's a new element.

Sri Aurobindo has spoken of a triple sacrifice: sacrifice by the power of Knowledge, sacrifice by the power of Love, sacrifice by the power of Works. Sacrifice is therefore something that pertains to all three paths of Yoga. Very often in the past the idea of sacrifice was largely confined to the path of Works; in Sri Aurobindo we find a full formulation of the path of sacrifice being itself a triple path, a synthesis of Knowledge, Works and Devotion.

The third discovery of the Veda was *the Supermind*. We spoke of *turiyam swid*, the discovery of "that fourth one". Beyond the body, life and mind, they discovered the Supermind. There is a very curious description in the Veda of the Reality having four horns and three feet. *Chatuhshringa trayopadasya*, "it has got three feet and four horns". The four horns consist of, first, the Reality that



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exists, the principle of existence; the second horn is that of Consciousness; the third horn is Delight; the fourth is the horn of the Supermind. These are the four horns in the Veda, as Sri Aurobindo himself has explained. The three feet are the body, life and mind. So if you look at the entire Reality you get seven principles. And to confirm the entire discovery of the Veda, as it were, Sri Aurobindo has spoken of "the sevenfold cord of Being". The Reality is sevenfold ? he has confirmed this discovery of the Veda. Wherever you move, whether in the manifest or the un-manifest, there is a sevenfold Reality. Just as the ray of light has a spectrum of seven colors, and whether they are manifested or not they are always present, similarly there are seven principles of Being whether they are manifested or not. Sri Aurobindo has described these seven principles of Being in a most elaborate manner. This is not only confirmation of what was in the Veda. What is new in this is a detailed explanation of the whole Universe such as has never been done in the history of the world. The explanation of the Universe that we find in Sri Aurobindo, in its totality, in all its amplitude, with its fullness of data, is completely new. And Sri Aurobindo describes the Supermind in a most ample manner which is not to be found anywhere in the history of the world.

The question is: Was the Supermind known to the Vedic Rishis as fully, in such amplitude as we find in Sri Aurobindo? I cannot dare to make a statement myself, but shall take a statement from the Mother. This is from *The Mother's Agenda*. The disciple asks a question; he starts by saying:

*You don't have time now or I would bring up a problem. It can wait for another occasion.*

Which problem?

*About the discovery of the Supermind in the Veda and by Sri Aurobindo. There is something I don't quite grasp.*

Because in the Veda it is incomplete.

This is the statement of the Mother: "*Because it is incomplete*". Then She continues:

*No. They had a hint, like a vision of the thing, but there is no proof that they realized it. What is more, had they realized it seems to me that we would certainly have found some traces, but no traces remain.*

That's a very important statement. It is a claim that whenever you proceed to do Yoga, and you do it thoroughly and sincerely, in all its depth, the Yoga gives you all that has been realized in the past, so that you find the traces. If somebody has trodden a path then it becomes easier for you to tread it. You don't have to make a great effort to hew a new path.

I'm omitting something from the text to make it briefer for you:

*According to what Sri Aurobindo saw, and what I saw as well, the Rishis had the contact, the experience... How to put it? A kind of lived knowledge of the thing, coming like a promise, saying, 'THAT is what will be.' But it's not permanent. There is a big difference between their experience and the descent — what Sri Aurobindo calls "the descent of the Supermind": something that comes and establishes itself. (Agenda 7 November 61)*

And then Mother goes on further ? you can read it in your own time. But this is an important statement, that Sri Aurobindo made a kind of discovery which you don't find in the Veda. It's a new discovery.

If you read what Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have written on this question, it is some very difficult research work. What is the speciality that you find in Sri Aurobindo? It emerges from the question of the Supermind. The Vedic Rishis had some experience of the Supermind, but it was incomplete. In what way does Sri Aurobindo consider it incomplete? Why does Mother? This can be seen only when you study and do research into the questions that Sri Aurobindo asked and the answers that he found. The questions the Vedic Rishis asked were of one type, the questions that Sri Aurobindo asked of a different type. It has very much to do with the question of harmony of which I spoke earlier: Can harmony be established in the physical world, in physical life?

In our own time this question has become extremely imperative. It is as if mankind cannot make the next step forward if this question is not answered. Today as never before there is globality, things are beginning to become global, universal. Even a small battle can become gradually a world war ? can become ? and the weapons of war today are so disastrous that all mankind can be extinguished by their use. Therefore, the search for harmony, the search for peace, is imperative, so urgent. When Sri Aurobindo turned to Yoga, he did so first to find an answer to the question, "Can Yoga be utilized to attain freedom for India?" That was his first question. And he found an answer, but when he found it he saw that he was himself led to a deeper question; he found that the mere freedom

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of India was not enough. The whole world should be free ? free from fear, free from hunger, free from poverty, free from war, free from all kinds of envy and jealousy and rivalries of whatever kind.

He began to ask that deeper question. He was led himself to this question, and he made this search. He discovered the Supermind on his own. It is not as though he read the Veda and found the Supermind there, then practised Yoga, and then found the Supermind himself ? that is not what happened in Sri Aurobindo's life. On his own search he discovered the Supermind, and then when he read the Veda he found verification of it. And then he began to develop this knowledge of the Supermind, and surpassed what was known in the Veda. Because his question was: Can this Supermind be utilized? Is there any means by which the Supermind can be employed to resolve the problems of the crisis that mankind is facing today? This is the question he asked.

And surprisingly, we find that Mother, who had not met Sri Aurobindo until 1914, but who was practising Yoga on her own, had also found the Supermind.

Mother herself has said that when she met Sri Aurobindo on the ninth of March 1914, for the first time, she put a question to him. She told him that she had already discovered the Supermind on her own (and again it was not by reading the Veda, she did it by her own Yogic experience), and she asked this question: "Can the Supermind descend on the earth? Can it be brought down?"

And why did she put this question? Because she'd found that in Supermind there is automatic harmony. The Supermind is a system of relationships which are automatically harmonious. There is no need to make an effort to harmonize, it is spontaneously harmonious. So if that Supermind can come on the earth, then harmony can become automatic. Mother had seen that if Supermind could be brought down to earth, then harmony could be brought about on earth ? in the earth life, in physical life. The question was: Is it possible?

That was the question that Mother put to Sri Aurobindo in 1914. You can see the spirit of research involved. When Mother says that Auroville is meant for research, it is this kind of burning research that we must have in our own hearts, that kind of search that Mother had. She was looking for an answer to this question: Can the Supermind descend on the earth?

And Mother herself says in her account of this experience with Sri Aurobindo, that he answered very briefly, and said, "Yes."

It's a tremendous answer. That Supermind could descend on the earth, there was no doubt in his mind ? he had already done all the necessities of research. He had come to the conclusion that Supermind can descend on the earth.

Now, most of the people who'd had some vision of the Supermind had not come to this conclusion that Supermind can really descend on this earth. Actually, as Mother says in one of her other accounts later on, all the past experience had repeatedly said that the Highest cannot manifest in the physical. Whatever is the Highest (it may be Sachchidananda, the Supermind, the Supreme Love — it may be anything), you can have a little bit of it on earth, but it can never be permanently here, not even that little. It can never come down fully here in the physical world. For the first time, Sri Aurobindo made a statement: Yes, it can descend. And what is more important is Mother's remark that when Sri Aurobindo said "Yes" she saw that Supermind began to descend on the spot, at the same time. It was not merely saying "Yes". And then Mother made this remark: "*For the first time I saw a Knowledge so powerful that it could become actualized.*" The moment Sri Aurobindo said "Yes" then it began to descend.

Now you may say (and it is true) that even in the Veda there is a descent of the Supermind. But the kind of descent that we find in the Veda and the kind that we find in Sri Aurobindo ? there is a difference. I told you last time of the "victory of the Fathers" and gave a quotation from *Parashara*, the great Rishi, who described the condition in which the highest victory is obtained. That description is that the powers of the gods, who are the sons of *Aditi*, come down, and they can be sustained by the physical without dislocation. The body remains stable like a baked jar; not an unbaked, but a baked jar. And this is the state which they described as Immortality: when the Supermind can be sustained by the body and the body does not break down. "That is a state of Immortality" ? does this mean that it is a physical state, physical immortality? That is a question to be raised: Did the Rishis mean physical immortality?

The answer is: It could be. In one of the conversations in the Agenda, Mother says that it is quite possible that some of the Rishis are even now alive. It is quite possible. If the physical remains sustained even when the Supermind descends, that physical can continue to live on and on. But even then Mother makes a distinction between the immortality of the body and the state of deathlessness. Deathlessness is a state in which death is not obligated. It's a conquest of death. To merely continue

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to live on and on and on is not the conquest of death. The conquest of death is when death is not obligatory. One can die, but it is not obligatory, one cannot, one is not obliged to die. This is a different proposition. We shall discuss this question some other time, if there is a great sense of research in us. In fact, at one time in 1965 or 66, Mother announced that she was doing research into what death is, and said that she would help all those who wanted to do this research. What is death? Is death obligatory? Should death be there at all? Mother said that her entire life experience could be summed up in this one search. She said, as it were, “I am here on the earth to find an answer to this question ‘What is death?’ and to make the conquest of death.” Because in death is contained the seed of all that we call division, discord, disharmony, everything. There is a very interesting chapter in *The Life Divine* where Sri Aurobindo has brought out the issue of Immortality in fullness — briefly, but in all its aspects. Mere survival of death — that is, to survive after death — may also be regarded as immortality. That immortality exists already in our souls, for everyone. The soul survives death, the psychic being is immortal. It passes from one body to the other, but itself it remains the same. It grows, it enriches itself in experience, becomes vaster, but it remains. That immortality is of course known to everybody. To realize the immortality of the soul is also a great step. We may have heard of “the Immortality of the Soul” but not have experienced it. So experience of it is also a kind of an experience of immortality — you can say when you have experienced it, “I have become immortal” — but that is not the full content of the idea of Immortality. There is a deeper idea of Immortality, when you experience the Supreme Reality, which is indestructible in its nature. The soul is only a spark of that Reality, but when you realize the Reality itself, that is another experience of Immortality.

In the *Katha Upanishad* the Immortality that is described is that experience of the ultimate Reality. To live all the time in the experience of the Supreme Reality is to attain to Immortality. The physical may die, but when you experience your oneness with that Reality — which is indestructible and vast, which is Supreme — that experience is the experience of Immortality. But can that Immortality be experienced even while in the body? — that was the question. In India and elsewhere there is a big controversy on this. According to one belief you can experience this Immortality while in the body, according to others it is only when you leave the body that you can experience it, otherwise you can’t.

Immortality as understood in the Veda is much vaster. You can experience in the body the Immortality of the Supreme, you can experience His Reality in its supramental character. The powers of the gods, who are the sons of *Aditi*, the Supreme Mother, come down and inhabit your body, and your body remains. *Prithivi vitasthe*, in *Parashara’s* words. *Prithivi* means “the physical”, *vitasthe* “stood unshaken” — that is Vedic Immortality.

Yet this does not mean cutting out the principle of death in this evolutionary world. One can live on, even physically. Sri Aurobindo speaks of triple Immortality, apart from all these experiences of which I spoke: immortality of the Soul, immortality of the experience of the Supreme, immortality of the Supreme with the Supermind in the body. Apart from these three connotations of the word immortality, Sri Aurobindo speaks of triple Immortality: immortality of the mind, immortality of the vital, and immortality of the body. The triple Immortality is a special kind of immortality, in which there is a constant progression, without the necessity at any stage of any kind of dissolution. You can have the mind developing in such a way that it goes on developing but at no stage is required to dissolve itself in any way. It is progression all the time. Similarly with the vital and the physical. And Sri Aurobindo has laid down what is the condition when this kind of immortality is achieved. When the mind is able to be guided constantly by the inner soul, by the psychic being, not only inwardly but even on the surface — in other words, when all the movements of the mind become psychicised — then the mind does not need to be dissolved for further progression. Otherwise the law of progression is that when you make some progress, at a certain critical point, in order to make a further progress, something of the old has to be dissolved. And then again you make some progress, something of the old has to be dissolved. *Has* to be dissolved, compulsorily — if you don’t dissolve it you can’t make more progress. This is the normal process, but when the mind is fully psychicised, and since the psychic being is immortal, this capacity of the immortality of the soul is reflected and partaken of by the mind. But this would be even further enhanced if the mind were supramentalised — not only psychicised, but supramentalised. And similarly the vital is psychicised and supramentalised and the body is psychicised and supramentalised.

This question of supramentalisation is very important. You can eliminate the principle of death — this is the new discovery that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have made. Even while remaining in the body, without the necessity of dissolution, whether the body can respond to the Will of the Supermind constantly, uninterruptedly — this is the question that Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have

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raised. And unless this is done, harmony on the earth is not possible. Because ultimately, harmony on the earth has to be a physical harmony, on the physical plane.

There is a difference between the body remaining stable even when the Supermind descends into it, and a new concept that you find in the Mother and Sri Aurobindo: permeation of the physical by the Supermind. The Supermind coming in the body and living in the body, but not yet permeating the body, is one stage. But the Supermind entering a body that remains stable and then going further, permeating into the physical — this question of permeation was never raised in the whole history of mankind. Is it possible for the Supermind to permeate the physical? And what is the condition of it? What forces are needed? How can you do it?

This is a very big discovery: Sri Aurobindo and the Mother have said that this can be done. Supermind can permeate the physical, so as to eliminate the necessity of death. The *necessity* of death — one can die, but the necessity of death, the obligation to die, would be eliminated. One can continue to live for thousands of years, but yet be obliged to die, that obligation would not be eliminated. Here one may die, but there's no obligation to die. There is what is called *death at will*, of which India knows very much — it is called *ichchha-mrityu*, "you die at will". But the death at will is only a temporary kind of adjustment, it is not a conquest of the obligation to die, but merely the capacity to determine the time when one can die. One can postpone it for some time, like Bhishma — it is said that he had the capacity to die at will, and he could postpone his death by some months. This is not a conquest of the obligation to die. One knows that one has to die, but one can postpone it. That is not what Mother and Sri Aurobindo speak of. The conquest of death is the conquest of the obligation to die, and that conquest, Sri Aurobindo and the Mother said, can be achieved. I referred once to Mother's declaration on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 1970, where she said, "It is done." In categorical terms she said, "It is done." And she said that now the Supermind can be permanently established in the physical. This is the difference between the Vedic discovery of the Supermind and Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's discovery. As Mother points out, in the Veda there is no indication that they had permanently established the Supermind. Mother and Sri Aurobindo wanted a permanent fixation of the Supermind on the earth. And why this permanent fixation? Because unless this is done there can't be durable peace. You must have heard in the modern world this term *durable peace*, the peace that endures, the peace that is never destroyed, it will remain. It's not as if you postpone world war now and then live in the fear of its coming. There is an obligation of war, as it were. We are obliged to fight. We can postpone the fight, but we are obliged to fight. We are at present at that stage. We are still obliged to fight. If the earth is to be free from the very obligation to fight.

I said that Sri Aurobindo confirms the Vedic experience that human life is a battle. He confirms the Vedic aspiration that we must arrive at harmony and peace. But what Sri Aurobindo has done is, which was not done elsewhere at all in the history of the world, this is new, is that the world need not be obliged to be a field of battle. At present it is a battlefield, but this whole principle of conflict can be eliminated from the world experience. And Mother said that it is done. For working it out it may take centuries, it may take a thousand years — it doesn't matter — but it is done. This gives a completely new perspective.

I told you about the letter I wrote to the Mother where I described my syllabus of the spiritual history of India. I would like to take this opportunity to read out to you the answer of the Mother. It's a short answer, but I would like to tell you what Mother told me because it is very relevant to the present question.

*You were trying to show the continuity of history with Sri Aurobindo as the outcome, the culmination. It is false entirely. Sri Aurobindo does not belong to history. He is outside and beyond history. Until the birth of Sri Aurobindo, religions and spiritualities were always centered on past figures, and they were showing as a goal the negation of life upon the earth. So you had a choice between two alternatives: either a life in this world with its round of petty pleasures and pains, joys and sufferings, threatened by Hell if you were not behaving properly; or an escape into another world — Heaven, Nirvana, moksha, liberation. Between these two there is nothing much to choose: They are equally bad. Sri Aurobindo has told us that this was the fundamental mistake which accounts for the weakness and degradation of India. Buddhism, Jainism, Illusionism were sufficient to sap all energy out of the country. True, India is the only place in the world which is still aware that something else than Matter exists, the other countries have forgotten it, Europe, America and elsewhere. That is why she still has a message to preserve and deliver to the world. But at present she is splashing and floundering in the muddle. Sri Aurobindo has shown that the Truth does not lie in running away from*



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*the earthly life, but in remaining in it to transform it, divinize it, so that the Divine can manifest here in this physical world.*

Then she addresses me and says:

*You should tell all this at the first sitting. You should be square and frank. Then — when this is told strongly, squarely, and there is no doubt about it — and then only, you can go on and amuse them with the history of religions and religious and spiritual leaders. Then, and then only you will be able to show the seed of weakness and falsehood that they have harbored and proclaimed. Then, and then only you will be able to discern from time to time, from place to place, an intuition that something else is possible. In the Vedas, for instance, the injunction to descend deep into the cave of the Panis. In the Tantras also, a little Light burning. I may add that you could adopt as a motto for your first project this quotation of Sri Aurobindo: ‘We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future’.*

This is the third discovery of the Veda, about the Supermind, and I told you how Sri Aurobindo goes beyond — it's not beyond, but something new that was not even conceived in the Veda.

In a sense, by telling you all this I have told you also what Sri Aurobindo has done with regard to the two other discoveries: the discovery of *the Supreme Reality*, and the discovery of *the completeness of knowledge*, the integrality of knowledge that we find in the Veda, and the Yoga of the Veda.

So with regard to each one of these five discoveries, there is in Sri Aurobindo, as Mother says, *“the presence of the noons of the future”*.