

The Flower of Contemplation



Adah Francis Shifrin



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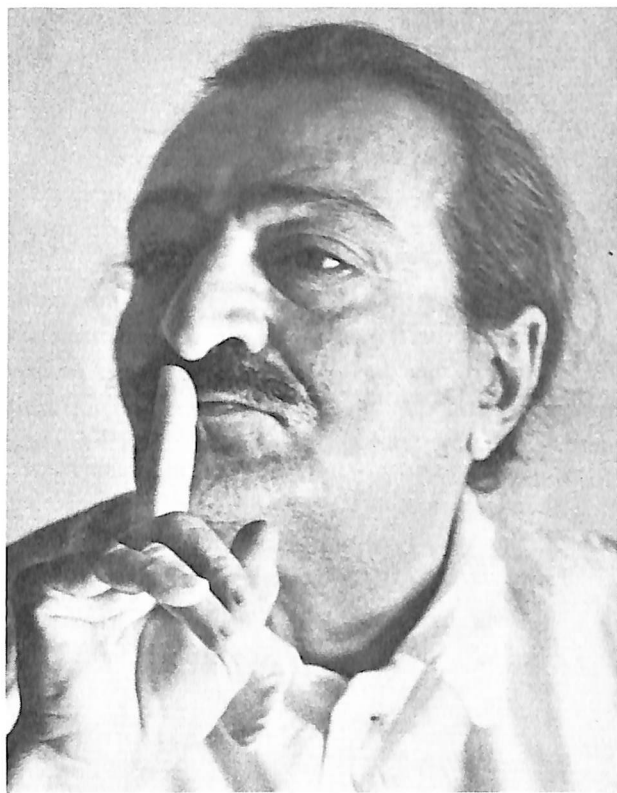
"The Flower of Contemplation"

IN REVERENCE OF
AVATAR MEHER BABA'S 40 YEARS
OF SILENCE, JULY 10, 1965

"When I speak, it will be only one Divine Word; but it will be the Word of Words or the Manifestation of Truth. This word will have to be hearkened by the heart, and not merely by the mind. It will go home to you and bring you the Awakening."

Meher Baba

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"I have come not to teach but to awaken"

Meher Baba

"The Grace of the Man-God is like the rain, which falls equally on all lands irrespective of whether they are barren or fertile, but it fructifies only in the lands which have been rendered fertile through arduous and patient toiling."

Meher Baba

DEDICATION

TO AVATAR MEHER BABA

We hear You call, Oh Beloved.
Again You call to us
Out of the wilderness,
“Friend to Friend,” “Lover to Lover.”
The heavenly light awakens us
And we fly to You!
What joy! What happiness! What love!
We are Yours.

*“My Message always has been
and always will be of Divine
Love. Let the world know it.”*

Grateful Acknowledgement

For permission from Adi K. Irani; Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, India – Sole Licensee – to reprint the numerous sayings and messages of Meher Baba found in this book.

Also, to Baba Lovers all over the world and to the loving Baba group in Miami, Florida. The coming together of these dear people has been one heart and one mind expressing their love and devotion for Beloved Baba's Divine Presence.

The sharing in this "Love" has helped to make this book possible.

The Author

INTRODUCTION

Just as the root is a part of the stem, the stem a part of the leaves and the blossom a part of the whole plant, so it is with this book.

It is a continuous flow of feeling. Some will think it is a story, others a song. Let your mind make of it what you will. Perhaps it may echo the calling of your own soul. Though the words are set down, by one hand, the thoughts and aspirations are the expressions of us all; whether consciously or subconsciously experienced.

A.S.

*Flower in the crannied wall, I pluck you out
of the crannies, I hold you here, root and all,
in my hand.*

*Little flower – but if I could understand.
What you are, root and all and all in all.
I should know what God and man is.*

*Alfred Lord Tennyson
“Flower in the Crannied Wall”*

"I cannot expect you to understand all at once what I want you to know. It is for Me to awaken you from time to time throughout the ages, sowing the seed in your limited minds, which must in due course and with proper heed and care on your part, germinate, flourish and bear the fruit of that True Knowledge which is inherently yours to gain."

Meher Baba

Our thoughts may take "wing" and go in many directions to visualize the gifts our Heavenly Father has bestowed upon His children. All of His creation contains the universal breath of His life, nothing still, everything moving with eternal balance and harmony. No matter where we look the Glory of His touch is ever present.

We think of a seed planted in the earth as the beginning of creation for that plant. This is only the material aspect involved. The seed itself had to come into existence. Latent within the seed there had to be the pre-planned design for color, size, shape, texture, aroma and the finer quality that is intangible. We marvel at the invisible pattern and plan for only one of these little capsules of life; let alone the billions of variations that adorn our earth. Truly only a Master Creator could conceive and deliver unto us this treasure that man seems to take for granted. Walt Whitman wrote that man looks in wonder at the pea in the pod. Yes, we must admit that the plant world is a vast beautiful kingdom within itself, which man is actually dependent upon for his physical survival.

If we were to study this one phase of life upon this planet we would have to come to the conclusion that this one little "whim" of God is

beyond human comprehension and that one little seed in the plant world holds the mystery within, placed there by the Unseen Power and Intelligence Supreme.

What then of the living seed of man who questions the Almighty Power that created him? He too is God's seed and the ultimate in all His creation. God in His Infinite planning set in motion His Divine pattern of life through the successive states of stone, metal, vegetable, worm, fish, bird, and animal. Man has finally evolved to human form and waits to receive the consciousness of the soul's unlimited self and for the soul to know itself as indivisible, eternal, and infinite.

God's beautiful dream brought the cosmos into being that man might find his way to the God-Head from whence he came. God's whole Divine plan was for this very purpose.

How fitting it is that a loving Father should help His children. In a sense we are the flowers that bloom in His universal garden and as we become more perfect and beautiful in His eyes so does His garden, the earth, become more perfect and beautiful.

Here on this planet is one of God's gardens where we shall bloom according to His Divine Will.

Since this is the Springtime of creation, the time for new planting, how natural that God should choose his most precious seed, one like unto Himself and plant it upon the earth so that the pollen of His love may be carried far and wide throughout the world to awaken the Divine Love which will touch all souls. This beautiful flower of God is the Avatar who has come at different times and in different places since the world began. He was the Messiah of Truth as in Krishna, Buddha, Christ and now He is here again to awaken us to a new humanity.

His earthly name is Meher Baba. His beauty and radiance is the light itself that touches everything that lives. See the leaf glistening and dancing in the sun, is it not as though it were His compassionate smile? The softness of the breeze, a light caress of His thoughts? The movements of His fingers like the ripples on His ocean of love while He moves tides in and out; the tides of our lives who love and surrender their all to Him. In the changing sunsets we can sense the color of His complexion. The glow that spreads across the sky a small part of His magnificence. Are not his eyes like the souls of babies still unborn in the embrace of the Infinite? No wonder

his look must be the delight of the angels. Each part of His Beloved Form so like man yet so unlike man for truly His complete Glory is hidden from the human eye. Only the eye Divine could see Meher Baba as he really is. Let us give thanks that we are born on earth at this time when the living God has come again for our liberation. Beloved Meher Baba has taken form on this earth to plant the seed of love in each heart, to bring about the awakening of man to self-realization. There is no greater treasure than Divine Love bestowed by the Grace of the Master.

Let us take the word "love" and see what man thinks of it. The word in its most limited aspect can mean ardent affection or a strong liking or interest. This one little word "love" is the most powerful in the human language and is the stimuli for all man's desires. Human love in its most limited state which exists in the material world, binds man. Divine Love in its most limitless state frees him.

Often we express throughout our lives the limited love for things that we think are important to our happiness. It might be for food, clothing, houses, jewels, money, places, self, family and on and on through numerous expressions of desires.

Sooner or later we will suddenly realize that all these possessions are transitory. We come to the realization that we were unconsciously seeking something else. When we have reached this point we begin to ponder and consider that there must be much more to man's destiny than what we have experienced through this limited "love." This could bring us to the crossroad of our lives. We must look beyond ourselves and ask our Creator to show us the way. We may have had many incarnations before we arrived to even question. To question is to search and to search is to find if we are determined.

It is in the heart of the "seeker" that God looks for fertile ground to sow the Divine seed of His love. To be the recipient of this great blessing is not just for the asking. It is the gift of the Master. Only through His grace does this "Love of Loves" come to the heart that is ready to receive it. Though the seed may be latent in our hearts for a long time it will surely take root and start unfolding the truth that will flower into the Ultimate of oneself.

To make the heart ready for the planting there is much to do even after the spiritual path is sighted. Knowing the way intellectually is not

enough. Setting our minds on the austerity of a religion or disciplining ourselves in any inward or outward expression is limiting. There must be a release of everything that binds; even thoughts and habits might hinder the progress.

The seed of Divine Love can only be sown when the heart is cleansed of all impurities. Selfishness must go and selflessness must come. We must find courage to sacrifice everything at all costs for the happiness of God. Our Divine Father wishes us to be loving and compassionate toward all of his other beings. Are we not all one in His eyes? How pleased He must be when a loving child wishes only to do his work with no thought of self. Sacrificing oneself for another's happiness and well being may sound difficult, but truly those who seem most content are the ones too busy helping others to think of themselves. Those concentrating on "I, my, me, mine" are unhappy and find much to complain about. These are the hearts too full of the "debris of self" to leave room for the seed of love.

We must have the courage to want to do away with this "debris of self" with all our will power.

It is never too late! Besides our own loving actions and efforts in daily life we can show

God our love by surrendering to God's personal manifestation: The Perfect Master. Could anything be more wonderful than to be able to offer all that one "Is" to Him? The Beloved Master is the King of Love. Who could know more or do more to help us cleanse our hearts than He?

When we come to Beloved Baba with all that we are, our good and our lesser good, we are like children who take their parent's hand and feel safely guided to a destination. Though we may not know the way, the Beloved does. Though we do not know our true selves, the Beloved does. Though we do not know our past, present or future, the Beloved does!

We have only to obey, surrender and love Him. It is our ignorance that causes him to suffer and still Our Beloved compassionately tells us, "Do not worry." He calls to us saying "Come all unto me."

Age after age the living God comes when the earth is in the grip of fear, disruptions and chaos. Though only a few may know of Him at first, the flowering of His love in these hearts will spread the pollen far and wide. From heart to heart, God's garden of Love shall bloom over the face of the earth, changing everything.

It is in the awakened heart that the flower will bloom. The essence and sweetness of this love will penetrate every phase of man's life. When the world has experienced this love man will step into a whole new change of consciousness. Humanity will enter a new phase of existence. Man's whole purpose will be based on true brotherly love. He will know that God dwells within Him. His every day life and thoughts will be a Divine expression. The spiritual light will begin to penetrate where it has not been able to reach because of the denseness of man's gross attachments.

Though words bind true expression in the limitations of language, great poets have tried for ages to write about Divine Love. Could these be the vanguard of future men and will this be part of the common heritage for all men? The Divine light that flowered in their hearts shall be in ours too. What we read and marvel at in the talents of others shall one day be the expression flowing freely in every man's mind. All the great achievements that are coming through man are from the Supreme Source.

Can we possibly imagine man capable of doing any great work without Divine guidance? The inspiration and the plan is from the unseen power

of God. His light is ever ready to touch the awakened heart. The expression then takes form in creativity. The wonders that are being formulated in the Supreme Mind are far beyond what we know today. The greater the love, the greater the creativity.

Every painter who created a masterpiece was the recipient of some degree of illumination.

Singers with fine voices may also have been touched through inspiration in the same way.

The Saints seem content to experience God's love with inner expression. The outer expression is seen in their reverence.

The masts in India are so intoxicated with God that they are content to be completely lost in Bliss.



From this we see that it is beyond human comprehension to know the degree of love which the individual heart might receive through the Grace of God. We know that if we can give the ultimate in love we will receive the ultimate of Divine Love; the God-realization that only a Master can bestow. This is the final goal of the Spiritual path. This is the flower God wishes to nurture in our hearts.

Ah, dear Father, is it that you wish for your flowers of love to be of many varieties with different color, texture and aroma; yet are we not all dear to You in the same way? The scent of the rose is no sweeter than the lily. Those of us who may not have any aroma at all are still beautiful to behold and so you love all of us in spite of our weakness.

Why are we who are in the flesh compared here to the flower? It is because our time spent here on earth seems just as brief. We no sooner bloom than our petals fall to earth. Not for long though, for our seed shall enter the earth and bloom again. Let our happiness be in the beauty of our love which we bring to the Master. Let our stay upon earth bring joy to those around us. It is the outpouring of this love that attracts the eternal light of God. Just as the sun nourishes all that lives so does the eternal light nourish the spiritual self. The seed God plants awakens slowly to a "drop" of this eternal light and begins to grow. As the flower begins to unfold more and more Divine light is attracted to it.

Time as we know it in the gross world has no value in God's eyes. He is infinitely patient and waits ages for us just to reach the point of the a-

wakening to our purpose in the world of forms. When this knowledge is reached even though we are still very limited in what the gross consciousness can understand, it is a time to rejoice. We can know that it is the turning point in the many lives we have lived. Somehow we intuitively know that a battle of the gross world is being won. Now we can start acting upon the inner promptings to guide us. This inner guidance is God's silent way of directing His love to us. We do not need a written word nor a spoken word to know His wishes. Once we completely surrender ourselves to Him the inner knowledge that He will guide us through everything comes to us. With this resignation comes a tremendous feeling of freedom. We feel less and less attachment to the gross forms which were formerly invisible shackles. Slowly impressions change. What seemed important and pressing becomes completely obsolete. The new Self can almost stand aside and look at the old self. What a comedy of errors the old self appears to be and how unimportant in relation to the over-all pattern of life.

This new and shining self looks in rather than out upon the world. It is as though one had been living in a huge bubble and suddenly walked through it. One steps through and then

turns about to look inside at all that was left behind which was going on within the bubble. One might say "Where am I now?" But who should care when God has brought one there and in His time one will experience and know this too. As long as it is God's wish that one be placed upon this earth this acceptance is enough for one to know and to be content with. There is the assurance He will guide man back to Him, from whence he came. When a new little bundle of life is born and cries and cries, it is not for food but for the arms of the Infinite unconsciously longed for.

All our lives we are unconsciously crying out for that union. It is the destiny of every soul to achieve this and no one need despair, no matter who he or she may be.

There are those who are extremely blessed to know God's manifestation on earth. It is Beloved Baba's will that others too shall come to Him that He may put an end to their ignorance. He will draw all those who are ready to Him and they will begin to know through living experience the true meaning of "love."

All that could be written here would fall short of explaining how Baba touches the heart

with His infinite love. It is the eternal light of the whole cosmos. None of the senses, no matter how beautiful or satisfying to the mind, can express the beauty of the "seeing within," the expanding joy going out from oneself. What is this undiscovered world within us? It is the Divine Love that has not yet bloomed. It is the seed beginning to feel the glimmer, the touch of life. How can one imagine the flowering of the Ultimate in God's love. Even the little trickle of light is great compared to the darkness in the ignorance of the gross consciousness.

One day the mind's eye will start to look within. The looking without becomes less and less interesting. Why did we take so long to find so simple a way to start answering the question of "Why are we here?" We have spent all our time looking without, searching with the physical eye. All the time, we ourselves are the world that has to be discovered. The answer lies deep within the heart and soul. All of us have been groping in the darkness for a way to the light. The only one who can bestow the experience of truth through love is the Avatar. He is the way and the light! Baba has told his lovers that the High Road to experience Him is through loving Him as He wishes to be

loved. We have no way to comprehend in our limited minds the true meaning and extent of this love. Since power of thought is where our greatest strength lies it is our only direct means of making a start. Our thoughts begin to go out. We are striving to reach God in our minds and so we are learning to meditate. Let us not allow our thoughts to drift about, but let them "take wing" and go directly to our Beloved. Do you think He does not know and receive your thoughts? In His infinite state there is nothing that is not known to Him. Time and space mean nothing to the Ancient One, who is here just for us. His light goes out like the rays of the sun touching all who are ready. This is Baba's miraculous gift, He touches the heart with love Divine. It is the awakening to Truth.

The more one thinks of Baba the more one is drawn by Him. Why then, not think of Him even while taking care of worldly duties? What could one think of more beautiful than meditating on the glory of the whole universe concentrated into one form. One even forgets what one has come for when thoughts are turned to Baba.

There is a contentment that comes just in the thought of the Beloved. Gradually one forgets how to worry. Anxieties begin to dissolve into

nothingness. Time does not have the same meaning for it becomes limitless and eternal.'

When we look upon ourselves in the mirror we are not concerned that youth fades for we know that the garment of flesh will be cast aside for a new and better one. We may even be glad to look toward the time when God shall receive us in His eternal embrace and keep us with Him for all time.

One's attachment to family and friends becomes lessened and one looks upon the whole world as being a part of one's own life. If one's thought dwells here for a moment one will see that all the homes, housing a little close knit circle, are faced with the exact same problems as one's own. Is not this one little unit a part of the larger one? Does one not feel the hunger pangs in their bodies as though it were a part of one's own? Upon the face of all of the earth the needs and emotions of its people are all the same, regardless of place or race. Baba will lift the veil from men's minds so that they will know the truth and recognize the oneness of all. It is when one meditates on Baba that perhaps these other thoughts will come and give cause for reflection. Through this trend of thinking comes the feeling of comfort and resignation that God has everything happening ac-

cording to His Divine Will. Not a blade of grass is out of place and although one does not know His law for destruction or construction, one can be sure it is for humanity on the whole.

The more one thinks of Baba the happier one becomes. Sooner or later one wishes to see Him and be with Him. Does one not go to Baba each time the mind goes out to Him? Let the mind fly to Him and one is there. Is one not growing to love this visit more and more? Does it not mean more than any physical act? One is now beginning to live less with thoughts of body which bind and the mind is becoming a vehicle to new freedom.

Now one grows further and further away from self and becomes more absorbed in thoughts of Baba. One begins to realize freedom, and though still limited it is far greater than what one had ever experienced before. It has often been said that happiness is a state of mind and this is true even for the limited mind. Now one has the "Highest of the High" to think about. To live in thought, though intangible, is as real as the gross world is false. To live in the mind can be more real than living in the world.

Where in this gross world can one see the beauty to compare to that which can fill the mind.

Once one captures the truth in this there is never a need for external stimuli. One is never alone. One place to live is as good as another for the mind knows not the limitations of the flesh. More and more of one's love goes out to Baba in thought and one begins to *feel* His love.

Ah, Beloved, when the heart starts to experience your love in return, one does not need to meditate, for one is in the Divine contemplation of you! All this time, Beloved, one was searching for you without and suddenly here you are within!

Now the words must come from the heart which is not ours, but yours, Beloved, for it has been given to you and it is you who abides here and no longer just oneself. It is in this sweet contemplation of you, Beloved, that already the sweet scent of the flower that is to come has awakened the soul.

If the heart could speak it would tell a story far beyond mind's comprehension. One of beauty that does not exist to the physical eye. This is not the beauty of sight when contemplating you, Beloved, but a glorious feeling of your Presence.

One seems to feel a light coming from within and going out to others. One feels as a child given a beautiful gift, something he has always wanted and never dreamed he could possess. This feeling never leaves but fills the heart with love overflowing and joy everlasting.

Strange how feelings come back from one's childhood. The simple pleasures, impressions, even the scent of wild flowers while walking through the woods, mingle with the sweetness of the present.

You, Beloved Baba, are the sweetness rediscovered. You are the best that one can find in oneself. You, Baba, are the beauty that is the ultimate in this world and in the beyond worlds and in the worlds that you are dreaming of that perhaps still do not exist.

That we are part of your dream and that we have eamed this right is beyond expression. There is no way of knowing for sure why we are so blessed. The thought is so overwhelming and our eternal gratitude, joy, praise of you, gushes up and finds our mouths open and empty. We are at a loss for true speech for there really is none. Perhaps only the angels know the language of the heart. Let us hope that someday man will under-

stand and be given a universal language of love and that you, Beloved Baba, will deem him ready to receive it soon.

There seems as many ways to love as there are leaves on the tree. Those who recognize the illusion of all creation and wish to rush into the arms of the infinite may try with all their spiritual might to separate themselves from the gross world through detachment. They may constantly plead with the Master to lift them up and out of illusion. This way to God is not easy. We were put on earth to fulfill a need, not only to ourselves but to others. Because we know the truth we cannot ignore the suffering of others caught in the net of illusion. We are here to help them find what we have found. When all know the illusion was created only as a backdrop for the stage of life we can play our part and find joy in the knowledge that our exits and entrances are well planned by the Master playwright.

We do not have to concern ourselves with what we want to do but be resigned to what God wants us to do. To be happy in the doing. Could it be that God Realization comes when we are not the actors but the act itself?

Let us play our part and let it be the best we have to give to the world for the sake of the world. God loves us all and we are all part of His love. This is why the earth was created. Though this world be only part of God's dream here, we are part of that dream. Does it not seem a simple conclusion that if we truly love Him then we should be happy to be included in the dream no matter what he deems right for us?

Let us not get caught up with concern for the planes of consciousness, leave this to Baba! But concentrate on the immediate eternal present. The Master knows the way for us. It is this gross body and the gross world that binds us now. Let the binding be one of joy and not sorrow. If we concentrate on our love for Baba happiness can be ours even in our ignorance. This must have been a part of what Christ meant when he said one must become as a little child. Are not children joyful because their minds have not been cluttered with desires. Do they not feel safe and happy without intellectualism? Beloved Baba gives us this opportunity to become as a child again. He is the Compassionate Father who awaits our return. We do not want for anything because he takes our wants away. Baba is the *Everything*. Yes, the *Everything*

that we thought we wanted, all the time.

Many people find some degree of spiritual satisfaction through their religion. All religions are beautiful and in different ways teach the same truth. It is man who creates division in that truth. Soon man will learn that all souls are one seeking the same Supreme God. This will be the flowering of a universal faith that will unite man in Divine Brotherhood. Each man will be his own temple wherein God shall dwell. It is in this time that peace shall reign upon the earth and Baba's Advent will bring his garden of love into full bloom.

Let us begin to make ready now! Let us pull out the weeds that might stifle the beauty that is growing within our hearts. Let us be the vanguard of Baba's love to bring help and hope to others less fortunate than ourselves. Let our lives be a living example of what we expect from fellow man.

Let us do our earthly duty with patience and joy. Let us be content in the knowledge that Baba's love will sustain us through times of stress and tribulation. Let us keep our minds pure and sweet. Let us not become slaves to our bodily wants.

Most of all Baba has said, *"Live for God and die for God."*

Soon we will come to know that what we believe to be important in our lives is unimportant. The ego will diminish and we will see that people are not as concerned about us as we had once thought. They are too intent upon the illusion of their own cares just as we once were. In forgetting ourselves we can think of others. Now life has fullness and meaning that it had never had before.

We never know in this Divine Experience on earth what purpose our life has served. We do not know but what the smallest incident could be the greatest in the eyes of God. We can only strive to do our best at all times.

Through the long process of evolution we have come to this earth. In this form we begin the quest for God. Through meditation and contemplation we ultimately discover the way to involution or the "journey within." It is the unfolding of the petals of the flower of Divine Love. It is the sojourn of the soul within to experience God, and as one dives deep within oneself slowly the curtain or veil of the gross, subtle and mental are removed.

Oh Beloved, you conceal yourself within the heart of the flower of love. To find You there

one cannot force the petals open for the delicate bud could be damaged. One must wait and wait for each petal to unfold. One must pass even the desire of longing to discover You, Oh Beloved.

No sacrifice would be too great in order to come face to face with You. One who loves you in the limited self can only dream of you, oh flower of the heart, Beloved Baba. One can sing of You, paint You, praise You in verse, but all of this is nothing when placed before the Glory that is You.

To become as dust at your feet would be welcomed if your Beloved feet would touch the dust. It would be better to become the air You breathe that You may draw us into You. Oh, what is there to do in the helplessness of our expression? What is there to give when whatever one has is already Yours?

Maya is trying to keep us apart but we will resist and with Your Grace overcome this "strangling weed" in our hearts. When intent on giving you our love nothing can stand in the way!

Perhaps this love is only the shadow of love just as earthly beauty is only a shadow of spiritual beauty. Could this be the reason why we do not even know how to love You as You wish to be loved? We too are in the shadow of illu-

sion. Only the Master can give us this gift of Divine Love, the light that nourishes the seed, then the shadow will be removed. In the glory of the spiritual Divine Light we can then be worthy to love You as You wish to be loved. Our hearts will be in full bloom ready to be received by You.

Just as the flower gives forth its message of beauty, essence of purity and sweetness in silence, so do You, Oh Beloved. Your silence speaks more eloquently than all the words that ever have or ever will be spoken. Your silence is the song of the whole universe emanating in the harmony of all pulsating life. Your silence is the vibration of all sounds from the tiniest breath of life to the expanding and contracting of the whole cosmos. The eternal hum of all that IS comes through Your Silence. Your Divine voice is the mystery within the seed of life itself!

Plato, one of the greatest philosophers of Western culture believed that the realm of nature and of human experience was in a constant flux with nothing really permanent. Even if a person made a true statement about some existing fact, the fact would soon change and the statement

would no longer be true, so he concluded that men could never gain knowledge, but only opinions, from sense perceptions and immediate experiences. But if man's mind could ascend from specific objects and ideas to universal ones, then he could have an unchanging formal object of knowledge. Plato said that only universal ratios or ideas of harmony have true being and that man must penetrate beyond the material world grasped by his senses. Thus we see that even Plato who was one of the greatest scientists and philosophers of his time achieved his status by recognizing the spiritual truths which were self evident even hundreds of years before Christ. It is historical proof that the message of the Avatar existed then as it does now.

Each Avatar of the past brought a message to the people in relation to their spiritual need. The evolution of man is progressing higher with each advent of the Avatar. For this reason Meher Baba brings the greatest Awakening of all time. His release of Divine Love will embrace the whole world and awaken man to his higher self. The mind will go from reason to intuition and one will experience a communication between men the world has never known. This will naturally

bring understanding that cannot be conveyed in human language.

For those who know and love Baba it is a profound experience just to think of His Silence. Untold books could be written and none would be complete. That a Master brings his message in Silence into the world where so much has been said and *so little done* is refreshing. When one realizes one is in an atomic machine age that has made man and his voice almost obsolete in power, one wonders if this is not one of the reasons God in His Supreme power is Silent. One is beyond the need of words. The world cries out for an awakening through Divine experience. Beloved Baba is here to bring the living experience of God to each.

When Baba deems the world ready, He will utter the One Word that will bring the release of a vibration or rhythm of love that will be felt by every heart. It will be so powerful that the very seed of love He sowed within the heart will virtually burst forth into bloom.

Beloved Baba is now in His fortieth year of Silence. He has conveyed to His lovers in outward expression some messages on His Silence. Those who are Blessed to know of the Avatar may be familiar with what Baba wants us to know.

Meher Baba says:

"The breaking of my silence - the signal for my public manifestation - is not far off. I bring the greatest treasure which it is possible for man to receive - a treasure which includes all other treasures, which will endure forever, which increases when shared with others. Be ready to receive it."

"I am not limited by this form. I use it like a garment to make myself visible to you; and I communicate with you. Don't try to understand me. My depth is unfathomable. Just love me. I eternally enjoy the Christ-state of consciousness, and when I speak I shall manifest my true Self; besides giving a general push to the whole world. I shall lead all those who come to me toward light and truth."

"When the God-Man speaks, Truth is more powerfully manifested than when He uses either sight or touch to convey it. For that reason Avatars usually observe a period of silence lasting for several years, breaking it to speak only when they wish to manifest the Divine Will, and world-wide transformation of consciousness then takes place."

"...I am never silent. I speak eternally. The voice that is heard deep within the soul is my voice . . . the voice of inspiration, of intuition, of guidance. Through those who are receptive to this voice, I speak."

"My outward silence is no spiritual exercise."

"My silence has been undertaken and maintained solely for the good of others."

"Things that are real are always given and received in silence."

"God has been everlastingly working in silence unobserved, unheard, except by those who experience his infinite silence."

"Time, implying a beginning and an end, like space, has no existence in the eternity of God. For us here, time does exist, and the present is fast approaching a junction of an old and the beginning of a new cycle. Time is thus almost ripe for a fresh Universal Divine Manifestation that will infuse new vitality in the body of the old and time-worn truths."

"This much I can say now being in the best of moods, that soon God will make me break my silence and then it will mean God manifesting Himself; and within a short period, humiliation and glorification will come and then will follow

my violent physical death. I will come back again after 700 years, this I can say now."

"...The moment I break my silence and utter that Original Word, the first and last miracle of 'Baba' in this life will be performed. It will be the miracle as I never have performed. When I perform that miracle, I won't raise the dead; but I will make those who live for the world dead to the world, and live in God. I won't give sight to the blind, but will make people blind to illusion and make them see God as Reality."

"As I am the pivot of the Universe, the full pressure of the universal upheaval will bear on me, and correspondingly my suffering will be so infinitely overwhelming that the WORD will escape from out of the Silence."

"I must break my silence soon. You all who have come into contact with me will have some glimpse of me. Some will have a little, some a little more and some still more. When the 'power-house' is switched on, wherever there are electric bulbs and if they have connection with the 'power-house', there will be light. If some of the bulbs are of small candle-power, the light will be dim; if some of the bulbs are of high candle-power, the light will be bright. If the bulb is

fused there will be no light at all. I perform no miracles, but when I break my silence, the first and the last miracle will be performed..... the time for the 'power-house' to be switched on is so near that the only thing that will count now is love."

These words are only some explanation Baba has given us to know about His Silence. There is meaning that can and cannot be understood with the mind. The roots of His truth are buried too deep for us to visualize or understand completely. The many little "hair" roots branching out are like the maze of our thoughts which take us nowhere.

We have only one alternative and that is to love Him.

There are always those who through dry intellectualism want facts and guarantees which have no meaning in the spiritual realm of values. Just as beauty is intrinsic and exists in the eyes of the beholder so it is with spiritual perception. One does not know why he knows, he only knows he knows. This may be one of the reasons that Beloved Baba means different things to different people. Just as each facet of a cut diamond picks up rays of light and defracts from each facet dif-

ferently so it is with each mind that knows of Baba. How infinitely patient He is with the burdens our minds create. We feel that we are obedient to Him when we do not even grasp the full meaning of the word. How can we know true obedience when we do not practice brotherly love? Beloved Baba has told us that He is everywhere and in everything, on every plane. True obedience would mean tolerance and love for all. No wonder our Beloved says it is almost impossible to be 100% obedient to Him.

We must make every effort to become obedient. One way to do this lies through effacement. Let us make a constant vigil of ourselves. We can judge our actions in the mirror of life for it will reflect all that we do.

Baba has given us these words on how to love God:

“To love God in the most practical way is to love our fellow beings. If we feel for others in the same way as we feel for our own dear ones, we love God.”

“If, instead of seeing faults in others, we look within ourselves, we are loving God.”

“If, instead of robbing others to help ourselves, we rob ourselves to help others, we are loving God.”

"If we suffer in the sufferings of others and feel happy in the happiness of others, we are loving God."

"If, instead of worrying over our own misfortunes, we think of ourselves more fortunate than many many others, we are loving God."

"If we endure our lot with patience and contentment, accepting it as His Will, we are loving God."

"If we understand and feel that the greatest act of devotion and worship to God is not to hurt or harm any of His beings, we are loving God."

"To love God as He ought to be loved, we must live for God and die for God, knowing that the goal of life is to Love God, and find Him as our own self."

Dear Baba, we must hold tightly to your daaman* for you will test our faith to the utmost. You will even try to push us away from You through worldly tests. Love gives us determination to hold fast. The stronger our love, the stronger the grip. Shake the whole world and you will not shake off those who love you more than the whole universe, Beloved!

**Hem of the Master's garment.*

There are surely those who think "What will the test be next and will we be able to endure all with love and resignation?" Beloved Baba in His compassion knows what is right for our spiritual growth and gives us only what He feels we should have whether it be through sorrow or joy. We must experience everything in life to grow through the opposites. This develops equanimity and spiritual poise.

We should not ask our Beloved to change Karma, the law of cause and effect. These are our liabilities and our assets. We should be happy to straighten out our accounts in the world. His love will give us strength and somehow we feel He may expedite everything for us. When Baba tells us not to worry and to be happy, it is because what is in our minds is really unimportant in relation to God's Divine scheme of things. How sad that our own eyes blind us and our own thoughts cover the true knowledge. Our only solution is to go to Baba as a child would go to his Father, admit our weaknesses and ask Him to show us the way.

Baba has come into the world to be The Father in our great spiritual need. To extract His Grace we must follow through obedience,

love and surrender. Those three words blended together are Divine Love. Says Baba: "*I am the slave of My true lovers.*" What more could He convey? What more could we ask? What more could He suffer than to become "man" for us? He comes as the "Highest of the High" to lift us out of the illusion and give us His message of truth.

How can we surrender, Oh Beloved? Nothing seems worthy of you. Our possessions are like trash, our flesh and bones worthless. Our minds, ignorant, our desires a burden to You. Only the heart and soul are left and these are Yours. All You have suffered for us, Beloved, and we have so little to offer You. Since You say that love is all You wish from us, then the heart holds the key to surrender. We shall empty out the abode of our hearts and make fertile the ground for Your seed of Love to be planted, this is the obedience. The culmination of both the surrender and obedience is our goal.

Kipling's expression, "A rag, a bone, a hank of hair," would seem to apply to us all and yet the "ego" tries desperately to change this

concept. All the suffering of mankind, through commercialism comes from catering to the outer shell of man. We lavish on our bodies things that feed the false ego more and more while the true self that is buried under all the debris has to struggle more and more to free itself.

Christ said that it is as difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God as it is for "a camel to go through the eye of a needle." This did not mean because of the riches. It meant that the possessions can possess the individual. We must be willing to give all in love of God. It is hard for most to "let go." The less we have, the easier, for materialism is a great burden.

Baba has given us the way to realize Him in these words, quote:

"Those who would realize Me
Must have:

"Intense longing for union with Me.

"Unassailable peace of mind.

"Unfailing humility.

"Desperate search.

"Unquestioning faith.

"Unswerving fidelity.

“Control, which is born of love.
“The spirit of selfless service,
which is unfettered by attachment to results.
“Thorough going renunciation.
“Spontaneous obedience.
“Whole-hearted surrender.
“Self-giving love.”

It would seem a person could spend a lifetime perfecting even one of the above ways to realize Baba. It is no wonder that it takes so many lifetimes. Let us be grateful that at least we are aware of what we must do. As the doctor might say to his patient, “We at least know the cause, now we can effect a cure.” To finally know what we do not know is a great discovery. We must go to the Master; there is no other way.

Beloved Baba has given us The Seven Realities to help show us the way. The number seven coincides with the number of planes that we must reach to realize Him.

The Seven Realities:

The only real Existence is that of the one and the only God, who is the self in everyone.

The only real Love is the Love of God.

The only real Sacrifice is that which knows no reservations.

The only real Renunciation is the giving up of all selfish thoughts and desires even in the midst of worldly duties.

The only real Knowledge is the understanding that God is the inner dweller in all, irrespective of whether they are good or bad.

The only real Control is the turning away of senses from the objects of low desires.

The only real Surrender is that in which the individual accepts the will of God with complete resignation.

When one reflects on these Seven Realities in relation to one's own spiritual progress one realizes how difficult it is to perfect any one of these "Truths." One does not have to be discouraged! One can have great hope for the Beloved gives this beautiful thought to "cling" to, quote:

“If I am the Highest of the High, then a wish of My Universal Will is sufficient to give, in an instant, God Realization to one and all, and thus free every creature in creation from the shackles of ignorance; but blessed is Knowledge that is gained through the experience of ignorance in accordance with the Divine Law. This knowledge is made possible for you to attain in the midst of ignorance by the guidance of Perfect Masters and surrenderance to the Highest of the High.”

If we take into our thoughts, deeply, these words we would know that our Beloved brings us “Peace of mind” in the midst of outward diversities of life. We have in the assurance of our Love for Him the knowledge that there is nothing to do but Love Him with complete faith. He gave the same instruction when as Christ He said, “Leave all and follow me.”

Why we are reluctant to leave the “decay of the world” is strange. This is the ignorance of man. All that we struggle for is so transitory. No wonder there is no lasting happiness. Even the forms of our loved ones that we attach our lives to must leave us. If we have complete faith, in our hearts we know that it is God’s will for

all are His children and all are born and leave by Divine Decree. We are all one and so life and death throughout the whole world should affect us the same.

However, this is difficult in our limited minds for the ego has become attached to a particular form. In this we see the limitations of human love. We also learn that we must experience this phase of "binding" in order to gradually gain freedom. We may slowly achieve a peaceful detachment while still experiencing the whole world. Once we have surrendered to the Will of the Master, He helps us attain to this freedom.

We attain to other freedoms too, that have been stifled by the ego. We begin to lose fears. Man suffers intensely because of this ignorance. Fears are created by desires and so can be numerous in expression. The moment we are freed from a desire the "fear" it has attracted vanishes. Just as the fear of death is attached to a desire to live, when we know there is no real death, the anxieties over death are gone.

One who desires riches fears poverty and on and on through as many desires as the mind can create.

Many of our desires are created by mental

impressions from our former lives (Sanskaras). This is why it is so difficult to rid ourselves of undesirable traits that are so deeply imbedded in our thought pattern and carried out through action.

Beloved Baba speeds up and exhausts these impressions through our everyday experiences in life. When we are aware of His love and have surrendered our all to Him, we become aware that events move faster. Nothing happens by accident. Every incident plays a part in the vicissitude of our lives.

Perhaps, Beloved, we were in some of our lives expressing beautiful souls in beautiful actions for were this not true how could we have earned the right to be your Lovers?

Could we have been with you in Ajibriegan where you were born as Zoroaster? Did we walk with you, Oh Beloved, through the wilderness where you spoke to us as "friend to friend"? You were the first to tell us of Ahura Mazda, the Supreme God. Do you again bring Mithras? (The Heavenly Light). Oh Dear Baba, could we have loved you then?

Or, Beloved, were we with Arjuna in the heat of battle waiting for you when you came as Krishna?

When Prince Gautama Buddha fed the "Swans," as a child, in His father's garden, could we have been there with you then, Oh Ancient One? Is this an old love rediscovered and renewed?

When you came as Christ were we there to hear the Sermon on the mount and to swear to follow you unto this very day?

Are you here now "Oh Beloved" to gather in your flock? Those who love you more than all there "Is" feel that your "call" resounds the echo of a longing heart. A familiar call that time and space cannot conceal.

Each time you come, Beloved, you bring us closer to Our Creator. This must be the restlessness the world feels today. Unconsciously, we know there is "something" going on, an undercurrent, a push for freedom. Men are beginning to understand political and commercial bondage. There seems to be a deep spiritual revolution going on within men, an awareness.

We feel as though You were preparing us for the climax that must be reached before You usher in the "New Life," which will come when You break Your Silence.

No sacrifice or suffering would be too great if one were able to help mankind reach a new height. The thought of "one hungry child" in the world is the responsibility of all. Man created the divisions that have brought about his own suffering. God is determined to put an end to this ignorance.

Those who love their fellow man are ready to accept anything that God might deem necessary to bring the New Awakening to the world.

There are those who feel a spiritual war is being waged at this very time. In silence the battle is waged, as in ages past, between the dark and the light forces. This may be the war of wars for men's minds, for when the "Heavenly Light" touches all men, there can never again be the ignorance that exists today.

Beloved Baba has come down from His state of Infinite Bliss to save us from our ignorance. He suffers with the burden of us all, to show man the way to eternal happiness.

Some individuals who learn of Baba may scoff just as they did in other Avataric periods. Still there will always be the few "believers" who will be in the vanguard, to help the Avatar in His universal work.

The last Avataric period was about two thousand years ago. The only difference between then and this present Spiritual Awakening is that there will be a greater awakening. A more powerful Spiritual Push. In spite of all outward appearances of mass suffering, man is evolving higher. All through the ages the Avatar has come for just this purpose.

How strange, that people do not realize that *the Scriptures are still being written*. Baba says of His Advent,

“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.”

We are most fortunate that much is being revealed to man through books and messages, recorded, about Baba. There is one book not yet released, which Baba has written, Himself. It will reveal spiritual knowledge never before given to man. It will be offered to the world, when decreed by Baba.

Baba's inner work that is done in the spiritual realm, is not known to anyone on the gross plane. His body is only an outer

covering so that we might see him in our limited sense.

That which Baba wishes us to know is in the profound truth of experiencing His Love. Whatever one's own religion may be it does not stand in the way of approaching Baba. There may be those who feel a "Universal Faith" and believe that all religions are beautiful.

Meher Baba makes His feelings known about religion and politics in this message, given in 1952.

"As the Divine Life embraces in its being One and All, including even the members of the animal and vegetable kingdom, and since from the moment of the attainment of man-o-nash (annihilation of the limiting mind), I have attained complete unity with that immeasurable and illimitable Divine Life, I cannot and will not identify myself with any caste, creed, religion or political party. From my point of view, all religions are great; but God is greater. In the same way, all political parties are, in their own way, noble, at least in their consciously accepted objectives. But the claims of the undivided and indivisible life are irresistibly supreme, and, as such greater than those of any party, howsoever noble.

“So, I love and adore all religions; but I am of no religion. Nor do I seek to establish another religion or add to the numberless illusions that divide man against man. No religion was ever intended to be anything more than the Gateway to God as Truth; but every religion has, in the course of time, got converted into a veil, obstructing the undimmed perception of that One Truth. As soon as the Truth of direct inner realisation is intellectualised and formulated, it gets enmeshed in creeds and dogmas. They have a tendency to bind the soul in the very attempt to emancipate it. They cover the Truth in the very act of seeking to express it. This comic tragedy reveals itself in the retrospective analysis of all the world religions bestowed on man. But it is not inevitable, if man is invariably vigilant and remains unwaveringly loyal to the inner perception of the inexpressible but unchangeable spiritual Truth, which ever affirms itself as the One All-embracing Life Divine, at once indivisible and illimitable.”

Meher Baba

Today the world seems to be in “spiritual poverty.” The evidence is in the outward conflicts but an outpouring of the Avatar’s Divine Love will cleanse the world.

Those of us who wish to be of help to suffering humanity may begin by loving our fellow man, regardless of color, creed or religion. A bouquet of wild flowers are just as beautiful as cultured ones.

We should *try to understand* that which we do not understand because we find it to be different in relation to ourselves. Look into the heart of everyone, not just the surface, for it may be that one day we would wish that someone might have the compassion to look into our own hearts.

Not a thought or an action goes unrecorded in the spiritual realm. Each action will bring reaction. A happy mind is one which keeps an awareness of this fact. These are the minds of people who do not need the psychiatrist or the tranquilizer. Nor do they need the stimulant, for their natural peace of mind is the reward for right action founded on truth and understanding.

Were we to live to be over a hundred years, it would be but a "twinkling of the eye" in relation to the endless, eternal true existence. We must not waste our earthly, few years, seeking to attain that which is false. Baba has said,

"To have one eye glued on the enchanting

pleasures of the flesh and with the other, expect to see a spark of Eternal Bliss is not only impossible but the height of hypocrisy."

Let us concentrate on perfecting and strengthening the weaknesses in our character of which we are aware. It is not easy in the diversities of life but if Baba finds we make the effort, He will give us the strength needed to accomplish the inner cleansing.

One who knows the meaning and the experience of receiving the "Seed of Love" may never be able to reveal this from a personal experience. It has to have been given in silence and received in silence, as are all real gifts from God. One can only hope to help bring others up to a certain point—but can go no further. It is up to the individual to put forth certain effort.

This period of inner cleansing is a difficult test but necessary.

That one would hesitate toward inner-renunciation for the reward of Divine Love is hard to understand, for it is like comparing "iron to gold."

As the "petals" unfold, one will begin to give forth the essence of sweetness that is the Master Himself. He is in the heart of every

true Lover and so becomes a part of their outward expression. So long as one remains faithful in obedience and surrender one can feel the Beloved's omnipresence.

One's life will be a joy to oneself as well as to others. The true lover is used in the Master's Divine work for the good of all. Wherever the lover's feet go, Baba will guide the way. No matter where one goes, the eyes will behold the Heavenly Beauty that shines forth even from the dirt on the ground. All around is felt a ring of invisible light that is like the Beloved's embrace. To be in Love and to be in this glorious state must be something of what the Saints experience in the Divine ecstasy of their love in communion with God.

Baba's love is attainable by all, saint and sinner alike, who hear His call.

AVATAR'S CALL

"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 clamor and 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.’”

Meher Baba

It is the purpose of this book to help others find their way to Beloved Baba through Love, **“The High Road to True Existence.”**

The experience of reading these words would not be complete without including Baba's own message from:

LOVE AND GOD-LOVE

“The force that can overcome all difficulties is the force of love, because the law of God is Love, which holds the key to all problems. This mighty force not only enables one to put the ideal of selfless service into practice, but also trans-

forms one into God. It has been possible because through love for man to become God, and when God becomes man it is also due to His Love for His beings.

“Love is dynamic in action and contagious in effect. Pure Love is matchless in majesty: it has no parallel in power, and there is no darkness it cannot dispel. It is the undying flame that has set life aglow. The lasting emancipation of man depends upon his love for God and upon God’s Love for one and all.

“Where there is love there is Oneness, and in Oneness the Infinite is realized completely at all times and in every sphere of life, whether science, art, religion or beauty. The spirit of love and sacrifice is beyond all calculation and cannot be measured. A constant wish to love and a non-calculating will to sacrifice are the best means that man can take to be his best and most joyful self.

“Love also means to be willing to suffer to give happiness to others. To the lover it is suffering without malice or hatred. To the beloved it is a blessing without obligation. Love alone knows how to give without bargaining for a return. There is nothing that love cannot

achieve and there is nothing that love cannot sacrifice.

“Love for God, love for one’s fellow-beings, love of service and love of sacrifice, in short, love in every form is the finest ‘give and take’ in the world. Ultimately it is love that will bring about the much desired equalization of human beings all over the world without inhibiting the mankind.

“...Divine Love is qualitatively different from human love. Human love is for the many in the one; Divine Love is for the One in the Many. Human love leads to complications and entanglements. Divine Love leads to integration and freedom. Human love, personal or impersonal, is limited; Divine Love with its fusion of the personal and the impersonal is Infinite in being and expression. Divine Love makes us true to ourselves and to others and makes us live honestly. It is the solution to all our difficulties and problems. It frees us from every kind of binding; it purifies our hearts and glorifies our being.

“To those whose hearts are pure and simple, true love comes as a gift through the activitising grace of a Perfect Master, and this Divine Love will perform the supreme miracle of bringing God into the hearts of men. Human Love should not

be despised even though subject to limitations; for it is bound to break through these limitations, and initiate an aspirant into the eternal life in the Truth."

Meher Baba

Here in this beautiful message is the way to Truth Eternal. Compressed in these few sentences is the essence of all there is to know, though one be the most learned person in the world.

This message is so simple that one might overlook the treasure that it holds. It is man's nature to think that everything worthwhile is difficult to obtain. Yet here in this Divine Message is the key to the "Gate of Heaven," itself.

One may pray in a temple of gold while a simple true loving heart may in utter simplicity find God under a tree.

It is only the pure love that counts as the Master so simply, but eloquently, has expressed it in the range of our comprehension.

In the sweet contemplation of our Beloved one begins the involution, or journey within. One has surrendered even the surrender and is hopeless and helpless in his or her love, like a child.

The way of love is the path of peace and happiness. We shall travel through a virtual garden that is in bloom with the flowering of our hearts.

Let us depart from our old selves. We shall journey from the darkness into the "Heavenly Light." We will be patient and happy for the Word of God shall guide us safely.

Silently, Beloved Baba will call to us. Listen, does not an inner voice echo His most Sacred Words?

"Come all unto Me"

*"I am the Ancient One, come to redeem
the modern world."*

This is The Beginning
(Not The End)

“WHAT I HAVE TO SAY”

“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 a blasphemy or a joke. The fact that God being One, Indivisible, and equally in us all, we can be nought 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 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 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. 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.”

Meher Baba

*“If you make Me your real Father,
all differences and contentions
between you, and all personal
problems in connection with your
lives, will become dissolved in
the Ocean of My Love...”*

Meher Baba



A Short Biographical Sketch of MEHER BABA

"I have come not to teach but to awaken. . . ."

Merwan S. Irani, known as Meher Baba, was born in Poona, India, in 1894, of Persian parents. His father, Sheriar Irani, was a real seeker of God and a great Sufi. Meher Baba went to a Christian high school in Poona and later attended Deccan College. In 1914, while still in college, a momentous event occurred in his life—the meeting with an ancient woman, Hazrat Babajan, a Perfect Master of her time, who made him aware of his high spiritual destiny and at the same time gave him God-Realization.

Eventually he was drawn to seek out another Perfect Master, Upasni Maharaj, who during the next seven years, gave him "Gnosis" or Divine Knowledge and control of the seven planes of consciousness. Thus in 1921, Merwan himself became a Perfect Master and his spiritual mission began when he drew together his first close disciples, training them in arduous spiritual tasks and self-disciplines. It was these early disciples who first gave him the name, "Meher Baba," which means "Compassionate Father."

During the following two years, Meher Baba wrote an account of the Divine Experience. This book has not been read by anyone, and it will be published only after his world manifestation. Upon completing the manuscript, he laid down his pen and has not written a line since, except his signature when necessary.

The early period of Meher Baba's life as a Spiritual Master can be divided into three parts, according to the places where he lived: the hut in Poona, where he drew

around him his first close disciples; the ashram at Bombay, where he devoted most of his time to the training of his close disciples for an arduous spiritual life; and Ahmednagar, where a new colony was established called "Meherabad," that has been his headquarters ever since. Here too, he trained a number of his Western disciples throughout the years. Among the early activities at Meherabad were: a free boarding school for students; the Meher "Prem" Ashram for boys where spiritual training was stressed; a free shelter for the migrant poor; also the Meher Charitable Hospital and Dispensary. Meher Baba also took great interest in the upliftment of the depressed classes, and in all the institutions no distinction was made between Brahmin and untouchable, who mingled in common fellowship under the inspiration of the Master. To his disciples in the colony who were of various religious faiths, Baba gave a training of moral discipline, love of God, spiritual understanding and selfless service.

On July 10, 1925, Meher Baba began to observe silence, which he has continued to this day. The Master's many spiritual discourses and messages have been dictated through the medium of his alphabet board. He is well-versed in six languages, including English. Since October, 1954, however, the Master has discontinued the use of his alphabet board also, reducing all communications to hand gestures unique to himself. The major part of his recent book, "GOD SPEAKS," which outlines the whole scheme of creation and its purpose, was laboriously dictated in this manner.

Meher Baba frequently retires into seclusion and observes long fasts. These periods of seclusion are periods of spiritual working on the inner planes for the good of all humanity. Alternating with the periods of seclusion, Meher Baba leads a life of dynamic activity.

In India, as many as 100,000 people in one day have come from all over to seek his spiritual blessings; some travelling great distances on foot or by bullock-cart; while in contrast, others fly by air even from other countries to spend a single day in his presence. At such occasions he distributes food and cloth to the thousands of poor.

Meher Baba has also taken special interest in contacting and personally serving those who are known in India as "Masts," or God-intoxicated persons, immersed in bliss and unconscious of the body. For this work he has journeyed many thousands of miles throughout Indian and Ceylon.

Meher Baba's aim is wholeheartedly a spiritual one, to awaken the Divinity in every man and guide him to his goal—which is Truth. Like the great illumined souls of the past, he draws mankind primarily by example, the example of a life lived wholly for the sake of others. "He awakens humanity to the fundamental and inviolable unity of all life," writes C. D. Deshmukh, Ph.D., "Thus, brotherhood does not become a laborious process of harmonizing diverse ideologies, but emerges as a spontaneous expression of the unclouded understanding of life as it is. Meher Baba imparts this understanding, not through words, but through the quality of divinity which knows no exclusiveness of self, desire, or fear.

Meher Baba first toured the West in 1931, visiting principally England and America, and it was at this time he first contacted many of his Western disciples. He made several later trips to the United States and at least three round-the-world tours. His disciples and followers are of all faiths and come from all walks of life, for his appeal is universal.

Meher Baba has said, *"I have come not to establish a new religion. The religion that I give teaches the Knowledge of the One behind the many. The book that I shall make people read is the Book of the Heart, that holds the key to the mystery of life."*



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