

COMPASSIONATE FATHER

**A Program for Students
Ages 11-18**

**Committee for Meher Baba and Scouting
912-9th Ave. South, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582
Telephone: 803-272-3498**

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Compassionate Father

The purpose of this program is to provide those enrolled in the Boy Scouts of America, ages 11 through 18 (and anyone else who is interested), with an optional religious study program and award based on the life of Avatar Meher Baba and His message of Love and Truth.

The candidate may take as much time to complete the program as he wants. In addition to study and preparation at home, seven sessions will be required with an appointed counsellor who is familiar with the Compassionate Father Study Program. All completed activities must be charted on the worksheets and initialed in the appropriate places by the candidate and his counsellor.

Most all the material needed for completion of the program is included in the study program kit which contains this program guide, a chart, and the worksheets. In addition to these materials, candidates for the award will need a copy of *Life At Its Best* by Meher Baba, and access to any of the many collections of stories and anecdotes connected with Meher Baba's life and work. A sample list of books is included in this program guide.

On pages 1 through 3 of this guide are two messages dictated by Meher Baba that fittingly open up this study program. They are: "Meher Baba's Message To Youth" (*Listen, Humanity*) and "Begin to Love God," given as a spiritual message for young

people (*Life At Its Best*). Following these messages are a short series of selected quotes by Meher Baba which should be studied before proceeding with the program activities.

Part One of the study program contains activities that are to be completed on an ongoing basis, throughout the program. Part Two consists of activities connected to each of the seven sessions with the candidate and his appointed counsellor.

After a candidate for the award—
“Compassionate Father”—has gone through the activities in the study program, his appointed counsellor will send the completed worksheets, writings, and essay, along with the application form, to the Committee for Meher Baba and Scouting in order to register that candidate for his award.

Contact the Committee for Meher Baba and Scouting if assistance is needed in obtaining materials connected with this program or for further information.

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Meher Baba's Message To Youth

It is the privilege of youth to be full of energy and hope. Not being caught in any ruts, your dreams of the future have the advantage of being inspired by unfettered imagination. In the glow of a newborn love or in the warmth of a newly-caught enthusiasm, you are quick to respond to the call for action and self-sacrifice.

Life would be poorer without these qualities that are predominantly present in youth. But if you are to derive the full benefit of the qualities with which you are abundantly endowed, you must also try to acquire some other qualities which are rare in youth.

Hope should be fortified by a courage which can accept failure without upset. Enthusiasm should be harnessed by the wisdom that knows how to wait with patience for the fruit of action. Idealistic dreams about the future should be balanced by a sense of the realities of the present. And the glow of love should allow itself to be illumined by the full exercise of reason.

It is easy for youth to be so absorbed in realizing the ideal that it becomes bitter against the present and the past. But it is as well to cultivate a spirit of idealizing the real, while being appreciative of the heritage of the past. The world as it is may not seem to conform to the pattern that youth adores, but you must never forget that it is always good enough to merit your most loving attention. In your desire to improve the world, do not, by becoming bitter, surrender your right to be happy.

Youth loves freedom and therefore has a natural impulse to rebel against authority. This is well and good, but you should make a real effort to keep free of the many illusions to which youth is particularly susceptible. True self-expression need not include irreverence for others. True criticism need not involve snobbishness or

cynicism. True freedom need not manifest hostility or separateness. Freedom without responsibility is a doubtful boon. Freedom is worth having only when there is self-restraint and willingness to cooperate with others. Youth is always willing to act and take risks. It should be allowed to yield freely to this fearless and imperative urge of life within. But while engaged in action, youth must take every care that it is creative, and not destructive. Let your watch-words always be LOVE and SERVICE.

MEHER BABA

Begin to Love God *

The youth of today is the ruling force of tomorrow. All things have a small beginning: the seedling grows into a tree, the stream into a river, and the child grows into a man to use or misuse the lessons he has absorbed in life as a youth. But even after he has grown into a man, he often remains a child in the spiritual sense of the word. The world is a kindergarten and school necessary for the spiritual lessons man must learn through countless lives of experiencing the opposites such as pain and pleasure, joy and suffering, good and bad, wealth and poverty.

All growth is gradual, and it is only through slow gradual stages that man truly begins to "grow up" and discover his true Self, and to relinquish the childish playthings of hate, greed, and anger through selfless service and love. In the spiritual school also there are many grades to be passed, for which few have the required courage and determination. Just as there are masters and instructors to guide you along the path of your studies, so there are Perfect Masters who can guide you along the path of the spirit to the glorious destination of Godhood.

Few have the good fortune to meet and follow such a spiritual guide, – when you do, you must earn his grace and be worthy of his love.

Do not balk at the discipline given by your parents and teachers. Discipline in small ways leads to the greater necessary discipline of Self. Do not try to conquer others—conquer yourself and you will have conquered the world. The simplest way to do this is to love God. Begin to love God by loving your fellow beings. Begin to see God by seeing Him in all beings and things. Give without thought of return, serve without thought of reward. God is everywhere, in everything. Most of all He is right within yourself. You do not exist for the world—the world exists for you.

There is an amusing illustration of this in the story of an ant. An ant was trying to cross a stream on a leaf. Tossed by the wind, the leaf overturned in midstream and the ant cried, “Help, help, the world is drowning.”

A frog close by said, “What rubbish! The world is not drowning, you mean *you* are drowning.”

“Well,” said the ant, “once I drown the world might as well not exist for me, so for me it means not only that I am drowning but that the world is drowning too!”

In the same way, all existence is within you. God is to be found within yourself, and once you find Him you have found the only treasure worth finding. I give you my blessing that you may love God and find Him.

* Meher Baba gave this as a spiritual message for young people.

Meher Baba says:

"To each one I appear to be what he thinks I am."

"God is all, God knows all, and God does all.
When the Avatar proclaims that He is the Ancient
One, it is God who proclaims His manifestation
on earth."

"I am the One so many seek and so few find. No
amount of intellect can fathom me. No amount of
austerity can attain me. Only when one loves me
and loses one's self in me, am I found."

"Let these words be inscribed in your heart:
Nothing is real but God. Nothing matters but
Love for God."

"I have only one message to give, and I repeat it
age after age to one and all: LOVE GOD."

"All the world religions proclaim the same eternal
and universal Truth, that there is but one God,
the Father of all in Creation."

PART ONE

— Throughout the Program —

HOW TO LOVE GOD

Meher Baba has dictated numerous messages and has
given entire discourses about Love for God. The
following passage can be found in Chapter 8, "Love
and God," in *Listen, Humanity*.

If, instead of seeing faults in others, we look within ourselves, we are loving God.

If, instead of robbing others to help ourselves, we rob ourselves to help others, we are loving God.

If we suffer in the sufferings of others and feel happy in the happiness of others, we are loving God.

If, instead of worrying over our own misfortunes, we think of ourselves more fortunate than many many others, we are loving God.

If we endure our lot with patience and contentment, accepting it as His Will, we are loving God.

If we understand and feel that the greatest act of devotion and worship to God is not to hurt or harm any of His beings, we are loving God.

To love God as He ought to be loved, we must live for God and die for God, knowing that the goal of life is to love God, and find Him as our own Self.

ACTIVITY: Read this message throughout the study program. During each session with your counsellor, explain a different one of these ways we can love God, describing the way in your own words, using examples from your life.

THE SEVEN REALITIES

ACTIVITY: Read this selection from *The Discourses* throughout the study program. Discuss a different one during each session with your counsellor.

I give no importance to creed, dogma, caste, or the performance of religious ceremonies and rites, but to the *understanding* of the following seven Realities:

1. The only REAL EXISTENCE is that of the One and only God, who is the Self in every (finite) self.
2. The only REAL LOVE is the Love for this Infinity (God), which arouses an intense longing to see, know, and become one with its Truth (God).
3. The only REAL SACRIFICE is that in which, in pursuance of this Love, all things, body, mind, position, welfare, and even life itself are sacrificed.
4. The only REAL RENUNCIATION is that which abandons, even in the midst of worldly duties, all selfish thoughts and desires.
5. The only REAL KNOWLEDGE is the Knowledge that God is the inner dweller in good people and so-called bad, in saint and so-called sinner. This knowledge requires you to help all equally as circumstances demand, without expectation of reward, and well compelled to take part in a dispute, to act without the slightest trace of enmity or hatred; to try to make others happy with brotherly or sisterly feeling for each one; to harm no one in thought, word, or deed, not even those who harm you.

6. The only REAL CONTROL is the discipline of the senses from indulgences in low desires, which alone ensures absolute purity of character.

7. The only REAL SURRENDER is that in which the poise is undisturbed by any adverse circumstance, and the individual, amidst every kind of hardship, is resigned with perfect calm to the will of God.

PRAYERS

In *Beams from Meher Baba on the Spiritual Panorama*, Meher Baba says, "The ideal prayer to the Lord is nothing more than spontaneous praise of His being." He says, "Nothing is more sublime than a spontaneous prayer. It gushes out of the heart, filled with appreciative joy."

Meher Baba has also dictated many prayers. Three of them are recited regularly by Baba lovers throughout the world.

The Master's Prayer

O Parvardigar, the Preserver and Protector of all,
You are without Beginning and without End;
Non-dual, beyond comparison; and none can
measure You.

You are without color, without expression,
without form, and without attributes.

You are unlimited and unfathomable, beyond
imagination and conception; eternal and
imperishable.

You are indivisible; and none can see You but
with eyes divine.

You always were, You always are, and You always
will be;

You are everywhere, You are in everything; and
You are also beyond everywhere and
beyond everything.

You are in the firmament and in the depths. You
are manifest and unmanifest, on all planes,
and beyond all planes.

You are in the three worlds, and also beyond the
three worlds.

You are imperceptible and independent.

You are the Creator, the Lord of Lords, the
Knower of all minds and hearts; You are
omnipotent and omnipresent.

You are Knowledge Infinite, Power Infinite, and
Bliss Infinite.

You are the ocean of Knowledge, All-Knowing,
 Infinitely-Knowing; the Knower of the past,
 the present and the future; and You are
 Knowledge itself.
 You are all-merciful and eternally benevolent.
 You are the Soul of souls, the One with infinite
 attributes.
 You are the trinity of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.
 You are the Source of Truth, the Ocean of Love.
 You are the Ancient One, the Highest of the
 High; You are Prabhu and Parameshwar;
 You are the Beyond-God, and the Beyond-
 Beyond-God also; You are Parabrahma;
 Allah; Elahi; Yezdan; Ahuramazda; and God
 the Beloved.
 You are named Ezad, the Only One worthy of
 worship.

The Prayer of Repentance

We repent, O God Most Merciful; for all our
 sins; for every thought that was false or unjust or
 unclean; for every word spoken that ought not to
 be spoken; for every deed done that ought not
 to have been done.

We repent for every deed and word and
 thought inspired by selfishness, and for every
 deed and word and thought inspired by hatred.

We repent most specially for every lustful
 thought and every lustful action; for every lie; for
 all hypocrisy; for every promise given but not
 fulfilled, and for all slander and backbiting.

Most specially also, we repent for every
 action that has brought ruin to others; for every
 word and deed that has given others pain; and
 for every wish that pain should befall others.

In Your Unbounded Mercy we ask You to
 forgive us, O God! for all these sins committed by
 us, and to forgive us for our constant failures to
 think and speak and act according to Your Will.

Beloved God Prayer

Beloved God, help us all to love You more and more,
And more and more, and still yet more,
'Till we become worthy of union with You;
And help us all to hold fast to Baba's *daaman* 'till the very end.

ACTIVITY: Recite these prayers throughout the study program, and recite them with your counsellor during your sessions. Learn to recite these prayers by heart.

READINGS

The fifty-seven short discourses found in *Life At Its Best* were dictated by Meher Baba through hand gestures during the 1956 tour of the United States.

ACTIVITY: Select and read one of these discourses prior to each of the sessions with your counsellor for discussion during that session.

There are numerous anthologies of stories and anecdotes about life with Meher Baba including colorful accounts and narrations illustrating a wide variety of spiritual lessons, topics, and experiences.

ACTIVITY: Select and read a different one of these stories or anecdotes prior to each session, and share this story or anecdote with your counsellor during that session.

A sample list of books follows:

Sparks of the Truth, from Dissertations of Meher Baba - a version by C.D. Deshmukh
Determined to be His, Stories Shared by Eruch in Mandali Hall - edited by Steve Klein
Our Constant Companion - compiled by Bal Natu
It So Happened...Stories from Days with Meher Baba - compiled and edited by W. Le Page
Meher Baba The Compassionate Father - compiled by Dr. H.P. Bharucha
Showers of Grace - compiled by Bal Natu
Not We But One, Meher Baba on Living and Love - compiled by William Le Page
The Dance of Love - by Margaret Craske
Still Dancing With Love - by Margaret Craske
Is That So? - compiled by William Le Page
While the World Slept - by Bhau Kalchuri

ACTIVITY: From your own experiences, write a Baba story. Make it as long or short as you like.

SERVICE

In *Sparks from Meher Baba*, Meher Baba says, "Purity, Love, and Service are the elements of spiritual life. "Always be in readiness to serve the cause of humanity. Select the kind of work you are qualified to do by your individual aptitude and abilities. And whatever service you can render must faithfully be carried out."

ACTIVITY: With the help of your parents and/or counsellor, come up with an idea for a service project that will benefit your place of worship or the general community. Complete this project during the study program period.

PART TWO

— Focus for Sessions 1-7 —

NOTE: The activities that follow are connected to each of seven sessions with your counsellor. These activities are to be completed with your counsellor in the order they appear.

Session 1

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

One of the most widely read of all of Meher Baba's messages is "Meher Baba's Universal Message."

ACTIVITY: Read this message and answer the following questions according to its content. Discuss these questions and your answers with your counsellor.

- 1) In this message, what three things does Meher Baba say He has come to do? ("I have come...")
- 2) In this message, what does Meher Baba say is the reason He observes Silence in this Avataric Form?
- 3) In this message, what does Meher Baba say we have to do to get nearer and nearer to God?
- 4) What are the two titles Meher Baba calls Himself in this message?

Meher Baba's Universal Message

I have come not to teach but to awaken.
Understand therefore that I lay down no precepts.

Throughout eternity I have laid down principles and precepts, but mankind has ignored them. Man's inability to live God's words makes the Avatar's teaching a mockery. Instead of practicing the compassion He taught, man has waged crusades in His name. Instead of living the humility, purity and truth of His words, man has given way to hatred, greed and violence.

Because man has been deaf to the principles and precepts laid down by God in the past, in this present Avataric form I observe Silence. You have asked for and been given enough words—it is now time to live them. To get nearer and nearer to God you have to get further and further away from “I”, “my”, “me”, and “mine”. You have not to renounce anything but your own self. It is as simple as that, though found to be almost impossible. It is possible to renounce your limited self by my Grace. I have come to release that Grace.

I repeat, I lay down no precepts. When I release the tide of Truth which I have come to give, men’s daily lives will be the living precept. The words I have not spoken will come to life in them.

I veil myself from man by his own curtain of ignorance, and manifest my Glory to a few. My present Avataric Form is the last Incarnation of this cycle of time, hence my Manifestation will be the greatest. When I break my Silence, the impact of my Love will be universal and all life in creation will know, feel and receive of it. It will help every individual to break himself free from his own bondage in his own way. I am the Divine Beloved who loves you more than you can ever love yourself. The breaking of my Silence will help you to help yourself in knowing your real Self.

All this world confusion and chaos was inevitable and no one is to blame. What had to happen has happened; and what has to happen will happen. There was and is no way out except through my coming in your midst. I had to come, and I have come. I am the Ancient One.

MEHER BABA

Session 2

MEHER BABA'S LIFE

Volumes and volumes of biographies have been written about Meher Baba's life and work.

The God-Man by Charles Purdom

The Beloved by Naosherwan Anzar

Glimpses of the God Man by Bal Natu

Lord Meher by Bhau Kalchuri

There are even whole books that deal with just one phase of Meher Baba's life and work.

Sobs and Throbs by Ramjoo Abdullah,

Tales From The New Life with Meher Baba, narrated by Eruch, Mehera, Mani and Meheru

Three Incredible Weeks with Meher Baba by Malcolm Schloss and Charles Purdom

The East West Gathering by Francis Brabazon

The Wayfarers, Meher Baba with the God Intoxicated by William Donkin.

ACTIVITY: From what you have read and what you have heard from others, give a brief description of the following events, phases and special work in Meher Baba's life:

February 25, 1894

Manzil-e-Meem

July 10, 1925

The Prem Ashram

Work with the Masters

The Blue Bus Tours

The New Life

The East West Gathering

January 31, 1969

Session 3

THE JOURNEY OF THE SOUL

In *God Speaks*, there is a famous chart painted by Rano Gayley under the direction of Meher Baba, illustrating Creation, Evolution, Reincarnation, Involution, and Realization.

ACTIVITY: Prior to this session, spend some time looking over the details of this chart.

ACTIVITY: With the help of your counsellor, using a copy of this chart as your guide, prepare a simple narration of the journey of the soul through all of the states and stages described therein.

In the “Reincarnation and Karma” section of the *Discourses*, Meher Baba deals in depth with a variety of topics. During this session, these discourses will be used as the reference, providing the framework for a simple discussion about the questions that follow.

ACTIVITY: Think about these questions and others you might have, regarding the process of reincarnation.

- 1) Why are we born in different parts of the world with different skills, opportunities and advantages, and why are we sometimes born male and sometimes female?
- 2) Why can't we remember our past lives?
- 3) What is Hell and Heaven, according to Meher Baba?
- 4) What is Karma and why is there such a law?

Session 4

THE DIVINE THEME

“The Theme” and the last sentence of the discourse “God as Infinite Love” add to the wonderful picture Meher Baba gives of the journey of the soul.

The Theme

There is no creature which is not destined for the Supreme Goal, as there is no river which is not winding its way towards the sea. But only in the human form is consciousness so developed that it is capable of expressing the perfection of its own true self, which is the Self of all.

However, even in the human form the soul is prevented from realizing its birthright of joy and fulfillment because of the burden of *sanskaras* which it has accumulated as a by-product of its arduous development of consciousness. Like the dust that accumulates on the shoes of a traveler on foot, these *sanskaras* are gathered by the pilgrim as he treads the evolutionary path.

In the human form, which is the crowning product of evolution, the divine life is enmeshed in the *sanskritic* deposits of the mind. The expression of the divine life is therefore curtailed and distorted by the distractions of the *sanskaras*, which weld consciousness instead to the fascinations of the false-phenomenal.

One by one, the many-colored attachments of the false must be relinquished. Bit by bit, the *sanskritic* tinder feeding the deceptive flames of the separative ego must be replaced by the imperative evidence of the unquenchable flame of Truth. Only in this manner can man ascend to the height of divine attainment: the endless beginning of life eternal.

The life in eternity knows no bondage, decay or sorrow. It is the everlasting and ever renewing self-affirmation of conscious, illimitable divinity. My mission is to help you inherit this hidden treasure of the Self.

MEHER BABA

"The Sojourn of the soul is a thrilling divine romance in which the lover, who in the beginning is conscious of nothing but emptiness, frustration, and the gnawing chains of bondage, gradually attains an increasingly fuller and freer expression of love, and ultimately disappears and merges in the divine Beloved to realize the supreme and eternal fact of God as Infinite Love." (from "God as Infinite Love", *Discourses*)

ACTIVITY: Read and think about these messages. Deliver the narration prepared during the last session, using a copy of the chart found in *God Speaks* as a visual aid.

Session 5

REMEMBERING GOD

Many followers of Meher Baba like to have photos of Baba in their rooms, and throughout their living quarters. Some wear jewelry with Baba's picture and some carry a photo of Baba in their wallet. You might know someone with a photo of Baba in their car. There are all kinds of Baba gatherings, Baba meetings, Baba movies, Baba books, and Baba music on phonograph records and cassette tapes. In a well-known message, Meher Baba said:

"I want you to make me your constant companion. Think of Me more than you think of your own self. The more you think of Me, the more you will realize My Love for you. Your duty is to keep Me constantly with you throughout your thoughts, speech and actions."

ACTIVITY: Think about some ways you can make Meher Baba your companion, keeping Him with you and remembering Him throughout the day.

Everyone's relationship with Baba is their own, and everyone has their own ways of remembering Him. Some of your ways might be just between you and Baba. Many things you do or use will also be similar or the same as those used by others.

ACTIVITY: It will be easy to make a list of certain "reminders" you like to use to remember Baba. Share your list with your counsellor and your parents. Most likely they will be very happy to share some of their "reminders" with you.

Session 6

SPECIAL PLACES

There are several special places associated with Meher Baba's life and work.

ACTIVITY: Based on your own experiences and from conversations with people you know, discuss with your counsellor what you feel is special about each of these places:

Poona

Meherabad

Meherazad

Myrtle Beach

ACTIVITY: Write a short account describing a special "Baba place" where you go or would like to go, or write a short account describing a gathering for Baba Lovers you have attended.

THE AVATAR

"Age after age, when the wick of Righteousness burns low, the Avatar comes yet once again to rekindle the torch of Love and Truth. Age after age, amidst the clamor of disruptions, wars, fear and chaos, rings the Avatar's call: 'COME ALL UNTO ME'" (from "Meher Baba's Call")

"The Avatar awakens contemporary humanity to a realization of its true spiritual nature, gives Liberation to those who are ready, and quickens the life of the spirit in His time. For posterity is left the stimulating power of His Divinely human example—of the nobility of a life supremely lived, of a love unmixed with desire, of a power unused except for others, of a peace untroubled by ambition, of a knowledge undimmed by illusion. He has demonstrated the possibility of a divine life for all of humanity, of a heavenly life on earth. Those who have the necessary courage and integrity can follow when they will." (from "The Avatar", *Discourses*)

"The Avatar is always one and the same, because God is always One and the Same, the Eternal, Indivisible, Infinite One, who manifests Himself in the form of man as the Avatar, as the Messiah, as the Prophet, as the Ancient One—the Highest of the High. This Eternally One and the Same Avatar repeats His manifestation from time to time, in different cycles, adopting different human forms and different names, in different places, to reveal Truth in different garbs and different languages, in order to raise humanity from the pit of ignorance and help free it from the bondage of delusions." (from "The Highest of the High")

Meher Baba has given us a wealth of information about who the Avatar is and how and why He comes. Revealing explanations are available in messages like "Meher Baba's Call", "The Highest of the High", from Part 3 entitled "Avatarhood" and Appendix II entitled "Reminiscences" in *Listen, Humanity*, and throughout many of the other books by and about Meher Baba.

ACTIVITY: From what you have read and what you have heard from others, address the following questions:

- 1) What are the names of the Five Perfect Masters that played their role in "bringing down" Avatar Meher Baba?
- 2) What did Hazrat Babajan do to Merwan under the Neem Tree?
- 3) What did Sai Baba exclaim on first encountering Merwan?
- 4) What happened during Merwan's first meeting with Upasni Maharaj?
- 5) What are the names of the six incarnations of the Avatar in this cycle of time, prior to Avatar Meher Baba?

ACTIVITY: Write an essay, as short or as long as you like, expressing how you feel and what it means to you to know about Meher Baba.



