

The Truth of Religion

(Based on Meher Baba's Teachings)

by

BABA'S DISCIPLES

July 1954

PUBLISHED BY
ADI K. IRANI
MEHER PUBLICATIONS
KING'S ROAD.
AHMEDNAGAR - DECCAN
BOMBAY - STATE, INDIA.

PRINTED BY
L. S. CHINCHORKAR
MOHAN PRINTERS
STN. RD. AHMEDNAGAR.
BOMBAY-STATE. INDIA.

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Irrespective of whether he believes through the medium of IDEAS or IDOLS, with sincere love and faith in DIVINITY, man can get ever nearer to God who is already the nearest to all. The essence of faith lies, not in the shape or manner of man's belief, but in the depth and sincerity behind it. The faith that can move mountains, can and does move the greatest of them all—the mountain of IGNORANCE that denies man a glimpse of his true divinity and conceals from him his true Identity.

God is Freedom, Bliss, Knowledge eternal. To make Him fit exclusively within the four walls of man-made churches is but added proof of our ignorance. God is

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Fathomless. To bind Him within the narrow and limited channels of dogmas, creeds and churchified conventions is to admit our lack of the true perception of God's Omniscience.

Unconsciously, man is always seeking, aspiring, yearning, for something higher—though he misinterprets that longing in the elusive expression of ambitions, power, and human love. When the mind stops vacillating amid the flights of its myriad-coloured fancies, and focuses on the centre, then can man visualize his true goal.

God is the Goal, the Centre—no matter from which angle you approach Him, you will find Him if you seek Him persistently. 'SEEK and ye shall find' are the words of One who knew. To quote an Indian mystic poet : " Ask, ask and ask again, and you shall not ask in vain. Keep on asking, and I swear to you by God, that even though you ask for God Himself, you will have him."

In the past, the Church of Islam has tortured to death many a great saint who asserted his Oneness with God. Let the Churches propound what belief they like, they cannot alter the truth of man's heritage. Let the leaders of churchianity, the professional and hereditary Divines, whether they represent the Cross, Crescent or any other Symbol, out of sheer ignorance flout or discard the truth of man's Ultimate Goal, it stands Immoveable, Unmoved.

Be they white-frocked or black-robed, bearded or clean shaven, the Priests, Mullas, Dastoors and Pandits, the man-decreed intermediaries between man and God, may in the name of religion shout themselves hoarse to the contrary, none can alter the birthright of man to actually SEE God, and to consciously BECOME one with God. Faithful or infidel, touchable or untouchable, black, white, brown or yellow, every man and woman is ultimately destined for the Supreme Goal.

Man's humanity is born of God's divinity. The physical birth of man takes place through the expression of man's animality. The tints of animality and the sparks of divinity inherent in man, are inevitably manifested, alternately predominating, until the Oneness of the Soul is actually experienced.

We have here therefore the three combined characteristics inherent in man : animality, humanity, divinity. Man fluctuates from his level of humanity to the higher one of divinity and to the lower one of animality, until he scales duality and realizes the Oneness of the Soul.

All direct and indirect attempts to white-wash the animality of man, or to make a show of the divinity inherent in everything, are neither the mark of spirituality nor the milestone that directs one towards it.

Man does not feel himself to exist in parts, that is, partly existing and partly non-existing. He always feels aware of his "I-am" state as whole and unchang-

ing in its essence, and unbroken in its continuity. In the course of dreams, whether they are ordinary or fantastic, exhilarating or horrifying, the dreamer does not find himself to be different from himself in any way. His "I-am-ness" continues to remain identical with that of his wakeful state. During spells of deep sleep, man loses consciousness in utter oblivion, but on awakening, he immediately feels the continuity of his existence.

This "I-am" consciousness of man is irrelevant to the muchness or littleness of his body. A severed limb does not deduct from the entirety of his original self. In the same way, his "I-am-ness" is neither found to be a whit less or more throughout man's growth from childhood to youth, from maturity to old age.

The 'I-am' awareness of the ego self continues from the beginning of evolution, as the soul with ever increasing consciousness, identifies itself with each different form adopted in the course of its progress. The ultimate and Supreme Consciousness of the soul's 'I-Am-ness' is reached when it identifies itself with God.

The matter of fact approach to life may or may not embrace religion, philosophy, spirituality, or psychoanalysis of the modern schools of thought. Facts of common human experience cannot alter, just because they happen to be labelled under different names, or because of a difference in the method of interpretation.

Today mankind apparently believes in one great religion or another, as also in one or all of the great principles such as truth, peace, service, sacrifice, justice, equality and freedom. But how many are there that live up to these beliefs in this faith-shaken age ?

In the world today are crores of Christians, as there are Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists. How many Christians are there that follow to the letter the core of Christ's teaching to 'turn the other cheek' or to 'love thy neighbour as thyself' ? How many Muslims can claim to be truly followers of Mohammed's precept to 'hold God above everything else' ? How many Hindus 'bear the torch of righteousness at all cost' ? How many Buddhists live the 'life of pure compassion' expounded by Buddha ? How many Zoroastrians can claim to be living the three gems that compose Zoroastrianism 'Think truly, speak truly, act truly' ?

Meher Baba has followers from among manifold religions. At one time or another they have been asked by friends and strangers whether Meher Baba makes his followers give up their religion. On the contrary, Meher Baba says, "Follow any religion you like, but follow its innermost nucleus. Do not make a mock of it by adopting the conventional husk of religion and ignoring the underlying Truth. Religion should not be a convenience to be indulged in, but words of Truth to be lived."

Without a LIVING sincerity of belief, without the FULL courage of conviction, and without the actual

preparedness to interpret the SIGNIFICANCE underlying the words, however lofty, beautiful and full of wisdom these words may be, they remain just words, and are little more than COLOURFUL, SCENTLESS flowers painted on canvas.

Sir Roger L'Estrange truly says, "Men talk as if they believed in God, but they live as if they thought there was none."

'The Second Coming of Christ', 'The imminent Manifestation of Imam Mehdi', The birth of 'Kalanki Avatar', 'Soshiyent' (the One expected by Zoroastrians), 'the Last Buddha': Clothed in different religions and expressed in different tongues we thus hear the cry of the rebirth of the Avatar. *He is here.* Once more the Avatar is in our midst. Soon the world will witness the greatest manifestation of God on earth, and we will share the Great Moment according to our receptivity. Let us be prepared for the Great Awakening. May we be worthy of such a blessing.

A saint has well sung, "Every time my Beloved bears a different name, and manifests in a different garb, yet ever the same face assumes a different form of beauty and grandeur."

Yar mara her zama'n, namo nisha'ne deegarast ;

Kul-le yarmin suratash, der shaklo shane deegarast.

Baba, the Beloved, says :

"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 religion.

“ 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 us all is approachable by each one of us through love.

“ Religion, like worship, must be from the heart. If instead of erecting churches, fire-temples, *mandirs* and mosques, people were to establish the House of God in their hearts for the Beloved God to dwell supreme, my work will have been done.

“ If, instead of mechanically performing ceremonies and rituals as age old customs, people were to serve their fellow-beings with the selflessness of love, taking God to be equally residing in one and all and knowing that by so serving others they are serving Me, my work will have been fulfilled.”

May we be imbued with this incomparable religion imparted by Meher Baba.

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Annual Subscription Rs. 5--July to June.

Block Prints of Meher Baba
Pictures in Different Poses.

A D I K. I R A N I
Meher Publications
King's Road,
Ahmednagar - Deccan
Bombay - State, INDIA.