

The Way and the Goal

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Avatar Meher Baba *The way and the goal*

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Meher Baba's 21 Points

*1. God is absolutely independent. The only way to approach Him is through love, constant repetition of His Name, and invocation of His Mercy.

2. Mercy is God's nature (swabhāv).

3. Bliss is God's original state (assal hālat).

4. Power is God's existence (astitava).

5. Knowledge is God's duty (kartavya).

6. The infinite state of God gets lost in the infinite jumble of infinite contradictions.

7. To know God in His infinite contradictions is to become conscious of His consciousness of His unconsciousness.

8. To achieve the God-state do absolutely nothing while doing everything.

9. To find God you must find yourself lost to yourself.

10. To be infinitely conscious you must consciously lose consciousness of yourself.

11. Space is the gulf between Imagination and Reality. Evolution of Consciousness fills this gulf.

12. Time is the interval between your most-first imagination and your most-last imagination.

13. Where imagination ends God is and Godhood begins.

14. Imagination is an eternal mimicry of Reality effecting the shadow-play of Illusion.

15. God is not anything comprehensible. He is Reality: Consciousness—Absolute Consciousness—Infinite Consciousness.

16. Realization of God is Absolute Consciousness minus consciousness of Imagination. Godhood is Absolute Consciousness plus consciousness of Imagination being imagination.

17. To be ever present with God never be absent from Him.

18. Do not desire union with God; but long for union till you go beyond longing for union and long for only the will and pleasure of beloved God.

19. Mind may die. Maya may die. Body dies and dies. But Hope and Thirst never die. Thus has said the slave Kabir.

20. Complete forgetfulness of self is to even forget that you have forgotten.

21. Complete remembrance of God, honesty in action, making no one unhappy, being the cause of happiness in others, and no submission to low, selfish, lustful desires, while living a normal worldly life can lead one to the path of Realization. But complete obedience to the God-Man brings one directly to God.

Free Will— A Talk Given by Dr. Harry Kenmore at The Society for Avatar Meher Saba on June, 20, 1970

Tonight we should like to discuss a topic that has come up quite often amongst serious seekers of Baba—free will. Does one really have free will and what is free will all about? Strangely enough, as I was thinking about it during the week, a letter arrived from India, and in it were comments made by Mani, Baba's sister, in answer to a query by a young man concerning free will. Tom, will you read these comments made by Mani and we'll take it from there.

Mani writes David: "I cannot answer your query, 'What did Baba say about free will?' because I cannot recall Baba saying anything direct on the point and I never thought of asking Him. We were kept busy in the depth of His Silence. And our main question has been to ourselves whether we are loving and obeying Him enough. But you have read everything of Baba's and, as you say, Baba did not mention about human beings when He said, 'the waves do not roll and the leaves do not move without My Will. "

"Baba has made it clear that the process of evolution is the development of consciousness which becomes full when human form is attained. Once the human form is attained, which means full consciousness, there is nothing to prevent him from realizing His Self, i.e. God, except the mountainous muck of sanskaras accumulated during the innumerable lives experienced in evolutionary forms. And one can be freed from that binding by binding oneself to loving and obeying the Perfect Master or try to make it by the interminably long way of self effort.

"So you see, as a human being, you do have the chance of a choice, particularly and immeasurably so when you have the rare good fortune to come into the Avataric orbit of the God-Man. When we are bound to Him, the only Reality, we are freed from illusion. Doing what we want is enjoying liberty, but doing what He wants is gaining Freedom.

"If you ask me, there is only God's Will, there is no such thing as our will, free or otherwise. We can only have free want. In the confinement of His All-pervading Will, we are free to want to do better. If it were not so, Baba would have no need to give us discourses, no need to tell us repeatedly and emphatically, 'Do your best and leave to Me the rest.'

"Travelling through the vast maze of the Divine Plan in illusion, we come to certain points where we have the choice of taking this pathway or that road. It is His compassion that again and again we are given a chance. Again and again He comes into illusion to show us the way. We generally select what looks like the easier way, or the one that we are deluded into believing is the short cut, by following after half-baked or imperfect guides, and then we *do* go along the predestined pattern of the way we have chosen.

"One's present life is nothing but the screening of a sanskaric pattern one has developed in the past life. And while it runs its course we are developing another 'film' for the next incarnation. Inasmuch as one's present life is concerned, one does have the freedom to make a better job of it—else what is the use of the teachings given by the Great Ones? And then once in a

long, long while comes the Producer Himself, God in person, to direct the passing show in the Light of Reality, to guide His Creation with the Love that He alone can have as Creator, and He can change, edit, even the present films (lives) of those who have the good fortune to come into His close connection. Therefore, once we've come into the Avatar's Love Orbit, and as long as we surrender our lives into His keeping, and leave all to Him, we are moving directly under His Will. We then have nothing to worry about except to do our best and to leave to Him the rest. And so Baba tells us, 'Don't worry. Be happy. "

"And that's another thing that's often misconstrued. Being happy need not mean being merry. Happiness and pleasure are not the same thing. If we can accept every circumstance we are put in, i.e. keeping our mind unaffected by the oscillations of joy and sorrow, taking it to be His Will, then we might be said to 'Be happy' as Baba means it. But mind is a very obliging companion and, like the chameleon, it changes its color to blend with its object. One chap once wrote, 'I'm really enjoying life. After all, didn't Baba tell us to be happy?' Not long after that he got into some grievous difficulty and wrote to say how miserable he was.

"Baba once remarked that the mind is like a bird cage with its many bars imprisoning the bird. The door of the cage is the heart through which, when opened, the bird can fly to freedom so easily. But even when the Keeper comes along and opens the door, the captive bird flutters about, dashing against the cage, hurting its wings and trying frantically to get out through the many narrow openings between the bars and giving up each time. I've witnessed this a number of times with encaged birds. After a time, the bird is exhausted with its efforts and collapses, dropping to the floor of the cage, looking dazed and helpless. And then, *then* it sees the open door, and in a moment is out of his cage and flying to freedom.

Now that Baba has opened the door: for you, you can well afford to bypass the innumerable questions of the mind that bar you from loving Him yet more and more. But of course Love for Him is also His gift, so when you come down to it, it is really His Grace that rules over all and over-rules all will. The Avataric era is when the grace is released and the more wide open and uncluttered we keep our hearts, the more we can receive of it. "

Dr. Kenmore: I wonder what the French peasant in the days of King Louis would have said about free will. This idea of free will is something born of those who have become members of a political democracy.

Is there free will? Actually, what each of us is doing is simply responding to the *original* Lahar, the *original* Whim of God-Unconscious in the Beyond, Beyond State, Who wanted to know Who He was. The *Is* wanted to know what It was. God-conscious potential simply moved in response to this Whim and Creation came into being.

Now this was an infinite Whim from an infinite

Source, and the imagination that came out of it is also infinite. Our small, reasoning minds find it difficult to capture this infinity. We can only capture finiteness. It's impossible for us with the mind to go beyond the mind, yet the mind craves to explore the mystery that is beyond it! To capture this mystery, we have to annihilate the very instrument with which we yearn to explore and possess this mystery!

The urges that we have and the yearnings that we have are a response that comes from the innumerable impressions that we are made of. These impressions we have carried with us from time immemorial—ever since we started the evolution of form which is the outgrowth of the evolution of consciousness. It's the evolution of consciousness, you see, which gave us the evolution of form. And like a rolling snowball, we've gathered all of the impressions concomitant with life in these forms until the human form was reached with which we gained the full consciousness of man. Meher Baba says, had we *not* gathered these almost infinitely innumerable impressions through the evolutionary journey, we would have attained the full consciousness of God upon attaining the human form.

As I remarked the other night to someone, Meher Baba was literally the first soul to gain the consciousness of God. Yet when He reached the consciousness of *man* rather than that of God, just imagine His chagrin, His abysmal disappointment, His desperation. He did not get the answer to the eternal question of "Who Am I?" All He got was the "answer", I am a man.

And think of the innumerable reincarnations that He had to go through until He realized that He had to go deep within Himself and begin a new trek in involution through the inner planes. Every time He gained the mastership of one plane, He must have said, "That's *it!*" But it wasn't. When He exhausted the impressions of the first plane, and He saw even more wondrous sights of the second plane, and He cried out "This is really it!"—He was doomed again to disappointment.

There was the third plane and the fourth and when he stood at the top of the sixth plane there was a "chasm" that stood between Himself and Realization. Just think of it! He had conviction by Sight! He saw God in everything, but He didn't see Himself as God. And He had to cross this chasm *all alone*. There was no one to help Him. He *had* to be Almighty Power! He *had* to be Almighty God!—or else He couldn't have done this alone. Then there was the annihilation of the mind. The Divine Vacuum was immediately filled with the "I Am God" State, and He knew He had arrived. Then He went on to take possession of the other states of God. Only because of His Compassion, He came back to make others like Himself. He gave others the opportunity to discover what He had discovered.

So you see, He had become the Divine Father of everything and of everyone. All of the Perfect Masters, and there are thousands that we have had throughout the ages, are nothing but children of Almighty God, Who, when He takes the human form, is known as Avatar. The Avatar of this age is Meher Baba, our truly compassionate Father.

Now Almighty God in the Beyond God State is

conscious of everything that we are doing. He knows everything, He sees everything, He's present everywhere. This is a fact. Because we have gross minds, we are not aware of it. Only those who are on the mental planes know this to be an eternal fact, because they see God everywhere. Only, they don't see themselves as God. But we, on the gross plane, are totally unaware that God exists literally as Omnipresence, Omniscience and Omnipotence. Because He's everywhere present, He's omniscient, and because He's omniscient He is also omnipotent.

Now everyone in *maya*, this world of duality, has an urge, has a yearning. The yearning can be in the direction of darkness, ignorance, or directed toward Light. The urge is always there. Whether we travel miles in one direction or retrace our steps an equal distance in the other direction, is no matter; all we will ever do is to fulfill those urgings that we've brought with us from other lifetimes. All we can ever do is respond to the pressure of impressions that we have brought with us from other incarnations.

We don't even have will, much less "free" will. There's only one Will and that's the Will of God, because this is *His* creation and we are simply beings that have been created within this phantasmagoria. You know, when a playwright creates a play, that play is *his* play. He's made all of the characters, he's dressed them up in the clothing they appear in, and all of the movements that they make and the little speeches that they utter were created in his own imagination. Everything you hear on stage is coming out of the mind of the playwright. Now this infinite creation which we call the universe has come out of the imagination, out of the mind of God!

Now this is an *infinite* mind, an *infinite* imagination and an infinitely variegated plot which comprises an infinite number of beings that are on the universe stage of His making. We simply respond to the manner in which He has made us—there's only His Will. Even if you feel that you're going to take *this* action instead of that action, and then you choose neither action—it is still His Will, because God, in order to know Himself, must go through every conceivable kind of experience. When Baba said no leaf moves, no wave rolls, except by My Will, He literally means—I *am* that leaf, I *am* that wave, and since I am that leaf and I am that wave, it only moves and only can move because of My Will.

The finite mind of reasoning finds it almost impossible to accept this, but those who've been in the presence of the person of Meher Baba know this to be a fact. I never found it more true than when I was in Meherabad on my second trip to India in 1959. When I would leave the Mandali campus to go to my bungalow I had to take a path through the garden. I would usually stop and listen—there was an utterly deep silence and there was a breathlessness about the atmosphere. It was inexplicable. And then, even before I had heard this expression about Baba being in every leaf and in every wave I got the feeling that no blade of grass moved unless Baba willed it. No blade of grass could even remain still unless Baba made it still! It was a wonderful revelation.

I know it took a long time for me to realize that there was only the Will of God and in May of 1962 at the Guruprasad, I literally blurted it out to Baba,

"There's only one Will and that's the Will of God. Everything that happens, happens according to the Will of God." He complimented me for that and He said, "Well, I am very happy to hear that," as if to say "Well it's about time you found out!"

You see, our egos are really damaging instruments to us. The pressure of that ego, which we call our will, fools us into believing that we are somebodies, when we are really nobodies, because when our time comes to go, we are just erased, like so many chalk marks on a blackboard. Gone. The only "somebodies" are those who are on the planes, those who are trapped between the planes, where their minds and their hearts are uplifted to Almighty God, the Perfect Masters and of course, The Avatar. All of us are zeros, we're nobodies, but the ego refuses to accept this. It says, "What do you mean? I'm *somebody!* Here I am. Here are my hands, my feet " You can't convince it otherwise! It's the pressure of this ego which maya subsidizes and reinforces. maya builds and supports the ego as long as you wish to become its victim. maya will have its way until you break out of this vicious circle of doing according to the laws of duality—until you accept the precepts and principles of God which compel you to grasp hold of His Damaan and be carried wherever He wills it.

Those who have come under the immediate aegis of Baba always had to fight this ego which resisted the Will of God even in its Human Form. The great lengths that Meher Baba went to smash this ego is very well explained in this particular story, which is a true story. This is only one incident, and with Mandali there are hundreds and hundreds of incidents. What we considered our wills was simply the damnable push, the drive, of ego that wanted its place in its silly sun. But Baba tried to level it down, and He did it so skillfully, so easily, so naturally, you'd never know what He was up to.

A party of five Mandali, were on a trip with Baba back in the early forties doing work with the poor and hunting down masts. They found themselves in Calcutta about 8:30 P.M. One of the Mandali knew of a hotel where Baba had stayed in earlier years, and thought this would be a nice place to stay. Now don't think for a moment that just because you select the name of a hotel that this is where Baba is going to stay. Oh, no. You watch and see what happens.

First they went inside to make arrangements. Now Baba didn't get just a room. He had to have a room way at the end of a corridor and right next to His room had to be a vacant room, and beyond that should be a room where the Mandali would be ensconced. There *had* to be that vacant room, but Baba was not to pay for it! Just imagine the haggling that had to go on with the manager of the hotel to give them three rooms for the price of two! They had to explain that Baba was their elder brother, because He was going incognito on these trips, and that He was absolutely exhausted, on the borderline of severe illness, and had to come under cover to be put to bed right away.

Well, when these arrangements were finally made, Baba would have to come in to inspect the premises. If they didn't meet with His approval, the party would just have to try another hotel. It meant back into the tonga

with all of their luggage, and they always carried lots of bundles on these journeys. Well finally they came to this particular hotel and they went up to the fifth floor.

Baba settles down there now and it's about 11:30 at night and He wants absolute quiet. Suddenly they hear a clanging from the blacksmith shop next door. They're banging away at the anvils, molding their iron, and Baba says He can't take this. This must stop or they will have to leave the hotel.

But leaving the hotel wasn't easy after they had removed everything from their bundles. The Mandali carried around everything Baba required—Baba's glasses and dishes, special tablets, different types of food, etc.—to get this all together again was quite a task! The disciple who chose the hotel said, "Well let me see what I can do to persuade them to do something about the noise," so down he goes the five flights of stairs to the blacksmith shop. He approaches the proprietor and tries to apprise him of the problem—the fact that he has an elder brother staying at the hotel next door, that he's on the border of a serious illness, that they've been traveling a long time on a pilgrimage and that unless He has peace and quiet, why, He's going to become a very, very ill man. He had to beg and practically bow down to this man to implore him to do something about the noise. Well, the proprietor promised that he would do the best he could, and relieved by this promise, up he goes to Baba. Suddenly the disciple hears the anvils have stopped. No noise. He heaves a deep sigh of relief.

Then, all of a sudden, they hear a stirring inside the next room which is supposed to be vacant. He goes outside to investigate and finds that a couple have been given the room, so he goes to the proprietor and the proprietor explains there are no rooms to be had anywhere, the hotels are filled up in Calcutta because of an event taking place the following day, and so long as the vacant room is there he has to give it to the couple because Baba isn't paying for it anyway! Back he goes to Baba and lets Him know that a respectable couple have the room. "Well" Baba says, "we'll have to pack up and move." He just can't stand this. He has got to get up and move to another hotel and now it is already one o'clock in the morning. The disciple persuades Him to wait a moment to see if he can prevail on the couple next door to be as quiet as they possibly can, so he knocks at the door, introduces himself, and informs them of the problem. They promise, of course, to be as quiet as possible. No sooner does he get back to Baba's room when suddenly there's a bang on the door. Baba says, "This won't do!" He just can't stand it. He isn't strong enough to take all of this racket. The disciple says, "One moment, Baba, let me investigate." Out he goes again, and he finds the waiter has brought some ice water.

So you see, no matter how much you try to be quiet, you know there are always going to be sounds beyond your ability to control. And, what's more, Baba had extremely acute hearing. When Baba "went to bed" in Meherazad, all of the windows were tightly shut, the door was shut, and He even put plugs in His ears so He wouldn't hear the characteristic night noises outside. For some phases of His work he required absolute silence.

Well, what are they to do? It means he has to wake up the other Mandali who are already asleep, and the Mandali haven't even had any tea. They never ate unless Baba ate first and they could never request. When Baba was ready, He supplied them with food. One of the five Mandali, Gustadji, had been on silence for many years and at that time he was an old man. In all of this melee of getting ready to move out of the hotel, Gustadji drops a shoestring under the bed and he is motioning with his hands to the disciple trying to get his attention. The disciple explodes, "My God! I've got one dumb man, now I've got to contend with two dumb men!" Then Baba comes and shakes him, "What do you mean? I'm not dumb! Remember that, I'm not dumb!" "Oh" he stutters, "I I I'm very sorry, I didn't mean it that way, except that here I'm being disturbed, here I'm trying to pack things and get things ready and he's lost something and he comes here and he motions with a finger and" Whew! he's exhausted.

This is Baba crushing down the ego. The will wants to go one way; God is pushing it another way. But, before they get into the street, they have to settle the bill! The manager demands to know, "After all the trouble you've caused why are you getting out of the hotel?" Now, the Mandali have to settle the bill for only the amount of time they've stayed in the hotel. They aren't to pay the full price so there is haggling going back and forth and this means more begging and apologizing by the Mandali. Out they go to a tonga and just as they're loading everything into the tonga, who comes along but the blacksmith! And he says to the disciple, "Look here, you! Where are you going? You make me close my blacksmith shop because your elder brother is going to be sick if I keep working, and here I have this great loss and now you are running off from the hotel!" Well, the disciple has to appease this blacksmith, and so you can just imagine all the apologizing and the profuse thanks he offered for the kind acts the blacksmith had done.

When finally the disciple got rid of the blacksmith the party went in search of another hotel. There was the business of the vacant room and the room for the Mandali on the other side all over again. Well do you know they didn't get another hotel room until 6:30 that morning. They'd been on the go from 8:30 P.M. Finally Baba was willing to accept the quarters in this new hotel. Then Baba looked about and said. "Hmm, Have you had any tea?" The disciple answered, "No Baba."

"Why haven't you had any tea?" Baba is always acting like He doesn't know anything when He knows everything.

"Well, Baba, we just haven't had tea, that's all." Then Baba ordered a great feast for the Mandali and they were back in good spirits, but immediately after the feast they left the hotel. They hadn't been there more than two hours. Again the men were haggling down at the front desk to pay for only the amount of time they'd used the rooms. Then they went on several miles until they found a mast, and that made Baba happy.

That's an illustration of how Baba grinds down what we call the will, which is nothing more or less than the ego—and there is nothing "free" about it.

The only ones who really have free will and freedom of will are Perfect Masters or the Avatar, because they are totally free of the prison of illusion. How can you be free in maya? You're the pawns of maya, you do as you are told! Always. You do according to the principle of ignorance, and any energy you exert in any direction is simply the will of illusion. You're always responding to its will. When you come under the aegis of Almighty God, then you come under His Will. And only His Will can lead you to Freedom, where you have free will. Then you can really do anything you please, because you have Infinite Power, Infinite Knowledge and Infinite Bliss. Its all yours. You're conscious of Infinite Power, but very seldom do you use it, although you know that you've got it. And when you know that you have it, you know that you don't have to use it. A really wealthy man doesn't fling his wealth about. He knows that he is wealthy and he does pretty much as he pleases. If he wants to go out in a ragged coat, everybody knows that he can afford a better one, so there's no criticism. If he wants to run around in a dirty shirt and a funny hat, they know that he can afford an excellently tailored tuxedo, and a fine top hat.

The Perfect Master really does as He pleases, but He is the slave of the love He has allowed to enter into the serious seekers who pledge themselves to Him and to His design for their future. Thus when you grasp hold of the Damaan, that's about the only will that you'll ever exercise. And that also is the Will of God moving you into that direction of grasping and holding on to the Damaan. If you have any other notions you've simply become the victim of impressions that you have gained in other lifetimes.

In maya you are impressed by the impressions of others. Always remember that. And your impressions become impressed by these impressions. The only time you can break out of it, as it were, is when you allow your mind to become impressed by the impressions that *God* gives you. Hang on to them; they will lead you to true Freedom. What you call "will" or "free will" is only bondage, and as Baba says—You are nothing but a bird banging yourself against the prison of maya, trying to break free, but you can't because you haven't caught hold of the Avatar's Daaman, the Kite, that will lead you to Freedom. You become the "tail" of the Eternal Kite, the Avatar, and He will take you to Freedom. Then you need never wonder or worry about what "free will", "bound will", "unfree will", Freedom with a capital "F" or small "f" is, just know that there is only one will and that's the Will of God. Move towards Him, as filings move towards a magnet, and attach yourself to Him.

We are creatures of habit, and because we are creatures of habit, we are creatures of attachment. Attach yourself to the God-Man by disengaging yourself from maya, and let *Him* utilize His Will for your benefit, which is the only reason why He came in human form. There is nothing for Him to attain; He has come to give you what He has attained, to give you equal status with Himself.

The God-Man is here. The God-Man, when He leaves His human form, simply assumes His eternal position of Divine Authority through the continued existence of His Universal Body, in which the entire

universe is suspended. This Universal Body blankets the whole of creation. He's everywhere at once, in everything, and knowing everything, every second of time. And when you give yourself to the Avatar, you are really giving yourself to what constitutes your own Divinity. He is simply the external manifestation of what you are. And He's come imploring you to come to Him through love, continuing to hold on to His Damaan. And, in love, with love, He'll carry you to Union with the Real Beloved, so that you can remain as your Real Self in equal status with Him forever and eternally.

****“It is the truth when I say
that the waves do not roll
and the leaves do not move
without My Will.” -MEHER BABA-**

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**Meher Baba in Los Angeles in 1956.

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Rano Gayley Visits New York

Over the summer of 1970, the Society for Avatar Meher Baba was fortunate to receive a visit from Rano Gayley, one of the women mandali who lives at Meherazad. Although born and raised in New York, Rano has spent most of her adult life in India, after being called there by Meher Baba in the 1930's. Her paintings of the Beloved were much enjoyed by Meher Baba; one hangs in the "museum" at Meherbababad, while another graces a cabin in Lower Meherbababad. She has also drawn the lovely frontispiece for the book of *Eighty-Two Family Letters*. Under Baba's direction, Rano painted the chart of evolution and involution which depicts the seven kingdoms, the planes, and God in the Beyond states.

Aside from her work with Baba, Rano has a storehouse of Baba anecdotes illustrating the life of the "Baba family" at Meherazad. For example, Baba would talk to his mandali about obedience: "If I told you to take off all your clothes and walk down the street, you'd do it without even thinking. If I told you to cut off your arm, you'd cut off your arm and think you were being noble. But when I tell you to do some tiny, little thing, *that* is when you fall down." To illustrate Baba's point, Rano gave a personal example from the period when she had first come to Baba: "I always hated getting up when it was still dark and on this day I dressed and came to the kitchen. Baba 'said', "Listen to the kettles sing." I thought to myself, 'I'm supposed to hurry to the kitchen to listen to the kettles sing?' Baba looked at me and 'said', 'The very fact that I had *thought* of you to call you to hear the kettles was the important thing, not the kettle itself.' And then I felt about so small. With Baba, there were many things I was going to have to do to mend my ways. '

The entire evening was delightful, and we welcomed the rare occasion to hear new stories of day-to-day life with the God-Man.