

MEHER BABA'S CALL

*Given on occasion of Mass Darshan Programme
at Ahmednagar on 12th September 1954*

**EXISTENCE IS SUBSTANCE
AND
LIFE IS SHADOW**

By MEHER BABA

Delivered at Rajahmundry on 1st March 1954

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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-honoured 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 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.

Strength begets humility, whereas modesty bespeaks weakness. Only he who is truly great can *be* really humble.

When, in the firm knowledge of it, a man admits his true greatness, it is in itself an expression of humility. He accepts his greatness as most natural and is expressing merely what he is, just as a man would not hesitate to admit to himself and others the fact of his being man.

For a truly great man, who knows himself to be truly great, to deny his greatness would be to belittle what he indubitably is. For whereas modesty is the basis of guise, true greatness is free from camouflage.

On the other hand, when a man expresses a greatness he knows or feels he does not possess, he is the greatest hypocrite.

Honest is the man who is not great, and, knowing and feeling this, firmly and frankly states that he is not great.

There are more than a few who are not great, yet assume a humility in the genuine belief of their own worth. Through words and actions they express repeatedly their humbleness, professing to be servants of humanity. True humility is not acquired by merely donning a garb of humility. True humility spontaneously and continually emanates from the strength of the truly great. Voicing one's humbleness does not make one humble. For all that a parrot may utter, "I am a man," it does not make it so.

Better the absence of greatness than the establishing of a false greatness by assumed humility. Not only do these efforts at humility on man's part not express strength, they are, on the contrary, expressions of modesty born of weakness, which springs from a lack of knowledge of the truth of Reality.

Beware of modesty. Modesty, under the cloak of humility, invariably leads one into the clutches of self-deception. Modesty breeds egoism and man eventually succumbs to pride through assumed humility.

The greatest greatness and the greatest humility go hand in hand naturally and without effort.

When the Greatest of all says, "I am the Greatest," it is but a spontaneous expression of an infallible Truth. The strength of His greatness lies, not in raising the dead, but in His great humiliation when He allows Himself to be ridiculed, persecuted and crucified at the hands of those who are weak in flesh and spirit. Throughout the ages, humanity has failed to fathom the

true depth of the Humility underline the greatness of the Avatar, gauging his Divinity by its acquired limited religious standards. Even real saints and sages, who have some knowledge of the Truth, have failed to understand the Avatar's greatness when faced with his real humility.

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.

I repeat and emphasize that in my continual and eternal experience of Reality, no difference exists between the worldly rich and the poor. But, if ever such a question of difference between opulence and poverty were to exist for me, I would deem him really poor who, possessing worldly riches, possesses not the wealth of Love for God. And, I would know him truly rich who, owning nothing, possesses the priceless treasure of his Love for

God. His is the poverty that kings could envy, and that makes even the King of kings his slave.

Know therefore, that in the eyes of God, the only difference between the rich and the poor is not of wealth and poverty, but in the degrees of intensity and sincerity in the longing for God.

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 fellow-men, but learn to long for the love of God. Even in the midst of your worldly activities, live only to find and realize your true Identity with your Beloved God.

Be pure and simple, and love all because all are one. Live a sincere life; be natural, and be honest with yourself.

Honesty will guard you against false modesty and will give you the strength of true humility. Spare no pains to help others. Seek no other reward than the gift of Divine Love. Yearn for this gift sincerely and intensely, and I promise in the name of my Divine Honesty, that I will give you much more than you yearn for.

I give you all my Blessing that the spark of my divine love may implant in your hearts the deep longing for Love of God.

—MEHER BABA

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AND

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Existence is Eternal, whereas Life is perishable.

Comparatively, Existence is what his body is to man, and Life is as the cloth that covers the body. The same body changes clothes according to the seasons, time and circumstances, just as the One and Eternal Existence is always there throughout the countless and varied aspects of Life.

Shrouded beyond recognition by the cloak of Life with its multifarious folds and colours, is Existence Unchangeable. It is the garb of Life with its veils of mind, energy and gross forms that "shadows" and superimposes on Existence, presenting the eternal, indivisible and unchangeable Existence as transient, varied and ever-changing.

Existence is all-pervading, and is the underlying essence of all things, whether animate or inanimate, real or unreal, varied in species or uniform in forms, collective or individual, abstract or substantial.

In the Eternity of Existence there is no Time. There is no Past and no Future; only the everlasting Present. In Eternity nothing has ever happened and nothing will ever happen. Everything is happening in the unending NOW.

Existence is God; whereas, Life is illusion.

Existence is Reality; whereas, Life is imagination.

Existence is Everlasting; whereas, Life is ephemeral.

Existence is Unchangeable; whereas, Life is everchanging.

Existence is Freedom; whereas, Life is a binding.

Existence is Indivisible; whereas, Life is multiple.

Existence is Imperceptible; whereas, Life is deceptive.

Existence is Independent; whereas, Life is dependent on mind, energy and gross forms.

Existence *is*; whereas, Life appears to be.

Existence, therefore, is not Life.

Birth and death do not mark the beginning or end of Life. Whereas the numerous stages and states of Life which constitute the so-called births and deaths are governed by the laws of evolution and reincarnation, Life comes into being *only once*, with the advent of the first dim rays of limited consciousness and succumbs to death *only once* on attaining the Unlimited Consciousness of Infinite Existence.

Existence, All-knowing, All-powerful, All-present God, is beyond cause and effect, beyond time and space, beyond all actions.

Existence touches all, all shadows and all things. Nothing can ever touch Existence. Even the very fact of its being does not touch Existence.

To realize Existence, Life must be shed. It is Life that endows limitations to the Unlimited Self. Life of the limited self is sustained by the mind creating impressions; by energy supplying the impetus to accumulate and dissipate these impressions through expressions; and by gross forms and bodies, functioning as the instruments through which these impressions are spent, reinforced and eventually exhausted, through *actions*.

Life is thickly linked with actions. Life is lived through actions. Life is valued through actions. Life's survival depends on actions. Life cognizant is actions—actions opposite in nature, actions affirmative and negative, actions constructive and destructive.

Therefore, to let Life succumb to its ultimate death is to let all actions end. When actions end completely, Life of the limited self spontaneously

experiences itself as Existence of the Unlimited Self. Existence being realized, evolution, and involution of consciousness is complete, illusion vanishes, and the law of reincarnation no longer binds.

Simply to desist from committing actions will never put an end to actions. It would merely mean putting into action yet another action—that of inactivity.

To escape from actions is not the remedy for the uprooting of actions. Rather, this would give scope to the limited self to get more involved in the very act of escaping, thus creating more actions. Actions, both good and bad, are like knots in the tangled thread of Life. The more persistent the efforts to undo the knots of action, the firmer become the knots and the greater the entanglement.

Only actions can nullify actions, in the same way that poison can counteract the effects of poison. A deeply embedded thorn may be extricated by the use of another thorn or any sharp object resembling it, such as a needle, used with skill and precaution. Similarly, actions are totally uprooted by other actions—when they are committed by some activating agent other than the “self.”

Karma Yoga, *Dnyan Yoga*, *Raj Yoga*, and *Bhakti Yoga* serve the purpose of being prominent signposts on the Path of Truth, directing the Seeker toward the Goal of Eternal Existence. But the hold of Life, fed by actions, is so tight on the aspirant that even with the help of these inspiring signposts he fails to be guided in the right direction. As long as the “self” is bound by actions, the aspirant, or even the pilgrim on the Path toward Truth, is sure to go astray through self-deception.

Throughout all ages, *sadhus* and seekers, sages and saints, *munis* and monks, *tapasavis* and *sanyasis*, *yogis*, Sufis and *talibs*, have struggled during their lifetime, undergoing untold hardships in their efforts to extricate themselves from the maze of actions and to realize the Eternal Existence by overcoming Life.

They fail in their attempts because the more they struggle with their "self," the firmer the "self" becomes gripped by Life, through actions intensified by austerities and penances, by seclusions and pilgrimages, by meditation and concentration, by assertive utterances and silent contemplation, by intense activity and inactivity, by silence and verbosity, by "*jāpas*" and "*tapas*," and by all types of *Yogas* and "*cheelas*."

Emancipation from the grip of Life and freedom from the labyrinths of actions is made possible for all and attained by a few, when a Perfect Master, Sadguru, or *Qutub* is approached and His grace and guidance are invoked. The Perfect Master's invariable counsel is complete surrender to Him. Those few who do, surrender their all—mind, body, possessions, so that with their complete surrender they also surrender consciously their own "self" to the Perfect Master, yet have their very being left conscious to commit actions activated now only by the dictates of the Master.

Such actions, after the surrender of one's "self," are no longer one's own actions. Therefore, these actions are capable of uprooting all other actions which feed and sustain Life. Life then becomes gradually lifeless and eventually succumbs, by the grace of the Perfect Master, to its final death. Life, which once debarred the persevering aspirant from realizing Perpetual Existence, can now no longer work its own deception.

I have emphasized in the past, I tell you now, and I shall age after age forever more repeat that you shed your cloak of Life and realize Existence which is eternally yours.

To realize this Truth of Unchangeable, Indivisible, All-pervading Existence, the simplest way is to surrender to me *completely*; so completely that you are not even conscious of your surrender, conscious only to obey me and to act as and when I order you.

If you seek to live perpetually, then crave for the death of your "deceptive self" at the hands of "complete surrender" to me. This *Yoga* is the Essence of all *Yogas* in one.

—MEHER BABA



