

The Way and the Goal

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Avatar Meher Baba

The Way and the Goal

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August 25, 1970

My Introduction to Meher Baba

by Delia DeLeon

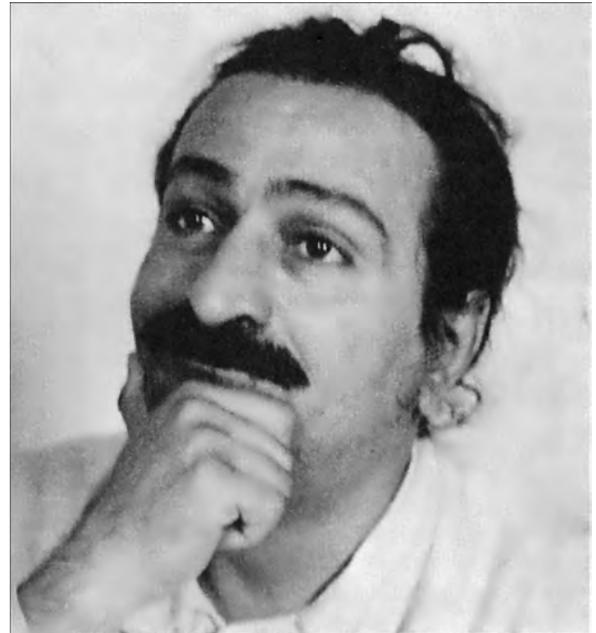
Baba came to the West for the first time in 1931. A center had been prepared for Him by Meredith Starr, an Englishman who had met Baba in India. All of us who were destined to be of His early English group, were somehow drawn to Meredith's place in North Devon - East Challacombe.

I personally had reached a crisis in my life. I had been seeking, not for a Master, but to know and understand something of God. This was my great desire. I was running an experimental theater in London but suddenly had to alter all my plans.

I found a note in a magazine called, "The Everyman," in which Mr. Starr spoke of the East Challacombe Center. I wrote to Meredith and I went. It was a converted farmhouse in the beautiful countryside of North Devonshire; here Meredith told us about the great Master he had met in India.

While I was at the Center, Baba cabled that He was coming to the West. I had to go back to London but I arranged to return to the Center and meet Him later on. Baba came to East Challacombe, however He cut short the length of His stay, and I received a call saying not to come but to meet Him at Kitty Davy's house in London.

Baba wanted to visit the theater, so Margaret Craske bought tickets for a musical comedy and she invited me to come. She instructed me to wait by the box office until Baba's party was seated. I was standing there when they passed. They had decked Baba out in a long English coat and He wore a hat that was down to His nose. His hair was flowing. Once Baba's party had left the lobby, Meredith appeared and took me to His box. There was one empty seat beside Baba; they told me to sit there. He simply looked at me and patted my hand. During the performance I hardly saw or heard anything except Baba. He chuckled quite a lot because there was a funny fat man in the play and Baba always liked fat men and comedians. After the play, I just looked at Him and said, "Baba, I must see you again." He nodded.



He spent one week in London and I went every day to see Him at Kitty Davy's house. I was with Him most of the time. He went to the cinema, He saw many people and when any of us asked Baba to go out He always had a lot of people come along, not just two or three.

The night before Baba left England we played Negro spirituals. He was especially fond of "Steal Away to Jesus," and "Is There Anybody Here Like Weeping Mary?" He sat among us, beautiful and radiant, while the songs played, and we were **all** terribly sad because we did not know when we would see Him again. He said, "Oh yes. You will see Me again." On one occasion He said to me, "You're very lucky to have met Me now," and He added, "It's not luck that brings you here."

That first meeting with Baba was unforgettable. Like many others I was moved by His radiant love and beauty, so much so that I wept continually. For years I cried every time I looked at Baba, because in some way I felt His great crucifixion in coming into the body.

Cont. on P.4

My Experience at the Meher Ashram by Chhota Baba

I joined the Meher Ashram Institute August 9, 1927. For the first two and a half months I stayed with the grown-up disciples of the Master and could not mix with the boys of the Meher Ashram proper, but on October 25 I was admitted into the Meher Ashram as a student. Besides secular instruction, spiritual instruction was imparted to boys by competent teachers in accordance with the commands of Shri Meher Baba. From about the middle of November the Holy Master Himself began to feed us with spiritual knowledge. Though we were not out of our teens the Master instilled into our minds great spiritual facts of which even yogis of the fourth cosmic plane are unconscious, intellectually acquainted us more and more with the Path, and gradually went on imparting spirituality to those of us who were fit for it. One night, after delivering a spiritual discourse, the Master said to me, "Child, have faith and try your best; I will make 'gold' of you." These words of my beloved Master produced a great impression on my mind—quite out of proportion to what one would expect. The above words were surcharged with spirituality and they made me restless ... A great spiritual longing took possession of me, and every moment of my waking state I said to myself, "When will this dust of myself turn into gold?"

A great revolution was effected in me. Boys and disciples wondered at my changed state. I myself wondered at it. Sound sleep I could not get, and all relish for any kind of food vanished. One day in the month of December, while partaking of dinner, I felt a sort of great sensation in my body from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. Tears rolled down my cheeks and I could not restrain myself from crying loudly. Everything around seemed to whirl and then vanish. My blood became extremely hot, and heat pierced my body from inside. Then I swooned. When I recovered I saw my beloved Master sitting near me. I could not help crying and pressing His lotus feet to my eyes. I kissed them now and then. He calmed me and gave me a cup of milk.

I could now think of nothing and nobody but the Master. I simply could not help meditating on him continuously. Even in school hours when I was apparently reading, my heart was with my Beloved. Sometimes while meditating I used to see Him with my subtle eyes sitting near me with His right hand on my head. Mere sight of Him, whether gross or subtle, used to make me weep. By the middle of December, on account of my devotion and constant meditation, such love took possession of my heart that it made me, so to say, 'mad' for my Beloved. Separation from Him made me suffer intensely. I was contented only when I was with Him. This love was Divine Love, a gift from the Master - the love

about which Shams-e-Tabriz says: "When Shamsul Hake Tabriz opened the wings of love, it made the Angel Gabriel run after Him."

Needless to say that by gaining this love I became entirely free from the snares of worldly Maya. Nothing seemed to interest me, not even my existence. It was through the Divine Love of my Beloved Master that I was transformed into my present state which only a few in the world experience. One day, in January of 1928, when the Holy Master was imparting instruction to boys and disciples, I began feeling that I was losing my consciousness, and after blurting out, "Oh, Baba," I actually lost it. I became unconscious of everything except the Divine Form of the Master. For four days I continuously remained unconscious of the gross world but conscious of the Master's Divine Form which I was seeing in myself.

On the fifth day my gross consciousness was restored to me, but with its restoration the Divine Form of the Master which, be it remembered, has nothing to do with His body, did not vanish. Since then I began seeing it in everything, in every body, and enjoying ineffable Spiritual Bliss for which I have paid a heavy price. Before I attained to my present Blissful state I had oft read and heard that this gross world is nothing but Maya. I could not understand properly why it was called Maya, but now I see for myself that it is really so.

God is Real. Everything else is unreal. Ignorance is the cause of all miseries, of scepticism, hatred and egoism. All the various kinds of impressions, all attachments and errors of man have for their sources ignorance and non-discrimination. Many persons confuse the dream with the Reality, take bad for good, and, forgetting the Soul, regard the gross world as the only reality. Ignoramuses look at the mirage and think they are the body which is a mere instrument and not the glorious 'Effulgent Self' or Atman. When Discrimination makes its appearance, the net of ignorance disappears and the Reality is seen through the eyes of Discrimination. Finally, in the words of the Sages, I say, "Neither despise any being, nor look with contempt on others, but attempt, if you can, to give all a helping hand, for Oneness is the secret, and the Journey is towards the same Goal. Believe in the Splendour and Glory of your own Soul. There is the treasure of infinite Freedom, Power and Purity: so avoid throwing an evil thought into the world. Don't think that you are born a bound slave full of impurity—for this thought is forbidden. Weakness never existed—but Strength; darkness never existed—but Light and Love from the beginning and so for ever."

Reprinted from The Meher Baba Journal, February, 1939 issue.

Arrival Through Denial? By Meher Baba

Before enlightenment shows one clearly *who* one is, there are the false self-assertions: I am a man, my name is Jack; I am a woman and my name is Jill.

Before SELF can assert Reality, all false self-assertions must be denied. And since his body is the source of his identity as Jack, a man, and the cause of false self-assertion, he must deny his body-wants.

The body wants food and drink—so food and drink must be denied.

The body wants rest and sleep—so rest and sleep must be denied.

The body wants to sit, to walk about—so sitting or walking about must be denied.

But it is impossible to deny for long the body's wants. The better way, the way that is evermore delightful and easy, is to begin to *forget* oneself until self-forgetfulness becomes so complete and absolute that nothing is remembered except the Real Self.

The various spiritual disciplines have been evolved to help one forget one's false self, and when faithfully practised they not only advance one on the Path of Forgetfulness, but, because of the law of action and reaction, all those closely related to or connected with the self-forgetting self experience some spiritual advancement. The more the self-forgetting self forgets himself the more he is remembered by all those connected with him, and the more these remember him, the more *they* forget themselves.

Now one of the easiest ways of cultivating self-forgetfulness is to concentrate on a picture of the Master, for this helps the aspirant shift, to some extent, his concentration on himself to one who is the being and form of Perfection. And when the picture upon which he concentrates becomes *alive*, this is called Illumination. And this seeing of the alive picture brings about further forgetfulness of self.

Soon he has no more thoughts about himself at all: his whole mind is focused on the living face and form of the Master who is the eternal Beloved, and eventually he merges in Him forever. He then knows that he himself was all along the Reality of his own concentration. This is Self-revelation, and in this is real Self-assertion: "I Am That".

The forgetter of himself has become the rememberer of who he is, and all those who forget themselves in remembering him are also liberated. As it has been said of old—if one member of a family attains emancipation, with him are emancipated generations of his past and also his present connections.

Self-denial is arduous, forced, and self-forgetfulness is easy and natural. Self-denial would be the quicker way if it could be done,



Enlightenment begins in self-denial and ends in self-revelation

Meher Baba

but it is impossible. Even if the aspirant succeeds in overcoming, say, hunger, after awhile he begins to enjoy fasting. This is a new want—he wants to fast—so he must deny his pleasure in fasting and eat, though even the sight of food may nauseate him. Or again, he succeeds in conquering sleep and enjoys wakefulness—he wants to remain awake—and if he is to master that want he must sleep, though to sleep seems like losing all that he has so hardy gained.

There becomes no end to denial and counter-denial, and even the strongest will and the stoutest heart will break down on this path. But Self-forgetfulness can be practised by everyone and its way is easy, delightful and safe because it is always under the tender regard of the Master.

Letter from Myrtle Beach

Dear Anne,

Please share this information with all in your group. Pine Lodge, the house just within the Main Gate of the Center on U.S. Highway 17, will be used for the reception of visitors coming to the Center, rather than Elizabeth's residence at Briarcliffe. Kitty or Jane will be at Pine Lodge on volunteer duty to register all guests between the hours of 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. seven days a week. During these hours the Main Gate of the Center will be on the latch so that it can be easily opened for you to come inside the area of Pine Lodge. This gate will be locked after 5 p.m. Therefore, anyone coming for any emergency reason after 5 p.m. is *not* to attempt to enter the Center, but should go to a public telephone and call 272-5295 for instructions.

You can well understand that Pine Lodge cannot be attended twenty-four hours a day; it is earnestly expected that all visitors will make their plans to arrive between the stated hours: 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The usual procedure of welcoming, registering in the Guest Book, obtaining a numbered key, and assignment of cabins will be done at Pine Lodge. A new inner gate just beyond this Lodge will serve as the actual entrance to Meher Center during office hours. There will be two kitchens available at the main part of the Center and you will be assigned to the one you are to use during your stay. Upon your departure from the Center, Pine Lodge will be the place to return your key and for payment of your account.

It is more important for everyone to make reservations ahead, preferably by letter, giving full details: the arrival date, length of stay, and the full names of those planning to come together. No new person brought to the Center without prior permission by letter or telephone.

The new number at Pine Lodge to call for all reservations is Area Code 803-272-5777, also between the hours of 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The rules of Meher Center remain the same; they are, principally: no drugs used or carried (including marijuana), and no alcohol.

Knowing that Baba had called the Center His home in the West, Elizabeth asked Him, when He was there last, who could stay at Meher Center and Baba replied:

"THOSE WHO LOVE AND FOLLOW ME,
THOSE WHO KNOW OF ME, AND WANT TO KNOW
MORE."

In Baba's Love, Elizabeth
Patterson
For Meher Spiritual Center, Inc.

MEHER SPIRITUAL CENTER, INC. BOX 487
MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA, 29577

My Introduction to Meher Baba

continued from page 1.

I never felt Baba didn't speak—He was always speaking to your heart. The first message I got from Him expressed it: "Baba sends you His Love; He is always with you, in you, near you. Be happy, don't worry."

Next Baba went to the United States where he contacted the original American disciples. On His way back to India He called a few of us to meet Him in Paris. We went to Versailles, to the Eiffel Tower, we played games with Him, and then He returned to India.

Before leaving, He told us to write to Him every week. We did and He wrote back to us. Here is an excerpt from one of His letters to me: "The world is in a state of fear and perplexity. No one knows what is going to happen, but wait and see. I know all, the present and the future, and nothing can stop the work I am here to do. Am I not the Avatar? And the world will know it and accept Me as such. Be calm; 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 uplift-ment of humanity. As you know I need none of you. I can work My Will independently, but I have chosen for My own reasons a few to help Me in that work. But these few need a love and faith as real as Saint Francis. Let that same love of his for Christ be your goal, and love Me as he loved his Master."



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