

Meher Baba on Love

Compiled by
K. K. Ramakrishnan

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Meher Baba on Love

Compiled by K. K. Ramakrishnan
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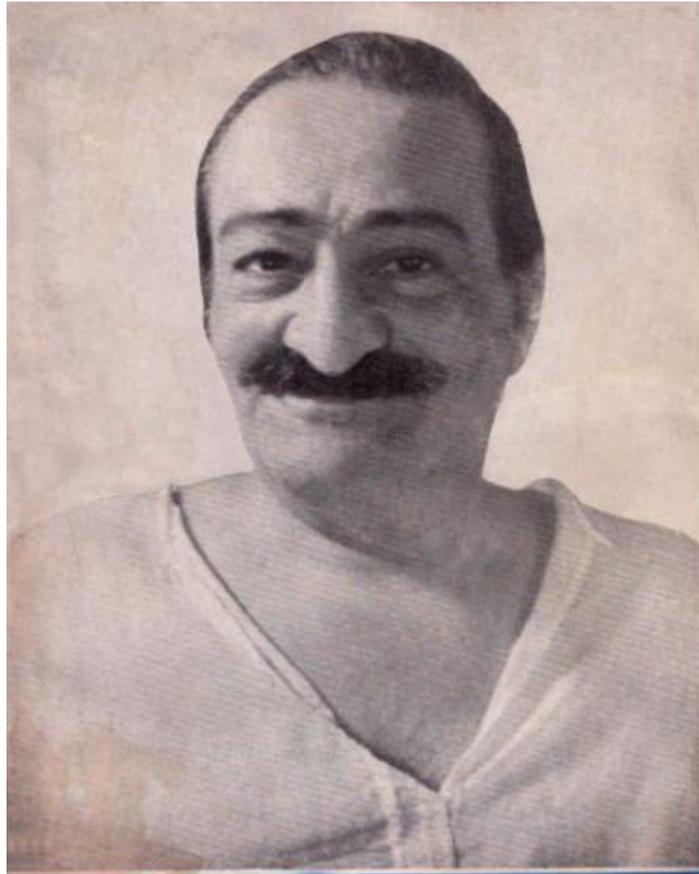
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Meherbaba on Love

*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*

MEHER BABA ON LOVE



MEHER ERA PUBLICATION, POONA

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This publication is not a profit making or competitive venture and its object is solely to disseminate the discourses, messages, sayings and statements of *Avatar Meher Baba* for the benefit of the public.

Publisher

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The material for this book has been drawn from the statements of Meher Baba unpublished, and those published in various books during the period 1929-1942. and thereafter.

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Meher Era Publications,
Avatar Meher Baba Poona Center,
Poona.

K. K. Ramakrishnan

A WORD

MEHER BABA ON LOVE is a small book compiled by our friend Shri K.K. Ramakrishnan from several sayings of Avatar Meher Baba. Shri Baba had given a number of books on various subjects of importance. But the underlined principle of his teachings is love. It is only through love that man gets happiness on the earth and becomes one with eternity. God is nothing else but Divine Love. If man follows this path of love, all problems, riddles, miseries will come to an end and this world will become a paradise.

But the beauty of Shri Baba's teachings is that he has made concrete what is originally abstract. Though he has not laid down any rigid discipline he has vividly chalked out a plan to transform human nature. He clearly states how to awake 'Divine' in man and how to win a decisive victory over our lower nature. Shri Baba has taught us not to differentiate between the ends and the means. Love is the means and Love is the end also. Shri Baba is a prophet of universal religion of love.

Our friend Shri Ramakrishnan has selected such appropriate sayings and discourses and arranged them so skilfully that we get a perfect view of Shri Meher Baba's philosophy.

Natubag,
Poona - 30.

- Gopinah Talvalkar

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FOREWORD

"Love is essentially self-communicative." So, in a line, Meher Baba explains how one Man can change all men.

Locked within our egos, we ordinary men can only trade among ourselves from our fantasy repertoires of well-worn impressions. Sometimes, indeed, we talk peace and hope, even strive for love, but by far the greatest part of our energy and effort flows through channels of lust, greed and anger.

There are a precious few saints who are really saints and spiritual teachers who are truly advanced, and these great ones are the rungs of an infinitely long ladder of inward steps which leads to the brink of the end of selfishness.

Yet it is only through the rare appearances of God in human form that mankind is saved from an unending imprisonment in selfishness. The God-Man - the Avatar, the Messiah - is the unfathomable embodiment of the unfettered consciousness of God in a human being. He manifests this divine consciousness through His love for all Creation, and it is by this inexhaustible and supremely dynamic love that He is recognized as the Ancient One.

It is not because of His eminently profound explanations of the purpose of Creation nor His penetrating discourses on the spiritual path, nor because of so many indications of omniscience nor the endless accounts of miraculous occurrences connected with His life that

people believe Meher Baba when He declares that He is God - God in human form and God beyond all form. Certainly all these things are delightful ornaments which inevitably adorn the life of the Christ. But people believe Him rather because of the experience of His love which awakens love, and nourishes love, and creates an ever-growing family of love, and because, for the awakening of the world to love, He invites upon Himself incomprehensible suffering in life and apparent ignominy and defeat in death .. because He is love.

5754 Cabot Drive, Oakland,
California, 94611, U.S.A.

- **Rick M. Chapman**

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION

The contents of this booklet are a compilation of expositions made by Avatar Meher Baba on the subject of *LOVE*, during the Sahavas gathering held at Meherabad, Ahmednagar (India) in 1955, when He allowed a picked group of His lovers, both from the East and the West, to live in close companionship with Him for a period of one month, equally divided amongst the four major language groups - Hindi, Marathi, Gujrathi, and Telugu, English serving as a link language. The lovers thus privileged to participate in this Sahavas gathering were drawn from all religions and races of the world and from various social orders and walks of life. Leaving aside the everyday life of separative existence, they lived as One, in His love, eating, drinking and resting together, under the same roof, playing and joking and absorbing every expression of His boundless love for all. In this Sahavas gathering I have seen a demonstration of divine love, discarding all man-made distinctions that divide human society, and uniting mankind in the oneness of universal love.

It is with the hope, that the reader will have an insight into the self-elevating love and inspire him to a life of love, that alone can solve all problems confronting man today, that this compilation is presented to the society on the occasion of the 72nd Birthday of Avatar Meher Baba.

Poona,
25 February, 1966.

K. K. Ramakrishnan

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION

The booklet '*MEHER BABA ON LOVE*' originally conceived, compiled and published in 1966, was an effort to share with as many as possible, the expositions made by Avatar Meher Baba on the subject of LOVE, during the Sahavas Gathering held at Meherabad, Ahmednagar (India) in November 1955, when He allowed a picked group of His lovers, both from the East and the West, to live in close companionship with Him for a period of one month, equally divided amongst the four major language groups - Hindi, Marathi, Gujrathi and Telugu, with English, serving as a link language. The lovers thus privileged to live in the company of the Avatar of God (God in Human Form) were drawn from all religions and races of the world and from various social orders and walks of life. Leaving aside the everyday life of separative existence, they lived as One, in His Love, eating, drinking and resting together, under the same roof, playing and joking and absorbing every expression of His boundless love for all. It was in this Sahavas Gathering I have had the opportunity of witnessing a practical demonstration of divine love, which enables man to live a life of love on this earth, in spite of the apparent divisions based on class, caste, creed and temperaments, which could be forgotten in love.

The beauty and fragrance of that one month life Meher Baba lovers had in the company of Meher Baba at Meherabad can be gauged from the following passage from "*STAY WITH GOD*" by Francis Brabazon,

an eminent poet from Australia, who was one of the privileged participants:

"....poured together into a heart-lake of His reflection.
They were clustered leaves on His bough, rustling in
His breeze;
Or bees pouring after their Queen on her swarming
flight leading them
To a new home; or skipping lambs before Him
shepherding to the pastures
And clear streams of Him; children before His All
father-mother
Bounty and security..... "

The appreciation of this booklet 'Meher Baba On Love' and the increasing demand we received from various stations in India and from countries abroad encouraged *MEHER ERA PUBLICATION* to bring out a revised second edition incorporating many more messages and discourses on the subject of *LOVE* by Meher Baba and this we released on the auspicious occasion of the 44th anniversary of His Great Silence, with a fervent prayer that beloved of all hearts, Meher Baba bless mankind to clear the cloud of confusion that confounds its mind today and even now save it from racial suicide and extinction. For humanity is not going to be saved by any material power - nuclear or otherwise. It can be saved only through divine intervention. Meher Baba is the One come to awaken in man divine love, which will solve all his problems.

K. K. Ramakrishnan

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIFTH EDITION

It was on Monday, the 22nd April 1957, an organized and disciplined group activity for the Cause of Meher Baba began in Poona with regular weekly Monday meetings at 399, Somwar Peth, Saraswat Colony in a spacious room lovingly offered by the family of A.T. Mudliar. Meher Era Publications began in November that year with a pamphlet entitled 'WHO IS A REAL WORKER', carrying a message of Meher Baba, '*What Baba Means by Real Work*' printed for us by Adi K. Irani at Ahmednagar, India. We have since then been bringing out from time to time 'Saying Cards,' 'Message Folders', pamphlets and booklets on auspicious occasions associated with various phases of Meher Baba's life and work, such as His birth-days on 25 February, Silence Anniversaries on 10 July, Sermons Day on 16 October and so on. We have till now brought out twenty-nine different titles, some of which have gone into three to four editions.

It was our practice to place the first copy of our publications at the sacred feet of Beloved Baba as an offering of our love in His service. When He received the second revised edition of "Meher Baba On Love" in July 1968, He affixed His signature on it and returned it with the instruction to preserve the same in our Centre, and that booklet form one of the invaluable treasures we have in the BABA ROOM of our Centre, in which He took rest and refreshed Himself with His mandali twice when He visited our Center

on 1 May 1964 and 1 May 1965 and in which we preserve all things either used personally by Him or touched by Him. 'MEHER BABA ON LOVE' is thus our favourite book, admired and appreciated by large number of aspirants after LOVE.

When He dwelt amongst us in WORD-MADE-FLESH form, our hearts were full with the beauty of His presence and we craved only for His loving company. But to feel His presence in His physical absence and to be in His constant company, we have to remember the WORD of His Name and read the Words of His love and truth. Thus, while reading the various books and journals in His Name and for His Cause we have been able to collect many more sayings, statements, messages and expositions on the subject of love, which we have incorporated in this fifth edition - revised and enlarged - in order to give the student on the subject of LOVE almost all that Meher Baba had unfolded on Love. This we release on the auspicious occasion of the Fourteenth anniversary of the opening of the *Avatar Meher Baba Poona Center* by Avatar Meher Baba on 1 May 1978.

K. K. Ramakrishnan

"YOU AND I ARE NOT WE BUT ONE"

- *Meher Baba*

Though all religions *are* one they do not need to be put together or brought together. All such outward efforts are of no significance. What is needed is the Realization, in one's own deepest core, of that ONENESS - which is love. Then one does not belong to any particular religion - all religions belong to one.

Religions we inherit by birth teach mere adherence to the outer forms only. But the Essence of Religion - Love, is lost. As we grow up we *have* to choose our own paths. Love is not a path or is its own path. Any other path that one may follow *has* to lead to love. Without love religiousness has no meaning.

All talk of religious tolerance is hypocrisy. Religion is not to be tolerated. It is to be loved. But such love cannot be cultivated. It can only grow within the human heart in the personal contact with a living Master or Avatar.

Such a ONE was Meher Baba. And it is of that love - in all its nuances - that He 'talks' about in the book, MEHER BABA ON LOVE.

(Dr. H. N. Phadnis)
-Swami Ajit Saraswati

Fragrance Of Love From Those Who Followed Meher Baba

Divine Love

Love is an active force in the universe. All our daily affairs in the course of life are accomplished through love, high or low. Divine love is the highest aspect of the one all-pervading love. It is all tender, above all rituals and laws and dogmas. It asks nothing and gives freely. In its limitless ocean the divine lover dives and finds precious jewels.

Nothing is higher, nothing deeper, and nothing wider than divine love. When kindled in the heart of anyone, its fire consumes everything that exists besides the divine Beloved. It purifies everyone who gets burnt in its furnace. That is why Jalaluddin Rumi has said, "love is the remedy of our pride and self-conceit, the physician of all our infirmities. Only he whose garment is rent by love becomes entirely unselfish."

As shown by Hazrat Meher Baba in His article on Love in this book, divine love is higher than the highest human love, the characteristic of which is pure disinterestedness. Its height is as high as God and its greatness is as great as God. It is the only preservative power at the heart of the universe. Without it spiritual progress is next to impossible. He who loveth not knoweth not the Beloved.

- *Chhota Baba**

* A product of 'Prem Ashram' at Meherabad in the late Twenties when God as Man amused Himself by making saints out of young boys under His care. Abdulla Pakrawan was called 'Chhota Baba' when he was raised to sixth plane of consciousness. Read 'Sobs And Throbs.'

The Meher Message: Vol. I, No. 5, May 1929, p. 15.

Love

The original aspect of love prior to its manifestation in the created world reposed infinitely in the bosom of oneness. It was love in condensation of its quality lying vast and unexpressed in an identity with the Absolute. This identity was unknown to itself. It was not an ignorance of love that prevailed but the highest form of love that knew nothing of knowing or desire except the one revelation of its own true nature. Revelation necessitated a change that could bring a differentiated existence. It lay the seed of a manifestation we call the universe where love plays the dual role of attraction and repulsion, male and female, and all the opposites.

Love in an infinite state was infinitely condensed and had very little to choose except the *most finite point* to express itself in the shape of creation. Most finite as opposed to the Infinite could be the only descriptive measure we have to represent the creative channel of love. While passing through this infinitesimal point, love was conditioned into a flowy liquid state which, on manifestation in the gross world, took the grossest form of stone surrounded by its limits and inertness. The infinite condensation evolved into finite condensation of a stone. Infinite Love in trying to express *itself* remained genuinely unexpressed. The period of Infinite Love is the *infinitude* and the period of unexpressed love is the period of evolution.

Throughout the progressive stages of the evolution, from the stone form to the animal world up to human

and all the human forms, love exhibited its perverse expression in the form of gravitation and attachment. The fact that love throughout the evolutionary period did carry with it an element of repulsion proves that the true and the all embracing love remained genuinely unexpressed. The beginning of unexpressed love is the stone-form, and the culmination of unexpressed love is the human being. The point of genuine expression of love is the opening of the inner sight of man.

The quality of love is not strange. It is common to all human beings who consciously or unconsciously experience its stupendous influence through various modes of its expression in life. One falls prey to love by letting this life-current out through easy channels of delusive happiness and short-lived satisfaction; another tries to poise it on a point of equity and consideration and remains pleasingly balanced on the "give and take" policy of the world; a third stakes his faculties and possessions in a frantic effort to attract speedily for himself all the happiness of the world; but the fourth one and the wisest does everything. He revels in the time-worn habits of man to experience their futility through weariness; he faces life in a spirit of bargain to meet the level of practical consciousness; and he stakes, if he has to, all the mental and physical possessions on the dice of *spiritual* warfare. He does all and everything with a vehement impulse of love armed with a precautionary curb on every fouling effect a wild passion may arouse. He maintains his high watermark of purity of love and strength of character. Every pure thought of love finds in him a vehicle of unrestricted expression. It

blesses him who gives and them who take, because it is pure. The giver knows the nature of love; its developments and consistency from the beginning of creation to a perfected *Divine Love* where there is a complete understanding of love.

There are seven stages of development of Divine Love. Its gradual unfoldment determines the progressive understanding of love as to its true nature. The integrating process of love starts from the first state and ends with the sixth. Alongside the process of integration runs a progressive enlightenment of its true nature. In the seventh, the final stage of *divine love*, the lover merges into the Beloved, and the two become one.

The highest result of love is unity, whereas unity is an integration of love. Infinite Love and infinite understanding abounds. The purpose of love from the beginning of the most *finite* point up to the culmination of *divine love* is fulfilled.

- *Adi K. Irani**

* *One of the early followers; disciple and secretary of Avatar Meher Baba during his life time; now one of the trustees of Avatar Meher Baba Trust and the sole licensee of Avatar Meher Baba Copyright. MEHERABAD, the most sacred place of pilgrimage for aspirants after Truth in general, particularly for the New Humanity is a gift of love from his father.*

Meher Baba Journal, Vol. I, No. 11, September 1939, p. 28.

Follow Love

Love is as you experience it. Love varies in degree, and the ultimate final state is "union with God."

Shri Meher Baba in his 'Sayings' has defined: "True love means the dedication of one's self or the complete surrender of one's self to the Beloved. It seeks the happiness of the Beloved without the least thought of obtaining happiness from the Beloved."

There is little question but that most of us desire love for the sake of our own happiness, at least indirectly. Yet we might see or pause to consider that our fountains of inspiration - the great music which throughout all time has inspired love, the rare expressions in art that have stimulated the heart of multitude - would in most instances never have been created if the artists had fulfilled their own earthly happiness. The background of the artist's life is usually one of unsatisfied longing. It is the very difficulty of the attainment of true love that, like the ever receding "Holy Grail" lures the soul from profound depths to ever greater heights. The heart that love has carved deep, can contain greater love. The bliss of God is a state beyond the dual action of experiencing love, for it is its very Source. The final state has been intimated by Christ in his words : "My Father and I are one."

Love often stirs the heart through a little thing in life, and at the same time has the possibility to end with the greatest thing in life. As much as we all desire love, it is rare to find one soul who dares even

the thought of its ultimate completion, rising above all duality and play of opposites, to become truly one through God-realization. The personification of Divine Love on earth is the *Sadguru* or Perfect Master, who is Love, Lover, and the Beloved.

Mystics of all faiths in every land have sought God with intensity of longing. Fervour is a quality of these lovers of God. Rare souls among them who arrived at sainthood, that beatific stage where God is seen face to face, have left to mankind a rich heritage of inspiration and experience which was their inner life. Churches or mosques or temples have claimed their remains after passing away, and canonized them within the fold, though during their life-time these ardent, unbounded saints rarely fitted into the pattern of creeds. Mostly they lived apart and sought God through intimate experience of Divine Love, which overflowed into their everyday living, and could not be circumscribed by convention or formalism. They wanted God more than man. They wanted God more than their very lives. They sought and found Him through various paths, but the blessed experience of Divine Love was alike. If it chanced that these saints possessed the spirit of evangelism, their very fervour and extremity of vision drove more people from them than ever were turned into followers during their earthly life. Of St. Francis of Assisi, we are told that his love embraced all creatures, and one day when the human listeners turned away from his sermon, leaving him all alone, he preached to the birds of the air, and these sensitive feathered creatures were irresistibly drawn to him. Even of Christ, the Master, we are told by St. John: "Many therefore of his disciples, when

they had heard, said, 'This is a hard saying; who can hear it?' From that time many of his disciples went back and walked with him no more."

The greatest of iconoclasts were never the heretics of the accepted order; they were such as Christ, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohamed within the religions of their respective birth, as from them date the passing of the old order. The message of love proves ever the great emancipator. New religions rose forth though only after these great living exponents of their own teachings had departed from earthly existence. Even scriptures were set down, oft-time by disciples after the Master's mission was finished on earth. No external religious form took place during their life-time - their own spiritually perfected being was the very temple of God.

From time to time in the history of religions there have been revivals when man asserted his right to know God for himself and demanded his own experience uncircumscribed by rites and creeds. No amount of persecution could dim such fervour, and only when the experience ceased to be direct and intimate, did the wave subside.

Religion itself is inspired from the living example on earth of God as man. God, the abstract, can be worshipped from afar, prayed to, meditated or pondered upon; but when Divine Love awakens the heart the affections become concentrated and objectified. God, the Beloved, has ever been in the form of a Saviour. He, who like Christ has become one with God, is God-man.

Every religion has its man who is not only of God,

but is God. To the believers he is the true manifestation of God on earth. Despite the insistence on their own *avataric* manifestation, these great religions all foretell of the return to earth of God as man. The "second coming" is a part of every faith, even to the more primitive ones. Many Christians, today, are given reason to think that St. Mark's prediction is near its time of fulfilment. "But in those days, after the tribulation... then shall they see the Son of man."

"How can we recognize the true Messiah?" has been many times asked of Shri Meher Baba. In a series entitled 'Questions and Answers' Shri Baba has replied: "The feeling and inspiration for things sublime and Divine Love are imparted by a *real* Messiah to anyone who comes in contact with him. A *false* Messiah cannot do this. Through His Divinity the *true* Messiah gradually attracts the world to himself, and the people come to know and feel that He is Real. The knowledge and feeling of confidence in His words and works grow gradually into certainty, masses follow Him drawn by an irresistible force. A mirage attracts the thirsty, but soon it is discovered to be an illusion and not the life-giving water. A *false* Messiah may attract the attention of the people through outward appearances, by force of personality, or by intellectual dissertations about spirituality, but he cannot do that which the *true* Messiah can do, i.e. arouse the highest ideals in men and touch the hearts of millions."

Should we be among these seekers of Truth who look for, or accept, a new manifestation of the Divine One on earth? How best can we receive and serve

Him? Following the path of Divine Love has ever been advocated in scriptures. The way has been expressed by Christ in the words: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I loved you." The Master drew mankind through his personal example of all compassionate love, yet he did not make it easy to follow him. He enjoined those who would follow to "leave all"; Christ said: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

To follow a Master has ever required complete detachment. Several hundred years before Christ, Krishna said words in effect: "One who is never affected by circumstance, one who is calm in all trials, who no one else's moods or behaviour upsets, one whose faith is never shaken, one who is cheerful even in the jaws of death - such a one only is worthy of loving me."

An ancient tale has been related to a group by Shri Baba which illustrates love for the Master as the way of attainment: "In Rama's time a Yogi once did penance for one hundred years. There was another man who loved the Master; he did no penance, no fasting. He only loved Rama. One day the Master went walking in the jungle. The first Yogi opened his eyes and said to him, 'Oh Rama, when will I see your formless face?' Rama replied, 'In fifty years.' 'The Yogi was frightfully disappointed and said, 'I made penance for one hundred years, and I suffered much, and still fifty more years to wait!' The next

day the Master accosted the happy devotee, and this loving one asked, 'Oh, Rama, when will I see your formless state?' Rama replied 'After fifty more lives.' The devotee said, 'So soon!' And thereupon he got into such an ecstasy that he died; and as he was dying he saw Rama's formless state." Concluding Shri Baba added: "Love is the very essence of Godhood."

Shri Baba has declared: "The highest state cannot be explained or expressed in words; the thought cannot grasp it; the mind cannot know it. It is the state of the Soul beyond the mind - it can be understood only when experienced. I can make you experience it by making you realize it."

- *Elizabeth C. Patterson**

* *One of the earliest Western disciples, who established the Meher Baba Center on the Lakes, at Myrtle Beach on the coast of South Carolina, a large estate of 500 acres bordering upon U.S. Highway 17 blessed by the physical presence of Avatar Meher Baba in 1952, 1956 and 1958, a spiritual resort for aspirants after Truth in the Western world.*

Meher Baba Journal, Vol. 1, No. 4, February 1939, p. 15.

Love

"True Love means the dedication of one's self or complete surrender of one's self to the Beloved. It aims at seeking the happiness of the Beloved, without the least desire of getting happiness from the Beloved," says our Beloved Shri Meher Babaji.

Such Love is the most important qualification, which one must possess to attain Godhood. One can never enter the Path without this Love. It is the healer, the life-giver and the only balm to our sore hearts. Perfect Divine Love destroys the idea of separateness of ourselves from God. It is the most important source, through which alone one can attain Salvation. The ordinary kind of Love that we have for our relations and friends, (somewhat selfish in its nature), is not the kind that will lead us to the Light. We must have that Divine Universal Love - Love for Him, through Love for all. For in the most sacred book Gita, Lord Sri Krishna says, "He who seeth Me everywhere, and seeth everything in Me, of him will I never lose hold, and he shall never lose hold of Me." Lord, the Divine Thread, runs through beads-like hearts of all beings. To practice this kind of Divine Love is not an easy thing; we can only cultivate it with the help of a perfect Guru. Neither could one tread on the Path without the help of a true Guru. Now, our Lord Babaji is here to help us to realize our spiritual aspirations. Why can we not "make haste while the Sun shines," by following His Divine Teachings, cultivating Divine Love and becoming one with Him? He

is our true Guru, Saviour and Leader on the Spiritual path.

May our Beloved Lord Shri Meher Baba live long and lead us all from the darkness to the Light!

"From the unreal lead me to the real!
From darkness lead me to Light!
From death lead me to Immortality!" Amen!

- *K. Janaki**

* Was the daughter of late C.V. Sampath Aiyangar of Judicial Service.

Meher Bhavan, their home at Saidapet, Madras was one of the houses in South India sanctified by the physical presence of Avatar Meher Baba and was a Center of much activities for His Cause in the thirties. There is a mighty banyan tree towering above the house, the sapling of which was planted by His divine hands.

The Meher Message, Vol. 11, No. 2, February 1930, p. 87.

Love Will Conquer

There are moments in our life when we see and feel with a certain distinctness. The man of spiritual vision describes these moments as revelation, but this revelation comes to all mortals and forms the real strength of their existence. Approaching the great theme of love, we must as much as possible try to feel that it is not just an abstract principle. Of course we do realize this, but only to the extent that love is related to our mortal sphere. Spiritual love, however, is a very definite and a very potent reality.

"The glory of life is to love, not to be loved; to give, not to get; to serve, not be served."

Here is a saying from a Christian source, yet how like it is the teaching of the Bhagvad-Gita, which Sri Krishna gave ages ago: "To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the fruits thereof" - love for love's sake, for the sake of itself. Naturally we must make our own interpretation, but these words may help to make clear to us what this Western mystic means.

Once a king was standing at the foot of the Himalayas with his queen. It was king Yudhisthira, one of the greatest of India's heroes, great not merely in the sense that he was a powerful ruler, but that he was an exalted spiritual being as well. And the queen was reproaching him for his noble qualities, as people often reproach others for their goodness, because through that very goodness, they are, so they think, not getting the best for themselves in this world of life.

"Why is it you are forever thinking of God and praising Him?" she asked. "What has He ever given you? Nothing but miseries all your days! Yet see how devoted you are - always loving and giving!"

For answer, the king pointed to the Himalayas.

"Look," he said, "at those mountains - magnificent, beautiful! How we love them! Yet we do not ask anything from them. There is nothing to ask, the beauty itself is sufficing. And just in that way do I love God,"

Perhaps this incident may give a little idea of the fullness of life - that perpetual fullness - possessing which a man has no time to calculate or measure how much he has given or what amount he has received.

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

We have heard a great deal concerning love from the lips of the preachers, but love is not anything we can merely speculate about, nor can it be conveyed by word of mouth; it is a fact; it is a force; it transforms and redeems. Men who are afraid of giving, afraid of serving, afraid of being their natural self, it lifts them out of that sphere altogether. That is the reason why the wise say God is love. Also love is the only approach to God. By "only approach" I mean that though there are many methods of reasoning, it is only after we have exhausted them all that we become a part of that great Blessedness. Among the people of the earth there is no difference of opinion that, no matter how we reach it, whether through

philosophy, logic, spiritual idealism or through work, love, moving through all forms of life, is the most potent power in the universe. It is one thing, however, to reason about it, and quite another to partake of it. The only one through whom we may taste the joy of God is the man who has become transformed by means of love.

- *Swami Paramananda**

* *Meher Message, Vol. III, February 1931, No. 2, p. 54-55.*

The Seven Realities Of Life As Unfolded By Meher Baba

EXISTENCE, LOVE, SACRIFICE, RENUNCIATION,
KNOWLEDGE CONTROL AND SURRENDER.

In the new dispensation of the spiritual values of life unfolded by Meher Baba, no importance to creed, dogma, caste or the performance of religious ceremonies and rites, is given, but to the UNDERSTANDING of the following seven Realities:

1. The only *Real Existence* is that of the One and only God Who is the Self in every (finite) self.

2. The only *Real Love* is the Love for this Infinity (God), which arouses an intense longing to see, know and become one with its Truth (God).

3. The only *Real Sacrifice* is that in which, in pursuance of this Love, all things - body, mind, position, welfare and even life itself - are sacrificed.

4. The only *Real Renunciation* is that which abandons, even in the midst of worldly duties, all selfish thoughts and desires.

5. The only *Real Knowledge* is the Knowledge that God is the inner dweller in good people and in so-called bad, in saint and in so-called sinner. This Knowledge requires you to help all equally as circumstances demand without expectation of reward, and when compelled to take part in a dispute, to act without the slightest trace of enmity or hatred; to try to

make others happy with brotherly or sisterly feeling for each one; and to harm no one in thought, word or deed, not even those who harm you.

6. The only *Real Control* is the discipline of the senses to abstain from indulgence in low desires, which alone ensures absolute purity of character.

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

* Adapted from *DISCOURSES: Vol. 1, published by Sufism Reoriented Inc. San Francisco, U.S.A., 1967, p. 15-16.*

What Is Love ?

Just as the one Paramatman has four states, so the one Love has four aspects. Irrespective of the four divisions and sub-divisions from the magnetic to the Divine, all is Love. The divisions and sub-divisions are but different aspects of the one all-pervading love. This necessarily means that every one has love and that love is everywhere.

The fourth aspect: all inanimate things have love in its fourth aspect. The lowest aspect of love may be termed natural love. In some cases it is perceptible; in others it is imperceptible. For instance, in a magnet the lowest form of love, which has the power of attraction, is clearly visible. This lowest aspect of love cannot be sub-divided. It is only magnetic.

The third aspect: There is love in all insects, birds, beasts, and, in fact, in every creature that lives on earth, but the characteristic of love in them is carnal, simply and purely. This is the third aspect of love, and is termed animal love.

Carnal love simply aims at satisfying personal desires and passions. For instance, if a hungry tiger spots a deer, what happens? Love for the deer takes possession of the ferocious animal. How to get hold of that deer becomes the temporary object of his life. This is love, but what a low form of love! Just as a lover is all restless and thinks only of reaching the beloved, so the tiger in this case, too, is very restless and remains so until he catches hold of the deer and

becomes one with it. Like a human lover, the tiger leaves no stone unturned to succeed in his aim.

The second aspect: as inanimate things have love it goes without saying that human beings have love too. In human beings love is in a higher aspect in comparison with that in inanimate objects and animals. This is a love in its second aspect and is termed human love. But this human love has four sub-divisions: carnal love, which is the lowest; greedy love; selfish love; and selfless love which is the highest aspect of human love. The four sub-aspects of human love may be described as follows:-

Carnal human love: all beings have more or less of this kind of love. We have already seen that the object of carnal love is to gratify desires and passions. In human beings it manifests itself in the same way as in the mute creation. When one becomes hungry and thinks of a cake, love for the cake arises in one at once. In such circumstances if one actually catches sight of a cake what will be the result? The love for the cake in that one will be intensified. Like a lover one will become impatient and will be eager to catch hold of that cake and become one with it. The same can be said of any vulgar desire in the man, - his restlessness for its fulfilment and his satisfaction after becoming one with the desired object. This is also love, but, mind you, the lowest form of love, in the human being.

The greedy human love: this form of love is imbued with desires for revenge, publicity, money. Think of a usurer and his love of money. Until he succeeds in collecting just as much money as his ambition claims; he can enjoy neither sleep nor food. His be-

loved .is money. His passion for money is generally termed avarice, but it is love in a lower form.

The condition of a fame-craving man is the same as that of an avaricious man. You may call him ambitious, but it cannot be gainsaid that he is in love with publicity. And what an ardent lover he is! He will give garden parties to officials; he will lavish gifts upon pressmen to boom him, and, of course, he will do such public service as will bring him great fame. One more example : Suppose A calls B bad names without any adequate reason. What will B suddenly get in his head or heart? Anger. Yes, but anger is reversed love and nothing else. The hand of B will feel the same twitches and twinges that a restless lover feels to become one with the most unguarded portion of the person of A. And when the fists of B have become one with the neck of A will B become satisfied.

Both the above aspects of human love require a beloved in the gross form. The object must be tangible. Hence these two sub-aspects of human love are connected directly with gross objects.

Selfish and selfless human love: these two aspects of human love differ from the two preceding ones in one respect. Unlike the carnal and greedy love, the selfish, as well as the selfless, human love pertain to the mind, and therefore it matters little whether the beloved is a gross or a mental object. Consider the love of a father for his son. The father loves the son and is devoid of vulgar desires of eating or beating the boy. But suppose he loves the boy with this idea, that the boy, when he grows up, will work and earn

money for him and thus be a support to him in his old age. Now, if the boy grows into an idle, pleasure loving and troublesome youth the father will most probably turn him out of the house. True he loves the boy, but his love is essentially selfish. The father is in love, not so much with the son, as with the hope of gain through the son.

Now take the example of a mother's love for her child. It is generally seen that the mother's love for her child remains the same whatever happens, even if the child does not rise to her expectations. This is the selfless love, but not the highest since the mother loves her own child. There is self in her love. The highest human love is that which is devoid of all hopes, interests, desires and expectations; in other words, that which is perfectly selfless and disinterested. And such love is found only in those whom we call heroes and heroines, Unless a person is spiritually minded he or she cannot be possessed of this aspect of love.

It will be seen from the above that natural love, animal love, and human love with its four sub-divisions, are but different aspects of the all-pervading love. Be it noted that all the sub-aspects of human love can be created and controlled by the Jivatman in him.

The first aspect: It must be borne in mind that the highest human love is not the highest absolute love - the divine love is the highest aspect of the all pervading love. One who gets divine love gets God. The divine love itself is a mighty Ocean. It enables the Jivatman to become Paramatman. The divine love is beyond reason and intellect and so beyond creation.

Nobody can create this highest aspect of love in himself, unlike the other lower aspects of love. The divine love is given and not created. It is a gift from the Paramatman in the Shivatman state to the Jivatman. The divine love may be defined as the love for Paramatman by which a Jivatman becomes in the end one with Paramatman.

There are three kinds of certainties - Yakin - regarding the existence of God. They are:-

- (a) Intellectual certainty = *ilmul Yakin*
- (b) Sighted certainty = *ainool Yakin*
- (c) Realized certainty = *haque Yakin*

The most that philosophy or intellectual gymnastics and *shariat* (religious rites and dogmas) can achieve is *ilmul Yakin*. They may make one intellectually certain about the existence of God, but it is only the love for God, the divine love, that enables one to find Him, and see Him actually, and finally to become one with Him. One gets the sighted certainty (*ainool Yakin*) by seeing God, and the realized certainty (*haque Yakin*) by becoming one with Him.

For the purpose of illustration regard God as water and the longing for water as love; and philosophy, or *Shariat*, as a water-divining rod. With the help of a water divining rod one may become aware of the existence of water, though one may not actually see it. This is certainty without seeing, and knowledge without experiencing. If one has no longing for the water one will certainly remain satisfied with this intellectual certainty only. But if one longs for water one will zealously undergo all the troubles of getting it till one gets it. Needless to say that, after seeing

it, the longing for drinking it will become intense, and this intense longing will drive one to drink it.

There are millions who believe in God but do not care even to see Him. They are satisfied with merely *ilmul Yakin* (intellectual certainty). But those who are really spiritually-minded cannot be satisfied with this intellectual certainty, which is, after all, shallow. It is far better to be spiritually restless than to be thus satisfied. One must yearn, not only after *ainool Yakin* (sighted certainty), but also *haque Yakin* (realized certainty), for God can be seen and realized.

By following the divine path (*tariqat*) one can see God and thereby get the sighted certainty. The realized certainty is got by realizing or becoming one with God. Only a few out of millions see God, and fewer realize him. One's spiritual progress can never be steady and certain without the divine love. It is the real side of religion and the only element which reveals or unfolds the emotionality of the spiritual path (*tariqat*). Unless and until one is possessed of it, one can never feel ecstasy, one can never behold illuminations and visions relating to the different states of the spiritual path.

The divine love knows no law. It is above all rules and regulations, above dogmas and rituals. Nothing can bind it and can set bounds to it. It is fire, an infinite fire, in itself, and those who burn in it become purified. The tortures of the separation from, and longing for, the union with the beloved sooner or later blaze up, and thereby wipe out all *sanskaras*, good as well as bad, of the divine lover. It is for this reason that one who is endowed with divine love, which,

be it remembered, is a God-sent grace, or a gift from a Sadguru, becomes restless. The trinkets of the world cannot tempt the true divine lover.

A worldly-minded man can have no idea of the spiritual agonies of the divine lover. Imagine a man lying on the sands of the Sahara in scorching sun and longing for water to moisten his parched-up lips and slake his thirst. If you can properly imagine the depth of his longing for just a drop of water when he is on the point of breathing his last owing to thirst, you will get a faint idea of the longing of the divine lover for the unification with the Almighty. Bear it in mind that only the divine love can bring about the annihilation of the consciousness of the separate self which gives self-realization.

It goes without saying that the divine love is the only true aspect of love. The other aspects of love may be said to be more or less inverse. They must be done away with if one desires to be possessed of the divine love. In other words, the renunciation of desires is a condition precedent to the gift of divine love

Love as love, considered absolutely, is passive, but in its divine aspect it is fully active. Angels have love but not in its divine aspect and so they cannot realize Paramatman.

Rightly has it been said 'Qood sinyar a isha hasto dard neest, (Angels have love but no pain or restlessness of the divine love).

Just a word about the two sub-branches of the divine love, the primal and the final. The primal is the beginning and the final is the endless end of the

divine love. The one is the spark and the other is the flame. The course of the river of love is long, but the goal can surely be reached.*

* *The Meher Gazette*: Vol. IV - No. 5, p. 61-62; No. 6, p. 70; Vol. V - No. 1 & 2, p. 82-83; No. 3 & 4, p. 1-3.

Have Hope

The modern era is steeped in restlessness as man is tossed between conflicting ideals. Like mounds in a sandy desert, intellectual knowledge is mounting up without provision for the expression of the heart, which is so vitally necessary to quench the need of the spirit. It is lack of this that has checkmated man's achievements, in spite of himself and his enormous advancements in the fields of science. Unhappiness and insecurity, emotional or otherwise, are the dominant notes of the age, and mankind is engulfed in the darkness of wars, hate and fear.

Yet I say, "Have hope."

Selfishness and lust for power tend to drag man towards brutality, which he has inherited from his evolutionary ancestry or acquired during erroneous searching through his incarnations. But there is within man the inextinguishable light of Truth, because he is essentially divine in origin and being.

Those who cleanse their hearts of the embittering poison of selfishness, hate and greed shall find God as their own true Self. When you find and realize God, the problem of selfishness and its numerous expressions melts away like mist before the sun. In God and as God, all life reveals itself as being really one and indivisible, and all separateness created by identification with human or sub-human forms is seen to be illusory.

The Truth of divine life is not a hope but a reality. It is the only reality, and all else is illusion. Have faith and you will be redeemed. Have love and you will conquer the lower and limited self of cravings that veil your own true being as God. Not through desperate self-seeking, but through constant self-giving is it possible to find the Self of all selves.*

* *Meher Baba, 'LIFE AT ITS BEST', Sufism Re-oriented, Inc. U.S.A. 1957, p. 41-42.*

World Peace Through Divine Love

Everywhere today man is rightfully occupied with the problem of world peace. If there is war, it means nothing short of racial suicide and total destruction. But world peace cannot be ensured through dogmas, however learned, or organizations, however efficient. It can be ensured only by a release of unarguing and unconquerable love which knows no fear or separateness.

Humanity is not going to be saved by any material power - nuclear or otherwise. It can be saved only through divine intervention. God has never failed humanity in its dark and critical periods. The greatest danger to man today is not from any natural catastrophe, but from himself.

It is not possible to realize human brotherhood merely by appealing to high ideals or to a sense of duty. Something more than that is essential to release human consciousness from the clutches of selfishness and greed.

Today the urgent need of mankind is not sects or organized religions, but LOVE. Divine love will conquer hate and fear. It will not depend upon other justifications, but will justify itself.

I have come to awaken in man this divine love. It will restore to him the unfathomable richness of his own eternal being and will solve all of his problems.*

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 44-45.

Redemption of Humanity Through Divine Love

The large mass of humanity is caught up in the clutches of separative and assertive tendencies. For one who is overpowered by the spectacle of these fetters of humanity, there is bound to be nothing but unrelieved despair about its future. One must look deeper into the realities of the day if one is to get a correct perspective on the present distress of humanity. The real possibilities of the New Humanity are hidden to those who look only at the surface of the world-situation, but they exist and only need the spark of spiritual understanding to come into full play and effect. The forces of lust, hate and greed produce incalculable suffering and chaos, but *the one redeeming feature about human nature is that even in the midst of disruptive forces there invariably exists some form of love.*

Even wars require co-operative functioning, but the scope of this co-operative functioning is artificially restricted by identification with a limited group or ideal. *Wars often are carried on by a form of love, but it is a love which has not been understood properly. In order that love should come into its own, it must be untrammelled and unlimited.* Love does exist in all phases of human life, but it is latent or is limited and poisoned by personal ambition, racial pride, narrow loyalties and rivalries, and attachment to sex, nationality, sect, caste or religion. If there is

to be a resurrection of humanity, the heart of man will have to be unlocked so that a new love is born into it - *a love which knows no corruption and is entirely free from individual or collective greed.*

The New Humanity will come into existence through a release of love in measureless abundance, and this release of love can come through spiritual awakening brought about by the Masters. *Love cannot be born of mere determination; through the exercise of will one can at best be dutiful.* Through struggle and effort, one may succeed in assuring that one's external action is in conformity with one's concept of what is right; but such action is spiritually barren because it lacks the inward beauty of spontaneous love. Love has to spring spontaneously from within; it is in no way amenable to any form of inner or outer force. Love and coercion can never go together, but while love cannot be forced upon anyone, it can be awakened through love itself. *Love is essentially self-communicative; those who do not have it catch it from those who have it.* Those who receive love from others cannot be its recipients without giving a response which, in itself, is the nature of love. True love is unconquerable and irresistible. It goes on gathering power and spreading itself until eventually it transforms everyone it touches. *Humanity will attain to a new mode of being and life through the free and unhampered interplay of pure love from heart to heart.*

When it is recognised that there are no claims greater than the claims of the universal divine life which, without exception, includes everyone and everything, love will not only establish peace, har-

*mony and happiness in social, national and international spheres, but it will shine in its own purity and beauty. Divine love is unassailable to the onslaughts of duality and is an expression of divinity itself. It is through divine love that the New Humanity will tune in with the divine plan. Divine love will not only introduce imperishable sweetness and infinite bliss into personal life, but it will also make possible an era of New Humanity. Through divine love the New Humanity will learn the art of co-operative and harmonious life; it will free itself from the tyranny of dead forms and release the creative life of spiritual wisdom; it will shed all illusions and get established in the Truth; it will enjoy peace and abiding happiness; it will be initiated in the life of Eternity.**

* *Meher Baba - 'NEW HUMANITY.' Discourses, Vol. I, p. 23-25.*

Non-Violence Means Love Infinite

Non-violence, pure and simple, means Love Infinite. It is the goal of life. When this state of pure and Infinite Love is reached, the aspirant is at one with God. To reach this goal there must be intense longing, and the aspirant who has this longing to realise the supreme state has to begin by practising what is termed "non-violence of the brave". This applies to those who, though not one with all through actual realisation, consider no one as their enemy. They try to win over even the aggressor through love and give up their lives by being attacked, not through fear but through love.

..."non-violence of the brave" is practicable for those individuals who have an intense longing to attain the supreme state. This longing is not to be found in the masses. If, therefore, it is intended to lead the masses to pure "non-violence", it is necessary first to prepare them for the "non-violence of the brave". To achieve this aim in a practical way it is necessary to make them follow, in the beginning, the principle of "non-violent violence" - that is, violence done solely to defend the weak without any selfish motive whatever. In times of actual war, when the masses are taken by surprise and when they are not even in the mood to listen to advice about having intense longing to attain the supreme goal of life, the only practical way to lead them finally towards the goal is to begin by inculcating in them the principle of "non-violent violence" and then gradually introducing

the "non-violence of the brave." A premature attempt to introduce "non-violence of the brave" amongst the unprepared masses in actual wartime would not only fail but incur a serious danger of bringing in the fatal "non-violence of the coward," i.e., the masses will not resist the aggression simply because of fear and for no other reason.

The masses may also be educated and led to the "non-violence of the brave" by making them follow the principles of "selfless violence," instead of those of "non-violent violence." Selfless violence is violence done in self-defence when attacked treacherously. No other selfish motive should be allowed to justify the violence. Thus, for example, when one's mother's honour is on the point of being violated by a lustful desperado and when one defends her by resorting to violence, he is said to have followed the principles of "selfless violence." Similarly, when the honour of the motherland is at stake and it is being attacked by enemies, the nation's selfless effort in defending the motherland is "selfless violence." A tinge of selfishness being present (as the mother is one's own mother), the love expressed here is limited human love.

"Non-violence of the coward" is, as pointed out, fatal. So also is "selfish violence," i.e., violence for selfish motives by individuals or a nation to gain power or for other selfish ends.

It will therefore be seen that while non-violence, pure and simple, is the goal of life, this goal has to be attained by individual seekers of God by following non-violence of the brave." The masses who have not the requisite intense longing for being one with

Him, have to be led gradually towards this goal by the principles of "non-violent violence," or those of "selfless violence," according to the circumstances. In conclusion, it must be very clearly understood that "non-violent violence" and "selfless violence" are merely means of attaining the goal of life, namely, pure and simple "non-violence" or "Love Infinite." The means must not be confused or otherwise mixed up with the goal itself.

The motive and the result are always judged by general acceptance, as to whether they are good or bad. For example, "non-violence of the brave" and "non-violence of the coward" are both non-violence, but from the viewpoint of the motive force behind it, "nonviolence of the brave" is born of *love* and "non-violence of the coward" is born of *fear*, which is the opposite of *love*. While as "non-violence" they are not opposites, their motives are infinitely opposed to each other. The motive behind "non-violence of the brave" is losing one's life to gain Infinite Love, but the motive behind "non-violence of the coward" is to save one's own life, which gains infinite contempt. "Non-violence of the coward" we put therefore under the headline of "non-love," while we put "Non-violence of the brave" under the heading of "love."

"Non-violent violence" is not placed under the heading of love but under the heading of *duty* - duty done selflessly to others according to *Karmayoga*, which eventually is linked up with unlimited love - but motivated by human love.

The difference between the two opposite forces cannot be obliterated, but the transformation of one force

to another can happen when expressed rightly through the right channels. Food given wrongly becomes poison, while poison (like strychnine) given in small quantities as a tonic becomes food for the nerves. Although food in substance does not become poison and *vice versa*, the action and the result due to the use can become transformed.*

* *Meher Baba: 'Violence And Non-violence', Discourses Vol. I, p. 108-111.*

Love and Non-Violence

True love is no game for the faint-hearted and the weak. It is born of strength and understanding.

In its enthusiasm for the highest ideal, wise leadership can never afford to lose sight of the relative and practical. Human evolution proceeds by gradual stages from selfish violence to unselfish violence, and then from non-violence of the brave to the pure and incorruptible non-violence of truth as infinite love. Each individual exists at some point in this succession, and his duty in time of war is indelibly determined by that position.

All narrowness limits love. In the East, as in the rest of the world, humanity is breaking into narrow groups based upon caste, creed, race, nationality, religion or culture. All this is due to ignorance, prejudice and selfishness. It can only be mended by fostering a spirit of mutuality which will derive its strength from a sense of the inviolable unity of all life.

Creative leadership will have to recognize and then emphasize the fact that all men are already united not only by their co-partnership in the great divine plan for the earth, but also by the fact that they are all equally the expression of the one life. No line of action can be really fruitful unless it is in complete harmony with this truth.

There must be love for friend and foe, good will, patience and forbearance. Man must try to remedy his own defects instead of clamouring about the faults

of others. The world will soon realize that neither cults, creeds and ceremonies on the one hand, nor passionate striving for material welfare on the other, can ever bring about real happiness - but that selfless love and universal brotherhood can accomplish it.*

* *Listen Humanity*, p. 143-144.

The Real And The False

In the material world every bit of money counts. In the subtle world every ounce of energy counts. In the mental world every force of thought counts. In the Beyond-State only God counts, and in the Realm of God-man everything counts as nothing and nothing counts as everything. Science as it is understood deals with energy and matter. This is the domain of the mind. There is also spiritual science which deals with the beyond-mind state. Material science brings results through the intellect, spiritual science through love. When love is fully experienced, the source of spiritual science, which is God, is realized and all else is then discovered to be illusory.

Spiritual science based on love alone is beyond mental understanding. It is full of apparent contradictions which love alone can face and overcome Whereas material science enhances the ego-life, spiritual science annihilates it, and leads into the 'I-am-God' state of becoming God. In fact, the end of all human questioning is God - the core of existence and the one and only Reality.

In the glow of a new-born love or in the warmth of newly caught enthusiasm one must also try to acquire other qualities. Hope should be fortified by courage, which can accept failure with equanimity; enthusiasm should be harnessed by the wisdom which knows how to wait for the fruit with patience. Idealistic dreams about the future should be counter-

balanced by a sense of the realities of the present; and the glow of love should allow itself to be illumined by the free and unhampered play of reason.*

* *From '6 Messages of Avatar Meher Baba,' published by Adi K. Irani, Meher Publication, Kings Road, Ahmednagar, India, p, 12 & 16.*

Ignorance Veils The Soul From Love

Any thought, feeling or action which savors of the separative ego springs from unqualified ignorance. It is not a form of ignorance that one may comfortably wear, or not wear, like an overcoat. It is an ignorance that binds. It is an ignorance that commits the self to unrelieved and degrading suffering, not necessarily of the physical body, but always and inevitably of the spirit. It is an ignorance attendant upon the betrayal of Truth and is, therefore, a form of self-betrayal.

It admits of no superficial and temporary remedies or bedridden compromises. It is an ignorance which shuts the soul from love and beauty, joy and freedom, conscious divinity and true Self-fulfillment. It is an ignorance which persists like a thorn in the flesh unless it is uprooted by complete acceptance of the Truth.*

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 28-29.

Belief And Love

The Truth-realized Master transmits dynamic impressions of faith in and love for God through appropriate spiritual experience. Faith of any kind is, in a way, ultimately based upon intellect. There can be no faith without some form of intellectual conviction, which again is founded in experience. Many people say that they believe in God or that they have faith in Him; but though they say this out of conventional fear of God, what they say is far from being true. If they really believed in God, their actions would be different from what they are. They fear God as something unknown, a power which they have been taught to respect and obey through tradition and mythology. They fear him as one who is supposed to give due rewards to the virtuous and punishments to the wicked. But neither their fear nor their beliefs are deep-rooted or sincere.

If their belief in God were sincere, they would forthwith start in right earnest to find out what God is. They would want to have God and realize Him; and all their actions would be entirely different. And if they were really to take God seriously and want to know what He is, their very first glimpse of divinity would disarm them of all their unjustified fear. It would reveal to them that God is Love and that His Plan for all, including themselves, is to raise them to the highest pinnacle of perfection and bliss, of which the earthly pleasures and even the happiness and joys

of the subtle and mental world are but faint and poor shadows.*

Love And Fear

The very first descent of divinity into the heart awakens love for God. And *when love for God comes, fear for God disappears*. Love for God removes all fear and prepares the aspirant to be lost in Him. The intensity of the love of aspirants unites them with God. They thus eventually get the supreme 'I-Am-God-State'. Those, who persist till the end, get there. Those who get there are however very few, though many, without getting there, feel tempted to claim that they are God. To be an honest atheist is no fraud. But to claim that one is God before attaining real unity with Him, is definitely a fraud.**

* From '*Sparks of The Truth from Dissertations of Meher Baba,*' version by Dr. C.D. Deshmukh, (Sheriar Press), p. 27.

**From '*Sparks of The Truth*', p. 27-28.

Love Is The Cleanser

In the divine scales, vice and virtue are necessary experiences man goes through before attaining the supreme balance of Self-realization, which is beyond all opposites - good and bad.

"Good" is like a clean mirror that reflects the image of God. When true knowledge is gained you realize that the reflection is the image of your own Self, the GOD that is in all and in everything.

"Bad" is like the dusty particles that accumulate and hide the image of God, until the mirror presents only a distorted or blank surface. It cannot affect the object being reflected; it merely distorts your vision. LOVE is the cleanser that wipes the mirror bright and enables you to behold with increasing clarity the indivisible Entity that permeates all life.

The negative experience of the "bad", with its consequent suffering, ultimately disgusts man and leads him to the positive force of "good," thus awakening divine love. Hence, the saints of the present are the sinners of the past. In the clarity of the understanding and knowledge they have gained they show true humility. They do not take pride in their achievements nor condemn the "sinner" whom they know to belong equally to God, but help him to remove the self-created veil of ignorance and perceive his true identity.

Man cannot escape his glorious destiny of Self-realization, and no amount of suffering that he passes through on the way to it can ever be too much. After

the apex of suffering has been reached, the time will soon come for mankind to have a deeper spiritual understanding, bringing it closer together in universal love and brotherhood in the bond of divine knowledge - the only knowledge worth having.*

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 48-50

No Hypocrisy In Love

Never before has dishonesty and hypocrisy prevailed in this world as much as today. If the least hypocrisy creeps into our thoughts, words and deeds, God who is the innermost Self in us all keeps Himself hidden. Hypocrisy is a million-headed cobra. There are today many so-called saints who, even though they tell people to be honest and not hypocrite, are yet themselves deep in dishonesty. Remember therefore, if you cannot love God and cannot lead a saintly life, at least do not make a show of it, because the worst scoundrels are better than hypocritical saints. It is not what the world thinks of us that matters, but what God knows about us.

The way out is to stop hating and to love, to stop wanting and to give, to stop domination and to serve. Trust God completely, and He will solve your difficulties. Faithfully leave everything to Him and He will reveal Himself to you. This love needs no ceremonies and show. Your heart must love so that even your mind is not aware of it.

Let us become the soldiers of God. Let us face all difficulties bravely and cheerfully. Let us struggle for the Truth. Let us live not for ourselves but for others. Let us speak truly, think truly and act truly. Let us be honest as God is Infinite Honesty. Let us return love for hatred and win over others to God. Let the world know that, above everything, the most dear to our hearts is God, the Supreme Reality.*

* *From '6 Messages of Avatar Meher Baba', p. 26-27.*

Baba's Divinity

I can say with Divine Authority that I experience eternally, consciously and constantly being one with you all and one in you all. I am greater than none of you in the soul-sense, and none of you has to receive from me Divinity, which exists equally in us all. What I have to give is the knowledge and experience of the oneness of us all.

I have come down from the Highest to your level and if on that level you love me with all your heart, you will come to my level of the Highest, because I am in you, and therefore, in whatever capacity and in whatever circumstances you are, I am in that too.

I am poor, rich, man, woman, small, big, literate, illiterate. When I am amongst the poor, I feel no one to be poorer than I. When I am amongst rich and important people, I feel I am the Emperor of emperors.

In my continual and eternal experience of Reality no difference exists between the worldly rich and the poor. But if ever a question of difference between opulence and poverty were to exist for me, I should deem him really poor who, possessing worldly riches, possesses not the wealth of love for God. I should know him truly rich who, owning nothing, possesses this priceless treasure of love for God. His is the poverty that kings could envy, which makes even the King of kings his slave.

I love children, and never feel more happy than

when amongst them, as I then feel myself to be a child. I prefer to have time to play with them rather than to have garlanding, Puja, Arti, etc., especially because I am expert in playing marbles. Ages ago, when I woke up, I began to play marbles with the Universe.

I feel every one of you to be mine and I want every one of you to make me yours, as you already eternally are mine. There is nothing which is beyond me and there is nothing without me, yet I am and can always be captured with love.

I want you to make me your constant companion. Think of me more than you think of yourself. Your duty is to keep me constantly with you in your thoughts, speech and actions. They do their duty who, sincere in their faith and love, surrender to me and are guided by their implicit belief in my Divinity as Baba. They too do their duty who speak ill of me, condemn me through their writings, urged by their genuine conviction that Baba is a fraud. But they are the hypocrites who, not knowing their own minds, are constantly doubting; at times, through fleeting emotion, they are inclined to believe in me and at other times to indulge in gossip against me. No amount of slander can affect or change me, nor any amount of admiration or praise enhance or glorify my Divinity. Baba is what he is. I was Baba, I am Baba and shall ever remain Baba.

Have hope. I have come to help you to surrender yourself to the Cause of God and to accept His Grace of Love and Truth. I have come to help you to win the one victory of all victories, to win yourself.

I tell you all with my Divine Authority that you and

I are not "we" but "one". You unconsciously feel my Avatarhood within you; I consciously feel in you what each of you feel. Thus every one of us is Avatar, in the sense that everyone and everything is everyone and everything, at the same time and for all time.

Pay heed when I say with my Divine Authority that the Oneness of Reality is so uncompromisingly unlimited and all-pervading that not only 'we are one' but even this collective term of 'we' has no place in the Infinite, Indivisible Oneness. In this Oneness not only the Avatar is God, but so also are the ant and the sparrow. The only apparent difference is in the states of consciousness. The Avatar knows that which is a sparrow is not a sparrow, whereas a sparrow does not realize this and being ignorant of its ignorance, identifies itself as a sparrow.

There exists at the moment a universal dissatisfaction and an indescribable longing for something that will end the chaos and misery holding the world in its grip. I will satisfy this craving and lead the world to true happiness and peace by making people look more deeply into things than hitherto.

My work will embrace everything. It will permeate every phase of life. Perfection would fall far short of the ideal if it were to accept one thing and reject another.

The world needs awakening, not mere verbal instructions. It needs the freedom and amplitude of Life Divine, not the superficiality of mechanised and pompous forms. The world-task ahead of me is creative. I see the structure of all the great and recognised religions of the world tottering.

True religion consists of developing that attitude of mind which results in seeing One Infinite Existence pervading the universe; then one could live in the world and yet not be of it, and at the same time one could be in harmony with everyone and everything; then one could attend to all worldly duties and affairs and yet feel completely detached from results.

I belong to no religion. Every religion belongs to me. My own personal religion is of my being the Ancient Infinite One and the religion I teach to all is love for God.

If religion does not help man to emancipate his soul from spiritual bondage and realize God, it has no useful purpose. Then it would be time for religion to go, for God to come. Therefore I am not interested in founding a new religion. The world is already divided by numberless sects, each with its own dogmas and beliefs. I have not come to set up another cage for man, but to impart to the world this illimitable Truth, and therefore I intend to bring together all religions and cults like beads on one string and to revitalize them for individual and collective needs.

The religion I give, touches the knowledge of the One behind the many. The book that I make people read is the book of the Heart, which holds the key to the mystery of life. As for ritual, I teach humanity to discriminate, to express its true life and to live the religion which it feels. I bring about a happy blending of the head and the heart.

If people were to ask me, "Have you seen God?", I would reply, "What else is there to see"? If they were to ask me, "Are you God?", I would reply, "What else could I be?" If they would ask me, "Are

you Avatar?," I would say, "Why else have I taken this human form?"

I am never born. I never die. Yet every moment I take birth and undergo death. Although I am present everywhere eternally in my formless Infinite State, from time to time I take form, and taking the form and leaving it is termed my physical birth and death. I find no one else to bow down to because I find myself in everything. I am the One so many seek and so few find. No amount of intellect can fathom me. No amount of austerity can attain me. Only when one loves me and loses one's self in me am I found, and only those who lose themselves in my love find themselves in me. This is not idle talk but an authoritative statement that eternally I have been and will always be the slave of my lovers, and that I am only Real and One for those who love me.

Any worship or obeisance done to any Deity, animate or inanimate, to any Master, Saint, Advanced Soul or Yogi, eventually comes to me. By offering unadulterated love to anyone and anything you will be loving me. When instead of erecting Churches, Fire temples, Mandirs and Mosques, you establish the House of God in your hearts for your beloved God, my work will have been done. When instead of performing ceremonies and rituals mechanically as old-age customs, you serve your fellow-beings with the selflessness of love, understanding God to be equally residing in all, and understanding that by so serving others, you are serving God, my work will have been fulfilled.

For the Infinite Love I bear for one and all, I con-

tinue to come as the Avatar, to be judged time and again by humanity in its ignorance, so as to help man to distinguish the Real from the false.

Those who are united in love know no separation. Wherever I am, wherever you are, I am always with you. Having seen me with your eyes, you have still not seen me as I am. You have not yet had even a glimpse of my true Being. Although I appear to be silent, I speak through you all. I am ever silent and ever-lastingly speaking, but the time has arrived when I shall break my apparent silence. Then those who love me will see my real Self.

To love me as I love you, you must become the recipient of my grace. To receive my grace you must obey me spontaneously, with firm unshakable faith in me. And you can only obey me spontaneously, as I wish, when you completely surrender yourself to me, so that my wish becomes your law, my love sustains your being, and my grace bestows upon you the gift of Divine Love.

He who succeeds, ultimately not only finds me but becomes me and realizes the aim of life.*

* *From '6 Messages of Avatar Meher Baba,' p. 1-6.*

Avatar Comes To Receive The Beauty And Give The Blessings Of Love

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.

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 viewpoint. Do not worry when you cannot follow what I say. Merely listening may possibly help someone to love me.

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.

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. The 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.

Listen to love without philosophising 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* me 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

* A group of persons living as a family. Here it means close disciples who live in implicit obedience to the master or those who lived with him physically.

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 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.

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 my self. 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.

Sometimes it is also infinitely impossible for one to receive that love. 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 his 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.

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...

* *Mast: a spiritually preoccupied and divinely intoxicated person.*

** *in the sense of one who is one with God. Meher Baba was the Avatar of the age.*

† *living in the company of the Master... held in November 1955 at Meherabad.*

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

Age after age the infinite God wills through His infinite mercy to come amongst mankind by descending to the human level in a human form. His physical presence among mankind is not understood and He is looked upon as an ordinary man of the world. When He asserts His divinity by proclaiming Himself the Avatar of the age, He is worshipped by some who accept Him as God, and glorified by a few who know Him as God on earth. It happens invariably though that the rest of humanity condemns Him while He is physically among them.

Thus God as man proclaims Himself as the Avatar and allows Himself to be persecuted and tortured, humiliated and condemned by humanity, for whose sake His infinite love has made Him stoop so low. Through His very humiliation He ensures that humanity, in its very act of condemning God's manifestation as the Avatar, shall assert, however indirectly, the existence of God in His infinite, eternal state.

. The Avatar is always one and the same because God is always one and the same. This eternally one and the same Avatar repeats His manifestation from time to time in different cycles. He adopts different human forms and different names, coming in different places to reveal truth in different clothing and different languages. This He does to raise humanity from the pit

of ignorance and help free it from the bondage of delusion.

Among the best known and honoured manifestations of God as the Avatar, the earliest is Zoroaster. He came before Ram, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed. Thousands of years ago He gave the world the essence of truth in the form of three fundamental precepts: good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

These precepts are constantly unfolded for humanity in one manner and another by the Avatar of the age, who leads humanity imperceptibly towards the truth. To put these precepts of good thoughts, good words and good deeds into practice is not as easy as it would seem, but yet not impossible. To live up to them though is as infinitely difficult as to practice a living death in the midst of life.

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

You can know me as one of you and one in you only when the veils of separateness are lifted, and this can be done if you love me honestly and whole-heartedly.

Lose yourself in Baba and you will find that you eternally were Baba. There can be no compromise in love. It has either to be full, or not at all.

I say with divine authority that I am the Ancient One, and the slave of those who really love me.

From the beginning of all beginnings I have been saying, I say it now, and to the ends I will say it, that *he who loves God becomes God.*

It is a fact that I have come amongst you. One of these days the whole world will come to realize how I have come, where I have come from and the purpose of my coming. I repeat once again that I have come neither to establish *panths* and *jaats* (groups and classes) nor to establish *mandirs*, *masjids*, churches and *ashrams* in the world. I have come to receive the beauty and give the blessings of love. All else but God - whether rites, rituals or ceremonies in the name of religion, worldly possessions, family, money or one's own physical body - all else but God is illusion.*

* *"Listen Humanity*, p. 13, 14, 16-21, 226, 227, 228, 236, 237, 240.

How Can Love Be Explained?

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 thing 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 make one as much awake to possibilities as it makes one deaf to impossibilities - as envisaged by the poet:

"I was tied to a raft and thrown in 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 *sahavas** is to help you grasp what love and obedience really mean.

* *Those who truly lived in the company of Meher Baba during the period of that sahavas actually live in his company today through effortless constant remembrance.*

You must have such a clear picture in your minds of this *sahavas* 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. You have got to remove from your minds any picture of me upon a dais and you sitting before me - as has been the experience of most of you present here.

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.**

** *Listen Humanity*, p. 241-242.

The All-Pervading Ocean Of Love

Love pervades the universe:

LIFE and love are inseparable from each other. Where there is life, there is love. Even the most rudimentary consciousness is always trying to burst out of its limitations and experience some kind of unity with other forms. Though each form is separate from other forms, in *reality* they are all forms of the same unity of life. The latent sense for this hidden inner reality indirectly makes itself felt even in the world of illusion through the attraction which one form has for another form.

Reign of love in inanimate nature: ~

The law of *gravitation*, to which all the planets and the stars are subject, is in its own way a dim reflection of the love which pervades every part of the universe. Even the forces of repulsion are in truth expressions of love, since things are repelled from each other because they are more powerfully attracted to some other things. Repulsion is a negative consequence of positive attraction. The forces of *cohesion* and *affinity* which prevail in the very constitution of matter are positive expressions of love. A striking example of love at this level is found in the attraction which the magnet exercises for iron. All these forms of love are of the lowest type, since they are necessarily conditioned by the rudimentary consciousness in which they appear.

Love in the animal kingdom:

In the animal world love becomes more explicit in the form of *conscious impulses* which are directed towards different objects in the surroundings. *This love is instinctive* and it takes the form of gratifying different desires through the appropriation of suitable objects. When the tiger seeks to devour the deer he is in a very real sense in love with the deer. Sex-attraction is another form of love at this level. All the expressions of love at this stage have one thing in common, *viz., they all seek to satisfy some bodily impulse or desire through the object of love.*

Human love has to adjust to reason:

Human love is much higher than all these lower forms of love because human beings have the fully developed form of consciousness. Though human love is continuous with the lower sub-human forms of love, in a way, it is different from them, for henceforth its operations have to be carried on side by side with a new factor which is *reason*. Sometimes human love manifests itself as a force which is *divorced* from reason and runs parallel to it. Sometimes it manifests itself as a force which gets *mixed up* with reason and comes into *conflict* with it. Lastly, it expresses itself as a constituent of the harmonised whole where *love and reason have been balanced and fused into an integral unity.*

Three combinations of love and reason:

Thus human love can enter into three types of combination with reason. In the first type, the sphere of

thought and the sphere of love are kept as separate as possible, i.e., the sphere of love is practically inaccessible to the operation of reason, and love is allowed little or no access to the objects of thought. Complete separation between these two aspects of the spirit is of course never possible but when there is an alternate functioning of love and reason (oscillating in their predominance) we have *a love which is unilluminated by reason or a reason which is unenlivened by love*. In the second type, love and reason are both simultaneously operative but they *do not work in harmony with each other*. Though this conflict creates confusion, it is a necessary phase in the evolution of the higher state where there is a real synthesis of love and reason. In the third type of love this synthesis between love and reason is an accomplished fact with the result that *both love as well as reason are so completely transformed that they precipitate the emergence of a new level of consciousness* which, compared to the normal human consciousness, is best described as *super-consciousness*.

Qualitative variety in love:

Human love makes its appearance in the matrix of ego-consciousness which has countless desires. Love is coloured by these factors in many ways. Just as we get an ever changing variety of designs in a kaleidoscope by the various combinations of simpler elements, we find an almost limitless qualitative variety in the range of love owing to novel combinations of psychic factors. And just as there are infinite shades of colour in different flowers, so there are diverse delicate differences in human love.

Lower forms of love:

Human love is encircled by a number of obstructive factors such as infatuation, lust, greed, anger and jealousy. In one sense, even these obstructive factors are either *forms* of lower love or the inevitable *side-results* of these lower forms of love. Infatuation, lust and greed might be looked upon as perverted and lower forms of love. In infatuation a person is *enamoured* of a sensual object; in lust he develops a *craving* for sensations in relation to it; and in greed he desires to *possess* it. Of these three forms of lower love, greed has a tendency to extend from the original object to the *means* of obtaining it. Thus persons become greedy for money or power or fame, which can be instruments for possessing the different objects that are craved. Anger and jealousy come into existence when these lower forms of love are thwarted or threatened to be thwarted.

The lower is the enemy of the higher:

These lower forms of love obstruct the release of pure love. The stream of love can never become clear and steady until it is disentangled from these limiting and perverting forms of lower love. *The lower is the enemy of the higher.* If consciousness is caught in the rhythm of the lower it cannot emancipate itself from its self-created ruts, finding it difficult to get out of them and advance further. Thus the lower form of love continues to interfere with the development of the higher form, and has to be given up in order to allow for the untrammelled appearance of the higher form of love.

Love and infatuation :

The emergence of higher love from the shell of lower love is helped by the constant exercise of *discrimination*. Therefore, love has to be carefully distinguished from the obstructive factors of infatuation, lust, greed and anger. In infatuation, the person is a *passive victim* of the spell of conceived attraction for the object. In love there is an *active appreciation* of the intrinsic worth of the object of love.

Love is also different from lust. In lust there is reliance upon the *object of sense* and consequent spiritual *subordination* of the soul to it, but love puts the soul into direct and *co-ordinate* relation with the *reality* which is behind the form. Therefore lust is experienced as being *heavy* and love is experienced as being *light*. In lust there is a *narrowing down* of life and in love there is an *expansion* in being. *To have loved one soul is like adding its life to your own*. Your life is, as it were, multiplied and you virtually live in two centres. If you love the whole world you vicariously live in the whole world, but in lust there is an ebbing down of life and a general sense of hopeless dependence upon a form which is regarded as *another*. Thus, in lust there is the *accentuation of separateness and suffering*, but in love there is the *feeling of unity and joy*. Lust is dissipation, love is recreation. Lust is a craving of the senses, love is the expression of the spirit. Lust *seeks* fulfilment but love *experiences* fulfilment. In lust there is *excitement*, but in love there is *tranquility*.

Love and greed:

Love is equally different from greed. Greed is possessiveness in all its gross and subtle forms. It seeks its appropriate gross things and persons as well as such abstract and intangible things as fame and power. In love, the annexation of the other person to your individual life is out of the question, and there is a free and creative outpouring that enlivens and replenishes the psychic being of the beloved independently of any expectations for the self. We have the paradox that *greed, which seeks for the appropriation of another object, in fact leads to the opposite result of bringing the self under the tutelage of the object; and love, which aims at giving away the self to the object, in fact leads to a spiritual incorporation of the beloved in the very being of the lover. In greed the self tries to possess the object, but is itself possessed by the object. In love the self offers itself to the beloved without any reservations, but in that very act it finds that it has included the beloved in its own being.*

Pure love awakened through grace :

Infatuation, lust and greed constitute a spiritual malady which is often rendered more virulent by the aggravating symptoms of anger and jealousy. Pure love, in sharp contradistinction, is the bloom of spiritual perfection. Human love is so tethered by these limiting conditions that the spontaneous appearance of pure love from within becomes impossible. So, when such pure love arises in the aspirant it is always a gift. *Pure love arises in the heart of the aspirant in response to the descent of grace from the Master.*

When pure love is first received as a gift of the Master it becomes lodged in the consciousness of the aspirant like a seed in favourable soil, and in the course of time the seed develops into a plant and then into a full-grown tree.

Spiritual preparation for grace:

The descent of the grace of the Master is conditioned, however, by the preliminary spiritual preparation of the aspirant. This preliminary spiritual preparation for grace is never complete until the aspirant has built into his psychic make-up some divine attributes. When a person avoids backbiting and thinks more of the good points in others than of their bad points, and when he can practise supreme tolerance, and desires the good of others even at the cost of his own self, he is ready to receive the grace of the Master. One of the greatest obstacles hindering this spiritual preparation of the aspirant is *worry*. When, with supreme effort, this obstacle of worry is overcome, a way is paved for the cultivation of the divine attributes which constitute the spiritual preparation of the disciple. *As soon as the disciple is ready the grace of the Master descends, for the Master, who is the ocean of divine love, is always on the look-out for the soul in whom his grace will fructify.*

Pure love is very rare :

The kind of love which is awakened by the grace of the Master is a rare privilege. The mother who is willing to sacrifice all and to die for her child, and the martyr who is prepared to give up his very life

for his country are indeed supremely noble, but they have not necessarily tasted this pure love which is born through the grace of the Master. Even the great *yogis* with long beards who, sitting in caves and mountains, are completely absorbed in deep *samadhi*, do not necessarily have this precious love.

Pure love the best discipline:

Pure love awakened through the grace of the Master is more valuable than any other stimulus which may be utilised by the aspirant. Such love not only combines in itself the merits of all the disciplines but excels them all in its efficacy to lead the aspirant to his goal. When this love is born the aspirant has only one desire, and that is to be united with the Divine Beloved. Such withdrawal of consciousness from all other desires leads to infinite purity; therefore nothing purifies the aspirant more completely than this love. The aspirant is always willing to offer everything for the Divine Beloved, and no sacrifice is too difficult for him. All his thoughts are turned away from the self and come to be exclusively centred on the Divine Beloved. *Through the intensity of this ever-growing love he eventually breaks through the shackles of the self and becomes united with the Beloved.* This is the consummation of love. When love has thus found its fruition it has become *divine*.

Divine love is higher than human love:

Divine love is qualitatively different from human love. Human love is for the *many in the One* and divine love is for the *One in the many*. Human love leads to innumerable complications and tangles, but divine love leads to integration and freedom. *In divine*

love the personal and the impersonal aspects are equally balanced, but in human love the two aspects are in alternating ascendancy. When the personal note is predominant in human love it leads to utter blindness to the intrinsic worth of other forms. When, as in sense of duty, love is predominantly impersonal, it often makes one cold, rigid and mechanical. Sense of duty comes to the individual as an external constraint on behaviour, but in divine love there is unrestrained freedom and unbounded spontaneity. Human love in its personal and impersonal aspects is limited, but divine love with its fusion of the personal and the impersonal aspects is infinite in being and expression.

In divine love the lover is united with Beloved:

Even the highest type of human love is subject to the limitation of individual nature which persists till the seventh plane. *Divine love arises after the disappearance of the individual mind and is free from the trammels of individual nature. In human love the duality of the lover and the beloved persists, but in divine love the lover and the Beloved become one. At this stage the aspirant has stepped out of the domain of duality and become one with God, for divine love is God. When the lover and the Beloved are one that is the end and the beginning.*

Universe came into existence for sake of love:

It is for love that the whole universe sprang into existence and it is for the sake of love that it is kept going. God descends into the realm of illusion because the apparent duality of the Beloved and the lover is eventually contributory to His conscious en-

joyment of His own divinity. *The development of love is conditioned and sustained by the tension of duality.* God has to suffer apparent differentiation into a multiplicity of souls in order to carry on the game of love. They are His own forms, and in relation to them He at once assumes the role of the Divine Lover and the Divine Beloved. As the Beloved, He is the real and the ultimate object of their appreciation. As the Divine Lover, He is their real and ultimate saviour drawing them back to Himself. Thus though the whole world of duality is only an illusion, that illusion has come into being for a *significant purpose.*

Dynamics of love:

Love is the reflection of God's unity in the world of duality. It constitutes the entire significance of creation. If love is excluded from life, all the souls in the world assume complete externality to each other and the only possible relations and contacts in such a loveless world are superficial and mechanical. It is because of love that the contacts and relations between individual souls become significant. It is love which gives meaning and value to all the happenings in the world of duality. But, *while love gives meaning to the world of duality, it is at the same time a standing challenge to duality.* As love gathers strength, it generates *creative restlessness* and becomes the main driving power of that *spiritual dynamic* which ultimately succeeds in *restoring to consciousness the original unity of being.**

* *Meher Baba: 'Love', Discourses, Vol. I, p. 156-164.*

Religion

Though religion has come into existence to liberate man from all narrowness, it can itself become a cage when not understood properly. All the world religions proclaim the same eternal and universal Truth; yet human weakness has a tendency to carve out some limiting, narrow loyalty which closes its gates upon the shoreless and unbounded ocean of love or divinity. It is not the essentials of religions, but addiction merely to their outer forms, which has tended to divide man from man, thus thwarting the very purpose of the great founders of the world religions.*

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 61.

Divine Life

The silence which I have been observing... is not intended to veil my Truth but to manifest it. When you realize the Truth as the very core of your being you are free from all fear and helplessness, and all rivalries and conflicts reveal themselves to be meaningless, for you know yourself to be inviolably one with all that has life.

To the struggling, failing and faltering humanity I say, "Have faith." Turn to God in complete surrenderance and receive the divine love. You are equally a part of the one indivisible divine life. There is not a single atom that does not vibrate with this divine life.

There is no need for anyone to despair. The greatest of sinners as well as the greatest of saints has the same unfailing divine assurance.*

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 62-63.

Worship From The Heart Counts In The Religious Province

At Shri Meher Baba's birth-day celebrations at Nasik in 1937, some of his Western devotees were present and heard one of India's great singers, improvising for over an hour the theme of yearning for the living Master, Krishna, which all hearts there could echo in the presence of Beloved Master, Meher Baba:

"O Beloved, Go not to Thy great temple at Mathura,
Nor to the house of the rich, where are great
preparations,
But come to the hut of the poor man,
Who has nought to offer but a cup of cold water and the
love of his whole heart."

On another occasion at Meherabad after Baba had been explaining the *Gita* to some of his Western disciples, he gave them the following Western Hymn to memorise and added: "Everything in the *Gita* is expressed in these few lines by the Western mystic":

Take my life and let it be,
Consecrated Lord to Thee,
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move,
At the impulse of Thy Love,

Take my feet and let them be,
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice and let me sing,
Ever only, for my king,
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold,
Take my intellect and use,
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine,
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, My Lord, I pour,
At Thy feet its treasure store,
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

—(Francis Ridley Havergal, 1874)

Such surrender is the object of all worship. Meher Baba has said:

"Almost the whole humanity is concerned with *Bhakti Yoga*, which in simple words means the art of worship. But it must be understood in all its true aspects, and not merely in a narrow and shallow sense, in which the word is commonly used and interpreted. The profound worship based on the high ideals of philosophy and spirituality, and prompted by divine love, doubtless constitutes true *Bhakti Yoga* ... Never-

theless it may be said that the ritualistic worship which the masses of humanity confuse with religion, is *Bhakti Yoga* in its incipiency or initial stage... The average man should follow his creed, whatever it be, in all sincerity, regardless of rewards to come, and with the only aim and object of:

*'I want nothing but you (God)'. But when I say about following one's own creed, I mean that everyone should be free to base his worship on the religious ideals and methods that appeal to him most, and not that one should stop dead at believing or disbelieving in certain statements in a particular scripture about subjects that are generally beyond the sphere of intellect. It is the act of worship from the heart, and not thoughts and beliefs that counts in the religious province."**

* *Meher Baba Journal: Vol. II, No. 7, May 1940, p. 400.*

Love - Key To All Problems

The reason of my coming here all the way from one end of the country to the other to participate personally in your celebrations is your Love that has irresistibly drawn me to you. Love is a mighty force. It not only enables one to put the ideal of selfless service into practice, but would transform one into God. With Love one can follow any of the Yogas most suitable to his or her temperament. It will enable an aspirant to follow the rigid principles underlying the spiritual path, and where and when necessary makes him turn his back to the worldly pleasures for the sake of union with the Beloved.

Where there is Love there is Oneness, and there can be no question of any particular religion or caste or system, superiority or inferiority, and touchability or untouchability. That these distinctions are not real has been proved in a way by the recent earthquake tragedy. The earthquake in Bihar was simply a manifestation of one of the laws of nature. And that disaster spared none, rich or poor, high or low, belonging this religion or that. It was not divine wrath. It is an eye-opener to the fact that where God and His laws are concerned there is no question of caste, creed or country.

But to realize this natural equality permanently one has to submit to the greatest law of God, which is Love. It holds the key to all problems in as much as under this law the Infinite is realized completely for

all times in every walk of life, be it science, art, religion, or beauty. May the world realize this highest aspect of Divinity more and more.*

* *This message was given by Meher Baba on the occasion of His Fortieth Birth-day celebrated in His physical presence at 'Meher Ashramam', Saidapeth, Madras, in February 1934.*

Love - The Final Solution Of All Problems

...The hour is near when men in their eager longing for real happiness will seek its true source. The time is also ripe when men will ardently seek to contact the embodiment of Truth in the form of a God-man, through whom they can be inspired and lifted into spiritual understanding. They will accept the guidance which comes from divine authority. Only the outpouring of divine love can bring about spiritual awakening. In this critical time of universal suffering, men are becoming ready to turn towards their Higher Self and to fulfill the will of God. Divine love will perform the supreme miracle of bringing God into the hearts of men and of getting them established in lasting and true happiness. It will satisfy the greatest need and longing of mankind. Divine love will make men selfless and helpful in their mutual relations, and it will bring about the final solution of all problems. *The new brotherhood on earth shall be a fulfilled fact and nations will be united in the fraternity of Love and Truth.*

My existence is for this Love and this Truth. To suffering humanity I say:

*"Have hope. I have come to help you in surrendering yourselves to the Cause of God and in accepting His grace of Love and Truth. I have come to help you in winning the one victory of all victories – to win yourself."**

* Meher Baba, *The Travail of the New World Order*, Discourses, Vol. III, p. 21.

Love and Happiness

...When man is merely selfish he can, in the false pursuit of separate and exclusive happiness, become utterly callous and cruel to others, but this recoils upon him by poisoning the very spring of his life. Loveless life is most unlovely, only a life of love is worth living.

If a man is desireless he will not only eliminate much suffering which he causes others, but also much of his own self-created suffering. Mere desirelessness, however, cannot yield positive happiness, though it protects man from self-created suffering and goes a long way towards making true happiness possible. *True happiness begins when a man learns the art of right adjustment to other persons, and right adjustment involves self-forgetfulness and love.* Hence arises the spiritual importance of transforming a life of the limited self into a life of love.*

* Meher Baba, *The Conditions of Happiness: II*, Discourses, Vol. III, p. 170-171.

Labor of Love*

The source of eternal bliss is the Self in all. The cause of perpetual misery is the selfishness of all. As long as satisfaction is derived through selfish pursuits, misery will always exist.

Only because of the infinite love and mercy of God can man learn to realize, through the lessons of misery on earth, that inherent in him is the source of infinite bliss, and all suffering is his labor of love to unveil his own infinite Self.

Path of love leads to eternal joy :

Through enslavement to the temporary and the passing, man deprives himself of the eternal and the lasting. Each moment with which man is confronted can either tighten the grip of the false or deliver him to the Truth. God is the only Reality and He is the fountainhead of all love, beauty, peace and happiness. Even in and through the "fleeting now" of the false, God is eternally inviting man to Himself, affirming Himself as the Truth of man's being. Those who dare to see and love God in everyone and everything, experience Him as the everlasting immediate Presence.

Only when his mind is utterly detached from the false is it possible for man to disentangle himself from

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 52~53. Meher Baba gave this answer to the following question asked of him on television during His visit to America in 1956: "Why should misery perpetually exist on earth in spite of God's infinite love and mercy?"

the repetitive clutches of the fleeting moment. Then and only then can he become established in the "eternal now", which ever-lastingly include the eternal past and the eternal future. The eternal "I Am" is an unfailing assurance of the only Reality which ever was, is and will be.

The way to peace and fulfillment in union with God, the divine Beloved, is a daring dive into the "eternal now." Not by fruitless surveys of the past, nor by elusive longings for the future, nor by enslavement to the fleeting moment, but by staking everything for God, is it possible for you to experience yourself as the illimitable ocean of love. Here and nowhere else is the final solution of all your problems. Love born in the Truth liberates without binding and fulfills without overpowering; it is a pure blessing not only for yourself, but for each and all, for ever and ever, in the "eternal now."*

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 56-58.

Selfless Love Is Rare

Pure love is rare, because in most cases love becomes adulterated with selfish motives which are surreptitiously introduced into consciousness by the operation of accumulated bad *sanskaras*. *It is extremely difficult to purge consciousness of deep-rooted ignorance that expresses itself through the idea of "I" and "mine"*. For example, even when a man says that he wants his beloved, he often means that he wants his beloved to be with him. The feeling of "I" and "mine" is notably present even in the expression of love. If a man sees his own son wearing tattered clothes, he does all he can to give him good clothes and will be anxious to see him happy. Under these circumstances he would consider his own feeling towards his son as that of pure love. But, in his quick response to the distress of his son, the part played by the idea of "mine" is by no means inconsiderable. If he happened to see the son of some stranger on the street wearing tattered clothes, he would not respond as he had in the case of his own son. This shows that though he may not be fully conscious of it, his behaviour towards his own son was, in fact, largely selfish. The feeling of "mine" is there in the *background* of the mind, though it can be brought to the surface only through searching analysis. If his response to the son of the stranger is the same as to his own son, then only can he be said to have pure and selfless love."*

* Meher Baba, *The Conditions of Happiness: II', Discourses, Vol. III, p. 171-172.*

Spiritual Significance And Beauty Of Life Is In Unselfish Love

The great and grand things of life are not the only ones surcharged with spiritual meaning. A thing need not be unusual or particularly striking in order to be spiritually significant. The unusual and striking exist relative to the usual and the habitual, and they are not in themselves necessarily representative of absolute spiritual beauty. Thus it is not necessary for a man to give huge sums of money for a cause in order to be spiritually great. A poor man may be unable to do this and yet be none the less spiritual if he gives what he can. *It is not the amount that endows the gift with spiritual meaning; it is the spirit in which it is given.* In fact, a large donation may often be accompanied with pride or some selfish motive, and then it loses its spiritual value. Even a small gift, given with humility and utterly unselfish love, is endowed with a much greater spiritual value.

Spiritual life is not a matter of quantity but of inherent quality of living. Spiritual infinity includes in its scope all phases of life. It comprises acts which are great as well as acts which are small. *Being greater than the greatest, spiritual infinity is also smaller than the smallest, and it can equally express itself through happenings irrespective of whether they are outwardly small or great.* Thus a smile or a look stands on the same level as offering one's life for a cause, when the smile or the look springs from Truth-consciousness.

There are no gradations in spiritual importance, when all life is lived in the shadow of eternity. If life were to consist only of big things and if all the little things were to be omitted from its scope, it would not only be finite, but would be extremely poor. *The infinite Truth which is latent in everything can reveal itself only when life is seen and accepted in its totality.*

Limitation comes into existence owing to ego-centered desires and self-will. *Possessiveness in all its forms leads to a life of limitation.* For example, if one covets the love of someone and, instead of winning the love of that person loses it to another, there ensues a narrowing down and strangling of the free life of the spirit and one has an acute consciousness of limitation. This is the origin of the pain of suffocating *jealousy*. But, if one looks at the situation with a heart purged of longing, the love which is received by the other will be seen in its natural beauty; and *in the clarity of perception which comes through non-possessiveness, one will not only taste of the freedom of non-duality but also of its joy.* When someone else receives that love it is like one's self receiving it, since no longer does one insist upon the claims of a single form, having identified oneself with life in all its forms.*

* *Meher Baba: 'The Infinity of the Truth', Discourses Vol. I, p. 167-169*

God As Infinite Love

Those who try to understand God through the intellect alone, arrive at some cold and dry concept which misses the very essence of the nature of God. It is true that God is infinite knowledge, infinite existence, infinite power and infinite bliss, but God is not understood in His essence until He is also understood as *infinite love*. In the Beyond State from which the entire universe springs and into which it ultimately merges, God is *eternally* infinite love. It is only when God's love is viewed in the limited context of *forms* (which arise in the interim period of the appearance of the illusory universe of duality) that its infinity *seems* to have been impaired.

When God's love experiences itself *in* and *through* the manifested forms of the universe, it goes through the following phase: (i) experiencing itself as extremely limited, (ii) experiencing itself as becoming less and less limited and becoming more and more like infinite love, and (iii) experiencing itself to be what it really is: infinite in essence and existence. *The experience of limitation in love arises due to ignorance caused by the sanskaras (which are the by-product of the evolution of consciousness); and the process of love becoming infinite is characterised by the shedding of these limiting sanskaras.*

After going through the almost unconscious stages of the mineral kingdom, love becomes conscious of itself as lust in animals. Its first appearance in human

consciousness is also in the form of lust. *Lust is the most limited form of love in human consciousness. In spite of the clear reference which lust has to other persons, it is indistinguishable from undiluted selfishness, because all the objects to which lust clings are desired for the sake of and from the viewpoint of the limited and separate self.* At the same time, it is a form of love, because it has in it some kind of appreciation for others, though this appreciation is completely vitiated by thick ignorance about the true Self.

When human consciousness is completely caught up in the duality of the *gross* sphere of existence, love cannot express itself as anything other than lust of some type. A man likes curry because it tickles his palate. There are no higher considerations, so it is a form of lust. It is only a craving for the sensations of taste. Mind also has cravings for the bodily sensations of sight, smell, sound and touch, and nourishes its crude ego-life through the excitement derived from these sensations. *Lust of every type is an entanglement with gross forms, independent of the spirit behind them. It is an expression of mere attachment to the objects of sense. Since in all forms of lust the heart remains unfed and unexpressed, it becomes a perpetual vacuum and is in a state of unending suffering and non-fulfillment.*

Love, which expresses itself as *undiluted* or one hundred per cent lust, is in a state of extreme limitation because it is helplessly caught up in ceaseless craving. *When the heart is in the clutches of lust, the spirit remains, as it were, in a state of delusion or stupor. Its functioning is severely curtailed and per-*

verted by the limiting ignorance to which it is subject. Its higher potentialities are denied expression and fulfillment, and, this thwarting and suppression of the life of the spirit entails a state of utter bondage.

Lust is the most limited form of love functioning under the thralldom of ignorance. The unambiguous stamp of insufficiency which lust invariably bears is in itself a sign that it is an incomplete and inadequate expression of something deeper, which is vast and unlimited. *Through the manifold and unending sufferings which are attendant upon undiluted lust, and the continued experiences of frustration which it brings, the spirit is ceaselessly registering its unyielding protest against the utter superficiality of a life of unqualified lust. In this manner the irrepressible voice of the infinity of God's love indirectly asserts the imperative claims of its unexpressed but unimpaired reality.*

Even in the lowest lustful life of the *gross* sphere, God is experiencing Himself as a lover, but it is a state of a lover who is completely ignorant about the true nature of himself or the beloved. It is a state of a lover who is inexorably separated from the beloved by an opaque curtain of un-understood duality. It is nevertheless the beginning of a long process by which *the lover breaks through the enveloping curtain of ignorance and comes into his own Truth as unbounded and unhampered Love.* But in order to get initiated into infinite love, the lover has to go through two other stages which are characteristic of the *subtle* and *mental* spheres.

The lover in the subtle sphere is not free from lust but the lust which he experiences is not undiluted as

in the gross sphere. The intensity of lust in the subtle sphere is about half that in the gross sphere. Besides, there is no gross expression of lust as in the gross sphere. The lover in the gross sphere is inextricably entangled with the gross objects; hence his lust finds gross expression. But the lover in the subtle sphere has gotten free from attachment to gross objects; hence in his case lust remains unexpressed in the gross form. His lust has *subtle* expressions, but it cannot have gross expression. Besides, since about half of the original lust of the gross sphere gets sublimated in the subtle sphere, the lover in the subtle sphere experiences love not as undiluted lust, but in a higher form as *longing to be united with the Beloved*.

Thus in the gross sphere love expresses itself as lust, and in the subtle sphere it expresses itself as *longing*. Lust is a craving for sensations and as such is completely selfish in motive. It has utter disregard for the well-being of the beloved. In longing there is less of selfishness, and though it continues to be *possessive* in a way, the beloved is recognised as having worth and importance in his own right. Longing is a less limited form of love than lust. In longing the curtain of duality has become more transparent and less obstructive, since the lover now consciously seeks to overcome duality between the lover and the Beloved by securing the presence of the Beloved. *In lust the emphasis is solely on the limited self and the beloved is completely subsidiary to the gross needs of the self. In longing the emphasis is equally distributed on the self and on the beloved, and the lover realises that he exists for the beloved, just in the same way as the beloved exists for him.*

The lover in the *mental* sphere has an even higher and freer expression of love. In his case, though lust has not completely disappeared, it is mostly sublimated. Only about one-fourth of the original lust of the gross sphere remains, but it remains in a latent form without any expression. *In the mental sphere, lust does not have even subtle expression.* The lover of the mental sphere is detached from subtle objects, and he is *free from possessive longing for the beloved* which is characteristic of the lover in the subtle sphere.

In the mental sphere love expresses itself as *complete resignation to the will of the beloved.* All selfish desire, including longing for the presence of the beloved, has disappeared. Now the emphasis is solely on the worth and will of the beloved. Selfishness is utterly wiped out and there is a far more *abundant release of love in its pure form.* However, even in the mental sphere love has not become infinite, since there is still present the thin curtain of *duality* which separates the lover from the beloved. Love is no longer in the clutches of selfishness, but it is still short of being infinite because it is *experienced through the medium of the finite mind,* just as in the lower spheres it is experienced through the medium of the lower bodies.

Love becomes consciously infinite in being as well as in expression, when the individual mind is transcended. Such love is rightly called divine, because it is characteristic of the God-state in which all duality is finally overcome. In divine love, lust has completely disappeared. It does not exist even in latent form. *Divine love is unlimited in essence and expression, because it is experienced by the soul through the soul*

itself. In the gross, subtle and mental spheres the lover is conscious of being separated from the beloved, but when all these spheres are transcended, the lover is conscious of his unity with the Beloved. The lover loses himself in the being of the Beloved and knows that he is one with the Beloved. Divine love is entirely free from the thralldom of desires or limiting self. *In this state of infinity the lover has no being apart from the Beloved. He is the Beloved Himself.*

We thus have God as infinite love, first limiting Himself in the forms of creation, and then recovering His infinity through the different stages of creation. All the stages of God's experience of being a finite lover ultimately culminate in His experiencing Himself as the sole Beloved. *The sojourn of the soul is a thrilling divine romance in which the lover, who in the beginning is conscious of nothing but emptiness, frustration, superficiality and the gnawing chains of bondage, gradually attains an increasingly fuller and freer expression of love, and ultimately disappears and merges in the divine Beloved to realise the unity of the lover and the Beloved in the supreme and eternal fact of God as Infinite Love.**

* *Meher Baba: Discourses Vol. III, p. 175-180.*

Wine Of Love

Wine is prepared by the crushing and further crushing of grapes, when it acquires the capacity for intoxicating, which usually takes away one's understanding. Close and repeated feeling of love for God also brings intoxication, but this takes you towards understanding. This understanding is not gained through reason or intellect. As long as you remain separated from God and try to understand Him, He cannot be understood. There is no separation between you and God. Lover and Beloved are one. You yourselves are the Way. You are God.*

* *From '6 Messages of Avatar Meher Baba', p. 25.*

Divine Love And Wine

Divine love and wine are both distant from the creeds of established religion; the former is beyond the creeds and the latter is disapproved of by them. Both are intoxicating and make man forgetful. But while wine leads to self-oblivion, divine love leads to self-knowledge.*

Wine and love:

The Sufi Master-poets often compare love with wine. Wine is the most fitting figure for love because both intoxicate. But while wine causes self-forgetfulness, love leads to Self-realization.

The behaviour of the drunkard and the lover are similar; each disregards the world's standards of conduct and each is indifferent to the opinion of the world. But there are worlds of difference between the course and the goal of the two: the one leads to subterranean darkness and denial; the other gives wings to the soul for its flight to freedom.

The drunkenness of the drunkard begins with a glass of wine which elates his spirit and loosens his affections and gives him a new view of life that promises a forgetfulness from his daily worries. He goes on from a glass to two glasses, to a bottle; from companionship to isolation, from forgetfulness to oblivion - oblivion, which in Reality, is the Original

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 51.

State of God, but which, with the drunkard, is an empty stupor - and he sleeps in a bed or in a gutter. And he awakens in a dawn of futility, an object of disgust and ridicule to the world.

The lover's drunkenness begins with a drop of God's love which makes him forget the world. The more he drinks the closer he draws to his Beloved, and the more unworthy he feels of the Beloved's love; and he longs to sacrifice his very life at his Beloved's feet. He, too, does not know whether he sleeps on a bed or in a gutter, and becomes an object of ridicule to the world; but he rests in bliss, and God the Beloved takes care of his body and neither the elements nor disease can touch it.

One out of many such lovers sees God face to face. His longing becomes infinite; he is like a fish thrown up on the beach, leaping and squirming to regain the ocean. He sees God everywhere and in everything, but he cannot find the gate of union. The Wine that he drinks turns into Fire in which he continuously burns in blissful agony. And the Fire eventually becomes the Ocean of infinite Consciousness in which he drowns.**

**Meher Baba, *The Everything And The Nothing*, Meher House Publications, Kalianna Crescent, Beacon Hill, N.S.W. Australia, p. 9-10

The Wine-Seller

Sufi poets use the figure of wine and its effects to describe the Way of Love and the condition of the lover. Saqi is the wine-seller, Rind is the customer and Maikhana is the wine-shop. Saqi-ul-Irshad is the vintner who makes and wholesales wine - the Wine-seller to the wine-sellers.

As in the world there are many wine-shops where new and unracked, and even adulterated, wine is sold for a small price, and which brings madness upon those who drink it and destroys their bodies and minds, so on the Spiritual Path there are saqis who have not let the wine of love they have from the Saqi-ul-Irshad mature, but have used it straightway themselves to obtain the intoxication of cheap spiritual experiences, and even added pure spirits to it to increase its potency; and they shall sell it to anyone for the coins of small services.

And again, as there are wine-shops where only good vintage-wine is stocked for connoisseurs, so there are Saqis who are saints and perfect saints (walis and pirs) who have the mature wine of love for God alone, the price they have paid for which is the sacrifice of all that is near and dear; and this price they, in their turn, require from those who go to them.

Among those who have paid this price through many lives, one has the rare fortune to be invited by the Saqi-ul-Irshad to visit his cellar. And he gives this one a little glass, from his special cask, and this

overpowers him completely and he becomes merged with God. And out of many such intimates he makes one as himself - a Saqi-ul-Irshad,

The Saqi-ul-Irshad is the Qutub, the Perfect Master, who is the Pivot of the Universe. He is All-power and has the authority to use it as he wills. He never gives one intoxication (masti), but causes one to see God face to face, and some he makes one with God. As Hafiz says:

One who is Saqi-ul-Irshad can, with his mere glance or wish transform dust into the alchemy-stone that transmutes base metal into gold.

And sometimes it happens that there is one who served the Saqi-ul-Irshad faithfully in previous lives and now has not even the price of the cheapest wine, and the Master remembers him and calls him and gives him a little drink of the Wine which gives Realization, and, perhaps, makes him a Saqi-ul-Irshad.*

* *The Everything And The Nothing*, p. 21-22.

Love Of Woman And God

A man loves a woman who is living in a distant place. His love causes him to be thinking of her all the time, and he cannot eat and he cannot sleep. His thoughts are only on his separation from her and he continually longs for her. When this longing becomes too great, he either goes to her or compels her to come to him. This is called Ishk-e-Mijazi or physical love.

To love God one should think of God, long for God and suffer the fire of separation until one's longing reaches its utmost limits, and God the Beloved comes to the lover and his thirst is quenched in union with God. This love is called Ishk-e-Haqqiqi, and is a gift from God.

But one who obeys the Master who is One with God, need not suffer these things, for in obedience is the Grace of the Master.*

* *The Everything And The Nothing, p. 11*

Divine Love Dissolves Sex-Duality

To be free from attachment to the opposite sex is to be free from domination of sex of the body in which the soul has incarnated itself, thereby annihilating the majority of those *sanskaras* which compel the soul to identify itself with the body. The transcending of sex-duality does not itself amount to the overcoming of all duality, but it certainly goes a long way towards facilitating the complete transcendence of duality in all its forms. On the other hand, it is equally true that *the problem of sex-duality is a part of the problem of duality as such. Its complete solution comes when the wider problem of all duality is solved through Divine Love in which there is neither "I" nor "you", neither man nor woman.* The purpose of male and female incarnations is the same as the purpose of evolution itself; it is to enable man to arrive at his own undivided and indivisible existence.*

* Meher Baba, *Reincarnation. And Karma: V, Discourses*, Vol. III, p. 82.

Sex And Love In Spiritual Path

What sublates all forms of duality is untethered love. Untethered love neither allows you to fall back into a subjective vacuity nor does it throw you at the mercy of the felt "other." It relieves you from the harassing interplay of the felt duality of "I" and "you". Among the psychic separatories which create and sustain the multi-colored duality of "I" and "you", none is more formidable than that of sex drive. The sex opposites, which are its creations, find themselves helplessly caught up in the game of illusion, being unable to separate from each other or really to unite with each other.

The multicolored interplay of souls and the variegated opposition of "I" and "you", persist until through the grace of some enlightened one the soul gets initiated into the untethered love which is free from every tinge of duality. Prior to this relieving fulfillment, every soul has to suffer the juxtaposition of "I" and "you" for countless lives. By the logic of the situation, every soul is driven to gather experiences of both sexes, sometimes incarnating in the male form and sometimes in the female form. Sometimes tethered at one end of the trans-subjective opposition and sometimes at the other end, the soul dramatizes within its own psyche the interplay of soul opposites by whom it is confronted until it gets established in the relief of non-differentiating and untethered love. Such love alone can understand the "I" as well as "you" as being its own illusory creations, rising from itself and dis-

appearing within itself to find the ineffable fulfillment of the eternal Beyond.*

...Right from the beginning of human evolution, the problem of emancipation consists in cultivating and developing good sanskaras so that they may overlap and annul the accumulated sanskaras. The cultivation of good sanskaras is achieved by fostering experiences and actions which are opposite to those that predominate in animal life. The opposite of lust is love, the opposite of greed is generosity, and the opposite of anger is tolerance or patience. By trying to dwell in love, generosity and tolerance, man can erase the tendencies of lust, greed and anger.

The general process of freeing oneself from the limitation of *sanskaras* has, therefore, to be accompanied by the process of renouncing the bad for the good. But whether a person happens to be good or bad at any given time is dependent upon the inexorable operation of his *sanskaras*. From this point of view the sinner and the saint are both what they are according to the laws operative in the universe. They have both the same beginning and the same end. *The sinner need not have the stigma of eternal degradation and the saint need not have pride in his moral attainments.* No one, however saintly he may be, has attained the heights of moral virtues except after a life of moral failings, and no one is so bad as to be unable to improve and become good. Everyone, no matter how depraved, can gradually become better and better until he becomes the best example for all mankind.

* Meher Baba, *'The Interplay of Souls', Beams From Meher Baba San Francisco: Sufism Reoriented, Inc. 1958, p. 70-72*

There is always hope for everyone; *none is utterly lost and none need despair*. It remains true, however, that *the way to divinity lies through the renunciation of evil in favour of the good*.

The gradual unfoldment of good brings in its train love, generosity and peace. The good *sanskaras* deposited by the manifestations of these qualities overlap and balance the opposite bad *sanskaras* of lust, greed and anger. *When there is an exact balancing and overlapping of good and bad sanskaras there is at once a termination of both types of sanskaras and the precipitation of consciousness from a state of bondage to a state of freedom.**

Spiritual unfoldment takes place through experience of such opposites as pleasure and pain, success and failure, virtue and vice. Both extremes are equally necessary for the fulfillment of life although they appear to be direct opposites of each other... Of the many pairs of opposites, the pair which needs especial mention and consideration is that of man and woman. Male and female human forms are rightly described as opposite sexes. Progressive realization of the adequate forms, the continuation of the species, and the onward march of the incarnated life-stream are dependent upon the opposition and interplay of the sexes, particularly at the higher phases of biological evolution. This is equally true of psychological and spiritual evolution as long as it is held up in the domain of illusion: The opposition of sexes and the alternative attempts to overcome or reconcile this opposi-

* *Meher Baba, 'Good And Evil', Discourses, Vol. I, p. 94-95 (1967).*

tion are admittedly a source of inspiration, sublimation and exasperation, which haunt the interplay of sex opposites at the psychic level until they are withstood or understood fully and adequately.

One special feature of the sex opposites is that while remaining in counterbalancing opposition to each other, they are more patently and firmly tethered to each other than many other opposites. A man who is conscious of himself as a male is at the same time conscious of woman as a female; and the tension of the felt duality is on him a constant burden, which he often invisibly passes on to a member of the opposite sex. The same is true of a woman who is particularly conscious of herself as a female. The opposites create and sustain a burdensome illusion which is transferred to each other. And if this illusion is shared by both it goes on increasing in geometrical proportion instead of being mitigated in any way. On the other hand, the disburdening of the illusory and oppositional duality of sex is also a self-communicative understanding. Then love is gradually freed from the tinge of differentiative sex consciousness, and understanding is lifted out of the obsessiveness of one of the most oppressive forms of duality.*

Sex is decidedly one of the most important problems with which the human mind is confronted in the domain of duality. It is one of the "givens" in the make-up of human nature with which one has to deal. Like everything else in human life sex comes to be con-

* Meher Baba, *The Calculus of Opposites*, *Beams From Meher Baba*, p. 58, 62-64.

sidered through the opposites which are the necessary creations of the limited mind. Just as the mind tries to fit life into a scheme of alternatives such as joy or pain, Good or bad, solitude or company, attraction or repulsion, so in relation to sex it tends to think of indulgence and repression as alternatives from which there is no escape. It seems as if man must accept the one alternative or the other. Yet he cannot whole-heartedly accept either, for when he tries repression he is dissatisfied with his lot and longingly thinks of indulgence. When he tries indulgence he becomes conscious of his bondage to the senses and seeks freedom by going back to mechanical repression. The mind remains dissatisfied with *both* alternatives and there thus arises one of the most vital and complicated problems of human life.

In order to solve the problem of sex, the mind must first understand that both alternatives are equally the creation of imagination working under the deluding influence of craving... *The question of indulgence or repression arises only when there is craving. The need for both vanishes with the complete disappearance of craving.* When the mind is free from craving, the mind can no longer be moved by the false promises of indulgence or mechanical repression.

However, it should be borne in mind that *the life of freedom is nearer to the life of restraint than to the life of indulgence* (though in quality it is essentially different from both). Hence for the aspirant a life of strict celibacy is preferable to married life, if restraint comes to him easily without undue sense of self-repression. Such restraint is difficult for most persons and

sometimes impossible, and for them married life is decidedly more helpful than a life of celibacy. For ordinary persons, married life is undoubtedly advisable unless they have a special aptitude for celibacy.

Just as the life of celibacy requires and calls for the development of many virtues, married life in turn also nourishes the growth of many spiritual qualities of utmost importance. *The value of celibacy lies in the habit of restraint and the sense of detachment and independence which it gives.* But as long as the mind is not altogether free from craving there is no true freedom. In the same way, *the value of marriage lies in lessons of mutual adjustment and the sense of unity with the other.* True union or dissolution of duality is possible, however, only through Divine Love which can never dawn as long as there is the slightest shadow of lust or craving in the mind. Only by treading the path of inner and spontaneous renunciation of craving is it possible to attain true freedom and unity.

For the celibate as well as for the married person the path of inner life is the same. When the aspirant is drawn by the Truth he longs for nothing else, and as the Truth increasingly comes within his ken, he gradually *dis-burdens* himself of craving. Whether in celibacy or in marriage, he is no longer swayed by the deceptive promises of indulgence or mechanical repression, and he practises internal and spontaneous renunciation of craving until he is freed from the deceptive opposites. The path of perfection is open to the aspirant whether in celibacy or *in marriage, and whether he begins from celibacy or from marriage will depend upon his sanskaras and karmic ties.* He cheer-

fully accepts the conditions which his past life has determined for him and utilises them towards his spiritual advancement in the light of the ideal which he has come to perceive.

The aspirant must choose one of the two courses which are open to him. He must take to the life of celibacy or to the married life, and he must avoid at all costs a cheap compromise between the two. *Promiscuity in sex gratification is bound to land the aspirant in a most pitiful and dangerous chaos of ungovernable lust.* As such diffused and undirected lust veils the higher values, it perpetuates entanglement and creates in the spiritual path insuperable difficulties to the internal and spontaneous renunciation of craving. Sex in marriage is entirely different from sex outside marriage. In marriage the *sanskaras* of lust are much lighter and are capable of being removed more easily. When sex-companionship is accompanied by a sense of responsibility, love and spiritual idealism, conditions for the sublimation of sex are much more favourable than when it is cheap and promiscuous. .

Truth cannot be grasped by skipping over the surface of life and multiplying superficial contacts. It requires the preparedness of mind which can centre its capacities upon selected experiences and free itself from its limiting features. This process of discrimination between the higher and the lower, and the transcendence of the lower in favour of the higher, is made possible through *whole-hearted concentration and a real and earnest interest in life.* Such whole-hearted concentration and real interest is necessarily precluded

when the mind becomes a slave to the habit of running at a tangent and wandering between many possible objects of similar experience. In married life the range of experience to be had in the company of the partner is so wide that the suggestions of lust are not necessarily the first to present themselves to the mind. There is therefore a real opportunity for the aspirant *to recognize and annul the limiting factors in experience*. By the gradual elimination of lust and the progression through a series of increasingly richer experiences of love and sacrifice, he can finally arrive at Infinity.

The spiritual value of married life is directly related to the nature of the preponderating factors which determine its daily course. If it is based upon shallow considerations, it can deteriorate into a partnership in selfishness aimed against the rest of the world. If it is inspired by lofty idealism, it can rise to a fellowship which not only requires and calls forth increasingly greater sacrifices for each other, but actually *becomes a medium through which the two souls can offer their united love and service to the whole family of humanity*. When married life is thus brought into direct line with the Divine Plan for the evolution of the individual, it becomes a pure blessing for the children who are the fruit of the marriage, for they have the advantage of absorbing a spiritual atmosphere from the very beginning of their earthly career.

Though the children are thus beneficiaries of the married life of the parents, *the married life of the parents is in its turn enriched by the presence of the children*. Children give to parents an opportunity for expressing and developing a real and spontaneous love

in which sacrifice becomes easy and delightful, and the part played by children in the life of parents is of tremendous importance for the spiritual advancement of the parents themselves. It therefore follows that when children make their appearance in married life they ought to be whole-heartedly welcomed by the parents.

In the beginning of married life the partners are drawn to each other by lust as well as love, but with conscious and deliberate co-operation they can gradually lessen the element of lust and increase the element of love. Through this process of sublimation lust ultimately gives place to deep love. By the mutual sharing of joys and sorrows the partners march on from one spiritual triumph to another, from deep love to ever deeper love, till *the possessive and jealous love of the initial period is entirely replaced by a self-giving and expansive love*. In fact, through the intelligent handling of marriage a person may traverse so much of the spiritual path that it needs only a touch by the Master to raise him into the sanctuary of eternal life.*

* *Discourses, Vol. I, p. 142-143, 144-147, 150-151, 155.*

The Lover And The Beloved .

God is love. And Love must love. And to love there must be a Beloved. But since God is Existence infinite and eternal there is no one for Him to love but Himself. And in order to love Himself He must imagine Himself as the Beloved whom He as the Lover imagines He loves.

Beloved and Lover implies separation. And separation creates longing; and longing causes search. And the wider and the more intense the search the greater the separation and the more terrible the longing.

When longing is at its intensest separation is complete, and the purpose of separation, which was that Love might experience itself as Lover and Beloved, is fulfilled; and union follows. And when union is attained, the Lover knows that he himself was all along the Beloved whom he loved and desired union with; and that all the impossible situations that he overcame were obstacles which he himself had placed in the path to himself.

To attain union is so impossibly difficult because it is impossible to become what you already are! Union is nothing other than knowledge of oneself as the Only one.*

* *The Everything And The Nothing, p. 9.*

Echoes Of Love

God is absolutely independent, and the universe is entirely dependent. When the Perfect Masters effect the descent of God on earth as the *Avatar*, they make Reality and illusion interdependent, each upon the other. And thus it is that his Infinite Mercy and Unbounded Love are drawn upon by those who are immersed in Illusion.

Between God and the Universe, infinite Mercy and unbounded Love act as a link eternally made use of by men who become God (*Sadgurus*, Perfect Masters or *Qutubs*), and by God who becomes Man (*Avatar*, Christ or *Rasool*). So the Universe becomes the eternal playmate of God. Through this link the *Avatar* not only established life in his Divine Play, but also established Law in illusion. And, this law being established by the God-Man or *Avatar* is the law of the law-less Infinite; it is eternally Real and at the same time illusory. It is this law that governs the universe: all its 'ups and downs', construction and devastation are guided by this law.

At the Cyclic period, God's Absoluteness is made to work upon this Law by the God-Man as God's Will, and this means that anything and everything that the *Avatar* wills is ordained by God... This is the time when man must love God more and more. Let him live for God and let him die for God. In all his thoughts, in all his words and in all his actions love for God alone must prevail.

...I want to warn all who approach me that they should not expect health, wealth, wife or children from me. I tell you that those who have associated with me through love have suffered complete material pain. History records this. All I give is God. I want only Love.

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. The best thing is for man to purify his heart.

The best way to cleanse the heart and to prepare for the stilling of the mind is to lead a normal life in the world. Living in the midst of your day-to-day duties, responsibilities, likes and dislikes becomes the very means for the purification of your heart.

Love if exposed is an insult to love.

The love, courage and faith of my lovers will be put to a severe test, not by me, but by Divine Law. Those who hold fast to me... will transcend illusion and abide in Reality.

Although I appear to be quite different in every *Avataric* period, I always am and always remain the same from beginning to end. I live the worldly life that is lived by the people, in order to help them live the divine life that I live simultaneously. To be established in the hearts of the people, I need no religious organization. On the contrary, religious organizations need me in order to be established after me. Those who do not love me fail to understand me; and those who do not realize my divinity fail to understand it.

I am often touched by the outpourings of love, faith, sacrifice and service on the part of the growing number of those who believe in me here and in the West and I do not mind the attitude of those who remain unconcerned about me, even of those who oppose me. But I am constantly eyeing your obedience to me, because it is futile to have love from the whole world in the absence of the required degree of obedience from you.

I do not mean that you intend to disobey me or that you disobey me deliberately, when I insist so often on your obedience. On the contrary, I do not forget your sense of duty.

The point I wish to drive home is that it is never too late to obey me, and that you should obey me to the end, that you should obey me with courage undaunted by any disaster... *

* *The God-Man by C.B. Purdom, 1971 (Sheriar Press, Inc.)*
Copyright Meher Spiritual Center, Inc., 1971, p. 281, 284, 286, 287,
292, 293.

Sparks Of Love From His Sahavas

I will ever live in you all, my lovers. So love me more and more. Be honest in your love for me. Try to serve others with love.

For those on the spiritual path I am the sun, giving them light and life. There are a very few on the path who burn themselves completely in the glory of my light. There are some who warm themselves in the rays of my light, taking care to be away from the intensity of the glory of my light; and there are others who remain under shelter, keeping themselves shut away from the rays of the glory of my light.

My suffering is daily becoming more intense, and my health is daily getting worse, but my physical body continues to bear the burden. Despite it I shall hold the *sahavas*. I expect from you a deep understanding of my self-imposed suffering, begotten of compassion and love for mankind... This *sahavas* will be unique in the sense that you witness and share my present universal suffering by being near me as my fortunate companions - being with the Ancient One, who will be completely on the human level with you... I may give you more, much more, than you expect - or maybe nothing, and that nothing may prove to be everything. So I say, come with open hearts to receive much or nothing from your Divine Beloved. Come prepared to receive not so much of my words but of my Silence.

What I want is love and obedience. I might manifest in you if you have them. Discourses and messages

are good, but are mere words. What I want is your love and obedience, one hundred per cent. I want one who does his best. In the time of Jesus I said the same thing; leave all and follow me! And the same in the time of Krishna and Zoroaster. I do not mean you to leave all your responsibilities but that my will becomes yours. My will should be your pleasure. God is infinite honesty. To love God you must be honest.

In the spiritual path there is no room for compromise... If you love me one hundred per cent you will be able to hold on to me. Obey me at all costs...

Sahavas: I am the only Beloved and you are all my lovers; or I am the only Lover and you are all my beloveds. I want you all to remain happy in my *sahavas*. I am the Ocean of Love. Draw as much of this love as possible. Make the most of this opportunity. It rests with you to draw as much love as you can out of the Ocean. It does not rest with me to explain to you how you should love me. Does a husband or a wife explain to one another how to love? One thing is certain; I want to give you my love. It depends on each of you to receive it. The easy way to receive it is to forget your home, family and all worldly affairs, when you are here, and be receptive to my love....

'*Sahavas*' means intimate companionship. To establish this companionship you should be free with me. *Sahavas* is the intimacy of give and take of love between the lovers and the Beloved. There is no need to explain this give and take, for to create an atmosphere of explanations and discourses is to mar the dignity of love which is established only in the closest intimacy.

How do I participate in the *sabavas*? I bow down to myself, I embrace myself. It is I who smile, who weep: it is Baba who sits here on the dais seat and Baba who squats on the ground in the tent. Baba meets 'Baba': Baba consoles 'Baba', pets 'Baba', chides 'Baba'. It is all Baba, Baba, Baba. Such is my experience of participation in the *sahavas*.

Drink deep at the fountain of love, but do not lose consciousness. If you can but taste even a drop of this love - what a wonderful experience it will be! Have you any idea what this *sahavas* is? He who approaches me with a heart full of love, has my *sahavas*. After I drop this body and my passing away from your midst, many things will be said about this *sahavas*. Take fullest advantage of this opportunity in the living presence of the *Avatar*. Forget everything else but my *sahavas* and concentrate all your attention on me. I am the Ancient One.

I am *Sakshat Paramatma*. If anyone were to get even a glimpse of my real state, one would be glad to be cut into pieces a thousand times for me.

If I were to turn the Key, those who are opposed to me would change into real *bhaktas* (lovers) in no time. Anyway, even *Virodh Bhakti* (remembrance of those who oppose), is better than no *bhakti* (remembrance through love).

Of what use is it to have my photo on paper? It is better to establish me in your hearts.

If I am not all-knowing what would it avail you to send me chits and notes? And if I am all-knowing, I know everything: chits and notes do not serve any

purpose. I tell you, I know everything; I am — all-knowing

If you take me to be God, God is all-knowing. What is it then that makes you come to me with your difficulties? As it is, it seems to you that I do not know everything.

It is definite that I am in everyone. And the glory of the suns is the seventh shadow of my real state of reality. Even a glimpse of this glory is enough for one to lose all consciousness. Nothing but the effulgence then remains to be seen continually.

The Seventh Shadow: If you put the brilliance of the seven suns together, their glory would not equal the first shadow of my glory.*

The Meaning of Love:

Love has no limit, but the mind is in the way. This obstacle cannot be removed without my grace. It is impossible, because mind has to annihilate itself. For example, if one were asked to jump over oneself, the most one could do would be to take a somersault! Yet it is impossible to jump over oneself; one may jump over others, but not over oneself! Thus one may want to realize 'Baba' as he really is, but the obstacle remains.

Books and discourses will not bring about one's spiritual regeneration. Mind cannot be annihilated by mind, for one cannot jump over oneself. Only by loving me as I ought to be loved, can the mind be

* *Baba explained this in answer to Don Stevens' question.*

destroyed. Anyone may have love for me, but not the love I want.

My lovers may be likened to one who is fond of lions and admires them so much that he keeps a lion in his own home. But being afraid of the lion he puts him in a cage. The lion is always encaged; even while he feeds the lion, he feeds the pet animal from a distance and from outside the cage. Baba is treated like the lion by the lovers. There is love; there is admiration; there is an intense desire to see Baba comfortable and happy; and Baba is also frequently fed by love of the lovers. But all this is done, keeping Baba segregated from one's own self. What is wanted of the lovers is that they should open the 'cage' and, through intense love, throw themselves inside the cage to become food for the lion of love. The lover should permit himself to be totally consumed through his love for the Beloved.

In spite of all explanations and reading of books, words remain mere words. They do not take one any further than intellectual satisfaction. Only love for God works the miracle, because love is beyond mind and reason. Where then is the necessity to read? I authoritatively say: I am the Ancient One. I have been saying this to all the world. If you love me with all your heart, you shall be made free eternally.

The ultimate experience can be had only after the heart is completely purified. God forgives everything except hypocrisy.

I am the Light of the Universe. One day, as soon as you get a glimpse of my reality, you will come to

know me; and you will get the glimpse. Very rarely one can see me as I really am; you see everything except me. You see the curtain that surrounds my reality. Fortunate are they who see even the curtain.

There is a *mast* at Meherabad. He has no body consciousness. He remains in the same position for hours together without moving his limbs in the slightest degree. He appears as though he were dead; but he has become the dust beneath the feet of his beloved God. He is my beloved child. Even he who has become like dust does not know my real state. Some of the *sahavasees* have already seen him. He is not mad; but looks like it. He is also childlike. If you make him stand up, he will remain standing until you tell him to sit down again. His mind does not function as the mind of an ordinary human being; yet his mind is not blank. Intense love and longing for God has made him like dust. This *mast* does not belong to this world, though he is in it. This does not mean that I want you all to become like him; with your present normal mental state I want you to love me as much as possible.

'This reminds me', interposed Baba, 'of Mahavira Vardhamana about whom many books are written and whose teachings became the foundation of Jainism. For fifteen years Mahavira behaved just like this *mast*. People thought him mad and stoned him; children teased him, dogs barked at him. But later he regained normal consciousness and became a Perfect Master.'

Saint and sinner, high and low, rich and poor, healthy and sick, man and woman, young and old, beautiful and ugly are all equal in my eyes. Why?

Because I am in everyone. None should hesitate to come to me, meet me and embrace me with love.

Consummation of *bhakti* (devotion) is love. When one's *bhakti* is at its zenith, one begins really to love Baba. And when love burns the lover, i.e. when love is intense, there remains no curtains between the lover and the Beloved.

...It is for very few to annihilate their very self to merge in me. So I say, love me more and more. Times are difficult; my *daaman* might slip out of your hands. Do not miss this opportunity, with a clear conscious love me sincerely and help those in need. I am eternal.

I tell you not to worry! Whatever suffering may befall you, you should put up with it with full faith in and love for Baba. At the most what could happen? You might die. And it is so very obvious that you have to die one day; you have to drop this body sooner or later. Why not then think that your body is not there already and so act detached? One more thing you must remember: that is, be honest. I am in everyone and in everything. God is in everyone and in everything. And because God is in everyone and everything he knows everything. So be resigned completely to his will.

Once you were a child; now you have grown up. During the period from childhood until now you have gone through moments of great joy and sorrow. Where has all that gone? The fact is neither joy sorrow was there; it is due to *maya* that you think of and experience things which have no foundation. Within 20 or 30 years you will also forget the thoughts and events of today. So the best thing for you to do

is just to love me. Love me honestly, work for me, I alone endure; all else is but a passing show! There should not be any trace of show in the work you do for me. You should have no expectations of reward for any work you do. In fact, I am much pleased and happy with your love and work. Don't worry.

Love and Devotion :

Love burns the lover.

Devotion burns the Beloved.

Love seeks happiness for the Beloved.

Devotion seeks for blessings from the Beloved.

Love seeks to shoulder the burden of the Beloved.

Devotion throws the burden on the Beloved.

Love gives: Devotion asks.

Love is silent and sublime, devoid of outward expression.

Devotion expresses itself outwardly.

Love does not require the presence of the Beloved in order to love.

Devotion demands the presence of the Beloved to express affection for the Beloved.

I am the Son of God the Father and God the Mother in One:

God is One. He is both father and mother in One. He is in everyone and in everything; but God is beyond this too. I will tell you about God in the Beyond state. In the Beyond state God is both God the father and God the mother simultaneously.

Now we will discuss the worldly father and mother. Suppose a couple has seven sons. It is natural for the

father to love those sons who are useful to him, who are healthy, intelligent, brilliant - obviously, the father will remain pleased with such sons. Now the six sons of this worldly father are healthy, strong, intelligent and good in all respects; the seventh son is a disabled weakling, innocent, simple and guileless (*Bhola*). The father has no love for this seventh son and loves only his six sons. But the mother loves her seventh son most because he is weak, sick, disabled, simple and guileless.

God is both the father and the mother in One. The Avatars are Sons of the Father in the Beyond state. All past *Avataric* periods witnessed the presence of the *Avatar* as the healthy, bright, wise son of God. All this means the *Avatar* always remained the beloved Son of the Father. Note that the *Avatar* always takes a male form and mingles with mankind as man.

Hitherto, God in the Beyond state did not have occasion to play the part of God the mother. In the *Avataric* period, God the Father is very pleased with me at my being infinitely bright, wise, efficient and perfect in all respects (*Ustad* or 'shrewd') as my Father wants me to be, and I am the beloved Son of my Father. At the same time, in this form I am physically disabled. In America, in 1952, I was injured on the left side of my physical frame from leg to face. In India, in 1956, I injured my right side from the head down to the leg. Besides being physically disabled, I am also infinitely simple and guileless (*Bhola*). Thus, I am also the well-beloved Son of my God the Mother. So, in this incarnation of the *Avatar*, God has the occasion, as it were, to play the part of both Father and Mother.

Love is the Remedy :

Do not give undue importance to explanations and discourses. Words fail to give any meaning to Reality; because when one supposes that one has understood, one has not understood; one is far from understanding anything so far as Reality is concerned. Reality is beyond human understanding, for it is beyond reason. Understanding cannot help because God is beyond understanding. The moment you try to understand God you 'misunderstand' him; you miss him when you try to understand him. Reason must go before knowledge dawns.

All this is a show, fun, a play. Mind must go, because the play lies in the mind. And the play is that mind must annihilate itself. Only *manonash* (annihilation of mind) takes one to reality. There is a way to annihilate the mind. The way is love. Just consider ordinary human love: when a man or woman is deeply in love with his or her partner, nothing comes between them. They get totally lost in love for one another. There is neither admiration nor fault-finding. There is total absence even of exchange of thought: love prevails without thoughts. Mind becomes defunct for the time being: for in such intense human love mind does not come into play. The mind apparently gets annihilated for the fraction of a second when love and loving are at their zenith. This brings about a state similar to trance. If ordinary human love can go so far, what should be said of the height of love divine?

I am the Ancient One, the One residing in every heart. Therefore, love others, make others happy, serve others, even at discomfort to yourself; this is to

love me. I suffer for the whole universe. I must suffer infinitely; unless I suffered how could I ask my lovers to suffer for others? I am One with all on every level: I am One with all on every plane of consciousness: and I am beyond all planes of consciousness.

Human Love at its Height:

Have you heard of the two lovers, Majnu and Leila? They had human love at its height. Majnu was at a great distance from Leila, always trying to love her and repeating her name wherever he went. But Leila was at some other place. One day a thorn went into Majnu's foot; blood came out. At the very same moment Leila felt a shock and blood trickled from her foot. Even such human love falls short of Divine Love. Human Love at its zenith is *Ishqa-e-Mejazi*: Divine Love is *Ishqa-e-Haqiqa*. His whole life was Leila; he saw Leila in everyone. Of course he was not careful of his clothes, health, food. He roamed about always thinking of her. Then he met a spiritual Master sitting under a tree. The Master called him, saying, 'If you had tried to love God as intensely as you love Leila, you would have seen God everywhere, in everything'. Majnu answered, 'I am not after God, I am after Leila, I see her in all'. The Master called him, embraced him, and in an instant Majnu had the experience of God everywhere. Then he started to say 'Anal Haq!' or 'I am God', instead of Leila.

God

In the sub-human stage, the consciousness of false self or false 'I', which is very slight, provides scope for evolution. In the human form the evolution of

consciousness is completed and the consciousness becomes full. Love comes into play actively for the first time. As love plays the part more actively and fully, the false 'I' begins to get consumed more and more. Eventually, when love is at its zenith, the false 'I' gets totally consumed; this results in consummation of both lover and love at the altar of the Beloved. Neither does the lover remain in love, nor does love reign supreme over the lover: the goal is attained. The Beloved is supreme over his self: there is nothing except the Beloved: everything else is consumed.

Meher Baba's Wish:

The lover has to keep the wish of the Beloved. My wish for my lovers is as follows:

1. Do not shirk your responsibilities.
2. Attend faithfully to your worldly duties, but keep always at the back of your mind that all this is Baba's.
3. When you feel happy, think: 'Baba wants me to be happy.'
4. Be resigned to every situation and think honestly and sincerely: 'Baba has placed me in this situation.'
5. With the understanding that Baba is in everyone, try to help and serve others.
6. I say with my Divine Authority to each and all that whosoever takes my name at the time of breathing his last comes to me: so do not forget to remember me in your last moments. Unless

you start remembering me from now on, it will be difficult to remember me when your end approaches. You should start practising from now on. Even if you take my name only once every day, you will not forget to remember me in your dying moments.

The Lover and the Beloved:

Beloved God is in all.

What is then the duty of the lover ?

It is to make the Beloved happy without sparing himself. Without giving a second thought to his own happiness the lover should seek the pleasure of the Beloved. The only thought a lover of God should have is to make the Beloved happy.

Thus if you stop thinking of your own happiness and give happiness to others, you will then indeed play the part of the lover of God, because Beloved God is in all.

But, while giving happiness to others, if you have an iota of thought of self, it is then not love but affection. This tends to seek happiness for the self while making others happy.

As for example: (1) A husband's affection for his wife. The husband wants to give happiness to his wife; but while doing so he thinks of his own happiness, too. (2) A mother's affection for her child. From this affection the mother derives happiness purely out of giving and seeking happiness for her child

Mira's Love:

Have you all heard of Saint Mira? In India everyone knows her. People sing the *bhajans* sung by Mira in praise of Krishna. Mira was a very beautiful girl. She was the wife of a royal prince of a wealthy family in North India, who later became king. She loved Krishna with all her heart, but did not live at the time of Krishna, about 5,000 years ago. Mira lived 200 or 300 years ago. Her husband did not like the way she was going about on the streets for she was the queen and queens did not mix with the crowd. She would enter the huts of the poor, the name of Krishna on her lips as she sang. She suffered many trials and threats to test her love for Krishna: she was locked up in a room, her food was poisoned, a cobra was concealed in a bouquet of flowers; she accepted all as a gift of her Lord Krishna and nothing happened, he protected her. She refused to have anything to do with anyone but her Lord Krishna. Finally the king drove her away. She said, 'If the king drives me out I have a place, but if the Lord of the Universe is displeased, I have no place'. The people turned against her. As years passed, she looked radiant in her rags. Then the king came and fell at her feet. For a man in India to bow down to a woman is a sin, and to his wife, unforgivable. Yet he fell at her feet because she was sincere. When she died all revered her, and now people repeat her *bhajans*.

I am Krishna, I want all of you to love me as Mira loved me.

Learn by unlearning :

Before he can know Who he is, man has to un-learn the mass of illusory knowledge he has burdened himself with on the journey from unconsciousness to consciousness. It is only through love that you can begin to un-learn, thus eventually putting an end to all that you do not know. God-love penetrates the illusion, while no amount of illusion can penetrate God-love. Start learning to love God by beginning to love those whom you cannot. You will find that in serving others you are serving yourself. The more you remember others with kindness and generosity, the less you remember yourself; and the less you remember yourself the more you forget yourself. And, when you completely forget yourself, you find me as the Source of all Love.

Divine Assurance:

Do not worry. Be happy in my love and continue to hold fast to my *daaman* to the very end. Rest assured that all will be Divinely well. God does not abandon those who trust him. They who love and obey me as I should be loved and obeyed, will one day be similarly loved and obeyed. Those who have today willingly chosen to become my slaves, *will* become true masters tomorrow.

Love Never Condemn:

Love and understanding never condemn, but seek to help and encourage. Men and women have departed from the custom and laws of truth and goodness, but God never condemns us or turns us from his door; so we should not condemn even those who con-

demn us. I bless you to try to understand and love those who are trying to help you to take your place in God's work through serving his humanity.

Father-of-all-in-Creation:

All religions of the world proclaim that there is but one God, the Father of all in creation. I am that Father.

I have come to remind all people that they should live on earth as the children of the one Father until my Grace awakens them to the realization that they are all one without a second, and that all divisions and conflicts and hatred are but a shadow-play of their own ignorance.

Although all are my children they ignore the simplicity and beauty of this Truth by indulging in hatreds, conflicts and wars that divide them in enmity, instead of living as one family in their Father's house. Even amongst you who love me and accept me for what I am there is sometimes lack of understanding of one another's hearts.

True children of One Father do not greet one another with smiles and embraces and at the same time harbour grudges and ill-feeling, but have an active concern in their hearts for the well-being of one another and make sacrifices for that well-being.

If you make me your real Father, all differences and contentions between you, and all personal problems in connection with your lives, will become dissolved in the Ocean of my Love...*

* *God-Man*, p. 295, 296, 297-298, 299, 301-305, 313-316, 320, 330-331, 332, 345, 351, 353, 363 and 368.

Baba Explains The Path Of Love To His Western Lovers

Every being is a point from which a start could be made towards the limitless ocean of Love, Bliss, Knowledge, and Goodness already within him.

The Perfect Ones, who retain normal consciousness and the body, even after realizing the unchanging and absolute truth, dwell eternally in Divine love, which transcends all duality and all understanding. They enjoy abiding and unassailable peace, for they have arrived at the final goal of creation.

I allow vegetarians to follow their own diet and non-vegetarians to eat meat; I do not interfere with any custom or religion. When faced with love for God these matters have no value. Love for God is self-denial, mental control, and ego annihilation.

You who love me have expressed your love in a way that touches my heart, and I feel very happy. Yet I have not known one who loves me as I would wish to be loved... To surrender is higher than to love, and paradoxical as it may seem, to love me as I ought to be loved is impossible, yet to obey me is possible. Therefore to say you love me and yet not to obey me would be hypocritical.

If you had even the tiniest glimpse of my Divinity all doubts would vanish and love - Real Love – be established. Illusion has such a tight grip on you that

you forget Reality. Your life is a Shadow. The only Reality is Existence Eternal - which is God.

It has been possible through love for man to become God; when God becomes man it is due to his love.

Realization of God came from loving God and seeing God in and through everything... I am one with you on every level, but you know this only when the ego and reason do not interfere. Then Baba appears as he is. I am what I am, whether the world bows down to me, or whether it turns against me; it does not matter. It is no one's fault. To know Baba is not a matter of eating Indian sweets. One has to die to oneself to know me. It is not just a joke - this Love. Be happy, and forget everything except what you experience here.

My only happiness lies in making people understand, not through the mind, but through experience, that God alone is the Beloved for whom we exist.

One who wants nothing, gets everything. Nothing means nothing, and one who wants nothing, is never disappointed.

Baba quoted a verse from Hafiz:

Do not ask for union with God, and do not bewail separation. Seek only the will of the Beloved. Before I met my Beloved in union, I lost everything, ego, mind, and lower consciousness; but thank God I did not lose my sense of humour.

Three types of lovers of God:

There are three types of lovers of God. The first is the *mast*, who loves and knows only God. He

loses all consciousness of self, of body and the world. Whether it rains or shines, whether it is winter or summer, it is all the same to him. Only God exists for him. He is dead to himself.

The second type of love is one who lives in the world, attends to all worldly duties fully, yet all the time in his heart he knows that this is temporary, that only God exists, and he loves God internally, without anyone knowing it.

The third type, which is the highest, is very rare. Here the lover surrenders completely to Christ, to the *Avatar*, to the God-Man. He lives, not for himself, but for the Master. This is the highest type of lover. Unless you have such love, merely to criticize and to judge others will take you nowhere.

Only pure in heart can see God! Means what?

Christ and his inner circle, and the Christian mystics, all stressed purity of heart. Mohammed and his Imams also stressed purity of heart. So did Zoroaster and the Magis, so did Krishna and his companions, and the Vedantists. So does Baba stress purity of heart. Today we shall see what this means - what the heart is - what the mind is. Is it only the physical organ that is meant, or something deeper? A Sufi said: 'The abode of love is infinitely higher than the domain of mind. He alone, out of the millions and billions of people, can touch and kiss the threshold of the Beloved who carries his life in his sleeves.'

This is a literal translation. What it means is that if want to see your beloved God, you must go before him with your head in the palm of your hand. It means

that the mind can never attain to the One who transcends the mind. So we now understand that God can never be understood. He is not visible, because he is infinitely visible to that eye which has no veil of desires or ego over it. The mind has a dual function, which I have explained at length in *God Speaks*. The first function is that of thinking. The impressions that lie dormant have to be worked out, and appear as thoughts. This thinking function of mind is known to the Vedantists as *mun*. The second function of mind includes all feelings and emotions.. This is called *antahkarana*. That means the heart. So what is known as the heart is actually the second functioning of the mind itself. The impressions called *sanskaras* are spent through both thinking and feeling. In the first functioning of the mind, are thoughts of all kinds. In the second functioning of the mind, that is the heart, are all feelings and desires - feelings of joy, pain, disappointment, happiness, shocks, belong to this *antahkarana*.

In sound sleep, the impressions registered in the mind lie in a latent, dormant state. We won't discuss dreams now; they have been explained in *God Speaks*. What wakes you up from sound sleep? The impressions of actions done, and these impressions are spent first by thoughts, then by desires, then by actions. So Krishna, in his Gita, said something to the effect that 'impressions should be spent only through thoughts.' Then no new impressions will be formed. If you cannot do this, then let the impressions be spent through desires, longings, feelings, not through actions. Then new impressions will be formed, but they will not be so deep. If impressions lead to action, then new and

stronger impressions are bound to be formed. This means that the first functioning of the mind is not important in so far as spending impressions is concerned. It is natural. But the second functioning of the mind, which is generally called the heart, is important because it is the seat of desires, and unless the heart is void of desires and feelings, unless the heart is pure and naked, God who is your innermost Self, cannot reveal himself. Is this clear?

God is your innermost Self. That means that behind this limited body, you have within you energy, and mind with both its functions. You as you - the ego - are also there. Behind all this, imagine God as infinite in space. Try to grasp what this means. You have this idea of yourself as body; you feel happy, depressed, hungry. You, you, you - this you think to be yourself; but behind this you, there is something that cannot be got rid of, even if the body is not there. If both your hands or legs were cut off, you would still exist as you. That means that you are not this body. In sound sleep, you are unconscious of your body, but you still exist; so you are not this body. Who then is this you? This you is your innermost Self. We must find, in our own self, this important 'I'.

Who am I? I am not this body. Then who am I? 'I' might be energy; but when I do not move, do not act - when I am unconscious - energy does not manifest itself; yet I still exist. So I am not energy.

'I' might be mind. But the same applies here. When I am unconscious, in sound sleep, the mind is still, the mind is not functioning, but I still exist; so I am

also not mind. Then who am I? Try to grasp this. Let us try to understand what cannot be understood. I am that which is not body, not energy, not mind.

In sound sleep, what do you experience? Nothing. That is *you*. Why? If I am not body, energy, mind, then I am that which has no body, energy, mind; and only sound sleep means that. Only sound sleep answers the question. In sound sleep you are not body, not energy, not mind, yet the body is there, energy is there, mind is there. Only the consciousness of body, of energy, of mind is not there.

I now go back to the first point and return to this later. The original state of the beginningless Beginning was the infinite sound sleep state of the Infinite One. In the beginningless Beginning, when there was no creation, no universe - not even nothing - there was only the Is state of 'god'.

Then started the Ten States of God, which you will find described in *God Speaks*. During the processes of evolution and reincarnation, impressions were gathered; body, energy and mind developed, and the soul, in spite of its infinite state, experienced itself as the finite body, as energy, and as mind, due to these impressions.

Now we return. In sound sleep, Malcolm* is not conscious of body, energy, mind, and only Malcolm as real Malcolm exists. The important point is that Malcolm in the sound-sleep exists as 'I am Malcolm' and is unconscious of this 'I-ness'. The ego in the

* *One of the lovers present.*

sound-sleep or absolute-unconscious state is called 'the natural ego'. There are three kinds of ego; the first is the natural ego.

What wakes you up from sound sleep? The impressions that lie on your mind. They say, 'Malcolm wake up! We want to be spent'. So Malcolm wakes up and spends the impressions through thinking, desiring, acting. And Malcolm, while spending the impressions, thinks 'I am this body'. This 'I' is called the 'false ego'. Let us not go too deeply into this. Malcolm, who really is Malcolm, and not this body, according to impressions takes one form after another, and goes on spending new impressions. But that is a different chapter.

While spending old impressions, new impressions are formed, which also need spending; so, ever new forms are taken, according to good and bad impressions - man, woman, beautiful, ugly, rich, poor, strong, weak, and so forth. They are like different clothes, which you alternately wear and discard, and, all along, this false ego persists.

Then comes a time when the impressions get fainter and fainter, scarcer and scarcer. Eventually they become so faint that they fade away completely, and when impressions are not there, mind's functioning is stopped. The heart is now naked and pure, because there are no desires, no longings, no feelings; yet you are still there. Then the 'I', void of all impressions, has no bindings, no limits. It now experiences that state which is above mind, the mind is no longer there. It experiences the Infinite Original State of Real 'I' -ness. This ego is called the Real Ego, and

just as with the false ego, Malcolm said, 'I am this body - or I am this energy - or I am this mind' - now Malcolm says, 'I am God'.

So there are the Natural Ego, the False Ego and the Real Ego. Only the pure in heart can see God. Whatever I have explained will take you nowhere, because how can one explain One whom the mind cannot grasp?

There is a bird of paradise which is said never to come to earth. Hafiz said: 'God is like the bird of paradise. Don't try to snare him by spreading the net of thoughts. In that net you will find nothing but mind.' And so it is said, 'Only love, and God will be yours.' Not thinking, but love. So however much I may explain, God cannot be explained; but if I should wish it in a split second you would see God and you would know. .

Ramakrishna did not speak any language except Bengali. He could not read; he was what they call illiterate. Yet, in an instant, he gained All Knowledge. Flocks of very literate and learned people gathered round him without understanding a thing he said. So love. The secret is, in a few words - when you are there, God is not. The more you use the rational mind the less you understand, for you must be there, and when you are, God is not. So explanations and understandings mean you drive away God, instead of drawing him in. When you understand, you have not understood.

You have to become what you already are. You are God, but you must become God. Christ humiliated

himself, God himself crucified himself, to teach this: through love, become what you already are.

Where you are; God is not! Means what?

Emperor Janak, Sita's father, was also known to be a Perfect Master. During his reign, there was a youth from outside his empire who longed desperately to see God. 'I must see him', he said, 'as clearly as I see the external things.' And he decided to see Janak and ask his help. For two months he walked through sun and rain without food. This was about seven thousand years ago. There were no automobiles and airplanes then. Finally he arrived at the courtyard of Janak's palace. The guards accosted and stopped him. He stood outside the wall, crying aloud for Janak, shouting his name, his glory and his fame. At last Janak heard him, and asked his ministers to inquire who he was. 'I am a lover of God', he replied, 'I want to see God. Janak must show me God.' Janak had him brought in and said to his ministers, 'Throw him in prison'. So he was thrown into jail. The youth thought, 'This Janak, who calls himself all-knowing must know that I am seeking God, yet he sends me to prison'. After a few days during which the youth had had no food nor drink, Janak ordered him to be brought to audience. Janak saluted him with folded hands, and ordered his ministers to give him a bath, to feed him, and to treat him like a prince. He was brought to the palace and seated on Janak's throne. 'Let him enjoy this state for three days', said Janak. The youth did not grasp what Janak had in mind, and of course he did not know how to manage the affairs of state. Poor people came begging, ministers came for

advice; he didn't know what to do, so he kept quiet. Finally he appealed to the ministers to ask Janak to free him from this uncomfortable position. Janak came, ordered him to get down from the throne, and asked him which he preferred, life in prison or life on the throne. The boy said, 'They are both prisons, but of different kinds'. Janak then directed him to go, and to return after twelve years.

The youth left the palace,. roamed about India, became a rich man, and took the name of Kalyan, which means 'happy in every respect'. After twelve years he returned to Janak, this time rich and prosperous. The guards again checked him, asking who he was. 'I am the rich Kalyan', he said; Janak, on hearing this, sent word for him to go away for a few more years. So Kalyan returned home and, in the course of time, lost everything that he possessed. After twelve years he returned to Janak who again asked who he was. 'I am the miserable Kalyan', he replied. Janak then sent him away again for twelve more months.

. During this time Kalyan started pondering. 'What is this? When I first went to Janak, I had nothing but I wanted to see God. Then I was thrown into prison. Then I was placed on the throne. Then I became rich. Then I became poor. What does all this mean?'

When he returned to Janak's palace after twelve months, one of the guards took pity on him and said, You fool. This time when Janak asks who you are, say "I don't know" Kalyan followed this advice. Janak then turned his gaze upon him and he lost con-

sciousness of all bodies, of the whole world, and became conscious of his own self as the infinite God.

The meaning of this tale is - unless you lose the 'I' you cannot see and become God, because where you are, God is not.

When a song by Yma Sumac played on record was translated by Dana Field as: 'I love only Thee, I worship only Thee, to Thee only I surrender the key to my treasure', Baba remarked:

"He who could do this would know me."

When an Indian music was played on record, Baba explained:

'This is a wonderful state of love. The lover is not concerned with the planes and the different states of consciousness. He is only concerned with God and how to love God. He arrives at a state when this love fills his world, and the pangs of separation are so unbearable that he says, "I now want to forget you but the more I try the more I remember you." This torture is unbearable.'

Baba proceeded to give interpretations of the words sung in the different records:

Here the Sufi of experience says: Oh you, who have arrived at the Goal and know the secret of God, see that you reveal the secret only to the few select ones.

Baba said, 'When Mansoor said "I am God", the Muslims got infuriated and hanged him:'

Oh Mansoor, even if you are hanged for having said you are one with Beloved God, do not reveal the secret. Oh Shams-i-Tabriz, because you raised the

dead and the Muslims skinned you alive, do not reveal the secret.

Oh Lovers of God, do not let what is in your hearts come to your lips. Remember, one who really loves God, God annihilates him; God mixes him with the dust.

Baba said, 'This was true of the Apostles of Christ and the Saviours:'

O lover, beware, God tests you by being cruel, by giving you false hopes, even by cutting you to pieces.

Kalyan says: The Master ties you fully dressed, hands and feet, unto a plank, throws you in mid-ocean, and says, 'If you love me, let not one drop of water touch your clothes'. Why does he do this? The answer is that which Peter the chief apostle was told, 'You will deny me'. Why? Jesus, in that way, took the whole burden of the world and made Peter share it. To love means to lose your whole self with all its paraphernalia: it means torture, pangs, longing, and if, despite this, one is firm in his love, he becomes one with the Beloved. What was the height of suffering to Peter? That he denied his beloved Master. This denial was to enable him to share the sufferings of Jesus.

The lover says 'Now the effect of your love has so infinitely widened my vision that wherever I go, I see nothing but you. I know, Beloved, I shall not be able to bear your glory. Yet I am ready to die; show me your face.'

Interpreting a song of an Indian Qawali singer Baba said: The *mast* says to the Beloved:

If you want to make me mad for you, do so; but don't make me a laughing-stock. Oh you people of the world, who think me mad, and throw stones at me, if you were fortunate enough to have this love, you also would be mad like me.

Oh you, who talk of loving God, you have to bow down to him as though at every step, every particle of dust were a threshold to the Beloved.

A Persian record of Hafiz's poem was played, and Baba interpreted:

Do not procrastinate. Start to love from this very moment.

Do not forget the Beloved even for one instant.

Baba explained that the Master of Hafiz, whose name was Fariduddin Attar, had long tresses of black hair; Hafiz says in the following poem:

Do not let your hair flow freely as my heart receives an arrow from every hair.

O Beloved! These tears that I shed are tears of blood so precious that you should consider them as pearls and wear them as earrings.

God says, O Lover of Mine, if you want to enter My Lane (Path), first let your head roll under My feet and be kicked by Me as a ball.

The lover says: I have been killed by your Love and yet you cruel Beloved, you do not even glance at me.

To find me, you have to lose yourself. But these are just words when spoken and heard. Losing oneself

and finding oneself is for very few lovers who carry their lives in their sleeves.

We have to feel in our heart of hearts that only God is real, that he alone exists, that he is in us all, that he alone is to be loved: God and God alone.

Do you know how St. Francis of Assisi loved Jesus and became one with him? He loved him as Jesus ought to be loved; but in Francis's group there was one who was a glutton. Juniper loved Francis most, though he did not sit in meditation or think of anything. He gave more trouble to Francis than anyone, yet he loved Francis dearly. When we love from the bottom of our hearts we give all our good and bad, even our troubles; the lover gives everything and demands nothing. I give everything and demand nothing. Love me like that and Baba is your slave. Even if you can't do that, don't worry. As long as you are mine, you need not worry. You are mine, that is why I have drawn you such long distances... I love you.

All we see, hear and experience in the world is not God. Whatever you can understand, is not God. Whatever is explained is not God. Whatever is expressed is not God. The poet says:

The lover says to the Master: You have taught me. You have created in me a desire that says, do not desire anything. You have given me that One Word which says, words mean nothing.

And the lover says: Oh Master, I was seeking God and thought Him this and that. Now you have given me something of which even my imagination cannot produce the shadow.

It is all words. When you say Self, God, Infinity, they mean nothing. To attempt to understand by reading or hearing explanations is an insult to our beloved God, who is beyond all understanding. The only answer is Love. If we love God, we become him. There is no further question. But we must love with all our hearts, so that only God exists for us.

I am so full of humour and so human that it is difficult even for *rishis* and saints to know me as I am. I am at every level and act according to that level. With a child I am a child; with the highest saints I am one with them. It is my nature to be absolutely natural, even with the beloved God, who is one with me, and I with him.

If you understand what I have just said, the solution to everything is in your hands. God is infinite honesty, and unless we love him honestly we cannot know him. Though beyond understanding, the heart full of love can understand the un-understandable. If you love God you become one with him; that is the only thing. And you can love God.

We are all meant to be as honest as God, as loving as God, as happy as God: only the Christ suffers for humanity, although he is the source of all happiness. You see me in this physical form, but every moment I am crucified. Only those fortunate ones know this. I suffer as no one could suffer; I suffer because I love....

My ways are so unfathomable that sometimes I too cannot fathom them. If you had but a glimpse of me as I am, you would lose consciousness. Love me and you will be loving God. And God is to be loved

honestly. The slightest hypocrisy or dishonesty keeps you far away from God. God our Beloved is here now in you all, who knows what you will think tomorrow. He is all knowledge, and when we love him honestly he becomes one with us. It is not that we have to become one with him, but he becomes one with us. My last message to you, dear ones, is to love God, and you will find I am one with God.

Baba interpreted a song:

One who loves cannot talk about loving, and my Beloved seems not to care for me. When my heart was drawn by the locks of my Beloved, I thought the locks were very near, but now I have walked all my life, until my feet are full of blisters, and they are still far from me.

When the lips of separation tried to touch the cup of Union, hundreds and hundreds of lovers were burned.

I have come to sow the seed of love in your hearts so that, in spite of all superficial diversity which your life in illusion must experience and endure, the feeling of oneness, through love, is brought about amongst all the nations, creeds, sects and castes of the world.

Honesty is the keynote to Divinity. He who can love God honestly can lose himself in God and find himself as God.*

* *God-Man*, p. 101, 198-199, 202, 217, 218, 228, 229, 230, 239-244, 245-247, 249, 250, 251, 253, 257, 259, 260, 261, 262, 264, 274, 280.

Spiritual Life Manifests Divine Love

The life of the spirit is an unceasing manifestation of divine love and spiritual understanding, and both these aspects of divinity are unrestricted in their universality and unchallengeable in their exclusiveness. Thus divine love does not require any special type of context for making itself felt; it need not await some rare moments, for its expression, nor is it on the lookout for sombre situations which savour of special sanctity. It discovers its field of expression in every incident and situation which might be passed over by an unenlightened person as too insignificant to deserve attention. Ordinary human love is released only under suitable conditions. It is a response to certain types of situations and is relative to them. But *divine love which springs from the source within is independent of stimuli*. It is released, therefore, even in circumstances which would be looked upon as unfavourable by those who have tasted only of human love. If there is lack of happiness or beauty or goodness in those by whom the Master is surrounded, these very things become for him the opportunity to shower his divine love on them and to redeem them from the state of material or spiritual poverty. His everyday responses to his worldly environment become expressions of dynamic and creative divinity which spreads itself and spiritualises everything to which he puts his mind.*

*Meher Baba: 'The Life Of The Spirit', Discourses Vol. I, p. 126-127

Silence - Symbol Of Infinite Love

The silence which I have been observing... is a call from the silence of unfathomable Divinity. Invite that Divinity into your hearts so that you may become permanently established in the immortality of universal life, which is vastly different from the persistence of limited individual life. The ego-life has a beginning and an end; the Truth which I bring is beginningless and endless. In order to inherit that Truth you need the courage to jump across the abyss of duality.

It is not possible to receive undying life in the Truth unless you surrender all resistance to it. You cannot drag along the prejudices of the past and yet hope to unfold Divinity within. You have to cut through the deposits of evolution and reincarnation and be completely receptive and susceptible to the lessons of life. If you meet life squarely, accepting its opposites with equanimity while carrying on your duties in a spirit of selfless love and service, you will not only come in tune with the Infinite, but you yourself will become the Infinite which you seek.

Learn the art of taking your stand on the Truth within. When you live in this Truth, the result is the fusion of the mind and the heart and the end of all fears and sorrow. It is not a dry attainment of mere power or intellectual knowledge. A love which is illumined by the intuitive wisdom of the spirit will bless your life with ever-renewing fulfillment and never-ending sweetness.*

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 23-25.

Spontaneity Of Love The Most Significant Sign Of Perfection

In answer to a question by a disciple requesting some infallible method of recognizing a Perfect Master, Meher Baba explained:

"An ordinary man may not be able to discriminate satisfactorily between the different stages of spiritual attainment up to the sixth plane. He may be able to know that such souls are advanced, but not the extent of their advancement. But when a sincere and patient seeker of Truth comes into contact with one who is spiritually perfect, he will observe certain outer signs that are inseparably associated with inner spiritual perfection.

"The most important of these signs are three: Firstly, Perfection is not only 'Oneness with God,' but also the continual and uninterrupted experience of 'Oneness in everything.' A perfect Master continually, without break, experiences and realizes his own Self as the Self in all. This inner experience objectively manifests itself in the spontaneity of love that such a one feels or expresses towards all Creation. To him nothing is attractive or repulsive. Good and bad, saint and sinner, beauty and ugliness, wisdom and idiocy, health and disease - all are modes of his own manifestation. When embodied Perfection loves, fondles, or feeds any living creature, it feels and joys as if it were loving, fondling and feeding its own Self. In this stage no vestige of 'otherness' is left.

"The second sign is the atmosphere of bliss that perfection radiates in its immediate vicinity, an atmosphere that a stranger in search of it cannot help feeling. A Perfect Master not only enjoys infinite bliss but also experiences universal suffering. The acuteness of suffering however is nullified or subdued by the overwhelming feeling of bliss. Hence Perfection can outwardly appear blissfully calm in the face of every kind of suffering and persecution.

"The third sign of Perfection is its power to adapt itself to any level of humanity. It can be as nonchalant on a throne as in a gutter. It can very naturally be thrifty with the poor, extravagant with the rich, regal with kings, wise with the learned and simple with the illiterate and the ignorant. Just as a Master of Letters teaches English in different ways to beginners and graduate students, so also a Perfect Master adapts himself to the level of those whom he wants to uplift spiritually."*

* *Meher Baba: "Supplement", 'God Speaks', Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged - Dodd, Mead & Company, New York 1973, p. 261-262.*

Sadguru Is Love Incarnate

A Perfect Master is a pure being, and as it is pure love that he causes in man, he creates what no man can. Baba says: "It must be borne in mind that the highest human love is not the highest absolute love. The divine love is the highest aspect of the all-pervading love."

One who gets divine love gets God. The divine love is beyond reason and intellect. Nobody can create this highest aspect of love in himself. The divine love is given and not created. It is a grace from the God-man.

Philosophies and intellectual gymnastics make you intellectually certain about the existence of God. But it is only the love *for God*, the divine love, that enables one to find Him, to see Him actually - and become one with Him.

One's spiritual progress can never be steady and certain without the divine love. It is the real side of religion and the *only element* which reveals or unfolds the *emotionality of the spiritual path*.

The highest love is the one which is devoid of all hopes, interests, desires and expectations - in other words, which is perfectly selfless and disinterested.

Unless a person is spiritually minded, he or she cannot be possessed of this aspect of love.

Divine love makes his captive forget his own individual existence by making him feel less and less bound

in his onward march by the trammels of human limitations, till he reaches a point where he can raise himself to the realization of the highest in himself.

Unless and until one is possessed of it, one can never feel ecstasy, one can never behold illuminations and visions relating to the different states of the spiritual path.

The divine love knows no law. It is above all rules and regulations, above dogmas and rituals.

Nothing can bind it and nothing can set bounds to it. It is fire - an infinite fire in itself, and those who burn in it get purified.

Bear it in mind that only the divine love can bring about self-annihilation which gives self-realization, which can make man lose his individual existence in the universal existence.*

* *"Meher Baba Journal: Vol. I, No. 4, February 1939: p. 75.*

The Sweet Mood Of Love

The Master at will enjoys the *Madhur Bhava*, i.e. the sweet mood of *Love*, where duality is illumined by the realisation of the immensity of the One in the duality, or the *Maha Bhava* or the *vast consciousness* of unlimited *oneness*, which has no room at all for any apprehension of manyness. *Maha Bhava* or the vast consciousness of unlimited oneness is much rarer than *Madhur Bhava*. But the Master can enjoy it even when he is engaged in acts like eating, talking and so on. *Madhur Bhava* can be communicated by imparting suitable spiritual impressions to the disciple. But *Maha Bhava*, which is essentially *beyond all impressions*, is *incommunicable*. In the ripeness of time, it dawns from *within*.*

* From '*Sparks of The Truth*', p. 28.

Love For The Master Is Above All Other Loves

The relation between Master and disciple is an inevitable outcome of intrinsic conditions in the life of the aspirant. It is primarily a relation between the lover and his Divine Beloved. From the spiritual point of view it is the most important relationship into which a person can enter. The love which constitutes the core of discipleship stands by itself among the different types of love which prevail in ordinary social relations. Mundane love is an interplay between two centres of God-unconscious; but *the love implied in discipleship is the love of God-unconscious for God-conscious.* Everyone is God, but some are unconscious of their divinity, some are partly conscious of their divinity and a few are fully God-conscious. Those who are unconscious of their divinity can have no idea of the God-state; they are only conscious of the body-state. In order that they should inherit the God-state they have to love, worship and be guided by the Master who is constantly dwelling in the God-state.

The love which the aspirant has for the Master is really the response evoked by the greater love which the Master has for the aspirant. It is to be placed *above all other loves.* Love for the Master naturally becomes a central power in the life of the aspirant because he knows the Master to be an embodiment and representation of Infinite God. All his thoughts and aspirations, therefore, come to be woven around the

personality of the Master. The Master thus has unquestioned supremacy among the claims recognised by the aspirant, and *it is through this supremacy that the Master becomes the focal point for the radiation of spiritual forces* which dispel all darkness, pluck out the sins of the heart and initiate the aspirant into a life of freedom and Truth-consciousness.

The fundamental requisite for the candidate who would be a true disciple is an unquestioning love for the Master. *All the other streams of love ultimately join this great river of love for the Master and disappear in it.* Majnu loved Laila. He loved her so intensely that every moment of his life he was filled with thoughts about her. He could not eat, drink or sleep without thinking of her; and all he wanted was the happiness of Laila. He would gladly have seen her married to some other person if he felt it to be in her interest, and he would even have died for her husband if he had thought she would thereby be happy. The utter self-denial and sincerity of his love ultimately led him to the Master. Every second of his life he thought not of himself but of the beloved, and this lifted his love from the physical or intellectual level and made it spiritual. The spiritualisation of his love led him to the Divine Beloved.

The Master is the Divine Beloved, and when the disciple meets his Master, all that he has to do is to love him; for if the disciple loves the Master out of the fullness of his heart, his final union with him is assured. He need not worry about the quality of his love. He should love in spite of his weaknesses and not tarry till he can purify his own heart. The Master

is the very source of purity, and *to set one's heart on the Master is the beginning of self-purification*. When the disciple has whole-hearted devotion for the Master, he opens himself to the reception of the divine Jove which the Master pours upon him. All his weaknesses are consumed in this fire of divine love of which he thus becomes the recipient. If the disciple is to be free from all weaknesses and attain incorruptible and infinite purity, he has to *dedicate his life to the Master* without any reservations or provisions. He must offer his weaknesses as well as his vices, his merits as well as his sins. There should be no "if's" and "but's" about his offering. His self-surrender must be so complete as to allow no room in his mind for even a shadow of any secret self desire.*

* *Meher Baba: 'True Discipleship', Discourses, Vol. II, p. 42-45.*

Godhood Is In Loving The Master

In thinking day and night of the Master, the disciple *nearly* achieves the ultimate objective which is the aim of the diverse practices of meditation and concentration. By putting the work of the Master above his own personal needs, he *achieves* the aim through complete renunciation.

In sincere surrender to the Master, the disciple comes *very* near to the stopping of the mind, which is the goal of most yogic processes. In obeying the Master at any cost and serving him selflessly, he *nearly* arrives at the culmination of the Path of understanding and action. And in loving the Master above everything else, he *becomes* one with the Master as Truth and thus attains Godhood - the goal of all search and endeavor - through his grace.*

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 21.

Seek The Grace Of Love

Affirmation of the separative ego is the chief veil between man and his divine self; but the doors of the heart have to be thrown open by the surrender of the ego-affirmation if God as the Supreme Beloved is to make His entry in the heart.

As soon as the soul begins to unfold to the first faint consciousness of its Infinite and Eternal State, it is confronted by its own Shadow and immediately gets lost in 'Play' of illusion. This play and display, show or *tamasba*, persists, in one form or another, throughout the soul's journey to Truth.

Most people play with illusion as children play with toys. If you get caught up in the ephemeral things of this world, and cling to illusory values, suffering is inevitable; but if you have rock-like faith and flame-like love for God, nothing in the world will affect you. Flattery will not touch you. Happiness will not humour you. Misery will not trouble you.

Therefore do not listen to the voice of the mind. Listen to the voice of the heart. Mind wavers, heart does not falter. Mind fears, heart is not daunted. Mind is the house of doubts, reasonings and theories; heart when purified becomes the dwelling of beloved God. Get your heart rid of low desires, temptations and selfishness and God will manifest in you as your own Self.

Be content with your lot; rich or poor, happy or miserable. Understand that God has designed it for

your own good and be resigned to His Will. It is by accident that the people are divided into the rich and the poor, the pampered and the neglected, the rulers and the ruled, the oppressors and the oppressed, the high and the low, the winners of laurels and the recipients of ignomy.

You eternally were and always will be. You have had innumerable forms as man-woman, beautiful-ugly, strong-weak, healthy-sickly, powerful-helpless; and here you are again another such form. Until you gain spiritual freedom, you will be invested with many other forms. So why seek temporary relief which has in its wake more bindings? Ask God not for money, fame, power, health, children; but seek for his Grace of love which would lead you to eternal bliss.

As it is, Reality pulls you towards itself and illusion pulls you towards itself. If you let go the pull of Reality, you get drowned in the ocean of illusion. If you lean towards both, you get crushed. The best is to let go the pull of illusion through love and become one with Reality.

When the soul turns inward and longs to have Self-knowledge, it becomes spiritually-minded. But even then, the habit of wanting to see some spectacle persists for several lives. The soul wants to experience miracles or spectacular phenomena, or, in more advanced stages it wants to perform miracles and manipulate phenomena. Even spiritually advanced souls find it difficult to outgrow the habit of playing with illusions. Persistent attachment to miracles is only a

further continuation of the habit of playing with illusions. It is therefore not miracles, but understanding, which can bring you true freedom. If you have firm faith and unfaltering love, your way to the Abiding Truth is clear and safe. Be ye guided by Love and Truth. Not by endless manoeuvring of illusions, but by loyalty to the Unchangeable Truth, can you hope to be established in Abiding Peace.*

* *From '6 Messages of Avatar Meher Baba', p, 22-24.*

Grace Depends Upon Love

True worship is an expression of devotion, not just saying prayers and making supplications. 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 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 kinds, 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.*

* *Listen Humanity*, p. 50-52.

Gifts Of Love

Love is a gift from God to man.
Obedience is a gift from Master to man.
Surrender is a gift from man to Master.

One who loves desires the will of the Beloved.
One who obeys does the will of the Beloved.
One who surrenders knows nothing but the will of the
Beloved.

Love seeks union with the Beloved.
Obedience seeks the pleasure of the Beloved.
Surrender seeks nothing.

One who loves is the lover of the Beloved.
One who obeys is the beloved of the Beloved.
One who surrenders has no existence other than the
Beloved.

Greater than love is obedience.
Greater than obedience is surrender.
All three arise out of, and remain contained in, the
Ocean of divine Love.*

* *The Everything And The Nothing*, p. 11.

The Real Gift Of Love

What is meant by the "real gift"?

If a gift is to be real, then both the giver and receiver of the gift must forget the transaction completely. To forget completely would mean that the giver should not feel he has given, and the receiver should not know he has received. If the giver does not forget, then he has obligated the receiver; and if the receiver does not forget, he experiences a sense of obligation towards the giver. The real gift of love bestowed on man comes from God alone, and remembrance is absent in both the One who gives and the one who receives. Because of this complete forgetfulness man can strive eternally to love God, and God remains the eternal Beloved for mankind.

How can God, Who is omniscient, forget? Because unless He "forgets," the gift He bestows upon man cannot be the real gift that it is. Man, too, is left in ignorance of the operation of this gift, through which he ultimately realizes his Godhood.

When the Omniscient bestows the real gift of love, He manifests His complete forgetfulness of it by apparently becoming callous towards His lovers. Hence the untold sufferings on the path of love that are experienced by the lovers of God, as also the unimaginable pangs of separation felt by them for their only Beloved, God.

Because God is omniscient and knows the real meaning of the real gift, He becomes callous towards His

lover who, absorbed in the profound depth of God's love, becomes oblivious that he loves Him and that it is a gift from Him, and hence loves Him ever more intensely. It is this "forgetfulness" which arouses in the lover the unallayed pangs of separation and consumes him in the ever growing fires of this incomparable love from which he emerges in the image of his Beloved in triumphant and eternal unity.*

* *Meher Baba, "The Real Gift", Life At Its Best, p. 11-13.*

Love Is Spontaneous

...In the life of most persons the mind and the heart are at loggerheads and the conflict between the two creates confusion. The heart, which in its own way feels the unity of life, wants to fulfill itself through a life of love, sacrifice and service. It is keen about giving instead of taking. It derives its driving power from the inmost psychic urge, expressing itself through the immediate intuitions of the inner life. It does not care for the proofs or intellectual corroborations which the mind seeks while dealing with material objects. In its objective handling of the material world mind is saturated with experiences of multiplicity and separateness, and therefore it feeds the egocentric tendencies which divide man from man and make him selfish and possessive. But the heart, feeling in its inner experiences the glow of love, has glimpses of unity of the spirit, and therefore seeks expression through self-giving tendencies which unite man with man and make him selfless and generous. Therefore there is necessarily a conflict between the "inner voice," and the deliverances of the intellect which are based upon the apparent and superficial aspects of life.

When the mind encroaches upon the province of the heart, it does so by requiring assurance or conviction as a precedent condition that must be fulfilled before there is a release of love. But love is nothing if it is not spontaneous. It cannot be a conclusion of reasoning. It is not a fruit of the spirit of bargain. *If you*

want to be certain about the object of love before giving your love, it is only a form of calculating selfishness. Many persons, for example, want to be convinced of my divinity in order to be able to love me. That is to say, they want me to give them objective proofs of my spiritual status by performing miracles. Conviction of this type is often a hindrance rather than a help in releasing the highest form of love - which is utterly indifferent to what it might receive from the object of love.

When the mind seeks conviction or corroboration (through objective proofs and miracles as an aid to spiritual understanding), it is encroaching upon the sphere which properly belongs to the heart. Conviction and corroboration become important when a person desires guarantees for securing certain definite and tangible results in the objective world. Even if we suppose that a person is intellectually convinced of the existence of God by means of miracles or some such objective data, this will not necessarily release his heart. The allegiance which he might perhaps give to God as a result of such cold revelation will be either through fear or through a sense of duty. *Love in which there is no sense of restraint cannot be born of a conviction which is based upon things accessible to the mind.* And where there is no love, there is no bliss or beauty of being. In fact, God's nature as the ocean of love cannot be grasped by the mind. God has to be known through love and not through intellectual search after miracles. That is the reason why I do not perform miracles for those who are closest and dearest to me. I would rather have no following than use miracles for convincing others of

my divinity. It is true that, while loving me, people often do have spiritual experiences which were hitherto unknown to them, and these experiences help them in the further opening of their hearts. But they are not meant to feed the mental craving for intellectual conviction, and they should not be regarded as the goal.

When a person has his eye on the results of actions instead of being concerned solely with their intrinsic worth, he is trying to tackle spiritual problems through the mind alone, and in doing so, is interfering with the proper functioning of the heart. Mind wants to have all kinds of things and therefore seeks objective proofs, convictions and assurances. This demand of the mind is a fetter for the spontaneous outflow of love, which at once depends upon and furthers true spirituality. You cannot love through the intellect. What you may get through the mind is a *theory* of love, but not love itself. The knowledge which certain types of *yogis* have through their minds is merely intellectual and dry. It cannot give them the spiritual bliss which characterises the life of love. *Love and happiness are the only important things in life, and they are both absent in the dry and factual knowledge which is accessible to the intellect.* Spirituality does not consist of intellectual knowledge of true values but in their realisation. It is this knowledge of inner realisation which is worthy of being called spiritual understanding, and this is far more dependent upon the heart than on the mind. Knowledge of the intellect alone is on the same footing as mere information and, being superficial, it moves on the surface of life. It gives the shadow and not the substance of reality.

The hidden depths of the ocean of life can be gauged only by sounding the heart.*

* *Meher Baba: 'The Avenues To Understanding', Discourses, Vol. I, 136-139.*

Pure Love

On the eve of December 1939, Meher Baba gave a discourse on "Pure Love" to a visitor, an advocate from the *mofussil*, a simple and plain-spoken man. He quite frankly and gently told Baba that he had heard so many people talk about "Love" and wondered what Love really was. An interesting conversation ensued, during which Baba explained this subject in his usual simple yet masterly way.

Baba - Are you married?

A - Yes.

Baba - Have you any children?

A - Yes.

Baba - Do you love them?

A - Yes, in the ordinary way. But I cannot say that is real love. My object is to have real Love, not this *mayavik* affection or attachment. I visited saints in the hope of experiencing real Love, but so far have not succeeded in any way.

Baba appreciated the man's longing for true and Divine Love and said, "You must first understand what *real Love* means. Selfish motives, even in what people call love, often deceive them and they mistake selfish feelings for love. I will make the point clear with an example: A person talking of Love will say, 'I love my beloved. I want my beloved to be with me' and so on. But in all these expressions of love, the 'I' and 'My' are most predominant."

Another example: "Suppose you find your child running about in tattered clothes and feeling unhappy about it. You will readily feel for it and do all in your power to get good clothes and make the child happy. On the other hand, if you see a child in the street in similar conditions, i.e., in torn and tattered clothes, would you feel the same and act as readily as you did in the case of your own child. If not, it shows how your attitude towards your own child is merely a result of your *selfish* feeling.

Your feelings could be called the outcome of true Love only if your attitude towards the unknown child of a stranger in the street were the same as towards your own child under the same conditions.

Complete absence of selfishness is therefore the true characteristic and real test of Pure Love."

Baba then proceeded to describe how this Pure Love or Divine Love can be experienced. He pointed out that it is not something which could be forced upon somebody or which could be snatched away from another. It is attained after the aspirant has succeeded in overcoming selfishness and when the "I" for him does not exist.

Explaining how this selfless stage could be reached, Baba pointed out, "It might be said that it is difficult to attain and at the same time it could also be stated that the stage is easy to reach. Paradoxical as these statements might seem, they are never the less true.

It is *difficult* to attain to the stage of selflessness so long as the aspirant has not resolved to reach it. In the absence of a firm determination, the external attachments connected with the lower "self" prove

too strong to be overcome, with the result that the aspirant does not find it possible for him to attain to his goal.

On the other hand, if the aspirant, with a strong will, decides once for all to achieve his aim at any cost, he finds his task *easy*.

For example, you have an old coat which you like much. You cannot get rid of it until you make up your mind and boldly take it off to do away with it once for all.

The bold decision makes the task easy which would otherwise be difficult.

Baba went on further to explain: "Self-renunciation is so necessary for experiencing Pure Love. This 'renunciation' does not mean that one has to leave all the worldly connections and affairs and go to the jungles. It really means remaining in the world and discharging one's own duties faithfully, yet keeping aloof from all attachment. This is not an unattainable ideal but a practical goal which can be attained with ease, provided of course the aspirant sincerely and boldly resolves to reach it."

Concluding the discourse, Baba pointed out: "Just as a man, when he is hungry feels so, similarly when an aspirant desires to experience Pure Love, he feels the longing for it, and at the proper time he gets the necessary directions and help from a Master to attain to the goal of 'desirelessness' and is able to finally enjoy the Bliss of Divine Love. This is a state to be *experienced* and not to be intellectually described."*

* *Meher Baba Journal: Vol. II, No. 4, February 1940, p. 258-260.*

Begin To Love God

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

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

Do not balk at the discipline given by your parents and teachers. Discipline in small ways leads to the greater necessary discipline of Self. Do not try to con-

quer others - conquer yourself and you will have conquered the world. The simplest way to do this is to love God. Begin to love God by loving your fellow beings. Begin to see God by seeing Him in all beings and things. Give without thought of return, serve without thought of reward. God is everywhere, in everything. Most of all He is right within yourself. You do not exist for the world - the world exists for you.

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

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 46-48.

Live Only To Realize True Identity With Beloved God

There is nothing but God. He is the only reality and we are all one in the indivisible Oneness of this absolute reality.

When one (man) who has realized God says, 'I am God, you are God, and we are all One', and when he also awakens this feeling of oneness in His illusion-bound selves (mankind), then questions of lowly and great, poor and rich, humble and modest, good and bad, simply vanish. It is man's false awareness of duality that misleads him into making illusory distinctions and filing the results into separate categories.

I repeat and emphasize that in my eternal experiencing of reality, no difference exists between the rich and the poor. If however such a question of difference between affluence and poverty were ever to exist for me, I would consider the one really poor who possessed worldly riches but not the wealth of love for God. I would know that he was truly rich who owned nothing, but possessed the priceless treasure of love for God. His is the poverty that kings may envy, and that makes even the King of kings his slave,

In the eyes of God the only difference between the rich and the poor is the intensity and sincerity of their longing for God.

Only love for God can annihilate the falsity of the

limited ego, which is the basis of life ephemeral. Only love for God can bring one to the realization of the reality of one's unlimited ego, which is the basis of eternal existence. The Divine Ego expresses Itself continually, but man, shrouded in the veil of ignorance, misconstrues this indivisible Ego, experiencing and expressing it as the limited, separate ego.

Listen when I say with divine authority that the oneness of reality is so totally unlimited and all-pervading that not only are we all one, but even the collective term 'we' has no place in the infinite, indivisible Oneness.

Awaken from your ignorance and try at least to understand that in this completely indivisible Oneness not only is the Avatar God, but also the ant and the sparrow and one and all of you are nothing but God. The only apparent difference is in their states of consciousness. The Avatar knows that the sparrow is not a sparrow, while the sparrow does not realize this. Being ignorant of its ignorance, it identifies itself as sparrow.

Do not live in ignorance. Do not waste your precious lifetime in differentiating and judging your fellow men, but learn to long for the love of God. Even in the midst of your worldly activities, live only to find and realize your true identity with your beloved God

Be pure and simple and love all, because all are One. Live a sincere life, be natural and be honest with yourself.

Honesty will guard you against false modesty and will give you the strength of true humility. Spare no

pains to help others. Seek no reward other than the gift of divine love. Yearn for this gift sincerely and intensely and I promise in the name of my divine honesty that I will give you much more than you yearn for.*

* *Listen Humanity*, p. 224-226.

Stages Of Love

When lust goes love appears; and out of love comes longing. In love there can never be satisfaction, for longing increases till it becomes an agony which ceases only in Union. Nothing but union with the Beloved can satisfy the lover.

The Way of Love is a continual sacrifice; and what gets sacrificed are the lover's thoughts of 'I', until at last comes the time when the lover says, 'O Beloved! will I ever become one with you and so lose myself forever? But let this be only if it is your Will'. This is the stage of love enlightened by obedience.

Now the lover continuously witnesses the glory of the Beloved's Will; and in the witnessing does not even think of union. He willingly surrenders his entire being to the Beloved, and has no thought of self left. This is the stage when love is illumined by surrender.

Out of millions, only one loves God; and out of millions of lovers, only one succeeds in obeying, and, finally, in surrendering his whole being to God the Beloved.

I am God personified. You who have the chance of being in my living presence are fortunate and blessed.*

* *The Everything And The Nothing, p. 10.*

The High Road To Divine Destination

The easiest and safest way to lose one's finite ego is by surrendering completely to the Perfect Master or to the God-man (Avatar), who is consciously one with truth. In them the past, present and future of the individual are drowned and during his implicit obedience to the master he is no longer bound by those actions, good and bad. Such complete surrenderance is in itself complete freedom.

Of all the high roads which take the pilgrim directly to his divine destination, the quickest lies through the God-man (Christ, Messiah, Avatar). In the God-man, God reveals Himself in all His glory, with His infinite power, unfathomable knowledge, inexpressible bliss and eternal existence. The path through the God-man is available to all those who approach Him in complete surrenderance and unwavering faith.

To the one who has unflinching love for the God-man, the way to abiding truth is clear and safe. Such a one must waste no time playing with things that do not matter. Loyalty to the unchangeable truth, guided by enduring love, is the simple way that leads to God and abiding peace.

Although God is more easily accessible to ordinary man through the God-men, yet God also reveals Himself in His *impersonal* aspect, which is beyond name, form and time. Regardless of whether it is to be through His personal or His impersonal aspect, it is

necessary that the aspirant seek Him and surrender to Him in love.

... ..

Progress is more realistic and enjoyable when there is an ample play of love and devotion to God. This postulates temporary and apparent separateness from God and longing to unite with Him. Such provisional and apparent separateness from God is reflected in the Sufi concepts of the states of "*Hama az Ust*" or "Everything is from God", and "*Hama Doost*" or "Everything is for the beloved God."

In each of these concepts the individual perceives that his separateness from God is only temporary and apparent, and he seeks to restore this lost unity with God through intense love, which consumes all duality. The only difference between these two is that, where the individual who follows the concept of "*Hama Doost*" rests content with the will of God as the Beloved, in the concept of "*Hama az Ust*" he longs for nothing but union with God.

Since the individualized soul which is in bondage can be redeemed only through divine love, even Perfect Masters who attain complete unity with God and experience Him as the only reality, apparently step into the domain of duality and talk of love, worship and service of God.

Divine love, as sung by Hindu masters like Tukaram, as taught by Christian masters like Saint Francis, as preached by Zoroastrian masters like Azer Kaivan and as immortalized by Sufi masters like Hafiz, harbors no thought of the self at all. It consumes all frailties which nourish the illusion of duality and ultimately

unites the individual with God. The awakening of this divine love in the heart of the aspirant and the cleansing of his being is one of the functions of the God-man and Perfect-Masters.

The life of love of a Perfect Master is unperturbed by desires or duality. Once the mind of the aspirant gets a glimpse into this life of true values it protests against the bondage of desires and the cage of the separative ego-life.

The Perfect Master acts from the truth with which he is one, and not from any limited ego-consciousness. Hence his help is more effective than all the unaided effort the aspirant himself can make.

The Perfect Master does not give something which is not already within the aspirant in latent form. He unveils the real self of the aspirant and enables him to come into his own rightful divine heritage.

Complete surrenderance to the God-man is not possible for one and all. When this is not possible, the other high roads which can eventually win the grace of God are:

- (1) Loving obedience to and remembrance of the God-man to the best of one's ability;
- (2) Love for God and intense longing to see Him and to be united with Him;
- (3) Being in constant company with the saints and lovers of God and rendering them whole-hearted service;
- (4) Avoiding lust, greed, anger, hatred and the temptations of power, fame and faultfinding;

(5) Leaving everyone and everything in complete external renunciation and, in solitude, devoting oneself to fasting, prayer and meditation;

(6) Carrying on all worldly duties with a pure heart and clean mind and with equal acceptance of success or failure, while remaining detached in the midst of intense activity; and

(7) Selfless service of humanity, without thought of gain or reward.

In the end, all walks of life and all paths ultimately lead to the one goal, which is God. All rivers enter into the ocean regardless of the diverse directions to which they flow, and in spite of the many meanderings they may take. The high roads are important because they take the pilgrim directly to his divine destination, avoiding prolonged wanderings in the wilderness of complicated byways in which the traveller is so often unnecessarily confused.*

* *Listen Humanity*, p. 163, 164-166.

Love: The Highest Spiritual Discipline

...Selfishness represents ignorance, while selflessness is a reflection of the Truth... *The paradox of selfless action is that it actually brings to the aspirant much more than could ever come within the purview of ignorant selfishness.* Selfishness leads to a narrow life which moves round the false idea of a limited and separate individual, but selfless action contributes towards the dissipation of the illusion of separateness and turns out to be the gateway to the unlimited life where there is realization of All-self-ness. What a person has may be lost and what he desires to have may never come to him, but if he parts with something in the spirit of an offering to God, it has already come back to him. Such is the *Sadhana of Karma Yoga*.

Even more important than the *Sadhana* of Knowledge or Action is *Bbakti* or Love. Love is its own excuse for being. It is complete in itself and does not need to be supplemented by anything. The greatest saints have been content with their love for God, desiring nothing else. Love is no love if it is based upon any expectation. In the intensity of divine love the lover becomes one with the Divine Beloved. *There is no Sadhana greater than love, there is no law higher than love, and, there is no goal which is beyond love, for love in its divine state becomes infinite.* God and love are identical, and one who has divine love already has God.*

* Meher Baba, 'The Deeper Aspects of Sadhana', Discourses, Vol. II, p. 191-192.

Love: Highway To The Realization Of The Highest

While meditation on the personal and impersonal aspects of God requires withdrawal of consciousness into the sanctuary of one's own heart, *concentration on the universal aspects of God is best achieved through the selfless service of humanity*. When the soul is completely absorbed in the service of humanity, it is completely oblivious of its own body or mind or their functions, as in meditation, and therefore new *sanskaras* are not formed. Further, the old *sanskaras* which bind the mind are shattered and dispersed. Since the soul is now centring its attention and interest not upon its own good, but upon the good of others, *the nucleus of the ego is deprived of its nourishing energy*. Selfless service is therefore one of the best methods of diverting and sublimating the energy locked up in the binding *sanskaras*.

Selfless service is accomplished when there is not the slightest thought of reward or result, and when there is complete disregard of one's own comfort or convenience or the possibility of being misunderstood. When you are wholly occupied with the welfare of others you can hardly think of yourself. You are not concerned with your comfort and convenience or your health and happiness. On the contrary you are willing to sacrifice everything for their well-being. Their comfort is your convenience, their health is your delight and their happiness is your joy. You find your

life in losing it in theirs. You live in their hearts and your heart becomes their shelter. When there is true union of hearts, you completely identify yourself with the other person... Thus, through living for others, your own life finds its amplification and expansion. The person who leads a life of selfless service is therefore hardly conscious of serving... Selfless service is completely achieved only when a man derives the same happiness in serving others as in being served himself..

Selfless service as well as meditation are both spontaneous when they are inspired by love. Love is therefore rightly regarded as being the most important avenue leading to the realization of the Highest. In love the soul is completely absorbed in the Beloved and is therefore detached from the actions of the body or mind. This puts an end to the formation of new *sanskaras* and also results in the undoing of old *sanskaras* by giving to life an entirely new direction. *Nowhere does self-forgetfulness come so naturally and completely as in the intensity of love.* Hence it has been given the foremost place among the methods which secure release of consciousness from the bondage of *sanskaras*.

Love comprehends in itself the different advantages belonging to other paths leading to emancipation, and is in itself the most distinguished and effective path. It is at once characterised by self-sacrifice and happiness. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that it is accompanied by an exclusive and whole-hearted offering to the Beloved without admitting the claims of any other object. Thus there is no room for the diversion of psychic energy, and concentration is complete. In love

the physical, vital and mental energies of men are all gathered up and made available for the cause of the Beloved, with the result that this love becomes a dynamic power. The tension of true love is so great that *any foreign feeling which might intervene is at once thrown out*. So, the expulsive and purifying efficacy of love is unparalleled.

There is nothing unnatural or artificial about love. It subsists from the very beginning of evolution. At the inorganic stage it is crudely expressed in the form of *cohesion* or *attraction*. It is the natural affinity which keeps things together and draws them to each other. The gravitational pull experienced by the heavenly bodies upon each other is an expression of this type of love. At the organic stage, love becomes *self-illuminated* and *self-appreciative* and plays an important part from the lowest forms like the amoeba to the most evolved form of human beings. When love is self-illuminated, its value is intensified by its conscious sacrifice.

The sacrifice of love is so complete and ungrudging that it has all to give and nothing to expect. *The more it gives the more it wants to give and the less it is aware of having given*. The stream of true love is ever increasing and never failing. Its simple expression is its simple giving over. The complexities of the Beloved are a concern of its best attention and care. Endlessly and remorselessly it seeks to please the Beloved in a thousand ways. It does not hesitate to welcome suffering in order to satisfy but one wish of the Beloved or to relieve the Beloved of the slightest pain of neglect or indifference. It would gladly pine and

perish for the sake of the Beloved. Care-worn and tormented, it waits not to attend to the very body which houses and nourishes it. It brooks no compromise, and the Beloved is the concern of its lifetime. The tabernacle of love bursts under unmanageable restlessness, and gives birth to streams of love and supreme sweetness, until *the lover breaks through his limitations and loses himself in the being of the Beloved.*

When love is deep and intense it is called Bhakti or devotion. In its initial stages devotion is expressed through symbol-worship, supplication before the deities and reverence and allegiance to the revealed scriptures, or the pursuit of the Highest through abstract thinking. In its more advanced stages devotion expresses itself as interest in human welfare and the service of humanity, love and reverence for saints and allegiance and obedience to the spiritual Master. These stages have their relative values and relative results. Love for a living Master is a unique stage of devotion, for it eventually gets transformed into *Para-bhakti* or divine love.

Para-bhakti is not merely intensified *Bhakti*. It begins where *Bhakti* ends. At the stage of *Para-bhakti*, devotion is not only single-minded but is accompanied by extreme restlessness of the heart and a ceaseless longing to unite with the Beloved. This is followed by lack of interest in one's own body and its care, isolation from one's own surroundings, and utter disregard for appearance or criticism, while the divine impulses of attraction to the Beloved become more frequent than ever. This highest phase of love is most fruitful because it has as its object a person who is

love incarnate and who can, as the Supreme Beloved, respond to the lover most completely. The purity, sweetness and efficacy of the love which the lover receives from the Master contributes to the *insuperable spiritual value* of this highest phase of love.*

Love for the Sadguru (Perfect Master) Can Transform Life:

Love for the *Sadguru* or Perfect Master is particularly important because it invites contact with the *Sadguru*. Through such contact the aspirant receives from the *Sadguru impressions which have the special potency of undoing other past impressions*, thus completely transforming the tenor of his life. The recipient of the impressions may entirely give up old habits of life and ways of thought. Such contact changes and elevates the tone of the most depraved life. A person might have been leading a life of reckless dissipation without ever thinking of anything other than the fulfillment of mundane desires. He might have been caught up in the thirst for possession and power, with no ideal other than that of acquiring and hoarding money and making merry. But even such a person, who cannot by any stretch of imagination think of freedom from earthly fetters, may find that the *sanskaras* which he catches from his contact with the *Sadguru* are potent enough to drop forever a curtain on his old manner of thought and existence, and open for him entirely new vistas of a higher and freer life. The impressions received from the *Sadguru* might be equally beneficial to an intellectual and cultured per-

* *Discourses: Vol. I*, p. 82, 83, 84, 85 and 86.

son whose vision is nevertheless circumscribed, whose imagination can at best appreciate the beauty of art and literature and whose altruism cannot go beyond the limits of his neighbourhood or the boundaries of his country. Such a person would, on receiving impressions from a *Sadguru*, be lifted to still higher modes of life.

The *Sadguru* can raise the aspirant from the ordinary intellectual level of consciousness to the level of consciousness where there is inspiration and intuition, and then onwards to the level of insight and illumination which culminates in his merging into the Infinite. This rising of the aspirant corresponds to his progress from the mundane sphere to the subtle sphere, from the subtle sphere to the mental sphere and finally from the mental sphere to the state of freedom.**

* ** p. 87-88

Path of Love is Effortless and Joyous

Love may be regarded as being equally a part of *Sadhana* and a part of the goal; but the intrinsic worth of love is so obvious that it is often considered a mistake to look upon it as a *Sadhana* for some other thing. In no *Sadhana* is the merging in God so easy and complete as in love. When love is the presiding genius the path to Truth is effortless and joyous. As a rule *Sadhana* involves effort and sometimes even desperate effort, as in the case of an aspirant who may strive for detachment in the face of temptations. In love, though, there is no sense of effort because it is spontaneous. Spontaneity is of the essence of true spirituality. The highest state of consciousness, in which the mind is completely merged in the Truth, is known as *Sahajawastha*, the state of unlimited spontaneity in which there is uninterrupted *Self-knowledge*. *One of the paradoxes connected with spiritual Sadhana is that all effort of the aspirant is intended for arriving at a state of effortlessness.*

There is a beautiful story of a *Kasturi-mriga** which brings out the nature of all spiritual *Sadhana*. Once, while roaming about and frolicking among hills and dales, the *Kasturi-mriga* was suddenly aware of an exquisitely beautiful scent, the like of which it had never known. The scent stirred the inner depths of its soul so profoundly that it determined to find its source. So keen was its longing that notwithstanding

* *The deer whose navel yields musk.*

the severity of cold or the intensity of scorching heat, by day as well as by night, it carried on its desperate search for the source of the sweet scent. It knew no fear or hesitation but undaunted went on its elusive search until, at last, happening to lose its foot-hold on a cliff, it had a precipitous fall resulting in a fatal injury. While breathing its last the deer found that the scent which had ravished its heart and inspired all these efforts came from its own navel. This last moment of the deer's life was its happiest, and there was on its face inexpressible peace.

All spiritual Sadhana of the aspirant is like the efforts of the *Kasturi-mriga*. The final fructification of *Sadhana* involves the *termination of the ego-life* of the aspirant. At that moment there is the realization that he himself has, in a sense, been the object of all his search and endeavour, that all that he suffered and enjoyed - all his risks and adventures, all his sacrifices and desperate strivings - were intended for having true *Self-knowledge* in which *he loses his limited individuality, only to discover that he is really identical with God Who is in everything.***

** *Meher Baba, 'The Deeper Aspects of Sadhana', Discourses, Vol. II, p.192~193*

Love And God

There can be no greater folly than that the aspirant quarrel with another over the pros and cons of this way or that, instead of concentrating on his own onward march. One road may be steep, another full of potholes, a third torn by racing rivers. Similarly, one man may walk best, another may be a good runner, a third a fine swimmer. In each case the things that should really count are the destination and the progress that each individual makes. Why should one who runs like a hare come in the way of another who is more likely to succeed at the pace of a snail?

Spiritual progress is like climbing through hills, dales, thorny woods and along dangerous precipices to attain the mountain top. On this path there can be no halting or return. Everyone must get to the top, which is the direct realization of the supreme God-head. All hesitation, side-tracking or resting in halfway houses, or arguing about the best route, only postpones the day of final fulfillment.

The aspirant cannot be too alert about the path. The slightest lingering in the false world of shadows is inevitably an invitation to suffering that could have been avoided if the eye had been steadily fixed on the supreme goal of life.

The best of all forces, which can overcome all difficulties on the way, is the love that knows how to give without need to bargain for a return. There is nothing that love cannot achieve, and there is nothing that

love cannot sacrifice. There is nothing beyond God and there is nothing without God, and yet God can always be captured by love. All other essential qualities will come to the aspirant if he follows faithfully the whisperings of the unerring voice of love that speaks from his own heart, shedding light on the path.

To lose hold of the mantle of this guide is to find only despair. The heart without love is entombed in unending darkness and suffering, but the heart that is restless with love is on its way to realization of the unfading light that shines on the unfathomable sweetness of life divine.

Pure love is matchless in majesty, it has no parallel in power, and there is no darkness it cannot dispel. It is the undying flame that has set all life aglow, yet it must be kindled and rekindled in the abysmal darkness of selfish thoughts, selfish words and selfish deeds. As it is fired anew it bursts out in magnificent light to serve as a beacon for those who still grope in the darkness of selfishness, be that darkness deep blue or all black.

Human love, regardless of its limitations, should never be despised. It is bound eventually to break through all limitations to initiate the aspirant into eternal life in the truth. Then the lover may lose his separate, false self and become united with God, who is the one matchless and indivisible ocean of unsurpassable love.

God does not listen to the language of the tongue and its *japs*, *mantras*, devotional songs and so on. He does not listen to the language of the mind and its

routine meditations, concentrations and thoughts about God. He only listens to the language of the heart and its message of love, which needs no ceremony or show, only silent devotion for the Beloved.

This love can be expressed in various ways, all of which ultimately result in union with God. The practical way for the average man to express love is to speak lovingly, think lovingly and act lovingly towards all mankind, feeling God to be present in everyone.

Love is dynamic in action and contagious in effect. It is only the spiritually alive and enlightened who can feel the significance of the ancient adage, so cheaply bandied about by some preachers and philosophers, that "love begets love".

The way of love is not free from sacrifices. Just as heat and light go hand in hand, so do love and sacrifice. The true spirit of sacrifice springs spontaneously, like humility, and cannot be aware of itself nor reserve itself for particular objects and special occasions.

Love means suffering and pain for oneself, and happiness for others. To the giver it is suffering without malice or hatred. To the receiver it is a blessing without obligation.

Just as it can never be too early or too late to learn to love for the sake of love, so there can be nothing too small or too big to be sacrificed or sacrificed for. The flow of life, the flow of light and the flow of love are as much in the drop as in the ocean. The smallest thing is as big as the biggest and the biggest thing is as small as the smallest. It all depends upon the particular yardstick used.

The spirit of true love and real sacrifice is beyond all ledgers and needs no measure. A constant longing to love and be loving, and a non-calculating will to sacrifice in every walk of life - high and low, big and small, between home and office, streets and cities, countries and continents - are the best measures man can take to be really self-ful and joyful.

Love is different from lust. In lust there is dependence upon the physical object, and thus spiritual subordination of the soul to it. Love puts the soul into direct, coordinate relation with the reality which lies behind the form.

Therefore lust is experienced as being heavy, but love is experienced as being light. In lust there is a narrowing down of life, while in love there is an expansion in being. To have loved one soul is like adding its life to your own. Your life is multiplied and you live virtually in two centres. If you love the whole world, you live vicariously in the whole world. But in lust there is an ebbing of life and generation of a sense of hopeless dependence upon a form which is regarded as *another*.

Thus in lust there is accentuation of separateness and suffering, but in love there is a feeling of unity and joy. Lust is dissipation, love is recreation. Lust is a craving of the senses, love is the expression of spirit. Lust seeks fulfillment, but love experiences fulfillment. In lust there is excitement, in love there is tranquility.

Divine love is qualitatively different from human love. Human love is for the many in the one, and divine love is for the One in the many. Human love

leads to innumerable complications, but divine love leads to freedom. In divine love the personal and impersonal aspects are equally balanced, but in human love the two aspects are in alternating ascendancy. Human love in its personal and impersonal aspects is limited, but divine love with its fusion of the personal and impersonal aspects is infinite in being and expression.

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

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

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

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

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

If we understand that the greatest act of devotion towards God is not to harm any of His beings, we are loving God.

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

Therefore let us become the soldiers of God. Let us struggle for the truth. Let us live not for ourselves, but for others. Let us speak truly, think truly and act truly. Let us be honest as God is infinite honesty. Let us return love for hatred and win others over to God. Let the world know that above everything the

most dear to our hearts is God - the supreme reality.

Besides keeping God before ourselves in our daily lives and loving Him by loving our fellow men, we can love God by surrendering to the *Sadguru* or Perfect Master who is God's personal manifestation, or to the God-man, who is God descended directly into form. To surrender to any of these is to surrender to God Himself.

This is my song:

For the rich, I am the richest;
 For the poor, I am the poorest;
 For the literate, I am the most literate;
 For the illiterate, I am the most illiterate.

Thus I am one of you, one with you
 And one in you, and we are all one.

To have my real *darshan* is to find me.
 The way to find me is to find your abode in me.
 And the only one and sure way to find your abode
 in me is to love me.

To love me as I love you, you must receive my
 grace.

Only my grace can bestow the gift of divine love.
 To receive my grace you must obey me whole-
 heartedly.

With a firm foundation of unshakeable faith in me.

And you can only obey me spontaneously as I want
 When you completely surrender yourselves to me

So that my wish becomes your *law*
And my love sustains your being.

Age after age, many aspire for such a surrender.
But only very few
Really attempt to surrender to me
completely as I want.

He who succeeds ultimately
Not only finds me
But becomes me
And realizes the aim of life.

The final way to realize God is to love Him and to lose oneself in Him through intense longing for union with Him. To love God wholeheartedly is to lose oneself eventually in the Beloved and enter the eternal life of God.

Like a tree, such love has branches - branches of wholehearted devotion, perfect selfless service, self-denial, self-sacrifice, self-renunciation, self-annihilation and truth. In this love are embodied all the yogas known to saint and seeker. The highest aspect of this love, which surpasses love itself, is that of complete surrender to the will of the Beloved. This means complete obedience to His wishes regardless of the cost.

The Perfect Masters are always immersed in the joy of this union with God and can never be snared in the mazes of the illusory universe. Therefore they do not ordinarily pay any attention to the universe other than to divert the attention of humanity from the shadow to the substance.

Divine love makes the individual true to himself and to others. It makes him live honestly, comprehending

that God is infinite honesty. Divine love is the solution to all difficulties and problems. It frees man from all bindings. It makes him speak truly, think truly and act truly. It makes him feel one with the whole universe. Divine love purifies the heart and glorifies one's being.

When one truly loves God, that love is based on the desire to give up one's whole being to the Beloved. When one loves a Perfect Master, one longs to serve him, to surrender to his will, to obey him wholeheartedly. Thus pure, real love longs to give and does not ask for anything in return.

When the individual truly loves humanity he longs to give all for its happiness. When he truly loves his country he longs to sacrifice life itself, without seeking reward and without the least thought of having loved and served. When he truly loves his friends he longs to help them without making them feel under the least obligation. When he truly loves his enemies he longs to make them his friends. True love for parents or family makes him long to give them every comfort at the cost of his own.

Trust God completely and He will solve all difficulties. Faithfully leave everything to Him and He will see to everything. Love God sincerely and He will reveal Himself. And as you love, your heart must love so that even your mind is not aware of it. As you love God whole-heartedly and honestly, sacrificing everything at the altar of this supreme love, you will realize the Beloved within you.*

* *Listen Humanity, p. 186-191.*

Love And God-Love

The force that can overcome all difficulties is the force of love, because the law of God is Love, which holds the key to all problems. This mighty force not only enables one to put the ideal of selfless service into practice, but also transforms one into God. It has been possible through love for man to become God, and when God becomes man it is also due to His Love for His beings.

Love is dynamic in action and contagious in effect. Pure Love is matchless in majesty: it has no parallel in power, and there is no darkness it cannot dispel. It is the undying flame that has set life aglow. The lasting emancipation of man depends upon his love for God and upon God's Love for one and all.

Where there is love there is Oneness, and in Oneness the Infinite is realized completely at all times and in every sphere of life, whether science, art, religion or beauty. The spirit of love and sacrifice is beyond all calculation and cannot be measured. A constant wish to love and a non-calculating will to sacrifice are the best means that man can take to be his best and most joyful self.

Love also means to be willing to suffer to give happiness to others. To the lover it is suffering without malice or hatred. To the beloved it is a blessing without obligation. Love alone knows how to give without bargaining for a return. There is nothing that

love cannot achieve and there is nothing that love cannot sacrifice.

Love for God, love for one's fellow-beings, love of service and love of sacrifice, in short, love in every form is the finest 'give and take' in the world. Ultimately it is love that will bring about the much desired equalization of human beings all over the world without inhibiting the mankind.

That the flame of love may serve as a beacon for those who are still confined in the prison of selfishness, love needs to be kindled and rekindled in the abysmal darkness of selfish thoughts, words and deeds.

The light of love is not free from the fire of sacrifice. Like heat and light, love and sacrifice go hand in hand. The true spirit of sacrifice does not reserve itself for particular objects and special occasions. Nor can love and coercion ever go together. Love has to spring spontaneously from within; it is in no way amenable to any form of force, yet it can be awakened in one through love itself.

Love cannot be born of mere determination, though through the exercise of will one can be dutiful. One may, through struggle and effort, succeed in conforming his external action with his conception of what is right; but such action is spiritually barren, because it lacks the impregnating quality of free-flowing love. Like every great virtue, love, the mainspring of life can also be misdirected. It may lead to the heights of God-realization or to the depths of despair. No better example can be given of the two polarities of love and their effects than that of Mary Magdalene, before and after meeting Jesus.

Between these two extremes are many kinds of love. It exists in all phases of human life, though sometimes it is latent, or limited or poisoned by personal ambitions, racial pride, narrow loyalties or rivalries, or by attachment to sex, nationality, sect, caste or religion. Pure love has also stages, the highest being the gift of God to love Him. When one truly loves God one longs for union with Him, and this supreme longing is based on the desire of giving up one's whole being to the Beloved.

True love is very different from an evanescent outburst of indulgent emotionalism or the enervating stupor of a slumbering heart. It can never come to those whose hearts are darkened by selfish cravings or weakened by reliance upon the stimulations of the objects of sense.

When one truly loves humanity, one longs to give one's all for its happiness. When one truly loves one's country one is willing to sacrifice one's very life for it. When one truly loves one's friends, one is glad to help them without making them feel under the least obligation; when one truly loves one's enemies, one longs to make them friends. True love for one's parents or family makes one ready to give them every comfort at the cost of one's own. Thought of self is always absent in pure love; a single thought of self would adulterate it.

Divine Love is qualitatively different from human love. Human love is for the *many in the one*; Divine Love is for the *One in the many*. Human love leads to complications and entanglements. Divine Love leads to integration and freedom. Human love, per-

sonal or impersonal, is limited; Divine Love with its fusion of the personal and the impersonal is Infinite in being and expression. Divine Love makes us true to ourselves and to others and makes us live honestly. It is the solution to all our difficulties and problems. It frees us from every kind of bindings; it purifies our heart and glorifies our being.

To those whose hearts are pure and simple, true love comes as a gift through the activitising grace of a Perfect Master, and this Divine Love will perform the supreme miracle of bringing God into the hearts of men. Human love should not be despised even though subject to limitations; for it is bound to break through these limitations, and initiate an aspirant into the eternal life in the Truth.

God does not listen to the language of the tongue, which constitutes Jap (Mental repetitions), Mantras (Verbal repetitions), Zikr (either kind of repetitions) or devotional songs. He does not listen to the language of the mind which constitutes meditation, concentration and thoughts about God. He listens only to the language of the heart, which constitutes love. The most practical way to express this language of the heart, whilst attending to the duties of daily life, is to speak lovingly, think lovingly and act lovingly towards all mankind, irrespective of caste, creed and position, understanding God to be present in each and everyone.

To realize God, we must love Him, losing ourselves in His Infinite Self... We can love God through intense longing for union with Him. We can love God by surrendering to the Perfect Master, who is God's

personal manifestation. We can also love God by loving our fellow-beings, by giving them happiness at the cost of our own happiness, by rendering them service at the sacrifice of our interests, and by dedicating our lives at the altar of selfless work. When we love God intensely through any of these channels we finally know Him to be our own Self.

The beginning of real love is obedience, and the highest aspect of this love, which surpasses that of love itself is that which culminates in perfect obedience to and supreme resignation to the Will and the Wish of the Beloved. In this love are embodied all the yogas known to saints and seekers.*

* *From '6 Messages of Avatar Meher Baba' p. 7-11.*

The Divine Union*

Not through worldly wisdom, but by diving deep to the innermost, is it possible to be united with God, Who is at once the Lover and the Beloved. For this union, one must summon the necessary courage to rise beyond the alluring shadows of the illusory world of sense-perception. Consciousness, loaded with attachments, gets pinned to the sense-world of duality. Mere withdrawal of consciousness from the world of forms presents a vacuum of nothing. But when consciousness is illumined by the Truth, it reveals God as everything and it experiences one uninterrupted and endless continuity of limitless bliss, love, power and understanding.

*The Inviolable Unity of Life***

It is my God-ordained work to awaken humanity to the inviolable unity and inalienable divinity of all life. Know that you are in essence eternal, and heirs to infinite knowledge, bliss and power. In order to enjoy your unlimited state, all that is necessary is to shed your ignorance which makes you feel that you are separate from the rest of life. The separative ego or "I" can disappear only through divine love, which will be my gift to mankind.

Let those who hearken to my call prepare themselves to render real service to the mankind. Let them make

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 58.

** p. 60-61.

it conscious of its oneness, irrespective of the apparent divisions of class, sect or creed. I do not attach importance to beliefs or dogmas. It is not what you *believe* but what you *are* that will ultimately count.

The Truth which I want you to share with me is not a matter of opinion or belief but of direct experience which knows no contradiction, and which will make you realize that nothing in this world is worth being greedy about, and that there need not be any hatred, jealousy or fear. Then, and only then, will man launch himself upon the safe voyage of unending creativity and unfading happiness which knows no decay or fear; he will have transcended the duality of "I" and "you", "mine" and "thine."

Love And God-Realization

Pure love is not a thing that can be forced upon someone, nor can it be snatched away from another by force. It has to manifest from within with unfettered spontaneity. What *can* be achieved through bold decision is the removal of those factors which prevent the manifestation of pure love. The achievement of selflessness may be said to be *both difficult and easy*. It is difficult for those who have not decided to step out of the limited self, and it is easy for those who have so decided. In the absence of firm determination, attachments connected with the limited self are too strong to break through, but if a person resolves to set aside selfishness at any cost, he finds an easy entry into the domain of pure love.

The limited self is like an external coat worn by the soul. Just as a man may take off his coat by the exercise of will, so through a bold decisive step he can make up his mind to shed the limited self and get rid of it once and for all. The task which otherwise would be difficult becomes easy through the exercise of *bold and unyielding decision*. Such decision can be born in his mind only when he feels an intense longing for pure love. Just as a man who is hungry longs for food, so the aspirant who wants to experience pure love has an intense longing for it.

When the aspirant has developed this intense longing for pure love he may be said to have been prepared for the intervention of the Master who, through pro-

per direction and necessary help, ushers him into the state of divine love. Only a Master can awaken love through the divine love which he imparts; there is no other way. *Those who want to be consumed in love should go to the eternal flame of love.* Love is the most significant thing in life. It cannot be awakened except by coming into contact with the Incarnation of Love. Theoretical brooding on love will result in weaving a *theory* about love, but the heart will remain as empty as before. *"Love begets love;" it cannot be awakened by any mechanical means.*

When true love is awakened in man it leads him to the realization of God and opens up an unlimited field of lasting and unfading happiness. The happiness of God-realization is the goal of all creation. It is not possible for a person to have the slightest idea of that inexpressible happiness without actually having the experience of Godhood. The idea which the worldly man has of suffering or happiness is entirely limited. *The real happiness which comes through realizing God is worth all the physical and mental suffering in the universe. Then all suffering is as if it had never been.*

Even those who are not God-realized can control their minds through *yoga* to such an extent that nothing makes them feel pain or suffering, even if they are buried or thrown into boiling oil. But though the advanced *yogis* can brave and annul any suffering, they do not experience the happiness of realizing God, When one becomes God, everything else is zero. The happiness of God-realization, therefore, does not suffer curtailment by anything. *The happiness of God-*

*realization is self-sustained, eternally fresh and unfading, boundless and indescribable. It is for this happiness that the world has sprung into existence.**

* Meher Baba, *The Conditions of Happiness: II*, Discourses, Vol. III, p. 172-174.

Love Annihilates Illusion of Separateness

Complete identification of the Master with the spiritual ideal is responsible for removing such barriers as might exist between the aspirant and the Master. This gives rise to the release of unrestrained love for the Master and leads to the *meditation of the heart*, which consists in constant thinking about the Master with uninterrupted flow of limitless love. Such love annihilates the illusion of separateness, which seems to divide the aspirant from the Master, and it has in it a *spontaneity which is virtually without parallel in other forms of meditation*. In its final stages meditation of the heart is accompanied by unbounded joy and utter forgetfulness of self.

Love for the Master leads to increasing identification with the Master, so that the aspirant desires to *live in and for the Master and not for his own narrow self*.*

* Meher Baba, *Types of Meditation: V*, Discourses, Vol. II. p. 150-151

Love Dissolves Ego

The ego is an affirmation of separateness... The ego affirms its separateness through craving, hate, anger, fear or jealousy. When a person craves for the company of others he is keenly conscious of being separate from them and thus feels his own separate existence intensely. The feeling of separation from others is most acute where there is great and unrelieved craving. In hate and anger also the other person is, so to speak, thrown out of one's own being and regarded not only as foreigner but as definitely hostile to the thriving of the ego. Fear also is subtle form of affirming separateness and exists where the consciousness of duality is unabated. Fear acts as a thick curtain between the "I" and the "you" and it not only nourishes deep distrust of the other, but inevitably brings about *a shrinking and withdrawal of consciousness so as to exclude the being of another from the context of one's own life*. Therefore, not only other souls but God should be loved and not feared. To fear God or His manifestations is to strengthen duality; to love them is to weaken it.

The feeling of separateness finds most poignant expression in jealousy. There is a deep and imperative need in the human soul to love and identify itself with other souls. This is not fulfilled in any instance where there is craving or hate, anger or fear. In jealousy, in addition to the non-fulfillment of this deep and imperative need for identification with other persons, there is a belief that some other soul has successfully

identified itself with the person whom one sought. This creates a standing and irreconcilable protest against *both* individuals for developing a relationship which one really wished to reserve for oneself. *All exclusive feelings like craving, hate, fear or jealousy bring about a narrowing down of life and contribute to the limitation and restriction of consciousness. They become directly instrumental in the affirmation of separateness and the ego.*

Every thought, feeling or action which springs from the idea of exclusive or separate existence binds. All experiences - small or great - and all aspirations - good or bad - create a load of impressions and nourish the sense of the "I". *The only experience which makes for the slimming down of the ego is the experience of love, and the only aspiration which makes for the alleviation of separateness is the longing to become one with the Beloved.* Craving, hatred, anger, fear and, jealousy are all exclusive attitudes which create a gulf between oneself and the rest of life. *Love alone is an inclusive attitude which helps bridge this artificial and self-created gulf, and tends to break through the separative barrier of false imagination.* The lover too, longs, but he longs for union with the Beloved. In seeking or experiencing union with the Beloved the sense of the "I" becomes feeble. In love the "I" does not think of self-preservation, just as the moth is not at all afraid of getting burnt in the fire. *The ego is the affirmation of being separate from the other, while love is the affirmation of being one with the other. Hence the ego can be dissolved only through real love.**

* Meher Baba, "The Nature of the ego and its termination", Discourses, Vol. II, p. 67-69.

God Loves The Helpless

The real help to all mankind is to help men to divert the human consciousness as much from pain as from pleasure, and everything non-lasting, to the eternal experience of the Divine Oneness. That is because until the human consciousness is completely transformed into Divine consciousness, there can never be a lasting solution of the endless problems before suffering humanity.

The more comfort and pleasure are available to man, the less are the chances for a sufficiently strong urge on his part to give up experiencing even the temporary happiness of name, and fame and riches so as to devote his full consciousness to experiencing the original blissful freedom of real existence. Greater the binding, the greater the chances for the quickest relief by actual experience with full consciousness of one's own original freedom once for all.

The often reported expressions of pity for the starving and the down-trodden are a pitiable expression of ignorance, as the pity is based on the inherent denial of the everlasting freedom of the self. There is no truth in the popular myth that only the well-fed, well-clothed and well-educated people can think of or find God.

On the other hand, rich and resourceful people are comparatively more handicapped with the bindings of temporary self-satisfaction over their comforts and resources than those who feel themselves bound with

dissatisfaction and disappointments over their growing wants and needs.

Most definitely, God loves the so-called destitute and helpless people most, and the greater the helplessness, the greater should be the dependence upon God for His help, which can be said to be always more eager to be given than it is wished for.

In spite of the existing difficulties, the only real help for mankind is to receive a perfect hope of a really equal opportunity for all the achievement of the everlasting freedom from all bindings. Such help can be given only by One who has himself not only achieved the eternally existing freedom of the Self with full consciousness, but who at the same time also continues to remain conscious of the ignorance of duality that afflicts men in both its aspects of limited knowledge and limited ignorance, limited freedom and limited bindings, limited leadership and limited following and so on.

Such simultaneous experience of Truth and Ignorance is very rarely achieved and therefore every man should help others to his utmost capacity after taking every possible and practical precaution against the feeling of obliging on the part of the giver and the feeling of being obliged on the part of the receiver. This is best attained by pure love between man and man.

For example, if a man's foot is hurt, he does not take care of it by way of obliging the injured foot. In the same way, the injured foot does not feel under an obligation to the other foot for taking over the brunt of the body weight, nor does the latter feel to be

obliging the former. Even if some such complete absence of the element of obligation is not found practically possible, all help and relief must be given all the same after taking the best of care and precaution in all sincerity against the tinge of any feeling of obliging or being obliged to arise as between those who give help and those who receive it.

Selfless love should spring out of the understanding of the fact that by achieving the full human consciousness, every human being has arrived at the threshold of the same Divine Oneness, and that each man and woman does possess a truly equal spiritual opportunity of achieving that Oneness of spiritual freedom, which is as perfectly complete in the one as it is in the other.*

* *From '6 Messages of Avatar Meher Baba', p. 30-32.*

Why God Loves The Destitute And Helpless

The method for abandoning the hold which duality has on consciousness is not simple. The more comfort and pleasure available to man, the less his chance for a strong enough push to force him to give up even the temporary happiness of his achievements. And yet he must eventually do this (internally) to bring the full focus of consciousness to bear on the experience of the eternally inherent self or soul, with all its blissful freedom of real existence.

This is why God loves most the so-called destitute and helpless. The greater the helplessness, the greater can and should be the dependence upon God for His help, which is ever more ready than are the sincere and earnest wishes for it. The greater the bindings, the greater the chances for quick, permanent relief, through fully conscious experience of man's own original and everlasting freedom. The unlimited and everlasting spiritual freedom of the self or soul exists eternally and infinitely in one and all, and is equally available to every man and woman irrespective of class, creed or nationality.*

* *Listen, Humanity*, p. 147.

Feeling Of Pure Love Between Man And Man

...There is no gift greater than that of spiritual freedom, and no task more important than helping others to find spiritual freedom... As a rule, spiritual freedom must be won through watchful and unflinching war against the lower self and its desires. Those who would help shoulder the load in the cause of truth have not only the responsibility of attaining the goal for themselves, but of extending love and understanding to others in every step which they take towards that attainment. There is no other way of sharing their burden.

Real help in achieving the perfect hope of attaining spiritual freedom can only be given by the Perfect Master who has achieved with full consciousness the freedom of the self, and at the same time continues to be entirely conscious of the illusion of duality. From him, true and great help can be obtained, for he has experienced one hundred per cent of the truth of spiritual freedom, and is one hundred per cent confident that the truth is real. Such a Perfect Master can give relief to humanity from "immediate ignorance", as well as relief to the individual from "continual ignorance".

But direct help from a Perfect Master is rarely available, and so each individual must help others in every field of life to the utmost of his capacity. First, however, he must take every possible precaution against

the development in himself of a sense of obliging, or of obligation in the receiver. This is best achieved by a feeling of pure love between man and man.

Such selfless love springs from the profound understanding that each individual, on achieving full human consciousness, has arrived at the same threshold of infinite divine Oneness. Each human being does possess therefore a truly equal spiritual opportunity to achieve the oneness of spiritual freedom, which is potentially as complete in himself as in the other.*

* *Listen Humanity*, p. 148-149.

Service - A Spontaneous Expression Of Love

Karma Marga, or the way of action, may normally consist of a life of service to humanity, a life in which effort is expended to improve the well-being of people through social, political or physical projects. In such service the motivating factor is usually a sense of duty, but often it is corrupted by the desire to achieve power, fame or other personal gain. Regardless, the way of action creates in its wake many joys and many sorrows, much exultation and much disillusionment. It often creates further bindings for the soul and is frequently fraught with nagging restlessness due to the worker's expectation of specific results. As often as not, it results in enlargement of the ego rather than its deflation.

On the other hand, internalizing this same way of action renders it pure, safe and spontaneous. In such case the aspirant may still be engaged in humanitarian work, but that work is no longer entangled in personal ambition.

Such service is not a mechanical response to a sense of duty, but a spontaneous expression of voluntary love. Through it man gradually becomes purer, is freed from many limitations, and finds peace of being as he becomes wholly detached from the results of his actions. Under the enlightening influence of inner understanding, the life of action helps in the elimina-

tion of the ego-mind and quickens the pace to attainment of truth-consciousness.

The inner spiritual path is irreplaceable because of the welling up of divine love which occurs during its course. Even in *Bhakti Marga* as the ordinary religious man of the world practices it, this up-welling of love is absent. It is only in the inner transformation of the way of devotion that the aspirant is initiated into that spontaneous love which needs no outer observance for its realization. Such love springs up spontaneously in the heart under the quickening touch of the master's grace.*

* *Listen Humanity*, p. 159-160.

Love And Service

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

Even when the aspirant is rendering a service which is selfless, he keeps constant guard upon his mind. The aspirant must be humble, honest and sincere. The service he renders must not be for the sake of mere show, and it should be an outcome of true love. *If the aspirant is inspired by love, his love will enable him to be in complete harmony with other co-workers without being jealous.* If there is not complete harmony amongst the co-workers, the service which is rendered falls short of the spiritual ideal. Further, if the aspirant renders the outward service without a spirit of love, he is acting from a sense of duty, as in many worldly institutions where there are paid workers. In the institutions of the world people work for pay. At best it is a cold sense of duty which prompts them

to be efficient. Their work cannot have the inward beauty of work which is spontaneously done out of love.

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

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

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

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

* Meher Baba, *Qualifications of the Aspirant: III, Discourses, Vol. III*, p. 127-130.

What Is Baba's Work?

Work undertaken with honest intent and love for God is Baba's work, and those who do this are always his.

But the greatest work one can do for Baba is to live the life of love, humility, sincerity and selfless service in which there is no trace of hypocrisy. Baba's love is for all; and for each of his lovers to help others know this, his or her own life must be a radiating example of love so that it may become the instrument to spread Baba's love and the truth of Reality. Such a life and such a love are vital and carry the highest responsibility, for behind every thought, word and deed is the all-pervading force of Truth.

To cultivate discipline in one's self requires self-determination and honest effort if one desires to tread knowingly and consciously the path of love. This discipline may at first appear dry as dust, but with perseverance it will automatically blossom and be transmuted into the very life of the lover.

To help others through one's own example, one must get not only thoroughly drenched but drowned in love. As a prelude one should attempt to create a balance between the thoughts of the mind and feelings of the heart. Mind, however, works much faster. Thoughts are like lightning - first there is the flash and later the sound of thunder. For an equilibrium to be reached, the mind - which is the seat of desires - must be made to function more slowly in order to keep pace with

the heart, and no amount of silence or fasting can accomplish this.

If the individual desires the enforcement of equilibrium in the true direction, a consistent acceleration of feelings should be made so that feelings supersede thoughts, i.e., the heart supersedes the mind. To achieve this the only effective fuel is love - unadulterated love. Unless one learns to love in its true sense, one cannot cross the hurdle of the mind. And for one to understand love in its true sense, the only resource is to dedicate one's self to the lord of love, and to hold fast under all circumstances to the feet of the Perfect Master. Any deviation from self-dedication will lead one astray from the path of divine love.

It is good to fast and observe silence as a discipline in one's daily life. But this becomes utterly insignificant when one has determined to starve and silence the mind itself, by implicitly obeying in all things a Sadguru - a Perfect Master.

Baba's love is with his lovers always, helping and guiding them. And they? They should keep their love for him alive and aglow, by making him their constant companion in all their thoughts, words, and actions, while carrying on their responsibilities, commitments and all other apparently necessary things of this world, though these have no foundation of their own in the domain of Reality.*

I tell you with Divine authority, that chanting my *arti*, performing my *puja*, garlanding me, offering me

* *Life At Its Best*, p. 63-65.

fruits and sweets and bowing down to me, in themselves mean absolutely nothing. It is a waste to spend money on garlands, fruits and sweets as offerings to me for the conventional *puja*, and a sheer waste of breath and energy merely to chant my *arti*. From time eternal, gods have been performing my real *puja*. What I want from all my lovers is real, unadulterated love, and from my genuine workers I expect real work done...

Love me wholeheartedly. The time is so near that the only thing which will count now is love. That is why I have been telling you all to love me more and more. Love me, love me, love me, and then you will find me. From you I want no surrender, no mind, no body, no possessions, only love... when you spread my eternal message of love to others, show them first that you really love me. Do not merely make them read my books and messages; do more. Live such a life of love, sacrifice, forgiveness and tolerance that others will love me. If instead of doing the real work of love, you start organized propaganda for me, it is absurd. I need no propaganda or publicity. I do not want propaganda and publicity, but I do want love and honesty. If you cannot live the life of love and honesty, you should stop working for me. I am quite capable of doing my Universal Work alone.

...If you love me even a little, I want your hearts towards each other to be clean and for you to forget your differences, cleanse your hearts and live for 'Baba'.... Let Baba's love be the Centre, the Office, the help and the work. I want my lovers and workers to know that there is no greater 'Baba's Centre' than the heart of my lover. Those who truly love me are

my centres in the world. Let each 'Baba-lover,' wherever he or she may be, be the 'Baba's Centre' personified, radiating the eternal message of Love Divine, living a life of love, sacrifice and honesty.**

** *God-Man*, p. 216-217.

What Constitutes An Ideal Prayer?

What constitutes the essence of prayer? Many prayers to God are current among the lovers of God, arising as they do from diverse cultural contexts. Some of the prayers invariably contain an element of asking something from God, either material or spiritual. In fact, God is so merciful and bountiful that even without their asking He always gives much more than His lovers can receive. He knows their real needs more deeply than they do. Therefore the element of asking something from God is superfluous. It often mars the inner love and worship which a prayer tries to express.

The ideal prayer to the Lord is nothing more than spontaneous praise of His being. You praise Him, not in the spirit of bargain but in the spirit of self-forgetful appreciation of what He really is. You praise Him because He is praiseworthy. Your praise is a spontaneous appreciative response to His true being, as infinite light, infinite power and infinite bliss. It is futile to attempt a standard prayer and hold it up as an ideal for all people of all times. The glory of the Almighty transcends all human understanding and defies all verbal descriptions. Eternally fresh and self-renewing in its unlimited amplitude, it never fades. Nor is it ever confined within the limits of the best of hymns.

All hymns and prayers reach out towards the eternal Truth of Godhead only to merge those who utter them

in silent and unending adoration. If by ideal prayer to the Lord is meant a set formula, any search for it is a wild goose chase. All prayers ultimately initiate the soul into an ever deepening silence of sweet adoration; and all formulae are dissolved and assimilated into the integral and direct appreciative perception of divine Truth. That which seeks to reach towards the immeasurable, itself becomes incapable of being measured by any set standards.

The ritualistic and repetitive expressions of prayer do not and cannot do justice to the innermost essence of prayer, which is adoring love for the eternal Beloved. To attempt to standardize prayer is to mar its intrinsic beauty... In the entire spiritual panorama of the universe nothing is more sublime than a spontaneous prayer. It gushes out of the human heart, filled with appreciative joy. It is self expression of the freed spirit without any actuation of a motive. In its highest form, prayer leaves no room for the illusory diarchy of the lover and the Beloved. It is a return to one's own being.*

* *Beams From Meher Baba*, p. 74-76.

Prayer

(dictated by Meher Baba)

O Parvardigar, the Preserver and Protector of all!

You are without Beginning, and without End;

Non-dual, beyond comparison; and none can measure you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

You are imperceptible and independent.

You are the Creator, the Lord of Lords, the Knower of all
minds and hearts; you are Omnipotent and Omnipresent.

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

You are the Ocean of Knowledge, All-Knowing, Infinitely-Knowing; the Knower of the past, the present and the future, and You are Knowledge itself.

You are All-merciful and eternally benevolent;

You are the Soul of souls, the One with infinite attributes;

You are the Trinity of Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss;

You are the Source of Truth, the Ocean of Love;

You are the Ancient One, the Highest of the High;

You are Prabhu and Parameshwar; You are the Beyond-God, and the Beyond-Beyond-God also; You are Parabrahma; Allah; Elahi; Yazdan; Ahuramazda; and God, the Beloved.

You are named Ezad, the only One worthy of worship.

(From 13 August to 2 September 1953 when Meher Baba was engaged in special work the Prayer above was recited each day in His presence.)

The Prayer Of Repentance

(dictated by Meher Baba)

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

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

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

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

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

Love Can Make You

1. Unlearn all you have learned intellectually. Not remember the past, forget the present, and not think of the future.
2. Renounce everything and everyone including your own self.
3. Escape from all that is illusory and take refuge in Reality.
4. Burn all your desires and longings and kindle the one and only desire and longing - union with the Divine Beloved.
5. Become God, live God's life, make others God unto yourself.
6. To be worthy of the Divine gift of this Love, let all your thoughts, words and deeds be controlled by the constant remembrance of God.

Register of Editorial Alterations

Page 6, para 2, line 4, beatic changed to beatific
Page 32, para 1, line 9, agressor changed to aggressor
Page 36, para 5, line 2, forebearance changed to forbearance
Page 76, para 3, line 3, "emories" changed to "to memorise"
Page 91, para 1, line 12, undiluated changed to undiluted
Page 97 para 3, line 2, connoisours changed to connoisseurs
Page 98 para 1, line 2, an changed to as
Page 102, para 3, line 7, opposite changed to operative
Page 127, para 1, line 12, threads changed to threats
Page 130, para 5, line 1, tinst changed to tiniest
Page 153, para 1, line 13, full changed to fully
Page 157, para 3, line 5, effect changed to affect
Page 164, para 2, line 8, "comes" changed to "comes from"
Page 167, para 1, line 7, hindance changed to hindrance
Page 168, para 2, line 1, "When" changed to "When a"
Page 170, para 4, line 7, "be" changed to "to be"
Page 187, para 1, line 7, love changed to lover
Page 190, para 2, line 4, suddently changed to suddenly
Page 206, para 1, line 2, of changed to or
Page 214, para 5, line 5, later changed to latter
Page 224, para 2, line 1, "do" changed to "can do"
Page 225, para 2, line 6, canot changed to cannot
Page 225, para 3, line 2, insignicant changed to insignificant