

One Fine Thread

Talks on Meher Baba

By Kitty Davy

An Avatar Meher Baba Trust eBook

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By Kitty Davy

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ONE FINE THREAD

TALKS ABOUT MEHER BABA



KITTY DAVY



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BY KITTY DAVY

SECOND EDITION

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A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

One Fine Thread is a collection of talks written by Kitty Davy between 1968 and 1990. It will come as no surprise that they are dedicated to the one subject that comprised the entire focus of her life, namely, Avatar Meher Baba, her spiritual Master whom she loved and followed since their first meeting in London in 1931. These talks were given mainly at Meher Spiritual Center, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where Kitty lived from 1952 until her death in 1991 at age 100. In addition, at various times over the years, she would be invited to speak at Meher Baba events around the United States and also in England. These talks are a reflection of Kitty's spiritual life since leaving Meher Baba's ashram in India in 1952, and, as such, they are a welcome companion to her extraordinary 1981 memoir *Love Alone Prevails: A Story of Life with Meher Baba*. This comprehensive work will surely be regarded in ages to come as one of the truly great Western spiritual memoirs. It provides an intimate portrait of the God-Man as well as recollections of a life of close discipleship.

When Kitty began writing these talks, her initial intent was to share experiences she had while in Meher Baba's company in Europe and India in the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s. Over the last two decades of her life, however, after Meher Baba dropped His physical body in 1969, the content gradually became oriented toward her inner life, her inner relationship with Meher Baba: focused on finding and following Him in her heart "now." As



Kitty in her bookroom/office at Dilruba, Meher Center, mid 1980s.

she puts it: “I have chosen to concentrate on the years since Baba left us physically to remain internally within, and to find new meaning in these latter experiences in relation to Meher Baba’s messages of Love and Truth.”

As a result of this work to “find new meaning,” we are left with a rare example of a spiritual seeker who, after having lived and worked side by side with the Avatar of the Age as one of His intimate disciples, later in life recognized the importance of further developing her relationship with Him internally. For those of us “young ones” who came along in the late 1960s and 1970s, this inner relationship is exactly what we were contending with in our own lives. Most of us had not met Meher Baba and were left to figure out what to do now that He was no longer physically here. To have Kitty as a loving and validating companion in this struggle

was like having a clear window into the life of the spirit—genuine, lighthearted, and enthusiastic.

For those readers who may be new to Kitty, we would like to paint a broader picture of this remarkable woman's life by introducing two other disciples whose names appear in this book, who, along with Kitty, played significant roles in Baba's work at Meher Center. First, Elizabeth Patterson, with whom Kitty worked closely year round, and second, Margaret Craske, who stayed with them at Myrtle Beach during the summers and holidays. (Margaret would later come to live at Meher Center in 1986.)

These three women met Meher Baba in the early 1930s, lived with Him for long periods of time in India, and were generally regarded as women mandali, or close disciples. Each was a vital presence at Meher Center throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, impacting the lives of countless people who were hearing about Meher Baba for the first time and wanted to learn more.

During this period, Baba was intimately touching the hearts of thousands of people, mostly young adults, who were drawn like magnets to India, Meher Center, and Avatar's Abode in Australia, hungry for stories about Him and eager to learn how to live their lives in response to the love He had awakened in their hearts. At Meher Center, Baba provided Kitty, Elizabeth, and Margaret as living examples of not only what life was like with the Avatar, but also how to live for Him now.

One interesting distinction these women shared was that they were each quite accomplished in their respective fields before coming into Meher Baba's orbit. Elizabeth was American-born and a prominent businesswoman, with a flourishing career as an insurance broker in New York City. In the early 1940s, by Meher Baba's directive, she, along with Norina Matchabelli, founded Meher Center. It was Elizabeth's father, Simeon Chapin, who made it possible for his daughter to obtain the land for a universal retreat

dedicated to Meher Baba. Eminently practical and efficient, Elizabeth worked, primarily behind the scenes, and she administered the Center with a gentle but commanding presence. She had an engaging personality and a wonderful wit. Her manner was soft-spoken, direct, and always to the point. Entrusted with sole authority from Meher Baba to take care of His Home in the West, Elizabeth held the reins with wisdom and poise until her passing in 1980.

Margaret, originally from Great Britain, was a world-renowned classical ballet instructor who taught in New York from the late 1940s to the mid-1980s. She was very much a woman of the world of dance and the arts. To the endless delight of visitors to Meher Center, Margaret was a fount of priceless stories, told in a self-deprecating manner and infused with a dry wit and a marvelous sense of mischief. She particularly enjoyed sharing funny stories of ashram life in India—for example, about the squabbles and tensions that inevitably arose between strong personalities living in close quarters. Through her storytelling, Margaret had the unique capacity to convey Baba's humor and naturalness along with the lessons gleaned from a life lived in His love and service.

Kitty, born in London, was a distinguished teacher of music for many years before she met Baba. She had a natural humility, warmth, and an openness with everyone she met. Enormously energetic, Kitty was always “on the go” and she was known for doing ten things at one time. People were irresistibly drawn to her enthusiasm and friendliness and, most especially, her ability to immediately place everything in a “Baba” perspective.

One particularly charming characteristic of Kitty's personality was her habit of spontaneously coming out with malapropisms, almost on a daily basis. She was so enchanting in her complete lack of awareness of what she was saying that she kept everyone around her in stitches. These unintentional sayings of hers became known throughout the Baba world as

“Kittyisms.” To give a memorable example, one day on the telephone, Kitty told us that Wendy’s mother, Jane, had been having trouble with her eyes. “But,” she added, “not to worry, she went to the optimist, and he said that everything would be quite all right.”

Like all the men and women mandali, Kitty, Elizabeth, and Margaret were strong, independent individuals, each with a unique personality. By the same token, they shared striking similarities in their approaches to following Meher Baba. First and foremost was their complete and wholehearted dedication to what they inwardly felt would please Him. This quality came through time and again in how they dealt with people and situations. Natural and accessible, not one of them set themselves up as a spiritual authority or put themselves before Baba. One always had the sense around them that Baba was very much in command right now, just as He was while in the body. Each in her own way stressed the importance, in whatever work one did, of surrendering it to Baba, doing it wholeheartedly, and then leaving the results to Him.

Perhaps Eruch Jessawala, the close disciple who was Meher Baba’s personal attendant, summed it up best. One time when we were speaking with Eruch about Kitty, Elizabeth, and Margaret, he told us: “Do you know why you love them so much? Because they hold on to Him with both hands! That’s what makes them priceless!”

In the mid 1960s, another major figure who played an integral part in the life of Meher Center was Jane Barry Haynes, who, along with her children John, Charles, and Wendy, met Meher Baba at the Center in 1958, and again in 1962, at what was known as the East West Gathering. Jane, a producer and actress, gave up her career in theater to move to Meher Center in 1965, by Baba’s directive, to help in the daily work of the retreat. Like Elizabeth and Kitty, Jane had an innate graciousness and the gift of making people feel welcome at Baba’s Home. She had a natural ability to relate to

guests that, coupled with her willingness to share her own struggles in life to please Baba, imparted a deep sense of Baba's acceptance of all.

These four women, each in her own way, had the capacity to circumnavigate the wiles of this "new generation," with an ease and focus that cut through all the cultural quirkiness, including wild ideas about spirituality, and went straight to the heart of the spiritual matter. They were all instrumental in introducing these seekers to Meher Baba's message of love and truth.

Kitty once said she saw her life in three parts: the time before she met Baba, the time after she met Baba and then lived with Him in India, and lastly, the time she lived apart from Baba in America. This last phase would hold special significance for Kitty, because Baba gave her a new role to play in her years of love and service to Him. After Meher Baba's automobile accident in 1952, He asked Kitty if she would stay in America to help Elizabeth (who had been badly injured in the accident) and Norina Matchabelli (who would be returning to Myrtle Beach from a recent hospital stay). Kitty wrote in her memoir: "Elizabeth would be convalescing for some months, and Norina, who was expected home from the hospital, was recovering from a severe heart attack and nervous exhaustion" (*Love Alone Prevails*, p. 403). In later years, Kitty said that she had no idea this great change was coming. Up to this point, she had been living with Baba in India for fifteen years, and she naturally assumed she would be returning with Him at the end of the 1952 trip to the West. However, when Baba asked Kitty if she would stay behind, she characteristically answered, "Why yes, of course, Baba." About this, she writes: "When following the Avatar, be prepared for the unexpected!" (*Love Alone Prevails*, p. 403).

From the late 1960s onward, when most of the talks in this book were written, Kitty had stopped doing caretaking duties at the Center (in the early days, she was the only person on what is now a fourteen-member cabin

crew!) and had begun meeting with the many visitors who were coming for the first time. Along with seeing new people, Kitty also sold Baba books out of her small office. In an April 1967 letter to Meher Baba's sister-disciple, Mani, Kitty writes: "Here day to day and everywhere all over the U.S. new people coming to Baba, nearly all of the younger generation, and Baba books and pamphlets flying!" (*Love Alone Prevails*, p. 649).

All day long, a constant stream of people made their way to Kitty's bookroom, hoping for a chance to speak with her about Baba or to confide problems they were grappling with in their lives. She was an unfailing source of support and insight to whoever came to see her. In her inimitable way, Kitty would often come out with the most profound things that would prove uncannily relevant to the individual's life. The following story gives a classic example of how Kitty would spontaneously impart a spiritual insight gleaned from her life in the presence of the Ancient One.

One morning, Wendy remembers being with Kitty in her office when a letter arrived from a young married couple asking for Kitty's opinion about whether they should buy a house or a condo. While Wendy recalls thinking this request was a bit over the top, Kitty wasted no time in responding. She asked Wendy to get paper and pen and immediately began to dictate a response. It turned out to be one of Kitty's famous "point" letters: point #1, point #2, and so on. Mani used to describe with great pleasure how much the Meherazad family would look forward to receiving "point" letters from Kitty. In her answer to the couple's question, Kitty said, "Point number one: "Baba loves challenges. He loves obstacles. This is His way of working. Point number two," she continued, "there is no such thing as a mistake." In that moment, she recalled something that happened when she was living on Meherabad Hill in the late 1930s. "One day, some of us women were squabbling about a decision we had to make regarding a task we had been given by Baba. Unexpectedly, Baba strode up to us, and spelt out on His

board: ‘You Westerners, always worrying about the right decision or the wrong decision. Don’t you know? I made the decision long ago. There is no such thing as a mistake. All that matters is the motive behind the decision: Are you doing it for Me or are you doing it for yourself?’”

This daily work of seeing and writing people continued all the way through Kitty’s late nineties, almost until the end of her life.

The culmination of Kitty’s examination of her inner life, including the insights she gained from the many seekers who came to see her, can be found in one of her talks on consciousness. Kitty pulls together her insights from the different phases of her life into a coherent inner portrait. In the conclusion of this talk, she writes: “Looking back, however, I realize that above all other aspects of our early lives with Baba in India and in the West, there was one fine thread that went onto the canvas, and that fine thread, as I see it today, concerned consciousness.” And later: “He was working to try to bring consciousness away from self and away from the many objects of illusion and duality, its wants and desires, to the one object of Himself. . . . And this gradual shift in consciousness grew as our love for Baba deepened.”

In the mid 1980s, we accompanied Kitty to Baba’s Home in India. At that time, she was in the midst of this inner work, and one day in Mandali Hall she asked Eruch about this question of “consciousness.” Right away, instead of answering the question, Eruch marveled aloud to all of us present: “Look at this. After so many years in His presence and His service—look how she is. Not placing herself above anyone, keeping her focus on Him—with no self-importance. She could do that. But she doesn’t. Instead she is only for Him.”

Another of Kitty’s most endearing qualities was how inclusive she was. She would often seek out the opinions and advice of others about the topic she was exploring and, in some cases, turn to them for help in editing her talks. We were privileged to share in that process, along with others, such

as Lois Breger and Roz Taubman, who were so instrumental in helping Kitty write her memoir.

In December 1981, soon after the publication of her book, we spoke with Kitty about the possibility of publishing her talks someday. She said she hoped we would, “but,” she added, “not until after I’m gone.” Happily, the talks of this extraordinary disciple, Kitty Davy, are now available to all.

Buz and Wendy Connor
Meher Spiritual Center
Myrtle Beach, SC
November 2014

C O P Y E D I T O R ' S N O T E

A few words about the editing of this book: Many of Kitty's talks were designed by her to be read aloud, not to be set in print. The fact that some of the text was prepared by transcribing from audio tapes meant that minor changes had to be made; for example, to remove excessive use of such expressions as "well" and "so" for smoother reading.

Many footnotes have been added for quotations of Meher Baba for those who wish to research Meher Baba's words, but sometimes documentation was not possible. At times Kitty seemed to combine words of Baba from different sources for the purpose of conciseness, or to quote the essence of a passage from memory; or she may be quoting from her own notes in places (which she often took in shorthand). Where it seemed evident that the words are a paraphrase, quotation marks have sometimes been removed, but this is not meant to imply that these words are not really Baba's message, only that we could not find a printed source; for example, in a specific message, discourse, or account of a gathering. We ask the reader's indulgence for the repetition of details; for example, Kitty tells about her first meeting with Baba in more than one talk, but we felt that the variations in the storytelling made it worth risking redundancy.

A number of factual and other corrections have been made to the second edition.

CHAPTER 1

THE STORY OF MEHER BABA: FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

NORTHEAST GATHERING FOR MEHER BABA
BLACKAWAXON, PA
SEPTEMBER 1981

I was sitting on the porch early one morning at Dilruba, Elizabeth Patterson's home adjoining the Meher Spiritual Center. I was thinking of a book I was writing about Meher Baba, called by many the God-Man, whom I first met and loved so much over fifty years ago. Then from within, a voice said, "What about My dear children? Have you remembered them?" I recognized this silent voice within as the One who long ago was born a small baby as were each of you. As a matter of fact, Baba was on silence, meaning that He was not speaking. I never heard Him speak, except from within.

I began to worry and I thought, "What can I say about Meher Baba, the God-Man, that they would like to hear?" And then I did the only thing possible. I gave the worry to dear Baba. I remembered long, long ago something He spelled out on His alphabet board: "Be happy, don't worry. Try your best. I will help you."

Now my mind, all excited, began to work fast. "Yes," I answered, "I shall write all about You, Baba, especially for the young ones, and it shall be about Your love for all."

What better beginning is there than when Baba was born? It was on

February 25, 1894, in Poona, India. I think you would be interested to know that Merwan, for that was His name when He was born, was always lively and full of mischief. I am reminded of a story. Hear what happened. Once, when Merwan was a baby, his mother left Him playing on the floor. When she came back to the room, she was shocked to see Him playing happily with a big, black snake, a dangerous cobra, which was coiled around Him! She rushed forward, but the snake slipped quickly away and no harm was done to little Merwan.

As He grew up, Merwan loved sports, especially cricket, an English game you play with a stick—a bit like baseball. He also loved to walk fast, and everyone else always had to run just to keep up with Him!

Later, Merwan attended school and then college. One day something unusual happened. He was bicycling through the Bund Garden near his home in Poona. Ahead of Him, sitting under a big banyan tree, was a very beautiful old lady with curly white hair. Her name was Babajan. When Babajan saw the youth on the cycle, she got up and walked towards Him. At the same time Merwan got off his cycle and walked towards her. Their eyes met, and Babajan, with a sweet smile, kissed Him on the forehead. Merwan went back to His bicycle and rode off. A strange incident, was it not? What did it mean? It was like a mystery story.

Well, Merwan arrived home. We don't know if He told his mother, Shireen, or His father, Sheriar, what had happened on the way. Perhaps He told his older brother, Jamshed, with whom He was very close. Of course He couldn't tell his little sister Mani, whom some of you have met in India, because she was not yet born! Anyway, none could fathom what had occurred. Merwan acted a little strangely.

Merwan returned to college, but He did not feel as He had before. Something had happened. He left college, had no appetite, could not sleep. His parents worried about Him and called in their family doctor, but he was

no help. No medicine could relieve poor Merwan of his headaches, lack of appetite, and a feeling He could not explain. This condition, we are told, continued for nine months. How sad for poor Merwan.

Then Merwan must have heard from within the same voice I heard. It told Him to get up, go out, and search for someone—He did not know whom. He obeyed. He knew His father, Sheriar, had been a great seeker as a young man. He had wandered through the jungles in search of God long before Merwan was born. Sheriar only left off roaming the jungles because that same voice within told him that if he went back home, later a child of his would be born who would find the answer Sheriar was looking for. He obeyed the voice and went back to Poona. Later he married Shireen, or Shirinmai, and one of their children was Merwan, who our story is about.

Now Merwan found Himself searching for the Truth as His father had done before Him, but along a different path. His search led Him to the five great spiritual teachers, called Perfect Masters, who were living at that time in different parts of India.

Merwan went to Shirdi, a village not far from Poona, where there was a very holy man. In fact, he was more than a holy man, as he was recognized by large numbers of people in India as a Sadguru, or Perfect Master. His name was Sai Baba. Merwan saw him for the first time during a parade, or procession, and when He bowed down, Sai Baba called out to Him, "*Parvardigar!*"—an Indian word meaning God Almighty, the Perfect One, the Love.

Another holy man, Upasni Maharaj, who was also recognized in India as a Perfect Master, was staying in Shirdi at that time too. Upasni, seeing Merwan coming towards him, bent down and picked up off the ground a small stone. This he threw towards Merwan. The stone hit Him on the forehead. What did this mean? Instantly this sudden knock opened an inner door, as it were, and Merwan was consciously aware of what had happened. He was experiencing what you might call another world—not like the one

He was used to, but a very different and beautiful world which awakened before his eyes.

After this experience, Upasni went to Sakori, a short distance away, and Merwan returned to Poona. After a time, Merwan went to Sakori and stayed with Upasni for six months. Upasni taught Merwan to understand His experience, which he related to God and God's Love. During this time Merwan suffered much physically, but at the same time He was learning day by day what His future work and mission were to be—an unfoldment from within, you might call it.

Perhaps you have heard of Jesus, Buddha, and Zoroaster—all Perfect Ones—Perfect in God's Love, the Father and Creator of us all. Do you remember in the Bible how Jesus walked in the streets of Palestine around the Lake of Galilee, looking for certain ones? Their names were Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and later, two women, Mary and Martha. Merwan did the same in India, searching for His Eastern group of mandali, or disciples, when He walked around a place called Kasba Peth in Poona. He lost no time in bringing His earlier companions from school and His new followers to a small building on Fergusson College Road. There He began sharing some of the beautiful things He had learned and was experiencing within Himself. His name was changed now to Meher Baba, the Compassionate Father, by His friends and first followers.

After a few years of training His Indian, or Eastern, men and women disciples and beginning His mission of spreading His message of Love and Truth, what did Baba do? The story tells us that He came from India across the ocean by boat to find His Western followers, men and women from England and America, and began His work in the West.

It was to my parents' home in London, where I was born, that Baba came on His very first visit to England many years ago. When I met Baba, I was grown up and was busy teaching boys and girls how to play the piano.



Baba feeding Mohammed the mast at the Bangalore ashram, 1939.

But I loved Baba so much when I first saw Him that all I wanted to do was to serve Him in any way He wished.

By the bye, Baba told me it is not easy to love God when you have never seen Him. So, He said, God comes from time to time in the form of a man. Through His love for us, everyone in the East and the West—people of all ages—will know that Baba is God in human form.

Baba's life, whether in the East or in the West, was a very full life of service. In the East, His work was feeding the poor, washing the lepers, going to parts of India where there were floods and famine. Much of Baba's work was with some wonderful people called *masts*, who spend so much of their time thinking

about God. Perhaps you know that beautiful picture of Baba feeding with His own hands Mohammed the *mast*. Some of you, I am sure, have met Mohammed at Meherabad, where Baba had His first ashram, or retreat.

What was Baba's work when He came to the West? Baba said, "I have come not to teach but to awaken." What do you think this means? Perhaps Baba wants you to remember Him when you wake up in the morning and to think of Him throughout the day. He wants to be awakened within you. Baba showed people how to love God more and how to love each other.

To awaken people, Baba visited many places in Europe and America. Sometime you might like to read the many wonderful stories connected with these spots. Who can say? Perhaps you will have the chance to go to some of the places that Meher Baba visited, walking on the roads where He walked, and eating in the cafés where He ate.

Baba was interested in everything all of you like. Animals He loved. He had monkeys, dogs, two little pigs, a lamb, a cat, a big horse and a small pony, birds, and even a tiny chipmunk. I saw it peeping out of his coat pocket one day! How He loved little creatures He could cuddle, and they all seemed to love Meher Baba. Do you know what Baba once said? "I love small animals, for they are part of My creation. But I love children much more, for with them I am the eternal child, and they in their happy play are My playmates."^{*}

I found out long ago that Baba loves you to try to please Him and make Him happy. You can talk silently to Baba and tell Him something that will please Him. Maybe He whispers something to you inside.

I have a young friend named Lori Converse who wrote about Baba when she was ten years old.[†] This is what she said:

^{*} *Lord Meher* online rev. ed., 5072.

[†] Lori Converse (1960–2008) made her first pilgrimage as a Baba-lover at age nine, attending the 1969 Darshan along with Murshida Ivy O. Duce's group, including her own mother, Cindy Ceteras, who had been with Sufism Reoriented since 1967. Lori herself was a member of Sufism Reoriented from the age of twenty.

Where Is Baba?

Where is Baba?

Where has He gone?

Please tell me!

I need Him and want Him. Oh, please tell me where He is. His eyes are like stars, his nose showing its pleasure, His mouth always smiling.

Oh, how I miss Him! His moustache blending in with His smile, His hair flowing behind Him holding the universe and the twinkling stars.

Oh, please tell me where He is!

Oh please! He is kind to beggars and travels like the universal King He is.

His lovers following Him and their hearts holding all His Love.

Oh, please tell me where to find His Love!

He loves everyone near Him and around Him, His love burning in every heart. People come to Him one by one and just know things they should know. Oh tell me where He is! His physical body has gone from earth but His heart is left with others. I think His heart was divided wrongly so I only got half of what I need. Could He be in our brown napkins? Could He be in my books? Could He be in the heart of the person who wrote my book?

Could He be in the hearts of the wrong people? No!

Why can't I always feel His Love as part of myself?

I suddenly feel I must go to where He lived to find the real truth about Him. . . .

My mind was all muzzy and stuck before, but now that I am in His house my mind clears. I know what was wrong with me. I know everything I must know. I feel love flowing into my heart . . . His perfect Heart has come to me and given me the part I needed.

I am so glad to have found that He is not the confused part of my mind. I know that I have found Him and have found my part of His heart that I should have known long ago. Now that I have found Baba's Love inside myself I can still think of Him, but I don't need to look for Him.

Baba is in the hearts of people who love Him and they carry His Love to many people around the world.

When He speaks the Word, people who love Him will feel a tingle in their hearts, and a loving feeling that is Baba will be in every heart.

Oh, I am so glad that I have found Baba now!

C H A P T E R 2

“I NEVER LEAVE”: WELCOMING GUESTS TO MEHER CENTER

MEHER BABA’S SEVENTY-FOURTH BIRTHDAY
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
FEBRUARY 25, 1968

Welcome all in the name of Meher Baba’s Center on this very special occasion, Meher Baba’s seventy-fourth Birthday.

There are several visiting here today for the first time who know little if anything of how the Center came into being, or what its purpose is. How in 1941 Baba sent Elizabeth Patterson and Norina Matchabelli back from India to find a place suitable in the West for a retreat or center for both His Eastern and Western followers. How, after several years’ search, Elizabeth and Norina found such a spot in Myrtle Beach—a jungle at a lake; and how, after several more years of work, the jungle then became what you see today: a spiritual retreat, as was Baba’s wish.

The purpose of the Center is fourfold:

- To maintain a spiritual retreat for rest, meditation, and prayer;*
- To maintain a library primarily of universal religious, philosophical, and inspirational books;
- To hold group meetings for reading of the *Discourses* of Meher Baba and other universal truths;

* The Center website uses the phrase “renewal of the spiritual life” instead of “prayer.”



Long Lake, Meher Center, late 1940s.

- To donate gifts of clothing and other necessities to the needy.

In 1956 Baba said of His Center: “Meher Center will become a great place of pilgrimage after I give up My body.”

And again in a cable to Elizabeth: “Meher Center will be My Universal Center in the West for all time.”

And again: “All the love that you put into the making of My Center comes from My Heart.”

In a cable to Elizabeth on her birthday He said, “I want you to keep it in 100% repair.”

And to all He said in 1958, as He was preparing to leave on His return to India: "I never leave, I am always here."*

And so we are indeed blessed and fortunate to find ourselves gathered together today at Baba's Center—made possible through Elizabeth's love and work and with the help of others' devoted, unending work given year in and year out to the keeping of His Center in 100 percent repair, as asked for by Baba.

* "I never leave. Remember, I do not leave because this is my home" (<http://www.mehercenter.org/visitor/directives.html>). And Darwin Shaw writes in his book *As Only God Can Love* (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Foundation, 2003) that on May 30, 1958, "When Anita Vieillard, who had come late, asked Baba how long he had been at the airport, Baba said, 'Since eternity! I never come and I never go. I am present everywhere. Isn't it wonderful that I never leave?'" (pp. 478–79).

CHAPTER 3

BABA'S DIVINE LOVE

THANKSGIVING

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC

NOVEMBER 27, 1969

When I was asked recently to speak to the New York group, it was a little difficult to decide what aspect of Baba's life to take. I knew many would be very new to Meher Baba's name; a few perhaps would be at a meeting for the first time, whilst others would be long-time members. If I were to ask what they would like, the answer would be: your experiences with Baba! But these are limited and have been already recorded in many of the *Awakener* magazines.

Then one evening, sitting by the wood fire in Montreal, I recalled a saying of Meher Baba's that I came across just as I was leaving Myrtle Beach for Canada. Not knowing why, I slipped the sheet into my handbag and now saw the words: "Experiencing Divine Love is looking upon the Face of God." These words brought back an occasion in 1932 in England when Meher Baba and His men mandali were guests in my parents' London home. Baba came into my room, sat down beside me, and spelled out on His alphabet board: "Which is greater—My love for you, or your love for Me?" I hesitated, then replied, "I suppose Your love for me." Baba smiled.

Margaret Craske tells the story that on this first visit of Baba to our



Margaret Craske on the back porch of Dilruba, mid 1980s.

home, she was sleeping in the big bed and I on a mattress on the floor. In the middle of the night she woke up, suddenly conscious of someone shaking her, and saw me. “Kitty, what is the matter? Why are you crying?” I answered, “He is so beautiful—so wonderful.” Next morning I had no recollection of the incident. The time was not ripe.

A few hours later, saying goodbye to Meher Baba as He stepped into the car (I had my hand on the doorknob) to take Him to the ashram outside London already prepared for Him by Meredith Starr, He turned around and, taking His alphabet board, spelled out: “Is there anything you want?” Without time to think or consider, I said, “An increased capacity to love and an increased capacity to serve—and yes,” I said, “spontaneous goodness.” I do not remember ever having given a thought to what I did

want up to that moment. Can this incident have been an unconscious, spontaneous reaction to Baba's Divine Love? Baba again spelled out on His board: "You will have all in a very short while," and then the car departed.

This was thirty-eight years ago, but it seems like only yesterday. In those whom Baba contacts, "He awakens the Love that consumes selfish desires in the flame of the one desire to serve Him."*

The Greater Love. Baba's Divine Love. Let this be our theme for today. We know that be it our love for Baba or the greater Love, Baba's Love for us, both are gifts of Grace and both are contained in the One Divine Love. The Give and Take.

But for now let it be the greater—Baba's Divine Love. A lovely thought for Thanksgiving.

It is interesting to observe how today the emphasis is concentrated much more on the outpouring and impact of the Beloved's Infinite Love rather than on the personal love of the lover for Baba. This is a change of focus. This quickening of Baba's Work is especially noticeable since Baba gave up His earthly form. From Europe one person writes: "The Baba lovers feel the intensity of Baba's Love and grace very strongly—a surge of love so great as is now outpouring cannot be ignored." And from London: "It is as if a breathtaking tempo had been speeded up fivefold—Baba seems to have no time to waste a single second in this stage of personal and universal outgoing. His Divine Love is evident everywhere at work."

Another tells how he came to a meeting for the first time in Schenectady, New York. Baba's discourse on Love was being read. The writer relates that it was as though he were enveloped by a great fire. The Love was so powerful. And he had only heard of Baba a short while ago. Many such letters have come to the Center, and I am sure many of you have received letters of this kind.

* "In those who contact [the Avatar] he awakens a love that consumes all selfish desires in the flame of the one desire to serve him." In "The Avatar," Meher Baba, *Discourses* (6th ed., 1967), vol. 3, p. 15.

As I remember, it is true that during the two or three early years of our constant association with Baba, the predominant thought was our love for Him. Our emotions, aspects of love which Baba says are not bad yet are quite different from Love, Baba accepted and encouraged. He took us many times to Europe, wrote us many letters through His mandali, signed by Him, to which we had to reply. We wrote back telling Him how much we missed Him and longed for His return. Cables went back and forth sending our love to Baba and Baba's reply saying how happy our love made Him, how He understood our longing, and sending all His Love.

Many hours were spent with Baba, playing games, laughing and singing, telling jokes, playing charades, and a few serious talks, all parts of Baba's Divine Game to win our love, to prepare us for work ahead. At this point, Baba was our dearest friend rather than Master. We knew little of Masters or the spiritual path. Once or twice I recall Baba spelled out on His alphabet board: "I am Krishna, I am Buddha, I am Jesus," and in letters He would end with, "I am Infinite Power, Infinite Love, Infinite Bliss."

We always noted that with Baba there is a constant change in His way of working with His disciples. In 1933 He asked us if we would come to India. We accepted. Our families and friends thought we were fanatics, hypnotized, and would return disillusioned. No matter, we went, and in India faced our first test. Baba had invited us for one year, during which we were to find others to carry on our jobs at home. The visit was to include seeing the women mandali, a visit to the famous Taj Mahal in Agra, then north to Kashmir, returning via Colombo, Ceylon—from where we were to go to China with Baba, visit my brother Herbert Davy, who was working with the League of Nations Exchange Program, and lastly, to Hollywood, California. It was a trip planned by Beloved Baba, as His secretary Chanji wrote in a letter, for our joy and happiness.

In less than three weeks after landing in Bombay, we were back home

again in London and New York—back in our old jobs. This was our first test. In Agra, Baba called each separately to His room and asked if we loved Him, to which we replied individually, “Yes, Baba!” He then asked, “Will you do something for Me? It might be necessary to send you back to the West earlier than first planned”—to which each of us replied, “Yes, if it is what You want, Baba.”

Said Baba, “It is for My work.” We were to hear these same words over and over again. “For My work.” Our first test. Baba knew now He could rely on our love and that we would obey Him. First love, then obedience. This is Baba’s way!

Baba looked so pained and sad to tell us this, but He still had a treat ahead for us. For the next ten days He took us up to Kashmir to see the place on the slope of the mountain where Jesus’ body had been carried after the Crucifixion and where Baba Himself had been in seclusion for many months on only water brought to a spot near Him. Then on to Kashmir, where we spent three days in houseboats on the Jammu River.

Yes, we loved Baba, but did we understand or know how much Baba loved us? That we were experiencing extreme restlessness of the heart and ceaseless longing to be with Baba was a fact, and this was visible to our families, of course. Children we were, and children indeed we remained. Baba stated thirty years later, in 1962: “I have been patient and indulgent, for you have been children in My Love. I want to give you my Love. I want you to be more mature in My Love.”* He reminded those who were unable to make it to India in 1962 for the East-West Gathering not to feel disheartened, for His Love was with them as always, and especially so at this time. And to those who were able to be present, He said that they were to

* From the message “My Dear Workers,” given at the 1962 East-West Gathering: “I have been patient and indulgent over the way you have been doing these things, because you have been very young children in my love, and children must have some sort of games to play. But now you are older, and are beginning to realize that there is a greater work ahead of you than what you have been doing.”

feel afresh His love in their hearts: "It is not your love for Me that has brought you here, but My Love for you." The greater love—His Divine Love—beyond comparison. The Real Gift.

Yes, the emphasis was now on His Love for us and on our awakening to a higher consciousness of His Love.

In *The New Yorker* of June 1969, one of the group interviewed by the press on her return from the Great Darshan in India was asked to tell of her trip.* She paused a very long time to think, and one of her statements was: "The thing that really zapped me was the darshan. You're in the presence all the time of God." She had never seen Baba in human form, because when she had the opportunity in 1962, honesty made her refuse Baba's invitation, since Baba had explicitly said that the 1962 Darshan was for His close ones, His lovers, and she did not feel she was one of these as yet. She asked herself if she loved Baba, and because she was not sure of the answer she felt she could not go to Him. See what Baba's release of Divine Love had now done. She now experienced some awareness of His Love. In 1962 she had not been sure of her love for Baba, but she did know how to obey, and Baba says obedience is greater than love in the relation of disciple to Master.

I want to read a few excerpts from a letter I received a few days ago, which bears on our theme: Baba's Divine Love. Here, too, the writer had never met Baba in physical form, and his yearning to see Baba was so great that in a moment of intense feeling and emotion he announced to me one Sunday morning: "I can't go on! I must go to India to see Baba." I persuaded him to write first. He did. The reply came: "We are all waiting to see Baba when He comes out of seclusion. The best thing to do is to go on working and wait for the call." Now he writes in October 1969:

"I saw darshan as the beginning, not the end, of my relationship with

* Dede Mavris, quoted in James Ivory, The Talk of the Town, "Jai Baba!" *The New Yorker*, June 21, 1969, p. 31.

Baba, the Real Baba, who it was now up to me to find. I asked Bhau how we were going to ‘follow’ Baba; and he said, ‘He has left many tracks.’ So now I scan this track every day for some hint of ‘which way He went.’ I have no time to ‘look back,’ to a Baba that lived and died in India; my business is with the real Baba who lives in the heart, and I am determined, with His grace, to follow Him wherever He leads, even though it seems to be away from Him. For I believe—no, I know—that Baba is leading me toward Him, though the path is winding and full of knots. As Coomaraswamy says, ‘even the knots are tied with the one true thread, which, if held to and followed through to the end, without looking back, will lead to God, or the true Self.’”

The Real Baba is the Divine Love of our theme today, which Baba says is His gift to mankind. A fire that burns ever within and expresses itself in spontaneous sacrifice and selfless service. But why did Baba take a human incarnation if it were not to reveal Divine Love as a way of Life, as a way of work and action? We need not necessarily look back, but we must keep before us His egoless life lived in both East and West. Read *The God-Man*,* *The Wayfarers*†—learn all we can. Says Baba: “The book I will give you to read will be My book—the book of the heart. This is all you need to know.”‡ Divine Love is the book of the heart.

You like to hear experiences with Meher Baba—here is one on the present subject. In the year 1933 we were with Baba in Lake Lugano, Italy. Baba had taken us for a day’s outing by boat across the lake and a walk up the hillside. We played games, and Ping-Pong was one of them. In the midst

* C. B. Purdom, *The God-Man: The Life, Journeys and Work of Meher Baba with an Interpretation of His Silence and Spiritual Teaching* (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Press, 1971).

† William Donkin, *The Wayfarers: An Account of the Work of Meher Baba with the God-Intoxicated, and Also with Advanced Souls, Sadhus, and the Poor* (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Foundation, 2001 [1969]).

‡ “The Book that I shall make people read is the Book of the Heart which holds the key to the mystery of life.” Message to Reporters and Press Representatives Given on board the S.S. *Bremen* in New York on May 19, 1932.

of our laughing and happy, carefree mood, Baba quietly put down the Ping-Pong bat, walked across the room, and took down from the hat stand in the corner a black silk top hat. Holding it with the hollow going away from us, and with Dr. Ghani interpreting, He said, "This way you look outward"; turning the hat around, He then said, "Now you look inwards—you must learn to look within. There you will find Me in the heart. You will experience My Real Being—Infinite Love."

Later Dr. Ghani reproved us for our lack of attention and understanding during Baba's explanation. Some had giggled and appeared not interested, and one remarked, I recall, that she loved Baba, wasn't that enough? Dr. Ghani continued that seldom did Baba give explanations anymore, and to spoil the mood was not good. And Baba turned to us and said, "What would you like to do?" We went out and continued walking on the mountain.

Sometime later, I asked Adi Sr. how best to serve Baba. He replied, "Not to criticize and backbite, and to study Baba's moods, whether gay or serious."

Now back to the present. It was during my recent visit to Canada that one evening, as I was sitting alone, the thought of current events in India surged up in my mind. Meher Baba's suffering of the last few years, His constant tiredness, His long seclusions and fasts, along with the culminating events of the last year in Meherazad. Baba's words: "My suffering is begotten of my compassion and love of mankind."* When He referred to the crushing weight of His Divine Love and boundless compassion, I thought of those words quoted by C. B. Purdom that Baba had said in 1923: that He would have to shed tears twenty-eight times for His Circle.†

* "I expect from you a deep understanding of my self-imposed suffering, which is begotten of my compassion and love for mankind." Charles Purdom, "The American Sahavas with Meher Baba, May 19th–May 30th, 1958," *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 5, no. 3 (Special Sahavas Issue 1958), p. 3.

† Charles Purdom quotes in *The Perfect Master* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1937) the following statement by Baba in 1923: "For the Circle, I shall have to get ill no less than twenty-eight times, and in each of my illnesses I shall have to shed tears." *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 3, no. 1 (Summer 1955), p. 16.

But, said Baba, “I enjoy and suffer through you to make you aware that you are Infinite Love.”* He later said, “Now is the time of My Crucifixion.”†

Again a flashback to years earlier before I knew of Baba. I was in New York, studying and living near Carnegie Hall. I recalled reading Giovanni Papini’s *Life of Christ*,‡ the account of Christ’s Crucifixion, and as I read, I recall the tears falling. Now suddenly, fifty years later, tears came as I thought of Baba’s love and suffering for all—tears that I vowed once in India a long time back never to shed again except for the beauty of Baba’s love. Never out of self-pity. The moment had come—not in India, not at darshan, but now, in the stillness and contemplation of Baba’s compassionate love for all.

* In “The Questioning Mind,” Meher Baba, *The Everything and The Nothing* (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Foundation, 2003 [1963]), p. 49, Baba says, “I enjoy and suffer through you to make you aware that you are Infinite.”

† E.g., “On Friday the 31st of January [1969] Baba said to us, ‘Today is my crucifixion.’” Mani S. Irani, *82 Family Letters* (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Press, 1976), letter no. 81, dated March 14, 1969, p. 348.

‡ Giovanni Papini, *Life of Christ* (1923), translated by Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

CHAPTER 4

AN INFORMAL TALK BY KITTY AND ELIZABETH

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
FEBRUARY 20, 1970

This is a transcript of a talk given in a conversational way to a number of people staying at Meher Center, all of whom had previously been to the 1969 Darshan in India and who were eager to hear details of Kitty and Elizabeth's journey to India for the first anniversary of Meher Baba's passing (Amartithi), January 31, 1970. They were assembled in the Saroja Library at Meher Spiritual Center during the week of Baba's seventy-sixth birthday celebration. Elizabeth did not know the talk was being taped; her words have been only slightly edited.

We have included this talk in the hopes that readers who did not have the privilege of meeting Kitty and Elizabeth will appreciate the delightful interplay between these two exemplary disciples of the God-Man as they express themselves in the perfectly natural manner that was characteristic of Baba's mandali and close ones.

The tape begins in the midst of a description of their plane connections in the Wilmington airport.

ELIZABETH: . . . We were really not supposed to get off, we were going on. And they said, well, just, something about the plane. That they thought that we'd better get off, because they had to have some little repair to it.



Kitty and Elizabeth at Meher Center.

So in view of the fact of that little repair, we decided that we'd better let them do it!

And after a while—we sat there for a length of time—I said, “Now, Kitty, you might want to ask them about this little repair.” And she said, “Well, we’re not going on that plane at all. There’ll have to be another plane.” And, “But it’ll be along after a while.”

And after another wait there, I said, “Kitty, just ask the people, there might be something different by now.” And actually, of course, there was. They said, well, the other plane had come in, but they didn’t even know it was going out! And here we were, on the way to India, you see. But we remembered that Baba was in that airport, when we saw Him in 1958. Then I said, “Well, Baba’s been in this particular airport, so that He knows all about it.”

And, after a while, they *did* go. But what they were waiting for was that where we were headed it was snowing and very slippery. Very ice-forming. And so they took us to another place entirely in Virginia—where is that university that we went to? . . .

KITTY: In Charleston.

ELIZABETH: The University of Virginia, which is *way* inland. And it seemed the ice was all—which was very unusual—the ice was along the coast part. And usually along the coast, with the salt air, the snow melts quicker.

Anyway, in Virginia, that particular part where we landed, there was no snow at all. And then we came to New York. I don't think we were *very* late. Then we went into New York, to a hotel, because we always knew that something could happen. If we had been going out that same day, we would be very, very nervous by that time, to think that we wouldn't get it [the flight].

But, we saw Fred and Ella [Winterfeldt], and one or two other people. Then, the next day, we went off on TWA. 'Cause we'd been on Air India before, we thought we'd try something else. Actually, we liked it very much. Seemed to have a little bit more leg room. And so we enjoyed it.

And our first stop—where was our first stop? Oh yes . . .

KITTY: Had a cinema on the plane.

ELIZABETH: Oh, yes. Kitty and I had never had this. Kitty said, "They're going to have a cinema, they're going to have a concert." You could have all these things. Of course, you see, it's \$2.50, and I said, "For each?" And she said, "Yes." And I said, "Well, it'd better be good!"

And they have all these different buttons and so forth. But you have to put something in your ear. And you know, after a while if you have something in your ear, very far in your ear, it . . . well, I don't know what it does to you, but . . . It's like when you go to a drive-in, you know, you see everything going, and you have no idea what they're saying. It [the ear phones] comes down from the roof.

KITTY: Oh, yes.

ELIZABETH: It comes down from the roof. Then I switched to hearing some music. You see, you can go back and forth, some way or other. On our way back from India, we didn't think it was quite worthwhile.

KITTY: I think that *was* worthwhile. It was quite good. I could see it through from the other class, you know. First class has the same film.

ELIZABETH: Yes, that's very interesting, you can see it—that's what we learned, you can see the film from two sides. And, I think it goes backwards or something, so—well, I don't—but whatever it is, on the same screen, you can see the same film, backwards and forwards.

KITTY: Yes.

ELIZABETH: Well, I think our first stop was Athens. I know it was Athens, but I meant to say I don't think we did anything in between, except we saw some islands down below. We'd say, "Oh, this is Cyprus, this is Malta, this is this. . . ." And of course it probably wasn't any of them. Might have been Elba, of course. When we arrived, we thought it was going to be a long walk, and Kitty said, "Oh, they must have a chair." But no chair came. And it was such a short walk; it is one of the few airports that you could just sort of go in and out of very easily.

And then we had a car meet us there, and take us to—what is the name of the hotel on a very beautiful square? Grand Briton?

KITTY: Yes, Bretagne, or something like that.

ELIZABETH: One of the old hotels. You see them in Paris and London and so forth. And all the old retinue there. And I think we were very comfortable. What about the food? There was something a little difficult about that. Or we arrived at the wrong time to get any food.

KITTY: Oh, well, the soup was cold. We had to send it back again, but that's very usual. Coffee was usually cold, and the soup was cold.

ELIZABETH: And, actually, the weather was cold, for Athens. We had the

first night, and then the next day in the afternoon we went to see all the environment. And we went way far, and saw all sorts of—it's a peninsula, and we went to the end of the peninsula. They wanted to take us to see all the beaches.

And I told them, I exclaimed, "Well, we've just *come* from beaches! Let's see something else." ... So instead of taking us by way of the beaches, they took us inland, and there were all the olive trees, and all sorts of things like that. It was without any olives, as it was quite out of season.

And after a while, he said, "Now, there's the place where you can stop and have something to eat." And just outside of a restaurant, there was sort of an open place. Then the man came out from the back with a lamb all on a skewer where it goes round and round. I said, "I think we'll try some other restaurant." But all the other ones had the same thing, you see, this roast lamb.

Maybe if it came to you on a plate and you didn't quite know how it got that way. And then finally we said, "You must have some *fish*." And so we went on about having some fish.

And then we came out, we came back round the beaches, which are very beautiful, but, a little off season, and . . . was it that day or the next day that we went to the Acropolis?

KITTY: The restaurant at the top . . .

ELIZABETH: Yes. And . . . was it that night?

KITTY: Yes, that same afternoon.

ELIZABETH: Well, that same afternoon, of course, they take you all around, and then take you to the Acropolis. And of course it's a *huge* rock. And the walls come up; it must have been a fortification. Because it was sheer rock, and then surrounded by a high wall, some of which was crumbling. But then they went to the back—probably that's the way they attacked it or something in the old days, because there seemed to be kind of a winding road that went to the back of the Acropolis. And by that time, it was . . .

KITTY: We were sitting down eating.

ELIZABETH: Yes. We were eating. Then, oh, *that* restaurant—you know, I don't think we had anything before that, because that restaurant, you had to go and pick out your fish! It wasn't swimming around, you had to go—he insisted you go out and have this *particular* fish, you see, so that you'd have to know what you're getting.

And, so then we waited awhile, and the fish came. It [the fish] was quite cold, as a matter of fact. They had this great big fire, huge logs. So I went over and stood near the fire, and so forth, and then we kind of relaxed. I think we had some Greek wine that came with it. Light-colored wine. And by that time, having gone around a little bit, we were drowsy, and settled down, you see, as it was an entirely different time of day than here at Myrtle Beach. And we kept seeing people going off outside, walking someplace.

KITTY: Busloads of people came up. . . .

ELIZABETH: Busloads of people came up, and they kind of went off walking, there. And Kitty said, "Do you want to walk?" And I said, "Well, I don't really feel quite like walking." She said, "Well, I don't think I'll walk, either. I think not." Then, later, she said, "Nobody told me that was the Parthenon!" I was there, and I didn't go out and see the Parthenon! We had seen it from the front, and I had seen it coming back from India. The pilots flew around the whole Parthenon, and I saw it from the top, you see. And of course I'd studied it, and so forth, but Kitty didn't know. You couldn't see it at all from the backside where we came up, you see, or where the restaurant was. She thought we were going to that later.

KITTY: I just saw it in a map this morning, got that out from all my papers; there was this huge one with the Parthenon and everything else, and I said, "Was this where we had that cold fish?" Oh yes. I said, "I never saw a single column or anything!"

ELIZABETH: Well, the next day we went on, also TWA. And we felt, it was

a wonderful thing to have rested in between, because any of you who went to India before, you know that when you arrived, it was just eleven hours' difference. And when it was night it was day, and vice versa, and we tried to plan this so that we would adjust ourselves, as we wanted to feel very fresh when we arrived. The last time [we went to India] we were met by every disciple of Baba's that was in Bombay or the area at all.

So this time we thought we'd sort of sneak in and see if we couldn't sort of manage, and not trouble anyone. Because all of them, in any case, were going the next day for three days—the 31st, 1st, and 2nd—and we thought they might have gone ahead. So we went to the Taj Mahal [Hotel in Bombay], which is supposed to be a *very* fine hotel, a very *beautiful* hotel.

And Kitty said, "Oh, I was here once before, it *must* have a balcony." He took us to a room that didn't have a balcony. Or they told us it didn't have a balcony. So [Kitty said] it *must*. And they said, "Well, we're pretty crowded, but there is just one." And it seems that you go up the elevator, it goes up so far, and then you walk another two flights up. And here, of course, are all our suitcases and everything. And we arrived, and there was a nice balcony. It was too dark at that time to look out.

And then, the same experience that Jane [Haynes] and I have had, when we went to Mexico, and one or two places. The next morning, this wonderful balcony, we looked out, and here was a [*imitates noise of machinery*] that they're digging a new portion for the new Taj Mahal, going down into the stone! You see. And this terrific noise that came up. And that's what we got. But later we found a nice quiet side to it, the garden.

Now what happened—what did we do now?

KITTY: (*speaks softly*) Luggage.

ELIZABETH: Oh, yes, that's the most important thing. So when we came off [the airplane], now we're going backwards, we're just getting off in Bombay. And we really went through very beautifully. I mean, nothing, they didn't

have to do anything, [any] special formality. They took us here, and everything went so quickly.

And suddenly we saw suitcases coming. And here was my suitcase, with the whole bottom of it out. It'd been slit. And, all my things coming there, I didn't know why they didn't fall out! Maybe they had! I could see all these nice things that I had put there, tissue paper, and all of this, like a sandwich in there.

The first thing, they [TWA] said, "Well, now, of course, TWA is responsible for it," and I said, "Well, now, you write that down, please, that they're responsible for it." But I said, "In the meantime, I could lose everything out, you'd better give me some nice old-fashioned rope to carry around it." So we arrived in the Taj Mahal with this rope around my suitcase.

One of the first things that I wanted to do was to get a new one. So they said, "You have to take it down to the TWA." I had to empty everything out, you see. I couldn't take it with all my things in it. And there he looked at it—and they're very clever, afterwards, I thought how clever they were—he said, "You know, we couldn't get you a nice one, they don't have nice ones like that in India. I think we'd better repair it for you." But I must say, they do wonderful repairs. I don't think I could get it repaired any better.

And I've still been wondering what it is, now, I'm sure *something* must have slid out. Now, we then took that little plane that goes from Bombay to Poona the next morning. And then we were met by Meherjee [Karkaria], with his smiling, lovely face. And he said he was taking us in his car to Ahmednagar. And we said, "Oh, you're going there?" He said, "No, I'm just going over there, and I'm returning in the same day."

But just before we got onto this plane in Bombay, Kitty said, "Oh, you know, we must have a good seat." Then, I said, "Well, how do you know which is the best seat?" "Oh, well, I'm sure near the front is the best." So we went way in near the front. So when we actually got to Poona, you see, it took us some time to get off. And then we saw Meherjee, and he said,

“Oh, I just asked Dr. Kenmore if he’d seen you on the plane. And he said no, he hadn’t.” We didn’t see him, either. You usually can *hear* Dr. Kenmore.* But here he was. He’d told nobody he was coming, and we hadn’t told him that we were coming, but we landed on the same plane. He was in the back of the plane, and he got off first, you see.

And then, Meherjee took us to his home, where we had tea. It doesn’t make any difference what hour you arrive in India, you have tea. It isn’t five o’clock in the afternoon necessarily. And then we went on. And we were told, “You’ll stay at Sarosh’s” [the home of Sarosh and Viloo Irani, in Ahmednagar].

Of course, now, Sarosh is Adi’s [Adi K. Irani’s] cousin. He’s a little older than Adi, not much. And he was one of the early disciples of Baba, as Adi and Meherjee were. And, some of the disciples were asked if they wanted to marry, and others, they were to choose. Not necessarily choose their wife, but just choose the idea, whether they wanted it. And Sarosh decided that he wanted to be married. And, anyway, he’d been married a long time. But he’s, of course, just as devoted, as a householder, as any of the others are.

And we stayed with Viloo, his wife. And, she dresses very well, and she’s very interested in cards. She loves to go and play . . .

KITTY: Canasta, bridge . . .

ELIZABETH: Canasta and bridge. Now I’m telling you these sort of outward things first, before we come to the real heart of the matter, of course. And they have a lovely house. And Dr. Kenmore was also there, as were two families from Karachi. Long-time disciples of Baba, and of course they were there in Pakistan . . . I mean they were there in Karachi before it *was* Pakistan. And they have great difficulty, now, getting from Pakistan back to their own country, as they still think of it, to go from one to the other.

* Dr. Kenmore, a chiropractor, had been blind since a childhood accident and also was partially deaf. He was known for his booming recitation of *The Master’s Prayer*, so full of conviction, which he often recited at Baba’s request.

And they [the government] make it very difficult to take out any money. They said, "People, Americans, have been going to Pakistan without getting any visa, but we have to get one to go out."

The whole family was staying with Sarosh. And there we were, everybody had their own car, or small car, or Jeep. Because we were going to Meherabad, which is about seven or eight miles outside of Ahmednagar. And we could go stay as long as we wanted to. So that we went the first day before any of it began. Before the 31st.

And, of course, the very first thing, we rode up to Meherabad on the Hill, where Kitty and I had stayed with Baba years before. And really, I like to call this part of the story "paradise relived," or "regained," or whatever you wanted to call it. Because there's so many wonderful memories. That is the feeling that you have, that it's important . . . there is a great importance to where a *Master* is buried. And where they are.

But it's never *just* the place where they're buried. Whether it's Hafiz, in Persia, wherever it is, it's a place where they have sat. For many they call it the *Master's seat*. And, while He was in seclusion for five and a half months, before this Tomb, the outer part of the Tomb, was there, He had this sort of a crypt, and He went down in there and stayed for five and a half months. And worked. Working spiritually, in seclusion.

And, after that time, then He had the Tomb built. And that was *long* before. And even when we were there before, we'd say, well, that's Baba's Tomb. And you thought Baba wasn't in that Tomb. It's a holy place, it's a very important holy spot. And, it was the first time that He had put over it, "Mastery in Servitude." And you also had the different symbols of the four great religions of the world at the corners of it. And that's been there since 1930-something. . . .

KITTY: Thirty-eight.

ELIZABETH: . . . 1938, it was built. A long time before, Baba knew He had to

be in that particular place, and He also said it would be a great place of pilgrimage. People would come from all over. And of course when we were staying there, nobody really was allowed to come. It was a retreat, and the men were down below, and the women were up there, and there were gates, and it was a real retreat.

Well, now, this particular day, before anything had begun, we saw the preparations [for the Amartithi celebration] down below. And there were eighteen hundred that came. But as Kitty reminds me, many more came, but there were eighteen hundred staying there. And they had these great tents; they're not like a circus tent, or anything of that kind, they have white sides, and then there are beautiful colorings on the top. All women are in one, and the men are in the other.

But they're huge! And they had, it was very luxurious, in the sense that they had a mattress . . .

KITTY: A mattress and one sheet.

ELIZABETH: And one sheet.

KITTY: And they were divided into states. 'Cause I went all around, and Andhra State was in one portion, and the Punjab was in another portion, and every state had its own sleeping . . .

ELIZABETH: A particular place, you see. Where they were. And then of course they had to cook, for all these people. These great cauldrons, you know. Cooking for . . . you can't imagine cooking for eighteen hundred people.

KITTY: But they all had chairs to sit down. I was surprised. Usually we've sat on the ground, but this time they had a kind of raised platform, and long, long tables.

ELIZABETH: You mean down below [at Meherabad], . . . yes.

KITTY: There were six thousand there, Eruch told me. But they came locally, either by bullock carts for the day, or buses. But they weren't actually sleeping overnight. But he said we were over six thousand for the anniversary Darshan.

ELIZABETH: Well, now, you tell about the next day.

KITTY: Let's see, now . . .

ELIZABETH: We've all arrived, now.

KITTY: There was the program, wasn't there?

ELIZABETH: Yes, the program . . .

KITTY: We were asked [by the women mandali] to go to Sarosh's for four days. Mehera said they would be going up themselves, all the girls, on the Hill, for the anniversary, for the three or four days, and it wouldn't be convenient for us to come and stay with them over that time [at Meherazad], because they wouldn't be there.

But they did say, try to be with Sarosh on the 28th of January, so that you can come and see us all, after all these years, and be back in Meherazad for a few hours.

So, we went in the afternoon. We had our car, and we spent a couple of hours with Mehera—Mehera, Mani, Meheru, Naja, and Khorshed. And there was one other person there, and that was Arnavaz. She was very often there with Nariman from Bombay, which some of you may remember; she and her husband are very often there. Because Meherazad belongs to Nariman and Arnavaz, but they have given it to Baba, for the use of the other retreat when they're not up in Meherabad.

ELIZABETH: . . . at a time when Baba wouldn't possess anything.

KITTY: In the New Life. And at that time they bought it. So we went there in the afternoon and then we came back. And now the next morning we were told the program would begin at nine o'clock in the morning. So that was on the 31st, wasn't it? But on the 30th, everybody from below had to have arrived in Lower Meherabad, and found their sleeping quarters, and have had their restrictions and the rules, et cetera, et cetera.

So practically everybody had arrived on that Friday afternoon, the eighteen hundred, by car, and by buses. I think one of the trains actually

stopped down the Hill. They do if there's a large crowd coming, and I think the biggest crowd this time came from Andhra. And that was interesting because at the last Darshan we had, they hadn't been able to come, in 1962, because there had been landslides, or strikes and heavy rains, and so they had not been able to come to the 1962 Darshan [East-West Gathering].

But there was a large number. Over a hundred or more came this time from Andhra, and from every state [in India]. So everybody arrived, on Friday the 30th. Then on the 31st, the program began at ten o'clock in the morning. And there were *bhajans* from about fifteen different states. *Bhajans* are like sacred music, and sometimes it's only the instrumental part, and sometimes there's singing attached to it. They came from Nagpur [Maharashtra state], and Jabalpur [Madhya Pradesh state], and Kanpur [Uttar Pradesh state], and Hamirpur [Himachal Pradesh state], and Dehradun [Uttarakhand state] . . . every conceivable state.

And then, after the *bhajans* were over, we arrived about twelve noon, and then, like you did here, there was a silence of fifteen minutes. And no one spoke at all. And at the end of the fifteen minutes, the call was, "Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai."

ELIZABETH: Jai [*correcting pronunciation*].

KITTY: Ki jai, was it.

ELIZABETH: They, I think, call it *jay* [*rhymes with "day"*]*—*we, here, many times we call it *jai* [*rhymes with "eye"*].

KITTY: On the next day I recall that Harry Kenmore asked if he might take the microphone and leapt up onto the platform. And one of the remarks he made was, "I do not think that any of you know how to say 'ki jai.'" He said, "You say it so lethargically, and it doesn't have any meaning." And you know it means "victory." So he said, "You should say, 'KI JAI!'" So he made all the audience repeat it after him.

And then, after the silence, at 12:15, Baba's prayer was read out. And

it was read out in six different languages. It was read out in English, in Hindi, in Marathi, in Telegu, in Tamil, and in Bengali. And people were asked to recite it, but not to be repeated loudly by the pilgrim. You weren't to hear just one loud voice of one. It was to be all in unison. And later on, perhaps on the birthday, we shall be hearing a tape that Eruch made—he had asked if there was anything we wanted, and so he gave us a very interesting talk, which was taken down.

And he mentioned so much about that prayer. He said, Baba—of course Eruch, as you know, was with Baba up till the very end, the last two years—nobody had been with Baba as much as Eruch. Eruch said on all occasions, Baba would be asking for *The Master's Prayer*. And towards the end, He was asking for it every day, and Baba was getting a little stiffer in His legs every day. But He would *always* stand for that prayer. And as each day went by, and Baba would [ask], who was feeling the pain from standing, especially in the last month or two of His life, He'd say "But faster, faster, faster!" And Eruch would go on saying this prayer, and suddenly he burst out laughing!

And so Baba, looking very serious, turned to him and asked what he was laughing about. "Well," Eruch said, "I'm saying it so fast that I can't even hear myself saying it," you see. But Baba took it very seriously, and He said, "It's no joke that I stand here, and over at the women mandali's, while this prayer is being said." And He never, never sat while it was said. He said that this prayer will be said through all times, and He said, "The very fact of My saying it while taking part in it with you now, means that all those coming after Me will be benefited by this prayer."

Just like Jesus left us the Lord's Prayer, I imagine that this *Parvardigar* [*The Master's Prayer*] will be a prayer for all time. And it's always recited in India wherever Baba's center is. And people always remember that Baba Himself, however ill He was up to the last day, when that prayer was said, He always stood for it. He never sat, not even Himself.

ELIZABETH: Baba said He was standing to put life into it. So that it *would* go on forever.

KITTY: So that prayer was read in six different languages. Then, in the afternoon, some more prayers were said. Then there was a portrait of Baba that somebody had painted, and was on the *gadi*, that is, the couch where Baba usually sat. And that was unveiled by Mehera.

And then after that there was another Arti, in Hindi, and the Darshan was after the Arti. Now, all through the three days that we were there, if you remember where Baba's Tomb is, there was a kind of platform that goes round, and there was a stream of people surrounding that, waiting for their turn to go into the Tomb.

And that went on continuously. One night it went on throughout the night. People were free to go up to the Tomb all night. Otherwise there were certain times that everybody could go. And it was so reverently done. Children, all types, and all nationalities. When I was up there, I met some other Westerners there; I saw them also standing to go into the Tomb.

I don't know whether any of you know Thom Fortson? He was there. And also a girl from London, and also [one] from Miami called Missy.

ELIZABETH: Missy?

KITTY: Missy. She was also there. Then [to Lyn Ott] the psychiatrist was there, Lyn. Do you know the psychiatrist?

AUDIENCE: Yes.

KITTY: He turned up on the Sunday. I happened to be walking up on the Hill and suddenly ran into him. I didn't even know he was there. And he was there with a girl from Montreal, from the same college up in Boston where he is. Never knew who you were going to run into at this Darshan.

Then there was another boy who'd been down here when Ann Karrasch was here. Do you remember John . . . ? He suddenly turned up,

and he had only known of Baba for a very, very short time, do you see. And so he was there. So . . .

ELIZABETH: He came down to Myrtle Beach when we left. And then he was only here for two days. Probably, and on his way going back, up to New York by car, he decided to go to India. And in three days' time he went through all the formalities, and went.

KITTY: So you walked around there, or you stood around, and you saw so many from India, and all the time people were coming up who had known Elizabeth and myself throughout the years; we may have forgotten them—in fact we did forget their names rather badly—but they seem to have remembered us.

And so that took up the whole morning, because as soon as Mehera had unveiled the picture, and the Arti had been sung—one of the Artis you know quite well—then the Darshan began fully. Then every single person, and there was eighteen hundred, before they went down to lunch, had paid their respects at Baba's Tomb. And then they went down the Hill.

ELIZABETH: Shall I read this?

KITTY: Yes. Now, the message.

ELIZABETH: Mehera was on . . . she faced everyone, was facing . . . well, whether you call it the "stage," or whatever it was, the dais, and Mehera stood facing the Tomb. And she addressed this to Baba. And that was very touching. Because she said, "Beloved Baba, we're all gathered here in our love for You. May we be worthy of Your very dear love for us. Your compassion is our strength, which sustains us. Your love is our life. It is Yours. May we hold on to Your *daaman* in complete surrender to Your will."

Then she turned to the pilgrims. "Dear Meher pilgrims. Jai Baba! We are all gathered here in love to pay homage to Avatar Meher Baba, our Divine Beloved, Who loves us more than we can ever love ourselves. Let us forever say His jai. Not only say it with our lips but live it in our hearts.

So that our very lives become a living testimony to His victory. Avatar Meher Baba ki Jai!

KITTY: And then everybody was dismissed to go down and have their lunch. We went back, ourselves, to Sarosh's for the afternoon. And then in the evening there was to have been a very important singer that always sang for Baba. Whenever Baba has called for her, she's never refused. Begum Akhtar.* And then, she was ill at the last moment, probably had flu, and she wasn't able to come.

But they always substitute something else, and they had something in her place. And thus ended the first day of the Darshan.

Then we come to the first of February, which was the next day. On that day we had to arrive up on the Hill at nine o'clock. And, on the second day there were three talks. The first one was on the publication of one or two books.

Now, Dr. Deshmukh had asked Mehera if she would—I don't know whether you'd call it—*inaugurate* Dr. Deshmukh's book . . . but anyway, do something, take it up in her hand, while Elizabeth . . .

ELIZABETH: I was to cut the ribbon.

KITTY: Yes, cut the ribbon. And when Mehera heard that Dr. Deshmukh had asked her to do that, and she knew there were two other books coming up, to be also inaugurated on this occasion, she said, "Well, if I do the one, I will do the three."

And it was very funny, Dr. Deshmukh was a little bit taken aback. He

* Begum Akhtar (1914–1974) was a famous singer of *ghazals*. "In the morning that day [January 13, 1963], Begum Akhtar, 49, the celebrated singer from Uttar Pradesh, was brought to Meherazad by Adi and Meherjee, along with Golwalkar, the music director of the Poona All India Radio station. Baba had several of Akhtar's records and she was one of his favorite artists. Previously, in 1937–38, Adi had invited Begum Akhtar to sing before Baba, and expressed his willingness to pay her round trip travelling expenses from Calcutta to Ahmednagar, and make all the arrangements for her journey. But she demanded an exorbitant fee, and at the time, Baba informed Adi: 'Don't call her now; one day she herself will come.' And here she was, coming on her own!" *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4906.

thought he was having a special privilege to have Mehera speak about this one particular book. But that is Mehera all over. Always thinks of everybody. And when she found that there were two more books, she said, "Well, I'll do the same for the three books."

And then Elizabeth had to get up, and she spoke very nicely on a little pamphlet that spoke of Baba.

ELIZABETH: It was a book, you see. The book was, you know, an inch or two inches. And I thought it was very, well, I guess you'd call it a booklet. On the other hand, it had so much in it that had to do with Baba, and his times that he met Baba, that I was very touched. Because I knew him in those early days, and I was able to say something, and he was very pleased.

Now, can I say something about this, or should we . . . ?

KITTY: Yes. Oh, no, no.

ELIZABETH: Mani had written, just before we left, that, "I'll give you a little time to think, because we expect that you and Elizabeth will say something [during the Amartithi celebration] as those from the different centers are saying something." And so Kitty took it *very* seriously, she said, "I'm going to keep a diary, too." And, well, she had all these wonderful things [prepared].

Then it seems that one of the hostesses . . .

KITTY: Just before we got to Bombay [while still on the flight to India.] . . .

ELIZABETH: I think she came from Singapore. And she was interested to learn English. I think that really was her reason, because she saw a seat between Kitty and myself and she asked if she could sit down. And Kitty tried to tell her that we were going to India, to Meher Baba's Darshan, but she'd never heard of Meher Baba and she didn't respond in any way. But what she was really interested in was to talk a little English with us.

Well, then came the time to get off. In the meantime, we had gotten a newspaper, and put it down in between us, and then she sat on the

newspaper. And then it was time to get off. Well, lo and behold, the notebook got left under the newspaper! All Kitty's notes that she'd taken, you see. All that, [left] there!

KITTY: So I started again.

ELIZABETH: I said, "Well, I'm sure it'll be much better." But in the meantime, I said, "I have to say something about the Center." They wanted me to say something about the finding of the Center, you see. And I said, "Well, I just found it in one way, I can't vary it. And I'll just have to say it that way." So I didn't do *anything* about writing anything down.

Well, then what happened was that Mr. Sastri, the honorable Mr. [Kutumba] Sastri, who is the president of the Trust . . . and it is very interesting that he, the Chairman, who is really the head of it, you see, had never been a *close* disciple of Baba's. But he's a very, very fine man, and he is from Andhra, and there are so many from Andhra. And he had asked all the people to give a talk about their centers. Well, he wanted not only talks about the centers, but he wanted to give a talk about the Trust, you see. Sarosh was the master of ceremonies, and he told everybody they can't speak more than . . .

KITTY: Ten . . .

ELIZABETH: . . . ten minutes. So he had his watch, you know, his military watch set there. This man went on, and on. Of course, we couldn't understand what he said, but he went on, and Sarosh gave him a little tug, and there was no response at all. And finally, he went on another ten minutes, and he tugged him again, and he kept going. And he kind of turned, as if to a child, you know. "What is it that you want?"

Well, he talked a full half hour. And after that, you see, I was supposed to come right after and tell about the finding of the Center.

KITTY: One thing, can I say one thing?

ELIZABETH: Yes, of course you can.

KITTY: One speech before Mr. Sastri's had been Adi K. Irani's. You see,

I told you there would be eighteen hundred people there. And if you had read the little account I have about it, about lodging and everything, they were charged for their food, a very minor amount of money, but they weren't charged, actually, for the lodging. Now, according to Adi, it was Mr. Sastri's idea that they just pay for their food.

Well, you see, when you come to put up structures for eighteen hundred people, it came to a lot of money. Something like forty thousand rupees. So then Adi said, "Well, now, where is the money coming from?" Because they've all paid for the food, and then Adi said, "We can't really take it out of the Trust. Who is going to pay the deficit of forty thousand rupees?" They were simply *huge* tents, you have no idea. And so then Adi got up, you see, to talk about it. And then Mr. Sastri went also to talk about it in his language, both in English and in the other language. . . .

ELIZABETH: In Telegu, you see, which nobody around there understands. Nobody . . .

KITTY: So, you see . . .

ELIZABETH: . . . in that part of the country understands Telegu.

KITTY: Elizabeth was down to talk "G," A-B-C-D-E-F-G, at a certain spot there, you see. And just when she began, Sastri and Adi had finished talking about the Trust and the lodging expenses, so just as Elizabeth was going to get to the microphone, up come the people with their rupee notes paying their rupees! And at the same time, something went wrong with the microphone too, you see. It was a gurgling sound, and somebody said, "Well, this is no good."

Well, anyhow, you go on now; the microphone is in front of Elizabeth, do you see, here.

ELIZABETH: And I, you know, say something about Baba, that really the Center had begun in India, when Baba told Norina and me to go there [the United States]. Finally Mani came and said, "They can't hear anything you

say.” And it seemed that there’s a squeak that had developed in the microphone, and all they could hear was this squeak.

And then I knew that I’d have to say something in such a short time, because they’d just had such a long speaker. And I said, “Ooh, that’s fine, I think it’s just better for that, not to speak. But Kitty’s going to speak later.” You see, I got out.

I gave a talk for Dr. Deshmukh that I hadn’t expected to, and so between the long thing and the squeak, I squeaked out of it. Then, your turn came later.

KITTY: I said, but I . . .

ELIZABETH: Yeah, I said, “Leave me out!” And I said, “Kitty, just read them very fast,” say it fast, you see.

KITTY: So I got up, and I got through about two paragraphs—mine was only about eleven minutes—but I only got through about three paragraphs, then I [laughs] hear Elizabeth saying, “Kitty, that’s enough. They can’t understand Americanized English any more than they could Telegu.” So then I stopped and sat down.

Four other people came and talked. And the one next to us was a charming man. He was the president of the Andhra center. A charming man. He was in his seventies, I think—but he spoke very well. But he got lost in his pages. So when he had done about half, there was Adi and Sarosh [telling him to end].

ELIZABETH: It was interesting, you see.

KITTY: It was very, very interesting what he had said, what he had read. So when all the speeches were ended, and then we were just getting off the platform, then Mr. Nalavala [Naosherwan Anzar] from *The Glow* asked if he might have what I was going to give. So I said, “Well, I don’t know, I’ll think about it.” Then a few steps on. Then came another person who said, “Can we have what you were going to say?” So I said, “Well, we’ll think

about it.” And so we didn’t say anything more. But as a matter of fact it will come into *The Glow*.*

ELIZABETH: As a matter of fact, Kitty took part of what I was going to say. (*Laughs.*) Because it was supposed to follow that, you see, so she took part of what I was going to say, and added to it. So anyway, editing has some uses.

KITTY: Oh yes. So then the speeches went on, and the Pakistan people, Mrs. and Mr. Minoo Kharas, whom many of you will remember from the Last Darshan, and Mrs. Rhoda Dubash, who were our wonderful hosts, they spoke very, very well. They were both in our hotels. Both families.

ELIZABETH: You mean . . .

KITTY: . . . Sarosh, yes. And they told of the difficulty they had to come. And then followed the Repentance Prayer, again in the six different languages, and then all went down the Hill for lunch. Now that was on the first of February. And then, on that same evening, they had films. And they showed all the films from the Center.

ELIZABETH: Some of them *we* hadn’t seen.

KITTY: Yes. One was a lovely one, ’56, which I think . . .

ELIZABETH: Ivy Duce had them strung together.

KITTY: Yes. And it was *very* beautiful, and I will try and get it for the Center. And the other two.

So, the interesting part was, although the people hadn’t heard Elizabeth’s talk about the Center, what I think Elizabeth would agree was really just as beautiful, was that they saw the lovely Center. They were all enthralled with the films that they saw of the Center. And now, you see, the women were on one side of the film and the men on the other. Here was the—let’s see—sheet. And, you were looking on it from this side, and then the men were looking at it from the other side. But it was on the same screen. Never thought of doing that.

* “Meher Baba at Cannes,” *The Glow International*, August 1970, pp. 3–19.

ELIZABETH: Yes. You know, when you have your crowd of people, one can see it on one side and one on the other side.

KITTY: There would be too many to have it on the same side, you see. And so then, that was the end of the second day. And then on the third day they came up just for some more Arti, and some more Darshan, and then at noon they had to go down and everybody had to be gone by noontime.

Now, what happened on the Sunday. Everything went very nicely for the eighteen hundred, but the lunch program we just said was so long, with all these talks, that the eighteen hundred got down late for lunch, down below the Hill. And that very much upset the man who was in charge of the food. And more and more people turned up than was expected.

So, when the evening came and they all went down for their supper, lo and behold, the cook had rather disappeared. And there was nothing there for them to eat at all! So I don't know how they managed.

But otherwise the arrangements went very well. Well, now, that ends the Darshan program. Was there anything more that . . .

ELIZABETH: Well, of course, we saw so many that we had known over the years, and . . .

KITTY: Well, then we went on to the . . . to me it was the most beautiful part, perhaps, and that was to go back to Meherazad and to be there ten to twelve days . . .

ELIZABETH: Twelve days.

KITTY: Twelve days in Meherazad.

ELIZABETH: I call them the "twelve days of Christmas," because they were so beautiful.

KITTY: It really was *the* most beautiful experience. Really like being with the Holy Family. That was all that you could think of. There were these mandali there trying to live the same kind of life that they had been living with Baba,

and there was only one difference, as they said, that every turn where they'd seen Baba, there was not Baba to be seen.

But each of them was carrying on the work that Baba had given them to do. And it appears that on December the 22nd [1968], that was really the last occasion on which Baba had really come out of His room to see the public at all. There was a very important wedding that took place in Meherazad [between Baba's nephew Dara Irani and Amrit Kumar], and Baba had sat on the porch, and the wedding had taken place. And Baba had performed the ceremony in His own way.

And He had said, so Mehera was telling me, to the crowd, "You won't see Me like this in Poona." Poona was already scheduled, you see, for April. "You won't see Me like this when you see Me in Poona."

Still, nobody was the slightest bit affected; they thought He meant that He would probably be feeling much better, and that He wouldn't be the invalid that He was . . .

ELIZABETH: Or that He'd be so surrounded by people they wouldn't see Him. So we never got all the hints that Baba gave; nobody ever understood them.
KITTY: Nobody.

ELIZABETH: Baba didn't *want* them to, I guess.

KITTY: Yes. And there they were, just like the Center is today, Meherazad was open *all* day. I said to Mani, "Are you ever going to write a letter? Are you ever going to write a book or anything?" She said, "Kitty, how can we?" She says, "From early morn to late, pilgrims arrive to see the room that Baba had been in, to hear about Baba. And this goes on afternoon and evening, and we never say no." I said, "Well, could you have fixed times?" They said, "No, because people come from such far distances, to hear about Baba."

And now that's the work that Mehera is doing. If it's the women that come, Mani stays away, and the others do, and they leave Mehera to talk. And I soon found after I'd been there one day one reason why I was there.

I did mean to write letters, and I'd taken pen and pencil. But on two occasions when I'd taken out a letter and a pencil, Meheru came along and said, "Kitty, are you doing anything?"

"Oh," I said, "Meheru, I'm just with my pen." Well, she said, "Mehera's on the porch, would you come up and talk to her?" And that was my cue. And never afterwards did I ever spend one moment but what I had free to be with Mehera. I went for walks with her, we walked right up . . . she hadn't been up Baba's Hill since 1965.

And Rhoda [Mistry] and I went for a little walk as we used to before supper, about half past five we started, and where did we end? At the very tip of the Hill. And she hadn't been up there before.

And in the mornings, too, after papers, Mehera went for the same walk that she used to go with Baba, along the main road there. And then she'd tell me different tales. And she had one sad thought; she says, "Kitty, all these years why didn't we take down the things that Baba talked about, and told us all the time? And now we never had a pencil, we never had a paper."

So I said, "Well, Mehera, it wasn't your fault," because when I was there, and I'd learned shorthand specially to be able to do that, after 1938 Baba said, "No more pencils, and no more notebooks. You just sit, and you're with Me. But I cannot have you thinking of what you're writing down." So I tried to make her feel that whatever Baba had said was somewhere it couldn't be lost, you see.

Every morning and every evening they would have, you might call it, darshan. Before breakfast we went to the room where Baba had passed. In the mornings it would have been Baba's prayer that was said in which we all joined, and in the evening it would be *The Prayer of Repentance*. And then we would sing one or two of the *bhajans*, and the Arti, yes.

ELIZABETH: The ones we used to sing when we were there, at five o'clock in the morning, when Baba was awake.

KITTY: And every evening she'd put in one more phrase, which was "Please God, may we love Thee more and more, and still more and more, and still more and more, until we become One with You, to the very end." And that was the prayer . . .

ELIZABETH: *The Master's Prayer*, if I may interrupt, was said in the morning. And *The Prayer of Repentance* in the evening.

KITTY: . . . in the evening. And . . .

ELIZABETH: And always standing.

KITTY: Yes, always standing.

ELIZABETH: And in the Eastern way, they put their hands like this [*with palms together*]. I mean they don't fold them the way we do [*with fingers interlaced*].

KITTY: And there was a *tremendous* love you could feel there. That's why I can only think of the words "the Holy Family." And it was very interesting, the day before we left, as I said, we used to walk along that path. When we got to the end of the path, we saw two men get off a bike. So Mehera said to Arnavaaz, "Oh, go forward and see what they want."

So it appeared that they were two Sikhs. And they had been in Ahmednagar for six months, in the big army camp. Ahmednagar has one of the biggest camps in India. That's why the Pakistanis can't get to Ahmednagar very easily, because Pakistan knows that it's a military fortification there.

And so they asked these two men what they were doing there. So they said, "Well, we've been seven months in Ahmednagar. We've been in the army here. And we were just looking for a few holy places. And we are just on our way now to Happy Valley"—which is a very, very beautiful spot, connected with Sita and Rama.*

* A wooded spot four miles north of Pimpalgaon-Malvi. According to tradition, Rama and Sita spent a few days of their years in exile here, and Rama shot an arrow into the ground here, creating a spring so that Sita could bathe. Meher Baba visited Happy Valley many times.

And so, Arnavaz said, "Oh, well, you are quite near a holy place. Have you ever heard of Meher Baba?" So they said, "Yes." So she said, "Well, do you know Sarosh?" So the Sikh said, "Yes, I've heard of Sarosh's name from the camp." So she said, "Well, perhaps you'd like to come along and talk to Eruch and then you could hear a little more about Baba." So they said, "But what are you all doing here?" We were four or five women. He said, "I don't see any house, where can you be living?" So then Arnavaz said, "Oh, well, right down that road, it's somewhere down there."

"Oh," he said, "I see, you're the holy women, are you?" But he said it very respectfully, you see. And so then he said, "I *will* come, but we're going off to Happy Valley now for the day, and we'll come next Sunday." Do you see? So those are the type of people that may be coming in and out.

Then there was another interesting lady that came while we were there, from Mombasa [Kenya]. She'd been teaching at a school there for twenty-five years. And she was leaving Mombasa because, she said, they don't want Indians there anymore. They're turning them out and they either have to go to England . . . on their [U.K.] passport, or they are to return to India.*

But she was telling us what happened on the day, and at the hour, that Baba passed. She knew about Baba, as she's a cousin of a Baba-lover. But she said she didn't know that Baba had actually dropped His body till two days after it had happened.

But she said "At the moment of twelve noon, when I figured the time Baba dropped His body," she says "the whole of Mombasa went absolutely pitch black." She said, "It wasn't like an eclipse at all." She said, "You could not see anything whatsoever." She said, "People would ask, and they came and said, 'Well, is this what your master has said was going to happen, that there are going to be earthquakes, et cetera?'"

* The Kenyan Indians were given a deadline to embrace Kenyan citizenship and renounce their British passports. Those who did not do so were not expelled, but because they were discriminated against, many of them chose to leave Kenya in the late 1960s.

ELIZABETH: Thunder and no rain.

KITTY: Rain? I don't know. And then two days afterwards she said she heard that Baba had passed at that particular time. . . . Life is very simple, as you know, in Meherazad. There're no iceboxes, they make their own bread, wash their own clothes.

ELIZABETH: There's no electricity.

KITTY: No electricity.

ELIZABETH: But it's coming up.

KITTY: And so in the evenings, we would play tapes, and they were very interested in the tape that went from here, which was of the program that you had here, that Jane sent and got in time. And then they played a record that Baba had liked very much, by Jim Reeves.* I don't know if any of you know Jim Reeves, do you, by name? He was....

ELIZABETH: I'll tell you, that he is the man who . . .

KITTY: Yes.

ELIZABETH: . . . died, quite early, and then he had a revival. I think you've heard of him.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Was he a Baba-lover?

KITTY: No . . .

ELIZABETH: Baba liked his records, and He played, there's . . . what is it, following . . . "There's a heartache," one of the ones that Baba liked, that he sang. "A Heartache Following Me." And the other is "Take My Hand, Precious Lord."

KITTY: Baba loved those.

ELIZABETH: And of course we all know that was one of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s [favorites], and was sung all over. But this was before Baba had chosen that, quite some time before.

* "Gentleman Jim" Reeves (1923–1964) was an American country singer and songwriter. He had many fans in India and Sri Lanka from the 1960s on.



Mehera beside the umar tree with the Beloved's image.

KITTY: And then we went over to the men's quarters, which was just across the wall, and we had long talks with Eruch. And we had brought back one tape that Eruch made, which we will play on Baba's birthday on the 25th. And we saw Bhau. Baba has asked Bhau to write a full account of His life. And he's gathering information.*

But the one thing I felt about everything, coming there . . . well, I didn't mention the tree. Now, perhaps that made the greatest impression of anything. You see, I think you all know about this tree. Very soon after July the 10th [1969], Mehera looked out of her window from her bedroom, and

* The result was the multivolume *Lord Meher*, initially published 1986–2001. Now online in the most recent edition (2014) at <http://www.lordmeher.org>.

there, distinctly on the tree, was Baba's—in wood, carved out of the [bark] of the tree, was Baba's picture. A picture we're all familiar with.

ELIZABETH: It stood out.

KITTY: Absolutely perfect. And it had never been there before. And I think Baba couldn't have given Mehera anything that could have convinced her of His living presence more than that tree. She can see it from the dining room, you can see it right through the house. It changes color every moment of the day. Sometimes it's a palish pink, according to how the shadows fall on it.*

And the interesting part was that Mehera said, "Some little time ago, Baba was in the garden showing some people round." She wasn't in the garden, because there were men there.† But she said, "Baba was there, so I was just peeping from the corner," and she said, "I saw Baba put out His hand on that tree," you see. "And He was talking to the people there, and He said, 'I like that tree.'" And His hand was stamped on that tree.

And apparently there are three of those [umar fig] trees in that garden. And it's a Hindu religious tree, which in the Hindu religion has great significance. It's in connection with Shiva. And therefore for Hindus it's a sacred tree. And when the Hindus in the Pimpalgaon area heard about that tree, they came two or three times a week, to pay homage at that tree. Because Baba's picture being on what was already a religious tree had great significance to them, and was sufficient to tell them that Baba must be who He was.

Well, anyway, it is *the* most beautiful picture. And I do hope perhaps one day Rano may paint the carving in the tree. Because the tree itself is so beautiful.

ELIZABETH: In relief, you see.

* "The likeness remained clearly visible for about nine years, at which point new growth of bark obscured the clarity of the image. However, sometimes even today, especially in the light of dusk, one can still glimpse Baba's features in the bark from inside Mehera's room." Avatar Meher Baba Trust website, <http://ambppct.org/umar.php>, accessed August 30, 2013.

† By Baba's order at that time, Mehera was not to see or be seen by adult males other than Baba.

KITTY: So, so beautiful. And Mani gave me some pictures, and some of you have seen them. But she said that Sheila [Krynski] was perfectly free to make copies of the tree now for anybody who would like it.

ELIZABETH: The color is so beautiful, it's not black and white, you see. The actual color is sort of beige and pink, and *beautiful* colors. Margaret [Craske] had told us about it. So I took a camera with me, but I had never used it before. And I left the reels with Fred Winterfeldt in New York, 'cause he could get it done, maybe, more quickly. And he's having one of each made. And I certainly hope that one or two of those come out.

But Mani actually took the photograph. She took it at certain times of day, different times of day, because it changed so. It's something that could make Mehera feel that Baba's presence was there, because that's what they've got to feel. They say, "Forty years have we been with Baba. For forty years, every moment of the day has Baba either been coming backwards and forwards, or telling us to do this, or telling us to do that. And then suddenly, it's like being without an anchor."

Therefore, they've only got Baba's presence to hold on to. And they've got to feel that. And Mehera, sometimes the tears would come to her eyes. She'd say, "Yes, I know Baba's presence is here, I can feel it, and yet," she says, "there is this gap. A kind of a void." She says, "I look around, and I expect to see Baba's smile." Whatever work she does, in the house, she feels that.

KITTY: But the . . .

ELIZABETH: And just, there, in that connection—I haven't told this to anyone, that I felt at certain times, "Well, now, let's wake up early and meditate." But you know, I couldn't meditate, 'cause I felt Baba was there! I mean, you can't long for something that is there. Baba's presence was so *acute*, and so real, that you just feel meditation is sort of, for something far off, you see, something you do from Myrtle Beach to India. But when you're there, it's all around you.

KITTY: Mehera kept on saying, "But Baba says, 'Just love Me more and more. And hold on to My *daaman* till the very end.'" And those are the two things that Mehera will tell you all the time. All we can do is to love Baba and obey Him more and more. And hold on, as He said, till the very end.

And Eruch said one of the last things that Baba had said: "Watch and see what happens." Watch and see what happens. Almost the last thing that He said.

And when he was asked if He had any message or anything, He said, "But I have given you everything in the way of life." Where is the way of life? Is it in this room? No, it isn't here. But we all know it, don't we, Baba's way of life: to love for the sake of love, to be detached from everything. Do you have the beautiful poster?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Which one?

KITTY: The poster that Rick Chapman did?

SHEILA KRYNSKI: The New Life.

KITTY: Yes, the New Life. I think you all know it, don't you? And therefore, one thought I came back with from there was that Baba has said this is a place of pilgrimage, and that's what you feel Meherazad is, and what you feel Meherabad is. It will be, Baba says, the greatest place of pilgrimage that has ever been on earth.

And I thought, Baba also talks about the Meher Spiritual Center as being *the* Center in the West. He said, "That is My universal center in the West." And talking to Meherjee [Karkaria] and Adi on the phone yesterday in New York, they said, "We're just waiting to come home, to Baba's Center. That is our home."

And a letter came in the post from Bob Brown, who said, "This is my home, and this is my family." And we've been away even so long from the girls [women mandali], you just feel there's no separation. Just to feel, all of us, we all feel as one family.

And what I feel very strongly, and I was saying to Elizabeth, is that we have got to keep the Center for what it really was and for what Baba has always wanted it. Each one of us, whether we're living in the Center, or whether we're living outside the Center, we must remember primarily it is a place of pilgrimage. And when you enter into the Center you've got to feel that you have come to Baba's place of pilgrimage. And that is the attitude that we've got to feel here.

That doesn't mean we've got to be glum, don't misunderstand me. But there is a difference between going to stay in a motel, or going to a camp, or saying to yourself, when you went to the gates, after U.S. 17, "Well, now we're coming into Baba's place of pilgrimage." And I think we've *all* got to remember that. And I feel it much more now that Baba has dropped His body.

Because now you're coming to the Center—what for: to feel His presence, because it's very strong in the Center. Elizabeth and I may not be able to feel it, perhaps, so much, because we are always here. But people who have come write daily and tell me that. And I'm sure some of you have felt it the same.

So I think that that is the thought. One thought I got also, when I was in the Tomb, and it always came back, was "To be happy, and to love Me more and more." I never got any other thought. It was always, "Be happy, and love Me more and more."

NOTES FROM MY EXPERIENCE DURING THIRTY YEARS WITH BABA IN THE WEST AND IN INDIA

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
MAY 17, 1970

A Religion of Life! A Religion of Love! A Way of Life!

Meher Baba says, “Because man has been deaf to the principles and precepts laid down by God in the past, in this present Avataric form I observe Silence. You have asked for and been given enough words—it is now time to live them. . . . I have come not to teach but to awaken,” to increase man’s awareness of his Real Self—which is nothing but God. Now, man is unconscious of this, but this is the goal, union consciously with God. Baba said: “I know from experience I am one with God—you know it in words but not through experience. This is My mission among you: Separateness is ignorance, Oneness is Truth. To dispel this ignorance have I come. I am the Ancient One.”

Meher Baba’s purpose in calling a few of us to India in the early 1930s was to share in the life of the ashram and to see His work: not to introduce us to any Eastern religion, whether Zoroastrian, Hindu, or Mohammedan. His method of bringing about a “happy blending of the head

and heart”^{*} was in providing experienced understanding between the so-called mystical East and the practical West. Each, said Baba, had their part to play and their share to contribute in God’s Divine Plan for His Universe.

We Westerners soon realized that cults, creeds, dogmas, religious ceremonies, lectures, et cetera, were not important in the spiritual search for Truth. They had little place of value in what Baba had come to actually awaken in man. The practical and the spiritual, says Baba, must work together hand in hand. Baba stresses the value of living in the Now, that all incidents and experiences which we undergo and endure are the real instruments by which Truth is revealed. But ideas of success and failure have no value and bind one deeper into ignorance, which grows in one’s mind through the play of opposites such as these.

Meher Baba did emphasize happiness, cheerfulness, no moods. “Be happy, don’t worry, I will help you” were words Baba frequently spelled out on His alphabet board or conveyed through signs, and He emphasized to continue loving and obeying Him to the very end: to love God more and more and more.

The yoga of the path that Meher Baba chose for His followers to tread is that of bhakti yoga, the path of selfless love and selfless service. Perhaps the least-used words of Baba were “occult” and “psychic.” Experiences along these lines, said Baba, had nothing to do with the spiritual path. One should neither fear them nor encourage them, but especially He would say to do nothing to encourage them, for they are more often a hindrance rather than a help to the goal, the increasing awareness of Truth in life.[†]

* “The Religion I shall give teaches the knowledge of the One behind the many. The Book that I shall make people read is the Book of the Heart which holds the key to the mystery of life. As for ritual, I shall teach humanity to discriminate, express and live rather than utter it. I shall bring about a happy blending of the head and heart.” Message to Reporters and Press Representatives Given on board the S. S. *Bremen* in New York on May 19, 1932.

† See “The Place of Occultism in Spiritual Life,” parts 1–3, in *Discourses* (6th ed., 1967), vol. 2, pp. 84-110.

Any of the five yogas [*hatha, bhakti, jnana, raja, karma*], if followed for Truth and not for power, will eventually bring you to the goal, but the path of love and service is the quickest way: Love for the sake of Love only, and spontaneous action—and if head and heart are striving for supremacy, it is safer to follow the heart.

Examples of true spirituality that Baba would refer to were His own life as Jesus, Mohammed, Krishna, or Buddha; and the lives of such great saints as St. Francis of Assisi, St. Teresa of Ávila, Meister Eckhart, or Jakob Boehme. He would have us Westerners read from the lives of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda of India, our contemporaries, and also from the Bhagavad Gita, which Baba said contains all spiritual truth in the teaching of detachment, expressed in the words of the seeker refusing the world: “Not this, not that.”* Needs but not wants, said Baba, was the road to happiness—a state of desirelessness.

The above-mentioned were all practical followers of his or her particular religion, and each was an example of selfless love and service. Each has been an inspiration to many in every generation to live only for God in the world.

Baba usually chose our work in the ashram, chose what He knew we were interested in, and each contributed their own particular talent for the benefit of all, Easterners contributing theirs and Westerners theirs. Baba also, as the greatest psychiatrist, knew the circumstance which would bring up one’s individual weaknesses and shortcomings. To become aware of these for ourselves was Baba’s way. With Baba it was not so much a matter of good opposed to bad, sin, or guilt, but rather weakness opposed to strength, and

* The Sanskrit expression *Neti, neti*, found in the Upanishads, expresses the truth that the Absolute Reality cannot be described or explained—it is “not this, not that.” The application of the principle of *Neti, neti*, says Baba, “implies constant effort to maintain watchful detachment in relation to the alluring opposites of limited experience.” “The Removal of Samsaras: I,” in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 1, p. 74.

ignorance to knowledge. He knew with His help and our love for Him we could do our best to overcome our weaknesses and ignorance as the frequent cause of our mistakes.

In the earlier period Baba did not want us to concern ourselves overmuch with the spiritual path but rather with the need to love and obey Him. Baba said: Forget the path, love Me, obey Me, and leave your progress to Me. And He would add: Love and faith are gifts of Grace. You cannot force them, but desire them with all your heart and they will be yours. You can obey Me, and obedience is greater than love. Your love for Me draws My grace to you.

Baba has from the very beginning, like Jesus, asked us to love Him, not because He was our compassionate friend, but because He was the God-Man, the human manifestation of God, as was Jesus, as was Buddha. Our obedience to and work with Him were a voluntary response to His love for us. It was our love for Him.

This is important in Baba's way of eliminating the small, selfish "I" of the ego or lower self in man, firstly through Love for God, and then secondly through work for God. Baba explained that the motive behind all our work must be that it is God's work. God alone is the doer. Baba gave us, as a help to change an ego-centered life into an egoless life, an idea He called the "provisional ego," and to say before starting any work: "It is God or Baba doing the work or getting the work done through me."*

The provisional ego, if practiced, eliminates any thoughts of pride or

* "Before beginning anything, the aspirant thinks that it is not *he* who is doing it, but the *Master* who is getting it done through him. After doing it he does not tarry to claim the results of action or enjoy them, but becomes free of them by offering them to the Master. By training his mind in this spirit he succeeds in creating a new ego which, though provisional and working, is amply able to become a source of that confidence, feeling, enthusiasm and "go" which true action must express. This new ego is spiritually harmless, since it derives its life and being from the Master who represents Infinity, and since, when the time comes, it can be thrown away like a garment." "The Dynamics of Spiritual Advancement" in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 2, pp. 179–80.

worry over the results of your labor, since results—good, poor, or bad—are God's concern. These two steps, when one has the grace of conviction in the Existence of God (and Meher Baba gave to everyone who merely came into His contact this deep conviction), should become the basis of one's life. Love Baba and remember Him as the doer of all works—that is the secret of living everyday life in the Eternal Now.

Baba once said on the subject of yogas: The only yoga I know, and it contains all other yogas, is that “you go.” As simple as that, you go: “You are your own curtain, and only when you go can you come. But the problem is, how will you go? The only solution is Love. When ‘you go’ through love for God, the Beloved, ‘you come’ as you really are.”*

To follow Baba as He wished is to love Baba, and gradually there is a growth of awareness and a growth from the ignorance of separateness to the knowledge of the One Truth that only God is and we are all One in Him. Not as the mouthing of so many fine empty words, but as the living spirit experienced daily in the life in the world. And thus the Goal remains as the mystical search of union with God.

* See note 1, p. 271.

CHAPTER 6

TO LIVE WITH THE ONE WHO IS LOVE ITSELF

EASTER SUNDAY

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC

APRIL 11, 1971

Baba says: “Love Me, each as you understand love”^{*} and “I am what each one of you thinks I am.”[†] I especially wanted to say those two things to the numbers of new ones and young ones who are here because I’m often asked that question. So I’ll say once again, Baba says, “Each of you love Me as you understand love.” And, “I am what each one of you thinks I am.” Quite independently of what anybody else thinks.

In a talk Meher Baba gave to the Sufi Order in New York City on July 20, 1952, He said: “If you take Baba to be perfect and One with God, Baba is then the Ocean, and the different paths—Sufism, Vedantism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Christianity—are as rivers to the Ocean. But now the time has arrived and a period has arrived when these rivers have more or less become dry . . . and so the Ocean itself has to go out and flood these rivers. It is now time for Me to reorient these different ‘isms,’ which end in One God.”[‡]

^{*} “Love Me in the way you understand love.” Meher Baba, quoted in Purdom, *The God-Man*, p. 330.

[†] “I am whatever you take me to be.” Quoted by Mani S. Irani in *Letters from the Mandali of Avatar Meher Baba*, ed. Jim Mistry (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Press, 1983), vol. 2, p. 76.

[‡] Talk given at Murshida Duce’s apartment. Ivy O. Duce, *How a Master Works* (Walnut Creek, CA: Sufism Reoriented, 1975), p. 125.

Baba called for ten of us from England and America to be with Him in India in 1933. And to let you know how thoughtful and loving Baba is, before we started, we had many letters, signed by Baba, telling us what we were to do on the boat. This one is from Nasik, February 26, 1933. I must explain that there were two groups, known as Kimco [after Kim Tolhurst] and Jeanco [after Jean Adriel]. Now, Jeanco was the American group and Kimco was known as the English group. This happens to be the English group, so it begins, “Dearest Kimco”:

I hope your preparations for coming to India are getting on alright. Baba, too, is very busy planning and arranging for your Indian tour, and there are two things that He is worrying about: seasickness—for He knows that some of you are rather bad sailors—and the heat. It will be terribly hot at the time you come, for then it will be the full summer season. . . . April and May are the hottest tropical months, but you needn’t worry a bit about that. We’ll do all we can to keep you cool. And Baba says that on board try to be on deck as much as possible in the shade, and don’t sunbathe after Port Said to Bombay—the sun will be fierce and sunbathing will be distressing. So don’t attempt it. And we have fixed up a very interesting and as cool as possible itinerary for you people, and you’ve no idea how happy and excited we all are to have you come over here. As I wrote to Quentin Tod, it’s the realization of my fondest dream to see you with Baba in India. Baba has ordered me to write this to you.

Signed “Adi Jr.” and “All my love,” signed by Baba, at the end.

It was an experience often repeated that those who passed through never forgot. Baba’s great mission to each one of us has been to show us how

to love, and our great privilege has been to live with the One who is Love itself. And, when we failed to learn through His example, then Baba used the drastic measure of rebuke and humiliation to guide us to the Truth. And calling us one day to Him in Nasik and telling us to be seated, He would take His board and begin:

It is time we started dying . . . the “death” of low desires. It is all bliss everywhere, but all are miserable because of ignorance which forces one to fulfill desires. . . . Try loving and loving more and more, and then you will want less of that which is beyond your needs. . . . All you have suffered, today is nil! It was all illusion. Long for union. Try with all your heart. . . . You cannot love each other. All right, but try at least to give in to each other. But even this you do not do. Why? Because you are not honest. That is why I love the mad at the Rahuri ashram. They are honest in their insanity. You come from far away to love me and to realize me, but here you have turned into fighting cocks and hens! I think I will have to leave you all and go to Nepal, or send you all to the Himalayas. . . . If I find disharmony and find you not prepared to “die,” then it is better that you all pack up and go. You have not come here for name and fame. . . . I do not need anybody. I am always alone and always will be until eternity. It is you who need me until you become me. But if you do not try, what is the use? . . . There must be harmony, love and peace. Real harmony, love and peace—not forced.*

And thus, by Baba’s personal guidance, did He lead us along the path He had chosen for us.

* April 13, 1937. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1817–18.

CHAPTER 7

LET YOUR LIFE ITSELF BE HIS MESSAGE OF LOVE AND TRUTH

CHAPEL HILL, NC

APRIL 1971

Part One: Messages of Meher Baba

Dear friends, I am here at your invitation. Thank you all. But am I the one who should be on this platform? Meher Baba said to some, “Go spread My message of love and truth.” To others, “Now is the time to tell all that God walks this earth in human form.” To others, “Tell all through any means available what I have said about the dangers of drugs, physically, mentally, and spiritually.” Whilst to others, “Let your life itself be My message of love and truth.”

I belong perhaps in this last category, having spent over twenty years in India with Meher Baba. There was very little contact with the outside world during that period, and the next phase, still in progress, is being spent at the Meher Spiritual Center in Myrtle Beach, where Baba left me in 1952 to help Elizabeth Patterson and Norina Matchabelli with the work involved. Here I find ample opportunity, with its minor problems, activities, and varied individual contacts, to recall Baba’s oft-repeated words, “Let your life itself be My message of love and truth.”*

* “Let your own life of love for Baba be the message of Baba’s love for one and all.” *Listen, Humanity*, ed. D. E. Stevens (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1957), p. 74.

Off the Center, I have spoken only two or three times. So if I've come under this third category, the theme today will center around what does it mean to live Meher Baba's message of love and truth? Is it in any way different from following other Prophets, Masters, or Avatars? Meher Baba, when asked the question in 1933, "Do we need another living Master if we follow Christ?" replied, "If you follow the teaching of Christ one hundred percent, then no." My mother in 1931, when Baba asked her if there was anything she needed, replied, "How can I understand and love You more?" Baba answered, "When you pray, have My picture there before you." She said, "I have always the picture of Christ." "Keep looking at Christ's picture, it is the same," Baba replied.*

I recall a later statement of Baba's: "There is no difference in the realization of Truth, either by a Muslim, a Hindu, a Zoroastrian, or a Christian. The difference is only in words and terms. Truth is not the monopoly of a particular race or religion."† Some of you may have read the book entitled *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, who was born a Hindu. And how he tells that for a period of two years he lived as a Christian, and then as a Mohammedan, and found it to be the same, in that he realized Truth equally in each of them.

For us, however, there is a difference in that the call we are following is not the one of two thousand years or four thousand years ago, but the call of one who lived in our time. One whom many have seen, have spoken with, and felt His human touch. And most of all, God's infinite love. There are thousands living today who can bear witness, in the East and West, to His spiritual influence in their lives, and in the lives of their families. Do not waste the opportunity that living contemporaneously with the Avataric advent means to one's personal lifetime. How great indeed has been our destiny. How great indeed our responsibility to pass on the message given

* Kitty Davy, *Love Alone Prevails* (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Foundation, 2001 [1981]), p. 25.

† "A Calendar of Baba Meditations," *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 3, no. 4 (Spring-Summer 1956), p. 16.

us by the one who said: "My work is now one hundred percent complete. You who love Me carry on, and spread My message of love and truth."

Now is the time. I believe it to be as true until the close of this century as when Meher Baba said it: "I am the One. Love Me above everything, for now while I am in your midst I am most easily found as I truly am." Baba has said that the spiritual impact of the Master continues until His next return to the world. And Baba says it will be again in the next seven hundred years.

Mrs. Patterson, in her article "Follow Love" from the *Meher Baba Journal*, writes: "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."*

Those searching in this present Avataric period have heard the call of Meher Baba: "I am the Ancient One. I was Rama, I was Krishna, I was this one, I was that one, and now I am Meher Baba."[†] It is the Master who kindles that real enthusiasm which is indispensable to the disciple's progress, and to the flaming heart of the seeker. The Master, whose very life is the example of Truth to mankind, gives a greater impulse toward Truth in the lover than any austerity or intellectual effort applied to divine themes. Not in entire forgetfulness, and not in utter nakedness, but in trailing clouds of glory do we come from God who is our home. This being so, it is understandable that

* Elizabeth C. Patterson, "Follow Love," *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 4 (February 1939), pp. 16–17.

† *The Everything and The Nothing*, p. 77.

at some time along the way we will feel within a stirring of this divine consciousness with an unconscious loving to return from whence we came.

Quoting Baba's words: "You have within your Self—the *Paramatman*—the planes, the planets and the entire universe, but you do not know it. They are within you; but you do not see them there because you see only without and not the real Self within."* Like a drop of the Divine Ocean, each comes unconsciously through evolution, reincarnation, and involution to attain full consciousness of himself as the Divine Ocean. In Meher Baba's "Universal Message" (1958), He says, "Because man has been deaf to the principles and precepts laid down by God in the past, in this present Avataric form I observe silence. You have asked for and been given enough words. It is now time to live them." And the message continues: "When I break My silence" (and I will add Baba's words from another source, "When the Word of My Love breaks out of its silence"),† "the impact of My love will be universal, and all life in creation will know, feel and receive of it." In other sayings, Baba has asserted, "My existence is for this love and this truth."‡ And, "Divine love will make men selfless and helpful in their mutual relations"§ and bring about a growing concern in the lives of others less fortunate than themselves—a realization of Oneness in place of separateness.

Baba goes on to say in His Universal Message: "I am the Divine Beloved who loves you more than you can ever love yourself. I will help you to help yourself in knowing your real Self." "I had to come, I have come. I am the Ancient One." "Divine love will perform that supreme miracle of awakening

* *Treasures from the Meher Baba Journals: 1938–1942*, ed. Jane Barry Haynes (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Press, 1980), p. 244.

† Words given at Guruprasad in 1965. *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1966), p. 28; Mani S. Irani, 82 *Family Letters*, letter no. 64, dated June 15, 1965, p. 226.

‡ "The Travail of the New World Order," in *Discourses* (6th ed., vol. 3, pp. 18-21). The preceding sentence was "The new brotherhood on earth shall be a fulfilled fact, and nations will be united in the fraternity of love and truth"; so "this love and this truth" refers to the new brotherhood that will result from the impact of His love.

§ Ibid.

God in the hearts of men, and getting them established in lasting and true happiness.”* “I am the one so many seek and so few find. No amount of intellect can fathom Me. And no amount of austerity can attain Me. Only when one loves Me and loves himself in Me, can I be found. My existence is for this love.”†

Baba calls it God’s divine game, the greatest of all detective stories. For after man has tried many paths, taking him at times through many isms and cults and ceremonies, he finds, as the Perfect Master Kabir says, by opening the windows of his own soul, that which he is seeking lies within himself. Pointing to himself, Baba would say, “I, as myself, am free. But in you, as you, I get myself bound. . . . This is My crucifixion.‡ It is My divine game. My work is to free Myself in you.”

In 1937 in Nasik, India, the press came to Baba and asked why His followers did not speak His message on the housetops, as, say, Gandhiji’s followers were doing. And Baba spelled out on His board, His disciple translating: “This is not the time. I have come to bring a revolution of the mind, a revolution in man’s thinking, and this is the slowest of all revolutions. Whilst I am here I will do My work. When I am no longer here, my work will be done by others.”§

Baba’s revolution surely is evident in our world today—the outpouring of energy and enthusiasm that heralds a change of consciousness, of consciousness expanding outward to awareness of the needs of others. He is so virile in the youth, the New Humanity, as Meher Baba calls you all. It is not anymore a few

* Ibid.

† *Listen, Humanity*, p. 236.

‡ *The Everything and The Nothing*, p. 51. See also note 13, p. 272.

§ In an interview with the *Evening News of India*, Baba was asked, “Why don’t you break your self-imposed silence and preach in the marketplace?” Baba replied, “Every great change must be carefully timed. How else could it be with the greatest revolution in the mind of man?” The interview was given on Christmas 1936 and published on January 7, 1937. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1759. See also Kitty’s “Reminiscences” in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Special Nasik Issue 1964), p. 1.

persons taking up the torch for real service. We see hundreds called to give voluntary service among the less fortunate—the poor, the mentally and physically disabled, the emotionally disturbed, and those suffering from other psychological needs. In this change of consciousness, every department of life, every skill can be used in service, when the individual, in heart and mind, has been turned outward by divine love to give service.

Just recall previous eras, how the lack of compassion and service saw most great change in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when only rare souls carried help to those in suffering. And it remained so almost to this present hour, when I can now see, particularly in America, the almost universal desire for service, which springs up in the hearts of the young today. Baba foretold that America would be the place where His message would flourish, because of its enormous energy, even though misapplied.* America has the soil in which His message has spread most quickly. And Baba tells us further, that real happiness is seeking the happiness of others at the cost of one's own. Truth is oneness; separation is ignorance. Don't think the person you are serving is under obligation to you. You are obligated to them, for they give you the opportunity to serve. What is love? To serve others. "True happiness begins when man learns the art of right adjustment to other persons, and right adjustment involves self-forgetfulness and love."[†]

"Do not waste your precious life-span in differentiating and judging your fellow men, but learn to long for the love of God."[‡] Baba says, "I am the Divine Beloved who loves you more than you can ever love yourself."[§]

* Baba told Rom Landau, "The spiritual revival that you ask about is not very far off and I am going to bring it about in the near future, utilizing the tremendous amount of misapplied energy possessed by America for this purpose." *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1404.

† "The Conditions of Happiness" in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, pp. 160-174.

‡ From "Meher Baba's Call," a message given on the occasion of a mass darshan program at Ahmednagar on September 12, 1954 (printed as a pamphlet by W. C. Healy Press, Seattle, in 1954). *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3554.

§ From "The Universal Message" (1958).

Part Two: Experiences with Meher Baba

We have heard a few of the outstanding aspects of Meher Baba's message of love and truth. Now to share some of the experiences as He led us along this same path during the period when we were in personal touch with Him, both in India and the West.

Try and be right in the picture as I relate so simply this daily contact with Baba in the family atmosphere He allowed us to share. Baba told us from the beginning, "It is not practical to have spiritual ideals without putting them into practice. To realize the ideal in daily life, to give beautiful adequate form to the living spirit, this is being practical in the truest sense of the word." And Baba continued, "I will teach you how to move in the world, and yet be at all times in communion with Me, as the Infinite Being."^{*}

To share with you these experiences, I must tell you briefly how I came to Baba. My first meeting with Meher Baba was on the platform of Victoria Station, London, on His first visit to the West, in September 1931. He stayed at my parents' in Kensington, London, before proceeding to the retreat at East Challacombe, North Devon, prepared for Him by one of His early disciples, Meredith Starr. Thereafter, at short intervals over a period of five years, Baba called me and others to follow Him to Italy, Spain, France, Switzerland, and finally to India.

But was September 1931 my first contact with Meher Baba? I think not. Six months before Baba arrived, I got ill and had to rest from teaching. For no apparent reason, my brother [Herbert Davy] gave me Romain Rolland's book on Vivekananda and his master, Ramakrishna, to read.[†] This

^{*} *Treasures from the Meher Baba Journals*, p. 17.

[†] Romain Rolland published two books, *The Life of Ramakrishna* (1929) and *The Life of Vivekananda* (1930), translated from the French. It's unclear which book Herbert gave Kitty. In her book *Love Alone Prevails*, she says that the book Herbert gave her was about "Vivekananda and his Master," so most likely the book was Rolland's *Life of Vivekananda*.

was my first introduction to Eastern philosophy, and to a living master and his disciples. And one sentence has remained vividly in my consciousness: “We love most when we are least conscious of loving.”

Equally significant was my brother reading a few days later in a magazine called *Light* of a spiritual retreat outside London, run by Meredith Starr. We both went down at different times, heard about Baba, saw His photo. My brother was immediately drawn. With me, the indelible impression came only after I saw Baba three months later. And thereafter my life became dominated by Baba, and everything else took second place.

I recall on that first evening as Baba, standing by the doorway, turned to Margaret and me and spelled out on His board: “Are you happy?”

“Yes, Baba,” we replied.

“Are you worrying?”

“I don’t think so.”

Baba spelled out on His board: “Be happy, don’t worry, I will help you.”

In this last hour, Baba brought us toward the spiritual path with a positive thought and an invitation. Next morning, Baba was giving us light services to do, seemingly unimportant. But in these services we found an inexpressible joy and happiness.

This spontaneous desire to serve Baba must have been our unconscious response to Baba’s love, which was so soon to awaken in us a kindred love for Him. But apart from these small active services, Baba seemed to have a deeper spiritual experience He wanted to share with the group, before leaving so shortly for America, to strengthen their love for Him.

Baba would call the group together and ask for music. Indian qawwali music is 100 percent spiritual. We in turn found some Negro spirituals sung by Paul Robeson. These have their own appeal to the heart and to the emotions, and as we sat and listened with Baba in our midst, we experienced a deep warmth of love. My experience can be most truly expressed in the

words of Pir Fazl Shah, an adept pilgrim, who on seeing Baba said, “No one until you came has touched my heart with the arrow of pure love.”*

Within a few days of Baba’s first visit, we learned of how Baba so often makes use of the opportunity, so close at hand, to manifest, through the sympathetic and gracious manners of human personality, His divine love. If children are around, Baba at once finds a point of contact, such as a kite, a bag of colored marbles, a game, a football. Also I remember how Baba, during His stay with us, sent one day for my mother and asked her if there was anything He could do for her. She replied shyly, “We have a home for aged folk over eighty. I would like You to visit them. But You have no time now. It is lunchtime.”

Baba sent for Chanji, His secretary-disciple, told him to order a taxi, and Baba, mother, and Chanji set off for the home. Baba said later how happy He was at the home. With my father, it was talk on cricket, Ping-Pong. We did not know then how much Baba loved to watch good cricket. Meredith had so stressed Baba’s spiritual state, we felt in those early days a sense of awe, and would have hesitated to suggest such an innocent recreation. But Baba had said that Perfection, in order to achieve the greatest results on the material plane, must have the human touch and a keen sense of humor. And this human touch enables Baba to fathom deep into the mind and heart, to discover our likes, dislikes, and hobbies. And if He wants to draw us to Himself spiritually, He utilizes one or other of these actions, as being the line of least resistance for our ultimate good.

Delia DeLeon, one of the early disciples, of her first impact writes: “During the week I went about like one in a dream. I was stunned with the wonder of Baba, and nothing else existed for me. I saw Him every day, and from then on I had absolute and implicit faith and trust in Him. I asked no

* *The Wayfarers*, pp. 281–82.

questions, I wanted nothing from Him. I gave my life into His keeping, and knew my search was ended.”

And Margaret Craske writes: “Those four days were the most beautiful and radiant of all my time with Baba. It was as if a curtain had been drawn aside, and then we were privileged to know and to feel in our hearts who Baba is. Nothing broke this feeling during the two and a half years since that time. I have not experienced anything quite like it. We have passed through trials and tests which have deepened our love and faith in Baba. And there is more to go through yet. But nothing has perhaps given the exquisite beauty of those four days. On the other hand, it was like the unthinking happiness of the child. We, His disciples, are growing up a little under the treatment He has given us since, and these first unclouded moments are a wonderful memory . . . but not a state to be returned to. We have to go on to whatever He wishes, to whatever trials.”

And Elizabeth records, also in 1932: “The moment of contact with Baba is a blending of past, present, and future, continuous as life itself. Although the spiritual master comes for all humanity, He reveals Himself to the individual.”

In these very early years with Baba, one thing was very noticeable. Not the spiritual talks, and not the do’s and the do-nots, but Baba’s apparent joy and happiness in keeping us happy and in good mood. He seemed to want us to feel that love was something cheerful and bright, not heavy and dark. A time to be gay, yes, and also a time to be serious. Both are aspects of the same divine spirit.

I recall a particular day in March. We were all in Lugano, Italy, and Baba took us by boat across the Lake of Lugano to Mount Generoso. At the top of the mountain was a small hotel which we made our headquarters. And there was a Ping-Pong table, and Baba started a game. Soon Baba put down the bat and ordered us all to the main room. He took down a man’s felt hat from the hat stand and held it sideways, the brim touching the table.

Using the hat as an illustration, Baba began explaining how we must look within, pointing to the inside of the crown, to find our soul, God. Here we stood at the opening, pointing to the brim, but were facing outwards, towards the world-space. Before Baba had time to finish, one of the group burst out laughing. Baba returned the hat to the stand, and we all left to walk in the open. No rebuke, but we could sense Baba was displeased, and Dr. Ghani, one of Baba's earliest disciples, came up and, looking very crestfallen, said, "Try and prevent this happening. Baba is rarely in the mood for spiritual talks, and His mood is spoiled. And if His mood is spoiled, we miss the lesson."

Later, when Baba left us and returned to India, He would write and tell us to write to Him every two weeks. And if we forgot, a cable would come: "Are you all right? Why no letter?" And our letters never went unanswered. To quote a few passages from those letters: "I know you better than you know yourself. And I will teach you in My own way all the things concerning your real Self. Seek and strive to know Me, your Beloved, and bit by bit you will know your real Self, for am I not your real Self?"

And in another letter I received about this time, He wrote us: "Realize Me and you will know God. No other purpose is worthwhile after you have seen Me, the Beloved. Everything centers around Him, and your only attachment is to your Beloved. All service then becomes selfless, whether done for friend, family, or stranger—all are one. And towards this One, the motive, too, is one—to please Him, whom to please is to know. There is no other knowing." And Baba would end His letter with, "Be happy, don't worry."

Few things, Baba was to tell us later, were more harmful and more detrimental to one's progress on the spiritual path than worry. While dissipating so much energy, even psychic energy, it made it also more difficult for the one helping you. Be happy—nothing did Baba dislike more, than to see us moody, despondent, and miserable.

When all letter-writing stopped between Baba and His followers, as it did a few years later, we were ready to acknowledge that Baba is with us always, and is indeed always within each one of us. “The heart of each one of My lovers is My Center. Call on Me—I will always hear you, and will help you.”

As I said before, our response to Baba’s love and His desire to please was that we, too, wanted to please Baba and see Him happy. I note especially that same joy, love, spontaneity in the various Baba groups today. To read, as I have during the last weeks, of the various birthday programs filled with music, guitar, songs, plays, films, slides, birthday cake, and yes, a few Indian dishes, tells me that nothing has really changed with those who are now awakening to Baba’s love. And your love so spontaneous, so overflowing towards each, so happy to please Baba.

Certainly part of Meher Baba’s training is to develop a peace within, though in the midst of active, pulsating life. Seclusion we had at times, but Baba would emphasize it was for the work, not for personal satisfaction. Solitude was rare. Our life with Baba was not a cloistered existence with inward contemplation. Baba leads us along the path in service to others, each contributing what he or she is capable of in art, writing, or by readily participating in Baba’s external work amongst humanity, while others give personal service at close range to parents and others in their own families.

I think of a quote from St. Teresa of Ávila, very apt for my work in the early ashram days: “If obedience employs you in outward things, know that even if you are in the kitchen, our Lord moves midst the pots and pans, helping us both within and without.” Whatsoever the duty, the first step in the field of service is to think of others more than oneself. And the last step is to truly love others more than oneself.

Baba has emphasized to us that to work for Him, we must be steady and

firm as a rock in our faith and love for Him. "I can then use you as a channel for My work, the work of divine love for the upliftment of humanity."*

The first test of our faith in Baba occurred soon after we arrived in answer to His first call to India, in 1933. "Be prepared," He said, "to stay one year with Me, travel through India, then on to China and Hollywood, where I will break My silence." Can you imagine our excitement? Well, briefly, what happened? Ten days after our arrival in India, each was called by Baba. We were in famous Agra. And Baba said that it might be necessary for us to return to Europe or home. We would go and obey all His instructions.

I never saw Baba quite so unhappy as when He said this. All, of course, said they would obey, so we returned, after a short visit to Kashmir with Baba, to our homes and our jobs, with a certain sadness, but with an increased love.

When the press boarded our steamship at Marseilles and questioned us as to why we were returning after so brief a visit, were we disillusioned, et cetera, we were prepared by a cable received from Baba, telling us to say He was sending us back for His work, and to prepare for His next visit to the West. Baba did return six months later. This was 1933.

Three years later there came another call from Baba inviting us to stay in His new ashram in Nasik, being specially prepared for His Western groups. And this time, for five years! He wanted us to share in His work.

Baba must have known that we might hesitate after our last test, and Baba has always emphasized that He never calls people for their pleasure, but for His work, either on the individual [level] or collectively. So we find Baba paying a visit to England a few months earlier than our scheduled visit to India, to explain the reasons for calling us to India for the second time.

* Baba wrote to Delia (October 2, 1938): "Be steady and firm as a rock in your faith and love for me. I can then use you as a channel for my work—the work of divine love for the upliftment of humanity." *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1953.

Briefly, after hearing conditions—complete obedience, and no going out of the ashram without permission, etc., and to stay for five years—we all agreed happily, and enthusiastically, and Baba returned to India to make final preparations for our coming.

This was the spring of 1936, and shortly after Baba returned to India, Maya steps in and warns us of the prospect that we might be sent back earlier again, and what will happen to our jobs, and what to say to our parents and friends, *etc.* And the possibility of a postponement. And I, on behalf of the English group, wrote to Baba in not too good a mood, explaining how we all felt at the possibility of being sent home again. I received in reply the following letter, signed by Baba, from Rahuri, dated November 26, 1936. I present it here only because I want you to know that we who came to Baba so long ago had so many weaknesses (as Baba calls them, rather than faults), so little understanding; even after Baba had worked so patiently and given us so much, still so much remained to be learned. How far we were from being Baba's mandali, whom Baba has said are close disciples who follow the instructions of the Master implicitly.

To me, Baba wrote about one year later, after a short visit He had made to England earlier in the year, in connection with our going to India a second time, to the Nasik ashram, 1936. This is the letter:

Darling Saroja,*

When I received your cable at Port Said that Kimco were not amused, I felt disappointed that with all their love for me, Kimco still wouldn't understand—in spite of the explanations

* In Venice in 1932, Baba had given special Eastern names to the "Kimco gopis" (the *gopis* were the cowherding village girls who loved Lord Krishna, as told in the Puranas). Kitty's Eastern name was Saroja ("Lotus"); see *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1465. (Another nickname Baba gave Kitty, in 1937 was "the Love"; see *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1810.)

of some important things so clearly given. . . when I think of the suffering I had to undergo to undertake this trip [to England]—only for them. Otherwise, had I wished it, I could have drawn you all to come to me *without* all the trouble and suffering, but there was reason that had much to do with you all—Kimco—for whom did I undertake this trip. And I was so happy you all eventually agreed to come, but the peculiar attitude of Kimco—always so typical of them, of taking all things, however serious, so lightly, even I want them to take it seriously and understand—at times causes me much pain, as in this case where things like the personal and private affairs of my own family and how I managed to have things done as I willed. That these things which I tried to explain under a special message through Kitty should be so misunderstood by those of my near ones like Kimco, who are so dear to me, makes me sad indeed, especially when Jeanco [the American group] take it so admirably with unconditional surrender.

And now I read your last letter in which you write something of your feeling depressed and worried over the words of a psychic who is a genius and so on. It breaks one's heart to hear such childish talks after so much contact, explanation and all that I gave you to feed on these five years, and I should like you all to consider once again before you leave London, to come here only if you are prepared to obey and not to worry over things that are meaningless—of my sending you away again in a short time as I did before, and so on. Let me assure you, once for all, that I want to keep you all with me to stay for the entire period of five years, if you could all stay, but if you could not all manage to stay for the entire period, I would

permit those who cannot manage, to go back after two years, and come again if possible. I have already told you that. . . .

Your heart is so wonderful, always feeling so deeply and truly and responsive to the call and understanding, but that peculiar mind of yours at times wobbles and tries to shake your faith, and your love revives it all again and afresh. One moment you feel quite prepared to do and stand anything, the next moment you hesitate with if's and but's and feel depressed and worried, unnecessarily. But I will see that this eternal struggle between the head and the heart, for you as well as for all others who suffer from the same weakness, ends eventually in the victory of the heart over the head, and brings about a blending of the two. In fact, I am working at it, suffering myself almost all the while of being misunderstood every moment and in every act of compassion in raising the consciousness and understanding of humanity to a higher level, even by my own who have known me and have been in my close contact! Just a little individual effort to understand and do as I say, and it would save so much trouble and pains for me and for all.

My love to all and self,

[Signed] M. S. Irani

We did go to Nasik, leaving in December, arriving just before Christmas Day, which we and the American groups spent with Baba in the newly planned ashram. However, it was for six months, not five years, and our training was strict, and we changed much. The Nasik ashram, called the "luxury ashram," which Baba provided for us Western disciples, was, as He said, situated amidst beautiful surroundings with plenty of scenery all around.

Baba wrote to us: "With the Western group in Nasik, the Eastern group

at Meherabad, and myself in Rahuri [the mad ashram], midway between Meherabad and Nasik, these will comprise the nucleus of my activities for the next five years." The special feature of Nasik, He said, "lies in its having my personal living guidance, the same as Jesus gave His disciples." Baba's intense period of activity occurred among the three mentioned ashrams, referred to by Him as "the three"—the modern (Nasik), the simple (Meherabad), and the primitive (Rahuri).

As the group was comprised of strongly individual personalities, the various clashes, complaints about food (though it was excellent, so many wanted special diets), et cetera, et cetera, and the different egos arose among us, who were from many countries. As Charles Purdom writes in *The God-Man*: "Baba permitted these discords to develop. He would then confront those involved with the situation, make them face the issue, and without compromise or easing over the troubles, bring them together in love. He insisted on harmony, though he provoked differences. It was an experience, often repeated, that those who passed through never forgot. He gave them many talks on life as a game: it is like playing chess, he said."^{*}

He also gave us the discourse on "What is love? To give and not to receive."[†] And the following, "What Is Spirituality?"[‡]

What is spirituality? It is the undoing of what you have been doing since ages. You always thought of selfish motives for eating, preserving your life, and attending to every need with

* *The God-Man*, p. 134.

† "Dissertation on Love," in *The Path of Love*, ed. Filis Frederick (North Myrtle Beach, SC : Sheriar Foundation, 2000 [1976]), pp. 98–100. The discourse was given May 28, 1936, in Nasik (*Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1843–44). In these sources the opening words are given as: "What is love? To give and never to ask."

‡ Baba's complete talk, given in Karwar on the southwestern coast of India, April 6, 1940, appears in *Love Alone Prevails*, pp. 285–86 (with slightly different wording), and also in *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 2095–96.

zeal. All these lives you have made a habit of looking to yourself. If the slightest thing goes against your habit, you are upset. Now, to undo all these selfish bindings, you have to do what you have not been doing, or not to do what you have been doing.

What you have been doing always is thinking of yourself, so now you must not think of yourself, but think of others. This is what is called “love.” But it needs character, poise, perseverance. Poise—what is poise? That state of mind where nothing excites you, nothing upsets you. Then only can you help others. Then only can you make others happy. That means love, thinking not of yourself but of others.

If you are in the Sahara, and for four days you have no water to drink, and all of a sudden one bottle of water appears—how do you react? If you have poise, you will let your companion drink, and not mind dying and letting her live. But if you fight and grab for it, you lack poise and spirituality. It is this poise that makes you sacrifice and makes others happy.

For example, I always say, “Make the best of everything.” Here [in Nasik] you have food, swimming, boating. Make the most of them and feel happy. Do not say it is not spiritual to enjoy innocent pleasures. But when we are driving on tour, and there is dust and we feel hunger, thirst, and feel sick, then feel as happy as you do now. This is poise. If you do not feel happy now, it is not easy to feel happy while traveling. Do not feel you are not spiritual in enjoying swimming, boating, *et cetera*. Is this clear? I do not mean making a show of being happy, but to really feel happy.

Perhaps the most memorable of the discourses given us at Nasik by Baba is “The Dynamics of Spiritual Advancement,” about the need to construct a “provisional ego” as a means to the elimination of the false ego. In short, to uncover the real Self, God, the Truth in all—not “me, my, mine,” but Thou and Thine—begin any task, be it music, art, cooking, writing, or digging, with the thought “It is Baba doing this through me.” Then you do not worry over the results of your actions. You become detached from results, success, or failure. Eventually this leads to nonaction in action.

Finally, this provisional ego that has been developed becomes spiritually harmless, so that you go and God remains. The only yoga, Baba once said, is “You go.”*

Baba has said that few things exhaust energy so much as worry. The ego-mind gets caught up with the past and its frustrated desires. Or it gets caught up in relation to the future. Worry is the unbridled imagination working under the scourge of desires.[†] It thrives upon sufferings that are its own creation. Hence worry is a serious dissipation of psychic energy, for when the mood is gloomy, depressed, and disturbed, our actions are binding. The cure for worry and depression is detachment. On the practice of separating oneself from the illusion of time and living in the present, listen to the Gita: “Thy business is with the action only, never with its fruits. So let not the fruit of action be thy motive, nor be thou to action attached. Perform action dwelling in union with the Divine, renouncing attachment, and be balanced evenly in success and failure.”[‡]

And here is an ancient story, told by Baba, which illustrates happiness.

* See note 1, p. 271.

† See “Qualifications of the Aspirant: II” in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 121: “Worry is the product of feverish imagination working under the stimulus of desires. It is a living through of sufferings which are mostly our own creation. Worry has never done anyone any good, and it is very much worse than mere dissipation of psychic energy, for it substantially curtails the joy and fullness of life.”

‡ Bhagavad Gita 2: 47–48. Translation by Annie Besant.

"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 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.'"

When I visited Rahuri, the mad ashram, Baba never gave any explanation why His intensive work with the God-mad and the *masts* started about the same time that He called the Westerners to India, to His newly planned retreat in Nasik. He was working, as I said, on very full schedule, at three centers simultaneously: Meherabad, Upper and Lower, the training quarters for his close women and the men mandali; Rahuri, for the mad men who were spiritually advanced; and with us in Nasik, visiting each group in turn, and even more frequently than we expected.

Pleader and Baidul, two great early disciples, were in charge of the Rahuri ashram. But as it has been throughout, Baba's way is to supervise every detail, big or small, even when He had left one or another of His 100-percent-devoted disciples in complete charge. All heads and others worked under Baba. Baba's day was from 4:00 a.m. to midnight, and Baba served the mad, washed their latrines, and each day sat with some of their group. Note this last. Are we not often ready to do all of the practical? But not so

* *Treasures from the Meher Baba Journals*, p. 7. Originally told by Elizabeth Patterson in "Follow Love," *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 4 (February 1939), pp. 18-19.

ready to give often of our time just to be with each other, forgetting that this particular aspect is just what Baba's workers need to embody most.

Elizabeth wrote a very beautiful account on her return from the Rahuri ashram, which she and Norina were asked by Baba to visit. An excerpt states: "From among a number of the mad men brought to Baba, Baba had selected a few whom He terms 'God-mad.' These are advanced souls whose spiritual yearnings and practices had left them out of the normal state. Baba pointed out to us, as we looked around, that this one was on 'the path,' and this one had a slight breeze of spirituality blowing through him. Another was quite mad but harmless. And the young fellow who started to beat on a tin can, as on a tom-tom, was really good, but 'goofy.' Baba told us that He loved them all very much, and indeed when we saw Him embrace the ragged world-ridiculed men, the beautiful scene of St. Francis embracing the leper came to our minds with all its touching realism. We witnessed the dull-eyed, dark piece of humanity called Goofy turn his face up to the Master's, and an unforgettable expression came to life and glowed in his eyes, like the primordial divine stirring in a piece of mud. His wits were completely absent. Only the clay of humanity was there. Yet we could indeed envy this creature, who could so directly use his intuition that he perceived Baba in His radiant state. Goofy's blurred eyes caught the vision as a mirror reflects the sun. . . . Another man smiled whenever Baba drew near, and when Baba moved away, tears would inevitably come to his eyes. . . . To see Baba playful and gay with those men, who recognize only Him, and to all other people and things in life were lethargic, was to watch a revealing sight. Baba was indeed Master with all types of souls."*

We Westerners were to share in a practical way in Baba's work with these spiritually advanced and dazed souls. Baba was in intensive inner work,

* *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 8, no. 4 (Fourth Quarter 1962), pp. 30–31.

in His own way working on us, too, as a part of our training, as He would express it, as preparation for the work that lay ahead. None of us at this period [1938–1940] thought this work would eventually return us to the West. But there are the surprises when you follow a Master. “You will be always with Me,” has more than one interpretation in Baba’s language. “I will teach you to be in the world, but not of it.”

The Rahuri ashram was dissolved in April 1937. And the principal inmate, Mohammed—some of you may have had the pleasure of seeing him at the 1969 Darshan visit—was moved to Lower Meherabad. And later when we were in Cannes with Baba, he was to be brought over by sea from India to France. Chanji wrote at the time, of this God-mad man, that whenever Baba moved at this period, Mohammed was the favored one, always near Baba for His work. So important was Mohammed’s arrival in Cannes that Baba told us all that if he did not come, He would return to India and send us all back, instead of remaining the year in Cannes as arranged. Mohammed could neither read nor write, behave rationally nor talk coherently. Yet in spite of great difficulties with government agencies, not taking a passport, passage, et cetera, for the mad one to be brought from India to Baba in France, it was accomplished. Mohammed arrived in Cannes. Such is the magnitude only of the 100 percent faith and love of Baidul and Adi K. Irani, who could accomplish the impossible.

Baba took care of his bathing and fetching his food from the kitchen Himself, and feeding him daily. A special room was built on the garage for him and Baidul, who was in charge. He also built an Indian-style bathroom for him. Thus Baba spent many hours daily in his special work with Mohammed, even canceling important interviews with Western visitors in order to give this time to the spiritually dazed *mast*.

After Nasik and six months in Cannes, a most interesting period, written up in the *Glow* magazine, Meher Baba took some of us to live in

His ashram on Meherabad Hill. Shortly after our arrival in July 1938, Baba gave a short discourse on seeking happiness, including this excerpt:

Everything that people do is done to obtain happiness. So what matters is happiness. Everybody seeks to be happy. And when we gain God, permanent happiness is gained. Happiness based on self-forgetfulness alone leads to permanent happiness, to God. When one loses the self in making others happy, one obtains real happiness—God. All other forms of happiness are fleeting and changeable. This real happiness must be strong to enable one to support all the suffering that comes to one, that Baba has to bear.*

I have an idea that we in the ashram there on Meherabad Hill were keeping somewhat of the very strict restrictions and austere life that Baba imposed in His simple ashram. Baba so often combines some rather serious aspects of the path that we were neglecting, with some happy event, either preceding or after the talk. On that very same morning [July 24, 1938], at 5:00 a.m.—think of the hour—Baba took us all to the Ahmednagar cinema to see the animated film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* (1937). And after we returned, the conversation turned to the subject of animals, and Baba said it would be a good idea if one of the group would conduct an animal hospital. Many humorous remarks followed, in which all joined with jokes. And then Baba said, “When you all will be working in the hospital for the poor, then I will see how strong you are. Smells, blood, awful wounds, fainting, agonies of the dying.”

And then Baba continued, “While you have all been talking and listening, I was doing my universal work, and yet I was with you.”

* For a slightly different version of this quote, see *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1929.

I will tell you now some of the events in which we witnessed Meher Baba's perfect love, His wisdom and understanding, in what is often referred to as the Blue Bus Tours. In a bus built for sixteen passengers, thirty women disciples traveled over India, the men usually traveling separately by train. For the most special trip to Ajmer, a bungalow was arranged for in advance.

Two of us, Rano and I, were assigned the following tasks: I was to prepare food for any number of strange souls who might come to Baba at any hour of the night and day. Rano was to prepare hot water over charcoal burners in large quantity, and be ready to carry it herself in bucketfuls to Baba when He was ready to bathe the *masts*.

Baba then sent the men disciples out to fish for souls. It is only with infinite patience and shrewdness that these strange souls are persuaded to leave their nooks and crannies. Let me describe the kind of life we were leading as transients ourselves, before I get into the description of Baba's beloved God-mad whom we encountered.

We have arrived at our destination after a full day in the car. And we find that the lentils that we'd cooked before we started have gone sour in the heat. "Never mind," says Baba, "we will have tea, milk, and bread." "Sorry," says the personnel at the *dharamshala*, or hostel for pilgrims, where we stopped, "there is no milk unless one drives seven miles to the village, and it's too late now."

Baba turns to me and says, "Any other food with us?" "Oh yes, Baba, a little cheese and lettuce." And our party numbered over twenty! Baba takes the little cheese and lettuce Himself to the drivers of the bus, Elizabeth and Eruch, and the rest have bread and tea minus milk. And Rano, hot and tired from packing and unpacking the inside of the bus, always her duty, says to me, "I have worked just as hard as the drivers and been up since three in the morning. Am I not to have any cheese?"

Baba could have prevented the outburst, since He knows our thoughts. But no, He comes up and asks what we are talking about. And I believe he ordered Rano to have more than the others, and she said later that it was worse having more than when she had little.

It is just these everyday happenings, so small, concerned with what we think of as petty, that Baba uses to detach us from the petty. He allows the crisis to come up. He once spelled out on the alphabet board for Mani to read, very seriously: "If you cannot love each other through love for Me, and after living with Me, then at least control by practical means. Every moment you feel you are getting excited or angry, remember and control. Pinch yourself. Go outside. Dance, skip. Remember Me, and you will at once turn all into laughter. Just give up wanting."

There are so many incidents that will emerge as stories, as time goes by, by Baba's handling of these crises. And it will be seen that He was changing the pattern in man's thinking. That is a change in such depth that all mankind will benefit in gaining freedom from the oppression of one's own desires, by becoming aware of the other fellow's side of it.

Here is an incident in connection with Julian Lamar, who painted the lovely portrait of Baba now in Baba's house at Meher Center in Myrtle Beach, which he painted from life on Baba's first visit to New York. The night before, he had parked his car in front of the Plaza Hotel. In the morning he found his baggage had been stolen from the locked compartment. He was very upset and kept talking to Baba about it, delaying our start. Finally Baba asked him if that was all he had in the world. He had to admit it wasn't, but continued to belabor the unknown thief. Baba wrote on His alphabet board: "I am in you. I am also in the thief."

Baba changes our thinking on many aspects. There was another man I recall, in India in 1954. He was bemoaning that his pajamas had come back from the wash and there had been cash in the pockets, but now, none. He

sat in front of Baba, gloomy, indrawn, pondering over his loss. And Baba, after bringing out what ailed him, said, "Who needed the money more, you or he?"

These things show how Baba, in spite of His work with the *masts*, takes all the so-called petty aspects of life and puts life and zest and humor into them. The following notes I took down by shorthand when we were on the trip. And they are exactly as Baba gave them to us.

He called all the women together, before He went out on the *mast* tour, and He said, "Now, today's conference is important. Listen carefully, seriously, and obey willingly. I have very particular and peculiar work to do in this town. Here I don't find circumstances fit for that work." (We were in Delhi at that moment.) "But Ajmer will definitely suit. But the following points will help me in that work. The mandali must be free for that work, so Elizabeth and Mansari will have to see to spoiling the shoes."

I must mention here that whenever the shoes went off to the bazaar, when they came back, each of us would go with complaints to Baba and say they hadn't been mended well. Hence Baba talks about "spoiling the shoes," when they come back from the menders.

"And Mansari, who can speak the language, though very slowly, will manage all this. I will be out most of the time, not with you. Eat, wash, come, and go. And I want you all to be a bit ascetic in Ajmer. Being ascetic will help spiritually and also financially. So in Ajmer we will get a house or bungalow, one that has lights and taps. Maybe very good or ordinary, but the asceticism will come in food. Kitty, with the two servants, will cook for us all. Every day lunch, dal, curry and rice, and at night one vegetable for all. Salads will be bought but not side dishes. In the morning, tea, bread, and butter, and at noon, only tea. All to be done by Kitty with the help of Lakshi and Bhambi [servants], and Katie and Naja. Mehera will cook My food, with the help of Khorshed. Everyone will carry their own buckets of water for bath

or water for washing teeth. No servants, you can help each other. Rano helps Norina. Norina helps Elizabeth carry pails. No servants for this work. Shoes [for mending] to be given to Elizabeth and post to Elizabeth. Everyone washes their own plates, buckets, etc., and own face. Rano can help Nonny in washing her pail, but not her face. Elizabeth helps Norina if she has a cold and is dying. No servants. Only two servants help Kitty with sweeping and bathrooms. In Ajmer we stay thirteen days. The first three days we see all the sights. And then for ten days stay quiet, and I will be free for that work, or for *masts*, and if Norina is not dead till then, I have special work for her, which I intended in Delhi and Karachi for ten days.

“We leave on the 7th from here. We celebrate [Baba’s] birthday on the 18th, with no ceremony, only Arti, and no presents. The mandali buy from the bazaar items like oil and vegetables, but every morning, only once daily. Kitty gives the chit for the bazaar, very economical, so these two days eat well in the hotel. We don’t pay extra, so eat quite a lot—like a camel that drinks for seven days and then not at all.

“For ten days in Ajmer I’m going to be Lord, servant, devotee, Master, everything in one. Most peculiar, but very particular work: worshiper, worshiped, and everything. It’s very important, especially seven days before the birthday, from the 11th to the 18th. The last two birthdays I bowed down to the poor. But this birthday will be quite different. I will bow to and be bowed to by different beings, so I must be free from [concern with details about] butter and bread and shoes. I know your difficulties. On the tour you can’t go out and you don’t know the people and the language, and the mandali, too, are not free to do that; but dear Elizabeth and our very dear Mansari will do their best to get done all to everybody’s dissatisfaction! Then Elizabeth will come from town with a broken back in a broken tonga, and Norina will say, ‘This shoe is not mended well.’ And Elizabeth weeps. And Mansari. It will be real asceticism.

“We go tonight to see the lights of New Delhi and Old Delhi. And the day after tomorrow we go to Nizamuddin’s tomb, and on the 7th we go to Ajmer. Who does not like all this? In Ajmer, Irene [Billo] will wash the clothes and Valu the dishes. You will all adore the lake at Ajmer, called Ana Sagar. It was made by a Mughal king. It is not a natural lake, but has a charm and spiritual atmosphere that you won’t find anywhere else. Very near Ajmer, a few miles away, is one of the greatest Hindu pilgrimage sites, called Pushkar Raj. There also is a lake which has crocodiles that Kitty wants to see, and Kaka will obey and be eaten by the crocodiles.

“Who likes all this? Who likes all this? Hands up. Who likes cleaning pails? I can imagine Elizabeth carrying pails in one hand, and her little dog Kippy in the other. House, we will try to get as good as we can. That helps—if possible.

“Five pairs of shoes just this morning. And I gave the mandali so much other work to do. Masa’s duty will be light here. I would have even given vegetables and bazaar, but the bazaar master does it so efficiently, and he knows the quantities. Be economical—not starve, but not waste. Afternoon only tea, but Elizabeth must have ‘that much’ to be full when tea is here. And Nadine takes supper every day.”

Baba, pointing to Elizabeth, said, “You will say I always mention you. Do you mind?” Elizabeth replied, “It is both true and funny.” Baba then said, “When I say only tea, it is not for money. But I don’t want you to have anything with tea. Kitty said she kept something for the two servants [Lakshi and Bhami]. Katie in the Kashmir Hotel in Kanpur said, ‘I will keep this for tea.’ Elizabeth is brave—she does not like that much to eat, but she must have a little with her tea! Now, eat well. With Norina and Elizabeth there is a great war going on upstairs. So by lunchtime they will both be dead, and be rescued with rice and dal. 9:30 to 10:30, ‘Gorilla’ warfare.”

These practical arrangements which concerned Baba's party, then, are the background to the exciting and unprecedented work that Baba continued with the *masts*, the spiritually advanced. One of the first located at Ajmer was a man who had sat for four years in the railroad station, where nothing had persuaded him to leave, not even when boiling water had been throw over him by the stationmaster. I quote now from Elizabeth's account in the *Meher Baba Journal*:

Finally the official resigned himself to the fact that there was something unusual in this man, and allotted him a place where he might remain. The man, who had taken upon himself the task of doing his spiritual work with humanity in the thoroughfare of a railroad station, had still the physical scars of the burns which were meant to dissuade him. Yet he was ultimately brought to Sri Baba after years of being seated in that one place. The *mandali* would go and persuade these men to come to the bungalow where Baba was staying. . . .

Upon arrival of this spiritual man from the station, the master bathed and fed him as a little child. Did not Christ say, "Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven"? When I first saw this man, he had been clothed by Sri Baba in a new white garment, *kafni*, it is called. And he was seated in the chair in the master's own room. His short, pointed beard, downcast eyes and holy expression reminded me strikingly of the well-known painting of Christ after the scourging was over and someone had placed a white garment upon Him. Tomorrow again he would be at his railway station amongst the crowds, but today in Sri Meher Baba's presence, he looked transfigured.

Why is this beneficial bath by Sri Meher Baba necessary? Or for these selected *masts*? Why the feeding with the master's own hands? To those who believe it is a spiritual matter, understood with the intuition. To those who are privileged to witness such transformation of consciousness, as is brought about by the master, through His personal touch, and the simple mediums of water and food, the matter is one of direct revelation. But to those (to whom) such matters are alien, I can but refer them to parallels in scriptures of all the great masters. In the New Testament of the Christians, water is used as a regenerative force, such as in baptism. I witnessed at Ajmer, men come to Shri Baba who had long given up the world for life of the spirit, and held fast to their own beliefs and faiths, yet were wracked and weary, soul-tortured or dazed upon the path. I have seen them leave the presence of the master, after the beneficial bath, cleansed in body and spirit. And with the unmistakable expression of regeneration upon their faces. It was like seeing a garden of humanity, purified and shining, after celestial rains. The stirring of the spirit by the touch of a master, if one has the privilege to witness it, is far more self-evident than when one sees and knows that a man is glad, or a man is sad. This state of bliss cannot be hid. It radiates from one's very being.

Part Three: The New Life

We are here this evening as a family in Baba's love. This being so, I am introducing a thought which is not included in the talk I planned tonight, but which I am hoping will answer the needs of a few who I know are present. I will read a short passage, a conversation from *The God-Man*:

Meher Baba: “To ask me, ‘How can I love you?’ is to insult love. How can I answer? What is your answer, Harry?”

Harry Kenmore: “Thanks for placing me in this predicament! One cannot be told how to love Baba, one must pretty much find it out for oneself. Such a question denies love on the part of the lover.”

Baba continued: “Had Jesus told Peter how to love him, Peter would not have denied him. I can tell you how to obey me, but there is no answer to how to love me. Love me in the way you understand love.”*

Baba is always present to help. And since Baba tells us that love and faith are gifts of grace from God to man, we should not feel worried if the consciousness of love fluctuates, or that we are losing hold of Baba’s *daaman*. Remember these words: “One loves most when one is least conscious of loving.” I recall Baba saying in the *Discourses* that a master is not so concerned as to whether the disciple has or has not belief in him. What he is concerned with, is whether the disciple is really sincere in his search and desire to serve the highest Truth.[†] Continue in big and little things to try and please Baba.

What is holding on to Baba’s *daaman* but being like a little child who clings to his mother’s hem? And though they bustle about in the crowds and stalls of the bazaar, the child never lets go. The bazaar is symbolic of the world in general—that which the Masters who have experienced Truth call Maya.

* *The God-Man*, p. 330.

† “Qualifications of the Aspirant: IV” in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 136. “The Master is unconcerned whether the disciple doubts him or has faith in him. What he tests is whether the disciple is or is not sincere and whole-hearted in his spiritual search and pursuit.”

Baba said in a letter to Delia in 1938:

. . . Remember *maya* is My shadow, so indirectly is Me, too, and is the means by which the soul, divine though it is, but unconscious as yet of its divinity, must become conscious of its oneness with God.

Herein lies the secret of the Universe, and My game, too. . . . And how can you help with this game of Mine? By love and service. By control of your mind and moods and yes, weaknesses which are there for the purpose of exercising control over them. Often, the greater one's love, the greater is the tendency to moods, because the pangs of separation are more acute. But I do not like moods and therefore to please Me, which is one of the best ways of showing your love for Me, try your best to overcome them.*

Can you realize that the path and the goal of God-realization are all of Baba's work, as well as His divine game? He says, "I long for this union infinitely more than you could ever long."[†] And Baba told Rick Chapman, in 1966, after intense seeking on Rick's part brought him into Baba's presence in Meherazad, "Forget the spiritual path, forget the planes, forget God-Realization, and breathe Baba."[‡]

* November 5, 1938. Delia DeLeon, *The Ocean of Love: My Life with Meher Baba* (Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Press, 1991), p. 114–15.

† "My way with you all is the shortest way to Union which I long for infinitely more than you can ever long." Letter of February 10, 1940, from M. S. Irani to "Leyla" (Delia). *The Ocean of Love*, p. 137.

‡ Rick Chapman comments: "This is how Kitty remembers what Baba conveyed during my meeting with Baba at Meherazad in August 1966. While not literally the words Baba communicated, this gist is accurately (and beautifully) portrayed by Kitty's recollection." For Rick's account of his meeting with Meher Baba in 1966, see Rick M. Chapman, *Meeting God in Human Form* (Berkeley, CA: White Horse Publishing Co., 2010), chap. 28.

And Baba says in the discourse “God Alone Is”: “It is not easy for man to accept and keep on accepting, under all circumstances, that God is. . . . Before he can know Who he is, man has to unlearn the mass of illusory knowledge he has burdened himself with on the interminable journey from unconsciousness to consciousness. It is only through love that you can begin to unlearn, thus eventually putting an end to all that you do not know.”* We have to unlearn our irrefutable and generally held ideas, so unscientific, especially that man is his body, or that man is his mind. We can begin to free ourselves from this web by breathing Baba. I could call it loving Baba, or pleasing Baba. And then we still may not feel satisfied with that—what is loving and what is pleasing. But to breathe Baba is to love God.

From out of Baba’s New Life phase, which began in 1949, and which expressed the spiritual revolution through Baba’s own actions, came the following statement, in which He gave us everything pertaining to His message of love and truth:

This New Life is endless, and even after my physical death it will be kept alive by those who live the life of complete renunciation of falsehood, lies, hatred, anger, greed and lust; and who, to accomplish all this, do no lustful actions, do no harm to anyone, do no backbiting, do not seek material possessions or power, who accept no homage, neither covet honor nor shun disgrace, and fear no one and nothing; by those who rely wholly and solely on God, and who love God purely for the sake of loving; who believe in the lovers of God and in the reality of manifestation, and yet do not expect any spiritual or material reward; who do

* “God Alone Is” was a discourse read aloud by Eruch in Meherabad on July 10, 1958 (a year when silence was not observed on that day). See Purdom, *The God-Man*, pp. 344–46. Also in *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4448–51, and in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 5, no. 4 (Fall 1958), p. 4.

not let go the hand of Truth; and who, without being upset by calamities, bravely and wholeheartedly face all hardships with one hundred percent cheerfulness, and give no importance to caste, creed and religious ceremonies. This New Life will live by itself eternally, even if there is no one to live it.*

In this message Baba has embraced every aspect of the life He lived amongst us in this human form. Taken section by section, you will read again what you will find oft repeated in the daily family life Baba allowed His close followers and others to share with Him. See the one sentence, “. . . who love God purely for the sake of loving”: love for the sake of Love is His message for how we should live, and our reason for living. It is a love like that of St. Francis for Jesus, of whom Baba has told us, “If you have that love for Me that St. Francis had for Jesus, then not only will you realize Me, but you will please Me.”† Listen to the emphasis here on pleasing; so I say again, continue in big and little things to try and please Baba.

And then, in 1958, still in the New Life,‡ Baba gave us in the Barn, at the Center in Myrtle Beach, His promise of eternal blessing and eternal life to those who live this message of love, from breath to breath, breathing His name in wholehearted remembrance of Him. It does not mean to take His name while the heart remains distant from Him. “Take My name” must certainly mean that each moment of one’s life is sharing consciously in the New Life which Meher Baba came to manifest anew, out of His infinite love and compassion which He

* New Life Circular No. 17, September 1950. Purdom, *The God-Man*, pp. 187–88.

† From the message “Twelve Ways of Realizing Me.” This message first appeared in the *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 2 (December 1938), pp. 10–11, and subsequently appeared in all editions of Meher Baba’s *Discourses*.

‡ Although the spirit of the New Life is “endless,” it is generally considered that Baba’s New Life phase concluded in February 1952, the date given variously as February 12th (Bhau Kalchuri, *Meher Baba’s New Life* [2008]) and the 16th, following the Manonash seclusion (T. K. Ramanujam, *Much Love* [1994], and C. B. Purdom, *The God-Man* [1964]). Bhau describes Feb. 12th as the start of the period known as “LIFE,” described by Baba as “my first real birthday” (p. 681). See also *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 356.

brought for all. This is Baba's life, and endless, and by God's will, will still be left when the Avatar returns and brings us with Him after seven hundred years.

From Meher Baba's message "My Wish": "I say with My Divine Authority to each and all that whosoever takes My name at 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 practicing from now on. Even if you take My name only once every day, you will not forget to remember Me in your dying moments."*

* "My Wish" was read out twice in the Barn. *The God-Man*, p. 320. See also *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 529: "If you just take My name, just at the moment of dropping your body, you will come to Me. Yes, anyone."

BABA'S EARLY WORK IN LONDON

MEHER BABA'S FIFTY-FIRST SILENCE DAY
MEHER BABA OCEANIC, LONDON
JULY 5, 1976

While its final pages have been lost, this talk has been included because of the significance of the occasion.

To Peter Townshend and family, and to the many gathered here for the opening week of Meher Baba Oceanic, it gives me great joy to be with you on this happy occasion at the invitation of our host, Peter Townshend.

On receiving Peter's letter of invitation, my thoughts flashed back to Meher Baba's first visit to the West in 1931, nearly half a century ago, especially because some of the early recollections related to this period are connected with this very area in which Meher Baba's Oceanic is situated. I refer to Kew Gardens and Richmond Park, both in Surrey County. Mani, Baba's sister, would often refer to places where Baba in earlier years had spent some time as becoming important points of His future universal workings in later years. And today, as we stand here on the grounds of Meher Baba Oceanic, such a link is visible, as will be seen as we read on.

On Meher Baba's first visit to London in 1931, we of the first group took Meher Baba and His Eastern disciples around London (five of whom



Kitty Davy, Adi K. Irani, and Delia DeLeon at the opening of "Oceanic" in 1976.

I see present before me), sometimes on foot, sometimes on top of the red bus, and once or twice down the moving stairway to the underground tube. What excitement and fascination for the Easterners to go up and down a moving stairway for the first time!

We visited one or two important places—the House of Commons, for one. It was late—9:00 p.m.—and the District Court was still in session. We had with us a letter of introduction. Baba went into the outer chamber, signed His name in the big book, and sent two of us on tiptoe to stand at the back of the court. We remained about three minutes and came back to Baba.

Another morning we went to the British Museum, prepared to spend a good hour. Baba took us at lightning speed through the various exhibits, and within ten minutes we were on our way again.

There was a theatre or two, a cinema or two, and yes, a visit to the area not far from where we stand today—a significant fact in relation to our talk today. I recall the afternoon spent in Kew Gardens with Baba among the rhododendron groves, the gorgeous flowerbeds, and the hothouses. Yes, a picnic, too, of sorts, for we always carried a few tidbits—peanuts, puffed rice, potato chips—tidbits that Baba liked to share with us all.

Sharing—a unique quality of Baba, especially in relation to His sharing so many hours of the day with us all. Most generous—He never wearied of being with us; if He did, it never showed. He rarely refused our suggestions in those early times. He wanted to please us. This aspect of pleasing us is not an insignificant fact when one realizes, after many years with Meher Baba, that one of the best ways of learning how to love and grow in that love for Baba is to try to please Him. So at the very outset here He was setting us an example. You will find in His many messages the emphasis that He placed on His appreciation of our effort, that His only response was not the words “thank you,” but “I am pleased with your effort to please” or “Your enthusiasm to try and serve pleases Me.”

At the request of Delia DeLeon, there was a visit to the Star and Garter Hotel—a very old and well-known hotel at the entrance to Richmond Park—to have tea with her grandmother and mother. (This is half-hour distance from the Oceanic.) Baba was happy and walked all around the veranda in deep thought. Later, we took a walk through Richmond Park, and to the right of the entrance gate at the top of Redhill I pointed out to Baba the home for the disabled sailors and soldiers of the First World War, some of whom were awaiting the fixture of artificial limbs.

Meher Baba was a fast walker, and we had some difficulty keeping up with Him as we continued across the park coming out at the far end, where, tired out, we climbed to the top of a red bus and went back to my parents' home on Russell Road, Kensington, where He was a guest.

One other memory in relation to Kew brings out a special aspect of Meher Baba's early training. It followed, if I recall correctly, the month we had spent with Baba in Italy in 1933. Meher Baba announced He must return to India for important work and decided that during His absence we should all live together in one house.

He sent me ahead to find a suitable house in Ealing District, not far from Kew. Eventually, a not-too-modern house was found within our limited means, and there we stayed for three months. We were a party of twelve to fourteen* with one bathroom and, I believe, no outside help—the work being divided amongst all. It was evident that Baba was working very intensely with us during these three months of His absence.

We were an international group representing many nations, and of varying ages. Although we knew one another, having come together through Meher Baba, we were now, for the first time, living under one roof without Baba, the peacemaker. Before leaving for India, He had laid down many restrictions on our movements. One, I recall, was that Anita [de Caro, later Vieillard] was allowed out to London only once during the entire three months, with my brother Herbert in charge. The various egos and their various temperaments clashed and flared up from time to time over food, household duties, interpreting Baba's orders, and so forth—mostly unimportant things. But through it all, Baba was working on our egos, individual and national, the latter being the more difficult of the two to overcome. I suppose by degrees we slowly progressed along this new, unexplored spiritual path, and what was hidden in the subconscious had to be brought out and faced, and with the help of Baba we were able to do this.

* In *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 110, Kitty mentions Norina Matchabelli, Elizabeth Patterson, Quentin Tod, Vivienne Gieson, Anita de Caro, Margaret Craske, Mabel Ryan, Delia DeLeon, Herbert Davy, and herself. Visiting guests were Minta Toledano, Audrey Williams, and Christine McNaughton.

Before Baba left for India, He had asked that, in His absence, we all participate in some entertainment to be ready on His return. We were not to be idle! There were three or four professionals: Margaret Craske, Quentin Tod, Delia DeLeon. The show consisted of amusing sketches, dances, and recitations, and on Baba's return was presented at the Q Theatre at the foot of Kew Bridge, lent for the occasion by Jack DeLeon [Delia's brother]. Approximately 250 people were present—a private show by invitation only. All did their best. Baba was pleased.

I suffered torture. I was no professional, just a music teacher having to play a solo—a Chopin étude, to be exact—and here on a public platform I was assisting in musical numbers. Returning to my seat in the audience, I heard from behind the remark, "She did not bring out the bass melody enough." Of course, she was right, but we all had to participate since Baba would never accept no for an answer. If you said you couldn't, Baba would look so sad. Always that word, "Try your best. Don't you want to please Me?"

Now to turn to another aspect of Baba's working in London at this early period. My next recollection is the important work of the office in Charing Cross, London, S.W. Baba's work with the West was increasing and taking on an international aspect spreading into Europe. In 1933, Baba asked us to rent an office to help with His work. What a site was chosen! Charing Cross, overlooking Trafalgar Square, and within a stone's throw of the Foreign Office, Downing Street, and the Houses of Parliament. My brother Herbert at this time was very strong in his love for Baba and felt it important that even Baba's shadow should spread over this crucial area during the political unrest apparent in the latter part of 1932–33. I remember, on the afternoon of Baba's first setting foot on English soil in 1931, Herbert had the taxi drive Baba and those with Him through this very same thoroughfare, and for the same reason—Baba's shadow must penetrate these important areas.

Will Backett was one of those chosen by Baba to be in charge. Some of you present today will remember the occasion of one of Baba's visits to the office—a Saturday afternoon which Baba spent interviewing those whom Will had brought together. There were so many that an additional room along the corridor had to be rented.

Will had to write a weekly letter to India about the activities of the office. For instance, reporting on the growing correspondence with the U.S. and Europe as messages, letters, and inquiries began to flow in. The office took on quite an international aspect in relation to Baba's work.

In reply to Will's weekly letter were answers and messages from Baba in India to the various groups and individuals scattered across Europe, the U.S., and China. Meher Baba would refer to this correspondence as laying spiritual cables for future work.

Another objective of the office work entailed personal contact. One of us was always to be there for people coming in off the street and asking questions about Meher Baba. The one contact that comes to mind from the work of this first center in Charing Cross was Will Donkin. Walking in one day on his way home from Bart's [St. Bartholomew's] Hospital where he was a medical student, he came into the office to talk of a picture of Meher Baba he had seen in the newspaper and to inquire how he could get in touch with Him. Twice a week he would come to talk about Baba. Later, he wrote to Baba in India, offering his life. The reply came back, "Finish your training and then I will call you to India." Some years later, Dr. Donkin wrote, at Baba's request, the well-known book *The Wayfarers*—the outstanding account of Baba's work with the *masts*.

We also published at the Charing Cross Center the first two booklets ever to be printed by Meher Baba in the West, both of which were entered in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.—*Questions and Answers* in

1932 and *Sayings of Meher Baba* in 1933.* The Circle Productions Committee was now in existence.†

All the training, the work and preparation, both with inner and outer aspects, done by Baba during this period with His first contacts in the West, and with the help of His first Center in Charing Cross, led up, I feel, to the second phase of Baba's work that followed, known as the film project, in which Europe was now to play a part.

This early preparation was no different from that which Meher Baba is doing today in an ever-increasing number of centers with their variety of group activities, and with the same basic situations and purpose: the opening up of the seed of love in the hearts of a few to begin with and spreading later in all directions—for the love must precede service, the true expression of love. Baba repeatedly says, "I need your love for My work," and "Only love counts." "I call you to Me for My work, not for your pleasure," He once said in reference to His calling us to India. The inner aspects of Baba's work with His first contacts, as I see it, was to awaken in them a desire and readiness to try and obey Him—to try and please Him, and to try and work for Him together in harmony. And by what method? By first awakening in us a love for Him and giving us a glimpse of His love for us.

At the same time, these two aspects of love naturally brought about a gradual change in our consciousness—the outcome of our close contact with Meher Baba. His ever-constant reminder, "What are you thinking of?"—

* These two booklets, *Questions and Answers* and *Sayings of Meher Baba*, are reprinted in *Meher Baba's Early Messages to the West: The 1932–1935 Western Tours* (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Foundation, 2009).

† "When the focus of Baba's work shifted to Europe and America, . . . the newly constituted Circle Editorial Committee involved in its activities a number of Baba's Western followers and concerned itself with a variety of literary projects during the years 1933–34. And in June 1934, Baba's disciples founded Circle Productions, Inc., a corporation with Baba himself as its president, dedicated to the financing and production of a film on a spiritual theme whose outlines Baba had dictated." There was also a "Circle Committee" that Baba envisioned in 1933. *Meher Baba's Early Messages to the West*, p. 232.

looking back, it is so clear. Baba's work was to allow His pure divine consciousness to overlap our lesser human consciousness, and by continually asking us, "What are you thinking?" Baba brought our wandering, restless minds, filled with umpteen illusory objects, back to Himself.

Returning to the film project, people from Europe, the U.S., and China became involved in it. I recall a letter from my brother Herbert in China, to whom Baba had written, asking him to look into the latest film techniques. "Why me?" wrote my brother. "I am out here teaching English. I know nothing about films." "No discussion, just obey," Kaka, one of Baba's beloved and earliest disciples, would reply. Later on, when Herbert returned to London, Baba had him still continue inquiring and learning, and he eventually landed (after considerable searching), through the introduction of a friend, Sir Henry Bunbury, at the Crown Film Unit. There he met Mr. John Grierson, who was busy on a documentary film, and I suppose Herbert picked up a few more techniques.

Curiously though, whilst there, a documentary was being shot in connection with the life of Buddha. The title was *In Steps of Buddha: A Traveler in Ceylon*, and flashing on the screen were the following words, not inappropriate: "When the mind is ready, for some reason or other, the bird flies, the temple bells ring and the bird winds his way home, whence it came."

All were kept busy, a few constantly on the move, traveling between Paris, Zurich, and Berlin—all for the film project. Karl Vollmoeller, author of *The Miracle* play and first husband of Norina—was working on the right scenario and sticking to his rigid attitudes. Gabriel Pascal was on production, and oh, what a difficult artistic temperament! He did not get along with us! But then, he was part genius and we really knew nothing.

Meantime, we still had to carry on with our jobs, careers, *et cetera*, participating as best we could in this exciting adventure which, throughout

1934 and early 1935, overshadowed every other activity, as you will see from the hitherto unpublished correspondence of these years received from Baba at the time.

Meanwhile the office work continued as usual, and we were finding the expenses more and more difficult to meet, but Baba said, "Carry on": "The Circle Editorial Committee office should continue to do its work without the burden of expenses, rent, and staff, and can be carried on at 32 Russell Road or elsewhere. Those who can voluntarily work for Me may help. All My Love—[signed] M. S. Irani."

The film project kept moving—through 1934 into 1935—with ever-increasing activity—Elizabeth and Norina in the U.S., Gabriel Pascal and Karl Vollmoeller in Paris and London, and Walter Mertens in Zurich. Backwards, forwards—one day with success, the next with apparent failure. Our emotions up and down, from deep depression and despondency to delight and joy. Meher Baba in the middle, either in India or Europe, directing patiently, awaiting results and yes . . . probably enjoying His other work. Simultaneously He was working on the elimination of our great egos.

In July 1935, a year after the film project had been in motion, Baba had returned to India, leaving us all alone to work on the film project as best we could. Whilst in seclusion on Mount Abu, Baba sent us a letter which said: "The film work that is left incomplete would stop without my guidance and constant advice as they need and desire. Remember all, I am always with you. [Signed] M. S. Irani."

It is to me inconceivable that a project on which Baba spent so much time and energy could end in oblivion. In Baba's time, it will be done. I see no signs of its being dead. During the last twenty-five years whilst I have been in touch in Myrtle Beach with so many of the present generation, the interest in film technique and production is very much alive—and if I ask why, Meher Baba's film is mentioned.

Quoting C. B. Purdom in the 1960s: “The fact that the film did not materialize then, later on or even during Meher Baba’s lifetime, is not important. A film of this kind could not have been made under the prevailing conditions of the film world.”*

I think, too, the West was not ready for the spiritual truth Meher Baba said had to be woven into the scenario. Later, Baba fulfilled this need by the publication of His book *God Speaks*, which deals in detail with the basic facts Baba wished to be incorporated in His film.

Meher Baba does not waste time. The film will be made and will be done with Baba’s inner direction and help. It will be the product of His combined lovers—maybe in the form of a great human love story, or a story of great adventure, of struggle, of challenge, of achievement, who knows! But it will incorporate the Divine Truths as first laid down by Baba in 1934.

As the work of the first center in the West at Charing Cross was instrumental in preparing the ground for Meher Baba’s initial work for His film, so, I believe, other centers now in existence will continue the work, each contributing towards as perfect a production as is possible.

So many are here today—New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Washington—and now, Meher Baba Oceanic, not to mention the many working independently on the same project.

The scene is set. Many lovers, much creative talent; now for the perfect scenario. This is the pressing need at the moment. Be ready, get started, accept the challenge, and remember Baba’s words in relation to the film project.

* Purdom wrote that “a film of this kind could not have been made under the prevailing conditions of film production.” *The God-Man*, p. 127.

ONE FINE THREAD

MEHER BABA'S FIFTY-THIRD SILENCE DAY EVE
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
JULY 9, 1978

RICK CHAPMAN: It has been rumored that Kitty met Baba in the 1930s in London and spent many years with Him in India, but she assured me that none of that is true. She in fact heard about Baba for the first time about three years ago while selling books at the Center at Myrtle Beach. Kitty Davy!

KITTY: There's one little truism in what Rick has just said, which you'll notice later on. The last remark he made.

Now, this is not part of my talk today, but one thought has been very constantly in my mind since I got here. And that is one word, which is called "sharing." If you ask me to put into one word of the nearly forty-five years now that I've been with Baba, it always comes back to this one word, "sharing." The very moment I saw Baba, in 1931, and we were sitting down to a meal, I remember He handed a grape to both Margaret and me, and said, "Eat." And Meredith said, "Well, this is to show you that Baba's happy to see you."

And all through the time that I was in India with Baba, in both the East and the West, it *was* a continual sharing. There was nothing, I don't

think you could mention anything to me, in Baba's life with us, unless it was when He was in seclusion, or away on *mast* work, that we weren't sharing with Baba, whether it was volleyball, or Tiddlywinks, or spiritual discourses, or music, or acting. Perhaps one of the last things I recall before the ashram was closed, and Baba had told us He might never see us again—this was in 1949—that as He told us that, and we were all prepared, and now He said, "Forget it all, and we will play a game of charades."

And we went upstairs, and we played charades, and Baba afterwards said we'd have a game where you played the titles of different books. And Baba and Mehera played in this game, and the title of the book that they chose, was *Gone with the Wind*.

I remember that very clearly. And, in every detail, your health, your joy, your troubles, everything Baba was sharing.

And, now that's one kind of sharing.

Now the second kind of sharing is when I look at you all, and see us all sharing with one another, and sharing Baba together.

After His first visit to the West in 1931, Elizabeth wrote and asked if they could meet together and talk about Baba and read His discourses and have a cup of tea. And the answer came back from Baba, yes, but remember that more important, perhaps, than reading the discourses was to get together with each other and communicate with one another. That wasn't the word that Baba used, but the idea was to get together, be together, and be able to break down the curtain that sometimes arises between us, because we are some of us very lonely, and a little shy.

And so as I see you all today, there comes very strongly into my mind what an opportunity it is for every one of you to share with one another. And I'm absolutely aghast, to see how well it's been organized, and how this is taking place.

Well, then, there's a third sharing, which is to share something with

somebody who has perhaps been with Baba. And of course I have to think of myself there. So there are these three sharings.

To go back to that first sharing, it is Baba being always present in every detail of your life. I feel very strong today that Baba's very present here. Because if Baba likes anything, He likes groups, groups, groups. I was thinking of China, when my brother was entertaining Baba, or was looking after Baba. He took Him to many parts of Shanghai where it was very quiet. But Baba said, "No, take Me where the crowds are. Take Me where the crowds are."

And also in Madrid the same. They walked along the streets where there were the most people present. And again in cinemas. Why did we go to so many cinemas? Because Baba said, "I can work well when everybody's mind is concentrated in one direction; then I am free to work with each one of you as I choose."

And I feel that the most important sharing that you will experience during these next three days is the sharing that Baba is with you all. I'm not psychic, and there are not many of us that are psychic, or I might be able to say I see Baba standing at the back there. And I can't say that, because I've never seen Baba since He dropped His body, in that form. But I am convinced that He is here. And therefore I hope that of all the three different sharings that I've mentioned, all of you will feel and take back with you that sharing of Baba today having been in our midst.

And now we'll pass on to the third sharing, which I have to take a part in, and that is what I've proposed to talk about.

You mentioned just now, Rick, that I didn't meet Baba till about three years ago. Well, I *could* say that what I'm going to talk about today had only really come into my mind since Baba dropped His body, and since I had to turn to the books, to find out the answer to certain problems. I never remember having a problem when I was with Baba. Baba said: Always obey Me, love Me, surrender to Me; I'll take care of your spiritual life.

And with one exception, I don't ever remember coming to Baba with any so-called spiritual question. But since Baba dropped the body, certain problems *have* come up regarding certain sayings of Baba's. For instance, He'd said, "I am ever conscious that I am in you, while you are never conscious that I am in you. Daily I support you and share your consciousness. Now I want you to uphold Me and share My consciousness one day."*

Now, I think that is the basis of what my talk will be today, because when I came to think about that, I began looking in Baba's books, and found such strange things I couldn't understand. One of them was: "In Me, I am free, but in you I am bound."† And another: "This is My crucifixion."‡

And over and over again, when I went back to the books, I struggled to find out the meaning of these sayings. And that will be the basis of the talk that I will give you. I'm sorry I can't do it without notes, but that's not my particular, shall I say, gift.

Today I will share with you some recent thoughts that have come to me on the theme "Meher Baba and consciousness." Many aspects of the spiritual path have seemed much clearer when placed in the background of this word, "consciousness." Also, certain sayings of Baba, hitherto difficult to understand, seem, now, more clear.

How I came to live to the present time, so unaware of the importance of this word, is a mystery. Meher Baba has used the word so frequently in *God Speaks* and in His *Discourses*, in relation to various aspects of the

* From "God Alone Is" (1958). *The God-Man*, p. 344. See also note 27, p. 272.

† "My spiritual suffering is because I know I am free in myself but bound in you." May 3, 1965, Poona. Quoted in H. P. Bharucha, "Six Days in Paradise," *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1966), p. 31.

‡ "The Man-God knows himself to be one with all the other souls in bondage. Although he knows himself to be identical with God and is thus eternally free, he also knows himself to be one with the other souls in bondage and is thus vicariously bound. Though he constantly experiences the eternal bliss of God-realization, he also vicariously experiences suffering owing to the bondage of other souls whom he knows to be his own forms. This is the meaning of Christ's crucifixion." "The Man-God: II," in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 34.

spiritual path. But somehow I overlooked the significance of the word. The time, we say, was not right.

Moreover, Baba did not encourage us to read in the ashram. And in the early days, *Discourses* and *God Speaks* had not even been published. But today I would like to mention how valuable it is to follow Baba's advice, that we should read and reread His books, for at each reading you will draw something previously overlooked.

Baba said many years back, "Learn to read Me, and you will need no other books."* But I recall very clearly Baba telling many visitors, when the book *God Speaks* came out, to read it through three times. To some it was even an order. Now, in my own experience, I realize how vital is Baba's advice, if we don't want to miss what Baba has given us in explanation of the purpose of life, and how we should live it.

To return now to the word "consciousness," in relation to the spiritual path it is a word in common use today, but in the early 1930s the word "awareness" was far more frequently used. However, although the word "consciousness" appears so frequently in Meher Baba's two important books, *God Speaks* and the *Discourses*, I cannot recall, in our early years with Baba, His using or emphasizing this word to any great extent. If He did, I was not aware of it at the time.

The words we were familiar with were *love* for Baba, and *obedience* that follows from that love, and to try and *please* Him. Meher Baba did emphasize *happiness*, *cheerfulness*, and *no moods*. *Don't worry, I will help you*, and to continue loving and obeying Him *to the very end*. And to *love God more and more*.

Looking back, however, I realize that above all other aspects of our early years with Baba, in India and in the West, there was one fine thread that went into or onto the canvas, and that fine thread, as I see it today,

* From Delia DeLeon's account of the stay with Baba in Portofino, Italy, in 1932: "One day when we were discussing things, he said 'Learn to read me, for when you understand me, you understand everything.'" *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 14, no. 1 (1971), p. 31.

concerned consciousness. Baba silently and continuously was working on this one theme, consciousness.

Why, for instance, did He so frequently call us to be with Him, to sit with Him, to play various games with Him? Ping-Pong, volleyball, and numerous card games. And His various disciplines, His occasional orders, His assigned duties—why? He was working to try to bring consciousness away from self and away from the many objects of illusion and duality—its wants and desires—to the one object, Himself.

And apparently to do this at this stage, he needed us to be with Him, in His presence, for a great part of the time. He appeared never to tire of having us around. His constant inquiry, “What are you thinking of?” And who can forget His smile, and yes, His twinkling eyes, when you could reply, “Oh, of You, Baba.”

Think of it, day-by-day sitting with Baba, sharing food with Baba, playing various games, indoors and outdoors, with Baba. In constant touch and companionship with Infinite Consciousness, Infinite Divine Love, which Baba was and is. And yet, not comprehending it.

Baba was friend and companion. It was, I think, as He wanted it. Whilst winning our love so spontaneously, and at the same time watching our consciousness being gently shifted, unconsciously, to Himself as the one object of consciousness. And this gradual shifting of consciousness grew as our love for Baba deepened.

And how did our love grow? Baba showed an interest in our pursuits. He made us feel He needed us. He found work for us to do. He tried to please us, showing us at the same time what we could do to please Him. And throughout, there was the unforgettable sharing of every facet of daily life with Baba, during this period of the external link.

Don't many of us feel, and just witness, when we visit Meherabad and Meherazad, that we are meeting face to face with those whose consciousness is completely absorbed in the one object of consciousness, Meher Baba?

And yet, at the same time, immersed in the daily duties assigned to them? A perfect balance of head and heart. I feel they [the mandali] have already learned this lesson of the shift of consciousness, directed more to the One than to the many.

I recall one day, when we were in Nasik in 1937, that I, at any rate, was called, and with reason, and Baba just spelled out on the board: “Learn to love the One in the many, and not the many in the One. I am the only friend who will never let you down.” And then said, “Now, go.”* No more than that. And I was left to bring into consciousness the purpose of the rebuke, or reprisal, that Baba had made me conscious of.

So it was again in the year of 1937, when Baba had a number of Westerners living together with a few of the Easterners, that due to a variety of ego-minds, it was not easy at all times to live together in harmony. This was Baba’s opportunity. And, alert as He always was to such an occasion, He one day called us together and brought to our notice this lack of harmony, saying how it interfered with His work. He might even have to send us back to the West. But that He would give us an alternative ego to work with—an ego centered on, and devoted to, Himself. He called it a “provisional ego,” which at some later time could be discarded, when it had done its work.†

All work was to be God’s work. Baba says that love for God can be expressed in many ways, for His infinite aspects are many. Power, bliss, knowledge, are well known. But infinite honesty, and infinite goodness, are also His main aspects. And goodness means where there is no thought of self, and when there is no thought of self, you are serving God. But the thought that you are serving has to be absent. Honesty demands no show, no fuss of your service to others.

* *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1793, reports that Baba “turned to Kitty and spelled on the board, ‘You love me for love itself.’ Turning to the others, Baba remarked, ‘Love not the many in the One, but love the One in the many. I am the only friend who will never let you down.’”

† See note 2, p. 271.

Now, the value of this provisional ego, I see now, lay in the fact that it brought the shift of consciousness away from the many objects to that of the One, Baba Himself. And this change of direction brought about immediately an increase in our love for Him, which evidently was lacking. It worked this way: before beginning whatever work Baba gave us to do, we were to say, "Baba is doing this or that through me. He is the doer, the speaker, the thinker." Therefore, the results of our actions, failure or success, were His, and we had no need to worry.

Of all the lasting lessons that Baba gave us, helping us along the spiritual path, this emphasis on the provisional ego remains the most constant, because it lifts our self-centered ego-consciousness away from ourselves to Baba, and it helps increase our love for Baba. And as Baba said, it helps in the elimination of the ego.

Baba was always so vigilant and alert to each moment's opportunity. How many of the opportunities, be they small and unimportant to us, we miss throughout the day—to give the smile, the word of interest, the intuitive response that would help others—simply through our inability to keep consciousness on Baba. We often had our chance to cooperate with Baba in His instant reaction to the moment, but if we impeded it in any way, Baba would be displeased, and He allowed us to learn this through His change of mood.

Once, on a visit to Mount Generoso in Switzerland with Baba in 1932, we walked into an inn. And to Baba's joy, He found a Ping-Pong table. He started to play, taking turns. Then all of a sudden, Baba grew serious. And we were all called outside to hear an explanation about planes, and how one gets from the sixth to the seventh plane. Some of us were in a laughing mood. And try as we would, Baba could not get us into a serious one. One of us laughingly suggested, "Why not go outside and play instead?" And Baba conceded, but He was not pleased.

Later Dr. Ghani came to me and said, “Many of these explanations which Baba is giving you now, we have never heard. He will only explain when He is in the mood, and if you laugh, joke, or seem disinterested, the mood to tell will pass from Baba, and you will lose altogether what He wanted to tell you. So do try to control your laughter when Baba seems ready to talk.”

So for Baba it was a ceaseless struggle. Or else would He ever have said, “You are hard nuts to crack”?* How hard in those early days, that shell of obstinacy, ignorance, and argument remained. Only Baba’s infinite patience could succeed in His work of shifting our consciousness to His consciousness, a love consciousness, a consciousness less concerned with self and more conscious of Him and of others. And through it all was Baba’s magnetic love, pulling us ever closer to this change of consciousness, brought about only by the love for each. *His* love for each.

This was noticeable not only with the immediate mandali, and the earlier Westerners, but in His work with the *masts*, the crowd, be it feeding of thousands or gifts of money or grain, visits to schools, to the blind, the lepers. No activity was left out, no opportunity lost for contact, for bringing about a change of consciousness—by a glance, a touch, a smile. And yes, an interest in the busboy setting the lunch table.

This latter instance I witnessed in Simla, in 1946. Baba was on a *mast* tour and had some of the women mandali still in seclusion, and myself staying at a local hotel. I was helping the boy put the dishes on the table. Baba suddenly comes in, takes the dishes Himself from the boy, puts them on the table, smiling, and communicates with him in His own way. I soon realized what Baba was doing, and stepped aside. Baba wanted that boy’s consciousness momentarily on Himself. Baba’s work for the moment was accomplished, to bear fruit in Baba’s time, possibly in a later reincarnation.

* March 4, 1937. *The Awakener* Magazine, vol. 10, no. 2 (Special Nasik Issue, 1964), p. 14.

At a much later date, in the Barn in Myrtle Beach in 1952, when Baba held an open day and hundreds passed by Him, afterwards Elizabeth said, "But Baba, how can You help each when they pass by so quickly?" Baba's reply was that a glance, a handshake, was sufficient. Also, if they lingered, the mind that works so rapidly would slip in and take over, possibly, from the impact of the heart that He was trying to touch and bring about this consciousness of Himself, the One in the many.

It is perhaps interesting that this constant alertness of Baba, in His work of raising and shifting consciousness, is equally noticeable in Baba's work with the animal kingdom. There is not time to mention but one instance that comes to mind: that of Warrior, one of the ashram dogs that Elizabeth took care of. Warrior was the only companion that Baba allowed to be with Him during His seclusion in this special room on Meherabad Hill. Warrior fell sick after the conclusion of the seclusion and died within a week or two. And Baba's message to His mandali was: "I wanted the company of a faithful soul, other than human. Now his work is over, and he is gone. No one should feel sorry for his death. He is fully rewarded. Henceforth he will not incarnate as an animal, but as a human being."*

Baba once said that when God becomes man, he gives a spiritual push and a raise in consciousness to mankind, and in His divine state as Avatar, He becomes a perfect friend for each and every species in Creation. And it was in Kashmir in 1933 that Baba told us, "Certain animals have insight, intuition, and inspiration, but as they are not fully conscious; they do not know what they are."†

* Warrior was at Meherabad from July to September 1940. In a slightly different account in *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 2156, after Warrior's death Baba said, "When Masters touch the dead bodies of animals, the animals get human forms in their next lives. Those animals who are in contact with Masters get forms of spiritual souls in the next birth. But, for Warrior, no more birth!"

† For example, Baba told Elizabeth, "In the animal kingdom, a dog is on the turning, as it has intuition and also partial insight, without being able to use it consciously." *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 2154.

Baba has said that since love and faith are gifts of grace, and perfect obedience is not within the grasp of any one of us, then all we can do is try and please Baba. And Baba, answering our need to know how to please, gave us three ways in which we could try to please Him, and in trying to please, would grow in our love for Him. Note how positive these are.

One: "Think of things that you will not hesitate to think of in My presence." Two: "Speak words that you will not hesitate to speak in My presence." Three: "Act and do things that you will not hesitate to act in My presence."* And to the above, I would like to add a later statement: "Think of Me, remain cheerful in all your trials, and I am with you, helping you."

It is sometimes said that there are few disciplines that Baba has stressed for the spiritual path. But could we really find a stricter inner discipline than these four points with their stress on obedience? Very straightforward, and at first glance, simple and not so difficult. But more recently came the realization that these points could not be acted on 100 percent, and obeyed, unless there were first the consciousness of Baba's presence throughout, with Baba as the object of their consciousness. And how can this be achieved?

And this quest set me searching through the many writings of Meher Baba on consciousness. Not in relation to the planes of consciousness, as found in *God Speaks*—that was not what I was searching for—but consciousness in relation to daily living, something that would be helpful to us all. Searching through all of Baba's books, these are some of the passages that I have found.

One: "I am ever conscious that I am in you, while you are never conscious that I am in you. Daily I support you and share your consciousness. Now I want you to uphold Me and share My consciousness one day."†

* "Think thoughts you would not hesitate to think in My presence. Speak words you would not hesitate to speak in My presence. And do things you would not hesitate to do in My presence." Quoted in Adi K. Irani, *Just to Love Him: Talks and Essays about Meher Baba* (Myrtle Beach: Sheriar Press, 1985), p. 69.

† See note 3, p. 271.

Two: The journey on the spiritual path, from its beginning to end, is a journey from unconscious God to conscious God.* Evolution is consciousness. Reincarnation is consciousness. Involution is consciousness. All is consciousness, the highest being infinite consciousness, Divine Love. When misdirected, it is illusion. When directed to Reality, it is Infinite. Its misdirection is ignorance. Consciousness, whether free and having Reality for its object, or bound to the objects in Illusion, is one. And consciousness becomes infinite when it takes Reality as the object of its consciousness. You are all one with the Ocean, yet separate only in consciousness. Every one of you is, in one form or another, the Divine Manifestation. You are all in Me, and I am in you all. The only way to realize God, and experience His consciousness, is through Love: love for God, and love for one another. Worry not over the past. Be vigilant in the present. All apparent differences are differences in states of consciousness. Nothing comes, nothing goes, there is only this one shifting of consciousness.

Shifting of consciousness.† This is the task ahead of each one of us. In which direction are we moving? Is the object of our consciousness reality, truth, Baba—or is it bound to the objects of duality and illusion? There can be no compromising. And Baba tells us the shift of consciousness can be done through love, a selfless, giving love.

Have you ever thought of these words of Baba?—"In Me I am free, but in you I am bound. . . . This is My crucifixion. . . . It is your ego-mind that binds Me, that binds you, and your ego-mind that binds Me in you." Is not Baba speaking of His own infinite consciousness that is bound in each one of us? What a challenge! What a privilege. And it is always God who is bound in mankind, and who struggles to free Himself.

* "The whole of evolution, in fact, is an evolution from unconscious divinity to conscious divinity. . . ." In "The Avatar," in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 11.

† Meher Baba speaks of "the shifting of the center of interest from unimportant things to truly important values" in "The Nature of the Ego and Its Termination: III," in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 2, p. 80.

What a work Baba has found for each one of us to do, to help free His own consciousness bound in us. He wrote in a letter to us, early in 1933: "My work is the conscious realization of Myself in all creation. I alone do My work, but I allow you, My close ones, to work for Me, so that you have the opportunity to use your talents and capacities selflessly, so as to draw closer to Me." Of course, all is God's work, creative arts, caring for children, sweeping the porch. But what we have to be mindful of is the thread of consciousness that must permeate all work, and become the motivation for all work.

But for today, the work we are considering is how to shift that consciousness to Baba, the highest of all consciousness, divine Love, which is, at the same time, the one consciousness.

One day the question was put to Baba: "Which yoga should I follow out of all the many yogas?" And His reply was, "I only know one yoga. That is that you go, and I come."* I often wonder if He meant: Let go of your consciousness, full of wants and desires, and I will be there as the one object of consciousness. I like the Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis' way of expressing it, in reference to sharing in this work of God, of freeing Himself in you: "Life is a crusade in the service of God. Whether we wished to or not, we set out as crusaders to free—not the Holy Sepulchre—but that God"—Baba—"buried in matter and in our souls."[†]

What a divine work is this shifting of consciousness to Baba. Nevertheless, we have to remember, as Baba has told us, that the binding of Himself in us is His own doing. It was all along God's plan that this Reality gets buried in the ego-mind, attached to illusion as the object, to enable the individual drop within the Ocean to find its way back to God consciously.

What a game! And Baba has called it the greatest detective story,[‡] and

* See note 1, p. 271.

† Nikos Kazantzakis, *The Saviors of God: Spiritual Exercises* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960), p. 106.

‡ "Infinity has to go through the illusion of finiteness to know itself as Infinity; and the Author has to play the parts of all of the actors to know Himself as the Author of this greatest detective story, worked out through the cycles of creation." "Reincarnation and Karma: VII," in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 102.

quoting Him, He says, "If you want to blame anyone for your present predicament, blame Me," who is the author and the actor of the game.*

A game just for the sake of love, so that God Himself, the drop in each, might consciously realize His oneness with the Ocean, which He is.

In His discourse on reincarnation and karma, in *God to Man and Man to God*, Baba says, "The actors"—that's ourselves—"are so engrossed in their respective roles, that they treat them as the be-all and end-all of all existence. And for the major part of their continued life, running into innumerable reincarnations, they are unconscious of the truth, that the author of the drama, in his imaginative production, Himself became all the actors, and played the game of hide-and-seek in order to enter into full and conscious possession of His own creative infinity. The author has to play the parts of the actors to know Himself as the creator of the greatest detective story, worked out through the cycles of creation."[†]

This shifting of consciousness—Baba referred to it once, if I remember correctly, as "one surrender after another."[‡] What of the degrees of consciousness between the two poles of consciousness? Pierre Teilhard de Chardin once said, "There are as many wave-lengths of consciousness as there are living forms."[§] And recently I found the following words of Baba's, as regards our present thought: "When the evolution of consciousness began, there was oneness in spite of the diversity in illusion. With the growth of consciousness, manyness also went on increasing, until now it is about to overlap the limit. Like the wave that reaches its crest, this height of manyness will dissolve itself and bring about the beginning of oneness in

* "... if you want to blame anyone blame me, for everything in the universe has come out of me and so I am the only one who can be blamed." *The Everything and The Nothing*, p. 49.

† Meher Baba, *God to Man and Man to God*, 2nd ed., ed. C. B. Purdom (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Press, 1975).

‡ "Spiritual advancement is a succession of one surrender after another." *Meher Baba Calling* (6th ed., 1992) (Ahmednagar: Meher Nazar Books), no. 54.

§ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Future of Man* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

illusion. Suffering at its height will cause destruction of this climate of manyness in illusion. The time has now come for the preordained destruction of multiple separateness, which keeps man from experiencing the feeling of unity and brotherhood.”* The world is now evolving back to Oneness, only it is a conscious One. A conscious Oneness.

Some of you may recall Meher Baba’s last message on the alphabet board, given on October 7, 1954. I think this explains the above message, and shows how Meher Baba is working to bring this Oneness into effect. It was 1954, the time of the Three Incredible Weeks. Baba had referred, if you recall, to dropping His body, and He was saying the many things that might happen—a stab in the back, a strange illness—and of course all the people with Him were very, very disturbed, and they all wrote to Him for some explanation. Was Baba going to leave them so soon? And this is Baba’s reply:

. . . There is no reason at all for any of you to worry. Baba was, Baba is, and Baba will also be eternally existent. Severance of external relations does not mean the termination of internal links. It was only for establishing the internal connection, the external contacts have been maintained till now. The time has now come for being bound in the chain of internal connections. Hence *external contact is no longer necessary*. It is possible to establish the internal link by obeying Baba’s orders. I give you all My blessings for strengthening these internal links.

I am always with you, and I am not away from you. I was, am, and will remain eternally with you, and it is for promoting this realization that I have severed external contact. This will enable all persons to realize Truth by being bound to each other with internal links.

* From Meher Baba’s “Final Declaration” (September 30, 1954), quoted in *The God-Man*, p. 274.

Oh My lovers! I love you all. It is only because of My love for My creation that I have descended on earth. Let not your hearts be torn asunder by My declarations concerning the dropping of My body. On the contrary, *accept My Divine Will cheerfully*. You can never escape from Me. Even if you try to escape from Me, it is not possible to get rid of Me. Therefore, have courage and be brave.

If you thus lose your hearts, how will it be possible for you to fulfill the great task which I have entrusted to you? *Be brave and spread My Message of Love far and wide, to all quarters, in order to fulfill My Divine Will*. Let the words “Baba, Baba” come forth from every nook and corner of the world, and from the mouth of every child, and let their ignorance be reduced to ashes by the burning flame of My love. Come together in order to fulfill My Will, by taking your stand on Truth, Love, and Honesty, and be worthy of participating in My task.

I give you all My blessings for spreading My Message of Love.*

And so, where to find the internal link that Meher Baba speaks of? Surely, through the shifting of consciousness from the many to the One, Baba, as the object of consciousness, Infinite Consciousness, Infinite Love. And to quote Baba again: “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”† . . . and then I have added, “with love.”

* Meher Baba's last message on the alphabet board is described as “Avatar Meher Baba's Circular letter [dated October 8, 1954] to all His lovers who showed great concern over dropping of His body as stated by Him in His Final Declaration made at Meherabad on 30th September, 1954.” *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 19, no. 2 (1981), p. 3. The letter was translated from the Hindi of Bhau Kalchuri by C. D. Deshmukh. *The Awakener Magazine* gave the circular the title “The Great Task Before Baba Lovers,” but it appears without a title in *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3651–52.

† Allan Y. Cohen, *The Mastery of Consciousness: An Introduction and Guide to Practical Mysticism and Methods of Spiritual Development as Given by Meher Baba* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 47. Allan Cohen's endnote says that he misplaced the citation for this quotation.

This surely is what we must do if we want to be really alive and filled with *enthusiasm*—another word for “alive with God.” And so here we meet today. A part of that varied number of wavelengths of consciousness, innumerable by nature, come together knowing ourselves to be, or at heart trying to be, one-pointed, upon a single aspect of consciousness—Meher Baba, the one Reality, the one Truth. Infinite Consciousness, Infinite Love—names do not matter.

And Baba by His life has shown us that not by running away from life, not by withdrawal, but by communicating and sharing of daily consciousness, through loving one another, can we attain to that same Infinite Consciousness, Infinite Love, which He longs so much for us to share, and to be one with.

However, the lesser consciousnesses along the way are necessary, for the experiences that we need for this growth in awareness.

Dick Anthony gave a talk some time ago at the Center in which he quoted a letter he had received from Meher Baba in the early 1960s, dictated to Eruch. Eruch was answering Dick’s letter asking Baba’s advice about what he should do. In those days we were allowed to ask Baba what we should do. And following Baba’s instructions, Eruch continued in the letter with the words, “Don’t worry, don’t worry, don’t worry,” all underlined. And Dick could not understand, because he was not worrying, consciously.

And now today, Dick told us that in his present work he was faced with problem after problem; and that seventeen times during the day he would be saying, “Don’t worry, don’t worry,” and the problem would lift and disappear. Perhaps if we start trying to remember Baba every time consciousness slips back from its one object into the many, we will be on the way to learning this valuable lesson of mental control and obedience, and thus be pleasing Baba.

Also, instead of worrying over our lapses of the past, let us become more

vigilant in the present. So often these words from the Book of Proverbs come to the surface of one's thought: "He that controlleth himself is greater than he that taketh a city."*

As a passing thought, I feel how fortunate indeed are the children of our nearby community, and indeed of others more distant, whose consciousness so early on is so spontaneously centered on Baba, their friend, with love. On Sundays at the Center, the children visit His house, Meher Abode. Saturdays they see Baba films. Fridays they see Baba's slides or hear Baba songs. Is there anything more worthwhile than this spontaneous shifting of consciousness towards Baba with love and freedom?

The other evening at the Center after the Baba slides had been shown, and the recitation of various poems started, a small voice in the third or fourth row piped out, "But more Baba, more Baba."

And on another occasion when someone was trying to converse with the mother, the little boy just walked around, pointing to the various pictures, saying, in a loud voice, "Baba, Baba, Baba." And crossing the lagoon bridge a child turned to her mother and said, "Is this heaven?" No reminder to tell them, or to think of Baba—their consciousness is already awakened, and with so much love.

Can we think of this as a Baba-happening? This new generation seems to share this one Infinite Consciousness to a degree not visible in the period before the two world wars. My world, if you like. See to where this awakened consciousness through Baba's love is leading them. Increasingly towards service work of some kind, ushering in this new brotherhood Baba speaks of in His discourse "The New Humanity."

I would like to share with you a short article or letter from Professor William Baum when he was teaching psychology at Harvard University. He

* Proverbs 16:32. The King James Version reads: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

was one of those I consulted when I told you that these problems began coming into my mind. I went to India, and I asked Eruch several questions, and then finally I came back, still not satisfied. And then Professor Baum was staying with us at the Center. I found him very helpful. And a year or so back I asked him to clarify a few points that puzzled me in connection with this word "consciousness." And this is what he wrote. He calls it "Consciousness and the Split Ego."

God's whim is to be conscious of Himself. And as a route to this goal, He has chosen first to make Himself conscious, and then to direct this consciousness to Himself. The sole purpose of the creation is the implementation of this design. The many only exists for the One to know Himself. The objects of consciousness during its evolution are the many. After attainment of full consciousness in the human form, consciousness must shift from the many to the One. This redirection is difficult, because consciousness is born in the dense jungle of desires, habits, and attitudes. Here and there a small ray of reality filters through the thick tangle of vegetation. But for the most part consciousness is confined to the jungle. And this thicket which once sheltered and nourished the developing consciousness is now an impediment. Though no longer necessary, it still seems necessary, because consciousness, which must have an object, as yet has not found another object. Just as a baby eventually finds the womb that nourishes it a confinement, so consciousness at its first fullness is imprisoned in the objects that stimulated its development. However, consciousness in us is finite, though complete, because it is riveted to the objects of illusion. Baba, however,

is infinite consciousness. He is conscious of the One, and is the One consciousness, which is Reality. And although consciousness develops within the limitations of the illusion, and is fixed on the objects of illusion, in reality it is indivisible. This is why Baba says He is simultaneously free from all limitations and yet bound in us. "In Myself I am free, but in you I am bound." But consciousness, whether free and having reality for its object, or bound to the objects of illusion, is One. The jungle thicket, duality, in which consciousness becomes full is the false ego—the ego-mind. It stands between consciousness and the real ego, which is Reality—the light that filters through the vegetation. Baba is the Real Ego, conscious of Itself. And this Real Ego, the One Reality, while being the object of consciousness, is also inseparable from consciousness. The One that is the object of consciousness is also consciousness itself. Baba uses the metaphor of the self or ego, because it is more comprehensible than the language of consciousness. It is easier to conceive of the self as a prisoner in a cell, from which it must get free, than to think of consciousness riveted on inappropriate objects, from which it must turn away. And it is easier to think of the One Reality as an Ocean, in which the self must dissolve, than it is to think of the One Consciousness, which the apparently separate consciousness becomes, when its object shifts from the illusion to Reality. It is the oneness of consciousness, however, that lies behind Baba's statement, that the Real "I" plays the part of innumerable finite "I's" or ego-minds. And Baba says that when the Real "I" manifests, it begins playing its true role. And the Real Ego, playing the role of the false ego-mind, gradually

burns its way through its bindings, the jungle, to freedom. And the false “I” trying to love the Real “I” is actually the Real “I” trying to love Itself—but hampered by ignorance. The objectification of illusion, reality, and ignorance makes it easier for the intellect to approach them. Baba says, however, that nothing comes and nothing goes. Consciousness is all. And when misdirected, it is illusion, and when directed to Reality, it is Infinite. And its misdirection is ignorance.

Billy Baum thus describes our desires and habits as a dense jungle, an almost impenetrable thicket that we must break through.

In conclusion, there are a few thoughts that I’ve found that I thought might be a help to us all. This one is called “God and Love,” and it’s taken from a message given in Nagpur in 1944. Baba says:

The spiritual path is like climbing up to the mountain top through hills and dales and thorny woods and along steep and dangerous precipices. . . . If there is one thing which is most necessary for a safe and sure arrival at the top, it is love. All other qualities which are essential for the aspirants of the Highest can and must come to them if they faithfully follow the whispers of the unerring guide of love. If you lose hold of the mantle of this guide, there is only despair in store for you. The heart without love is entombed in unending darkness and suffering; but the heart which is restless with love is on the way to realisation of the unfading light and unfathomable sweetness of Life Divine.

Human love should not be despised even when it is fraught with limitations. It is bound to break through all these

limitations and initiate the aspirant into eternal life in the Truth so that the lover loses his separate and false self and gets united with God, who is the one matchless and indivisible ocean of unsurpassable love. The gateway to this highest state of being one with God is firmly closed for all who do not have the courage to lose their separate existence in the restless fire of Divine Love. I give my blessings to all who are thirsting for the full realisation of divinity, for they shall be the pillars of the coming era of Truth and Love.*

And then, on a lighter note, a quote from Francis Brabazon's little pamphlet known as *The Lord Is Our Brother*:

The Avatar is our eternal Lord and Play-fellow. He loves the play He Himself created; He loves our playing of the roles of this play and He loves playing with us in these roles. When we realize this our fears will vanish and there will be no "Saviour" to see—only our Brother to serve in surrenderance and joy. . . . God as Author of the play is our Father; but God as Avatar is at the same time the Holder of the thread of our lives. . . .†

And the thread of our lives is that "I am ever conscious that I am in you, while you are never conscious that I am in you. Daily, I support you and share your consciousness. Now I want you to uphold Me and share my

* The message "God and Love" was read out to a large audience, in the presence of Meher Baba, by Advocate A. V. Khare at the National College Hall in Dhantoli, Nagpur, on November 12, 1944. In *Messages of Meher Baba Delivered in the East and West* (Ahmednagar, India: Adi K. Irani for the Publication Committee, Meher Baba Universal Spiritual Centre, 1945).

† Francis Brabazon, Address at the Bombay Press Conference, February 25, 1959. Reprinted in "Two Birthday Talks," *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 17, no. 1 (1976), p. 21.

consciousness one day.”* “I know you are all Mine forever, but I want you to make Me yours.”†

It’s twenty-five minutes past ten. I have one further quote but I’m sure you’re all very anxious, aren’t you, to get out into the sunlight.

AUDIENCE: No!

You don’t mind? I’ll tell you why I did write it, because it was the very, very first message that Baba gave to the press after He had arrived in California. It comes in a little book of messages that was given to reporters in Hollywood on May 29, 1932, and you see that as far back as that, Baba Himself was talking of consciousness. Consciousness, as far as the world was concerned, didn’t really come very much to the fore until about twenty years later. But you see Baba mentions it in 1932. And now you can take up magazine after magazine, and of course there is the book *The Mastery of Consciousness* by Allan Y. Cohen,‡ which makes me think of how popular this word has become.

Now, one of the most helpful of Baba’s messages is the one in that little booklet of messages which was given to reporters in Hollywood in 1932:

So much has been said and written about the “Highest Consciousness” and God-realization that people are bewildered as to the right process and immediate possibility of attainment. The philosophical mind wading laboriously through such literature only ends by learning a few intellectual gymnastics. The highest state of consciousness is latent in all. The Son of God is in every man, but requires to be manifested. The method of attaining this great consciousness must be very

* See note 3, p. 271.

† February 1954. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3469.

‡ See note 4, p. 271.

practical and must be adapted to the existing mental and material conditions of the world. . . .

In the evolutionary ascent from the mineral, vegetable and animal life, the latent mind gradually expands and develops till full consciousness is reached in the human form. To create this very consciousness, the universe emanated from the Infinite Ocean of Knowledge and Bliss, i.e., God the Absolute. In the human form, however, a difficulty is confronted, to remove which, prophets and spiritual Masters have periodically visited this earthly plane. Besides full consciousness in the human form, as a result of previous conditions of life, the ego, the "I," is evolved.

The ego is composed of fulfilled and unfulfilled desires, and it creates the illusion of feeling finite, weak and unhappy. Henceforth, the soul can only progress through the gradual suppression of this finite ego and its transformation into the Divine Ego, the One Infinite Self, but retaining in full the consciousness of the human form. When man realizes this state of Divine Consciousness, he finds himself in everyone and sees all phenomena as forms of his own Real Self. The best and also the easiest process of overcoming the ego and attaining the Divine Consciousness is to develop love and render selfless service to humanity in whatever circumstances we are placed. All ethics and religious practices ultimately lead to this. The more we live for others and less for ourselves, the more the low desires are eliminated, and this, in turn, reacts upon the ego, suppressing and transforming it proportionately. The ego persists to the end. Not till all the six out of the seven principal stages on the Path (culminating

in the God-conscious state) are traversed is the ego completely eliminated, to reappear on the seventh plane as the Divine “I,” the state of Christ Consciousness to which Jesus referred when he said, “I and my Father are One,” and which corresponds to the state of living in the Infinite and finite at one and the same time. . . .

The extraordinary results achieved by a Perfect Master are due to the fact that being one with the Universal Mind, he is present in the mind of every human being and can therefore give just the particular help needed to awaken the Highest Consciousness latent in every individual. Perfection, however, in order to achieve the greatest result on the material plane, must possess a human touch and a keen sense of humor.*

Now: “The other night”—I must tell you, I wrote this about a year ago—“The other night, having completed what I wanted to say, I closed the book and said, ‘Well, now that’s finished, there is nothing more to say.’” Right. “And I said good night, and I went to bed. And the moment my head struck the pillow, there flashed from within the following words: ‘Love, Joy, Peace, Happiness.’ So vividly, with no effort. But just these four words continuously through the night, and into the morning, and even beyond. And I think that perhaps in the above thoughts on consciousness, I may have overemphasized the consciousness of illusion and duality, with its wants and desires, and not the aspect of Baba, God’s infinite love consciousness, as the supreme goal of all consciousness.

“And, so Baba stepped in, as I might say, and reminded me, ‘Have you

* This “broadsheet” was printed up for Hollywood reporters, as described in *Meher Baba’s Early Messages to the West*, p. 269. The Message to Reporters in Hollywood, Given by Meher Baba on His Arrival in California, May 29, 1932, appears in *Meher Baba’s Early Messages to the West*, pp. 12–14.

forgotten what the infinite Divine Consciousness is?" And the answer was, Love, Joy, Peace, Happiness."

Now I thank you all very much.

I think Baba would say, as He always did after a talk or something of this kind: *Now all go out and enjoy yourselves. And take Baba with you.*

AUDIENCE: *Beautiful, Kitty.*

. . . Now, somebody thought that I would be having questions and answers. But do you know what Baba says? That one question always leads to another question. And there are all these dear ones behind me just longing to get me out of the way so they can bring in their musical program. So we're not going to have any questions and answers tonight, but instead, if my voice holds out, I'll tell you, not how I came to Baba, but how Baba came to me.

Now, I might get one or two dates wrong, but I hope not, because I didn't think of this earlier tonight.

It was in 1928 that Baba asked Rustom* to go to England. Rustom was one of Baba's longest disciples up to that time, and I think he came first amongst the mandali, and when Baba asked him to go to England, he said, "Well, Baba, why do you send *me* to England? I don't know anybody there, and I really don't know how to talk about You, and I'm sure You could find another one of Your mandali."

And Baba said, "But don't you love Me, Rustom?" So Rustom said, "Well, yes, of course, Baba." Then Baba said, "If you go to England, My work will be done if you love Me. You can go to as many cricket matches as you like, football matches, you can go to the cinema, and just accept all the invitations that come your way. And My work will be done."

Now, that was in 1927. In 1931 I was teaching music, and I had been

* Rustom K. Irani, brother of Adi K. Irani and father of Meheru R. Irani.

teaching for fifteen years before I met Baba. And for the first time I had a touch of pleurisy. This was in December 1931. And so the doctor said, "Well, now, take off three months." And he said, "And don't go teaching at all for three months."

In the meantime, at this particular moment, my brother Herbert had gone to St. Thomas' Hospital to study medicine. He was wanting to finish that and to be a doctor. But in the meantime, when he heard that I had to go away for three months, for rest, he thought, "Well, I'll just see where you can go."

So, he was at the hospital where he was training, and said to the students there, "Do you know any nice place outside of London, where my sister could go for a month and not do anything but rest?" And they gave him a book called *Light*. And he opens the book, it's a metaphysical book, and it falls open to the page where a retreat is advertised in a place called East Challacombe, which is in a very lovely part of England down in North Devon, near Ilfracombe.

And he thought it was a very nice retreat, run by somebody who had recently returned from India. He was rather interested in India anyway, he'd been in the army there, and he was interested in Gandhi and Milarepa, so he said, "Well, Kitty, I'll go down first of all, and I'll see what it's like." That was a four-hour journey by train from Waterloo Station, and he went down, and he stayed there three days.

Now, in the meantime, before he left, he gave me a book to read. It was Romain Rolland's life of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna.* That was my very, very first introduction to anything which is of Eastern thought. I was brought up in a very conservative manner, Protestant of the English Church, and my parents were very conservative, and at that time, late Victorian,

* See note 5, p. 271.

anybody over in the East was “heathen” to us. We gave our money to the heathen missions, and we made clothes for the heathens.

And as for “karma” or “reincarnation,” or any of those words, well, I’d never even *heard* of such words.

Well, now, so my brother went down, and he left me with this book to read. And when he came back—he stayed there three days—he said, “Yes,” he said, “It’s all right, you can go down and stay, and you won’t have to work at all, won’t have to be fetching the wood up, everybody was working at this retreat for themselves.”

I ought to have said one little thing that I left out, so I’ll go back. I told you just now about Rustom Irani being sent to England, didn’t I? Well, you want to know, of course, what Rustom Irani was *doing* in England. He did exactly what Baba said. He went to cricket matches, and football matches, and he found himself one afternoon at an afternoon tea party—a rather uninteresting thing they have in England. But you do it, you balance a cup on your lap and you spill the tea.

Well, at this tea party, lo and behold, there was Meredith Starr, and Rustom Irani. Now, Meredith Starr had always been interested in Eastern thought. So when he saw a nice, handsome young Indian at the tea party—Rustom was very handsome and very tall—he naturally walked across the room and began talking to him.

And as he talked with Rustom, he found out that Rustom had a master in India, with the name of M. S. Irani, and they got talking. And of course the first thing that Meredith said was, “Well, now, when you go back to India, will you try and see if Meher Baba, or M. S. Irani, will allow me to come with my wife and my sister-in-law, and stay in their retreat?” To which Rustom of course said, “I will be very happy to do so.”

Now, Rustom didn’t know at all why Baba had sent him to the West, except that Baba had said, “You know, My work will be both in the East

and in the West. I will have to have Western disciples in this incarnation, as well as Eastern disciples." So Rustom was prepared for that.

So Rustom went back to India and told Baba what he had discovered, and of course Baba knew all along why he'd sent Rustom, but was delighted that the contact had been made. And straightaway Baba had a letter written to Meredith Starr to tell him to come out with his wife.

So Meredith Starr went out to Poona and Ahmednagar, and stayed with Baba with his wife, Margaret [or Margarita] Starr, and her sister, Esther Ross, in the ashram for about six months. And then Baba had to go to Persia. This was in early 1929. And He said to Meredith, "Now, you go back to the West, and try and interest people in My message of love, and find a small house where Easterners and Westerners could be together when I come over, and that would be in two years' time."

So this was the man that was running this little retreat in East Challacombe, in a beautiful part on the south coast, to which my brother went down. And when my brother went down to see Meredith Starr, his purpose was not to know anything about Baba, really; he was only looking for a place that I could go to.

But of course he heard about this great teacher from the East, and after he'd been there a day or so he realized that Meredith at least thought of M. S. Irani, as He was then, or Meher Baba we'll call Him, as being like Christ. And my brother heard all about Baba, and all about Eastern thought, and he came back to me at home, and said, "Yes, I think you'll be very happy down there, and you won't have to do any work, and you can stay there a month."

So I packed up my things and I went down too. And I met Meredith Starr. Now, I was very, very fond of my brother Herbert, very fond of him. I was one of a family of nine children. I was at the top, and he was one or two near the bottom, you see. So I became a little bit like a mother

to him, but not really, because my thought would be much more influenced by what he thought, as he came to say later. So we had that in common, you see, and he'd given me this book, meaning that I should read about Ramakrishna.

I went down, and I heard about Meher Baba, and Meredith wrote some very nice poetry which was very beautiful, and I could see how much he loved Meher Baba. He began talking to me about vegetarianism, and awareness, and said, "Don't fidget." And he said, "You know, awareness and all that sort of thing are part of the spiritual path."

He told me a little bit about reincarnation and karma, and he also said, "In your room where you're going to sleep, there is a picture of Baba on the wall." Or M. S. Irani, as I think He was still called then. "And if you see a light shining on the picture, don't be alarmed." He said, "That will be a very good sign spiritually."

I said, "All right." So I went to bed my first night, but the only experience I had was that the moon shone in the room, and shone on the picture.

Well, I stayed there, and I used to go for walks, and I would hear these poems, and a little bit more about Eastern philosophy, but I wasn't drawn to Meredith, not like my brother had been. Not at all.

But, because my brother was interested, I wasn't going to be left out of the picture, you see. Because that was another link we would have together; we had other links, but if he was going to be interested in this particular kind of philosophy—well, then, I would go along with it, you see.

After we came back, I went back to teaching, and for about another three months, that would be one term, and then July came. And in July, Herbert said, "Come on, let's go down again together." So we said we'd go down there together. This time when I went down, there were three or four other people there. There was one you know very well, Margaret Craske.

And Charles Purdom was there, the one who wrote the books.* I think we were about seven or eight people there.

And we would spend the evening hearing about the poetry, and talking about philosophical questions, and talking a little bit about Meher Baba. And while we were there, a cable came from India, from Baba—it was written to Meredith Starr, of course not to any of us—which said, “Love Calls Me to the West. Make preparations.”†

And, of course, you will imagine the excitement on the part of Meredith, and on the part of my brother, too, because he was getting very close to Meredith, and he was getting drawn to Baba through Meredith. You see, he was already, as I said, so interested in Milarepa and Eastern thought. And at the same time, remember, he was studying medicine at St. Thomas’ Hospital in London.

The first reaction to the cable was that we must do all we can to make it possible for them to come, and that was to provide the money for the four or five who were coming, and to provide the place where Baba could stay in London, and also a place where He could see a few visitors. Of course there was the retreat, that was all ready. That was the place that Baba had asked Meredith Starr to have.

In the meantime, Baba had been to Persia, and was now back again in India. So that when the cable came, we all talked it out, and Herbert and Meredith got together and said, that Baba said He’d come about August. But we were very used even then to Baba postponing. And He actually did not come until September 1931.

* *The Perfect Master: The Life of Shri Meher Baba* (1937) and *The God-Man: The Life, Journeys and Work of Meher Baba, with an Interpretation of His Silence and Spiritual Teaching* (1964); as well as the condensed edition of *Discourses* that Purdom edited under the title *God to Man and Man to God: The Discourses of Meher Baba* (1955).

† Cable of July 16, 1931, to Meredith Starr in Devonshire. In *Love Alone Prevails*, p.7. In *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1231, the cable is quoted as reading, “Make all preparations for My coming. Love is calling Me to the West.”

Now we had to decide where Baba was going to stay. We knew He was going to come and stay directly outside of London, in East Challacombe. But you don't usually come from abroad so far as from India and not stay overnight somewhere in London.

Well, that was a very difficult question, because there were four Indians, and England was still ruling in India, as you know, and it wasn't very easy to find places where Indians would be allowed to go. When they heard there were Indians, they'd say, "I'm sorry, but we have no room."

So, this is what Herbert did; he went to Father. And, in the meantime, there's one thing that's very important, that all leads into the story. You might not think so, but it does. Herbert, you see, was studying medicine. And he had about another two years to go. He'd already done English at the Cambridge University, and then changed and wanted to be a doctor. I wonder what else he would have liked to have been afterwards; something else, probably.

So he came to Father, and—well, he thought that he was very close to Meredith and he wanted to help Meredith financially with this nice little retreat outside of London. But he couldn't do that while he continued medicine, because then he was paying out for medicine. So he said, "I'll stop doing medicine, and I'll take a job instead. I'll try and get a job." He was already an English professor, he was an M.A., so he applied at the League of Nations and found that you could have an exchange professorship.

So he decided that he would go to Nanking for two years, as a professor of English, and forgo medicine, and make a lot of money, half of which he would live on and the other half to give to Meredith towards Baba's work in India and in this little retreat.

Okay? So he had five days. When Baba said He was coming in September 1931, Herbert had just five days before he was due to sail for China. So, that was the link. He came to Father, and he said, "Father, you

know I'm going away for two years. And there's something I'd like to ask if you'd do for me." So Father said, "Well, what is it?" So Herbert says, "I have some friends coming from India, and I'd very much want to know if you'll put them up for one night."

You see, it was one night, and Herbert going to be away for two years, so Father could hardly say, "Oh no, I couldn't do that." So Father had to swallow his pride, or whatever you like to call it, and he said, "Yes, they can come and stay one night." So that was one hurdle.

We got the money together for the tickets, and the day was to come, September 12. I was to go to the station in London and be there when the boat train came in, and my brother and Meredith Starr were to go all the way over to Marseille, where the *S. S. Rajputana* was going to come in on September 11, bring them from Marseille to Dover, and from Dover by the boat train to London on the 12th. And then they were going to come to our house. And Margaret Craske was to be there and see that everything was ready when they arrived.

Now, we had one of those . . . what you would call one of those old-fashioned brown houses, like in New York? You know, three or four flights up, and a big basement. Now, that was the kind of house we had, which had its water boiled from a big furnace in the basement up on the other floors.

So we put the top floor ready for Baba and the three that were coming with Him, and I was sleeping up on the top floor, and my brother had his bedroom there, and a sitting room where he worked, so that was going to be the room that Baba could see us all and entertain, and see visitors. And Mother and Father on the next floor down, and on the next floor was the sitting rooms and then the big basement underneath.

So, we were ready for Baba, and Margaret was to be staying at home, and see that everything was ready when Baba arrived. My brother and Meredith were rather secretive about Baba. Too secretive. And they did a

funny thing. Meredith told Margaret, “When you see Baba arriving on the doorstep, and coming in, you see that all the doors of the different rooms are closed, and that nobody is peeping out of the doors to see who’s arriving.”

Well, I can just imagine the host and hostess being told they were to stay somewhere out of distance. But Meredith—I mean, it was Meredith, remember, who brought five or six of us to Baba, but he had a few strange things about him. And, this was one. Such as four hours’ meditation when we got down there, and a few other little things, you see? But Baba puts up with everything if you love Him. At least to begin with, He does.

So, we thought, well, we have to have a vegetarian meal, and we got hold of a Japanese friend [Koizumi] to cook rice, and we knew that Baba ate lentils, and we had some junket made—there’s a funny story about that junket—and we had some fruit, and I suppose we had some bread.

The time arrived; it was to be half past four on Saturday afternoon, at Victoria Station in London, which is the terminus for all the boat trains coming from the Far East. And when I got to the station, there was a crowd of people. It was a foggy, wet Saturday afternoon. And I thought to myself, “Well, I thought there were only seven or eight people in the whole of London that knew about Baba. Where on earth do all these people come from?” And then suddenly I remembered that on that same day, and by the same boat, the S.S. *Rajputana*, Gandhi was to arrive. And there he was, coming down onto the platform, Gandhi and Miss Madeleine Slade, his secretary, and several other people in Indian dress. And all the people on the platform were all the people from India who were there to welcome him. He’d come over for conferences about nonviolence and home rule. You probably don’t remember that. But that was his purpose.*

So here was Baba on the same boat, by accident if you like to call it, or

* Kitty misremembered. For an accurate account, see *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1254.

by chance, and they arrived at the station. So I said to the porter that I didn't see Baba getting out of the train, or my brother or Meredith. And I said to the porter, "Well, is there no other part of the train?" Because I knew that sometimes if there was a large number on the boat, the trains came in two parts, on two different platforms.

"Oh yes," he said, "over there the other part of the train's coming in. If you're quick, and go up and down the stairs, you'll just get there." So I made a race for the platform, just in time to see my brother stepping off the train, and Meredith Starr, Rustom Irani, Agha Ali, Chanji, and Baba, you see. Baba with a turban on His head, and His chinchilla coat, and I think He had his white robe [*sadra*] underneath.

And so there I shook hands with Baba in a very formal way, because I was very formal in those days. I couldn't be anything different. And I only noticed that Baba's eyes took in the whole scene. They were this side, that side, and everywhere.

Well, we waited for the luggage and then my brother came up to me and said, "We decided that Baba and I and Meredith should go on by taxi, and you wait and get all the bedding rolls, and come along by another taxi with Rustom." And Herbert said, "You know, I think I'll take Baba by the foreign office, and Buckingham Palace." Things were very unsettled in England at that moment, so I knew already what my brother was thinking about Baba, that He would want to take Him not the direct way home to where we lived in Kensington, but all around the Foreign Office, and Downing Street, and Buckingham Palace, and the houses of Parliament, all these important places where decisions were being made every day on the Middle East situation and the conflict between Japan and China at that time.

So they went on and I waited, and then came along with Rustom and these bedding rolls. Now, have you ever seen Indian bedding rolls? They're very, very large, huge things. And they contain sheets, and towels, and

blankets and everything. And there were five or six of those. But we got them all onto one taxi.

And we finally arrived back at 32 Russell Road, which was where I lived. And there was Margaret, as was arranged, at the front door, to let us in. That was the first sight that she had of Baba, on the doorstep at 32 Russell Road.

Then we went upstairs, and we found Baba already seated, eating His rice and lentils, and the others were waiting on Him or standing around. And He asked Margaret and me to sit down. We sat down, and then Baba handed us a grape. Meredith Starr was the interpreter then, and he said—and Baba did this [*gestures*], you see, because we had no idea what that meant—“Baba’s telling you He’s very happy to see you. And He hopes that you’re well,” and all the rest.

So we ate our grapes, and then Baba got up to move, and went into another room and told us to remain seated and finish eating. Now, at that meal I told you we had junket. That was to be the dessert. But Meredith turned to me, before Baba took the junket, and he said, “How was the junket made?” “Oh,” I said, “it was made in the ordinary way.” “Oh,” he said, “then you can’t give it to Baba.” I said, “Why not?” “Well,” he said, “one of the ingredients comes from the cow, and Baba is a vegetarian.” So, I said, “All right.” So we couldn’t eat the junket.

Baba would have taken it, I’m sure, but He always did what Meredith wanted at that time. So that was our little first experience. Baba was a wonderful host.

Then Baba went into the next room, and just a few moments later—I suppose He changed—we were all sent for, there were five or six of us, one by one to Baba in the next room. Meredith and Chanji were the interpreters, and I think I went in first, and Baba said, “Is there anything you want to ask, or is there anything you’re worried about?”

Of course, Baba knew before I asked Him. I told Him, “Yes,” I said, “my brother Herbert is going to China, and there’s already talk of war,* and they say it’s a very serious situation, and I’m very drawn to him, and I’m just wondering what’s going to happen to him.” So then Baba spelled out on the board: “Don’t worry, I am sending him to China for My work and I will see that he comes back safely.”

So then Baba says, “Is there anything else you’d like to ask?” So I said, “No.” And then I left. And then Margaret Craske went in next. And Margaret tells the tale that when she went in, she couldn’t keep her eyes off Baba. She found Him so beautiful to look at. And she turned to Chanji at the side and said, “Do you think Baba minds my looking at Him so long?” And Baba took up the board and spelled out: “It is your love that brought Me to the West.” So that was Margaret’s first interview.

I’m not quite sure whether this next thing happened in this interview with Margaret, or whether it was the next one.[†] But it’s interesting, because Baba evidently, in two or three days, was going to the retreat, you know. You know what I mean by the retreat that we had all ready for him out of London. And He must have turned to Margaret, and said, “Well now, you’ll come down on Tuesday to be with Me there.” And Margaret’s first reaction was, “Oh, but Baba, I will be teaching.” Of course, she was in dancing. But she said, before she had time to finish, Baba said, “But if you don’t come, I will have to turn the key.” And Margaret said from that moment she knew that you never discussed with a Master. If He wanted you to do something, you would do it. It wouldn’t be “but,” or this or that. It was a lesson that Margaret learned very early on. And she always abided by that.

Well, the interviews finished, and then we were all sent back to the

* Between China and Japan.

† Margaret Craske writes, “During that evening He asked me to go to Devonshire with Him for a few days.” Quoted in Delia DeLeon, “The English Scene: Early and Late,” *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1977), p. 40.

room. And then Baba came back to the sitting room where we'd been eating our meal, and He called me and we sat talking. I can't quite remember what it was. I imagine it was "Are you happy?" and things of that kind.

I must have been looking at His garment; He had a long white robe on. There must have been a tear on it. I never said anything, but I suppose I saw the tear. And Baba turned to Meredith, and said, "Tell Kitty to bring a cotton and needle." So I went to get the cotton and needle, and when I came back Meredith said that Baba wants you to mend this tear.

So, you see, my experience was that Baba knows everything, from that first instance. And with great trepidation up comes the robe and I do my best to mend the tear. Then, after that little time, I think a few other people saw Baba, and then Baba retired for a while and said, "Come back, we'll all be together at seven o'clock, and we'll have some music."

We didn't know what kind of music Baba would like, but we were prepared, we knew that He liked music, so we had Paul Robeson's spirituals. There was "Water Boy," and there was "Steal Away to Jesus," and "Weeping Mary," just these rather sad things, rather serious things. None of the Spanish music, which afterwards we found that Baba just loved. But that, as Filis [Frederick] would say, was after we tried to be a little bit serious with a Master.

So anyhow, we had a wonderful time sitting with Baba on the floor; we must have been there nearly an hour. And it was really very, very beautiful. Baba in our midst, there was no talking at all, just Herbert playing these records.

And then it got to be about eight o'clock, and Baba said, "And now we'll go to bed, because I have to leave at seven the next morning to go down for the retreat." So as He left the room, to go to His own room, He turned to Margaret and me and said, "Are you worrying about anything?" And so of course the usual answer, "Well, we don't think so, Baba." So then Baba said, "Don't worry, be happy. I will help you." That was the end of the first evening.

And of course He went off, and the men went off with Him, and Margaret and I— and my sister was there from Canada, I'd forgotten that, and my niece from Canada who was going to school—we just sat and we talked a little bit about Baba, and thought that He was very beautiful. We didn't understand what He was, excepting that He was a spiritual teacher. Meredith had taught us that, you see.

And then the next morning came, and Margaret said to me, "Kitty, what happened to you in the night?" I said, "I don't know, I thought I slept." "Oh no," she said, "you didn't," she said, "I was on the bed and you were sleeping on the floor, and you tugged at my arm, and I said, 'Yes, Kitty, what do you want?'" I hadn't met Margaret until then; we only met through Baba at the retreat. Neither of us had known each other before. In fact, none of us knew each other. We were brought together only through Baba.

And so she said, "Yes, you tugged my arm, and I said, 'Oh Kitty, what do you want? Anything the matter?'" And she said I said, "Oh, but isn't He so beautiful? Isn't He so wonderful?" And I said, "I don't remember anything about it." Anyhow, that's what happened.

Now we come to the next morning. We did have two maids in the house, which was a usual thing to have at that time, Irish maids, but it never occurred to me to tell them to get up very early and light the fire, which heats the hot water right up to the top floor. Never occurred to me to do that. And I hear this knock on the door in the morning, and I think it was Chanji, or little Ali, who says, "Oh, Baba wants a hot bath."

"Oh," I said, and of course there's no water. I said "Of course I can get Katy," or whatever our maid's name was, "to light the fire but it would take half an hour." "Oh," and the answer comes back, "don't worry, just get us a little hot water." You know, we didn't even have an electric ring, or whatever you'd like to call it, we only had gas at that time.

So I went down and put on two kettles of hot water on the gas stove, one after the other, and brought it up for the bathtub. And somehow I suppose Baba had a bath. I didn't hear any more about it then. But of course afterwards we were to learn that never did Baba ever go without a hot bath in the morning. And very early at that. But we had to learn all those things slowly.

After that we got them seated, and breakfast began. We never had hot milk for the tea, though afterwards we realized Baba always had hot milk with tea, and they do even today. And so we had just the tea, and cold milk, and toast and a few lentil cutlets that we had left over from the meal before.

And then we sat down to eat, and Baba turned to me and said, "But where is Herbert?" "Oh," I said, "I expect Herbert's upstairs, Baba." So He says, "Well, go up and fetch him." So I went up, and there was Herbert, who was always rather worrying about things, struggling with these *huge* bedding rolls, trying to tie them up, you see.

He said, "Well, nobody else has tied them up. They've got to be tied up, we've got to leave at seven, Meredith said we must not leave late, because there are many people waiting down in Devonshire to see Baba." So I come down with the message.

And then Baba says, "Well, how is he going to work for Me if he gets so frustrated in this way, and gets so agitated? Just go up and tell him to come down."

So I go up again and tell him to come down. I can't remember whether Herbert came down or not. But let's hope he did.

So, the tea was over, and—now, I didn't tell you, I was going to tell you—by this time Baba hadn't even met my mother and father. Just think, they were the host and hostesses. And do you know why not? Because, you see, when mother peeked out of the door, when she heard the front door bell and knew they were going up the stairs, and she opened the door,

Meredith had instructed Margaret Craske not to let anybody do any peeping out of the doors, or be on the staircases, while Baba went up to his room. So, as father used to tell me afterwards, he thought it was very strange that neither your father nor mother was allowed to see the guest of which they were host and hostess. But that is what happened.

Of course, it never happened again, Baba saw to that. And there were many things that we realized, the last sort of thing that Baba would ever do. I could tell you lovely stories in connection with my mother and father that happened later. But this is what happened on the first night.

We hadn't got a car, but we had a rental car to take them the four hours' drive down to East Challacombe. And I was to go down on the Tuesday following, with my fourteen-year-old niece Zillah, who was going to school. Baba had seen her, just before He left. But strangely my brother had said, "Baba, I want You to see my niece of fourteen." And said, "I would love You to bring her to You." He asked Baba that. He said, "I want her to be a follower of Yours."

And Baba had said yes. He said, "I will see her before I leave." So Baba went to the room where she was still asleep, and as Baba went into the room, she opened her eyes. And Baba just said, "She has great work for Me to do in the future." He must have meant in another life, because it certainly is not going to be in this life. That is, time, with Baba, is something quite different to what we think it is.

So we got started. And I went down, with my niece, but not till the Tuesday. Baba had a way of working that for two or three days He would work with one person, then He would send for another and work with them for two or three days.

Since Herbert had only three days left before he was going to go to China, Baba was going to spend the Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday with him. And those also at the ashram, and Meredith Starr and his wife, and

others, at East Challacombe. We'll call it "East Challacombe," because that was what it was called.

Just as Baba was getting into the car, He turned to me with the board in His hand, and He said, "Is there anything you want?" Well, the car was already in motion to go off, I had no time to think, and I just said, "Yes, Baba, an increased capacity to love and an increased capacity to serve." And then as an afterthought, and I can't think where it came from, I said, "Yes, spontaneous goodness." I don't know what it really meant! But those three things came out, you see.

And Baba just spelled on the board: "You will have all in a very short time." And then He got into the car and He left.

The rest of us at home went upstairs to the room, myself along with Margaret Craske, my sister, and my niece. We sat down to breakfast and discussed what a wonderful person Baba seemed to be, from the few hours that we'd been together. We'd seemed so at home with Him, He seemed so loving. In fact He seemed unlike anything we had ever experienced before.

My sister May Cluse, Zillah's mother, was there, and I said, "Baba wants me to bring Zillah down on Tuesday." "Oh?" said May. "My daughter has come to go to school here. How can I have her going to an ashram where you meditate four hours a day? Isn't she ever to have any dancing, or all the things that young girls of fourteen would like? Oh, no, I'm sure her father in Canada wouldn't like her to go." And she started crying, you see.

Well, she knew that we were interested in Baba. She said, "No, I wouldn't like her to go at all." So Margaret Craske said, "Now, don't worry, we won't take her if the girl doesn't want to go. We won't force her to come down with us." And of course within a few days, Zillah was the one who wanted to go.

But anyhow, we left it that way, that night. And we talked, and we

discussed about Baba. Well, Tuesday came, and we went down by train, we didn't go by car, and when we got down to the little house, at the retreat in East Challacombe, we just saw Baba, He welcomed us there, but He didn't have very much more to do with us. There were two or three other people there, and we entered into the rest of the ashram, we went for walks, and we talked with Rustom and others, but I didn't see very much of Baba. Until the Wednesday. Tuesday and Wednesday, we went to the beach with Baba, but He spent most of the time with my brother Herbert, who was to leave. He gave him His sadra, He gave him His turban, and He gave him an orange to take with him on the way. And Herbert said, "I ate both the peel and the orange."

And next day he went off, and Baba and Meredith went with Him to the train, and he went off to China. Before He got to China, what we expected would happen did happen—the war broke out between China and Japan. Now, Baba gave Herbert certain specific places to stay. He was to go to Moscow, and he was to go to Warsaw, and do certain things Baba wanted him to do. Baba wanted him to contact certain people, and told him how he would be able to find them.

Naturally, when my brother left, I was a little sad. As I've told you, I was very close to my brother. So when he had gone off to China, I didn't stay around the ashram, I went for a walk in the woods, quite near where the retreat was. And then I began to walk back. And I saw two of the Indians walking towards me. "Oh," I said, "is anything wrong?"

"No," they said, "but Baba sent us to find you, because He wanted to see you."

So I said, "Oh, well, I'm coming along," and so I came back and I came into the room, and then Baba told me to sit down. Then I think He turned to my niece, and said, "Ask Kitty why she's happy." And, I don't know why He should ask that, because I'd probably been weeping a little bit. But

anyway, I answered, “Well, I’m happy.” So Baba said, “You see, Zillah, she’s happy.” So that was all that was said.

Now, that was on the Wednesday. We went to the beach and we played a game, and Baba began to take a little notice of us both, asking us if we were happy and so forth. Then He called me and said, “Thursday”—and we thought He was going to stay there a year, but He said, “Kitty, I want you write to your parents and ask if I can come back again and stay ten days.”

So I said, “Oh, Baba, you had asked me to come for a week. And now you’re asking me to go back?”

So then Baba said, “But didn’t you say you wanted to work for Me?”

So I said, “Well, yes, Baba.”

“Well, then,” He said. “My work in England is finished.”

The tape ends at this point. For a more detailed account of this period, see Kitty’s book Love Alone Prevails and The Awakener Magazine, “Meher Baba, 1931” by Kitty Davy, vol. 11, no. 2 (1966), online at <http://www.theawakenermagazine.org/>.

MEHER BABA'S CALL

MEHER BABA'S EIGHTY-SIXTH BIRTHDAY
WASHINGTON, DC
FEBRUARY 23, 1980

Age after age, when the wick of Righteousness burns low, the Avatar comes yet once again to rekindle the torch of Love and Truth. Age after age, amidst the clamor of disruptions, wars, fear and chaos, rings the Avatar's call: "Come all unto me."

Although, because of the veil of illusion, this Call of the Ancient One may appear as a voice in the wilderness, its echo and re-echo nevertheless pervades through time and space to rouse at first a few, and eventually millions, from their deep slumber of ignorance. And in the midst of illusion, as the Voice behind all voices, it awakens humanity to bear witness to the Manifestation of God amidst mankind.

The time is come. I repeat the Call, and bid all come unto me. . . ."

Reading over "Meher Baba's Call" from the New Life period, given on the occasion of the mass darshan in India in 1954, I would like this message to be

* From "Meher Baba's Call" (1954). *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3552–53.

a central point for us this evening, with its timeless message for all of us incorporating the directive from Meher Baba that “This New Life is endless.”*

As I reread it, my thoughts turned frequently back to the years before I met Meher Baba in September of 1931 in London. A thought to recall—a quote of Baba’s: “The importance lies not in your finding Me, but in My finding you.”

Looking back fifty years or so, certain events of that early period seem to have come alive and to have a direct bearing leading up to the greatest day of my life—September 12, a day that was to change completely the direction and goal of my life—the day of my first meeting with Meher Baba.

I have not previously shared these thoughts with any of the groups. I do so today because I feel that you now may recall outstanding events of earlier days and see them today as having in some way influenced the spiritual path you are traveling on at present, and yes, that led you to Baba; knowing at the same time that Baba himself was doing the drawing. But true it is that when the Call came for action, you were ready to follow and obey by Baba’s grace.

Speaking from my own experience (and with all of you, likewise, whatever your experiences were), I believe from the bottom of my heart that the few scattered extraneous “happenings” in my own past were planned by Baba as a necessary preparation for what was to follow, so that when the moment came one would be ready and not blind to the Call.

I will go back to the early 1920s in London, England, when I was at St. Paul’s High School. There was on the visiting staff a great conductor and composer, Gustav Holst—a name familiar to many—who taught the choral singing classes weekly during the four years I was there. Today he is recognized as a much greater man than any of us then thought—both as a

* New Life Circular No. 17, September 1950. Quoted in *The God-Man*, p. 187.

musician and a lover of Indian mysticism, which he had studied deeply. I kept in touch with him but I was unconscious of his Eastern interests. Can one say, though, that I was influenced by his consciousness and that perhaps at the time some transference of consciousness took place, to bloom later?

A few years passed and I was teaching music. I met a Professor Barnett,* one of the foremost translators of early Sanskrit texts at the British Museum in London. I recall the conversations we had regarding his work, and we spoke of Sanskrit and Indian thought, but I was not actually interested at that time.

The third contact was my connection with the Isherwood family. Christopher, the elder son, is a well-known translator of the Bhagavad Gita, and he was with the group, which included Aldous Huxley and others who were interested in the Vedanta path and the Hindu religion. His younger brother, Richard, was my piano pupil for many years. Thus another early link with India and Eastern thought.

Following these three earlier incidents, a few years later, all of a sudden, I became absorbed in Christian mysticism. Any money I had after necessities went to buy books on mysticism by the German mystics Johannes Tauler, Henry Suso, and Meister Eckhart, the Englishwoman Evelyn Underhill, and St. Francis of Assisi and St. Teresa of Ávila, along with Plotinus and Plato. Outside my music teaching, here lay my interests. I had always loved Jesus, but not as these great mystics with their love for God, and they stirred in me a passionate longing to experience what they had felt. At this point I had no conscious interest in Eastern mysticism. My background was of a very conservative Protestantism in a formal Victorian atmosphere.

Finally, a few years later—and this brings me within a year of my first contact with Meher Baba in 1931—I came down with a sharp attack of

* Lionel David Barnett (1871–1960).

pleurisy, and the doctor prescribed three months of rest from teaching. My brother Herbert was studying for his doctoral degree at St. Thomas' Hospital in London, and he heard through a friend of a spiritual retreat at a place called East Challacombe, North Devon. He and I were very close, although a span of ten years divided us. This incident, too, was planned, I feel, by Baba, for I never would have heard of Baba had it not been for Herbert. He went down by train, a journey of four hours, to inspect the retreat. There he met Meredith Starr, recently returned from India, who, under Baba's instructions, was running this country house in East Challacombe not far from the sea, as a spiritual retreat where those desiring of such a place could come and hear more of Baba and His mission.

Herbert was elated with the retreat, and I arrived a few days later, taking with me a book by Romain Rolland on the life of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna. This was my first insight into Eastern thought and impressed me deeply. Remember, at that time no comparative religion courses were available in college or school

This surely was most opportune, as it turned out, in preparing me for my first contact with Baba. I was struck by one short sentence: "You love most when you are least conscious of loving." I was to hear similar thoughts within this short period from someone else!

And within six months of this visit to the retreat, on my second visit, while there with a group of about eight others, a cable came from Baba from India to Meredith reading, "Love Calls Me to the West. Make preparations."* This was July. In September my brother and Meredith were on the way to Marseilles to meet Baba on His arrival on the S.S. *Rajputana*. It was arranged that I should meet Baba at the Victoria Station terminus in London before we drove to my parents' home, where Baba was to stay the night, proceeding the following morning to East Challacombe.

* See note 6, p. 271.

The years of silent preparation and planning by Baba, the seeds He had sown in His own manner and now in His own time were about to break into blossom. How does Baba put it? "I have come to sow the seed of love in your hearts,"* and in due course in My own time they will bear fruit.

I met Baba for the first time that afternoon. The hour was late. It was 4:30 p.m. on a cold, wet Saturday. My response was to His Love, which drew forth from me a responding love which, before He left next morning, wanted straightaway to express itself in action. But that is another saga.

Now to share with you an experience of an opposite kind in the case of my brother, who brought me outwardly to Baba and who himself served Baba with love 100 percent during the very early years. For reasons of his own—and yes, difficult circumstances—Herbert left Baba within two or three years of his first meeting with Him. Later he joined the Ramakrishna group and followed the teachings of Vivekananda and is doing so today. Recently he wrote me of his early experiences in India and with Eastern thought before he met Baba, and of his travels in India in the 1940s, and he realizes that he was not ready and was blinded by prejudices of trivialities, ego bindings, and weaknesses. The wonderful thing to me is that Baba led Herbert to holy places connected directly with Himself, although he was no longer with Baba. Herbert's reflections on these visits reveal an awareness of sadness of some kind, the pull of the Beloved for Himself, the lover. Yes, and a great lover he was. But I don't worry, for Baba says to us all: I will never leave you—where can you go that I am not? Your heart is still with me. It is only your wobbly mind, and it is for such wobbly minds that I have come. But Baba warns us to hold on to His *daaman* with two hands. Don't let it slip through your fingers.

Repeating Baba's words, the call from the Beloved to us all—to follow, love, and work for that love latent deep within the soul—is the call of the

* From the "Final Declaration" (1954), quoted in *The God-Man*, p. 274.

Beloved to Himself, now the lover, bound in each by the innumerable forms He has to endure for His return journey to Infinite Existence, with love in full “I” consciousness. “In Myself I am free but in you all I am bound. But the binding is of My own doing, that I may realize Myself consciously in each of you.”

I once asked Baba in the early 1930s how it was that I wanted to do certain things for Him, and His answer was, “Because you have been with me for ages and ages,” and He said it is Love in its highest aspect. Baba’s Divine Love is with His lovers always, helping and guiding them, and 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 and commitments.

Baba says: The separative ego or “I” can disappear only through Divine Love, which will be My gift to mankind. I am the Ocean of Love. Draw as much as possible of this Love—it rests with you to draw as much Love as you can out of the Ocean. It is to live in your hearts and to share your lives that I have come.

It is God’s love for man that counts—only a Master can awaken love through the Divine Love which He imparts. There is no other way. Seek no other reward than the gift of Divine Love. Yearn for the gift. You have no idea of My love and compassion, Baba says, which sustain your very being. Be receptive to My Love. To be what you really are, Divine Love; to be practical yet divine—that can be achieved in any life, and not just by sitting quiet, away from the world.

There can be no greater moment, no greater treasure, than His awakening, for this it is. This is the only miracle in this present Avatarhood that He said He would perform. So look upon any happenings in your so-called past that you feel have played a part in the situation in which you find yourself today as being the “Silent Call” of Love, the Beloved who

Himself prepares the way for that great moment in time for the awareness and glimpse of consciousness of the Beloved's Call—a call to action to follow. Do not look upon these incidents as something belonging to the past—no! They are happenings in the NOW, for Baba tells us there is no past. All is in the present—the Now—and the greatest moment in your life has been this moment of awareness and consciousness of that inborn call, and your great moment has been your response in action to that call.

Baba has told us, among other things, that Divine Love is a call to work for Him. Baba has left many points on this subject of His work and real workers. The following quotes tell us what is Baba's work for us:

Now is the time to spread My message of Love and Truth.*

I am ever conscious that I am in you, while you are never conscious that I am in you. Daily I support you and share your consciousness. Now I want you to uphold Me and share My consciousness of Divine Love and share with all you come in contact with.†

Be alert to spread this expressive Beauty of the Divine Beloved through practical action and keep constant vigil in the midst of intense activity.‡

* Baba made many references to spreading His message. See, e.g., "The Great Task Before Baba Lovers": "Be brave and spread My 'Message of Love' far and wide to all quarters, in order to fulfill My Divine Will." *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 21, no. 2, p. 1. He also said, "I want all my lovers to inform others of this [Final] Declaration and spread my message of love to all four corners of the land." *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3661.

† See note 3, p. 271.

‡ "...you should be constantly alert towards the expressive Beauty of the All-pervading Beloved." *The Everything and The Nothing*, p. 41.

The way of My work is the way of effacement, which is the way of strength, not of weakness, and through it you become mature in My Love.*

We ask, what work? and Baba replies: “My work will embrace everything. It will permeate every phase of life.”†

Here is the answer to the laborer, the mother, the dancer, the painter, the philosopher, the doctor, ad infinitum. But Baba reminds us that in our chosen work, each Baba lover must be a Baba-center personified, radiating the eternal message of Divine Love—living a life of love, sacrifice, and honesty.

Four important things come to mind as I think back on the days with Baba in India and watching His work, the fourth being the most difficult:

- There must be no worry attached to our work. This, Baba says, is one of the greatest obstacles to spiritual progress.
 - There must be joy and enthusiasm.
 - There must be endless patience.
 - To be and to look cheerful and happy, is a spiritual duty!
- Baba says, a divine art.

Let us now read the close of “Meher Baba’s Call”: “Come all unto Me.” Afterwards, if you like, I will read certain passages from Baba’s messages and sayings, taken mostly from the New Life phase of Baba’s life. These we can share and I think they will answer many of your questions on suffering, war, intuition, and so on. I understand that when many questions are asked at

* From “What Baba Means by Real Work” (1954), quoted in *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 653. Baba’s message on Real Work was explained by Meher Baba at Rajahmundry on March 1–2, 1954, during His Andhra tour and subsequently published as a pamphlet.

† From Message to Reporters and Press Representatives, Given on board the S.S. *Bremen* in New York on May 19, 1932. In *Meher Baba’s Early Messages to the West*, p. 7.

Meherazad, the mandali's reply is: "Read the books by and about Baba, and they will answer your questions."

To end now with the closing statement from "Meher Baba's Call," this is a message that was given at the end of the New Life period, and I note that in this period Baba frequently focused our attention not on Himself but on God and the Oneness of all:

Live not in ignorance. Do not waste your precious life-span 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 other reward 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.

I give you all my Blessing that the spark of my divine love may implant in your hearts the deep longing for Love of God.

—Meher Baba

A FEW WORDS ON KITTY'S NINETIETH BIRTHDAY

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC

AUGUST 30, 1981

(THE SUNDAY FOLLOWING HER AUGUST 28TH BIRTHDAY)

From time to time one or another has asked me to get up and talk to you, and I have said no. Today I feel like saying a few words to you all. Remember, however, that I speak as one of you—the only difference being that I am ninety and you are all for the most part in the fascinating twenties and thirties. So be it!

I don't know what you would answer if I put the question to you, "How does intuition work? Does it come all in a flash, or in bits and pieces?" When I take a pencil in hand, it comes in that rather untidy format: bits and pieces.

First, a big thank-you to all of you who have contributed in many different ways towards the success of this happy ninetieth birthday celebration now in progress. In looking forward to this occasion, I remember how Baba would often use a birthday occasion as a time to bring up a topic that was on His mind.

Looking back on the early ashram days, Baba did not make life easy for any of us. I recall He had us in "groups," on top of each other, you might say, with nowhere to escape to! Baba arranged all of this and used the opportunity for His work. There followed frustrations, tensions, backbiting,

tempers flying, and continual face-to-face confrontations. Efforts to make ashram life work as Baba wished it to work were not easy! But according to Baba, ashram life was a forerunner, so to speak, of life in the world.

Now, the thoughts that I had put together earlier this last week were touched upon so beautifully by the quotes that Dr. Harry Kenmore gave us from Baba's messages in the film last night, that my first thought this morning was to tear this all up! My second thought, however, was that all of the community, Baba's family here in Myrtle Beach, may not have been present last night, due to work and family responsibilities, so I will continue. I know that most if not all of us living in Myrtle Beach are doing so out of our love for Baba and our wish to be where He once walked and worked.

I firmly believe, as many of you tell me, that Myrtle Beach is not an easy place to settle in to live, whether you are single or married, and discussing this with some of you, we agreed that the answer may lie in the fact that Baba has visited the Center no fewer than three times, and has told us that Meher Center is His universal Center in the West for all time and that His presence will never leave the Center. This being so, we must expect that Maya, Meher Baba's shadow and His necessary adversary, is very active here. Baba's work on the elimination of the ego is as active today as in the ashram life. It is still problem number one, not just here in Myrtle Beach but in various Baba centers in the West, and apparently in the East as well, wherever Baba's lovers are gathered together. Briefly, we know that the outward aspect of this necessary project (the elimination of the ego), be it the bringing up of the good as well as the not so good elements of the subconscious or karmic effects, means tensions, frustrations, backbiting, crises, and so forth, and it is very hard in a large community to deal with these problems.

But we have to remember that whereas we can, as Baba says, love each other because we know we are in reality One, it is not easy to like each other

equally because of our varied temperaments and natures—but we can try. Here again Baba says: I want you to be yourself—I do not want you to change your natures, but to please Me by discipline and control of same. Try and learn, with all the varieties of human nature that I have created, to live in harmony with this diversity which is of My own doing. It is all illusion, which all must endure on the spiritual path. And remember that I want from you all a harmony in the midst of diversity, not a harmony born of uniformity. In such a harmony I can do My work, which I alone must do.

Although Baba says, “I alone must do My work,”* we also know that He has said, “I use each one of you according to your capacities to help Me in My work,”† and I can say from my own experience that the one thing that makes it easier for Baba to do His own work is to find amongst His lovers harmony rather than disharmony. How can we do this? One way, I feel, is by always looking for the good qualities in each other, and, of course, by loving Baba more and more. One important thing I learned from my long friendship with Elizabeth Patterson is that if ever I brought up a negative thought about anyone, she would immediately follow it with a positive attribute of that person.

And now I close by revealing the title of my one and only book on my fifty-one years with Baba—*Love Alone Prevails*.

Jai Baba!

* “You must always remember that I alone do My work.” From the message “What Baba Means by Real Work” (1954), quoted in *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 653.

† “Every one of you has to help in My work according to your individual capacity.” *Treasures from the Meher Baba Journals*, p. 17.

LOVE ALONE PREVAILS

MEHER BABA'S EIGHTY-EIGHTH BIRTHDAY
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
FEBRUARY 25, 1982

Love is as you experience it. Love varies in degrees, and the ultimate final state of Love is union with God—God-realization.

Elizabeth Patterson wrote: “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.” So there is also God the Personal: “God, the Beloved, has ever been in the form of a Saviour. He who, like Christ, has become One with God, is God-Man,”* who comes down to release the tide of God’s Love for humanity. It is His Infinite Love and Mercy towards His own creatures that makes God take on a gross form, so that He might mix with His children as a loving Father and awaken them to their true status—conscious oneness with God, as the Divine Beloved.

To many thousands all over the world, Meher Baba is the God-Man or the Avatar of this age. Meher Baba says, I am that same Ancient One who has always come to redeem man from his bondage of ignorance and to help him to realize that which consciously or unconsciously he is always seeking.

* See note 7, p. 271.

But why does the Divine One descend on earth? Why is it necessary for Him to come down in person? A parallel may be given of a father who, in communication with his child, has to come down to the level of the child in order to educate him, in order to play with him, making it convenient for the child to learn and understand. The best example that the God-Man can create to impress upon the conscience of man is to set an example by His own life on earth.

But, since the body of the God-Man functions like an ordinary man's and becomes lifeless after His span of life, the Perfection of the God-Man may be misunderstood by the common man, whose only basis for opinion is his outward perception. The God-Man is like a boundless Ocean, but to the common man only the surface is visible.

Observations made and conclusions drawn are mostly based on things and movements that are exposed to human eyes and intellect. The inner life, the depth of the Ocean, is not taken into account. So it is very likely that the conclusions fall short of the whole truth. Meher Baba, for all outward observations, is a man, but inwardly, He is God.

Meher Baba, or Baba as we lovingly call Him, lived a life of universality for others in all His aspects of dress, food, friendship, help, service, love, and blessings. There was never a time when He lived for Himself. His entire life was in the service of others. This was His outward life, which was visible to us. His inner life was of such immensity of purpose and vastness of activity that we could hardly see anything of it, but could feel it in glimpses of meaningful musings and contemplative meditation.

Meher Baba is very loving yet demanding, logical yet spiritual, firm yet generous, practical yet introspective, forthright yet simple. He is as much human as divine. He is a personage with a multi-sided personality, able to meet everyone on his or her own level of search for God. His messages reveal these attributes, making them universally acceptable. The grandeur and

simplicity of His writings are filled with the originality of knowledge and the richness of Love of God and love of man that know not barriers of caste, religion, nationality, or color.

Meher Baba says God-realization is the Goal of all creation. It is, He states, the birthright of every individual to see God, to know God, to become one with God.

Therefore, the first essential step towards that goal is to want God. As Paramahansa Yogananda put it, "What counts is to *want* God." He adds, "God may be Infinite, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Personal and Merciful but these conceptions are not sufficiently compelling to make us try to know God. We may as well do without Him. He may be Infinite, Omnipresent and so forth, but we have not immediate and practical use for these conceptions in our busy, rushing lives. . . . These stereotyped conceptions . . . explain Him, but do not make us seek Him."^{*}

Meher Baba says the answer to that is Love. The only way to want God, the only way to realize God, is through Love. It is just as when "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."[†]

So in the same way, one has to form the relationship of love with God. Meher Baba says, "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."[‡]

^{*} Paramahansa Yogananda, *The Science of Religion* (Los Angeles: Self-Realization Fellowship, 1953), p. 4.

[†] *The Everything and The Nothing*, p. 6.

[‡] Ibid.

When Divine Love in the form of the God-Man awakens the heart, the affections become concentrated and objectified. According to Meher Baba, loving God is the greatest love, and loving the God-Man is a timeless technique for loving God. Meher Baba's invitation to seekers, "Love Me," is not a neurotic need for affection. It is an encouragement to pursue fruitfulness on the God-Man's path. The following quotes give a clear picture of Meher Baba's priorities for His current and potential lovers.

I am the One who is always lost and found among mankind. It is your love for yourself that loses Me, and it is your love for Me that finds Me. Love Me above everything. . . .*

I have not come amongst you for you to bow down to Me, to perform My Arti, to worship Me. . . . 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. . . .†

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.‡

The only place that can hold Me is the heart. Keep Me close with you. I am always there.§

* Message for Baba's sixty-seventh birthday, given on February 9, 1961.

† *Listen, Humanity*, pp. 13–14.

‡ *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 5, no. 3 (Special Sahavas Issue, 1958), p. 15.

§ June 1958. *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 6, no. 3 (Indian Summer, 1959), p. 33.

At another time, Baba gave a beautiful, informal talk on Love. Today, the word “love” is one of the most misused words in the language. Love, says Meher Baba, always seeks the will, the happiness, pleasure, and command of the Beloved. *Always*. Love never thinks of itself. That is Love—that is God. God gives eternally. Love, too, gives. Love never expects.

“Did I ever tell you the story of Ramdas and Kalyan?” said Baba. “Ramdas was a spiritual Master at the time of Shivaji. He had many disciples, the favorite among whom was Kalyan. Ramdas wanted to test his devotion. He asked all his disciples to come together, and he pretended to be sick to the point of death. He had put a mango over the knee-joint to simulate swelling, and bound it up. It seemed to be swollen like a tumor, which Ramdas said it was. Then he asked his disciples whether any of them would suck out the poison from the knee-joint, saying that whoever did so would die in his place, but that he would be pleased. While all the other disciples hesitated, Kalyan arose immediately and sucked the knee-joint, but instead of poison, he sucked the juice of the mango.” Baba concluded, “This is Love—to be ready to die for love of the Beloved, for the happiness of the Beloved. All this means love, faith and sacrifice.”*

Thus, Meher Baba tells us that the shifting of consciousness from self to God, the shifting of consciousness from many objects of illusion and duality in the world to God, is done through love. Through love, one develops the ability to keep the focus on God and not on oneself, whilst living in the world. From the beginning Meher Baba had told us, “I will teach you how to move in the world and yet be at all times in communion with Me as the Infinite Being.”†

* *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 173. Another version of the story of Kalyan and Ramdas is told in “True Discipleship,” in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 2, pp. 46–47.

† *Treasures from the Meher Baba Journals*, p. 17. From *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1 (November 1938), p. 40.

Meher Baba was asked: How can God be remembered in the midst of intense activity? Baba illustrated how with a story. “Hazrat Nizamuddin Awliya, the Perfect Master of Delhi, was once asked by a visitor how one should live in the world. At that moment it so happened that a few women were passing by with pitchers of water balanced on their heads, and as they walked, they gossiped and gesticulated. Pointing to them, Nizamuddin said, ‘Look at those women—that’s how you should live in the world.’ Asked to explain this cryptic remark, the Master continued, ‘These women returning from the well with pitchers balanced on their heads seem to be thinking of nothing else but exchanging tid-bits of gossip with each other; and yet they are all the time concentrating on something far more important, on balancing the pitchers on their heads. Thus, whatever your body, your senses, or the purely surface part of your mind may be occupied with, see that the root of your mind is constantly focused on God.’”*

Meher Baba tells us, “I have come not to teach but to awaken.”† He awakens us to our true divine heritage by giving us the right understanding of what lies behind the outworn forms and dogmas of religion, He gives us the right understanding of true values.

Truth is essentially the same—it cannot be Truth otherwise. He gives us the same Truth. He wants us to become aware of our shortcomings in not having lived up to the precepts laid down in the past. He revives and regenerates them and again puts us back onto the path of righteousness.

For example, says Meher Baba, the essence of Zoroaster’s teaching lies in the principles of good thoughts, good words, good deeds, and not in the multitude of rituals and ceremonies. In achieving good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, one finds that good is not something better than

* Meher Baba, *God Speaks: The Theme of Creation and Its Purpose*, 2d ed., rev. & enl. (Walnut Creek, CA: Sufism Reoriented, 1997), supplement note 2, p. 196.

† From “The Universal Message” (1958). In Purdom, *The God-Man*, p. 343. See also note 28, p. 272.

bad, nor merely the opposite of bad; and not-bad is not necessarily good. “Good” and “bad” are terms that reinforce illusory duality more than they remind one of Divine Unity. From the point of view of Truth, thoughts, words, and deeds are “good” only when they are born of the longing for, or the love of, God, the one and only Truth.

How does one then practice good thoughts, good words, good deeds in daily life? Meher Baba says, Think of things you would not hesitate to think in God's Presence; speak words that you would not hesitate to speak in God's Presence; act and do things that you would not hesitate to act and do in God's Presence.*

Note how positive these ways are, and in following them, one grows in one's love for God. For in the midst of intense activity we can still make Beloved God our constant companion by seeking His pleasure in thoughts, words, and deeds.

What this talk cannot convey is Meher Baba's personal touch and the transformation that it produced in the lives of countless individuals. Wherever He went, followers and strangers alike would be left marveling at a tenderness and compassion greater than they had ever found in anyone—parent, friend, or spouse. Perhaps more than anything else, the simple stories of Baba's activities can give rise to the conviction that love such as His could only be Divine.

The effect of Meher Baba's spiritual claims remains largely for the future to determine. Although each person can and should have his own opinion of Meher Baba, only a saint or Master who has seen God for himself can recognize God-consciousness with certainty. Yet, what anyone can know today is the man Meher Baba and the example which He gave us of a life divinely lived. The Avatar, when He comes, comes for all—greatest to least.

* See note 8, p. 271.

Through Him, the way to God, long cluttered by the wreckage of dead forms and the accumulated products of human desires, becomes clear again.

Yet the human heart cannot ultimately be satisfied with a memory, however vivid or beautiful. What matters to us now is not so much what Meher Baba was as what He is. For God is the living Truth present in every moment. Ever fresh, He is revealing Himself through the heart in ways always suited to the circumstances of the present. Indeed, it is the miracle of the God-Man's descent that He appears to us in the shape of Love as we understand it. By playing this role, He gradually awakens us to the experience of Divine Love as it really is. The Christ could not be the Christ, and God's mercy could not be Infinite, if His dispensation were limited to the years of His physical life and if all succeeding generations were left with only the dry bed of what was once a gushing stream. Love would never have it so; the living wine continually needs an empty cup and a pair of thirsty lips, so God is always searching for new lovers. Religious teachers and doctrinaires may be content to formalize what has been, but Meher Baba still gives of Himself to those who long for Him.

If Meher Baba really is who and what He claims, then He must be directly available at any time to anyone who approaches Him with Love. So, what we need to try to do is to learn to love Love. And this, Meher Baba reminds us, we can do by letting all our thoughts, words, and deeds be controlled by the constant remembrance of God with love.

Clearly, Love and Love alone prevails. As in Meher Baba's final birthday message to us:

To love Me for what I may give you is not loving Me at all. To sacrifice anything in My cause to gain something for yourself is like a blind man sacrificing his eyes for sight. I am the Divine Beloved worthy of being loved because I am Love. He who loves Me because of this will be blessed with unlimited sight and will see Me as I am.*

* On December 11, 1968, Baba dictated this message for his seventy-fifth birthday the following year, February 25, 1969. Adi was instructed to release it after January 1969. It was published in the Family Letter of January 26, 1969.

DEDICATION OF THE DILRUBA READING ROOM

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
MAY 22, 1982

This talk was written with the assistance of Wendy and Buz Connor. Dilruba—"Stealer of Hearts" in Persian—was the Eastern nickname Baba gave to Elizabeth. It seems the perfect name for the reading room that was added to the Center's library, which was named after Kitty's Eastern nickname, Saroja.

We are here today to dedicate this beautiful Dilruba Reading Room in memory of our dear companion Elizabeth Patterson, made possible by the loving contributions of her many friends in Baba.

I remember one day Elizabeth remarking how lovely the view is from this spot and how she hoped that one day Saroja Library could have an extension added to it. I know it would make Elizabeth happy to see that her wish, by Baba's Grace, has now come to pass.

This is a room where people can sit and read in silence in the atmosphere of the Beloved's home. Elizabeth so appreciated those moments of solitude when she could sit alone with Baba's own words, or the words of others which inspire one to a life lived for God. For Elizabeth had a great love for literature, especially poetry. As a young woman, her search for God



Kitty and Jane Haynes at the dedication of the Dilruba Reading Room at the Meher Center Library.

led her to read extensively from among the world's great religious and philosophical literature. She understood, even then, that the highest literature can provide a vehicle through which God can nurture a life of the spirit. Indeed, her own readings eventually brought her to Meher Baba's doorstep in 1931.

What more perfect setting could there be to focus on the life of the spirit than here in the splendor of Meher Center? Here one can contemplate the words of Meher Baba as well as the great spiritual writers of the past and know, all the while, that the Beloved Himself has been here and walked these grounds. Meher Baba's presence at the Center breathes life into these books so that they speak not merely to the intellect but, most importantly, to one's heart.

Meher Baba has said that Meher Center shall always be a place for rest, meditation, and renewal of the spiritual life. How happy it must make Elizabeth to know that the Dilruba Reading Room will be a place where pilgrims can come to recollect the silent voice of the Ancient One whom she loved so well.

Elizabeth once wrote:

Clear as a clarion's call
Thy voice comes to me
Across the ages of forgotten years
Like tides that knew some distant shore
Silence stills the tumult of the waves
And Thy voice alone is heard

THE MEANING OF SAHAVAS

WELCOMING REMARKS FOR THE FIRST
NORTHEAST GATHERING FOR MEHER BABA
BLACKAWAXEN, PA
SEPTEMBER 1981

The words that spring to mind almost spontaneously are four lines from a well-known hymn, “In the Garden”: “And He walks with me and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own; and the joys we share as we tarry there, no other has ever known.”*

And so today, as these words spring out of the blue, as it were, the thought of *sahavas* comes to mind. This is a word used for one of Baba’s frequent activities during His advent. If you read *The God-Man* or *Ramjoo’s Diaries*,† throughout the years the word *sahavas* is mentioned in connection with many occasions.

To quote Baba’s words: “Sahavas is intimacy of give and take of Love.”‡ The keynote to a *sahavas* program is Love—an exchange of love, the giving and receiving of love. Baba, at the 1958 American Sahavas, posed the question, “What is *sahavas*?” And then replied, “It is companionship with

* “In the Garden” (1912) was written by C. Austin Miles (1868–1946).

† Ramjoo Abdulla, *Ramjoo’s Diaries, 1922–1929: A Personal Account of Meher Baba’s Early Work* (Walnut Creek, CA: Sufism Reoriented, 1979).

‡ February 22, 1958, Meherabad Sahavas. *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 6, no. 4 (1960), p. 12.

God. It means that I come to your level or you rise to My level. We are not on the same level. . . . *Sahavas* means God becoming human.”*

And at the 1962 East-West Gathering in Poona, Baba gave this greeting: “Be ready to step into the intimacy of *sahavas*. There you will find the treasure complete. Inscribe the following words in your heart—the intimacy of love, lover, and Beloved in the silence of that word, *sahavas*.”†

Thus, from this great event, we find the keynote for our gathering here: to leave all our troubles behind and concentrate on Baba. When we leave all to Him and remain alert to His eternal Love, Baba will be present with us.

I am sure there will be times where each can be alone with “Love,” and times equally which will bring all together. The response of each one of us here will vary in degree and intensity. Baba has said it is up to us to receive what He has to give. His Love is always there, ready to pour into the heart at leisure from itself. But are we ready to receive it?

I think each has something to give to make this *sahavas* memorable for the love that each has brought to it. It is not what we are going to take away with us from this *sahavas* but what we are ready to lay down at Baba’s feet. In this I mean the effort that each will make towards trying to please Baba, our special Guest. I am reminded of Baba’s words that faith and love are God’s gifts of grace to each; and our share is to try to please Baba, and in pleasing, learn how to love Him.

Baba answers our need to know how to please Him by giving us three ways in which we can do this: (1) think of things you would not hesitate to think of in His presence, (2) speak words you would not hesitate to speak in His presence, and (3) act and do things you would not hesitate to act and do in His presence.‡ To these I would like to add a later statement of

* May 20, 1958, Myrtle Beach *Sahavas*. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4360.

† For this quotation, the Master Glossary compiled by Frank Davis cites Bill Le Page, *The Turning of the Key* (Myrtle Beach: Sheriar Press, 1993); no page number is given.

‡ See note 8, p. 271.

Baba's: "Think of Me, remain cheerful in all your trials, and I am with you, helping you." And He reminds us further to let all our thoughts, words, and deeds be controlled by our constant remembrance of God with love. Nothing else is more important than Love, the only Reality. What we need to try to do is to learn to love Love.

I am sure events planned leave opportunities for sharing too, in a very important aspect of Baba's many years of training His early group of disciples. I recall when we were with Baba in Nasik in 1937, one thing He stressed most was for us to focus the mind on Him in everything we did and to think constantly that everything we did was for Him and not for self. Baba told us, "If you dance for Me, you do as much good as one who meditates on Me. Some like work, some like play, but when you do it for Me, then it is the same. Try to forget yourself and do all for Baba. Let it be Baba all the time! . . ." "This is Vedanta and Christian philosophy in a nutshell: so very easy, yet so very difficult."*

And now, as we disperse to our various activities, let us remember Baba's words:

Make the most of this opportunity. I am the Ocean of Love.
It rests with you to draw as much Love as you can from
this Ocean.[†]

* To Margaret Craske, January 5, 1937. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1765.

† Meherabad Sahavas, February 1958. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4246.

PRAYER: GOD'S OWN WORDS

NORTHEAST GATHERING FOR MEHER BABA
BLACKAWAXEN, PA
SEPTEMBER 1981

There is little left for me to share of the early days with Meher Baba that I have not already shared with you in the book *Love Alone Prevails*—I mean, of those events that I can still recall factually. So I turn more to the present to find what other incidents or impressions have surfaced in recent years that might be both helpful and interesting.

As I do so, I find that my thoughts keep turning to the period of Meher Baba's New Life, which began in October of 1949, and to the period called the Fiery Free Life, which followed Baba's first visit to the Meher Center in 1952. The one thought or message that, in my mind, characterizes this period can be found in the new emphasis and direction that Baba gave to our thoughts and hearts. It is clear to me now that He had us focus less and less on Himself in His human form, and more and more on the impersonal aspect of God—God the Absolute, God in the Beyond State, God within. And one of the most important ways we witnessed in which Baba brought about this shift in focus was through the medium of prayer.

Yes, there was clearly a shift of consciousness after the New Life and the closing of the ashrams. How astonishing to find Baba in the New Life

taking on the role of the aspirant and the seeker of God—as one of us—praying continually to God for help, for forgiveness, for guidance for Himself and those with Him. Indeed, it was just before Baba entered the New Life, at the close of the Old Life, that He had a prayer offered to God on His behalf for the first time, and a few more were to be composed during the New Life period.

It was during the years following the New Life that Baba gave us His three beautiful prayers: *The Prayer of Repentance* (given out in English at Meherabad in 1952),* *The Master's Prayer* (composed at Dehra Dun in 1953),† and *The Beloved God Prayer* (given August 25, 1959).‡ Each prayer is addressed to God, the Father, God the Absolute. Who can fully understand the significance of these prayers? We cannot. Nevertheless, what comes to me more and more strongly now is the great importance of these three prayers that Baba has given us.

In these prayers, Baba has shifted our understanding of God—from One to be feared to One to be loved. From One far away up in the clouds to One ever-living and ever-present in the hearts of us all.

As Kabir puts it: “No need to go to Benares—open the windows of your own soul and there you will find Him whom you seek.”

Throughout these various periods—Baba as God, Baba as Man, Baba as the God-Man—prayer was an essential aspect. Even in the very early days, if you read *Ramjoo's Diaries*, you will see how Baba daily instructed his

* *The Prayer of Repentance* was first dictated by Baba in Gujarati in Khuldabad, India, in November 1951. One year later, on November 8, 1952, it was recited aloud in English for the first time by Dr. Donkin in Meherabad. *Lord Meher*, 1st ed., 11: 3951. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3173 (see also the note); the prayer is now in appendix C.

† Meher Baba dictated *The Master's* (or *Parvardigar*) *Prayer* at Dehra Dun on Thursday, August 13, 1953. From that day until the September 2, it was recited every evening, with Baba taking part in the prayer. Donkin would read it aloud in English, and it was repeated by another mandali in Gujarati. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5433.

‡ Also known as “A Prayer for Baba's Lovers.” *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4580.

early men disciples to be up at 4:00 a.m. and then, after bathing, each to go to his room and pray in his own religion to God for one hour. It was during this early period, in the 1920s, that Baba, in His Old Life of Perfect Divinity, wished to help His lovers with an ideal prayer, and He composed some lines in Gujarati. This prayer later became the song known as the Gujarati Arti.*

Although Baba did not emphasize prayer during our years in the ashram, I do recall on one occasion Baba stating, “A life of prayer is ever-essential. Atman (Soul) can be obtained only through the Atman itself, which is the object of prayer, the desire and the fulfillment.”†

Reflecting on all these prayers that Baba composed and had his disciples so often recite, it is extraordinary to realize the importance He gave them. It is clear that the offering of prayers became one of the vital aspects of Baba’s spiritual work. Not only would Baba ask for the prayers to be recited at any moment (and in the later years it was often daily for months at a stretch), but He Himself would also participate in the prayers. He would even prepare Himself by washing His face and hands.

Mani describes the time at Guruprasad when Baba joined in *The Master’s Prayer* for the first time:

When we were in Poona last summer [1968], in Guruprasad, *The Parvardigar Prayer* and *The Prayer of Repentance* had to be recited. The men would be on one side and the women on the other. Baba would come up to the men and then Eruch would recite the prayers. All the men stood up, and Baba stood up every time with joined hands. And then He would come to the women mandali. They would all stand up, I would recite

* “On January 11th, 1926, Meher Baba wrote his own arti called *Bujaave Naar* which later became known as the Gujarati arti.” *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 634.

† *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 97.

the prayers, and again Baba would stand with hands joined. Even then it didn't strike us, because this was the first time He did that. And Baba said that such a prayer had never been before, and never will be, and that His "reciting," His participating in the prayer while we said it . . . would mean benefit for each one who recited this prayer. And after He dropped His body, the benefit would be great for them.*

In an article on this very subject from the *Divya Vani*, Dr. C. D. Deshmukh, one of Baba's early disciples, explains: "It is not merely a prayer which Avatar Meher Baba recommends to the aspirants; He Himself participates in it with folded hands as one of them. Significance of this participation is clear. Though He is Himself perfect and has nothing to repent for or ask forgiveness for, He intercedes with God for the sake of those who love Him or have faith in Him. He prays for them and on their behalf, and while doing so, He identifies with them so completely that He explicitly includes Himself among them as one of them. . . . It is, on the part of Meher Baba, a deliberate descending to the level of ordinary aspirants and devotees without in any way being Himself limited thereby. . . ."[†]

Another incident you may recall happened one day in 1968 when Baba had Eruch recite *The Master's Prayer* at breakneck speed. Baba's health had greatly deteriorated by this time and He could not stand for very long. He gestured several times for Eruch to speed it up, until Eruch was saying the prayer so fast that at one point he couldn't help laughing. Eruch then controlled his laughter and continued with the prayer. Later, Baba turned to him and said, "You're mad! You have no idea what is happening here. To

* Mani in a conversation at Guruprasad, April 14, 1969, quoted in *How a Master Works*, note 91, pp. 609–10.

† *Divya Vani*, July 10, 1962, pp. 44–48. Quoted in Bal Nattu, *Glimpses of the God-Man, Meher Baba* (Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Press, 1984) vol. 4, pp. 95–96.

you it seems ridiculous. For me it is no joke, in this state of My health, to participate in this prayer. I have given it to humanity, to posterity, to say it. And, whenever anyone recites it after I pass away, because of My participation now, it will help the one who repeats this prayer. So that's why I want the prayer said; it has nothing to do with your speed or how you read it out, or anything of this sort. All that matters is My having participated in the prayer. So every time anybody repeats the prayer, I am there with him, My presence is there.”*

Speaking personally, I have never found anything more difficult to learn by heart, and during the last few months I just set myself to the task, but I discovered that the moment your mind gets off onto another subject, the sequence is gone, and one has to begin again. But, I repeat, I believe there is nothing more worthwhile at this present time than to know these three prayers by heart, to repeat them daily, remembering Baba constantly with love.

How can we feel otherwise when we hear and read of the importance Baba gave them; and of the disappointment He expressed when none of us knew them, nor were we able to lay our hands on a copy, as happened once in San Francisco and again in the Barn in 1958—and too, the seriousness with which Baba had them read. Some may call it ritual—that remains with you. A simple answer: God hears what springs from the heart, not from the intellect.

I will go so far as to say: is it not one way that Baba has given us of helping Him in His work? Indeed, on several occasions, Baba requested His lovers around the world to recite *The Master's Prayer* and *The Prayer of Repentance* daily for a specified length of time, telling us that we were helping Him in His Universal Work.

* “Eruch on the Master at Prayer,” adapted from recordings by Tim Owens at Meherazad, 1980, in *The Awakener Magazine* vol. 19, no. 2 (1981), p. 17.

And to me, perhaps the most beautiful thing is that Baba never gave it to us as an order, but instead as something that begins spontaneously with love and that would please Him. I can hear Baba saying, "I am pleased that you have done this for Me." As He tells us: "The prayer God hears is the prayer of the heart, that raising of the heart, that suffering of the heart is what God pays attention to."* And Baba also tells us: "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-forgetfulness."†

In closing, I would like to quote Bal Natu from his book *Glimpses of the God-Man, Meher Baba*: "The Master's Prayer is Meher Baba's loving present, a sort of spiritual talisman which, in time, will reveal to its reciter the treasure latent in one's heart. Its daily recitation, followed by *The Prayer of Repentance*, is like tapping the innermost source of blessedness, which will, in time, purify one's everyday life. Indeed these prayers are a gift of the God-Man to humanity and all are free to experiment and ascertain for themselves the awakening of God's Love in their hearts."‡

And so, how can we overestimate the significance of these prayers and the privilege Beloved Baba has given us all in giving us prayers that we can give back to Him? Is it possible to overestimate the power and the authority of these prayers when we recall that Baba said to Eruch, "These are God's own words"?

Let us now stand together to recite these three prayers and draw ourselves close to Him as we begin this Gathering in Baba's Love. We will ask Darwin Shaw to lead us in the prayers.

* "Meher Baba's Addresses in London" (1956), *The Awakener Magazine* vol. 4, no. 2 (Winter 1956), p. 14.

† *Beams from Meher Baba on the Spiritual Panorama* (New York: Peter Pauper Press/Sufism Reoriented, 1958), pp.74–75.

‡ Bal Natu, *Glimpses of the God-Man, Meher Baba*, vol. 4, February-December 1953, p. 99.

The Master's Prayer

O *Parvardigar*, the Preserver and Protector of all!

You are without Beginning and without End;

Non-dual, beyond comparison; and none can measure You.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

You are imperceptible and independent.

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

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

You are the ocean of Knowledge, All-Knowing, Infinitely
Knowing; the Knower of the past, the present and the future;
and You are Knowledge itself.

You are all-merciful and eternally benevolent.

You are the Soul of souls, the One with infinite attributes.

You are the trinity of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.

You are the Source of Truth, the Ocean of Love.

You are the Ancient One, the Highest of the High; You are
Prabhu and Parameshwar;

You are the Beyond-God, and the Beyond-Beyond God also;
You are Parabrahama; Paramatma; Allah; Elahi; Yezdan;
Ahuramazda; and God the Beloved.
You are named Ezad, the Only One worthy of worship.

The Prayer of Repentance

We repent, O God most merciful, for all our sins;
for every thought that was false or unjust or unclean;
for every word spoken that ought not to 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 specially for every lustful thought and every
lustful action;
for every lie; for all hypocrisy;
for every promise given but not fulfilled,
and for all slander and back-biting.

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

In your unbounded mercy, we ask you to forgive us, O God,
for all these sins committed by us,
and to forgive us for our constant failures
to think and speak and act according to your will.

Beloved God Prayer

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

BABA'S SILENCE WITHIN

CLOSING REMARKS FOR THE NORTHEAST
GATHERING FOR MEHER BABA
BLACKAWAXEN, PA
SEPTEMBER 1981

In a short while we will all be on our way to take up the work, responsibilities, and challenges that we hopefully left behind on our trek here for the sole purpose of sharing with one another this beautiful gathering in Meher Baba's Love.

Now is the appropriate moment to thank on behalf of all Pat Eslinger, our hostess, and those who worked so untiringly with her to help make this gathering so lovely. I feel most privileged to have had the opportunity and the pleasure of an invitation to this gathering—the first of its kind on the Northeast coast, the first of what I am sure we all wish may become an annual sahavas in Baba's Love.

There is one closing thought I would like to share with you all before we go our seemingly separate ways. I use the word “seemingly,” for I feel we are not really separate, being knit closer together by that invisible thread that binds all who are linked through the sharing of Baba's Infinite Universal Love.

The closing thought I have in mind has to do with Meher Baba's Silence, which, through destiny, was the privilege of some of us to share in outwardly for so many years.

Of course, Baba's keeping Silence has always been linked with the breaking of His Silence. But today it is on the Silence itself that I would like to concentrate for a moment, for I, like all of you present, am trying to understand, appreciate, and live with Baba's Silence inwardly, as it were. To have shared in it outwardly in the past is not the same, I feel, as it is now.

One observation I have from my many years of working at the Meher Spiritual Center in Myrtle Beach is that in the early 1960s into the 1970s, the question of Meher Baba's Silence and the breaking of it was invariably asked by newcomers, personally or by letter. Beginning in the late 1970s and still noticeable today, few seem to refer to either Baba's Silence or the breaking of it. The concern today is more with Baba's Love—the way of Love and His teachings in relation to one's own life. No doubt this is what Baba wanted after the tremendous outpouring of Love that was felt after the dropping of His human form.

However, looking back to our early years with Baba, His Silence was something He did not want us to overlook, but rather something He wanted us to be aware of and think about.

Many of you have met Eruch Jessawala, one of Baba's close mandali, who recalls the occasion when Baba, sitting with the men mandali, gave the following explanation about His Silence. "Do you know," Baba said, "why it is that when two people are angry at one another they shout at each other loudly, though they may be standing close together? It is because their hearts are so far apart that they feel they must shout to reach one another. And when two people are in love, have you noticed how they speak softly to one another, often in whispers, and they find they need to say little to be understood. Their hearts are so close that they need few words to reach one another. You see," Baba said, "that is why I am Silent, for I am in your heart. So for Me there is no need for words."^{*}

* See Eruch Jessawala, *The Ancient One: A Disciple's Memoirs of Meher Baba*, ed. Naosherwan Anzar (Englishtown, NJ: Beloved Books, 1985), pp. 101–2.

I remember Baba in 1937 calling the large Western group assembled at Nasik and saying, "From today, I want everyone to sit silent and alone for five minutes and try to look within. It is not a meditation, it is just a 'looking within.' Now, how to do this? Sit in a relaxed position—don't think of anything, not even of Baba. Close the eyes and mentally look within and imagine yourself as infinite within. Let the idea that you are infinite remain for five minutes. How do you imagine yourself as infinite? You can imagine the infinite sky, ocean, or vast emptiness. And let this one thought be in your mind—that you are infinite within. . . . It is very, very important for Me to help you and to give you what I want to give."*

Sometimes Baba sat with us on the lawn and gave us thirty minutes with Him in silence. This we loved. During this time, Baba wanted complete quiet in the compound. Said Baba, "External silence helps to achieve inner silence, and only in internal silence is Baba found—profound inner silence."† "I am never silent. I speak eternally. The voice that is heard deep within the soul is My voice—the voice of inspiration, of intuition, of guidance. To those who are receptive to this voice I speak."‡

My own thought at this moment: Isn't this opportunity to sit in silence with Baba still available to us? I feel that it is, but we must be ready and alert to respond. Baba's Silence is an active Silence, and in the depths of our being He speaks.

It is up to us to explore Baba's Silence within—the voice that is in our hearts—and make Him more a part of our lives. As Baba says, "Remember Me constantly with Love." Here I would like to offer a suggestion: To set aside a time each day, no more than five minutes or so, to sit with Baba in

* *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 166.

† Nasik, March 1937. Excerpt from the notebooks of Ruano Bogislav, in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 16, no. 2 (1976), p. 46. Also in *Love Alone Prevails*, pp. 166–67. (A similar quote is given on p. 179.)

‡ *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 179. An earlier citation is Norina Matchabelli, "The Voice," *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 4 (February 1939), p. 53.

silence (as He asked us to do over four decades ago)—thus enabling His voice of inspiration, of intuition, and of guidance to penetrate the heart and awaken us to His Presence within.

In closing, as we are about to part company, let us hear this timeless message to us given by Baba in 1954 in Andhra, India. Among other statements Baba tells us:

You have had enough words. I have had enough words. It is not through words that I give what I have to give. In the silence of your perfect surrender, My Love, which is always silent, can flow to you—to be yours always, to keep and to share with those who seek Me. When the word of My Love breaks out of its silence and speaks in your hearts, telling you who I really am, you will know that *that* is the real word you have been always longing to hear.*

* Baba's message to His lovers given on May 3, 1965. Quoted in Mani S. Irani, *82 Family Letters*, letter no. 64, dated June 15, 1965, p. 226.

MY FIRST CHRISTMAS WITH BABA

CHRISTMAS ADDRESS

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC

DECEMBER 25, 1983

Happy Christmas to you all!

Tonight we will begin the program with the *O Parvardigar* film, which consists of clips from different films of Meher Baba set against the background of *The Parvardigar Prayer*, its words adapted and put to music.* This prayer, given by Meher Baba, is a universal prayer of praise to the one God behind all religions.

We gather together this evening to celebrate the spirit of the season and to remember the advent of the God-Man in the form of Jesus.

It seems that this year, more than ever, there is a resurgence in the celebration of Christmas. People in many parts of the world, from different faiths and nationalities, are sharing in the Christmas message of love and service. One cannot help but feel that this resurgence of universal love and caring for one another is a direct response to the awakening of consciousness through the life and example of the Ancient One, who is with us again in the form of Meher Baba.

* In the song accompanying the film, Peter Townshend adapted the words of Baba's prayer to his own musical composition. The *O Parvardigar* film (1976) was re-released in a restored and extended version in 2010, by the Meher Baba Film Archive, Eel Pie Publishing.

Margaret [Craske] and I thought you would like to hear a little account of our first Christmas with Meher Baba, which took place in Nasik, India, 1936. Our arrival in Nasik coincided with the Western Christmas Eve, so Baba decided to celebrate it with us by giving a dinner with the help of His close disciple Kaka. After dinner, Baba took all the small presents which we had proposed to give to each other, mixed them up, and handed them out to everyone—but not at all in the way that we had planned to do. It was, however, great fun. And since Baba handed them out Himself, no one cared whether they received a suitable gift or not—as long as it was received from Baba's hand, accompanied by His loving smile.

Let us now enjoy the *O Parvardigar* film, which will be followed by some Christmas carols led by Rev. Donald Clayton.

IN REMEMBRANCE AND JOY

SPRING 1984

Dear friends, I would like to express my appreciation and joy in being able to share with many from so far and near in this significant event of 1984, Avatar Meher Baba's fifteenth Amartithi anniversary year. Seeing you all gathered here today, I am reminded of an excerpt of a letter from Mani that was printed recently in the *Meher Baba Washington (D.C.) Gathering Newsletter*. Whilst sitting in Mandali Hall, Mani had a thought which she shared with the group. The excerpt reads as follows:

“Word comes from Baba’s world family of the many personal trials and difficulties Baba lovers are facing at this time. When Beloved Baba was physically present with us, He carried the cross of the world’s suffering on His shoulders. It’s as if when He dropped His body, this cross fell and shattered into thousands of pieces and each of His lovers now carries a little piece of this cross for His sake, and always with His love to uphold it.”

So today we find ourselves gathered together, the pieces as it were, each with his or her own unique connection with Meher Baba—the One whose Amartithi we have so recently observed.

Thinking back on that recent Amartithi celebration, linked so strongly

in the minds of many of us and connecting it with Meher Baba's New Life, two words come to mind: Remembrance and Joy. They have a strong connection, I feel, and bring to the forefront of consciousness something we can share with one another today.

Two words that truly one connects so strongly with Meher Baba, whose message of Love and Truth certainly corresponds with the message Baba came to bring: "I have come not to teach but to awaken,"* and His words in connection with the Amartithi celebration: "When I drop this body, I shall remain in all who love Me.† I am the Ancient One. I live eternally in the hearts of each one of you."

For the mandali, Eruch expressed it thus: "We have not felt that we have lost Baba, but feel His presence with us all the more. May His love be awakened in the hearts of all so that he may reside in them eternally."

Remembrance and Joy—our theme for today.

To begin with Joy. Although Baba used both the words "joy" and "happy" on occasion, and they are often used interchangeably, I feel they have a slightly different connotation. Joy can be perceived as the epitome of happiness, an experience that touches both the heart and the spirit. In one of the Family Letters, Mani points out that joy and sorrow both reveal glimpses of the poignancy of human experiences. Although joy is often preceded by an element of sorrow or suffering, it frequently results in drawing one closer to God. The dictionary defines "joy" as a forceful, sustained state of happiness that is associated with sharing, self-realization, and high-mindedness—an exultation of the spirit.

These thoughts bring to mind an instance out of the past. I was working on an article on "Consciousness" and, thinking it was finished, I put it aside.

* See note 9, p. 271.

† May 20, 1958, in Myrtle Beach, SC. Charles Purdom, "The American Sahavas with Meher Baba," in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 5, no. 3 (Special Sahavas Issue, 1958), p. 7.

But that same night, a question seemed to come from Baba, asking, "Have you forgotten what the Infinite Divine Consciousness is?" And four words kept recurring: Love, Joy, Peace, Happiness.

Yes, joy and happiness. Has it ever occurred to you that amongst the first words Baba used during his life with us as the God-Man were "Don't worry, be happy"? And these same words were amongst the last words Baba used with His mandali at the time of the dropping of His human form. Was this not something Baba emphasized so strongly for us to recall when He would not be physically present with us?

Baba said in 1968, "I have taken on the form of man to take on the suffering of Man."^{*} And He also reminds us: "I am the joy of your heart and the despair of your mind."[†]

Several other passages come to mind on this theme of joy. In the hymn from Handel's *Messiah*: "Joy to the world! The Lord has come. Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room, and heav'n and nature sing. . . ."

From the Book of Psalms: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."[‡]

From St. John's Gospel before the Crucifixion: "These things that I have spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."[§]

And later: "And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."^{**}

It is interesting to note that although this spirit of joy seemed so evident in Christ's time, it seems generally lacking in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Why do I feel this is so? Recently I came across a

* *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5381.

† "I am the joy in your heart and the despair of your mind, for love can attain that which intellect cannot fathom." Cable to Hakumat Rai Kapil of Delhi, February 1, 1966. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5206.

‡ Psalms 126: 5, King James Version.

§ John 15:11, King James Version.

** John 16:22, King James Version.

selection of the best-known poems of that era, entitled *The Family Album of Favorite Poems*, edited by P. Edward Ernst and printed in 1959. Most of the poems seemed to have a somewhat sentimental quality expressed as sorrow, despair, disappointment, or unrequited love, but only very occasionally was there any reference to the words “joyous” or “joyful” or even “joy.” This, I feel, reflects an atmosphere of something spiritually lacking in that era—a certain lack of consciousness.

Fortunate indeed are we all now, at the close of the twentieth century. In spite of all its turmoil, conflicts, and suffering, we find that the concept of joy in this great Avataric period seems to have come back into its own with its true focus and spiritual connotation. For example, here is a quotation from a choral work by Gustav Holst with words from Walt Whitman’s poem “The Mystic Trumpeter”:

Joy! Joy! in freedom, worship, love!
Joy in the ecstasy of life!
Enough to merely be!
Enough to breathe!
Joy! Joy! all over Joy!

Are they not suggestive of Baba?

“Joy! Joy! all over Joy!” “Your joy no man taketh from you.” And where is this joy? There came back to my memory an occasion in the 1930s when a few of us were sitting with Baba and He spontaneously spelled out on the board: “What do I mean when I say I have come to awaken?” No answer came from us, with our slow thinking, but Baba came forth with His own answer: “I mean the conscious awakening of Myself in each of you.” Words that for the next forty years remained dormant within, with little or no consciousness of their import, save for the remembrance that when Baba

did leave us, physically speaking, in 1969, He had told us earlier: “In Myself I am free but in you I am bound. But the binding is of My own doing, that I might realize Myself consciously in each one of you.”

Baba explains fully that this process of God’s awakening within is the goal for each one of us—that of perfect consciousness of His being within. When this consciousness is fully awakened within, then the spirit will make you free, Baba will no longer be bound, and your joy no man taketh from you.

Here we are visibly seeing the very kernel of Baba’s work on the personal level to free consciousness of its bindings—a revolution in man’s thinking. As Baba told the press in Nasik in 1937, it is the slowest of all revolutions.* Who could free the consciousness of man to its fullest degree except One whose consciousness itself is infinite and complete. As Jesus said long ago, “Be ye perfect even as I am perfect.”†

Baba warned us: “The wave of destruction must rise still higher, must spread still further. But when, from the depths of his heart, man desires something more lasting than wealth, something more real than material power, the wave will recede. Then peace will come, joy will come, light will come.”‡

To turn now to the other word connected with our Beloved—the word “remembrance.” Francis Brabazon, in a pamphlet entitled *The Lord Is Our Brother*, tells us: “The Avatar is our eternal Lord and Play-fellow. He loves the play He Himself created; He loves our playing of the roles of this play and He loves playing with us in these roles. When we realize this our fears will vanish and there will be no “Saviour” to see—only our Brother to serve in surrenderance and joy. . . . God as Author of the play is our Father; but God as Avatar is at the same time the Holder of the thread of our

* See note 10, p. 271.

† Matthew 5:48. The King James Version reads: “Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

‡ “The Avatar,” in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 16.

lives....* And the thread of our lives is, quoting Baba: “I am ever conscious that I am in you, while you are never conscious that I am in you. Daily I support you and share your consciousness. Now I want you to uphold Me and share My Consciousness and share it one day with all with whom you work.”† “I know you are Mine forever, but I want you to make Me yours.”‡

And how can we do this? According to Bal Natu: “One should not shun the world, but makes it spiritual by dedicating one’s actions to the Avatar,” and by remembering Him. “Thus, one’s inward journey”—to be merged in God’s eternal presence—“becomes not a matter of mechanical effort, but a natural and spontaneous remembrance of the One whose love makes it easy. Our meditation on Him becomes a delightful companionship with Him, overflowing into praise and gratitude.”§

Another important way to remember Baba is found in His words concerning Meherabad Hill given there during the 1958 Sahavas in India. Baba tells us: “After I drop My body, My physical remains will rest here, and this Hill will become an important place of pilgrimage for the world. . . . While bowing down at the Tomb, I want you all to remember two things: first, to love Me wholeheartedly. Love does not mean just outward expression. You should love in such a way that you forget yourself in Me, the Beloved. If you cannot love Me, I will love you and you will be My beloved. Second, to give happiness to others at the cost of your happiness or comfort.”**

To help us further retain this spirit of joy and remembrance, Baba, understanding the frailty of human nature, gives us a profound gift, His three beautiful prayers—*The Master’s Prayer*, *The Prayer of Repentance*, and

* See note 11, p. 271.

† See note 3, p. 271.

‡ *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3469.

§ Bal Natu, *Glimpses of the God-Man, Meher Baba*, vol. 5 (1987): Jan. 1-Mar. 6, 1954, p. 26.

** February 1958. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4334–35.

The Beloved God Prayer. Few things have brought more joy and understanding and remembrance of Baba to me.

I feel these prayers from Baba are comparable in profundity to Leonardo da Vinci's great painting of the Last Supper—that painting being such a vibrant way to remember Jesus Christ, and Meher Baba's prayers being such a vital way to remember Him.

And how indebted we are to Eruch that his misunderstanding of Baba's order to him on one occasion in 1968—to read *The Master's Prayer* faster and faster, which caused Eruch to laugh whilst he was reciting it—later prompted an explanation from Baba, who said: "You're mad! You have no idea what is happening here. To you it seems ridiculous. For me it is no joke, in this state of My health, to participate in this prayer. I have given it to humanity, to posterity, to say it. And, whenever anyone recites it after I pass away, because of My participation now, it will help the one who repeats this prayer. So that's why I want the prayer said; it has nothing to do with your speed or how you read it out, or anything of this sort. All that matters is My having participated in the prayer. So every time anybody repeats the prayer, I am there with him, My presence is there."*

In thinking of the gift of Baba's prayers to us, it occurred to me that whilst Amartithi is the occasion for the world at large, assembling from far and wide to celebrate it in remembrance and joy, Baba also gave us the prayers—thus giving us both a universal observance and a personal, more intimate one.

On the subject of Baba's prayers, Bal Natu talks of the immense importance of our offering *The Master's Prayer* and *The Prayer of Repentance*. He says, "These particular prayers have the unique quality of penetrating dry minds and awakening the wellsprings of love in the heart. . . . Every word in both prayers is imbued with a timeless significance. This is because

* *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 19, no. 2 (1981), p. 17.

these words have been charged with the Avataric Consciousness, through the physical presence of the God-Man, Meher Baba. As such, these words can render spiritual help to anyone, on any level of human consciousness. Therefore, offering these prayers should not be treated as a ritual; they are channels of direct communion with the Beloved that will help each one in their journey to Him.”*

Bal reminds us of a story that is told about Rabia of Basra, the Muslim saint: “Once a man asked her if God would turn His face to us if we prayed to Him in repentance. Rabia said no. The man was shocked. ‘What? You mean even if we pray in repentance God won’t turn His face to us to forgive us?’ Rabia said, ‘God does not turn His face to you to forgive you when you repent. It is because He has already turned to you and forgiven you that your heart has been prompted to repent. The fact that you are impelled to ask for forgiveness indicates that you have already been forgiven.’”

I like what Bal writes: “Remembrance of Baba, the ever-present One, has a unique quality of gracious reciprocity. When we remember Him during the prayers He has given us, we then often find out how, and how much, He remembers us. Especially in times of crisis, when we need His help and even forget to call on Him, His love, His care, His concern for us is there. Truly His love is unconditional.”

Not till this present century was the Avatar able to give to mankind His special message of raising man’s consciousness to the level of understanding regarding His truth of Oneness and the consciousness of His abiding Presence within. Although periodically bound through the veil of ignorance, to a few through the ages—the mystics, the saints, and the prophets—glimpses of Truth were revealed. But today, through the Avatar’s Presence, it is the masses who are experiencing the Miracle of miracles—

* Bal Natu, *Glimpses of the God-Man, Meher Baba*, vol. 4 (1984): Feb.-Dec. 1953, p. 99, 100.

the awakening of the heart, wherein God Himself has waited so long to be free and ascend to His own Abode, leaving behind for those to follow a fuller meaning of wholeness and perfection in the great shift of Consciousness towards its goal—Infinite Consciousness, Divine Love. “All other essential qualities,” Baba tells us, “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.”*

How clearly can one perceive life’s purpose in Baba’s final statement in the form of a *ghazal* couplet He composed a few days before He dropped His physical form. Baba said, “What will we live for now / that You have left us and gone away?”†

Recently these words brought back memories of early correspondence with my brother Herbert on the somewhat parallel world conditions during the Advents of both Jesus and Baba, and talking with my friend Richard Blum, this led up to the ideas of what might occur when Baba returns in seven hundred years. I feel like this relates to our theme of Remembrance and Joy.

It is interesting to note that both Jesus and Baba were born in Eastern countries which were suffering the oppression of being colonized by a Western country. In the time of Jesus it was Rome occupying Palestine and making it a part of its empire, and during Baba’s advent we witnessed the British occupying India and making it a part of the British Empire. During these times in both Palestine and India there was deep suffering and the desire to become free of the oppression. In Jesus’ advent, zealots were seeking

* *Listen, Humanity*, p. 186.

† “During these final months, Baba had also been dictating lines to Bhau to be incorporated into *ghazals*. On the evening of the 29th, he dictated this line in Hindi and told Bhau to write a *ghazal* based on its theme: ‘What will we live for now, when you have gone away?’ Bhau wondered about the line’s meaning. Soon he would understand. This was one of the last lines Baba ever gave him.” (Note reads: “The Hindi is: *Aab jeekar kya karange, jub tumhi chale gaye?* This line and others were incorporated in *ghazals* published in *Meher Roshani* [Meher’s Effulgence].”) *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5395-96.

to rid Palestine of the Romans, and during Baba's advent there was Gandhi and the independence movement, which was seeking to rid India of the British. This brings with it suffering of two kinds: whilst some suffer in their struggle for freedom from political oppression, others seek a higher freedom—a spiritual freedom. Perhaps it is this longing for spiritual freedom that draws the Avatar to manifest where He takes birth, for He says that He comes where suffering is most acute.

It is also interesting to note that in the end it is the Western countries which originally were the oppressors, which cultivates the manifestation of the Avatar. It was in Rome that Christianity finally flourished, and Baba has said for His advent that America, in spite of its material side, is destined to lead the world spiritually.

So who can say where Baba will be born next advent? Although Baba has told us that in each advent the Avatar has contact with India, perhaps He will be born in a Western country that is being oppressed by a Far Eastern country. Baba has said that in seven hundred years when He comes again, Japan will be in His need and He will need to go there for His work.* One can imagine Japan, with its advanced technology, seven hundred years from now dominating parts of the world—perhaps even oppressing America. If that is the case, perhaps Baba will be born in America and visit and work in Japan. And then Japan would be the site of the flourishing of His future Manifestation.

So in answer to the question, "What will we live for?" we must carry on, each one of us, as we are doing now—in Remembrance and Joy. Remember the universal and personal prayers Baba has left with us. Remember Him constantly with love and hold on to His *daaman*—the

* A Japanese man attending the men's meeting in India in 1954 invited Baba to visit his homeland. Baba replied, "After seven hundred years, I will come to Japan." *Lord Meher* 13: 4465. There is no known record of Baba's saying that in a future advent the Avatar would incarnate in Japan. Baba had stopped in Japan briefly in June 1932 while sailing from Honolulu to Shanghai.

Divine Love, His awakened love in us all—till the very end. And praise Him, being mindful that Baba tells us: The ideal prayer is nothing more than the spontaneous praise of His being. You praise Him not in the spirit of bargain but in the spirit of self-forgetfulness*—and I would add, joy.

May we never forget to praise Beloved Baba in Remembrance and Joy, and in the spirit that Malcolm Schloss dedicated his poetry:

To
The One Supreme Self
which is in all,
communion with which
alone makes possible
Processionals of Joy.†

And let us now close with a song of praise to Baba written and composed by Bob Holdt, and sung by Jim Meyer, “The Ocean of Love.”‡

The Ocean of Love
Lyrics and music by Bob Holdt

I am the Ocean where all have begun
I am Beloved sublime
I am the Ocean where all finally come
I am the one beyond time
Yes, I am the one beyond time

* “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.” *Beams from Meher Baba on the Spiritual Panorama*, pp. 74–75.

† Malcolm Schloss, *Processionals of Joy* (Hollywood, CA, 1946), dedication, p. 7.

‡ “The Ocean of Love: Song of the Divine Beloved,” by Robert A. Holdt. Copyright © by Michelle Holdt.

Chorus

And I am the one who made Heaven and Earth
Planets and stars up above
I am the treasure of infinite worth
I am the Ocean of Love.

I am the Ocean of limitless joy
Infinite consciousness too
I am the music that never will cloy
I am the Ocean in you
I am the Ocean in you

I am the Ocean of unending peace
Limitless hearing and sight
You from your chains I have come to release
Into the Ocean of light
Into the Ocean of light

I am the Ocean of unbroken calm
Infinite bliss I am too
I've been called Jesus and Buddha and Ram
And now Meher Baba by you
And now Meher Baba by you

For I am the One who made Heaven and Earth
Planets and stars up above
I am the Treasure of Infinite worth
I am the Ocean of Love—
Drown in My Ocean of Love
For I am the Ocean of Love

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AWARENESS

BABA'S SIXTIETH SILENCE DAY
ELEVENTH ANNUAL SILENCE DAY SAHAVAS
LOS ANGELES, CA
JULY 1985

In Meher Baba's Love we are privileged once again to meet together and share with one another our experiences and love for our Beloved.

I would like to express my appreciation and joy in being asked to be with you all on this very special occasion—the eleventh Silence Day Sahavas at Pilgrim Pines here in California.

Baba stressed that we should try to live in the present, in the Now, and not be concerned so much with the past or the future. So, bearing this in mind, I have chosen to concentrate on the years since Baba left us physically to remain internally within, and to find new meaning in these latter experiences in relation to Meher Baba's messages of Love and Truth.

Two concepts seem to contain the substance of this later period's experiences for me. One is the concept of Consciousness, followed a few years later by the concept of Awareness.

And yes, along with these two concepts has been an intense and continually increasing longing to fathom God Himself. This latter theme must be left for another occasion, for Baba puts the cap on it, as it were, by telling us in His book *God Speaks*: "God cannot be explained, He cannot

be argued about, He cannot be theorized, nor can He be discussed and understood. God can only be lived.”*

However, in searching deeply to fathom the concepts of Consciousness and Awareness, I encountered the following passages from Meher Baba: “We are all, each of us, meant to be happy. God, who is within us all, is to be experienced as infinite happiness, and it can be done only through love for Him”†—through the heart, and not the intellect.

And on another occasion, Baba stated: “The only important thing is to see God everywhere and in everyone, and to become One with Him. The goal of life is to know God the Infinite One in everyday life, and all this existence is to gain that goal.”‡

Now, whilst our theme today is Awareness, I feel a brief introduction to the concept of Consciousness is not out of place, for it has led me to a deeper understanding of the concept of Awareness. Baba states: “Spiritual progress is not a process of accumulating from without; it is a process of unfoldment from within.”§

It came to me gradually that there must be a consciousness of Baba within, where Baba always told us He is to be found as He really is. How I came to live up to the time of Meher Baba’s dropping His physical form so ignorant of the importance of this word, “consciousness,” is a mystery. Perhaps living for so many years, eighteen in all, with Meher Baba in India, and later from 1952 in Myrtle Beach but with the privilege of corresponding with India, there seemed no need to be concerned with concepts such as this. Baba’s Form and Presence were all-encompassing.

Can you imagine anyone reading the *Discourses* or *God Speaks* and the eye not registering this word, “consciousness”?—proving the truth of the

* *God Speaks*, 2nd ed., rev. & enl. (1997), part 10, Conclusion, p. 190.

† London, August 1952. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3126.

‡ London, August 1952. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3127.

§ “The Task for Spiritual Workers,” in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 110.

saying that until the mind is ready to grasp what the eye sees, the words carry little or no impact.

It was not until after Meher Baba dropped His physical form that two profound statements of His continually focused my attention, and led ultimately to a deep search and effort to understand Consciousness, and later Awareness. First: "In Myself I am free but in you I am bound. But the binding is of My own doing so that I might realize Myself consciously in each one of you."* And the second statement: "I am ever conscious that I am in you, while you are never conscious that I am in you. Daily I support you and share your consciousness. Now I want you to uphold Me and share My consciousness, and share it one day with all with whom you work."†

Only recently have I begun to understand what Baba was doing with us in the early years. There was one fine thread in the canvas, and that fine thread concerned consciousness. I recalled Baba's words that those who concentrate their lives on Him gradually become identified with Him in consciousness. Little by little, their humanity is absorbed into His divinity, and they become free.‡

Going back to the 1930s and 1940s for a moment, to give one example of how Baba worked on this theme—any time of the day, during mealtime, playtime, worktime, or perhaps whilst we were walking in the compound: suddenly Baba would gesture towards one of us with a slight raise of His hand indicating, "What are you thinking?" Why? He was working to bring our consciousness away from self, away from the many objects of illusion and duality, with its wants and desires, to the one object of Himself, or God.

* See note 13, p. 272.

† See note 3, p. 271.

‡ "Those who consecrate their lives to him [the Avatar] gradually become identified with him in consciousness. Little by little, their humanity is absorbed into his divinity and they become free." "The Avatar," in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 15.

Apparently, to do this, He needed us to be with Him and in His physical presence. I recall a statement of Baba's at the time: "Love Me and obey Me, and I will look after your spiritual life." Yes, He was our Companion and Friend.

I also recall another remark Baba made during this period (paraphrasing): What I am doing now with you all will affect everyone in the whole world later. In their time, they will be sharing in the work I am doing now.

Needless to say, we were not cognizant of what Baba was doing or what was happening to us. His tool, of course, was His Love—pure, divine Love. I only know that because of Love we wanted to please Baba. But slowly, gently, spontaneously, Baba was shifting our consciousness to Himself—to God, the one Reality of Consciousness, Infinite Love.

Baba tells us: "I have come not to teach but to awaken."* I recall on one occasion, when we were with Baba in India, He asked us what He meant by this statement. Then, before any of us could reply, Baba explained: "I have come to awaken Myself in all."

Again, quoting Baba: "The journey of the spiritual path from beginning to end is a journey from unconscious God to conscious God, the highest consciousness being Infinite Consciousness—Divine Love. When misdirected, it is illusion. When directed to Reality, it is Infinite; but whether having Reality for its object or bound to the objects of illusion, consciousness is One. All consciousness becomes infinite when it takes Reality as the object of its consciousness. All apparent differences are

* Although this quote is associated with the 1958 "Universal Message," Baba made this statement earlier. On July 9, 1925, prior to beginning His silence: "The teacher Pandoba then pleaded with Baba that if he became silent, people would no longer have the opportunity to hear what he had to declare, and the world will be deprived of his teachings. Meher Baba replied, 'I have come not to teach, but to awaken!'" *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 599. And on November 6, 1931, an immigration officer in New York City asked Baba, "You have come to teach people in America? *Without* speaking? With this board? How foolish! Who gave you this silly idea?" Baba spelled out in reply, "I have come not to teach, but to awaken." *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1300.

different states of Consciousness. Nothing comes, nothing goes. There is only the shifting of Consciousness.”

Yes, the shifting of Consciousness, or one could say the unfoldment from within. This is the work we all face today and every day.

In the years after leaving India, and even more so after Baba dropped His physical form, I found my attention centered more internally, and in trying to fathom Consciousness I encountered another word—“Awareness.” Was this something that preceded or followed consciousness? Was one the outcome or outgrowth of the other?

During this time, I found a need to make choices and decisions which brought about greater responsibility in thought and action, and yes, a need for greater self-control. Did this, too, have something to do with awareness? And why was it only recently that I seemed to come across this word “awareness” so often in correspondence, books, newspaper articles, and on television—especially national and international news coverage.

I could not fathom the difference between these words, “consciousness” and “awareness,” and yet I felt there was a difference—they were not synonyms.

Then, last November [1984] during a visit to India, I had an opportunity one day to discuss the problem—for a problem it was—with Eruch, and during our discussion, he got up from his chair, went to his desk, and taking out a sheet of paper, read the following:

Awareness is a great help to Me in My work.

—Meher Baba

That was all I needed. I was now deeply into the search for the true understanding of the word “awareness” as used by Meher Baba. And from this search, the following thoughts have emerged.

In common usage, the words “consciousness” and “awareness” are used interchangeably, and by Baba, too, it would seem. The dictionary uses these words as synonyms, and Baba uses the four words “aware,” “conscious,” “awareness,” and “consciousness” interchangeably. Used casually, they appear to mean little more than the term “knowledge.” But Baba sometimes seems to give a word a special meaning, and this He may do with these two words, “awareness” and “consciousness.”

Baba’s meaning of “consciousness” seems to refer to the action of the soul by which the soul imagines, perceives, or comprehends. This consciousness is complete, Baba tells us, in the human form, but it is fettered and limited by the accumulation of endless ego-impressions, gathered over a period of innumerable births and deaths. “Awareness,” in Baba’s special meaning, would be the breaking or wearing down of these fetters and bindings on consciousness. Thus, Awareness could be thought of as the expansion of Consciousness. Baba wants us to become more aware; really, awareness is a gift from Him.

When conscious activity expands, what do we become aware of? We become more aware of the One Reality, and the Oneness of all things, instead of conscious of the manyness of illusion. So to become aware must be closely tied to the awakening of intuition to a contact or union with God within us.

As we become aware of God within, we simultaneously become aware of God without, or outside, as well, and also a breaking down of the distinction between within and without.

This is awareness, the consciousness of God in everything. This consciousness of God’s omnipresence leads to the further sense of His omnipotence—that His hand is in all that happens. This, too, we may say is part of awareness.

When Baba dropped His physical form, He became more available to everyone, everywhere, because He was no longer limited to His form by our

consciousness. As He tells us: “I come amidst mankind to maintain my own creation of illusion, thereby also awakening humanity to become aware of it . . . and through me you automatically discard illusion when you are made aware of its falseness.”*

Even before dropping His physical form, Baba encouraged His followers to find Him within themselves—not to rely on His form. Now we must all seek to find Him within, for that is the true source of awareness. The more we can be alert to His Presence within, the more intuition grows and the more awareness of His One Reality grows.

Baba sowed the seed of awareness in our hearts. He is the Divine Gardener who will see that seed grow, and eventually bear fruit.

In human form, consciousness is complete—yet we have no awareness of full consciousness. We must develop full awareness in order to experience full consciousness, which, Baba says, is the beginning and ending of life. Life begins in consciousness, and if there is an end, it ends in consciousness—Infinite Consciousness, Divine Love.

Awareness, Baba tells us further, is the result of impressions, and as one grows older, one becomes aware of the gross world according to one’s experiences. A story from Eruch Jessawala illustrates this point. Eruch was with Baba in Poona when word came that Eruch’s father[†] was very ill, and after seeing Baba, he died the following day. On the way to the funeral, Baba gestured, “Death—what is it?” Then he explained that just as normal body functions are necessary to the body’s health and nourishment, the health of the soul requires its nourishment in the form of experience. Although the human form throws off the body when the soul has absorbed the experiences for which it has come, the soul does not leave—it is always present. Eruch

* The “Final Declaration” (1954), quoted in *The God-Man*, p. 275.

† Beheram Dorab Jessawala, known as Pappa Jessawala, died on May 28, 1959, at the age of seventy-four. See *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4551.

commented that his earlier consciousness of death was now with an awareness that Baba had given him, through this experience, of the true meaning of death.

I mention in my book *Love Alone Prevails* a quote from the writer Maurice Nicoll: “Life does not always grow from the present, but in many active points lying in life that spread forwards or backwards.”* This reminds me of a personal experience that may add to the significance of Baba’s great gift to us of Awareness.

It was part of the early years of my life that on a Saturday morning—the day of no school—added to other small duties, my mother had the three or four of us of suitable age (out of a family of nine children) meet in the nursery to read together and learn, by heart, passages chosen by her from both the Old and New Testaments. I am sure we were not pleased! But such was a part of the Victorian era in a Protestant environment. I remember very clearly the passages of scripture chosen. Today I realize how enriching they were in expression and meaning, and I can only be grateful. Unfortunate indeed, it seems to me, is the absence of including in education or culture the matchless and profound beauty of these eternal Truths.

Amongst them, for example, are passages from the prophet Isaiah, chapter 55, verse 1: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

And David’s Psalm 23:1–6: “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of

* Maurice Nicoll (1884–1953) was a follower of Ouspensky and Gurdjieff. This quote has been attributed to the following source, which could not be verified: Maurice Nicoll, *Living Time and the Integration of the Life* (London: Vincent Stuart, 1952).

death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.”

Turning to the New Testament, St. Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians (13:1–2): “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal; and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.”

And Jesus’ words in St. John’s Gospel (14:1–2): “Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

But there are two passages which for over seventy years have been my most constant companions:

From the Epistle to the Hebrews (11:1): “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

And the second passage (Galatians 2:20): “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in Me.”

There was neither mature consciousness nor awareness, however, until after the experience of many years with Meher Baba, when these words gradually began to take on meaning, enhanced by an inner awareness—Baba’s gift to each of us—the awakening within through the expansion of consciousness.

Is it not life’s experiences that bring up to the surface what is already there—in this case, awareness? And this is what Baba has come to awaken. Not consciousness, which was here in its completion at the time of

human birth, but the awakening and unfoldment of a consciousness of the unconscious, which in its final aspect is Infinite Consciousness or Divine Love.

Perhaps you will recall the message from Baba's discourse entitled, "The Avatar," in which He tells us: "Those who are spiritually awake have been aware for some time that the world is at present in the midst of a period such as always precedes Avataric manifestations. Even unawakened men and women are becoming aware of it now. From their darkness they are reaching out for light; in their sorrow they are longing for comfort; from the midst of the strife into which they have found themselves plunged, they are praying for peace and deliverance."^{*}

Does this not fulfill Baba's statement to the press in Nasik, India, in 1937: "I have come to bring about a revolution in man's thinking, the slowest of all revolutions"?[†]

This spiritual awakening is reflected in a practical awareness that we observe in so many of Baba's followers and others who are involved with prison reform, child abuse, and many other aspects of social work. And it is also reflected in a general awareness of the critical situations throughout the world—for example, over \$40 million raised for Ethiopia and help for Africa and India.[‡]

Surely this is one aspect of spiritual awareness in practical form to which Baba has awakened us all, and made us—if not fully aware—at least more aware to the extent of participation and sharing in various kinds of service work, which carries out Baba's words of bringing knowledge where there is ignorance and strength where there is weakness.

We have touched on two aspects of awareness—the mystical and the practical. But there is also another perspective we have not yet considered—

^{*} *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 16.

[†] See note 10, p. 271.

[‡] "2-Month U.S. Total to Help Ethiopians Reaches \$40 Million," *New York Times*, January 1, 1985.

that of scientific awareness. This concept, Baba emphasized, would play its part in spreading His message when He manifested, or broke His Silence—a voice out of the Silence which would be heard throughout the world.

Baba did not say in what way awareness was a great help to Him in His work, and we cannot confine the concept to just two avenues of approach—the mystical and the practical. Baba's work touched on all aspects of life, including working with the *masts*, the poor, the helpless, the disabled.

We, too, I feel, must not limit our vision. Where would we be without the awareness of men and women such as Newton, Einstein, Madame Curie, Pascal, and others if their perception and vision had not persevered to prove their discoveries?

Awareness does, I believe, include advances in science and technology, which can be used for solving worldwide problems. Therefore, before closing I would like to share a few excerpts from a letter I received recently.

Less than one month ago, I thought I had nothing more to add to this informal sharing of ideas, when late one evening, the telephone rang and a Baba follower, but one unknown to me, asked, "Are you Kitty?"

"Yes," I answered, and he began to express a vision he recently had concerning scientific technology leading to an awareness that could alleviate world poverty.

And it came to me in a flash—why, yes, we have not considered the tremendous growth of awareness in relation to science and technology. And Baba has told us not to divide life into compartments*—emphasizing that all knowledge comes from God and that life in its various directions, if correctly applied, can be helpful toward fulfilling God's Universal Plan. The caller was so full of enthusiasm and so fully aware that I could not help but feel inspired by his vision, and I asked that he send me a written version. Time permits only a few highlights here as follows:

* See "The Task for Spiritual Workers," in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 3, p. 108.

Most of our material troubles here on Earth are due to limited awareness of reality. Although Meher Baba would have said this from His universal perspective, I am speaking to you now from a scientific one that we all can comprehend. Nearly all of us believe that because we are residents of Earth, we therefore must solve our problems here. Space, what we know of it, remains a remote possibility. In fact, there is no barrier separating Earth's atmosphere from the rest of the solar system.

My vision is to work with others to create a project that will spread awareness of how scientific technology can create a tremendous impact upon our day-to-day lives. I see most of us limiting our thinking to the boundaries of Earth. From this perspective, problems such as world hunger, resource shortages, economic stagnation, and poverty seem insurmountable. This view holds that problems on Earth must be solved on Earth. But within our solar system are solutions beyond the imagination.

The combination of virtually unlimited raw materials and energy will transform Earth's resources. To give several examples: If you place a transatlantic call, it is likely to go straight up 22,000 miles to a communication satellite, then down again—each utterance! If you know someone who wears a pacemaker or had a CAT scan, their lives were probably saved in part by space technology. But these examples don't solve problems such as hunger, poverty, or the helplessness that accompanies them.

The potential of space—within our solar system—is to transform life on Earth. Many scientists agree that we have

adequate technology to begin solar manufacturing. The problem, however, is that of perspective, which is frustrating our efforts at human betterment. Most people view solar advances as pertaining to the distant future, the region of dreams. But they would be excited about space technology if only they had an awareness of how much it has already contributed to our lives, and how much more it has to contribute. For instance, by building solar-powered satellites, solar radiation could be converted into electricity that could be directed anywhere on Earth to end world poverty. How? Various antiquated farming methods, especially in third-world countries, for example, could be replaced by solar-powered electricity, which could be used to pump seawater into deserts and then distilled for irrigation.

We have all the necessary technology to tap space's resources to whatever extent we desire. Eventually (within twenty-five years) work can begin on construction of large-scale space colonies that will collectively house as many people as care to leave Earth. Clearly the full realization of these possibilities will set humanity free from its material limits. Also, the benefits of a frontier are spiritual as well as material. Earth is only a small speck within its own solar system. An Age of Enlightenment is dawning, and space technology will play a large part. This age will be characterized by the removal of limits upon human awareness. We stand at the inner edge of this New Age. We're through the crossroads, now it's up to each one of us to develop our full potential.

Awareness that our limits are illusions, and spreading that awareness to others, will play a key part.

A passage from the New Testament (Acts 2:17) comes to mind: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

The following statements of Baba’s on Awareness may be helpful.

My Advent is not to destroy illusion because illusion, as it is, is absolutely nothing. I come to make you become aware of the nothingness of illusion.*

As Infinite Life I experience Myself as everyone and everything. I enjoy and suffer through you to make you aware that you are Infinite.†

Patiently I have suffered these things in Silence for all My children. It is time that they become aware of the Presence of their Father in their midst, and of their responsibility toward Him and themselves.‡ (From the 1962 East-West Sahavas.)

I want you to live in agreement and to maintain cordial relations with all, especially during these six months of My seclusion which will test to the utmost your forbearance, thus making you aware of the extent of your love for Me.§ (Before a period of seclusion.)

* “Final Declaration” (1954), quoted in *The God-Man*, p. 275.

† *The Everything and The Nothing*, p. 49.

‡ Baba’s message “My Dear Children” was read out on November 2, 1962, at the East-West Gathering at Guruprasad, Poona. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4863–64.

§ Circular issued on June 30, 1960, quoted in *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4712.

You are Bliss itself. To make you aware of it, I come amongst you and suffer infinite agony.* (When Baba was seriously ill and suffering greatly.)

Now I would like to ask Lois [Breger] to read a few couplets from Rumi, one of Baba's favorite poets, in a translation by Daniel Liebert.†

.....

It was He, not I,
knocking at the door
it was He within

I caress my own breast
for there He is hidden

no one else knows you;
since you are I,
I know you

forms become a trifle
when feeling and intuition
richly intensify

* Mani S. Irani, 82 *Family Letters*, letter no. 38, dated January 1, 1961, p. 89. Also another version—"To draw you to me and to make you realize that you are Bliss Itself, I come amidst you and suffer infinite agony"—appears in Meher Baba, *The Everything and The Nothing*, p. 48. An earlier version of this talk, published in *The Awakener Magazine* in 1985, stated that these words were given during Baba's last year, which was in error.

† Excerpted from Daniel Liebert, *Rumi: Fragments, Ecstasies* (Santa Fe: Source Books, 1981), poem 8, p. 17.

in the end
a man tires of everything
except heart's desiring
soul's journeying

sultan, saint, pickpocket;
love has everyone by the ear
dragging us to God
by secret ways

I never knew
that God, too, desires us

To close with Baba's words:

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.*

* "Final Declaration" (1954), quoted in *The God-Man*, p. 274.

HE WHO SEEKS MY PLEASURE FINDS THE DIVINE TREASURE

MEHER BABA'S SEVENTEENTH AMARTITHI
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
JANUARY 31, 1986

Today, each of us in his or her own way will be reliving the events that have brought us together in remembrance and joy of our Beloved Master, Friend, and Companion, Beloved Meher Baba.

On Meherabad Hill, we picture the crowds of lovers (who increase yearly) gathered at the Tomb-shrine to express their love in spontaneous song and praise for their Beloved. Some of you may recall Baba's visit to the Center in 1958, when He referred to the time in Meherabad that He had taken some of the *sahavasis* up the Hill. On that occasion, Baba told the group: "When I leave this body, it will have its rest in the Tomb on this hill. After 70 years, this Hill will turn into a place of world pilgrimage where lovers of God, philosophers and celebrities will come to pay homage to the Tomb. How fortunate you all are that you are here in My living presence and that you could come up the Hill with me. Those of you who have not seen the Tomb before should go there and see it and pay respects, with a firm resolve that you will do your best to give happiness to others at the cost

of your own, and that you will love Me with all your heart. Having made that resolve, try to follow up these two things honestly.”*

In relation to today’s celebration, there is a short quote of Baba’s that I would like to share with you:

He who seeks My pleasure
finds the Divine Treasure.†

On this theme, the following statement of Baba’s is meaningful: “Think of things that you would not hesitate to think of in My presence, speak words that you would not hesitate to speak in My presence, and do things that you would not hesitate to do in My presence.”‡

It was early in the 1930s when Baba, speaking to us of love and truth, spelled out on His board: “Faith and love are God’s gifts of Grace to you.” And we replied, “Then what can we give you, Baba?” To this, Baba spelled out on His board: “Try to please Me, and you will know how to love Me.”

And how to please Baba? Now, it is interesting to recall that in the early years, when correspondence between Baba and His Western disciples was very frequent, the answer from Baba by cable or letter in reply to ours—telling Him what we had been doing, or referring to small gifts we would send Him from time to time—was always “I am pleased.” And He would tell us not to worry or be unhappy at our separations from Him. Never the words “thank you” but always the word “pleased.” And this has been so throughout my life with Baba.

* Purdom, “The American Sahavas with Meher Baba, May 19th–May 30th, 1958,” *The Awakener* Magazine, vol. 5, no. 3, p. 12.

† Spontaneous couplet dictated to Francis Brabazon, 1966. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5236.

‡ See note 8, p. 271.

The words quoted in the Bible, spoken from the heavens at Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist, come so often to mind: "This is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."*

Also, Baba's words: "If you have that love for Me that St. Francis had for Jesus, not only will you realize Me but you will please Me."†

Yes, there are many ways to please Baba. For example, sharing with one another in the prayers dictated by Baba in praise and worship of His being, and in so many messages from Baba—perhaps the most helpful among them being "How to Love God."‡ And in remembrance of Him constantly with love. Also, from the many guidelines hidden in the beauty of Baba's discourses and books we can choose the path of Love that we feel pleases our Beloved most.

This concept of pleasing Baba is comparable in my mind to walking on the razor's edge, because being conscious or aware of pleasing Him means every thought, every word, every action, comes under the scrutiny of "Does this please or displease Baba?" There is no room for compromise. It is an ever-present challenge—a discipline, if you will—on the Path of Love. As Baba states: "Do not lose heart, but keep Me in your heart and remember I am always with you."§

Yes, we face a challenge and an adventure with slips and potholes along the way, but they lessen as we concentrate on pleasing Him on the Path of Love. Baba tells us:

* Matthew 3:17.

† From "Twelve Ways of Realizing Me." See note 14, p. 272.

‡ Message read out at the Wadia Park Darshan in Ahmednagar, September 12, 1954. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3555–56.

§ *Meher Baba Calling*, 6th ed., no. 36.

Let your love flow on ceaselessly, like a stream down the mountain on its way to the ocean. Obstructions there will be, of pleasures, of pains. Pass by these as passing phases. There will be flowers and thorns by the bank and in the flow. Do not get attached; do not get affected. Go on and on and let the stream become a river. Doubts may assail you, self-complacency may lure you, but with love in the heart, roll on, flow on to Me—the Ocean. Worry not, fear not. I am the Ocean of Love.*

Now, what about the other half of the couplet “He who seeks My pleasure / finds the Divine Treasure”? The Divine Treasure . . . Immediately to mind comes that beautiful saying of Jesus’ from St. Matthew’s Gospel: “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”†

Do you recall the verses in the “Song of the New Life”?

Listen to the silent words of Meher Baba;
The life of all lovers of God is in these words.
You who are serious to follow the New Life
Will renounce your ephemeral existence. . . .

Even though your heart be cut to bits, let a smile be on your lips.
Here I divulge to you a truth:
Hidden in your empty hands is treasure untold;
Your beggarly life is the envy of kings. . . .‡

* To Bal Natu, Madras Darshan, 1947. Quoted in Bal Natu, *Glimpses of the God-Man, Meher Baba*, vol. 1 (1977): 1943–1948, p. 212.

† Matthew 6:21, King James Version.

‡ Quoted in *The God-Man*, 178–79.

And Baba's words:

I am in everybody's heart but I am sleeping there. It is My old, old habit. In order to awaken Me, you should always call out to Me and say, "Baba, Baba, Baba" continuously. Then I, who am sleeping in your heart, will not feel any pleasure in remaining asleep. Let alone sleep, I shall not find time even to doze. I shall then slowly be awakened in your heart by hearing your constant calls [your taking My name constantly]. Once I am awake in your heart, you too will awake and remain awake forever. Therefore, repeat My name constantly and awaken Me in your heart so that you become awake for all time.*

Baba tells us further:

Greater than love is obedience.

Greater than obedience is surrender.

All three arise out of, and remain contained in, the Ocean of divine Love.†

As Baba states: "I am the slave of the love of My lovers."[‡] And what is that love to which He refers? Do we not find it in the last of the "Seven Realities" in one of Beloved Baba's first messages to the West?: "The only real surrender is that in which the poise is undisturbed by any adverse

* To Justice Prem Khilnani and his wife, Girija, July 18, 1959. In *The Ancient One*, p. 173.

† *The Everything and The Nothing*, p. 5.

‡ "Someone who wanted Baba's blessing for a job reminded him, 'Baba, you say you are the slave of your lovers. Well, then, you must give me your blessing that I get this job.' Baba retorted with a smile, 'I am not *your* slave. I am the slave of your love. Remember that.'" *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4656.

circumstance, and the individual, amidst every kind of hardship, is resigned with perfect calm to the Will of God.”*

This brings to mind a stanza from a lovely poem which is one of Margaret Craske’s favorites:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, “Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.”

And he replied:

“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”†

Returning to Baba’s words, from *The God-Man*:

Love me wholeheartedly. The time is so near [for breaking My silence] 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.

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 “Baba’s Centre” personified, radiating the eternal message of Love Divine, living a life of love, sacrifice and honesty.

If you had even the tiniest glimpse of my Divinity, all doubts would vanish and love—Real Love—be established.

* January 9, 1941. “The Seven Realities of Meher Baba’s Teaching,” in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 1, p. 15.

† From “God Knows” by Minnie Louise Haskins.

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.

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 “Who else could I be?” If they were to ask me, “Are you *Avatar*?” I would reply “Why else have I taken this human form?”*

We join shortly now in the Silence of silences. May our thoughts blend in the One who always was, who always is, and who always will be.

“He who seeks My pleasure finds the Divine Treasure.” And where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

“Love me more and more because for the sake of love I have come among you.”†

And let us remember Baba’s beautiful quote, the greatest Treasure of all: “You and I are not ‘we,’ but ‘One.’”‡

* *The God-Man*, p. 216–18.

† Message for Baba’s 74th birthday, 1968. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5318.

‡ From “Meher Baba’s Call” (1954). *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3553.

WELCOMING REMARKS ON BABA'S BIRTHDAY

MEHER BABA'S NINETY-SECOND BIRTHDAY
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
FEBRUARY 25, 1986

A welcome to all gathered here this evening to celebrate and share in the most important and happiest day of the year—Meher Baba's Birthday.

Baba had remarked in the earlier days that His birthday would be celebrated at the various centers and homes and not necessarily all being together as is customary for the Amartithi celebration. However, looking around, I think we have decided to share Baba's birthday under one roof, and I am happy this is so.

Many of us today have come empty-handed. Others have brought their gifts of love to Baba, which they will be sharing with us shortly.

Now one word about the program. From the monthly calendar you will have read that the children were scheduled for a short play entitled *The Lamb, the Cat, and the Rabbit* by Adah Shifrin. But unfortunately, owing to a constant recurrence of the flu amongst the children and the difficulty of getting all together for a rehearsal, the play has been postponed. And instead the thought came to let the children and young adults bring as their personal gift to Baba some work from the "performing arts" that they had prepared as perfectly as they could and let these be their gifts to Baba on His birthday.

I find the young adults of twelve and over to be too shy to get up on stage and participate—and so step back. Another year maybe they will feel differently if their effort is done to please Baba. However, I do understand (so well), for this was one aspect of our training in India that Rano and I found so difficult.

Meher Baba would go off on His *mast* tours and, before leaving us, tell Mani to write an amusing play to be ready for His return and that Rano and I were to take part in the play. Really it was a torture—we were not actors, neither of us.

In the first play, I was playing the part of a music teacher, and with my books under my arms, as I walked to the piano, they all fell on the floor. In the second play, I was an English maid, and while I was carrying the tea tray from the kitchen to the living room, the tray fell out of my hands. But Baba was so loving, and gave me to think He and the others in the audience believed it was only part of the act, for they started laughing and clapping. How difficult to forget oneself!

Last year one of the most delightful items at the Los Angeles Silence Day Sahavas program was called the Meher Miniatures. The players were all young adults between thirteen and sixteen. The group sat at the back of the stage in a semicircle. Each in turn gave their name, where they came from, how each had heard of Baba, and what that experience had meant to them. In sharing this experience with each other, they themselves found new friends and an experience of love and sharing they had not found before, even with their own families. Later, each played or sang—but their own stories were the most meaningful and loving part of all the program, which is now in its third or fourth year, kept alive through correspondence and meeting whenever together, wherever possible, at one or other of the *sahavas* programs. . . . Why, I think there are two from that group in the audience today—one from Chapel Hill or Oregon and one from Myrtle Beach.

Yes, Baba makes use of the arts—to make us less conscious of our selves, to try and focus more on Him, and to try to please Him more, in thinking of the happiness of others at the cost of one's own.

At the end there will be a rush to the door, so I take this opportunity to thank staff and the many volunteers for their help, from the baking of the cake to the placing of the chairs.

And by the bye, you remember, many of you, I told you on Sunday mornings that the suitcase with the *prasad* from India had been lost and therefore there was no *prasad* for you. Well, since then it has turned up, with the *prasad* direct from Meherabad Hill. And this you will receive as you leave the hall this evening.

Now to the program and to share the many gifts of love wrapped up in that program.

THE SOUND OF HIS INFINITE SILENCE

MEHER BABA'S SIXTY-FIRST SILENCE DAY EVE
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
JULY 9, 1986

The original version of this talk, which was first published in The Awakener Magazine (vol. 22, no. 1, 1986) under the title "Thoughts on Silence: A True Episode," has been slightly edited.

A month ago, at Dilruba, I was discussing with Richard Blum the possibility of my saying a few words on the eve of Silence Day, and the difficulty I was having thinking of anything to say—in fact, Richard recalls that I was deciding against saying anything at all—when out of the blue, the postman arrived with a package which he handed to me. I remarked, “Oh, this can wait—just a book, no doubt.” I was about to lay the package aside to continue talking with my friend when, on second thought, I changed my mind and said, “Well, let’s see what is here.”

It was this black book. I opened the cover—a picture of Baba—and a letter from David Carter of the Chicago group. He had sent a most beautiful gift—the complete record, a concordance, of everything Baba has said on His Silence and the breaking of His Silence—David’s work of two years of research, with over three hundred quotations.* Final destination: the Saroja Library.

* The results of David Carter’s research have been posted on the Internet, at www.MeherBabaManifesting.com/.

Opening the pages, my eyes fell on the following quote from Baba:

God's first Word was "Who am I?" God's last word is "I am God." And the word that I, the God-Man, will utter soon will be the Sound of My Infinite Silence.*

Inspired by this passage, and with Richard's kind offer to compile a selection of quotations for me, the following thoughts have come to light.

Tonight, the night before Silence Day, it seems fitting that we should ponder the meaning of our being silent tomorrow. What role will we play while being silent? How will we be helping Meher Baba by keeping silent tomorrow? Thinking along these lines, the above words from Baba, for the occasion of the forty-first anniversary of His Silence, keep coming to the forefront: "And the Word that I, the God-Man, will utter soon will be the Sound of My Infinite Silence."

Yes, the "Sound of My Infinite Silence." How difficult to grasp—and Baba goes on to say about Silence: "External silence helps to achieve inner silence, and only in internal, inner silence is Baba found—in profound inner silence. I am never silent. I speak eternally. The voice that is heard deep within the soul is My voice."†

Tomorrow we will be keeping external Silence, and by keeping external silence we are helping to awaken internal silence. And the value of internal silence is that in profound inner Silence, Baba is found.

So we find that there are varying degrees of Silence: External Silence, Internal Silence, Profound Inner Silence, and Infinite Silence. Quoting Baba again: "And the Word that I, the God-Man, will utter soon will be the Sound of My Infinite Silence."

* *The Life Circulars of Avatar Meher Baba* (Hyderabad: Meher Vihar Trust, 1968), p. 133. This message was given for the 41st anniversary of Baba's Silence (1966). Also in *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 640.

† See note 15, p. 272.

The “Sound of My Infinite Silence” . . . What is this sound? Baba states: “I am never Silent, I speak eternally.” He also tells us: “When I speak, it will be only one, Divine Word; but it will be the Word of words. . . .”*

This “Word of words” will be the Sound of His Infinite Silence.

It is the Sound of His Infinite Silence that stands out in my thoughts this evening. What meaning in connection with our own Path to God can we find in these words?

I have often thought of great artists such as Mozart and Beethoven, how they had access, as it were, to sounds unheard by their contemporaries. What equipment did they have that allowed them to hear such sounds? Well, they were conversant with all the musical talent at that time accessible—coupled with tremendous desire, intuition, and a closeness to God. Indeed, they were equipped to hear a greater degree of the Silence within, and to reproduce what they heard in the form of great art.

It seems to me that in this Avataric Age, the equipment which was available to only a few of the great artists of the past is being made available to humanity at large. This equipment is what Baba has left us in order to hear His Inner Silence.

Several thoughts come to mind about this equipment—the first, of course, being concerned with His Love and Presence. To quote Baba: “If those who love Me will just for one minute be silent in their minds just before they go to bed, and think of Me and picture Me in the Silence of their minds, and do that regularly, then this veil of ignorance that you have will disappear and this bliss that I speak of and which all long for, you will experience.”†

If we give Baba the Silence of our minds, He supplies us with His Love and Presence needed to hear that Inner Silence. The forty-sixth psalm of

* From the message “On Playing with Illusions,” given out November 1, 1953, at the mass darshan at Dehra Dun, India, and reprinted in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 1, no. 3 (January 1954), p. 2.

† London, July 1956. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3978. See also *The Ocean of Love*, p. 186.

David from the Old Testament comes to mind: “Be still, and know that I am God.”* Desires of lust, greed, and anger must give way, and will give way when there is inspiration to do so. Inspiration, a quality seen in the great artists of the past—as well as in the mystics and prophets—will be awakened in us.

The inspiration we have from Baba is the certainty that all of us have a role to play on the conscious journey back to God. Each of us is destined to return to the Source, back to the original Sound of Creation itself—back to God.

When we become internally silent so that there is no sound—nothing—perhaps we will hear that Original Sound out of which came everything. As Baba states: “All forms and words are from the Primal Sound or the Original Word.”†

Is that Original Word not the sound of His Infinite Silence?

And this brings me to two other aspects of the equipment Baba has left with us, during His sojourn amongst us as the God-Man. I speak of Consciousness, and its outgrowth, Awareness, which I have mentioned many times in previous talks.

On this subject, here is a welcoming thought given us by Baba in Kashmir in 1933: “In the beginning,” Baba said, “there was Oneness amongst all creation. This gave way to manyness, but now manyness has almost reached its zenith, and it is time to return now to Oneness, but a Oneness with Consciousness—whereas before, there was no consciousness or awareness.”‡ And in later years, a quote from Baba familiar to us all: “You and I are not we but One.”§

* Psalms 46:10.

† Meher Baba, quoted in Francis Brabazon, *Stay with God* (Sydney: Garuda Books, 1959), p. 66.

‡ See note 16, p. 272, for the source of a similar passage.

§ From “Meher Baba’s Call” (1954): “I tell you all with my divine authority that you and I are not ‘we’ but ‘One.’” *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3553.

Yes, mankind has all the equipment available, given throughout the Silent Life of the Silent One and Dear Friend, Avatar Meher Baba.

So often, especially in the early years, Baba reminded us of His Silence. And I ponder today: why was it that Baba did so often remind us? Perhaps it is that while He was with us physically, He was creating outward connections which were to grow into inner connections. While we recognize Baba outwardly as the Silent One, now we must also recognize Baba inwardly as the part of *us* which is Silent. He is that which is never speaking within us. The Sound of His Infinite Silence. “And the Word that I, the God-Man, will utter soon will be the Sound of My Infinite Silence.”

In closing, I would like to share with you a cable received in Myrtle Beach from Baba in India for the occasion of Silence Day, July 10, 1966—exactly twenty years ago:*

MY LOVE TO YOU AND ALL MY LOVERS IN MYRTLE
BEACH AND AT THE CENTRE GATHERED 100% IN
THE FULLNESS OF MY SILENCE.

MEHER BABA

* Cable to EliKit (Elizabeth and Kitty), July 19, 1966. In *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 640.

KITTY'S WISH ON HER NINETY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
AUGUST 28, 1986

I welcome this occasion primarily because it gives me the opportunity to share with all the nearby community and with many from afar that I see around, a very happy occasion in which Baba is our one Central point—also it gives me the opportunity to thank you jointly, individually not being possible, for the many lovely flowers received at Dilruba on the 28th, turning Dilruba into a beautiful garden of various flowers and plants. Also to thank you for the many, many happy birthday cards received and lastly, but not leastly, for the help in many directions that age ninety-five requires to even get around—and not least, a yearly flow through the back door of Mountain Spring Water.

A last thought not really expressible on paper, a special thank-you for the many extra hours of work from all of you who have been involved in helping with today's gathering.

I want you to share in a true story that had its beginning over twenty years ago and had its ending just two days ago. It is a story about a special wish, long dreamt of by someone, and how that wish has now been fulfilled. Well, that someone is me, and the wish was to have an opportunity to get

in touch with a certain person for a particular reason. I will tell you who and why later!

One day in 1964 the postman brought me a letter. The letter was from someone I did not know and the contents were as follows: "I happened to see a film in Schenectady, New York, of Meher Baba about evolution and the creation of the world. It made me interested in Baba and I bought the book *God Speaks*. Then one day I took this fascinating book and a pill and went to lie down in the woods. I had an experience so marvelous that I felt I wanted to share this experience with others—with people who love Meher Baba. Will you kindly send me the names of a few Baba lovers?"

I remember thinking: "What is he talking about? What is this pill he is referring to?" I mentioned the letter to Elizabeth Patterson and it did not make sense to her either.

Now, at that time I had permission to write to Baba on matters relating to the Center only. So I sent the letter on to India to find out from Baba what I should do. Baba's reply came quickly telling me that I was to do nothing—that He would answer the young man himself and send a copy of the letter to me, which He did. The essence of Baba's letter to that young man was, and I quote: "If God can be found through the medium of any drug, God is not worthy of being God."*

Well, you may have guessed who that young man was—it was Dr. Allan Cohen. Many of you will remember that Baba gave an order to Allan along with Robert Dreyfuss and Rick Chapman to travel around the U.S. to, and I quote Baba, "spread My Love among others, particularly among the young, and persuade them to desist from taking drugs, for they are harmful physically, mentally and spiritually."

* *God in a Pill? Meher Baba on L.S.D. and the High Roads* (San Francisco: Sufism Reoriented, 1966), back cover. In *Lord Meher* (online rev. ed., 5166) Meher Baba is reported to have told Herman Alvarado on August 9, 1967: "If God could be obtained so easily with drugs, then God is not worthy of being sought after!"

Thus began a long friendship and correspondence with Allan. That time also marked the beginning of the Center's direct involvement with the issues and problems surrounding drugs. For the past twenty years, Baba has not allowed the drug question to recede into the background, but, quite the contrary, he has kept it at the forefront of the Center's work. It seemed clear to Elizabeth, Jane, and me that He wanted us to help the young people to find alternatives through His message in relation to drugs.

Then why is it that this problem has escalated to such a point that it has become a universal threat to mankind? It is Baba Himself who is responsible, for, being who He is, He has brought it all up into the open to make us aware of the problem so that now it can be dealt with.

Now, you may be wondering: what has all this to do with my wish and my birthday? Well, for these past twenty years I have been deeply interested in Baba's work with this problem of drugs, and for a very long time I have wanted to get His message on drugs to the powers that be in the White House, hoping they could hear Baba's name, for, as you know, Baba has said, "It is enough if people hear My name and I will do the rest." I became especially eager to do so when I learned of Nancy Reagan's media campaign urging young people to "Just Say No" to drugs.

Well, in spite of many efforts to get word to Washington, I met with no success. Still my wish remained.

Now see what came in the mail just two days ago. "Congratulations and many happy returns of the day. May you have a joyous celebration and all the best in the year to come. Our best wishes are with you for a very Happy Birthday. God bless you. Nancy Reagan, Ronald Reagan."

Now, of course, I shall write a thank-you letter. See how Baba has given me the perfect opportunity to send His name and message on drugs to the President and his wife, Nancy. It was the perfect birthday present.

THE TREASURE UNTOLD

MEHER BABA'S NINETEENTH AMARTITHI
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
JANUARY 31, 1988

Hidden in your penniless hands is Treasure untold
Your beggarly life will be the envy of kings!
—from the “Song of the New Life”*

The treasure untold. I think we all feel from time to time the Truth of these words from the “Song of the New Life.”

Today, for a brief moment—but a deeply precious moment—a time has been set aside when we can share together this treasure by celebrating the nineteenth Amartithi of the passing of our Beloved Meher Baba.

This intimate sharing is also a joyous sharing. As Mani remarked in the Family Letter of March 1969, in reference to the thousands who came to Meherabad to pay their final respects at Baba's Tomb before the interment: “The breath that stirred this gathering of lovers . . . was not so much a sighing of ‘Come, let us weep together,’ but a crying of ‘Come, let us adore Him.’”†

* *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 2811. In *The God-Man*, p. 179, the line reads: “Hidden in your empty hands . . .”

† Mani S. Irani, 82 *Family Letters*, letter no. 81, dated March 14, 1969, p. 343.

The treasure we share is the continued intimate Presence of our Beloved—a coming together with Baba, in spirit, just to be alone with Him—a time for a true sahavas or darshan. As Baba so frequently stressed in the early days: “Come and be with Me, sit with Me.”

Referring to this time of “give-and-take of love,” Baba said in the Barn in 1958: “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.”*

Isn’t this one reason that we are gathered here for Amartithi this morning? Though Baba is not with us in the physical form, we can feel His Presence in the spirit. Many years before actually dropping His body, Baba gave the following message—His last on the alphabet board—to those who had expressed concern over the dropping of His physical form mentioned in His “Final Declaration” of September 1954: “I am always with you and I am not away from you. I was, am and remain eternally with you, and it is for promoting this realization that I have severed external contact. This will enable all persons to realize the Truth by being bound to each other with internal links.”†

Amartithi is the remembrance of the day on which Baba broke external links to foster the development of internal links. These links to Baba, which each of us has, are our ever-lasting Treasure.

On this day of Amartithi, when we remember the dropping of the physical form of our Beloved, my thoughts return to an incident during the

* *The God-Man*, pp. 299-300. “Give-and-take of love” was one of Baba’s definitions of sahavas. The reading from which this excerpt comes was from the Meherabad sahavas, February 15, 1958, and was read out in the Barn by Don Stevens on May 22, 1958. Kitty’s quote reflects *Lord Meher* (1999) 15: 5272. The revised online edition of *Lord Meher* (2014), p. 4293, reads: “Either you all be my lovers and I your only Beloved or I will remain the only Lover and you all remain my beloveds.”

† *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3651. See also note 30, p. 272.

New Life period. Baba referred to the devotion, love, and service of His very early disciples who were then departed, by offering a prayer to God on their behalf: “. . . I appeal in all humility to the most merciful and gracious God that He should bestow His grace upon each of these departed ones. . . .” Then He continued: “Since the spirit is immortal, so those whose bodies have returned to the earth are still living in the spirit. And yet, today, I feel constrained to offer homage to the flame of sacred love, which is so dear to God, that burns in every loving heart; the same flame that burnt with different intensities in the hearts of all these departed ones. . . .”^{*} After Baba’s prayer, the names of 124 close disciples and lovers who had passed away were then read out by Eruch.

Thus, at this time, it seems appropriate that we should remember some of the very earliest lovers of the Beloved who have more recently departed: Pendu Irani [1986], Rano Gayley [1986], Arnavaz’s brother Homa Dadachanji [1986], and most recently from the West, Lud Dimpfl, who went to Baba only one week ago [January 19, 1988]. By remembering them, we also remember Baba, for He referred to His closest ones as parts of His physical form.

And so, whether we are in the body or have departed, our treasure of living in the spirit with Baba remains. How can we of Baba’s close family, who have the good fortune and destiny to be called by Him—how can we become more aware of this great Treasure?

One question we ask ourselves: Why have we been chosen to share in this Treasure? Margaret Craske asked Baba in the early years: “Why out of all the billions in the world have we been chosen?” And Baba, using His board, spelled out slowly: “You have no idea how much you have suffered, how much you have desired it.”

^{*} *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3021–22.

The opportunity of being with Baba is available to us all. May we welcome and endure whatever suffering comes our way, and remember Baba's words: "He who seeks My pleasure finds the Divine Treasure."*

Today, on Amartithi, lovers of Baba join together all over the world, forgetting all else in the Presence of His eternal and infinite spirit. What can our response be to such a great gift? Baba tells us: "Be with Me constantly. Come to receive My love, which is ever available. I will help you to obey Me, to love Me and to surrender to Me."

It is not only at Amartithi that we have the opportunity to have Baba's darshan. In the Family Letter of March 1969, Mani wrote that long before dropping His body, Baba had casually remarked that "soon when He started giving His darshan to His lovers, it would not be for a limited period but for all time."†

Many of you report feeling Baba's Presence so much whilst on pilgrimage at Meherabad. I recall Sheila Krynski writing from India a year ago: "My favorite times here are at Meherabad and in the Tomb. It is very powerful and very private. It's those times alone that I treasure. Not alone painting, not listening to music, not thinking. But just alone with Baba. Everything else is lovely and pleasant but not central, and just fills the time between those moments."

With Baba's Treasure constantly available, we must be ever alert to His Call, so that we do not miss an opportunity to be with Him. To recall Baba's words read out to us in the Barn during sahas in 1958: "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 worldly affairs, when you are here, and be receptive to my love. This is the first thing. The second thing is to have a good night's rest, sleep well each night and feel

* See note 17, p. 272.

† Mani S. Irani, *82 Family Letters*, letter no. 81, dated March 14, 1969, p. 348.

fresh when you come here for my *sahavas* each day. I am God: and if you remain drowsy in my presence, you will miss me and your drowsiness will oblige you to remain absent from my Presence. . . .”*

This lesson was also brought forth at the time of Jesus just before the Crucifixion. Jesus had called His most intimate disciples to be with Him, and He took them to Gethsemane to wait with Him. The following is what happened, quoting from the Gospel of Matthew:

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane and saith unto the disciples, “Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.” And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with Me. And He went a little farther and fell on His face and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt. And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy Will be done. And He came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words: Then cometh He to His disciples and saith unto them, “Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand. . . .”†

* *The God-Man*, p. 300.

† Matthew 26: 36–45, King James Version.

Therefore, let us be more alert, more reliable, more responsible, and not succumb to drowsiness in Baba's Presence.

In closing, Baba tells us:

I am the Divine Beloved worthy of being loved because
I am Love.*

Love Me more and more, because for the sake of Love, I have
come among you.†

Hold fast to Me so that I will take you where I go; otherwise,
you will be lost. I am the Emperor. If you belong to Me, you
will have access to the Infinite Treasure that is Mine.‡

The only one and sure way to find your abode in Me is to
love Me.§

Love me because I am Love.**

* From Meher Baba's 75th birthday message (for February 25, 1969), dictated December 11, 1968. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5375.

† From a telegram sent in 1968 to Baba's lovers in Europe, America, and Australia (February 20) and in India and Pakistan (February 22). *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5318.

‡ December 9, 1962, Meherazad. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4898. Also in Mani S. Irani, *82 Family Letters*, letter no. 52, dated April 13, 1963, p. 158.

§ From the printed message "Real Darshan," distributed at the mass darshan of November 1, 1953, Dehra Dun. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3411.

** Handwritten note on the typescript of Kitty's speech. In His 1967 birthday message Baba said, "It is easy to love Me because I am Love." *Meher Baba Calling* (1992).

Listen once again to the twenty-third psalm of David, familiar to us all:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me
beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy
staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine
enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup
runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my
life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

CHEERFULNESS AND SILENCE

MEHER BABA'S SIXTY-THIRD SILENCE DAY EVE
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
JULY 9, 1988

On the eve of the sixty-third anniversary of Meher Baba's Silence, welcome to you all in His Love. There are many reasons for Baba lovers and followers to gather together this evening. Our reason at the Meher Center is best expressed in Mani's words in the Family Letter of March 1969: "The 10th of July, a day for the world to observe in honour of the Silence observed by God as Man for men. As beloved Baba had wished His lovers to observe silence (without the option of a fast) for twenty-four hours on 10th July of last year, 1968, so we feel all His Lovers must observe *silence* from midnight of July 9 to midnight of July 10 of this year, 1969—and for all years to come."*

Isn't it possible that one purpose of Meher Baba's Silence was so that we might learn to silence our own minds and intellects? And thus, awaken and open our hearts to be ready? Ready for that great awakening of the direct contact of God through the soul.

Tomorrow, as we enjoy the outer silence around us, we can also be aware of that inner awakening, and try to be more aware and conscious of His

* Mani S. Irani, 82 *Family Letters*, letter no. 81, dated March 14, 1969, p. 347.

voice within. Is this not Baba's greatest gift and miracle of this age—the awakening of the infinite Divine consciousness within the soul?

It may be that Baba, having closed the outward sign of His Silence, has opened another area of communication, more directly connected with His own Being—His own consciousness.

I think we all feel, whether we were in Meher Baba's physical presence or not, that He communicates through His Silence—the inaudible sound that speaks from heart to heart—the voice of intuition that is the sound of His Infinite Silence.

Mani wrote in 1979: "Silence Day is a very special day for every lover of Baba. Meher Baba has observed silence for all—for each one of us—and can we not give Him that little response for one day? I don't feel by our keeping silence we are going to help the world or anything like that. That is not why we are doing it—it's just a salute—an homage to His Love for us, an expression of our love for Him. Beloved Baba observed silence for all those years, and for one day He said we can share it with Him too. How blessed we all are!"

And Baba has told us many times: "I give you all My Blessings that the spark of My Divine Love may implant in your hearts a deep longing for Love of God."*

There is one other topic I wish to share with you tonight. That topic concerns another of Baba's wishes. That wish is that we always remain cheerful. In *Love Alone Prevails* I wrote:

All Baba asked from each was a happy face and work done cheerfully. To Baba, this cheerfulness was a goal most worth striving for, a goal of paramount importance. Baba told us, "If

* From "Meher Baba's Call" (1954). *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3554.

you don't want to be old before you really ought to be old, be cheerful in thought, word, deed and appearance—most of all in appearance. Maybe you are not happy inside—perhaps gas in your stomach! When you eat garlic it is a smell passed on to all; so when you appear garlic-faced, that too is contagious. It is a divine art to always look cheerful. It is a divine quality. It helps others. When you are garlic-faced, it makes others unhappy.” Baba emphasized that no one must expect to get happiness from others, but be happy in oneself.*

It was during the New Life that Baba gave the order that those companions going with Him should always remain cheerful. Referring to the New Life, I again quote from Mani, this time from *Tales from the New Life*:

. . . being cheerful meant we had not to complain, we had not to be sad or look glum. The impact was hardest on the men. We had to do it, too, but the brunt was more on the men. I remember once when we had stopped for the night in a little cinema house, of all places. We women were to sleep on the stage, just behind the cinema screen. A light was on and I was throwing shadows on the screen with my fingers, making rabbits and so on. Baba was with the men, hidden from our view, but we could hear Eruch's voice as he was interpreting what Baba was telling them.

One of the things we heard Baba tell was, “You have to be lords and masters of your faces during the New Life, no matter what happens,” which meant never letting one's face betray

* *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 239.

any unhappy emotion one might feel. But simply masking your face was not much of a solution either, because Baba could draw out the tiniest waver of emotion that might arise within you. He would detect it and bring it out. . . .

Cheerful did not mean you had to go about smiling. If you did that at the wrong time it was just as bad, and Baba would reprimand, “Why are you grinning like that?” We still don’t really understand the meaning of the words *cheerful*, *happy*. Cheer can be silent—cheer can be absolute silence itself. Happiness is stillness, not just dancing and singing.*

As Mani says, cheer can be absolute silence itself. So that brings us back to our first topic, Silence, and we find a connection between the two, cheerfulness and silence.

Again quoting Baba: “If those who love Me will just for one minute be silent in their minds just before they go to bed, and think of Me and picture Me in the Silence of their minds, and do that regularly, then this veil of ignorance that you have will disappear and this bliss that I speak of and which all long for, you will experience.”†

So tomorrow, on the day of Silence, as we commemorate Baba’s silence by remaining silent, let us also attempt to please Him by remaining cheerful, by focusing on His happiness that the absolute inner silence may bring.

* *Tales from the New Life with Meher Baba*, narrated by Eruch, Mehera, Mani, and Meheru (Berkeley, CA: Beguine Library, 1976), p. 189.

† See note 18, p. 272.

BABA'S SILENT MESSAGE OF LOVE

MEHER BABA'S SIXTY-FIFTH SILENCE DAY EVE
MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
JULY 9, 1990

As we gather together on the eve of the sixty-fifth anniversary of Silence Day, we ponder the meaning of our being silent tomorrow. The following message from Meher Baba seems appropriate:

God's first Word was "Who am I?" God's last word is "I am God." And the word that I, the God-Man, will utter soon will be the Sound of My Infinite Silence.*

Yes, "the Sound of My Infinite Silence." How difficult to grasp—and Baba goes on to say in reference to His Silence: "External silence helps the inner silence, and only in internal silence is Baba found—in profound inner silence."† "I am never silent. I speak eternally. The voice that is heard deep within the soul is My voice."‡

Tomorrow we will be keeping external silence. By keeping external

* See note 19, p. 272.

† See note 20, p. 272.

‡ See note 15, p. 272.

silence, we are helping to awaken internal silence. And the value of internal silence is that in profound inner silence, Baba is found.

So we find that there are varying degrees of Silence: External Silence, Internal Silence, Profound Inner Silence, and Infinite Silence.

I have often thought of great artists such as Mozart and Beethoven and how they had access, as it were, to the sounds within. What equipment did they have that allowed them to hear such sounds? Well, they were conversant with all the musical talent at that time accessible—coupled with tremendous desire, intuition, and a closeness to God. Indeed, they were equipped to hear a greater degree of the Silence within, and to reproduce what they heard in the form of great art.

It seems to me that in this Avataric Age, the equipment which was available to only a few of the great artists of the past is now available to humanity at large. This equipment is what Baba has left us in order to hear His Inner Silence. If we give Baba the Silence of our minds, He supplies us with His Love and Presence needed to hear that Inner Silence.

The forty-sixth Psalm of David from the Old Testament (Psalms 46:10) comes to mind: “Be still, and know that I am God.” Desires of lust, greed, and anger must give way, and will give way, when there is inspiration to do so. Inspiration—a quality seen in the great artists of the past as well as in the mystics and the prophets—will be awakened in us. When we become internally silent so that there is no sound—nothing—perhaps we will hear that Original Sound out of which came everything.

Yes, mankind has all the equipment available given throughout the Silent Life of the Silent One and Dear Friend, Avatar Meher Baba. As He tells us: “For ages, I have been giving in silence My silent message of Love. . . . Silent is Love, and the lover loves My Silence and silently adores Me in My Silence.”*

* Message given February 25, 1959, for the *Andhra Patrika* publication. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4498.

This theme is beautifully expressed in the following poem about Baba entitled “Silence,” by Jeanne Foster from her book *Awakening Grace*:*

Enter My Silence in the morning hours
At evening, and upon the still midnight
Enter My Silence, where the seeking soul
Visions the truth and finds the inner light.

Enter My Silence, take My healing grace
To cleanse the heart and give the mind release
From all the bindings of the outer world;
Within My Silence is the way of peace.
Enter My Silence, set your feet upon
The Path that all the holy ones have trod;
Shut out the clamorous world and find the Self
That listens to the whispering of God.

In closing, as we prepare for our day of Silence with our Beloved, the following quote from Baba seems especially fitting:

If those who love Me will just for one minute be
silent in their minds just before they go to bed, and
think of Me and picture Me in the Silence of their
minds, then this veil of ignorance that you have
will disappear and this bliss that I speak of and
which all long for, you will experience.†

* Jeanne Robert Foster, *Awakening Grace: Poems at the Feet of the Silent Master* (North Myrtle Beach, SC: Sheriar Press, 1977).

† See note 18, p. 272.

THOUGHTS ON MANONASH

Manonash—meaning “annihilation of the mind”—was the name Meher Baba gave to a four-month phase of His work in 1952, toward the end of the New Life. This excerpt from an undated talk offers Kitty’s speculation on this intriguing facet of Baba’s work.

It seems to me that for several millennia humanity has been involved in a great evolutionary process. In far ancient times, men experienced the world primarily through sensation. Even the mystical writings of that time, such as the Vedas, represent their inner truth through symbolisms, which refer to the physical world; there is very little in the way of direct intellectual abstraction.

Over the past several thousand years, however, the intellectual aspect of the mind has evolved enormously, and this development seems to have reached its apex today. Therefore, it seems that any “annihilation of the mind” that Baba brought about would have to entail the breaking of the intellectual tendency so that humanity as a whole could come to experience the world primarily through intuition. In support of this view, I would note that Baba far more than any previous Avatar kept insisting on man’s inability to find God through the intellect.

Manonash occurred at the end of the New Life. In that New Life, Baba assumed the role of the seeker, acting out for all of us, possibly, the path that we must tread. Therefore, it makes sense that the New Life should culminate in annihilation (Manonash), just as each individual path to God culminates

in Fana—Nirvana—the annihilation of the ego. Possibly the three “Free” lives that followed represent stages in the descent of God into creation—a descent that can occur only after the soul has passed through annihilation (Nirvana) and become God-Realized.* It is noteworthy in this connection that Baba did not publicly declare Himself to be the Avatar until the end of this whole process, during the Fiery Free Life.† Quite possibly Baba did not really become the Avatar in the fullest sense until this time, having traversed the path for all humanity, and now He could bring down God for all humanity—indeed, for each drop-soul in creation.

Now a question arises: in Manonash (“annihilation of the mind”), what was annihilated? We can be sure that Baba did not annihilate mind in its totality, for if he had done so, then the entire universe, which depends on mind, would have ceased to exist (as in Mahapralaya).‡ There seems to be two other possibilities. One is that He destroyed the universal mind, though I am not sure exactly what the universal mind is. We would have to assume that individual minds can keep functioning in the absence of the universal mind; if they cannot, then Baba must not have done this. The second possibility is that, through the course of the New Life, Baba created some particular mental form or body which was contained within the universal mind and which summed up the essential characteristics of this age, and it was this body that Baba then destroyed.

* Annihilation here is not of the soul but rather of the false ego. Baba called Manonash “the annihilation of the false, limited, miserable, ignorant, destructible ‘I’, to be replaced by the real ‘I’, the eternal possessor of Infinite Knowledge, Love, Power, Peace, Bliss and Glory, in its unchangeable existence.” In *The God-Man*, p. 149.

† Charles Purdom wrote: “While at Dehra Dun in the month of September 1953, the Fiery Free Life reached its culmination, and on the 7th of that month, the reputed date of Zoroaster’s birth, Baba made one of his most important declarations [‘The Highest of the High’]. . . . This was the most explicit, direct and the fullest public statement made by Baba about himself.” *The God-Man*, 210, 214-15. Others say that the first public declaration was on February 10, 1954, at Meherastana, U.P., India, when Baba spelled out on his alphabet board, for Eruch to read to the crowd, “Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai.” *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3451.

‡ Mahapralaya is the periodic “great dissolution” of the cosmos, according to the Hindu Vedas.

In any event, I do feel that the “mind” that Baba annihilated in Manonash was such that all the individual minds, value systems, religions, civilizations, et cetera, were based upon it, and after its demise, all of these were bound to slide into ruin after a little while. Certainly this is what we see happening in the present era. It is as though Baba broke all the basic patterns; everything that was built and operating on these patterns would continue of its own momentum for several years or decades, but would be bound to collapse eventually. The present destruction of the world is the effect of Manonash. If it is Baba’s plan to bring in the New Age in this way, then this destruction will continue until absolutely everything that is not 100 percent anchored on and saturated with His Reality will be shattered. This would fulfill the many warnings that Baba gave, especially in the later years.

“IS BABA INSIDE GOD?”

AN UNDATED TALK

A short while back, it was a Sunday morning—a mother and her child of six were sitting in front of the desk at Dilruba. We had said to one another what we had to say, and I suggested that it was time to leave. Others were waiting on the porch outside.

The mother got up and the small child pressed close to her when the mother remembered the child had a question she wanted to ask me, and could she ask me now!

“Of course,” I replied. “What is it? I will do my best to answer.”

Little Mary came around the desk to the chair where I sat and said very softly, “Is Baba inside God?”

“Yes,” I said without hesitation. I was startled at the directness of the question and, yes, relieved that it was a question I could answer without many words of explanation!

“Yes,” I repeated. “Baba is inside God.”

Mary had no further questions. “Baba will be happy you asked this question,” I said. I gave her *prasad* and a kiss on her forehead, and she left looking very happy.

Throughout the following days, however, I was left with another thought that persisted—connected, if you will, with the telephone. Not so strange, perhaps, if you are acquainted with that rather raucous sound that emanates from the portable telephone to my left on my desk. Unbelievable, so piercing and shrill when one is trying to concentrate.

From early years, children are so familiar with the phone and love to run to answer it for Mum and Dad, and I often marvel at how efficiently they take messages. So clear and direct. Of course there are other times when they use the phone to call a playmate, and the line is busy, busy, busy, and you get mad and you actually ask your parents if you could have your own line and number—a wonderful gift, you suggest—for a teenager, no doubt!

Thinking along these lines, there comes to me the thought of a different type of telephone—not yet on the market. A telephone that is available to us all, at any time of the day or night, that is always free, without anyone waiting to tug it out of your hand—always with Someone on the other end to take the call. Never in a hurry—never hesitant in His reply to your needs, and given so silently that you won't even have to bang the door for privacy. And most important, He always has time to listen to whatever you have to say.

Imagine, now for an instant, you have the switch "on" of this imaginary phone you are holding in your hand, and you remember, "Yes—Baba is in God and God, Baba tells us, is in Him and in everything and knows everything. The happy things, the funny things, and the things that have gone wrong." Then, in your imagination, is it not like taking up your phone and calling and speaking direct to God—to Baba? Perhaps we are so taken up with talking, and say it is bedtime and you forget to listen for Baba's answer, but He understands and says, "Go on calling Me or whispering to Me—or no words at all, for that too makes Me happy, for you have remembered Me."

Yes, your private phone and number. Remember in your imagination to take it with you, and you can switch it on at any time to talk or to listen,

and when all is said, just replace the portable phone wherever you choose—imagine where you would like it. In your pocket? Under your pillow? Ready for morning to say, “Good morning, Baba. I’m off to school. I’m taking my portable phone with me. I will give you a call. I won’t forget. Something I know you would like to hear. I am happy, and, oh yes, I won’t forget to listen—you might have a message for me too. . . .”

Yes, where’s that telephone—somewhere safe? Yes, it is with God, inside me—inside everyone. And Meher Baba—where can we find Him? Is Baba inside God too? Yes, Baba is inside God. Listen, listen on your imaginary telephone. Here, in a message dictated by Baba to one of His children, He tells us:

. . . All of you say that when you call Me, I never listen. It is not true; Baba is such a friend that even for a moment He is never away from you. When you remember Me I know, because I am with you all the time. . . .

Now if you ask Me how it is that I stay always with you but you never see Me, I would say that I like to play games very much, and most of all I like to play hide-and-seek. In this game I am Ustad (Master) because I hide and see everything. In order to see and find Me, you will have to search for Me. Look for Me, seek Me and try to find Me. Seek Me, find Me, defeat Me in this game, and you win!

But where will you look for Me? I am hiding in your heart, so search for Me in your heart. How will you search for Me? Always remember Me, call Me, make Me your dear friend. Because I am your friend, I will respond to your call immediately. . . .

If you remember Me I will be happy. . . .*

* Letter to a child, dated September 18, 1955, Satara. In *Letters from the Mandali of Avatar Meher Baba*, vol. 2, pp. 151–52.

HAS THE SILENCE BEEN BROKEN?

SILENCE DAY EVE

MEHER CENTER, MYRTLE BEACH, SC

UNDATED

In a 1967 letter, Mani writes: “Even as the Avatar hides His Reality behind the veil of our ignorance, He hides His Silence behind the clamour of our words. Never has the world seemed more word-crazy than it is now, our minds never so deafened by discordant jangle of words coined in man’s base metal. How then can we hope to hear the sublime ring of His words when He drops them in our midst—words that we let roll away to the corners of our minds or collect in pages of books. And because we have not really heard the words Beloved Baba has given us we ask Him for more, and yet again for more, while He gives us a gentle reminder: ‘If My Silence cannot speak, of what avail words?’ . . . And Beloved Baba, what does He say will happen when He breaks His Silence? Baba says: ‘THAT WHICH HAS NEVER HAPPENED WILL HAPPEN WHEN I BREAK MY SILENCE.’”*

God’s Silence is infinite and ever-existing. Out of silence He creates sound. God is ever independent of the sound he created and the sound is ever dependent on God’s Silence. The power of activating the Silence rests

* Mani S. Irani, 82 *Family Letters*, letter no. 73, dated June 1, 1967, pp. 280–81.

with the one who is identified with Silence and sound at one and the same time.

It has been well expressed: Words and sound [are] an expression of unfulfilment. It is a cry of the desires and craving. When man is at peace with himself and enjoys contentment from within, he finds words irrelevant. His mind approaches stillness. Silence signifies completion-perfection. Sound denotes incompleteness-imperfection. Our journey, in some sense, is a journey from the sound to the silence. Words originate from delusion, frustration and impatience. Words are man's natural substitutes for what he cannot be and what he is not.

However, the ever-merciful nature of God does not allow Silence to remain silent for long. The Almighty takes the human form to bridge the gulf between Silence and sound, activating the immense possibility of Silence bearing upon the movement of sound, and restoring the lost harmony of thought, words, and deeds, amongst the people overpowered by sound and estranged from silence.

Baba gave an allegory of a dying soldier while explaining the apparent delay in the breaking of His silence. Clarifying, Baba compared the breaking of the Silence to a dying soldier re-directing his falling body in order to avoid falling on some ants on the ground that he has suddenly noticed. Thus he saves the ants from being crushed.* This compassion for the ants is similar to the time taken by Him in letting the Word out.

In another interesting expression of clarification on this point of the

* "A brave warrior was fighting for a noble cause against a group of cruel soldiers. He cheerfully withstood the attack, with the light of compassion in his eyes even for those who fired at him. In the end as he was falling to the ground for his final rest, he noticed some ants moving about. Even while experiencing excruciating pains, he had a kind thought for the ants. So he swayed his body a bit to the other side and saved the lives of the ants. The delay in time that ensued in the fall of the body to the ground which resulted from that compassionate feeling, may appear too trivial a time interval to you, but it may be likened to the interval between the observing and the breaking of My silence. The purpose is to save truth-loving humanity from being crushed." Quoted by Eruch Jessawala in *The Ancient One*, p. 177.

timing of His breaking His Silence, it has been written [that] Baba's manifestation and the breaking of His Silence would release magnificent spiritual energy. This energy will bring about the spiritual transformation of humankind and other beings. For the impact to have the desired effect, the creation needs to be prepared. God cannot let anything go to waste. So, He must ensure that the universe will gain precisely as He has planned. But as He prepares the universe, it is also incumbent upon us that we prepare to receive His Word in our heart.

This brings up the point of view, namely, that Baba's breaking of the Silence and His Manifestation are synonymous with each other and that it is yet to happen. In this case Baba's utterance and breaking of His silence will have a tremendous universal impact. This impact will be received, felt, and availed by each and all in the universe on each plane, according to receptivity. Having been released from its very source, the utterance of the Word will inevitably give a spiritual push to the world. It will break the conventional patterns, historical habits, and mental prisons.

But then in a letter dated March 14, 1969, Mani suggests another point of view. She writes: "Being wiser after the Event—that is, Baba dropping the body—we now see deeper significance in the message that Beloved Baba had dictated on 17th January 1968, His message for the 43rd anniversary of His Silence to be released on the 10th July 1968. It was not released, and Baba did not have any other message sent out in its place. Feeling that perhaps it was meant to be released now, I give it here: 'Divine Father help Your Beloved Son to carry out all Your work this year, for July of this year will mark the last year of His Silence.'"

Mani continues: "The Silence of Meher Baba—as unheard, as un-understood, as unfathomable, as ever. And as ever, His lovers talk about His Silence. They ask themselves, so that they might answer the sceptics: Has the Silence been broken? Has the Silence been broken and not heard? Baba

said that He will break His silence while in the body—which body does it mean? Did he mean His universal body? Will the breaking of His Silence be manifesting the shape of events to come, rather than in Sound form? A hundred questions, having as many answers as there are lovers. Not only had each lover his or her own answer, each lover is an answer. That the questions don't question the breaking of His Silence, but simply seek to know 'when' and 'how,' is enough answer for the sceptics of the world. In His lovers' unwavering faith and love, Baba's Silence is heard continuously.”*

Baba's message for the 1968 Silence Day, namely, that July 1968 will mark the last year of His Silence, has an interesting companion statement casually mentioned by Baba in July 1968 when He said that His work was completed 100 percent.[†] This brings us, in my opinion, to Eruch's statement: “The Silence of Meher Baba in His Man-form was the personification of the Silence of God, and His being in our midst as the God-Man is the ‘WORD made flesh.’ His having dropped His Man-form is the act of releasing the WORD (i.e., the WORD that was engaged in the Man-form of Meher Baba was released when the body, which engaged it, dropped) which simultaneously is tantamount to the act of breaking the Silence.”[‡]

And thus with the breaking of His Silence, His manifestation has occurred but, it could be said, is emerging gradually. As said earlier, the breaking of His Silence creates tremendous energy, and that force gradually breaks down the thick layers of self-interest in all its forms, in the process creating increased agitation, conflict in all spheres of life, extreme hardship and suffering, making everyone and everything open up more and more to

* Mani S. Irani, 82 *Family Letters*, letter no. 81, dated March 14, 1969, p. 346–47.

† Quoted in *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5340.

‡ *Letters from the Mandali of Avatar Meher Baba*, vol. 1, p. 46. Eruch adds, “Now, please do not take this as a statement of facts. . . . I am not a master who can give an authoritative statement.”

His manifestation of Light and Love. God as Light and Love becomes more available with the lessening and thinning of the veils of creation's karma. In time will come His full acknowledged Manifestation, and then following with time its force gradually fading and subsequently bringing about His descent again into His creation.

So Beloved Baba has said:

When I break My Silence, the world will come to know that I am the one whom they were waiting for.*

When I break My Silence, the impact of My Love will be universal, and all life in creation will know, feel and receive of it. It will help every individual to break himself free from his own bondage in his own way.†

Those who have come into contact with Me will have some glimpse of Me. Some will have little, some a little more and some still more.”‡

God's first Word was “Who am I?” God's last word is “I am God.” And the Word that I, the God-Man, will utter soon will be the sound of My infinite Silence.§

* At a press conference on 23 May 1956, in New York City, Baba was asked which of his statements concerning his silence was most significant, and this is what he replied. See *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 4, no. 3 (1957), p. 16.

† Quoted from the “Universal Message” (1958).

‡ From the 1954 message “What Baba Means by Real Work”: “I must break my silence soon. And when I do, all will come to know of it. Those who have come in contact with me will have a glimpse of Me. Some will have a little, some a little more, and some still more.”

§ *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 11, no. 4 (1967), p. 13.

This we observe as more and more people come to know the true Object of their desperate seeking, and in so doing provide evidence of His manifesting Love.

In conclusion, let me finish with these words of Eruch:

Had Baba not broken His Silence, you would not have come to Him in India to adore Him. The day He began His Silence He broke it, and He continues to be silent and to break His silence in the hearts where He resides and where He sleeps and is awakened continually.

The moment the heart recognizes the Ancient One, at that very moment He has broken His Silence in that heart.

It is the echo of that breaking heard by the heart that makes the heart yearn for Him and adore Him. Now it is left to you to nurture His Word.*

* Eruch Jessawala in *Letters from the Mandali of Avatar Meher Baba*, vol. 2 (1983), letter of January 4, 1976, p. 18.

MEHER BABA AND CONSCIOUSNESS

AN UNDATED TALK

Many aspects of the spiritual path seem much clearer when we understand the concept of the word “consciousness.” Also, certain sayings of Meher Baba’s, hitherto difficult to understand, become clearer. How I came to live to the present time so unaware of the importance of this word is a mystery to me. Baba used the word so frequently in His writings, but somehow I overlooked its significance. The time, as we say, was not right.

Although the word “consciousness” is in common use today, in my early years with Baba the word “awareness” was far more often used. However, I cannot recall Baba’s using or emphasizing either word to any great extent, or if He did I was not aware of it at the time. The words we were most familiar with were *love* for Baba and *obedience* that followed from that love. What Baba emphasized was *happiness*, *cheerfulness*, and the importance of trying to *please* Him—bringing us closer to loving Him more and more. Looking back, however, I realize that above all other aspects of our early lives with Baba in India and in the West, He was silently and continuously weaving one fine thread onto the canvas, and that fine thread, as I see it today, concerned consciousness. Why, for instance, did Baba call us so

frequently to be with Him—to sit with Him, to play various games, receive various orders and duties? I feel He was working to try to bring consciousness away from self and away from the many objects of illusion and duality to the one object of Himself. He appeared never to tire of having us around and His constant inquiry was, “What are you thinking of?” And who can forget His smile and His twinkling eye when you could reply, “Of you, Baba.”

Think of it: companionship with infinite Consciousness, infinite Divine Love—which Baba was and is and always will be—and yet at the time we did not comprehend this. Baba was our friend and companion. Undoubtedly this was as He wanted it—winning our love so spontaneously and at the same time watching our awareness being gently shifted to Himself as the one object of consciousness. Over the years, this gradual shifting of consciousness grew as our love for Baba deepened. Many of us feel and observe, when we visit the mandali at Meherabad and Meherazad, that we are meeting face to face with those whose consciousness is completely absorbed in the one object of consciousness, Meher Baba. And yet at the same time the mandali are immersed in the daily duties assigned to them—a perfect balance of head and heart.

How clear today is that moment in 1937 when we were in Nasik and Baba called me suddenly “out of the blue” and spelled out on His alphabet board: “Learn to love the One in the many and not the many in the One. I am the only friend who will never let you down.”* How often have I pondered this phrase! And now it is so clear what “the many” means: all the varieties of illusion and duality.

How hard in those early days was our shell of obstinance and ignorance! Only Baba’s infinite patience could succeed in His work of shifting our

* See note 21, p. 272.

consciousness to Himself. For Baba it was a ceaseless struggle, otherwise would He ever have said of us, “You are hard nuts to crack”?* Through it all, Baba’s magnetic love was pulling us ever closer. This shifting of consciousness was noticeable not only in His work with us, but also in His work with the *masts*, the poor, and the masses. No activity was left out, no opportunity was lost for contact. To quote Baba’s words: “Every one of you is in one form or another the Divine Manifestation. You are all in Me. I am in you all. The only way to realize God is through love: love for God and love for one another.” Thus He tells us that the shifting of consciousness can be done through love—a selfless, giving love.

On this theme, I recall Eruch saying that since love and faith are gifts of Grace, and perfect obedience is not within the grasp of any one of us, then all we can do is to try and please Baba. And Baba, responding to our need to know how to please, gave us three ways in which we could do this. In so doing, we would grow in our love for Him. Note how positive these ways are: “Think of things you would not hesitate to think in My presence. Speak words that you would not hesitate to speak in My presence. Act and do things that you would not hesitate to act and do in My presence.”† To these I would add a later statement of Baba’s: “Think of Me, remain cheerful in all your trials, and I am with you, helping you.” It is sometimes said that there are few disciplines that Baba has stressed for the spiritual path, but could we find a stricter inner discipline than these four points, with their emphasis on obedience?

As Baba wrote to Kimco in the early 1930s: “My work is the conscious realization of Myself in all creation. I alone do My work but I allow you, my close ones, to work for Me so that you have the opportunity to use your talents and capacities selflessly, so as to draw closer to Me.” We know, of

* See note 22, p. 272.

† See note 8, p. 271.

course, that all work is God's work—creative arts, caring for children, sweeping the porch. But what we have to keep in mind is that fine thread of consciousness that must permeate all work and become its motivation in order that we may experience love, joy, peace, and happiness.

The Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis expresses this theme so well: "Life is a crusade in the service of God. Whether we wish to or not, we set out as crusaders to free—not the Holy Sepulchre—but God buried in matter and in our souls."^{*} What a divine work! Nevertheless, we have to remember that Baba has told us the binding of Himself in us is His own doing. It was, all along, God's plan that Reality gets buried in the ego-mind, attaching itself to illusion until eventually the individual self finds its way back to the Ocean, God consciousness.

Baba once referred to the shifting of consciousness as one surrender after another.[†] What eons of degrees of consciousness between its two poles! As Pierre Teilhard de Chardin has said, "There are as many wave-lengths of consciousness as there are living forms."[‡]

Fortunate indeed, I feel, are children whose consciousness early on is spontaneously centered on Baba, their Friend. Baba spoke of the young generations as the New Humanity, and He states: "Through divine love the New Humanity will learn the art of co-operative and harmonious life"[§]—oneness.

From the beginning Baba told us, "It is not practical to have spiritual ideals without putting them into practice. To realize the ideal in daily life, to give beautiful and adequate form to the living spirit . . . —this is being practical in the truest sense of the word."^{***} And He continued, "I will teach

* See note 23, p. 272.

† See note 24, p. 272.

‡ See note 25, p. 272.

§ "The New Humanity," in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 1, p. 25.

*** *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1417.

you how to move in the world and yet to be at all times in communion with Me as the Infinite Being.”*

Meher Baba has said that the spiritual impact of the Avatar continues until He returns again within seven hundred to fourteen hundred years. Elizabeth Patterson, in her article “Follow Love” from the *Meher Baba Journal*, writes on the Avatar’s spiritual impact as follows:

“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 rights 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. . . .”†

Those searching in this present era have heard the Call of the Avatar: “I am the Ancient One; I was Rama, I was Krishna, I was this One, I was that One, and now I am Meher Baba.” It is the Avatar who kindles the genuine enthusiasm that is indispensable to the disciple’s progress and to the heart of the seeker. Meher Baba’s very life is the Divine example of Love and Truth.

I recall that, in reference to the above, Baba has said that one may follow God in the Absolute, but one must bring the Absolute into one’s own being. This surely is what we must do if we want to be really alive and filled with *enthusiasm*—a word that comes from the Greek and means

* From a 1937 discourse to the group in Nasik. *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1 (November 1938), p. 40. Also in *Treasures from the Meher Baba Journals 1938–1942*, p. 17.

† See note 7, p. 271.

literally “alive with God.” It is so important to be alert and ready to give a smile, a word of interest, an intuitive response that would help others. Baba, by the example of His own life, shows us that not by running away from life but by communicating with and loving one another can we strive to shift our consciousness to His infinite Oneness.

If we try to remember Baba every time our consciousness slips back from the One to the many, we will be on the way to putting into practice the valuable lesson of mental control and obedience, and thus be pleasing Baba. There are so many opportunities that we miss throughout the day simply because of our inability to keep our focus on Baba. What we need to try to do is to learn to love Love. Baba reminds us to let all our thoughts, words, and deeds be controlled by our constant remembrance of God, with love.

Clearly, Love and Love alone prevails in Meher Baba’s final (seventy-fifth) birthday message to us, dictated by Him on December 11, 1968:

To love Me for what I may give you is not loving Me at all. To sacrifice anything in My cause to gain something for yourself is like a blind man sacrificing his eyes for sight. I am the Divine Beloved worthy of being loved because I am Love. He who loves Me because of this will be blessed with unlimited sight and will see Me as I am.*

* See note on p. 171.

N O T E S

- 1 "Someone from Deccan College interested in yoga practice came to see him [at Guruprasad in April 1959], and Baba said: 'What do you mean by yoga, and what do you aspire to attain through it? There is only one true yoga, and that is "you go." I know of no other yoga than "you go." The meaning of yoga is as simple as that. You are your own curtain, only when you go can you come. The problem is, how will you go? The only solution is Love. When "you go" (are "annihilated") through love for God, the Beloved, "you come" ("emerge") as you really are.'" Purdom, *The God-Man*, p. 348.
- 2 "Before beginning anything, the aspirant thinks that it is not *he* who is doing it, but the *Master* who is getting it done through him. After doing it he does not tarry to claim the results of action or enjoy them, but becomes free of them by offering them to the Master. By training his mind in this spirit he succeeds in creating a new ego which, though provisional and working, is amply able to become a source of that confidence, feeling, enthusiasm and 'go' which true action must express. This new ego is spiritually harmless, since it derives its life and being from the Master who represents Infinity, and since, when the time comes, it can be thrown away like a garment." "The Dynamics of Spiritual Advancement" in *Discourses* (6th ed.), vol. 2, pp. 179–80.
- 3 From "God Alone Is" (1958), in Purdom, *The God-Man*, p. 344. See also note 27.
- 4 Allan Y. Cohen, *The Mastery of Consciousness: An Introduction and Guide to Practical Mysticism and Methods of Spiritual Development as Given by Meher Baba* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).
- 5 Romain Rolland published two books, *The Life of Ramakrishna* (1929) and *The Life of Vivekananda* (1930), translated from the French. It's unclear which book Herbert gave Kitty. In her book *Love Alone Prevails*, she says that the book Herbert gave her was about "Vivekananda and his Master," so most likely the book was Rolland's *Life of Vivekananda*.
- 6 Cable of July 16, 1931, to Meredith Starr in Devonshire. In *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 7. In *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1231, the cable is quoted as reading, "Make all preparations for My coming. Love is calling Me to the West."
- 7 Elizabeth C. Patterson, "Follow Love," *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 4 (February 1939), pp. 16–17.
- 8 "Think thoughts you would not hesitate to think in My presence. Speak words you would not hesitate to speak in My presence. And do things you would not hesitate to do in My presence." Quoted in Adi K. Irani, *Just to Love Him: Talks and Essays about Meher Baba* (Myrtle Beach: Sheriar Press, 1985), p. 69.
- 9 From "The Universal Message" (1958). In Purdom, *The God-Man*, p. 343. See also note 28, p. 272.
- 10 In an interview with the *Evening News of India*, Baba was asked, "Why don't you break your self-imposed silence and preach in the marketplace?" Baba replied, "Every great change must be carefully timed. How else could it be with the greatest revolution in the mind of man?" The interview was given on Christmas 1936 and published on January 7, 1937. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1759. See also Kitty's "Reminiscences" in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Special Nasik Issue 1964), p. 1.
- 11 Francis Brabazon, Address at the Bombay Press Conference, February 25, 1959. Reprinted in "Two Birthday Talks," *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 17, no. 1 (1976), p. 21.
- 12 "Eruch on the Master at Prayer," adapted from recordings by Tim Owens at Meherazad, 1980, in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 19, no. 2 (1981), p. 17.

- 13 "My spiritual suffering is because I know I am free in myself but bound in you." May 3, 1965, Poona. Quoted in H. P. Bharucha, "Six Days in Paradise," *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 11, no. 1 (1966), p. 31.
- 14 From the message "Twelve Ways of Realizing Me." This message first appeared in the *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 2 (December 1938), pp. 10–11, and subsequently appeared in all editions of Meher Baba's *Discourses*.
- 15 *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 179. An earlier citation is Norina Matchabelli, "The Voice," *Meher Baba Journal*, vol. 1, no. 4 (February 1939), p. 53.
- 16 From Meher Baba's "Final Declaration" (September 30, 1954), quoted in Purdom, *The God-Man*, p. 274.
- 17 Spontaneous couplet dictated to Francis Brabazon, 1966. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 5236.19
- 18 London, July 1956. *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3978. See also DeLeon, *The Ocean of Love*, p. 186.
- 19 *The Life Circulars of Avatar Meher Baba* (Hyderabad: Meher Vihar Trust, 1968), p. 133. This message was given for the 41st anniversary of Baba's Silence (1966). Also in *Love Alone Prevails*, p. 640.
- 20 Nasik, March 1937. Excerpt from the notebooks of Ruano Bogislav, in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 16, no. 2 (1976), p. 46. Also in *Love Alone Prevails*, pp. 166–67. (A similar quote is given on p. 179.)
- 21 *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1793, reports that Baba "turned to Kitty and spelled on the board, 'You love me for love itself.' Turning to the others, Baba remarked, 'Love not the many in the One, but love the One in the many. I am the only friend who will never let you down.'"
- 22 March 4, 1937. *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 10, no. 2 (Special Nasik Issue, 1964), p. 14.
- 23 Nikos Kazantzakis, *The Saviors of God: Spiritual Exercises* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960), p. 106.
- 24 "Spiritual advancement is a succession of one surrender after another." *Meher Baba Calling* (6th ed., 1992) (Ahmednagar: Meher Nazar Books), no. 54.
- 25 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Future of Man* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964).
- 26 Ramjoo Abdulla, *Ramjoo's Diaries, 1922–1929: A Personal Account of Meher Baba's Early Work* (Walnut Creek, CA: Sufism Reoriented, 1979).
- 27 "God Alone Is" was a discourse read aloud by Eruch in Meherabad on July 10, 1958 (a year when silence was not observed on that day). See Purdom, *The God-Man*, pp. 344–46. Also in *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 4448–51, and in *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 5, no. 4 (Fall 1958), p. 4.
- 28 Although this quote is associated with the 1958 "Universal Message," Baba made this statement earlier. On July 9, 1925, prior to beginning His silence: "The teacher Pandoba then pleaded with Baba that if he became silent, people would no longer have the opportunity to hear what he had to declare, and the world will be deprived of his teachings. Meher Baba replied, 'I have come not to teach, but to awaken!'" *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 599. And on November 6, 1931, an immigration officer in New York City asked Baba, "You have come to teach people in America? *Without* speaking? With this board? How foolish! Who gave you this silly idea?" Baba spelled out in reply, "I have come not to teach, but to awaken." *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 1300.
- 29 "Every one of you has to help in My work according to your individual capacity." Ed., Haynes, *Treasures from the Meher Baba Journals*, p. 17.
- 30 Meher Baba's last message on the alphabet board is described as "Avatar Meher Baba's Circular letter [dated October 8, 1954] to all His lovers who showed great concern over dropping of His body as stated by Him in His Final Declaration made at Meherabad on 30th September, 1954." *The Awakener Magazine*, vol. 19, no. 2 (1981), p. 3. The letter was translated from the Hindi of Bhau Kalchuri by C. D. Deshmukh. *The Awakener Magazine* gave the circular the title "The Great Task Before Baba Lovers," but it appears without a title in *Lord Meher*, online rev. ed., 3651–52.

A B O U T K I T T Y D A V Y

Katherine L. Davy, known as Kitty, was born in London on August 28, 1891. As a student and later a distinguished teacher of music, Kitty had contact with several individuals whose love for Indian mysticism helped to prepare her for her own destiny as a disciple of Meher Baba, including the composer Gustave Holst; Professor Barnett, a translator of early Sanskrit works at the British Museum; and the family of Christopher Isherwood, a translator of the Bhagavad Gita.

In 1931, Kitty met Meher Baba in London during His first trip to the Western world. From that time forward she was one of His leading Western disciples. One of the few to whom Baba accorded the privilege to “leave all and follow Me,” Kitty spent most of her first twenty years of discipleship in Baba’s company, including a long span in India from 1937 to 1952. Her life of selfless service is recounted in her book, *Love Alone Prevails* (1981).

In 1952, Kitty was one of the disciples who accompanied Baba on His first visit to the Meher Spiritual Center in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. At that time, she was asked by Baba to remain in Myrtle Beach to help Elizabeth Patterson and Princess Norina Matchabelli in their work at Meher Center. She actively served in that voluntary capacity until her death on December 3, 1991, at the age of 100.

ONE FINE THREAD is a collection of talks written by Kitty Davy between 1968 and 1990. It will come as no surprise that they are dedicated to the one subject that comprised the entire focus of her life, namely, Avatar Meher Baba, her spiritual Master whom she loved and followed since their first meeting in London in 1931. These talks were given mainly at Meher Spiritual Center, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where Kitty lived from 1952 until her death in 1991 at age 100.

— From the Introduction

“Looking back, I realize that above all other aspects of our early lives with Baba in India and in the West, there was one fine thread that went onto the canvas, and that fine thread, as I see it today, concerned consciousness.”

— From Kitty's talk
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