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According to the Mother, Savitri is:

- 1) The daily record of the spiritual experiences of the individual who has written.
- 2) A complete system of yoga which can serve as a guide for those who want to follow the integral sadhana.
- 3) The yoga of the Earth in its ascension towards the Divine.
- 4) The experiences of the Divine Mother in her effort to adapt herself to the body she has taken and the ignorance and the falsity of the earth upon which she has incarnated. *MCW 13:24*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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About Savitri

On the morning of 20th December 1967 the Mother saw me in her music-cum-interview room. She asked me:

“Have you brought anything to show me ?”

I replied: “Yes, Mother. Here is the file of the four hundred and sixty-five passages from Savitri which you recited and which were put below the Savitri paintings when they were exhibited on 10th February 1967 under the title you had given:

‘MEDITATIONS ON SAVITRI’. Mother, will you please explain these passages to me and allow me to take down your explanations of them on my tape-recorder as I did with your recitations of the passages? Then surely people will be able to understand the Savitri paintings more easily.”

She concentrated for a moment or two, then replied enthusiastically:

“If I have to explain these passages, I would prefer to start from the very beginning and give a full explanation of the whole of Savitri.”

In fact this had been planned in the Mother’s vision long ago, before I came to stay near her on 10th February 1955. Amal Kiran has reported how, soon after the first one-volume edition of Savitri was published in 1954 by the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education, the Mother revealed to a small group of sadhaks:

“Savitri is occult knowledge and spiritual experience. Some part of it can be understood mentally - but much of it needs the same knowledge and experience

for understanding it. Nobody here except myself can explain Savitri. One day I hope to explain it in its true sense.”

On the morning of January 18, 1968 the Mother and I commenced our work on Savitri, and on January 28 the Mother gave the new work the name “About Savitri”.

I may indicate how we proceeded. The Mother read out the passages from Savitri and then after a deep contemplation gave her comments, which I tape-recorded and later transcribed. I also prepared paintings inspired by the passages, according to her instructions.

As we went on the Mother uncovered Sri Aurobindo’s visions and her own of the New World expressing the Supramental Light, Consciousness, Force and Delight. She disclosed their effect on the cells of the body. Taking the theme of Savitri as her starting-point, when the time came she spoke about the action of the New Consciousness which started manifesting from the beginning of the year 1969.

On March 21st 1969, after our Savitri work, the Mother told me:

“Child, do you know, from the beginning of this year the New Consciousness has been coming down on earth which tells everything - what to do and what not to do - to people who are conscious and want to change.

This Consciousness is gradually and gently organising everything. When you are withdrawn, quietly and silently, and listen to it, it will tell you what you should do and what you should not.

This Consciousness does not do anything violently and forcibly, but gently and gradually. It works not only in the mind and vital being but also in the body. It takes great care of the body and everything else.

I am putting this Consciousness around you. You will see and feel it. It will tell you everything. It is always smiling. It never gets angry, it never scolds, but is very gentle and sweet - you’ll see!”

The Mother always kept her promises. I became more and more aware of the New Consciousness and its action.

The Mother’s message of April 1, 1969 was based on one of her talks to me. It runs:

“Since the beginning of this year a new consciousness is at work upon earth to prepare men for a new creation, the superman. For this creation to be possible the substance that constitutes man’s body must undergo a big change, it must become more receptive to the consciousness and more plastic under its working.

These are just the qualities that one can acquire through physical education. So, if we follow this discipline with such a result in view, we are sure to obtain the most interesting result.

My blessings to all, for progress and achievement. MCW 12:278

The days passed and our work went on. One day the Mother told me:

“Now I have caught the exact thing regarding the work - now I know what Sri Aurobindo wants me to do.”

On another occasion she said:

“You see, Savitri is very good for me also, because while I read and recite I do not think at all. I am only inspired. I need this experience.”

I answered:

“Ah, Mother - you don’t need anything, because you are the Divine, aren’t you?”

She laughed softly and replied:

“Yes, I am - but this [indicating her body] is physical. And there is the physical world, and it must be perfected. In fact, nothing is enough for me.”

Then during the next session of our Savitri work she revealed:

“This work is really very good. I like it. When I concentrate and go back to the origin of the creation, I see things as a whole in their reality, and then I speak.

You see, each time when I speak, Sri Aurobindo comes here. And I speak

exactly what he wants me to speak. It is the inner hidden truth of Savitri that he wants me to reveal.

Each time he comes, a wonderful atmosphere is created. I have read Savitri before, but it was nothing compared to this reading.”

Our work continued up to 9 August 1970, when the Mother had to suspend it on account of her health. The last passage she could comment on is halfway through Book One, Canto Four. It runs:

*A Consciousness that knows not its own truth,
A vagrant hunter of misleading dawns,
Between the being's dark and luminous ends
Moves here in a half-light that seems the whole:
An interregnum in Reality
Cuts off the integral Thought, the total Power;
It circles or stands in a vague interspace,
Doubtful of its beginning and its close,
Or runs upon a road that has no end;
Far from the original Dusk, the final Flame
In some huge void Inconscience it lives,
Like a thought persisting in a wide emptiness.
As if an unintelligible phrase
Suggested a million renderings to the Mind,
It lends a purport to a random world.
A conjecture leaning upon doubtful proofs,
A message misunderstood, a thought confused
Missing its aim is all that it can speak
Or a fragment of the universal word.
It leaves two giant letters void of sense
While without sanction turns the middle sign
Carrying an enigmatic universe,
As if a present without future or past
Repeating the same revolution's whirl
Turned on its axis in its own Inane.*

p.55-56

On this passage the Mother commented:

“This is the world as it seems to the eyes of an ignorant vanity that lives without knowing, sees without understanding and is cut off from its Origin. The why of all this is hidden, and unless it is discovered and lived consciously, life will always be an incoherent horror.

But we are here to discover, to know and to live, and we can bear the horror with the certitude that the Light, the Knowledge and the Purpose will one day be manifested.

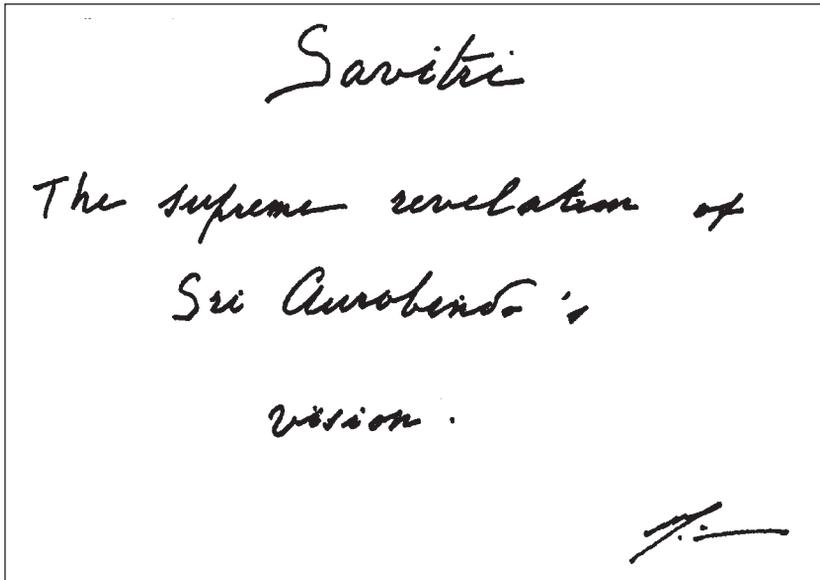
With patience and firmness and quiet assurance we must go on, we must endure and we must realise.”

The Mother arranged for her explanations of Book One Canto One to be published in February 1972, along with the paintings corresponding to each passage which I had made according to her instructions and inspiration. To this book she gave the title :



About Savitri
with
some paintings

and this message:



Three more volumes of “About Savitri”, containing the Mother’s explanations of Canto 2, Canto 3 and the first half of Canto 4 are in preparation and awaiting publication.

The Mother’s wonderful comments give a unique insight into Sri Aurobindo’s masterpiece, in the light of her own experiences during the time when our work was going on. My profound gratitude to Sri Aurobindo and the Divine Mother for their Grace and Love.

Huta

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From February 20 - 28 1999, the Mother’s explanations of Book One Canto One will be exhibited at Savitri Bhavan, along with the corresponding passages from Savitri and reproductions of Huta’s paintings. We shall also be playing the recordings of the Mother’s readings and comments, and showing the slides of the paintings.

“A god come down and greater by the fall”

*Based on the talk by Professor Arabinda Basu at Savitri Bhavan
August 9, 1998¹*

Children of the Mother, this morning I would like to talk about one single line. This line occurs in the Canto entitled “The Vision and the Boon”. The passage runs :

*This strange irrational product of the mire,
This compromise between the beast and god,
Is not the crown of thy miraculous world.
I know there shall inform the inconscient cells,
At one with Nature and at height with heaven,
A spirit vast as the containing sky
And swept with ecstasy from invisible founts,
A god come down and greater by the fall.*

p.343²

This last line is a very very significant one, which seems to me to turn the whole history of spirituality upside down. The ideal of spiritual pursuit that is expressed in this particular line has never been expressed before. This morning I will attempt to explain this startlingly original idea: “A god come down and greater by the fall”.

The entire history of spirituality has asserted that as a human being you are a fallen creature, whatever explanation may be given for the fall, and that you have to get back to where you came from.... whether from God or Brahman or whatever. You have to regain union with your source. All spirituality has aimed at getting back to the source from which we came.

1. Professor Basu is preparing an expanded version for publication.

2. References are to Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library, Vol. 28.

But here Sri Aurobindo speaks of “A god come down”. It seems to me that this phrase indicates a deliberate choice. This suggests that we have voluntarily exiled ourselves from our true Self, deliberately, by choice. Why? And how is it that we are greater by the fall?

Sri Aurobindo seems to say that because you have fallen you have become greater, at least potentially. So the question is not about getting back to where you came from, but of doing something here. This is absolutely fresh and original. Our greatness consists not in rebecoming what we were before we fell, but in doing something here, on this earth. As far as I know, this does not exist in any other spiritual discipline or philosophy or yoga.

This idea occurs already in the first Canto of Savitri, where Sri Aurobindo speaks of “The godhead greater by a human fate.” Here also he uses the word “greater”, and in connection with “a human fate”. So a god has become greater, or perhaps potentially greater, by becoming human.

And yet all yoga insists upon the human not remaining forever human; its aim is to become more than human, superhuman, superman. How do we combine these two ideas? Sri Aurobindo insists that unless you know the Self which is one in all, you cannot attain to the Supermind. And if you cannot attain to the Supermind, you cannot transform life here on earth. So all these ideas have to be combined together.

Nevertheless this line suggests that eventually we will become greater by the fall, because in the fall itself there is a significance, a meaning, a purpose, which is not there in the higher worlds, not even in the highest. This is a very challenging statement.

The sentence where this line occurs says: “I know there shall inform the inconscient cells, ...” Not in the Supramental world, if there is such a thing, but “in the inconscient cells”, here on the earth, in the body, the material physical frame. “At one with Nature and at height with Heaven” - implying: Don’t abandon Nature, don’t renounce Heaven, but bring the two together in the inconscient cells, making them superconscient.

Sri Aurobindo also says that “We live self-exiled from our heavenlier home.” [p.262] The normal idea is that man has fallen because he has

disobeyed God's command. Or in Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism we find the idea that one has karma from previous lives, and has come down to exhaust that karma. Judaism doesn't insist so much on the idea of the original sin, but Christianity does. And because of this original sin of pride, hubris, disobedience towards God, we have fallen. But here there is no such idea at all: We are "self-exiled" - we have come down deliberately, voluntarily. There must be some purpose in this, for nobody would by choice come down to a life which, as Sri Aurobindo says, is condemned to an imperfect body and mind, living in the inconscient with all the indignities of the physical life.

Yes, there is indignity, there is dishonour, there is a lack of bliss, even of pleasure: we are all born into a world of division and discord, ambition and frustration, failure and futility; of Knowledge ringed by ignorance, and pleasure by pain. This is our life. How can it be greater than the existence that we had before we fell? We will find the answer in the poem itself.

Can God be incomplete? The Upanishad tells us that he is full there and here, and that if we subtract fullness from that fullness, what remains is still full. So God in himself is complete, full, fulfilled. And yet Sri Aurobindo dares to say: "A god come down and greater by the fall". We shall see that this is because God has a definite purpose in descending into matter.

This means that in the light of what Sri Aurobindo says, the ancient Indian concept of Maya appears to be an incomplete knowledge.

Taking his terms from Indian spiritual thought Sri Aurobindo says that we can look at creation from three points of view: as Prakriti, Maya and Lila. Prakriti, in the Sankhya philosophy, refers to inconscient Nature, a creative power without any trace of consciousness in it at all. There is Purusha, or pure consciousness, which is static, and there is Prakriti who is unconscious but dynamic. You can see the world as the evolution of Prakriti - which it is, to a very great extent.

Then there is the concept of Maya, which says that the world isn't really there - it only seems to be there. According to this philosophy, Brahman is purely static, it has no creative power, no quality, no feature, no nothing as Americans would say. So the world is Maya, the world

doesn't exist, it only seems to exist. This too is a truth of a certain plane of experience - even for those who are trying to practice Integral Yoga. Sri Aurobindo says that every integral yogin must go through this experience sooner or later. At some time in your sadhana, you must know that the world is nothing, absolutely nothing. Only when you know that the world is nothing at all, can you be utterly and completely free of attachment.

But this is not a complete experience. Because later you find that where you felt there was nothing, the Divine pours into every atom. This was Sri Aurobindo's Vasudeva vision in the jail. The Gita says "Vasudeva sarvam iti". Vasudeva means all-pervasive, ubiquitous, omnipresent - that is the meaning of the word vasu. One who knows Vasudeva as all, such a great soul is very very very rare. And Sri Aurobindo in the jail became one of those very very rare great souls because he was seeing the divine reality everywhere. This was after his experience of Nirvana, please remember - Nirvana which showed him, in his own language, that everything was materialised shadows: no essence, no reality, just floating material shadows. Those material shadows became instinct, informed with reality in each core of them.

In this view, the universe is called Lila - a play. It is a free act. God is not compelled to create, he is not compelled to manifest himself. He does it as a free act, as a play of delight and bliss. The Bhagavata Purana says it is the dance of a child who just dances because he sees his own shadow. It is a shadow, but a shadow of a reality, a shadow of a light.

Sri Aurobindo adds to this idea of Lila: he says that this play has a purpose. Yes, you have to become liberated, for you are like a prisoner, so you must come out of the prison, and you go out into the open market or the open field and you say, "Yes! I am free - what a lovely life now!" But what about the prison? You have left it in the lurch, you have condemned all the other prisoners to the conditions they live in, which are less than human. What if I take the mission of becoming free, in order to go back into the prison and make it into a palace? This is god's mission in the world.

The Canto called “The Pursuit of the Unknowable” shows Ashwapati shooting vertically up to the Absolute. Life is too much with him, the world is too imperfect, life is not worth living in the world. He wants his self, the Self in all, and the Absolute. So he tries to realise the Absolute, forgetting the world, renouncing it, abandoning it. There is a magnificent description of the outcome of this pursuit:

*Thought falls from us, we cease from joy and grief;
The ego is dead; we are freed from being and care,
We have done with birth and death and work and fate.* p.310

But the Mother accosts him, asks him, “What are you doing? where are you going?” There are other things to do which Ashwapati does not know about. She tells him:

*O soul, it is too early to rejoice!
Thou hast reached the boundless silence of the Self,
Thou hast leaped into a glad divine abyss;
But where hast thou thrown Self's mission and Self's power?* p.310

So the Self has a mission. And that mission can be accomplished by a very special kind of power,

*But where hast thou thrown Self's mission and Self's power?
On what dead bank on the Eternal's road?
One was within thee who was self and world,
What hast thou done for his purpose in the stars?* p.310

There is a purpose in the stars. The constellations were not created without any purpose. So this is the Mother's scolding, if you like: “Where are you going? What are you doing? Losing yourself in the Absolute? What about the purpose of God in the world? Who will accomplish it? I have not sent you down here just to go back to where you came from, to lose yourself in the Absolute, forgetting your own individuality, your potentiality, your possibility of divine life. You can't do that.”

Escape brings not the victory nor the crown!

p.310

This is an escape - escape from the obligation, the responsibility, the duty of “a god come down”. So Ashwapati is asked to turn back to the world, and he accepts the mission with the Mother’s command; and he is the one who is debating with the Mother in the Canto of “The Vision and the Boon”. And please note the end of the name of the Canto - the Boon. The Boon is: “One will descend, to break the iron law” - the iron law of subjection to Death.

*A high and blank negation is not all,
A huge extinction is not God's last word,
Life's ultimate sense, the close of being's course,
The meaning of this great mysterious world.*

p.311

There is a meaning of this great mysterious world. It is not without significance, without meaning, it is meaningful, full of significance, full of possibility and potentiality because the Divine himself has a purpose in the world. We have to understand this meaning and to make it manifest. This is the mission the Supreme Mother gives to Ashwapati. What is this meaning? What is God’s purpose?

*In absolute silence sleeps an absolute Power
Awaking, it can wake the trance-bound soul
And in the ray reveal the parent sun:
It can make the world a vessel of Spirit's force,
It can fashion in the clay God's perfect shape.
To free the self is but one radiant pace;*

p.311-12

Yes, you have to realise the Self, it is an absolute necessity, it is one radiant pace, but what else is there?

Here to fulfil himself was God's desire.

p.312

To fulfil himself. We think of God being fulfilled in his own scheme of existence eternally, but how does he fulfil himself in the world, what

does that mean? God also has a desire: not that every creature, every child of his will find salvation or liberation or moksha or whatever you call it. No. Each child will become God. This is his mission and that is his purpose in the world. And he wants it to happen here on earth, not on the highest plane of heaven.

Recently I read a sentence where Sri Aurobindo says that we certainly have to realise God and embrace Him, but what is far more important is to become that reality. And although that can be achieved, and has been achieved, even by numerous devotees and yogis and saints and mystics, on the plane of God, nobody has yet done it on this plane, where God has become matter - deliberately, by choice, in order to fulfil his mission and purpose.

Those who will fulfil this desire of God will do it here on earth, not somewhere else, they are the gods who have come down, and they are “greater by the fall”.

Now this fall: Why is it a fall? It is a fall, in the sense that we have lost our native spiritual status in God. We are no longer united with him. Nevertheless Sri Aurobindo says, very daringly, “No more existence seemed an aimless fall” There is an aim, a purpose, a goal.

*No more existence seemed an aimless fall
Extinction was no more the sole release.
The hidden Word was found, the long-sought clue,
Revealed was the meaning of our spirit's birth.* p.313

Again we come across the words ‘meaning’ and ‘purpose’. “Revealed was the meaning of our spirit’s birth.” At present, because of assuming birth in the world, the spirit is:

*Condemned to an imperfect body and mind
In the inconscience of material things
And the indignity of mortal life.* p.313

The body is subject to disease and ultimately to death, the mind is

ignorant, seeking after knowledge and hardly ever reaching it. This is what the Spirit is born into. But this is not the last chapter of the drama, the last act. The curtain hasn't fallen yet. Creation is not yet a finished product. It still goes on. This ongoing process is the one by which God's desire will be fulfilled.

*When earth was built in the unconscious Void
And nothing was save a material scene,
Identified with sea and sky and stone
Her young gods yearned for the release of souls
Asleep in objects, vague, inanimate.*

...

*They cried to Life to invade the senseless mould
And in brute forms awake divinity.*

p. 129

What does it really mean in practical terms - "In brute forms awake Divinity"? Don't abandon the forms in order to get back to Divinity. No - awake Divinity in the forms, where it is concealed, sleeping, dormant, involved. That is where we have to awake divinity. Not only to achieve divinity in soul and space, but even externally, superficially, on the surface, in brute forms we have to awake divinity. This is one of Sri Aurobindo's favourite ideas and it comes in many places. For example on page 121, in the same Canto:

*Our human ignorance moves towards the Truth
That Nescience may become omniscient, ...*

The spiritual attempt has always been to leave ignorance and get knowledge. Here we have a new idea. Nescience will become omniscient. And this is possible because nescience is nothing but a formation of the omniscient. The lowest is nothing but a formation of the highest. What Sri Aurobindo is now trying to do is to make the lowest into the highest. This is the challenge.

*Our human ignorance moves towards the Truth
That Nescience may become omniscient*

*Transmuted instincts shape to divine thoughts
Thoughts house infallible immortal sight
And Nature climb towards God's identity.*

p.121

Don't leave Nature in the lurch: make it divine - because Nature is concealed divinity.

We would expect a fall to be debasing, but the poet says: "No fall debased the godhead of her steps". [p.128] Where is our share in this? In a brilliant line, Sri Aurobindo says: "In her gold liberty of divinity all had a share." As we take to Savitri as a refuge, we will share in her golden-coloured splendour. "No fall debased the godhead of her steps" - the godhead has come down to what is fallen, but it is not itself fallen. It always keeps its nature of spirituality and divinity, and yet it has assumed, deliberately, all the limitations of the material physical life. How is this possible?

*In her nature housing the Immortal's power
In her bosom bearing the eternal Will.*

p.128

This tells us how. And it means that it is possible for the creature to house the immortal's power and bear the eternal will. Each of us can do it, through Savitri's work in the world. Through the unsparing distribution of her grace. Through them we can receive it. The Grace is here, it is doing its work, but we don't pay any heed to it. We are so busy getting our salvation that we have forgotten about God's mission in the stars.

*A spirit ignorant of the world it made,
Obscured by Matter, travestied by Life
Struggles to emerge, to be free, to know and reign;*

p.329

To reign over what? This world, this physical life, which is at the moment most awful. Therefore we want to escape. We want to escape for our own benefit, to get out of this trouble, this tribulation. But who listens to God? What does he want us to do? Am I ready to give what

He wants? Because Sri Aurobindo tells us, "A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme." [p.67] God has assumed humanity, it is humanity's obligation to assume divinity. We must become as he is, as perfect as he is. This is the mutual debt.

He has not assumed humanity without a purpose, just as a joke - no. He has done it with a very serious purpose - a joyful, blissful one, but nevertheless a very serious purpose. He means business, says a colloquial phrase, and God's business in assuming humanity was to make humanity divine. And humanity is here on earth, not in heaven. In this mutual interchange between God and man, God descending, man ascending, the meeting point is a new creation, a marvellous new world.

Elsewhere he tells us that we can't leave unfulfilled the world's miraculous fate. The world has a fate. It is going to be a new creation, something marvellous that has never happened before.

*As yet thought some high spirit's dream,
Or a vexed illusion in man's toiling mind
A new creation from the old shall rise, ...*

p.330

Here, on this earth. This is the creation. In God there is no creation. Sri Aurobindo tells us over and over again that in God there is no progression. But then where is progression, where is evolution, where is movement? Where God has limited himself.

As you know, philosophically speaking, this world is a result of God limiting himself. If the Absolute remained Absolute always, there would be no relative. If God did not give up his unity, there would be no Many. If the Divine did not renounce his divinity there would be no humanity. So this is the holocaust of the soul, the Supreme Soul, a self-sacrifice that is made for the sake of a result and a fruit. And that fruit is the world becoming a new world, the creation assuming a novelty, a freshness, a spiritual fulfilment.

*Merged into the Unknowable's mystery
Lay unfulfilled the world's miraculous fate.
As yet thought only some high spirit's dream*

*Or a vexed illusion in man's toiling mind
A new creation from the old shall rise,
A Knowledge inarticulate find speech,
Beauty suppressed burst into paradise bloom
Pleasure and pain dive into absolute bliss.
A tongueless oracle shall speak at last
The Superconscient conscious grow on earth
The Eternal's wonders join the dance of Time.*

p.330

The earthly creature is not supposed to become superconscient where the Superconscience is, on the superconscient planes ... no, it will grow superconscient here on earth, in matter, through the new creation.

The Divine Mother gives Aswapati the vision of the birth of that new creation:

*The great world-rhythms were heart-beats of one Soul,
To feel was a flame-discovery of God,
All mind was a single harp of many strings,
All life a song of many meeting lives;
For worlds were many, but the Self was one.
This knowledge now was made a cosmos' seed. ...*

A new cosmos is being created. This knowledge, that worlds are many but the Self is one, is being made the seed of a new cosmos. And:

*This seed was cased in the safety of the Light,
It needed not a sheath of Ignorance.
Then from the trance of that tremendous clasp
And from the throbbings of that single Heart
And from the naked Spirit's victory
A new and marvellous creation rose.*

p.323

Meanwhile evolution is still going on. Evolution still has to continue because God has not yet fulfilled himself. As Sri Aurobindo says somewhere else, only half God's cosmic work is done. Creation is not a

finished product, it is an on-going process. But if, in Sri Aurobindo's vision, only half God's cosmic work is done, it is bound to be done. This is certain because:

*The master of existence lurks in us
And plays at hide-and-peek with his own Force;
In Nature's instrument loiters secret God.* p.66

In all your instruments, your powers and abilities, in all of them God's power lurks. But it is hidden, it needs to be brought out, manifested, expressed. In one sense we can say that evolution is really the emergence of the hidden powers of the Divine in man. There is the evolution of the soul, but there is also, parallel to it, the evolution of nature, and nature means all the physical, vital, mental powers and abilities or potentialities.

*All-knowing he accepts our darkened state,
Divine, wears shapes of animal or man;
Eternal, he assents to Fate and Time,
Immortal, dallies with mortality.
The All-Conscious ventured into Ignorance
The All-Blissful bore to be insensible.
Incarnate in a world of strife and pain,
He puts on joy and sorrow like a robe
And drinks experience like a strengthening wine.* p.66-67

All experience can be turned into this strengthening wine, if we know the magic of it.

*He whose transcendence rules the pregnant Vasts
Prescient now dwells in our subliminal depths
A luminous individual Power, alone.* p.67

Where is he? In our subliminal depths. In order to bring him out, express him, manifest him for all to see, all experience is there to be endured and enjoyed. This is a magnificent passage and one can keep reading it over and over again.

*The Absolute, the Perfect, the Immune,
One who is in us as our secret self,
Our mask of imperfection has assumed,
He has made this tenement of flesh his own,
His image in the human measure cast*

p.67

Why?

*That to his divine measure we might rise;
...
This transfiguration is earth's due to heaven:
A mutual debt binds man to the Supreme:
His nature we must put on as he put ours;
We are sons of God, and must be even as he;
His human portion, we must grow divine.*

p.66-67

He has become human, we humans must become divine. This is the Secret Knowledge.

Then he talks of the seeker:

*Late will he know, opening the mystic script,
Whether to a blank port in the Unseen
He goes or, armed with her fiat, to discover
A new mind and body in the city of God*

p.72

Earlier on we read that he is condemned to an imperfect body and mind. But here we have a transfiguration. What will happen to the body and mind? He goes on to discover a new mind and body in the city of God. So we will have a new mind and a new body, to embody the divine here on earth -

*And ensrine the Immortal in his glory's bouse
And make the finite one with Infinity.*

p.72

Again the emphasis is on the finite becoming one with Infinity - not

leaving the finite to go into infinity. The finite itself has to put on infinity. Therefore, since this is God's own vision and purpose, the seeker cannot rest. He has no refuge until he finds his goal.

*And never can the mighty Traveller rest
And never can the mystic voyage cease
Till the nescient dusk is lifted from man's soul
And the morns of God have overtaken his night.
As long as Nature lasts, he too is there,
For this is sure that he and she are one;*

p.72

(the Divine and his force)

*Even when he sleeps, he keeps her on his breast:
Whoever leaves her, he will not depart ...*

For there is a deep purpose in all this:

*There is a plan in the Mother's deep world-whim,
A purpose in her vast and random game.
This ever she meant since the first dawn of life,
This constant will she covered with her sport, ...*

Right from the beginning, when he first thought of creation, of expressing himself, there was this intention:

*To evoke a Person in the impersonal Void,
With the Truth-Light strike earth's massive roots of trance,
Wake a dumb self in the inconscient depths
And raise a lost Power from its python sleep
That the eyes of the Timeless might look out from Time
And the world manifest the unveiled Divine.
For this he left his white infinity
And laid on the spirit the burden of the flesh,
That Godhead's seed might flower in mindless Space.*

p.72-73

This is the mission of God.

I will end by reading from a letter of Sri Aurobindo where he states in very clear and unambiguous words all that I have been talking about rather vaguely and imperfectly. He is talking of the different planes and worlds, from the subtle physical up to the highest..And he says that each of them has its own distinctive characteristics, so that there are qualities in those worlds which are not here, and which can't be reproduced here. He says in the letter that there is an idea in God's mind, that is in the Supermind, the world of real ideas that is rooted in Reality; and that is a real idea which God wants to express, to manifest, and in and through it ultimately to manifest himself. and he gives the example of the subtle physical plane, which is closest to the physical and most like it, but still has a lot of things that this world of ours, the physical world, has not: He says it has: "a freedom, plasticity, intensity, colour, wide and manifold play ... of which, as yet, we have no possibility on earth. And yet there is something here, a potentiality of the Divine which the other, in spite of its greater liberties, has not, something which makes creation more difficult, but in the last result justifies the labour." That is what makes the creation worthwhile. That is what he says. He talks about a Supramental creation, and asks, rhetorically so to speak: "What would be the utility of a supramental creation on earth if it were just the same thing as a supramental creation on the supramental plane? It is that, in principle, but yet something else, a triumphant new self-discovery of the Divine in conditions that are not elsewhere." [22:554-55] When all God's cosmic work is done, that will be the result of his mission and desire being fulfilled: a triumphant new self-discovery of the Divine, in conditions which are here and nowhere else.

Please note the phrase "a self-discovery of the Divine". This is not a matter of man discovering the Divine. It is a self-discovery of the Divine, the Divine discovering himself. And where? In matter. In the physical being. In the Inconscience. The Superconscient grows aware in the inconscient.

All of these concepts come together in one. Each is a facet of the one central notion. It means that God is trying to do something here on the earth, in the physical being, in the inconscience: a self-discovery. On the divine plane where he is, he doesn't know that he is material. This is why Sri Aurobindo speaks in another place of God knowing himself as the material divine. God still has something to discover, to know: another facet of his own being, his own power, his personality; and what is that? It is the material divine. The Divine that is in matter. Not trying to get out of matter and back to where it began, where it was divine ... No! Discovering himself as the material divine in matter.

This cannot be done unless matter is spiritualised, supramentalised, divinised. How is this to be done? The answer to this is the main theme of the whole epic, of the legend and the symbol which is Savitri, and it can be summed up in a few lines from page 314:

*A burning Love from white spiritual founts
Annulled the sorrow of the ignorant depths;
Suffering was lost in her immortal smile.
A Life from beyond grew conqueror here of death;*

This conquering Life and this burning spiritual Love that can achieve the transformation of the material world is Savitri incarnate.

SAVITRI BHAVAN ACTIVITIES

December 1998 - February 1999

1. Guest Speakers:

During this period we had three guest speakers:

On December 20th. Dr. Ananda Reddy spoke to us about the first part of Book 7 Canto 2, "The Parable of the search for the Soul" - the canto being read by the study group at this time.

On January 10th, Aurovilian Georges van Vreckem, author of "Beyond Man : Life and Work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother" addressed a large and enthusiastic audience on the theme of "Sri Aurobindo in Savitri"

On February 14th Professor Aravinda Basu visited us again to speak on Savitri.

On each of these occasions we were able to provide transport from Pondicherry to enable interested people from there to join the gathering.

2. Group study

Starting from December 1st our regular Sunday morning gatherings for reading and study of Savitri were supplemented by a number of other supporting activities.

English : twice a week, on Tuesdays at 4.30pm and Fridays at 6.30 am there are guided courses for adults who would like to improve their English through reading Savitri.

Sanskrit : our Russian friend Vladimir who has studied and taught at prestigious institutions in Russia and India is holding Sanskrit classes four times a week.

Once a week on Thursdays at 5 pm the "Exploring Sri Aurobindo" group is continuing. The present series is focussing on the Mother's commentaries on Sri Aurobindo's *Thoughts and Aphorisms*, in French and English.

And on Sunday afternoons a small but enthusiastic group is exploring ways of improving their abilities to read Savitri aloud.



SAVITRI BHAVAN first phase construction, January 1999



3. Special events

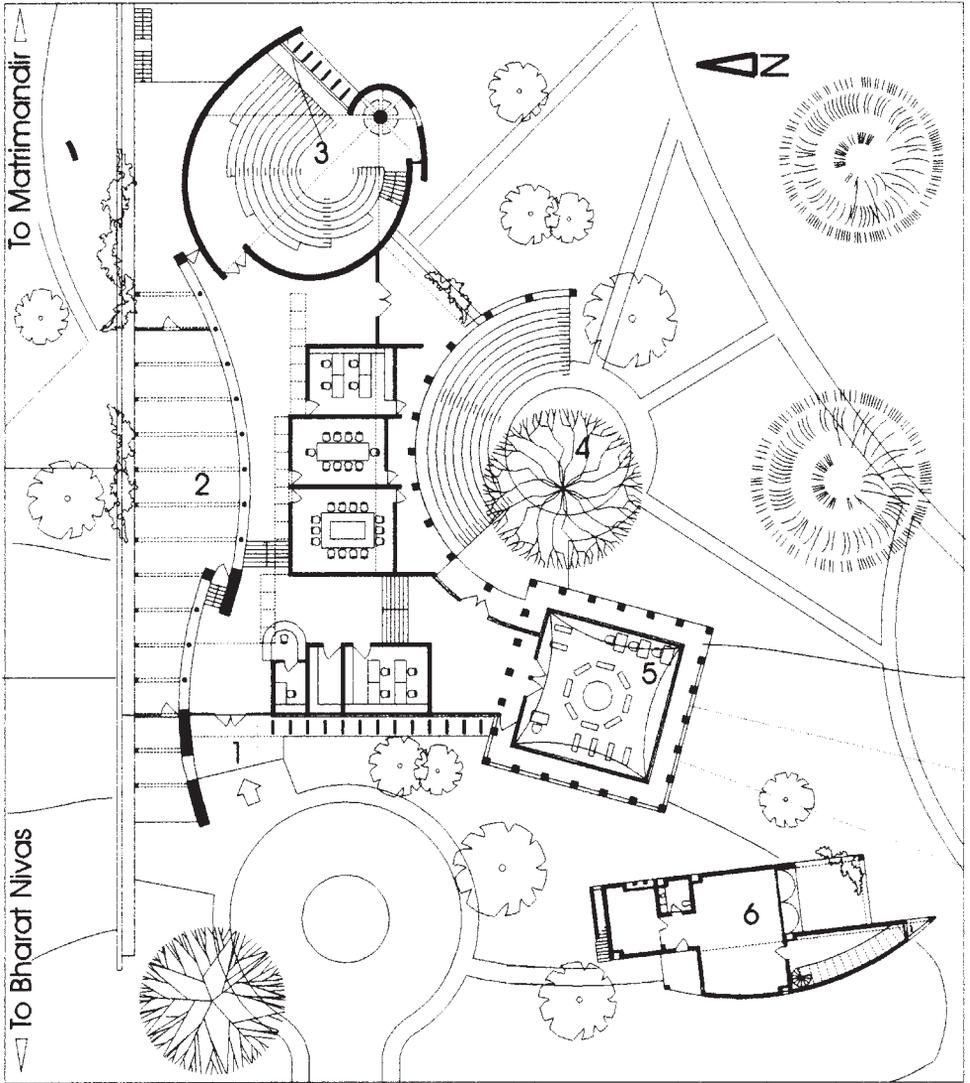
During Auroville's "Birthday Week", from February 20 - 28 1999, we shall be celebrating the birthdays of the Mother (Feb. 21) and of Auroville (Feb. 28) with an exhibition entitled "About Savitri". The Mother's explanations of Book One Canto One will be exhibited at Savitri Bhavan, along with the corresponding passages from Savitri and reproductions of Huta's paintings. We shall also be playing the recordings of the Mother's readings and comments, and showing the slides of the paintings. We are extremely grateful to Huta for sharing these treasures with us all through the Savitri Bhavan.

All these activities are taking place in the temporary shelter on the Savitri Bhavan site.

4. Construction

On December 13, in pouring rain, a few core members of the Savitri Bhavan team were present for the "first brick" ceremony, inaugurating the construction of the first phase of the Savitri Bhavan complex. Since then the structure has been growing rapidly, and if funds continue to flow in as rapidly, we have good hopes of being able to complete the building in time for Sri Aurobindo's birthday on August 15th 1999.

This first phase will provide a multi-purpose hall, office and library/storage space as a basis for our activities until the rest of the complex can be completed. It is expected to cost around Rs.11 lakh. At the moment of starting, thanks to the generosity of many well-wishers, we had exactly half that amount. In order to get the new facilities functioning, the remaining Rs. 5.5 is needed as soon as possible.



Plan of full complex

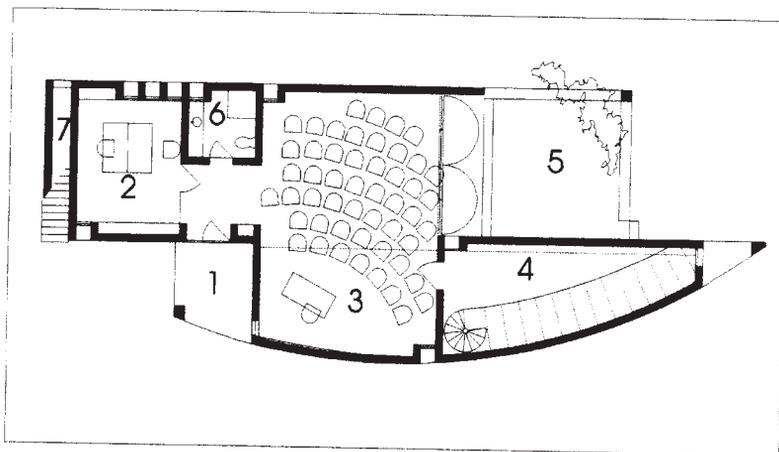
Key:

1. Entrance
2. Art Gallery
3. Hall
4. Amphitheatre
5. Library
6. First phase

First phase - now under construction

Key:

1. Entrance
2. Office
3. Hall
4. Books and audio-visuals
5. Courtyard
- 6 Bathroom
7. Stairs to roof-terrace



About Savitri Bhavan

We dream of an environment in Auroville

that will breathe the atmosphere of Savitri

that will welcome Savitri lovers from every corner
of the world

that will be an inspiring centre of Savitri studies

that will house all kinds of materials and activities
to enrich our understanding and enjoyment of
Sri Aurobindo's revelatory epic

that will be the abode of Savitri, the Truth that
has come from the Sun

We welcome support from everyone who feels that the
vibration of Savitri will help to manifest a better
tomorrow.

Savitri Bhavan is a project of SAIIER (Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research). Donations by cheque or draft may be made payable to 'SAIIER' and sent with a covering note specifying that the amount is meant for Savitri Bhavan. You may also specify whether you would prefer your donation to be used for construction or activities.

Indian donors will receive 100% tax exemption under Sec. 35(1) (iii) of the I.T. Act. Contributions from within Auroville may be made through the Auroville Financial Service, account no. 230247.

All correspondence may be addressed to:

Savitri Bhavan, Auroville 605101, TN, India



INVOCATION is a new quarterly magazine containing study notes and news of SAVITRI BHAVAN in Auroville. We shall be sending it free to all our donors and well-wishers. If you would like to receive a copy, or have it sent to a friend, kindly write and inform us of the address to which it should be sent. We hope *Savitri* lovers will find this circular interesting; we will be glad to receive comments and suggestions about materials for inclusion in future issues. Correspondence may be addressed to:

Savitri Bhavan, Auroville 605101, TN, India