

**An Introductory Sketch
on
THE LIFE AND WORK OF
AVATAR MEHER BABA
and
HIS EXPOSITIONS :**

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SOME MESSAGES AND SAYINGS

PRAYERS

“THE TRUE TEACHER”—BY FRANCIS BRABAZON

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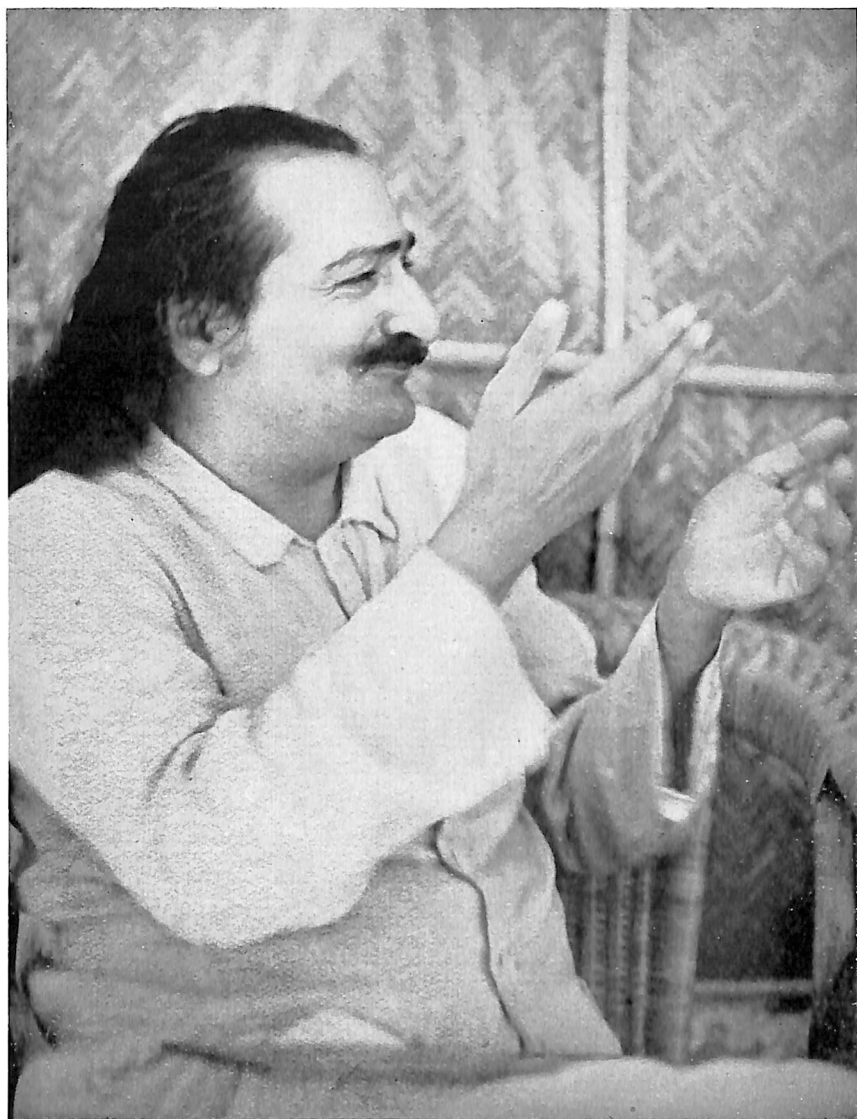
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SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR THIS BROCHURE

"God is for those who are not for themselves."

POONA,
November 1st, 1962.

—MEHER BABA.

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AN INTRODUCTORY SKETCH ON THE LIFE AND WORK OF AVATAR MEHER BABA

(By MR. A. C. S. CHARI)

BORN on the 25th February, 1894, as the second of the eight children of Persian parents (Parsees of the Zoroastrian faith) who had then settled in Poona (India), Merwan (Meherwan) Sheriar Irani completed his preparatory school grades at St. Vincent's High School, Poona, with high credit, and at the age of 17, entered the Deccan College, Poona. His father, Sheriar Mundegar Irani was a real seeker of God and a great Sufi. Merwan seemed in all respects a normal, healthy, happy boy, rather mischievous, loving the beautiful and despising the mean and petty, and noted for his gentleness and unselfishness. He did not appear to have been seeking anything outside the boundaries of his mundane activities. He was methodical and punctual, and a rapid learner. He loved the poetry and literature of the West as well as the East, excelled in studies and sports (cricket and hockey), was a leader in his class, well-liked by his classmates and teachers. He was brisk and alert to an unusual degree, a quick walker and a fast runner. His main interest was in literature and he read eagerly Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Shelley as well as many other English, Indian and Persian poets. He was particularly fond of the great Persian poet Hafiz. Under the inspiration of that poet, he wrote many poems in the Indian dialects, in Persian and also in English, which were accepted and published in the newspapers and journals of that time. He loved music and had a beautiful singing voice. He also took interest in mystery stories and at the age of 15, wrote a story which was accepted and printed. In the school and college, he was regarded as a natural leader, called upon to arbitrate whenever quarrels arose; the boys came to him for advice on all subjects. At Deccan college, he formed a club called the "Cosmopolitan club", membership to which was open to anybody regardless of caste or community and whose rules prohibited coarse

language, gambling, quarrelling, etc. His college career, however, was broken in the second year of college study.

In 1913, as a lad of 18, Merwan (as he was then called) was riding his bicycle along the hot dusty road of Poona on his way home from Deccan College where he was a student. As he approached a large shady neem tree, a very old woman then of about 110 years (the Perfect Master by name Hazrat Baba Jan) rose from the midst of a group which sat beneath the tree, and came forward to meet Merwan. Merwan dismounted his cycle and the two looked into each other's eyes. Then the aged woman Hazrat Baba Jan kissed him on the forehead, between the eyes, and returned to the waiting group. No word was spoken. Merwan got onto his cycle and continued on his way home. Later, Merwan related that at the moment of his contact with the aged woman,—a simple and apparently insignificant incident—a tremendous current as of high-powered electricity shot through his body, leaving in its wake a feeling of unearthly indescribable joy, ecstasy, combined with intense pain. Some time after he reached home, he lost all awareness of the physical body and found himself lifted to a state of supreme consciousness, called "God-Consciousness". Once in January, 1914, Hazrat Baba Jan told everyone: "This child of mine (referring to Merwan) will create a great sensation in the world and do immense good to humanity." On another occasion, She openly declared: "Merwan would startle the world with His God-power and love".

His state, however, caused considerable worry and uneasiness to his mother Mrs. Shirinbanoo who could not understand what happened to her son and who tried all sorts of treatments. After some time, Merwan (Mr. M. S. Irani) led a sort of itinerant life and came into contact with many saints and in particular, other spiritual Masters in India of that time, *viz.*, Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi, Sadguru Upasani Maharaj of Sakori, Narayan Maharaj of Khedgaon and Hazrat Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur.

In particular, Sri Upasani Maharaj who was contacted by Merwan, in 1915, brought him back to normal consciousness, by a slow process. At the first meeting, Sri Upasani Maharaj flung a small stone at the forehead of Merwan—a deliberate and significant way of Upasani Maharaj, a Perfect

Master—which hit him on the forehead at the exact place between the eyes where Hazrat Baba Jan had kissed him. Merwan began to regain a little gross (body) consciousness from that moment. During the period from 1915 to 1921, Merwan was in close contact with Sri Upasani Maharaj of Sakori, though it would not be accurate to style him as a regular disciple of Sri Upasani Maharaj. While Merwan had been brought down gradually to normal consciousness, his sublime experience of what was described as “God-Consciousness” was not interrupted or diminished. At the end of 1921 or the beginning of 1922, Merwan thus became a Perfect Master at the age of 28 and he was thenceforth called “*Meher Baba*” (which means “Father of Compassion”). At that time, Sri Upasani Maharaj openly declared that Meher Baba (whom he called Merwan) is the leading Sadguru of the Age, that he will move the world and that all humanity will be benefited by his work. Sri Upasani Maharaj directed his own close disciples to thereafter follow and obey Merwan. In the words of Sri Upasani Maharaj, he would say to his disciples: “Follow Merwan, do as he says; a time will come when all the world will follow his lead”. To quote Meher Baba:

“Sai Baba made me what I am, Baba Jan made me feel what I am, and Upasani Maharaj made me know what I am.”

“Hazrat Baba Jan gave Me divine bliss; Sai Baba gave Me divine power; Upasani Maharaj gave Me divine Knowledge.”

Meher Baba thus began his spiritual mission in 1922. He first drew a few close disciples around him (of them, most were devotees of Sri Upasani Maharaj who were transferred to Meher Baba under Sri Upasani Maharaj's orders) belonging to different religions. They were trained for a very arduous spiritual life of selfless service. In 1924, Meher Baba made his headquarters near Arangaon, a village six miles from Ahmednagar Railway Station, since called “Meherabad”. Here, during the following years, many of his Eastern and Western disciples have participated in various spiritual and humanitarian activities under the direct guidance of the Master. Those included the Hazrat Baba Jan's School, where the students received free schooling, the Prem Ashram, a free

boarding school for students of all castes and communities, particularly for the so-called "untouchables", a branch of which was for the spiritual awakening of select candidates, a Dharmsala or free shelter for the migrant poor, an Ashram for the God-intoxicated people called "Mast-s" (pronounced to rhyme with "trusts") and also a charitable hospital and dispensary. These were, however, subsequently dissolved.

To superficial onlookers, it may look as though his habit was always to disband and dissolve them after a short time. But, the ways of Perfect Masters have unquestionably deeper meaning and purpose. To quote Meher Baba:—

"When one has to erect a large building, a temporary scaffolding is erected. When the building is completed, the scaffolding is removed. The schools, hospitals, etc., were but scaffoldings for My real work. Now that that is finished, the scaffolding has to go."

Meher Baba always discouraged narrow attachment to institutions and ashrams, and broke them up when he found people getting themselves involved in separatist tendencies. At the same time, he wants individuals and groups to co-operate and co-ordinate their efforts in the spread of His name and messages.

Between 1921 and 1926, Meher Baba wrote an account of his spiritual experiences; this book, however, has not been published yet, and is kept in safe custody. Baba says that it contains hitherto unknown spiritual secrets. The World hopes that it will someday be released, and this depends upon the will and pleasure of Meher Baba.

Since 1927, Meher Baba ceased writing, except very rarely putting his signature.* Since 10th July, 1925, Baba has observed complete SILENCE of the tongue, not uttering a word. This 'Silence' continues till this date. Till 7th October, 1954, Meher Baba was communicating by means of an English alphabet board on which he spelt out words by pointing at the letters with his fingers. After 7th October, 1954, even the alphabet board was abandoned, and since then, he communicates only by gestures.

* He signs 'M. S. Irani'.

All the works published under his name containing his discourses, messages or "sayings" were dictated by him either through the aforesaid alphabet board or by gestures and recorded by his close disciples. At the end of this brochure is given a list of books, now available, some published under Meher Baba's name and some by authors who have come into contact with him. The list also contains the Journals (now current) giving information of Meher Baba's work and propagating his messages and teachings. Some of the books were printed in America, England and Australia, and the rest in India.

A few of Meher Baba's EXPOSITIONS are extracted *infra* in this brochure, only to introduce the reader to a deeper study of the other publications and Journals by and about Him.

Meher Baba attends to and replies to letters and telegrams from his lovers all over the world, in the said manner. Those staying near Meher Baba (called his "Mandali") act as interpreters whenever a new visitor finds difficulty in following Meher Baba's gestures, or whenever Meher Baba gives "darshan" to his devotees or to the public or audience to anyone. When asked "Is it not difficult for you to express yourself clearly (because of your silence) in your high mission and noble undertaking?", Meher Baba's reply was: "No; because, both internal and external mediums are at my disposal." "God has been everlastingly working in silence, unobserved, unheard, except by those who experience His Infinite SILENCE."

Why Meher Baba has been observing and continues to observe 'silence' and what he promises to do may be gleaned from a deep understanding of some of his 'sayings' and 'messages'.

MEHER BABA, whose 68th Birthday (25th February, 1962) was observed by his devotees all over the world, leads a very simple life of strict celibacy, not married, eats little and simple food, vegetarian in his diet, and never sleeps.

"In superconsciousness, the soul experiences itself as all-mighty, its bliss is unbounded and its continuous awareness of itself as the Infinite Truth admits no slightest interruption by

the self-forgetfulness of the ordinary sleep-state, dream-state, or wake-state.”—(*Listen, Humanity* : page 126).

He often retires in strict seclusion and observes long and strenuous fasts. He has no *mutt*, or ashram or organisation or institution. He does not allow anyone to touch his feet or offer *pranam* or prostration. He does not wear any of the marks or robes of a saint, he does not grow any beard, but dresses plainly and lives as an ordinary man. He moves and mixes freely with one and all—of course, when he allows occasions for us to meet him and remain with him—keeps everyone at ease, plays with you, cracks jokes, enjoys humour and fun, listens to humorous stories and very much enjoys jokes made at his expense (of course, depends on his mood at the time).

Some are rather outraged because he does not fit their pre-conceived pattern of a Master. They forget that this Master Meher Baba does not follow any pattern and that he breaks all patterns. There is in him no awe-inspiring solemnity or serenity that is attributed usually to the occult hierarchy, except, however, on certain occasions when his disciples have the chance of observing from a distance Meher Baba being engrossed in internal or esoteric work on other planes. As for all Perfect Masters, it is simple for Meher Baba to be in one place physically and be present at another place or places perhaps thousands of miles away, at the same time. At present, he lives in Pimpalgaon, (also called “Meher-azad”) a place nine miles from Ahmednagar (Maharashtra State, India).

He is particularly interested in contacting advanced souls and souls intoxicated with Divine Love called “Masts” who are on different planes of consciousness. Meher Baba has toured a great deal incognito, to several remote places putting himself to considerable hardship and expense and contacted thousands of these “Masts” in India and other foreign countries. He gives the “Masts” unique effective guidance and spiritual push and he facilitates their onward march on the Path, so that they become more and more fit as vehicles for the expression of the Divine Will. They become more efficient agents for the promotion of God’s plan on earth.

Meher Baba is also particularly interested in contacting

the poor, the blind and the lepers, bathing them, washing their feet, placing his head on their feet, doing service to them and presenting them with gifts of grain, cloth, fruits and cash. Samples of His messages to (1) the lepers, and (2) the blind, are extracted elsewhere in this brochure.

Baba has been noted for his silent work done in seclusion, always unannounced and unostentatious and very often incognito. His work and plans are not revealed even to his close "Mandali" very often, though everyone of his disciples thirsts to know more about the several aspects of his Avataric work. As examples, devotees in Bengal and Bihar would be interested to know that Meher Baba was physically present incognito and worked for many days and rendered service and help in Calcutta and other parts of Bengal during the Great Famine of 1943. Recently, in October, 1950, shortly after the Bihar floods, he was present incognito in some of the worst-affected villages and gave relief to the victims of the flood. On that occasion (October, 1950), Baba passed through Calcutta incognito, stayed for four or five days, spent some hours in a room in Dakshineswar Temple. (*Vide "Awakener", Vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 25-29*).

The little of Baba's work that is known to and revealed to his close "Mandali" and disciples may not perhaps be understood and adequately appreciated by us.

Meher Baba has been active not only in India but in foreign countries. His first trip to England was in 1931, second in 1932, and thereafter a few more between 1932 and 1958. In all, he has made six journeys to America including Europe, and about ten journeys to other foreign countries. He is now a well-known International Spiritual Personality and looked upon by innumerable persons in India, Pakistan, England, America, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, Greece, Jerusalem, South Africa, Egypt, China, Japan, Ceylon, Malaya, France, Persia and other countries, as the "AVATAR of the Age".

Regarding his spiritual mission, Meher Baba has declared that He is the Highest of the High, the Ancient One, the Avatar of the Age. He often emphasises: "*I have come not to teach, but to awaken*"—in other words, to give a general

spiritual push to the whole of humanity and to lead those who come to Him towards the Light of the Truth. His spiritual help is not only individual, but collective, and it affects every phase of the daily life of man. He never interferes with one's religious beliefs and he permits all to follow unhindered their own creeds, customs and rituals. He gives no such thing as 'initiation', etc. He prescribes no pooja, mantra, japa, tapas, yoga or ritual. The only "sadhana" he prescribes is: "LOVE", which should be one's attitude in thought, word and deed every moment, while living the normal life of the world and doing one's work or duty as a worldly or normal human being. "I will teach (train) you how to move in the world yet be at all times in inward communion with ME as the INFINITE BEING". This, Meher Baba says, can only be successfully done and lived by the grace of a Perfect Master. His disciples today belong to all nationalities, stations in life, born in different circumstances and strata of society and professing different religions and creeds. There are thousands, both in the East and in the West, who implicitly obey and follow Him, so implicitly and lovingly that they are prepared cheerfully and whole-heartedly to do anything at His orders, nay, even a suggestion or hint. Among them are his own family members, including his three younger brothers now alive (Jal, Behram and Adi*) and his sister (Mani). Incidentally, his elder brother Jamshedji died in 1926 and his father Sheriar Mundegar Irani passed away in April, 1932. His mother Mrs. Shirinbanoo (Shirin-Mai) dropped her body in February, 1943. Jamshedji loved Meher Baba so intensely and died with loud utterances of Baba's name. Sheriarji, the father, actually worshipped Meher Baba's photo and Baba as God and had no doubts of the Avatarhood of his son.

Hazrat Baba Jan, till the date of her dropping her body on 21st September, 1931—(the time of Meher Baba's first visit to the West)—at her very ripe old age of 127 years, had known from the time of her own inner illumination that it was her lot to awaken Merwan to his great mission of ETERNAL AVATAR and she regarded Meher Baba as such, and spoke to others of Meher Baba's Avatarhood and greatness. In Hazrat Baba Jan's words: "I have made you so perfect, that very

* Called 'Adi S. Irani' (or, Adi Junior)—to distinguish him from 'Adi K Irani (or Adi Senior) who is Meher Baba's Secretary.

soon you will have half the world at your feet." Sri Upasani Maharaj also likewise regarded Merwan undoubtedly as the Avatar of the Age. Till the time of Maharaj dropping his body on 24th December, 1941, there were occasions when he paid visits to Meher Baba's house, and the houses of other disciples and performed "harti" to Meher Baba's photos or pictures. On one occasion, Shri Upasani Maharaj folded his hands to Meher Baba and said "Merwan, you are the Avatar, and I salute you". On 17th October, 1941, there was a very important confidential meeting between Sri Upasani Maharaj and Meher Baba, the details of which are recorded in "Meher Baba Journal" then current.

Among those who are prepared to implicitly follow and obey Meher Baba are quite a number who have not even met Him in His physical form. Astonishingly enough, among those who are, so to say, prepared to lay down even their lives at a hint or suggestion from Meher Baba, are quite a large number of devotees and disciples who do not appear to have been blessed with any substantial material or worldly benefit (such as, betterment of economic or family conditions, improvement of health, curing of ailments, etc.) as a result of their contact with Meher Baba. One could also explain such love and obedience on their part as due to "Divine Grace" or the result of "past connections" or merit earned either in the past or in the present.

On the contrary, almost all those who have come into close contact with Meher Baba have been and are subjected to severe experiences narrated by some graphically as "a sweet-smiling ego-surgeon's seemingly heartless operations", by some as "a continuous roasting in the fire or in the pan", etc. But yet, during all these experiences which are endured by the disciples quite cheerfully and courageously and in a sportsmanlike manner, the disciples who have had the benefit of Baba's grace or 'nazar' have come out of the ordeal, richer than purified gold in every way. In the words of Jean Adriel in her inspiring book* "AVATAR". published in 1947: "Just as he (Meher Baba) quickens the positive side of our natures, inspiring us to deeper love, greater faith in God, so does he (Meher Baba) stir

* Copyright 1947: Author, Jean Adriel. (United States of America).

in equal measure the negative side with its 'Shadow' manifestation Under the tremendous impact of Baba's catalytic effect upon consciousness, the seeds in one's mind—be they seeds of so-called good or so-called evil—inevitably work their way into expression. Since Meher Baba knows that the conflict of the opposites must ultimately be overcome, he deliberately brings the warring elements out into the open, so that the disciple may be compelled to find the way of transcendence. These 'good' and 'bad' tendencies, called *Samskaras*, are the binding effects of past thoughts, emotions and deeds. These karmic fetters, which keep us in spiritual bondage, Meher Baba undertakes to remove, if we submit to his guidance and are accepted by him as disciples. From the moment of such surrender, the consciousness of the disciple is subject to whatever intensification of experience he needs, in Baba's judgment, for his cleansing and release."

"The moment one becomes the recipient of Meher Baba's special attention, karmic forces converge with singular intensity upon the disciple. Whatever good or bad effects the individual soul has accumulated during its journey through time are brought to one's conscious attention in an unmistakable and perhaps painful way. Particularly, one is compelled by force of circumstance to rise above all negative reactions, by developing those spiritual qualities of courage and resilience, which subsequently are converted into power to be used in the service of the Master".

His intimate disciples who have been benefited by following and obeying Meher Baba describe him as "ego-crushing surgeon" or "ego-specialist". The word "Ego" is not used here with the meaning given to it ('Real Ego') in Theosophical literature. "Egoism", in the sense Baba wants us here to understand that expression, is not merely selfishness or being self-opinionated. To be conscious of our separate existence in any way, is false egoism. Such a slight thing as recalling "I am a man; I am sick; I have pain; I did not sleep," etc. is false egoism. So also, is any feeling of self-concern or complacency or self-pity. "Hydra-headed though this false ego is", Baba says, "its main branches are four, namely, craving which arises from gratification of passion or desires, fear, anger and greed". Baba would never allow anyone to brood, to keep morose, wear a sullen and sulky face, or to worry, whatever may be the calamity that

creates the occasion for any of these. What pleases Meher Baba most is a disciple enduring any kind of hardship or suffering with full courage and cheerfulness and not directly or indirectly bringing it to Meher Baba's notice or asking for his intervention and blessing for giving relief or alleviation. Time and again, he has forbidden people coming to him, for benefits which are regarded as boons by a worldly man, such as, curing of sickness, betterment of economic conditions, relief from troubles of different kinds, blessings for marriages and children, etc. In spite of these, the love and faith of his innumerable disciples and followers throughout the world is such that they are prepared to undergo any ordeal, any trial, any agony, and merit the love-blessings of Meher Baba. Questions were put to him: "What is your secret?" The answer of Meher Baba was: "Elimination of the ego (false ego)". "What is your line of work?" Meher Baba's answer was: "LOVE AND SERVICE". He would constantly tell his disciples and followers: "DON'T WORRY. Even though the world collapses around you, do not worry. Worry accumulates and grows in strength, becoming a habit long after the original cause has ceased to be". "Don't worry about anything. Keep thinking of Me constantly. I am the only One that exists, the only One that matters."

A word about his workers both in the East and in the West. Meher Baba trains them for universal work, not for their personal enjoyment. His first object is to free them from the bondage of the ego (false ego) (the expression 'ego' used here in the sense which Meher Baba wants us to distinguish 'false ego' from 'real ego') which they have acquired in their present and former lives, so that they may be unobstructed channels for Meher Baba's work. He does not accept any one who does not come forward voluntarily for doing his work. He does not accept any one as a worker who expects, either secretly or indirectly, any benefit in return—even spiritual benefit. Meher Baba has referred to the workers as wires and fuses in an electric installation. The electric energy generated at a power-station will flow as light and power into any home, shop, or factory, that is properly wired to receive it. A faulty contact, however remote and slight it be, will cause even an important or distant fuse to be blown off and will cause the supply of light and power to fail, plunging even a large town

and all its homes into darkness, and bringing its factories to a standstill—sometimes, confusion. Meher Baba's love flowing through the workers or other disciples to the fellow-beings completes "*the Divine Circuit*". As a worker, he is engaged in a deep longing to help others to know who and what Meher Baba really is and what his brother or fellow-being really is—a child of God, and an heir to His Kingdom—and the worker or the disciple thus maintains his contact with Meher Baba uninterrupted. This he does by really loving his neighbour divinely and unselfishly and serving him. In this manner, the workers are souls filled with love of Baba, and the Light, Power and Joy of the Lord. When the workers really 'love Baba', they are in reality and in fact channels for Baba's Avataric work to the humanity, present and also future. The significance of this is very far-reaching and shows it is no easy matter to be a worker of Meher Baba! Meher Baba undoubtedly loves us. But do we love Meher Baba, as we all ought to? This is a self-searching question which each has to put to himself or herself. For example, we may be resentful, or of an irritable temper, or envious, or have pride (a 'superiority complex'), or be a little selfish, or have a possessive instinct, or lack 'team-spirit' or we may have slipped into the habit of silently or secretly criticising or condemning our neighbour. Any one of these means that we do *not* love Baba. In other words, it means that we are no longer a channel through which Meher Baba's compassionate love can flow to help and heal our neighbour. Thus, 'to love Meher Baba' is no easy matter! It requires a hero to do so, and a hero filled with Meher Baba's *grace*.

The life of a Meher-Baba-disciple or worker is not soft or smooth, nor is it intended to be. Meher Baba would say: "I have chosen you all and can work with both your good and bad points." Meher Baba wants as his workers men and women strong and stable as mountains, who will go through the fire without flinching or faltering, and cheerfully working amidst all oppositions and difficulties of various kinds, without even caring for a word of thanks or even a gesture of appreciation from anyone, least of all from Meher Baba himself. Meher Baba would often stress: "Do not get disheartened or alarmed when adversity, calamity, or misfortunes pour upon you. Thank God, for, He has thereby given you the oppor-

tunity of acquiring forbearance and fortitude. One who has acquired the power of bearing with (enduring) adversity can easily enter upon the Spiritual Path." In passing, it may be stated with some amount of happy pride and gratification that by Meher Baba's grace, there are among Meher Baba's disciples and workers both in the East and in the West living examples of selfless workers and it is difficult to find their equals anywhere else. *They just leave everything to him, and just obey him.*

Meher Baba occasionally—the occasions depending purely on his pleasure and will—meets his lovers, gives them "darshan" or "sahavas" (company) and sometimes also gives "darshan" to the public. Thousands and tens of thousands are known to have rushed eagerly to have availed of such opportunities of Meher Baba's public "darshan". On such occasions, as a symbolic token of his love-blessings, Meher Baba distributes also *prasad*. During such meetings, Meher Baba indulges in humorous talks, here and there conveying deep spiritual truths with deep meaning. "Each person who receives the *prasad* from Meher Baba or who has Baba's "darshan" is benefited according to his or her own receptivity". "Perfect Masters can impart divine knowledge, bestow divine love and shower the grace of God-union, by a mere glance, touch or single divine thought."

AVATAR MEHER BABA is meeting a few thousands of His close lovers from all parts of the world at unique gatherings held in 'Guru Prasad' bungalow premises, Poona (India), on four days, viz., 1st to 4th November, 1962; and this brochure is released in commemoration thereof. Copies of His special messages on the said occasions can be had.

Of money or property, Meher Baba has none. In fact, he never touches money at all, except, however, when he passes through his hands gifts of cash to the poor or the lepers on certain occasions, and such money is found by some of his devotees. Even the devotees have to obtain Meher Baba's sanction for making their money so available. It is not to be taken for granted—on the contrary, it is just otherwise—that any offering by a devotee especially of money will be accepted by Meher Baba. Even the members of Meher Baba's "Mandali" do not and will not accept any gift in kind or in cash from

any devotee or lover of Meher Baba unless he permits the same and such permission is never given unless Meher Baba is fully convinced that the gift is motivated by love on the part of the devotee-donor, and nothing else. Gifts from devotees are not at all encouraged; in fact, they are notified that no gift should be brought to Meher Baba. If at all Meher Baba seems to accept any gift on certain occasions, it would be just to show his pleasure at the love which prompted the lover to bring an offering or gift. However, such gifts are not retained by Meher Baba but are immediately distributed and given away to others as Meher Baba's *prasad*.

Meher Baba's physical body met with two serious accidents. Once, on 24th May, 1952, while crossing the American continent, Meher Baba along with a few of his disciples was injured in an automobile accident on the road to Prague (Oklahoma) breaking his left arm and left leg and suffering facial injuries. He was given medical treatment in America very promptly and some time after, he recovered. The other and more serious one was on 2nd December, 1956 in a place on the road from Poona to Satara (Maharashtra State, India), when the right side of his body from the head down to the leg, particularly the hip and the pelvic region sustained serious fractures and injuries. In this second accident, one of his close "Mandali" died on the spot and three others received gruesome fractures and injuries. All have been since cured after prolonged medical treatment and of course with what the medical persons also described as "Master Baba's grace". These two "personal disasters" were so often predicted long before the respective events, and Baba said that they are parts of His Avataric Mission and Life, that a part of his blood should be shed in America and another part of his blood in India. In Baba's words, "the sufferings are self-imposed" by him and such "self-imposed suffering is begotten of My (Meher Baba's) compassion and love for mankind." Like all Perfect Masters, Meher Baba could have in a moment cured himself or rid himself from reaction or perhaps prevented or averted such disasters. Perfect Masters do not abrogate the Law which they themselves established but they humbly submit themselves to it and bear the limitations and sufferings of ordinary human life. They also make use of the law of action and reaction by inviting the suffering upon themselves that would otherwise have been fallen upon humanity

as its just due. Meher Baba said on the occasions of those two disasters: "The last thing I would do is to avert or avoid it". "I expect from you a deep understanding of My self-imposed suffering".

He maintained the trait of very quick walking (which he had even as a boy) till he met with the second 'personal disaster' on 2nd December, 1956. It would be a strain for others to keep pace with him; in fact, the majority of those accompanying him would have to run to keep pace with Meher Baba's ordinary quick walking. Further, in spite of these 'personal disasters' he continues to be very alert, active and brisk and maintains and radiates an unusually dynamic and vibrant smile and cheerfulness.

Almost everyone who has come into contact with Meher Baba has been found to be attracted to him and stuck to his "*Daaman*" (which means, that he has full unswerving hundred per cent faith in and love for Meher Baba and that he is trying to obey and follow Meher Baba fully to the end, through thick and thin). Everyone has gained experiences which are peculiar, unique and distinctive to each respectively, perhaps according to the individual level and requirements and receptivity. The working of Meher Baba on his devotees and on the masses in general may be said to be rather "internal" (this word is used for want of a better expression). Meher Baba often is deeply immersed in inner or esoteric work and it is believed that no event of the world happens except by His will. On occasions of such inner work on other planes than are visible to the ordinary observer, Meher Baba forbids anyone to come near him.

Of miracles, about which the ordinary man is more curious and with which he is impressed, although Meher Baba would say: "I perform no miracles and will perform none", there definitely have been and are innumerable miracles. Lepers have been cured, deaths averted, poor families which were once destitute and living on charity have become blessed with affluent circumstances, criminals have reformed admirably, persons separated from each other with bitter feelings have become friendly and begun to sincerely love each other, and so on.

To quote Meher Baba:—

“Miracles, whether performed by Perfect Masters or by so-called ‘yogis’, are mere illusions in comparison with the Everlasting Truth, and are not more real than the shadows of this world. Miracles performed by so-called ‘yogis’ are essentially selfish, as they are invariably based on personal (egoistic) motives; whereas the miracles of Sadgurus and Perfect Masters are absolutely selfless, as they are based on the principle of giving a spiritual push to humanity....

God has to be known through LOVE and not through the intellectual search after miracles. That is the reason why, for those who are closest and dearest to Me, I do not perform miracles. I would rather have no following than use miracles for convincing others of My Divinity. It is true that while loving Me people often do have spiritual experiences which were hitherto unknown to them; and these experiences help them in the further opening of their hearts.”

For a fuller exposition by Meher Baba on MIRACLES, please study the Exposition *infra* ‘SUPERVENING ORDERS IN SPIRITUAL PANORAMA’.

It may also be said that Meher Baba is a complete enigma to the intellectual or rational mind. But, by such a criterion, Meher Baba cannot be judged, because he does not function on the intellectual plane. Strange and inexplicable to the rational mind would seem His ways. On the other hand, when one looks at His capacity for organisation, for attention to details, for large-scale direction and movement, for strict punctuality, promptness and quickness of action, for discipline combined with affection and compassion, for attention to the small details of the creature comforts of his disciples whom he invites for meeting him, at public gatherings, on travels, etc.—all these qualities attributed unquestionably to a balanced and rational mind—Meher Baba has no equal.

A very common criticism is that Meher Baba very often and suddenly changes his plans and programmes, so much so it gives an impression that ‘he is not sure of himself’. It is difficult to answer this at the human level by arguments and

logic. The utterance of Baba in answer to this (at Nasik—(India)—in 1937) is worthy of note:

"I never make plans, never change plans. It is all one endless plan of making people know that there is no plan."

—(MEHER BABA).

Once, a raw theosophist in the West, after reading his discourses and messages, put Meher Baba the question: "Is God a person or a power?" Baba's answer was: "God is both personal and impersonal. He is in art, in literature, in science, and in fact, in everything".

The things which Meher Baba will not tolerate in any circumstances and by any one howsoever high-placed he may be, are: (i) observance of caste, especially by the orthodox so-called highcaste people towards the so-called "depressed" or "untouchables", (ii) hypocrisy, posing, and (iii) backbiting.

According to Meher Baba: "The real untouchables are those who cannot enter the temple of their own hearts and see the Lord therein."

"Do not get angry, but be pleased with him who backbites you, for, he thereby renders service to you by diminishing the load of your *Sanskaras*—and also pity him, for thereby he makes his load of *Sanskaras* more burdensome...."

"Don't criticise. The habit of criticising our fellow-beings is a bad one. At the back of it often lies self-righteousness, conceit and a false sense of superiority; sometimes, it indicates envy or a desire for retaliation."

Another strange feature not found in the accepted orthodox Sadgurus is Meher Baba's interest in motion pictures and also in games such as, cricket, etc. Meher Baba has been known to use the motion pictures and cricket matches as potent means of quickening mass consciousness, availing of the excited and tense situations during the course of a play in a theatre or a match in a field, by being present incognito.

The question is asked: "What is he and what is his

business?" One answer, though not all-comprehensive, would be: "He is God-Man—the Ancient One, the Infinite Source of Wisdom and Justice, and the personification of Divine Love. Saints are His assets and sinners (so-called) are His liabilities. His business as Avatar is to go on turning His liabilities into assets". "The saints of the present were the sinners of the past."

Another question is asked: "What is the benefit which His devotees have received, or will receive?" The answer is by no means easy. Only those who have met Him and who have had the good fortune of realising the exquisite joy imparted by His presence, His dynamic and vibrant love, and of enjoying the charm of His touch or embrace or smile or gesture or prasad or token of His abundant Love, can testify what the experience really means to them—though one would wonder whether they can at all adequately express the experience in words. "He has the gift to appear to each disciple as if he loved him/her very specially and particularly". Further, in the words of Meher Baba, this is what is promised:

DIRECT JOURNEY TO GOD*

"The masses who try to attain the Truth by following rites and rituals are, as it were, in the goods train which is detained indefinitely at various stations. Those who sincerely and devotedly meditate on God or dedicate their lives to the service of humanity are, as it were, in the ordinary train which stops at every station according to the time-table. But those who seek the company of the Truth-realized Master and carry out his orders in full surrenderance and faith are, as it were, in a special train which will take them to the goal in the shortest possible time, without halts at intermediate stations."

The Divine Love which radiates from Meher Baba and permeates through His words, gestures, actions and activities, is utterly selfless and wholly universal. Meher Baba unfailingly awakens in those who come into contact with Him — [for that matter, the contact need not be actually physically and directly

* Vide "LIFE AT ITS BEST" p. 20 (Copyright 1957: Sufism Re-oriented, San Francisco, Calif, U.S.A.)

with the Master; the contact may be a thought contact, or by just getting a photograph of Baba or a tract or a booklet about Him, or attending a meeting of his devotees or associating with one of His devotees]—a new deep and beautiful understanding of life and its glorious purpose, which is not only to experience God but to become consciously united with God. *“God alone is real and the goal of life is to be united with Him through Love.”*

“When one remains completely resigned to the Divine will of God, all service, sacrifice, solitude, seeking and surrenderance merely symbolize one’s Love for God.”—(Meher Baba).

Meher Baba has been declaring that He would soon break His Silence and utter the One Word of Words which would shake the world. Each understands this declaration in his or her own way, and also indulges in one’s own guesses. The implications of this oft-repeated (and oft-postponed) declaration or promise are awaited by humanity. In the meanwhile, the following which are a few of Meher Baba’s recent “utterances” or “declarations” would appear to be very significant and meaningful and worthy of deep contemplation:—

“Unity in the midst of diversity can be made to be felt only by touching the very core of the heart. That is the work for which I have come.... I have come to sow the seed of love in your hearts so that, in spite of all superficial diversity which your life in illusion must experience and endure, the feeling of oneness, through love, is brought about amongst all the nations, creeds, sects and castes of the world.”

“When I break my silence, it will not be to fill your ears with spiritual lectures. I shall speak only One Word and this Word will penetrate the hearts of all men and make even the so-called sinner feel that he is meant to be a saint, while the saint will know that God is in the sinner as much as He is in himself. When I speak that Word, I shall lay the foundation for that which is to take place during the next 700 years.”

“I perform no miracles and will perform none, until I manifest on breaking My outward silence. Then I will perform the One and Only Miracle, whose greatness and glory

you cannot even imagine, and which will benefit not only those around Me, but the whole world—each and every being in consciousness. . . . The moment I break My silence and utter that Original Word, the first and last miracle of 'Baba' in this life will be 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."

"I am the Ancient One, the One residing in every heart. Therefore, love others, make others happy, serve others even at discomfort to yourself; THIS IS TO LOVE ME."

"I veil myself from man by his own curtain of ignorance and manifest my glory to a few. My present Avataric form is the last incarnation of this cycle of time; hence my manifestation will be the greatest. When I break my silence, the impact of my Love will be universal, and all life in creation will know, feel and receive of it The breaking of my silence will help you to help yourself in knowing your real Self."

"The time has come for the pre-ordained destruction of multiple separateness which keeps man away from experiencing the feeling of unity and brotherhood. This destruction will take place very soon, will cause three-fourths of the world to be destroyed. The remaining one-fourth will be brought together to live a life of concord and mutual understanding, thus establishing the feeling of oneness in all fellow-beings leading them towards lasting happiness."

"Humanity is not going to be saved by any material power—nuclear or otherwise. It can be saved only through *divine intervention*. God has never failed humanity in its dark and critical periods. The greatest danger to man is not from any natural catastrophe but from himself.

"It is not possible to realize human brotherhood merely by appealing to high ideals or to a sense of duty. Something more than that is essential to release human consciousness from the clutches of selfishness and greed.

"Today, the urgent need of mankind is not sects or organized religions, but LOVE. Divine love will conquer hate and fear. It will not depend upon other justifications, but will justify itself.

"I have come to awaken in man this divine love. It will restore to him the unfathomable richness of his own eternal being and will solve all of his problems."

"Be brave. Be happy. I and you all are One. And the Infinite that eternally belongs to Me will one day belong to every individual."

"No one can understand My ways. I am beyond your understanding. Only Perfect Masters can know Me and My ways."

"The Powerhouse is to be switched on and all connected with it will be enlightened; it will be not only here, but throughout the world. If the bulbs are of low candle-power, the light will be little. If the bulbs are of high candle-power, the light will be bright. But bulbs not working or fused will not be giving the Light. That is why I have been telling you *all to love Me more and more*. All this talk of books, literature is good for preparing the ground, but the time for the 'Powerhouse' to be switched on is so near that the only thing that will count *now* is *LOVE*."

LOVE — THE GREATEST THING

“THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not Love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not Love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not Love, it profiteth me nothing.

Love suffereth long, and is kind;

Love envieth not;

Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

Doth not behave itself unseemly,

Seeketh not her own,

Is not easily provoked,

Thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the
Truth;

Beareth all things,

Believeth all things,

Hopeth all things,

Endureth all things.

Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is

in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth Faith, Hope, Love, these three.

But, the greatest of these is LOVE.”

— I. COR, xiii

“TO ONE AND ALL”**

“I am equally approachable to one and all, big and small;
To saints who rise and to sinners who fall.
Through all the various paths that give the Divine Call.
I am approachable alike to saint whom I adore,
And to sinner whom I am for,
And equally through Sufism, Vedantism, Christianity,
or Zoroastrianism and Buddhism, and other Isms of any
kind,
And also directly through no medium of Isms at all”.

— MEHER BABA.

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AVATAR MEHER BABA'S SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR THE 68TH BIRTHDAY

ON THIS ANNIVERSARY OF MY BIRTHDAY, I GIVE YOU MY BLESSINGS FOR THE DEATHDAY OF YOUR FALSE SELVES, AND FOR THE BIRTHDAY IN ME OF YOUR ONE TRUE SELF."

MEHER-AZAD,
25th Feb., 1962

— MEHER BABA

"I am never born. I never die. Yet, every moment, I take birth and undergo death. The countless illusory births and deaths are necessary landmarks in the progression of man's consciousness to Truth—a prelude to the Real Death and Real Birth. The Real Death is when one dies to self; and the Real Birth is when, dying to self, one is born in God, to live forever His Eternal Life *consciously*."

I give you all My Love and Blessings for the Real Death and the Real Life."

(on 25th Feb. 1954)

— MEHER BABA

"I never make plans, never change plans. It is all one endless plan of making people know that there is no plan."

(in 1937)—at Nasik (India).

— MEHER BABA.

THE NEW HUMANITY—HOPE FOR THE FUTURE*

(By MEHER BABA)

THE DIVINE PLAN

AS in the great critical periods of human history, humanity is now going through the agonising travail of spiritual rebirth. Great forces of destruction are afoot and might seem to be dominant at the moment. But constructive and creative forces, which will redeem humanity are also being released through several channels. And though the working of these forces of light is chiefly silent, it is eventually bound to bring about those transformations, which will make the further spiritual sojourn of humanity safe and steady. It is all a part of the Divine Plan, which is to give to the hungry and weary world a fresh dispensation of the eternal and only Truth.

WAR IS A SYMPTOM OF GRAVER CAUSES

At present, the urgent problem, with which humanity is faced, is to devise ways and means of eliminating competition, conflict and rivalry in all the subtle and gross forms, which they assume in the various spheres of life. Military wars are of course the most obvious among the sources of chaos and destruction. However, wars, in themselves do not constitute the central problem for humanity, but are rather the external symptoms of something graver, which is at their root. Wars and the suffering, which they bring, cannot be completely avoided by a mere propaganda against wars; if they are to disappear from human history, it is necessary to tackle their root-cause. Even when military wars are not being waged, individuals or groups of individuals are constantly engaged in economic or some other subtle form of warfare: and the

* By kind Courtesy of "MEHER BABA JOURNAL" Vol. III, No. 1.

military wars, with all the cruelty which they involve, arise only when these underground causes are aggravated.

THE ULTIMATE CAUSE OF CHAOS IS IN EGOISM AND SELF-INTEREST

The root-cause of the chaos, which precipitates itself in wars, is, that most persons are in the grip of egoism and selfish considerations; and they express their egoism and self-interest individually as well as collectively. This is the life of illusory values in which men are caught. To face the Truth is to realize that life is one, in and through its manifold manifestations; and to have this understanding is to forget the limiting self in the realization of the unity of life.

WARS ARE BOTH UNNECESSARY AND UNREASONABLE

With the dawn of this true understanding, the problem of wars would immediately disappear. Wars have to be so clearly seen to be both unnecessary and unreasonable that the immediate problem would not be to stop wars but to wage them spiritually against the attitude of mind responsible for such a cruel and painful state of things. In the light of the Truth of the unity of all, life co-operative and harmonious becomes natural and inevitable. Hence, the chief task before those, who are deeply concerned with the rebuilding of humanity, is to do their utmost in dispelling the spiritual ignorance, which envelops the mind of humanity.

SELF-INTEREST MUST BE ELIMINATED FROM ALL THE SPHERES OF LIFE

Wars do not arise merely to secure material adjustment: they are often the product of uncritical identification with the narrow interests, which through association come to be included in that part of the world which is regarded as 'mine'. Material adjustment is only a part of the wider problem of establishing spiritual adjustment: but spiritual adjustment requires the elimination of the self not only from the material aspects of life but also from those spheres which affect the intellectual, emotional and cultural life of man.

EVEN MATERIAL ADJUSTMENT REQUIRES SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

To understand the problem of humanity as merely the problem of bread is to reduce humanity to the level of animality. But, even when man sets himself to the limited task of securing purely material adjustment, he can only succeed in this attempt if he has spiritual understanding. Economic adjustment is impossible unless people realize that there can be no planned and co-operative action in economic matters unless self-interest gives place to self-giving love; otherwise with the best of equipment and efficiency in the material spheres, they cannot avoid mutual conflict and insufficiency.

THE RIGHTFUL PLACE OF SCIENCE

The NEW HUMANITY, which has to emerge out of the travail of present struggle and suffering, will of course not afford to ignore science or its practical attainments. It is a mistake to look upon science as anti-spiritual. Science is a help or hindrance to spirituality according to the use to which it is put. Just as art, when rightly expressed, is the expression of spirituality, so science, which is properly handled, can be the expression and fulfilment of the spirit. Scientific truths, concerning the physical body and its life in the gross world, can become a medium for the soul to know itself; but, if they have to serve this purpose they must be properly fitted in the larger spiritual understanding, which includes a steady perception of true and lasting values. In the absence of such spiritual understanding, scientific truths and attainments are liable to be used for mutual destruction and for a life, which will tend to strengthen the chains which bind the spirit. All-sided progress of humanity can be assured only if science and religion proceed hand in hand.

THE NEED FOR SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

The coming civilization of the NEW HUMANITY shall be ensouled not by dry intellectual doctrines, but by living spiritual experience. Spiritual experience has a hold on the deeper truths, which are inaccessible to mere intellect; it cannot be born of unaided intellect. Spiritual truths can often

be stated and expressed through the intellect; and the intellect surely is of some help for the communication of spiritual experience. But by itself, the intellect is insufficient to enable man to have spiritual experience or to communicate it to others. If two persons have had headache they can co-operatively examine their experience of headache and make it explicit to themselves through the work of the intellect. But, if a person has never experienced headache, no amount of intellectual explanation will be enough for making him understand what headache is. A man must have the headache if he is to know what it truly is: and in order that he should understand it, he may have to be hit on the head. Intellectual explanation can never be a substitute for spiritual experience; it can at best prepare the ground for the appearance of that experience.

THE NATURE AND PLACE OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Spiritual experience involves something more than what can be grasped by mere intellect; and this is often emphasised by saying that it is a mystical experience. Mysticism is often regarded as something anti-intellectual, obscure and confused, or impractical, and unconnected with experience; but in fact true mysticism is none of these. There is nothing irrational in true mysticism, when it is, as it should be, a vision of Reality as it is; it is a form of perception, which is absolutely unclouded; it is so practical that it can be lived every moment of life and can be expressed in every-day duties; and its connection with experience is so deep that, in one sense, it is the final understanding of all experience. When spiritual experience is described as being mystical, one should not assume that it is something supernatural or entirely beyond the grasp of human consciousness; all that is meant is that it is not accessible to the limited human intellect, unless it transcends its limits and is illumined by the direct realisation of the Infinite. Christ pointed out the way to the spiritual experience when he said: 'Leave all and follow me'. This meant that man has to leave his limitations including his virtues and vices and get established in the infinite life of God. Real spiritual experience not only involves the realisation of the soul on the higher planes, but also a right attitude to worldly duties and every-day life; if it loses its connection with experience or the different

phases of life, what we have is a neurotic reaction, which is far from being a spiritual experience.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE IS NOT BORN OF ESCAPE

The spiritual experience, which shall enliven and energise the NEW HUMANITY, cannot be a reaction to the stern and uncompromising demands of the realities of life. Those, who do not have the capacity to adjust themselves to the flow of life, have a tendency to recoil from the realities of life and to seek shelter and protection in the self-created fortress of illusions. Such reaction is an attempt to perpetuate one's separate existence by protecting it from the demands made by life; and it can only give a pseudo-solution of the problems of life, by providing a false sense of safety and self-completeness. It is not even an advance towards the real and lasting solution; on the contrary, it is a side-tracking from the true Path. Man will again and again be dislodged from his illusory shelters by fresh and irresistible waves of life; and he will invite upon himself fresh forms of suffering by seeking to protect his separative existence through escape.

THE NEW HUMANITY WILL NOT BE ATTACHED TO EXTERNAL FORMS

Just as a person may seek to hold on his separative experience through escape, so he may seek to hold it on through uncritical identification with forms, ceremonies and rituals or with traditions and conventions. Forms, ceremonies and rituals, traditions and conventions are, in most cases, fetters to the release of infinite life. If they are a pliant medium for the expression of unlimited life, they would be an asset rather than a handicap for securing the fulfilment of the divine life on earth; but they mostly have a tendency to gather prestige and claims in their own right independently of the life, which they might express; and, when this happens, any attachment to them must eventually lead to a drastic curtailment and restriction of life. The NEW HUMANITY shall be free from the life of limitations and allow unhampered scope for the creative life of the spirit, and break the attachment to external forms and learn to subordinate them to the claims of the spirit. The limited life of illusions and false values will

then be replaced by the unlimited life in the Truth; and the limitations, through which the separative self lives will wither away at the touch of true understanding.

IDENTIFICATION WITH A NARROW GROUP IS A FORM OF THE LIMITED SELF

Just as a person may seek to hold on his separative existence through escape or identification with the external forms, he may seek to hold it on through identification with some narrow class, creed, sect or religion, or with the divisions based upon sex. Here the individual may seem to have lost his separative existence through identification with the larger whole. But, in fact, he is often expressing his separative existence through such identification, which enables him to take delight from his feeling of being separate from others, who belong to another class, nationality, creed, sect, religion or sex.

THE LIMITED SELF LIVES THROUGH THE OPPOSITES

Separative existence derives its being and strength by identifying itself with one opposite and by contra-distinguishing itself from the other. A man may seek to protect his separate existence through identification with one ideology rather than another or with his conception of the good as distinguished from what he regards as evil. What we get in identification with a narrow group or section or with some limited ideal, is not a real merging of the separative self but only an appearance of such merging. A real merging of the limited self in the ocean of universal life involves complete surrender of separative existence in all its forms.

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

The large mass of humanity is, however, caught up in the clutches of separative and assertive tendencies; and, for one, who is overpowered by the spectacle of these fetters of humanity there is bound to be nothing but unrelieved despair about its future. One must look deeper into the realities of the day if he is to get a correct perspective of the present distress of humanity. The real possibilities of the NEW HUMANITY of the Future are hidden to the perception of those, who only look at the surface of the World-situation; but they are there

all the same and they only need the spark of spiritual understanding to come into full play and effect. The forces of lust and hate and greed make for incalculable suffering and chaos; but, the one relieving feature about human nature is that even in the midst of the working of disruptive forces there invariably exists some form of love.

LOVE MUST BE FREE FROM ITS LIMITATIONS

Even wars require and call upon the existence and exercise of co-operative functioning; but the scope of this co-operative functioning is artificially restricted by identification with a limited group or ideal. Wars often are carried on by a form of love; but it is a love which has not been understood properly. In order that love should come to its own it must be free from all its trammels and become unlimited. Love does exist in all the phases of human life; but it is latent or is limited and poisoned by personal ambition, racial pride, narrow loyalties and rivalries, and attachment to sex, nationality, sect, caste, or religion. If there is to be resurrection of humanity, the heart of man will have to be unlocked so that a new love is born into it—a love which shall know no corruption and which shall be entirely free from individual or collective greed.

LOVE IS SELF-COMMUNICATIVE

The NEW HUMANITY will come into existence through a release of love in measureless abundance; and this release of love itself can come through the spiritual awakening brought about by the Masters. Love cannot be born of mere determination: through the exercise of will, one can at best be dutiful. One may, through struggle and effort, succeed in securing that his external action is in conformity with his conception of what is right: but such action is spiritually barren, because it lacks the inward beauty of spontaneous love. Love has to spring spontaneously from within: and it is in no way amenable to any form of inner or outer force. Love and coercion can never go together; but, though love cannot be forced upon any one, it can be awakened in him through love itself. Love is essentially self-communicative and its own evidence: those who do not have it, catch it from those who have it. Those who get love from others cannot be its recipients without giving

a response, which, in itself, is of the nature of love. True love is unconquerable and irresistible; and it goes on gathering power and spreading itself, until eventually it transforms everyone, whom it touches. Humanity will attain to a new mode of being and life through the free and unhampered interplay of pure love from heart to heart.

REDEMPTION OF HUMANITY THROUGH DIVINE LOVE

When it is recognised that there are no claims greater than the claims of the universal Divine Life which without exception includes every one and everything, love shall not only establish peace, harmony and happiness in social, national and international spheres, but it will shine in its own purity and beauty. Divine Love is unassailable by the onslaughts of duality and is an expression of divinity itself; and it is through Divine Love, that the NEW HUMANITY will come in tune with the Divine Plan. Divine Love will not only introduce imperishable sweetness and infinite bliss in personal life, but it will also make possible an era of NEW HUMANITY. Through Divine Love, the NEW HUMANITY will learn the art of co-operative and harmonious life; it will free itself from the tyranny of dead forms and release the creative life of spiritual wisdom; it will shed all illusions and get established in the Truth; it will enjoy peace and abiding happiness; it will be initiated into the life of Eternity.

— MEHER BABA

“The heart of a lover (the true devotee of God) constantly burns with the fire of LOVE so much so that whatever (passion) intrudes upon its sanctity is burnt to ashes.”

“When the river pursues its course, the flow occasions force and noise, but when it ultimately merges into the sea, it rests in supreme peace. The same is true of the individual ‘self’ covering various stages on its onward journey to merge itself in the Universal Self.”

— HAZRAT KHWAJA MUINUDDIN CHISTI

“To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second.”

— THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE, 36.

THE SEVEN REALITIES*
OF
MEHER BABA'S TEACHING

*Existence, Love, Sacrifice,
Renunciation, Knowledge, Control & Surrender*

MEHER BABA'S teaching gives no importance to creed, dogma, caste systems, and the performance of religious ceremonies and rites, but to the UNDERSTANDING of the following seven Realities:—

1. The only *REAL EXISTENCE* is that of the One and only God, who is the Self in every (finite) self.
2. The only *REAL LOVE* is the Love for this Infinity (God), which arouses an intense longing to see, know, and become one with its Truth (God).
3. The only *REAL SACRIFICE* is that in which, in pursuance of this Love, all things, body, mind, position, welfare, and even life itself, are sacrificed.
4. The only *REAL RENUNCIATION* is that which abandons, even in the midst of worldly duties, all selfish thoughts and desires.
5. The only *REAL KNOWLEDGE* is the knowledge that God is the inner dweller in good people and so-called bad, in saint and so-called sinner. This Knowledge requires you to help all equally as circumstances demand, without expectation of reward.

* Extract from "MEHER BABA JOURNAL" Vol. III No. 4.

and when compelled to take part in a dispute, to act without the slightest trace of enmity or hatred; to try to make others happy, with brotherly or sisterly feeling for each one; to harm no one in thought, word, or deed, not even those who harm you.

6. The only *REAL CONTROL* is the discipline of the senses from indulgence in low desires, which alone ensures absolute purity of character.
7. The only *REAL SURRENDER* is that in which the poise is undisturbed by any adverse circumstance, and the individual, amidst every kind of hardship, is resigned with perfect calm to the will of God.



"Be angry with none but your weakness.

Hate none but your lustful self.

Be greedy to own more and more wealth of tolerance and justice.

Let your temptation be to tempt Me with your love in order to receive My grace.

Wage war against your desires, and Godhood will be your victory.

Real living is dying for God.

Live less for yourself and more for others.

One must die to one's own self to be able to live in all other selves.

One who dies for God lives for ever."

— MEHER BABA.

"Befitting a fortunate slave, carry out every command of the Master without any question of 'why' and 'what'."

— HAFIZ.

"About what you hear from the Master, never say it is wrong, because, My dear, the fault lies in your own incapacity to understand Him."

— HAFIZ.

EXISTENCE* IS SUBSTANCE† AND LIFE IS SHADOW

(By MEHER BABA)

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 everchanging.

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—"Sat" in Sanskrit.

† By courtesy of an old devotee of Rajahmundry (Andhra Pradesh—India) from his record.

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 re-incarnation, 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. Life as such has no re-incarnation.

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.

For Existence to assert itself as "Existence", Life must be shed; this means, realising Existence consciously. 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 realised, evolution and involution of consciousness is complete; illusion vanishes and the law of re-incarnation 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 up-rooting 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 actions, the firmer become the knots and 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 sign-posts on the Path of Truth, directing the Seeker towards 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 sign-posts 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, Tapasvis 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 '*japas*' and '*tapas*', and by all types of "*Yogas*" and '*Chillas*'.

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

PROBLEM OF SEX* AND THE SANCTIFICATION OF MARRIED LIFE*

(By MEHER BABA)

THE ARISING OF THE PROBLEM OF SEX

SEX is decidedly one of the most important problems with which the human mind is confronted as long as it does not step outside the domain of duality. It is one of the things which are, so to say, 'given' in the make-up of human nature and has to be dealt with. Like every other thing in human life, sex also comes to be considered through the opposites which are the necessary creations of the limited mind. Just as the mind tries to fit life into a scheme of the alternatives of joy or pain, good or bad, solitude or company, attraction or repulsion, in relation to sex, it has a tendency to think of indulgence and repression as alternatives from which there is no escape. It seems as if man must accept the one alternative or the other. And yet he cannot whole-heartedly accept either alternative because when he tries repression he is dissatisfied with his lot and longingly thinks of indulgence, and when he tries indulgence he becomes conscious of his bondage to the senses and seeks freedom by going back to mechanical repression. The mind remains dissatisfied in *both* the alternatives and there thus arises one of the most vital and complicated problems of human life.

THE OPPOSITES OF INDULGENCE AND MECHANICAL REPRESSION ARE EQUALLY DISAPPOINTING

In order to solve the problem of sex the mind must first understand how both of these alternatives are equally the creation of imagination working under the deluding influence

* MEHER BABA JOURNAL, Vol. II (Extracted by kind permission).

of craving. Craving is implicitly present in the repression of sex, as well as its gratification; both presuppose the vitiation of consciousness by the operation of lust or the desire for sensations. The mind is therefore inevitably restless in either alternative. Just as when there are clouds in the sky, there is gloom and lack of sunshine, whether it rains or not, so when the human mind is shrouded by craving, there is diminution of being and lack of true happiness, whether this craving is gratified or not. The mind which is restless with desire creates an illusory idea of happiness in the gratification of desire, and then knowing that the soul remains dissatisfied even after gratification of desire, it seeks freedom through repression. *Thus in search of happiness and freedom the mind gets caught up in the opposites of indulgence and repression which it finds equally disappointing.* And since it does not try to go beyond these opposites, its movement is always from one opposite to the other and consequently from one disappointment to another disappointment.

THE FALSE PROMISES OF THE OPPOSITES

Craving thus falsifies the operation of imagination and presents the mind with the option between the two alternatives of indulgence and repression which prove to be equally deceptive in their promise of happiness. However, in spite of alternate and repeated disappointment in indulgence as well as repression, the mind usually does not renounce the root cause of unhappiness which is craving, because, while experiencing disappointment in repression, it is easily susceptible to the false promise of gratification, and while experiencing disappointment in gratification, it is easily susceptible to the false promise of purely mechanical repression.

INTERNAL AND SPONTANEOUS RENUNCIATION OF CRAVING IS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH AWAKENING

This is like moving within a cage. The gateway to the spiritual Path of internal and spontaneous renunciation of craving remains closed for those who have not the good fortune to be awakened by a Master. But true awakening is the entering into the path of wisdom which in the course of time surely leads to the Freedom and Abiding Happiness of Life Eternal.

Internal and spontaneous renunciation of craving is different from mechanical repression as it is from indulgence. *Mind turns to mechanical repression of craving because of disappointment; but it turns to internal and spontaneous renunciation of craving because of disillusionment or awakening.*

THE OPPOSITES OF INDULGENCE AND REPRESSION ARE RELATIVE TO CRAVING

The need for indulgence or mechanical repression arises only when the nature of craving is not clearly grasped. When the aspirant becomes fully awake to the inevitable bondage and suffering entailed by craving, he voluntarily begins to disburden his mind of craving through intelligent understanding. *The question of indulgence or repression arises only when there is craving; the need for both vanishes along with the complete disappearance of craving.* When the mind is free from craving, the mind can no more be moved by the false promises of indulgence or mechanical repression.

RESTRAINT IS NEARER TO FREEDOM THAN INDULGENCE

However, it should be borne in the mind that *the life of freedom is nearer to the life of restraint than to the life of indulgence* (though in quality it is essentially different from both). Hence for the aspirant, a life of strict celibacy is preferable to the married life, if restraint comes to him easily without any undue sense of self-repression. But such restraint is for most persons difficult and sometimes impossible; and for them the married life is decidedly much more helpful than a life of celibacy. For ordinary persons married life is undoubtedly advisable, unless they have a special aptitude for celibacy.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF CELIBACY AND MARRIAGE

Just as the life of celibacy requires and calls forth the development of many virtues, the married life in its turn also nourishes the growth of many spiritual qualities of utmost importance. *The value of celibacy lies in the habit of restraint and the sense of detachment and independence which it gives.* But as long as the mind is not altogether free from craving there is no true freedom. In the same way, *the value of marriage lies*

in the lessons of mutual adjustment and the sense of unity with the other. But true union or dissolution of duality is possible only through Divine Love which can never dawn so long as there is in the mind the slightest shadow of lust or craving. Only by treading the path of inner and spontaneous renunciation of craving is it possible to attain true freedom and unity.

THE PATH OF PERFECTION IS OPEN IN CELIBACY AS WELL AS IN MARRIAGE

For the celibate as well as for the married person, the path of inner life is the same. When the aspirant is drawn by the Truth, he longs for nothing else; and as the Truth increasingly comes within his ken, he gradually *disburdens* himself of craving. Whether in celibacy or in marriage, he is no longer swayed by the deceptive promises of indulgence or mechanical repression and he practises internal and spontaneous renunciation of craving until he is freed from the deceptive opposites. The path of perfection is open to the aspirant whether in celibacy or in marriage; *and whether he begins from celibacy or from marriage will depend upon the sanskaras and the karmic ties of the aspirant.* He cheerfully accepts the conditions which his past life has determined for him and utilises them towards his spiritual advancement in the light of the ideal which he has come to perceive.

THE NECESSITY OF A CLEAR CHOICE

The aspirant however must choose one of the two courses which are open to him; he must either take to the life of celibacy or to the married life; and he must at all costs avoid a cheap compromise between the two. *Promiscuity in sex-gratification is bound to land the aspirant in the most pitiful and dangerous chaos of ungovernable lust;* and as such diffused and undirected lust veils the higher values, it perpetuates entanglement and creates insuperable difficulties in the spiritual path of internal and spontaneous renunciation of craving. Sex in marriage is entirely different from sex outside marriage. In marriage, the *sanskaras* of lust are much lighter and are capable of being removed more easily. When sex-companionship is accompanied by a sense of responsibility, love and spiritual

idealism, conditions for the sublimation of sex are much more favourable than when it is cheap and promiscuous.

THE DANGERS OF PROMISCUITY

In promiscuity the temptation to explore the possibilities of mere sex contact is almost formidable; and it is only by the maximum restriction of the scope of mere sex that the aspirant can arrive at any real understanding of the higher values which are attainable through the gradual transformation of sex into love. But if the mind once tries to understand sex through the increasing of its scope, there is no end to the delusions of which it must be a prey, because there is no end to the enlarging of its scope. In promiscuity, the suggestions of lust are necessarily the first to present themselves to the mind, and it is *doomed to react to people with the limitation of this initial perversion* and thus close the door to deeper experiences.

INFINITY IS ATTAINABLE THROUGH THE INTELLIGENT HANDLING OF MARRIAGE

Truth cannot be understood by skipping over the surface of life and multiplying superficial contacts; but it requires the preparedness of mind to centre its capacities upon selected experiences and to free itself from its limiting features. This process of discrimination between the higher and the lower and the transcendence of the lower in favour of the higher is made possible through *whole-hearted concentration and a real and earnest interest in life*; but such whole-hearted concentration and real interest is necessarily precluded when the mind becomes a slave to the habit of running at a tangent and wanders to many other possible objects for similar experience. In married life, the range of experience in the company of the partner is so wide that the suggestions of lust are not necessarily the first to present themselves to the mind, and there is a real opportunity for the aspirant *to recognise and annul the limiting factors in experience*. By the gradual elimination of lust and the progression through a series of increasingly richer experiences of love and sacrifice, he can finally arrive at Infinity.

THE SANCTIFICATION OF MARRIED LIFE

MARRIED LIFE SHOULD BE A SPIRITUAL ENTERPRISE

Most persons enter into married life as a matter of course; but marriage will turn into a help or a hindrance according to the manner in which it is handled. There is no doubt that some of the immense spiritual possibilities are accessible through a married life, but all this depends upon having the right attitude. From the spiritual point of view, married life will be a success only if it is thoroughly determined by the vision of Truth. It cannot offer much if it is based upon nothing more than the limited motives of mere sex, or if it is inspired by considerations which usually obtain in the partnership of 'business'. It has to be taken as *a real spiritual enterprise which is intended to discover what life can be at its best*. When the two partners together launch upon the spiritual adventure of exploring the higher possibilities of the spirit, they cannot at the outset limit their experiment by any nice calculations concerning the nature and the amount of *individual gain*.

MARRIED LIFE IS ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM PROMISCUOUS SEX-PARTNERSHIP

Married life almost always makes upon both the partners many demands of mutual adjustment and understanding and creates many problems which were originally beyond their expectation; and though this might in a sense be true of life in general, it is particularly true of married life. In married life, two souls get linked with each other in many ways with the result that they are called upon *to tackle the whole complex problem of personality rather than any simple problem created by some isolated desire*. This is exactly the point in respect of which married life is utterly different from promiscuous sex partnership. Promiscuous sex-partnership attempts to separate the problem of sex from *other* needs of the developing personality and seeks to solve it in isolation from them; and though this kind of solution might seem to be easy, it turns out to be very superficial and has further the disadvantage of *side-tracking* the aspirant from attempting the real solution.

THE TENSION BETWEEN THE VARIED PURPOSES OF MARRIED LIFE CALLS FORTH SUBLIMATION

The relative values of the various sides of the limited personality can be best appreciated when they get intertwined and appear in varied setting and perspective. It is difficult to discriminate between them if they appear fitfully in a disconnected series. In married life there is ample room for varied experience, with the result that the different tendencies which are latent in the mind begin to get organised around the crystallised scheme of married life. And this organisation of varied purposes *not only provides an unlimited field for discrimination between the higher and lower values but also creates between them a necessary tension which requires and calls forth effective and intelligent sublimation.*

THE CONDITIONS OF MARRIAGE INVITE AND PRECIPITATE THE CHANGES IN INNER LIFE

In one sense, married life may be looked upon as the intensification of most human problems; and as such it becomes *the rallying ground for the forces of bondage as well as for the forces of freedom*, the factors of ignorance as well as the factors of light. As the married life of ordinary persons is determined by mixed motives and considerations, it inevitably invites an uncompromising opposition between the higher and the lower self of man; and such opposition is necessary for the wearing out of the lower part and the dawning of the true divine self. Married life develops so many points of contact between the two souls that severance of all connection means the unsettlement and derangement of practically the whole tenor of life; and since this difficulty of getting away from each other invites and precipitates inner readjustment, it is really a disguised opportunity for the souls to establish a real and a lasting understanding which can cope with the most complex and delicate situations.

MARRIED LIFE MUST BE IN TUNE WITH THE DIVINE PLAN

The spiritual value of married life is directly relative to the nature of the preponderating factors which determine its daily happenings. If it is based upon shallow considerations, it can deteriorate into a partnership in selfishness as against the rest of the world; but if it is inspired by lofty idealism, it can

be raised to a fellowship which not only requires and calls forth increasingly greater sacrifices for each other but actually *becomes a medium through which the two souls can offer their united love and service to the whole family of humanity*. When married life is thus brought into direct line with the Divine Plan for the evolution of the individual, it becomes a pure blessing to the children which are the fruit of that marriage, for they get the advantage of imbibing spiritual atmosphere from the very beginning of their earthly career.

MARRIED LIFE IS SANCTIFIED AND ENRICHED BY CHILDREN

Though the children are thus the beneficiaries from the married life of the parents, *the married life of the parents is in its turn enriched by the presence of the children*. Children give to the parents an opportunity for expressing and developing a real and spontaneous love in which sacrifice becomes easy and delightful and the part played by children in the life of the parents is of tremendous importance for the spiritual advancement of parents themselves. It therefore follows that when children make their appearance in married life, they ought to be wholeheartedly welcome to the parents.

THE BIRTH CONTROL MOVEMENT TRIES TO SECURE ITS AIM THROUGH WRONG MEANS

In view of the claims which children have on married lives, the present Birth Control movement deserves careful attention and critical examination. The question must not be considered from the point of view of any one special or limited interest, but from the point of view of the *ultimate* well-being of the individual and society. The right opinion in this respect, as in all respects must above everything be based upon spiritual considerations. The attitude which most persons have towards the Birth Control movement is oscillating and confused because it contains a queer admixture of good and bad elements. *While the Birth Control movement is right in its aim of securing the regulation of population, it is disastrously unfortunate in the choice of its means*. There can be no doubt that the regulation of children is often desirable for personal and social reasons. Uncontrolled breeding intensifies the struggle for existence and may bring about a social order where ruthless competition becomes inevitable. Apart from creating for

parents a responsibility which they cannot adequately discharge, it becomes an indirect and contributory cause of crimes, war and poverty. But though the humane and rational considerations demand and justify all serious attempts to regulate the birth of children, the use of physical means for securing this purpose remains fundamentally indefensible and unjustifiable.

THE USE OF PHYSICAL MEANS TAKES AWAY THE ORDINARY INCENTIVE TO MENTAL CONTROL

The purely physical means which are generally advocated by the supporters of the Birth Control movement are most objectionable from the spiritual point of view. Although the physical means of Birth Control are advocated on humanitarian grounds, they are almost always used by the generality of the people for serving their own selfish ends and for avoiding the responsibility of bearing and bringing up children. And since the physical consequences of yielding to lust can be so successfully avoided through the use of these means, those who have not begun to be awake to the higher values have no incentive to be moderate in the gratification of passion. They thus become victims to excessive indulgence and bring about their own physical, moral and spiritual ruin, by neglecting mental control and becoming a slave to the animal passion.

MENTAL CONTROL IS INDISPENSABLE FOR RISING FROM PASSION TO PEACE

The easy use of the physical means obscures the spiritual side of the question and is far from being contributory to the awakening of man to his real dignity and freedom as a spiritual being. Thoughtless and uncontrolled indulgence must inevitably lead to reaction and spiritual bondage. For spiritual aspirants in particular and also for all human beings (because they are all potentially spiritual aspirants) it is extremely inadvisable to rely upon physical means for the regulation of children. *For the regulation of children they must rely upon nothing but mental control.* Mental control secures the humanitarian purposes which inspire the Birth Control movement and keeps clear of the spiritual disasters entailed by the use of physical means; and it is not only useful for regulating the number of children but is also indispensable for restoring to man his

divine dignity and spiritual well-being. *Only through the wise exercise of mental control is it possible for man to rise from passion to peace, from bondage to freedom and from animality to purity.* In the minds of thoughtful persons, the much ignored spiritual side of this question must assume the importance which it deserves.

JOINT RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTHOOD

Since woman has to undertake the troubles and the responsibility of bearing and rearing children, she may seem to be affected by any possible failure in mental control more seriously than man; but in fact it does not mean any real unfairness to woman. It is true that woman has to undertake the troubles and the responsibility of bearing and rearing children, but she has also the compensating joy of feeding and fondling them. Thus, motherhood is much greater than the joy of fatherhood. Further, the man also must face and shoulder the economic and educational responsibility towards the children. In a properly adjusted marriage, there need not be any injustice in the distribution of parental responsibility which should be shared by man as well as woman. If the father as well as the mother are truly conscious of their mutual responsibility, *inconsiderateness will give place to active and co-operative endeavour to attain full mental control*; and in the event of there being any failure in mental control, they would cheerfully and willingly discharge the joint responsibility of parenthood.

IN MARRIED LIFE CHILDREN MUST BE WELCOME

If a person is not prepared to undertake the responsibility of children, there is only one course which is left for him. He must remain a celibate and practise strict mental control: for, though such mental control is extremely difficult to attain, it is not impossible. From the purely spiritual point of view strict celibacy is best; but since it is so difficult, few can practise it. And for those who cannot practise it, the next best course is to marry, rather than fall a prey to promiscuity. Within married life, one can learn to control animal passion. But it is bound to be a gradual process, and *in cases of failure in practising control, parents must allow nature to take its own course, rather than interfere with it through artificial means.* They

must cheerfully welcome the consequences and be prepared to shoulder the responsibility for the upbringing of children.

MENTAL POWER IS UNDERMINED BY RELIANCE ON PHYSICAL MEANS

From the spiritual point of view, Birth Control must essentially be effected through mental control and nothing else. And physical means are under no circumstances advisable *even when a person seeks to use them merely as a provisional and a second aid without intending to ignore the ideal of developing mental control.* While using the physical means, he can never arrive at real mental control, though he might want it in right earnest; on the contrary, he becomes addicted to the use of physical means and even begins to justify them. To explain it still more clearly, what happens in the use of physical means is that while one thinks that he is using them merely as a preliminary step before mental control is fully developed, he actually gets addicted to their use and becomes a slave to that habit. And though he may for some time remain under the delusion that he is trying to develop mental control (side by side with the use of physical means), he is actually losing it gradually. In short, *mental power is necessarily undermined by reliance on the physical means.* Thus the use of physical means is detrimental to the development of self-control and is positively disastrous for spiritual advancement; it is therefore under no condition advisable even for the best of motives.

SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT THROUGH MARRIED LIFE

In the beginning of married life, the partners are drawn to each other by lust as well as love. But they can with conscious and deliberate co-operation gradually lessen the element of lust and increase the element of love. Through this process of sublimation, lust ultimately gives place to deep love. By the mutual sharing of joys and sorrows, the partners march on from one spiritual triumph to another spiritual triumph, from deep love to ever deeper love, *till the possessive and jealous love of the initial period is entirely replaced by a self-giving and expansive love.* In fact, through the intelligent handling of marriage, a person may traverse so much of the spiritual Path that it needs only a touch by the Master to raise him into the sanctuary of ETERNAL LIFE.

BHAKTI YOGA*

(By MEHER BABA)

OUT of a number of practices which lead to the ultimate goal of humanity—God-Realization—, Bhakti Yoga is one of the most important. Almost the whole of humanity is concerned with Bhakti Yoga, which, in simple words, means the art of worship. But it must be understood in all its true aspects, and not merely in a narrow and shallow sense, in which the term is commonly used and interpreted.

The profound worship based on the high ideals of philosophy and spirituality, prompted by divine love, doubtless constitutes true Bhakti Yoga. It follows then that the various ceremonies, rituals, which are part and parcel of every creed or the "shariat" of every "religion" constitute only its shadow. Nevertheless, it may be said that the ritualistic worship, which the masses of humanity confuse with religion, is Bhakti Yoga in its incipient or initial stage. A number of the ceremonies performed by the followers of every creed are doubtless useless, but those ceremonies and modes of offering prayers, which are essentially based on the principle of conveying or evoking worship, may be said to constitute elementary Bhakti Yoga.

Although Bhakti Yoga cannot be divided into separate, watertight compartments, it may be said to have three principal stages. The first stage, which is elementary, concerns itself with ritualistic worship. The *Namaz* of the Muslims, the *Tal-Bhajan* and the *Sandhya-Pujas* of the Hindus, the *Kusti* and *Bhantars* of the Zoroastrians, the prayers of the Christians, etc., are no doubt Bhakti—worship in rudimentary stages. The first stage of Bhakti Yoga is therefore general, and almost everyone is concerned with it and can practise it.

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The second stage, which is intermediate, concerns itself with the constant remembrance of God. The worshipper, through constant mental or physical repetitions (*Nam-Smaran* or *Zikra*) of any one name of God, achieves the fixity of thought on God, without the medium of any ceremony. In other words, when a person's thoughts are always directed towards God, throughout the waking state, even while eating or talking, he may be said to be in the second stage of Bhakti Yoga.

This kind of constant remembrance of God must not be confounded with meditation. In meditation, one makes an attempt to achieve fixity of thought; whereas one who has reached the second stage of Bhakti Yoga already possesses the one sole and single thought for God, and therefore has no more need of organized thinking. Just as a variety of thoughts come to an ordinary man, even without the intention on his part to have them, the Bhakti Yogin in the second stage simply cannot help thinking about the Lord, wherever and however he may be. This fixity of thought on God is higher Bhakti or worship.

The third stage, which is advanced, concerns itself with divine love and longing of a high order. The higher Bhakti of the second stage ultimately leads the aspirant to this third or highest stage of Bhakti Yoga; in other words, to the highest Bhakti and to the True Love. The one in this stage can be called the true Lover of God. For him there is no question of fixity of thought. He is beyond thought. His thoughts, so to say, have got melted into the blazing and all-consuming fire of an intense longing for the Beloved—God. So much so, that far from thinking about his physical needs, the aspirant in this stage of Bhakti or Love, is almost incognizant of his very corporality.

From this survey of the three stages of Bhakti Yoga, it is quite evident that for householders, men of busy avocations, in short, for the masses, the practice of worship is possible only up to the first stage. The average man should follow his creed, whatever it may be, in all sincerity, regardless of the rewards to come, and with the only aim and object of—"I want nothing but You—God."

But when I say "following one's own creed", I mean that

everybody should be free to base his worship on the religious ideas and methods that appeal to him most, and not that one should stop dead at believing or disbelieving certain statements of a particular scripture, about subjects that are generally beyond the sphere of intellect. It is the act of worship from the heart, and not thoughts and beliefs, that counts in the religious province.

Thus, for a Hindu, a Muslim, a Christian, a Parsi, the best Bhakti is the performance of the *Puja*, the *Namaz*, the prayers, and the *Kusti* ceremony, respectively. But the performance must be from the very depths of the heart, and with the only object of "I want nothing but You (God)". Otherwise, a religion, however beautiful be its teachings, however grand be its philosophy, becomes nothing but a mere farce, which people indulge in generally more through force of habit and fear of society than through any idea of true devotion and worship.

Unless there is the will to worship, no number of ceremonies and no amount of lip-prayer will ever serve the true purpose of religion. It is one thing to learn by heart the whole of a scripture; it is quite another thing to repeat a single sentence of it from the heart. A Hindu may have the *Shastras* at his fingertips, but if he lacks in devotion from the heart, he is no better than a typewriter or a calculating machine.

A Muslim may laugh at so-called idol-worship; but he becomes guilty of stray-thought worship, if, while placing his forehead down in *Sijda* in the course of his *Namaz*, without being prompted by the will to worship, he is attacked by objectionable thoughts, for it means that he is at that time paying homage, not to the Almighty, but to those very thoughts. For instance, if a Muslim gets the thought of any man or woman, while doing the *Sijda*, it amounts to having offered the *Sijda* to that man or woman, and thus the *Namaz* turns into a farce.

This point was convincingly elucidated by the Muslim saint, Sufi Sarmast (who was averse to offering ritualistic prayers) when Aurangzeb once forced him to participate in the congregational *Namaz*. The Saint joined the congregation against his will, but he soon revolted against it by calling loudly to

the Imam, who, at the particular moment of leading the prayers, was mentally busy arranging the finances for the forthcoming marriage of his daughter, that "the God of the Imam was beneath his feet". The Saint's words were verified later when a treasure-trove was actually found just beneath the spot where Sufi Sarmast was standing at the time of praying with the congregation.

To sum up, it is possible for everyone, belonging to any creed and to any station in life, to practise Bhakti Yoga or the true art of worship in its first stage. The act of worship should spring from the heart. Let it be borne in mind that worship from the heart presupposes great efforts. It cannot be evoked with a mere wish. If one decides upon practising true Bhakti, one has to make heroic efforts in order to achieve fixity of mind, because, contrary thoughts are very likely to disturb one's mind. It is because the average person's frame of mind is averse to remaining unchanged for any considerable period of time, that *repeated efforts* to evoke deep devotion are essential; and in fact are the turning points in such practices that distinguish the right sense of religion from the shallow show of a mere routine.

* * * *

Some persons may be so constituted that they can readily take to the second stage of Bhakti Yoga, without having passed through the first stage. But whether the devotee has or has not passed through the first stage, in the beginning of the second stage, he has to make vigorous efforts in thinking about the Almighty as much and as often as possible. The efforts must be continued until he becomes above efforts; and he becomes above efforts only when worship from the heart becomes his *second nature*. He who can naturally worship from the heart without finding it necessary to make artificial efforts, may justifiably be said to have attained to higher Bhakti.

Let it be noted that it is not necessary for a man to stop carrying out his worldly duties and obligations, to achieve or to practise this higher Bhakti. He may conduct his business or follow his profession, he may lead the family life and look after all his necessary external requirements; but amidst all his worldly engagements he should *ever be alert* on the Lord.

The more he can remember the object of the heart-worship, along with the routine work of his everyday life, the better for him. Besides reiterating the name of the Almighty in the ordinary manner, the seeker of the subjective, spiritual side-lights in the second, more advanced stage of Bhakti Yoga should make it a rule to retire into a dark room all alone for about a couple of hours every night. During this period of retirement he must try to avoid all thoughts save that of "I want You, O Lord", and repeat continuously any one of the names of the Almighty which he has adopted for the purpose of *Nam-Smaran*.

This is the best course open for those who neither feel satisfied with objective worship, nor can afford to renounce all for God. If sincerely followed, this intermediate practice is bound to bear fruit sooner or later and provide the aspirant with the subjective "glimpses" of the great Reality in some way or another. For instance, one may be able to see or hear without using the gross organs of sight and sound; or perhaps even get established on the Path itself.

But for the few who insist, from the very depth of their souls and from the innermost core of their heart, on seeing the Reality actually face to face, at all costs and consequences, there is but one way. And that is complete renunciation. Such heroes must not only possess the indomitable courage of renouncing the world, forsaking all possessions and properties, tearing up all external connections, but also of practising internal renunciation which means giving up all desires and passions, but entertaining the aspiration for God-realization.

After renouncing fully and faithfully, both in the letter and spirit of the word, as described above, the hero-aspirant must either surrender himself completely to a Perfect Master, in whom he has faith; or retire for good in a forest, or on a mountain, or along the riverside, with the name of the Lord on his lips, with the thought of God in his mind, with the aspiration of seeing Him in his heart. In short, until the aspirant comes to the goal, or the guide—a living Perfect Master—he should lead the life of renunciation, wandering or sitting in solitude, ever ready to lay down his life in the cause of his aspiration. But this does not mean he should

never feel hungry, or, wherever or whenever food is available he should avoid it. Renunciation certainly means that one should, among other things, cease to think about food, but hunger is not always the result of thinking. One never requires thought about hunger in order to become hungry. It is as natural as breathing. However, it has great connection with the intensity of Bhakti or longing on the part of the aspirant. The more intense becomes the divine longing, the more reduced become the physical needs.

Even on this phenomenal plane, we often find worldly people becoming indifferent for a long time to what we call the indispensable necessities of life, in the heat and attraction of an absorbing work and pleasure. This is just what happens on the spiritual plane too. One may become so very pre-occupied with the ideal in view as to forget all about these supposedly indispensable necessities of life for months together, without permanently harming oneself physically. No harm can come where there is no thought of any harm. And when we say that those who really insist on seeing God must renounce all and go about with their very lives in their shirt sleeves, we certainly mean that no consideration for any personal loss or danger should be entertained. We do not mean that the aspirant should commit suicide; but he should certainly cease to cling to life and be prepared to lose it, if and when circumstances demand it.

This may seem impracticable, and it is certainly next to impossible for most persons to reach this height of Bhakti Yoga. Yet every human being is potentially capable of demonstrating this high achievement; and some, though very few in number, do manifest divinity in this way from time to time. To give a recent example, His Holiness Sadguru Upasni Maharaj of Sakori seated himself in seclusion several years ago on a hill near Nasik, for fully one year continuously, and during this whole period took neither food nor water, even once. And yet he remained alive! A God-realized person can, if he or she so wishes, remain without food, water, or even breathing, for years together, but there is no wonder about it, as the God-Realized One possesses infinite powers.

But in the above example the noteworthy point is that

at the time of remaining without food or water for one year, Shri Upasani Maharaj was not God-Realized. It was simply owing to the intensity of his divine longing that Shri Maharaj was able to forget the consciousness and needs of his corporeal frame.

The question may be asked as to what a man, who is completely renounced and retired into solitude, should do to secure the bare necessities of life, i.e., food, when he feels a great pinch of hunger. He must go a-begging for food, and for this purpose, may mix slightly with others temporarily. But he must be prepared to partake of and be satisfied with any kind of food, whether it is agreeable or disagreeable, and sufficient or insufficient. And no sooner is his most acute need supplied, than he should go back and remain in solitude all by himself, with the thought of God.

It should not be implied from the above that begging, as practised by a large number of so-called *Sadhus* and other professional beggars, who are a curse to society and a disgrace to spirituality, is here advocated or condoned. On the contrary, it is a fact that the first and foremost law of spirituality and God-finding is to *give*, from the start to the finish. And the true renouncer, the great hero who has given up all desires—the root-cause of beggary—when he begs for and takes food and bare necessities from a man of the world, he gives that man an opportunity to serve and share in the great and noble search for God. In order to elucidate the point, we will now discuss "*Sahkama*" and "*Nishkama*", the two kinds of Bhakti.

A worship may be sincere, it may be from the heart, but if the worshipper offers it with the expectation of any return whether in the shape of worldly benefits, or for blessings in the life hereafter, his worship is "*Sahkama*"; and this *Sahkama* is generally connected with the first stage of Bhakti Yoga. When worship from the heart is offered for the sake of worship only, and without any thoughts of reward in this or the next life, it is called "*Nishkama*" and is concerned with the second and the third stages of Bhakti Yoga. True, the aspiration to see and be one with God is the chief motive of the highest worship, but this aspiration is poles asunder from worldly desires. This aspiration is such that even when one comes

face to face with God, it remains in full blaze until the Union is effected—as evident from what Hafiz exclaimed when he reached the sixth plane, viz.:

"Khatiram vakhti havas kardi kay binam chizha Ta toora didam na kardi jooz ba didarat haves."

—which means:

"I always desired to see different things, but since I have seen You, I desire to see nothing but You."

Efforts may be made to turn *Sahkama Bhakti* into *Nishkama Bhakti* even in the first stage. In the beginning, worship is necessarily "*Sahkama*". Next stage: a man may cease to worship God for the sake of temporal gains. But even then, it seldom happens that, while worshipping, a man in the initial stage can help avoiding thoughts for reward in the life to come. And although this *Sahkama Bhakti* is nothing but beggary, it is all the same the beginning of true *Bhakti*, for, while begging directly or indirectly of God for any kind of favours, the worshipper sincerely praises God. Because the praise, actuated by the thoughts of gain, is from the heart, it is likely to turn into disinterested praise, which in turn leads to *Nishkama Bhakti*.

"Ask God not for money, fame, power, health, or children, but ask for His Grace of LOVE (for God) which will lead you to eternal bliss and freedom. This love can be practised by anyone, high, low, rich, poor and everyone of each caste and creed can love God."—MEHER BABA.

"MY CENTRE IS IN THE HEART OF MY LOVER"

— MEHER BABA.

PRAYER AS INNER APPROACH*

(By MEHER BABA)

FOR most persons, the outer ceremonies and rituals prevalent in the diverse religions are the established approach to God and Divinity. They are regarded as indispensable. However, they are neither essential nor necessary, though at times they have been allowed or given by masters by way of inevitable accommodation to human weakness. They may also be practised with benefit when they are thus allowed or given by a Master, but only during the period for which they have been prescribed, and in the context in which they are intended to be given effect. They have no lasting value nor can they be made eternally binding. They *were never* essential or indispensable; they *are never* essential or indispensable; and they *will never* be essential or indispensable.

Let us take, for example, the stern discipline and fasts associated with Ramzan. No doubt they serve some spiritual purpose. But one way of looking upon it is to regard them as a sort of compulsory rationing of food and water in those areas where they were rare, and where such control was necessary in the interest of society. It is not necessary to convert the instructions of the Prophet into inflexible and eternal rules of discipline. In the context in which they were given, they served both material and spiritual purpose. They cannot be regarded as inescapable or necessary in all times and climes. The same thing applies to any other disciplines given by other Seers or Masters.

The Masters have sometimes followed external disciplines including prayers and have set an example of humility and readiness to learn from others. Thus, Mohammed played the

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role of being taught by Gabriel. He thereby achieved two things. Firstly, he gave to the world an example of readiness to learn from others; and secondly, he awakened the teacher in Gabriel. No teachers have been content with merely external disciplines. Through their teachings as well as example, they have often set forth prayer as the inner approach to God and Divinity.

What constitutes the essence of prayer? Many prayers to God are current among the lovers of God, arising as they do from diverse cultural contexts. Some of the prayers invariably contain an element of asking something from God, either material or spiritual. In fact, God is so merciful and bountiful that even without their asking He always gives much more than His lovers can receive. He knows their real needs more deeply than they do. Therefore, the element of asking something from God is superfluous. It often mars the inner love and worship which a prayer tries to express.

The ideal prayer to the Lord is nothing more than spontaneous praise of His being. You praise Him, not in the spirit of bargain but in the spirit of self-forgetful appreciation of what He really is. You praise Him because He is praiseworthy. Your praise is a spontaneous appreciative response to His true being, as infinite light, infinite power and infinite bliss. It is futile to attempt a *standard prayer* and hold it up as an ideal for all people of all times. The glory of the Almighty transcends all human understanding and defies all verbal descriptions. Eternally fresh and self-renewing in its unlimited amplitude, it never fades. Nor is it ever confined within the limits of the best of hymns.

All hymns and prayers reach out towards the eternal Truth of Godhead only to merge those who utter them in silent and unending adoration. If by ideal prayer to the Lord is meant a set formula, any search for it is a wild goose chase. All prayers ultimately initiate the soul into an ever deepening silence of sweet adoration; and all formulae are dissolved and assimilated into the integral and direct appreciative perception of divine Truth. That which seeks to reach towards the immeasurable, itself becomes incapable of being measured by any set standards.

The ritualistic and repetitive expressions of prayer do not and cannot do justice to the innermost essence of prayer, which is adoring love for the eternal Beloved. To attempt to standardize prayer is to mar its intrinsic beauty.

If you pray with a motive to do good to some one, your prayer may actually bring about good both to him and to yourself. Some people pray for the spiritual benefit of those who have done them some wrong. There also, they are helping others spiritually. But all prayers with a motive fall short of the ideal prayer which is without motive. In the entire spiritual panorama of the universe nothing is more sublime than a spontaneous prayer. It gushes out of the human heart, filled with appreciative joy. It is self-expression of the freed spirit without any actuation of a motive. In its highest form, prayer leaves no room for the illusory diarchy of the lover and the Beloved. *It is a return to one's own being.*

SELECT "SAYINGS"

"When the Master himself gives, it is equal to milk. But when you yourself ask for it, then it is equal to water. And, if you force the Master to give you anything, it is like blood."
—KABIR.

"Be content with your lot, whether rich or poor, happy or miserable. Understand that God has designed it for your own (ultimate) good and be resigned to His will."
—MEHER BABA.

"What you see of me, that is, with my coat, body, etc., it is not ME. You have yet to see ME. If you have just a glimpse of ME you will be free from binding. One in a million can have that glimpse; and one out of those millions (having such glimpse) can have a realisation of ME."
—MEHER BABA.

"When you breathe your last, repeat BABA'S (God's) name and you will surely come to ME. This may look or seem easiest, but that is also very difficult. Unless you are in the habit of loving ME every second of your life, you cannot think of ME in the last moment."—MEHER BABA.

SUPERVENING ORDERS IN THE SPIRITUAL PANORAMA*

(By MEHER BABA)

THE mystery of the universe is hierarchic in structure. There are graded orders, one supervening upon the other. The spiritual panorama of the universe reveals itself as a gradient with laws upon laws. Superimposition of one type of law over the other implies elasticity and resilience of lower laws for the working out of higher superseding laws. Instead of lawlessness, it means a regime of graded laws adjusted with each other in such a manner that they all subserve the supreme purpose of God, the Creator.

The lower laws are subsumed under the higher laws. We have first the law of cause and effect reigning supreme in Nature. Such natural laws seem to be mechanical, rigid and inexorable. But by acting and interacting with life-force, they lead to higher laws of *sanskritic* or impressional determination and become superseded by them. Impressional determinism is not an exception to causal laws but is their finer and higher form. It supervenes upon mechanical causal laws.

Let us take an example to illustrate the functioning of supervening orders in the spiritual panorama. The days of every incarnate soul in the gross world, and what they bring, are both definitely determined by the accumulated impressions of past lives. But this impressional determinism does not work itself out independently of, or in defiance of, ordinary causal laws. On the contrary, it works *through* established causal laws. For example, wrong diet or gluttony or any other disregard for natural physiological laws will definitely affect the duration of the life-term in the gross body. In the same way,

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intelligent use of known laws will affect happenings during this term of life. But, whether or not there is going to be a disregard of such laws on the part of some particular soul, is itself impressionally determined; i.e., it is dependent upon his gathered dispositions. Thus physiological and other causal laws are subsumed by higher *karmic* laws and lend themselves as pliant fabric-work for them. The law of *karma* supersedes and uses the other laws of Nature without violating them.

Nor are the natural laws in any way violated by what are called *miracles*. No miracle is an exception to the existing laws of the universe. It is an overt result of the impersonal working or conscious use of the established laws of the inner spheres. It is called a miracle because it cannot be explained by the known laws of the gross world. Here, known laws are superimposed by unknown laws; it is not a case of chaos or lawlessness.

There are many examples of miracles. Giving sight to the blind and kindred achievements are brought under the category of miracles. They do not set aside the laws of the universe but are the expressions of laws and forces, unknown and inaccessible to most human beings. There are some persons who, through the use of their supernatural powers, can keep their bodies alive for hundreds of years although they are not necessarily spiritually advanced. In the same way, the lingering aura of a saint may work miracles from his burial place.

The scope of miracles is very wide. Even the animal world is not exempt from the possibility of miracles. Though mammals such as porpoises and other animals do not have a fully developed subtle body, there is in the subtle world an equivalent or counterpart of their gross forms. The rudimentary subtle matrix, which has yet to develop into a definite and functionally self-sufficient subtle form, can still serve some purposes and become a medium for performance of miracles. Stories of sorcerers who caused schools of porpoises to come from the open sea to shore for a native feast are within the bounds of probability. But all this realm of the supernatural, occult, miraculous and magic (black or white) must be regarded as having no spiritual value in itself.

Occult phenomena like stigmata, telekinesis (effecting the

flight of objects such as a communion wafer through the air), elongation, elevation, etc., "may amuse, astound or over-power people. But they cannot bring about spiritual healing or uplift, which is the real thing that matters. They are just an illustration of the supersession of ordinary and known laws of nature by the supernatural and unknown laws of the inner spheres. The curious might very well occupy their minds with these things, but they are best relegated to the background as insignificant. The real lover of Truth passes by these things without becoming entangled with any of them. He cannot afford to be distracted or diverted from his *real* objective, viz., attaining union with God and releasing the radiance of His purity and love.

The apparent anomaly of miracles does not constitute the violation of known natural laws but means only their supersession by other unknown laws. It also does not mean violation of the higher *karmic* laws which supervene upon natural as well as supernatural laws. However, among the supervening orders in the spiritual panorama, there is one important factor which transcends and controls all laws, including the supernatural laws and the laws of *karma*. That factor is *Divine Grace*, which is *beyond all laws*.

God forgives sins in the sense that He does not eternally damn any one for his sins. He keeps the door of redemption eternally open. Through repeated sincere prayers it is possible to effect an exit from the otherwise inexorable working out of the law of *karma*. The forgiveness asked from God evokes from Him His inscrutable grace, which alone can give new direction to the inexorable *karmic* determination.

The only miracle which is worthy of the name is the *Divine Grace* that knows no fetters, and that can control the entire universe with all of its laws. It is the last supervening factor in the graded orders which obtain in the spiritual panorama.

DIVINE GRACE is not concerned with phenomena. It is concerned with the emancipation and spiritual fulfilment of souls. Here an interesting question is, "Does God work miracles in the narrower sense of operating the hidden laws of the inner spheres?" The answer is, "God does everything and at the

same time He does nothing. He leaves everything to the natural and supernatural forces prevalent in the spiritual panorama of the universe".

Although God does nothing by way of small miracles, the entire universe which has emanated from Him is the *miracle of miracles*. The more we ponder on anything in the universe—even the meanest of things—the more miraculous it appears to the human mind. And the universe, which includes an infinite number of such items, giving to each of them an indelible stamp of eternal significance, is an unquestionable miracle because it admits of a thousand questions but offers no answer to the limited human intellect. So, having created this supreme miracle of the universe, God does not bother about performing further minor miracles within this universe, but leaves it to the reign of laws. However, this does not apply to the *God-man* who may, if he deems it to be fit and necessary, perform numberless miracles in supervision of the normal routine working of the universe, without attaching any especial importance to them.

God does everything and in another sense does nothing. Although God does nothing, those who approach Him with love and surrender derive everything that matters in the spiritual realm, even though He does not do anything in particular towards them. God may be compared to the sandalwood. It continually emits a sweet scent in all directions, though only those who take the trouble to go near it have the benefit of its charming fragrance. But we cannot say that the sandalwood has done anything in particular towards those who approach it, because emanation of its sweet scent is going on all the time and is not specifically directed towards any person or persons. It is available to each and all who care to come within its range. Thus the sandalwood gives in one sense; and in another sense it does not give. Take another example. The river gives water to those who are thirsty in the sense that if thirsty persons approach the river and drink its waters, their thirst is quenched; but the river does nothing either to invite them to itself or to fill them with its waters.

These examples show how God does everything and at the same time does nothing. This naturally applies to the so-called

miracles, which are minor happenings within the great miracle. Mind also can be called the great miracle of the universe, because it is out of the mind that the illusion of the universe arises. Mind is a parent miracle; yet the fulfillment of its destiny lies in self-annihilation. It has not fulfilled its true purpose if it does not completely disappear. The temporary clay model often has to be destroyed in order to bring out a statue of permanent importance; the form of wooden planks is raised only to be replaced later by a slab of concrete; and the hen's egg has not fulfilled its destiny until it is broken from inside by the pecking of a hatching chicken. In the same way, the mind-mould arises only in order that it may be shattered to pieces and that its bursting may make possible the unfoldment of true and unlimited understanding which is self-sustained. Thus the mind, which is the parent miracle, comes into existence only in order to vanish.

The vanishment of the mind means its stopping to function as mind. In its normal functioning, the mind sees, hears and speaks; but it has to cease this functioning. It must not see, hear or speak through impressional goadings as it is wont to do. When it succeeds in stopping its impressional functioning, it has vanished as mind and achieved the last miracle in its vanishment. The mind is a miracle in its origin, in its functional products, and last but not least, in its vanishment, which is the pinnacle of its miraculous tenor. But the mind cannot jump over itself. It cannot stop its own impressional functioning. It can only make a somersault and hold before itself a pretence of annihilation, as do snakes and scorpions which often pretend to be dead as a last resort to save themselves.

When the mind gets annihilated, it happens not through its own somersault or gymnastics, but by an act of *Divine Grace*. We can neither deny nor explain this divine grace which transcends all of the graded orders, together with all their laws, in the spiritual panorama. With the wiping out of the mind, there is the wiping out of all minor and major miracles. This is the only miracle worthy of the name and which is spiritually necessary. All other miracles, despite their imposing gradations in the panorama, are like the evanescent waves which rise and fall on the surface of the ocean without being able to fathom its immeasurable depths.

The miracle of wiping out the mind brings with it complete disappearance of all forms of manyness. The many divisions, of which mind makes too much and in which it becomes enmeshed, are all within the domain of the illusion or the self-created objects of the mind. Within the domain of the objective world of imagination there are differences, *e.g.*, between the cobra, the tiger, the man, etc. But they are not in the mind, which is the origin of this imagination. All separateness vanishes as soon as the mind, which is the creator of this separateness, comes to its termination through the act of DIVINE GRACE.

During His visit to the Leper Colony near Amraoti, Meher Baba laid special stress on the following:—

- (1) God loves most those who suffer most.
- (2) Uninvited suffering is a blessing in disguise.
- (3) Both pain and pleasure ultimately end in nothing.
- (4) Lepers must give up despondency and despair, and must look upon their afflictions as a God-given opportunity to get nearer to Him.
- (5) Compared with the few suffering from physical leprosy, many in the world today are suffering from leprosy of the mind.

I have a plan of my own to open a world-wide asylum for all kinds of "lepers" in the world. —MEHER BABA.

Message of Meher Baba during his visit to the Institution for the Blind, Poona, on 11th April, 1959.

"People generally think that the blind are unfortunate. You may also sometimes think so. But it is people with the sight of eyes who are really unfortunate. They think that all the things they see are real. But they never see God, who alone is real.

All those who do not see God are blind. The only thing worth seeing is God. So, even those who have physical sight may be more blind than those who are physically blind and love God within.

Today I embrace you with my love so that some day you may have real sight and see ME (God) everywhere".

—MEHER BABA.

THE TRUE TEACHER**

(By FRANCIS BRABAZON)

THE True Teacher is that one
who, having no need to come, for my sake came;
having no need to remain, for my sake remains;
and who, having no need to go, will for my sake go:
who rocks me to sleep and at the same time awakens me;
makes me blind and at the same time sharpens my sight,
and removes my ignorance by making me know nothing:
who without admonition makes me aware of my shortcomings;
without urging me to effort awakens and sustains my interest;
and rewards me without letting my ego become inflated:
who puts on a coat when it is cold and takes it off when it is hot,
satisfies hunger and thirst in the same way as I do,
but does not sleep as I sleep but watches for me my sleeps of
unconsciousness:
who in every way in everyday life acts like an ordinary man,
is easily pleased and hurt, but being beyond pleasure and pain,
suffers as no one else can suffer and whose bliss shines through
his suffering:
who is the father of children he has never begotten,
the mother who never brought forth with labour,
the brother and friend who sees no one but himself:
who is the Goal and its revelation and the pathway to it
and the path-treader who treads no path any whither
because he is where he is and has never been anywhere else:
who, in fact, is the supreme Reality
but appears to my eyes as very man, to my mind as Rightness
and to my heart as the ineffable Beloved who may be approached
and attained.

** The author who is a close disciple of AVATAR MEHER BABA means Him as "The True Teacher" and this was laid by the author at the Feet of The AVATAR MEHER BABA. (Printed by permission).

SOME PRAYERS

(Dictated by AVATAR MEHER BABA)

O PARVARDIGAR, the Preserver and Protector of All!
Thou art without Beginning, and without End;
Non-dual, beyond comparison; and none can measure
Thee.

Thou art without colour, without expression, without form,
and without attributes.

Thou art unlimited and unfathomable, beyond imagination
and conception; eternal and imperishable.

Thou art indivisible; and none can see Thee but with
eyes Divine.

Thou always were, Thou always are and Thou always
will be.

Thou art everywhere, Thou art in everything; and Thou
art also beyond everywhere and beyond everything.

Thou art in the firmament and in the depths, Thou art
manifest and unmanifest; on all planes, and beyond all planes.

Thou art in the three worlds, and also beyond the three
worlds.

Thou art imperceptible and independent.

Thou art the Creator, the Lord of Lords, the Knower of
all minds and hearts; Thou art Omnipotent and Omnipresent.

Thou art Knowledge Infinite, Power Infinite, and Bliss
Infinite.

Thou art the Ocean of Knowledge, All-Knowing, Infinitely-
Knowing; the Knower of the past, the present and the future;
and Thou art Knowledge itself.

Thou art All-merciful and eternally benevolent.

Thou art the Soul of souls, the One with infinite attributes.

Thou art the Trinity—of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.

Thou art the Source of Truth; the Ocean of Love.

Thou art the Ancient One, the HIGHEST OF THE
HIGH; Thou art Prabhu and Parameshwar; Thou art the
Beyond-God, and the Beyond-Beyond-God also; Thou art
Parabrahma; Paramatma; Allah, Elahi; Yezdan; Ahuramazda,
God Almighty; and God the Beloved.

Thou art named EZAD; i.e., the Only One worthy of
worship.

THE CHRISTIAN PRAYER*

I N the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, O Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come unto Thee!

Thou Who art the God of the Gods, the Father Almighty, art the Father Everlasting!

O God, Almighty Father, the Lord of Lords! The King of Kings! All the earth doth worship Thee!

To Thee all angels, to Thee the Heavens and all Powers, To Thee all saints and all beings with unceasing voice do cry:

The Holy! The Holy of Holies!

Full are the Heavens and the Earth of the Majesty of Thy glory, Thou the Glorious! Thou the Exalted Effulgence; Thou the Praiseworthy in the assemblage of the Prophets; Thou the Celestial Beauty, art the Eternal Song of Thy Lovers. Thou Who art acknowledged, praised and worshipped throughout the world, in all churches, synagogues, mosques, temples and pagodas—

To Thee I most humbly bow down.

Thou of Unbounded Majesty, art the Father of the Creation;

Thy true adorable and Only Begotten Son, the Christ, is the King of Glory, the Saviour of Mankind, the Ancient One, the Highest of the High!

O Christ! The Messiah! Thou of the Father Everlasting art the Son Everlasting!

* By kind courtesy of "AWAKENER" Vol. II No. 3 & Vol. VIII No. 1.
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Thou, O most merciful Lord, hath taken upon Thee to deliver men from bondage to eternal glory;

O The Ancient One! The Redeemer! Thou, having first overcome the sting of ignorance, didst open to all the kingdom of Bliss, Knowledge, and Power!

I most humbly praise Thee, O My God!

I most firmly acknowledge Thee, O My God!

O My Soul of souls, I believe in Thee, because Thou art Truth itself,

I worship Thee, O Highest of the High, because Thou art the Only One worthy of adoration.

I love Thee above all things and beings, because Thou art Love Divine itself.

I beseech Thee, because Thou art Mercy itself!

I offer Thee all my thoughts, words and actions, my sufferings and joys because Thou art the Only Beloved.

I therefore beseech Thee, my God, my Lord of Lords, the Highest of the High, the Ancient One, to have mercy on me according to Thy Unbounded Mercy, and let my cry come unto Thee!

O My Beloved! Suffer me not to be separated from Thee for ever and ever!

— AMEN.

DEDICATION**

AND

INVOCATION**

“Lord and Master, we Thy servants assembled here to do Thy bidding, dedicate our lives to Thee, that Thy Love may illumine our Way. Lord of Love and Life, live in our hearts for evermore. In life and in death, to labour in Thy Service, our faith we pledge—with heart, and head, and hand.”

“O MASTER of the Great White Lodge,
Lord of the Religions of the World,
Who art once again with the earth that needs Thee,
Guide Thou our feet in the ways of Truth and Love.

Speak the Word of Peace,
Which shall make the peoples to cease from their
quarrellings,
Speak the Word of Brotherhood,
Which shall make the warring classes know themselves
as one.

Lead us with the Light of Thy Love,
Strengthen us with the Splendour of Thy Power,
That in Thee, and through Thee, the World be healed
and saved,
O Thou who art the Teacher alike of Angels and men.”

** This Dedication and Invocation is often recited by many lovers and workers of AVATAR MEHER BABA—many Theosophists believe Him as the Great (Fifth) World Teacher who is working at the present through men and their institutions, also in mystic ways through various channels—A tall candle is also lit as a symbol of His presence in our midst in the world today.

** Extracts from “The Ritual of the Mystic Star”.

REPENTANCE & PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

(Dictated by MEHER BABA)

O M PARABRAHMA-PARAMATMA, Ya-Yazdan, Ya-Allah
O God, Father in Heaven!

We repent, O God most merciful, for all our sins, for every thought that was false or unjust or unclean, for every word spoken that ought not to have been spoken, and for every deed done that ought not to have been done.

We repent for every deed and word and thought inspired by selfishness, and for every deed and word and thought inspired by hatred.

We repent most specially for every lustful thought, and every lustful action; for every lie; for all hypocrisy; for every promise given but not fulfilled, and for all slander and back-biting.

Most specially also, we repent for every action that has brought ruin to others, for every word and deed that has given others pain, and for every wish that pain should befall others.

In Thy unbounded mercy, we ask Thee to forgive us, O God, for all these sins committed by us, and to forgive us for our constant failures to think and speak and act according to Thy Divine Will.

THE HIGH-ROADS TO GOD

"....The quickest of these High-Roads to God lies through the God-Man, who is consciously One with the Truth. In the God-Man, God reveals Himself in all His glory with His Infinite Power, Unfathomable Knowledge and Unending Love."

An Introductory Sketch on the Life and Work of AVATAR MEHER BABA and His Expositions.

(Second—Revised—Edition : 1st November, 1962)

CORRIGENDA **

Page	Line			
1	20	for	unusual	read unusual
5	34	after	in his	insert usual, normal, routine
6	14	for	dies	read does
7	32	after	Australia,	insert Germany, Switzerland, Mexico, Lebanon,
8	7	after	He	insert generally
8	8	after	ritual.	insert There have been, however, a few exceptions, perhaps necessitated for special reasons concerning the respective individuals or groups.
14	last line	for	been fallen	read befallen
16	10	before	God	insert "
36	3	for	Indivisible	read Indivisible
68	13	for	are	read art
68	23	for	are	read art

** For the above corrigenda, the author and publisher is very grateful to an American lover and worker of Avatar Meher Baba—a woman who really appears to have the eyes of an eagle and one who has completely dedicated herself for the Living God MEHER BABA.

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				groups.	
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- (1) Love for God and intense longing to see Him and to be united with Him.
- (2) Being in constant company with the saints and lovers of God and rendering them whole-hearted service.
- (3) Avoiding lust, greed, anger, hatred and the temptations for power, fame and fault-finding.
- (4) Leaving everyone and everything in complete external renunciation, and in solitude, devoting oneself to fasting, prayer and meditation.
- (5) Carrying on all worldly duties with equal acceptance of success or failure, with a pure heart and clean mind and remaining unattached in the midst of intense activity; and
- (6) Selfless service of humanity, without any thought of gain or reward."

— MEHER BABA.

"....There are innumerable pages of your life record still to be written up, fair and blank they are as yet. Child of your Race and of your Age, seize the diamond pen and inscribe them with the history of noble deeds, days well-spent, years of holy striving. So will you win your way ever upward to the higher planes of Spiritual Consciousness. Fear not; faint not; be faithful to the ideal you can dimly see. You have (also) much to unlearn...."

—A MASTER'S LETTER.

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