

The Die is Cast

by

A DISCIPLE OF MEHER BABA

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THE DIE IS CAST

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A Disciple of Meher Baba

“ Let Thy will be mine
and let my will follow Thine ”

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

True obedience to one's Master is the greatest and closest of bindings which must inevitably bring in its wake the greatest of all freedoms — the Freedom of the Soul.

Meher Baba's *mandali* consists of those who lead a life of implicit obedience to Baba, in all walks of life and under all circumstances. Against the few who live such a life with him and near him, there are many who do so at physical distance from him.

Despite Baba's prolonged and strict retirement of late years when none is allowed to visit Him of his or her own accord, Baba has maintained an outward contact with his people — directly when possible and practicable, and indirectly when otherwise, through meetings, gatherings, Mass Darshan programmes and messages.

In his decision announced on April 10th Baba explains that although illusion is throughout illusion, life in illusion is both real and illusory. Man's illusory life is potentially real since it has its beginning and its end in God, the Only Reality; it remains illusory only so long as it does not end in God.

By his Decision in question, the die is cast afresh for the entire illusory life in creation. Life enters a new lease. The possibility of any modification in the future destiny of man is no longer a live issue.

Soon after giving out the "Decision", Baba commenced arrangements for his present strict yet fully non-binding seclusion beginning from May 1st. The 24th of April was the date fixed for a congregation of some thirty odd disciples from Poona, Nagar, Bombay etc., to come to Satara.

Although Baba obviously deliberated before deciding on the names and number of those to be called to Satara, neither all the intimate ones, nor all the prominent workers, nor representatives from every centre were sent for. In short, the 36 persons including the resident Mandali, who came together before Baba on the morning of 24th April 1955, *collectively represented all those closely connected with him* - all those who love him and follow his instructions.

None of them knew in advance what Baba intended to disclose that day, and the only intimation given beforehand was that unless expressly instructed otherwise all the resident and invited Mandali were to keep themselves ready to be with Baba for six hours - from 8 to 11 a. m. and from 2 to 5 p. m. that day. In actuality,

Baba went further; he gave them his company for an unbroken stretch of eight hours - from 7-30 a. m. to 3-30 p. m.

It must be made clear at the outset that Baba made all communications without the help of his board (which he has given up since 7th October). Apart from his vivid hand gestures that are usually fairly easy to interpret, difficult words were dealt with by making use of the lengthy and tedious method of having the alphabet recited repeatedly till the letters, and consequently the words, were arrived at. There was therefore no alphabet pointing, and no "finger-writing". These self-imposed restrictions of communication did not, however, restrain the spirit of bonhomie that usually marks such occasions. Baba was lively and cheerful - nothing escaped his notice, no subject of immediate interest was neglected as too unimportant, no one was spared - including himself - for shortcomings of the moment.

A "how do you do" from Baba is inimitable and rarely the same each time. In his love and understanding, concern and frankness, he is father, mother and friend in one - and above and through it all he remains supremely Master. His explanations and remarks, his questions and counter questions, even his admonition and correction, made those present easily forget they had been made to miss their lunch that day.

His first question to each that morning was how he had slept the night before. Against the few who had slept well, there were many who for various reasons could not. Baba then 'said', "Worries over personal and family affairs are always there but let worries not

worry you for the day... Keep your ears and eyes wide open... you may not get another chance of physical contact with me... above all remain cheerful and attentive... don't yawn; those who appear drowsy will be expelled from the hall...".

The first thing Baba did was to lead all to the nearby bungalow which was prepared for his Seclusion. He showed them round the little room in which he intended to sit for his work, the bedroom, bathroom, and the 'hall' intended for relaxing and 'walking'—since during the period of his stay there he would not step out of the place.

Regarding his seclusion Baba said, "I know well that this period of three months, from May 1st to July 31st, is one of crisis for me; particularly for my physical body which might become paralyzed or drop. All that depends upon the strain I have to bear. As it is, I think I may remain here for all of the three months. But there is no binding on me—I will have to adjust things as they best suit my work. I may come out the very next day and move about freely, go into even greater seclusion, or travel from place to place... Irrespective of all that I may or may not do, for all practical purposes I wish to remain in retirement and want that everybody should completely let me alone for the full period of the three months."

When all were reassembled it was again with a feeling of joy and gratitude for this unexpected company of the Master. Baba's explanations given with the authoritative stamp of Truth and simplicity of approach, the soundness of his arguments and the aptness of the examples he gave, kept all present alert and full of enthusiasm and cheer.

According to Baba an illiterate rustic and a learned philosopher are both equally in the domain of ignorance as both fail to understand the Real Life which is not to be lived until the last vestige of illusion vanishes. Baba never tires of upholding the fact that God cannot be imagined or understood through the intellect. Yet, while pointing out the limitations of the intellect, Baba employs sound reasoning to convince us that man can find God, man can see God, and above all man can more naturally become infinitely-conscious God than he is finitely-conscious man.

At about midday, in the midst of some discussion, Baba asked for the general instructions (given out in Life Circular No. 25) to be read out, saying it was for this purpose that they had been called that day. Just then there was a pattering of rain drops on the tin roof above and Baba gestured, " This is symbolical of the fact that all this you now hear has come right from my heart."

Those present were asked to share with the absent ones the essence of all that passed at the meeting that day.

" It is good for you to have come when I called you; it is both good and bad for me to have done so. Those whom I have not invited for the occasion are likely to be upset for more than one reason when you tell them, as I want you to do, all that you have seen and heard today.....

" At the September meeting in Meherabad I had said I would not be seeing any one again... yet now I have sent for you, asked you to come without disclosing

to any one why and where you were going. Some areas and centres are represented by more than one person amongst you, while others are represented by just one, and yet many others by none! At first I thought of sending for all concerned, but that was not found to be practicable for many reasons, avoidable and unavoidable. On the other hand mere circularizing of the Instructions was not enough... you must carry my message and emphasize the importance underlying my words at this juncture of crisis for me... give the widest possible publicity to my instructions through printed translations in your regional vernaculars...

“ Those who live with me, as well as those who live for me in spite of being away from me, each have individual faults and weaknesses but they have no equals, I know... they need not necessarily know... they have been following me all these years through thick and thin... I don't mind saying that if I were in their place I might not have been able to stand what they have stood so splendidly so far... .

“ It is also a fact that it is I who have been helping them to stick to me... the time is drawing near when they will have to maintain their hold on my *daaman* on their own... I want none to leave me, but if one and all were now to give me up I would not mind at all... For those who choose to remain with me and near me there is the possibility of greater hardships and even lack of day-to-day provisions after the period of my retirement... I will not at all be displeased with those who feel they've had enough of a life of obedience and from May or August 1st choose to live a life of their own... I'm offering now that freedom to one and all. If you *now*

decide to leave me you do so honourably and all you have done so far will continue to stand to your credit. But if, having chosen to stick to me, you later give me up you would earn the title of *mardood* (apostate) thus wiping out all your past service and obedience to me. Those who decide to stick to me may have to suffer in the future; but one thing is certain, they will not suffer alone — I will equally share with them their hardships and privations."

In the many years that I, with other disciples, have loved and followed Baba in his life of 'Mastery in Servitude,' we have known him give this 'fair chance', time and again, to his followers — of undergoing a searching self-analysis and remaking their choice; and time and again have we witnessed the renewed avowal of love and obedience.

Here we are asked to decide again. It was clear for all concerned that just as Baba was free of all bindings and promises, every follower was being made equally free to decide afresh whether to give up or continue to hold on to Baba's *daaman*.

There is no restraint placed on what one should or should not expect from Baba, but all those who are asked to decide afresh to continue their life of obedience to Baba, have got to be prepared not to ask anything of Baba on any account, spiritual or material, at any time both before, and after July 31st 1955. This means being bound by obedience to Baba without in any way binding him to do 'this' or 'that', 'today' or 'tomorrow' anything personal or impersonal, important or unimportant, temporary or permanent, or give up Baba once and for all.

In response to some query by one of the mandali that morning Baba Said, " Each is free to think of me and interpret my work as he feels or understands best. Either my words must be presented as they stand, or if interpreted by you, you must not fail to state it is your own interpretation ... I never denied being Perfect and being the Avatar but you do not know that yet. I know I am the One without a second, alone, and matchless. You would be quite right to assert and proclaim whatever you truly believe me to be — never hesitate to own your faith and belief in me and about me. But do not claim to know or feel what you actually do not."

Among other things, instructions were given by Baba, in the eventuality of his death or the death of some of the men and women disciples living with him, for the disposal of the bodies. The last few minutes, before the gathering dispersed, were occupied in hearing the individual instructions prepared for the Mandali who were to be on duty with or near Baba during the three months of his seclusion.

The following digest has been compiled from Meher Baba's various comments and remarks of the day, and are presented in the form of five 'discourses':

PRAYERS

"In keeping with my general instructions, news was recently given me of the death of R. and A.'s youngest son at Karachi. I asked for full details...the little boy accidentally fell from the upper storey of their house and died within half an hour from severe injuries...both the mother and father of the child love me...A. was

present at the Meherabad meeting in September...he and his wife, amongst others, had organized the round-the-clock prayers or *Japa** as desired by me for the period ending April 30th 1955.

“ Before R. and A. could make arrangements for the disposal of the mutilated body of their son, it was time for A. to attend and maintain the continuity of the *Japa* - this he did promptly, without a second thought... it was after much persuasion that R. allowed another to take her place in carrying out the prayer schedule ... when I heard all this my heart was pierced and I felt very happy with their love... .

“ Even as you sit before me, some of you can't help thinking or worrying over little things as money, health, etc....those who are free for the moment from such thoughts, are nevertheless susceptible to worry over the inevitabilities of daily life....just realize the sense of duty and love on the part of my dear R. and A.... I doubt whether I, in their place, would have remembered God's name so well....

“ When connected with my work or carried out under my instructions, all prayers - whether carried out mechanically or in the true spirit - are helpful to my work. When prayers are offered in the spirit in which A. offered them, they help me greatly.... Those who have been participating in maintaining the continuity of prayers (*japa*) day and night as desired by me, should go on doing so at least up to the end of April...if possible, I would prefer them to be continued for the next three months, till July end.

* Repetition of God's name.

“ The *japas* and *tapas* (prayers and penances) as carried out by Rishis and Munis (saints and sages) for interminable periods have a significance of their own...all other so-called prayers offered mechanically have no true value for an aspirant to the Path of God-realization.”

FOUR THINGS OF LASTING VALUE

“ The things of lasting value for the Path are (1) Divine Love; (2) Obedience to a Perfect Master; (3) Absolutely sincere and whole hearted service to others; and (4) True renunciation of all worldly things, leaving no room for thoughts other than of God, the only Reality.

“ Divine love is purely a gift from God to man. It is not only the richest of all gifts on earth or in heaven, but it is indeed so rare that very very few are blessed with it. It is beyond all prayers, beyond all wishing and willing on the part of man.

“ Contact with a Perfect Master is never equally available to all men at all times. It is only the really fortunate ones who come across a Perfect Master during their life time, and the few most fortunate ones who live their lives in obedience to him. The Perfect Master Jalaluddin Rumi says that one moment passed in the company of a Saint is infinitely better than a hundred years of sincere prayers and penance. Remember, he refers only to saints—the least you can say about a Perfect Master is that he is a maker of saints!

“ Selfless service and true renunciation are open to all but possible only to the true heroes amongst men.

“ For those to whom any of the above four — which constitute the essential marrow for an aspirant of the Path — is not possible, the last and least best thing is to take recourse to the bare bones of one's religion, and live one's life in accordance with it.

“ The best thing for the mandali is to obey me and go on obeying me to the last.I know how difficult that is .. I do not often obey Me myself ... but even if a few amongst you succeed in really obeying your Baba, you will indeed make him truly great.”

CONCEPT OF REALITY IS NOT REAL KNOWING

“ There are few among the purely intellectual who can establish a life of obedience to a Perfect Master, and fewer still who can maintain it. This is because, although intellect and reasoning are a help to man in arriving at the decision to follow the Master, man is invariably misled when he tries to prove or disprove the perfection of the Master solely through reasoning. The utmost reaches of the human intellect cannot go beyond the gross sphere. Through intellect alone man can never penetrate the materialism of life, no matter how fine are the limits of things reached by man.

“ The Perfect Masters, who are one with God, and the innermost core of everything in existence, are beyond the gross as much as they are beyond the subtle and mental spheres that go to make up the illusion of creation as a whole.

“ These explanations and discourses and all else that I say about Reality are but a play of words. If one tries

to grasp Truth through words only, one is bound to miss it because it is beyond mind, and mind, the inner man, is not just brain. Although the brain is the seat of the intellect, yet by itself the brain is but a piece of mechanism composed of matter belonging to the outer man.

“Transcending the intellect is not the same as going mad. In madness the faculty of reasoning is impaired – it does not disappear. Even the mad and utter idiots think, though wrongly; and so they abuse, cry, laugh, etc., in an unbalanced manner. Man’s intellect has evolved out of his consciousness. His consciousness has not emanated from his intellect.

“Becoming free from the limitations of the intellect does not necessarily mean becoming void of intelligence or losing the power of expressing things; but the more such matters that are beyond its grasp are put into words and explained in details, the more inexplicable they become... An intellectual giant not imbued with the spark of love or not having the guidance of a Master can never have knowledge of the spiritual Path. But, however ignorant he may be, one who has either of these two things has every possibility of advancing rapidly towards God, the Goal of all life.

“The consciousness of those who leave their hold on all except their life of obedience to me, shall transcend all limitations including the limitation of the intellect.....”

IF I AM WHAT I AM

“If I am what I am, it is all the more natural for you not to be able to understand all that I wish to ex-

press, and why at all I say all that I say ... It has been going on like this for thousands and thousands of years... If I am the highest of the high I know best why Jesus was crucified and why Mohammed was stoned ... For all the so-called good and bad things said about Them by the so-called good and bad world, people understand next to nothing about Christ and Mohammed, about Ram and Krishna, Zoroaster and Buddha, and about all the things they said and did.

"For all its power of achievement in the gross sphere, the faculty of human knowledge has its limitations within the intellect. None is at fault therefore, just as a child is not held responsible for the things which are beyond the power of its understanding. But all things have their uses. A lullaby is as useful as a lecture. A thing does not cease to be useful simply because it is not within the grasp of one's understanding.

"Those who believe in me yet feel like questioning my words and actions are weak in their convictions and belief in me. If you maintain a tight and lasting grip on my *daaman* you will remain with me on the highest of levels or the lowest, wherever I am, wherever I may be....Where the kite goes, its tail goes, as long as it sticks to the kite. So long as you keep your grip tight it matters little whether you are a saint or a sinner.

"This reminds me of an incident of my childhood.... Once I stuck on to my kite, with what I thought was good gum, a strip of paper to serve as its tail; but when I sent up the kite the tail came off and was lost. I was bent upon my kite having a tail, and, with some sticky filth near at hand, I stuck on another tail. This time it remained stuck and, irrespective of what it had been fixed with, kept flying with the kite.

"To stick to me means to keep me pleased at the cost of your own comforts and pleasures. It means to remain resigned to my will whether you keep good health or bad, whether you make money or lose it, and whether you gain name and fame or become the laughing stock of others....

"During wars, often fought for prestige and power, wealth and lands, soldiers give up their lives as a matter of course in their duty to their country....why cannot it be possible for you to consider yourselves as already 'dead' in serving me?"

FOUR STAGES OF EVERYTHING

"Sometimes I cannot help asking myself about the things I do and say, and about the things I deliberately avoid and easily forget. At the last Meeting in Meherabad I gave out my final declaration and yet it was followed by a clarification, a confirmation and lastly by the decision.

"Until the other day I had not given it a thought... then, while taking a rest I asked myself why at all I did give out the declaration. Who asked me for a Clarification? Where was the need to issue a Confirmation and what made me give the Decision?

"I was satisfied that all that was, had been inevitably necessary...Throughout time, in accordance with common law of nature, there are four stages to everything. Therefore the day I had announced my declaration, I knew the decision inherent therein would have to be worked out by me through the stages that would automatically follow. For example :

“ After a mango stone is sown and nurtured, a sapling is bound to spring up. The sapling is not in itself the mango but it represents a declaration of the mango's advent. The sapling does not stop there, but unfolds to clarify itself into more leaves, branches and a trunk. It is however, the coming of the flowers which confirms the fruit is near at hand. And it is the actual appearance of the mango that finally decides beyond a doubt that it was the mango passing through the inevitable four stages in order to become what it really has been all along.....

“ Thus my declaration was in fact my decision, but for the declaration to be manifested as the decision, it had inevitably to pass through the intermediary stages of clarification and confirmation. Perhaps you can grasp it better through further examples :

“ My declaration may be likened to the birth of a child, which is subsequently clarified as to whether it is a boy or a girl. The confirmation represents puberty which reaches its decision in procreation.....These four stages commonly represent the development of human life.....

“ A day is declared by the dawn, clarified by noon, confirmed by afternoon and its completion decided by sunset.

“ The initiative of all initiatives, the foremost *lahar* or spontaneous urge on the part of God to ask Himself ‘ Who am I ? ’; was God's declaration; creation was then necessary for its clarification; the evolution of perfect consciousness in man is its confirmation, and involution - the transformation of human consciousness into God-consciousness - concludes in the decision (already inherent in the declaration) that throughout God was God and never anything other than God.

“ But here again I asked myself why in my Declaration I had stated certain things that would definitely happen, without stating a definite date ? Whereas in the Clarification which allowed for different interpretations according to the ‘ language ’, I definitely stated a time ? What was the reason for presenting two possibilities in the Confirmation: either a change in the nature of events or a change in the factor of time ? And, how did I arrive at my Decision which has eliminated the factor of time ?

“ A question is the beginning of an answer - an answer but the end of a question. In the beginningless beginning, when God alone was, and there was neither illusion nor life in illusion, God had the divinely spontaneous urge to know Himself and ask ‘ Who am I ? ’. The answer ‘ I am God ’ was already latent in His question ‘ Who am I ’.

“ Although God’s decision of ‘ I am God ’ was inherent in His declaration of ‘ Who am I ’, yet in order to manifest as the decision, the declaration had to pass through the intervening stages of clarification and confirmation. But just as the decision is inherent in the declaration, vacillation is equally inherent in the clarification and confirmation.

“ The stage of clarification is therefore one of vacillation. The growing consciousness through evolution in the form of stone, vegetable, animal etc., the declaration ‘ Who am I ’ begins to be clarified through the counter question ‘ Who am I not ? ’. It is through the vacillating experiences of ‘ I am not stone ’, ‘ I am not this ’, ‘ I am not that ’ that the soul eventually arrives at the only correct answer, ‘ I am God ’.

“ Before reaching perfection in the human form, consciousness has to evolve through a definite period of time. There is no vacillation in the *time* factor of the clarification therefore, only, in its events.

“ Confirmation — the second intervening stage — is also one of vacillation, but in a different way. Evolved consciousness reaches its fullness in man, and instead of wavering between the various experiences of ‘ Who am I not ? ’ there is now the certainty of ‘ I am man ’ — never for a moment does man doubt himself to be other than man.

“ This ‘ I am ’ -ness, reached in the human form, is the apex of evolutionary consciousness — yet this full but false consciousness is only the beginning of the long journey towards true Consciousness, God-consciousness or the consciousness of ‘ I am God ’.

“ On the one hand therefore the positive consciousness of ‘ I AM ’ is reached in the human form. On the other hand the Soul is still in quest of the real answer to Its original Question, and this quest expresses itself in man through various experiences, until he can finally say ‘ I am God ’.

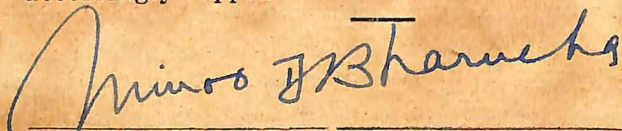
“ Before the commencement of involution into God-consciousness, human consciousness is trapped in the treadmill of reincarnations for an *indefinite* period and is in what might be expressed as a spiritual stalemate. Because of this there is the vacillation in the time factor of ‘ confirmation ’; for, unlike the fixed limit of time gone through during the *évoluntary* process, there is the

possibility of a chance in deciding the time factor between human-consciousness and God-consciousness.*

“ Thus the conflicting stages in the nature of events and the factor of time have been governing all things from the beginningless beginning and will continue to do so to the endless end.

“ There is now no time limit. Things may happen after one month or three months, after three years or twenty years. In short, I may speak tomorrow or after ten years. I am free from all promises, bindings, undertakings and arrangements. None should therefore ask for anything material or spiritual from me at any time or on any account. I will do what I think to be best for one and all and when I deem fit. From now on therefore your connection with me will endure on this basis—and this applies not only to those present here, but to all my followers, present and future, in the East as well as in the West. It is now for you to decide whether to hold on to my *daaman*, believing in me and remaining devoted to me, by following my orders and instructions.

“ Whatever I have said and have been saying, I was made to say by God. when I say a thing, God makes me say so. All I want to say now is that whatever I have declared and decided will be so and all things shall accordingly happen. ”



*The 'chance' is the contact with, or grace of, a Perfect Master.

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"God Speaks"

BY AVATAR MEHER BABA

is being published in New York City by the publishing firm of Dodd Mead & Co., and will be ready by Oct. 1955.

It is unique in the fact that Baba has dictated the main body of this book through the medium of his alphabet board; and later through the difficult means of communication without his board, has personally seen to the final work of checking before the book went to the press.

In "God Speaks" Baba has for the first time revealed in detail the fundamental purpose and mechanics of life and the universe through a minute description of the evolution of the Soul from the time of its creation to its return to the Infinite Self from where it originated.

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