

Religion and Occultism

RELIGION

God gives Himself to His whole creation; no one religion holds the monopoly of His Grace.

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Instead of excluding each other, religions ought to complete each other.

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The spiritual spirit is not contrary to a religious feeling of adoration, devotion and consecration. But what is wrong in the religions is the fixity of the mind clinging to one formula as an exclusive truth. One must always remember that formulas are only a mental expression of the truth and that this truth can always be expressed in many other ways.

6 December 1964

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You express your faith in Sri Aurobindo with certain words which are for you the best expression of this faith; this is quite all right. But if you are convinced that these very words are the only correct ones to express what Sri Aurobindo is, then you become dogmatic and are ready to create a religion.

5 March 1965

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In a severe tone:

“Madam, you are pledging your word.”

Very quietly:

“I know it, sir, and when I make a promise, I keep it. But for me these things don’t have much importance. I have no

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attachment for any religion, and when one has no attachment, one has no aversion either. For me religions are forms, much too human, of spiritual life. Each one expresses one aspect of the single and eternal Truth, but in expressing it exclusive of the other aspects, it deforms and diminishes it. None has the right to call itself the only true one, any more than it has the right to deny the truth contained in the others. And all of them together would not suffice to express the Supreme Truth which is beyond all expression, even whilst being present in each one.”

In a dry tone:

“I am sorry, madam, but in this field I cannot follow you.”

Smiling and peaceful:

“I know that very well, sir, and I told you all this only to explain to you why I did not reply very seriously to the promise you were demanding from me.”

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Why do men want to worship?

It is far better to become than to worship.

It is the reluctance to change that makes one worship.

24 June 1969

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One may abstain from worship only on condition that one changes, for there are many who want neither to change nor to worship!

June 1969

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The attitude to be taken towards religions

A benevolent goodwill towards all worshippers.

An enlightened indifference towards all religions.

All religions are partial approximations of the one sole Truth that is far above them.

April 1969

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A benevolent goodwill towards all worshippers.

An enlightened indifference towards all religions.

As for the relation with the beings of the Overmind, if this relation exists already, each case must have its own solution.

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Why do men cling to a religion?

Religions are based on creeds which are spiritual experiences brought down to a level where they become more easy to grasp, but at the cost of their integral purity and truth.

The time of religions is over.

We have entered the age of universal spirituality, of spiritual experience in its initial purity.

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(About an article entitled "Religion in the New Age")

I have read the article — it is all right. I have made only one change — in the last page, where you write "since it will be the age of God" (God is still too religious) I have put "of the ONE" — because it will truly be the age of Unity.

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I approve of your continuing this practice in the Arya Home provided those who live there are *absolutely free* to attend or not according to their own conviction. Practices of this kind have no spiritual value if they become a habit or a compulsion, even if it is only a *mental* compulsion. I mean to say that no propaganda spirit must be used.

With blessings.

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Religious thought cannot be used unless it is liberated from the influence of religions.

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The notion of religion is most often linked with the search for God. Should religion be understood in this context only? As a matter of fact, these days, are there not other forms of religion?

We call “religion” any concept of the world or the universe which is presented as the exclusive Truth in which one must have absolute faith, generally because this Truth is declared to be the result of a revelation.

Most of the religions affirm the existence of a God and the rules to follow to obey Him, but there are some Godless religions, such as the socio-political organisations which, in the name of an Ideal or the State, claim the same right to be obeyed.

Man’s right is to pursue the Truth freely and to approach it freely in his own way. But each one ought to know that his discovery is good for him alone and is not to be imposed upon others.

13 May 1970

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You must not confuse a religious teaching with a spiritual one.

Religious teaching belongs to the past and halts progress.

Spiritual teaching is the teaching of the future — it illumines the consciousness and prepares it for future realisation.

Spiritual teaching is above religions and strives towards a global Truth.

It teaches us to enter into direct relation with the Divine.

15 July 1972

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OCCULTISM

Occultism does not truly blossom except when it is surrendered to the Divine.

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And yet there is an analogy. Just as you may read all the books possible on the art of playing the piano, but if you do not play it yourself you will never be a pianist, so too you may read everything that has been written on occultism, but if you do not practise it yourself you will never be an occultist.

November 1957

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Pre-vision: the power of projecting one's consciousness into the future.

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I do not like these showy miracles — they most often fail pitifully under the pressure of the Force. The first effect is a dangerous swelling of the ego. In front of all that, there is only one attitude to take — do your best and leave the result to the Lord.

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In the lives of many saints we read that with full trust the devotee refused to eat unless the Lord appeared and took part. And the Lord did appear and eat and work like human beings. Is there any truth in such stories?

A psychological truth because anybody can become for you the Lord if so you decide. The subjective point of view is much more widely prevailing than is generally admitted.

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I have gone through the papers you sent me.

The historic part of the papers seems to be true. The founder must surely have been acquainted with the Kaballah and with some mystics of Asia Minor. The original appears to have been written in Latin with adjuncts of Hebrew words (probably taken

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from the Kaballah). But the Osiris-Isis part looks to me like a more recent addition which came in something like 50 or 60 years ago.

The whole thing is from its origin a very well-made, a very strong and elaborate *mental formation*, powerfully designed to catch hold of certain vital elements and forces (both outside and inside the individuals) to rule and use them and through the vital to exercise a partial power over the physical.

Formations of this kind are numerous; they translate upon earth into secret societies. I have met *many* of the kind, more or less ancient, more or less powerfully organised, but all of a similar type. They are not, in their nature, spiritual. If there is any spirituality in them, it comes *not from the formation itself* but from the presence, in the society, of one or several personalities with a spiritual character and achievement.

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In ancient times the teaching of the great spiritual truths was a secret teaching reserved for a small number of initiates.

Even now there are things that are spoken but cannot be written down, and still less can they be printed.

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In our daily practices we are endeavouring to express the great mystery of the Divine Incarnation.

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In the final analysis, formulated knowledge is only a language that gives the power to act upon the object of this knowledge.

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(A sadhak wrote that devotees were performing ceremonies much like the worship of deities in front of the

photographs of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Stating that for proper worship there should be a bija-mantra [seed-mantra] to invoke the deity, he asked whether there was such a mantra for Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Mother replied:)

I always advise to let the mantra rise from the depth of the heart as a sincere aspiration.

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It occurs to me to beg Thee for a key word for japa.

OM.

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OM is the signature of the Lord.

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(About pranam, the gesture of obeisance to the Divine)

This gesture, when one makes it in all sincerity, is the consecration to the Divine in the whole creation. It is that, that is the origin of the thing... Like a recognition, a recognition and a submission to the Divine in the creation.

That is the true meaning. Naturally, in outer appearance, not one person in a thousand does that... but that is the true meaning of this gesture.¹

19 March 1973

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¹ Tape-recorded.

ASTROLOGY

Do not fear for your life — the astrologers do not always say the truth.

7 November 1939

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The stars have no decisive influence. It is only if one does not believe in the Divine that one unnecessarily suffers by believing that they determine one's life.

I have known many astrologers both in Europe and India. So far, nobody has been able to read the future correctly. There are three reasons for the failure. First, the astrologers do not know how to read the future properly. Secondly, the horoscope is always incorrectly made — unless a man is a mathematical genius. And even for such a person it is very difficult to make a correct horoscope. Thirdly, when people say that the stars in this or that house at the time of birth rule your life, they are quite wrong. The stars under which you are born are only “tape-recorders” of physical conditions. They do not rule the future of the soul. There is something beyond, which rules the stars themselves and everything else. The soul belongs to this Supreme Being. And if it is doing Yoga, then all the more it should never believe in the power of the stars or in any other power.

An astrologer who predicts a catastrophe for you is like a joker. Many jokers say things like, “Today you will break your neck!” But in spite of the joke nothing happens.

Only a great Yogi can tell you your future correctly. But even then there is the Supreme Will which alone controls and decides everything.§

8 September 1961

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X who has been studying astrology has prepared my horoscope. I send it to you to see. Do you think the indications he has given in it for my future have any value?

The horoscope is sufficiently vague and favourable to be taken in consideration as the base of a mental conception for your future.

The most important factor in a horoscope is the intuitive faculty of the astrologer.

6 May 1964

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Why do you believe in what the astrologers say? It is the belief that brings the trouble.

Sri Aurobindo says that a man becomes what he thinks he is.

1965

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Horoscopes have no importance for those who take up yoga, because the influence that works through yoga is much more powerful than the influence of the stars.

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PALMISTRY

Palmistry is a very interesting art, but it depends for its exactitude and truthfulness almost entirely upon the real ability of the one who practises it. Moreover, it relates only to the material destiny and this destiny can be altered by the intervention of the higher forces.

3 January 1951

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Words of the Mother – III

NUMBERS

- 1 — The One
- 2 — Decision for Creation
- 3 — Beginning of Creation
- 4 — Manifestation
- 5 — Power
- 6 — Creation
- 7 — Realisation
- 8 — Occult Formation
- 9 — Power of Static Fulfilment
- 10 — Power of Expression
- 11 — Progress
- 12 — Perfect Manifestation Stabilised

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- 1 — The Origin
- 2 — Appearance of the Creative Consciousness
- 3 — Sachchidananda
- 4 — Manifestation
- 5 — Power
- 6 — New Creation
- 7 — Realisation
- 8 — Double Enclosure (protection from inner and outer enemies)
- 9 — New Birth
- 10 — Perfection
- 11 — Progress
- 12 — Double Perfection (spiritual and material)
- 14 — Transformation§

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This morning after Pranam, Thou blest me with four flowers of Sincerity. I feel that there is special significance

in it, but I am unable to find out the same. May I know it?

When I picked up the flowers to give you, I felt that several were coming and I willed: "Let it be the number of the states of the being in which the Sincerity (in the consecration to the Divine) will be definitively established." Four means integrality: the four states of being, mental, psychic, vital, physical.

27 December 1933

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COLOURS

*Can one tell when the colour yellow indicates the mind
and when it indicates light?*

Greenish yellow is mental.

Orange yellow is the symbol of light.

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SYMBOLS

The fox on the envelope means cleverness.

8 January 1932

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It is a hare — "prudence".

9 February 1932

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Mother, what does the deer signify?

Gentleness and swiftness of movement.

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Generally a snake symbolises a movement of falsehood, When something in the nature is in affinity with falsehood, snakes are attracted. The nature of the falsehood is indicated by the nature of the snake and the plane where it appears.

30 August 1932

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Please tell me what the horse means.

The horse signifies the powers of the individual being, which must be controlled (bridled).

1 January 1933

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What is the meaning of the drawing You sent me on the envelope?

It is a *lamb*, which means “purity”.

4 January 1933

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What is the significance of the picture You sent me?

This boar is the symbol of desires.

1933

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(Significance of the falcon)

Keen sight.

1933

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The snake is not the symbol of power but of *energy*, and just as there are obscure and perverted energies, so too the snake can be the symbol of unregenerate and anti-divine forces.

29 May 1934

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Does the cow really have a special sanctity or is it merely a tradition based on economic needs?

Mere tradition based on old symbols.

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Mother, what is the meaning of the house in the picture?

I do not remember the picture I sent. A house is generally a place of rest and safety.

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This little badge was chosen as it is — a single ball hanging from a cord made of countless silk threads — for the following reasons.

The ball — the globe — is a symbol of universality, integrality, infinity. One, it becomes the symbol of the Supreme Oneness manifested in all the domains of the being — the multiplicity — represented by the silk cord.

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In the picture which I received today from Thee, I see someone offering with two hands a full-bloomed red lotus, a lotus bud and a garland. The background of the picture is yellow in colour. What do all these signify?

The red lotus is the symbol of the Avatar and the offering of the red lotus is meant to suggest the full consecration to

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the Avatar; the yellow background represents the supramental manifestation.

8 November 1933

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What is symbolised by the waterfall in the picture you have given me? Is it not the current of your serene peace and of your divine force which constantly floods me?

Yes, it is the symbol of the descent of the divine forces upon the physical plane.

25 January 1934

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Water signifies many things such as fluidity, plasticity, suppleness, the purifying principle. It is the driving force and marks the beginning of organised life.§

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Water corresponds to the vital, air to mind, fire to the psychic, earth to matter and ether to the spirit.

20 August 1955

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The diamond is the symbol of pure spiritual light. No hostile force can cross it. If you put that light on a hostile force, he simply melts away. But the diamond light cannot be used indiscriminately in all cases, because human beings who shelter these adverse forces get very dangerously affected.

Of course I am not speaking of material diamonds.§

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*What is the relation between the Supramental Light and
the solar light?*

The solar light is the symbol of the supramental light.

9 July 1965

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We invoke the solar light, symbol of the Supreme Lord, to give
us the Light of Truth.

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Symbols are a convention, and their value is the same as the
value of the languages.

10 April 1966