Difference Between
Religion and Yoga

The spiritual life *(adhyātma-jīvana*), the religious life *(dharma-jīvana)* and the ordinary human life of which morality is a part are three quite different things and one must know which one desires and not confuse the three together.

Sri Aurobindo

(SABCL 22: 137)

Selections from
Talks and Writings of Sri Aurobindo & the Mother

Meaning of "Yoga"

ntially, Yoga is a generic name for the processes the result of processes by which we transcend or d off our present modes of being and rise to a new, gher, a wider mode of consciousness which is not of the ordinary animal and intellectual man. Yoga e exchange of an egoistic for a universal or cosmic ciousness lifted towards or informed by the supra- ic, transcendent Unnameable who is the source support of all things. Yoga is the passage of the an thinking animal towards the God-consciousness which he has descended.

A 13: 119) *Sri Aurobindo*

What We Call "Religion"

all "religion" any concept of the world or the uni- e which is presented as the exclusive Truth in which must have absolute faith, generally because this h is declared to be the result of a revelation.

15: 30) *The Mother*

Difference Between Religion and Yoga

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All India Magazine, July 2013



The Mother (Self-Portrait)

Difference Between Religion and Yoga

Q: Sweet Mother, what is the differen between yoga and religion?

Ah! my child... it is as though you were asking m the difference between a dog and a cat!

(Long silence)

Imagine someone who, in some way or other, h heard of something like the Divine or has a person feeling that something of the kind exists, and begi to make all sorts of efforts: efforts of will, of dis pline, efforts of concentration, all sorts of efforts find this Divine, to discover what He is, to becon acquainted with Him and unite with Him. **The this person is doing yoga.**

Now, if this person has noted down all the pr cesses he has used and constructs a fixed system, ar sets up all that he has discovered as absolute laws for example, he says: the Divine is like this, to fi the Divine you must do this, make this particul gesture, take this attitude, perform this ceremon and you must admit that *this* is the truth, you mu say, "I accept that this is the Truth and I fully adhe to it; and your method is the only right one, t only one which exists"— if all that is written dow organised, arranged into fixed laws and ceremonie **it becomes a religion**.

The Moth

(CWM 8: 146, 2nd ed.)

All India Magazine, July 2013

Nature of Religion

: What is exactly the nature of religion? Is it an bstacle in the way of the spiritual life?

ion belongs to the higher mind of humanity. It is the of man's higher mind to approach, as far as lies in ower, something beyond it, something to which hu- ty gives the name God or Spirit or Truth or Faith or wledge or the Infinite, some kind of Absolute, which uman mind cannot reach and yet tries to reach. Reli- may be divine in its ultimate origin; in its actual nature ot divine but human. In truth we should speak rather igions than of religion; for the religions made by man any. These different religions, even when they had not me origin, have most of them been made in the same

Ve know how the Christian religion came into exis- . It was certainly not Jesus who made what is known as tianity, but some learned and very clever men put their s together and built it up into the thing we see. There nothing divine in the way in which it was formed, and is nothing divine either in the way in which it func- And yet the excuse or occasion for the formation was ubtedly some revelation from what one could call a e Being, a Being who came from elsewhere bringing with him from a higher plane a certain Knowledge Truth for the earth. He came and suffered for his Truth; ery few understood what he said, few cared to find old to the Truth for which he suffered.

uddha retired from the world, sat down in meditation discovered a way out of earthly suffering and misery, f all this illness and death and desire and sin and hun-

ger. He saw a Truth which he endeavoured to expres communicate to the disciples and followers who gat around him. But even before he was dead, his teachin already begun to be twisted and distorted. It was only his disappearance that Buddhism as a full-fledged rel reared its head founded upon what the Buddha is supp to have said and on the supposed significance of the ported sayings. But soon too, because the disciples an disciples' disciples could not agree on what the Maste said or what he meant by his utterances, there grew host of sects and sub-sects in the body of the parent rel — a Southern Path, a Northern Path, a Far Eastern Path, of them claiming to be the only, the original, the unde doctrine of the Buddha.

The same fate overtook the teaching of the Christ too came to be made in the same way into a set an ganised religion. It is often said that, if Jesus came bac would not be able to recognise what he taught in the f that have been imposed on it, and if Buddha were to back and see what has been made of his teaching, he w immediately run back discouraged to Nirvana! All reli have each the same story to tell. The occasion for its bi the coming of a great Teacher of the world. He come reveals and is the incarnation of a Divine Truth. But seize upon it, trade upon it, make an almost politic ganisation out of it. The religion is equipped by them a government and policy and laws, with its creeds and mas, its rules and regulations, its rites and ceremonie binding upon its adherents, all absolute and inviolable the State, it too administers rewards to the loyal and as punishments for those that revolt or go astray, for the etic and the renegade.

(CWM 3: 76-77)

The M

Is Religion an Obstacle to Spiritual Life?

irst and principal article of these established and for-
eligions runs always, "Mine is the supreme, the only
all others are in falsehood or inferior." For without
undamental dogma, established credal religions could
ave existed. If you do not believe and proclaim that
lone possess the one or the highest truth, you will not
le to impress people and make them flock to you.
his attitude is natural to the religious mind; but it is just
which makes religion stand in the way of the spiritual
The articles and dogmas of a religion are mind-made
s and, if you cling to them and shut yourself up in a
of life made out for you, you do not know and cannot
the truth of the Spirit that lies beyond all codes and
as, wide and large and free. When you stop at a reli-
creed and tie yourself in it, taking it for the only truth
e world, you stop the advance and widening of your
soul.
ut if you look at religion from another angle, it need
lways be an obstacle to all men. If you regard it as one
higher activities of humanity and if you can see in it
spirations of man without ignoring the imperfection of
an-made things, it may well be a kind of help for you
proach the spiritual life. Taking it up in a serious and
st spirit, you can try to find out what truth is there,
aspiration lies hidden in it, what divine inspiration
ndergone transformation and deformation here by the
an mind and a human organisation, and with an ap-
riate mental stand you can get religion even as it is to
some light on your way and to lend some support to
spiritual endeavour.
all religions we find invariably a certain number of

people who possess a great emotional capacity and ar
of a real and ardent aspiration, but have a very simple
and do not feel the need of approaching the Divine thr
knowledge. For such natures religion has a use and
even necessary for them; for, through external forms
the ceremonies of the Church, it offers a kind of su
and help to their inner spiritual aspiration. In every rel
there are some who have evolved a high spiritual life
it is not the religion that gave them their spirituality
they who have put their spirituality into the religion
anywhere else, born into any other cult, they would
found there and lived there the same spiritual life. It is
own capacity, it is some power of their inner being an
the religion they profess that has made them what the
This power in their nature is such that religion to them
not become a slavery or a bondage. Only as they have
strong, clear and active mind, they need to believe in t
that creed as absolutely true and to give themselves
it without any disturbing question or doubt. I have m
all religions people of this kind and it would be a cri
disturb their faith. For them religion is not an obstacl
obstacle for those who can go farther, it may be a hel
those who cannot, but are yet able to travel a certain dis
on the paths of the Spirit. Religion has been an impu
the worst things and the best; if the fiercest wars have
waged and the most hideous persecutions carried on
name, it has stimulated too supreme heroism and sel
rifice in its cause. Along with philosophy it marks the
the human mind has reached in its highest activities. It
impediment and a chain if you are a slave to its outer l
if you know how to use its inner substance, it can be
jumping-board into the realm of the Spirit.

(CWM 3: 77-79)

The M

All India Magazine, July 2013

A Fundamental Error in Religions

is why religions are always mistaken — always — be-
they want to standardise the expression of an experi-
and impose it on everyone as an irrefutable truth. The
ience was true, complete in itself, convincing—for the
who had it. The formulation he made of it was excellent
himself. But to want to impose it on others is a funda-
al error which has altogether disastrous consequences,
s, which always leads far, very far from the Truth.
hat is why all the religions, however beautiful they
e, have always led man to the worst excesses. All the
s, the horrors perpetrated in the name of religion are
g the darkest stains on human history, and simply be-
of this little initial error: wanting what is true for one
idual to be true for the mass or collectivity.

(Silence)

ath must be shown and the doors opened but every-
ust *follow* the path, pass through the doors and go to-
s his personal realisation.
he only help one can and should receive is that of the
which formulates itself in everyone according to his
need.

*

want to know "the Truth" as a thing well defined, well
fied, well established, and after that you are at rest:
is no need to seek any more! You take it up, you say:
, this is the Truth" and then it is fixed. This is what all
ligions have done. They have established their truth as
ma. But it is not the Truth any more.

*

... for me these things don't have much importance. I
no attachment for any religion, and when one has n
tachment, one has no aversion either. For me religion
forms, much too human, of spiritual life. Each one expr
one aspect of the single and eternal Truth, but in expre
it exclusive of the other aspects, it deforms and dimin
it. None has the right to call itself the only true one
more than it has the right to deny the truth contain
the others. And all of them together would not suff
express the Supreme Truth which is beyond all expres
even whilst being present in each one.

*

The spiritual spirit is not contrary to a religious feeli
adoration, devotion and consecration. But what is wro
the religions is the fixity of the mind clinging to one for
as an exclusive truth. One must always remember tha
mulas are only a mental expression of the truth and tha
truth can always be expressed in many other ways.

*

Man's right is to pursue the Truth freely and to appro
freely in his own way. But each one ought to know th
discovery is good for him alone and is not to be imp
upon others.

*

The attitude to be taken towards religions

A benevolent goodwill towards all worshippers.

An enlightened indifference towards all religions.

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

(CWM 9: 406-07; 15: 396, 27-30)

The M

When You Come to the Yoga

go a little way within ourselves, we shall discover here is in each of us a consciousness that has been liv- hroughout the ages and manifesting in a multitude of s. Each of us has been born in many different countries, ged to many different nations, followed many different ons. Why must we accept the last one as the best? The iences gathered by us in all these many lives in differ- ountries and varying religions, are stored up in that in- ontinuity of our consciousness which persists through rths. There are multiple personalities there created by past experiences, and when we become aware of this tude within us, it becomes impossible to speak of one cular form of truth as the only truth, one country as our country, one religion as the only true religion. There eople who have been born into one country, although eading elements of their consciousness obviously be- to another. I have met some born in Europe who were ntly Indians; I have met others born in Indian bodies were as evidently Europeans. ...

your aim is to be free, in the freedom of the Spirit, nust get rid of all the ties that are not the inner truth of being, but come from subconscious habits. If you wish nsecrate yourself entirely, absolutely and exclusively e Divine, you must do it in all completeness; you must ave bits of yourself tied here and there. You may object t is not easy to cut away altogether from one's moor- But have you never looked back and observed the ges that have taken place in you in the course of a few ? When you do that, almost always you ask yourself it was that you could have felt in the way you felt and acted as you did act in certain circumstances; at times, you can no longer recognise yourself in the person you only ten years ago. How can you then bind yourself to was or to what is or how can you fix beforehand what or may not be in the future?

All your relations must be newly built upon an freedom of choice. The traditions in which you live brought up have been imposed on you by the pressu the environment or by the general mind or by the of others. There is an element of compulsion in your a escence. Religion itself has been imposed on men; it ten supported by a suggestion of religious fear or by spiritual or other menace. There can be no such impo in your relation with the Divine; it must be free, your mind's and heart's choice, taken up with enthusiasm an What union can that be in which one trembles and sa am compelled, I cannot do otherwise"? Truth is self-ev and has not to be imposed upon the world. ...

When you come to the Yoga, you must be ready to all your mental buildings and all your vital scaffol shattered to pieces. You must be prepared to be suspe in the air with nothing to support you except your faith will have to forget your past self and its clingings altog to pluck it out of your consciousness and be born anew from every kind of bondage. Think not of what you but of what you aspire to be; be altogether in what you to realise. Turn from your dead past and look straig wards the future. Your religion, country, family lie th is the DIVINE.

(CWM 3: 81-84)

The Mo

All India Magazine, July 2013

Nature of Yoga

Q: Will you say something to us about Yoga?

do you want the Yoga for? To get power? To attain to e and calm? To serve humanity?

one of these motives is sufficient to show that you are t for the Path.

he question you are to answer is this: Do you want the for the sake of the Divine? Is the Divine the supreme f your life, so much so that it is simply impossible for o do without it? Do you feel that your very *raison d'être* e Divine and without it there is no meaning in your ence? If so, then only can it be said that you have a call e Path.

his is the first thing necessary — aspiration for the Divine. ext thing you have to do is to tend it, to keep it always and awake and living. And for that what is required ncentration — concentration upon the Divine with a to an integral and absolute consecration to its Will and ose.

oncentrate in the heart. Enter into it; go within and and far, as far as you can. Gather all the strings of your iousness that are spread abroad, roll them up and take nge and sink down.

fire is burning there, in the deep quietude of the heart. he divinity in you — your true being. Hear its voice, v its dictates.

here are other centres of concentration, for example, bove the crown and another between the eye-brows. has its own efficacy and will give you a particular t. But the central being lies in the heart and from the proceed all central movements — all dynamism and

urge for transformation and power of realisation.

Q: What is one to do to prepare oneself for the Yog

To be conscious, first of all. We are conscious of only a significant portion of our being; for the most part we ar conscious. It is this unconsciousness that keeps us dow our unregenerate nature and prevents change and tran mation in it. It is through unconsciousness that the und forces enter into us and make us their slaves. You are conscious of yourself, you must awake to your nature movements, you must know why and how you do thin feel or think them; you must understand your motive impulses, the forces, hidden and apparent, that move in fact, you must, as it were, take to pieces the entire chinery of your being. Once you are conscious, it mean you can distinguish and sift things, you can see whic the forces that pull you down and which help you on when you know the right from the wrong, the true fro false, the divine from the undivine, you are to act strict to your knowledge; that is to say, resolutely reject one accept the other. The duality will present itself at every and at every step you will have to make your choice will have to be patient and persistent and vigilant — "s less", as the adepts say; you must always refuse to giv chance whatever to the undivine against the divine.

(CWM 3: 1-2) **The M**

Consciousness is not only power of awareness of s and things, it is or has also a dynamic and creati energy.

(SABCL 22: 234) *Sri Aurobin*

Freedom and Fatality; The Aim of Yoga

Is there then no real freedom? Is everything absolute-determined, even your freedom, and is fatalism the ghest secret?

dom and fatality, liberty and determinism are truths obtain on different levels of consciousness. It is igno- that makes the mind put the two on the same level bit one against the other. Consciousness is not a single rm reality, it is complex; it is not something like a flat , it is multidimensional. On the highest height is the eme and in the lowest depth is matter; and there is an te gradation of levels of consciousness between this st depth and the highest height.

n the plane of matter and on the level of the ordinary ciousness you are bound hand and foot. A slave to the anism of Nature, you are tied to the chain of Karma, there, in that chain, whatever happens is rigorously onsequence of what has been done before. There is an on of independent movement, but in fact you repeat all others do, you echo Nature's world-movements, evolve helplessly on the crushing wheel of her cosmic ine.

ut it need not be so. You can shift your place if you instead of being below, crushed in the machinery or d like a puppet, you can rise and look from above and anging your consciousness you can even get hold of handle to move apparently inevitable circumstances change fixed conditions. Once you draw yourself up f the whirlpool and stand high above, you see you are Free from all compulsions, not only you are no lon- passive instrument, but you become an active agent.

You are not only not bound by the consequences of yo tion, but you can even change the consequences. Onc see the play of forces, once you raise yourself to a pla consciousness where lie the origins of forces and ide yourself with these dynamic sources, you belong no l to what is moved but to that which moves.

This precisely is the aim of Yoga, — to get out cycle of Karma into a divine movement. By Yoga you the mechanical round of Nature in which you are an rant slave, a helpless and miserable tool, and rise int other plane where you become a conscious participan a dynamic agent in the working out of a Higher De This movement of the consciousness follows a double First of all there is an ascension; you raise yourself out level of material consciousness into superior ranges. Bu ascension of the lower into the higher calls a descent higher into the lower. When you rise above the earth bring down too upon earth something of the above, — light, some power that transforms or tends to transfo old nature. And then these things that were distinct, di nected and disparate from each other — the higher i and the lower, the inner and the outer strata of your and consciousness — meet and are slowly joined tog and gradually they fuse into one truth, one harmony.

It is in this way that what are called miracles happen world is made up of innumerable planes of consciou and each has its own distinct laws; the laws of one pla not hold good for another. A miracle is nothing but a den descent, a bursting forth of another consciousnes its powers — most often it is the powers of the vital – this plane of matter.

(CWM 3: 29-31)

The M

A Story of Two Clergy Men on a Boat

Q: Sweet Mother, in the world today most people follow some sort of religion. Are they helped?

nuch.

erhaps they are taking it up again now, but for a very time, towards the beginning of this century, they had diated religion as something opposed to knowledge — st all intellectual people had. And it is only recently movement of return to something other than a thor-going positivism has begun.

eople follow religion by social habit, in order not to get he bad books of others. For instance, in a village it is ult not to go to religious ceremonies, for all your neigh- will point at you. But that has absolutely nothing to ith spiritual life, nothing at all.

(Silence)

irst time I came to India I came on a Japanese boat. on this Japanese boat there were two clergymen, that otestant priests, of different sects. I don't remember ex- which sects, but they were both English; I think one n Anglican and the other a Presbyterian.

ow, Sunday came. There had to be a religious ceremo- the boat, or else we would have looked like heathens, he Japanese! There had to be a ceremony, but who d perform it? Should it be the Anglican or should it be resbyterian? They just missed quarrelling. Finally, one em withdrew with dignity — I don't remember now one, I think it was the Anglican — and the Presbyte- performed his ceremony.

took place in the lounge of the ship. We had to go a few steps to this lounge. And that day, all the men

had put on their jackets — it was hot, I think we we the Red Sea — they put on their jackets, stiff collars, le shoes; neckties well set, hats on their heads, and they with a book under their arm, almost in a procession the deck to the lounge. The ladies wore their hats, som ried even a parasol, and they too had their book unde arm, a prayer-book.

And so they all crowded down into the lounge, an Presbyterian made a speech, that is to say, preached hi mon, and everybody listened very religiously. And when it was over, they all came up again with the sat air of someone who has done his duty. And, of course minutes later they were in the bar drinking and pl cards, and their religious ceremony was forgotten. had done their duty, it was over, there was nothing mo be said about it.

And the clergyman came and asked me, more o politely, why I had not attended. I told him, "Sir, I am but I don't believe in religion."

"Oh! oh! you are a materialist?"

"No, not at all."

"Ah! then why?"

"Oh!" I said, "if I were to tell you, you would be displeased, perhaps it is better for me not to say anyth

But he insisted so much that at last I said, "Just see, I don't feel that you are sincere, neither you nor flock. You all went there to fulfil a social duty and a custom, but not at all because you really wanted to into communion with God."

"Enter into communion with God! But we can't do All that we can do is to say some good words, but we no capacity to enter into communion with God."

Then I said, "But it was just because of that I didn

doesn't interest me."
fter that he asked me many questions and admitted to
at he was going to China to convert the "heathens".
at I became serious and told him, "Listen, even before
religion was born — not even two thousand years ago
e Chinese had a very high philosophy and knew a path
ng them to the Divine; and when they think of West-
s, they think of them as barbarians. And so you are
there to convert those who know more about it than
What are you going to teach them? To be insincere,
rform hollow ceremonies instead of following a pro-
d philosophy and a detachment from life which lead
to a more spiritual consciousness?... I don't think it's a
good thing you are going to do."
hen he felt so suffocated, the poor man; he said to me,
I fear I can't be convinced by your words!"
Oh!" I said, "I am not trying to convince you, I only de-
ed the situation to you, and how I don't quite see why
arians should want to go and teach civilised people
they have known long before you. That's all."
nd there, that was the end of it.

8: 147-49) **The Mother**

mustnotconfusereligiousteachingwithaspiritualone.
Religiousteachingbelongstothepastandhaltsprog-
. Spiritual teaching is the teaching of the future — it
minesthe consciousness and prepares it for the future
isation.
Spiritualteachingisaboverelignionsandstrivestowards
obal Truth.
Itteachesustoenterintodirectrelationswiththe Divine.
M 12: 120) The Mother

Atmosphere in Religious Monuments

In all religious monuments, in monuments considere
most... well, as belonging to the highest religion, wh
in France or any other country or Japan — it was neve
same temples or churches nor the same gods, and yet m
perience was everywhere almost the same, with very
differences — I saw that whatever concentrated force
was in the church depended exclusively upon the fai
the faith of the devotees. And there was still a diffe
between the force as it really was and the force as the
it. For instance, I saw in one of the most beautiful cathe
of France, which, from the artistic point of view, is o
the most magnificent monuments imaginable — in the
sacred spot I saw an *enormous* black, vital spider which
made its web and spread it over the whole place, and
catching in it and then absorbing all the forces eman
from people's devotion, their prayers and all that. It wa
a very cheering sight; the people who were there and
praying, felt a divine touch, they received all kinds of b
from their prayers, and yet what was there was this
thing. But they had their faith which could change tha
thing into something good in them; they had their fait
truly, if I had gone and told them, "Do you think yo
praying to God? It is an enormous vital spider that's
ing upon all your forces!", that would really not have
very charitable. And that's how it is most of the time, a
everywhere; it is a vital force which is there, for these
entities feed upon the vibration of human emotions
**very few people, very few, an insignificant numbe
to church or temple with a true religious feeling, th
not to pray and beg for something from God but to
themselves, give thanks, aspire, give themselves. Th

y one in a million who does that. So they do not have ower of changing the atmosphere. Perhaps when they here, they manage to get across, break through and go where and touch something divine. But the large ma- of people who go only because of superstition, egoism elf-interest, create an atmosphere of this kind, and that at you breathe in when you go to a church or temple. as you go there with a very good feeling, you tell your- 'Oh, what a quiet place for meditation!"

am sorry, but that's how it is. I tell you I have delib- y tried this experiment a little everywhere. Maybe I d some very tiny places, like a tiny village church at , where there was a very quiet little spot for medita- very still, very silent, where there was some aspiration; his was so rare! I have seen the beautiful churches of magnificent places; they were full of these vital beings ull of terror. I remember painting in a basilica of Ven- nd while I was working, in the confessional a priest hearing the confession of a poor woman. Well, it was a frightful sight! I don't know what the priest was like, his character was, he could not be seen — you know, you, that they are not seen. They are shut up in a box eceive the confession through a grille. There was such k and sucking power over him, and that poor woman n such a state of fearful terror that it was truly painful e it. And all these people believe this is something holy! is a web of the hostile vital forces which use all this to upon.

6: 194-95) **The Mother**

Hell and Heaven Created by Religions

Q: (A child:) After death people enter the vital w but those who do good go to paradise?

Where is your paradise? Who has taught you that? have spoken to you of heaven and hell and purgato No? Not of all that? From where did you gather your of paradise? From which book? ...

It is generally what religious priests say to the faith encourage them to do good. For it is a notorious fact th is not more easy for the good than for the wicked; usua is the contrary: the wicked succeed better than the goo people who are not very spiritual say to themselves: " should I take the trouble of being good? It is better wicked and have an easy life." It is very difficult to them understand that there are many kinds of good that sometimes it is worth the trouble perhaps to ma effort to be good. So to make this intelligible to the intelligent, they are told: "There, it is very simple. I are quite obedient, quite nice, quite unselfish, if you al do good deeds, and if you believe in the dogmas we t well, when you die, God will send you to Paradise. I have sometimes good will, sometimes bad, if, some you do good, sometimes you don't and if you think much of yourself and very little of others, then when die, you will be sent to Purgatory for another experi And then if you are thoroughly wicked, if you are al doing harm to others, doing all kinds of bad things and do not care about the good of anyone and particularly i do not believe in the dogma that we teach you, then you go straight to Hell and for eternity."

This is one of the prettiest inventions I have ever l

ey have invented *eternal hell*. That is to say, once you
n hell, it is for eternity.... You understand what that
s, for eternity? You will be tortured and burnt (in the
ountries you are burnt, in the cold countries you are
n), and that for eternity. That is it. So I do not know
taught you those pretty things; but they are simply in-
ons to make people obey, to keep them under control.
here are teachings which are not like that. There are
ons which are not like that. But still one can, in a po-
picturesque, descriptive manner speak of a paradise;
se this paradise means a wonderful place where there
most joy and happiness and comfort.... And yet that
nds upon the religion to which you belong. For there
eavens where you pass your time singing praises to
you do nothing else — but in the end that must be
what wearisome; however, there you pass your time
ng music and singing the praises of God. There are
heavens, on the contrary, where you enjoy all possible
ures, all that you desired to have during your life, you
in heaven. There are heavens where you are constantly
ssful meditation — but for people who are not keen
editating, that must be rather tiresome. However, that
nds, you know: they have invented all kinds of things
t people may really want to be wise and obey the laws
to them.
nd man's imagination is so creative, such a form-maker,
here really are in the world places like these heavens.
are places also like these hells and there are places
ese purgatories. Man creates out of nothing the things
agines. If your consciousness is enlightened, then you
e pulled out of these places; otherwise you are shut
mprisoned there by the very belief you had when alive.
will tell me that it is equal to a life, but it is an altogether

illusory and extremely limited existence. It is real on
those who think like that. As soon as you think differ
it does not exist for you any longer; you can come out
You can pull a person out of these places, and immedi
he perceives that he was imprisoned in his own forma

Man has an extraordinary power of creation. He ha
ated a whole set of godheads in his own image, havin
same faults as himself, doing on a bigger scale, with gr
power whatever he does. These beings have a relative
tence, but still it is an independent existence, just like
thought. When you have a thought, a well-made menta
mation which goes out of you, it becomes an indepen
entity and continues on its way and it does that for wh
was made. It continues to act independently of you. T
why you must be on your guard. ...

Note that this power of formation has a great advan
if one knows how to use it. You can make good forma
and if you make them properly, they will act in the
way as the others. You can do a lot of good to peopl
by sitting quietly in your room, perhaps even more
than by undergoing a lot of trouble externally. If you
how to think correctly, with force and intelligence and
ness, if you love someone and wish him well very sin
ly, deeply, with all your heart, that does him much g
much more certainly than you think. ... if you have u
your consciousness with the psychic consciousness,
you die you remain conscious of your psychic being
the psychic being returns to the psychic world which
world of bliss and delight and peace and tranquillity a
a growing knowledge. So, if you like to call that a para
it is all right; because in fact, to the extent to which yo
identified with your psychic being, you remain conscio
it, you are one with it, and it is immortal and goes to it

al domain to enjoy a perfectly happy life or rest. If you
o call that paradise, call it paradise. If you are good, if
have become conscious of your psychic and live in it,
when your body dies, you will go with your psychic
to take rest in the psychic world, in a blissful state.
ut if you have lived in your vital with all its impulses,
impulse will try to realise itself here and there... For ex-
e, a miser who is concentrated upon his money, when
es, the part of the vital that was interested in his money
e stuck there and will continue to watch over the mon-
that nobody may take it. People do not see him, but
there all the same, and is very unhappy if something
ens to his precious money.

*

ese invisible worlds there are also regions which are
esult of human mental formations. One can find there
ne wants. In fact, one very often finds there exactly
one expects to find. There are hells, there are paradis-
ere are purgatories. There are all sorts of things in ac-
nce with the different religions and their conceptions.
e things have only a very relative existence, but with
tivity similar to that of material things here; that is to
or someone who finds himself there, they are entirely
nd their effects quite tangible. One needs an inner lib-
on, a wideness of the consciousness and a contact with
per and higher truth to be able to escape from the il-
n of their reality. But this is something almost similar
hat happens here: human beings here are mostly con-
d that the only reality is the physical reality — the real-
what one can touch, can see — and for them, all that
ot be seen, cannot be touched, cannot be felt, is after
roblematical; well, what happens there is an identi-

cal phenomenon. People who at the moment of deat
convinced, for one reason or another, that they are g
to paradise or maybe to hell, *do find* themselves there
their death; and for them it is truly a paradise or a hell
it is extremely difficult to make them come out of it an
to a place which is more true, more real.

*

Q: Do Heaven and Hell exist?

Heaven and Hell are at once real and unreal. They bot
ist and do not exist.

Human thought is creative; it gives more or less la
forms to mental, vital and even subtle physical subst
These forms are appearances rather than realities; bu
those whose thoughts they are, and still more for those
believe in them, they have a concrete enough existen
give them an illusion of reality. Thus, for the believe
religions which assert the existence of a hell, a paradi
various heavens, these places do exist objectively, and
they die they can go there for a longer or shorter period
still these things are only impermanent mental forma
they carry no eternal truth in themselves.

I have seen the heavens and hells where some p
have gone after death, and it is very difficult to make
understand that there is no truth in them. Once it too
more than a year to convince someone that his so-called
was not hell and to get him out of it.

(CWM 5: 129-34; 8: 217-18; 10: 64-65) **The M**

Hell & Heaven exist only in the soul's consciousness. ...

(CWSA 12: 442) *Sri Aurobin*

Renunciation and Nirvana Idea in Religions

s is an attitude which is found everywhere in the d, differently expressed according to the country and eligion, and it was as a reaction against the ignorance s attitude that I wrote this.* Naturally, there is the idea in India, this idea of the complete renunciation physical reality, the profound contempt for the mate- world which is considered an illusion and a falsehood, eaves, as Sri Aurobindo used to say, the field free to the eign sway of the adverse forces. If you escape from the ete reality to seek a distant and abstract one, you leave whole field of concrete realisation at the full disposal e adverse forces — which have taken hold of it and or less govern it now — in order to go away yourself lise what Sri Aurobindo calls here a zero or a void unit become the sovereign of a nought. It is the return into ana. This idea is everywhere in the world but expresses in different forms.

ecause until now evil has been opposed by weakness, spiritual force without any power for transformation e material world, this tremendous effort of goodwill nded only in deplorable failure and left the world in ame state of misery and corruption and falsehood. It the *same* plane as the one where the adverse forces uling that one must have a greater power than theirs, a r which can conquer them totally *in that very domain.* ut it otherwise, a spiritual force which would be capa- f transforming both the consciousness and the material d. This force is the supramental force. What is neces-

Power greater than that of Evil can alone win the Victory. It is rucified but a glorified body that will save the world. (New Year ge 1957)

sary is to be receptive to its action on the physical plane not to run away into a distant Nirvana leaving the e with full power over what one abandons.

It is neither sacrifice nor renunciation nor weal which can bring the victory. It is only Delight, a de which is strength, endurance, supreme courage. The de brought by the supramental force. It is much more dif than giving everything up and running away, it dem an infinitely greater heroism — but that is the only wa

*

The whole creation, the whole universal manifestatio pears at best like a very bad joke if it only comes to Why begin at all if it is only to get out of it! What is th of having struggled so much, suffered so much, of ha created something which, at least in its external appear is so tragic and dramatic, if it is simply to teach you ho get out of it — it would have been better not to begin a

But if one goes to the very depth of things, if, stripped only of all egoism but also of the ego, one gives onese tally, without reserve, so completely and disinterestedly one becomes capable of understanding the plan of the then one knows that it is *not* a bad joke, *not* a tortuous by which you return, a little battered, to the starting-p on the contrary, it is to teach the entire creation the de of being, the beauty of being, the greatness of being, the esty of a sublime life, and the perpetual growth, per ally progressive, of that delight, that beauty, that great Then everything has a meaning, then one no longer re having struggled and suffered, one has only the enthus to realise the divine goal, and one plunges headlong int realisation with the *certitude* of the goal and victory.

(CWM 9: 4-5; 426)

The M

Difference Between Morality and Spirituality

e is a] great difference between spirituality and moral-
vo things that are constantly confused with each other.
piritual life, the life of Yoga, has for its object to grow
he divine consciousness and for its result to purify, in-
fy, glorify and perfect what is in you. It makes you a
r for manifesting of the Divine; it raises the character
ch personality to its full value and brings it to its maxi-
expression; for this is part of the Divine plan. Morality
eds by a mental construction and, with a few ideas
hat is good and what is not, sets up an ideal type into
n all must force themselves. This moral ideal differs in
nstituents and its ensemble at different times and dif-
t places. And yet it proclaims itself as a unique type, a
oric absolute; it admits of none other outside itself; it
not even admit a variation within itself. All are to be
ded according to its single ideal pattern, everybody is
made uniformly and faultlessly the same. It is because
lity is of this rigid unreal nature that it is in its prin-
and its working the contrary of the spiritual life. The
ual life reveals the one essence in all, but reveals too its
te diversity; it works for diversity in oneness and for
ction in that diversity. Morality lifts up one artificial
ard contrary to the variety of life and the freedom of
pirit. Creating something mental, fixed and limited, it
ll to conform to it. All must labour to acquire the same
ties and the same ideal nature. Morality is not divine
the Divine; it is of man and human. Morality takes for
sic element a fixed division into the good and the bad;
his is an arbitrary notion. It takes things that are rela-
nd tries to impose them as absolutes; for this good and
ad differ in differing climates and times, epochs and

countries. The moral notion goes so far as to say that
are good desires and bad desires and calls on you to a
the one and reject the other. But the spiritual life dem
that you should reject desire altogether. Its law is tha
must cast aside all movements that draw you away
the Divine.

*

What is usually called moral perfection is to have a
qualities that are considered moral: to have no defects
er to make a mistake, never to err, to be always wha
conceives to be the best, to have all the virtues — that
realise the highest mental conception: to take all the
ties — there are many, aren't there?— all the virtues, al
man has conceived to be the most beautiful, most
most true, and to live that integrally, to let all one's ac
be guided by that, all the movements, all the reaction
the feelings, all... That is living a moral ideal of perfecti
is the summit of man's mental evolution.

Not many people do it... but still... there have been
and there still are. This is what men usually take fo
spiritual life. When they meet a man of this type, they
"Oh! He is a great spiritual being." He may be a great
he may be a great sage but he is *not* a spiritual being.

And yet it is already very good and very difficu
realise this. And there comes a time in the inner evol
when it is very necessary to try to realise it. It is obvi
infinitely higher than to be still guided by all one's imp
and ignorant outer reactions. It is to be already in a
the master of one's nature. It is even a stage through w
one has to pass, for it is the stage when one begins to b
master of one's ego, when one is ready to let it fall away
is still there but sufficiently weakened to be nearing its
This is the last stage before crossing over to the other

ertainly, if anyone imagines that he can go over to the side without passing through this stage, he would risk ng a great mistake, and of taking for perfect freedom a ct weakness with regard to his lower nature.

is almost impossible to pass from the mental being — the most perfect and most remarkable — to the true ual life without having realised this ideal of moral per- n for a certain period of time, however brief it may Many people try to take a short-cut and want to assert inner freedom before having overcome all the weak- s of the outer nature; they are in great danger of delud- hemselves. The true spiritual life, complete freedom, is thing much higher than the highest moral realisations, ne must take care that this socalled freedom is not an gence and a contempt for all rules.

ne must go higher, always higher, higher; nothing less what the highest of humanity has achieved.

ne must be capable of being spontaneously all that anity has conceived to be the highest, the most beauti- he most perfect, the most disinterested, the most com- ensive, the best, before opening one's spiritual wings ooking at all that from above as something which still gs to the individual self, in order to enter into true uality, that which has no limits, which lives in an integral Infinity and Eternity.

3: 117-18; 9: 408-09) **The Mother**

un all lowness, narrowness & shallowness in reli- ous thought & experience. Be wider than the widest rizons, be loftier than the highest Kanchenjunga, profounder than the deepest oceans.

WSA 12: 434) *Sri Aurobindo*

Is Sri Aurobindo's Teaching a New Religion

Q: Many people say that the teaching of Sri Aurobin new religion. Would you say that it is a religion?

People who say that are fools who don't even know they are talking about. You only have to read all th Aurobindo has written to know that it is impossible to a religion on his works, because he presents each pro each question in all its aspects, showing the truth cont in each way of seeing things, and he explains that in to attain the Truth you must realise a synthesis which beyond all mental notions and emerge into a transcen beyond thought.

... when we speak of Sri Aurobindo there can be no tion of a teaching nor even of a revelation, but of an a from the Supreme; no religion can be founded on that

But men are so foolish that they can change any into a religion, so great is their need of a fixed frame for their narrow thought and limited action. They d feel secure unless they can assert this is true and that i but such an assertion becomes impossible for anyone has read and understood what Sri Aurobindo has wr Religion and Yoga do not belong to the same plane of and spiritual life can exist in all its purity only when free from all mental dogma.

*

[To a teacher:] You were trying to show the continu history, with Sri Aurobindo as the outcome, the culmin It is false entirely.

Sri Aurobindo does not belong to history; he is ou and beyond history.

Till the birth of Sri Aurobindo, religions and sp alities were always centred on past figures, and they

ing as "the goal" the negation of life upon earth. So, had a choice between two alternatives: either

- a life *in* this world with its round of petty pleasures pains, joys and sufferings, threatened by hell if you not behaving properly, or
- an escape *into* another world, heaven, nirvana, moksha....

etween these two there is nothing much to choose, they qually bad.

ri Aurobindo has told us that this was a fundamental ke which accounts for the weakness and degradation dia. Buddhism, Jainism, Illusionism were sufficient to ll energy out of the country.

rue, India is the only place in the world which is still e that something else than Matter exists. The other tries have quite forgotten it: Europe, America and else-e.... That is why she still has a message to preserve and er to the world. But at present she is splashing and dering in the muddle.

ri Aurobindo has shown that the truth does not lie nning away from earthly life but in remaining *in* it, *nsform it*, divinise it, so that the Divine can manifest E, in this PHYSICAL WORLD.

10: 95-96; 12: 210-11) **The Mother**

ot his [Sri Aurobindo's] object to develop any one re- or to amalgamate the older religions or to found any religion, for any of these things would lead away from ntral purpose. The one aim of his Yoga is an inner self-opment by which each one who follows it can in time ver the one Self in all and evolve a higher consciousness the mental, a spiritual and supramental consciousness will transform and divinise human nature.

A 36: 549-50) **Sri Aurobindo**

The Future of Religions

This conception was expressed by Sri Aurobindo, I hav pressed it myself many a time, and it could be formu somewhat like this: the old spirituality was an escape life into the divine Reality, leaving the world just wh was, as it was; whereas our new vision, on the contrar divinisation of life, a transformation of the material w into a divine world. This has been said, repeated, mo less understood, indeed it is the basic idea of what we to do. But this could be a continuation with an imp ment, a widening of the old world as it was — and so as this is a conception up there in the field of thought, i it is hardly more than that — but what has happened really new thing, is that a new world is *born, born, born* not the old one transforming itself, it is a *new* world w is *born*. And we are right in the midst of this period of sition where the two are entangled — where the othe persists all-powerful and entirely dominating the ord consciousness, but where the new one is quietly slippi still very modest, unnoticed — unnoticed to the exten outwardly it doesn't disturb anything very much, fo time being, and that in the consciousness of most peopl even altogether imperceptible. And yet it is working, g ing— until it is strong enough to assert itself visibly.

In any case, to simplify things, it could be said that acteristically the old world, the creation of what Sr robindo calls the Overmind, was an age of the gods consequently the age of religions. As I said, the flow human effort towards what is above it gave rise to innu able religious forms, to a religious relationship betwee best souls and the invisible world. And at the very su of all that, as an effort towards a higher realisation ther

n the idea of the unity of religions, of this "one single
" which is behind all these manifestations; and this
nas truly been, so to speak, the extreme limit of human
ation. Well, that is at the frontier, it is something that
belongs *completely* to the Overmind world, the Over-
creation and which from there seems to be looking
rds this "other thing" which is a new creation it cannot
— which it tries to reach, feels coming, but cannot
. To grasp it, a reversal is needed. It is necessary to
the Overmind creation. It was necessary that the new
on, the supramental creation should take place.
nd now, all these old things seem so old, so out-of-
so arbitrary—such a travesty of the real truth.
the supramental creation there will *no longer be any*
ons. The whole life will be the expression, the flower-
ato forms of the divine Unity manifesting in the world.
there will no longer be what men now call gods. ...
When the physical substance is supramentalised, to
nate on earth will no longer be a cause of inferiority,
the contrary. It will give a plenitude which cannot be
ned otherwise.
ut all this is in the future; it is a future... which has
, but which will take some time to be realised integral-
eanwhile we are in a very special situation, extremely
al, without precedent. We are now witnessing the birth
ew world; it is very young, very weak — not in its es-
but in its outer manifestation — not yet recognised,
ven felt, denied by the majority. But it is here.

9: 150-51) **The Mother**

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

15: 29) **The Mother**

What is Spirituality?

... spirituality is not a high intellectuality, not id
alism, not an ethical turn of mind or moral puri
and austerity, not religiosity or an ardent and exalt
emotional fervour, not even a compound of all the
excellent things; a mental belief, creed or faith, a
emotional aspiration, a regulation of conduct accor
ing to a religious or ethical formula are not spiritu
achievement and experience.

These things are of considerable value to mir
and life; they are of value to the spiritual evolutio
itself as preparatory movements disciplining, pur
fying or giving a suitable form to the nature; b
they still belong to the mental evolution, — th
beginning of a spiritual realisation, experienc
change is not yet there.

Spirituality is in its essence an awakening
the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, so
which is other than our mind, life and body, a
inner aspiration to know, to feel, to be that,
enter into contact with the greater Reality b
yond and pervading the universe which inhabi
also our own being, to be in communion with
and union with It, and a turning, a conversion,
transformation of our whole being as a result
the aspiration, the contact, the union, a growth
waking into a new becoming or new being, a ne
self, a new nature.

(CWSA 22: 889-90) **Sri Aurobind**

Ordinary Life, Religious Life & Spiritual Life

spiritual life (*adhyātma-jīvana*), the religious life *(dhar-vana)* and the ordinary human life of which morality is t are three quite different things and one must know n one desires and not confuse the three together. The **nary life** is that of the average human consciousness ated from its own true self and from the Divine and led e common habits of the mind, life and body which are ws of the Ignorance. **The religious life** is a movement e same ignorant human consciousness, turning or try- o turn away from the earth towards the Divine, but as ithout knowledge and led by the dogmatic tenets and of some sect or creed which claims to have found the out of the bonds of the earth-consciousness into some fic Beyond. The religious life may be the first approach e spiritual, but very often it is only a turning about in nd of rites, ceremonies and practices or set ideas and s without any issue. **The spiritual life,** on the contrary, eds directly by a change of consciousness, a change the ordinary consciousness, ignorant and separated its true self and from God, to a greater consciousness hich one finds one's true being and comes first into di- nd living contact and then into union with the Divine. he spiritual seeker this change of consciousness is the hing he seeks and nothing else matters.

orality is a part of the ordinary life; it is an attempt to rn the outward conduct by certain mental rules or to the character by these rules in the image of a certain al ideal. The spiritual life goes beyond the mind; it en- nto the deeper consciousness of the Spirit and acts out e truth of the Spirit. As for the question about the ethi- fe and the need to realise God, it depends on what is

meant by fulfilment of the objects of life. If an entry int spiritual consciousness is part of it, then mere morality not give it to you. ...

The kind of worship (*pūjā)* spoken of in the letter be to the religious life. It can, if rightly done in the deepes gious spirit, prepare the mind and heart to some exter no more. But if worship is done as a part of meditati with a true aspiration to the spiritual reality and the tual consciousness and with the yearning for contac union with the Divine, then it can be spiritually effecti

If you have a sincere aspiration to the spiritual ch in your heart and soul, then you will find the way an Guide. **A mere mental seeking and questioning ar enough to open the doors of the Spirit.**

*

All Religion begins with the conception of some Pow existence greater and higher than our limited and m selves, a thought and act of worship done to that P and an obedience offered to its will, its laws or its dem But Religion, in its beginnings, sets an immeasurable between the Power thus conceived, worshipped and ob and the worshipper. Yoga in its culmination abolishe gulf; for Yoga is union. We arrive at union with it thr knowledge; for as our first obscure conceptions of it cl enlarge, deepen, we come to recognise it as our own hi self, the origin and sustainer of our being and that tow which it tends. We arrive at union with it through w for from simply obeying we come to identify our will its Will, since only in proportion as it is identified with Power that is its source and ideal, can our will become fect and divine. We arrive at union with it also by wor for the thought and act of a distant worship develops

ecessity of close adoration and this into the intimacy
e, and the consummation of love is union with the Be-
.

*

e are two aspects of religion, true religion and religion-
True religion is spiritual religion, that which seeks to
n the spirit, in what is beyond the intellect, beyond the
etic and ethical and practical being of man, and to in-
and govern these members of our being by the higher
and law of the spirit. Religionism, on the contrary,
nches itself in some narrow pietistic exaltation of the
r members or lays exclusive stress on intellectual dog-
forms and ceremonies, on some fixed and rigid moral
on some religio-political or religio-social system. Not
hese things are altogether negligible or that they must
worthy or unnecessary or that a spiritual religion need
in the aid of forms, ceremonies, creeds or systems. On
ontrary, they are needed by man because the lower
bers have to be exalted and raised before they can be
spiritualised, before they can directly feel the spirit
bey its law. An intellectual formula is often needed by
hinking and reasoning mind, a form or ceremony by
esthetic temperament or other parts of the infrarational
, a set moral code by man's vital nature in their turn
rds the inner life. But these things are aids and sup-
not the essence; precisely because they belong to the
nal and infrarational parts, they can be nothing more
f too blindly insisted on, may even hamper the supra-
nal light.

L 22: 137-38; 21: 528; 15: 166-67)

Sri Aurobindo

What is Religion?

Religion is the first attempt of man to get beyond hi
and beyond the obvious and material facts of his exist
Its first essential work is to confirm and make real to
his subjective sense of an Infinite on which his materia
mental being depends and the aspiration of his soul to
into its presence and live in contact with it. Its functi
to assure him too of that possibility of which he has al
dreamed, but of which his ordinary life gives him n
surance, the possibility of transcending himself and g
ing out of bodily life and mortality into the joy of imm
life and spiritual existence. It also confirms in him the
that there are worlds or planes of existence other than
in which his lot is now cast, worlds in which this mor
and this subjection to evil and suffering are not the na
state, but rather bliss of immortality is the eternal cond
Incidentally, it gives him a rule of mortal life by whi
shall prepare himself for immortality. He is a soul an
a body and his earthly life is a means by which he c
mines the future conditions of his spiritual being. So
is common to all religions; beyond this we get from the
assured certainty. Their voices vary; some tell us tha
life on earth is all we have in which to determine our f
existence, deny the past immortality of the soul and a
only its future immortality, threaten it even with the in
ible dogma of a future of eternal suffering for those
miss the right path, while others more large and ration
firm successive existences by which the soul grows int
knowledge of the Infinite with a complete assurance f
of ultimate arrival and perfection. Some present the In
to us as a Being other than ourselves with whom w
have personal relations, others as an impersonal exis

which our separate being has to merge; some therefore
us as our goal worlds beyond in which we dwell in the
nce of the Divine, others a cessation of world-existence
mergence in the Infinite. Most invite us to bear or to
don earthly life as a trial or a temporary affliction or a
y and fix our hopes beyond; in some we find a vague
of a future triumph of the Spirit, the Divine in the body,
this earth, in the collective life of man, and so justify
nly the separate hope and aspiration of the individual
he united and sympathetic hope and aspiration of the
Religion in fact is not knowledge, but a faith and as-
on; it is justified indeed both by an imprecise intuitive
ledge of large spiritual truths and by the subjective
ience of souls that have risen beyond the ordinary life,
itself it only gives us the hope and faith by which we
be induced to aspire to the intimate possession of the
en tracts and larger realities of the Spirit. That we turn
s the few distinct truths and the symbols or the par-
r discipline of a religion into hard and fast dogmas, is
that as yet we are only infants in the spiritual knowl-
and are yet far from the science of the Infinite.
et behind every great religion, behind, that is to say, its
ric side of faith, hope, symbols, scattered truths and
ng dogmas, there is an esoteric side of inner spiritual
ng and illumination by which the hidden truths may
own, worked out, possessed. Behind every exoteric
on there is an esoteric Yoga, an intuitive knowledge
ich its faith is the first step, inexpressible realities of
its symbols are the figured expression. ...

(L 20: 439-41) **Sri Aurobindo**

Questions and Answers

Q: Are not religious practices like doing japa, reading holy
tures, doing puja, etc. signs of aspiration for the Divine Life
they not a help for reaching the highest Truth?

A: It depends on the spirit in which they are done. A
can do all these things and yet remain an unspiritual
or even an Asura.

Q: Is there any spiritual value in going for pilgrimage to
places and worshipping many gods and goddesses? Does i
in realising the Divine Truth?

A: It has nothing to do with the Truth; it is a relig
exercise for the ordinary consciousness.

Q: What is the spiritual utility of 'samkirtan' which is co
amongst Vaishnavs?

A: It has a power to raising devotion, especially i
vital parts.

Q: Is there any possibility of fully turning towards God for
who remain wholly engrossed in worldly life and remembe
only in times of difficulty and calamity?

A: There is a future possibility for everyone, eve
the atheist or the one who never thinks of God.

Q: If even the atheist or one who never thinks of God, as a
possibility of fully turning to God, then why should anyone
the spiritual life and face its difficulties?

A: The Future possibility may only realise after ten thou
years and even then it can only come by practising Yo

dinary people call for the action of the Divine Grace in times mity but afterwards forget the Divine. Does the Grace act in e of people only in this way?

is only with the ordinary people that it is like that, not those who seek after Divine. The special Grace of the e is for the seekers of the Divine — for the others it is mic Will acting through their Karma.

there any difference between the Divine Will and the Divine ? Are they not the same?

e Divine Will works on all things — it may work out any- whatever. The Divine Grace comes in to help and save.

n it be said that a sadhak who in his present life could not pen himself to the Divine, will in his next birth again take e Yogic life and continue his sadhana?

es, it is fairly certain that he will, unless he has to ust first the adverse elements that come in his way e he starts again.

ere is a belief that if a person, who never thought of God g his whole life, were only to utter His name or to remember at the time of his last breath on his death-bed, he will get i in his next life. Is there any truth in this belief?

o — that is all supersition. If *mukti* were so easy, every- could do what he liked all his life and simply by the of remembering "God" at the end, reach the supreme It is an idiotic idea.

nts of Yoga, Chapter XIV) **Sri Aurobindo**

Religious Fanaticism

There is nothing noble besides in fanaticism — there nobility of motive, though there may be a fierce enthus of motive. Religious fanaticism is something psycholo ly low-born and ignorant — and usually in its action f cruel and base. Religious ardour like that of the martyr sacrifices himself only is a different thing.

*

... you say that you ask only for the Truth and yet you s like a narrow and ignorant fanatic who refuses to belie anything but the religion in which he was born. All fa cism is false, because it is a contradiction of the very n of God and of Truth. Truth cannot be shut up in a s book, Bible or Veda or Koran, or in a single religion Divine Being is eternal and universal and infinite and not be the sole property of the Mussulmans or of th mitic religions only, — those that happened to be in from the Bible and to have Jewish or Arabian prophe their founders. Hindus and Confucians and Taoists ar others have as much right to enter into relation with and find the Truth in their own way. All religions have truth in them, but none has the whole truth; all are cr in time and finally decline and perish. Mahomed hi never pretended that the Koran was the last message o and there would be no other. God and Truth outlast religions and manifest themselves anew in whatever w form the Divine Wisdom chooses. You cannot shut up in the limitations of your own narrow brain or dictate Divine Power and Consciousness how or where or thr whom it shall manifest; you cannot put up your puny ers against the divine Omnipotence. These again are si

s which are now being recognised all over the world; the childish in mind or those who vegetate in some ula of the past deny them.

ou have insisted on my writing and asked for the Truth have answered. But if you want to be a Mussulman, no revents you. If the Truth I bring is too great for you to rstand or to bear, you are free to go and live in a half- or in your own ignorance. I am not here to convert ne. ...

answering you I am answering the ideas which have put in you by the Power of darkness and ignorance that is ow using you for its own purpose. This Power is very usly not the divine Power. It is a Power of Falsehood s making you do and say extravagant things which are slamic but a caricature of Islamic faith and action; its tion is to make not only Islam but all spirituality and on ridiculous through you. It hopes to disturb the di- work upon earth, even if it can only do it a little. It is g to spoil your brain and destroy your intelligence, to you say and do foolish and extravagant things and you into an object of sorrow and pity for your friends vell-wishers and a laughing-stock to others. If you have espect for yourself or for God or religion, if you truly for the Truth and Light, if you wish for the awakening alvation of your soul, you must stop speaking and do- hese extravagant things and you must throw away the ence that is now driving you.

L 22: 490; CWSA 32: 109-10) **Sri Aurobindo**

Errata

In the May 2013 number of *All India Magazine*, on pag in the announcement of "Awakening to the Beauty Future" **the subscription rates for overseas subscr were wrongly printed.** The correct rates for both Indi Overseas (by Air) are as under:

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