

EF-001A**Eruch Jessawala**

Mandali Hall, Meherazad, India

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Content

This starts in the midst of a humorous aside by Eruch concerning the antics of persons affected by the ecstatic condition described as "haal." Eruch is speaking throughout, except as noted... No quotation marks for Eruch.

You know the story about Aloba, our Aloba? He is from the Prem Ashram. Some beautiful thing has happened. Aloba used to experience *haal*. You don't do it on purpose, you don't know what you are doing, but you get so overwhelmed with some feelings that overpower you, and you throw yourself, you break your head, though nothing happens to your body.

Haal (ecstatic condition often experienced by Aloba) is different from Hawa (the spiritual breeze). It takes place because of certain environmental situations, you see -- the atmospheric circumstances. Don't you all [speaking to an audience of Westerners] have that experience sometimes, something deep down inside yourself is warmed up, so to speak. There's nothing new in it, nothing wrong in it, but all that is needed is to control yourself and get the benefit of it. When we cannot control it, tears may come down your cheeks, and people are sometimes embarrassed at this. Women weep at this time, and also men. There's nothing wrong in it. It's like blocks of ice on our hearts start melting in the warmth of the sun. It is a good sign, but don't try to induce weeping, because it comes in its own way.

So what happened is this. Everyone here who knows Aloba knows that whenever Qawwali programs are sung, the words are there. They always express a complaint from the lover to the Beloved, connected with the Beloved's response. It's a happy exchange. Baba loved Qawwali programs and he loved being taunted by these singers, in the lines of, "You are supposed to be the Ocean of Love, and we ask you just for a little teaspoon of that love and you are a miser. You don't even give a drop..." It goes on and on. Back and forth singing goes on. I'm just giving you an example of it. Many sublime things are said.

Invariably Aloba used to get uncontrollable. He would shout out loudly, run to Baba, kiss Baba, tear his shirt, the whole day would be spoiled, and Baba would say, "I can't even enjoy this little Program," and all that. Whenever such a program would be held, Baba would warn Aloba, Aloba would be made to sit far away.

One day a very good Qawwal was to be called, and this happened at Meherabad where the study hall is now. The whole hall was full of people whom Baba had invited. A very famous troupe of Qawwals had come, we had heard of them, and they had offered to perform before Baba. They had good quality of wording that they had gathered from great

saints and saviours, you see, put them into songs and sang out. Baba looked forward to it. Baba always liked to share the joy, the atmosphere.

But, Baba said, we have to figure out how to control this man [Aloba]. Otherwise the whole thing will be spoiled. Baba looked at one person named Pesi. He was the son-in-law of Baidul, and a giant of a man. Pesi is Dr. Freiny Foreman's relative. "Pesi," Baba said, calling him, "Would you do one thing for me, for my sake?"

"Of course Baba, I would do anything for you."

"Sit there at the very end of the hall, catch hold of Aloba and keep him there. Whenever he tries to move forward toward me, just stop him from doing that."

"Yeah, I'll do that. What is there in that?"

Baba was very happy, "Fine, do that."

On the day the whole hall is filled with people. It takes about an hour and a half for them to warm up, and goes on forever and forever. So now, after they had warmed up, the whole thing gets into a swing, the atmosphere is beautiful, the Lord himself is there, he is rocking to [the beat of] the music. Every now and then Aloba wants to move, and that fellow is restraining him, so all is fine.

Two and a half hours pass by, and all of a sudden this giant loses control of himself! Roles reverse and Aloba is trying to restrain Pesi! Baba enjoyed that, too, with the characters changing. Pesi wanted to rush to Baba and Aloba is being dragged along. The controller had become uncontrollable.

Mind you [in response to a question] this is not Hawa. Hawa is a spiritual breeze.

[Reminiscing about other occasions, Eruch recalls that Aloba got so out of control that he inadvertently broke Baba's little finger while embracing him. Baba tried to catch Aloba while Aloba was falling and that resulted in Baba's injury. Even now, when Aloba went to Hamirpur he was rolling in the dirt, Alan C. reports. Eruch reminds the assembled that Baba wants us to control ourselves.]

Baba says, "My grace is always there for you all, unasked. But before you all crave for it, you need to need it. How will you go to the river and get the water? You need a container, otherwise it is wasted." [in response to a question Eruch says that if the river comes to you, you must be like a rock so you are not washed away -- not like a pebble.]

In response to a question about the nature of early days, when Baba was fiery, Eruch points out that he wasn't there, but can only tell from others' accounts of it.]

Very fiery and very strong -- that's what those who were there say. For him just to lift you by the scruff of the neck was nothing. Those earlier people were not as refined as we are, you see. [Eruch amuses himself, and the audience laughs appreciatively.] Gradually jamali and then balanced -- it is there. Year after year there is a gradual change. There have been people who say, well, one picture doesn't resemble the other.

He's like a mirror. Whatever you see mirrors your own moods.

[A photo is shown to Eruch from Nasik in 1937, touched up because it's a single cine frame, and thus not of good quality.]

[A questioner refers to material he read about Baba stopping and seeking out two Native Americans in Albuquerque (Lord Meher Online p. 1656 and Love Alone Prevails, p.134 citing Chanji's diaries), one of whom, Baba explained to Ruano, was Baba's agent. After pointing out that he hadn't read anything about it, Eruch continued:]

Baba didn't encourage the mandali to read anything about His advent, the histories. Really speaking, there was no time for it. [A question is now asked by Ed, whether "The version we get of Baba through books is quite different from the experience of the mandali(?)" It is difficult to determine whether the question is asked to call into existence some discredit of the books or to elicit whether perhaps the experience of being Baba's mandali is simply not expressible through words, or their experience was somehow different from other lovers' experience. Eruch answers:]

The thing is I haven't read any of the books. Baba dictated God Speaks [to me] and I was a scribe for it, but there was no opportunity to sit down and enjoy it. We hear about the books from you...

There's a fine story that comes to us about containing his Grace. Of course there is nothing to do with Baba, but [telling a relevant spiritual story not specifically about Baba is the same idea as] the songs you have that can be sung to Baba even though they weren't written about Baba.

A certain young man had a tremendous urge to dedicate his life, to go in search of a perfect master. He felt that by doing so, naturally, the end result would be that he would be doing good for the world as well as the community. He would be able to gain some powers and he would be able to do good by using those powers. So he searched for a perfect one, and at last he came to a certain place, a town, and he heard that so and so is a master here. He goes to him and sits there. Somehow in his heart of hearts he felt that this was the right place, though he had been to many other places in his search. After a time the master orders all to disperse for the day. After a month or a month and a half, the master has still not inquired who he is and what he is there for. Has the master even noticed me?

So eventually he crawls to the master, and tells that he has been there for the past two and a half months. Master says he is happy to see him, though the master has not even noticed him up to that time.

After six months has passed by and still the lad has gotten no recognition by the master. A second time he goes to the master, he holds the master's feet, and the master still fails to recognize him. "I want your grace."

"Why didn't you speak up? No, I must put you to the test, to see if you can contain my grace."

"I'm prepared for anything. I want to dedicate my life at your feet, to be with you, to live with you. I have been wandering all these years..."

"I am happy," responds the master. "Do one thing. When you come tomorrow, remind me about it."

But the boy feels what kind of a master can this be? He should be knowing everything. Still the boy comes the next day and reminds the master as he was ordered to do.

"OK, says the master, "but that is quite a big thing, to ask for grace. Come tomorrow morning early before the others, and I will test you."

Early the next morning, the boy comes and the master, after apparently failing once more to recognize him, says, "Do one thing for the test to earn my grace. You know where the city gate is? [Eruch digresses to point out that in the early days cities were walled, enclosed and there were gates permitting departures and arrivals to/from various directions.] Go to the northern gate and be there until the time the gates are closed this evening. Anything noticeable just come and report to me in the evening. All the happenings, or whatever you feel like reporting."

He goes, all enthusiasm, and sees nothing out of the ordinary. Humdrum daily life, and nothing of any interest. What to report? Donkeys come into and out of the gates, men and women likewise, and there is nothing that seems worthy of notice. In due course, the day is over.

At the close of the day, he sees the warden, who comes from the distance to lock the gates. Just as the warden is pulling the huge gates to the fully closed position, the boy observes an old man, outside the gates, arriving, trying to enter. The old man is bent over, with a pile of fuel wood on his back, and the warden is locking. "Please don't lock the gates," says the old man. "I have just come, and I will enter immediately."

The warden abuses him, "Why did you arrive so late? Don't you know we close the gates now?"

The old man says to the warden, "Please let me in, I was just searching for wood to keep me warm, and if you don't open up the gates, wild beasts will eat me." The old man goes on pleading. Meanwhile the aspirant is noticing the drama taking place. The aspirant is thinking to himself, "Why can't the warden help the old man out? After all, there are difficulties for such an old man, (and so forth.)" Meanwhile, as the aspirant is having those thoughts, the warden is abusing the old man. At last, the warden opens the lock, unwinds the chain, and reaches through the small opening in the gate and grasps the wood, taking that into the city but shutting the man out. "Get out from here. I have just unburdened you of your burden," says the warden as he walks away and leaves the old man to perish.

The aspirant is now quite angry at the heartlessness of the treatment. Various thoughts go through his mind, "Such men in the world, with no pity for an old man like that -- had I the grace of the master, I could have blasted the gate and overturned the tragedy that has occurred."

In this state of mind, the aspirant comes to the presence of the master, as ordered. The master asks, and the aspirant explains about the humdrum part of the story, that every hour saw nothing but routine transit -- animals and people.

"Nothing to report?" asks the master.

"Yes, there was one thing that happened just as the gates were being closed..." and the aspirant presents the story of the events at the closing of the gate.

"And...?" says the master."

"Master, if I had had your grace I could have done wonders -- broken the locks broken the chains and made the whole thing turn out in favor of the old man.

"You have failed in the test."

"Why? What happened? How could I have failed in the test? What did I do?"

"It is because of the grace of the old man that I am what I am. He is my master. You have yet to learn how to contain the grace. The old man could not only have opened the gates, but he could have blown a whiff of his breath on the warden and killed him. His grace is what has made me. You need to contain the grace. Just a little flare-up and you started to imagine destroying the world to put it all right?

"Try to learn, my boy, to mold the container to contain the grace."

We are always asking him to help us out, use his grace for us, but then we should try to learn to contain it.

[This story is so profound that the gathering turns to trivia. Someone asks Eruch if Baba's eyesight was good, and Eruch asserts that it was. A play on words ensues about him hiding

from us but we are unable to hide from him. Eruch points out that we have our imperfections to give to him.

[There is a break in the tape and the afternoon session starts.]

Eruch: Dead man tells no tales, but here we have been hearing two such tales! [One of the tales was apparently the Nan Umrigar story of her dead son communicating to her via the Ouija board or automatic writing, things that Baba told us not to dabble in. And yet, the outcome of this occult thing was to bring the whole family to Baba [plus many, many in their community.]

What I wanted you all to know is that Baba tells us, "I want you to do things that I tell you to do, but I do not want you to do as I do." He may be using the dead for some purpose, but he doesn't want us to dabble with the dead. I wanted that message to reach certain people who were in the hall today.

[A question is asked about general participation by Baba lovers in silence on silence Day.]

Baba wanted us to observe silence, especially in the later years. In the early years, the silence Day would pass off un-noticed, because we were so busy, touring.

But in the later years, he created a circular requesting his lovers to observe silence, telling people either to fast on that day or observe silence.

Then in the late 1960s he passed the message to observe silence, for all of us who would obey him. The mandali also observed silence.

One silence day we observed silence, and He told us that this was the worst day of the year for Him because, though He was so eloquent with His gestures, we were so crude in our attempting to communicate with gestures. Naturally we tried to emulate his gestures, but he didn't like that. We were so crude, but he was so eloquent. I still have the experience that my fingers are more stubs than fingers, compared the eloquence of his gestures. Because of the difficulties, in later years Baba ordered me to speak out, and not to observe silence on that day. Instead, when I was in his presence I should speak, but should keep silence when he was not present.

[A question comes in and Eruch extends to the extent of this:]

Our silence is to honor His burden of his silence. As a practical matter, it is customary not to do so much on that day.]

[Circa 1980, there was a many-player volleyball game most afternoons played in the dirt outside the Meher Pilgrim Center. It ordinarily used to incorporate quite a lot of shouting, and Eruch jokes about how hard it is to keep silence while playing that game. Ed, who was playing, admitted that an occasional curse slipped out.]

Eruch explains that he had to keep a month-long silence [dates Eruch doesn't remember but someone says in early 60s] and still do all his work and all that.

[A woman says that this morning (July 11) on Mehera's porch all those present admitted that they were unable to keep the silence without any slips. One person tells story about Rano in Myrtle Beach during silence day when the phone rang, at Kitty's, and finally she got up and said, "Doesn't anybody ever answer the phone around here?"

Kitty said, "Yes, but it's silence day."]

Eruch says he uses a slip of paper. However, a funny thing, emergencies sometimes arise on Silence Day. Someone will bring the news of the emergency, but even if he isn't a Baba lover, the conveyer of the news typically blurts out the message. Then we process it among ourselves in silence, gestures and so forth, but that sometimes the messenger becomes silent -- it's contagious, or a spell is cast.

Just imagine Baba's silence, and he wasn't silent, but was totally active, whereas we have passive silence on that day.

[Jamie offers that the silence must have been most difficult during suffering and Eruch says Baba kept silence through the last 15 minutes of his final dropping the body -- "I know that.".]

It's not just the fingers, when I say His silence was very eloquent. The whole thing was in motion, the eyebrows, face, hands, expressions, the whole body. I don't know how to get the right expression to go with the gestures. So vivid they were!

When Bhau came for the first time, a couple of years passed by and then Baba took him out with us for a mast trip. We stopped for a cup of tea. I parked the car at a tea stall on some mountainside, under the shade of a tree, and went out to clean the cup for Baba, and then check to see that the tea water was clean and the pot was clean. They are very dirty people, you see.

Bhau was there near the door of the tea stall, and I gave the cup to him to give to Baba. Baba took the cup from Bhau and poured the tea into the saucer. Baba would never drink from the cup.

[tape ends]