



“Just think of it: God is within all, in everyone, and he is infinite. God is all powerful, God is all bliss. And yet, though God is in each one, how helpless we feel. We weep, we feel pain, we feel sorrow, although God, who is so infinitely powerful and blissful, is there. Why? It is because of our own bindings. But there is one way to get liberated from these bindings, and that is through love...

If you can love me, love God, your love will make you know me. If you can make others happy through your love without seeking your own happiness, you can free yourself from this bondage. You can then find me as I really am. No sooner do you get that experience, than you feel liberated and experience infinite bliss.”

Avatar Meher Baba

26 July 1956, Myrtle Beach,

Awakener Magazine

4:3 page 40, 41 Don Stevens

The Awakener Magazine is available on the Internet.



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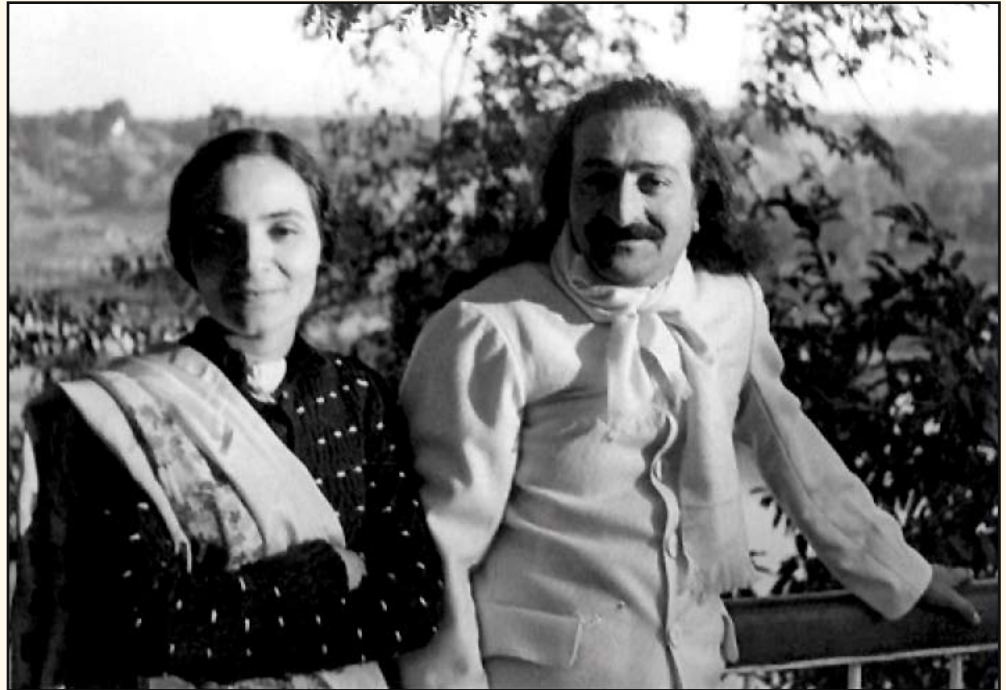
Our Web Genie!

Check out the newly updated website Thanks to Jeanne Mojé MacDonald (link below or on sidebar).

This newsletter (and past issues) will eventually be available in pdf form on the **center website**, above.

Dear Reader

Tis The Season!



This is the season of gift giving. Having received life's greatest of gifts, our faith in Beloved Meher Baba, may we seek to treasure it more and more, and may we seek to reciprocate the gift in terms of more and more love to the bestower of gifts, and in enlarging the spirit of giving in our hearts. Like a fire that energizes our lives, the desire to please the Beloved inspires each and every day with a new dedication to love, obey his instructions, and surrender all to His care.

As I was trying to recapture my night's sleep last night, about 4 a.m., I was thinking of the reading I did before sleep. I was reading about the men's sahasas in November, 1955, when men from the four language groups of India were each invited to spend a week in Baba's sahasas. Each group was given an assignment; Baba instructed the men to wake up at midnight for one full year, 365 nights, and repeat his name, 14 times one night and 28 times the following night. They were not to mention aloud Baba's name at any other time for the full year. I was thinking that this would be a good practice for me, not to mention interesting. What a nice gift both to myself and to Baba. Or

(Continued on next page.)



Dear Reader (Cont.)

maybe I could fast for seven days, repeating Baba's name, staying in one room, and not allowing my head to rest on a pillow for seven full days and nights, and not sleeping? That was what Baba asked of seven volunteers from each group. I drew the line at that idea, but I was considering the former. One attendee lived in a remote village in the woods and no one in the village owned a clock or watch, and he asked what he should do. Baba asked if this were true and then he gave the man an alarm clock so he could wake up exactly on time.

I have already given myself a seasonal gift, a CD of music. I would like to remind readers about a source of gifts for the season they may have forgotten, the **Sheriar Bookstore** and the **Love Street Bookstore**—they supply not only the greatest literature on the planet, but offer a treasure trove of wonderful music. Our **Center** also sells a large selection of CDs, Baba books, 2011 Baba calendars and art. Each store has its merits, but presently the Sheriar web page has a better merchandising outreach as each CD is shown with instantly accessible samples of music from each CD offered for sale. I have several on my wish list and maybe I'll pry loose some money for the #1 choice. Our local talent is represented on this site: Adrienne Shamszad, Ron Greenstein, Raine Eastman Gannet, and Dave Miotke.

Mehera Reiter, the daughter of Hermes and Lindsey Reiter, is selling her father's photos and books at her new site, <http://hermescreations.blogspot.com>.

Mitchell Rose sells his videos at <http://www.mitchellrose.com>. And there are many visual artists whose paintings may inspire you for years to come, Dale Draeger, Will David, Lisa Greenstein, Laurie Blum, Nadia Wolinska, Charles Mills and Wodin.

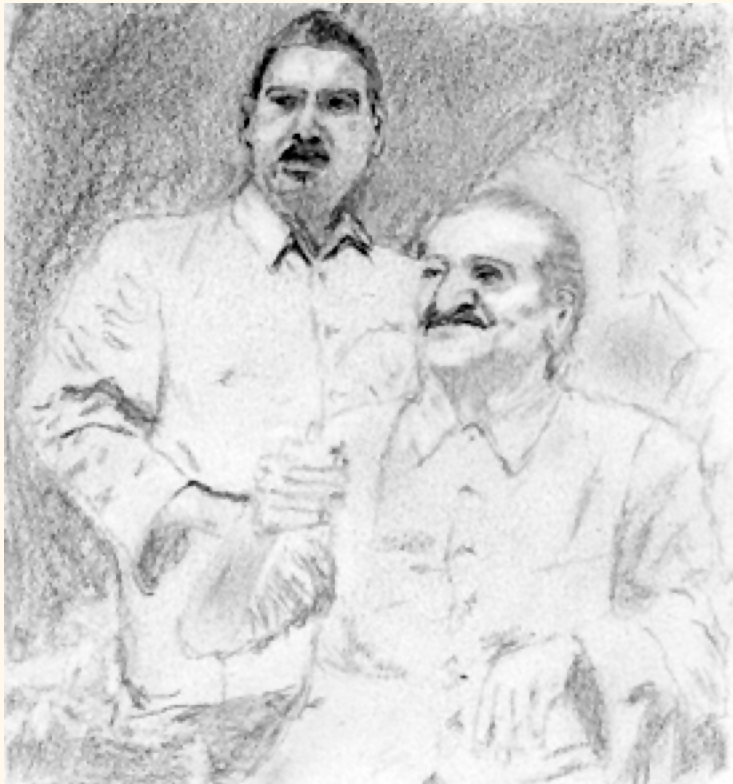
And not to forget, our local charities hold food drives and toy drives to make the season brighter and lovelier for our neighbors and their children.

-Ben Leet



To Be His Slave

by Ron Greenstein



pencil drawing by Ron Greenstein

I am always powerfully moved when I revisit *Beholden to Him*, a taped interview of Eruch Jessawala, an intimate disciple of Meher Baba. Eruch stated spontaneously and emphatically that his primary relationship to Meher Baba was one of slave. Meher Baba says that he is the Master of masters, while at the same time, He is the “slave of the love of his lovers.” What Baba seeks from those

drawn to Him, is to be loved and thought of. A natural outcome of loving and remembering Baba is to want to obey Him, for one who approaches Him soon comes to know that Baba ranked obedience as “greater than loving Me.”

Baba allows each one who comes into contact with Him to take Him as whatever they sincerely feel Him to be. Aside from those who take Baba to be a fraud, hypocrite or supreme egotist, there are those who take Him to be a genuine master—a Perfect (God-realized) Master—the Avatar. If it is one’s fortune to fall into this latter group, then one must determine how Baba’s masterhood fits into one’s life. A key to feeling Meher Baba’s divinity is the experience of being profoundly loved by Meher Baba, more than one could ever love one’s self. Then the give and take of love between lover and Beloved begins. This process includes “the push and pull,” “the kisses and kicks,” “the blessings and tests,” His prodding and His ignoring. Thus, Baba said, “True love is no game for the faint-hearted and the weak...”

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To Be His Slave (cont.)

by Ron Greenstein

Once this Beloved/lover relationship is established it can open to a new element: Master to student, disciple, or slave. This slavery differs from the common notion, as the Beloved's slaves attend the Master willingly and feel themselves to be most fortunate for this opportunity ("Babatunity"). To better understand what is implied in this Master/slave relationship, we must consider what the responsibilities of each are. Baba has said that if one determines to be His slave, sincerely obeying Him 100%, it is incumbent upon Him to guide the slave in how his Master wishes to be pleased. This is a gradual unfolding of coming to know His pleasure. In a letter to Delia DeLeon, Baba said, "To please Him, the Beloved, is to know Him. There is no other knowing. Feeling is not knowing. To please me is to do, but to do what? That which your Beloved commands you." I see this as a spiraling process: the more one tries to please Him, the more one comes to know Him, the more one comes to know Him, the better one becomes able to please Him. And on and on.

Baba has given us some very important messages such as "My Wish" that indicate what would please and displease Him. By acting on these concepts in daily life, one can aspire to please Baba, in the smallest details, in each moment, through every thought, word, and deed. Successes and failures all become integral to this learning enterprise.

If one makes a decision to serve Baba as His willing slave, surely the mind will find concepts like ego annihilation, stripping attachments and surrendering body, mind and possessions, all quite daunting. Only the heart would dare enter into such a bold commitment. Maya might offer up thoughts like, "this slavery business must be for someone greater than I, someone more spiritual." However, should one take that plunge, the experience could prove very charming and beautiful.

Though I ruminate over intellectual concepts or savor stories of slaves who have boldly served their Lord, in the end it is all but an invitation. One could make much of being a recipient of this invitation, but ultimately it is all about going to the party.

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Christmas Wish List for Richmond Rescue Mission

The Richmond Rescue Mission is a only a short distance from the Meher Baba Center in El Cerrito. The Mission provides for families with nowhere else to turn for help. To quote from their website: <http://www.bayarearescue.org>... “For more than forty years, the Bay Area Rescue Mission, a Christian organization, has been changing lives for a brighter tomorrow through the emergency shelter, meals, recovery programs, spiritual counseling, education, job skill training, transitional services, youth intervention, food pantry, resource distribution and mobile outreach.”

This year we are collecting items that Richmond Rescue has requested in a box by the front door of the Baba center and will deliver them before Christmas eve. If you would like to contribute any of the items listed below, please drop them by the weekend of Dec. 18th & 19th during meeting times (see calendar).

Bay Area Rescue Mission- 2010 Christmas Wish List

Christmas Gifts for Homeless Adults

Men Staying at the Mission:

· Towels and wash cloths · Socks (crew and dress) · Boxer shorts (waist 36-48) · T-shirts (L - 3XL)

Women Staying at the Mission:

· Ladies underwear (S - 3XL) · Slippers, socks and pantyhose · Bath Sets, lotion/perfume and jewelry · Purses, scarves, gloves and hats

Gifts for Homeless Children and Children In Need (\$15-\$20 in value)

Elementary Boys (8-12 yrs):

· Action Figures (Batman, etc.) · ZuZu Pets · Transformers
· Remote Control Vehicles

Elementary Girls (8-12 yrs):

· ZuZu Pets · Bratz Dolls · Nail Polish · Miley Cyrus (anything)
· Hannah Montana (anything)



Christmas Wish List for Richmond Rescue Mission (Cont.)

Pre/Teen Boys (13-12 yrs):

- Musical Device · Headphones · Axe Cologne Sets
- Sports Equipment

Pre/Teen Girls (13-18 yrs):

- Musical Device · Headphones · Body Spray/Wash · Jewelry
- Nail Polish

Appropriate for all

- Scarves, Hats, Hoodies (pull over hooded sweatshirts)
- Gift Cards: Movie Theaters, Game Stop, McDonalds,
- Used Video Games (in good condition)
- Batteries (AAA, AA, C, D & 9 volts)

Top Mission Needs

- Rice
- Beans
- Spices
- Canned Foods
- Laundry Soap
- Copy Paper
- Cleaning Supplies
- 32-45 gal Garbage Bags

Rescue Office
2114 Macdonald Ave
P.O. Box 1112, Richmond, CA 94802

BayAreaRescue.org

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Poetry

Love Just Is

love, alone, suspended in a void
waiting, hurting, Freudian
in its longing to be loved.
hoping, waiting its turn to give love

love does not deserve to be,
nor does love deserve not to be—
love just is.

love can move only in its own void,
or it can encompass the whole world
it has its own rights and reasons,
independent of distance, range or seasons
yet this same love, which can move mountains,
can freeze a word, a glance, make immobile
a hand wanting to reach out to a beloved

love captures everything, gives everything
accepts everything
yet obeys the laws of freedom

love we say is blind – not so
it sees far beyond the mind
love's instinct knows where all else is blind

love expands never binds
selfless love needs no sacrificial gestures
for love will share equally in both joy and sorrow
so with love take care, to disabuse it never dare
leave it not in suspended void state
but set it free to see it grow at its own pace
for to refuse love its freedom leads to soul's stalemate



Meher Baba Center of Northern California

INsights

Community Newsletter

Announcements

Center Library Note

Would you like to be a “patron”? We have a library for your reading pleasure and convenience. Our library is housed upstairs in a book case at the MBCNC Center on Stockton Street. We have had 14 borrowers over the past year. You may access a list of the holdings at the web page meherbabameherbaba.org; look for library, and open the book or video pdf files. When you visit the Center remember to check out the library books. We would also like donations. For a list of books we need, see the section at the end of the library holdings. Contact the Newsletter about donations.

The Trust

All who wish to share in the commitment laid down by Meher Baba through the Trust should contact Jack Mormon, ambkj@aol.com

Meher Baba Information

For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail info@MeherBabaInformation.org or write to:

P.O. Box 1101,
Berkeley, CA 94701

<http://MeherBabaInformation.org>

Meher Baba Center of Northern California

6923 Stockton Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530
(510) 525-4779

Meher Baba Center of Northern CA website

Meeting schedules can be downloaded in pdf form from website (above).

The center is open for drop-in and book store most Saturdays 1 p.m.–4 p.m.

(check [website](#) for details)

Directions to our Center:

From Highway 80, Interstate 5, going north or south, in El Cerrito, take the Central Avenue exit. Exit east, toward the hills.

Cross San Pablo Avenue. Go under the BART train tracks, and less than a block after the tracks, turn left on Richmond Avenue.



Announcements (cont.)

Head north on Richmond Avenue until Stockton Avenue (first stop light),
turn right on Stockton. About two blocks onward, the Center is located
on the left side of the street. Address on previous page.

More Local Meetings (Continued on next page)

More Local Meetings

Lafayette – Sunday Afternoons

Monthly meeting at the home of Kirk and Marlene Allen.

Please call to confirm. (925) 284-4066

Sacramento – Several Gatherings Each Month

Times and locations vary.

Contact Marilyn Buehler (916) 812-9496 info@premsay.com

Los Gatos – Sunday Evenings

At the home of Clint Snyder

Call (408) 395-6865

Sonoma County - Arti happens once a month,

Usually the first Sunday. Locations vary.