

MEHER BABA ON GOD-REALIZATION

(The Practical side of Self-Realization)



MEHER ERA PUBLICATIONS, POONA.

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GOD REALIZATION

By The Author of "The Path of God-Realization"



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sayings and statements of AVATAR MEHER BABA for the benefit
of the public.**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

'THE MEHER MESSAGE', the first Journal in the name of Meher Baba introducing to this world at large his name and activities for the spiritual awakening of mankind began its publication from Ahmednagar, India, from January 1929 by K. J. Dastur, M. A., LLB., an ardent aspirant after spiritual attainments, fired with an enthusiasm that so unbalanced him that he became probably the first disciple to defect, leaving the Journal to a premature end by October 1931. The first number carried 'SAYINGS OF HIS DIVINE MAJESTY SADGURU MEHER BABA' and articles and poems by his disciples both Indian and foreign. Short discourses on spiritual aspects of life, man, God and Creation began appearing in and from its second number issued in February 1929. Some of these short discourses are reprinted in our last booklet : 'QUESTIONS MEHER BABA ANSWERED, PART I'. Although almost all of these discourses, messages, sayings and statements have been later on re-edited and incorporated in the later publications, the original form of early publications has its own charm, because it gives us an opportunity to observe the early phase of Beloved Baba's life and work. It is

the effort of MEHER ERA PUBLICATIONS, POONA, to reprint all such early writings in the name of Meher Baba for the benefit of all in his love.

The contents of this booklet : 'MEHER BABA ON GOD-REALIZATION' is compiled from a series of articles Meher Baba gave to THE MEHER MESSAGE from January 1930 to March 1931. The Journal, however, ceased its publication, its purpose having been served, before concluding the series. We have thus to borrow an article from the latest issue of the AWAKENER, Vol. XVI, No. 1, for which we are grateful to the Editor in Beloved Baba's Love and service. We are also grateful to the publishers of 'GOD TO MAN AND MAN TO GOD,' Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, (1955) and 'DISCOURSES BY MEHER BABA,' Sufism Reoriented Inc., San Francisco, U. S. A. (1967), from both of which we have drawn liberally to complete this booklet.

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There are many in India and abroad, who, directly and indirectly assist this publication work of *Avatar Meher Baba Poona Centre* and its other activities. They are indeed blessed, for they have found a place in the infinite heart of the Avatar of God, Who holds the whole world in His hands, Who sustains and supports the Creation, and Whose Love continues to redeem and reclaim mankind.

We give our time to Meher Baba,

He gives us eternity.

We give our energy to Meher Baba,

He gives us omnipotence.

We give our possessions to Meher Baba,

He gives us limitless abundance.

We give our love to Meher Baba,

He gives us perpetual communion.

We give our life to Meher Baba,

He gives us immortality.

Publisher

DECLARATION

The contents of this booklet are compiled by MEHER ERA PUBLICATIONS, POONA from writings in the name of Meher Baba, for AVATAR MEHER BABA POONA CENTRE, which is an Institution registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 (Bom./343/PN of 8-10-59) and the Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950 (Bom. XXIX of 1950) and established '*to spread Avatar Meher Baba's messages of Love and Truth.*' The Centre is a non-profit Institution located in Poona, India, the birth-place of Avatar Meher Baba. Profits from the sale of publications, if any, go directly back into the educational and charitable activities of the Centre and no personal benefit is derived by any individual or individuals. The benefits of the Centre activities are open to all persons irrespective of caste, creed, colour, community, race, religion or nationality.

Publisher

INTRODUCTION

ehar Baba introduces the subject of 'GOD-REALIZATION,' which is but discovery of one's own Self, by first inviting the attention of the aspirant after Truth to the existence of different man-made creeds and the folly of men in wasting time and energy in debating and establishing the superiority of the different religious conceptions of God through a simple and symbolic anecdote of the elephant and the blind men. He then awakens the awareness of the aspirant to the fact that there are as many religions as there are individual souls on this earth and advises all that one should follow the creed of one's own conscience and stick to that path which best suits one's spiritual inclination, mental attitude, physical aptitude and external surroundings and circumstances

Paths are many as laid down by those who sought and found. And each path has many by-paths. One thing common to all paths is love for God or Truth. And it is the sincerity of purpose, one pointed devotion, unshaken determination, loyalty and longing to become one with that Beloved God that make one worthy

receptacle of God's grace, the gate-way to the goal of all life.

Discourses Meher Baba gave are avenues of understanding life; insight and inspiration to discover one's own Self. Spiritual paths, he threw ample light on; but he was himself the Path and the Goal in one. The example of his life of self-giving love for and self-withering service to mankind will ever ennoble human life and enrich this earth, if emulated by man in his moment to moment life.

K. K. Ramakrishnan

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Avatar Meher Baba
At Guruprasad, Poona



GOD-REALIZATION

(The Practical Side of Self-Realization)

I

Introduction :

There were six blind men who had a very keen desire to know what an elephant was like. They had heard much about it—about its size and shape, trunk and tusks, etc., and being much interested on hearing the graphic description of it they became imbued with the desire of passing their hands over an elephant, to know for themselves what it resembled most. One of their friends, one day, took all of them before an elephant and made each of them get hold of a part of its huge body. One of the blind got hold of the huge creature's trunk, another passed his hands over one of its legs, the third one happened to touch its back and belly, the fourth got hold of its tail, the fifth its tusks and the last its head. As neither of them passed his hands over every limb of its body and each on different limbs, each of them formed a different opinion about the creature.

On being asked by the friend, who took them before it, as to what it resembled, the man who had held its trunk declared that the elephant was just like a big pipe, another who had caught hold of one of its legs

asserted that the elephant resembled nothing but the trunk of a big tree, the one who had passed his hands over its back and belly ridiculed the previous two and firmly opined that the elephant was just like a big wall, the man who had touched its tail maintained that the elephant was like a rope, the one who had grasped its tusk declared that the elephant resembled nothing but a file, and the last who had passed his hands only over its head called his companions madcaps and asserted that the elephant was just like a big ball of hard crust.

The above is a typical example of what we call incomplete knowledge. Each of the blind, though quite right in his judgment of the elephant according to what he actually felt, was entirely wrong in the eyes of the one, who could see the creature. How could the blind, by merely touching or feeling a portion of it, know what an elephant was like ? The man with sight, who without touching or feeling it could at a glance make out what it resembled, was not surprised at their ignorance.

The six blind men could be compared with the followers of different 'religions' (*Shariats*), each of whom, not having his internal sight opened, considers his own creed the only true one, his conception of God the only right one, and wastes his time and energy in arguing out his case and proving his cause. But the man, whose internal eye is opened, has nothing to do with the forms and formalities, dogmas and doctrines, customs and conventionalities of any of the creeds (religions);

but, directly perceiving Truth, marches on towards the Goal, i. e. God in the Beyond state.

In the Beyond state God or Paramatman transcends both the individual and Universal existence. Beyond form and beyond mind, He is entirely independent. You can call Him neither one nor many, for He is aloof from duality and non-duality. You cannot term Him personal or impersonal as He cannot be bound by any quality. And yet it is He Who appears as the individual soul, Who exists as the Universe, Who plays the part of the Creator, and Who manifests Himself as the Self-realized Saviour.

To realize God in the Beyond state is the eventual aim of every yoga. In order to attain to this state various paths have been chalked out. There is one path in which the intellect tries to reach the goal through meditation, concentration and inner sight ; there is another path in which the heart makes tremendous efforts and tries to become one with the Almighty Beloved through the medium of emotions and feelings which culminate in love ; there is still another path in which the spirit longs to unite with the One Indivisible Existence by means of selfless service to all. And again each of these paths has various branches, each of which, if followed to the end, may bring one to the high road that leads one to the Eternal Source of all life.

Even in this materialistic age a number of persons, in every part of the world, are making tremendous efforts

to realize the Self. Some adopt sannyas, others practise Raj Yoga ; some renounce everything, others become household devotees ; some practise Hath yoga, others seek the soul in tranquility ; some observe Brahma-charya, others advocate matrimony ; some fast and pray and practise self-help, others dedicate themselves to a Sadguru or a Perfect Master.

Really speaking, in order to realize God or to gain the Native State from Which everything emerges, everybody should follow the creed of his own conscience and stick to that path only which best suits his spiritual tendency, his mental attitude, his physical aptitude and his external surroundings and circumstances. And so in a series of articles I shall explain each and every path and method systematically and in details, so that each and every aspirant may derive benefit and may be able to follow and practise any method which he likes best and any of which, if practised with ardent zeal and burning longing till the very end, will lead him to the Ocean of Divinity.*

* The Meher Message, Vol. II, No. 1, January 1930, Pp. 2-5.



II

MEDITATION

As I said in the introduction to this subject I shall discuss and describe in this serial the various methods

of different Yogas and other practices that lead to Self-Realization. But before I do that, I must let you know about meditation, as it is invariably connected more or less and in one way or the other with almost all the Yoga practices and practical efforts towards the realization of Truth.

What is meditation ? Generally the word is used to express particular mental efforts and exercises in connection with religious and spiritual ideas, but it would not be incorrect to say that it is systematic thinking, and as such it is taken recourse to by many a person in the everyday life of the world. Before doing anything, one has to think about it ; in other words one has to meditate on the intended action. The thinking or meditation may, in worldly life, last for hours together, or only for a fraction of a minute, but it has to be undertaken consciously or sub-consciously, intentionally or unintentionally, before anything could be done or brought about. Now just consider that if thinking or meditation is necessary in achieving gross results, how necessary it must be in reaching the spiritual subtleties that lead to Self-Realization. But for the latter purpose the thinking is to be organized on the principle of Truth which is oneness, in contrast with the universe which is apparently based on manifoldness. Thinking is supposed by worldly people to be the process that leads only to the manifestation of external force which is displayed in a gross action. But such is not the case. Just as even a random thought can manifest force in

the shape of a bodily action, meditation or deep and properly organised thinking produces a force of its own which is very useful and helpful to a spiritual aspirant. The manifestation of such force produced through deep and methodical thinking may not become evident immediately or in a short time in every case, but meditation is bound to bear fruit in the long run.

There are many methods of spiritual meditation. The following six are the most important :

1. For those who are inclined to think of the impersonal aspect of the Almighty i. e. Impersonal God it is advisable to retire into solitude and, after taking a comfortable seat, begin to contemplate on Him thus : "God is one. God is infinite. God is everywhere. God is beyond everything." Then they should bring the immeasurable space, commonly known as the sky, to their mind's eye and begin to concentrate on the idea of the impersonal God across this imaginary background of the blank and unlimited sky for as long a time as possible.

2. The same way to sit for meditation as shown in the first example ; but the line of thought in this method must be as follows : "God is true. All else is false. This world and all that is and perceived is a dream, a mirage or unreal phenomenon. God is living within my own Self, as the soul of my soul." After contemplating on these thoughts for some time, one must turn one's attention to the heart, imagine a flame as

one's own Atman — Soul to be there, and concentrate as much and as long as possible on this imaginary flaming spot in the heart.

3. The line of thought to be followed in this kind of meditation (the other preliminary conditions to be the same as in the first two methods) is this : "I am not this body. I am not finite. I am the Self. I am eternal." Following some contemplation in this way, one must suddenly close the two external eyes as tightly as it is comfortably possible to do, and then mentally gaze intently upon the centre of the forehead from inwards as much and for as long as possible, avoiding all other thoughts, whether higher or lowly, during this concentration.

4. This is at once a very simple and very difficult kind of meditation. All that one has to do is to retire into solitude and sit in a comfortable position with both the external eyes closed and try to keep the mind blank. One has neither to think about God nor about the devil, neither about immortality nor about eternity, neither about the existence of the world nor about its non-existence. In short in this meditation one must try to remain mentally blank throughout the sitting, for as long a period as possible.

5. To sit aside in solitude, close the eyes and contemplate and mentally say and reiterate thus : "God is my Beloved. I am His lover. I want union with my Beloved, the Almighty Lord, the great God."

Following this process for a while, one should begin to repeat mentally any one of the names of the Almighty in any language, but in such a way that half of the name must be pronounced (of course mentally) while inhaling the breath and half of it to be pronounced while exhaling the breath. While carrying on this reiteration rhythmically one should try to concentrate all attention on the reiteration of the name only.

6. One, who is inclined to thinking of the personal aspect of the Lord i. e. Personal God, must sit with one's soul for one's companion in a quiet place, close the eyes and then try to bring before one's mind's eye the whole face of any Prophet, God-Incarnate, or Sadguru, of the past or the present age, and concentrate on it as long as possible.

In order to facilitate the bringing of the features of any Perfect Master to one's mind's eye, his portrait must be gazed at deeply, before closing the eyes in meditation.

It must have been noted that sitting in solitude is essential in every kind of meditation. There are a few more points that are equally important and that must be observed in meditations. We shall call the following four conditions the general rules for meditation.

a. Wherever and whenever possible one should select a quiet and solitary spot on or around a hill or mountain or by the bank of a river for sitting in

meditation. Failing this one should retire into a room all alone and keep the door closed during meditation.

b. It is unnecessary to lay down hard and fast rules regarding the posture. Any sitting posture, which one finds most convenient, should be adopted. But once it is adopted, one must stick to it and sit in the same way daily. Where there is a need of mental reiteration of a name of God, one must select any one name and adhere to it daily. Therefore the most comfortable sitting (not reclining) position and the most appealing name should be carefully selected once for all.

c. There is no length of time that can be called too long for any of the meditations, and every hour of the night and the day is suitable for any meditation ; but the best period for meditation is the early hours of the morning, 4 to 7 a. m.

d. It is preferable, though not quite necessary, to take a bath before sitting in meditation.

Now which of the methods is the best one ? It is not the method but the might that one would use behind a method that counts. The saying, one man's food is another man's poison, applies just as much to meditation as to gastronomy. It would be foolhardy to say that this or that particular kind of meditation is the best. That which suits one's own inclination or that which appeals most to one is the best kind of meditation to that one. The question of success depends on one's own self. Purity counts as much as perseve-

rance and devotion as much as determination. There is no question about the benefits of meditation. The chief of them are the following :

1. Meditation serves the excellent purpose of counteracting the might of *Maya*. One who meditates with sincerity may sooner or later become free from the clutches of *Maya* and be drawn to the Truth or God.

2. If along with sincerity meditation is practised with regularity and for a sufficiently long time, it is capable of making one's mind pure and permanently inclined to the divine path.

3. The third advantage of meditation lies in the fact that if the meditation is very deep and intense it is likely to produce the state of Yoga Samadhi. Though Yoga Samadhi has nothing to do with Nirvikalpa Samadhi and must not be confused with spiritual Perfection, an aspirant is likely to derive some benefit from it.

4. But the greatest advantage of meditation is that which lies in a chance for direct God-Realization ! Yes, it is not impossible to get the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Hakikat, the complete realization of the state 'I am God' through meditation ! But it is possible, provided that the meditator has come under the influence of a living Perfect Master, has pure and spotless character, and is possessed of dogged determination that knows no defeat,

even if it comes to the question of giving up the very life in the cause. With these qualities, one must meditate without any other object in view save that of becoming one with the Almighty.

Let it be borne in mind that there should be no limit to or a particular fixed period only for meditation. If meditation cannot be continued throughout the waking state without a break, it must be as long as possible. The intensity of meditation is in proportion to the longing for the Goal. Every hour, every minute, one must crave for God, as a drowning man craves for life. The longing for God brings about extreme unrest, a kind of mind-crushing torture and this mind-crushing torture must be so strong that no thoughts, except those of God, enter the devotee's mind. This intense longing is very rare in this matter-ridden age. In order to generate this longing, the help of a Perfect Master is required in most cases.

The grace of a God-Realised Master works wonders, but one must so to say extort this grace from him.

Be it noted that meditation or anything done in the cause of Truth never goes in vain. It is, as already said, bound to bear fruit sooner or later.

Now before I close this article, I must ask all aspirants to remember once for all that, if they are desirous of rapid progress and quick enlightenment, they should live upto the following four laws.

1. If possible observe celibacy ; if already married, keep as little sexual intercourse with your partner as possible ; consider, if you are a man, all other women as your sisters ; if you are a woman, all other men as your brothers.
2. Avoid all animal food, except milk and the products of milk. Don't partake of even eggs.
3. Avoid all intoxicating drugs and drinks. Tea is not an intoxicant, provided it is weak ; but be moderate in your habit of tea-drinking.
4. Curb yourself and never give way to anger. Whenever you fly into a passion, you contract red sanskaras, which are the worst of all.*

* The Meher Message, Vol. II, No. 2, February 1930, Pp. 2-8.



III

BHAKTI YOGA (1)

Out of a number of practices which lead to the ultimate goal of humanity, viz. God-realization, Bhakti yoga is one of the most important. Almost the whole 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 and prompted by divine love doubtless constitutes true Bhakti yoga. It follows, then, that the various ceremonies and rituals, which are the 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 incipency or initial state. A number of 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 coveying 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 states.

The first stage, which is elementary, concerns itself with ritualistic worship. The Namaz of the Mussalmans, the Tal-Bhajan and 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 states. The first stage of Bhakti yoga is therefore general, and almost every one is concerned with it and can practise it.

The second stage, which is intermediate, concerns

itself with the constant remembrance of God. The worshipper, through constant mental or physical repetitions (Nama-Smaran) 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 organised 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 the 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 the 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 corporeity.

From the above 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 upto the first stage. The average man should follow his creed, whatever it 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 about '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 in certain statements in a particular scripture about subjects that are generally beyond the sphere of intellect. It is the act of worship from 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 wor-

ship. 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 finger tips, but if he lacks in devotion from the heart, he is no better than a typewriter or a calculating machine.

A Mohammedan may laugh at the so-called idol-worship, but he becomes guilty of stray-thought-worship, if, while placing down his forehead in a *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*, *the Sijda amounts to having been offered 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 soon revolted against it, saying loudly to the Imam the leader of the prayers, "Your God is beneath my feet!" When an explanation was demanded from him for this apparently blasphemous conduct, he proved by his power of intuition the hypocrisy of the Imam, who at the particular moment of leading the prayers

was mentally busy arranging the finance for the forthcoming marriage of his daughter. As to the Saint's remark about having the 'God' of the Imam beneath his feet it turned out later on that there was actually a treasure trove 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 of 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, for contrary thoughts are very likely to disturb one's mind. It is because an average person's frame of mind is averse to remaining unchanged for any considerable period of time that the repeated efforts to evoke 'deep devotion are essential, and in fact are the turning point in such practices, that distinguish the right sense of religion from the shallow show of a mere routine.

We shall discuss the means to and the methods of higher Bhakti later on.*

* The Meher Message, Vol. II, No. 3, March 1930, Pp. 2—6



IV

BHAKTI YOGA (2)

Some persons may be so fitted 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, he, in the beginning of the second stage, has to make vigorous efforts in thinking about the Almighty as much and as often as possible. The efforts must be continued till 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 justly 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

sidelights in the second 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 give themselves upto subjective contemplation of 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 other. For instance one may *see* or one may *hear* (without using the gross organs of sight and sound) or perhaps even get established on the Path itself.

But for those few who *insist*, from the very depths of their souls and from the innermost cores of their hearts, on seeing the Reality actually face to face, at all costs and consequences, there is but only 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 that of practising internal renunciation, which means giving up all desires and passions, but entertaining the aspiration for Self-realization.

After renouncing fully and faithfully both in the

letter and spirit of the word as shown 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, on a mountain, or along a riverside with the name of Lord on his lip, 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 that he should never feel hungry or wherever and 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 to think 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 or pleasure. This is just what happens on the spiritual plane, too. One may become so very preoccupied with the ideal in view as to forget all about these supposed 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 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 Upasani Maharaj of Sakori seated himself in seclusion about forty-five years ago, on a hill near *Nasik* for full 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 and even breathing for years together, but there is no wonder about it as the God-realized possess infinite powers. But in the above example the noteworthy point is that at the time of remaining without food and 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 has completely renounced and retired into solitude, should do to secure the bare necessities of life, e. g. food when he feels a great pinch of hunger. He must go abegging for food, and may for this purpose slightly mix 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 in quantity. And no sooner is his most acute need supplied than he should go back and remain in solitude, all by himself but 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 take a share in the great and noble search for God. In order to elucidate the point we will now discuss *Sakam* and *Nishkam*, 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 after death, his worship is *Sakam*.

And this Sakam Bhakti is generally connected with the first stage of Bhakti yoga. When worship is offered from the heart for the sake of worship only and without any thoughts of reward in this or the next life, it is called Nishkam and is concerned with the second and third stage of Bhakti yoga. True, the aspiration to see and be one with God is the chief motive for 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 !”
i. e. “I always desired to see different things but since I have seen You, I desire to see nothing but You.”

Efforts must be made to turn Sakam Bhakti into Nishkam Bhakti, even in the first stage. In the beginning worship is necessarily Sakam. A man may cease to worship God for the sake of temporal gains. But 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 Sakam Bhakti is nothing but beggary, it is all the same the beginning of true Bhakti, as while begging directly or indirectly of God for any kind of favours, the worshipper sincerely praises God. Because the praise, actuated by the thought of gain, is from the heart, it is likely to turn into dis-

interested praise, which in turn leads to Nishkam Bhakti.*

* The Meher Message, Vol. II, No. 4, April 1930, Pp. 2-7.



V

KARMA YOGA

(The Path of Action or Selfless Service)

While meditation on the personal and impersonal aspects of God requires withdrawal of consciousness into the sanctuary of one's own heart, *concentration on the universal aspect of God is best achieved through the selfless service of humanity.* When the soul is completely absorbed in the service of humanity, it is completely oblivious of its own body or mind or their functions, as in meditation, and therefore new *sanskaras* are not formed. Further, the old *sanskaras* which bind the mind are shattered and dispersed. Since the soul is now centring its attention and interest not upon its own good, but upon the good of others, *the nucleus of the ego is deprived of its nourishing energy.* Selfless service is therefore one of the best methods of diverting and sublimating the energy locked up in the binding *sanskaras*.¹

1. Meher Baba : " The Removal of Sanskaras : II ", Discourses Vol. I, San Francisco, Calif. USA, Sufism Reoriented Inc., Pp. 82-83.

The *Karmayogin* avoids the chaotic activity of selfish desires as well as the apparent inaction of utter non-wanting, but he leads a life of selfless service in which there is *not the slightest alloy of any personal motive* and which furthers the release of divinity in all phases of life.²

When a man realises that he can have a more glorious satisfaction by widening the sphere of his interest and activities, he is heading towards the life of service. At this stage he entertains many good desires. He wants to make others happy by relieving distress and helping them. And though even in such good desires there is often an indirect and latent reference to the self, narrow selfishness has no grip over good deeds. Even good desires may, in a sense, be said to be a form of enlightened and extended selfishness, for, like bad desires, they too move within the domain of duality. But as man entertains good desires his selfishness embraces a larger conception which eventually brings about its own extinction. Instead of merely trying to be luminous, arrestive and possessive, man learns to be useful to others.³

Selfless service is accomplished when there is not the slightest thought of reward or result, and when there is complete disregard of one's own comfort or convenience or the possibility of being misunderstood. When you are wholly occupied with the welfare of others you can

2. Meher Baba : "Selfless Service", Discourses Vol. I., Pp. 128.

3. Meher Baba : "Selfishness", Discourses Vol. I, Pp. 29-30.

hardly think of yourself. You are not concerned with your comfort and convenience or your health and happiness. On the contrary you are willing to sacrifice everything for their well-being. Their comfort is your convenience, their health is your delight and their happiness is your joy. You find your life in losing it in theirs. You live in their hearts and your heart becomes their shelter. When there is true union of hearts, you completely indentify yourself with the other person. Your act of help or word of comfort supplies to others whatever might be lacking in them, and through their thoughts of gratitude and good-will you actually receive more than you give.

Thus, through living for others, your own life finds its amplification and expansion. The person who leads a life of selfless service is therefore hardly conscious of serving. He does not make those whom he serves feel that they are in any way under obligation to him. On the contrary, he himself feels obliged for being given a chance of making them happy. Neither for show nor for name and fame does he serve them. Selfless service is completely achieved only when a man derives the same happiness in serving others as in being served himself. The ideal of selfless service frees him from the *sanskaras* of craving for power and possession, of self-pity and jealousy, of evil deeds actuated through selfishness.*

* Meher Baba : "Removal of Sanskaras : II ", Discourses Vol. I, Pp. 83-84.

Those who are inspired by a spirit of selfless service are quick to render unto humanity all possible help through provision of the necessities of life like clothes and shelter, food and medicine, education and other amenities of civilization. In pursuing the path of duty they are not only prepared to fight for the weak against aggression and oppression, but also to lay down their very lives for the sake of others. All these types of service are great and good, but from the ultimate point of view, the help which secures spiritual freedom for humanity surpasses them all ; it is insuperable in importance.

The way to help others attain spiritual freedom is far different from the way of rendering other types of help. For the hungry you can provide food, and they have only to eat it. For the naked you can provide clothes, and they have only to wear them. For the homeless ones you can provide houses, and they have only to dwell in them. For those who are in the agonies of spiritual bondage, however, there is no *ready-made* provision which can give them immediate relief. *Spiritual freedom has to be won by oneself for oneself through watchful and unfailing war against the lower self and lower desires.* Those who would be soldiers in the cause of Truth have to help all, not only in launching upon the thrilling enterprise of attaining victory over oneself, but also in every step which they take towards that attainment. There is no other way of sharing their burden.**

** Meher Baba : "Work For the Spiritual Freedom of Humanity", Discourses : Vol. III, Pp. 102-3.

Karma Yoga or the Path of Action consists in *acting up to the best intuitions of the heart without fear or hesitation*. In *Sadhana* what counts is *practice* and not mere *theory*. Sound practice is far more important than sound theory. Practice which is based upon right knowledge will of course be more fruitful, *but even a mistake in a practical direction may have its own valuable lessons to bring*. Mere theoretical speculation however, remains spiritually barren, even when it is flawless. Thus a person who is not very learned but who sincerely takes the name of God and does his humble duties whole-heartedly, may actually be much nearer to God than one who knows all the metaphysics of the world but who does not allow any of his theories to modify his everyday life.*

Fulfilment of the *Sadhana* of *Karma Yoga* requires that action should spring from perception of the Truth. Enlightened action does not bind because it is not rooted in the ego and is selfless. Selfishness represents ignorance, while selflessness is a reflection of the Truth. The real justification for a life of selfless service is to be found in this intrinsic worth of such life and not in any ulterior result or consequence. *The paradox of selfless action is that it actually brings to the aspirant much more than could ever come within the purview of ignorant selfishness*. Selfishness leads to a narrow life which moves

* Meher Baba : "The Deeper Aspects of *Sadhana*", Discourses Vol. II, p. 189-90.

round the false idea of a limited and separate individual, but selfless action contributes towards the dissipation of the illusion of separateness and turns out to be the gateway to the unlimited life where there is realisation of *All-selfness*. What a person has may be lost and what he desires to have may never come to him, but if he parts with something in the spirit of an offering to God, it has already come back to him. Such is the *Sadhana* of *Karma Yoga*.*

In true *Karma Yoga* or the life of perfect action, there is proper adjustment between the material and the spiritual aspects of life. In this type of life consciousness is not fettered to the mundane and material things, but at the same time it is not allowed to fly away from everyday existence. The mind is not allowed to be immersed in the material life of gnawing wants, nor is it allowed to be merged in spiritual bliss. It is used to face and tackle the problems of life from the point of view of spiritual understanding.**

..To serve the Master is to serve your own self in every other self. The Master dwells in universal consciousness and wills universal spiritual well-being. To serve the Master is therefore to participate in his cause, which is to serve all life. While sharing in the work

* Meher Baba : "The Deeper Aspects of Sadhana", Discourses Vol. II, Pp. 191-2.

** Meher Baba : "The Life of The Spirit", Discourses Vol. I, Pp. 121

of the Master, the disciple may be required to be in touch with the world ; but, though moving in the world in accordance with the work which is in store for him, he is in inward contact with the Master as Infinite Being. Therefore, *by sharing in the work of the Master the disciple comes closer to him and becomes an integral part of his consciousness.* Serving the Master is the quickest means of realising him.

The service which the disciple can offer the Master is not only linked with the universal cause of humanity but is one of the most potent means of bringing the disciple nearer his spiritual goal. When the disciple's service is spontaneous, whole-hearted, selfless and unconditional it brings him more spiritual benefit than can ever come by any other means. Serving the Master is a joy for the disciple even when it means an ordeal that tries his body or mind. Service offered under conditions of discomfort or inconvenience is a test of the disciple's devotion. The more trying such service becomes, the more welcome it is for the disciple and as he voluntarily accepts physical and mental suffering in his devoted service to the Master, he experiences the bliss of spiritual fulfilment.***

*** Meher Baba : " True Discipleship ", Discourses Vol. II, Pp. 47-48.



VI

DNYANA YOGA (1)

Like Bhakti Yoga, Dnyana Yoga has also three stages, though the three stages of either cannot be divided into separate compartments. But whereas renunciation is necessary in the third or last stage of Bhakti Yoga it is essential in the very beginning of Dnyana Yoga, because Dnyana Yoga has a principal connection with *Chit Suddhi* or the purity of mind which is closely connected with and is the outcome of renunciation. Indeed it can safely be asserted that renunciation is the very basis of Dnyana Yoga. And, therefore, before dealing with the three stages and aspects of Dnyana Yoga I should, in this article, explain the true significance of renunciation.

Renunciation or Tyaga invariably follows Vairagya or disgust with the world. In fact there can be no Tyaga without Vairagya, except in exceptional cases, and this Vairagya being the forerunner and the root cause of renunciation, we shall discuss a few of the many kinds of Vairagya.

First kind : Shallow Vairagya :

This is as easy as it is shallow. The mere sight of a passing funeral procession is likely to cause in many

a man disgust with the life he leads, or some unexpected calamity may turn hundreds of people to think about things other than worldly, as well as make some pause and ponder over the question of giving up all that is shallow and get hold of something substantial and reliable. But all this is just a momentary spell of the shallow kind of Vairagya, and its influence will pass away sooner than a cloud covering the sun.

Second kind : Temporary Vairagya :

This may last for a few hours or at the most a few days. It may arise, on the one hand, from purely worldly affairs, such as a quarrel amongst friends or the members of a family, a sudden financial loss in business or gambling, or the passing away of a near and dear one, without any idea about God and a search for God. On the other hand it may arise from hearing a good argument in favour of the substantiality of the Spirit or reading a convincing argument upon the frailty of the world and its affairs, or finding the truth about God proved in a drama or a film. Both these types of Vairagya, with or without any idea about spirituality, are temporary. Both these Vairagyas may turn into actual Tyaga and one may really leave all and try to get out somewhere out of the din of the world. But he or she is sure to come back to the original position. This immature Vairagya is of no use at all in the realm of divinity. This reminds me of an Irani youth who, some years ago, came to me, saying that he felt like

retiring from wordly affairs in search of the Substantial. I liked the idea and encouraged him to put it into practice. The man one evening actually left home and went to a solitary spot near the Parvati Temple at Poona. He remained there for some hours but when at nightfall he heard the foxes yelping, he felt so alarmed that he took to his heels as if his life was in danger, and did not stop even for breath until he went back into his house, perhaps never to venture out on the quest of the 'Unknown' again. I know another such amusing but true case of a man who once had the second type of temporary Vairagya. This man felt himself so very impressed about this passing show of the world at the end of a drama, entitled "Bhagirath," that he went straight to a Sadhu at Kurla (Bombay), instead of going home to his wife and children, and there surrendered himself to the Sadhu. The latter accepted him and as one of the first conditions of discipleship got the poor man's hair shaved completely and then ordered him to sit in the open until called for. So far as the shaving was concerned, his Vairagya—Tyaga remained unshaken, but when on the following day the sun began to warm the unprotected crown of his head, his enthusiasm for spirituality began to dampen. By noon the climax was reached. Far from any Vairagya being left in him, the man actually felt repentance for rushing into renunciation so very suddenly. To his discomfiture, his wife, who had been searching for him, happened

to appear on the spot just then, and forced him to retreat with her tongue and slippers.

Third kind : Serious Vairagya :

Through unfavourable circumstances in life, like repeated failures in business or keen disappointments in home or society, one may get serious Vairagya that may lead to a permanent or prolonged renunciation and one may begin begging and borrowing for one's requirements from others. But such Vairagya—Tyaga, far from having any spiritual value, is nothing but the manifestation of rank cowardice. On the other hand, he who gets a similar serious fit of Vairagya and a feeling of being fed up with this ever changing ephemeral world for no particular reason in view, not even with any ideas about God and the spiritual Path, but also without being forced out by circumstances as mentioned above, and if he avoids begging and borrowing, he is sure to stumble upon the Path sooner or later. However, such serious but at the same time perfectly voluntary Vairagya is the outcome of very good sanskaras gathered together in the previous lives. Sant Tukaram, the great Sadguru, did get this serious kind of voluntary Vairagya before he became perfect. Tukaram was by profession a Baniya but he was also a Darya.* He was not a prince like Buddha, but all the same he was a king by heart.

* Baniya literarily means a grocer as well as denotes a particular caste among the Hindus.

Darya literarily means ocean in Urdu, though it is also used as Darya-Dil or the magnanimous heart.

Had he not been so generous and magnanimous, his would have been a happy life from the worldly point of view. But he was naturally inclined towards giving and giving whatever he could to others — so much so that a quarrel at home with his wife was not a rare occasion. Under the circumstances it is not strange that a serious Vairagya of the spiritual type, that is, not as a result of wordly unhappiness or troubles, was engendered in him. This serious Vairagya soon turned into *pacca* Vairagya of the fourth kind (with which I shall deal in the next article), leading to the love for God that ultimately made him one with Him, or to be more correct, made him God himself, with the constant complete non-changing eternal consciousness that he was That. And now there are millions who revere his august name.**

** The Meher Message, Vol. III, No. 2, February 1931, Pp. 2-6.



VII

DNYANA YOGA (2)

Renunciation : External & Internal

Fourth Kind : *Pacca* Vairagya.

No number of social calamities can bring about this Vairagya ; nor is the Vairagya following a political

or a financial disaster or even a world catastrophe *Pacca* or mature. It can arise only from or can be the outcome only of an acute thirst for Truth, a deep longing for the Reality and a pure love for God, as was possessed by Gautama Buddha. He was a prince born in purple and had all the resources of a mighty monarch at his command to create a sort of heaven on earth for himself, yet when Buddha got the Vairagya He forsook all His royal passions at a stroke. Neither circumstances forced Him in any way to renounce, nor any circumstances could come in His way, once He got the *Pacca Vairagya* to give effect to the highest possible external renunciation. He left all for the sake of Truth and therefore there is no wonder that He found it at last. *Pacca Vairagya* and highest renunciation, so to speak, go hand in hand. There is no half-hearted decision or timid deliberation about *Pacca Vairagya*. It is a deep and deliberate inner dislike for everything except Truth, Reality or God, and therefore naturally it results in the highest renunciation, the first and foremost necessity in Dnyana Yoga.

However, in exceptional cases, as we have already said, renunciation or Tyaga of this highest type is possible even without any kind of Vairagya at all, specially at the command of a Sadguru, as happened in the case of Raja Gopichand. Like Buddha, Gopichand was also a great prince and perhaps surpassed the former in personal enjoyment of his position as the husband of

sixteen hundred queens whom he had at the command of his pleasure. But unlike Buddha Gopichand never had any Vairagya at all. All the same, at the command of his Guru to whom Gopichand had the good fortune of surrendering himself, he not only renounced all princely possessions including his sixteen hundred queens but also after that, as ordered by his Master, actually went begging from those very queens whom he once commanded and enjoyed.

Now renunciation itself is of two kinds, viz. external and internal. By external renunciation we mean complete non-attachment to all things worldly. This gross non-attachment is the first essential step along the Dnyan Yoga, inasmuch as it generally brings about the internal renunciation and thus leads to Divinity. Detachment from plurality makes one invariably attached to unity. This is what Christ meant when he said, "Sell all and follow the Cross." But this does not mean that the so-called Tyagins and Sanyasins that unfortunately swarm the country, particularly at places of pilgrimage and who have adopted the Sanyas only as a sort of profession that helps them indulge in an unproductive life of idleness, are practising detachment. Non-attachment implies previous attachment, just as renunciation implies previous possession. Where there is no possession there can be no renunciation, and where there is no attachment there can be no question of non-attachment.

Internal renunciation means a check upon and control of desires, leading to the purification of the mind so that it may not fall a prey to the forces of lust, greed and anger. By this we do not mean that a man should at once cease to have any thoughts about lust and greed or that he should never feel angry. This is impossible ; and were it possible, then there would be no question left of any renunciation. If there is no anger, then what remains there to control ? And similarly if there are no thoughts about lust or greed, no check or control would be necessary for the desires which would no longer be there. In fact none but the following three types of persons can be said to be completely free from lust, greed and anger :

- (1) The man who is completely emotionless through some physical deformity ;
- (2) The man who is substantially advanced on the Path and is also of a loving disposition by nature ;
- (3) The God-Realized.

While instructing Ali on internal renunciation, Prophet Mohamed said, "Kill anger ; this is your greatest foe." And the way Ali carried out the instructions provides a fine example of how to control anger. Once it so happened that Ali heard a man abusing his Master and felt himself so very moved that he was about to kill him on the spot, but the man just then spat at him,

whereupon Ali's indignation turned into personal anger. And what did he do ? Remembering the Prophet's words Ali "killed" the fit of anger and let go the man unharmed.*

* The Meher Message, Vol. III., No. 3, March 1931, Pp. 2-5.



VIII

RENUNCIATION TO REALIZATION

For the ordinary mass of human beings, the best course to follow to acquire spiritual knowledge and go dliness is renunciation, which is termed, in Gujarati, *Sanyas*, *Tyag*.

Now this renunciation arises either out of an unpleasant experience ; or by getting tired of the world, (Vairag, disillusionment) ; or it arises out of a longing to see God, (Talab, thirst). Renunciation must come, in any way whatsoever; it is the first step in the attainment of any spiritual knowledge.

Renunciation means, as Vivekananda says in his poem on the *Sanyasi* : 'to eat and drink anything by anybody, to sleep anywhere, to wander, and to be quite aloof and free from any karma, more particularly from women and gold.'

By renouncing everything in this way, all the past sanskaras are destroyed, and new ones are not formed. 'Eat what you get till karma's powers are spent,' says Vivekananda.

But such renunciation, too, is difficult. If any *sadhu* wanders here and there, partaking of food just sufficient to satisfy his hunger and keeps himself from greed and passion, he is said to be far higher than any family man in the world. The following couplet of Kabir splendidly illustrates the state and condition of a Fakir :

"Only one who desires just barely enough food to satisfy his hunger and clothes to protect his body can be called a real Fakir."

Otherwise the *sadhus* and *sanyasis* today are generally mere idlers, wandering about only to get free food and clothing, without having to work ; again, they are always engrossed in talk of 'wine and woman.' Worldly people are far superior to these hypocrites.

But the fact remains that the world and its environs are like chains and bindings in every way, whether one's actions are good or bad.

The one who renounces everything and remains in the company of a Sadguru is superior to the hypocritical *sadhus* and *sanyasis* mentioned above. Still higher is he who, renouncing all, and staying in a Sadguru's company, carries out the duties entrusted to him by the Sadguru.

Service to country, service to relatives and friends, and even to the world, acts of charity and so on, all involve bindings. All actions, good and bad, create *sanskaras*. There is no other remedy but renunciation. Hence it's said, 'Let go thy hold, Sanyasi bold !' Keep your hands open to allow all actions to escape, to avoid actions, to do nothing. In the company of your Sadguru, eat, drink, and be free of cares, and do not mind if the world calls you cowardly. For to renounce the world takes courage, which those cowards attached to it do not have. Besides, in all worldly affairs there is incompleteness, imperfection, in spite of any amount of bold facing of difficulties.

The past *sanskaras* of those who face the world and all its difficulties are such that they make mistakes, and hence must suffer. In the case of many, they fail in whatever they do, and are severely disappointed. Many such disappointments lead to desperation and disgust with the world, and finally to *Vairag* (disillusion) and renunciation. Some have a natural fear of any sexual experience, and all these fears (of sins of any sort) are also due to past *sanskaras*.

He who is a coward in materialism becomes either the greatest sinner or a spiritual master. Those who have been the greatest masters in their time have been the greatest cowards in materialism ; they were heroes in the spiritual world.

You all think that renunciation is far easier than

materialism, that giving up worldly life is easier than loving it. Not so ! It is very difficult ; only those who wish to give up their very lives can venture it.

To quote a Persian line : "*Love at first seemed easy, but as time went on, innumerable difficulties fell on us.*"

After everything external has been renounced, desires and ambitions have to be given up. Even if internal renunciation does not come, the external renunciation helps. For internal renunciation the best remedy is the company (*sat-sang*) of a sage. Those who remain in the world and practice complete renunciation do well too, but the case of those who renounce and keep company with a sage is quite different.

This 'sat-sang' or company of a holy one, is of three kinds :

1. One who gives, takes not, and stays.
2. One who gives not, takes not, but stays.
3. One who gives not, takes, but stays.

This give and take business is in all material things. The first two, who take not, are better ; the last, who takes, is ordinary. But all three derive great benefits, for they stay in the *sat-sang* after they have renounced all. The giving and not giving all depend on their past *sanskaras*. All three are far superior to the so-called *sanyasis* of the world ; not only the first two, but even the last one, who 'takes' but 'stays' in *sat-sang*. But the ordinary *sanyasis* who have renounced everything,

are better than those still in the world and in the entanglements of Maya.

To be in *sat-sang* means to obey the guru's orders.

Staying aloof from the world because of disappointments, committing suicide or going mad are quite different, naturally, from true renunciation. Yet renunciation is 'death.' If one gets a guru, well and good ; otherwise untold difficulties occur.

All this is a question of the unfolding of sanskaras. That is the essence. If the sanskaras of our actions, attached to the *Paramatma* within, are wiped out, it's all right. Otherwise, if they accumulate, there is just that much more stress and burden.

Saint Tukaram took renunciation on being disappointed and disgusted with world ; then the love of God was born in him, followed by the darshan of a guru. All this was due to his previous sanskaras and tremendous preparation of self, such as cannot be imagined ! Unthinkable difficulties, acute stress and strain which created such powerful sanskaras that he got the opportunity for renunciation, then for finding his guru, then for the guru's grace, etc., all within a few years of one lifetime.

Almost the whole company of Ramakrishna's followers were *sanyasis*. He always said : "Do not do any actions, not even reading and writing — nothing

else but food and drink, the essentials for preserving one's body, which is the 'means' (*sadhana*) for Realization."

'Doing' and 'being' are what drown you all. 'To do' nothing and 'to be' nothing is the truth.

"When 'I' (my being) was not, I was God.

When 'I' was nothing — I was God;

This "being" (I, ego) drowned me !

Oh ! Had there not been that cursed 'I' !

In what an unlimited Ocean of Bliss would I have been !

I would have been Perfect, if these, 'my being' and
'my being anything' were not there !"*

* The Awakener, Vol. XVI, No. 1, Pp. 18-19.



IX

RENUNCIATION OF WANTS LEADS TO THE ROAD TO HAPPINESS

Selfishness comes into existence owing to the tendency of the desires to find fulfilment in action and experience. It is born of fundamental ignorance about one's own true nature. Human consciousness is clouded by the accumulation of various types of impressions

deposited by the long course of the evolution of consciousness. These impressions express themselves as desires, and the range of the operation of consciousness is strictly limited by these desires...Owing to the hindrance of multifarious desires, it becomes impossible for the soul to find free and full expression of its true being, and life becomes self-centred and narrow. The entire life of the personal ego is continually in the grip of wanting, *i. e.*, an attempt to seek fulfilment of desires through things that change and vanish. But *there can be no real fulfilment through the transient things*. The satisfaction derived from the fleeting things of life is not lasting and the wants of man remain unfulfilled. There is thus a general sense of dissatisfaction accompanied by all kinds of worries. *

Selfishness inevitably leads to dissatisfaction and disappointment, because desires are endless. The problem of happiness is, therefore, the problem of dropping out desires. Desires, however, cannot be effectively overcome through mechanical repression. They can be annihilated only through knowledge. If you dive deep in the realm of thoughts and think seriously for just a few minutes, you will realise the emptiness of desires. Think of what you have enjoyed all these years and what you have suffered. All that you have enjoyed through life is today nil. All that you have suffered through life is also nothing in the present. All

* Meher Baba : 'Selfishness'. Disc. Vol. I, Pp. 26-27 & Pp. 28-29.

was illusory. It is your right to be happy and yet you create your own unhappiness by wanting things. Wanting is the source of perpetual restlessness. If you do not get the thing you wanted, you are disappointed. And if you get it, you want more and more of it and become unhappy. Say, "I do not want anything," and be happy. The continuous realisation of the futility of wants will eventually lead you to Knowledge. This Self-knowledge will give you the freedom from wants which leads to the road to abiding happiness.

Wants should be carefully distinguished from needs. Pride and anger, greed and lust are all different from needs. You might think, "I need all that I want," but this is a mistake. If you are thirsty in a desert, what you need is good water, not lemonade. As long as man has a body there will be some needs, and it is necessary to meet these needs. But wants are an outcome of infatuated imagination. They must be scrupulously killed if there is to be any happiness. As the very being of selfishness consists of desires, renunciation of wants becomes a process of death. Dying in the ordinary sense means parting with the physical body but dying in the real sense means renunciation of low sense-desires. The priests prepare men for false death by painting gloomy pictures of hell and heaven, but their death is illusory, as life is one unbroken continuity. The real death consists of the cessation of desires, and it comes by gradual stages.

The dawn of love facilitates the death of selfishness.
Being is dying by loving*.

* Meher Baba : 'Selfishness', Disc. Vol. I, Pp. 28-29.



X

RENUNCIATION LEADS TO SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

Human beings do not have Self-illumination, because their consciousness is shrouded in *sanskaras* or the accumulated imprints of past experience. In them the will-to-be-conscious with which evolution started has succeeded in creating consciousness. But it does not arrive at the knowledge of the Oversoul, because the individual soul is impelled to use consciousness for experiencing *sanskaras* instead of utilising it for experiencing its own true nature as the Oversoul. The experiencing of *sanskaras* keeps it confined to the illusion of being a finite body trying to adjust itself in the world of things and persons.

The individual souls are like the drops in the ocean. Just as each drop in the ocean is fundamentally identical with the ocean, the soul which is individualised due to *bhas* or illusion is still the Oversoul and does not really become separate from the Oversoul. Yet the envelope

of *sanskaras* by which consciousness is covered, prevents it from having self-illumination and keeps it within the domain of *maya* or duality. In order that the soul should consciously realise its identity with the Over-soul, it is necessary that consciousness should be retained and that *sanskaras* should be entirely removed. *The sanskaras which are contributory to the evolution of consciousness themselves become impediments to its efficacy in illuminating the nature of the Oversoul.* Henceforth the problem with which the will-to-be-conscious is confronted is not that of evolving consciousness but that of releasing it from *sanskaras*.*

If the mind is to be freed from the bondage of ever-accumulating *sanskaras*, it is necessary that there should be an end to the creation of new *sanskaras*. Fresh mult implication of *sanskaras* can be stopped through renunciation. Renunciation may be external or internal. External or physical renunciation consists in giving up everything to which the mind is attached, *viz.*, home, parents, wife, children, friends, wealth, comforts and gross enjoyments. Internal or mental renunciation consists in giving up all cravings, particularly the craving for sensual objects. Though external renunciation in itself is not necessarily accompanied by internal renunciation, it often paves a way for internal renunciation. Spiritual freedom consists in internal renunciation and not in external renunciation ; but external renunciation is a great aid in achieving internal renunciation.

* Meher Baba : 'The Removal of Sanskaras : I', Disc. Vol. I, Pp. 65-66

The person who renounces his possessions disconnects himself from everything that he had or has. This means that the things which he renounces are no longer a source of fresh *sanskaras*. He thus takes an important step towards emancipating himself from his *sanskaras* by putting an end to the process of forming new *sanskaras*. This is not all that is achieved through external renunciation. With the renouncing of everything, he also renounces his past bindings. The old *sanskaras* connected with his possessions get detached from his mind and, since they are withheld from expressing themselves, they get worn out.

For most persons, external renunciation creates a favourable atmosphere for the wearing out of *sanskaras*. A man who possesses gold and power is exposed to a life of indulgence and extravagance. His circumstances are more favourable for temptations. Man is mostly what he becomes by being chopped, chiseled and shaped by the sculptor of environment. Whether or not he can surmount his surroundings depends upon his strength of character. If he is strong, he remains free in his thought and action, even in the midst of action and reaction with his environment. If he is weak, he succumbs to its influence. Even if he is strong, he is likely to be swept off his feet by a powerful wave of collective mode of life and thought. It is difficult to withstand the onslaught of a current of ideas and avoid falling prey to circumstances. If he resists the circumstances, he is likely to be carried away by some wild

wave of collective passion and get caught up in modes of thought which he is unable to renounce. *Though it is difficult to resist and overcome the influence and surroundings, it is easier to escape from them.* Many persons would live a chaste and straight-forward life if they were not surrounded by luxuries and temptations. The renunciation of all superfluous things helps the wearing out of *sanskaras* and is, therefore, contributory to the life of freedom.*

* Meher Baba : 'The Removal of Sanskaras : I,' Disc. Vol. I, Pp. 67-69.



XI

SOLITUDE AND FASTING AS RENUNCIATION

The two important forms of external renunciation which have special spiritual value are : (1) solitude and (2) fasting.

Withdrawal of oneself from the storm and stress of the multifarious worldly activities and occasional retirement into solitude are valuable for wearing out the *sanskaras* connected with the gregarious instinct. But this is not to be looked upon as a goal in itself.

Like solitude, fasting also has great spiritual value. Eating is satisfaction, fasting is denial. Fasting is physical when food is not taken in spite of the craving for the enjoyment of eating ; it is mental when food is taken not for its delights and attachment, but merely

for the survival of the body. External fasting consists in avoiding direct contact with food in order to achieve mental fasting.

Food is a direct necessity of life and its continued denial is bound to be disastrous to health. Therefore external fasting should be periodical and only for a short time. It has to be continued till there is complete victory over the craving for food. By bringing into action all the vital and psychic forces to withstand the craving for food, it is possible to free the mind from attachment to food. External fasting has no spiritual value when it is undertaken with the motive of securing the formation of the body or for the sake of self-demonstration. It should not be used as an instrument for self-assertion. In the same way, it should not be carried to the extreme — until the body is reduced to its limits. Self-mortification through prolonged fasting does not necessarily promote freedom from the craving for food. On the contrary, it is likely to invite a subsequent reaction towards a life of extravagant indulgence in food. If, however, external fasting is undertaken in moderation and for spiritual purposes, it facilitates the achievement of internal fasting. When external and internal fasting are whole-hearted and faithful, they bring about the unwinding of the *sanskaras* connected with the craving for food.*

* Meher Baba : 'The Removal of Sanskaras : I,' Disc. Vol. I, Pp. 69-70.



XII

RENUNCIATION OF DESIRES LEADS TO TRUE FREEDOM

People differ in their capacity and aptitude for rejecting desires. Those in whom desires arise with great impulsive velocity are unable to curb them at their source, but they can refrain from seeking their fulfilment through action. Even if a man has no control over the surging of desires, he can prevent them from being translated into action. Rejection of desires by controlling actions avoids the possibility of sowing seeds of future desires. On the other hand, if a man translates his desires into action, he may spend up and exhaust some impressions, but he is creating fresh impressions during the very process of fulfilling the desires, and is thus sowing seeds for future desires which, in their turn, are bound to demand their own satisfaction. The process of spending up or exhausting impressions through expression and fulfilment does not in itself contribute towards securing release from *sanskaras*.

When desires arise and their release into action is barred, there is plenty of opportunity for spontaneous cogitation about these desires. This cogitation results in the wearing out of the corresponding *sanskaras*. It

should be noted, however, that such spontaneous cogitation does not bring about the desired result if it takes the form of mental indulgence in the desires. When there is a deliberate and wanton attempt to welcome and harbour the desires in the mind, such cogitation will not only have no spiritual value but may itself be responsible for creating subtle *sanskaras*. Mental cogitation should not be accompanied by any conscious sanction for the desires which arise in consciousness, and there should not be any effort to perpetuate the memory of these desires. *When desires are denied their expression and fulfilment in action and are allowed to pass through the intensity of the fire of a cogitative consciousness which does not sanction them, the seeds of these desires are consumed.* The rejection of desires and the inhibition of physical response in time effect an automatic and natural negation of the past *sanskaras*.

Rejection of desires is a preparation for desirelessness or the state of non-wanting which alone can bring about true freedom. Wanting is necessarily binding, whether it is fulfilled or not. When it is fulfilled, it leads to further wanting and thus perpetuates the bondage of the spirit. When it is unfulfilled it leads to disappointment and suffering which, through their *sanskaras*, fetter the freedom of the spirit in their own way. There is no end to wanting because the external and internal stimuli of the mind are constantly alluring it into a state of wanting or disliking (which is another form of wanting)

something. The external stimuli are the sensations of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. The internal stimuli are those that arise in the mind-stuff of man from the memories of the present life and the totality of *sanskaras* gathered by consciousness during the evolutionary period and during human lives. When the mind is trained to remain unmoved and balanced in the presence of all external and internal stimuli, it arrives at the state of non-wanting, and by not wanting anything (*except the Absolute Reality which is beyond the opposites of stimuli*) it is possible to unwind the *sanskaras* of wanting.

Wanting is a state of disturbed equilibrium of mind and non-wanting is a state of stable poise. The poise of non-wanting can only be maintained by an unceasing disentanglement from all stimuli, whether pleasant or painful, agreeable or disagreeable. In order to remain unmoved by the joys and sorrows of this world, the mind must be completely detached from the external and internal stimuli. Though the mind is constantly fortifying itself through its own constructive suggestions, there is always the chance of these outposts of defence being washed away by some sudden and unexpected wave arising in the ocean of natural and mental environment. When this happens you may, for the time, feel completely lost, but the attitude of non-attachment can keep you safe. This attitude consists in the application of the principle of "*Neti, Neti*," "Not-this, Not-this." *It implies*

constant effort to maintain watchful detachment in relation to the alluring opposites of limited experience. It is not possible to deny only the disagreeable stimuli and remain inwardly attached to the agreeable stimuli. If the mind is to remain unmoved by the onslaughts of the opposites, it cannot continue to be attached to the expressions of affection and be influenced by them. The equipoise consists in meeting both alternatives with complete detachment.

*...Detachment should not be allowed to form any nucleus upon which the ego could fasten itself, and at the same time, it should not be an expression of one's inability to cope with the storm and stress of worldly life. The things that condition pure and infinite being should be given up through an attitude of immense strength which is born of purity and enlightenment, and not from a sense of helplessness in the face of strife and struggle. Further, true detachment does not consist in clinging to the mere formula of "Neti, Neti," which sometimes becomes an obsession of the mind without any deep-felt longing for enlightenment. Such interest in a mere formula of negation often exists side by side with an inward dwelling on the temptations. Detachment can be integral and whole-hearted only when it becomes a part and parcel of one's nature.. *The finality of spiritual experience does not consist of a bare negation. To bring it under a negative formula is to limit it by means of an intellectual concept. The negative formula**

has to be used by the mind to decondition itself, but it must be renounced before the ultimate goal of life can be attained. Thought has to be made use of in order to overcome the limitations set up by its own movement, but when this is done, it has itself to be given up. This amounts to the process of *going beyond the mind*, and this becomes possible through non-identification with the mind or its desires. To look objectively upon the body as well as all thoughts and lower impulses, is to get established in blissful detachment and to negate all the *sanskaras*. This means freeing the soul from its self-imposed illusions like "I am the body," "I am the mind" or "I am desire" and gaining ground towards the enlightened state of "*I am God*," "*Anal Haqq*," or "*Aham Brahmasmi*."*

* Meher Baba : "The Removal of Sanskaras : I, " Disc. Vol. I., Pp. 71-74-75-76.



XIII

COMPLETE NON-WANTING POSSIBLE IN SUPRAMENTAL EXISTENCE

....*The life of the spirit does not consist in turning away from worldly spheres of existence, but in reclaiming them for the divine purpose which is to bring love, peace happiness, beauty and spiritual perfection within the reach of everyone.*

However, he who would live the life of the spirit must remain detached in the midst of worldly things without becoming cold or indifferent to them. Detachment should not be misunderstood as lack of appreciation. It is not only compatible with true evaluation of things, but is its very condition. Craving creates delusion and prevents right perception. It nourishes obsessions and sustains the feeling of dependence upon external objects. Detachment promotes right understanding and facilitates perception of the true worth of things without making consciousness dependent upon external things. To see things as they are is to grasp their real significance as parts of the manifestation of the One Life, and to see through the veil of their apparent multiplicity is to be free from the insistent obsession for anything in its imagined isolation and exclusiveness. *The life of the spirit is to be found in comprehensiveness which is free from clinging, and appreciation which is free from entanglement.* It is a life of positive freedom in which the spirit infuses itself into matter and shines through it without submitting to any curtailment of its own claims.*

The intellect of most persons is harnessed by innumerable wants. From the spiritual point of view, such a life is the lowest type of human existence. The highest type of human existence is free from all wants and is characterised by sufficiency or contentment. Everyone

* Meher Baba : ' The life of Spirit ', Disc. Vol. I, P. 125.

is seeking happiness, but few have it, for lasting happiness dawns only when there is complete freedom from wants. This highest state of non-wanting may outwardly seem to imply inaction and to be easy of attainment. However, if anyone tries to sit quietly without inwardly wanting anything and with full consciousness (*i. e.*, without going to sleep), he will realise that such a state of non-wanting is very difficult to attain and that it can be sustained only through tremendous spiritual activity. In fact, complete non-wanting is unattainable as long as life is mind-ridden. It is possible only in supramental existence. One has to go beyond the mind to experience the spiritual bliss of desirelessness.

Between the two extremes of a life harassed by wants and a life which is completely free from wants, it is possible to arrive at a mode of practical life in which there is harmony between the mind and the heart. When there is such harmony the mind does not dictate the ends of life, but only helps to realise those ends which are given by the heart. It does not lay down any conditions to be fulfilled before any utterance of the heart is adopted for translation into practical life. In other words *it surrenders its role of judge*, which it is accustomed to play in its intellectual queries concerning the nature of the universe, and accepts unquestioningly the dictates of the heart.

The mind is the treasure-house of learning but the heart is the treasure-house of spiritual wisdom.. In most persons

the mind accepts ends from the promptings of wants, but this means denial of the life of the spirit. Only when the mind accepts its ends and values from the deepest promptings of the heart does it contribute to the life of the spirit. *Thus mind has to work in co-operation with the heart; factual knowledge has to be subordinated to intuitive perceptions; and heart has to be allowed full freedom in determining the ends of life without any interference from the mind.* The mind has a place in practical life, but its role begins after the heart has had its say. Spiritual understanding is born of harmony between mind and heart.*

* Meher Baba : 'The Avenues To Understanding', Disc. Vol. I, Pp. 139-140.



XIV

GOD-REALIZATION IS SELF-DISCOVERY

Most people do not even suspect the existence of God. Others, through early upbringing or the influence of tradition, belong to some faith and acquire belief in God's existence from education and their surroundings : their faith keeps them bound to rituals, ceremonies or formal beliefs but rarely brings about a radical change in their lives. There are others, philosophically minded, who have an inclination to believe in the existence of

God, either because of their own speculations or because of the assertions of others ; for them, God is a probable hypothesis or an intellectual idea. They do not, however, know God from personal knowledge, and God is not to them an object of intense desires.*

A genuine aspirant to the knowledge of God is not content with spiritual information based on hearsay, neither is he satisfied with inferential knowledge. For him, spiritual realities are not merely the object of thought and their acceptance or rejection is fraught with momentous implications. He searches for direct knowledge.*

God either exists or does not exist : if he exists, search for him is justified ; even if he does not exist, there is nothing to lose by seeking him. But man does not usually turn to the search for God as a voluntary and joyous enterprise ; he has to be driven to this search by a disillusionment about worldly things from which he cannot detach his mind. Ordinarily, man is engrossed in activities concerning the material world and lives through its experiences of joys and sorrows without suspecting the existence of a deeper Reality ; he aims at the pleasures of the senses and avoids suffering. "Eat, drink and be merry" is his philosophy. But he cannot entirely avoid suffering, and even when he succeeds in having pleasures he becomes satiated. While he thus goes through the daily round of

* God to Man and Man to God : Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, Pp. 25-27

experiences, there arise occasions when he asks himself, "What is the end of this ?" Such an occasion may present itself in some happening for which he is not mentally prepared ; it may be disappointment in some confident expectations, or an important change in his situation demanding radical readjustment and the giving up of cherished habits. Usually such occasions arise from the frustration of some deep craving of which he is possessed. If that craving has no chance of being satisfied, the psyche receives a shock that may cause it no longer to accept the life that hitherto has been lived without question.*

Under such circumstances a person may be driven to despair, and if the tremendous power generated by the psychic disturbance remains uncontrolled it may lead even to serious derangement of mind. Such a catastrophe overcomes those in whom desperateness is allied with thoughtlessness, for they allow impulse to have free sway. Desperateness can only work destruction. But the desperateness of a thoughtful person under similar circumstances is altogether different because the energy released is intelligently harnessed and directed towards a purpose. In the moment of such divine desperateness a man may take the important decision of discovering the aim of life. There thus comes into his life the search for lasting values. Hence-

* God to Man and Man to God : Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, Pp. 25-27

forth the question that refuses to be silenced is, "What does my life lead to?"

Divine desperateness is the beginning of spiritual awakening. When the psychic energy of man is centred upon finding the goal of life, he is using the power of desperateness creatively. He is no longer content with the fleeting things of this life and is sceptical about the values he has so far accepted. His desire is to find the Truth at any cost and he does not rest satisfied with anything short of it. Divine desperateness is the beginning of spiritual awakening because it gives rise to the aspiration for God-realization. In the moment of divine desperateness, when everything seems to give way, a man may decide to take any risk for realizing the possible significance of his life.

All the usual solaces have now failed him ; but at the same time his inner being refuses to reconcile itself with the idea that life is devoid of meaning. If he does not then admit some hidden reality that he has not hitherto known, there is nothing worth living for. The alternatives are that there is a hidden spiritual reality, which prophets have described as God, or that everything is meaningless. The second is unacceptable to a sane man, therefore he must try the other. This man turns to God.

Since there is no obvious access to this hidden reality, he looks upon his experiences as a possible avenue to an explanation, and thus goes back to those experiences

with the purpose of gathering light upon them. This involves looking at everything from a new angle of vision and entails a reinterpretation of experience. Now the seeker not only has experience but tries to fathom its spiritual significance : he is not concerned merely with what it is but with what it means in relation to this hidden goal. And this revaluation of experience results in gaining an insight which could not have come to him before.

Revaluation of experience amounts to the acquisition of wisdom, and each addition to spiritual wisdom brings about a modification of the general attitude to life. So the purely intellectual search for God (or the hidden spiritual reality) has its place in the practical life of man ; his life now becomes an experiment with perceived spiritual values.

The more he carries on this intelligent and purposive experimentation with his own life the deeper becomes his comprehension of its meaning, until he discovers that in undergoing a transformation of his psychic being he is arriving at the perception of the significance of life.*

With the clear and tranquil vision of the real nature and worth of life he realizes that God, whom he has been seeking, is no stranger. He is the Reality itself and not a hypothesis ; he is the Reality seen with

* God to Man and Man to God : Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, Pp. 27-28.

undimmed vision — the Reality in which he has had his being, and with which he is identified. So though he begins by seeking something new he arrives at understanding of an ancient thing. The spiritual journey does not consist in gaining what a person did not have, but in the dissipation of ignorance concerning himself and life, and the growth of understanding which begins with spiritual awakening. *To find God is to come to one's own self.**

To arrive at self knowledge is to arrive at God-realization. God-realization is different from all other states of consciousness because they are experienced through the medium of the individual mind, whereas God-consciousness is not dependent upon the individual mind. A medium is necessary for knowing anything other than one's self ; for knowing one's self no medium is necessary. In fact, the association of consciousness with the mind is a hindrance to the attainment of realization. As the seat of the ego the individual mind is conscious of being isolated. From it arises the limited individuality, which at once feeds and is fed by the illusion of duality, time and change. To know the self as it is, consciousness has to be freed from the limitation of the individual mind. In other words, the individual mind has to disappear while consciousness is retained.

Throughout the life history of the soul its consciousness grows with the individual mind and the workings

* God to Man and Man to God : Victor Collancz Ltd., London, Pp. 28-31.

of consciousness proceed against its background. Consciousness comes to be firmly embedded in the individual mind. So when the mind is in abeyance consciousness also disappears. The interdependence of the individual mind and consciousness is illustrated by the tendency to become unconscious when there is any effort to stop mental activity through meditation.**

The limited mind is the soil in which the ego is rooted ; and the ego perpetuates ignorance through the many illusions in which it is caught. The ego prevents the manifestation of infinite knowledge already latent in the soul, and is the most formidable obstacle in the attainment of God. A Persian poem says, "It is extremely difficult to pierce through the veil of ignorance ; for there is a rock on fire." As the flame of fire cannot rise very high if a rock is placed upon it, a desire to know one's own true nature cannot lead to the truth as long as the burden of the ego lies upon consciousness. Success in finding oneself is rendered impossible by the ego, which persists throughout the journey of the soul. Though more and more detached as the soul advances on the Path, it remains until the last stage of the seventh plane.

The ego is the centre of human activity, and the attempts of the ego to secure its own extinction may be compared with the attempt of a man to stand on his own shoulders. Just as the eye cannot see itself, the

** God to Man and Man to God : Pp. 35-36.

ego is unable to end its own existence. All that it does to bring about self-annihilation only adds to its existence for it flourishes on the very efforts directed against itself. Thus it is unable to vanish through its own activity, though it succeeds in transforming its nature. The vanishing of the ego is conditioned by the melting away of the limited mind which is its seat.

The meaning of God-realization is the emancipation of consciousness from the limitations of the mind. When the individual mind is dissolved, the related universe vanishes, and consciousness is no longer tied to it. Consciousness then becomes unclouded and is illumined by the Infinite Reality. While immersed in the bliss of realization the soul is oblivious of objects in the universe. conscious experience of God requires the dissolution of the ego and the turning of full consciousness towards the Ultimate Reality... In God-realization, the mind does not merely forget itself but has (with all its impressions) lost its identity ; and the consciousness hitherto associated with the individual mind is freed from trammels and brought into direct unity with the Ultimate Reality. Since there is no veil between consciousness and the Ultimate Reality, the soul is fused with the Absolute, and eternally abides in knowledge and bliss.

What was latent in the infinite becomes manifest. After the attainment of God-realization, the soul discovers that it has always been the Infinite Reality, and

that its looking upon itself as finite during the period of evolution and spiritual advancement was an illusion. The soul also finds that the infinite knowledge and bliss that it enjoys have been latent in the Infinite Reality from the beginning of time and that it became manifest at the moment of realization. Thus the God-realized person does not become different from what he was before realization. He remains what he was : the difference that realization makes in him is that while previously he did not consciously know his true nature, he now knows it. He knows that he has never been anything other than what he now knows himself to be, and that he has been through a process of self-discovery.

The process of attaining God-realization is a game in which the beginning and the end are one. The attainment of realization is nevertheless a distinct gain. There are two kinds of advantages. One consists in getting what we did not previously possess ; the other consists in realizing what we really are. God-realization is of the second kind. However, there is an infinite difference in the soul that has God-realization and one that has not. Though the soul that has God-realization has nothing it did not already possess, its explicit knowledge makes God-realization of the highest significance. The soul that is not God-realized experiences itself as finite, and is constantly troubled by the opposites of joy and sorrow. But the soul that has realization is lifted out of them and experiences the Infinite.

In God-realization, separate consciousness is discarded and duality is transcended in the abiding knowledge of identity with the Infinite Reality. The world of shadows is at an end and the curtain of illusion is forever drawn. The distress of the pursuits of limited consciousness is replaced by the tranquillity and bliss of truth-consciousness and the restlessness of temporal existence is swallowed up in the peace of eternity.*

The happiness entered into by the God-realized person is unconditioned and self-sustained, eternally the same, without ebb and flow. He has arrived at certainty and equanimity... In the happiness of the God-realized there is no duality. The happiness of the God-realized is self-grounded... The happiness of the God-realized is the divine grace itself.**

* God to Man and Man to God : Pp. 31-33.

** Pp. 35-36.



XV

GLORY OF GOD-REALIZATION*

God-realization is the goal of creation. All earthly pleasure is a shadow of the eternal bliss of God-realization ; all mundane knowledge is reflection of the absolute truth of God-realization ; all human might is but a fragment of the infinite power of God-realization. All that is noble, beautiful and lovely, all that is great

* God to Man and Man to God : Pp. 39-40.

and good and inspiring in the universe, is an infinitesimal fraction of the unfading and unspeakable glory of God-realization.



XVI

THE PRICE OF GOD-REALIZATION*

The eternal Bliss, the Absolute Truth, the Infinite Power, and the Unfading Glory of God-realization, are not to be had for nothing. The individualized soul has to go through the pain and struggle of evolution and reincarnations before it can inherit this treasure, and the price it has to pay for coming into possession of it is its own existence as a separate ego. The limited individuality must disappear if there is to be entrance into unlimited existence; individuality which is identified with a name and form creates a veil of ignorance before the God within ; for this ignorance to disappear the limited individual has to surrender his limited existence. When he leaves not a vestige of his limited life, what remains is God. The surrender of limited existence is the surrender of the firmly rooted delusion of having a separate existence. It is not the surrender of anything real but of the false.

* God to Man and Man to God : P. 40



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XVII

GOD ALONE IS **

..The entire process of evolution is from unconscious divinity to conscious divinity, a process in which God himself, eternal and unchangeable, assumes an infinite variety of forms, enjoys an infinite variety of experiences, and transcends an infinite variety of self-imposed limitations. Evolution, from the standpoint of divinity is a divine sport, in which the Unconditioned tests the infinitude of his absolute knowledge, power and bliss in the midst of all conditions. But evolution, from the standpoint of the creature, with limited knowledge, limited power, limited capacity for bliss, is an epic of alternating rest and struggle, joy and sorrow, love and hate, until, in the perfected man, God balances the opposites and transcends duality. Then creature and Creator recognise themselves as one ; changelessness is established in the midst of change, eternity is experienced in the midst of time. God knows himself as God, unchangeable in essence, infinite in manifestation, ever experiencing the supreme bliss of Self-realization in continually fresh awareness of himself by himself.

** God to Man and Man to God : P. 47



XVIII

GODHOOD IS BEYOND GOOD AND BAD*

The ego lives through either the bad *sanskaras* or the good, or through a mixture of good and bad. When there is balancing of the good and bad so that they both disappear what remains is a clean state of mind which reflects the Truth. Nothing is written on the self. The *sanskaras* are deposited on the mind, the self remains untarnished ; but only when the mind is clean can it reflect the Truth. When the mind sees the self there is Illumination. The mind seeing the self, however, is not the same as the self knowing itself, for the self is not the mind, but God beyond the mind. Therefore, even after the mind has seen the self it has to be merged in the self if the self is to know itself in Truth. This is Realization. In this state the mind with its good and bad *sanskaras* has disappeared. It is a state beyond the mind and beyond good and evil. There is one existence characterised by infinite love, peace, bliss and knowledge. The strife between good and evil has disappeared because there is neither good nor evil, only the one undivided life of God.

* God to Man and Man to God : Pp. 152-153.



THE STATE OF CONSCIOUS GODHOOD**

When the aspirant ascends to the seventh plane he experiences the last merging which is called *Fana-Fillah* or the final annihilation of the ego in God. Through this merging the aspirant loses his separate existence and becomes permanently united with God. He is now one with God and experiences himself as none other than God himself. This seventh plane *Fana-Fillah* is the terminus of the spiritual Path, the goal of all search and endeavour. It is the *Sāhaj Samadhi* or the *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* characteristic of conscious Godhood. It is the real awakening. The aspirant has now reached the other shore of the vast ocean of imagination, and realizes that this last Truth is the only Truth and that all other stages on the Path are illusory. He has arrived at the destination.

** God to Man and Man to God : Pp. 210-211.

THE GOD-STATE IS BEYOND THE MIND*

To dwell in *Sahaj Samadhi* is to experience the God-state, in which the self knows itself to be God, because it has shed all limiting factors. The God-state of the *Siddha* is in contrast to the body-state of the worldly man. The worldly man concerned with eating, drinking, sleeping and the satisfaction of other bodily desires, does not extend his consciousness beyond the body, and thinks in terms of the body. He lives and moves and has his being in time and space.

The life of energy :

The first step towards the God-state of *Sahaj Samadhi* is taken when the body-state is transcended. The shedding of the body-state means entering the sphere of existence that is comprised of energy. The self is not subject to time and space. It is lifted to the domain of energy. Body or form is a solidification of energy ; and to rise from the world of forms to the sphere of energy amounts to an advance towards a pure state of being. The energy-state is free from many of the limitations that obtain in the world of forms. Consciousness then vibrates in and through energy. In the energy-state

* God to Man and Man to God : Pp. 124-126.

the eating and drinking of the body-state are paralleled by the absorption and assimilation of energy. The self at this level exercises control over energy. It is through the use of energy that it seeks fulfilment. But its actions are still within the domain of spiritual limitation. It can see, hear and smell things that are inaccessible to the body-state, and can perform many things (such as producing light in the dark, or living for thousands of years only on the drinking of energy), which appear to be miracles to those who are in the body-state. But the sphere of its existence is that of energy, and its life is completed by energy. The energy-state is the state of the spiritually advanced, but is far from being the state of perfection, which expresses itself through the *Sahaj Samadhi* of the *Siddha*.

The life of the mind :

The second important step towards *Sahaj Samadhi* is taken, when the self transcends the domain of energy and enters the domain of the mind. All energy is an expression of the mind, therefore the transition from the energy-state to the mind-state constitutes an advance towards the God-state of *Sahaj Samadhi*. In the mind-state, consciousness is directly linked with the mind. Here consciousness is in no way fettered by the body or energy. The saints who are in the mind-state have full control over the body and energy, they can read and influence the minds of others and even raise the dead. However, the mind-state is still within the

domain of duality and illusion and has to be transcended before the attainment of union with the Infinite.

The entire advance from the very beginning consists in gradually curtailing and transcending the working of the individual mind. The mind functions in the body-state and the energy-state. In the body-state the mind thinks in terms of the body, in the energy-state in terms of energy, and in the mind-state in its own terms. However, even when the mind thinks in its own terms it does not attain knowledge and realization of the Infinite, because it itself is the veil between its thought and the Truth. Though the mind may be unencumbered by the life of the body or the life of energy, it is still limited by separate consciousness. The mind has to be merged and dissolved in the Infinite before it is possible to experience the God-state of *Sahaj Samadhi*. Form is solidified energy, energy is an expression of the mind, the mind is the covered mirror of Eternity, and Eternity is the Truth, which has thrown off the mask of the mind.

To discard the limiting mind is no easy thing. The chief difficulty lies in the fact that the mind has to be annihilated through the mind itself. One indispensable condition is the most intense longing for unity with the Infinite Reality. But patience is equally necessary. One Master told his disciple that to attain the highest state he had to be bound to a wooden plank, with his hands and feet tied, thrown into a river, and then to

strive to keep his garments dry. The disciple could not understand the meaning of this. He went from place to place until he came to another saint and asked the meaning of the injunction given by the Master. The saint explained that it meant that to attain God he had to long for union with him, as if he could not live another moment without it, and yet to have the inexhaustible patience that could wait for endless years. If there is lack of intense longing for unity with God, the mind lapses into its usual *sanskritic* working, and if there is lack of infinite patience, the very longing that the mind entertains sustains the working of the limited mind. Only when there is a balance between infinite longing and infinite patience can the aspirant hope to pierce through the veil of the limited mind ; and this combination of extremes comes only through the grace of the Master.

To dwell in *Sahaj Samadhi*, is to dwell in Truth-consciousness. This state cannot be grasped by anyone whose mind is active. *The God-state* is beyond the mind ; for it dawns when the limited mind disappears in the final union with the Infinite. The self now knows itself through itself, not through the mind. The worldly man knows that he is a human being, not a dog ; in the same way, in *Sahaj Samadhi* the self knows that it is God, not finite. The worldly man does not have to keep repeating to himself that he is not a dog, and in *Sahaj Samadhi*, the self does not need any inducing of

God-Consciousness through repeated suggestions ; it knows itself to be God through effortless intuition.

The life in eternity :

The Life in Eternity : He who has *Sahaj Samadhi* is established in the knowledge of the self. This knowledge does not come and go. In the state of ignorance the aspirant looks upon himself as a man or woman, as the agent of limited actions and the experiencer of joys and pains ; but in the state of knowledge he knows himself as the self, which is not limited by these things, and is untouched by them. Once he knows his own true nature, he does not get involved in ignorance. This state of God-consciousness is infinite, characterized by unlimited understanding, purity, love and happiness. To be initiated in *Sahaj Samadhi* is to arrive at the endlessness of life in Eternity.



XXI

UNION WITH THE MASTER THE REALIZATION OF THE TRUTH*

The Master is an affirmation, of the unity of all life ; allegiance to the Master, therefore, brings about a

* God to man and Man to God : Pp. 140-141.

gradual dissociation from the ego-nucleus which affirm separateness. After this crisis in the life of man, all mental activity has a new reference in the light of its relation to the Master as the manifestation of the infinite Truth. The person henceforth experiences his acts as no longer initiated from the limited "I", but inspired by the Truth. He is no longer interested in the well-being of the limited self, but only in the Master as representing universal and individual life. He offers all his experiences and desires to the Master, reserving neither the good nor the evil for the limited "I", thus stripping the ego of its contents. This bankruptcy of the ego does not interfere with the process of integration, which is created around the new centre established by the Master. When the ego-nucleus is bankrupt and devoid of any power or being, the Master as Truth is firmly established in consciousness as the guiding and animating principle. This is at once the attainment of union with the Master and the realization of the Infinite Truth.

As the ego gradually adjusts itself to the spiritual requirements of life through the cultivation of humility, selflessness and love or whole-hearted surrender and offering to the Master, it suffers drastic curtailment in being, and it not only offers increasingly reduced resistance to spiritual enfoldment, but undergoes a radical transformation that causes the ego, as an affirmation of separateness, completely to disappear. The

intermediate steps of the reduction of the ego and the softening of its nature are comparable to the trimming and the pruning of the branches of a tree, whereas the final step of the annihilation of the ego amounts to the uprooting of the tree. When the ego disappears entirely, there arises the knowledge of the True Self. Thus, the long journey of the soul consists in developing from animal consciousness the explicit self-consciousness of the limited "I", then in transcending the "I", and, through the medium of the Master, to be initiated into the consciousness of the Supreme and Real Self, as an everlasting and Infinite "I am" in which there is no separateness, which includes all existence.



MEHER BABA

ON

GOD-REALIZATION

(The Practical Side of Self-Realization)

GLOSSARY

Bhakti = Ibadat = Bandagi = Worship.

Nam Smaran = Zikra = Reiteration of the Almighty's
any name.

Sakam = Riyaae = Matlabi = Selfish.

Nishkam = Be-Riyaae = Bin-Matlabi = Selfless.

Tyaga = Sanyas = Tark = Renunciation.

Chit Suddhi = Khooloose Qulb = Mind purity.

Vairagya = Vahshat = Mixture of dislike and
disgust.

Vairagya = Disgust with the world or worldly life.

Purna = Pacca = Mature.

Guru = Murshed = Master.



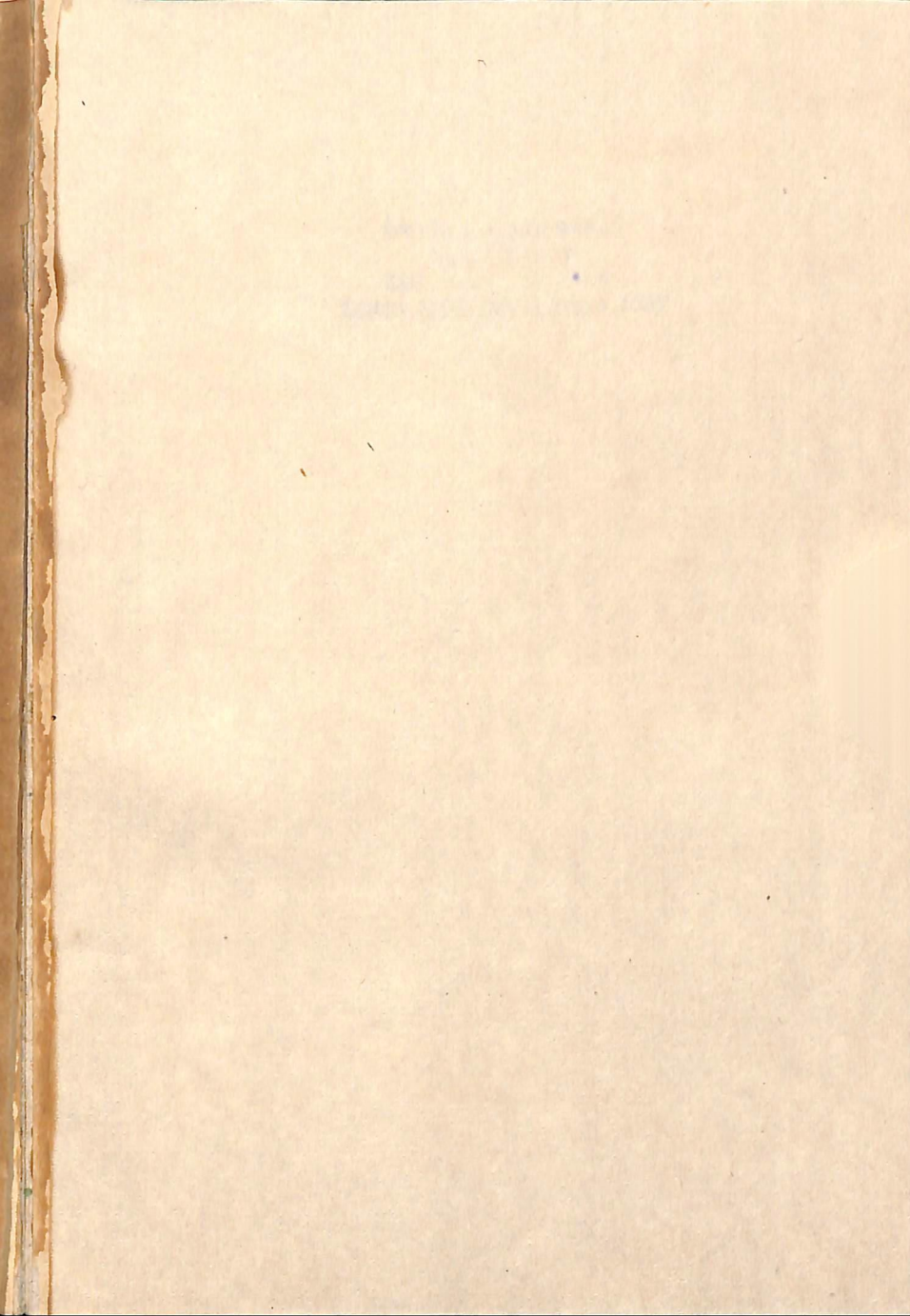
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* Philosophers, atheists and others may affirm or refute the existence of God, but as long as they do not deny the existence of their own being they continue to testify to their belief in God—for I tell you, with divine authority, that God is Existence, eternal and infinite. He is EVERYTHING.

Whether man knows it or not, there is for him only one aim in life, and eventually he realizes this when he consciously experiences his own eternal and infinite state of "I Am God."