What is the next aphorism?

50 — To hate the sinner is the worst sin, for it is hating God; yet he who commits it glories in his superior virtue.

Do you have a question?

*When we enter a certain state of consciousness, we plainly see that we are capable of anything and that ultimately there is no ‘sin’ not potentially our own. Is this impression correct? And yet certain things make us rebel or disgust us. We always reach some inadmissible point. Why? What is the true, effective attitude when confronted with Evil?*

There is no sin not our own....

You have this experience when for some reason or other, depending on the case, you come into contact with the universal consciousness — not in its limitless essence but on any level of Matter. There is an atomic consciousness, a purely material consciousness and an even more generally prevailing psychological consciousness. When, through interiorization or a sort of withdrawal from the ego you enter into contact with that zone of consciousness we can call psychological terrestrial or human collective (there is a difference: ‘human collective’ is restricted, while ‘terrestrial’ includes many animal and even plant vibrations; but in the present case, since the moral notion of guilt, sin and evil belongs exclusively to human consciousness, let us simply say ‘human collective psychological consciousness’); when you contact that through identification, you naturally feel or see or know yourself capable of any human movement whatsoever. To some extent, this constitutes a Truth-Consciousness, or at such times the egotistical sense of what does or doesn't belong to you, of what you can or cannot do, disappears; you realize that the fundamental construction of human consciousness makes any human being capable of doing anything. And since you are in a truth-consciousness, you are aware at the same time that to feel judgmental or disgusted or revolted would be an absurdity, for EVERYTHING is potentially there inside you. And should you happen to be penetrated by certain currents of force (which we usually can't follow: we see them come and go but we are generally unaware of their origin and direction), if any one of these currents penetrates you, it can make you do anything.

If one always remained in this state of consciousness, keeping alive the flame of Agni, the flame of purification and progress, then after some time, not only could one prevent these movements from taking an active form in oneself and becoming expressed physically, but one could act upon the very nature of the movement and transform it. Needless to say, however, that unless one has attained a very high degree of realization it is virtually impossible to keep this state of consciousness for long. Almost immediately one falls back into the egoistic consciousness of the separate self, and all the difficulties return: disgust, the revolt against certain things and the horror they create in us, and so on.

It is probable — even certain — that until one is completely transformed these movements of disgust and revolt are necessary to make one do WITHIN ONESELF what is needed to slam the door on them. For after all, the point is to not let them manifest.
In another aphorism, Sri Aurobindo says (I no longer recall his exact words) that sin is simply something no longer in its place. In this perpetual Becoming nothing is ever reproduced and some things disappear, so to speak, into the past; and when it's time for them to disappear, they seem — to our very limited consciousness — evil and repulsive: we revolt against them because their time is past.

But if we had the vision of the whole, if we were able to contain past, present and future simultaneously (as it is somewhere up above), then we would see how relative these things are and that it's mainly the progressing evolutionary Force which gives us this will to reject; yet when these things still had their place, they were quite tolerable. However, to have this experience in a practical sense is impossible unless we have a total vision — the vision that is the Supreme's alone! Therefore, one must first identify with the Supreme, and then, keeping this identification, one can return to a consciousness sufficiently externalized to see things as they really are. But that's the principle, and in so far as we are able to realize it, we reach a state of consciousness where we can look at all things with the smile of a complete certainty that everything is exactly as it should be.

Of course, people who don't think deeply enough will say, “Oh, but if we see that things are exactly ‘as they should be,’ then nothing will budge.” But no! There isn't a fraction of a second when things aren't moving: there's a continuous and total transformation, a movement that never stops. Only because it's difficult for us to feel that way can we imagine that by our entering certain states of consciousness things would not change. Even if we entered into an apparently total inertia, things would continue to change and we along with them!

Ultimately, disgust, rebellion and anger, all movements of violence, are necessarily movements of ignorance and of limitation with all the weakness that limitation implies. Rebellion is a weakness, for it's the feeling of an impotent will. When you feel, when you see that things are not as they should be, then you rebel against whatever is out of keeping with your vision. But if you were all-powerful, if your will and your vision were all-powerful, there would be no opportunity to rebel! You would always see that all things are as they should be! That is omnipotence. Then all these movements of violence become not only useless but profoundly ridiculous.

Consequently, there is only one solution: by aspiration, concentration, interiorization and identification, to unite with the supreme Will. And that is both omnipotence and perfect freedom. It's the only omnipotence, the only freedom — all the rest are approximations. You may be en route, but it's not That, not the total thing.

If you make the experiment, you will come to see that this supreme freedom and this supreme power are accompanied by a total peace and an unfaltering serenity; if you notice any contradiction — revolt, disgust or something inadmissible — this indicates that some part in you is not touched by the transformation, is still en route: something still holding on to the old consciousness, that's all.

In this aphorism, Sri Aurobindo speaks of those who hate sinners — that one mustn't hate sinners.

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1 When asked later about the meaning of this somewhat elliptical statement, Mother said: “There are two stages. The first involves a mental (and possibly intuitive) vision of what will be (perhaps in an immediate future), and this is what we call seeing things ‘as they should be’. The other is an identification with the supreme Will and the perception that at each second everything is exactly as the Supreme wants it to be, that it is the precise expression of the Supreme. The first is a vision of what is coming and says, ‘That's how things should be.’ But we overlook the distance between what presently exists and what is coming. While if we go high above and become one with the Consciousness of the supreme Will, we see that at every instant, at every moment in the universe, all is exactly as it should be — exactly as the Supreme wants it to be. That is Omnipotence.”
It's the same problem seen from another angle, but the solution is the same.

But the difficulty isn't so much not hating the sinner, but not hating the virtuous! That's far more difficult! Because one readily understands sinners, those poor people, but the virtuous....

Actually, what you hate in them is their self-righteousness, only that. After all, they're right not to do evil — they can't be blamed for that! But what's hard to tolerate is their sense of superiority, the way they look down their noses at all these poor fellows who are no worse than they!

Oh, I could cite a few shining examples!

Consider the case of a woman with many friends, and these friends are very fond of her for her special capacities, her pleasant company, and because they feel they can always learn something from her. Then all of a sudden, through a quirk of circumstances, she finds herself socially ostracized — because she may have gone off with another man, or may be living with someone out of wedlock — all those social mores with no value in themselves. And all her friends (I don't speak of those who truly love her), all her social friends who welcomed her, who smiled so warmly when passing her on the street, suddenly look the other way and march by without a glance. This has happened right here in the Ashram! I won't give the details, but it has happened several times when something conflicted with accepted social norms: the people who had shown so much affection, so much kindness ... oh! Sometimes they even said, “She's a lost woman!”

I must say that when this happens here.... In the world at large it seems quite normal, but when this happens here it always gives me a bit of a shock, in the sense that I say to myself, “So they're still at that level! ...”

Even those who claim to be broad-minded, above these ‘conventions’, immediately fall right into the trap. And to ease their consciences they say, “Mother wouldn't allow that. Mother wouldn't permit that. Mother wouldn't tolerate such a thing!” — to add a further inanity to the rest.

This state is very difficult to get out of. It is really Pharisaism — this sense of social dignity, this narrow-mindedness — because no one with an atom of intelligence would fall into such a hole! Those who have traveled through the world, for instance, and seen for themselves that social mores depend entirely upon climatic conditions, upon races and customs and still more upon the times, the epoch — they are able to look at it all with a smile. But the self-righteous ... oooh!

This is a primary stage. As long as you haven't gone beyond this condition, you are unfit for yoga. Because truly, no one in such a rudimentary state is ready for yoga.

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(A short while later:)
I am going downstairs on the 21st, for Saraswati Puja. They have prepared a folder with a long quotation from Savitri and five photos of my face taken from five different angles.

The title of the folder is the line from Savitri that gave me the most overpowering experience of the entire book (because, as I told you, as I read, I would LIVE the experiences — reading brought, instantly, a living experience). And when I came to this particular line .. I was as if suddenly swept up and engulfed in ... (‘the’ is wrong, ‘an’ is wrong — it's neither one nor the other, it's something else) ... eternal Truth. Everything was abolished except this:

For ever love, O beautiful slave of God!  

That alone existed.

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2 Saraswati represents the universal Mother's aspect of Knowledge and artistic creativity. On this occasion, Mother would go down to the Meditation Hall and the disciples would silently pass in front of her to receive a message. This year they would receive a folder containing five photographs of Mother.