

M e h e r B a b a
T h e
A n c i e n t O n e

TO COMMEMORATE THE
50th ANNIVERSARY
10th July 1925 — 10th July 1975
OF
AVATAR MEHER BABA'S
UNIQUE SILENCE

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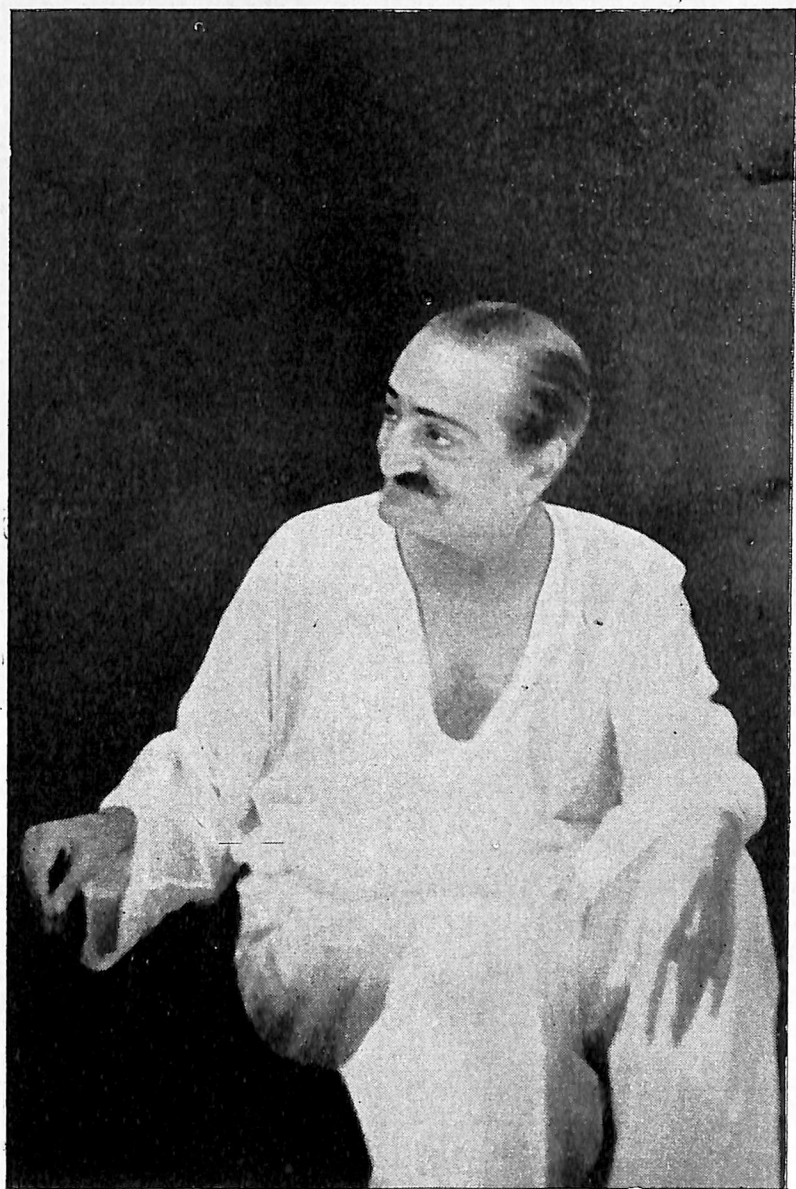
AVATAR MEHER BABA BOMBAY CENTRE,
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AVATAR MEHER BABA

LIFE SKETCH

The Avatar (Christ, Rasool) is God-Man, the total manifestation of God in human form, when God knows Himself as God whilst living the life of a man amongst men. God is One, without a second, and He as the Avatar or Christ is always one and the same, but the manifestation is repeated from time to time, "in different cycles, adopting different names and different human forms, in different places, to reveal Truth in different garbs and different languages". He comes as Zoroaster, Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, whenever "the spiritual law has been lost sight of, and materiality is rampant". In his life as man, the Avatar lives as other men, as a king, or a carpenter or a charioteer—but within the particular circumstance which he chooses as the arena for his work, he continually, openly and subtly, demonstrates a meaningful livingness which is applicable to everyone irrespective of their station in the world.

"When God becomes man it is due to His love for His beings;" and so it is "possible through love for man to become God".

Meher Baba has further stated : "Irrespective of doubts and convictions, and for the Infinite love I bear one and all, I continue to come as the Avatar, and am judged time and again by humanity in its ignorance, in order to help man distinguish the Real from the false. I have only one message to give and I repeat it age after age to one and all: love God."

MEHER BABA, by name Meherwan Sheriar Irani, was born in Poona, India, on the 25th February 1894, to a middle-class Zoroastrian family of Persian origin. His father Sheriar Mundegar, born in Persia, was an ardent seeker since his youth, and his thirst for spiritual enlightenment brought him to India where he spent years of arduous wandering in search of Truth. One day a vision revealed to Sheriarji that the goal he was seeking would be attained in the son who would be born to him ; as a result of this he finally settled down in Poona and

married the daughter of a Persian merchant who had migrated to India with his family. In his son Meherwan, Sheriarji recognized the declaration and promise of the vision, the fruit of his search for God.

Meherwan's was a happy normal boyhood. Kind, fun-loving, dutiful, he was a bright student, and shone both in class as well as on the sports field. He was fluent in a number of languages, and was an energetic reader of classical literature as well as detective fiction. He was a lover of the poetic, and assiduously read the works of great poets in English, Indian and Persian languages. In the course of his education in Poona, Meherwan (Merwan as he was usually called) attended Sardar Dastur School, St. Vincent's High School, and Deccan College. It was during his college period that he was awakened to the knowledge of his divinity and the profound mission of his life. It happened one evening in May 1913. Merwan was cycling home from college and as usual he passed by the end of Malcom Tank Road where, under the shade of a neem tree, sat an ancient Mohammedan woman known as Hazrat Baba Jan. She was reputed to be 110 years old, and was venerated by the local people as a great holy personage. Whenever Merwan cycled by, he saw her surrounded by a group of people. On this particular day he felt a strong curiosity regarding her, and leaving his bicycle he cautiously approached. When he met her eyes she beckoned to him, and he went up to her. She then arose and kissed him on the forehead. No word was spoken. That silent kiss (as Meher Baba told us) was for him the rending of the veil of illusion and simultaneous Self-Realization (or God-Realization). From that moment he lost consciousness of the worlds of form, and for nine months remained oblivious to his surroundings. For some days he was in a total coma, while his anxious parents brought in the best doctors to treat him. Later on he appeared to recover to the extent of moving about normally, but to all appearances his actions were those of an automation. He constantly visited Hazrat Baba Jan, who referred to him as her child. One day in January 1914 Baba Jan pointed a commanding finger at Merwan and declared to the gathering around her: "This child of mine will create a great sensation in the world and do immense good to humanity."

Our earth is blessed to have, at all times, five Perfect Masters (Sadgurus), who have attained God-Realization and regained consciousness of the worlds of form. They are thus the perfect Masters or

Guides who can lead others out of the 'sanskritic' morass of illusion. At the ordained Avataric time, it becomes the function of the then living Perfect Masters to bring about the Advent of the Avatar, or God-Man, who is none other than God in human form. The five Perfect Masters who brought about the advent of the present Avatar, were Hazrat Baba Jan of Poona, Sai Baba of Shirdi, Upasni Maharaj of Sakori, Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur, and Narayan Maharaj of Kedgaon.

It was in the same year, 1914, that Merwan met the rest of the Perfect Masters. His first contact was with Hazrat Sai Baba of Shirdi. At the time when Merwan approached him, Sai Baba was walking in a procession of his devotees. Merwan went up and prostrated himself at his feet. Sai Baba looked at him and loudly called out : "Parvardigar" (which means : Almighty God, the Sustainer).

His next spiritual Master was Sadguru Upasni Maharaj of Sakori, to whom he was inwardly directed by Sai Baba. Upasni Maharaj was then living in the Khandoba Temple, and as Merwan approached him he picked up a stone and flung it, hitting Merwan in the middle of the forehead at the spot where Baba Jan had kissed him. This symbolic action was to help Merwan regain consciousness of the worlds of form, which would in no way affect the God-consciousness he experienced without a break. It was a process that covered some years, and at its completion, Upasni Maharaj declared before his followers : "Merwan, you are the Ancient One, Avatar !"

Merwan's next visit was to Hazrat Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur, and finally to Sadguru Narayan Maharaj of Kedgaon, thus completing the circle of contacting the five Perfect Masters who were responsible for this Advent of God on earth.

Years later Merwan, as Meher Baba, was to tell his followers : "Baba Jan gave me Divine Bliss. Sai Baba gave me Divine Power, and Upasni Maharaj gave me Divine Knowledge. I am Infinite Power, Knowledge and Bliss. I am the Ancient One, come to redeem the modern world."

Merwan's mission as Avatar began in 1921, when he drew to him the first group of disciples. These included Zoroastrians, Hindus, Mohammedans, who recognized in him their Spiritual Guide and gave him their lives to mould. It was they who gave him the name by

which he has since been known : MEHER BABA, meaning Compassionate Father. As time went by more and more disciples joined him, men, and women who ultimately left their all to stay with the Master, leading a life of the strictest discipline and service. In 1923 Meher Baba established a colony on the outskirts of Arangaon, a village some six miles from the town of Ahmednagar (Maharashtra). It was named Meher-abad. For many years Meherabad remained the headquarters of the Master, where the most varied and active phases of his work where unfolded. These included a free school for boys of all castes and creeds ; a free hospital and dispensary ; shelters for the poor ; a boarding school named "Prem Ashram" where scholastic and spiritual education was imparted to the boys under Meher Baba's direct and personal guidance ; and an Ashram for the God-intoxicated individuals known in India as Masts (pronounced musts)—they are so literally intoxicated with love for God, that they have lost all consciousness of the world.

This vast field of activities proved a continual training ground for his men and women disciples in practising a life of love for God, selfless service, perfect obedience, moral discipline and love and tolerance, towards each other. Meher Baba who was both Master and Servant performed the most menial jobs in His divine love for the children and the Masts. He would brook no distinction between the high castes and the untouchables, and this proved a hard lesson for the high caste disciples who had to serve without prejudice. They learnt through the love of their Master, who himself washed the clothes of the untouchables and cleaned their latrines. He was always the supreme example, and His disciples' love for him was the moving spirit of their every endeavour.

Meher Baba's work was not confined to one place. He made numerous tours all over India and Ceylon in search of Masts, contacting these spiritually advanced souls to help them progress further on the spiritual Path. During the arduous Mast-tours Baba covered thousands of miles by all manner of transport : car, tonga, train, bullock cart, mule, camel, horseback, and on foot. An equally extensive and important part of his work had been with the poor and the lepers—bathing them, feeding them, washing their feet, bowing down to them by placing his forehead on their feet, giving them clothes and money. Many a needy middle-class family, struck by some sudden calamity such as famine or flood and too proud to seek help through organised channels,

had received a gift from Baba in person. Baba did not touch money except when giving it to the needy. His giving them money was not an act of charity in the usual sense of the word; it served as a medium for the immeasurable spiritual blessing he bestowed on them. During these many travels, Baba always remained incognito and the men accompanying him were ordered not to disclose his identity.

In contrast to such incognito tours, Meher Baba had been to all parts of India openly giving his 'darshan' to the masses—as many as one hundred thousand had come in a day to pay their respects to him and receive his blessing.

Meher Baba observed complete silence without a break from 10th July 1925 till 31st Jan. 1969 when He dropped his body. His unique silence lasted for forty three and a half years. His many spiritual discourses and messages were dictated by means of an alphabet board. In 1954 he discontinued the use of the board, reducing all communication to hand gestures which are unique in expressiveness.

To quote a well known author Mr. C. B. Purdom "Those who have been in his presence know that Baba communicates through his silence. What proceeds from him is beyond words, does not need words, could not be contained in them. The inaudible sound is from heart to heart ; silence that penetrates mind and heart".

Meher Baba travelled to the Western world thirteen times, his first visit being to England in 1931 when he contacted his early Western disciples. At the invitation of his followers he had since been a number of times to America, England, Iran, Australia, and Europe. In all these countries he has a large following, as well as in Pakistan, Israel and Africa, and to some extent in Canada, Mexico, West Indies, Lebanon and New Zealand—thousands of men and women who love and believe in him as God-man, the Avatar. These lovers from all over the world journeyed to spend a few days, or even a single day, in his presence whenever he permitted, and still do so to pay their homage to His Tomb on the hill at Meherabad.

Since 1948 Meher Baba had made his abode at "Meherazad", a place nine miles from Ahmednagar (Maharashtra) and close to the village of Pimpalgaon Malvi. Here he lived most of the time with a few

of his disciples. His lovers are all over the world carrying his message of Love and Truth to their fellow beings on earth, eager to share with others what they have silently received from him.

As Meher Baba had explained, his work is neither to teach nor to found a new religion, but to awaken man to the consciousness of his Real Self which is God. He has said, "I have come not to teach but to awaken." He left his followers free to follow their religious beliefs and customs. He gave no 'initiation', prescribed no disciplines such as 'pooja', 'mantra', 'japa' or 'yoga'. He has said that the only true yoga is "You go" - i. e. the annihilating of one's ego or self-interest. The only 'sadhana' he prescribed was LOVE, as the constant guiding influence of one's every thought, word and deed, while leading a normal life of the world and fulfilling one's duties and responsibilities. It is through the power of utterly selfless Love that Meher Baba awakens in others the true understanding of the purpose of life, which is to realize the Godhood that is inherent in each.

Meher Baba has said, "I belong to no religion. Every religion belongs to me. My personal religion is my being the Ancient Infinite One, and the religion I impart to all is Love for God, which is the Truth of all religions. This Love can belong to all, high and low, rich and poor. Every one, of every caste and creed, can love God. The one and only God who resides equally in all, is approachable by each one through Love".

Avatar Meher Baba had said in November 1968, he would give darshan "on his own terms". No one knew what those terms would be. "The darshan will be strictly for my lovers." Baba also said this darshan would be unparalleled—it would be the last darshan given in silence, and that when he started giving darshan to his Lovers, it would NOT be for a limited period, but for all time. He also said he would give his Darshan in a reclining position. All these were hints that he would not be with us physically but spiritually. So it happened.

At 12.15 P. M. on 31st January 1969, Meher Baba dropped his body, which was kept in the Tomb at Meherabad Hill for seven days for the thousands of his lovers from East and West, to take his darshan. Meher Baba's body was as fresh as ever, as if he were sleeping, when he was interred on the seventh day.

"I am not come to establish any cult, society or organization, nor even to establish a new religion. The religion that I shall give teaches the Knowledge of the One behind the many. The book that I shall make people read is the book of the heart that holds the key to the mystery of life. I shall bring about a happy blending of the head and the heart. I shall revitalize all religions and cults, and bring them together like beads on a string".

-MEHER BABA-

S I L E N C E

"Through endless time God's greatest gift is given in silence. But when mankind becomes completely deaf to the thunder of his silence, God incarnates as man. God alone is".

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"God does not listen to the language of the tongue. He does not listen to the language of the mind. He responds to the language of the heart. The language of the heart is the song of Love for Beloved God. Love God. Keep him ever consciously present with you. Let Him form the basis of all your thoughts, speech and actions. Remember Him in every little thing you do; the responsibility will then rest with Him".

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"Do not listen to the voice of the mind. Listen to the voice of the heart. The mind wavers, the heart does not. The mind fears, the heart is undaunted. The mind is the home of doubts, reasonings and theories. The heart, when purified becomes the dwelling of the Beloved. Rid your heart of low desires, malice and selfishness and God will manifest in you as your own self".

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"If man wants the happiness he is striving for let him be more aggressive towards himself and more tolerant towards others.

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"The voice that is heard deep within the soul is my voice. Through those who are receptive to this voice, I speak eternally. My outward silence is no spiritual exercise. It has been undertaken and maintained for the good of others. I bind myself with silence, that when I break it mankind will realize what real freedom is".

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"Because men have been deaf to the principles and precepts laid down by God in the past, in this present Avataric form I observe silence. You have asked for and been given enough words—it is now time live them. To get nearer and nearer to God, you have to get further and further away from "I", "My", "Me", and "Mine". You have not to renounce anything but your own self. It is as simple as that, though found to be almost impossible. You can renounce your limited self by grace. I have come to release that grace".

SILENCE (Contd.)

"God has been everlastingly working in silence, unobserved, unheard, except by those who experience his infinite silence. If my silence cannot speak, of what avail would be speeches made by the tongue?"

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

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

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"I lay down no precepts. When I release the tide of truth men's daily lives will be the living precepts. The words I have not spoken will come to life in them".

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"If those who love me will just for one minute be silent in their minds just before they go to bed and think of me and picture me in the silence of their minds, and do that regularly, this veil of ignorance will disappear and this bliss that I speak of and which all long for will be experienced."

PEACE AND HAPPINESS

"Throughout the ages men have been deeply involved in the struggle for peace and happiness.

It is this struggle that lands them into chaos and misery. If men were only to become conscious of the fact that peace and happiness are not to be fought for but to be sought for within oneself, they would abandon their fighting and be at peace with themselves and the world."

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"I have come not to teach but to awaken—to awaken man to that peace and happiness which cannot be obtained through struggle; neither can it be bargained about, nor borrowed, for it is inherent in all."

L O V E

"I have only one message to give, and I repeat it age after age to one and all: LOVE GOD".

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"Of all the forces that can best overcome all difficulties, is the force of love, because the greatest Law of God is Love, which holds the key to all problems".

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"Love is a gift from God to man, obedience is a gift from master to man, and surrender is a gift from man to master".

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"One who loves, is the lover of the Beloved. One who obeys is the beloved of the Beloved. One who surrenders all body, mind and all else—has no existence other than that of the Beloved, who alone exists in him. Therefore greater than love is obedience, and greater than obedience is surrender".

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"I have come to sow the seed of love in your hearts so that, in spite of all superfluous diversity, which your life in illusion must experience and endure, the feeling of oneness, through love is brought about amongst all the nations, creeds, sects and casts of the world".

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"When from the depths of his heart, man desires something more lasting than wealth, something more real than material power, the wave of destruction will recede. Then peace will come, joy will come, light will come".

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"You cannot bargain for love. No amount of penance, meditation, pooja, etc. can give that gift of Love. Once that gift comes from God, it burns up, all the veils of Sanskaras."

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"I am the One Who is always lost and found among mankind. It is your love for yourself that loses Me and it is your love for Me that finds Me. Love Me before everything, for now, while I am in your midst, I am most easily found as I really am".

"Have Hope. I have come to help you in surrendering yourselves to the cause of God and in accepting His Grace of Love and Truth. I have come to help you in winning the one victory of victories to win your Self".

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"The way of love is not free from sacrifices. Just as heat and light go hand in hand, so do love and sacrifice; The true spirit of sacrifice springs spontaneously, like humility, and cannot be aware of itself nor reserve itself for particular objects and special occasions".

"HOW TO LOVE GOD"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

M I S C E L L A N Y

"Man does not seek suffering; it comes to him as an outcome of his search for happiness. Happiness is sought through the fulfilment of desire but in the pursuit of desires, he is preparing for suffering from their non fulfilment".

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"Unless you become as dust you cannot realize God. But first you have to become stone, for you cannot become dust right away. What is needed is to retain human consciousness and become as stone and then wear yourself to dust at the feet of the Perfect Master".

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"Only when the heart is cleaned out and the mind completely emptied, can they become instruments, hollow as the flute or drum, to give forth divine music".

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"Mind wants to know that which is beyond mind. To know that which is beyond mind, mind must go vanish, leaving no vestige of itself behind. The humour of it is, the mind, which is finite, wants to retain itself and yet know Truth, which is infinite. This is the position of those who seek Truth through intellect. Few grasp this fact, and so most grope and grapple in vain".

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"It is easy to ask questions, but it needs past preparation to grasp what I explain. Those who have the authority to ask and the capacity to understand do not ask. They understand that God is understandable and beyond the reach of the questioning mind".

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"Everyone wants to be happy. Each of you seeks happiness in one way or another invariably to meet with dissatisfaction and disappointment. In reality you are bliss itself—but what a comedy Illusion stages before you, what game it makes of you to make you aware of it".

MISCELLANY (Contd.)

“Mere intellectual understanding does not bring God nearer to you. It is love, not questioning, that will bring God to you. Questioning nourishes pride and separateness. So do not ask questions, but strive to become a ‘slave’ of the Perfect Master”.

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“The greatest sin is hypocrisy. He is the greatest hypocrite, who, himself being one, asks others not to be hypocritical. I want you all to be honest. You should not pretend to be what you are not”.

“The Source of eternal bliss is the Self in all. The cause of perpetual misery is the selfishness of all. As long as satisfaction is derived through selfish pursuits, misery will always exist. Only because of the infinite love and mercy of God can man learn to realize, through the lessons of misery on earth, that inherent in him is the source of infinite bliss, and all suffering is his labour of love to unveil his own infinite Self”.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON MEHER BABA

Who Is Meher Baba ?

He is the essence of your very being which provokes you to ask this question.

He is the Awakener who will awaken humanity from its sleep of ignorance to the knowledge of its true Self.

He is the Arouser who will arouse man to the consciousness of his rightful divine heritage

He is the Light which will dispel the darkness of our selfishness, and make us aware of our oneness in God.

He is the True Friend, who has come to guide mankind to the path of Truth.

He is God in human form.

He is the Saviour, the Messiah, the Christ, the Rasool, the Avatar, the Buddha.

He is the Answer to all questions.

He is the Avatar, the God-Man.

Why is Meher Baba Observing Silence ?

For the benefit of mankind. Meher Baba says "The voice that is heard deep within the soul is my voice.

Through those who are receptive to this voice, I speak eternally. My outward silence is no spiritual exercise. It has been undertaken and maintained for the good of others. I bind myself with silence, that when I break it mankind will realize what real freedom is".

How Does He Communicate ?

Through His divine Love—which reaches the hearts of all who come in his presence.

Through the language of the heart, which is love—pure divine Love.

Through the silent language of the heart which is more potent than any spoken word.

Through the gestures of his hands, which are more expressive and eloquent than the spoken word.

What Is Meher Baba's Religion ?

He belongs to no religion. Every religion belongs to him. He says "My personal religion is my being the Ancient Infinite One; and the religion I impart to all is Love for God which is the truth of all religions".

What Are His Teachings ?

Remember God and love God, and forget yourself and everything. He does not teach but awakens in one, love for God.

Does He Give Special Prayers Or Meditation ?

Yes, He has given two prayers to mankind ;

(a) The Master's Prayer (O Parvardigar)

(b) The Prayer of Repentance. He does not lay stress on any form of meditation. He stresses remembering him wholeheartedly and constantly while attending to our daily duties. This, he says, is the best form of meditation. However, he has given some discourses on meditation, as well as two charts called " The Divine Theme "

What Have You Learnt By Following Meher Baba ?

That we have to completely unlearn all we have learnt in order to begin to know the Truth.

What Have You Gained By Following Meher Baba ?

The loss of some of the false self

Unless one completely loses one's false self, one cannot gain one's true Self.

Does One Have To Receive Any Initiation From Him To Be His Follower ?

The only ' initiation ' is the love for him that he awakens in one's heart.

Does He Give Any Mantra, Any Sadhana (Discipline)

To repeat his name is the only mantra that he gives. To just remember him wholeheartedly at all times is the only sadhana he prescribes.

What Yoga Does Meher Baba Teach ?

Meher Baba says " The yoga I teach is : You go from you and come to Me".

What Does He Want Of Us ?

He wants complete surrender and complete obedience.

How Can One Get Happiness ? What Has He To Say ?

He says " If man wants the happiness he is striving for, let him be more aggressive towards himself and more tolerant towards others"

" The cause of misery is the selfishness in man "

" Happiness and misery are two facets of Illusion "

What Is The Goal Of Life According To Meher Baba ?

The annihilation of the mind and the realization of the Self.

What Is Meher Baba's Mission ?

He is not a missionary to have a mission.

He is the Ancient One come again among men to help them to know that God alone is real and all else is illusion.

What Is God ?

What is not God ? God is Existence infinite and eternal. Everything is God.

Though everything in existence is nothing but God, the difference between Meher Baba and us human beings is that Meher Baba is simultaneously and continuously conscious of both his Godhood and manhood, we are conscious only of our manhood.

What Makes You Believe That He Is The Avatar ?

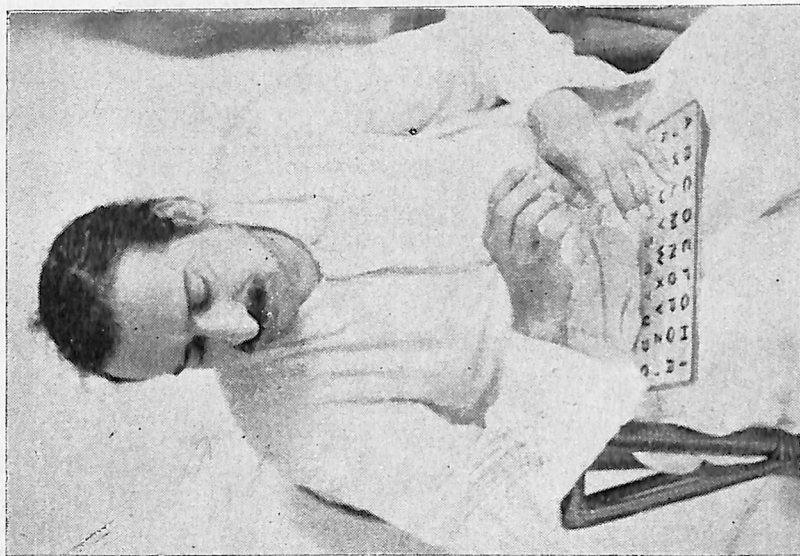
One's belief or faith is an inner revelation, a deep conviction, that cannot be communicated to others by words. It has to be a personal experience.

We believe that Meher Baba is the Avatar, because in Him we find the affirmation of the existence and attributes of God.

There are hundreds of thousands who are fortunate to have experienced this, who believe that Meher Baba is the Avatar.



**Meher Baba bathing lepers at Pandharpur.
On His right is Gadge Maharaj.**



Meher Baba with the Alphabet Board.

