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Monthly:

November 1971

DIVYA VANI

(DIVINE VOICE)



AVATAR MEHER BABA

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The Qualifications of the Aspirant

PART III

by AVATAR MEHER BABA

Readiness to Serve According to Individual Aptitude and Ability

The aspirant has to be always in readiness to serve the cause of humanity. He need not apply himself to any type of work irrespective of his capacity: he has to select that portion of work which he is qualified to do by virtue of his *individual aptitude and abilities*. But whatsoever service he can render by virtue of his capacity, he renders even when the circumstances are most trying.

No Claims of the Limited ' I ' :—

The ordeals through which he may have to pass are many: but his determination to serve whenever possible must remain unshaken. But *he is not in any way attached to the idea of service in the sense of maximum results being secured through himself alone*. If there is any service which needs to be rendered, he is willing to render it with any amount of sacrifice: but he never is bound by the false idea, ' I ' alone should have the credit of doing it. If the privilege of rendering the service falls to the lot of someone else, he is not envious. If he were to seek for himself opportunities for rendering service, it would be a form of selfishness, while in the service, which really counts in spiritual life, there can be no thought of the self at all. There should be no felt necessity for having something for oneself or for being the one who can give something to others. *The self in all its forms has to be entirely out of the picture. Service should spring out of the spontaneity of freedom if and when it is necessary: and it has to come in the cooperative spirit in which there is no insistence upon the claims of the limited ' I '.*

Freedom from the Opposites of great and small things.

If the aspirant is completely detached from all works and their results, he becomes free from the vitiating opposites of the great things and small things. *The worldly minded feel their separative existence through achievement.* Therefore, they have a natural tendency to judge their achievements in terms of the tangible quantities; they grasp at great things and avoid the little things. But, *from the spiritual point of view, the so-called little things are often seen to be as important as the so-called great things.* The aspirant has no motive to eschew the one and seek the other: therefore, he attends to little things with as much zest as to great things.

The Domination of Conventions Restricts The Scope of Service.

In spiritual life, even the little things matter as much as great things. But the conventions of the world usually fail to recognise this simple truth. By following the conventionally accepted ideas, *the scope of possible service to fellow beings gets artificially restricted to those things which are conventionally regarded as important;* and many things, which are really of vital importance to life, come to be neglected with the result that life is spiritually impoverished.

Accepted Values Determine the fields of service:

Thus, in a society, which is dominated by merely material conceptions of life, service is interpreted in terms of affording facilities for bread or clothes or other physical amenities of existence; in a society, which is responsive to the value of intellectual culture, service is interpreted in terms of spreading learning in different forms; in a society which has developed taste for beauty, service is interpreted in terms of organising the production and distribution of works of art; in a society which is responsive to the ineffable values of the heart, service is interpreted in terms of constructing those channels which will facilitate the culture

and expression of the heart; and in a society which is alive to the supreme importance of the life of the spirit service is interpreted in terms of imparting spiritual understanding. Of these different types of service, the service which is concerned with spiritual understanding is the highest because *spiritual understanding includes the right perspective to all human problems and promotes a solution of them all.*

Two Kinds of Service:

But, if there is no spiritual understanding, the desire for rendering service to others is harnessed by limited conceptions. *Service is of two kinds: it consists in adding to the lives of others those things which are really worth while, or it consists in removing from the lives of others those handicaps which prevent them from having things which are worthwhile: and if our ideas of things which are worth while are narrow, the scope of possible service also becomes correspondingly narrow.*

Little things that Matter.

The scope of service is not completely exhausted by great gestures like giving big donations to public institutions, *they also serve who express their love in little things.* A word that gives courage to a drooping heart or a smile that brings hope and cheer in gloom, have as much claims to be regarded as service as onerous sacrifices and heroic self-denials. A glance which wipes out bitterness from the heart and sets it throbbing with a new love is also service; although there may be no thought of service in it. When taken by themselves, all these things seem to be small: but life is made of many such small things; and *if these small things are ignored life would be not only unbeautiful but unspiritual.*

Element of Error in the Estimates of the World

Just as the worldly minded have a tendency to judge positive contributions in terms of magnitudes, they also make a similar mistake in judging obstacles, handicaps and adversities. Thus, for most persons, the adversity of another must assume colossal forms if it is to deserve notice. It is

characteristic of the worldly minded that *they give more importance to things that take shape in external and tangible ways than to things which are silent elements in inner life.* Devastating war is, for example, considered to be a greater calamity than lingering lives filled with bitter hatred, though from the purely spiritual point of view, lives filled with bitter hatred are not in any way less evil than devastating war. War assumes so much importance because of the many visual instances of cruelty; but hatred is equally unbeautiful even when it does not materialise itself in outward actions. In the same way, epidemics, injuries and the sufferings of the death-bed invite more attention from the worldly minded than the agonies of the heart which is heavy with the burden of unquenchable desire.

Field of service is Life as a whole

But, for the aspirant, who is eager to serve without any desire for recognition and credit, *every thing that thwarts or perverts the release of full life is worthy of attention irrespective of whether it is great or small according to the usual estimates of the world.* Just as the building up or the collapse of empires have a place in the flow of universal life the fleeting moments of sadness or sweetness have also their own place in it; the importance of the one should not be measured in terms of the other, and the claims of the one should not be ignored as against the claims of the other. *The aspirant looks at life as an integral whole, without allowing any parts to monopolise his attention at the cost of other parts.*

Service which springs from love Ensures Harmony with Co-Workers

Even when the aspirant is rendering a service which is self-less, he keeps constant guard upon his mind, The aspirant must be humble, honest and sincere. The service, which he renders, must not be for the sake of mere show: and it should be an outcome of true love. *If the aspirant is inspired by love, his love shall enable him to be in entire harmony with other co-workers without being jealous.* If there is no complete harmony amongst the co-workers, the

service which is rendered falls short of the spiritual ideal. Further, if the aspirant renders the outward service without the spirit of love, he is acting from a sense of duty, as in many worldly institutions where there are paid workers. In the institutions of the world, people work for pay; at best, it is a cold sense of duty which prompts them to be efficient. Their work cannot have the inward beauty of work which is spontaneously done out of love.

Importance of contact with the Master:

The aspirant can best assimilate the lessons of true service, if he has the good fortune to be in contact with the Master. The Master teaches not through preaching but through example; and when the Master is seen in his capacity of rendering service to humanity, the aspirant is quick to catch that spirit because of his love for the Master. Contact with the Master is also helpful in imbibing the spirit of co-operation which the aspirants cultivate easily because of their common love for the Master. They serve because the Master wants it; they do the Master's work, not their own; and they do it not of their own accord but because they have been entrusted with that work by the Master. Therefore, *they are all free from any ideas of individualistic claims, rights or privileges, being keen only about the Master's work, ready to serve his cause to the best of their ability, when they are called upon to do so and equally ready to hand over that work to another co-aspirant if he can do it better.*

Service without Fuss:

In co-operation of this type, the aspirants are in a way serving each other, because the Master's work is accepted by them all as their own, and in being useful to a co-aspirant for doing the Master's work, the aspirant is rendering service to him as much as to the Master. But in such service there can be no bossing, because aspirant is always conscious that it is the Master's work which he has accepted as his own that he is doing: he further knows that, as aspirants, they are all equal, and it is easy for him to cultivate the habit of serving in the spirit of utter humility. If service makes him proud,

he might as well not have served. *One of the most difficult things to learn is to render service without bossing, without making fuss about it and without any consciousness of high and low. In the world of spirituality humility counts at least as much as utility.*

The Ideal of Service

When the Master serves others, he does so not because he is attached to the work but in order to help and also to set his disciples the example of self-less service; and while serving others, he sees himself in them and experiences having served himself. *In his unwaning blissful feeling of oneness, the Master knows himself to be at once the Lord of all and the Servant of all; he, therefore, exemplifies an ideal of service, in which there is no enslavement either of him who receives service or of him who renders it.* The aspirant can speedily realise the ideal of true service if he has before him example of the Master: but *the spiritual preparation of the aspirant can never be said to be complete unless he has learnt the art of rendering service, which gives not boredom but joy, which brings not enslavement but freedom, which does not set claims and counter-claims but springs from the spontaneity of free give and take, which is free from the burden of personal want, and which is sustained by the sense of ever renewed fulfilment.*

AN APPEAL

We earnestly appeal to all the readers of Divya Vani, that they can do a great service to Baba's Cause by presenting to the nearest Public Library a year's subscription for placing "Divya Vani" on its reading table, which will mean extensive spreading of information about Avatar Meher Baba to hundreds of persons.

Editor.

Baba's Spirit is now Dynamically Working

by Dr T. DHANAPATHI RAO, Kakinada.

Though Avatar Meher Baba has physically vanished from our midst, however his dynamic spirit seems to vibrate in our hearts more resonantly now than before when ever we simply utter his name with all faith and trust. The moment we think of Him, our heart swings and we silently sing His glory with all ecstasy. When we once bring back the memory of our old contacts and the past recollections about His wonderful life which was always permeated with so much of Love divine, they all become so vivid and realistic that we invariably feel as if we are all immersed in the delight of His actual sacred company making us forget completely all about our own little selves and our environment, stilling our mind and elevating our heart. All these ineffaceable impressions undoubtedly reflect profound spiritual testimony about the incontrovertible certainty of God's Infinite Existence so often repeatedly and authoritatively stressed by Baba.

The astounding glory of Baba's Divine beauty, love, compassion, mercy, forgiveness, patience, detachment, poise, steadfastness and His all-comprehensive perfect and precise understanding and exposition of life with its multiple and varied ups and downs in every phase and in every field clearly reveal, His great Avatarhood in no small degree. This is an indirect indication that man will have to pass through all those trials and tribulations necessarily before he attains the final Freedom and live eternally with full consciousness through His grace. When meditating on these various aspects over and over again, we learn definitely how to live rightly and lovingly and how to tread the spiritual path safely through inner detachment. The evolution of our consciousness is thus wonderfully quickened. Finally we comprehend the utter futility of our ignorance, the complete emptiness of our false notions and the harrowing bondage of all desires which keep us all down in the bog of the ephemeral attractions and attachments of this false illusion.

Baba has taught us repeatedly that mere understanding of Truth through intellect is not the real understanding at all. He exhorted us several times to live the Truth with all love and delight, courage and strength, patience and poise with all resignation to His will and with all selflessness and self-giving without the thought of our little self in any form. The truth of the intrinsic human nature lies in its inviolable harmonious, all-pervading, unlimited oneness of life in every thing in all situations and at all times.

Baba expects from us that we should all feel and experience our universal fellowship by loving God honestly and selflessly through all sacrifice of our comforts and happiness for the welfare of all humanity. This frees us from the bondage of selfless and ego-centric life.

This is possible only when we remember Baba constantly and dedicate everything to Him whole-heartedly.

JAIBABA!

Meher Lover

by Bro P. G. NANDI, Calcutta.

Primarily one has to build one's innermost self
 Ere decided on to preach MEHER'S golden Message
 Unless the depth of being surcharged by Divine Love,
 All efforts only end in utter woeful wastage!

How can Love flow with no feeling heart?
 How can fruits grow with no fragrant flower?
 How can deeds shine with no Truth behind ?
 How can seeds sprout with no gracious shower?

A flame is a lamp only by a lighted one?
 Darkness dispelled only by the sun above;
 By MEHER'S Message agonising hearts assuaged
 Only by devoted souls, fully soaked with Love !

May the fragrant flower in remote corner blossom;
 Its perfume, yet, to the bees silently reaches!
 May not MEHER-Lover speak out, may he remain mum;
 Through his love in silence, yet, thousands he teaches!

To All Baba Lovers

From Dr. H. P. Bharucha
"Truth" Ashapuri Road
NAVSARI, Gujarat

Dear brother/Sister

In 1965, I had compiled a book—The Compassionate Father. In this book were published the experiences of Meher Baba lovers. These experiences, where Baba had poured His love and compassion on His lovers are soul stirring and touch the heart of any one who reads the book.

Due to pressing demands from the Baba family in India and abroad, I have decided to produce another edition of the book. At the same time, I wish to add some new experiences of Baba lovers. Cooperation from each Baba lover will help me to do this work. Kindly send only such experiences which do not appear miraculous for that would be in keeping with Baba's status of the Highest of the High who is beyond such petty things.

Thanking you.

CONDOLENCE RESOLUTION

We the lovers of Avatar Meher Baba Dowlaishwaram Centre met on 24-10-1971 in the centre to express our deep sorrow at the demise of our brother in Baba's service Sri A. Kondala Rao at about 9-00 P.M. on 23-10-1971, at Dowlaishwaram, with Beloved Baba's name on lips. We pray to Beloved Baba to bestow eternal peace on the departed soul. We also convey our heart felt condolences to the members of his family.

Jai Baba!!!

* Chronicles of Our Avatar

by M. A. MICHAEL EVANS, California.

- (i) The only begotten Son dawns,
Reckoning the seekers of perfections pearl
To enter His treasure house of Love.
As Baba emerges from the ocean of the
Omnipresent Om,
Waves of joy wash away
Every barrier between the Holy Flute Player
And the echos of His miraculous music.
The Sea of Silence churns to a storm that will shatter
the shackles of illusion.
Then Infinite Knowledge, Power and Bliss—The
three temples of Truth—
Will dwell in the heart of every lover of love.
- (ii) As He comes forward, all darkness and fear fades away,
For He comes to gather us into Himself—
To make us see the worlds as the coffins of our bodies
By opening our center eye to see infinite life in Him.
Flowers flow from the beloved's footsteps,
Blooming in the warm rays of His spirit,
Radiating from the unlimited Love of the Master.
The universe vibrates with stillness, listening for an
invitation from its creator
To attend the funeral of death—
To rejoice at the passing away of separation.

* Written in anticipation of Baba's Darshan at the end of seclusion. (Received in Aug. 1969,)

(iii) So merciful is His Holiness, replacing the placid
pleasures of the world

With fire-pains of love;

Filling our hearts with compassion

Till they burst for us to bathe eternally in bliss.

So merciful is His Holiness, causing the Chaos of Maya

to crack,

Rubble-tumbling to its true nonexistence;

Exposing pillars of sanity that support the three

temples of Truth.

So merciful is His Holiness, sweating a hundred

thousand burning tears to thaw our frozen hearts;

Constantly awake as we continue to sleep.

So merciful is His Holiness, so merciful!

(iv) Here is God - a distance of infinity

One hundred and eighty degrees from the direction

in which we are usually looking.

Here is God, Master of the Meherazad of our heart,

Blinding us to blindness, silencing us to deafness,

Wiping away the inability of ignorance

To know our True Self as our True Self.

God is here, and closer still,

He is coming out of our seclusion from Him—

For love, truly for Love

He is coming!

(v) Oh Beloved, If I may see you only once,

Let me see you with my soul,

So that the delusion of duality will die forever,

Giving me sight eternal of your beauty.

Oh my Master, If I may embrace you only once,

Let me embrace you with my heart,

For it alone is capable of holding You

Oh God of Grace, wherever You will have me, I am.
Bless me with the absence of my presence.
And I will care not where our bodies be.

(vi) Lovers of the living Christ, come to Him not to ask
questions,
But to answer the call of the Ancient One,
Come to Him not to seek, but to serve the Alpha and the
Omega, for He has found you.
Come to Him never to leave, then His agony, which is
your ignorance, will cease,
And only pearls of peace will ever again drop from
your eye.
Come to Him with the elegance of immaculate Love,
And He will disappear into you as you become Him.
Let your eyes cry to see Baba,
But drown your heart in the Lake of His boundless Mercy,
And then your soul will see that His omnipresence is ever-
touching you, ever-holding you, that It is You.

BABA PHOTOS

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G L I M P S E S
of
The God-Man Meher Baba

First Day of Darshan at Madras

1947 — Part II

By BAL NATU

Meher Ashramam. A Flashback

In April, 1947, with Shri Meher Baba, I visited Madras, on the south-east coast of India. It was quite a long journey by a mail train. A fair number of years have rolled by; yet a few of the recollections are surprisingly vivid. They generate a marvelous power that conjures a magic bridge which covers the span of time. It helps to bring back those lovely moments of divine companionship, so fresh, so living! But before I begin with that account, I must make a mention about the Baba-work done in that area by one of His near and dear disciples, C. V. Sampath Iyengar of Madras Judicial Service.

In the early thirties, the city of Madras gave Shri Meher Baba for the first time a resounding ovation. It was a spontaneous gesture on the part of the public. Since this visit, the atmosphere of the city vibrated with Shri Baba's name. The entire visit was a glorious success. This was mainly due to the devoted efforts of Sampath Iyengar. This visit was on 1st and 2nd March, 1930. It was during this visit that Meher Ashramam had its inception, in Shri Baba's presence. Meher League, with the object of promoting universal brotherhood, had Shri Baba's sanction. K J. Dastur and Iyengar were the Presidents. Shri Baba asked His devotees to come together, at least once a week, for meditation and a free mutual exchange of thoughts and feelings.

A decision to publish the Meher Gazette, as a quarterly from Madras had Shri Baba's approval. Sister V. T.

Laxmi was to be the Editor. During this short visit, a cosmopolitan dinner was also arranged. There were some house visits too. Shri Baba paid a visit to the Baby Welcome Centre, bathed a child and distributed sweets to all. On way to Saidapet, where Iyengar resided, He sanctified a part named paracheri (a slum for the so-called depressed class) where the Parihas lived. Shri Baba had a 'chat' with some, through gestures and He tasted the rice-water in one of the huts. He did not ignore to meet an ailing devotee named Pankaja Ammal. He consoled her and gave her some flowers as *prasad*. Later, with Shri Baba's name on her lips she passed away peacefully, offering her heart as a flower at His holy feet. After a public meeting which was very well attended to, in Goschen Hall, Shri Baba left Madras the next morning.

The first number of Meher Gazette was published in June, 1930. Meher Ashramam continued to render services to the depressed classes. From the very beginning Shri Baba upheld that no particular caste or religion is exclusively superior. In the special message to the Meher Gazette, He stated, "Though creeds and theologies are many, Religion is strictly speaking One; and this One Religion includes love for God and longing to realize the Truth. In order that this Religion may be applicable to all, class-caste tyranny and priest-craft must be eradicated root and branch." Sampath Iyengar did his best to live his life according to Shri Baba's message. But in 1947, by the time Shri Baba visited Madras again, Iyengar had dropped his body to rest eternally in his Master's Being. However, Mrs. Iyengar and their two daughters V. T. Laxmi and K. Janakey tried utmost to make Shri Baba's stay at Meher Bhavan quite comfortable and creative for His devotees.

"Bhagwan (God) Is Never Lost!"

After the close of the *mast-ashram* at Mahabaleshwar in January, 1947, Shri Meher Baba broke the long spell of His public withdrawal, by giving *darshan* to the devotees and the people at Madras. The request of the Southerners

was strong and intense. Shri Baba asked them to fix a date in near future. When everything was getting on well, there arose some disturbance in the city. So, in March, V. T. Laxmi sent a telegram that the holding of a public meeting or a congregation in the city of Madras was prohibited by the orders enforced by the Police Commissioner. When Shri Baba was on the point of cancelling this visit there was the second telegram mentioning that Shri Baba's visit would be considered as most timely, in those troubled days. The situation in the city was getting normal and Meher Baba agreed to visit Madras. The people were allowed to have His *darshan* at the place of His residence, Meher Bhavan, 27 Brahmin Street, Saidapet Madras-15. When the decision was conveyed to the Baba-people at Madras, in a welcome telegram to Meher Baba, it was stated: "Delighted. Deeply grateful to you. Awaiting Your august arrival, on 2nd April, 1947."

On 1st April Shri Baba left Poona by the Bombay-Madras Express. Kaka Baria, Ja1 (Baba's brother), Dr. Ghani, Dr. Donkin, Adi Sr., Ramjoo, Meherjee and Sidu accompanied Him. The train reached Kurduwadi by 9 at night. It was for the first time that the public of this place had Meher Baba's *darshan*; rather just a look through the window, at that radiant Figure, as they folded their hands in *namaskars*. Two devotees from Barsi named Bhagat and Bhagwan had come to Kurduwadi to join the Baba-party; but one named Bhagwan was found missing. We searched for him in the waiting rooms, the railway lines and the platforms, shouting aloud "Bhagwan, Bhagwan" but in vain. When this news was conveyed to Shri Baba, He remarked, "Don't worry. Bhagwan (the word literally means God) is never lost!" The second devotee named Bhagat was asked to return to Barsi. Later it was learnt that when Bhagat came to my house to take me to the station, Bhagwan who was an illiterate street cobbler, inadvertently got into an earlier train heading towards Sholapur (Madras side). At the next stop realizing the mistake, Bhagwan got down at Sholapur. He too was asked to return to Barsi.

At Kurduwadi, through the crowded platform, I managed to sneak in a nearby compartment. The annual examination of the school was drawing close but the Head Master kindly sanctioned the leave; and my colleagues sanctioned perhaps my madness to 'run' after Shri Baba. From Sholapur Limkar joined me as a compartment companion. Bubbling with Baba-love he was a good company though at times, it was boring to hear him talking excessively. Again, I had to give a patient hearing to the poems he had composed on Shri Baba. At Adoni it was a delightful morning. Under the soft blue sky, it was pleasing to get down on the platform. Both of us moved towards Shri Baba's compartment and stood at a distance, from where we could just have a look at Shri Baba's radiant face, so tender, so compassionate! The sun had peeped above the horizon and poured in through the window, joining us in this morning marvel! By nightfall the train reached Madras. As per previous instruction, no special reception, like the one at Nagpur, in November, 1944, was held at Madras Central Station. Only the host received the Divine Guest.

With Shri Baba, Under The Same Roof.

Soon we found ourselves in Meher Bhavan. There was a big hall on the second floor for the *mandali*. The adjacent room was reserved for Shri Baba. Within few minutes, Shri Baba arrived in the *darshan* hall, which was on the first floor. He stopped there and met His dear ones who had come from outstations. Minu Kharas and Adi Dubash from Karachi were also present. Shri Baba asked them to attend all the programmes but for their lodging He remarked, "Only those who have come with me are to stay in Meher Bhavan." They happily obeyed Him and made the necessary arrangements. About Limkar Shri Baba joked, "The number of his relatives in Madras exceeds the number of my devotees!" He warned Limkar that if he had come specially for Shri Baba's programmes, he should not go to see his relatives. Limkar could not overcome the temptation. He visited his relatives, had

a fall and was limping for days. May be it was a warning for him to be more careful about the words of the Master, even a casual remark. Mine was the last turn. "Am I to quit this place?", a wave of doubt came rolling. But before I could say anything Adi Sr. intervened and said something in Gujarati. Shri Baba signalled me to stay on. The heart chuckled at the prospect of living with the Master under the same roof. The next day Shri Baba asked Minu Karas and Adi Dubash to bring back their bag and baggage for a stay in Meher Bhavan. Shri Baba showered and still showers His grace on us but not necessarily when we expect it!

Darshan Commenced In Maher Bhavan.

On 3rd April, by morning a Band-squad attended at the gate of Meher Bhavan. They played sweet music announcing the commencement of the Baba-programme in Madras. Here are some of the details as far as I remember them. A change here or there in the sequence of events is possible. *Darshan* was to commence from 8-30 a.m. in the well-decorated Hall, on the ground floor. Shri Baba's seat was in a corner facing the main door. *Darshan* was permitted from a little distance. No one was allowed to touch Shri Baba's person. To avoid such disturbance a special seat had been designed. I do not recollect Shri Baba having embraced any of His devotees, during those two days. About the *Darshan* programme, Dr. Donkin wrote, * "People streamed through the room in hundreds—Baba sitting in the corner in a monstrous throne with a sort of seven-headed cobra over Him and a peacock at either side. This weird and wonderful throne was covered in silver paper of various colours, and Baba had to amble in and out of it, at the beginning and close of each *darshan* session People really were moved by Baba; people would stand with rapt expressions on their faces, looking quite lost to everything and some would stand with eyes closed and tears tumbling down their cheeks.... "

* The Awakener Vol. IX No. 3.

Manek Mehta had come from Bombay with a large group. He stayed in one of the suburbs of Madras. This group of men and women would sit before Shri Baba's seat and sing *bhajans*, during *darshan* hours. Some of the songs were composed by Manek on Meher Baba's divinity. I remember the following two songs:

"Meher muze pyara duniyame tuhi hamara" meaning "Meher is my loved one. In the world You are the only one for us all." The second song in Gujerati was: *"Sadguru bahu bhayo chhe, Tuzasam bijo na koi"* meaning "There have been many masters but You are the One without a second." As the songs continued, one after the other the people passed in a line before Shri Baba's seat, taking His *darshan*. Sometimes Shri Baba would cast a glance of appreciation at the singer or gesture a sign of approval. A few songs of Mirabai and Kabir were also sung.

I had a short talk with Minu Kharas, It was fairly instructive. In a small bag he had all the five volumes of Meher Baba's Discourses, as also a few booklets published on Meher Baba. His study of Shri Baba's literature including the remarks made by Shri Baba at different times was critical. He told me that when one was in Meher Baba's *sahavas*, one should exclusively concentrate on Him. It was *He who first suggested me to write my impressions in a diary form, about my visits and meetings with Meher Baba*. Minu Kharas first met Shri Baba at Nasik in January, 1932. No sooner did he see Meher Baba than his heart acclaimed, "Here is God in human form whom I was searching for all the years. Now my search for the Master is over." Since that very first meeting Minu had inwardly dedicated his very being at the holy feet of his Beloved Master, Meher Baba. Minu's rock-like faith in Meher Baba's Divinity is remarkable. He had flown from Bombay to Madras to be in time for *darshan*, Malcom Schloss from California (U.S.A.) was also permitted by Shri Baba to attend the programmes in Madras, but somehow he could not get 'on the wings'.

Spirituality Cannot Be A Monopoly.

When the rush of the people was less, Shri Baba moved to the premises of Meher Ashramam. There was a pipal tree which was planted in commemoration of Shri Meher Baba's visit to Madras in March, 1930. By this time it had grown into a huge tree. Shri Baba sat under it and some beautiful pictures were taken. Formerly under the auspices of Meher Ashramam Baba-work, including services to the poor and the depressed class people, was carried on in this compound. Shri Baba had appreciated such type of selfless social service. Meher Baba's message for the "oppressed and the depressed" was as follows:

"To believe today in birth and profession, to be necessarily the basis of any difference as between man and man, is to insist upon living in the past and remaining dead to the present. Cleanliness of mind and body which is practical spirituality, has never been and can never be, the monopoly of any one particular class or creed. It should be aspired to, by every one and could be acquired by any one—man or woman.

"Man-made differences, like all other things made by man, take no time to change with the changing times. Rights must be restored and will be restored, but responsibilities have also to be shouldered. It is indeed great to be a man, but it is far more greater to be man to man.

"Irrespective of the birth-labels and belief-tables, I give my blessings to all those who feel themselves to be oppressed, depressed or suppressed, from any cause whatsoever."

During the two days' visit to Madras, Shri Meher Baba gave a message to a small group, a part of which is given below:

"The institution of slavery in the middle ages was already bad enough, but the irresponsible slavery of the

industrial age is worse. The most cruel and destructive form of slavery is an intellectual bigotry of possessing the monopoly of Truth, exclusive of others.

"Intellect is, so to say, reserved by nature for man. But, however keen and quick it may be, it will always remain to be just one of the stepping stones to knowledge. Like every thing else, intellect can be used as much as misused or abused. The deeper the intelligence, the greater the responsibility for discrimination between essentials and non-essentials.

"May you succeed in transcending the limitations of Intellectual understanding..... My blessings to all."

Meherjee's Meeting with Meher Baba

In Meher Bhavan, my bedding was facing Dr. Ghani's in the opposite row. So, I could hear or overhear many things—jokes and Baba-anecdotes, that he told to those around him. Like Minu Kharas, Meherjee Karkaria was a new acquaintance though I had no personal talk with him, then. I was told that he first saw Shri Meher Baba, at Meherabad in the Meher-Ashram days, as back as 1927. It was just a coincidence that he accompanied Chanji, F. H. Dadachanji, on a week-end to Meherabad. Shri Baba lovingly enquired about Meherjee. After getting his degree in science, he wanted to go to Germany to study pharmaceutical chemistry. Shri Baba casually said, "If you pass this year, continue your studies; if not, come to me at Meherabad." Meherjee never expected a failure in the examination. But "luckily" he failed and did go to Meherabad where he taught the boys in the *ashram*-school. He was just twenty then. When the school was closed, at the request of Meherjee's father, Shri Meher Baba permitted him to leave Meherabad. However, by the way Shri Baba remarked, "You may leave Meherabad, but I will not leave you!" Since his young age Meherjee had been one of Meher Baba's dear disciples.

I also heard one uncommon incident from Meherjee's life, revealing one of the aspects of Shri Baba's all-inclusive

knowledge. I wish to narrate the same, for some may find it interesting as it is connected with "Horoscope and the influence of stars".

Master's Words Rule out Prediction!

In the early thirties Meherjee Karkaria left India, on business for Iran. After over a decade he visited India, in 1943. At that time Shri Meher Baba's headquarters was at Lahore, hundreds of miles to the north of Bombay. So, before proceeding to Lahore Meherjee met some of his acquaintances in business. There arose an amusing episode about the astrological prediction. One of his friends asked Meherjee to check his 'fortune' from his horoscope. He advised him not to speculate too much on war-money. It was the time of the World War II. Being impressed, Meherjee got his horoscope from his father who was residing at Navsari, in Gujerat. After going through the birth-chart of Meherjee the famous, old astrologer predicted that Meherjee should stop earning in that particular line of business and it was better for him to sell all what he had at the market rate. Meherjee felt convinced and cabled his office in Iran to act accordingly and then left for Lahore (Pakistan).

He was meeting Shri Meher Baba after a period of eleven years. Shri Baba very lovingly embraced him and enquired of him about his life and business in Iran. When Meherjee concluded the whole account by relating the cable sent from Bombay, about selling all the goods, She Baba called him near and twisted his ear. He remarked "Do you believe in stars or in me as God?" Meherjee's prompt reply was, "I have full faith in you as God in human form." At that moment, Shri Baba asked him to send a fresh cable to his office cancelling the previous instructions. Later, Meherjee reaped a considerable profit in that enterprise. After a few years Meherjee wound up his business in Iran and left that country for good. Just after his return to India, he had the good fortune to join Shri Mcher Baba in His visit to Madras, as one of the *mandali*.

Leaving apart whether Meherjee's horoscope was correct or incorrect, I personally do not feel that Meher Baba was either for or against any branch of 'science'; for He is Life itself, in all its aspects. Perhaps He wanted us to understand the right placing of various theories acting on our lives. We have to guard ourselves against the 'super-natural element' affecting our daily life. Such intrusion tempts one to make a fetish out of anything and one loses self confidence, gradually. Would you believe that one of my friends wore 'caps' of different colours, as per the fore-warning of the stars! To me, this incident in Meherjee's life indicates that in one's life with the Master, if one has an unswerving faith in His words, it acts as a supervening law. I am not an adherent of astrology but I do feel that no honest investigation about life should be treated either with undue prejudice or excessive enthusiasm.

Thus, we were having a good chat amongst us about Shri Meher Baba as the Avatar and His *lilas*. It seemed an unending delightful occupation. To recount the whole of it will be an outright digression. Personally, I found that Dr. Ghani was the storehouse of many, many significant Baba-events and that I should not miss his company whenever possible. The hall was quite close by Shri Baba's room and a word came that He had retired. It was a signal to switch off the lights and we rested on our beds, with the sweet memories of the day leading us to sleep. Thus ended the first day of our stay at Meher Bhavan, Madras.

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(To be continued)

The Third Amartithi of Avatar Meher Baba Darshan at Meherabad Hill

Avatar Meher Baba Trust
KING'S ROAD, AHMEDNAGAR
Maharashtra State, INDIA

(Miss) MANIJA S. IRANI
Chairman

21st October 1971

Dear Friends,

The Third Amartithi of Beloved Avatar Meher Baba falls on Monday the 31st January 1972. As usual, large numbers of pilgrims from India and abroad are expected to visit the Tomb of Beloved Baba at Meherabad in Ahmednagar,

This Third Amartithi (Anniversary) of Avatar Meher Baba Darshan on Meherabad Hill will be definitely observed on 31st January 1972 and the following will be the programme for the day:

PLACE: The Holy Tomb on Meherabad Hill.

31st January 1972

- 10 a. m. to 12 noon : Singing by Bhajan Mandali of different Meher Centres.
- 12 noon to 12-15 p.m.: All present to observe complete silence.
- 12-15 p.m. to 12.45 p.m.: Master's Prayer in different languages and Arti in Hindi
- 12-50 p.m. Begin taking darshan.
- At night: (1) Society for Avatar Meher Baba, New York U. S. A. will stage a play called "Goodbye Maya, Hello God."
- (2) There will be a film show of Beloved Baba films.

In view of the ever-increasing flow of pilgrims converging at the Tomb for the Amartithi, the perennial water shortage, the prohibitive cost of making temporary arrangements at Meherabad and other handicaps, the Avatar Meher Baba Ahmednagar Centre is unable to shoulder the burden of arrangements for the pilgrims at Meherabad during the Amartithi occasion. Moreover, it is not possible for Avatar Meher Baba Trust to undertake such arrangements. Under the circumstances, it is found impossible to give free facilities to the thousands of Amartithi pilgrims by providing temporary lodging and boarding arrangements for them at Meherabad for the Amartithi occasion.

However; Avatar Meher Baba Trust has entrusted LODGING arrangements at specially reduced rates to the local Contractor Shri Shashikant H. Mutha, D.C.E. Decorator. Tilak Path, Station Road, Ahmednagar (M. S.) Telephone 579.

Shri S.H Mutha will independently undertake LODGING arrangements for Meher Pilgrims at Rs. 8/- per head as per his printed leaflet enclosed herein.

Meher Pilgrims wanting to stay at Lower Meherabad during the Amartithi occasion are requested to deal directly with Shri S. H. Mutha.

Regarding BOARDING arrangements please note:

To provide facilities to Meher Pilgrims during the Amartithi occasion there will be stalls erected by local vendors where Meher Pilgrims can purchase eatables, milk tea etc.

Regarding TRANSPORT arrangements:

- (1) The State Transport authorities will be requested as on the last Anniversary occasion to ply their State Transport buses from the railway station and S. T. bus stand to and from Meherabad.
- (2) Meher Pilgrims arriving by special buses or by cars are requested not to take their vehicles on Meherabad Hill, but to park them at Lower Meherabad.

Please pass on the above information to all lovers of Avatar Meher Baba in your area so that those who are planning to visit the TOMB of Beloved Avatar Meher Baba for the Amartithi are made fully aware of the conditions concerning their lodging, boarding, and transport arrangements as explained above.

Jai Avatar Meher Baba!
In beloved Baba's Service
(Sd) Manija S. Irani, Chairman

Note:

- (i) All are heartily welcome to attend Beloved Avatar Meher Baba's Amartithi function on Meherabad Hill.
- (ii) Only those Meher Pilgrims who obtain ENTRY TOKENS from Shri S. H. Mutha will have LODGING facilities at Lower Meherabad during the Amartithi occasion.
- (iii) Please do not correspond on this subject with the Trust Office or with Shri Adi K. Irani.

LODGING ARRANGEMENTS:

AT LOWER MEHERABAD - AHMEDNAGAR (M. S.)
FOR THE THIRD AMARTITHI (ANNIVERSARY)
OF AVATAR MEHER BABA DARSHAN
ON MEHERABAD HILL
From 30th January to 1st February 1973

I am happy to announce to all lovers of Avatar Meher Baba that LODGING arrangements for this sacred occasion will be made by me at Lower Meherabad with the kind permission of the Avatar Meher Baba Trust. Ahmednagar. This includes bathing, sanitation (latrine,) lighting and stay arrangements at lower Meherabad from 2-00 P.M. of the 30th January to 2-00 P.M. of the 1st February 1972.

For lodging arrangements, Meher pilgrims will be charged per head Rs. 8/- only for the whole period. Children below seven years of age will not be charged.

Any Meher pilgrim wanting a mattress will be supplied with one on the spot on cash payment.

Only one bucket of hot water for bathing will be supplied (free of charge) on the 31st January and on the 1st February in the morning from 5-00 A.M. to 8-00 A.M.

Milk, tea and food etc. will be available at stalls at Lower Meherabad on cash payment.

Meher pilgrims who want to have LODGING arrangements for the sacred occasion should send me Rs. 8/- per head (only by a MONEY ORDER) as soon as possible but BEFORE the 15th December 1971 at my following address.

SHASHIKANT H. MUTHA, D. C. E., DECORATOR
TILAKPATH, STATION ROAD,
AHMEDNAGAR (M, S.) (TELEPHONE 579)

Meher Pilgrims are requested to be very particular to give their full name and address in BLOCK LETTERS on the Money Order coupons. They MUST ALSO REMEMBER to bring to Meherabad with them the Money Order ACKNOWLEDGEMENT and also the M. O. Receipt. This will entitle them to receive from me their respective ENTRY TOKEN immediately on their arrival at Lower Meherabad on the 30th January 1972 afternoon.

Please do avail of this specially reduced rate for Lodging Arrangement at Meherabad at the time of the Third Amar Tithi (Anniversary) by sending to me Rs. 8/- by MONEY ORDER as soon as possible but not later than the 15th December 1971.

There is no further need for any correspondence.

At the service of Meher Pilgrims
Shashikant H. Mutha

How I was Drawn to the Divine net of Beloved Baba

by BONALA VENKATESWARLU, Kakinada

Sri V. V. Narayana Rao was the Deputy Collector, Amalapuram during 1952 & 1953. He used to go to Meherabad near Ahmednagar (M. S.) very often for the Darshan of Shri Meher Baba. I was quite inquisitive about his frequent going to Meherabad and I tried to know more about Shri Meher Baba. He was kind enough to tell me that He was the Avatar of the Age. He gave me the book "Perfect Master". I read it and it impressed me very much. This is how I could know about Baba and ever since I have become a Meher Baba reader.

By Baba's grace Sri V. V. Narayana Rao was transferred to Kakinada as District Supply Officer and myself was appointed as his Assistant during 1954. Because I am destined to become a Meher devotee things really happened so. Baba came to Andhra during February and March, 1954. Sri V. V. Narayana Rao was in charge of the arrangements for Baba's Darshan in East Godavari District. He fixed me and two others for making arrangements at Kakinada. On 2-3-1954 at about 6-00 P.M. Baba came in a Car driven by Sri N. Dharma Rao to the garden house of Sri Y. V. Narasimha Rao at Sarpavaram as this was then fixed for His stay. There I was also present along with Sri Y. V. Narasimha Rao and his family members. We were all introduced to Baba and Baba blessed us all. He placed His right palm as an act of blessing on my head, and I felt a thrill. I cannot remember what I did then. This momentous contact was a real important event in my life.

Baba gave public Darshan on 3rd after-noon in the spacious compound of Sri Malladi Satyalingam Naiker Charities premises at Jaganaickpur, Kakinada. A huge pendal was erected for the purpose and a decorated dais was improvised to seat Baba. As soon as Baba reached the spot on the car He was warmly received by a large gather-

ing with enthusiastic resounding greetings of "Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai." Prasad consisting of plantains and few bunches were placed by His side. Baba distributed the same at the rate of one plantain for each person. We were all anxious that the plantains would be soon exhausted but there was a continuous flow of fruits since many bunches of plantains were unexpectedly brought in, to the surprise of all. Every one that gathered got an opportunity to go very close to Baba to pay his or her homage, and in turn, each one received from Him the Prasad directly. The distribution of Prasad by Him was so swift that no human being can do so with such rapidity and tenderness. His dynamic attractive personality and the way in which He distributed the Prasad with so much affection and intimacy to His devotees and to the masses without any tiresomeness and gap confirmed all the previous stories we heard before, that Baba was really God. On that day about 6,000 yearning hearts must have had their long cherished desire fulfilled by meeting Baba and taking His Darshan and Prasad for the first time. Baba said that no body had an idea what He gives through prasad and that was the only thing through which He gives what He wanted to.

Here I mention a small incident. I beg to be excused for displaying my devotion that I am a lover of God for I was having 3 lockets—one of Rama in gold, another locket of Annavaram Satyanarayana Swamy also in gold and a third locket of Baba pinned with a lucky Bone on my chest over the bush-shirt and I worked as volunteer before the dais of Baba, While managing the crowd I lost this lucky bone pin with lockets in the midst of heavy rush. I was much worried at the loss and prayed to Baba inwardly for its recovery. When the Prasad distribution was coming to a close, to my great surprise I noticed the pin with all lockets lying on the ground, half covered by sand. Is this not Baba's work to punish my ego in airing my vanity for exhibiting the lockets so prominently? When I prayed I received a compassionate glance from Baba. I then recovered those lockets in spite of the heavy rush of the Darshanaradhees.

On the fore-noon of 3rd March (SIVARATRI DAY) Baba visited some houses of his lovers at Kakinada. At Ungaralavari's House (Club view) which is the brothers-in-law home of Dr. T. D. Rao myself and entire family could again pay our homage to Baba. All of us received Arati and we were all blessed by Baba then. On 4th after-noon Baba left Kakinada in a Car driven by Sri N. Dharma Rao to Samalkot to catch the train. We all followed Him up to Samalkota. Here I narrate that during the whole tour of Andhra Sri Dharma Rao drove Baba's Car*. To each one who drove Him, Baba said *"you do not know how fortunate you are to be driving Me—This mere act of driving Me will ensure that when the time comes and you are traversing the planes, you will not get stuck in them. How fortunate brother Dharma Rao is !*

I was permitted to attend the momentous meeting on 29th & 30th September, 1954 at Meherabad when the Final Declaration was delivered by Baba.

Next time in 1955 Baba notified special Sahavas programme which seemed to be a very Important phase of His mission. I was one of the fortunate few who attended this Sahavas. I was to be present at Meherabad from 11-11-1955 to 17-11-1955. I was then acting as the Tahsildar of Kakinada. Sri Vinobha Bhave, the spiritual heir of Mahatma Gandhijee, programmed to tour in Kakinada taluk from 9th to 11th November, 1955. In pursuance of the Sahavas invitation I wished to start from Kakinada on 9th to reach Meherabad on 11th. On account of the above said programme of Sri Bhave, I was not certain that I would attend the Sahavas as I felt I would not be permitted to leave the station under these circumstances. I apprised Baba through Sri Adi K. Irani of this predicament on 3-11-1955 and requested to send me a wire whether I could join the Sahavas later on 13th. But I did not receive any reply till then. Therefore I applied for casual leave from 9th but my immediate superior (Revenue Divisional Officer) refused to sanction the said

* vide "Awakener" vol IV No I 1956. Page 14.

leave, of course in view of the already fixed tour of that high personage. Thereupon I desperately approached the Collector on 9th morning and explained the whole situation. By Baba's grace the Collector sanctioned one month's leave from 9th and arranged for my immediate relief before 12-00 Noon of the same day, enabling me thus to start on 9th itself. This sort of granting leave and arranging relief within a few hours has never occurred in the annals of Revenue Department in this District. In reply to my letter dated 3rd, Sri Adi communicated to me the following news on 10-11-1955 after I left for Meherabad. "Considering that you are unable to be present here on the 11th for the reasons stated in your letter, Babaji wants you to reach Meherabad positively on 13th. Please note this *and do not fail*." Baba on the second day of Sahavas on 12-11-1955 explaining about self-less service, said "Take the case of Vinobha Bhave: he is an old man and does selfless service and tells others of 'Gods Love'—Try to do selfless service through love." By mentioning the name of Vinobha Bhave, He glanced at me and made me realise the fact that He was quite aware of my prayer and that He was All Knowing and Knowing everything. This incident confirmed my faith in Baba's Omniscience. On 15-11-1955 Group Photos were taken with Beloved Baba on Meherabad Hill. The Revenue Divisional Officer who felt prejudiced for this unusual way of getting relief, proposed my transfer from Kakinada on the expiry of my leave. But to the surprise of everybody I was reposted to Kakinada. Once again I saw the inner hand of Baba.

Another Sahavas was fixed in 1958 and Women also were permitted to attend this Sahavas. Baba said, "During the period of Sahavas congregation, *I shall work with full force*." My self and my wife had the good fortune to attend this Sahavas between 21st & 26th February, 1958. Luckily 25th February happened to be the *64th Birthday of Baba*. He washed His own feet (Pada Pooja) Himself—The water that touched Baba's feet was collected and distributed as sacred waters with strict instructions to apply

the same to the foreheads of Sahavasis but it was not intended for taking as 'thirtham'. Several group photos with Baba were taken on 26-2-1958 by lady Sahavasis only near Baba's cabin.

Here I cannot resist telling the unique parting scene of the unprecedented train departure on 26-2-58 after-noon. By the grace of Baba this special train was arranged to start from railway line Meherabad itself some 6 miles away from the railway station of Ahmednagar. Instead of the Sahavasis going to the said Station to catch the train, Baba made it possible for the train to stop at the Meherabad railway line to pick up the whole lot of Andhra Sahavasis. When the train arrived at the spot all these Sahavasis entrained. Out of infinite compassion Baba with some of His woman Mandali came down from the Meherabad Hill in His Car and stopped near the fully packed train. Immediately there were tremendous cries of 'Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai', from every compartment. Baba waved His hands and gestured to the Sahavasis not to get down from the train. It could not be described how happy we were all during that memorable moment. Baba then gave His hand signal for the train to start. After a very long whistling, this "Baba's special" moved out with shouts of "Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai". Then many of the lovers stood on the foot boards and the rest leaned out through the windows and waved their hands with all enthusiasm. Baba then gestured with His hands that he was very happy and asked us to take Him along with us to our homes, and to love Him more and more. How fortunate we all are! May Baba be praised for ever.

My Subsequent Homages to Baba

Then I felt within myself a very strong urge and great longing to see Beloved Baba as often as possible. Whenever there was occasion for it, I never missed it by His grace. I had His Darshan all these times at the immortalized Guru Prasad, Poona as follows:—

On 19-4-1959 Sunday Between 9-00 A.M. & 12 Middy.

On 1-3rd May, 1960: Had the fortune of getting private interview and the privilege of drinking lemonade sipped by Baba, and on 26-28 May, 1961.

After the darshan programme of Baba in May, 1961 I fell seriously ill. I apprised this fact to Beloved Baba and I got the following blessing dated 18-6-1961:—

"Your letter of the 15th instant was read to Beloved Baba and your deep love for him has touched Him. In reply to yours, Beloved Baba wants me to convey to you His love Blessing and to inform you that He is pleased with you and that you must not feel worried in the least for He loves you and your dear Parivar. Baba wants you to remember Him frequently as and when possible and be completely resigned to the Divine will. Baba wants you to take proper treatment and have no fears at all for anything. Eruch." I was completely recovered by His Grace.

1-4th November, 1962—East-West gathering. I attended with 10 members of my family (i.e.,) My wife, 2nd & 3rd daughters with their children and my 2nd son-in-law Rama Krishna.

During this gathering on 1st after-noon very suddenly there was heavy rain and the entire audience of about 5,000 (Western & Eastern) lovers including children and babies were completely drenched. Strangely Baba asked us all not to move and we all remained silently in our places till the whole programme was completed. After the rain stopped, all the clothes worn by lovers had dried up in a short time. Old people and even children were least affected by this drenching. Evidently we saw the protecting Hand of Baba. It is possible that many sanskaras of each individual might have been washed away. Balak Bhagawan who was also present on this occasion, was seen drinking the rain water falling down from the Shamiana pendal as if it was the blessed 'prasad' of Baba.

My second daughter Ramamrutham had darshan of Baba before her husband who was an Assistant Station Master Railways was kept under suspension owing to the occurrence of a collision of trains on 1-10-1962 while on

duty. Her son aged 8 years miraculously escaped drowning in a well on 4-10-1962. Yet she attended East West gathering with her husband and children along with us. We did not try to invoke Baba's particular attention towards us for relief during that gathering as we all obeyed His orders not to ask for any individual personal interview at that time. Subsequently Baba banned all correspondence with Him or Mandali during the whole of 1963. These circumstances however prompted me to bring the above trials to the notice of Baba by a letter dated 22-12-1962. We never expected any reply. But to our surprise we received a wire on the night of 26-12-62 from the most compassionate Father as follows: "Your letter 22nd read to Baba-Beloved. Baba very happy with love and devotion for Him of Meher-Nilayam and wants you all not to worry but be happy in His love." – ERUCH

This message simply indicated 'Abhaya Hastam' and my second daughter received it directly.

From 8-13th June, 1963 I was at Poona with my daughters —(eldest & 2nd) and grand children and my second son-in-law Rama Krishna. On 9th June, 1963 Baba indicated that my grand-daughter Bhavani aged 5 years), who passed away on 3-6-1963 joined him. On 13-6-1963 Baba was photographed with all the devotees present at Guru Prasad on that day. From 1-4th May, 1965, I attended Baba's darsan programmes with my wife, 2nd & 3rd daughters with their husbands Rama Krishna & Satyanarayana. During all these meetings we were all blessed by His personal Physical touches and embraces which appeared to have given us so much joy and untold blessings. Baba said that the highest spiritual benefits could be imparted by a Master only when He was in bodily Presence on earth, Thus there was a meaning in our desire to see Him and to receive His prasad with His hands.

After the Great Event on 31-1-1969 I was present at the Meherabad Tomb from 3rd to 7th February, 1969. Myself and family attended the last darshan as per Baba's wish in perfect silence on 12-5-1969 which was the day fixed for us at Guru Prasad Poona by Baba Himself.

I also attended the 1st and 2nd, Amar Tithi festivals of Meher Baba Darshan on Meherabad Hill on 31-1-1970 and 31-1-1971 and we really electrified and sanctified by the still perfumed spiritual atmosphere of the sanctum-Sanctorum of this Holy Tomb. I and my family feel that Baba's all encompassing love has helped us to face the several trials and tribulations of our family with all patience, courage and understanding. Of late, Baba seems to be testing most of His dear lovers by giving them some severe shocks and mental distress for their purification and annihilation of some of their bad sanskaras. For instance in my case the hand of death snatched away my 3rd son-in-law Satyanarayana in a motor accident on *7-10-70 and my 2nd daughter Ramamrutam on ** 13-8-1971. Both were dearly attached to me. What the Divine will has decreed must come to pass. There is no other go. We believe that Baba will never avert or avoid His own pre-ordained plans. We therefore resigned to His will and feel comforted thinking that both of them who had the fortune of having His direct physical company happily reside in eternal bliss with our Lord Avatar Meher Baba.

I know fully well that He implanted in us the 'Seed of Love' long time back which is now trying to sprout up into a Small plant. Through several favourable and unfavourable events during this critical period I believe that He has commenced to quicken our spirit at a rapid rate or He must have made us to share an infinitesimal part of His universal work. But whatever He does, He does it for our ultimate good. This is all His Divine sport.

By His grace my love and faith have been growing deeper and deeper day by day. I have now arrived at such a stage of mind that I am obliged to leave everything to HIS SWEET WILL without any second thought. My fervent prayer always is that I should hold on to HIM tightly till the end of my Life. Jai Baba!!!

* Coincidentally 7th October was a day of discarding Alphabet Board by BABA in 1954.

** And 13th August was a day when BABA dictated Master's Prayer in 1953. We consider these days as very sacred.

Avatar Meher Baba Tamilnadu Centre

by Bro. N. MANGARAJU, *Secretary*

5th Anniversary of Avatar Meher Baba Tamilnadu Centre was celebrated on Sunday, the 26th September '71 between 10 A.M and 1 P.M. in the centre premises, in its humble way. Meeting was presided over by Avatar Meher Baba.

Programme was commenced with melodious and devoted Bhajans by the family of Sri Jiddu Venkata Rao who has now shifted to Madras from Kakinada. Lovers of Avatar Meher Baba Tamilnadu Centre also sang Bhajans in praise of beloved Baba under leadership of Miss Rama Devi, daughter of Shri K. Appa Rao, President of A.M.B. Tamilnadu Centre.

Shri T.K. Ramanujam gave a simple and impressive talk on "Secrets of Divine Working" based on the teachings of our beloved Baba. Before beginning his talk, he surcharged the atmosphere by singing a chorus BABA BHAGAVAN, BABA BHAGAVAN, MEHER BABA BHAGAVAN. It was a happy coincidence to have Dr. G.S.N. Moorthy amongst us. It proved to be a boon from Beloved Baba. He gave a very nice speech describing his contact with Avatar Meher Baba. He gave the story between His first Embrace and the last Embrace.

Both the talks were translated by Shri K. Appa Rao in Telugu to enable the gathering to follow it. Repentance prayer and Parvardigar prayer were recited by Mr. Bhaktavatchalu Naidu, goods Agent, Salt Cotaurs Goods Shed and his Mrs. Smt. Santhakumari. Arti was performed and after distribution of Prasad, the programme came to a close in Love atmosphere. Nearly 150 people, many of them new lovers of Beloved Baba, attended the function and made it a grand success. JAI MEHER/JAI BABA/ JAI AVATAR/

AVATAR MEHER BABA RAYAPETTA

(Madras) Centre
by N. MANGARAJU

On the eve of the Maha samadhi day of Sadguru Sai Baba, Avatar Meher Baba Rayapetta Centre was inaugurated at No. 3 Anthony Street Rayapetta Madras-14. by Dr. Miss Vasumathi Iyengar grand daughter of Late Shri C. V. Sampath Iyengar an old lover of Beloved Baba.

Function started with the chanting of Bhajans and Kirtans by the family of Mr. Jiddu Venkata Rao. Formality of inauguration was done by removing the curtain carrying the words "Remember Me—BABA" by the hand of Dr. Miss Vasumathi. Miss Meherkanthi great grand daughter of Late Mr. C. V. Sampath Iyengar was also present in this solemn occasion. Miss Vasumathi in her talk narrated the loving experiences of her childhood with beloved Baba at Bangalore and Madras. After this Mr. T. K. Ramanujam described his first contact with beloved Baba which touched the hearts of all present. When Mr. Ramanujam was delivering his talk, Miss Vasumathi thought in her mind how nice it would be if Baba is listening all this in this corner of a city of 37 Lakhs. No sooner the thought came in her mind, garland from Baba's Photo fell down though it was nicely put by her on Baba's Photo while inaugurating the Centre. She narrated the incident no sooner it happened, stopping Mr. Ramanujam's talk. Mr. Ramanujam commenting on this said, though it might be a coincidence, but it reaffirms of our faith in Baba's promise, that, he is always present amongst his lovers when they get together in his love and talk about Him.

Parvardigar Prayer & Repentance Prayer were read out by Miss J. Divya Jothi in Telugu. After the Arti was performed, Prasad was distributed and all lovers disbursed taking Baba into their hearts. New Lovers of beloved Baba Miss Kamala, Miss Dilly, and Mr. Shanmugam were also present.

***AVATAR MEHER BABA GOES TO ANDHRA
PRADESH**

Baba at Eluru : House Visits continued

13. Shri Y. Rammohan Rao: His wife was having some eye trouble, which could not be cured by all the medical treatment given so far. Baba told her to take a glass of water, put a pinch of salt in it and then wash her eyes with that solution for some days, *after repeating Babe's name for 7 times on each wash*. He introduced his child aged about 1¼ years, adding that he was having some strange experiences about Baba. A few months ago, whilst sitting on his chest, when he was lying on a bed, the child began to say, Baba, Baba and began to move his fists (open them and then close them), in a way, just as some one was singing something with a Musical instrument in his hand. He then asked for his mother, to be present and when she came, she too saw the boy in that state and heard him saying, Baba, Baba. All the time this child remained in the presence of Baba, he was noticed to be curiously looking at Him. and the same thing was noticed when he was taken near to Baba, whilst He was sitting in the car, just when leaving the place. A T.B. patient was present there and he asked Baba for His Blessings. Baba told him that every morning, when he gets up, after washing his mouth, he should take a little butter and sugar, mix them and then eat them *taking Baba's name for 7 times before he actually eats it*.

14. Shri G. Chalapati Rao (Asst Commercial Tax Officer) A family group photo with Baba was taken at his place. He showed Baba a similar photo taken last year, at his place, with Baba in it, Baba bowed down to it and returned it to him.

15. Shri K. Subrahmanya Sastri. The entire family are great lovers of Baba and the First Meher Centre in Andhra was opened at their place. A painted portrait of Baba was placed there for 'puja' and on Shri Ranga Rao's drawing Baba's attention to that portrait, He got

* From the Diary of Baba's Andhra Tour compiled by Kisan Singh, Dehra Dun. Continued from October 71 issue of Divya Vani.

up and touched the feet of it and asked for the Arti to be performed. which was done. Prayer was performed, by ladies in Telugu and Baba remained sitting all the time with His hands folded. Baba picked up a Banana from the prasad and threw it to Shri Ranga Rao, who could catch it well. Simultaneously, He threw one to Shri Katta Subba Rao, which he could catch after it was thrown by Baba for the second time, to the amusement of all present.

16. Shri Tulsi Das Naidu (Retired Dist. Judge) Baba had, a day before, given him a cocoa-nut, which he was asked to break open, on 10-7-54 and on entering the house, He asked him whether he was keeping that cocoanut. By the side of Baba was sitting a relative boy of Shri Tulsidas Naidu who was brought on a stretcher (chair) to Baba on His last visit, being unable to walk, as he was suffering from some disease. This cocoa-nut was given by Baba for that boy.

17. An unknown person. Baba entered his house on His own accord and began walking to and fro in the porch. The occupant belonged to a well-to-do family and they were surprised to see a stranger walking in their compound. with a large number of people with Him (Mandli and Andhra lovers). They, however, appeared to be happy over Baba's presence there.

18. Dr. K. Suryanarayana: He is a great lover of Baba, and he was entrusted with the duties of looking after the health of all the Mandli members, during Baba's Andhra tour. He also served the Mandli, putting in a hard labour, at all the places visited. Introducing his daughter-in-law's sister, he told Baba that her husband was mentally unsound and that he had wanted to come but was not allowed to do so by his brother. Baba asked for an apple, which could not be made available. He then touched some sweets lying there and gave them to that lady with instructions "Ask him, eat this".

19. Shri D. Jagannatham: Out-filled with love, his wife began to weep on seeing Baba at their place. She

was seriously ill, when Baba had visited their house last year. Like her husband, she too is a great lover of Baba.

20. Shri P. Subbarao: It was a surprise visit to the house of an unknown person. Baba sat on a charpoy and said:- "Let me sit here for 5 minutes as it is all cool here." The occupants of the house were surprised to see Baba and the Mandli there. The man runs a 'Pan' (Betel) shop.

21. Shri Kandula Radha (Merchant): Baba was offered fruit juice, which He drank a little and asked Mrs. Kandula Radha to drink the rest, spelling simultaneously on the board:- "When God gives you one (meaning a son) name him MEHER DAS". From the sound that was being heard, Soda-water bottles were being opened outside the room but these were not actually being served to the Mandli, sitting inside. On Baba's so pointing out, cold drinks were served to all Mandli and when a Mandli member (Dr. C. D. Deshmukh) wanted a second bottle, he was stopped by Baba. Baba threw prasad to three of His Mandli members (Eruch, Deshmukh and Brabazon) and spelt on His board:- "I feel happy, therefore, be seated here for 10 minutes".

22. Dewan Bahadur Moti Ganga Raju:- Baba visited the place at the request of the late Dewan Bahadur's son who is a Baba lover. It was a very commodious house, well decorated and well lighted. Baba's Arti was performed by the youth and all his family members jointly.

23. Rao Bahadur Moty Narsimharao (Ex. M. L. C. and Ex-chairman of Eluru Municipality): Baba sat on a couch in the hall, where very nice furniture was also kept for the Mandli to sit. A family group photo, with Baba in ct and the burning Arti plate, placed on the stool in front of Him, was taken.

Visit to Business places of Baba Lovers at Eluru

Besides the visit to the houses of His lovers and devotees; Baba also paid visits to the business premises of two of them. His first visit was at about 10.00 hours on

23-2-1954 to Venkatarama, Power Printing Press, which is said to be the biggest Printing Press in Andhra State. Each head of the various Departments of the Press, with his co-workers, was seen intoxicated in love for Baba. They all had worked, day and night, in the cause of Baba, in producing the various kinds of literature, which was required in connection with Baba's visit to Andhra. Each one introduced was patted by Baba, in appreciation for hard labour, which they all did jointly, prompted by love for Baba. There you will see Baba going from room to room in quick succession and Shri Venkatarama showing Him:-

- (a) Some of the photos printed by the Press, out of a lot of about one lakh photos.
- (b) Some of the literatures concerning Baba, as was printed at the press.
- (c) How printing Composing, Proof reading, processing, Paper folding, Paper cutting and Books stitching Departments were very quickly doing their jobs, with the machine installed in those departments. Baba enjoyed to see the quick out-turn given by each Machine, especially the one on which flat paper was being folded, first to half the size and then to book size, and
- (d) Introducing all the respective Heads of various Departments, including some of the oldest employees of the Press.

Before leaving the Press, a joint prayer was offered to Baba by all the employees singing in chorus. Some of the Mandli members did not enter the Press and remained standing outside when Baba was being shown the working of the press inside, thinking that the space in the various rooms was not enough to accommodate all the Mandli. Baba, later on, ordered them to visit the Press by the evening of that date.

The second visit was paid to the Book shop of our Eluru host, Shri Katta Subbarao at about 11.25 hours on

the 23rd February 1954, i.e., the same date, Baba ordered that every one of the Mandli should enter the shop in a queue. The shop was a long one but much less in width. At the other end of it, there was a door and outside it were the steps taking to the roof. Baba got that door opened but did not go out of the shop and asked the Mandli to turn their faces, whilst still standing in the queue and walked out of the shop. Every one felt pleased to see the shop of their loving host.

Visits to School & Institutions Etc.

In addition, visits were also paid by Baba to some of the Schools and Institutions given as under, on the same date:-

- (i) VenkataRama Elementary School (08.40 hours): The number of children in this School was 150 all being boys and girls of tender age. They surrounded Baba on all sides and how lovely Baba looked amongst them, whilst patting some on their faces, embracing some, touching the heads of some of them and simultaneously expressing His love to them all, in various other ways.
- (ii) Sai Baba temple (11.00 hours):- Baba was received by Shri Satyanarayana, the Secretary of Sai Samaj. Pointing to the Sai Baba's portrait lying there, Baba said:- "In a way these five made me what I am, the ancient one, he is my Grand-Pall".
- (iii) Sai Baba temple 'Eastern Street' (11.20 hours):- On entering the temple, Baba first folded His hands and said:- "If there is real love... .. this Sai Baba. He is every where, I am every where."
- (iv) K. P. Theosophical High School (15.20 hours):- Immediately Baba stepped in, He was garlanded by the School Authorities and taken to a decorated dais. Shri Lingayya, a great lover of Baba, an Advocate, gave a short lecture, in which he expressed his happiness over the opportunity given by Baba to the students and the staff of the school, to

see Him, adding that his heart was filled with affection for that. This School had about 700 students on its roll and most of them were present, when Baba visited it. Expressing His love for the children Baba said: "I will say what I want to say, in very few words. I love children and never feel more happy than to be amongst them. I would prefer to have time to play with them, rather to have all this:- garlanding, puja. Arti etc. etc. Specially I am expert in playing marbles, because ages ago when I woke up, I began to play with universes like marbles. I would feel specially happy, if you people one day become Master of the Art of Divine Love and be the torch bearers of truth, i.e. BABA". Prasad was then offered to Baba for distribution but he touched it and asked that it be distributed after He left adding:- "Baba would like to embrace each and every child but there was no time".

- (v) A children School – (visited in the after-noon at about 14.30 hours) This was the visit, which was forced upon Baba by the young students of the school. It so happened that when Baba came out after visiting the house of Shri K. V. Mutyal, about 40 boys of the school surrounded Him and lovingly insisted upon His paying a visit to their school, which was nearby. Moved by their love, Baba at once agreed, entered the school and began expressing His love to all the boys, who were feeling very happy over the visit of Baba.

At Eluru A Birds view of the Service Rendered to Baba and Mandli.

The work at Eluru had now been completed. Baba gave the order that every one should get ready to leave the place at 20-30 hours (24-2-54) for Penugonda. Before, however, I proceed further to describe the further movements of Baba, I inwardly feel that my diary will not be complete, if I had failed to include therein a few words about our distinguished host at Eluru—Shri Katta Subba Rao, and the facilities we had from him there.

So, I start by saying that this man has a very loving heart for Baba and Mandli. He took all the pains to the minutest details, which could affect the comforts of both Baba and the Mandli. Accommodation for both was arranged by him in his own garden. The place where Baba stayed, was well-decorated and well furnished. Nice furniture was there and the verandah outside Baba's room was so well extended and covered that it was giving the look of an improvised pavilion for Baba and the audience to sit. But still, there you will find Shri Katta Subba Rao, asking Baba, whether he could do any thing else to make Him more comfortable.

For Mandli, thatched accommodation was arranged, which gave the appearance of an improvised hall, in which nice good folding cots were in position, for all the forty members accompanying Baba and some more for some of the Andhra lovers and devotees of Baba, who were asked by Him, to remain with Him, during His visit from place to place. By the side of each bed, you will find a good chair to sit on. Yet with all the bare necessities of life required for a purely temporary halt for two days only, you will find Katta Subba Rao visiting the Mandli more frequently and telling them, how he can make them more comfortable.

Arrangement for latrine Bath-rooms, kitchen and dining hall—all thatched—was also very satisfactory with electric light provided therein, besides the whole path from Baba's place to the Mandli's place having been electrified. Hot water could be made available as early as 04-00 hours in the morning.

To apprise the Mandli that Tea, lunch or dinner was ready, a bell was kept by the side of the dining hall. 'There the bell goes'. Oh, it is Katta Subba Rao, who is ringing it and calling all to come. When Mandli enter the hall, for tea or meals, you will find Katta Subba Rao present there, forcing his utmost to make you eat more and more. "Here are these nice Ladus brother Adi" you will hear him say and there the ladus, 3 or 4 of them find

their place in Adi's tray. "Oh, what nice Puris, I have brought for you brother Pendu" he would utter, and presently at least three puris are in Pendu's plate. "See, brother Jal, how lovely this Banana is", and hardly the sentence ends that 2 or 3 Bananas with peel off are in Jal's plate. "Look, how hot this Halwa is, brother Kishan Singh" and presently Kishan Singh's plate is full with it, so on and so forth.

Lunch is served but soon you see Katta Subba Rao appearing again. "What has he got with him in that basket this time" every one would murmur to himself. By the time one opens his mouth to enquire about it, that he sees Katta Subba Rao hurriedly taking out orange juice from that basket and forcing every one to take it, even when one's stomach was already full. "Brabazon, see it is just like the Australian stuff" he would hurriedly say and by the time he completes the sentence you will find a glass full of it forced in Brabazon's hands and Katta Subba Rao hand and tongue very quickly moving "Take it, Take it". Presently you will hear him say, "Brother Ramjoo, take this juice, it will give you strength in reading Messages at the Darshan Programmes" and Katta Subba Rao himself extending his hands with glass full of it towards Ramjoo's mouth.

"Why was he doing that all?" may be a question that could be raised. The only and the safest reply could be that 'out of cent percent burning love for Baba' he was feeling an urge to serve and feed the Mandli with love and in so doing he was forgetting what was the actual requirement of each member of the Mandli. In fact just at the moment the party arrived at the garden on the night of 22-2-54, Baba had cautioned every one to be careful with his stomach, as Katta Subba Rao would be pressing them to eat more and more food etc. My hat off to Katta Subba Rao's love for Baba and the Mandli. So was the case with all other hosts at other places and my hat off to them also for the hospitality shown to us all, whilst touring through Andhra.

March to Tadepalligudem.

Baba and Mandli then left Eluru on 24-2-54 at 20.30 hours for Penugonda. Baba's car, as usual, was ahead of the convoy but it so happened that when the Bus reached village Bhimadole, (enroute to Penugonda) where a Darshan Programme was arranged by Baba's Andhra lovers at about 21.10 hours, Baba's car was not seen there. The route being the same, every one felt surprised as to where Baba's car had gone to, since the bus did not overtake it on the road. As usual, every sort of conjecture overtook the Mandli members.

At about 21.15 hours, Baba's car was seen coming towards the village and now the occupants of it felt surprised to see that the Bus had reached earlier. The Mandli members with Baba, in the car, likewise started their own conjectures as to how the bus could reach earlier than the car. Further pursuit of the matter was, however, dropped when some one from Baba's Andhra lovers enlightened the Mandli that just near to the starting place (Katta Subba Rao's garden) two roads were running to that route and possibly the car went by one road and the bus by the other. However, the difference in the distance by these roads being negligible the mystery, how the car remained behind, remains still unexplained.

About 500 people were present at that hour at that village for Baba's Darshan Programme and some of them had waited there since 19.00 hours. Arti was performed by the ladies and Baba left the village after giving His Blessings to all present and after touching the prasad to be distributed later after He left.

The party reached Tadepalligudem at 22.30 hours (24-2-54) and stopped at the Travellers Bungalow where Baba gave necessary instructions to all, to keep awake that night for the Awakener, on that memorable eve of Baba's 60th Birthday. After a short stay there, the onward Journey to Penugonda was resumed at 23.20 hours (24-2-54) to attend the Darshan Programme there.

Visit to Penugonda.

Baba and Mandli reached Penugonda at 01.08 hours on 25-2-54. A number of men, ladies and children were eagerly awaiting the arrival of Baba. Some more started coming on hearing that Avatar Shri Meher Baba had arrived in their village.

Shri Kutumba Sastri (of KDRM) vehemently addressed the audience in Telugu, saying that it was not a proper move on the part of Baba's lovers to have called Him to Penugonda, at so late an hour. All this inconvenience to Baba could have been saved, if people had agreed to have Baba's Darshan at Tadepalligudem, which was at a distance of only 25 miles from there, and had gone there. Continuing he said that Shri Brabazon, Francis had come by air from Australia to have Baba's Darshan and Mr. Pascal, another lover of Baba was flying from America (this lover of Baba, however, could not come for certain unavoidable circumstances) for Baba's Darshan. Comparing the love on the part of both these lovers, it was quite an ordinary matter for Baba's Penugonda lovers to go to Tadepalligudem.

An address on behalf of Meher Centre Penugonda was read by Shri J. Lakshmayya, a zamindar of the village and thereafter Baba said at 01.20 hours on 25-2-54:-

"Let my coming here for a short period even at this late hour, be worth coming, by your trying to love Me and find Me within yourself. My Blessings to you all."

Due to the shortage of time at Baba's disposal, He could not distribute the prasad but touched it before leaving the place. Tea was ready for Baba and Mandli but for the same reason Baba did not accept it, especially when Baba had previously told His Penugonda workers that He would visit the place for 5 minutes only.

(To be continued)

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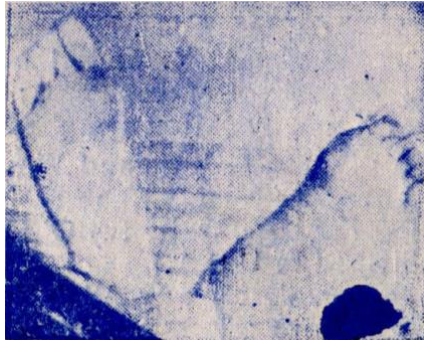
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1. I belong to no religion. Every religion belongs to me. My religion is love.
2. I am the divine beloved that loves you more than you can ever love yourself.
3. I am the Lord of Love and Servant of My lover.
4. Let *Principle* in work and *honesty* in life prevail.
5. One penny extracted, in My name, without true basis is dishonesty and will be the cause of *millions of births*.
6. Think well of those who think ill of you.
7. If you truly and in all faith accept your Baba as the Highest of the High, it behooves you to lay down your life at His feet.



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ioach	couch	41	5	2
accomodate	accommodate	42	6	6
que	queue	43	1	2
dias	dais	43	6	3
pavillion	pavilion	45	1	8
hurridly	hurriedly	46	2	5
hat	that	46	2	5
comming	coming	47	2	1
persuit	pursuit	47	2	5
comming	coming	48	1	3
vehenently	vehemently	48	2	1