

17 February 1954

This talk is based upon Mother's essay "Psychic Education and Spiritual Education".

Once the being has entered into contact with the psychic, why does the psychic again hide itself?

It is not the psychic that hides itself, it is the being which returns to its ordinary consciousness!... It is difficult for it to remain at its highest. One slides down, falls back. Only, the second time the discovery is easier. And each time the road is easier until one no longer falls back.

Sweet Mother, I don't understand this: "Normally this discovery [of the eternal principle in oneself] is associated with a mystic feeling, a religious life, because it is mainly the religions that have concerned themselves with this aspect of life. But it need not necessarily be so: the mystic notion of God may be replaced by the more philosophical notion of truth and still the discovery will remain essentially the same, but the road leading to it may be taken even by the most intransigent positivist."

What is it that you don't understand? I mean that what one thinks is not of much importance because thought is formed by the surroundings in which one is born and the education one has received — but that is only one way of saying things. And you can say them in all sorts of ways: they remain what they are. What is it that you don't understand?

If the mystic notion of God is replaced by the more philosophical notion....

17 February 1954

It all depends on what meaning you put into the word “God”. It is a word (I have told you this at least four or five times) to express “something” you do not know but are trying to attain. Well, if you have received a religious education, you are accustomed to call this “God”. If you have received a more positivist and also a more philosophical education, you are accustomed to call this by all sorts of names, and you may at the same time have the idea that it is the supreme truth. If one wants to speak of God and describe him, one is obliged to make use of things which are the most inaccessible to our consciousness, and to call God what is beyond anything we know and can grasp and be — all that is too far for us to be able to understand, we call God. Only some religions (there are some) give a precise form to the godhead; and sometimes they give several forms and they have several gods; sometimes they give one form and have only one God; but all this is human fabrication. There is “something”, there is a reality which is beyond all our expressions, but which we can succeed in contacting by practising a discipline. We can identify ourselves with it. Once one is identified with it one knows what it is, but one cannot express it, for words cannot say it. So, if you use one kind of vocabulary, if you have a particular mental conviction, you will use the vocabulary corresponding to that conviction. If you belong to another group which has another way of speaking, you will call it or even think about it in that way. I am telling you this to give you the true impression, that there is something there which cannot be grasped — grasped by thought — but which exists. But the name you give it matters little, that’s of no importance, it *exists*. And so the only thing to do is to enter into contact with it — not to give it a name or describe it. In fact, there is hardly any use giving it a name or describing it. One must try to enter into contact, to concentrate upon it, live it, live that reality, and whatever the name you give it is not at all important once you have the experience. The experience alone matters. And when people associate the experience with a particular expression — and in so narrow a

Questions and Answers

way, so closed up in itself that apart from this formula one can find nothing — that is an inferiority. One must be able to *live* that reality through all possible paths, all occasions, all formations; one must live it, for that indeed is true, for that is supremely good, that is all-powerful, that knows everything, that... Yes, one can live that, but one cannot speak about it. And if one does speak, all that one says about it has no great importance. It is only one way of speaking, that is all. There is an entire line of philosophers and people who have replaced the notion of God by the notion of an impersonal Absolute or by a notion of Truth or a notion of justice or even by a notion of progress — of something eternally progressive; but for one who has within him the capacity of identifying himself with that, what has been said about it hasn't much importance. Sometimes one may read a whole book of philosophy and not progress a step farther. Sometimes one may be quite a fervent devotee of a religion and not progress. There are people who have spent entire lifetimes seated in contemplation and attained nothing. There are people (we have well-known examples) who used to do the most modest of manual works, like a cobbler mending old shoes, and who had an experience. It is altogether beyond what one thinks and says of it. It is a gift, that's all. And all that is needed is to be that — to succeed in identifying oneself with it and live it. At times you read one sentence in a book and that leads you there. Sometimes you read entire books of philosophy or religion and they get you nowhere. There are people, however, whom the reading of philosophy books helps to go ahead. But all these things are secondary. There is only one thing that's important: that is a sincere and persistent will, for these things don't happen in a twinkling. So one must persevere. When someone feels that he is not advancing, he must not get discouraged; he must try to find out what it is in the nature that is opposing, and then make the necessary progress. And suddenly one goes forward. And when you reach the end you have an experience. And what is remarkable is that people who have followed altogether different

17 February 1954

paths, with altogether different mental constructions, from the greatest believer to the most unbelieving, even materialists, have arrived at that experience, it is the same for everyone. Because it is true — because it is real, because it is the sole reality. And it is quite simply *that*. I do not say anything more. This is of no importance, the way one speaks about it, what is important is to follow the path, *your* path, no matter which — yes, to go there.

I did not understand the explanation of the psychic you have given: "One could say, for example, that the creation of an individual being is the result of the projection, in time and space, of one of the countless possibilities latent in the supreme origin of all manifestation which, through the medium of the one and universal consciousness, takes concrete form in the law or the truth of an individual and so, by a progressive development, becomes his soul or psychic being."

It is a little philosophical.... You know the difference between what is subjective and what is objective? You know it! Well, imagine precisely this Reality we were speaking about, which is at the origin of all things, passing from the subjective to the objective state. That is, what was within becomes as though projected outside. It is the *same* thing; it is the state that changes. And so, within it there are all the possibilities of objective existence; within they are unexpressed, unmanifested; outside they are projected, as a picture is projected on the cinema-screen: we see it before us. And every element that was a possibility within, a law, becomes the law of a realisation. And every one of these possibilities becomes the reality of a being, of an individuality if you like, of something existing objectively. And it is that law which is the origin of the centre of the psychic being: it is the truth of the being or the law of the being. The Buddha called it the "law", he spoke of the *Dharma*. It is the truth of the being. It is that which binds it again indestructibly to its origin. And

Questions and Answers

that is the starting-point of the psychic being. And so, even as this develops, like the picture on the screen, it takes a more and more complex and precise form in the manifestation. But the reality of that form is one, it is bound to the One. And all the units are linked together and reproduce the One.

Is it not easier?... (*Looking at the child*) It is still more difficult! But indeed, that's what I have said here.

Sweet Mother, you have said: "Give up all personal seeking for comfort, satisfaction, enjoyment or happiness. Be only a burning fire for progress, take whatever comes to you as an aid to your progress and immediately make whatever progress is required."

Yes, that's quite simple! It is very clear!

Yes, but if I want to progress in sports, for instance, then that would be a personal progress, wouldn't it?

Eh? What? In sports? No, the value of the will depends on your aim. If it is in order to be successful and earn a reputation for yourself and be better than others — all sorts of ideas like that — then that becomes something very egoistic, very personal and you won't be able to progress — yes, you will make progress but still it won't lead you anywhere. But if you do it with the idea of being open, even in the physical, to the divine Influence, to be a good instrument and manifest Him, then that is very good. Not clear?

Yes.

Physical things are not necessarily more egoistic than mental or emotional ones. Far from it. They are often much less so. Egoism does not lie in that, egoism lies in the inner attitude. It does not depend on the field in which you are concentrated, it depends

17 February 1954

on the attitude you have. It does not depend on what you do, it depends on the way you do it.

Sweet Mother, you say: "Never take physical happenings at their face value. They are always a clumsy attempt to express something else, the true thing which escapes our superficial understanding." But, Mother, it is said one must not be pessimistic, and here you have said, "They are always a clumsy attempt..."

This means that the material world, just as it is, is very awkward at expressing the truth which is behind. That is obvious. I believe we don't need to reflect very deeply to perceive that, unless there are people... Yes, in "The Four Austerities" I speak of those who are perfectly adjusted in life and find everything wonderful, but I haven't yet met many of these who can believe it all their life through. I am speaking of optimists — one is optimistic so long as one is healthy and very young, and then, as soon as one begins to be less strong and less healthy, optimism vanishes. But still, if one has a little sense and sensibility, it is easy to see that everything is not for the best in the best possible world, for if you yourself are comfortable and have all you need, if you are getting on well and have no cares, that does not mean that there are not millions of beings in altogether hard and painful situations. Then, it may be very easy to think only of oneself. But it is not something very advisable. I knew people who were very rich and had never had the chance to come into contact with those who had nothing or hadn't enough, and for them it was something unthinkable. I knew a lady (I knew many) who lived in a very fine apartment with many servants and all possible comfort — she had always lived thus and had never known any but easy circumstances — and one day I spoke to her about someone, a person of great worth and merit but who had nothing, hadn't enough to eat — and I asked her to help that person, not with money for he would not have accepted it, but with some work

Questions and Answers

or by inviting him to pass some time with her (for she had a philosophical mind and could have helped intellectually). So I told her: “You know, he doesn’t always eat his fill.” I saw that she did not understand. I said: “Well, yes, he does not always have enough money to buy food — buy bread and what he needs to eat.” — “But surely there is always bread and food in the kitchen!” (*Laughter*) She said that so spontaneously!