

Sahavas: In The Company Of God

By Meher Baba

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Sahavas: In the Company of God
by Meher Baba

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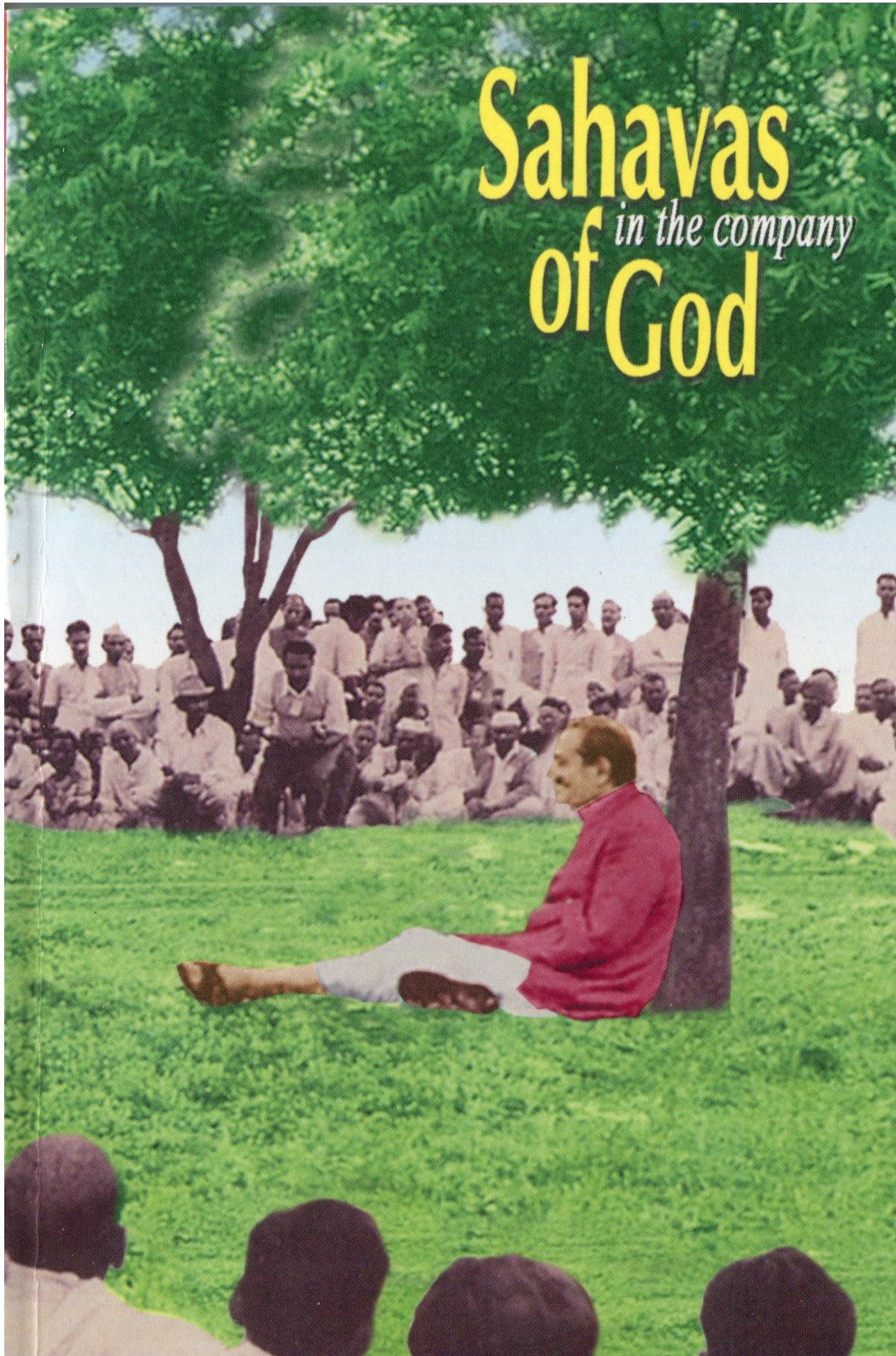
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Sahavas

in the company

of God





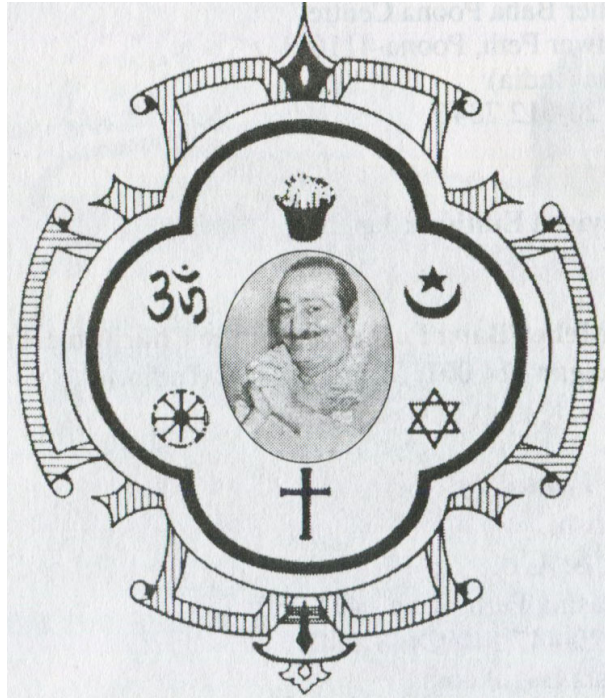
Determined to be His

To Walk and talk with the God in human form, to touch and feel Him, to smell the fragrance of His presence, to listen to His words, to be drenched in the showers of His love, to become the object of His love and tender care was an invaluable experience for all the participants of this sahavas gathering. I was one of those who were bestowed with this grace of being invited as the participant to be near Meher Baba and to bask in His Glory. I was in my youth then, having neither special qualification nor any understanding of spirituality and God. When I revisit those memorable days, I think that Meher Baba had presented Himself before His lovers in two prominent and distinct roles. One as the Beloved, arousing love in people's hearts and making them appreciate that this love mattered most in their lives above and beyond everything else. The second role was of the man with divine knowledge, elucidating the various spiritual facts, with His masterly skills. And it may be noted that this was achieved without any

(continued on inside back cover)

SAHAVAS :

In The Company of God



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Mehrabad, 1938



Acknowledgement

An elaborate account of this great event of this Avataric cycle has been recorded by Don Stevens of the US and published in the form of a book, titled 'Listen Humanity'. To make this record accessible and affordable to larger number of lovers, Avatar Meher Baba Pune Centre in the year 1977 published an economical and abridged version of this book. This concise form was titled 'In the Company of God Meher Baba.'

This is the second and enlarged edition which has been enriched by inclusion of some new information that had appeared in the epic life-story of the Avatar, called 'Lord Meher.'

We are sure the readers will always experience an ever-growing interest in reading and re-reading this book. They will find it an invaluable reference book to share information related to this important event in the life of the Avatar. Those who were present during that Sahavas

will find this account refreshing their memories and flooding their minds with vivid experiences of those days. And those who were not present would get an insight into the ways of the Master.

We are grateful to Sufism Reoriented Inc., Sufism Reoriented Centre, California for words drawn from "Listen, Humanity", Harper Colophon Edition, 1971.

Our heartfelt gratitude to Bhau Kalchuri, the author, and copyright holder Lawrence Reiter and publisher of 'Lord Meher' for the information and photos drawn by us from the book 'Lord Meher'.

We acknowledge our appreciation to Subhash Pokale, Baba's lover who has edited this second edition and for his efforts in beautifying this book and Miss Homai Malati for her help in proof reading.

- Publisher



INTRODUCTION

If men are asked today as to what was the greatest event in our time, the answer would necessarily be many depending upon the tastes and interests in life of each individual. Those who appear or claim to be materialistic in their outlook on life and are what one may call scientifically inclined would say that the greatest event in our time is possession of 'Atomic Power' in the hands of man. This has not only brought to an abrupt end the horrors of the second world war, but also given hopes of a healthier and happier life for all by the peaceful exploitation of its potentialities. Some others would say 'Man's Landing on the Moon' is the greatest event in our time. Space research opens up avenues of understanding the mysteries of the vast universe in which we live.

For a student of biology and the medical science the possibility of 'heart transplantation' is the greatest event in our time.

For lovers of freedom who are concerned with the emancipation of subject people of various countries, races, religions and nationalities would say 'Freedom from Foreign Domination' attained by large number of colonial countries is the greatest event in our time.

Men of peace longing for lasting peace on this earth would say that the 'Establishment of the United Nations' is the greatest event in our time.

Each of the above is great and has its own significance in its own field and has influenced the life of human society. But life seen in its fullness is infinitely greater than different fields of human activities. Life is neither material nor spiritual alone. Life cannot be divided into watertight compartments under titles such as scientific, social, political, economical, cultural, religious or spiritual. Then what is life?

Life is a process of self-discovery: discovery of one's relation with another and all other forms of life in existence. It is a discovery of one's place in the advancing stream of life. It is in fact the discovery of the cosmos within one's own self. Discovery in conscious experience of the oneness in manyness or the unity in diversity is the goal of life.

Life is indivisible oneness, infinite and eternal. For those who aspire after the Real Life or an undimmed vision of life in all its fullness, the greatest event in our time is the '*Avataric advent of God as Man on this earth*' in the

most beautiful, most lovely, most living and appealing-to-all-heart-form of Meher Baba.

On February 13, 1968 Meher Baba issued a message to his lovers all over the world: "LET MY LOVERS REJOICE ON MY 74TH BIRTH-DAY, BECAUSE, SOON AFTER 25TH MARCH, SOMETHING GREAT WILL HAPPEN THAT HAS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE."

What was this *something great*, that has happened soon after 25th March 1968, *something that has never happened before*? God being infinite, His words given in His Avataric Advents can be interpreted and understood infinitely. But the fact that Meher Baba wasn't there physically, when his lovers celebrated his 75th birth-day on 25 February 1969 (because Meher Baba passed away at 12-15 P.M. on 31 January 1969) lends support to the belief that the message was a hint to his lovers of the approaching event.

For a lover, the beloved of one's heart is the highest. To be in the presence of one's beloved is the most blissful experience for a lover. And to live in the company of the beloved is heavenly life on earth. The Avatar of God is the beloved of all hearts. The aim of a lover of God is to see God, and the goal of life is to become one with God. God is believed to be the indweller of every heart. He is also believed to be all-pervading. When this God Who indwells all forms of life in existence, this God Who pervades the whole world and beyond enforms Himself

as Man, He is called the Avatar of God. His life and activities on this earth as Man is the true manifestation of divinity on earth. God being Infinite Power, Infinite Knowledge and Infinite Bliss, His manifestation on earth as Man releases the triune aspects of divinity. "Avataric periods are like the spring-tide of creation. They bring a new release of power, a new awakening of consciousness, a new experience of life - not merely for a few, but for all. Qualities of energy and awareness, which had been used and enjoyed by only a few advanced souls, are then made available for all humanity. Life as a whole, is lifted to a higher level of consciousness and geared to a new rate of energy....."*

God becomes Man and lives the life of man so that man may love God as he loves himself and his nearest and dearest ones. God becomes Man and lives a divine human life of self-giving love and self-effacing service so that man may follow the example of God's Man-life on earth and thus ennoble human life and enrich this earth. God becomes Man and lives the life of love for man so that man may love God as Man and through that love, learn to love God in all men. God becomes Man and lives a life of self-sacrifice so that man may serve God as Man and through that service and self-sacrifice learn to serve God in each other. During the Avataric advent of God on this earth God as Man sows the seeds of His infinite love

* From: God to Man and Man to God, P. 48.

into the hearts of men through His personal contact individually and collectively; quickens the process of spiritual aspirations in mankind through His work in the higher spheres of existence and planes of consciousness; He awakens in man an awareness of God's presence in every heart and internally inspires man to live a life of love and service and gradually uplifts him above his self-centered life of separative existence.

The Avataric advent of God as Man on earth occurs once in seven hundred to fourteen hundred years according to an eternally existing divine law and precipitated by the Five Perfect Masters of the time. They select the parents and prepare the womb for God to take birth as Man. They watch over His birth and carefully protect His growth and when the time is ready for Him to begin His work hand over the world to His charge. God as Avatar works according to a divine plan chalked out by the masters of the time and at the completion of His work gives up His body as a final sacrifice for the redemption of the world through a universal transformation of human consciousness and a spiritual push to the creation as a whole. According to the spiritual truths unfolded by Meher Baba, there are at all times on this earth 7000 spiritual beings on what one may call a progressively advancing stages on the path of self-discovery. Fifty-six of them having realized their selves as one with God (Universal Self) actually live the life of God's infinite power, knowledge and bliss on this earth. Five amongst them

function as Perfect Masters (Sadgurus) guiding the destinies and affairs of all men and creatures of this world and worlds invisible to our eyes, and controlling the creation and movements of universes beyond the reach of human intellect.

The Five Perfect Masters of our time who precipitated the advent of God as Meher Baba were Babajan of Poona, Narayan Maharaj of Kedgaon, Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur, Sai Baba of Shirdi and Upasani Maharaj of Sakori. Their shrines have become sacred places of pilgrimage for devotees of God.

Meher Baba was born at 5 o'clock on the morning of 25 February 1894. The place of his birth is David Sassoon Hospital, Pune. This Birth place which was the European ward in olden time, now occupied by skin disease patients and lepers. However, it has now become a place of pilgrimage for Meher Baba lovers all over the world visiting Pune.

Merwan Sheriar Irani (that was the name by which Meher Baba was known before he became a Perfect Master) passed his childhood at No. 816 Butler Moholla, except for a period of two years when he lived with his parents and brothers in a flat in the Bhagwandas Chawl. Later on the family resided at a larger house opposite to No. 816. This house where he lived most of his boyhood days till 1913, when the spiritual transformation of his life had taken place and till the time he was restored to

normal consciousness is now known as "Meher Baba House," 765 Dastur Meher Road in the cantonment area of Pune, another sacred place of pilgrimage for Meher Baba lovers all over the world.

Merwan's education began when he was five years old at the Dastur Girl's School, where he learned to read and write the Gujarati language and the rudiments of Arithmetic. At the age of nine he was sent to the Camp Government English School, where he remained five years. Then he went to the St. Vincent High School, where he matriculated in 1911, at the age of seventeen. Merwan entered Deccan College Poona in 1911. While still at college at the age of nineteen, he was touched by a spiritually Perfect Woman in Poona, called Babajan, and thereafter he gave up his studies. His life became suddenly transformed and for a long time he lost normal consciousness. In that state he was instinctively drawn to the other Perfect Masters of the time - Narayan Maharaj of Kedgaon, Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur and in 1915 he went to the well known spiritual Master, Sai Baba of Shirdi, who sent him to another Master, Upasani Maharaj of Sakori, who in the course of the subsequent seven years restored him to normal consciousness and gave the all-pervading knowledge of creation, its function and purpose. He became known as Meher Baba, and with a number of devotees, whose allegiance to Upasani Maharaj was transferred to him, started upon his work of awakening people to the unity of spiritual knowledge and love of

God. Various phases of his work during his life time have been recorded by his biographer, C.B. Purdom, an English disciple, in his book '*God-Man.*'

About a thousand persons drawn from various walks of life, race, religion and nationalities had the rare privilege of living in the company (Sahavas) of Meher Baba at Meherabad, Ahmednagar, India during the month of November in the year 1955. They were divided into four language groups - Gujarati, Telegu, Hindi and Marathi - each living in close company with him for a week. Some of us from Poona were allowed to stay for two weeks as workers assisting the mandali in the management of the Sahavas programme.

Sweetness of love is experienced by the lover in the company of the beloved. And the bliss of life is in the union of the lover and the beloved when duality is dissolved in oneness.

Life in duality is sustained by the memory of the beloved, sweetened by the memory of love experienced in the company of the beloved and the hope of the bliss of ultimate union with the beloved.

The whole story of the Sahavas - *In the Company of God* - is recorded in the book '*Listen, Humanity*', (Harper Colophon Books) 1971, narrated and edited by D.E. Stevens, one of the fortunate participants from the Western world. Only some words of spiritual wisdom that flowed

from the unfathomable divinity of Meher Baba's Silence into the hearts of those around him then are collected here in this book and we offer this to his lovers as a gift of love in their effort to love Meher Baba, the Beloved of all hearts. May you receive the Love these words carry from God to His children in the House of their Father on this earth! Each Word of Meher Baba is a Light on the path of life. May these Words of God illumine the path of your life in such a way that each day become a Diwali of ever-renewing brightness and delight!

K. K. Ramakrishnan



Meher Baba with group of devotees at Meherabad Sahavas, Nov. 1955

THREE REASONS FOR SAHAVAS

Preparation in Meherabad for the first sahasas program were in final stages. From Oct. 28th until the 31st, 1955 Baba began visiting daily from Meherazad. Tents for sleeping were erected for the four different language groups coming and also one for meetings. A separate dining pandal with tables and chairs was pitched for serving tea, breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Free transportation from the Ahmednagar railroad station to Meherabad was also provided. Of course, all the mandali were occupied in one way or another, day and night and Baba was overseeing every detail.

For those attending the sahasas, Baba dictated instructions for each man to read carefully, which were posted on bulletin boards in the Lower Meherabad Hall. Baba gave directions:

"Particularly for the participants of the sahasas weeks, and in general for all connected with Baba. I want

you to read carefully and absorb these directions, as well as the other items arranged alongside. Namely:

- (1) The framed gist of the Circular No. 25 of May 1st 1955.
- (2) The two charts on God and Love (done by Rano Gayley).
- (3) The list of donations for the sahas weeks (made by Indian devotees).

Following the conditions laid down by Baba to his lovers and devotees in Life Circular No 25, Baba stated: "Under the existing conditions of no promises from me, no bindings upon me and no undertakings by me, my dependents must also be made to feel quite free of their material dependence upon me. Thus, they will be able to maintain a pure relationship of love for the sake of love.

"I now wish to be outwardly what I always am inwardly; living solely in love, for love and with love. In that spirit, the whole world could live with me irrespective of whether or not there happened to be any provision for food and shelter for the "todays" as well as for the "tomorrows". As it is, I am free and no bindings touch me, but I should also be free of the need to bother about arrangements for others. I now want love to reign supreme outwardly, as it always does inwardly in me.

"How can one explain love? There are as many ways of explaining love and obedience, as there are men.

There can thus be no end to the understanding of them except through obedience based on love, and through love itself. All great saints, teachers and masters say the same things in one way or another when the emphasis is laid on love for the sake of love, or failing that, on obedience in the cause of love.

"For spontaneous surrender, the heart must, so to speak, be worn on one's sleeve. One must be ever ready to place one's neck under the ever-sharp knife of command of the Beloved, and the head should figuratively be detached in order that it might be completely surrendered at the Master's feet. Obedience should be so complete that one's concern with it makes one as much awake to possibilities as it makes one deaf to impossibilities - as envisaged by the poet Hafiz:

***"I was tied to a raft
and thrown into the ocean
and then I was warned to be careful
not to let my robe get wet."***

"Yet, all this does not and cannot explain the required degree of continued readiness for love and obedience to love. In fact, one of the three reasons for this sahas is to help you grasp what love and obedience really mean.

"You must have such a clear picture in your minds of this sahas as to forget completely such things as declarations, messages and discourses by me. This is not

an occasion for the fulfillment or the making and breaking of past and future promises... I want you to be with me, near me and before me in an entirely different atmosphere, so that you can freely breathe the air of my personal presence. We must be together as intimately as if we were living under the same roof for no purpose other than that of living with each other and for each other.

"Do not look forward to any functions, meetings, timetables, programs, agendas or any cut-and-dried plans..... You are not expected to read, study, meditate or pray, but to feel at home with me as naturally and unreservedly as you would do at home in the midst of your own family and friends. I want you to be your natural selves, putting aside all the superficial niceties one usually assumes in social life. Being in my company, watching me and being watched by me, you will automatically learn and unlearn a lot, which no amount of teaching can convey. In short, there are three reasons for this sahasavas program:

First: To give you my closest company in order to bring out the oneness between us.

Second: To help you understand love and obedience, and to make you imbibe these twin aspects of the nectar of the infinite existence behind all life.

Third: To show you how to do my work of spreading love.

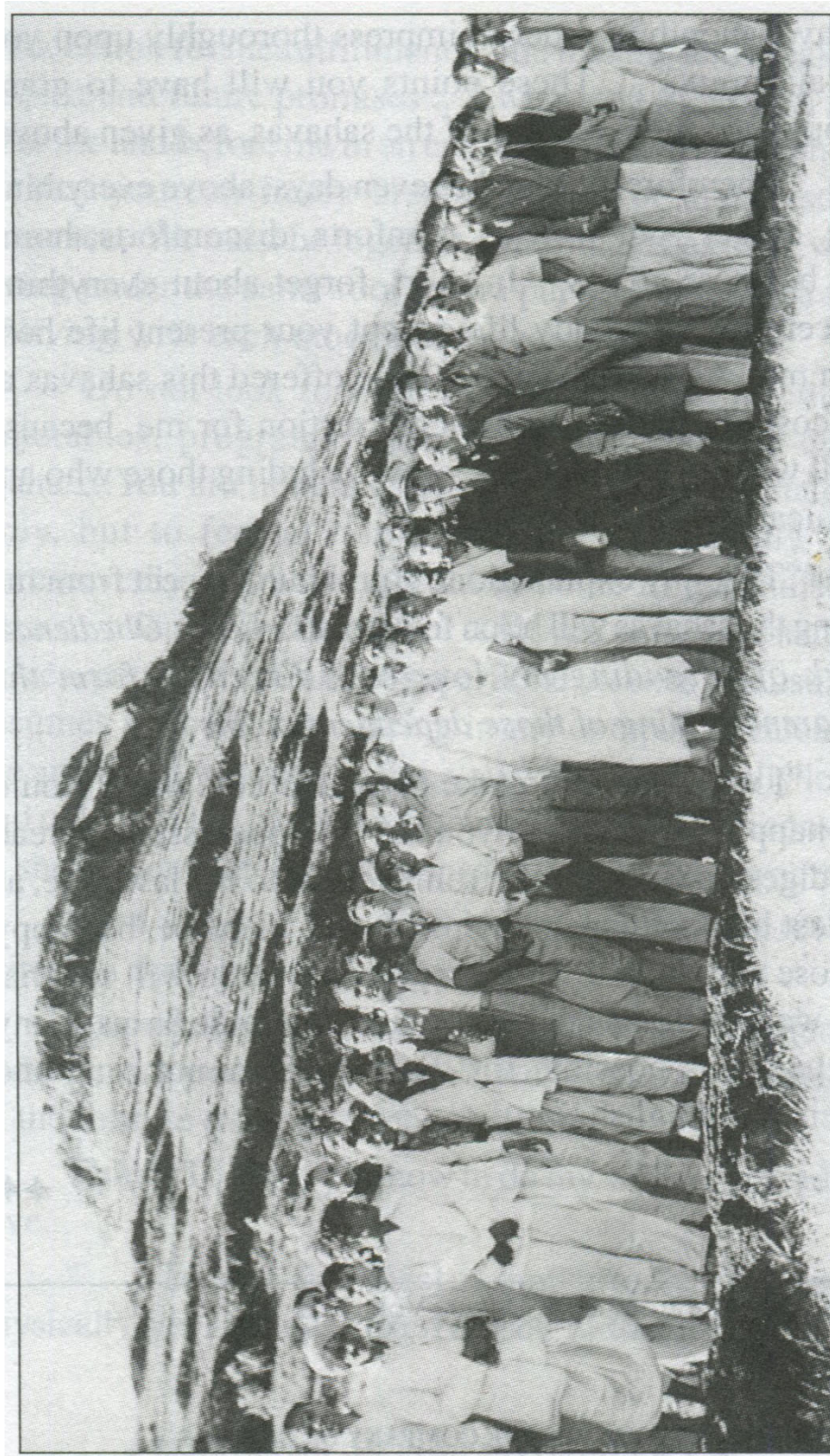
".....To say the least, I am utterly exhausted, physically, yet I intend to exert myself further for the whole

sahavas month in order to impress thoroughly upon you certain points..... These points you will have to grasp through the three reasons of the sahavas, as given above.

"Therefore, during the seven days, above everything else forget your worries, comforts, discomforts, home and business affairs. In short, forget about everything concerning your daily life except your present life here with me. As I have stated, I have offered this sahavas at the cost of additional physical exertion for me, because of all who love me and obey me, including those who are physically absent.

"The only explanations you should expect from me during the sahavas will be on four points: *Love; Obedience; Work of spreading my love* and, *Freedom from the apparent binding of those dependent on me.*"

"I want you all to take particular note that I would feel happy if each one of you not only possessed but read and digested *God Speaks* from the first to the last page, as the last book of its kind by me. I will, likewise, be happy if those among you who can possibly do so will see that this work is translated and made available in as many languages as possible for those who cannot read and understand English."



Meher Baba at the base of Seclusion Hill with the Gujarathi Sahavas Group, Nov 1955

LEAVE EVERYTHING AND FOLLOW ME

About a thousand participants, who were divided into four Language groups -- Gujarati, Telegu, Hindi and Marathi -- had the rare privilege of Baba's *sahavas* at Meherabad from 4th Nov. until 2nd of Dec.1955.

After the lovers met the Beloved in an embrace of his love and exchanged greetings, Baba began...

"I have not asked you to come here for long discourses on philosophical subjects.. A proper *sahavas* means physical proximity, as well as mingling together, as do the members of one family. But my staying with you and your staying with me do not mean the same thing. For ages and ages I have been with you, nearer to you than you feel yourself to be. Now you have an opportunity to be with me for a week and also to come nearer and nearer to me for all time.

"During these seven days I want you all to live with me as freely and intimately as the resident *mandali* have

done for years -- together. On my part, I will be equally free and frank with you in all respects. But do not anticipate hearing only pleasant things from me. As the elder in the family I may find fault with you and scold you.

"During this precious week, try at least to forget everything else so that your hearts will remain clean and open for me to step in. Do not notice either your failings, weaknesses and short-comings, or your prestige, position, learning and so-called knowledge of spiritual things. Try to forget what you think you already know.

"Let the atmosphere you have left behind remain there. You are now here physically. Try to remain here mentally as well. Follow me wherever I may be. Otherwise, though present here physically, you will remain mentally in your same old atmosphere.

"To have a passing thought, and to keep thinking of it, are two different things. If you fold your hands mechanically before me but go on thinking of your problems at home, you will be folding your hands to them and not to me.

"Do not worry about thoughts. *Never try to force your mind to check your thoughts.* Thoughts may and will come. Do not try either to invite them or to drive them away. Let the thoughts come and go unasked. By observing the most minute details about me and what I do and say, you will take little notice of your thoughts, good or bad.

"Be careful of your health and keep fit. The moment you feel indisposed, do not hesitate to consult Doctors Nilu and Kanakdandi. Those who are used to Homoeopathic treatment should go to Padri. But for those who are suffering from the malady of love, I remain their Doctor.

"At the first sign of a cold, get immediate treatment. Otherwise all of you will catch cold and start a chorus of sneezing."

With such powerful thought suggestion at work the audience broke out into a chorus of self-conscious coughs and clearing of throats. Baba looked carefully and critically at his flock.

"The most important things," he resumed, "which you have to forget for the time being are the troubles in your day-to-day life at home, such as health, money, social matters and other petty worries. Do not think that by coming here your day-to-day difficulties will necessarily be solved, and do not expect my blessings for health or wealth.

"I hold no key to such problems. I am not a yogi, wali or saint, who can and does perform miracles. If you count upon such things from me in return for your sahas with me, you may lose even what you now possess.

"I have not come amongst you for you to bow down to me, to perform my *arti* (song in praise), to worship me. These things are good for the saints, walis and yogis. I

expect much more from you. I have come to receive your love from you, and to bestow my love on you. I have descended to your level* for the one purpose of bestowing my love on you so that you may love God and become God. The rest is all illusion. Do not expect anything from me except my love for you.

"Let us not hurry. Let us go slowly. You have fully five days here. Whether a point sounds small or big, be equally attentive. I may crack jokes, I may be serious. Listening to me will never be in vain. If you cannot grasp what I say listen carefully regardless. Today, or tomorrow, you will grasp everything that I say.

"Age after age I have the one same thing to tell, but each time I say it in a different manner and from a different view-point. Do not worry when you cannot follow what I say. Merely listening may possibly help someone to love me.

"Those who fall drowsy and are inclined to take a nap should move back towards the walls. Only those who feel alert should sit near me."

And then thoughtfully, almost with a trace of sadness, "People generally remain indifferent when I am present among them. They understand and appreciate me more after I drop my body. That is the way whenever I come."

* Not specifically directed towards this particular audience, but in the sense of God descending into human form for the benefit of all mankind.

Whether moved by Baba's statement or by the need to relax muscles held too long in unused positions, several older men in front began to shift their positions with a self-conscious, apologetic air. Baba noted this at once.

"Those who feel like straightening their legs should do so without any hesitation. We are here in each other's company. Remain at ease and do not become unnecessarily cramped through formality. Now we will have a game of seven tiles," he announced unexpectedly, and with a loud shout of enthusiasm everyone poured out of the back door of the hall and onto the verandah. Baba quickly designated two teams of seven men each, a small heap of tiles was stacked in the middle of the floor, and the two sides ranged at either end of the verandah with the spectators standing off on the ground at the side...."

As the group came back into the hall, a few late arrivals were waiting to greet Baba. One smiling sahavasi came forward with a garland so large that he had difficulty unsorting himself from it. Baba chuckled as he saw the mass of confusion approaching him.

"What price did you pay for the great bulk of flowers?" he asked. "Ten rupees," was the prompt reply, at which a shout of laughter went up.

Another approaching supplicant needed an entire basket to carry his tribute of flowers. As he struggled up to the chair Baba remarked on his sallow complexion.

"You seem to be pulled down. Perhaps it is your love for me that makes your face look wan and withered."

Then one who had travelled several times with Baba on his strenuous journeys contacting the *masts* or spiritually intoxicated, approached to pay his respects.

"Are you happy?" Baba asked; "You look just the same as when I saw you last."

The old friend nodded smilingly to acknowledge his health, the greeting and his appreciation of Baba's concern. Then he turned to go away.

"Wait. Did you garland me?" Baba asked as if there were some real doubt in his mind.

"No, Baba, I did not."

"You must also garland me," Baba signified by gestures as he removed one of the many strands of flowers from his neck and handed it to the waiting man.

As the crowd settled on their haunches on the mat-covered floor Baba sat back in his seat momentarily. Then he focused his attention on the group and began to gesture as Eruch translated.

"To garland me, to bow down to me and to sing my praises are comparatively the three most unimportant things. The three most important things on the path to God-realization are love, obedience and surrender. There is no possibility of compromise about these three.

"Love is a gift from God to man, obedience is a gift from master to man, and surrender is a gift from man to master. The one who loves, desires to do the will of the beloved, and seeks union with the beloved. Obedience performs the will of the beloved and seeks the pleasure of the beloved. Surrender resigns to the will of the beloved and seeks nothing.

"One who loves, is the lover of the beloved. One who obeys is the beloved of the beloved. One who surrenders all -- body, mind and all else -- has no existence other than that of the beloved, who alone exists in him. Therefore greater than love is obedience, and greater than obedience is surrender. And yet, as words, all three can be summed up in one phrase -- Love-Divine.

"One can find volumes and volumes of prose and poetry about love. But there are very, very few persons who have found love and experienced it. No amount of reading, listening and learning can ever tell you what love is. Regardless of how much I explain love to you, you will understand it less and less if you think you can grasp it through the intellect or imagination.

"Hafiz describes the bare truth about love when he says:

'The majesty of love lies far beyond the reach of intellect; only one who has his life up his sleeve dares kiss the threshold of love.'

"The difference between love and intellect is something like that between night and day: they exist in relation to one another and yet as two different things. Love is real intelligence capable of realizing truth; intellect is best suited to know all about duality, which is born of ignorance and is entirely ignorance. When the sun rises, night is transformed into day. Just so, when love manifests, not-knowing (ignorance) is turned into conscious-knowing (knowledge):

"In spite of the difference between a keenly intelligent person and a very unintelligent person, each is equally capable of experiencing love. The quality which determines one's capacity for love is not one's wit or wisdom, but one's readiness to lay down life itself for the beloved, and yet remain alive. One must, so to speak, slough off body, energy, mind and all else, and become dust under the feet of the beloved. This dust of a lover who cannot remain alive without God -- just as an ordinary man cannot live without breath -- is then transformed into the beloved. Thus man becomes God."

At this, Baba stopped briefly and looked around at the intently listening audience. Then he plunged ahead more pointedly.

"Listen to love without philosophizing about it. None present here loves me as I ought to be loved. If all of you had such love, none of you would be left before me. You would all have realized God and we would all

have become the One which we all are in reality and in eternity.

"You accept me as being simultaneously God and man, the highest of the high and the lowest of the low; but by accepting me to be THAT, you do not *know* to be THAT. To know me as I am you must become conscious of my *real state*, and for that you must love me as I love you.

"The *mandali* who have been with me through thick and thin all these years are fully prepared for love of me to lay down their very lives at such a sign from me. Yet even they do not love me as I love them. If they did, then they would have become one with my oneness, which in reality is the oneness of us all.

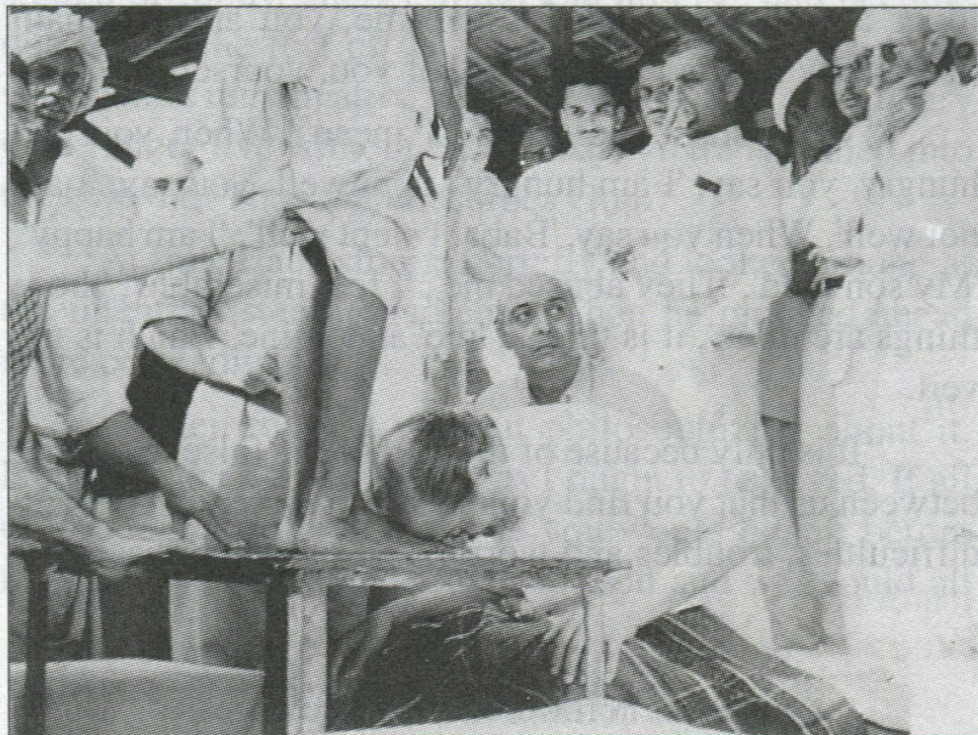
"It is love alone which can lift the veil between a lover and the beloved. Believe me, you and I remain divided by nothing but the veil of you, yourself.

"What does 'you yourself' mean? When you feel hungry, you say, 'I am hungry'. If unwell, you say, 'I am not well'. When you say, 'Baba, I slept well', 'I am happy', 'My son died', 'They abused me', 'I feel miserable', 'those things are mine', it is this 'I', 'me' and 'mine' which is the veil.

"It is only because of the veil of the false ego lying between us that you find yourselves involved in so many difficulties, troubles and worries, all of which disappear



Meher Baba washing feet of the poor in Meherabad, Nov. 6th 1955



automatically when touched by the reality of love. When the curtain of your limited 'I' is lifted - and it can only disappear through love, and love alone - you realize unity and find me as your real self, i.e. God. I say so because it is only I, everywhere. There is really nothing like you.

"It requires cycles and cycles for one to be enlightened with real knowledge of self, or God. Therefore millions upon millions of so-called births and deaths on your part are not sufficient in themselves to lift the veil of your limited 'I'. It can be removed through love though in infinitely less than a split second.

"All those who are true ascetics, yogis, *walis*, *pirs* and saints are not necessarily God-realized. Only real lovers of God, irrespective of sex, are the true *mardan-e-Khuda* (men of God). Even from among a hundred thousand such men of God, though, perhaps only one will become God-realized after many cycles.

"Both Hakim Sanai and Moulana Rumi say the same thing in different words:

'It needs many cycles for just one advanced soul to be realized.'

'When for many years man has longed for God-realization, one out of a hundred thousand such men of God, achieves it'.

"No amount of rites, rituals, ceremonies, worship, meditation, penance and remembrance can produce love

in themselves. None of these are necessarily a sign of love. On the contrary, those who sigh loudly and weep and wail have yet to experience love. Love sets on fire the one who finds it. At the same time it seals his lips so that no smoke comes out.

"Love is meant to be experienced and not disclosed. What is displayed is not love. Love is a secret which is meant to remain a secret save for the one who receives it and keeps it.

"To love Baba in hopes of achieving health, wealth, betterment of family and friends, etc., is to love all these and not Baba. Such love cannot be compared with that of Adi and his wife Roda Dubash, and Nariman and Navrozji Dadachanji and their family members. They can be justly proud of their love for me which remained unshaken in the face of tragic accidents which cost the lives of their dear ones among my dear ones. As a matter of fact Nozher (Dadachanji) has come to me, as all those do who remember me while breathing their last.

"Love God and become God. I have come to receive your love and to give you mine, as I have already said. If you love me you will find me. Unless you love me, you can never find me. Do not think that you can never love me or that you can find no time to love me. I often say that I want your love. I mean it, because that is all that I want from you. Therefore I always tell you to love me more and more.

"I have also said that you cannot love me as I ought to be loved. To do that you must first receive the gift of my love, and that gift depends upon absolute pleasure on my part in giving you just a glimpse of the reality of myself. No one can possess love by any means other than as a gift. But I give love to self and accept it myself. The giving of love knows no law save love, which by itself is the law which governs all other laws of nature.

"It is always infinitely easy for me to give - but it is not always equally easy for you to receive - the gift of my love."

Baba paused once again and his eyes moved over the faces turned patiently, quietly, even sadly towards him. Not one visage in the room indicated that the thinking, feeling, aspiring man behind it interpreted the master's words in any manner other than he intended them: that the great goal of each human being is the realization of his own oneness with God, and that there can be no greater, no more necessary boon in achieving this goal than the love and the grace of a Perfect Being who is already one with God.

"Sometimes it is also infinitely impossible for one to receive that love," Eruch interpreted Baba's wide, sweeping gestures as he continued his intense preoccupation with the subject. "That is why Kabir says that *some ask for it and do not get it, some get it unasked and yet there are those who are unable to receive it even when it is offered to them.*

"I am ever prepared to give the gift, but you must also prepare yourself to receive it. That requires real daring.

"Even in ordinary animal and human love there are upper reaches in which a mother is sometimes negligent of her own life for the sake of her offspring. Or a man can remain without sleep or food or thoughts of lust for days due to restlessness, born of true love for a woman.

"Divine love is the fire which not only eliminates all kinds of cold, but also all sorts of imagined heat. For example, amongst the very, very few who possess such love is the *mast** known as Dhondiba at Kolhapur. Though exposed to the rigours of heat, cold and rain through all the seasons, his body remains healthy, well-fleshed and strong. The fire is burning within him unknown even to those in his surroundings. His mind has no link with his body. Love pervades him from head to foot.

"Although love is beyond intellect, there are innumerable points about it which can still be explained by reason and brought within its grasp. But in finality I remain; everything else is zero, and I am the only reality.† That reality cannot be reached in illusion through illusions, and there can be no hide-and-seek about love. When God becomes man (Avatar, Buddha, Christ, Rasool), He can bestow both love and obedience upon and accept the surrenderance of any and all individuals.

□Mast: a spiritually preoccupied and divinely intoxicated person.

"I say all this as much to those who have been living with or for me all these years, as to those who are only with me now for this *sahavas*. I tell you honestly that if you obey me honestly you will become me -- your own real self.

"This is not the first time I have said this. For ages past I have been telling all to leave everything and to follow me. That means to obey me so that you may have conscious experience of me. Now is the time when those who obey me will realize me.

"Obedience which is greater than love is the one hundred per cent obedience described by Hafiz:

'Carry out every command of the master without question, as is becoming to a lucky slave.'

"About thirty years ago, before I started observing my silence, and when Meherabad was a colony of hundreds of seekers, servers and sufferers who lived in the *ashrams* (abodes), asylums (shelters), schools, dispensaries and the hospital here at that time, a visitor came to surrender to me. He could not help weeping when I told him that what he intended was very, very difficult since surrenderance means obedience, and obedience has but one meaning, and that is to obey.

† Not in the sense of Meher Baba as a person, but as one who is one with God. Baba's constant theme is that all men are really one with God, and therefore inevitably one with all God-realised beings, and with each other as well if they only knew it.

"He said he knew that, and was prepared to obey me implicitly. When I inquired if he would cut his own child to pieces if I asked him to do so, he even agreed to that. But when I asked him to remove his clothes and walk naked in the streets of Ahmednagar he began to protest and ultimately went his way.

"I am not going to ask you to do that", Baba hastened to tell the audience. "I never expect anyone to do the impossible."

Chuckles of understanding greeted this comment. A reshuffling of cramped limbs took place as a small buzz of background conversation vented the feeling of a number of individuals to their neighbours that there was not much purpose in seeking a great master if the aspirant could not face even such a first test as this.

Baba's smile faded and he began to look serious again.

"Now that you are in my sahavas you should know all about my habits and about my behaviour to the *mandali* who live with me. I love Kaikobad (one of the resident *mandali*) and often bow down to him. Whenever I go out on mast tours or for other congregations I ask Kaikobad to lay his hand on my head and bless me. Recently at Satara he wept and protested, but I told him to continue to obey me to the point of kicking me should I ask him to do so.

"Kaikobad has been with me for twelve years. He has his family. They are staying on Meherabad hill. He has dedicated everything to me and I have accepted him. He belongs to the Parsi (Zoroastrian) priest class, and hence he is also called Dastoor, which means 'a priest'. And he is a real priest. He sees Baba as Baba is to be seen, and he takes Baba's blessing as blessings are to be taken.

"He has also been silently repeating Baba's name one hundred thousand times every twenty-four hours all these years. He had the first glimpse of Divinity at Meherabad in 1946. Again on August 31, 1953 he experienced at Dehra Dun such bliss that he was on the point of dropping his body. Now he says he can see glimpses of my reality whenever he wishes.

"At such moments he sees even a dark room lit up with such brilliance that compared with it the brilliance of the sun is nothing. Then in that light he sees me. That is no miracle performed by me. I cannot do that myself. I know only one thing, that I am everywhere and in everything.

"Despite all that, Kaikobad has yet to realize God. He is on the path, and he has to go on and on. He often tells me that he is enjoying my grace, and I always tell him - and I mean it - that it is his love for me that gives him the wonderful experiences of the path. Even though glimpses, his experiences give him deep bliss and the

unshakeable conviction that I am his master. Therefore he will carry out any of my orders promptly and cheerfully.

"Kaikobad," Baba gestured as he looked towards the back of the audience, "stand up."

A slim, gentle-faced man stood up about two-thirds of the way back in the hall.

"Is not what I have said true?" Baba queried. "Yes, Baba, everything you have said is exactly true," Kaikobad replied, and looking for a moment at Baba to see if anything further was demanded of him, he sat down again.

"Whatever I say," Baba resumed, "I say it in all sincerity. Unquestioning obedience to me, without consciously knowing me, will bring you nearest to me, But it is impossible to obey me literally and spontaneously. If I were in your place, I myself would not be able to do that.

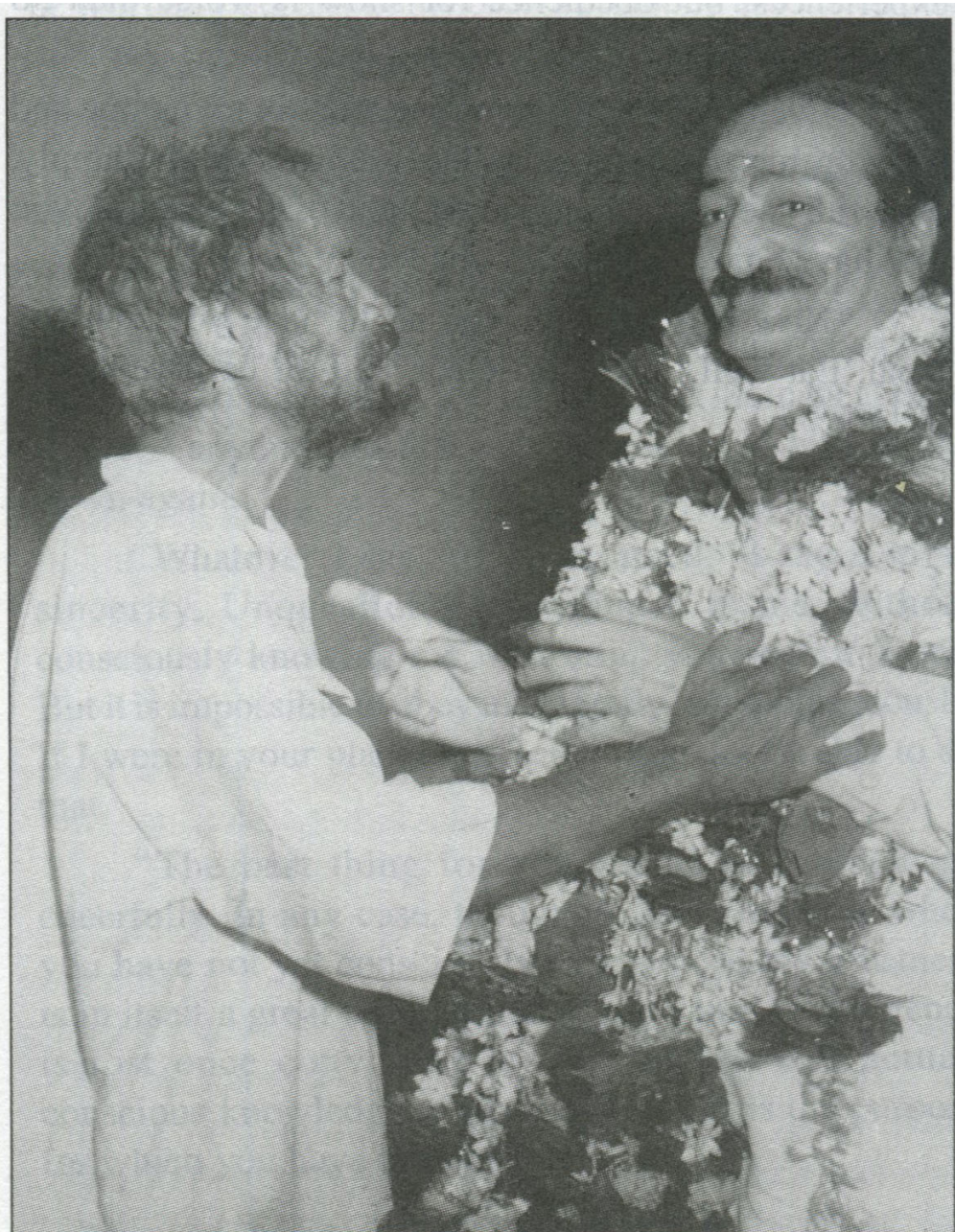
"The best thing for you would be to obey me cheerfully. In any case, though, to obey me now when you have not yet consciously experienced my greatness is in itself a great thing. Much of the value of obedience is lost once conviction is transformed into actual conscious knowledge of my reality. That is the purpose for which you have been called.

"Obedience is greater than all the spiritual experiences, but obedience for show is worse than no obedience."

"Even if one among you succeeds in loving me and obeying me the purpose of the *sahavas* will be amply, even fully served. Otherwise, instead of my sahavas, you will have enjoyed a week's picnic.

"Now it is time for you all to have your midday meal. Eat well, rest after lunch, and all be here at two o'clock."

* SAHAVAS : IN THE COMPANY OF GOD * 25 *



**Meher Baba and Mast Mohammed embracing
in Lower Meherabad, Nov 1955**

CAREFUL ATTENTION OF GOD MAN

Each language group was officially assigned a week, but allowing time for arriving and settling down, and packing and leaving at the end of the sessions, plus a day for the workers to clean between groups, the actual time with Baba amounted to about five days for each group. It has been the tradition in India from ancient times that devout persons approached a religious teacher or a spiritual master with some form of external expression of their love and reverence for him -- garlanding, offering of flowers, fruits, sweets etc. etc. Bowing down to or prostrating before the feet of the master is also an ancient tradition symbolic of one's surrender to God. Though Baba allowed these to some extent at certain occasions, depending on the nature of work he was engaged in at any given time, he repeatedly reminded his lovers that they were not important; what was important was living a life of love, reverence and humility in our moment to moment life.

As Baba came into the hall the second morning of the first week, there were more garlands, and insistent chorused shouts of hailing the God-Man "*Avatar Meher Baba-ki-jai*". Baba then remarked:

"Compared with the essentials for the path, the three most unimportant things are to garland me, to bow down to me and to sing in my praise or perform an arti. These are not necessarily the signs of love for God.

"I know well that you garland me with love. This is a good idea when we first meet. But why do it every day? I have only two coats of the colour (pink) I like most, and one is already spoiled by repeated garlanding.

"Do not waste any more time in garlanding me tomorrow. Let us not waste money, and let me not be burdened with garlands.

"Don't shout 'Avatar Meher Baba-ki-jai' every time I come in and go out of the hall. What is the use of that? Keep shouting, but do so within your hearts so that only you and not others may hear."

Like abashed schoolboys the group sat looking straight ahead, unwilling to catch a glance from the corner of a neighbour's eye.

Momentarily the air hung tense with the light reprimand, while Baba looked keenly over the hunched heads and forward-leaning shoulders.

"Did you sleep well last night?" he asked.

"Yes, Baba", was the general reply.

"Who did not sleep last night?"

Slowly one man stood up near the door, heavy brown scarf wrapped tightly about throat and head, eyes inflamed, nose running. His diagnosis was promptly read by almost three hundred pairs of eyes. Another, and then another, then several, rose to their feet.

"Why didn't you sleep last night?"

"Because I was so happy to be near you again, Baba."

"And why didn't you sleep?"

"My stomach was upset, Baba. I think I ate too much dinner because I was so glad to see all of my old friends again."

"And you?"

"Some of the Parsis were playing cards and I couldn't sleep. I do not think they should play cards when they are here to learn of God from you."

Baba was prompt with his reply.

"What has playing cards to do with one's love and longing for God? Playing with cards is better than playing with the whole of life. Shams Tabrez and his famous disciple Moulana Rumi were both very fond of playing chess. Shams' greatest work was done at the end of a game of chess with Rumi.

"When Rumi lost the game he could not help crying out to Shams, 'I have lost'.

"Then and there, with the words, 'No, you have won', Shams gave Rumi instant God-realization.

"But come now," Baba continued as he again looked searchingly at the audience, "many of you look sleepy this morning. Once more, quite honestly, who all did not sleep last night?"

Under such persistent prodding, several others rose, among them a slender boy dressed in white shirt and white shorts and with an American style crew-cut.

"Why did you not sleep?"

There was a struggle for emotional control in the handsome face of the youngster, but finally he placed his hand over his eyes and wept. "I could not, Baba, because all night I could not help remembering the happy times in the past when you used to stay at Dehra Dun," he choked out between his quiet sobs.

Baba looked gently at him for a moment, and then turned his attention to another heavy-set, intelligent-looking fellow of middle age.

"And you, what kept you awake?"

"I did not sleep because I was remembering you all the time," was the simple reply.

Staring abstractedly over their heads, Baba seemed to be thinking momentarily about the various answers given to him. Then recollecting himself he motioned to them to sit down and without a moment's hesitation looked straight at a very thin fellow, perhaps in his early twenties,

who sat just in front and to the right.

"Why do you look so pale and tired this morning?"
Eruch translated.

"I admit that I do not feel well and I did not get a good sleep," the pale one replied as he rose reluctantly to his feet.

"Why did you not rise to your feet when the others did?"

"I am a young man, Baba, and I did not want to complain like an old one."

Baba shook his head. "It is natural for all those who have bodies to develop ailments. Both young and old alike can catch colds. Youth in itself is no protection against disease. In exceptional cases, such as the one who becomes God-conscious and does not return to normal consciousness, such a one remains naturally immune to contagion. But having come down to your level, even I can catch cold and become ill as naturally as you can. You must take proper treatment."*

Thereupon the subject was dropped for that morning. Throughout the *sahavas* weeks, however, the most enduring daily theme was the meticulous questioning of the groups and of individuals about how they felt and how they had slept. At first one attributed this to the extraordinary attention of an extraordinary man, but soon it became clear that Baba was concerned that careful attention be paid to health at all times.

* For more detailed discussion, see *God Speaks*, Meher Baba, Dodd Mead, Pp. 228-229. Also Appendix II of *Listen, Humanity*, Meher Baba Harper Colophon books, Pp. 257-258.

THE WHOLE CREATION IS A PLAY OF THOUGHTS

Baba's gestures started:

"Rest assured, I definitely know from my living experience that God is the one and only reality, and that all else is illusion. All that you see and hear at this moment - this hall, our being in each other's presence, these explanations which I give and you hear, and even my incarnation as the Avatar -- all this is a dream. Every night you go to sleep and have different kinds of dreams, yet every morning you wake up to experience anew the same old dream that you have been dreaming since your birth into your present life in illusion.

"You will say, 'Baba, we are wide awake; we actually see you sitting before us; we can and do follow what you are explaining to us.' But you will admit that you would say the same thing to me if, in a dream, you found that you were near me and heard me telling you that all you felt, saw and heard was a dream.

"As long as you do not wake up from a dream, you are dream-bound to feel it to be stark reality. A dream becomes a dream only when you wake up; only then do you tell others that the life you lived in the dream was just a dream. Good or bad, happy or unhappy, in reality the dream is then recognized as having been absolutely nothing.

"Therefore I repeat that, although you are now sitting before me and hearing me, you are not really awake. You are actually sleeping and dreaming. I say this because I am simultaneously awake in the real sense* and yet dreaming -- with one and all -- the dreams which all dream.

"All your pleasures and difficulties, your feelings of happiness and misery, your presence here and your listening to these explanations, all are nothing but a vacant dream on your part and mine. There is this one difference: I also consciously know the dream to be a dream, while you feel that you are awake.

"When you really wake up you will know at once that what you felt to be wakefulness was just dreaming. Then you will realize that you and I are and always have been one in reality. All else will then disappear, just as

* It must be borne constantly in mind that, once one grants the reality of God-realization or union with God, it follows immediately that such a God-realized individual would be speaking the simple truth when he said that all of creation flowed from him, that he was responsible for the whole creation, and that all creation was in him. This holds equally for the Avatar, despite the presumably different mechanics lying back of His oneness with God. The ensuing statement therefore is a simple development of the logic of this essential fact of oneness.

your ordinary dreams disappear on waking. Then they not only cease to exist, but they are found never to have really existed.

"From birth to death you keep on growing. First you are young; then you grow old and die without knowing or caring from whence you came or whither you go. From 'Who am I?' to 'I am God' is just one long, long dream covering ages and ages in time. But this too is found never to have existed in the eternity and infinitude of your own existence, at the moment you realize your real self, or God.

"Every individual here and elsewhere is the same one, ever-indivisible God. I say this because I am responsible for the whole creation.* If I am not here, then not only will you not be here but the whole of creation with all its gross, subtle and mental spheres will not be here. In short, everything exists because I exist.

"In your case also the whole of creation exists because you exist. When you sleep soundly, then for you everything -- body, mind, world and the universe -- vanishes and is absorbed in your sound-sleep state, the most-original, beyond-beyond state of God. Then your consciousness, tired of focusing on the illusion of duality, is at rest within you.

"After being refreshed in the most-original, beyond-beyond state of God, your consciousness plunges you first into the dreams-in-sleep, and then you wake up once again

* As quoted on Page – 33

within the dream of creation. This dream of creation emanates again and again from you and for you.

"This process of repetitive sleeping-dreaming-awakening is a result of your inability to wake up in your sound-sleep state (i.e. conscious union with God). Therefore alternately you remain asleep or keep dreaming either the dreams-in-sleep or the dreams of creation.

"It is only when you wake up in the true sense (God-realization) that you find that you alone (God) exist and that all else is nothing. Only after cycles and cycles of time can one attain one's own conscious state of God and find that one's infinite consciousness is eternally free of all illusion of duality.

"The whole of creation is a play of thoughts: the outcome of the mind. It is your own mind which binds you, and it is also the mind which is the means of your freedom. You are eternally free. You are not bound at all.

"But you cannot realize your freedom by merely hearing this from me, because your mind contrives to entangle you in the illusion of duality. Therefore you only understand what I am telling you, and mere understanding cannot make you experience the truth which I tell you.

"For the truth, you must let your mind be halted and finally rooted out. Then, as soon as you see me as I really am, everything else will disappear and you will find yourself to be your own eternal and infinite self."

With this Baba signified that it was time to halt for lunch. He instructed everyone to relax after the midday meal so that they might be refreshed for the afternoon.

As he left the hall, Baba passed close to a thin, middle-aged man dressed in the loose, ochre-coloured robe worn by ascetics and known as a kafni. The unusual colour caught his eye, and he seemed to think momentarily to penetrate through the robe to the man.

"What is this? Why do you wear the kafni?" he asked. "I have put it on only for the occasion of the sahavas program, Baba," was the reply. Baba speculated a moment, weighing the answer thoughtfully.

"We have to give the shape and colour of detachment to our hearts and not merely to the clothes we wear", he suggested gently and strode on through the door.

HOW TO CLEANSE THE HEART

"Kohiyar", he beckoned, "recite in your melodious voice the 'Banam-e-Yazdan' (In the Name of God Almighty)."

As Kohiyar's sonorous voice floated through the hall Baba rose from his seat and folding his hands in front of him and with eyes almost closed, swayed slightly with the rhythm of the powerful prayer.

When it was ended, Baba remained standing and then began to gesture.

"For ages past I have been telling people to leave all and come to me. That alone is the way to liberation from all illusion. We always live in the present. From childhood to old age, we always live in the present. We forget the past because it is not there at all. There is always the eternal present.

"Even the great ones often fail to get a grip on eternity. At Hyderabad there is a well-known saint. His following runs into thousands, but even he has yet to find



Meher Baba with the Telegu group on the top of Seclusion Hill, Nov 1955

out truth.. (NONE CAN KNOW THE ONE WHO HAS FOUND GOD)."

Then Baba sat down. For a few moments he preserved the characteristic pose of abstraction which usually served as a punctuation mark as he transferred from one subject to another. Then he began to gesture again while Eruch continued the task of clothing the graceful motions with a garment of words.

"Hearing is not equal to understanding. Understanding is not equal to conception. Conception is not equal to perception. Perception is not equal to experience. Experience is not equal to becoming God-realized. To realize God is to become God. This means consciously experiencing that you are God, for you are eternally God, but you do not know it. When God becomes man (Avatar) He understands completely why you do not know that you are God, and He knows how you can become THAT.

"There can be nothing like a rigid set of rules to outline the means by which you may be led to the one and only path to God-realization. This path lies through the subtle and mental spheres, which are independent of and 'above'* the gross sphere with its innumerable stars, suns, moons and world including the earth.

"Whatever brings you nearer to the path and suits you best, is best for you, provided you are able to put it into

* In reality there is no " above " and no "below"

practice whole-heartedly and in harmony with the natural bent of your mind. A good runner who remains indifferent to racing cannot make good progress, but a lame man who keeps on limping vigorously may soon arrive at the path. If it is not used properly the best car is virtually useless to the traveller, however concerned he may be to arrive at his destination.

"I have already told you that love for God and obedience to a master are beyond the reach of man on his own, and that complete surrender is almost impossible for him. The next best thing then is for man to purify his heart. This is also very difficult because every action, whether trivial or important, good or bad, has left its impression on his mind.

"Thus every human mind is a gigantic storehouse of accumulated and fast-changing impressions. How can one gain an adequate idea of these impressions left by innumerable actions -- and particularly those born of anger, lust and greed -- during the lengthy course of the evolution of man's consciousness through the progressive stages of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms of life?

"The obvious remedies for this situation are to use no remedies. For example, if one engages in a secluded life of mere physical renunciation, one is more likely to drive underground than eliminate the dirt of impressions from one's mind. Under a false sense of external security born of the secluded life, the mind is apt to become weakened

and so stop struggling. Then, instead of achieving freedom from the bindings of impressions, the mind is likely to succumb eventually to its impressions, and thus develop greater bindings.

"By becoming physically free of the bindings created by the impressions in your mind, you have not rooted them out of your mind. Although your *body* may be temporarily freed, as it is in the sound sleep state, yet your *mind* remains bound by the impressions. Even when the body itself is dropped you do not become free, for your mind remains bound by the impressions which the mind has created.

"Even as the mind cannot be freed of bindings by mere physical renunciation, so the heart cannot be purified by mere mechanical following of the external forms and fads of religion. One must act on principles and not by rituals.

"For example, the essence of Zoroaster's teaching lies in the principles of good thoughts, good words and good deeds, and not in the multitude of rituals and ceremonies. These latter serve more as an escape from, rather than as an incentive to, the task of purifying the heart.

"In achieving good thoughts, good words and good deeds, one finds that good is not just something better than bad, nor merely the opposite of bad; and not-bad is not necessarily good. 'Good' and 'bad' are terms that reinforce

illusory duality more than they remind one of divine unity. From the point of view of truth, thoughts, words and deeds are 'good' only when they are born of the longing for, or the love of, God, the one and only truth.

"Although born a Zoroastrian, all religions are the same to me in-so-far as they help men to come nearer and nearer to God, who is ever most near to man.

"It is better not to worship if your heart is not in it. Any prayer made mechanically in a spirit of show or ceremony is all farce. It results in greater bindings through one's pretense to purity. Similarly, a self-imposed fast, if not observed through a sense of obedience or through love of truth, may make a clock the object of your fast through watching to see when it is time to stop. Such actions tighten more than they loosen the bindings of impressions.

"By not eating, you gather impressions of 'not eating'. Doing or not doing anything - whether sleeping, staying awake or even breathing - creates impressions on your mind. Therefore you may fast indefinitely, hang yourself upside down or knock out your brains on a slab of stone, and yet not free your mind of its impressions.

"Why then should you necessarily give up eating, drinking, doing your duty to your wife and children and looking after the welfare of others? Such duties do not obstruct your way to the path at all. What do come in your way are the bindings which you create unnecessarily for yourself through attachment to the objects connected with those duties. You can own the world without being attached

to it, so long as you do not allow yourself to be owned by any part of it.

"Suppose, for instance, that a man, in spite of doing his best, loses his family and is unable to obtain enough to eat for himself. If he remains unconcerned, this amounts to his having really given up both his family and eating.

"A real fast for the mind is to have no thoughts at all, but ordinarily this is impossible. Knowingly or unknowingly, like breathing, thoughts keep coming and going, whether you are dreaming the dream of your life or the dreams in your sleep. You become completely free of thoughts only when you are in the state of sound sleep - the most-original beyond-beyond state of God. But in sound sleep you also lose consciousness. Your mind is then temporarily at rest, but not freed of its impressions.

"Let us soon finish these discussions, lest some of you slip right into the most-original state!

"The best way to cleanse the heart and prepare for the stilling of the mind is to lead a normal, worldly life. Living in the midst of your day-to-day duties, responsibilities, likes, dislikes, etc., will help you. All these become the very means for the purification of your heart. This natural normal method depends for its success upon a clear idea of the force behind your thoughts, and the facts underlying your actions.

"The force behind your thoughts is the force of the impressions in your mind. The impressions are there due



Meher Baba with five of his favorite Sikhs, Nov 1955

to your own previous actions. Actions are the cause of impressions and thoughts are but the expression of the impressions. This being true, the more you try to check your thoughts, the more you interfere with the natural process of their expression. Sooner or later, with the added force produced by suppression, the impressions are bound to express themselves completely.

"The truth of action is that every action, significant or insignificant, voluntary or involuntary, is at once impressed in turn upon your mind. Like a non-greasy stain, a light impression can be easily wiped out, but impressions caused by actions conceived in anger, lust or greed are hard to remove. In short, actions produce impressions, and impressions produce thoughts. Thoughts in turn tend to precipitate further action.

"For the purification of your heart, leave your thoughts alone, but maintain a constant vigil over your actions. When you have thoughts of anger, lust or greed, do not worry about them, and do not try to check them. Let all such thoughts come and go without putting them into action. Try to think counter-thoughts in order to discern, to discriminate, to learn, and above all to unlearn the actions which are prompted by your own impressions.

"It is better to feel angry sometimes than merely to suppress anger. You then have an opportunity to think about anger, its causes and its consequences. Although your mind may be angry, do not let your heart know it. Remain unaffected.

"If you never feel angry you will be like stone, in which form the mind is least developed. Similarly, if you never have lusty thoughts you cannot achieve the merit of having avoided lustful actions.

"Let the thoughts of anger, lust and greed come and go freely and unasked without putting them into words and deeds. Then the related impressions in your mind begin to wear out and become less and less harmful. But when you put such thoughts into actions - whether overtly or secretly - you develop new impressions worse than those which are spent in the act. These new impressions root even more firmly in your mind.

"The fire of divine love alone can destroy all impressions once and for all. However, remembering me can keep down the impurities in the impressions in your mind, as alum catches hold of (flocculates) dirt in a vessel of turbid water. Therefore, when you feel angry or have lustful thoughts, remember Baba at once. Let my name serve as a net around you so that your thoughts, like mosquitoes, may keep buzzing around you and yet not sting you. In that manner you can prevent unwanted thoughts from turning into unwanted actions, and thus eventually bring your heart to the purification required for me to manifest therein.

"But it is not child's play to remember me constantly during your moments of excitement. If, in spite of being very angry, you refrain from expressing anger, it is indeed

a great achievement. It means that when your mind becomes angry your heart does not know it, just as when your heart loves me your mind need not know it. In fact, your mind does not know that your heart loves when, prepared to give up life itself, you lead a life of day-to-day obedience and duty.

"You can also entrust your mind to me by remembering me or repeating my name in your heart as often as you can. Remember me so often that your mind is at a loss to find other thoughts to feed on.

"Although I am 'taking' my own name continuously, I have come to hear it repeated by my lovers, and even though I were deaf, I would hear it if you repeated it only once with all your heart in it. If you cannot remember me constantly, then always take (repeat, think of) my name before going to sleep and on waking up.

"At least remember to remember me when you breathe your last, and you will come to me. But how will you remember at the last moment, unless you start to remember me right now?

"Kammu Baba, whom many revere as a saint in Bombay, recently sent me word asking to be relieved of his duties and to return unto me. I advised him also to take my name when breathing his last.

"In his last moments, Nozher took my name. So did my brother Jamshed and many others who have come to me. But it is only the heroes who come to me in their

physical form. To these, death itself surrenders ultimately."

With these words Baba left off his gesticulations and gazed thoughtfully at the clock at the end of the hall. It was only four-thirty, but it had been a long, full day, with few interruptions in the flow of thought....

"You have listened patiently today. I am eager to have done with these words and to finish what we must say during this week of *sahavas*...."

Baba motioned to the four musicians, and at once the audience hushed as devotional music filled the hall. Once again the rhythmic clapping of the audience kept time with the music and the men swayed to the surges of feeling in the song. There was an air of high good humour after the meaty discourse, punctuated by the recent sharp burst of humour.

By five o'clock Baba was on his feet and off on a brief inspection of the kitchens and the sleeping quarters. Here and there he would reach out for a brief scuffle with someone, much as a boy in his teens. A favourite trick was to raise his right arm high in a long, slow arc, then bring his hand crashing down into the grip of some grinning, tensed devotee. If the sting had not thrown the man completely off guard, a brief pushing and pulling ensued in which both parties tried to throw the other off balance.

Promptly at five-thirty Baba climbed into the blue car with the complement of *mandali* and they left for Meherazad to spend the night.

THE OCEAN OF GRACE

"True worship is an expression of devotion, not just saying prayers and making supplication. For you to worship me truly, it is necessary for you to have my grace. What is grace? No bargaining whatsoever is possible in the receiving of grace, and there is absolutely no specific condition for its bestowal. It may be given freely to anyone, whether saint or sinner, intellectual or illiterate, man or woman. Grace is just grace, nothing more and nothing less.

"Although it is next to impossible, yet it is conceivable that one might become one hundred per cent prepared by one's own efforts, and thereupon realize God. In such an improbable event, God-realization is not through grace.

"But if the worst sinner stood before me and I had the whim (lahar), I could make him realize God in less than the flash of a second. That would be grace. At the very instant my grace descends upon you, you also become me and we remain one.

"It is easier for me to come as an Avatar than for you to receive my grace. The problem is that once you have been conditioned by duality there is no end to the conditions which restrict your ability to receive my grace. Therefore it is difficult for my grace to flow from me to you.

"That is why it is not as easy as it sounds for me to get the whim to cause you to receive my grace. As a matter of fact it is flowing sufficiently all the time to fill one and all receptacles everywhere.

"There is rarely a vessel which is not filled with other things. A vessel must first be emptied before it can be filled by the flow of my grace. It is also my grace which helps a vessel to become completely emptied in the first place.

"The sun is now shining brilliantly outside this hall, but the sunlight does not reach you here under the roof. The sun is doing its duty of giving light. You have also to do your duty in removing whatever comes between you and the sun.

"Unless you break open the roof, how can you ask the sun to pour its light upon you ? You have raised this roof of 'ignorance' over your own self. Demolish it and you will find that you yourself are the light and you yourself are the sun.

"Through my grace, a sudden crack in the roof can let the sunlight in on you immediately, but one in a million

roofs might thus attract my grace. I am an ocean of grace, but I am also hard as flint when you try to draw that grace from me. The flow of my grace to you depends upon the intensity of your love, for it is love which attracts my grace to you.

"Generally it is rightly said that the right time must arrive for grace to descend. Yet in a particular sense this is absurd. The contradiction arises because words are never enough to express spiritual truths accurately as they exist in the higher spheres, far above intellect and understanding.

"Suppose I happen to have the whim to make you realize God -- simply because you happen to be near me physically at that moment -- and you do realize God. That is grace, and it is also the right moment for you. In short, as long as you do not receive grace, the right moment has not come for you. And when you do receive grace the right moment has come for you.

"The greatest difficulty lies in the easiest matter. It is most difficult for you to become (knowingly) God because it is easiest for you to be what you have (unknowingly) been all the time, and what (unknowingly) you will always be until it is the right moment for grace to descend upon you.

"'Impossible' and 'possible' are opposites in the realm of duality, but truth lies beyond all duality. If on a

bright sunlit morning I tell you that it is night, you will be lying if you agree with me that this is so. But if you do not agree, that will mean I lied to you.

"Such an impossible situation would not exist if, when I say it is night, you actually find that it is pitch dark in broad daylight. For this you need grace.

"You can find more or less all of what I am telling you in books of various kind, but all of those, and all of this, pale in comparison with the spiritual realities which lead to the one divine reality - God.

"The time is rapidly approaching when a tidal wave will rise in the ocean of grace. Then the usual process by which the water in the rivers flows into the ocean will be reversed and the ocean water will rush through the river beds. Be prepared to receive this overflow of grace."

BELOVED GOD IS INFINITELY BEAUTIFUL, SO GLORIOUS

Baba said a few words on *Dnyan* - *Divine knowledge*:

"Dnyan is of two kinds, imperceptible (paroksh) and perceptible (aparoksh), Ilmul Yakin and Huq-ul-Yakin (Becoming). We will skip over the intermediate stages. It is also referred to as intellectual knowledge and spiritual knowledge. Volumes have been written on knowledge. However much I would like to explain it, it is impossible. Knowledge, or wisdom, is to be experienced. Still, I will take you nearest to understanding the subject as never done before.

"Knowledge through mind is not Huq-ul-Yakin, the conviction of Becoming. There is an infinite difference between intellectual knowledge and the knowledge gained by Becoming. Even knowledge through the mind state only a few achieve. I am in all. This knowledge that I am in all, in everything, am everything and that I am the only one - only a very few realize through the mind.



Meher Baba inside his Tomb at Meherabad Hill, Sep. 1954

"Volumes abound in Hindu philosophy about Knowledge. In *God Speaks* I have explained it very clearly. After you read the book, you will come to the understanding that there is nothing besides 'I'. This is not Knowledge, this is understanding. From the beginning to the end, there is nothing but God. After reading about it, you will come to the conclusion that you are God. But this is not even mental knowledge; it is only mental or intellectual understanding. What is mental knowledge and what is mental understanding? We come to the understanding that we all are one. When you finish reading *God Speaks*, you will say what Baba has said is true. Mental understanding is that which makes you understand that God is everywhere and nothing exists but God. But within a few minutes, this understanding is disturbed by a sense of suffering, or by some insult and so on.

"What is mental knowledge? Suppose a man has read many books, even *God Speaks*, and he comes to the understanding that I am all in all. He takes it for granted that Baba is one with God. But even when he suffers some insult or humiliation or suffering, he says it is all God's will and has no thought of revenge or hatred or anything of the sort. This is mental knowledge. And even this mental state very few gain.

"After this, there are two other stages, and then the last conviction of Becoming, "I am God", etc. Eruch has

not to think he is Eruch. In the same way, with this knowledge, the person concerned has never to think that he is God. This conviction through Becoming very, very few attain.

"Why I started on the explanation of Dnyan was from that incident in England of standing before the camera in the severe cold. We should not pretend to be what we are not. God knows everything, and everything means infinitely everything. Everything includes everything God knows. All this has been described in God Speaks. I know of only one sin, and that is of posing to be what we are not. There is a solution even for avoiding such a situation. Remember one thing, that only God exists and God knows everything. He is everything, present everywhere and knows everything. By remembering this always, you will not try to pretend to be what you are not.

"There is another sin. Keki (Nalavala) will say God is everything and everywhere. Then God must be in him, too. God Himself is the one who poses! That is true. But, in the words of Hafiz, in such a situation *"keep silent. Don't utter God's name."* There is nothing like sin. God is everywhere acting infinite parts. But Hafiz says in a situation such as Keki's, be quiet and say I have committed the sin. It is my fault.

"Then there is the second stage of Dnyan after mental knowledge. This second stage of knowledge makes you know that God has done everything; still, Truth

makes you say, "Yes, I have committed the fault." Very few come to this stage.

"When one becomes That, it is everything. With it, he comes back and declares, "I know Myself!" and he says, "I am God." There is no posing in the Sadguru state. "I and my Father are one... Come unto me.... Follow me, leave everything" - is not pretense. He is THAT! We all are one. God is one infinite ocean. We should pay respect to that unity of God.

"Even to cut ourselves to pieces to become God will not carry us far. Beloved God is so infinitely beautiful, so glorious, that to sacrifice our body for Him is nothing. What ever I say, I say with authority. God is so precious that to Him the cutting of the body to pieces is no offering!"

"Listen! Zarathustra was the Avatar. The essence of his three principles is to be found in the teaching of all religions. What I say also comes within these three Zoroastrian Principles.

Spread his name.

Don't bring Him into Disrepute.

Learn to love God.

Think of me always!"

Meher Baba & Five Perfect Masters



Sai Baba



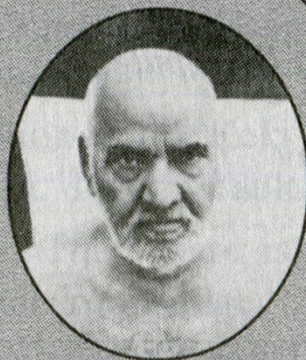
Narayan Maharaj



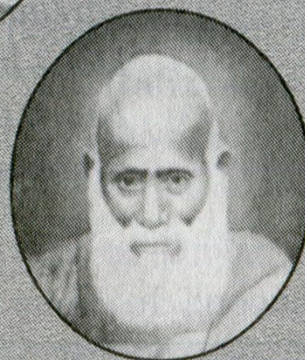
Hazarat Babajan



Avatar
Meher Baba



Upasani Maharaj



Tajuddin Baba

FIVE SADGURUS PUT TOGETHER MEAN BABA

"The five greatest 'thieves' in the world," he began, "are the five living Perfect Masters of their time. They often steal the hearts of people, and periodically they also steal me and bring me down amongst you. Again and again I must become what I am, and each time this is due to the five Perfect Masters. Wherever I may be, at whatever time, it will always be due to those five.

"I never come of my own wish. It is always the five Perfect Masters who bring me down in each avataric period. Those five hold the key to all of creation - which contains a number of universes.

"I have explained in detail in *God Speaks* how God becomes man as the Avatar (Buddha, Christ, Rasool) and men become God as Perfect Masters (*Sadgurus, Qutubs*).

"It is because of the five Perfect Masters that I appear here before you. They fetch me down, and I experience myself as everything and tell you that I am everything.

"The state of God-realization cannot be described. It can only be known to those who achieve that supreme experience of the conscious state of God. It is beyond the domain of mind, which persists only through the sixth plane of spiritual consciousness. At that stage God is seen through the mind as being everywhere, all the time. But that is not the supreme experience, as the 'seer' and the 'seen' still remain two.

"The five Perfect Masters are the five persons of their age who only become God but, after achieving God-realization, also come down to the ordinary normal consciousness of man. Thus they possess simultaneously God-consciousness, plus mental, subtle and gross-consciousness. The world is never without the five men-God.

"In spite of appearing as five different men, they are and always remain one God, as each one has exactly the same supreme experience of God-consciousness. Nevertheless, in external relations with the world, each shows a different personality, with his own characteristic traits, tastes, nature, habits and ways of dealing with people.

"For example, both Sai Baba and Babajan were very fond of hearing *qavwaalis* (Sufi songs), and Upasani Maharaj had no taste for them, although he was equally capable of appreciating devotional music.

"Perfect Masters are not necessarily recognized as such in the world. They, too, often meet with opposition

and have to share persecution from the masses born of ignorance. However in general they meet comparatively little opposition, particularly when their function as masters remains more or less unknown.

"But the Avatar, who is God-incarnate, must always face the headache of severe opposition. It occurs in every avataric-yuga (cycle of divine manifestation). Zoroaster, Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed - all had to face it. The same picture is before my eyes today.

"All the five Sadgurus (Perfect Masters) put together mean Baba. I have come so that you can escape from the cage of maya, and experience (know) me in your lifetime. Since the very beginning of the illusion of creation, *maya*, which makes illusion appear as reality, has been hanging around my neck in all of you. That is why I must come (as the Avatar) again and again. That is why I also came back from my *New life*, so that you might realize that all else - beauty, money, position, worlds, universes - is as valueless as zero in comparison with God, who alone is worth seeing and becoming.

"Those who live for me and my work, contact me gradually, become intimately connected with me, dedicate their all to me and become my dependents. From time to time, individually or collectively, with me or in accordance with my instructions, they carry out various activities connected with my work. There are a number among them who must necessarily carry out my detailed instructions

daily and continuously, living as and where I want them to live.

"For example, at different times in the past there have been various institutions here at Meherabad. There have been a hospital, dispensaries, schools, shelters for the poor, and separate *ashrams* for boys, men, women, the mad and the masts. All were run free and were open to people irrespective of their caste, creed or class.

"I make the best use of money when I have it, and dissolve everything when I have none. Gifts of love I accept with love, and I disburse them with love. I maintain no institutions on a permanent basis, such as those run elsewhere by self-perpetuating organizations. Every heart that loves me continues, regardless of the presence or absence of institutions, to remain my *ashram* for my work.

"Similar processes are repeated in every avataric period, and thus matters proceed, age after age. Among those who are very dear to me there are those whose dependency increases day by day. Eventually they become dependent on me for everything.

"When I first set foot in Meherabad over thirty two years ago I had nothing, but in the course of my subsequent activities here and elsewhere, over a crore (ten million) of rupees must have been spent for my work. Today I have nothing. I give no value to money for the sake of money.

"When I talk of money I come down to your level and say things from that level, but I repeat that I am not in

the least concerned with money. I am told that one of you has inquired of Pendu today whether money could be offered to me. This reminds me of the attitude towards money of Sai Baba, one of the five Perfect Masters.

"Sai Baba had exceptionally lustrous eyes and a wonderful personality. He was fond of smoking chilam (an earthen pipe) and used to cough and spit freely in the presence of his visitors. He always asked point-blank for money of all those who visited him. In some cases he would ask the same person for money again and again, until the visitor was stripped clean, with no money left even for his return journey. However Sai Baba would keep no money and used to give it away.

"Bhajans and *qavwaalis* were often sung before him by Hindus and Moslems, who revered him alike. But you will never be able to understand thoroughly how great Sai Baba was. He was the very personification of perfection. If you knew him as I know him you would call him the master of creation.

"During his lifetime there were few who *really* loved him, and there were many who could not understand how one who constantly grabbed money from visitors could be a saint! But now you find Sai *mandirs* (temples), Sai match-boxes, Sai 'this' and Sai 'that' mostly made by the same worldly-minded people who mocked Sai Baba during his lifetime.

"Here in my presence you feel like dozing now, but after I drop the body, like Sai Baba, people will begin to understand my divinity.

"During the three years that Upasani Maharaj stayed in Khandoba's temple at Shirdi he lived on water alone under orders from Sai Baba. Maharaj was the only one there who knew who Sai Baba really was. Maharaj himself was so great that if his grace were to descend on a particle of dust, it would be transformed into God.

"But in contrast to Sai Baba, Maharaj for many years chased away those who offered him money. In later years however he began to accept what people offered out of their love for him. That is how the present Upasninagar, with its temples, residential quarters, etc., has come into being and is maintained.

"Babajan, whom I often call '*the Emperor*', was really the emperor of emperors. She lived most of the time under a *neem* tree in the cantonment area of Poona, staying there during all seasons regardless of sun, rain or cold. Although wrinkled with age, she remained very energetic to the last, always looking bright, and usually cheerful. She had almost no wants, and there was no question of money in her life, which was that of a real *fakir* (poorest of the poor).

"Among those who were deeply devoted to her was a large number of Pathan and Baluchi soldiers who would often flock around her seat under the tree. But when, in a

mood of *Jalal* (divine majesty), she would rise from her seat with a stick in her hand, the strongest men in the group would run away.

"It was Babajan who caused me in less than the flash of a second to experience my most-original state of being the Ancient One (Avatar).

"Narayan Maharaj had absolutely no physical personality. He was short-statured like Gustadji, but more lean. He always dressed in fine clothes and used to have a diamond ring flashing on one finger. He lived in grand style in Kedgaon, living a life of routine *arti-puja* (ceremonial worship). He never asked for money directly, but indirectly he used to impress this point upon his visitors and devotees.

"Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur was completely indifferent to his immediate surroundings. He was *taj* (the crown). You can have no idea who he was. I do know who he is. People used to crowd around him during his lifetime and still flock around his shrine by the thousands.

"All five of these Perfect Masters have brought me 'down', and all that I have become is due to these five. I am made of all the attributes of all five of these Masters, and my avataric state comprises the five states of these five Sadgurus (*Qutubs*). Naturally, therefore, the qualities of all five are in me.

"Since I began to observe silence (July, 1925) I have not touched money except when I give it to the poor and

to the masts. Sometimes I ask for money from those who love me. Sometimes I receive money from them unasked, At times I refuse all money offered to me. But I have never obtained money through any such thing as the miracles which the yogis occasionally perform. It is only money offered with love that I accept and disburse for my work.

"At this moment Sai Baba's attribute is uppermost in me. If people are to know about me, they should know everything about me. Those who love me should continue to love me. Those who do not love me do not affect me. I am what I am and I will remain what I am for all time and under all circumstances. Money comes, money goes, I remain the *fakir* that I am.

"Christ often said, 'I forgive you, I forgive you'. Those who loved Christ accepted His *prasad* (offering) of forgiveness. But those who would not recognize Christ naturally could not understand Him. His words were just words to them.

"I can forgive; I have come to forgive. Forgiveness is the highest thing for those who are forgiven. It is not a great thing to me to forgive. In fact, in reality there is nothing to be forgiven, for there is really nothing like good and bad. *You* find them so, and they *are* there in duality, due to your own bindings in duality.

"In the bondage of duality there is good and there is bad, but in reality everything but God is zero. *Maya*, which causes you to mistake illusion for reality, is present for you

but not for me. *For me, only I am, and nothing else exists.* It therefore means nothing for me to forgive, and everything for you to be forgiven.

"Forgiveness consists in loosening the bindings of duality in *maya*, which makes you feel and find the One as many. Therefore 'I forgive you' amounts to the loosening of your bindings.

"Although it takes a lot of time to build a big stack of hay, a single lighted match can burn all of it in no time at all. Similarly, regardless of the accumulated dirt and refuse of sins, divine forgiveness burns them away in no time."

I NEED NO PREACHERS

"Wherever I go, people flock about me by the hundreds and thousands. That kind of love is not what I want. Whether people worship or vilify me, I remain what I am. Whether the whole world believes in God or denies Him, God always remains God. I look forward to the love which enables the individual to obey me, so that he may find me and eventually become me.

"Therefore I do not want merely crowds to be attracted towards me. I want really sincere souls. I do not necessarily wait for them to come to me. I often go to them. I can - and do, do my own work. You can - and should - share it too.

"It is easy to collect crowds, and it is easy for crowds to collect. My greatness cannot be established in the crowds and through the crowds, but even a few with love can make the masses feel my greatness, and keep the greatness established in their hearts. One single person who really loves me can move the whole world.

"There is no one here, including myself, who can so love me. If all of you became my real lovers we would need several more worlds for all of you to work in for me.

"My work for you does not consist in your going around beating a big drum for me. Love needs no propaganda. You need love yourself in order to propagate love among others. To spread my love among the people, you have to make them understand me as you understand me. For that you have to bring them to love me as you love me, and that means you have to cause them to feel my love as you feel it. The best way is to show others by your own example how much you love me.

"The world is too full of preachers and teachers. Never forget that I have not come to teach, and I need no preachers.

"In the intimate spirit of the *sahavas* I must be free and frank with you and tell you whatever I feel like saying. Why shout to others, 'Baba says God is the only reality and all else is illusion', when you yourself cannot help whispering to me about your own illusions? There are doubtless many among you here who are sincere and painstaking in your efforts to explain my message to one and all, that they should ignore illusion and awaken to reality.

"Yet these sincere workers do not hesitate to bring to my attention their own tales of illusory woes and worries, such as, 'Baba, I am short of money', 'My wife is



Meher Baba with followers from Hamirpur at Meherabad during Sahavas of Nov 1955

not in good health', 'I am about to lose my job', 'There is trouble in my business', and so on.

"Would it be truthful for one of these to tell others, Baba says, 'Do not worry about illusory things. God knows every thing and God does every thing?' Why preach at all what you yourself cannot put into practice? If you do not find yourself free of falsehood, envy, slander, backbiting and hatred, and if you find in yourself lack of love and consideration for others, then instead of telling others, 'Baba says this' and 'Baba says that', you had best keep quiet and not show your face to those whom you would like to win over to me.

"Suppose one of my followers is speaking before a gathering and trying to tell them that Baba is reality and all else is illusion. Suppose that just then a telegram is given to him which tells of a bus accident in which all of his family have been killed. If, in spite of the tragedy and pain of what has happened, he continues to speak with greater conviction, then he has achieved real authority to speak about me and my teachings.

"You win the right to tell others what you first accept in letter and spirit for yourself. Show outwardly only what you have won inwardly.

"There is no doubt, for example, that I am the Avatar, the Ancient One, but how do you know that I am He? You say so mainly because I say so. I say so based on my own living experience of being That. But for you it is just a belief until you become me. Suppose your belief is wrong?

"What I want to impress upon you is this: never give a twist to what you feel deep down in your own hearts. If you feel I am the Avatar, say openly 'Baba is the Avatar'. If you feel I am a fraud, do not hesitate to say, 'Baba is a fraud'. I remain unaffected by praise or abuse. If you speak what you feel to be true, you have the force of truth to make others accept truth.

"Honest differences between workers labouring in a common cause are signs of the vitality of the work. But a spirit of discipline is also essential in all creative activities of life. How can people work jointly without discipline, and on the other hand, where would there be scope for self-control and discipline if there were no differences between workers?

"Your eyes, ears, nose and mouth are placed in different positions to serve varying purposes. They also appear different in size and shape, and yet all are equally yours. Besides serving specific direct purposes, all your organs are also complementary to each other, and in this respect equally valuable to you. There is no question of one organ competing with another for supremacy of position or service to the body. Each serves in its individual capacity, and all harmonize in the smooth functioning of the whole body.

"Differences between workers who toil in the cause of love and truth can either accentuate or mutilate them for other persons, and for the workers as well. Therefore

differences must be properly harmonized and fairly adjusted with the aid of discipline, which is more to be lived sincerely within oneself than enforced upon others. But neither differences nor discipline should ever be raised above love and truth. They should be sacrificed rather than be allowed to mar or cloud the main object. A body without a soul is best buried, burned or disposed off as quickly as possible. No one would like to die to save one's eyes or ears.

"Your love for me should have free expression in the mode or form best suited to you. It should shine through you to others, awakening their hearts to receive this divine gift. Gatherings and meetings in my name should be a channel for the expression of my love, and to give them any other importance is to misunderstand my cause.

"Organizations may be necessary for carrying out work of a routine nature, but if I am the Avatar I need no such things for my own work. Although I would not be worth loving if I were not aware of someone's unexpressed love for me, why should anyone who wishes to express it be compelled to do so through some office or organization?

"My office should be the heart of everyone who loves me. The heart of each should be my shrine, and my lover the priest of that temple of love. Such a temple comes first, and the priest afterwards. A cart placed before the horse can serve no purpose. Love, and the heart which has love, are of greater importance than questions of the

position or prestige of those who choose to take up my work.

"A heavy railway train with two engines pulling it in the same direction is quickly moved up a steep grade. But a few cars pulled by two engines straining in opposite directions cannot make progress even on level ground.

"Forget the past and make the most of the present. Keep your own hearts clean. Learn to love each other first before you tell others about my love for one and all. Give love, receive love, gather love, everything else is dissolved eventually in the truth of divine love.

"Let your own life of love for Baba be the message of Baba's Love for one and all."

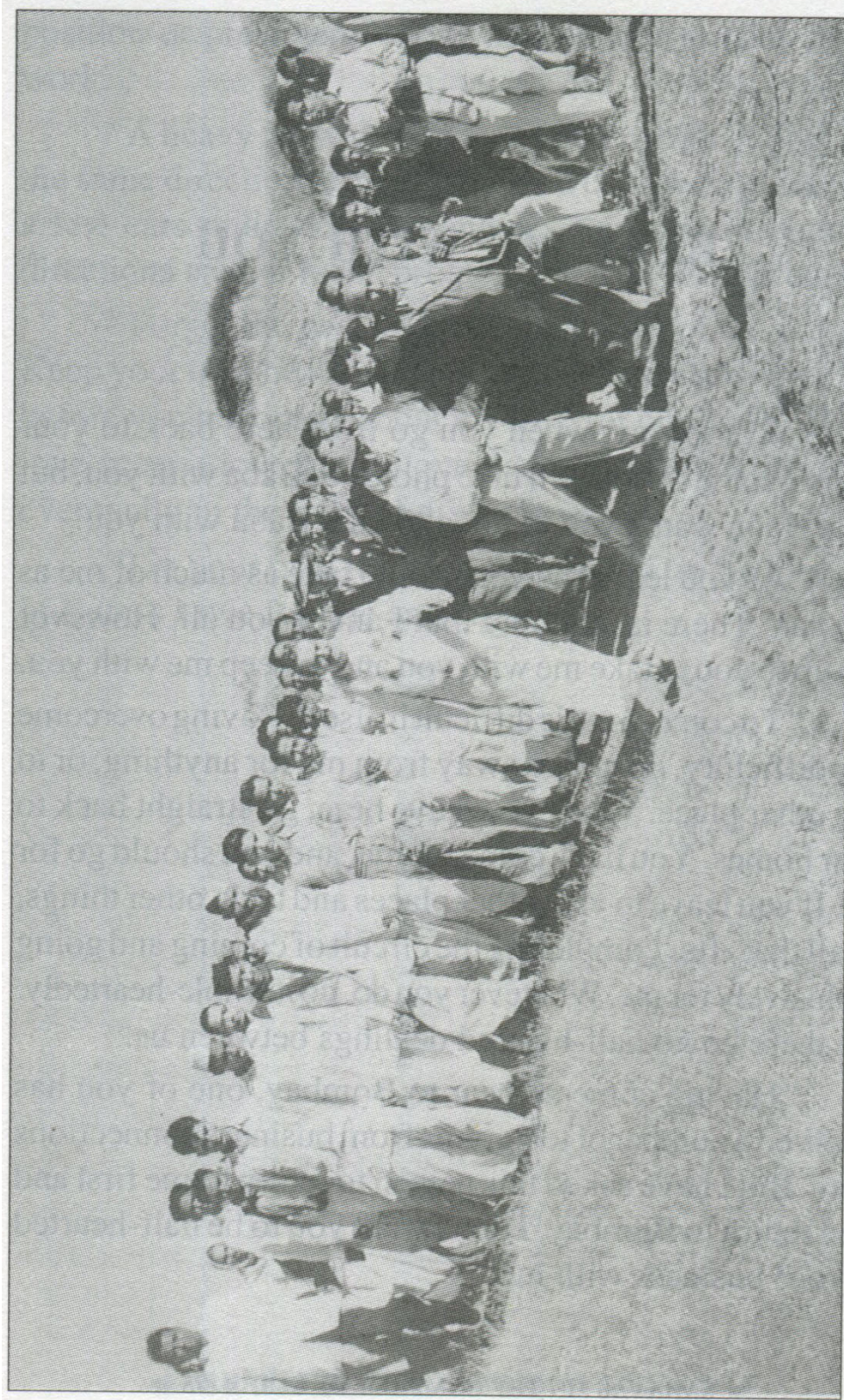
KEEP ME WITH YOU

"Tomorrow, when you go from here back to your homes, some of you will take photos of Baba with you, but what Baba wants you to do is to take Baba with you.

"As you leave me you should take as much of me as you can. There is no doubt that I am in you all. However it is up to you to take me with you and to keep me with you.

"To come to me is difficult in itself. Having overcome this difficulty, do not go away from me for anything, or to any other place. When you leave here, go straight back to your homes. You have come for me, and you should go for me. If you leave to visit other places and to do other things, do all that after completing the circuit of coming and going exclusively for me. Whatever you do, do it whole-heartedly. Let there be no half-hearted dealings between us.

"Having come so near to Bombay, one of you has received a number of telegrams from business connections there. But I have asked this person to return home first and then return to Bombay. I don't want you to be half-hearted in your business with me."



Meher Baba in Meherazad walking along the path to Seclusion Hill with the Sahavas group, Nov. 1955

EXPECT NO MIRACLE FROM ME

"Now I wish to talk with you about miracles. This matter is always coming up, and no matter how often I tell people that I have never consciously performed a miracle, these stories still persist. I want to tell you all very honestly again that I have never consciously performed a miracle.

"Ages and ages ago I did perform one great miracle, and the whole of this illusion of creation came from me.* I will perform another such miracle at the time when I break my silence. That will be my first and last miracle in my present incarnation.

"Expect no other miracle from me, and do not associate me with any others. There is a stream of letters from both East and West describing the wonderful experiences of people who say they 'see' me, and 'find' that I do things for them, or 'experience' things which happen through my intervention.

* One must bear constantly in mind the context of "my Father and I are one."

"This is all news to me, as I do nothing of the sort. But there need be no wonder at these things, for people's own love for me and faith in me can do anything.

"Rawalbhai, tell these people what you have personally witnessed when your district badly needed rain.

"One of the *sahavasis* rose to his feet and in a few brief sentences told of one of Baba's most ardent followers who had asked in Baba's name that it rain in their parched district. And to the joy of both those who wanted the rain and those who loved Baba, it had rained.

"We need not doubt what Rawalbhai says," Baba continued. "He has witnessed this with his own eyes. But the fact remains that I did not know about this, and I did nothing to bring the matter about.

"If I wished, I could make this harmonium dance and play songs all by itself in front of you. Seeing this, you would be sufficiently impressed to obey me, but your obedience would be towards the singing and dancing harmonium, not me.

"You should know two things which have happened during the last two months. In one instance a dead child, whose parents did not love me and who had not even seen me, is said to have come to life again as my name was said over it. In the second instance a young man who loved me dearly and obeyed me implicitly died a tragic death, with my name on his lips to the very last.

"Let me tell you first of the so-called miracle of the dead child returning to life in my name. We recently received a letter from Hamirpur describing this event in great detail.

"A seeker after the truth by the name of Ramdas was directed by his *guru* to call on me at Satara during my last seclusion there. It happened by coincidence that I had sent for all the resident *mandali* to discuss a phase of my work with them. When I inquired if all were there, Eruch had in all truthfulness to tell me about the visitor whom they had left behind.

"I then allowed Ramdas, the visitor, to come to see me, but only through one of the windows, and he was instructed then to go away. Shortly thereafter, he tells my followers in Hamirpur, he saw me in three different forms, as Ram, as Krishna, as----but I have forgotten the third name given in the letter from Hamirpur.

"Because of the vision Ramdas had seen, he went into the country-side of Uttar Pradesh, rather than to Nasik for the *sinhast* (periodic) fair as he had originally planned. In Uttar Pradesh he first fasted for some time, and then began to spread my message of love.

"Ramdas selected an area hostile to love and devotion, but he prevailed upon the head of one village to agree to a *kirtan* (discourse on spiritual subjects, accompanied by music) held in my name at the village head's home.

"It is said that he had agreed to this because one of his children was seriously ill, and that his suffering had made him remember God. But let me say to you that one who remembers God in the hour of happiness, remembers God best.

"My worker arranged the *kirtan*, and in the middle . of it the sick child suddenly died instead of getting well. Despite the ensuing confusion, Ramdas remained steadfast and, taking the dead child in his lap, continued the *kirtan* with even greater zeal and devotion, meanwhile offering profound silent prayers to me.

"The child returned to life before the *kirtan* was ended."

Baba paused to let the audience absorb the full import of what he had said. Perhaps in some situations a similar group would have cheered, but these men had been long enough in Baba's presence, and become sufficiently conversant with the unexpected nature of his view-point, to understand that even this great event was part of illusion. They waited soundlessly for the story to spin on.

"Because of this, thousands in that village and the surrounding countryside expressed their enthusiastic devotion towards me. But I say that this enthusiasm and devotion were not truly for me, but for the incident which had occurred in their village. Regardless of the fervor of their expression, it was not out of love for God, but for

love of an additional illusion which had occurred within the illusion of their daily lives."

Baba then singled out the one from the audience who had held the dead child on his lap.

"Listen to me, Ramdas, the child did not return to life because of any miracle on my part. Even granting that the child really revived due to your love for me, this is not a great thing. The really great thing would be for you yourself to die* in your love for me.

"Beware of your 'I'. Never let your ego feed on cheap things. Crowds easily gather around you, but do not let yourself become lost in the crowds, for you would be finished once and for all.

"Now I will tell you of the second miracle which happened only a month ago. Some of you must have seen or heard of Navrozji Dadachanji of Bombay. He and his family love me dearly.

"His son Nozher died recently in a flying accident near Hyderabad. He was a handsome young man, and deeply devoted to me. Besides helping to support his family, he also spent freely from his salary, as an instructor in the Indian Air Force, for my cause and in my name.

"He had called on me at Satara just before he went to Hyderabad. As I had instructed him, he never failed to take my name each time before flying. This he did when

* Not literally to die physically, but to the importance of the world of illusion.

he was leaving on a routine training flight. He and one other were in a two-seater plane, and, as things sometimes happen for reasons which will never be known, the plane suddenly dove straight into a lake and both men were lost. Nozher was one of my gems; he died with my name on his lips and has come to me."

The quiet of the group was profound. Baba looked very small for the moment in the silent garden, and yet something akin to a fierce pride seemed to burn in his eyes. One felt very close to the eternal miracle, and the sense of it spilled through the silent audience. The spell of human souls touching, one to another, lasted a full eternal moment, and then Baba roused himself to complete his story.

"At the time of the accident I had gone on to Poona to rest from my seclusion. It was there that Nozher's family sent me a telegram with the news of the accident, expressing their regrets in it for disturbing my rest with the news.

"Such love is what I consider to be the true miracle, the miracle of love."

Again a moment of no speaking, of the quiet even breathing of the *sahvasis*. Again Baba plunged on.

"In reality, there is nothing such as death or birth. I know this, and I say it with the authority of my conscious knowledge. We are all in eternity, and we will always be there.

"Really, none comes or goes, none is born or dies. But to experience this truth we must first free ourselves from the bondage of our ignorance.

"After a hundred years or so you will all have dropped your bodies, and yet you will still exist. Do not think about your bodies, but think only about me. Then, before you drop your bodies, you will be able to remember me.

"My miracle will be to make you become me.

"Although all of you regard yourselves as belonging to different religions, nationalities, etc., to me you are all one. I have not the least objection if you go to meet saints of any religious sect, pay them your respects, and remain in their company. They are all in me. If you feel that a particular being is a great saint worthy of your respect, why should you not revere him?

"But if you want to see God and to become one with God, then the only solution is to catch hold of my *daaman* (hem of garment). If you care only for God, and if you have the one sole sincere desire for union (God-realization), then hold onto my *daaman* exclusively.

"If you want things such as health, wealth, children and other material things, then don't come to me. There are many saints capable of satisfying your desires, and they might be pleased to give you what you want.

"I am what they call in Iran a *shah-saudagar* (merchant-prince). I am neither a wholesale nor a retail dealer. If you're in the market to purchase a pin or a needle you must go to the retail merchant.

"I am not dealing in merchandise such as granting favours. A *shah-saudagar* can and may, if he likes, supply anyone with even a pin, but it would be unthinkable to approach him for such a thing."

It was mid-afternoon, and the strains of songs from the great Sufi mystics floated from the dormitory atop the old military reservoir. Each one in the room was trying to soak in the last essence of the occasion, to stretch each second of time into an eternity, that body, mind and soul might be wrapped in the endless perfection of the moment.....

The devotions went on, and at last Baba signified that they were at an end. There was nothing left now but to receive the parting embrace of a good-by, and this I shall not tell. There is a time in human fullness, as in human sorrow, when the human soul must be allowed to sit within the privacy of its shrouds and smile or weep or caper as it may.

They walked down the hill, some smiling, some sad some still gently weeping. They packed their bags and that evening some of them left to go home.....

These were the things* that Meher Baba said and did with somewhat more than a thousand of his followers in India in November of 1955.

* For the full story of the SAHAVAS read '*Listen, Humanity*' and '*Lord Meher*', Vol. XIII

MY MISSION

"Philosophers, atheists and others may affirm or refute the existence of God, but as long as they do not deny the existence of their own being they continue to testify to their belief in God - for I tell you, with divine authority, that God is Existence, eternal and infinite. He is EVERYTHING.

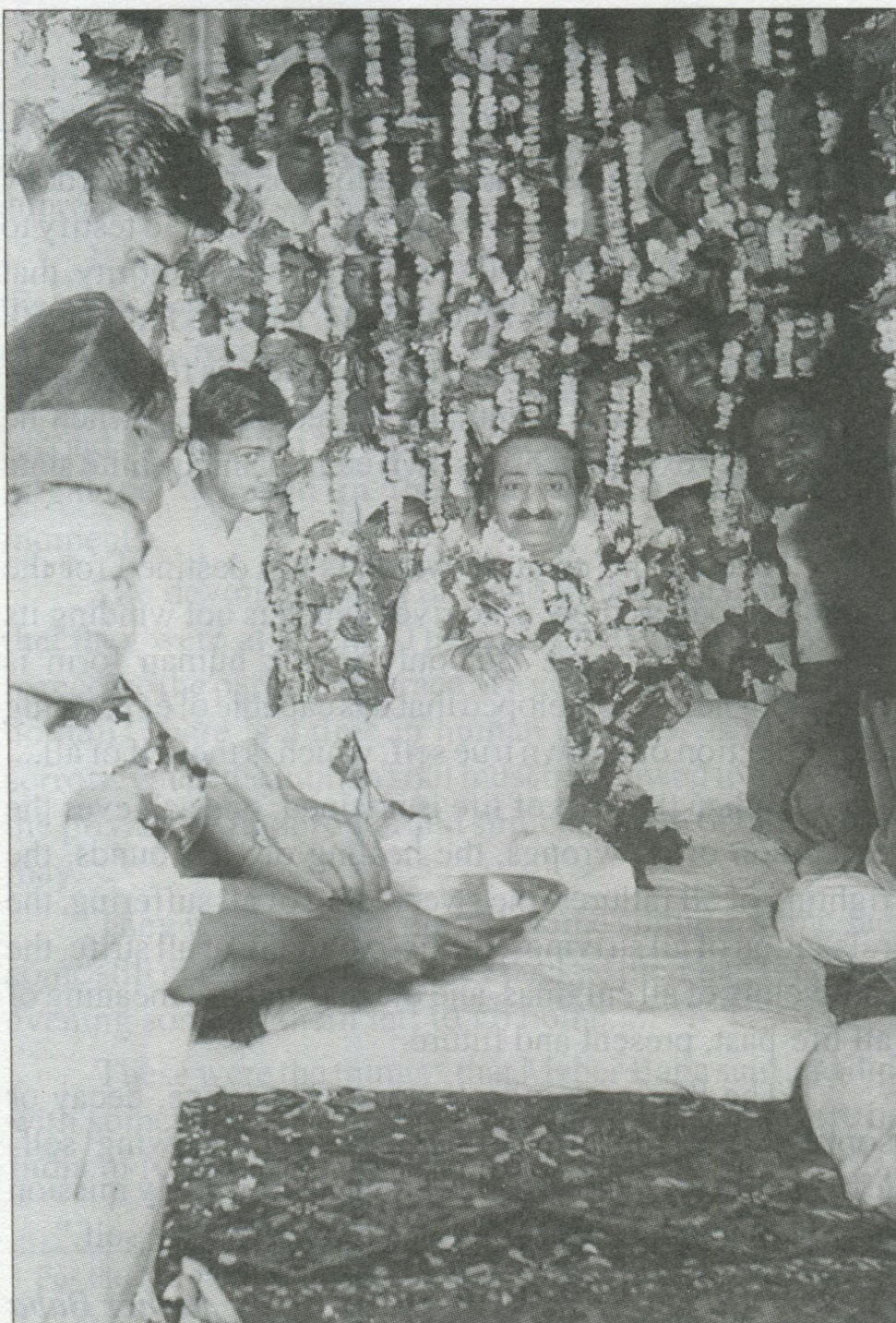
"Whether man knows it or not, there is for him only one aim in life, and eventually he realizes this when he consciously experiences his own eternal and infinite state of "I Am God."

"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....

"When the goal of life is attained, one achieves the reparation of all wrongs, the healing of all wounds, the righting of all failures, the sweetening of all suffering, the relaxation of all strivings, the harmonizing of all strife, the unraveling of all enigmas, and the real and full meaning of all life - past, present and future.

"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



Meher Baba with Arangaon devotees at family quarters, Lower
Meherabad, Nov 30, 1955

MEMOIRS OF SAHAVAS DAYS

(Collected from '*Lord Meher*' vol. XIII)

"Who Took My Name?"

On the first day of sahas, November 4th, along the way from Meherazad to Meherabad, Baba picked up Meherjee Satha at Akbar Press. As the car wended its way to Meherabad, suddenly a buffalo turned in front of them, and Eruch hit the brakes. The car swerved and was narrowly saved from plunging into a ditch by the side of the road.

Baba asked, "Who took my name?"

Eruch said, "I was speaking with you so, for me, there was no question of taking your name."

Kaka Baria said his attention was focused on looking after Baba's personal belongings, and Meherjee Satha replied that since he was traveling in the same car as Baba, there was no need for him to repeat his name.

"Baba reminded him, "Remember to always take my name when anything untoward is about to happen."

I Alone Exist:

Baba touched the topic on the publication of *God Speaks* in America. With hand gestures, speaking in Gujarati, he observed: *God Speaks* will soon be available. It is a unique book. I have explained many things there; still I will briefly explain in a way so that you may all understand it.

"From eternity we are all one. We do not know it; we are not conscious of it. But in eternity we are a limitless ocean. We are all drops of this ocean.

"What happens daily? From our waking state, we go to sleep. Before entering sound sleep, we pass through the same thing - from deep sleep to dream state and from dream to waking state. When you sleep soundly, you forget everything; nothing exists for you. That is the Original State. We pass through this state daily and wake up - after passing through the dream state - in yet another dream state, this gross world.

"What to do now? Something should be done about this daily entering our Original State and waking in this dream state. In our original sound sleep state there is Unity, but we become conscious of duality when waking up. This original sound sleep state is of no use. We must wake up consciously in the Original State, and then alone will we experience that we are One.

"That is the state of Eternal Bliss. Before this bliss, what is there? Only this Eternal Bliss. It is all bliss and

bliss. To be conscious of our Original State, the state of Oneness consciously is Dnyan - Knowledge; it is Power, it is Bliss. This state comes after manonash - annihilation of the mind. To gain this experience, one must become the very dust under the Master's feet.

"I alone exist. How to become dust under my feet? There is only one panacea - by obeying me implicitly. To do what I say. One should become the very dust! Even I have not that courage. But there are a real few in the world lost in the ecstasy of divine love."

While Embracing:

At morning on Nov. 5th, Baba greeted everyone present, stating, "Those whom I did not embrace yesterday should now come forward to be embraced." Among those who lined up were Dr. Deshmukh and Bal Natu, who hoped for a second embrace. Baba embraced the former after pointing out to him that he had already been embraced the previous morning and refused to embrace the latter for the second time, remarking, "That way I will have to embrace one and all once again." Afterwards, when Baba asked Deshmukh about his fountain pen, everybody came to know that Baba had slyly removed it from Deshmukh's pocket while embracing him.

Be Like The Football:

Baba appreciated the work Sohrabji Siganporia and Burjor Mehta were doing in Bombay and asked them to continue it in all sincerity. Sohrabji had opened a center, and when he told Baba of the difficulties he faced, Baba advised him, "My detractors may oppose and harass you, but you should carry on. Always remember this, that I am God. Be like the football. Wherever it is kicked it goes, and the kicks make it finally reach the goal. Similarly, whatever difficulties are put in your way and whatever amount of opposition you have to face, bear it silently. It will one day bring you to the Goal.

The Real Sahavasi:

An Arangaon boy, named Babu, was cooking Baba's food. Baba would have his daily breakfast at Meherabad when he arrived from Meherazad. It consisted of tea and a few slices of bread and cream. Accordingly, every night, Babu would skim the cream off the milk and keep it aside for Baba; but, in the morning, it would be gone. Someone would invariably take it from the pinjra (screened cupboard). Babu was castigated for this but was at a loss to explain how the cream would disappear.

One night, he hid in the kitchen. After some time, Darabshah J. Oomrigar of Bhavnagar stealthily entered and ate the cream. Babu informed Baba. Calling Darabshah

to his cabin, Baba asked, "Do you secretly take cream from the pantry and eat it?"

"Yes, Baba," he admitted.

"Why do you do it?"

Dorab, who had the innocent heart of a child, said, "You have told us to feel absolutely at home here and stay as one family. Well, at home, I always take food when I am hungry. If I don't do the same here, it would be a breach of your orders!" Baba highly enjoyed his logic and embraced him. "You are the only one who has had my real sahas !"

After a couple of days, when all have gathered in the hall, Baba expounded upon the dedication, obedience and love of westerners. He then remarked to Dorabshah Oomrigar, "Twist my ears (punishment usually meted out to a naughty child)." Oomrigar was heavy-set and stood up with difficulty.

"Did you have more cream last night?" Baba asked with a twinkle.

Dorab smiled and caught Baba's ears. Baba was pleased and stated, "Obedience is not easy. You all come to me with folded hands and then leave. This is your love. But obedience is quite different. It is not so easy. If I tell you now to walk on the road completely naked, it would be difficult for you to do."

Universal Work:

After lunch, Baba was briskly pacing the veranda back and forth, looking solemnly at a few close ones. He asked them, "What are you thinking?"

They said, "We were thinking you must be doing some important universal work!"

With a smile, Baba cuttingly replied, "I am not doing any important work but just digesting my food!"

"I Want to Realize God":

Dr. Hoshang Bharucha, had come to Meherabad for the first time during this sahavas. He had met Baba in Bombay in 1952, but since then he had not seen Baba because of his close connection with Sakori. During the sahavas, Baba paid much attention to him. He would make him sit beside him and would occasionally pat his back.

One day after lunch, Hoshang Bharucha and a friend, Eruch Karadia (also a follower of Godavari Mai), were standing near Baba's cabin. Baba called them inside and asked Hoshang, "What is the aim of your life?"

"I want to realize God," he replied.

Baba observed, "Very, very few reach that Goal, but he who holds fast to my daaman reaches it." Then he concluded, Godavari Mai has not attained Self-Realization. She is not God-Realized."

Hoshang considered Godavari Mai to be his Guru, and hearing this directly from Baba, he became confused. His mental agitation and inner turmoil took a long while to subside; but thereafter, Hoshang became completely Meher Baba's disciple. After the sahavas, Eruch Karadia went to Sakori and told Godavari Mai what Baba had said. She replied, "This was said only to test your faith in me." But Karadia did not believe her, and likewise, became fully devoted to Baba.

"No Question of My Will":

Baba had asked for volunteers to fast for twenty-one days, but subsequently he reduced the amount of time to seven days. Cowas Vesuna of Navsari also wanted to fast, and Baba asked him, "Would you feel bad if I do not permit you to?"

Cowas answered, "I will not feel sorry because I want to carry out your wish - which is my life's fast and only penance. There is no question of my will."

Baba was highly pleased but did not agree to his request. Later, when Cowas returned home, he realized it would have been impossible for him to have fasted, since his wife was vehemently against it. Cowas had been in Baba's contact since the darshan in Surat in 1947, but his wife did not believe in Baba. However, when she came in his contact three years later (at the sahavas in 1958) she was completely transformed.

A Miraculous Change:

Baba proceeded with all to the dhuni, where the poor program was to be held. Almost two hundred poor had collected. Baba took his seat in a chair near the table, and one by one, the poor mounted the steps, Pendu handed Baba water for each in a large tin cup and Padri the soap. Baba would wash each person's feet and wipe them dry with a towel handed him by Eruch. After laying his head on their feet, Baba gave each four rupees as his love-gift.

In spite of his often-repeated instructions to the men, not to allow a break in the continuous rhythm of repeating God's name during the entire course of the poor program, Baba, at one point, suddenly interrupted the proceedings and signaled for the repetitions to be stopped. Pointing to the poor man standing before him, Baba introduced him. He was Satya Mang, the former dacoit and robber whose story Baba had often told. Although Satya Mang had fallen on hard times and was poverty stricken, he remained honest to his promise to Baba and never committed another robbery. He was a living example of the miraculous change Baba brought about in individuals. Baba informed everyone present about him, and they saw with their own eyes how a hardhearted criminal who had terrorized the countryside had been reformed through Baba's divine love.

Blissful State:

The entire group had assembled on the Hill. Baba sat for about fifteen minutes in a section of a women's quarters with the gathering around him and reminisced. He recalled the days of the Prem Ashram when Chhota Baba was overcome by God. In an emotional outburst of divine love, Chhota lost consciousness for four days. Baba said that had it not been for the enema administered on the fourth day according to his orders, the boy would have died. When Chhota regained his normal consciousness, he was weeping and wailing, asking why Baba had dragged him down from that blissful state in which he saw nothing but Baba.

Baba further observed, "Union with God is very difficult to attain. He who enters the seventh plane and remains merged in divine bliss for three days oblivious to all other planes, if he does not regain consciousness on the fourth day, he drops the body. But he who regains consciousness on the fourth day is a real Majzoob. Even in the case of ordinary human beings, the link with this world does not break with death. For example, after the brake is applied to a running train, it does not come to a halt at once. It takes several minutes."



Devotees recite prayer before Meher Baba at the Dhuni pit in Lower Meherabad, Sept. 24, 1954

The Result of Faith In Baba:

Two minute individual interviews followed. Baba talked with everyone in batches of five. Madon was first and showed Baba his small box of ointment. He told Baba, "Eruch's uncle's throat was terribly sore; he was unable to speak. Famous doctors advised him to have an operation. But, taking your name, he used the Wonderful Ointment and was cured!"

Baba advised, "Don't you forget to take my name!" and related to him a story about Baidul. Many years ago in Iran, Baidu) began treating the sick with boiled garlic oil. Taking Baba's name, he used the same medicine on every type of malady - colds, cough, pneumonia, typhoid, malaria, earaches, diseases of the eye, and so forth- and the sick got well. Not only that, but amazingly his remedy proved infallible in treating donkeys, horses and cattle too.

Baba told Madon, "This is not my miracle, but the result of Baidul's faith in me."

A Way To Escape Illusion:

A qawaali program had been arranged for the afternoon in Meherabad, and Baba admonished the gathering to listen to it quietly and with interest. "The qawaals have been called from a long distance, and there is deep meaning in what they sing, so all of you should be alert and not doze."

Baba then explained, "On this gross plane, we only see, feel and taste gross things. There are three spheres (planes) of consciousness - gross, subtle and mental. As the pilgrim advances on the Path, he passes through many wonderful experiences, and with the growing of his consciousness, he sees things that quite daze him. But all this and everything else is illusion. He is so dazed that he actually gets stuck on the Path. He can neither go forward nor retrogress."

Baba cited the instance of a seeker stuck on an inner plane who was so dazed by the experience that he lost consciousness and kept hanging from the branch of a tree for four years. Then he remarked, "There is only one way to escape this illusion, and that is, I repeat, to take my name, have my remembrance and love me. This will get you God!"

Hold Fast To My Daaman:

Some of the group sought Baba's permission to pay their respects to the tombs and shrines of other Sadgurus and saints, whereupon Baba remarked, "Personally, I have no objection. But if you hold fast to my daaman and obey me, you will realize the Truth. You are free to follow your religion if you want, but it will lead you nowhere. Spirituality is an entirely different thing, and unless you become like the dust under the Master's feet there is no hope for salvation."

An Emotional Outburst:

Arrangement had been made to hold the qawaali program in the Water Tank on the Hill. Aloba used to go into an emotional frenzy upon hearing qawaali singing, so to be on the safe side, Baba told Baidul's son-in-law, Pesi, to look after him. But when the music started, quite the opposite happened. Pesi himself lost control, and Aloba and others had to hold on to him. Later, when asked by Baba why he had not gone into a paroxysm of weeping, as was his custom upon listening to a qawaal, Aloba explained that at the time he was not looking at Baba, and that was why he was saved from his own emotions.

The Grace Of Mohammed:

As Baba was walking behind the main bungalow, Mast Mohammed suddenly emerged from the Rahuri Cabin, where he had been kept for part of the sahas, and grabbed Baba's hand. He would not let go, and led "dada" into his room. Kumar and Vishnu were standing outside and witnessed a spectacular occurrence. Mohammed was grasping Baba's left wrist with his right hand. Both were facing the door of the cabin as Baba explained to Mohammed that he was in a hurry and had to leave. After a few moments, Mohammed began swinging Baba's arm back and forth, and then said, "Acha, jao, jao." ("Okay, go, go.")

Kumar and Vishnu both saw the hair on the back of Baba's head gradually rise and form into a tuft or crown with a halo over and around it. The cluster of hair grew brilliant and turned into rays. Kumar thought perhaps he was imagining it, but later Vishnu asked him, "Did you see anything when Baba and Mast Mohammed were together?" Kumar said he had and described it. Vishnu confirmed that he, too, had seen the same thing and gave a huge sigh. "At last," he said, "after thirty years of being with him Baba has finally given me darshan - and that, too, perhaps by the grace of Mohammed!"

And Baba Is Garlanded:

Kuppuswami appeared in a saffron-colored kafni. When inquired by Baba he replied, "It is only for this occasion." Baba replied, emphasizing, "We should cleanse our hearts with this color - not merely wear it outwardly."

Introducing two or three new people from Malabar who had not brought garlands, Krishnaji criticized them, "These people are not religiously-minded and do not realize the importance of garlanding one such as yourself."

Baba sharply replied, "I am not religious myself, as in the whole universe I alone exist!"

Others who had not brought garlands were feeling rather remorseful. Smiling, Baba remarked, "There are piles of garlands here. Whoever has not brought a garland

should choose one from among them, and garland me." They were happy and garlanded Baba accordingly.

Let Thought Be Burnt In Dhuni:

While talking with Telegu Group on morning of 12th Nov, Baba conveyed, "Today is a lucky day for the Telegu group. On the 12th of every month a dhuni is lighted, and today at six o'clock we will be present there. The human mind is full of infinite thoughts. This mind is finite, but its thoughts are infinite. So burn your desires and thoughts in the dhuni today. At least let one thought of either lust, greed or anger be burnt in it." Baba had explained to them that the small piece of sandalwood should represent a particular desire they wished to consecrate and burn to ashes.

Prime Minister Nehru's Birthday:

Thirumal Rao asked Baba's permission to say few words before the group. Baba granted him to speak: "Today is Prime Minister Nehru's birthday. He is totally honest and doing his utmost for India's progress. I pray to Baba, on his birthday, that he may bless him with his guidance and inner help in his efforts to preserve peace in the world."

In reply, Baba stated: "I am happy that today is the birthday of Nehru. He is an all-India man. He has a very



**Meher Baba crowned with flowers during Sahavas in Meherabad,
Nov 30, 1955**

good heart, is intelligent and full of energy. Whatever he does, he does in all sincerity. I heard everything that you said, that with my grace India will prosper spiritually and materially. The leaders are gems. Our good wishes to Nehru on his birthday. I am happy that you remembered him. We have only a few gems in India. Gandhi was incomparable; so is Nehru.

"I know all this, and also, that there is no man like me in the whole universe - that, too, I know! They are in my heart. Just imagine, Nehru is sixty-six today and still has so much energy for work because his whole mind is absorbed in the good of the nation. We should be proud of him. All energy flows through me, from me. This is a fact."

Dhanapathy said, "Thirumala Rao has suggested that Baba send a telegram of his blessings and good wishes to Nehru"

Baba disapproved of the idea: "There is nothing to send. The value of what has been said here today by me will be nullified if we send a telegram. Whatever I have said, I have said from the heart. When I say all this about Nehru, it will reach him. Sending him a telegram would reduce the value of my words."

"I Am Lord Krishna":

Bhaskara Raju introduced new lovers to Baba. One man, Pandit Rajeyya, a Yadava by caste, had come, believing Baba to be the same as Lord Krishna. Baba assured him, "It is so. You have come because of the link with me since ages past. I will give you darshan as Krishna in the last moments of your life, but never think it is God-Realization."

Another was Mandrajula Venkataratnam, a laundry man by caste. To him, Baba said, "Both of us are the same in a sense - but while you wash dirt of a few, I wash the whole world from sin!"

Knowing Through Becoming:

Baba was engaged in giving individual and collective interviews. At 3:30, everyone gathered in the hall where bhajans were sung. In between songs, Baba would make some amusing remarks and chat with the group. At one point, he interrupted someone and remarked: "I just remembered something I did not give in God Speaks. Our breathing is natural and automatic. While we inhale and exhale, we have not to concentrate on it. Even in sound sleep it continues its rhythm. It is part of us. No sooner it stops, the body drops.

"Similarly, God is very closely associated with our being. We do not know of His existence. When we exert

and try to find Him through love, we come to know that God is so very, very near us and within us. Even those closely associated with me for years do not know me in the real sense - meaning, knowing through Becoming".

"Who Love Me Are Mine":

Kutumb Shastri requested Baba to introduce his mandali members, and although Baba himself did not like the idea, he asked the mandali, turn by turn, to stand up when their names were called and he started introducing them. After few introductions, suddenly Baba stopped and gestured, "Why this introduction of individual mandali members? Have you not come from long distances to be with me? Are you not my lovers and workers? Each one of you can as well be introduced.

"For the last four years," he continued "these sandals are on my feet. They go wherever I go - to the bathroom, to the toilet, while traveling - they are with me day and night. Am I to expound on the merits of my sandals?" However, he introduced mandali members there and said, "Some gems have been left out. There are gems outside, too. In America, there are lovers of mine who have dedicated their all to me.

"There are gems among you, too..... Those who do my work are my mandali. Remember, those who love me are mine. The whole world is mine. Everything is mine.

You all are mine, but I am not theirs. I am the one for those who love me. For those who love me, I am theirs whether they be near or far away."

Meherabad: The World Centre of Pilgrimage:

While taking tea before leaving for Meherazad, on 16th November, Baba asked for bananas, and although there were a dozen ripe bananas on hand, Sidhu brought him some unripe fruit by mistake. The misunderstanding was corrected, but it prompted Baba to remark: "Sixty years after my body drops, people in the thousands will come here and will collect even the very dust of this Meherabad because I have trod on it. They will pay me homage and reverence.

"I should ask you all to take a dust bath instead of a water bath! But it has not entered your head yet that God himself is moving among you and you are in his living presence!"

To Marathi group, on 1st December, Baba observed, "It is your great fortune that I myself brought you to my last resting place. After sixty years, this place will be a world center of pilgrimage."

Pains And Pleasures:

Baba was pacing back and forth on the veranda. Ramhirdaya Tiwari and P.M. Bhatt of Nagpur came and

stood nearby. Baba embraced both. Tiwari began weeping. He told Baba his grandson had died. Formerly, Tiwari had worked under Jal Kerawala, and Baba replied, "Even Jal Kerawala is dead."

P.M. Bhatt interposed, saying, "Baba, Tiwari has gotten a promotion. He is no longer a superintendent but has become a director."

Tiwari smiled, and Baba remarked, "See, Tiwari wept for one thing and is happy at another." Baba assured him, "Don't worry, I will see you again."

The Head And Its Hair:

Before the Hindi group went for lunch, Eruch read out what Baba had dictated at Meherazad the previous evening about 'The Head and the Hair on the Head:'

"God is Infinite Reality, whereas the cosmos is infinite illusion. But both are not infinite in the same sense. God is One Infinite and illusion is infinite in numbers. God is Infinite Unity and illusion is infinite duality. Always God is. All along illusion is not. Illusion or no illusion, God remains beginningless and endless, while illusion has a beginning in illusion and it also ends in illusion.

"The infinite illusion includes an infinite number of suns, stars, moons, planets and worlds. The whole of creation goes on evolving ad infinitum in illusion.

"Take for instance the head of a man with innumerable hairs growing over the same skull. When all hairs are shaved off, the growth of hair does not cease; the hairs reappear and cover the head all over again. Even when the head becomes bald, it is only the hairs which disappear; the head remains a head.

"Compared to the one head, the hairs, although innumerable, have next to no value. They may appear and disappear without any difference to the value of the head as such. The value attached to the hair is mostly decorative, as a means of attraction and as a lure of self-satisfaction.

"Similarly, the individual mind that generates infinite thoughts may be compared with the individual head that has a growth of innumerable hairs. The individual mind is capable of containing, emanating and absorbing infinite number of thoughts. In fact, all energy and all matter are but the outcome of the mind itself.

"To understand the all-importance of God, Who is the only Reality, let us now compare Him with the mind, and let the hair over the head be compared with the creation. The illustration would at once suggest that compared with the hair on the head, the mind alone is infinitely valuable. Similarly, I say that God is infinitely valuable when compared with the whole of creation, which has no value other than that of hair - the hair that lures and the hair that creates illusory self-satisfaction."

When Eruch finished, Baba jokingly remarked, "I remembered these points last evening when I happened to notice Kumar's head, which is tending to become bald."

New Type of Dedication:

Baba spoke about the mandali and the families dependent upon him and narrated this incident from the early Meherabad days: In those days, many poor persons from Ahmednagar and surrounding villages came, and they were all given grain. An old man from Ahmednagar would come regularly and tell me: "Baba, I wish to lay everything of mine at your feet."

I replied, "So far, I have not come across a single individual with your type of dedication! It is wonderful!" I asked him how many children he had.

"Seven, and a wife!" he said.

I asked, "What will you dedicate to me? Have you any money?"

He answered, "I have no money, but I am dedicating my whole family at your feet. Please take care of us." I laughed much at his reply. I had no idea of such dedication! He showed me a new type of dedication."

"Nanak Is in The World Today":

Baba asked Daulat Singh to read a favorite verse from the Granth Saheb (Sikh's holy book). He sang a few lines about "the Highest of the High, the Lord," and Baba beamed, "It affords me great pleasure to hear this." Then, as with the former two previous groups, Baba touched on the subject of a seven-day fast, and asked those prepared to do it to stand up. Several men volunteered. Looking at Pukar, Baba teased, "You are too fat, so you are chosen!"

To Hakumat Rai, Baba remarked, "You are also quite strong! All right, you too are selected."

Selecting Virinder Singh of Dehra Dun, Baba remarked, "See how I have caught certain Sikhs! How pleased I am with you! Guru Nanak is dear to me. The same Nanak is in the world today."

The Echo of Love:

The Hindi language group reassembled in the hall and Ghani Munsiff's brother, Abdur Rehman, sang two ghazals, which Baba liked very much. Matru Dutta Shastri was again overcome with emotion, and standing up, began clapping and singing. At first no one clapped with him, but when Baba joined in, all others followed suit. The hall echoed with the sound, and those present were moved by the rhythm of his love-dance. Shastri started dancing, and Kunj Behari joined him. After some

time, Baba stopped the singing and commented, "If you know how to love me, your very existence will change. Your life will end in Real Freedom; but it is not easy!"

One In Thousand:

During the personal interviews the day before, Adarsh Khare had expressed his ardent wish to stay with Baba. And Baba had inquired who would look after his wife and children. Adarsh's father was very pleased with his son's desire and took full responsibility for his son's family. Baba replied that he would decide about it the following day, and so the whole night Adarsh was wondering whether or not Baba would accept him.

Baba disclosed the details of his interview with Adarsh, and declared to the gathering, "There is only one in thousand like Gaya Prasad! He dedicates his own son to me out of his love for me, and I am very happy with him." Baba permitted Adarsh to stay with him for a year, starting from February 15th 1955.

Gadge Maharaj Invites Baba:

On November 24th, all the sahavas group and most of the mandali went to Meherazad, where Baba talked about Gadge Maharaj, the revered saint of Maharashtra. Gadge Maharaj had now come to Ahmednagar and was staying at Akbar Press. Adi had gone to see him that



Meher Baba with Gadge Maharaj in Pandharpur, Nov 6th, 1954

morning, and after meeting him, arrived at Meherazad. Adi told Baba that Gadge Maharaj had invited Baba to Nasik. He had said, "Baba is the Sun, and I am a small bird. I wish Baba would come to Nasik to give darshan. I am an ignoramus, and Baba is All-knowledge!"

Baba instructed Adi, "Go and tell Gadge Maharaj that I cannot go to Nasik, because I have to spend one year in seclusion. But Maharaj can come and see me even during my seclusion." (In fact, Gadge Maharaj met Baba by coming to him eternally, for shortly afterwards the saint passed away.)

Three Types of Seekers:

Before beginning the afternoon interviews, Baba had the entire group summoned to the hall, where he explained for five minutes about the three types of seekers:

"There are three types of seekers. The first type says that God is within him and he has to see God within. "I must see Him at any cost and so I'll continue my efforts." But this type of seeker has not that amount of courage and daring which the second type displays. It takes him ages and ages to reach his goal, and the way is full of suffering and obstacles.

"The second type says God is within him. He has no need of a Master. At any cost, he must seek and search for Him. He has the daring to take a headlong plunge and get himself drowned.

"The third type believes that God is within him and he also has the daring. What is daring? The daring is that he is prepared to blindfoldedly obey the Master. He has so much daring that he has no thought for himself."

Walking between the two groups seated in the hall on opposite sides, Baba continued: "Take this as a very narrow canal in which there is surging, boiling water flowing. The seeker has to cross from one side to another. The first type has no courage. He walks the whole long, long distance of his bank and keeps on moving. After ages, when he reaches the opposite bank he finds that from his side to the other side he has reached, there is practically no distance to cover, except the surging boiling water of the narrow canal.

"This is literally true.

"The second type is not the type to take pains to go all the long distance done by the first. He takes headlong plunge into the troubled waters and completely dissolves himself.

"The third type has great courage. He also knows how to swim. The Master from the opposite bank stretches out his hand, asking him to take it so that he can drag him to his side. Because of the courage and confidence he has in the Master, he blindfoldedly accepts the Master's help and crosses over."

Keep Love Locked Within You:

On Nov. 30th, Baba arrived from Meherazad. Madhav Rao's son-in-law garlanded him and placed the crown on his head. Baba looked wonderful and resembled paintings of Lord Krishna.

In the hall, Suloo Meshram stood up and said, "Last evening, I felt more or less unaware of my surroundings, and for about two hours kept myself closeted in the bathroom. I felt that some breeze from God was passing over me; I felt I was beyond birth and death. I completely forgot about my family and my dying child, too - the child I left behind in answering Baba's invitation to come to Meherabad. I don't know whether the child is alive or dead. I still hear some sort of music and smell sweet smells. Yesterday, I was seeing light before my eyes, and that is why I could not sleep."

Baba motioned for Suloo to be seated and commented: "Suloo is telling the truth. He has been in my contact since April 1938, when he was a lad of fourteen. Since then, his love for me has increased. He has composed songs about me that are published in a book."

Baba, however, then admonished him, "Whatever your experience may be, there is no need to tell others about it!

"Listen very carefully. When you narrate these instances the ego gets tickled, and you don't know it. 'I

saw this sight, it was so wonderful, I felt so happy.' All these magnify the ego!

"If there is love, and if you let it slip out of your lips, you waste it! If you express it in words, you ruin it! Suppose you really love me - then you should keep that love locked within you. If you let it out, it tantamounts to an insult! If I ask you of my own accord, you may explain, but do not talk of it on your own.

"You have to go a long, long way. You have to reach the Summit. In their efforts to reach the Goal, even rishis and munis are apt to fall through expressions of ego. I like you, Suloo. You are simple and have a pure, innocent heart. Love me more and more, but do not leave your family. And don't get upset when your initial state of tranquility is disturbed or changed."

Baba Gave So Much To So Many:

For this Gujarati, Telegu, Hindi and Marathi lovers, the sahavas had been a joyful, wonderful week spent in Meher Baba's Company. But for Baba, to constantly give darshan, to meet people, to give his sahavas was an exhausting task, because with the shower of his love, he was taking upon himself the good and bad sanskaras of those who came in his contact. The sahavas afforded pleasure to his lovers, but at a cost of great suffering to himself. Unbeknownst to those attending the four sahavas,

throughout every night, Baba would be restless. To those who observed him, it seemed that every tissue in his body was infused with suffering. Yet no one could have the slightest idea of this except those in his close proximity, because when Baba would come to Meherabad, he would always appear radiant and happy. It was crucifixion for Baba to give his sahavas to people, and that, too, for a solid month. The Meherabad Sahavas program of 1955 was truly a historic occasion and momentous example of the Avatar's infinite mercy and love. How fortunate were those who attended.

Meherjee had aptly written to someone in the West: "Never before has Baba given so much to so many for so long."

Sangam of Divinity with Humanity:

During the four sahavas, Feram Workingboxwala and Kishan Singh were recording Baba's words, and Ramjoo Abdulla later compiled these notes into a booklet entitled '*The Company of God.*' Don Stevens, too, made use of this material in the book entitled '*Listen, Humanity.*' In summing up the month-long program, Ramjoo wrote:

God alone can keep company of God, but during the period of sahavas, which Baba gave so freely and fully, Baba left no stone unturned in order to help everyone invited make the most of the opportunity and get the

largest possible share out of it. In the midst of each of the four different groups, Baba sat, worked, played, worshiped, heard, prayed, walked, "talked" and at rare moments allowed himself to be worshiped all so spontaneously and naturally.... And yet every week was different and distinct from the other.

Every little thing and big arrangement about the sahas weeks received Baba's personal attention. He not merely issued instructions about the minutest bit to the collective arrangements but often personally checked them, and where necessary got them carried out in letter and spirit under his own supervision.

While freely mixing, moving and sitting with those living the life of his sahas, what Baba said through his inimitable and animated gestures was all in the shape of small talk and general conversation. He never dwelt on any one particular subject for more than several minutes at a time, He would start explaining about love, and then suddenly switch over to the subject of cold and coughing. In between, he would remember some interesting point about his own life, return to the point of love and before it was finished, ask somebody to narrate some story.

Within a few minutes after giving a grave warning to all present to pay serious attention to what he was going to tell them, he would make all burst out in a roar of laughter. It was child's play for Baba to make the least sentimental man in a group begin to struggle with tears in his eyes and start stuttering incoherently.

With all that, Baba repeated the same topics and subjects before every group, every week, without ever missing a single important point; but he always did so in a different way, in different words, in different contexts. Words such as "love", "Obedience" and "Surrender" were explained by Baba to the point of making them cease to be words. He made them sound like *live* things: things as having been lived, as could be and should be lived. He would explain things and, in the same breath, add that they were inexplicable.

Another noteworthy feature of the *sahavas* lay in the fact that eventually, in effect, it proved to be Baba's *sahavas* for all his life and as such, enough to last for the lifetime of each of the participants. Although each group had only five days to live their life in Baba's company, Baba managed to give them every idea of his life from childhood to his present Mastery in servitude and right up to the time he would breathe his last.... Baba made everyone as familiar with himself as those who had been living with him all their lives.

By a few, or by the many, among the rich and poor, old and young, strong and healthy, weak and ailing, literate and illiterate, educators and intellectuals, businessmen, government servants, lawyers, doctors, artisans, artists, poets, writers, *sanyasis* (renunciates), *tapasvis* (ascetics), Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs and Christians who attended the weekly congregations, the participants on the whole represented mankind in miniature.

The sahas in spirit was wonderful *sangam* (coming together) of naked Divinity with stark humanity. It was a *hujum* (crowd) and a *mela* (fair) of the Infinite mingling with finitude. "Weaknesses" had their moments of being drowned in the "Strength" which produced the one miracle of God, the whole of creation. All sins and virtues were, for the time being, shamed into nothingness..... There were moments when one could almost feel that as the Infinite Ocean of existence, God did link every life into one indivisible whole.

monotonous lectures, meditation sessions but through simple, heart-to-heart communication, putting everyone present at ease and at the same level of understanding. It was sprinkled with humour, jokes, teasing and with melodious interludes, to lighten the atmosphere and to relax the muscles of the straightened faces of some serious listeners. Baba used all the techniques to enhance the understanding of those present, and touched on many facets of life such as religion, science, logic, ethics, psychology, physiology, commerce, and so on, to bring home this understanding amongst His lovers that God is the only Truth and implicit obedience to the Perfect Master is the uncompromising option for the seekers of the Truth. This was done with utmost precision and skill, without missing the focus on the subject and the pulse of the listeners. This was the demonstration of excellent communication and relation building skills.

While playing a perfect host and demonstrating the two roles mentioned above, Baba touched everyone's heart so deftly that it was an experience to be cherished for the lifetime. Baba's ability to share His love so freely, without holding anything back, had a profound impact on me. This was a unique ability that I had never experienced in any human being earlier. Although I was enamoured by His love, He also made it easy for me to keenly listen to everything that He said, not missing even a single word. The impression of His love was so deep and overwhelming for the participants that I know that some of them who were meeting him for the first time, determined to dedicate their lives to His cause and they carried on this determination in their lives later.

Pratap Ahir

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Register of Editorial Alterations

Page iv, para 1 line 2, recored changed to recorded
Page iv, para 1, line 6, publised changed to published
Page 5, para 3, line 4, form changed to from
Page 7, para 1, line 3, privilage changed to privilege
Page 28, para 7, line 2, reprimant changed to reprimand
Page 29, para 2, line 4, dyes changed to eyes
Page 33, footnote, line 1, born changed to borne
Page 42, para 3, line 4, pretence changed to pretense
Page 48, para 6, line 2, compliment changed to complement
Page 55, para 3, line 1, "this. There" changed to "this, there"
Page 63, para 2, line 3, earthern changed to earthen
Page 68, para 1, line 3, villify changed to vilify
Page 72, para 2, line 4, activites changed to activities
Page 93, para 4, line 7, as changed to at
Page 97, para 4, line 6, doz changed to doze
Page 99, para 2, line 3, "kept" changed to "been kept"
Page 106, para 5, line 1, varanda changed to veranda
Page 118, para 3, line 7, suddently changed to suddenly
Page 119, para 1, line 7, sould changed to sound
Page 120, para 1, line 6, whold changed to whole