

Invocation

Savitri

B H A V A N

Study notes No. 45

*INVOCATION is an occasional publication of SAVITRI BHAVAN
in Auroville. All correspondence may be addressed to:*

**SAVITRI BHAVAN
AUROVILLE 605101, TN
INDIA**

*Telephone: 0413-2622922
e-mail: savitribhavan@auroville.org.in
www.savitribhavan.org*

*This publication has been funded by SAIER
(Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research)*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Unless otherwise indicated all quotations and photographs of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo are copyright of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, Pondicherry, reproduced here with acknowledgements and thanks to the Trustees. We are particularly grateful for permission to use the word 'Invocation' in Sri Aurobindo's handwriting as our banner.

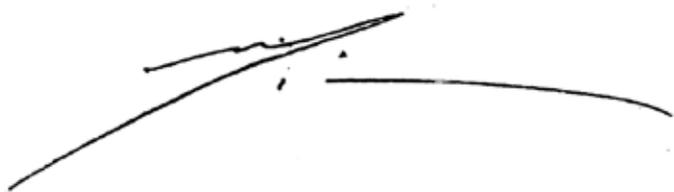
*Edited by Shraddhavan for Savitri Bhavan, Auroville
Design by Prisma, Auroville
Printed at Auroville Press, Auroville*

November 2016

C O N T E N T S

The Mother answers Questions on <i>Savitri</i>	4
The English of <i>Savitri</i> by <i>Shraddhavan</i>	7
News of Savitri Bhavan Sangam Hall Construction	58
Calendar of Events March to September 2016	60

What Sri Aurobindo
represents in the world's
history is not a teaching,
not even a revelation;
it is a decisive action
direct from the Supreme



What Sri Aurobindo
represents in the world's
history is not a teaching,
not even a revelation;
it is a decisive action
direct from the Supreme.

THE MOTHER



The Mother answers Questions on *Savitri*¹

Mother, suffering comes from ignorance and pain, but what is the nature of the suffering and pain the Divine Mother feels for her children—the Divine Mother in Savitri?

It is because she participates in their nature. She has descended upon earth to participate in their nature. Because if she did not participate in their nature, she could not lead them farther. If she remained in her supreme consciousness where there is no suffering, in her supreme knowledge and consciousness, she could not have any contact with human beings. And it is for this that she is obliged to take on the human consciousness and form, it is to be able to enter into contact with them. Only, she does not forget: she has adopted their consciousness but she remains in relation with her own real, supreme consciousness. And thus, by joining the two, she can make those who are in that other consciousness progress. But if she did not adopt their consciousness, if she did not suffer with their sorrow, she could not help them. Hers is not a suffering of ignorance: it is a suffering through identity. It is because she has accepted to have the same vibrations as theirs, in order to be able to enter into contact with them and pull them out of the state they are in. If she did not enter into contact with them, she would not be felt at all or no one could bear her radiance This has been said in all kinds of forms, in all kinds of religions, and they have spoken very often of the divine Sacrifice, but from a certain point of view it is true. It is a voluntary sacrifice, but it is true: giving up a state of perfect consciousness, perfect bliss, perfect power in order to accept the state of ignorance of the outer world so as to pull it out of that ignorance. If this state were not accepted, there would be no contact with it. No relation would be possible. And

1. MCW 5:387-90

this is the reason of the incarnations. Otherwise, there would be no necessity. If the divine consciousness and divine force could work directly from the place or state of their perfection, if they could work directly on matter and transform it, there would be no need to take a body like man's. It would have been enough to act from the world of Truth with the perfect consciousness and upon consciousness. In fact that acts perhaps but so slowly that when there is this effort to make the world progress, make it go forward more rapidly, well, it is necessary to take on human nature. By taking the human body, one is obliged to take on human nature, partially. Only, instead of losing one's consciousness and losing contact with the Truth, one keeps this consciousness and this Truth, and it is by joining the two that one can create exactly this kind of alchemy of transformation. But if one did not touch matter, one could do nothing for it.

Did Savitri foresee what she was going to do?

She said so. You have not read it? She had even been told that she would be alone. And she said: I am ready to be alone. You have not read it? It is in the canto they recited last year.¹

Did she know she would meet the "Mother of Sorrows", the "Mother of Might"?

Indeed she did. It is said all along that she knew all that was going to happen. It is written clearly. Indeed, to each of them she says clearly: I shall bring to you what you need. Consequently, she knows it. Else she would not say so. If she did not know it, how could she say so?

In Savitri the "Mother of Sorrows" says:

*"Perhaps when the world sinks into a last sleep,
I too may sleep in dumb eternal peace."*

Ah! that, that is the human consciousness. It is the human consciousness. It is the idea of the human consciousness that when all suffering will be over, well, "I shall sleep". It is indeed of this that Sri Aurobindo speaks. When there is this aspiration for a supreme peace, one feels that if there were a *pralaya* and the world

1. *Savitri* Book VII, Canto 4, recited at the School Annual function of 1 December 1953.

disappeared, well, at least there would be peace. But the phrase itself is self-contradictory, for if there were a *pralaya*, there would be no more peace to be felt—there would be nothing at all any longer!

But this is just one of the contradictions of the human consciousness: “As long as the world is there and suffering there, I shall suffer with the world. But if ever the world enters into peace, disappears in the peace of Non-Being, then I too shall rest.” It is a poetic way of saying that as long as misery is there in the world, I shall suffer with the world. Only when it ceases to be there, it shall cease for me also.

Then what will the “Mother of Sorrows” do? What else can she do?

She will be the “Mother of Delight”.

Savitri represents the Mother’s Consciousness, doesn’t she?

Yes.

What does Satyavan represent?

Well, he is the Avatar. He is the incarnation of the Supreme.

The Vision and the Boon
Savitri and the Katha Upanishad

The 7th Dr. M.V. Nadkarni Memorial Lecture
will be given by

Dr. Ananda Reddy
at Savitri Bhavan on

Sunday 19 February 2017, 4 – 5pm

As usual, transport will be available
behind the Ashram from 2.30pm onwards.
Light refreshments will be offered at Savitri Bhavan

Everyone is welcome

The English of *Savitri*

Book Two, Canto Two – The Kingdom of Subtle Matter

by Shradhdhavan

Section 1, lines 1–149

We are now reading Book Two, The Book of the Traveller of the Worlds. King Aswapati, who will become the human father of Savitri, is the Traveller. He is searching for the Power that will be able to transform life on earth into a divine life. He has been shown the ‘*World-Stair*’, a great mountain of ascending levels of existence and consciousness, and he will explore these levels one by one in this Book, the longest of the poem with its fifteen cantos. At the end of Canto One, Sri Aurobindo pictured King Aswapati like this:

A figure sole on Nature’s giant stair,
He mounted towards an indiscernible end
On the bare summit of created things.

The base of the World-Stair is gross matter, the matter that we experience in this universe. As Aswapati begins to mount the ‘*giant stair*’ of the subtle planes of existence, he comes first to ‘*The Kingdom of Subtle Matter*’, which is described in Canto Two.

In the impalpable field of secret self,
This little outer being’s vast support
Parted from vision by earth’s solid fence,
He came into a magic crystal air
And found a life that lived not by the flesh,
A light that made visible immaterial things.

Sri Aurobindo reminds us that this journey of ascent is happening in the inner consciousness, ‘*In the impalpable field of secret self*’: within Aswapati’s own consciousness. That inner field is ‘*impalpable*’, which means that it cannot be touched physically; but nevertheless it is the support which keeps our ‘*little outer being*’ in existence. If it were not for that ‘*impalpable field of secret self*’,

the '*little outer being*' which each of us identifies with would not exist at all. It is the '*vast support*' of '*this little outer being*', but it is hidden from our physical eyes by the '*solid fence*' of earthly matter, and can be perceived only by the inner senses of touch and vision and hearing. As Aswapati enters into this realm of subtle matter, he encounters '*a magic crystal air*': a very different atmosphere from the air that our bodies depend on here in the realm of gross matter. There he finds '*a life that lived not by the flesh*', a life which can live independently from any material body. He also finds a kind of light that is different from the material light which we experience here: '*A light that made visible immaterial things*', revealing things that cannot be seen by our physical eyes because they are '*immaterial*', made of a substance that is finer than the matter which constitutes our universe.

A fine degree in wonder's hierarchy,
The kingdom of subtle Matter's faery craft
Outlined against a sky of vivid hues,
Leaping out of a splendour-trance and haze,
The wizard revelation of its front.

A '*degree*' is a step, a stage or level. The kingdom of subtle Matter forms a level in a '*hierarchy*', an ascending order, the order of the planes of existence, the World-Stair. This is a hierarchy of wonder and marvel, each step more wonderful than the one below it. The poet says that this kingdom is '*A fine degree*': it is refined, subtle, rarefied. The '*faery craft*' of this kingdom reveals to Aswapati '*The wizard revelation of its front*'. '*Craft*' means skill; a craftsman is a person who has a skill, who knows how to make something of value. That realm has the power to manifest fine and beautiful things. Here Sri Aurobindo uses the poetic adjective '*faery*'. This word appears eleven times in *Savitri*, and once even the word '*faeries*'. The poet has chosen to use an old spelling of the word which suggests something much more magical and enchanting than the more common '*fairy*'. The '*faery craft*' or magical power of '*The Kingdom of subtle Matter*' draws an outline '*against a sky of vivid hues*'. The sky which he sees is not grey or blue like ours, but shines with varied intense colours. That outline reveals the '*front*', the first appearance, of that world. It seems to appear suddenly,

‘Leaping out of a splendour-trance and haze’. ‘Haze’ is fine mist. As if suddenly appearing out of mist and a glorious dreamy state, ‘a splendour-trance’, the first glimpse of that world is perceived as a ‘wizard revelation’. A ‘wizard’ is an enchanter, someone who can do magic, and perhaps magically reveal things that have been hidden. In this way Aswapati gets his first impressive sight of ‘*The Kingdom of Subtle Matter*’. Now Sri Aurobindo will tell us more about this realm:

A world of lovelier forms lies near to ours,
Where, undisguised by earth’s deforming sight,
All shapes are beautiful and all things true.

The new world which Aswapati now discovers is more beautiful than our own; the ‘forms’ there are ‘lovelier’ – more beautiful; but it is ‘near to ours’, not very far away from us. There, ‘*All shapes are beautiful*’, and they are ‘true’: they appear as they really are. They are not disguised, deformed, distorted, by our earthly vision which sees only imperfect material forms.

In that lucent ambience mystically clear
The eyes were doors to a celestial sense,
Hearing was music and the touch a charm,
And the heart drew a deeper breath of power.

‘Ambience’ means ‘environment’, ‘surroundings’ or ‘atmosphere’. That world had an atmosphere which was ‘lucent’, full of light; it was also ‘mystically clear’. There the ‘eyes’, the ‘eyes’ of the inner self, were ‘doors to a celestial sense’ opening to a pure and heavenly vision. This was true of the sense of hearing also: whatever was heard sounded like ‘music’, and whatever the ‘touch’ conveyed was full of delight, of ‘charm’. There ‘*the heart drew a deeper breath of power*’: the heart could draw on a deeper and more powerful ‘breath’ of energy, of prana, than the physical air that we breathe here on earth.

There dwell earth-nature’s shining origins:
The perfect plans on which she moulds her works,
The distant outcomes of her travailing force,
Repose in a framework of established fate.

Sri Aurobindo reveals that the *'shining origins'* of the material forms that we see here in our world lie there, in the realm of subtle matter. Earth-nature shapes *'her works'*, the things that she creates, on the *'perfect plans'* that exist in that world. Even the results towards which earth-nature is working – *'The distant outcomes of her travelling force'* – the aims that she is labouring to bring about with great effort – already exist there, waiting at ease, in a state of *'repose'*, without any effort, within *'a framework of established fate'* because what will be manifested here on earth has already been worked out and established there in the Kingdom of Subtle Matter.

Attempted vainly now or won in vain,
Already were mapped and scheduled there the time
And figure of her future sovereignties
In the sumptuous lineaments traced by desire.

Things that we try to bring about here on earth, but fail – or if we succeed, are soon lost again – are there already *'mapped and scheduled'*: the form of those realisations and even the time of their realisation here is already decided and fixed there. The wonderful achievements that will happen on earth in the future are already beautifully laid out and arranged and can be seen there, *'In the sumptuous lineaments traced by desire'*: just the way that we would wish them to be. *'Sumptuous'* means *'magnificently rich and luxurious'*. Those achievements prepared for the earth's future are not simply sketched out: all their *'lineaments'* or features are already expressed there in full detail, just the way we would desire and imagine that they should be.

The golden issue of mind's labyrinth plots,
The riches unfound or still uncaught by our lives,
Un sullied by the attainment of mortal thought
Abide in that pellucid atmosphere.

The human mind is always plotting and trying to work things out, and its way of doing things is very complicated, twisting and turning like a *'labyrinth'* or maze; but their *'golden issue'* – the glorious results that we long to achieve – is already waiting there in the atmosphere of that world, which is absolutely *'pellucid'*: pure and clear, *'Un sullied by the attainment of mortal thought'*, along with all

the inner '*riches*' that our lives have not yet found or may perhaps have found but have not yet been able to seize. To 'sully' something means to make it dirty, to pollute it; sometimes we even sully things by our thoughts – just by thinking about them we spoil their perfect beauty. '*Attaint*' means a 'touch which spoils, which leaves a dirty mark'. Our '*mortal thought*' has not stained or spoiled those riches; it has not touched them with the deformations of earth. In the perfectly pure atmosphere of that world they are waiting for the predestined moment when they can be realised here.

Our vague beginnings are overtaken there,
Our middle terms sketched out in prescient lines,
Our finished ends anticipated live.

Some of the things that we try to achieve here are still only '*vague beginnings*', unfulfilled efforts; there they '*are overtaken*': it is as if someone has run past us and already reached wherever we are aiming at. '*Our middle terms*', the things we are in the middle of working on here, are '*sketched out*' there '*in prescient lines*' which indicate what will be realised in the future. Things that will be achievements for us in the future – '*our finished ends*' – are already anticipated there, already in existence. If you anticipate something, you are expecting that it will happen, waiting and looking forward to it happening; or you may be trying to express something, and someone else anticipates what it is you are trying to say or do and does it before you; in a similar way, things that we are trying to achieve here have already been achieved there – '*anticipated*' – in advance.

This brilliant roof of our descending plane,
Intercepting the free boon of heaven's air,
Admits small inrushes of a mighty breath
Or fragrant circuits through gold lattices;

That world is above us, on a higher level of the World-Stair. Here Sri Aurobindo describes it as a '*brilliant roof*' of our material plane, which is '*descending*': reaching downwards and forming the base of the whole hierarchy. Like a roof, that world is a kind of protection for ours. He says that it intercepts '*the free boon of heaven's air*' and prevents it from reaching us, but allows '*small inrushes*' of that

‘*mighty breath*’, that tremendous energy, to flow in gently, a little at a time. A lattice is what we call a ‘*jali*’ in India, a window made from a criss-cross of wood or stone that protects the interior from the full glare of the sun and the full rush of rain or wind. Sri Aurobindo says that the realm of subtle matter is protecting us with ‘*gold lattices*’ which allow ‘*heaven’s air*’ to reach us gently in the form of perfumed breezes, as ‘*fragrant circuits*’ or currents.

It shields our ceiling of terrestrial mind
From deathless suns and the streaming of God’s rain,
Yet canalises a strange irised glow,
And bright dews drip from the Immortal’s sky.

In a house, there will usually be a ‘*ceiling*’ beneath the roof. That subtle physical plane is like a roof, which ‘*shields*’ or protects our ‘*ceiling*’ of earthly mind from the ‘*deathless suns*’ of higher consciousness, which would be too strong for us to bear. It protects us from ‘*the streaming of God’s rain*’, the full force of divine power and Grace; yet it allows something of the divine consciousness and energy to reach us: it ‘*canalises*’ or channels to us ‘*a strange irised glow*’. ‘*Iris*’ is the name of the Roman goddess of the rainbow. The dazzling divine light is channelled to us as a soft glow of all the colours of the rainbow. ‘*Dew*’ is the water that condenses in the cool early morning on grass and flowers: is very soft and refreshing. That subtle plane prevents us from receiving the full powerful downpour of ‘*God’s rain*’; but it does allow ‘*bright dews*’ to ‘*drip*’ gently through to us from the higher realms, ‘*from the Immortal’s sky*’.

A passage for the Powers that move our days,
Occult behind this grosser Nature’s walls,
A gossamer marriage-hall of Mind with Form
Is hidden by a tapestry of dreams;
Heaven’s meanings steal through it as through a veil,
Its inner sight sustains this outer scene.

‘*Powers*’ from other worlds are moving ‘*our days*’: we are not aware of them, but influences from other planes are moving us and affecting our lives. The Kingdom of Subtle Matter acts as a ‘*passage*’ through which those Powers reach our world. ‘*Occult*’, hidden ‘*behind this grosser Nature’s walls*’ of matter, that realm is

like ‘a *gossamer marriage-hall*’. ‘*Gossamer*’ is a beautiful poetic word for the very, very fine threads of silk that baby spiders spin to carry them away from the spot where they have just hatched from their eggs. Each tiny spider spins a long thread of silk, so fine that it is practically invisible; it climbs up onto a twig or blade of grass and waits for the wind to come and blow it away on its silken parachute to the unknown destination where it will start its life. If many spiderlings hatch at the same time, and the air is very still, in the early morning you may see a field covered with a fine silvery net of shining ‘*gossamer*’. Imagine a whole room made out of such very fine, almost invisible threads: this is the hall where ‘*Mind*’ marries with ‘*Form*’. Here in our world, Matter or ‘*Form*’ is dominant over Mind, but there they marry, as equal partners. The secret ‘*marriage-hall*’ where they meet ‘*is hidden by a tapestry of dreams*’. A ‘*tapestry*’ is a woven or embroidered wall-hanging. The space where ‘*Mind*’ marries ‘*Form*’ is concealed behind a curtain of dreams. That ‘*gossamer marriage-hall*’, ‘*hidden by a tapestry of dreams*’, where Mind and Form unite, provides a passage through which ‘*Heaven’s meanings steal*’: divine significances pass through it imperceptibly, so that we do not see or hear them coming. They pass from that world into our world ‘*as through a veil*’ – a very fine transparent curtain. And the power of subtle inner vision which rules in that world ‘*sustains*’ – supports or holds up – ‘*this outer scene*’: all that we see here.

A finer consciousness with happier lines,
It has a tact our touch cannot attain,
A purity of sense we never feel;

The ‘*consciousness*’ of that realm is ‘*finer*’ than ours, more refined and ‘*happier*’ than the mixed and ignorant consciousness that prevails in our world. The poet says that it ‘*has a tact our touch cannot attain*’, cannot achieve. Literally, ‘*tact*’ means touch; something that is ‘*tactile*’ can be touched. But this word is also used in a psychological sense: when we say that somebody has tact or is tactful we mean that they have a special capacity to say and do the right thing at the right time; so the word conveys a sense of being able to do delicate things perfectly. I think that is what Sri Aurobindo might want to suggest here: that ‘*finer consciousness*’ has a delicate way of doing things

perfectly, which our grosser earthly touch cannot achieve. It also has '*A purity of sense we never feel*'. We have senses of hearing and sight and taste and smell and touch, but they are all dominated and polluted by gross matter; because of that, our state of consciousness is also polluted and impure. The subtle physical world is free from the domination of gross matter, so there the consciousness and the senses have a '*purity*' and refinement which we do not experience here.

Its intercession with the eternal Ray
Inspires our transient earth's brief-lived attempts
At beauty and the perfect shape of things.

'*Intercession*' is like mediation: for example, if someone in authority has made a decision which affects us and we want them to change it, we may ask a friend to go and 'intercede' for us, to speak to that person on our behalf, or to communicate between us and that person. Here Sri Aurobindo suggests that the Kingdom of Subtle Matter is interceding or mediating between our world and the '*eternal Ray*', the pure Divine Light, by protecting us from the full force of the dazzling divine sunlight and yet channelling some helpful rays to us. In this way, that world '*Inspires our transient earth's brief-lived attempts / At beauty and the perfect shape of things.*' We can think about the way the earth's atmosphere protects us from the full blaze of the sun, allowing us to breathe and enabling plants and flowers and animals to grow. That subtle physical realm is protecting us in a similar way, providing an atmosphere which '*inspires*' all our short-lived '*attempts*' to achieve beauty through perfect forms. The '*intercession*' of that world comes between us and the '*eternal Ray*', channelling something of the higher Light and beauty to us and giving us the inspiration and will to achieve beautiful things.

In rooms of the young divinity of power
And early play of the eternal Child
The embodiments of his outwinging thoughts
Laved in a bright everlasting wonder's tints
And lulled by whispers of that lucid air
Take dream-hued rest like birds on timeless trees
Before they dive to float on earth-time's sea.

Sri Aurobindo likens that realm of subtle matter to a house where the '*eternal Child*' lives and plays. This expression makes us think of what is called in India Hiranyagarbha, the Golden Child, who represents the Divine as ruler of the subtle realms. The Golden Child is playing and dreaming, and all his wonderful thoughts and dreams take subtle forms, '*The embodiments of his outwinging thoughts*'. Those forms are '*laved*', or washed, '*in a bright everlasting wonder's tints*': they get tinted with bright colours in that air of untiring wonder and charm. They are also '*lulled by whispers of that lucid air*'. We may rock a baby in our arms to lull it to rest, to soothe it so that it will rest peacefully. In the Kingdom of Subtle Matter, the thoughts and dreams of the Hiranyagarbha, the Divine in his form of a Golden Child, get rocked and soothed in that '*lucid air*', so pure and clear and full of light. This happens in the subtle realms, '*In rooms of the young divinity of power*', where the Creator takes the form of a Golden Child, before entering into the world of matter as Virat, the Lord of the material universe. His thoughts take form and fly around him like birds, and they are washed in the lovely '*tints*', or colours of '*a bright everlasting*' wonder, an unflinching charm and delight. That air is very soft and soothing, those divine thoughts and dreams are '*lulled by whispers of that lucid air*'. There in the Kingdom of Subtle Matter they take rest – '*dream-hued rest*'. Clothed in the kind of beautiful magical colours you might see in a lovely dream, the embodied thoughts of the Divine Child remain for a time, '*like birds on timeless trees / Before they dive...*' out of that world into our world, where they will '*float on earth-time's sea*'. Here in earth-time and earth-space they will take other forms. Sri Aurobindo has written in *The Life Divine* that everything in the universe embodies a thought of God. Here he evokes the process by which God's thoughts take form in the subtle physical realm before entering our material world.

All that here seems has lovelier semblance there.
Whatever our hearts conceive, our heads create,
Some high original beauty forfeiting,
Thence exiled here consents to an earthly tinge.

Whatever appearances we see here, '*All that here seems...*' is even more beautiful there in that world. They have a '*lovelier semblance*'

there, a more beautiful appearance in that world. Whatever comes up in our hearts, whatever our hearts give shape to, '*Whatever our hearts conceive*', and whatever our heads or our minds create, has actually come from there, '*Thence*', from that subtle world. It has been '*exiled*' from there. If you are '*exiled*', you have to leave your country to live somewhere else. The appearances which are '*exiled*' from the realm of subtle matter to be embodied here in our world have to forfeit or give up the '*high original beauty*' which they wore there. When they leave that realm and materialise here, they lose their original beauty and consent or agree to take on '*an earthly tinge*': their lovely heavenly colours get stained and darkened by the muddier colours of matter.

Whatever is here of visible charm and grace
Finds there its faultless and immortal lines;
All that is beautiful here is there divine.

There are beautiful forms here on earth, forms with '*visible charm and grace*', but '*Whatever is here of visible charm and grace*' appears much more beautiful there. In that subtle physical world it finds '*its faultless and immortal lines*' which are absolutely perfect. And because they are perfect, because they are '*faultless*', they are also '*immortal*', they do not have to die, as everything here on earth must die. '*All that is beautiful here is there divine.*'

Figures are there undreamed by mortal mind:
Bodies that have no earthly counterpart
Traverse the inner eye's illumined trance
And ravish the heart with their celestial tread
Persuading heaven to inhabit that wonder sphere.

In the last few sentences Sri Aurobindo has been telling us about the correspondences between that world and ours; but in that realm there are also '*Bodies that have no earthly counterpart*': there is nothing here that matches them. In that world there are figures or forms '*undreamed by mortal mind*' – we cannot even imagine or dream of them. If we could enter that world, as Aswapati has done, we would see those forms and figures not with physical eyes but with subtle inner eyes. Those beautiful forms pass through the '*illumined trance*' of the inner eyes, and when they are seen the heart

is ravished, filled with delight, as those forms pass by ‘*with their celestial tread*’. The very way that they move has something divine and heavenly about it, ‘*Persuading heaven to inhabit that wonder sphere*’. These are divine forms, and as they pass it seems as if ‘*that wonder sphere*’ is not merely a subtle physical layer of our own world, but that a heavenly quality inhabits it.

The future’s marvels wander in its gulfs;
Things old and new are fashioned in those depths:
A carnival of beauty crowds the heights
In that magic kingdom of ideal sight.

Wonderful possibilities are waiting for us in the future. In one of his aphorisms, Sri Aurobindo has written,

If mankind could but see though in a glimpse of fleeting experience what infinite enjoyments, what perfect forces, what luminous reaches of spontaneous knowledge, what wide calms of our being lie waiting for us in the tracts which our animal evolution has not yet conquered, they would leave all & never rest till they had gained these treasures.¹

In the Kingdom of Subtle Matter, ‘*The future’s marvels*’ – those wonders of the future – are wandering ‘*in its gulfs*’ – its deepest secret places, and in those depths old things and new things are given shape: ‘*fashioned*’ means ‘shaped’ or ‘made’. On its heights is ‘*A carnival of beauty*’ – a crowded festival with a riot of beautiful colours and forms and movement, revelling ‘*In that magic kingdom of ideal sight*’. The power of vision there perceives things in their ideal forms, their highest and most perfect expressions.

In its antechambers of splendid privacy
Matter and soul in conscious union meet
Like lovers in a lonely secret place:
In the clasp of a passion not yet unfortunate
They join their strength and sweetness and delight
And mingling make the high and low worlds one.

1. CWSA 12:423

An 'antechamber' is a small private room adjoining a bigger more public space. That world provides some secret and protected places, '*antechambers of splendid privacy*' where '*Matter and soul*' can meet in '*conscious union*', '*Like lovers in a lonely secret place*'. We may feel that Matter and Soul are almost like opposites which cannot really meet. But in that subtle realm they can meet secretly. They embrace as lovers, '*In the clasp of a passion*' that is '*not yet unfortunate*'. In our world perhaps the meeting of Soul with Matter seems to be doomed, but there it is pure and delightful: '*They join their strength and sweetness and delight*', mingle their qualities and melt together, uniting the realms of heaven and earth and making '*the high and low worlds one*'. We are not only our bodies; we have souls within us, we have subtle physical elements, we have mental and vital parts, we carry the potentialities of all the planes of existence in us; but in this material world, soul has difficulty to express itself: as long as our minds and lives and bodies are under the domination of matter the soul cannot express itself freely. In the world of subtle matter, it is easier for Matter and Soul to meet and mingle, because the substance of that world is finer and purer than ours.

Intruder from the formless Infinite
Daring to break into the Inconscient's reign,
The spirit's leap towards body touches ground.

An '*Intruder*' is somebody who breaks in, an uninvited guest. Spirit is an '*Intruder*' in the material world. For the material universe to be manifested, the Spirit, the pure existence-consciousness-bliss, had to take a tremendous downward leap. It had to leave its '*formless Infinite*', beyond even the highest level of the World-Stair, and dare '*to break into the Inconscient's reign*', into the realm of unconscious matter. On the way down, in the course of involution, '*The spirit's leap towards body*', towards embodiment in the material universe, it is in the realm of Subtle Matter that it first '*touches ground*', makes its first landing.

As yet unwrapped in earthly lineaments,
Already it wears outlasting death and birth,
Convincing the abyss by heavenly form,
A covering of its immortality

Alive to the lustre of the wearer's rank,
Fit to endure the rub of Change and Time.

When it does so, the spirit is not yet wrapped up '*in earthly lineaments*'. '*Lineaments*' are features, appearances. In the subtle physical realm, the spirit does not yet have an earthly body, but it is already wearing a '*covering of its immortality*'. That '*covering*', unlike our earthly bodies, is also immortal: it outlasts '*death and birth*'; and the poet tells us that there is something very convincing about that ideal form which the spirit wears in the subtle realms: it convinces '*the abyss by heavenly form*'. That form is '*alive*' – it is responsive – '*to the lustre*', the light or the radiance, '*of the wearer's rank*'. Your '*rank*' is your position in society or in a hierarchy. The spirit belongs to the very highest level of the hierarchy of planes of existence, so the '*covering*' which it wears when it enters into the realm of subtle matter reflects that high rank; it is not only shining and radiant, it is also '*Fit to endure the rub of Change and Time*'. Here in our material world, our bodies start to wear out as they grow older because of all the changes they undergo in time, but the subtle physical body that the spirit wears when it first '*touches ground*' is more durable: it is '*Fit to endure the rub of Change and Time*'.

A tissue mixed of the soul's radiant light
And Matter's substance of sign-burdened Force,—
Imagined vainly in our mind's thin air
An abstract phantasm mould of mental make,—
It feels what earthly bodies cannot feel
And is more real than this grosser frame.

Here Sri Aurobindo tells us more about the covering which the spirit wears in the subtle physical realm. It is a '*tissue*' in which two elements are combined: '*the soul's radiant light*' is mixed with '*Matter's substance of sign-burdened Force*' – '*Matter's substance*' which is a formation of energy, of '*Force*', loaded with significance: '*sign-burdened*'. If we happen to perceive one of those subtle physical forms, the mind assumes that it is something '*abstract*', something unreal, which does not really exist, a '*phantasm*', an illusory appearance, a '*mould*' that has been produced by mind itself.

But Sri Aurobindo tells us that this is just a vain imagination of our earthly minds. In fact, that substance is much more real than our own. It can feel '*what earthly bodies cannot feel*': it has a much finer consciousness and subtler senses than ours and can enter into subtler relations which our gross bodies are not capable of. It is actually '*more real than this grosser frame*' – this body that each of us is wearing. To us, matter seems to be the thing that is most real and we tend to feel that anything finer and subtler than matter is unreal or at least less real than what we can perceive with our physical senses. But in fact that subtler substance is '*more real*' because it is closer to the Origin.

After the falling of mortality's cloak
Lightened is its weight to heighten its ascent;
Refined to the touch of finer environments
It drops old patterned palls of denser stuff,
Cancels the grip of earth's descending pull
And bears the soul from world to higher world,
Till in the naked ether of the peaks
The spirit's simplicity alone is left,
The eternal being's first transparent robe.

'After the falling of mortality's cloak' – when the physical body falls away, so that the spirit no longer has to wear this '*cloak*' of matter that is subject to death, its subtle physical covering becomes lighter, '*to heighten its ascent*', so that it can easily rise to higher levels. It becomes finer, '*Refined to the touch of finer environments*', of even subtler worlds. The spirit '*drops old patterned palls of denser stuff*'. A 'pall' is a heavy cloth; actually this is the word that is used for the covering that we put over a dead body or over a coffin. Here it refers to the material substance of the body. The spirit lets fall all those old heavy patterned coverings of denser substance and '*Cancels the grip of earth's descending pull*' so that it is no longer subject to gravity, the downward pull of the earth. That subtler body can carry '*the soul from world to higher world*', getting finer and lighter until '*in the naked ether of the peaks*', the very refined atmosphere of the highest planes, no '*covering*' is needed: '*The spirit's simplicity alone is left, / The eternal being's first transparent robe.*'

But when it must come back to its mortal load
And the hard ensemble of earth's experience,
Then its return resumes that heavier dress.

When the spirit has to return to this world, to take up the load of human existence and face all the hard circumstances of living on earth again, then as it comes back, step by step it puts on *'that heavier dress'* of subtle and then gross material bodies.

For long before earth's solid vest was forged
By the technique of the atomic Void,
A lucent envelope of self-disguise
Was woven round the secret spirit in things.

'Vest' here means 'robe' or 'garment'. In the old Indian tradition, 'earth' represents the material principle or Matter. Here, Sri Aurobindo seems to be telling us about a time long before matter as we know it came into existence. Physicists and cosmologists tell us that after the 'Big Bang', which they consider to be the beginning of our universe, it took quite a long time for the atoms which constitute the matter we know today to get formed in the heart of stars, and much longer still for those atoms to coalesce to form planets orbiting around suns. *'Forged'* means 'made' or 'manufactured'; it is used especially of the extraction and shaping of iron. Here he says that *'long before'* the matter that we know *'was forged'* or produced *'By the technique of the atomic Void'* – the empty space full of elementary particles from which material forms have emerged – already the spirit had created a covering for itself: *'A lucent envelope of self-disguise / Was woven round the secret spirit in things.'*

The subtle realms from those bright sheaths are made.

The *'subtle realms'* which make up the World-Stair that Aswapati is just beginning to explore are made *'from those bright sheaths'* – those bright coverings which constitute the *'lucent envelope of self-disguise'* that spirit has made for itself.

This wonder-world with all its radiant boon
Of vision and inviolate happiness,
Only for expression cares and perfect form;
Fair on its peaks, it has dangerous nether planes;

'This wonder-world', the Kingdom of Subtle Matter, *'with all its radiant boon'* or shining gift of subtle vision and *'inviolable happiness'* only cares about *'expression'* and *'perfect form'*. *'Inviolable'* means *'unspoiled'*; when something is violated, it gets spoiled or broken, but the happiness gifted by that world is inviolable, unspoiled. In a way the material world too cares only about form, but forms here are not as beautiful as the perfect forms of that world. *'On its peaks'*, its higher levels, the forms are beautiful – *'Fair'* – but also *'it has dangerous nether planes'*; its lower levels are dangerous. In the next few lines the poet explains why.

Its light draws towards the verge of Nature's lapse;
It lends beauty to the terror of the gulfs
And fascinating eyes to perilous Gods,
Invests with grace the demon and the snake.

The light of that realm comes close to *'the verge of Nature's lapse'* – the borderline where Nature falls away from perfection into unconsciousness, imperfection, falsehood and evil. Since that world cares only about perfect expression and form, it gives beautiful forms even to dark and terrible things from *'the terror of the gulfs'* – the deep dark levels of the vital. It lends *'fascinating eyes to perilous Gods'*, providing attractiveness even to dangerous powers; it makes even *'the demon and the snake'* – symbolic terms for adverse vital powers – look beautiful and alluring.

Its trance imposes earth's inconscience,
Immortal it weaves for us death's sombre robe
And authorises our mortality.

The *'trance'* or deeply indrawn consciousness of the lower levels of that world makes *'earth's inconscience'*, the unconsciousness of matter, unavoidable. That world is *'immortal'*, free from death, but *'it weaves for us death's sombre robe'*, the dark clothing of matter which has to die, and authorises or sanctions our *'mortality'*, the subjection to death which prevails in the material world.

This medium serves a greater Consciousness:
A vessel of its concealed autocracy,
It is the subtle ground of Matter's worlds,

It is the immutable in their mutable forms,
In the folds of its creative memory
It guards the deathless type of perishing things:
Its lowered potencies found our fallen strengths;
Its thought invents our reasoned ignorance;
Its sense fathers our body's reflexes.

The *'medium'* of subtle Matter *'serves a greater Consciousness'*; it is *'a vessel'* for the absolute authority or *'autocracy'* of that *'greater Consciousness'*. *'It is the subtle ground'* or foundation *'of Matter's worlds'*. It is the foundation for gross matter and provides the unchanging, *'immutable'* base and support for the changing forms that exist in the worlds of Matter. It is keeping safe *'In the folds of its creative memory'* the permanent ideal forms underlying the impermanent formations of matter: *'the deathless type of perishing things'*. In the material universe everything perishes sooner or later; but perishable forms are based on ideals or types. When material nature gives birth to forms she is trying to approximate the ideal forms which exist on higher levels. Held in the subtle physical substance of that world is the *'memory'* of those deathless types or templates. The *'lowered potencies'* of the *'Kingdom of Subtle Matter'* are less powerful than those of the higher worlds, but nevertheless they provide the basis and origin of the strengths of our fallen world. The kind of *'thought'* which rules there gives birth to *'our reasoned ignorance'*, and *'Its sense'*, its capacities of subtle touch and vision and hearing and taste, give rise to the reflexes of our body: the consciousness of our physical bodies derives from the subtle senses of the Kingdom of Subtle Matter.

Our secret breath of untried mightier force,
The lurking sun of an instant's inner sight,
Its fine suggestions are a covert fount
For our iridescent rich imaginings
Touching things common with transfiguring hues
Till even earth's mud grows rich and warm with the skies
And a glory gleams from the soul's decadence.

That realm of subtle matter is supporting our material world with a *'secret breath'* carrying a greater strength than anything we have so far tried to use. It is a *'lurking sun'*: a hidden consciousness and light

which we might glimpse for a moment with ‘*an instant’s inner sight*’. It is sending us many ‘*fine suggestions*’ which flow to us as if from a secret fountain, feeding ‘*iridescent rich imaginings*’ shining with all the colours of the rainbow. Sometimes those ‘*fine suggestions*’ touch the ordinary things that we see here in our world ‘*with transfiguring hues*’ so that we see them changed, in a new magical light, and for a moment even our gross muddy matter becomes ‘*rich and warm with the skies*’, with the light of higher levels of consciousness, ‘*and a glory gleams*’ even ‘*from the soul’s decadence*’, from the fallen state of the soul here in the material world. ‘*Decadence*’ means ‘falling away’; we use it of something that has fallen away from a higher state into a lower one, for example civilisations or cultures.

Its knowledge is our error’s starting-point;
Its beauty dons our mud-mask ugliness,
Its artist good begins our evil’s tale.

Since our material world is derived from that subtler plane, ‘*Its knowledge*’ forms the starting-point of our ignorance and error, and its magical beauty ‘*dons our mud-mask ugliness*’. To ‘don’ means ‘to put on’, for example a mask or robe. The mud of matter covers up the loveliness of the subtle forms of that higher world and ‘*Its artist good begins our evil’s tale.*’ This is a paradoxical line, but earlier Sri Aurobindo warned us that the Kingdom of Subtle Matter cares only for expression and perfect form like an artist; sometimes the aesthetic values of the artist can give grace and allure to falsehood, and this may contribute to the long story of what we experience in our world as evil.

A heaven of creative truths above,
A cosmos of harmonious dreams between,
A chaos of dissolving forms below,
It plunges lost in our inconscient base.
Out of its fall our denser Matter came.

On its highest levels the Kingdom of Subtle Matter is ‘*A heaven*’ full of ‘*creative truths*’, able to create their own perfect expressions. In its middle levels it is ‘*A cosmos*’, a universe ‘*of harmonious dreams*’; but on its lower levels there is ‘*A chaos of dissolving forms*’, losing their shapes and their harmonious order, so that at its lowest, ‘*It*

plunges lost in our inconscient base: finally it gets lost in the formless Inconscience from which the material world has emerged: ‘*Out of its fall our denser Matter came*’. As the poet showed us earlier, ‘*earth’s solid vest*’ has been forged out of the formlessness of the inconscient ‘*By the technique of the atomic Void*’. The gross matter that makes up our world has emerged from that ‘*inconscient base*’.

Section 2, lines 150–359

Thus taken was God’s plunge into the Night.
This fallen world became a nurse of souls
Inhabited by concealed divinity.

The Supreme Consciousness has plunged into the Asat, the non-existence, the darkness of inconscience, in order to set off the slow process of evolution. As a result, ‘*This fallen world*’ of matter, ‘*became a nurse of souls*’. Earth, the material principle is apparently inconscient, but she nourishes and feeds the souls who are going to emerge. This world and the souls it will give birth to are ‘*Inhabited by concealed divinity*’: the Divine dwells within them, ‘*concealed*’, hidden from our view.

A Being woke and lived in the meaningless void,
A world-wide Nescience strove towards life and thought,
A Consciousness plucked out from mindless sleep.
All here is driven by an insentient will.

Because of God’s plunge into the Night of non-existence, a ‘*Being*’ woke up and lived within ‘*the meaningless void*’. As a result, that ‘*world-wide Nescience*’, that state of not knowing, began to strive, to make an effort, ‘*towards life*’ and beyond life even towards ‘*thought*’. The will in matter is ‘*insentient*’, without senses; but it is blindly pushing towards the capacity to live, to feel, and even to think. In that way it is driving the evolutionary movement forward towards higher realisations.

Thus fallen, inconscient, frustrate, dense, inert,
Sunk into inanimate and torpid drowse
Earth lay, a drudge of sleep, forced to create
By a subconscious yearning memory

Left from a happiness dead before she was born,
An alien wonder on her senseless breast.

Earth, Sri Aurobindo says, is a goddess. When we use this word 'earth' we think of our planet, this globe we live on, but it symbolises the material element, the material principle. Earth is a goddess, and here she is in her most material state, '*fallen*', apparently without consciousness, '*frustrate*', unable to express her divinity, heavy and unmoving: '*dense, inert*'. Her innate consciousness and force have sunk into a '*drowse*', a sleepy state that is '*inanimate and torpid*': lifeless and unable to move; a '*torpid*' state is like being in a coma because of illness or drugs. '*Earth lay*' like that, as if in deep sleep, and yet she has to work very hard as '*a drudge of sleep*'. Drudgery is hard, boring work, work that you do but do not like to do, laborious hard boring work; a '*drudge*' is a poor person who has to work very hard without gaining any joy from her work. Although the Earth goddess is as if asleep, she still has to labour hard because she is being '*forced to create*' by a memory which she is carrying in her subconscious. That subconscious memory is '*yearning*', longing for a state of happiness that was already dead before earth was born, before earth was manifested. What is the '*alien wonder*' that she is carrying on '*her senseless breast*' – her breast that cannot sense or feel anything because it is purely material? The next sentence will tell us.

This mire must harbour the orchid and the rose,
From her blind unwilling substance must emerge
A beauty that belongs to happier spheres.

This '*mire*', this dirty mud that is typical of earth must provide a home to miraculously beautiful flowers, orchids and roses. From earth's '*blind unwilling substance*' of insentient matter must emerge '*A beauty that belongs to happier spheres*': not just the material sphere, but the spheres of life and higher realms even beyond life. When these things emerge from matter they are '*an alien wonder*'. Imagine the first flowers... what a miracle they are on that '*breast*' of earth, that '*breast*' in which there are no senses, no capacity to enjoy or perceive beauty. Something must emerge that belongs to another realm: '*an alien wonder*'.

This is the destiny bequeathed to her,
As if a slain god left a golden trust
To a blind force and an imprisoned soul.

This is earth's '*destiny*'. It has been '*bequeathed to her*'. Before you leave your body you may plan, you may write a Will, indicating who should receive your wealth, your belongings and your responsibilities: what must go to whom, so that when you are no longer here each particular responsibility or possession will go to the person you have '*bequeathed*' it to. Here it is as if a god has been '*slain*', killed, a divine being, who knowing that he is no longer going to be there, has left this very precious '*golden trust*' as a task to the earth, even though she seems to be only '*a blind force*', an unconscious energy and a soul that is '*imprisoned*' in matter which cannot express it properly. So how is she going to carry out its '*golden trust*'?

An immortal godhead's perishable parts
She must reconstitute from fragments lost,
Reword from a document complete elsewhere
Her doubtful title to her divine Name.

Earth has been bequeathed these impossible tasks: first she has to find the lost '*fragments*', the broken and scattered pieces of '*An immortal godhead's perishable parts*', and then she must put them back together again, '*reconstitute*' them. This is her first task. The second is that somewhere there is a '*document*' which entitles the earth to be called a goddess, to be regarded as a goddess, as a divine being. But that '*document*' is kept somewhere else where she cannot reach it. Here she has to '*reword*' it, reconstruct again in words her '*title*', her entitlement to a '*divine Name*', because that '*title*' is in doubt. How can we be sure that she is a goddess until this '*document*' has been restored, put together again?

A residue her sole inheritance,
All things she carries in her shapeless dust.

A '*residue*' is what is left when something has been used up. Someone may have left you a lot of money in their will, but almost all of it has been spent on funeral expenses and paying debts – all you receive is the residue, and it may be very little, all the rest is gone,

it has all been used up. Earth has only inherited some '*shapeless dust*'. But in this '*shapeless dust*' everything is contained and can be reconstituted, can be born. She is carrying everything, all forms, and all possibilities in the '*shapeless dust*' of her substance, because, as we read in the previous canto, all the powers and capacities of the higher worlds are condensed and concentrated in it.¹

Her giant energy tied to petty forms
In the slow tentative motion of her power
With only frail blunt instruments for use,
She has accepted as her nature's need
And given to man as his stupendous work
A labour to the gods impossible.

Earth has accepted this inheritance as '*her nature's need*', recognised it as the work she needs to do; she has accepted that her tremendous energy should be '*tied to petty forms*', small, unimportant, insignificant, forms as she exercises her great power in a '*slow tentative motion*'. The movement of this evolving material earth is very slow and '*tentative*', unsure of itself. As if groping in the dark it tries out one thing and then another; it is not absolutely sure of the direction it must go. Evolution seems to move like that: through many experiments, testing and trying, always asking, "Is this the right thing? Will it work or not?" And what kind of '*instruments*' or tools has she got at her disposal for this tremendous work? Only forms that are born in the material world; they are both '*frail*' – weak and easily broken – and '*blunt*'. If you have a great work to do you would like to have a nice sharp suitable tool to use, but if you have only got a blunt instrument it makes your work very much more difficult. She has accepted this task and all these difficult conditions. The task that she has accepted is impossible to the gods, but she has handed on that '*stupendous*

1. Our earth is a fragment and a residue;
Her power is packed with the stuff of greater worlds
And steeped in their colour-lustres dimmed by her drowse;
An atavism of higher births is hers,
Her sleep is stirred by their buried memories
Recalling the lost spheres from which they fell. (*Savitri* pp. 99-100)

work’ to us human beings. We are the ‘*frail blunt instruments*’ she has at her disposal. We are the ones who have to help her carry out this labour that is impossible to the gods.

A life living hardly in a field of death
Its portion claims of immortality;
A brute half-conscious body serves as means
A mind that must recover a knowledge lost
Held in stone grip by the world’s inconstancy,
And wearing still these countless knots of Law
A spirit bound stand up as Nature’s king.

This sentence is about human beings, and the task we have to do on behalf of the Earth goddess. We are alive, but the whole universe around us is subject to death, to entropy, and we are constantly in danger of death; but something in us feels that we are immortal and have the right to live forever. Our body is an animal body that is ‘*brute*’, primitive and unrefined and ‘*half-conscious*’; but it has to serve a mind – in consciousness we are mental beings. This mind of ours has the task of recovering or rediscovering a knowledge that has been lost and is ‘*held in stone grip*’, the grip of inconstancy. This animal body of ours must also serve a spirit which is intended to rise up as the king of Nature even while it is still wearing all ‘*these countless knots of Law*’, restricted by the laws of matter, of life and of mind. Our spirit has to grow strong enough to stand up and rule Nature even while it still inhabits and uses the physical body and brain.

A mighty kinship is this daring’s cause.
All we attempt in this imperfect world,
Looks forward or looks back beyond Time’s gloss
To its pure idea and firm inviolate type
In an absolute creation’s flawless skill.

How can earth have the courage, the ‘*daring*’ to take up this impossible task? She can do it because she belongs to a very powerful family and has a ‘*mighty kinship*’. Your ‘*kin*’ are the people you are related to. In the next passage Sri Aurobindo is going to explain further that ‘*mighty kinship*’ which gives earth the daring to take up the task that is her demanding inheritance. Meanwhile he tells

us that everything that we attempt here, *'in this imperfect world'*, is either looking forwards or looking backwards beyond Time, beyond the *'gloss'* or interpretation that Time gives. When I interpret and explain these words and lines to you I am giving a *'gloss'* on them; a *'glossary'* gives the meanings of difficult or unfamiliar words. Sri Aurobindo says that Time is giving a *'gloss'*, presenting an interpretation of something which is Timeless: a *'pure idea and firm inviolate type'* – a model form which is *'inviolate'*, which is without any kind of imperfection, which exists somewhere else, *'In an absolute creation's flawless skill'*. Beyond our earth, there is the ideal creation of a perfect earth somewhere which is being reflected or expressed or re-created in the course of Time and Space in this manifestation. It is because there is a connection, a *'mighty kinship'* between the ideal and its evolutionary manifestation, that earth can undertake this great labour and that we, her children and instruments, are impelled always to make fresh attempts at greater things. Sometimes we are consciously inspired; sometimes we are just driven by the will of evolution, but whatever we attempt here, in this imperfect world, is connected with that flawless ideal: consciously or unconsciously we are either looking back to some ideal earlier state or looking forward to some divine fulfilment in which what we are attempting to realise now already exists in all its perfection.

To seize the absolute in shapes that pass,
To fix the eternal's touch in time-made things,
This is the law of all perfection here.

Everything in our world is relative, but we sense that somewhere there must be something *'absolute'*. To get hold of that absoluteness and express it somehow in these relative and short-lived forms and shapes and to *'fix'* just one *'touch'* of the eternal in things that are made here in Time – that is what true artists are always trying to do. We try to do this in our lives as well – to do things as well as we can, to do things as perfectly as we can. *'The law of all perfection here'* is to be able to receive something from that absolute and flawless world beyond Time, beyond imperfection, to bring a little of it here and *'fix the eternal's touch in time-made things'*. Sri Aurobindo seems to say that this is possible:

A fragment here is caught of heaven's design;
Else could we never hope for greater life
And ecstasy and glory could not be.

If it were not possible for us somehow, through this connection, to catch just a '*fragment*', a tiny little bit, of '*heaven's design*'... if we could not do that... there would be no hope for any higher life, and '*ecstasy and glory could not be*': they could never be felt or experienced here in the material world.

Even in the littleness of our mortal state,
Even in this prison-house of outer form,
A brilliant passage for the infallible Flame
Is driven through gross walls of nerve and brain,
A Splendour presses or a Power breaks through,
Earth's great dull barrier is removed awhile,
The unconscious seal is lifted from our eyes
And we grow vessels of creative might.

Here we are in '*our mortal state*', subject to death, in our little separate existence, imprisoned in these '*outer*' forms; but even so it is possible for a higher inspiration to come to us from above, when a '*brilliant passage for the infallible Flame*' of creative force gets '*driven through*' the gross material walls of the nerves and the brain, so that the '*dull barrier*' of matter gets removed for a time, '*The unconscious seal is lifted from our eyes*': our power of vision is no longer sealed up by the limited capacity of our physical eyes, and under the pressure of that higher inspiration we may become for a moment or two '*vessels of creative might*', able to contain and be used by a great creative power. Here, I think, Sri Aurobindo is speaking about the inspiration the poet or the artist receives. Somehow '*A brilliant passage for the infallible Flame*', a shining tunnel through which a '*Flame*' of inspiration that brings something absolutely true, something that cannot fail, gets driven through the gross physical '*walls*' of our nerves and our brain, so that we feel some glorious possibility pressing on us and a '*Power breaks through*'. Then the '*dull barrier*' of matter is '*removed*' for some time; a '*seal*' of blindness, of unconsciousness, '*is lifted from our eyes*' and we become '*vessels*' of a great creative force.

The enthusiasm of a divine surprise
Pervades our life, a mystic stir is felt,
A joyful anguish trembles in our limbs;
A dream of beauty dances through the heart,
A thought from the eternal Mind draws near,
Intimations cast from the Invisible
Awaking from Infinity's sleep come down,
Symbols of That which never yet was made.

This is the creative delight of the artist, who gets seized by the '*enthusiasm of a divine surprise*'. Something pours through his life, seizes hold of him, and he feels '*a mystic stir*', a movement that is so intense that the limbs of the body tremble with '*joyful anguish*'. Then '*A dream of beauty dances through the heart*' or some great divine thought approaches us. These are '*Intimations*', messages or hints which are thrown down '*from the Invisible*' world; they have been sleeping in the realm of infinite possibility, but now wake up and come down into the consciousness of the aspiring artist as '*Symbols of That which never yet was made*': images of something which has never yet been manifested, something completely new and fresh. Probably this is one of the greatest forms of delight we can ever experience as human beings: the sense of being a vessel through which creative force is finding expression.

But soon the inert flesh responds no more,
Then sinks the sacred orgy of delight,
The blaze of passion and the tide of power
Are taken from us and, though a glowing form
Abides astonishing earth, imagined supreme,
Too little of what was meant has left a trace.

'*But soon*' owing to the nature of our physical body, our brain and nerves and hands stop responding to that powerful flow of inspiration: '*the inert flesh responds no more*'. The substance of our bodies tends to be *tamasic*, inert, unresponsive. That '*dull barrier*' of earthly nature may be removed for a while, so that we receive some touch of inspiration, but soon the body cannot respond any longer to that flow from above. Then the intense creative delight that we have been experiencing, that '*sacred orgy of delight*', is lost. The word '*orgy*' is usually used of a mass indulgence in the lower enjoyments of the

senses; but here the poet speaks of a *'sacred orgy'* when the whole body is seized by creative inspiration and force. For a time all the senses and capacities may be fully engaged in this intense delight, but soon all that intensity dies down like a candle burns out, like a fire sinking down. *'The blaze of passion'*, the intense feelings that come under the pressure of the higher inspiration are like a *'blaze'*, a big bonfire burning; we feel a *'tide of power'* pouring into us like an ocean of strength; but soon those powerful experiences are taken away from us. Under their influence we may have created something very beautiful, *'a glowing form'* which *'Abides'*, remains after the creative impulse has passed. That great creation may astonish those who see it, who may say "What a great masterpiece! What a supreme piece of art!" But the artist himself knows that *'Too little of what was meant has left a trace'*. What was coming – the inspiration that was coming – was so much more perfect, more complete, more complex, more beautiful than what he was able to express. Maybe even Sri Aurobindo felt like this about *Savitri*; we see this *'glowing form'* that he has left to us, and are astonished by the supreme poetry, but he himself might have felt that *'Too little of what was meant has left a trace'*.

Earth's eyes half-see, her forces half-create;
Her rarest works are copies of heaven's art.

The earth-consciousness is limited: she can only *'half-see'* the universe around her, and *'her forces'* can only *'half-create'*, so that her most beautiful achievements, whether of nature or of human beings *'are copies of heaven's art'*, that creations which can be seen in the subtle physical realms.

A radiance of a golden artifice,
A masterpiece of inspired device and rule,
Her forms hide what they house and only mime
The unseized miracle of self-born shapes
That live for ever in the Eternal's gaze.

The forms of earth, he says, shine with the *'radiance of a golden artifice'*. An *'artifice'* is artificial. To make something artificial you may be very skilful, but what you make is not the real thing. You may create *'a masterpiece of inspired device and rule'*. *'Devices'*

are skilful tricks to get things done – bits of machinery, gadgets or ways of doing things and there are rules, guidelines about how to use them most effectively, but the outputs are still artificial, copies of the real thing. The forms of earth ‘*hide what they house*’: they are outer coverings for something very true, divine, but that truth which lies within gets hidden by the outer forms. The outer forms only ‘*mime*’ or copy the real original forms, the eternal and self-born shapes that have not been made by ‘*artifice*’, by ‘*device and rule*’, but are pure self-expressions of the Eternal. ‘*Mime*’ is a form of dramatic art which can be truly wonderful, but mimicry cannot catch the ‘*unseized miracle*’ of the ‘*self-born shapes*’, the pure original forms ‘*That live for ever*’ in the vision of the Eternal.

Here in a difficult half-finished world
Is a slow toiling of unconscious Powers;
Here is man’s ignorant divining mind,
His genius born from an incontinent soil.
To copy on earth’s copies is his art.

Here we are in this ‘*difficult half-finished world*’, which is only half-way through its evolution. So what we experience here is ‘*a slow toiling of unconscious Powers*’: everything costs effort, even simple things. Even if we feel inspired to produce a great work of art, that demands an enormous effort and takes time because here the Powers of Matter, Life and Mind are unconscious and unable to respond fully to the higher consciousness. What we have to work with is ‘*man’s ignorant divining mind*’. Our minds are ignorant, but seem somehow to be guided or have some power of intuition. Sri Aurobindo uses the word ‘*divining*’, the verb we use for a person who can tell us where to find water, or things that are lost, because he has some special sense that is not really understood. The word is connected with the French word ‘*deviner*’ which means ‘to guess’, but it is not really guessing so much as knowing without knowing how you know; it is a form of intuition, of direct knowledge. And if a person shows some exceptionally developed capacity of intellect, artistic ability or power of organisation, we call him a ‘genius’; but human genius is nevertheless born from this unconscious soil of matter, of the physical body and is dependent to a certain extent on

a physical brain, on the nerves and the body's responses. This means that human beings who are inspired to create great beautiful things – in art, music, poetry, the sciences and even philosophy – find that what they are doing is '*To copy on earth's copies*'. All artists, as part of their training, have to do this: learn to observe the forms of nature, the material forms and see how accurately and precisely and evocatively they can express the appearances of nature, which are already '*copies of heaven's art*'.

For when he strives for things surpassing earth,
Too rude the workman's tools, too crude his stuff,
And hardly with his heart's blood he achieves
His transient house of the divine Idea,
His figure of a Time-inn for the Unborn.

When a human being tries to go behind and beyond what can be seen and sensed, he finds that the tools he has at his disposal are '*too rude*' and rough, and that the material he has to work with is '*too crude*', too unresponsive. Only with great effort, '*hardly with his heart's blood*', can he achieve a form to hold and express '*the divine Idea*' that he was aiming for; and even that is only a '*transient house*' which will not last for ever. But that hard-won form is '*His figure of a Time-inn for the Unborn*'. An '*inn*' is a place where a traveller can stay overnight, or for a short time. When a human being is attempting to create some beautiful form, what he is really trying to do is to build a form that the '*Unborn*', the unmanifested reality, will accept to inhabit for some time. This is what the true artist is trying to achieve: a form that will house and express some unborn beauty and truth.

Our being thrills with high far memories
And would bring down their dateless meanings here,
But, too divine for earthly Nature's scheme,
Beyond our reach the eternal marvels blaze.

What inspires us to make such attempts? Sri Aurobindo says that we feel impelled to do that because deep within us lie '*high far memories*', perhaps from the time before we took birth in the material universe; if we get some contact with such a memory in our inner being, we may feel a thrill, a moment of excitement that

makes us want to embody them here and ‘bring down their dateless meanings’, their significances which are beyond time, not limited by time, into our present time and our space. But those ‘eternal marvels’ are blazing like suns ‘Beyond our reach’; they are ‘too divine’ to fit into the ‘scheme’ of earthly Nature.

Absolute they dwell, unborn, immutable,
Immaculate in the Spirit’s deathless air,
Immortal in a world of motionless Time
And an unchanging muse of deep self-space.

Those ‘high far memories’ live out of our reach. We live in a world of relativity, but they are ‘Absolute’. They are ‘unborn, immutable’, beyond birth and death, forever unchanging; they live ‘Immaculate in the Spirit’s deathless air’: they are absolutely perfect; there is no imperfection in them anywhere, and they are dwelling in the ‘deathless air’ of the ‘Spirit’ where they are ‘Immortal in a world of motionless Time’: there can be no death, because there is no movement of Time. That realm of the Spirit is ‘an unchanging muse of deep self-space’. Sri Aurobindo tells us to think of the One creating the world out of Himself: the very first step of Creation is an extension of His ‘self-space’ to form Time so that all the potentialities He carries within Him can appear one after the other, and to objectify them in what we experience as Space. Time and Space and Creation are born from Spirit’s ‘muse of deep self-space’ where Time is motionless and all Space is contained within the One. The ‘high far memories’ which thrill us and impel us to create, come from that unchanging state of ‘motionless Time’ and unchanging self-space. These perfect forms are held there unchanging, perfect forever, at the Origin of all Creation.

Only when we have climbed above ourselves,
A line of the Transcendent meets our road
And joins us to the timeless and the true;
It brings to us the inevitable word,
The godlike act, the thoughts that never die.

We can have a contact with that realm only when we have ‘climbed above ourselves’, beyond our present limited state. Then a line from that transcendent state beyond time and space and manifestation

may meet us on our path and connect us to *'the timeless and the true'* and bring us a great gift from our Origin: *'the inevitable word'*, *'The godlike act'*, or *'thoughts that never die'*. When writing Savitri Sri Aurobindo was always looking for the *'inevitable word'*, the one word that is just exactly right in that particular place to convey the intended meaning, the word that cannot be substituted by any other word without diminishing the significance that is to be conveyed. That contact with our Transcendent source may bring us the capacity for some powerfully effective act here in the world – a *'godlike act'*, or it may bring us *'thoughts that never die'*. These great gifts come when we have risen above ourselves and had a contact with the *'Transcendent'*.

A ripple of light and glory wraps the brain,
And travelling down the moment's vanishing route
The figures of eternity arrive.

This is the experience of inspiration or even revelation: suddenly the brain is enveloped in a gentle wave of *'light and glory'* and just for a moment, *'down the moment's vanishing route / 'The figures of eternity arrive'*. The moment lasts only a very short time, but in that short time, we are visited by *'figures of eternity'*, images that express eternity.

As the mind's visitors or the heart's guests
They espouse our mortal brevity awhile,
Or seldom in some rare delivering glimpse
Are caught by our vision's delicate surmise.

Those *'figures of eternity'* come and enter into us, visiting the mind as deathless thoughts, or coming to the heart as forms of eternal beauty. For a time they *'espouse our mortal brevity'*, accepting our short-lived mortal state. *'Brevity'* means *'shortness'*. Or maybe, just for a moment, they are *'caught by our vision's delicate surmise'*: we glimpse them just for a moment so that we are not sure of what we have seen. *'To surmise'* means *'to conjecture'*: we catch a brief glimpse and wonder *"Did I really see that? What did I really see?"* Such a glimpse happens only very rarely, but when it comes it is liberating, *'delivering'*, freeing us from the limitations of our normal everyday perceptions.

Although beginnings only and first attempts,
These glimmerings point to the secret of our birth
And the hidden miracle of our destiny.

These experiences are only beginnings, only first attempts, only ‘*glimmerings*’: very faint little lights; but the very fact that we can have such experiences points ‘*to the secret of our birth*’, who we really are, and ‘*the hidden miracle of our destiny*’: they are indications of where we have come from and where we are going. These rare and exceptional experiences are clues to the truth of our existence.

What we are there and here on earth shall be
Is imaged in a contact and a call.

They reveal an image of our true being, of ‘*What we are there*’, on those higher and subtler levels, and what we shall be ‘*here on earth*’, when our evolution advances so far. The higher truth and reality of ourselves gets ‘*imaged*’ in that rare touch which is also ‘*a call*’, for when we experience that contact, it is an invitation which attracts us.

As yet earth’s imperfection is our sphere,
Our nature’s glass shows not our real self;
That greatness still abides held back within.

‘*As yet*’, for the time being, so far, we live here in this ‘*sphere*’, in this realm of ‘*imperfection*’ which is dominated by the material principle. If we try to observe our outer nature, as if looking at ourselves in a mirror, what we see there is ‘*not our real self*’. The ‘*greatness*’ that we really are still remains ‘*held back within*’ us; it has not yet come forward or been revealed.

Earth’s doubting future hides our heritage:
The Light now distant shall grow native here,
The Strength that visits us our comrade power;
The Ineffable shall find a secret voice,
The Imperishable burn through Matter’s screen
Making this mortal body godhead’s robe.

We look into the future with a mixture of hope and anxiety: we are not sure what will happen, what the prospects are. It is

as if our possible futures are doubting themselves, uncertain of themselves. That sense of doubt '*hides our heritage*': what is the future going to inherit from the past? We do not know – but Sri Aurobindo assures us that we have a very bright heritage. The higher Light of consciousness which now seems very far away and out of reach '*shall grow native here*': it will become absolutely natural and '*native*' to the earth. The greater spiritual '*Strength*' that occasionally '*visits us*' for a short time in special moments will become '*our comrade power*', be always with us, always supporting us. A '*comrade*' is a reliable and intimate friend and companion. '*The Ineffable*' is the supreme Reality which we can never adequately express in words or images; but Sri Aurobindo promises us that the inexpressible Truth will find '*a secret voice*', a subtle way of expressing itself here on Earth. '*The Imperishable*' existence and substance which does not decay or die will '*burn through Matter's screen*', the material covering of the inner being, to make '*this mortal body*' we have now, which is subject to death and decay, into '*godhead's robe*' – a dress for the divine being which inhabits it. All this can happen because:

The Spirit's greatness is our timeless source
And it shall be our crown in endless Time.

The greatness of the Spirit is beyond Time, '*timeless*', but it is our '*source*', our origin, where we have come from. It is also where we are going to. Reaching it consciously in the material manifestation will be our crowning achievement in the endless process of Time.

A vast Unknown is round us and within;
All things are wrapped in the dynamic One:
A subtle link of union joins all life.

Three complementary statements: there is a '*vast Unknown*' all around us and also within us; '*All things*' – everything in the manifestation, known or unknown to us is '*wrapped*', enclosed and held '*in the dynamic One*' – the one Divine Being and Presence actively at work; and because of this, a '*subtle link of union joins all life*': all living things, and actually all things – because life is there everywhere really – are connected in that dynamic Oneness.

Thus all creation is a single chain:
We are not left alone in a closed scheme
Between a driving of unconscious Force
And an incommunicable Absolute.

This means that everything in the creation is connected like the links of a chain; so although we human beings often feel as if we are alone and unsupported, in fact *'we are not left alone'*. We may feel that we are imprisoned within a *'closed scheme'* from which we cannot escape, caught between nature's *'driving of unconscious Force'*, constantly impelling us from below and *'an incommunicable Absolute'* – some absolute Power above and beyond which we cannot possibly communicate with or grasp; but Sri Aurobindo assures us that it is not like that.

Our life is a spur in a sublime soul-range,
Our being looks beyond its walls of mind
And it communicates with greater worlds;

In fact we are connected with higher and greater realities: *'Our life is a spur in a sublime soul-range'*. This combination of the words *'spur'* and *'range'* makes us think of a great mountain-range such as the Himalayas from which spurs of lower hills extend. Our life is like one such lower hilly spur connected to the much vaster and higher mountain-range of the realm of soul. We may feel that we are confined within a *'closed scheme'*, but in fact we are connected to that *'sublime soul-range'*. Our being can look beyond the walls of our surface mind and communicate *'with greater worlds'*; in fact that communication is going on all the time, although our surface being is not aware of it.

There are realms where Being broods in its own depths;
It feels in its immense dynamic core
Its nameless, unformed, unborn potencies
Cry for expression in the unshaped Vast:

Now Sri Aurobindo starts to tell us something about those *'greater worlds'*: first, the transcendent realms where pure existence is concentrated within itself and feels all its latent potentialities within its centre or heart, *'its ... core'*. That core is *'immense'* and *'dynamic'* – full of energy and power. Within the core lie all

infinite '*potencies*' of Being, its powers and possibilities; as yet they are '*nameless, unformed, unborn*', unmanifested; but they want to be named, formed, born, manifested – they are crying out to be expressed and to find expression '*in the unshaped Vast*'. This is the state in which pure unmanifest existence feels itself pregnant with infinite possibilities that are waiting to find expression in a manifested world.

Ineffable beyond Ignorance and death,
The images of its everlasting Truth
Look out from a chamber of its self-rapt soul:

The '*everlasting Truth*' of that pure existence is '*Ineffable*' – beyond all expression, in a transcendent state beyond '*Ignorance and death*'; but it forms '*images*' of itself and its possibilities, and those images look outwards from '*a chamber of its self-rapt soul*': a secret space at the core of the Being where its soul is concentrated, indrawn and focussed only on its own self-delight. Its unborn potentialities look out from that '*self-rapt*' state.

As if to its own inner witness gaze
The Spirit holds up its mirrored self and works,
The power and passion of its timeless heart,
The figures of its formless ecstasy,
The grandeurs of its multitudinous might.

It is as if the one existence, the pure being, '*The Spirit*', is holding up a mirror to '*its own inner witness gaze*' and revealing itself and its '*works*', its activities, and all its possibilities: all the '*power and passion*' that is held in its dynamic heart, in its '*timeless*' core; it sees them as '*figures*' of its own '*formless ecstasy*', its own eternal delight, still shapeless and unborn, and of its power, expressed in uncountable forms: the '*grandeurs of its multitudinous might*'. This is the creative process from which our souls have emerged into manifestation.

Thence comes the mystic substance of our souls
Into the prodigy of our nature's birth,
There is the unfallen height of all we are
And dateless fount of all we hope to be.

It is from there that '*the mystic substance of our souls*' comes: from those '*realms where Being broods in its own depths*' and feels all the '*nameless, unformed, unborn*' possibilities within it crying out for expression, where the everlasting Truth of Being expresses itself in images which look outwards from its self-rapt state and Spirit projects those figures and sees all its dynamic potentialities as if in a mirror. Our souls embody those powers in '*mystic substance*' and enter into '*the prodigy of our nature's birth*'. A '*prodigy*' is something very exceptional and unusual, mysterious and inexplicable. That realm of Spirit is '*the unfallen height of all we are*': the highest level from which we have emerged into the material manifestation, the '*dateless fount*', the source, the origin beyond Time of everything that '*we hope to be*'. We have come from there, and whether we know it or not we are constantly hoping and striving to return to that state, that realm of Spirit.

On every plane the hieratic Power,
Initiate of unspoken verities,
Dreams to transcribe and make a part of life
In its own native style and living tongue
Some trait of the perfection of the Unborn,
Some vision seen in the omniscient Light,
Some far tone of the immortal rhapsodist Voice,
Some rapture of the all-creating Bliss,
Some form and plan of the Beauty unutterable.

'*Hieratic*' means 'priestly' and implies something sacred and secret which mediates between the divine and the human. That mediating Power, the Conscious-Force of Being, is an '*Initiate*': one who has secret knowledge. She is the '*Initiate of unspoken verities*', truths that have not been expressed. That '*Power*', that *Shakti*, knows the innermost truth of all those unexpressed truths, and on every plane of the involution and the evolution, she dreams of transcribing them and making them a part of life '*On every plane*' of existence. If we have an audio recording of a talk we can transcribe it, either in writing or in digital form in a computer; or a piece of music that is composed for one instrument, a violin or a flute, can be transcribed so that it can be played on a different instrument, a piano for example, or in a different key. It is transcribed into a different language. The creative

Power dreams of transcribing the secret truths that she knows into the different languages of each plane of creation '*In its own native style and living tongue*'. Sri Aurobindo gives a list of some of the things that she wants to express on each plane, in its own distinctive language: some '*trait*', some feature or quality, '*of the perfection of the Unborn*'; some vision that the One has seen in its all-knowing '*Light*'; some distant note of the ecstatic song being sung by the '*immortal rhapsodist Voice*' of the Supreme; '*some rapture*' out of all the infinite rapture '*of the all-creating Bliss*'; '*some form and plan*', some line of development of the unutterable '*Beauty*' of the Origin. A '*rhapsody*' is an ecstatic utterance, a description, poem or piece of music that expresses ecstasy; a '*rhapsodist*' is one who gives expression to such an utterance - in this case the eternal ecstasy of the Supreme. That is the task of the creative Power, the Conscious-Force of the Creator. Because she is an '*Initiate*' of eternal unexpressed Truths, she can give expression to them on each plane of existence in the way that is characteristic of that plane.

Worlds are there nearer to those absolute realms,
 Where the response to Truth is swift and sure
 And spirit is not hampered by its frame
 And hearts by sharp division seized and rent
 And delight and beauty are inhabitants
 And love and sweetness are the law of life.

There are other worlds that are '*nearer to those absolute realms*' than our world is; in those worlds the response to Truth is spontaneous - '*swift and sure*', and '*spirit is not hampered by its frame*'. Here in our material world, the spirit is hampered by its material bodily frame; here our '*hearts*' are '*seized*' and torn - '*rent*' means torn apart - '*by sharp division*'. But in those higher worlds '*delight and beauty are inhabitants*' and '*love and sweetness are the law of life*'. It seems as if we are carrying the memory of those worlds and are always longing to be there. That makes life on earth very painful sometimes because we have the feeling, "It should not be like this: '*Love and sweetness*' should be the law of life!"

A finer substance in a subtler mould
 Embodies the divinity earth but dreams;

Its strength can overtake joy's running feet;
Overleaping the fixed hurdles set by Time,
The rapid net of an intuitive clasp
Captures the fugitive happiness we desire.

Part of our problem here is our '*substance*' – it is so dense, heavy and unconscious. In those other worlds there is a '*finer substance in a subtler mould*'; even the form is subtler. It can embody the '*divinity*', the divine qualities that earth only dreams about. Sri Aurobindo told us earlier that all the beautiful forms we see in nature are reflections of forms which exist in higher and subtler worlds. That finer substance is also stronger. '*Its strength*' is such that it can run quickly enough to catch hold of joy! For us joy always seems to be running away and we cannot catch up with it; we might touch it for a moment but it is always escaping from us. The divine strength of that substance is able to leap over the '*fixed hurdles*' or obstacles placed in its way by Time, so that its '*intuitive clasp*' can capture the happiness that we desire but cannot catch and hold because it runs away from us like a '*fugitive*', in a '*rapid net*', like a hunter catching fish or birds.

A Nature lifted by a larger breath,
Plastic and passive to the all-shaping Fire,
Answers the flaming Godhead's casual touch:

In those higher and subtler worlds a '*Nature*' is at work that is different from the earthly nature that we are familiar with. It is '*lifted by a larger breath*', a vaster *prana* than the energy we get from the air that we breathe. That '*Nature*' is '*plastic*' – it can be shaped more easily than our material nature; it is not resistant but '*passive to the all-shaping Fire*' of the divine will and responds to even a light '*casual touch*', a passing touch, of that '*flaming*' deity.

Immune from our inertia of response
It hears the word to which our hearts are deaf,
Adopts the seeing of immortal eyes
And, traveller on the roads of line and hue,
Pursues the spirit of beauty to its home.

We live in a world that is dominated by gross matter, one of whose dominant characteristics is inertia; that inertia affects not only pure

matter, but also the living matter of our physical bodies, as well as life and mind and even soul. But that subtler world is '*Immune*' to the inertia that affects our senses so that they respond only dully and slowly to contacts. So the nature there can hear the creative word '*to which our hearts are deaf*'; it is able to see what '*immortal eyes*' see. It moves like a traveller '*on the roads of line and hue*', of outline and colour, pursuing '*the spirit of beauty to its home*': it is eager to find the source from which that beauty comes.

Thus we draw near to the All-Wonderful
Following his rapture in things as sign and guide;
Beauty is his footprint showing us where he has passed,
Love is his heart-beats' rhythm in mortal breasts,
Happiness the smile on his adorable face.

This is the way to come close to the divine as the '*All-Wonderful*': by following the signs of his '*rapture in things*', his delight in forms and objects. Wherever we find a trace of Beauty, we can be sure that he has passed that way; the love that we feel is an expression of the beating of his heart of delight in our human forms; if we feel happiness that is like seeing '*the smile on his adorable face*'. These are signs that express something of '*the All-Wonderful*' to our experience; the recognition of beauty and love and happiness brings us near to Him.

A communion of spiritual entities,
A genius of creative Immanence,
Makes all creation deeply intimate:
A fourth dimension of aesthetic sense
Where all is in ourselves, ourselves in all,
To the cosmic wideness re-aligns our souls.

The word '*genius*' is often applied to a person who has an outstanding capacity in some area, such as a poet or musician or scientist; but in its origin it means 'spirit'. There is a spirit of '*creative Immanence*', an indwelling '*creative*' power, which may express itself in outstanding capacities, but which is dwelling within everything. If that spirit wakes up in us through a '*communion of spiritual entities*', a communion of our spirit with other spirits, we may experience a '*deeply intimate*' connection

and kinship with everything in creation, and true creativity results from that sense of intimacy with all creation. Sri Aurobindo tells us that there is a '*fourth dimension*' beyond the three dimensions of space, a '*dimension of aesthetic sense*', a sense of beauty where we experience that everything is in ourselves and we ourselves are in everything. This experience '*re-aligns*' or attunes '*our souls*' to the vastness of the entire universe.

A kindling rapture joins the seer and seen;
The craftsman and the craft grown inly one
Achieve perfection by the magic throb
And passion of their close identity.

When that happens, an intense delight, a '*rapture*', gets kindled in us like a fire which '*joins the seer and seen*', uniting what is seen with the one who sees, in an identity where there is no separation. When such a '*rapture*' unites a '*craftsman*' with his '*craft*', his skill, they grow inwardly one. The '*magic throb*', the enchanting thrill and the '*passion of their close identity*' enables '*perfection*' to be achieved. From the Far East comes the ancient teaching about the Tao, the cosmic oneness, which says that if any human being can put themselves in touch with the universal creativity, the '*genius of creative Immanence*', through a particular skill or a way of being and living, then they can achieve perfection in what they do, whether they are a painter or a butcher or anything else: that is the way to '*achieve perfection*'. Whatever we human beings produce from our limited selves is necessarily limited and artificial; but if we can establish a connection with the universal creative force then some perfection can be achieved despite our limitations.

All that we slowly piece from gathered parts,
Or by long labour stumblingly evolve,
Is there self-born by its eternal right.

Here on earth, we human beings gain knowledge by slowly piecing together bits of experience and information, like putting together a jig-saw puzzle; or '*by long labour*' we may '*stumblingly evolve*' some wisdom or capacity. But '*there*' in those higher and subtler worlds, whatever we might manage to put together or grow into with many stumbles and difficulties here is '*self-born by its eternal*

right'; it is achieved spontaneously and naturally, without effort, as an innate '*eternal right*'.

In us too the intuitive Fire can burn;
An agent Light, it is coiled in our folded hearts,
On the celestial levels is its home:
Descending, it can bring those heavens here.

The all-shaping '*intuitive Fire*' of divine creative energy can burn in human beings too. It is an '*agent Light*', working on behalf of the Divine. Although its home is '*On the celestial levels*', the potentiality of it '*is coiled in our folded hearts*', curled up like a sleeping serpent in our hearts which are like the unopened buds of beautiful flowers. If the '*agent Light*' descends into us, it can bring the '*heavens*' which are its home and source, here, into this material world of ours.

But rarely burns the flame nor burns for long;
The joy it calls from those diviner heights
Brings brief magnificent reminiscences
And high splendid glimpses of interpreting thought,
But not the utter vision and delight.

But here, because of the '*inertia of response*' of our nature, that '*flame*' of divine creative will come to us only '*rarely*', and if it comes at all it does not burn in us for very long. When it comes, it calls down from the heavenly heights a great joy, which brings with it '*brief magnificent reminiscences*', glorious memories of the higher planes our souls have come from, and '*high splendid glimpses of interpreting thought*', but does not give us '*the utter vision and delight*', the complete and full seeing and ecstasy that is native to those higher planes of consciousness.

A veil is kept, something is still held back,
Lest, captives of the beauty and the joy,
Our souls forget to the Highest to aspire.

When that creative flame burns in us, it is veiled and it does not give us the full supreme experience; '*something is still held back*': we are not allowed to have that '*utter vision and delight*' here because if we did, we would be so enchanted by it that we would become '*captives of the beauty and the joy*' and our souls would forget to aspire '*to*

the Highest'. To prevent that happening '*A veil is kept*' – we are given only a glimpse of greater possibilities so that our souls will not grow content and satisfied, but continue to aspire for the highest realisation.

Section 3, lines 360–440

In that fair subtle realm behind our own
The form is all, and physical gods are kings.

The Kingdom of Subtle Matter is a very beautiful subtle realm. It is behind or within our own realm of gross matter, and supports our own world; although it is not dominated by the gross matter we know, but it is still a material world where '*form*' is everything and '*physical gods are kings*': the gods of substance rule that world as they do ours.

The inspiring Light plays in fine boundaries;
A faultless beauty comes by Nature's grace;
There liberty is perfection's guarantee:
Although the absolute Image lacks, the Word
Incarnate, the sheer spiritual ecstasy,
All is a miracle of symmetric charm,
A fantasy of perfect line and rule.

There, the '*inspiring Light*' of creative force '*plays in fine boundaries*' – not crudely limited as in our world, but nevertheless bounded, restricted in a subtle and refined way. There '*faultless beauty*' comes naturally, spontaneously, as a gift of Nature; there, '*liberty is perfection's guarantee*': each thing is free to take its own '*form*', a '*form*' that perfectly expresses it, and that freedom is the '*guarantee*', the assurance, of perfection. But then Sri Aurobindo reminds us that something is missing there: '*the absolute Image*', the '*Word / Incarnate*', the embodiment of the supreme creative '*Word*' and will, the '*sheer spiritual ecstasy*' – the uttermost, purest, ecstasy of the spirit: those things are missing from that limited world. But nevertheless, everything that can be seen is '*a miracle of symmetric charm*': balanced, perfectly charming and delightful, '*A fantasy of perfect line and rule*': everything follows the rules of perfect form even though they are free.

There all feel satisfied in themselves and whole,
A rich completeness is by limit made,
Marvel in an utter littleness abounds,
An intricate rapture riots in a small space:
Each rhythm is kin to its environment,
Each line is perfect and inevitable,
Each object faultlessly built for charm and use.

All the beings there feel complete and satisfied. Here on earth we are always troubled by a sense of incompleteness and imperfection; but that Kingdom of Subtle Matter is a typical world which does not need to evolve, but simply be. It is limited by its *'fine boundaries'*, but within those boundaries *'a rich completeness'* is felt, a sense of fullness and abundance. Even the very smallest things are marvellous and complex. *'An intricate rapture riots in a small space'*: something *'intricate'* is very complex and yet fine at the same time. We admire intricate jewellery, when the goldsmith or the silversmith skilfully fashions very small yet complicated forms. Here an *'intricate rapture'*, a delight in many closely connected, interwoven elements, *'riots'*, plays boisterously and unrestrained *'in a small space'*. Nature is full of *'rhythms'*: the rhythm of the days and the hours, the rhythms of the seasons, the rhythms of speech and music. In that world, *'Each rhythm is kin to its environment'*, in harmony with its surroundings; there are no clashing, jarring rhythms and *'Each line is perfect and inevitable'*; they cannot be any different, each is needed for the perfect expression. *'Each object'* is *'faultlessly built'*, made without any fault or defect to fulfil its use and purpose and be perfectly beautiful in itself, delightful and charming.

All is enamoured of its own delight.
Intact it lives of its perfection sure
In a heaven-pleased self-glad immunity;
Content to be, it has need of nothing more.

Everything there is in love with its own particular kind of *'delight'* and is *'Intact'*: it cannot be damaged because it is perfect and is quite confident and sure that it is perfect; it feels immune, perfectly safe and happy about itself, feeling that it lives in a perfect paradise, this heaven that it lives in. Everything there is content and satisfied

simply to be, enjoying its own perfection and the perfection around it. There is no sense of need, no feeling that anything is missing.

Here was not futile effort's broken heart:
Exempt from the ordeal and the test,
Empty of opposition and of pain,
It was a world that could not fear nor grieve.
It had no grace of error or defeat,
It had no room for fault, no power to fail.

Here, very subtly, Sri Aurobindo shows us that the imperfection of our world is an opportunity. In that world, there is no possibility of experiencing the heartbreak of finding that all your efforts have failed, have been in vain, '*futile*', useless. That world is '*exempt from the ordeal and the test*'; when you are exempt from taxes, you do not have to pay them, or you may be exempt from having to serve in the army. In that world there are no painful tests or ordeals. Pain and opposition simply do not exist there. There is no possibility of experiencing fear or grief, or even of making a mistake: '*It had no grace of error or defeat*'. Sri Aurobindo is pointing out that the possibility which our world offers of making mistakes, being defeated, being imperfect and failing, is a grace because such experiences help us to grow in many ways. But that '*grace*' does not exist in that world because there everything is perfect and there is '*no room for fault*', no room for any mistake, and '*no power to fail*'.

Out of some packed self-bliss it drew at once
Its form-discoveries of the mute Idea
And the miracle of its rhythmic thoughts and acts,
Its clear technique of firm and rounded lives,
Its gracious people of inanimate shapes
And glory of breathing bodies like our own.

That realm of subtle matter spontaneously draws all its creations and achievements out of '*some packed self-bliss*', an intense delight in its own existence. All that beauty and perfection, of forms, of rhythms, of lives and shapes and even '*breathing bodies like our own*', emerges '*at once*', without effort or imperfection, from that self-bliss.

Amazed, his senses ravished with delight,
He moved in a divine, yet kindred world
Admiring marvellous forms so near to ours
Yet perfect like the playthings of a god,
Deathless in the aspect of mortality.

Aswapati feels amazed by all this perfect beauty; ‘*his senses*’ are ‘*ravished*’, in a state of rapture. This is a ‘*kindred world*’ very similar to ours, and yet divine, because of all this perfection. He can only admire those ‘*marvellous forms*’ that are so similar to earthly forms, and yet perfect, like ‘*playthings of a god*’. The bodies there have a similar appearance or ‘*aspect*’ to our own which are mortal, subject to death, but they are immortal: ‘*deathless in the aspect of mortality*’.

In their narrow and exclusive absolutes
The finite’s ranked supremacies throned abide;
It dreams not ever of what might have been;
Only in boundaries can this absolute live.

In that world there is a hierarchy of supreme powers sitting on thrones in ordered ranks; but they are powers of the ‘*finite*’ – what is limited and defined. In their perfection they are in a way ‘*absolutes*’ – absolute powers, but their absoluteness and perfection are ‘*narrow and exclusive*’, supreme only because of what they exclude. Because that world does not allow any possibility of failure, defeat or error, it never dreams of ‘*what might have been*’. We think of what might have been as an opportunity that is lost and gone forever, but Sri Aurobindo has written about ‘*might-have-been*’s, saying that they ‘*are not entirely dead rejected things, but can return through the power of the Idea and effect future determinations and can fulfil themselves at last in the inner reality of their idea though, it may well be, in other forms and circumstances.*’¹ But that world does not allow any dreams of what might have been. It can only live within the ‘*fine boundaries*’ of its own beautiful and perfect creations.

In a supremeness bound to its own plan
Where all was finished and no widths were left,

1. CWSA 13:344

No space for shadows of the immeasurable,
No room for the incalculable's surprise,
A captive of its own beauty and ecstasy,
In a magic circle wrought the enchanted Might.

This is a '*supremeness*', a supremely beautiful world, a world of perfect form. But it is '*bound to its own plan*', its own plane, the plan within which it has to live. There everything is complete, finished, perfect. There are no empty spaces left to be filled and there is '*No space for shadows of the immeasurable*' – no space for mystery or what cannot be measured. Also there is '*No room for the ... surprise*' of the '*incalculable*'. The Lord is incalculable: we never know what He is going to do next; He can always surprise us. Within that world of perfect limited achievement there is no room for the surprise of what cannot be calculated, cannot be expected or worked out. As a result, that world is a '*captive of its own beauty and ecstasy*' and the creative power that is at work there is working '*In a magic circle*' as if under a spell – '*enchanted*'. '*Wrought*' is part of a verb meaning 'to work' that comes to us in only two forms: '*wrought*', the past tense and the past participle (used as an adjective when we speak of 'wrought iron') and 'wreak', the present tense. The phrase 'to wreak havoc' means to make or cause havoc – destruction and great confusion.

The spirit stood back effaced behind its frame.
Admired for the bright finality of its lines
A blue horizon limited the soul;
Thought moved in luminous facilities,
The outer ideal's shallows its swim-range:
Life in its boundaries lingered satisfied
With the small happiness of the body's acts.

In that world, subtle matter is the dominant power just as gross matter is the dominant power in our world. The other powers of thought and life, soul and spirit move there under the rule of that power. Spirit is standing back, '*effaced*', as if it has been wiped out: it can hardly be seen behind the perfect beauty of its frame. Subtle matter is the '*frame*' which should adorn and display spirit, but the '*frame*' is so marvellous that spirit can hardly be seen. Soul

is limited by the beautiful '*blue horizon*' of that world, which is '*Admired for the bright finality of its lines*': it is one of the '*fine boundaries*' confining that world. It is such a perfect blue line – horizon – so it cannot move any further there. '*Thought*' there can move only '*luminous facilities*': thought is luminous; it brings light; '*facilities*' implies easy thoughts, rather than profound questioning ones. Something that is '*facile*' is too easy and superficial. There thought cannot '*swim*' very far; it stays away from the depths, in shallow waters of the outer ideal, the ideal of perfect form. '*Life*' lingers there lazily, not moving dynamically forward, because it is '*satisfied*' with the '*small happiness of the body's acts*', the limited delight that comes from the action of those perfect bodies. But that is not the way that life is meant to be.

Assigned as Force to a bound corner-Mind,
Attached to the safe paucity of her room,
She did her little works and played and slept
And thought not of a greater work undone.

Life is '*assigned*', given the mission to serve as '*Force*' or power to '*Mind*', to the faculty of thought and will. In this limited subtle-physical realm '*Mind*' is tied up in a small corner, so the life-force is also limited. There she is '*Attached to the safe paucity of her room*'. '*Paucity*' means smallness. She likes that small space she is given, and feels safe and happy there in her little corner. There she does her small tasks and plays and sleeps, and never thinks of any greater work that is not being done but that could be done.

Forgetful of her violent vast desires,
Forgetful of the heights to which she rose,
Her walk was fixed within a radiant groove.
The beautiful body of a soul at ease,
Like one who laughs in sweet and sunlit groves,
Childlike she swung in her gold cradle of joy.

In the next cantos, Sri Aurobindo will show us what an immense power the Life-Force is, but in this realm she has forgotten all about the '*her violent vast desires*'; she has forgotten '*the heights to which she rose*' – later he tells us that she can reach almost to the Supreme. But here in this beautiful subtle physical world she can only move

along ‘*a radiant groove*’, a fixed track. In the years before CDs and Mp3 players were invented, people used to play music recorded on gramophone records, plastic disks on which the sound was scored in grooves. We would put the disk on the gramophone, a machine which contained an engine to turn the disk around and around and an arm where a special needle could be inserted. We put the needle on the outermost edge of the groove, and the record would be turned round by the machine so that the needle gradually moved towards the centre of the disk; the sounds it made were amplified through a speaker, so that the music it played as it went could be heard. The needle was fixed into that groove and was not supposed to jump out of it – otherwise the disk would be scratched and spoiled. Like that needle, the Life-power in that world has to move in a fixed groove: it is radiant, beautiful, shining, but it is still ‘*fixed*’. In that world the powerful Life-Force takes the form of ‘*the beautiful body of a soul at ease*’, relaxed, content, happy ‘*Like one who laughs in sweet and sunlit groves*’. The sun is always shining, the birds are always singing, the flowers are always in bloom and there she is like a child swinging in ‘*her gold cradle of joy*’.

The spaces’ call reached not her charmed abode,
She had no wings for wide and dangerous flight,
She faced no peril of sky or of abyss,
She knew no vistas and no mighty dreams,
No yearning for her lost infinitudes.

It is as if she is under a spell; the place where she lives, ‘*her charmed abode*’ is magically protected, so that no ‘*call*’ reaches it from vaster spaces. Here, she has ‘*no wings for wide and dangerous flight*’. In that world there is no danger, no ‘*peril*’ because there are no vast spaces, no ‘*sky*’, no ‘*abyss*’, no ‘*vistas*’ or wide views, not even any ‘*mighty dreams*’. She has completely forgotten the ‘*infinitudes*’ which were her native home, so she is not dreaming of them or yearning for them. Life is a divine and infinite power, but here she is constricted; dominated by the beauty of this limited world, she has forgotten the infinite possibilities she has lost.

A perfect picture in a perfect frame,
This faery artistry could not keep his will:

Only a moment's fine release it gave;
A careless hour was spent in a slight bliss.

This subtle physical world is like a '*perfect picture in a perfect frame*'. But its '*faery artistry*', this magical, intricate, delicate work of art could not hold the '*will*' of King Aswapati. It only gives him '*a moment's fine release*'. It is so difficult to live in our imperfect world of clashing forces that if for a moment we can experience a world of perfect form and ease it gives some relief, some delight. There Aswapati experienced, '*A careless hour*': an hour free from care, free from anxiety and fear, '*spent in a slight bliss*', a small and limited kind of '*bliss*'.

Our spirit tires of being's surfaces,
Transcended is the splendour of the form;
It turns to hidden powers and deeper states.
So now he looked beyond for greater light.

Aswapati represents the aspiring will and effort which leads from the mortal planes, the earthly planes, to the immortal levels. Sri Aurobindo is showing him embarking on a great journey of spiritual search to the higher planes. Leaving the earth, he has entered our neighbouring realm of subtle physical matter with all its physical perfection and beauty. But that is still a world of forms and surfaces. Our spirit gets tired of surfaces because it wants to go beyond even the most perfect and splendid manifestations of '*form*'. It starts looking for '*hidden powers and deeper states*' of being. Having fully experienced the beauties and perfections of the Kingdom of Subtle Matter and understood its limitations, Aswapati now looks beyond, seeking a '*greater light*' of consciousness.

His soul's peak-climb abandoning in its rear
This brilliant courtyard of the House of Days,
He left that fine material Paradise.
His destiny lay beyond in larger Space.

His soul has set off to climb towards the peaks, the mountain tops, the summits of being; so he leaves behind '*This brilliant courtyard of the House of Days*' which is like a shining space in front of the entrance to the house of Time. He moves on: '*He left that fine*

material Paradise. The word ‘Paradise’ has its origin in a Persian word which means a garden, an enclosed and cultivated space: a paradise is always limited, and a ‘*material Paradise*’ is especially limited. ‘*His destiny lay beyond in larger Space*’. So Aswapati will move next into the much vaster and more complex worlds of ‘*Life*’.

End of Canto Two



Savitri Study Circle



Arul Vazhi students enacting the tale of Satyavan and Savitri on a visit to Savitri Bhavan

Visit the Savitri Bhavan Website

www.savitribhavan.org

To find:

- Monthly Programme of Activities
- ‘Flower of the Month’ pages with photos from Savitri Bhavan garden with their spiritual significances, the Mother’s comments, etc.
- Videos of Shraddhavan’s *English of Savitri* sessions from Book Three onwards.
- Videos of Dr. M.V. Nadkarni Memorial Lectures nos. 1-6 and other Guest Lectures and presentations at Savitri Bhavan
- Shraddhavan’s complete reading of *Savitri* with accompanying text
- Chapter-wise readings of *The Life Divine* with accompanying text
- Digital copies of all issues of *Invocation* and much more.

Savitri Shabdarnut Volume 6

Gujarati translation by Shri Kirit Thakkar of Shraddhavan’s *English of Savitri* talks on Sri Aurobindo’s epic *Savitri*, covering Cantos One, Two and Three of Book Seven, The Book of Yoga. Also included are summaries of Books Four, Five and Six of *Savitri*. As usual, the volume includes original lines of *Savitri* along with Pujalal-ji’s verse translation of them and translation in prose by Shri Kirit Thakkar, followed by the Gujarati translation of Shraddhavan’s explanations.

384 pages, soft-bound, Price Rs. 150.00
(Postage in Gujarat Rs. 20.00, outside Rs. 50.00)

Published by Yogayukta Prakashan, 2016

Available from:

Yogayukta Prakashan, E 102, Chandranagar Colony, Nr.
Suvarna Laxmi Appts. Waghodia Road,
Vadodara 390019, Gujarat, Mobile: 9427540195, e-mail: kiritukta@yahoo.co.in

Also from Savitri Bhavan; SABDA; and Sri Aurobindo Memorial Trust,
Sri Aurobindo Nivas

Vadodara 1, Phone (0265) 2418978;
as well as at all leading Sri Aurobindo Centres in Gujarat.

News of Savitri Bhavan

Sangam Hall Construction

The first information about this new project of Savitri Bhavan was given in issue no. 43 of *Invocation* (November 2015). Construction began with a 'first brick' ceremony on November 24 2015, on the 20th anniversary of the Foundation Stone laying by our beloved elder brother Dr. Nirodbaran in 1995.

Construction work has gone on steadily since then and an appeal for funds published in issue no. 44 of *Invocation* (April 2016) brought a welcome inflow of support. As a result, the First Phase (Raw Structure) was completed within the estimated budget and ahead of schedule by June 2016.

In August this year, as the Second Phase (Finishing Works) proceeded and it became clear that the construction could be completed by the end of 2016 if sufficient funds became available – avoiding any costly delays – a fresh appeal was distributed to many friends and well-wishers, informing of the urgent need for an additional Rs. 40 lakhs to make this possible. There has been a generous response, and we are looking forward to seeing the new building nearly completed by our anniversary day on November 24 2016.

In deep gratitude to the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, whose Sanction and Blessings are enabling the continuation of their Work at Savitri Bhavan, and to all the donors who are generously contributing the needed financial resources, we are praying that the new Hall may be successfully completed by the end of the year and look forward to being able to use it in the New Year. All help and support will be received with appreciation and thanks.



Tiling the roof of the Sangam Hall, September 2016



Inside the Sangam Hall, September 2016

Calendar of Events

March to September 2016

Regular weekly activities:

- Sundays** 10.30am-12noon *Savitri* Study Circle
- Mondays** 7-8am Chanting Sanskrit Hymns
3-4pm ‘*Yoga and the Evolution of Man*’, led by Dr.Jai Singh
5-6pm ‘*Revelations of Isha Upanishad*’, led by Dr.Ananda Reddy
- Tuesdays** 9am-12 noon ‘*Introduction to Integral Yoga*’ workshop led by Ashesh Joshi
3-4pm ‘*Yoga and the Evolution of Man*’, led by Dr. Jai Singh
4-5pm *L’ Agenda de Mère* – listening to recordings with Gangalakshmi
5-6pm *Let us learn Savitri together* in Tamil, led by Buvana
5.45-7.15pm OM Choir
- Wednesdays** 7-8am Chanting Sanskrit Hymns
5.30-6.30pm Reading *The Life Divine*, led by Shraddhavan
- Thursdays** 4-5pm The English of *Savitri*, led by Shraddhavan
- Fridays** 7-8am Chanting Sanskrit Hymns
3-4pm ‘*Yoga and the Evolution of Man*’, led by Dr.Jai Singh
4-5pm *L’ Agenda de Mère* – listening to recordings with Gangalakshmi
5.30-7.00pm Meditations with Hymns of the *Rig Veda* translated by Sri Aurobindo, led by Nishta
- Saturdays** 3-5pm *Integral Yoga sharing circle* led by Manoj
4-5pm *L’ Agenda de Mère* – listening to recordings with Gangalakshmi
5-6.30pm *Satsang* led by Ashesh Joshi

Monthly Event:

Gatherings in front of Sri Aurobindo’s statue on the Full Moon Day.

Special Events:

March

- 1-31 Exhibition: *Meditations on Savitri Books Two and Three* – 110 paintings made by Huta under the guidance of the Mother.
- 6 Workshop: *Mudra-Chi* – a body-prayer in Tai-chi form based on the Mother's Mudras, led by Anandi F.
- 7 Film: *Glimpses of the Timeless* – Paintings and drawings by Mirajyoti, a film by Manohar.
- 14 Film: *On The Mother : Integral Knowledge* – a filmed talk by M.P.Pandit in February.1990.
- 21 Film: *On The Mother : Incarnations' Purpose* – a filmed talk by M.P.Pandit.
- 24 Performance: *Bhakti Poetry in Music and Dance* by Madhumita Padnaik (dance), Gordon Korstange (south-Indian Flute) and Joel Eisenkramer (Hindustani slide-guitar)
- 28 Film: *Meditations on Savitri. Book Seven, The Book of Yoga* – film by Manohar of Huta's paintings illustrating passages from *Savitri* read by The Mother and accompanied by her own organ music.
- 29 *Douze Prières et Méditations de la Mère*, a dramatic recitation of twelve Prayers and Meditations of the Mother, performed in French by Céline in the Savitri Bhavan amphitheatre to celebrate the 102nd anniversary of the Mother's first arrival in Pondicherry

April:

- 1-30 Exhibition: *Meditations on Savitri Books Two and Three* continued in the picture gallery.
- 4 Mime performance: *Silence of All* by Drupad with Deepanam School children
- 11 Film: *On The Mother : The Character of Psychic Guidance and Protective Grace* – a filmed talk by M.P. Pandit in March 1990.
- 18 Film: *The Teachings of Flowers : The Life and Work of the Mother of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram* – film prepared by Loretta Sharsis
- 25 Film: *Meditations on Savitri Books Eight and Nine* – film by Manohar of Huta's paintings, illustrating passages from *Savitri* read by The Mother and accompanied by her own organ music.

May:

- 1-31 Exhibitions: *Sri Aurobindo – A Life-Sketch in Photographs*, and *Glimpses of the Mother*.
- 1 Workshop: *Mudra-Chi* – a body-prayer in Tai-chi form based on the Mother’s Mudras, led by Anandi F.

June:

- 1-30 Exhibitions: *Sri Aurobindo – A Life-Sketch in Photographs*, and *Glimpses of the Mother*.
- 5 Workshop: *Mudra-Chi* – a body-prayer in Tai-chi form based on the Mother’s Mudras, led by Anandi F.
- 20 Film: *The Genius of India* – film based on Sri Aurobindo’s *The Renaissance in India*, made by the Auroville Press team.
- 27 Film: *Meditations on Savitri Book Ten* – film by Manohar of Huta’s paintings illustrating passages from *Savitri* read by the Mother and accompanied by her own organ music.

July:

- 1-16 Exhibition: *Glimpses of the Mother*
- 1-31 Exhibition: *Sri Aurobindo – A Life-Sketch in Photographs*
- 3 Workshop: *Mudra-Chi* – a body-prayer in Tai-chi form based on the Mother’s Mudras, led by Anandi F.
- 4 Film : *Surrender in Savitri* – The 6th Dr. M.V. Nadkarni Memorial Lecture by Mr. Jamshed Mavalwalla on February 19, 2016.
- 11 Film: *On The Mother : Perfect Expression* – filmed talk by M.P. Pandit
- 18 Film: *The Collaboration of Nature* – filmed talk by Richard Pearson
- 25 Film: *Meditations on Savitri Book Eleven* – film by Manohar of Huta’s paintings illustrating passages from *Savitri* read by the Mother and accompanied by her own organ music.

August:

- 1-31 Exhibition: *Meditations on Savitri Books Four to Seven* – paintings made by Huta under the guidance of the Mother.
- 1 Film: *Sri Aurobindo and His Dreams for the Future of Mankind* – film about Sri Aurobindo’s Independence Day message, made by Auroville Press team.
- 7 Workshop: *Mudra-Chi* – a body-prayer in Tai-chi form

- based on the Mother's Mudras, led by Anandi F.
- 8 Film: *The Day of The Lord* – talk given by Dr. Alok Pandey at Savitri Bhavan on February 28, 2016.
- 10-31 Exhibition: *Images on the Invisible* – recent paintings by Paolo Tommasi
- 15 Film: *The Mother on Sri Aurobindo*
- 22 Film: *Journey to the Life Divine, Part One* – film made by Ashram covering the lives and work of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother from their childhood to November 24, 1926.
- 28 Workshop: *The Eternity Game* – Oracle-game based on Sri Aurobindo's Yoga, led by Anandi F.
- 29 Film: *Meditations on Savitri Book Twelve* – film by Manohar of Huta's paintings illustrating passages from *Savitri* read by The Mother and accompanied by her own organ music.

September:

- 1-31 Exhibitions: *Meditations on Savitri Books Four to Seven* continued, and *Sri Aurobindo – A Life-Sketch in Photographs*.
- 5 Film: *Journey to the Life Divine, Part Two*, covering the lives and work of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother from November 1926 onwards
- 12 Film: *The Yoga after Sri Aurobindo and Mother's Passing* – Interview with Dr. Alok Pandey by Narad (Richard Eggenberger).
- 19 Film: *Responses to Questions about Auroville* – Shradhdhavan is interviewed by a Russian TV team.



*The Savitri Bhavan team in front of the new Sangam Hall construction
August 6, 2016*

The Dream of 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

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

TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF SAVITRI BHAVAN

Savitri Bhavan is mainly dependent on donations, and all financial help from well-wishers is most welcome. Please consider how to help the dream of Savitri Bhavan to become a reality.

By Credit/Debit card transfer

Access www.auroville.com/donations and enter the amount you wish to offer. Amounts of INR 500 to INR 10,000 are accepted. Specify 'Savitri Bhavan' as the recipient. Please be aware that charges will be deducted from the amount before it enters our account, and that therefore the amount mentioned on our receipt will be less than the exact amount that you sent. This will be a consideration if you require tax relief on your offering.

By Cheque or DD

Cheques and DDs should be made payable to **Auroville Unity Fund** and sent to Savitri Bhavan at the address given below.

If you are offering Rs. 500 or less, please consider sending it by money-order or DD, since the charges for cashing out-station cheques have become very high. If you feel like sending a regular modest offering, it may be better to send it every three months rather than monthly, for the same reason.

If you live in India

To send your offering through Internet Banking or direct transfer, it should be sent to **State Bank of India : Branch code No. 03160 : Current account no. 10237876031; For 100% tax exemption** under section 35 (i) (iii) of the IT Act use **Current account no. 31612623238**.

If you send an offering in this way, please inform us at the time of sending, so that we can check up with the bank and acknowledge receipt as soon as possible.

If you live Abroad

To send your offering by SWIFT Transfer, please use the following code :

SWIFT (IFSC) Code : SBININBB474

State Bank of India, Branch Code 0003160

Auroville International Township Branch

Kuilapalayam Auroville 605101 INDIA

Auroville Unity Fund Foreign Account no. 10237876508

Purpose "SAVITRI BHAVAN"

For all correspondence and queries, please contact
Savitri Bhavan, Auroville 605101, Tamil Nadu, INDIA

Phone : +91 (0)413 262 2922

e-mail : savitribhavan@auroville.org.in

www.savitribhavan.org

Savitri Bhavan is a unit of SAIER

(Sri Aurobindo International Institute of Educational Research)

Savitri
is a Mantra
for the transformation
of the world

The Mother