

Meher Baba Australia

March – May 2019



Avatar

Prelude to destiny

Jean Adriel

Tremendous as Baba's effect has been upon the lives of many thousands who have had a close inner or outer contact with him, his life activity so far has been largely preparatory, because his public manifestation — which many of us believe will substantiate his claims of Avatarhood — is yet to begin and become self-evident.

His claims of Mastership can hardly be repudiated by any unprejudiced person who is acquainted with the facts of his life; and if we understand what the role of Avatarhood implies, we may see in many of these facts indications that this claim also is true.

Since in the West we have no literature which deals with the concept of the Avatar as a recurrent manifestation of Godhood in human form, we must turn to the Bhagavad Gita — the great sacred classic of India — for enlightenment on this subject.

Here we find a dramatic situation which is wholly analogous to the present condition of man. Then, as in our time, a dreadful war — as related to the Mahabharata — was destroying the old order with all its vices and virtues. Both individuals and nations had come to the place where all the intellectual, moral and emotional values had collapsed, leaving man in a state of spiritual bankruptcy and utter bewilderment.

The man of action — Arjuna — was asking himself, even as we are asking ourselves today, whether bloodshed ever achieved anything of lasting worth. Did it not perhaps merely help to keep the balance of power in the hands of one group of people or

nations rather than in another? With Arjuna, however, directing the battle behind the scenes, was his beloved friend and counsellor, Krishna, for whom Arjuna had the deepest love and respect. In his moment of utter frustration, hopelessness and doubt of all his old values, he turns to his wise friend and guide, asking him for a clear rule of conduct by which he may confidently walk.

This man Arjuna is the representative man of his age who has — like modern man — exiled God and spirituality in favour of ethical, social and humanitarian ideals and practical reforms. Both individually and collectively this man of the Gita and of today has reached the moment of his soul's greatest need — when he must face his own inadequacy.

Up to this time, Krishna's help has been largely that of spurring his friend on to disinterested action in defending his position against the opposing foe; the outer foe who is, of course, nothing but the objectification of the inner. But now Arjuna — having reached the end of his own egoistic action — turns to Krishna in despair, pleading for his help.

He begins to suspect that this beloved comrade is more than human friend, more than mere man. He implores him to show him his true form, his real nature. And because the soul of Arjuna — almost like that of modern man — has been sufficiently conditioned by suffering; because his egoistic self-sufficiency has been punctured, Krishna consents to satisfy

the soul's urgent desire.

He reveals himself in his aspect of universal Saviour or Avatar, and proceeds now to guide Arjuna to the higher state of consciousness for which he knows him to be ready.

In the person of Krishna, we find one in whom the eternal divine nature is fully conscious; one, therefore, who is fully aware of his destiny as the spiritual leader of mankind and in that consciousness, directs the destinies of men and nations. In his own right as the incarnate God for the whole of humanity — not merely for a restricted group of close disciples — he lifts the consciousness of the entire created world, for even the animals respond to the magic of his divine flute — the symbol of the irresistible drawing power of God in the soul. Krishna also recognizes that his role of guide and awakener of the whole of life is one which he has always, since the dawn of humanity, fulfilled.

Of this same consciousness, Baba has given countless indications both in his dealing with people and by his own admission. Once, when a questioner asked him how he knew that he was the Christ, he replied: "I knew it before anything was," which is perhaps another way of saying: "Before Abraham was, I am;" or, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

In the instruction which Krishna gives to his disciple Arjuna, we find basically the same technique of life which Baba today gives to his twentieth-century disciples. At some

stage of their inner unfoldment he gives them a glimpse of his true nature and mission, and then encourages them to surrender themselves wholly to his will — his guidance.

He teaches them how to live in the world, yet not be of it; how to perform all action without regard for the fruits, by thinking of themselves as channels for the action of the Divine Being within. He gives them a new Law of Life by which action may be performed free of bondage yet powerful enough to achieve the will of God or the Avatar.

He lifts them above the plane of the opposites, with its endless conflicts and perplexities, into the center of true knowledge, peace and joy — the Divine Self.

Also like Krishna, Baba first leads the disciple as the beloved friend, father, comrade. Then, when the time is ripe, he reveals himself as the soul's Saviour, the immortal Being who lives in the heart of every man, while at the same time he takes form as the human Avatar. With Krishna, Baba says: "Seek refuge in me, for you are very dear to me. I will release you from all sin. Do not grieve; do not worry."

Surely today as in that far-off time of Krishna, we have reached an impasse in man's development. Of himself alone, he seems powerless even to protect his physical existence. This is the psychological moment when man should — and indeed must — turn



Meher Baba at Feldmeilen, the Mertens' home in Switzerland, 6-15 July 1934. Avatar's Abode Archive.

once again toward God for help.

To the least mystical person, it should be apparent — as it was to the pragmatist, Arjuna — that unless some divine means is found to enable man to transcend his greed, selfishness and fear, this civilization will rapidly regress to the jungle state of consciousness, or be totally destroyed by the pressure of a button in the hands of a man or nation gone berserk.

War has obviously not taught us the lesson that mankind is One. War can never teach that lesson. Only as individuals become aware of the basic unity of all life will nations be able to cooperate in a spirit of universal brotherhood and assure the further spiritual progress of mankind.

Clearly, such a development in man's consciousness presupposes divine intervention of some sort. Not by intellectual means, not by conscious willing, can man learn to love his fellow-man regardless of colour, creed or nationality. For this, the constructive forces of the unconscious

must be released.

Fortunately for humanity there is, in the form of Meher Baba, a Divine Force who has the power to arouse these latent powers of Light; and what is more important, who has the authority to use that power, as the testimony of many advanced souls and saints has corroborated in this, his life story.

Only the Leader — the Avatar — knows when the God-force shall speak his word of power and effect for man his gravely needed spiritual awakening. We can, however, as Baba tells us, speed its coming by surrendering ourselves wholly to the will of God, with the recognition that only divine aid will save mankind from total destruction.

When humanity has come to the end of its own resources, at the moment of its greatest need, then, Baba says, he will initiate his public work....

*AVATAR, pp. 266-269,
1947 © Jean Adriel.*

The Avatar's call

Meher Baba

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 clamour 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.

This time-honored Call of mine thrills the hearts of those who have patiently endured all in their love for God, loving God only for love of God. There are those who fear and shudder at its reverberations and would flee or resist. And there are yet others who, baffled, fail to understand why the Highest of the High, who is all-sufficient, need necessarily give this Call to humanity.

Irrespective of doubts and convictions, and for the Infinite Love I bear for one and all, I continue to come as the Avatar, to be judged time and again by humanity in its ignorance, in order to help man distinguish the Real from the false.

Invariably muffled in the cloak of the



Meher Baba, 8 June 1957 at the previous Poona Centre at 399 Somwar Peth. Photographer: Meelan. Avatar's Abode Archive. © Meher Nazar Publications.

infinitely true humility of the Ancient One, the Divine Call is at first little heeded, until, in its infinite strength, it spreads in volume to reverberate and keep on reverberating in countless hearts as the Voice of Reality.

Age after age, history repeats itself when men and women, in their ignorance, limitations and pride, sit in judgment over the God-incarnated man who declares his Godhood, and condemn him for uttering the Truths they cannot understand. He is indifferent to abuse and persecution for, in his true compassion he understands, in his continual experience of Reality he knows, and in his infinite mercy he forgives.

God is all. God knows all, and God

does all. When the Avatar proclaims he is the Ancient One, it is God who proclaims His manifestation on earth. When man utters for or against the Avatarhood, it is God who speaks through him. It is God alone who declares Himself through the Avatar and mankind.

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

There is nothing but God. He is the only Reality, and we all are one

in the indivisible Oneness of this absolute Reality. When the One who has realized God says, “I am God. You are God, and we are all one,” and also awakens this feeling of Oneness in his illusion-bound selves, then the question of the lowly and the great, the poor and the rich, the humble and the modest, the good and the bad, simply vanishes. It is his false awareness of duality that misleads man into making illusory distinctions and filing them into separate categories.

Love for God alone can annihilate the falsity of the limited ego, the basis of life ephemeral. It alone can make one realize the Reality of one’s Unlimited Ego, the basis of Eternal Existence. The divine Ego, as the basis of Eternal Existence, continually expresses itself; but shrouded in the veil of ignorance, man misconstrues his Indivisible Ego and experiences and expresses it as the limited, separate ego.

Pay heed when I say with my Divine Authority that the Oneness of Reality is so uncompromisingly unlimited and all-pervading that not only “We are One,” but even this collective term of “We” has no place in the Infinite Indivisible Oneness.

Awaken from your ignorance and try at least to understand that, in the uncompromisingly Indivisible Oneness, not only is the Avatar God, but also the ant and the sparrow, just as one and all of you are nothing but God. The only apparent difference is in the states of consciousness. The Avatar knows that that which is a sparrow is not a sparrow, whereas the sparrow does not realize this and, being ignorant of its ignorance, identifies itself as a sparrow.

Live not in ignorance. Do not waste your precious life-span in differentiating and judging your

fellowmen, 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.

THE BELOVED, THE LIFE AND WORK OF MEHER BABA, pp. 109-111, Naosherwan Anzar, 1983 © Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

The declaration

Meher Baba

I have not come to establish anything new — I have come to put life into the old. I have not come to establish retreats or ashrams. I create them for the purpose of my universal work, only to repeatedly dissolve them once that purpose has been served.

When my universal religion of love is on the verge of fading into insignificance, I come to breathe life into it and to do away with the farce of dogmas that defile it in the name of religions and stifle it with ceremonies and rituals.

THE MOVING FINGER WRITES, Part 2, p. 12, 1967 © Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust

The Avatar’s advent

Meher Baba

Age after age the Avatar comes amidst mankind to maintain his own creation of illusion, thereby also awakening humanity to awareness of it.

The framework of illusion is always one and the same, but the designs in illusion are innumerable and ever-changing.

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.

Through you, I automatically maintain illusion which is nothing but the shadow of my infinite Self, and through me you automatically discard illusion when you experience its falseness.

LIFE AT ITS BEST, pp. 73. 1957 © Sufism Reoriented, Inc.

Avataric periods

Meher Baba

Consciously or unconsciously, every living creature seeks one thing. In the lower forms of life and in less advanced human beings, the quest is unconscious: in advanced human beings, it is conscious. The object of the quest is called by many names — happiness, peace, freedom, truth, love, perfection, Self-realization, God-realization, union with God. Essentially, it is a search for all of these, but in a special way. Everyone has moments of happiness, glimpses of truth, fleeting experiences of union with God; what they want is to make them permanent. They want to establish an abiding reality in the midst of constant change.

Avataric periods are like the springtide of creation. They bring a new release of power, a new awakening of consciousness, a new experience of life — not merely for a few, but for all. Qualities of energy and awareness, which had been used and enjoyed by only a few advanced souls, are made available for all humanity. Life, as a whole, is stepped up to a higher level of consciousness, is geared to a new rate of energy. The transition from sensation to reason was one such step; the transition from reason to intuition will be another.

This new influx of the creative impulse manifests, through the medium of a divine personality, an incarnation of God in a special sense — the Avatar. The Avatar was the first individual soul to emerge from the evolutionary and involutory process as a Sadguru, and He is the only Avatar who has ever manifested

or will ever manifest. Through Him God first completed the journey from unconscious divinity to conscious divinity, first unconsciously became man in order consciously to become God. Through Him, periodically, God consciously becomes man for the liberation of mankind.

The Avatar appears in different forms, under different names, at different times, in different parts of the world. As His appearance always coincides with the spiritual regeneration of man, the period immediately preceding His manifestation is always one in which humanity suffers from the pangs of the approaching rebirth. Man seems more than ever enslaved by desire, more than ever driven by greed, held by fear, swept by anger. The strong dominate the weak; the rich oppress the poor; large masses of people are exploited for the benefit of the few who are in power. The individual, who finds no peace or rest, seeks to forget himself in excitement. Immorality increases, crime flourishes, religion is ridiculed. Corruption spreads throughout the social order. Class and national hatreds are aroused and fostered. Wars break out. Humanity grows desperate. There seems to be no possibility of stemming the tide of destruction.

At this moment the Avatar appears. Being the total manifestation of God in human form, He is like a gauge against which man can measure what he is and what he may become. He tries the standard of human values by interpreting them in terms of divinely human life.

He is interested in everything but not concerned about anything. The slightest mishap may command His sympathy; the greatest tragedy will not upset Him. He is beyond the alternations of pain and pleasure, desire and satisfaction, rest and struggle, life and death. To Him they are equally illusions that He has transcended, but by which others are bound, and from which He has come to free them. He uses every circumstance as a means to lead others toward Realization.

He knows that individuals do not cease to exist when they die and therefore is not concerned over death. He knows that destruction must precede construction, that out of suffering is born peace and bliss, that out of struggle comes liberation from the bonds of action. He is only concerned about concern.

In those who contact Him, He awakens a love that consumes all selfish desire in the flame of the one desire to serve Him. Those who consecrate their lives to Him gradually become identified with Him in consciousness. Little by little their humanity is absorbed into His divinity, and they become free. Those who are closest to Him are known as His Circle.

The Avatar awakens contemporary humanity to a realization of its true spiritual nature, gives Liberation to those who are ready, and quickens the life of the spirit in His time. For posterity is left the stimulating power of His divinely human example — of the nobility of a life supremely lived, of a love unmixed with desire, of a power

unused except for others, of a peace untroubled by ambition, of a knowledge undimmed by illusion. He has demonstrated the possibility of a divine life for all humanity, of a heavenly life on earth. Those who have the necessary courage and integrity can follow when they will.

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.

For the moment they must be patient. 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 and something more real than material power, the wave will recede. Then peace will come, joy will come, light will come.

My public manifestation — is not far off. I bring the greatest treasure it is possible for man to receive — a treasure that includes all other treasures, that will endure forever, that increases when shared with others. Be ready to receive it.

*DISCOURSES, 7th edition,
pp. 266-270, 1987*
© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual
Public Charitable Trust.



Meher Baba, Jabalpur circa January 1939. This photo was taken by Mani. Avatar's Abode Archive. © MSI Collection.

This body is not Me

Meher Baba

You do not see Me as I really am. This body is not Me. My real Self is far more beautiful.
I am Infinite Truth, Infinite Love, and Infinite Power. I am life eternal.
I was Krishna, I was Buddha, I was Jesus and now I am Meher Baba.

LOVE ALONE PREVAILS, p. 34, Kitty Davy, 1981
© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

Last message on the alphabet board

7 October 1954

Meher Baba

There is no reason at all for any of you to worry. Baba was, Baba is, and Baba will also be eternally existent.

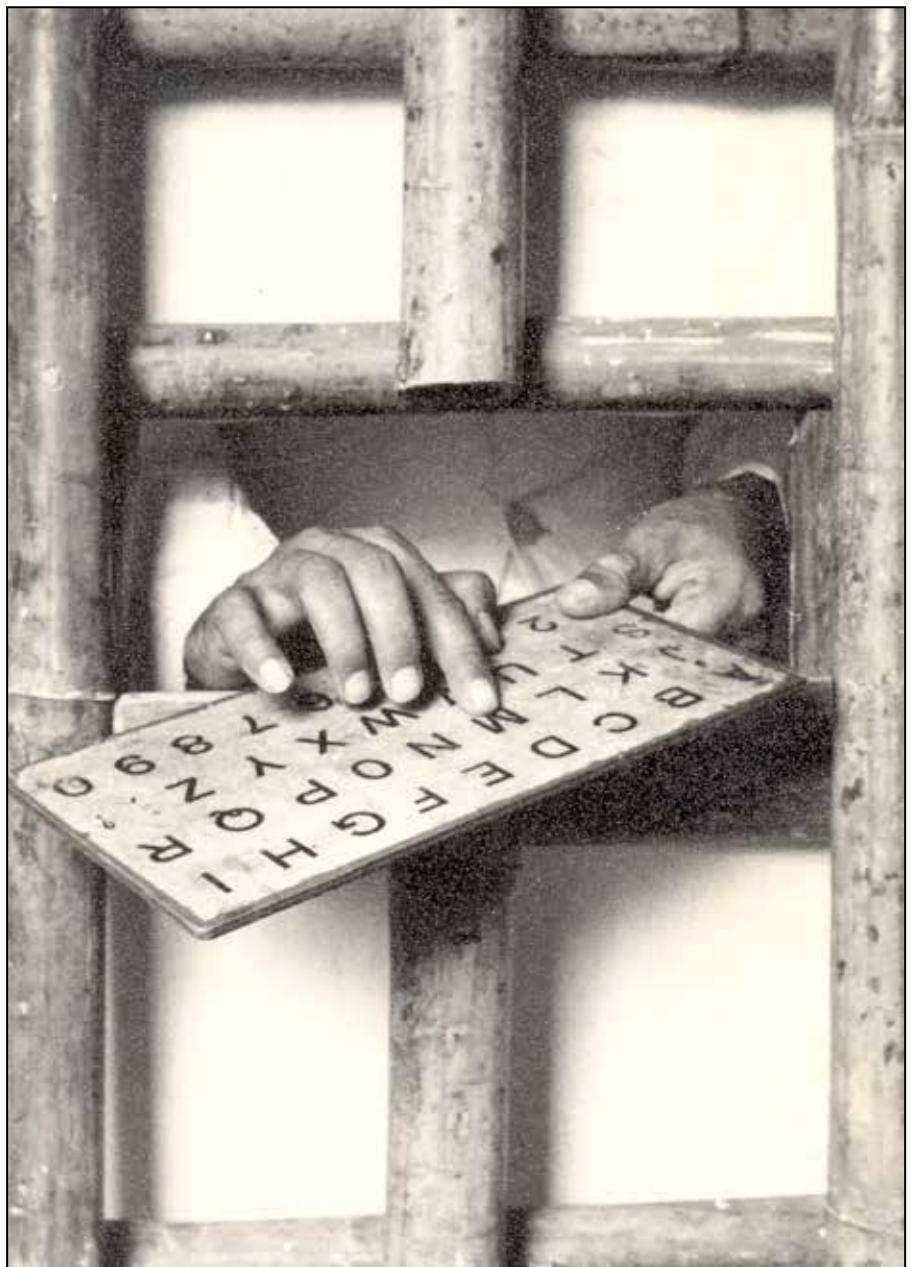
Severance of external relations does not mean the termination of internal connections. It was only for establishing the internal connections that the external contacts have been maintained till now. The time has now come for being bound in the chain of internal connections. HENCE EXTERNAL CONTACT IS 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.

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 heart, 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



Meher Baba's hands using the alphabet board in the cage room at Upper Meherabad on 30 July 1941 before going into seclusion on 1 August 1941. This photo was taken by Padri. Avatar's Abode Archive. © MSI Collection.

'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.

PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY, p. 216, John A. Grant, 1985
© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

He is with each one at all times

Mani Irani

We do not need to see what the year holds; we need only to hold fast to the Seer. All we have to do, Baba tells us, is to hold on to Him with unshakable faith and love — all who are attached to Him, whether deserving or otherwise, are bound to reach the goal.

He gave the simple illustration of a goods train: every wagon that is linked to the Engine, whether it contains gold or rubble, gets borne to the Terminus. But many are the jolts and distractions along this journey with God, and He has to keep warning us “hold fast — hold fast” as He pulls us along.

He has provided us with the means to hold fast. He has given us the love that feeds our faith. Faith is like a lighted lamp, it shines only in the dark. And while its brightness is proof of darkness, its light reveals His grace that keeps it burning.

Those who deprive themselves of the light of God’s grace by their blind unbelief are nevertheless never deprived of His compassion. Baba recently commented to the mandali: “Jesus said ‘Father forgive them for they know not what they do.’ I say ‘Father have pity on them for they know not what will happen.’”

To His lovers, Baba says: “I alone Am. Remember me wholeheartedly. Repeat my name constantly. I am with you.” Over and over again His lovers experience the sublime truth of His being the Slave of the love of His lovers. With every wholehearted call of BABA!, His reply I AM HERE materializes. He is with each one at all times, but asks us to wake Him up with remembrance. He says, “I am in each heart but I am sleeping there. It is my old, old habit. In order to awaken me you should always call out to me, saying ‘Baba, Baba, Baba’ continuously. Then I, who am in your heart, will not find any pleasure in remaining asleep. Let alone sleep, I shall not find time even to doze!”

82 FAMILY LETTERS, p. 300, 1976 © Avatar
Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.



Meher Baba sitting in front of the pipal tree He had planted in 1930 in Madras. 4 April 1947. Avatar’s Abode Archive.

Nowadays people have computers

Eruch Jessawala

Nowadays people have computers to do everything. You people are always telling us we have to get computers for the office, to keep the books, to file papers, to organize things, but Baba used to keep track of all this, of the hundreds and hundreds of people He was responsible for, without any computer, without writing anything down.

Baba’s perfection was such that He would never overlook even the tiniest detail of anything.

THAT’S HOW IT WAS, p. 95, 1995
© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.



Mani labelled this photo as being taken at the Prem Ashram in Meherabad in the 1920s. Avatar's Abode Archive.

I am bliss personified

Meher Baba

Really speaking, everywhere in the entire universe is bliss. It is all bliss, bliss and bliss! But poor, ignorant mankind cannot enjoy it, as man does not know how to enjoy it. The whole universe is full of infinite bliss, but disregarding it, man hankers after the transient happiness of affluence, influence, possessions, name and fame. This is all false and illusory, yet man runs only after this. It is due to his ignorance of what is real. One should try to acquire real happiness by eschewing that which is false.

I am bliss personified. This five foot, six inch physical form you see is not real. If you could see my Real Form, you would not be yourself. The limited human mind has not the least conception of the Sat-Chit-Ananda state — Infinite Power-Knowledge-Bliss. This state is beyond the realm of the mind. It is called the Nirvikalp state — the “I am God” state. Nirvikalp is the Infinite Bliss state of Paramatma or God’s Infinite Consciousness.

Everyone is destined to attain this state and it is everyone’s duty to make efforts toward that end. Some persons may acquire Realization today; if not today, then tomorrow. Some may get it after years and some after many births. But at some time or other, one and all have to experience this elevated state.

LORD MEHER, Online, p.1039, 1986

© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

Messages of Avatar Meher Baba

Meher Baba

I belong to no religion. Every religion belongs to Me. My own personal religion is of My being the Ancient Infinite One and the religion I teach to all is of love for God. This love can be practised by anyone, high, low, rich, poor, and every one of every caste and creed can love God.

God is not to be lured, but is to be loved. God is not to be preached, but is to be lived. Only those who live the life of love, honesty and self-sacrifice, can know Me as the Ancient One.

I can say with Divine Authority that I experience eternally, consciously and continually, being one with you all, and one in you all. Any worship or obeisance done to any deity ... to any saint, master, advanced soul or yogi, eventually comes to Me. By offering pure unadulterated love to anyone and to anything, you will be loving Me, as I am in everyone and everything and beyond everything.

WHEN HE TAKES OVER, p. 3, ed Bal Natu 1988

© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

Remember others with kindness and generosity

Meher Baba

Before he can know Who he is, man has to unlearn the mass of illusory knowledge he has burdened himself with on the journey from unconsciousness to consciousness. It is only through love that you can begin to unlearn, thus eventually putting an end to all that you do not know. God-love penetrates the illusion, while no amount of illusion can penetrate God-love.

Start learning to love God by beginning to love those whom you cannot. You will find that in serving others you are serving yourself.

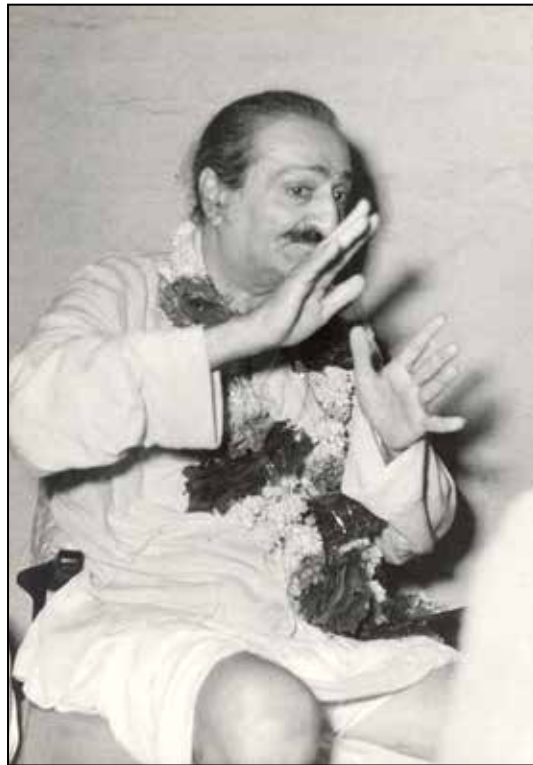
The more you remember others with kindness and generosity, the less you remember yourself; and the less you remember yourself the more you forget yourself. And, when you completely forget yourself, you find me as the Source of all Love.

Give up parrotry in all its aspects. Start practising whatever you truly feel to be true and justly to be just. Do not make a show of your faiths and beliefs. You have not to give up your religion, but to give up clinging to the outer husk of mere ritual and ceremonies. To get to the fundamental core of Truth underlying all religions, reach beyond religion.

Extract from Meher Baba's UNIVERSAL MESSAGE. Can also be found in THE GOD MAN by C.B. Purdom pp 344-346 (God Alone Is). © Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

Toys in the Divine Game

Meher Baba



Meher Baba at Ganeshkind in Poona, 9 June 1957. Photo by Meelan Studios. Avatar's Abode Archive. © Meher Nazar Publications.

The Infinite alone exists and is Real; the finite is passing and false.

The Original Whim in the Beyond caused the apparent descent of the Infinite into the realm of the seeming finite. This is the Divine Mystery and the Divine Game in which Infinite Consciousness for ever plays on all levels of finite consciousness.

I am Infinite Consciousness, interpenetrating and transcending all states of limited consciousness. The most primal and the most final categories of consciousness — say a stone or a saint — are

equidistant from me, so I am equally approachable by all. I am the Way.

Unwavering loyalty to the Way is the real remedy for the sickness of impressed consciousness. Some of my lovers, owing to fluctuating faith, fail to understand this and run hither and thither for Freedom. For me it then becomes a matter of retrieving them, and others wonder why I give so much attention to these people.

A child has many toys, and it likes to play with some more than with others, and one is so dear that he won't part with it even when he goes to bed. If someone snatches away a favourite toy he must get it back, and if one gets broken he demands that it be mended; he will not be consoled with another even more costly one.

It is the same with me. I am a child whose playground is the universe. All beings and things are my toys in my divine Game — compared with my being and power all are inanimate toys — but they are toys which I inspire with my life-giving love.

All are equally me and I reside in each always, but some are dearer to me, and if one of these is taken from me I must get him back. And others have no right to wonder why I show so much concern for this or that one.

*THE EVERYTHING AND THE NOTHING, pp. 70-71, 1989
© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust*

Forgive them and forget all

Meher Baba

Criticism of Baba by the press was a regular occurrence those days. Behind it was Colonel Irani, who was quite clever and active in his propaganda campaign. He even went so far as to try to persuade Baily to his viewpoint by bribing him.

On December 27th, (1928) Baba found out about Baily's involvement with the Colonel and warned, "If Baily succumbs to graft to support his habits of wine, women and song, he will be like Judas. But I won't allow it to happen. I love him and will see that he does not slip off the path." Soon after, Baba sent Vishnu to Poona, and he returned with Baily the next day. Baily sought Baba's forgiveness with tears streaming down his cheeks. He promised Baba he would change his habits and said he would write a fitting reply to the Colonel's allegations. Hearing this, Baba explained at length about the current antagonism against him.

You should not hate him (Colonel Irani); the man deserves to be pitied. We should not act in the same way as he does. We should harbor no bitterness for his criticism nor try to get the better of him. Instead we should patiently tolerate his obstructive tactics. How beautiful it was when Christ said, "If a person slaps you on one cheek, offer him the other." This is the real thing; otherwise, there is no difference between the Colonel and Baily.



Meher Baba at Toka 1928, during a fast. This photo was taken by Raosaheb Afseri. Avatar's Abode Archive. © MSI Collection.

If a man curses your father and you curse his mother, what is the difference between you? Such opponents are friends not enemies. They teach you the lesson of being calm, patient and forbearing in every adverse circumstance – in the midst of all provocation. They thereby render you the greatest service. So forbear, forgive and forget.

Your attitude should serve as an example of forbearance and patience to the world. Therefore, don't become like them. Tolerate everything, face every obstacle and learn to swallow

anger. It is for this reason that Kabir has said, "If you want to gulp down anything, gulp down wrath."

You have a great lesson to learn from this opposition. Learn that those who spread deceitful lies about our actions and propagandize against us are thereby giving importance to our work without our asking. They publicize our cause, advertising it widely in a way which we could not have done. This is their service to us. Not only this, but by carrying on with all their propaganda, they are always thinking of me and giving me so much importance. This preoccupation of theirs is thus advantageous to them. You serve me in a favorable manner; they in an unfavourable manner, but it is service nevertheless. There is no doubt that in this way they are thinking of me and that is what matters. Their angle of

vision is different, but they have the right to think and express their views and opinions. But while expressing their minds, too often they lose control over their tongues which leads them to such extreme ridicule which makes them scandalize us.

You may resent it and say that this is their weakness. But if you believe this and still adopt the same vituperative attitude toward them, does this not expose your own weakness? There is then no difference between you and them! And it shows that my instructions, discourses and



Meher Baba at the 1965 Darshan at Guruprasad in Poona. Avatar's Abode Archive.

My own divine play

Meher Baba

1954

When I say I am the Avatar, there are a few who feel happy, some who feel shocked, and many who hearing me claim this, would take me for a hypocrite, a fraud, a supreme egoist, or just mad. If I were to say every one of you is an Avatar, a few would be tickled, and many would consider it blasphemy or a joke.

The fact that God being One, Indivisible, and equally in us all — that we can be naught else but one — is too much for the duality-conscious mind to accept. Yet, each of us is what the other is. I know I am the Avatar in every sense of the word, and that each one of you is an Avatar in one sense or the other.

It is an unalterable and universally recognized fact since time immemorial that God

knows everything, God does everything, and that nothing happens but by the Will of God. Therefore, it is God Who makes me say I am the Avatar, and that each one of you is an Avatar. Again, it is He Who is tickled through some, and through others is shocked.

It is God Who acts, and God Who reacts. It is He Who scoffs, and He Who responds. He is the Creator, the Producer, the Actor and the Audience in His own Divine Play.

LORD MEHER, Online Edition, p. 3555, 1998
© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Trust.

Forgive them and forget all, continued from previous page

teachings have had no effect upon you. Compared to them, your weakness is greater because you have stayed with me, heard my discourses and know me, which they have not. So remain calm, put up with hardships and be tolerant; forgive them and forget all.

LORD MEHER, Online Edition
pp. 1001 – 1002 1998 © Avatar
Meher Baba Perpetual Public Trust.

Recalling my first *Amartithi*

Ross Keating

When I first attended an *Amartithi* it was in 1973. I remember meeting people from all around the world and I had this immediate recognition that Meher Baba had awakened Himself in them just as he had awakened Himself in me.

It was like Baba was meeting Baba. And everyone felt it; it was like we had all tumbled into an alternative universe, one that was filled with Baba's Presence. Baba was our map, our guide, and our travel companion.

Mani, Baba's sister, summed it up nicely in saying that we gave the *mandali* an experience of Baba as the One in the many, while their experience of living with Baba was of the many in the One. Eruch was amazed at the depth of longing we had in our hearts having never met Baba before and only knowing of Him through a photograph or a message.

I thought that our experience must have been akin to the Pentecost experience of the early Christians: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). Except the Holy Ghost was Baba's Presence and the "other tongues" was simply the language of love for the God-Man -- which we all miraculously understood and shared -- given to us by Meher Baba.

In a real sense my experience at *Amartithi* was proof to me of Eruch's words: "When the God-Man (Avatar) drops His physical form God simply sheds the Man-form and He continues to exercise His attributes of infinite

Love, Mercy, Compassion, etc. His Authority and Power do not cease to directly function through Him -- He being God the Eternal". For I felt Baba was fully active in my life. He had awakened Himself in me. I had nothing to do with it at all -- it was totally Baba's doing.

Overnight, in a sense, I had become a Baba lover. I also remember being struck at the time with the original message from Meherazad announcing Baba's dropping of His physical body on 31st January, 1969 for it said that Baba was now -- "to live eternally in the hearts of His lovers". He was not going off to a blissful heavenly existence, as I was conditioned to believe by my religious upbringing. Instead, Meher Baba was going to be resident in my heart. But I wondered what that meant?

Francis also made it to the *Amartithi* in '73 and I happened to hear him give a short talk in *Mandali* Hall at Meherazad. Francis's words, as usual, were very grounding. While it is difficult to imagine his sense of personal loss, as with all the *mandali*, of not having the beautiful presence of their Beloved to fill their days, he was able to see the deeper significance of Baba's putting aside His physical body.

Francis began by saying: "Four years ago Beloved Baba covered His form with the veil of His compassion so that we would be led (or driven) to seek Him in the reality of Himself instead of clinging to Him in the Shape of His Love. He came so that we might see and He went so that we could know". And then came the full force of his

thought: "By His act of dropping His body He showed that He expected us to seek His Reality and He challenged us to measure up to His Expectation". Francis was making it clear that the idea of Baba "living in our hearts" meant a spiritual challenge, and not the guarantee of some kind of ready-made, inner peace.

And then Francis followed with a striking image of Baba, which poetically reinforced his thought: "He was a drop of wine on the rim of the cup of our carousing that we desired greatly to taste, but which slipped down into the body of the ruby liquid so that we could not taste one drop but drink the whole cup".

But how to meet this challenge? At the end of his talk Francis gave a clue: "There can be no grief on the dust road, only longing. But there is no longing, because we have certainty. But we cannot be certain because everything depends on His Whim. But this Whim is Himself, His own very nature: in the likeness of that He has made us -- selves of Himself as drops in an ocean. All that we have to do is to stop singing our self-song and sing the song of His Name.

"His departure was His sign to us that it was time for us to depart from ourselves. His departing in silence was so that we would listen in the stillness of our hearts for His Word of words. And the victory will always be His."

As usual in those days, I staggered out of *Mandali* Hall needing to breathe.



The Pilgrimage

The dawn came up – surprising the sleepers in the garden;
And the nightingales began preening their feathers before
beginning their song to the Rose.

“Be happy!” the Master told us,
“Leave the ‘yea’ and the ‘nay’ to me:
Such matters are beyond your grasp and comprehension”.

How many of last year’s pilgrims reached the Goal of One-ness;
But when the season of love turns round again, many will
hoist aloft the banner of new hope.
I have repented – but the repentance of the hypocrite has
no weight with the Simurgh

Call it (our goal) **One-ness** or **Such-ness** or any other term
If love is absent it is a waste of time being present
at the roll call for the pilgrimage.

*Francis Brabazon, 1981, in celebration
of Beloved Baba’s Birthday.*

Meher Baba said -
It is only love that counts, and to have love
You have to cross the threshold of the intellect.

The **Simurgh** is a benevolent, mythical bird in Iranian
mythology and literature.

Image at top: Simurgh, detail of a c.1297 Persian manuscript,
New York, Pierpont Morgan Library.



I saw grief drinking a cup of sorrow
and called out, “It tastes sweet does it not?”
“You’ve caught me,” grief answered,
“and you’ve ruined my business ...
How can I sell sorrow, when you know it’s a blessing?”

Rumi - rendered by Coleman Barks

Adam Surfing

The water lay waiting.
The Lord spoke within
its depths and the first
swells began to lift.

They took the shape
of the Lord’s lips.
Adam heard them calling
in the shell of his ear.

In the sun’s first light
he paddled to the rhythm
of the waves echoing
in the hollows of his heart.

He turned at the first
wave and rode it back
to shore. It was then
he heard the Lord’s words:

*Whatever lives is full of the Lord.
Claim nothing; enjoy,
do not covet His property.
Then hope for a hundred years of life
doing your duty. No other way can
prevent deeds from clinging,
proud as you are of your human life.*

Ross Keating

*The quote at the end of the poem,
“Adam Surfing” is from the “The
Lord” (Eesha-Upanishad), 1st
Millennium BCE, put into English by
Shree Purohit Swami and W. B. Yeats.*

Meher Baba Sahavas Margaret River Western Australia

Coinciding with Ward Parks visiting
Western Australia on his way to the
Avatar’s Abode Anniversary in June 2019,
the first ever South-West Baba Sahavas is
being held in Margaret River on
April 5th - 7th 2019 at the Surfpoint
Resort surfpoint.com.au

If you would like to attend please
phone Julie on 0428 250 294 or
email julie@whae.com.au

Meher Baba and Qawwali

Peter Rowan

Qawwali was the musical form which Beloved Baba favoured above all others, and from which He derived immense enjoyment all His life.

If a Qawwal was greatly pleasing to Baba He would sometimes sit up the whole night listening raptly and during the performance explain the nuanced delights of sublime meaning and spiritual subtlety in the singing.

After the performance, if extremely pleased, Baba would perhaps reward the Qawwal with a handkerchief, praising him with delight, and occasionally allow the Qawwal to kiss His hand.

On the other hand, if the Qawwal was not up to the expected mark Baba would terminate the program very quickly.

There are many instances recorded of these Qawwali programs Baba enjoyed over the years, but before further discussion on them, I believe it would be an advantage to first give a brief introduction to what Qawwali is; Qawwali is the musical form and a Qawwal is the performer.

The Qawwali musical form emerged in India in the mid-13th century as a distinct genre of Sufi devotional music, developed predominantly by an eminent Sufi known as Amir Khusrow of the Chishti order of Sufis. The Chishti order is best exemplified by the great Perfect Master of the 12th century Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti of Ajmer.

Amir Khusrow was born in India in 1253 and was a musician, poet and scholar, who is also said to have brought the Urdu language into prominence,



Amir Khusrow surrounded by young men. Miniature from a manuscript of *Majlis Al-Usshak* by Husayn Bayqarah.

which is still the major language used in Qawwali to this day.

Modern Urdu is what one may call loosely a derivative Persian standard register of the Hindustani language and is to a degree mutually intelligible with standard Hindi, therefore Qawwali may be, more or less, understood by a fairly broad section of India's population even though in essence, it is still essentially very much a part of the province of Islam.

Qawwali, in its developmental stages, was sung mainly at the dargahs and shrines of Sufi saints, and as this tradition is continued still, it is an essential factor which keeps the Qawwali form alive in its intrinsic devotional nature.

The aim of the Qawwal, is to praise the Beloved through such subtlety and refinement as to induce a rapport of

spiritual ecstasy for his audience.

Most Qawwali 'parties' follow a relatively strict format. The party is generally composed of six to eight men comprising the lead Qawwal, who would generally accompany himself on a harmonium, perhaps another subsidiary harmonium player would also play, there is always a tabla and often a dholak for percussion. Several of the men acting as a chorus sit in the second row and repeat key verses and aid percussion by hand-clapping.

The format of the Qawwali to be performed, is governed to a large degree by convention. An opening slow song in praise of Allah comes first with a song in praise of Muhammad to follow, perhaps then a further song in praise of a saint is sung if the Qawwal is at a saint's dargah.

The Qawwali to be sung, is then

started with an instrumental prelude, where the main melody to be employed is played on the harmonium accompanied by the tabla, then comes a tonal improvised melody in which the singers intone long notes, in the mode of the song to be sung.

The lead Qawwal will then sing some improvised preamble verses non-rhythmically, suggestive of the devotional nature of the Qawwali to be employed, with only his harmonium as accompaniment.

As the song now begins in earnest the tabla, dholak and hand clapping begin, with all the party then joining in the singing of the verses that constitute what will begin the main refrain which has by now, become clear by the Qawwal.

The lyrics of the main verses are never improvised but follow exactly the poetry of the ghazal or poetic form being used, however the tunes may be subtly improvised within the framework of the main melody

Traditionally, each Qawwali will last between 15 to 30 minutes beginning gently, and steadily building to a highly charged devotional energy level dependant on the ability of the Qawwal and his party and the receptivity of the audience.¹

Most lovers of Avatar Meher Baba are aware of the ghazal, the poetic form associated



Jaipuri Qawaal performing for Meher Baba, probably 18 October 1963. Mandali Hall, Meherazad.
Photographer: Meelan. © Meher Nazar Publications.

Continued on next page

with Hafiz of Shiraz, the 14th century Perfect Master poet most favoured by Baba.

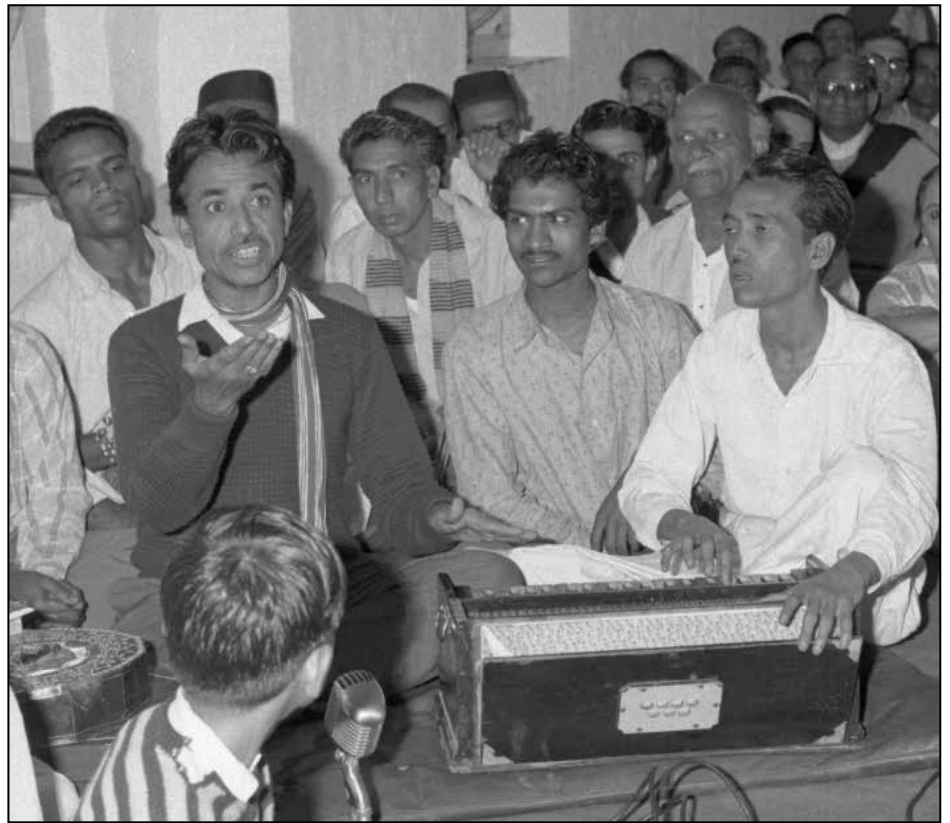
Even though the ghazal form is used extensively in Qawwali as a main form of devotional expression, a Qawwal is not necessarily considered to be a ghazal singer as such, and most 'ghazal singers' are not necessarily Qawwals.

It was not until the 1950s that Qawwali programs became a regular event in life with Beloved Baba, even though there were occasions in the earlier years when He would be pleased to have a Qawwal sing for Him, such as in 1926 at Meherabad when a Qawwal stayed for a few days and gave several performances, in appreciation Baba presented him and his tabla player with silk handkerchiefs.²

Baba would appreciate the mandali seeking out a good Qawwal for His pleasure but could show extreme displeasure if the Qawwal was sub-standard, as happened in 1942 when Baba was in seclusion and instructed Baidul he would like to hear Qawwali for relaxation. Baidul hired a Qawwal and his musicians, but within two minutes of listening Baba left the room beckoning Adi to follow him, saying, "From where on earth did Baidul find this man, is he singing or what?" Baidul was then summoned and Baba said, "What have you brought me here, that man can't sing?"

Baidul protested, "But he is a famous Qawwal, give him a chance he was probably only warming up." Baba listened for another ten minutes and motioned for Baidul to send the group away.

Baba asked, "Baidul what did you pay that man?" "Five rupees Baba", answered Baidul, "Which included his tonga fare". "You brainless Irani idiot, can any Qawwal sing for such a sum,



Habib Qawaal, of Ahmednagar, performing for Meher Baba, 9 December 1962. Mandali Hall, Meherazad. © Meher Nazar Publications.

the rogue knew he couldn't sing and so accepted the miserly five rupees you offered him" retorted Baba angrily, "You should have thought more about lessening my universal burden with good Qawwali, instead of thinking you had struck a bargain!"³

There are many wonderful occasions during the 1950s when Baba's universal work was given relief by an excellent Qawwal, such as in 1952 at Meherabad when a favourite Qawwal of Baba's, Habib Qawwal sang, giving Him great pleasure, his performance was so moving that Padri, Bal Natu, Minoo Kharas, Meherji and others started weeping. Aloba became so overcome with emotion, he banged his head against the wall and had to be restrained.⁴

Aloba would often go into an emotional frenzy with Qawwali, and on one occasion in 1955 Baba had Baidul's son-in-law Pesi look after him during a performance, but quite the

opposite happened, Pesi lost control, and Aloba and others had to restrain him.⁵

Baba was staying in Khuldabad in 1955 and wanted to hear good Qawwali, so Eruch and Pendu went to Aurangabad to arrange for a Qawwal to visit. When he arrived to play all burst out laughing as it looked as if he were about to drop off to sleep.

The Qawwal had been continuously performing for the past three nights and was extremely tired, "What sort of Qawwal have you bought me?", Baba commented to Eruch and Pendu, and then gave the Qawwal and his tabla player tablets to keep awake, which worked wonders.

The Qawwal was excellent and Baba was glowing with pleasure, the Qawaal sang for Baba till 4a.m. and by that time the mandali were thoroughly overcome, not just with the singer, but with Baba's pleasure.⁶

The essential factor with Qawwali

is expression of refinement of thought and feeling toward the Beloved, not brilliance of technique or ability for vocal pyrotechnics. A good Qawwal will enter the heart of the song and have the natural ability and technique to convey his brilliance of expression to stir the finer sensibilities of his listeners.

A wonderful case in point, expressive of this sentiment, was demonstrated by Beloved Baba in 1959. Baba had been giving darshan in Bombay to large numbers, and afterwards, a program of Qawwali with four of Bombay's best known Qawwal's and musicians had been arranged for Baba's relaxation and pleasure.

The first party began to play, Baba did not like them and sent them away. The second party began to play but they also were stopped after five minutes. The third and fourth party met with the same fate, Baba was not happy with any of them.

Baba spoke to His lovers who had made the arrangements, "What is this, I didn't like any of them?" They said, "But Baba, these four Qawwals are famous all over Bombay!" Baba replied, "They may be famous, but I like singing to be from the heart!" This comment by Beloved Baba clearly enunciates for us that unless a Qawwal was first and foremost concerned with devotion to the Beloved in his performance, no matter how brilliant or clever he may be, it was of little interest to Baba.

A lovely adjunct to the above drama of Baba's displeasure, is that another Qawwal turned up with his party at the same program and saved it admirably for Beloved Baba. The Qawwal had sung for Baba at Meherabad four years earlier and Baba enjoyed his singing immensely!⁷

The content of Qawwali is very much based on feeling and freeing feelings of love for the Beloved. The metaphors used in Qawwali express the soul's longing for Union and the agony of separation, and the inexpressible joy felt in loving the Divine.

At a Qawwali program one time, when some of the mandali and several others were overcome with the rapture that the Qawwal's singing induced, Baba was moved to explain, "Tears that stream down the cheeks without you being aware of them are very difficult to control, but if restrained, more happiness and joy is found in companionship with one's Beloved."⁸

At another time during a moving Qawwali performance in 1957, Baba stopped the singing and spoke of the emotional state brought about by Qawwali. He explained, "This is known as *haal* or *bhav*, but when a devotee becomes a real lover, he becomes devoid of this state, in his love he simply burns within which cannot be observed outwardly."

Resuming the program, Baba addressed the Qawwal, urging him, "Now let us hear some more choice truths!"

The Qawwal sang: 'I go on deceiving myself, living in the hope of dying!'

Stopping him yet again, Baba commented, "What a beautiful thought! In this state the lover is totally uprooted from the world. All his desires die, except one, and that is to die for the Beloved."⁹

There are numerous occasions and instances, up until Baba dropped His body, of His delight and pleasure in being entertained by good Qawwali, but in the latter years of the 50s and 60s it became clear that Baba's favourite Qawwal by far, was Jaipuri Qawwal, who was summoned with

his party to sing before Beloved Baba many times. On one occasion Baba displayed his pleasure, after listening for four hours to Jaipuri Qawwal, by presenting to him and his five musicians, a handkerchief each.¹⁰

A most wonderful description of Baba's joy and pleasure in listening to Jaipuri Qawwal in 1962 is encapsulated in the following observation by one of the mandali, "As Jaipuri Qawwal sang, Baba's face looked more radiant than a thousand suns. His being in all states of divine love was seen on His face. None knew how the two hours of singing passed so quickly, all longed to be in Baba's presence for more time. It was pure joy to look at Baba, His luminous countenance contained wine and intoxicated all."¹¹

700 years of Sufi tradition is contained in the beauty of the Qawwali form of music. How delightful for our Beloved Baba that it gave Him so much pleasure during His Advent, and He was able to tell us, "Good Qawwali always gives me brief respite from the burden of my Universal Work."¹²

***Footnote:**

For those who would like to listen to a recent performance of Qawwali in celebration of Beloved Baba's birthday, I would suggest you go to: '[Meherabad Moments](#)' – [YouTube](#). Click on videos, then scroll to '[Phenomenal Qawwali Performance by Pavan Naik and Group](#)' at Avatar Meher Baba Ahmednagar Centre 27th Feb. 2017 as part of celebration of Baba's Birthday.

REFERENCES

1. Wikipedia: Qawwali; Amir Khusrow; Urdu
2. LORD MEHER online p646. 3. p2292. 4. p3167. 5. p3767. 6. p3680. 7. p4500. 8. p3167. 9. p4234. 10. p5289. 11. p4874. 12. p5046.

Meher Baba's Tiffin Lectures

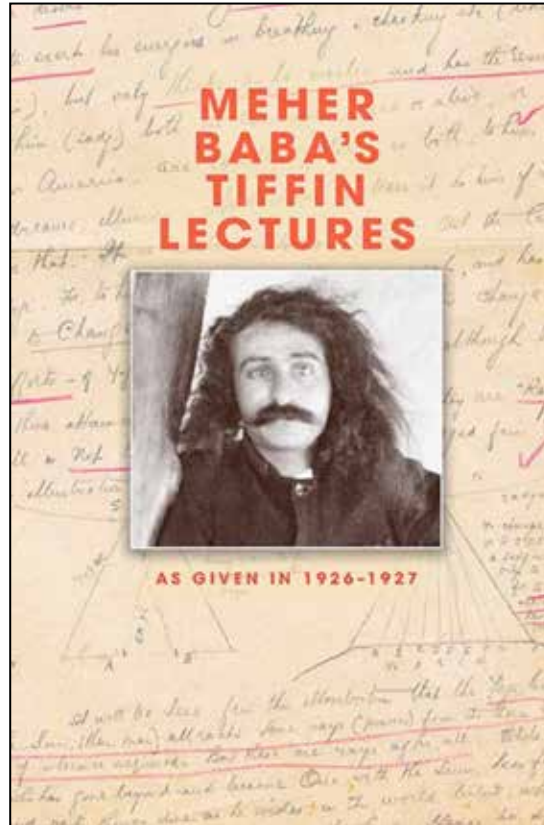
Published 2017 by Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust, Ahmednagar, India.

Book Review

Sarah McNeill

Only during the last fifteen years has new archival research and textual scholarship brought back into view what we could call the Avatar's early literary dispensation during the Meherabad years of the 1920s ... This present book, rendering Baba's talks to his intimate male disciples, now takes its place alongside Infinite Intelligence and In God's Hand as a record of his expositions during the first part of his Meherabad residence. (Meher Baba's Tiffin Lectures, p.425)

The above statement, taken from a section at the end of the book, underscores the importance of the Tiffin Lectures, compiled as they were from a treasure trove of original manuscripts stored for decades in an outhouse at Meherabad. During a visit in 1988, I can recall seeing Eruch gesture towards an outbuilding in the garden, saying it was stacked from floor to ceiling with old documents, letters and so forth, a random archive that had never been sorted. But in recent years, Baba brought together some of his finest scholars to tackle the huge task involved and one of the outcomes of their work has been the publication of this book, *Meher Baba's Tiffin Lectures*. The completed work of the editorial team is an outstanding presentation of Baba's original words together with photos, maps, tables, diagrams and an array of support sections in the Supplement including a Glossary of



Indian words, Appendices and an Index. Every instrument of elucidation has been drawn on to make the contents easily accessible, easy to read and easy on the eye – the book is a delight to read and to pore over and to do so is to be transported back to those early days when Meherabad was in its formative years.

The group of, at the time, comparatively young men mandali, tasked with the hard labour of preparing the ground for construction work at the Meherabad site and then building some of the early structures, would have eagerly anticipated the break for “tiffin” on Thursday afternoons at the nearby home of

Kaka Shahane (now known as the Family Quarters) not just for the tea and snacks provided by their host, but also for talks Baba gave on these occasions, talks that became known as Tiffin Lectures. In these sessions of their early training, Baba (always referred to as ‘Shree’ by the notetakers of that time), began with basic steps explaining the function of some spiritual practices, and focusing on the role of the ‘Sadguru’ (by which title Baba referred to himself).

“If all these various practices – yoga, samadhi, concentration, meditation, yoga study (yog abhyas), and the like – do you any good at all, the limit is this: at the most they can give you experience of the path up to the sixth plane; that is, they can bring the pilgrim to the point where he sees Paramatma. But even if he has maintained a commendable control over the mind, even if he has tried his level best to keep himself free from the clutches of Maya during his trials and hardships of tap-jap-vrat, even still his sanskaras and egoism persist. These have not been destroyed, nor can one do so through one's own efforts however titanic these exertions may be. For this task is beyond a man's capability. It can't be accomplished without the aid of a Sadguru (Dev) or one who has realized God.

Now in this context what does a Sadguru do? Gradually the Sadguru destroys the intellect and egoism of those

whom he desires to take with him and prepare for Realization, through a process slow but sure. In his dealings with such candidates the mind is the only part that the Sadguru spares and maintains. It is exclusively on the mind of the man to whom he wishes to impart the experience of Realization that the Sadguru works from the very beginning and on to the very end.” (pps.141/142)

In one of his earliest lectures Baba sets out some thoughts and raises questions on the subject of anxiety and the effect it has on the mind.

The more you think of Maya, the more is your anxiety, or your eagerness for its enjoyment (‘upabhog’); and the greater your anxiety, the greater your fears. What are these fears and anxieties after all? They are the refuse, the stench, the ‘bad-bu’. Penetrating your mind, they stand in the way of Self-realization. So do not let these thoughts and anxieties accumulate, lest they become a hindrance blocking your advance. Do not feel at all anxious about anything. Do not fear anything. For what is it you are anxious of, what do you feel for or fear? All this that you see is mere ‘bhas’ or imagination, since the very universe itself is ‘bhas’, a creation of imagination. (p.73)

The tiffin gatherings began less than a year after Baba had started his silence and his talks were communicated by means of slates and chalk. Many pages copied down assiduously by mandali members were eventually found in the treasure trove at Meherazad.

Covering what is by now, for many readers of today, familiar ground, Baba apparently chose the topic for each day’s talk in a fairly random manner. There doesn’t appear to be any specific sequencing of his lectures. The mandali themselves or even a local visitor might provide a cue or an argument for Baba to start a

discourse, or the subject could arise from their own discussions about the material world and Baba might talk about a particular incident or visitor. For example, on one occasion there were soldiers around, Ahmednagar being as it was a city where the British Indian Army’s Southern Command maintained their Tank Corps (consisting at the time of six armoured cars!) and Baba referred to the soldiers in one of his talks, beginning in general terms.

Worldly people are too much engrossed with worldly Maya, one way or another, to cut its connection finally and absolutely, even for the sake of seeing God Himself. To them worldly attachment ranks far and away as the first priority; all else, even a darshan or visit with God comes as an after consideration. (p.353)

He then takes the example of soldiers who, while they served, were assured three meals a day and clothing, saying, *... to them as to other worldly people, filling the stomach (pet-puja) twice or thrice a day is everything. ... first of all the daily two or three meals have to be eaten; talk of other things comes afterwards. Then ask the question why should everyone among the people necessarily eat at all? Let the body suffer and drop, or let it be destroyed; and then take another body in rebirth. Repeat this process again and again, but do not forsake that state, that staunch attitude. (p.354)*

To any of his would-be disciples it was uncompromising and was part of their training in the same way as every other topic relating to consciousness and awareness raised by Baba and discussed in these weekly talks.

“Our eyes, subtle and gross, are turned only towards Maya, that is, towards the universe: hence we see nothing but the universe which is Maya. The moment

these eyes turn around back and inwards, they see Paramatma. Then it naturally happens that the mind, attracted by His super-magnificence, tries to proceed towards that magnificence and gradually realizes it. (p.65)

On another occasion, Baba drew attention to the function of the voice and the way it works:

“The voice within, that voice wells from within seven curtains inside, yet despite this how quickly it is heard! Mark the time that the movement of the voice (through the seven curtains) starts and finishes and you will be surprised at the extraordinarily quick rate at which the voice travels ... the voice itself is the gross form of the thought; the thought itself is subtle, while the voice that carries it is gross. But these two, the gross and the subtle, cannot become one. This is the difficulty that the ordinary human beings face. (p.326)

(A further reference to this is found in *Infinite Intelligence*, (p.53/54) and a mention of ‘curtains’ (Inf. Intell. p.598) uses that same image to refer to the subtle/gross interface between voice and ear).

Background notes included in the book state: *“... it cannot be doubted that Baba himself stands at the source of these dictations, for much of the key vocabulary and phraseology that we find in “Tiffin Lectures” was probably transcribed from his own handwriting”* read from the words Baba himself chalked on the slates, utilizing as one might expect, readily available materials in the same way he took familiar objects to illustrate his points or make analogies. For example, he explained types of realized and unrealized persons in terms of the room where they met, pointing to three garments hung on three pegs on

Continued on next page

the wall to represent Power, Knowledge and Bliss; and likening the threshold of the room to the junction between the 'furthest end and outreach of the sixth plane and the beginning of the seventh plane; the six steps leading up to the door representing the six planes, and the level ground and scenery outside representing the material world.' (p.322)

There were fifty-two talks altogether in this training period, each one functional and hard-hitting in a way seemingly designed to dismantle the mind and shake up preconceived ideas. Some of the later talks on the subject of the human form, had similarly precise form and purpose. Baba told the men how,

Different degrees of spiritual advancement can be correlated with different parts of the human body, as explained below: (p.276)

and at this point the passage goes on to define four types – ordinary people; yogis and such who inhabit the astral plane; Sadgurus; and the Majzub, explaining that,

*Each of these four types **knows** in a different way. (p.276)*

The explanation broaches areas of 'subtle physiology' which are usefully explored further by the book's editor/authors, in Appendix 4.

By the expression 'subtle physiology' we mean to designate those branches of esoteric spiritual tradition that deal with the symbolic or archetypal significance of the human form. The idea that the human body itself images or mirrors God can be found in the Torah and runs through the history of Judaic and Christian tradition. In Sufi literature, especially in the tradition of the Perfect Master Ibn-al-Arabi, the Perfect Human or 'al-Insan al-Kamil' stands as the perfectly mirrored image of God and the locus for God's fullest Self-disclosure.

... In Hinduism and certain Buddhist traditions the perception that the human form stands as the microcosm to greater domains of spirituality. ... When Meher Baba touches on these themes then, he is linking into a vast, sometimes half subterranean, network of interconnecting streams and currents in the great scriptural and esoteric literatures of the world. (p.502)

The Appendices were compiled to give context and refer to some of Meher Baba's early writings, and in this way further add to the completeness of the book as a whole. The names of Baba lovers listed in the Acknowledgements, those who worked over recent decades to bring the book to life, give the reader a fair idea of the range of talent and experience assembled to tackle the awesome task.

Scanning and transcription of the originals was done during the 1990s by a team of workers led by Eric Nadel. Bhau Kalchuri took part in the original study and editing. Peter Nordeen and David Fenster provided much assistance in early Meherabad research. Translations from Gujarati, Urdu, Persian and Arabic manuscript sources ... were provided by Cyrus and Soumia Khambatta, Rajnikant Mistri, Kushan and Uttan Panchal, Shridar Kelkar, Dolly Dastur, Max Phillips, Jean Gousseff, Fereshteh Azad, Philip Lutgendorf and Carl Ernst and others. The book was edited by Meherwan B Jessawala and Ward Parks, and the book's design and artistic recreation of thirty-three figures are the work of Sheila Krynski. (page xxvii)

The lectures are featured in dated sequence from end April 1926 to the end of August 1927, filling 398 pages of the book's 687 pages, and a most wonderful selection of archive photographs bring the events of those days into view for the reader. Even a

very early image of Baba in his black kamli coat playing cricket, wielding a bat with terrific style, has been recovered, restored and brought to life in the pages of *Tiffin Lectures*. (see p.273) Places and personalities are identified and quotes from *Chanji's Diaries* and from *The Combined Diaries* are incorporated in brief introductory passages provided for each lecture. The series of figures or diagrams, based on Baba's original rough sketches and reproduced here in colour, are extremely beautiful, each one a small work of art which perfectly serves Baba's choice of this visual device, one he often used to communicate abstract ideas.

Of *Meher Baba's Tiffin Lectures* the book, two separate statements can forgivably be combined here to sign off a remarkable collaborative commitment by the authors/editors of this book.

This edition of 'Tiffin Lectures' tries to give to the public the content of this early Meherabad period, in a form that is reliable and readable. Just as those talks served the needs of the great disciples and lovers of God who comprised the Avatar's original circle of listeners, we hope that this book ... (see p.465)

... will serve many seekers and lovers of God who would like the benefit of the spiritual training Meher Baba gave to his close ones, and that it will constitute a cornerstone in the foundation that he has laid for the civilization of the New Humanity that will arise in the ages to come. (see p.xxvi)



The glorious sunset

Eruch Jessawala



Meher Baba photographed circa late 1930s.
Avatar's Abode Archive. © Meher Nazar Publications.

It was noon and we were walking and it was very hot and Baba gestured like this, “Do you feel the heat? It is very hot, isn't it?”

And I said, “Yes, Baba, I feel it.”

Then Baba suddenly asked me, “Which is more glorious, the sunrise or the sunset?”

And I said, “The sunset, Baba.”

Baba said, “Yes, it is so.” Then He asked, “Do people ever come out to admire the sun when it is at its zenith?”

I said, “No, Baba.”

Baba said, “People do not even see the sun then, they are not aware of it. They feel the heat, but they do not even look at the sun. It is only at sunrise and sunset that people glorify the sun.”

And then He continued and said, “It is the same with My advent. When I am about to come, there is great anticipation. It is the sunrise. But then, when I come, now that I am in your midst, it is like the midday sun. But when I drop My body, that will be the glorious sunset and then all the world will become aware of My advent.”

THAT'S HOW IT WAS, Eruch Jessawala, pp. 40-41, 1995
© Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust.

Meher Baba Australia

Steven Hein, MBA Editor

What is 'Meher Baba Australia'?

It is a volunteer run, non-profit initiative. We publish a newsletter that aims to connect the community of lovers of Beloved Meher Baba.

Interested in assisting with production? Contact Steven Hein, Editor. stevenhein101@gmail.com.

Frequency - four issues a year

March, June, September, December.

Cost?

There is no charge as such. We do however ask readers to subscribe, to actively choose to receive / keep receiving the journal.

How do we cover printing & postage costs?

We welcome donations. Occasionally, if costs go up and funds run low, we even invite and encourage donations.

Actual costs of a hardcopy issue?

To produce, print and post within Australia, each issue costs us approx \$7.50 AU. For the 4 issues that's about \$30 AU a year. International postage costs a bit more.

The digital email PDF version?

We also have the low cost PDF version we distribute by email. Many of our subscribers choose to subscribe to receive both email and hardcopy versions.

How do we ask you to renew each year?

It will be an email request or a coloured slip inside your MBA hardcopy. Your response helps us keep your (confidential) info and address on our mailing list up to date.

Editorial policy

The MBA editorial policy is pretty simple – MBA will not publish any content that is divisive, political, disruptive or disrespectful. The editors reserve the right to accept or decline any submitted articles. Editors also reserve the right to edit any or all accepted articles for length and content prior to publication.

MBA contacts

Editor: stevenhein101@gmail.com

Mailing List / Subscriptions: David Bowling
meherbabaaustralia@gmail.com



Avatar Meher Baba, 1954 Andhra, India.

Donations can be made via PayPal at avatarsabode.com.au/donations.html

Or by direct bank deposit or Electronic Funds Transfer to

Account name: Meher Baba Australia
BSB: 064424

Account number: 10379525

Please include your initial and last name for reference.

Suggested annual donation

\$5 AU Email PDF (Global) – 1 year, 4 issues.

\$30 AU Hardcopy (Australia) – 1 year, 4 issues.

\$40 AU Hardcopy (Overseas) – 1 year, 4 issues.

Meher Baba Australia

March to May 2019

Editor: Steven Hein

Design, Layout and Digital Image Cleanup: Liz Gaskin

Proof Reading: Steven Hein. Contact editor if you can help too stevenhein101@gmail.com.

Mailing List and Subscriptions: David Bowling. Email meherbabaustralia@gmail.com for information.

Next Issue: Please email submissions for the next *Meher Baba Australia* to stevenhein101@gmail.com or mail to MBA, PO Box 335, Woombye, QLD 4559, Australia.

Deadline Next Issue: NO LATER THAN 15th April 2019.

Photos to be minimum of 1MB, preferably over 2MB.

PLEASE NOTE that the editor reserves the right to edit all published articles for length and content prior to publication.

Cover: Meher Baba, darshan program 1950s. Photo by Bhaiya Panday. Avatar's Abode Archive. © MSI Collection.

Sydney Meher Baba Community

(Please note that all dates and details below are subject to change, however all effort will be made to ensure late-breaking updates are provided by email and/or Facebook)

Monthly Meetings at Meher House are held on the last Sunday of every month. Prayers and Arti, open discussions about Baba, occasional guests, vegetarian potluck meal. Contact; Ross Keating M: 0416 883 373
E: ross-keating@hotmail.com.

Monday Night Discourse Meetings are held on most Mondays at the home of Kris Wyld. Occasional special guests. Contact Kris Wyld M 0407 481 323.

The Meher Baba Sydney community is always searching for volunteers to serve in Baba's cause and love and in a variety of ways. For further information contact Kevin Mossberger on 0412 559 402.

Online links and contacts:

Meher House meherbabasydney.com/meher-house.html

Sydney Contacts meherbabasydney.com/contact-us.html

Facebook [facebook.com/MeherBabaSydney](https://www.facebook.com/MeherBabaSydney)

Meher Baba Gatherings in WA

Phone Paul Morris 0429 310 169 or Julie Lee-Morris 0428 250 294.

New Zealand

Travellers to New Zealand who want to meet Baba lovers there are invited to contact Jill Hobbs, 19 Brassey Rd, Wanganui. Ph: (06) 347 2974,
Email: jillhobbs1954@gmail.com

Meher Baba Australia is a non-profit publication independent of the Avatar's Abode Trust. The views expressed in articles in *Meher Baba Australia* are solely those of the authors.

What's on at Avatar's Abode

61st Anniversary 2019

The Anniversary of Meher Baba's visit to His Abode in Australia on June 3 to 6 in 1958 is celebrated each year at Avatar's Abode, usually over four days, on the weekend preceding the second Monday of June.

Keep up to date with the 61st Anniversary dates, program and news at the **Avatar's Abode website** avatarsabode.com.au



Meher Baba holding Eruch's arm, outside the men's tents at Avatar's Abode, June 1958. Photo by Gif Alston. Avatar's Abode Archive.

Monday Mornings Meeting

10–11.30am in the Meeting Hall. For information: Lorraine 5446 8005 or babakalyan55@gmail.com. All are welcome to join with stories, readings, poetry, songs and a cuppa.

Tuesday Mornings You are most welcome to join us in the Bookstore, 11am–12pm. Geoff Gunther (07) 5442 2467.

Wednesdays Reading Group 4.30pm – 5.30pm in the Bookstore. Contact Wilma Pearson phone 0404 775 789 or (07) 5473 9947, email wilmapearson@aapt.net.au.

Friday Mornings This study group is taking a break until further notice.

Saturday Film Nights on the first Saturday of the month at 7pm. Contact: David and Glenda Hobson on (07) 5442 1220 or Jim Frisino on 0417 112 668.

Melbourne Meetings

The best contact for Melbourne activities and meetings is Jasmine Ilas. Give her a call on her mobile 0438 300 193. Please leave voicemail if she can't take your call.