

The Way and the Goal

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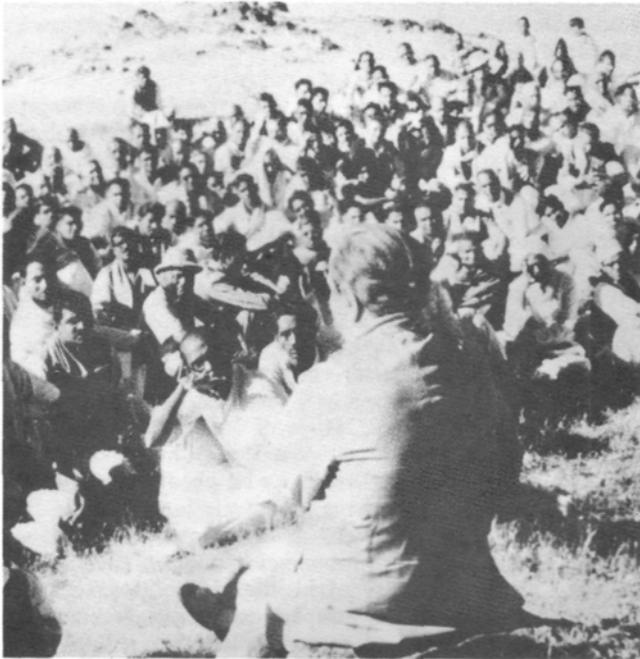
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The Way AVATAR MEHER BABA and the Goal

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 5

MAY 25, 1970



Meher Baba's motto for this advent was 'Mastery in Servitude'. The motto for true lovers should be 'Servitude to Mastery'.

Dr. H.L. Kenmore

1. What is a Baba Lover? PART ONE. article by: Dr. Kenmore

From an address delivered at the Society For Meher Baba
Saturday evening, March 28, 1970

2. Letter Drop

1 In ancient times people were *worshippers* of God. Centuries passed; then they became *believers* of God. Today we are living in a turbulent and violent age. At the height of our difficulties the challenge has been issued by the Avatar—the God-Man—to a humanity asleep in its illusory world to buck-up, to hurry up, to awaken, because *now* is the time to become *lovers* of God. In *this* era, our Avatar appeals to our maturity in insisting that we become *lovers* of Meher Baba—Baba lovers.

Now, what *is* a Baba-lover? The best way this can be answered, I feel, is by asking another question, what is a baseball player? Suppose someone says, I'd like to play baseball. Strolling down the street, he enters a bookstore and espies a book entitled *How to Play Baseball*. He is attracted by the title, buys it, tucks it under his arm, and while sauntering down the street encounters a passerby who catches the book title and remarks, "Hmm. *How To Play Baseball*. Are you a baseball player?" "Oh no," he protests, "I just *bought* the book. I'd like to read about the game." Then home he goes to read about it. Is he a baseball player? Of course not, he's a baseball reader. He's only interested in reading about baseball.

Now, he says, I'd like to see how they *play* the game. He goes out to the ball park and watches a couple of teams go at each other. What is he now? He's become a baseball observer or spectator. If he really gets his feelings aroused after seeing a number of games, what does he become? A baseball enthusiast! It hasn't gotten into his blood yet. And then he sees some more games, and possibly goes through it another season; he then becomes a baseball fan or fanatic. But is he a baseball player? Now to play baseball you've got to *play* the game, and he hasn't played the game, has he? All right, he gets a uniform. Now he's walking down the street dressed up in his baseball uniform. People say, my, there goes a baseball player. He looks like a baseball player. You can't deny it with that uniform on, and there he goes swaggering down the street with those cleated shoes and peaked cap. Golly, he *must* be a baseball player. But, mind you, he hasn't yet picked up a bat, ball, or glove in his life. Of course, nobody's going to dare say to him, are you a baseball player? With that regalia they wouldn't dream of asking such a question. But is he a baseball player; Certainly not.

Well, he gets to the ball park and begins to play. He's practicing now. He's a baseball trainee. He doesn't know how to throw a ball yet—he gets a sore arm throwing it around—but, by George, he really looks like a baseball player. He looks like it but he isn't, and this is most confusing. Finally, when he practices enough, gets enough coaching, and learns and *applies* the rules he gets to *play* baseball. He gets into a real game, and learns how to run the bases with his hook and fall-away slides. And when he is in the field he has to field all the balls batted at him. If he drops most of them he's still not a baseball player. You'd say

he's a bad baseball player. In fact, you wouldn't even consider him a player! But if he holds on to nearly all of them, and he hit and runs well, then you begin to think ... gee whiz, he not only looks like a baseball player and acts like one; in fact, he, *really is one*.

Now how does a guy get to be a football player? A fellow sees a sign up that says, "All those who want to be on Varsity Football come out and see the Coach." The Coach sits him down and sounds him out. Well, since the Coach has to see what our hero is made of, he puts him through the paces. He goes through tackling the dummy, etc. Well, he may make it. He's got the build, he seems to have the guts for it too, and he seems to have the beginnings of some real ability. Then he practices and practices but what is he? He's only a trainee—a candidate for the football squad. When *is* he a football player—when he actually gets into the scrimmage—the give and take of the game—when he's entered into competition against other teams, not the practice team of his own school, but against other varsity school teams. And after he plays consistently game after game, everyone knows he's a real football player, not a guy who just looks like one in those handsome football togs.

Now, suppose a fellow wants to be a musician. He muses, I'd like to play a musical instrument. What instrument shall it be? Let's see there's a fine-looking violin. He wanders into the instrument shop where they'll let you have a rental of an instrument for so many dollars a month. He puts the violin under his arm (some have put empty violin cases under their arms, you know, to look like musicians) and meanders down the street. Jumpin' jehosopha, there goes a violin player. He hasn't even drawn a bow across the string yet, but, my goodness, there he is. He's got long hair and disheveled clothing—he must be ... gosh, he *must be* a violinist.

Well, the fellow with the violin goes home and begins sawing away at the strings. Is he a violinist? Has he mastered the instrument? Has he shown even elementary proficiency in exhibiting the possibilities of the instrument? Of course not. He's only shopping around—because if he doesn't like the high pitched tone or the way it squeaks he might trade it in for a cello or a viola. I think I'll rent a cello or a viola, he thinks, and he takes these home and goes through the same rigamarole. Now, is he a musician? Of course not.

I once knew a chap who used to astound a whole audience. He'd walk up to the piano, sit down, and he'd put this *tremendous transcendent chord—RAM—right* down on the piano keys. They exclaimed, I didn't know you could play the piano! He hadn't even begun yet. That's all he knew—one chord!

Now to enhance his love and knowledge of the instruments he may attend concert recitals by eminent soloists. If his feelings are stirred and enthusiasm grips him, firing him to a greater determination to master the difficult art of violin playing, he becomes an excited concertgoer and fan. This musical student finally becomes a violinist when he can perform smoothly and with aplomb before a listening group, and stir them to rounds of appreciation for a stellar performance.

Almost every day people greet me with the shibboleth, "I'm a Baba-lover." What does this mean? Now to say you're a lover of God—to say you're a lover of Meher Baba—is a very serious declaration. But the ones who use the expression really use it ill-advisedly, with vain pretension—to attract attention to themselves or half-jesting—for frankly, I don't know *what* they mean when they say, "I am a Baba-lover." There is no way we can tell what a Baba-lover looks like. In India anyone wearing a kafni, a gown that extends from your neck to your ankles fastened with one button at the neck, is known as *Baba*. He's a *friend*, one who is engaged in the pursuit of non-material ends. They are spiritual seekers, sannnyasins. Thus, when one says

he's a Baba-lover, we may well wonder, lover of whom? What *Baba*? There are over a hundred thousand *Babas* in India—which *Baba* do you love? Now, if you're a follower or devotee of *Meher Baba*, say so, because there's only one Meher Baba in the whole world. And this Meher Baba isn't just a friend. He is the Compassionate Father and Friend of all of us. He's the One and Only Lord of the Universe. That's who this Meher Baba is. He is the Avatar of our age. Now to be a lover of Meher Baba, you must be accepted by Meher Baba as His lover. It's the Father who chooses the son—not the son who chooses the Father. It isn't your own estimate of yourself which is acceptable to God; it's God's estimate of *you* that really counts and really matters. Therefore, when we say we're Baba-lovers we're simply making an estimate of our own irritating egotism—that's all we're doing. This self-conscious effusiveness has nothing to do with love.

In His discourse *Love and Devotion*, Meher Baba, telling of love, says simply, love is not only *sublime*, but also *silent*. One who is really in love doesn't tell the whole cockeyed world about it. He *looks* it. He *beams* it. He *acts* it. *You* feel it.

When one first picks up a book about Meher Baba and reads about Him, he is a Meher Baba reader, *not* a Meher Baba lover. If he attends meetings and listens to talks about Meher Baba, he's become a Meher Baba listener. Of course, if one leaves the meetings and attends other kinds of meetings—cults and such—then he's a Baba-shopper. He's like the butterfly that hasn't selected the kind of flower from which it wants to get its perfume. If one comes to a lot of meetings and begins to get a little feeling about Baba, he becomes a Meher Baba candidate. When this feeling swells he may be deemed a Meher Baba enthusiast—but he's not a *lover* yet by any means. After he's disposed of the preliminaries connected with the acceptance of Meher Baba as God in human form and as his only Beloved, he begins his approach towards the spiritual path. As he obediently applies Meher Baba's rules for right living, and feels himself drawing closer and closer to Meher Baba as the Only One who is assuredly his Real Beloved, countenancing none other, Meher Baba becomes the sole Reality of his life. As his closeness to the Beloved is more deeply experienced, his feeling of separation becomes more acute, longing intensifies, and yearning to bridge the gulf of separation becomes sharper and more poignant. Only when we feel a continuous burning in remembrance of our Beloved, a desperate separation, a deep and tortured longing—because this Meher Baba is someone we want Union with, because this Meher Baba has really become our One and Only True Beloved—do we begin to take on the responsibilities and obligations of a real lover. Everything in illusion is lessened and reduced to its irreducible minimum in our consideration and concern. There's only one paramount interest, one transcendent yearning—Union with this Divine Beloved. To please this Beloved and to do His Will everlastingly, we execute selfless service to our fellow man, to all living creatures in need of understanding and assistance. In every one of these beings we see this Meher Baba, because this Meher Baba lives in every being as *Soul*. We feel that He is everywhere and in everyone, and forgetting ourselves by remembering Him, we want to serve this One who is in everyone and everything. We feel this *love* can never be satiated; we can't stop serving, we can't stop giving. When we've stopped *asking—when* we've stopped asking others to shoulder our burdens for us, but instead, we shoulder our own burdens—that's pleasing our Beloved Meher Baba. When we actively seek to engender happiness in others we are pleasing our Real Beloved.

Meher Baba emphatically states that true or real love means the complete surrender of one's self to the Beloved. One's self includes one's body, mind, affairs, attachments, and one's very life. In His *The Everything and The Nothing*, Meher Baba mentions three kinds of *lovers*. First is the *mast*

who knows only God, and is oblivious to himself and the world. Second: the One who lives in the world, carries out his worldly duties and responsibilities one hundred percent, but is all the time conscious that everything is passing and only God exists. He *loves* God without ever being aware of it. Third: the one who completely surrenders to the God-Man (the Christ or Avatar). He no longer lives for himself, but for the God-Man. This is the highest and rarest type of *lover*. He becomes a puppet of the Divine Puppeteer.

Now, only when we've responded joyously to God-Man's challenge to become His real lover, and taken on the burdens of a true lover of Almighty God, can we be called Meher Baba lovers. And one who is selflessly serving never proclaims it, never gives it lip service, because what one is doing for others is the proclamation.

We have only one concern—to serve and please this Beloved. Always. People who call themselves Baba-lovers are looking for the Beloved to make *them* happy, to be their servant. Rather, it's the other way around. Before God can become a slave of His lovers we must first, irrevocably, become His slave. We must give up everything to this Beloved. Remember, when God gives, He gives Everything. Centuries ago, when the Perfect Masters cried out "I am God," they would have also wished to let out the secret, "You all can become God like Me if you take the love Path that I have travelled." Even though a Perfect Master was skinned alive, he would not reveal the secret of loving the Beloved; humanity at that time was too immature to receive this revelation. But, today, God Himself, as Avatar, has proclaimed the secret to a humanity that now has the maturity to accept it.

Meher Baba has said, do not let what is in your heart come to your lips—stitch your lips and never let it leak out. Remember, one who really loves God, God annihilates him. God pounds His lover into dust and mixes him with the dust. God tests him by being cruel, by giving him false hopes, even by cutting him to pieces. To love means to lose your whole self with all its paraphernalia. It means torture, pains, longing, burning, and, if in spite of all this, one is firm in his *love* for the Beloved, he becomes one with the Beloved. Everyone can literally become awake to the realization that each one is Almighty God in essence. But this Almighty God in each individual is *sound asleep*. The Divine Spiritual Awakener, Meher Baba, has come amongst us to awaken us out of this eternal slumber, to release us from our dreaming. He holds out to us His Daaman to grasp tightly, and pledges that if we keep holding on, He will take us to where we really belong, merged in His Infinite Ocean of Divine Love. When the interminably separated love-drop becomes this Ocean, the *lover* becomes what he originally was and eternally is—God the Beloved.

This is the Way and the Goal. To achieve this Goal you have to become a *lover* of Meher Baba. Therefore, let us not blithely state that we are Baba-lovers. We're Baba-readers, we're Baba-trainees, we're Baba-candidates, we're Baba-enthusiasts, we're Baba-fans. *Lovers*? Let's not kid ourselves. It's no joke to love the Beloved; it demands great daring. Meher Baba wants everyone in this age to know and praise Him as the Highest of the High, the Avatar, but only the select few can become His *real lovers*. I never heard any of the intimate Mandali (whom Baba called *real lovers*) say, "I love Baba" or "I'm a Baba-lover". A Baba-lover gives one hundred percent selfless service with absolutely no thought of results or rewards. This stems from a spontaneous dedication to do the Will of the Beloved and to please Him always. Therefore, let's let loving God become the cardinal aspiration of our lives. When this becomes the most serious and supreme resolution of our lives, we will become an uninvolved witness of the machinations of Maya, and know that our Real Beloved, Meher Baba, alone exists.

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Dear Dr. Kenmore,

Thank you for the book "God Speaks, as it has arrived. May I read and study it with a still mind and an understanding heart, that thru the wise guidance of His Words, the Lotus of my mind and the rose of my heart be opened I have some questions sir, that I would most sincerely appreciate, as I am in the quest of truth and there is much unenlightened doctrines here and there. If they are answered in the book, then well and good:

- (1) It has been said that one must have a living Guide (on the Physical Plane), to reach the station of Full God Consciousness.
- (2) That a Perfect Master having brought one or more disciples to *God Realization*, He, the Master, when He passes, leaves the order in His chosen disciple's hands.
- (3) Does the Society teach on the astral plane also?
- (4) Does Meher Baba teach at this time there?

These questions are not just mine.

Respectfully,
Jack T. Allen

Dear Jack,

Here are Dr. Kenmore's dictated answers to your four questions asked in your last letter:

Answer to question 1:

The Avatar and *only* the Avatar occupies the significant status of being the only One who can be your living guide without having a physical form to direct you. Only the Avatar who is literally the Creator, Sustainer, and Dissolver of this entire universe continues His personal guidance to all who seek His help and Grace.

The Perfect Master or Sadguru, after He leaves His body, is totally finished with the phenomenal experience. If any help is granted at the tomb of any Perfect Master, the help is given through a living Perfect Master (whether you've met Him or not) who takes on the responsibility of the devotees of the dead Perfect Master in the tomb.

At the tomb of a Perfect Master you can only receive material benefit. At the tomb of the Avatar, only spiritual benefit is received directly from the Avatar to His sincere devotee.

Answer to question 2:

The Perfect Master, through His perennial contacts, through aeons of time with certain souls, finally emerges with a group of twelve men disciples and two women disciples. At the time of His body relinquishment, He gives His Charge to one favorite disciple and only one who becomes God Realized like the Perfect Master. The remaining eleven men and two women disciples receive God Realization in future lifetimes.

Only in the case of the *Avatar*, who not only has twelve men and two women disciples as His intimate circle, but also nine other circles of twelve each, having both men and women—totaling altogether one hundred twenty, plus two

women disciples in His intimate circle comes to one hundred twenty-two. During the lifetime or after the Avatar relinquishes His body, all twelve men disciples with the appendage of two women disciples, receive God Realization. All other remaining members of the nine circles of twelve each do not receive God Realization, but all are interrelated from previous contacts with each other in many previous lifetimes. And only when the second circle moves up to the first circle (intimate circle) in a future Avataric Advent, will they be candidates for God Realization.

Only the intimate circle of the first twelve men are the authentic, authoratative Apostles of the Avatar. Implicit in the term *intimate Mandali* is the function of Apostleship.

Answer to question 3:

The Society for Avatar Meher Baba does its work in the gross or physical world promulgating and propagating Avatar Meher Baba's Message of Love and Truth. The astral plane which lies between the gross and the first plane of the subtle world is the "hobgoblin" world which should be avoided by a sincere seeker after Truth. Meher Baba states emphatically that the search for Truth which will terminate in Self Realization should be the Path of Love and only love and selfless service in His name—and not to pursue after gimmicks, rabbit's foot and horseshoe superstitions, or seemingly comfortable gadgetry supplied by the astral world or sidetracking "experiences" which are powerful tools of maya and almost insuperable obstacles to progress on the Path of Love.

Only the Avatar eternally in His Creation is everywhere and in everything as Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence and every sincere aspirant in his heart and through love can deal directly with the Avatar in His formless state. You contact Him wherever you are in this gross or physical world. The astral world is replete with all manner of innumerable discarnate souls or entities, who, not having bodies to work off or spend their impressions, have to find and possess physical bodies in the gross world to work off these impressions irrespective of whether they're good or bad impressions. Therefore if your business is with God, and God alone, seek Him and none other where He is. And He is in you in your heart, as Soul, though asleep, waiting to be awakened by your continuous and burning remembrance of Him as your Real Beloved.

Answer to question 4:

Avatar Meher Baba is the Personification of Almighty God who out of compassion and Love for His Creation manifested Himself amongst men in the "unreal" form of a human being so that they could partake of His Love and Care and His full involvement in their ignorance was to awaken their hearts to the realization that they are not to live in the prison of maya (illusion,) but to seek and acquire Freedom in God's Ocean of Divine Love even as He, the Avatar, experiences His Infinite State. Meher Baba left His physical form (His unreal form) January 31, 1969 in Meherazad near Ahmednagar, India to assume His Real formless state of being everywhere and in everything. When you give complete and total attention to Meher Baba, should it be completely sincere, He will give full and complete attention to you. This can be done by saying His name audibly or silently, continually throughout the day, reciting the Avatar's Prayer, which commences with "Oh Parvardigar the Preserver and Protector of all."

Sincerely,
Tom Mauro

An article on ex-drug users recently appeared on the front page of the New York Times in which Avatar Meher Baba was mentioned as a Hindu mystic heading a "cult" of followers referred to as "Baba-heads." Those of us who speak to the public or are interviewed about our Beloved God-Man, Meher Baba, must be very careful to present Baba accurately and in a manner befitting the One most precious to our hearts. When, in response to inquiries about Baba, we allow others to infer from our conversation that Meher Baba, the Avatar of the Age is a Hindu mystic and that those who surrender to Him are a cult of "Baba-heads," we are not showing our love for Baba or the Divine Greatness that we perceive in Him. If, on the other hand, we let people see that our Divine Beloved, Meher Baba, is our Lord and our God and that no one in the universe is more dear to us than our Real Beloved, then others will be touched by our love for Baba and subsequently by Baba's Love for all. Let us strive to make all our work in Baba's name worthy of the Highest of the High.

Dear Annarosa:

The personal glimpses of Beloved Meher Baba revealed in the "Family Letters" supplement and complement everything written about Him in other publications, yet, the book is different and unique. There are quotes of our Avatar that I had not come across in our extensive collection, including magazines. There is even an extensive letter on drugs among much else.

When we reread the letters the feeling is like being with Him and His intimate ones—part of the family. It is like a diary over a 13 year period that we enjoy very much. Our copy is autographed by Baba's sister, Mani.

It was kind of Meher Baba to let you put the book together and offer it for sale to the public. It is a welcome addition to our Baba library.

It was like old times Saturday night listening to Dr. and staying for coffee. We still relish the experience. It gives us a spiritual lift. The Baba in him comes through so beautifully to let us know what is important and how to keep it in perspective. Maybe someday his library of tapes will be available to the public. What a precious treat that will be.

In Baba's Love,
Curtis & Amara Smith

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