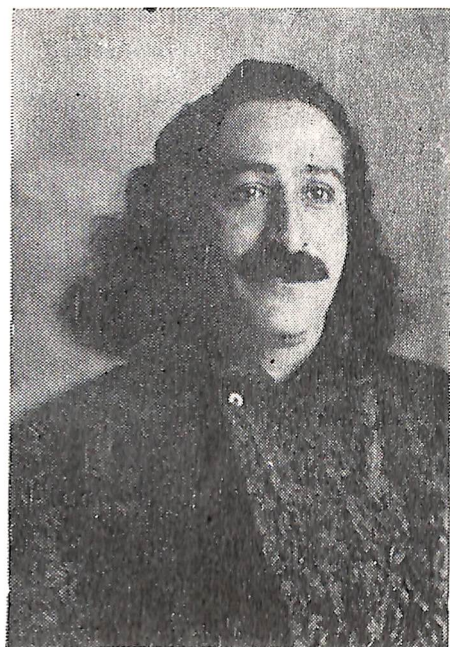
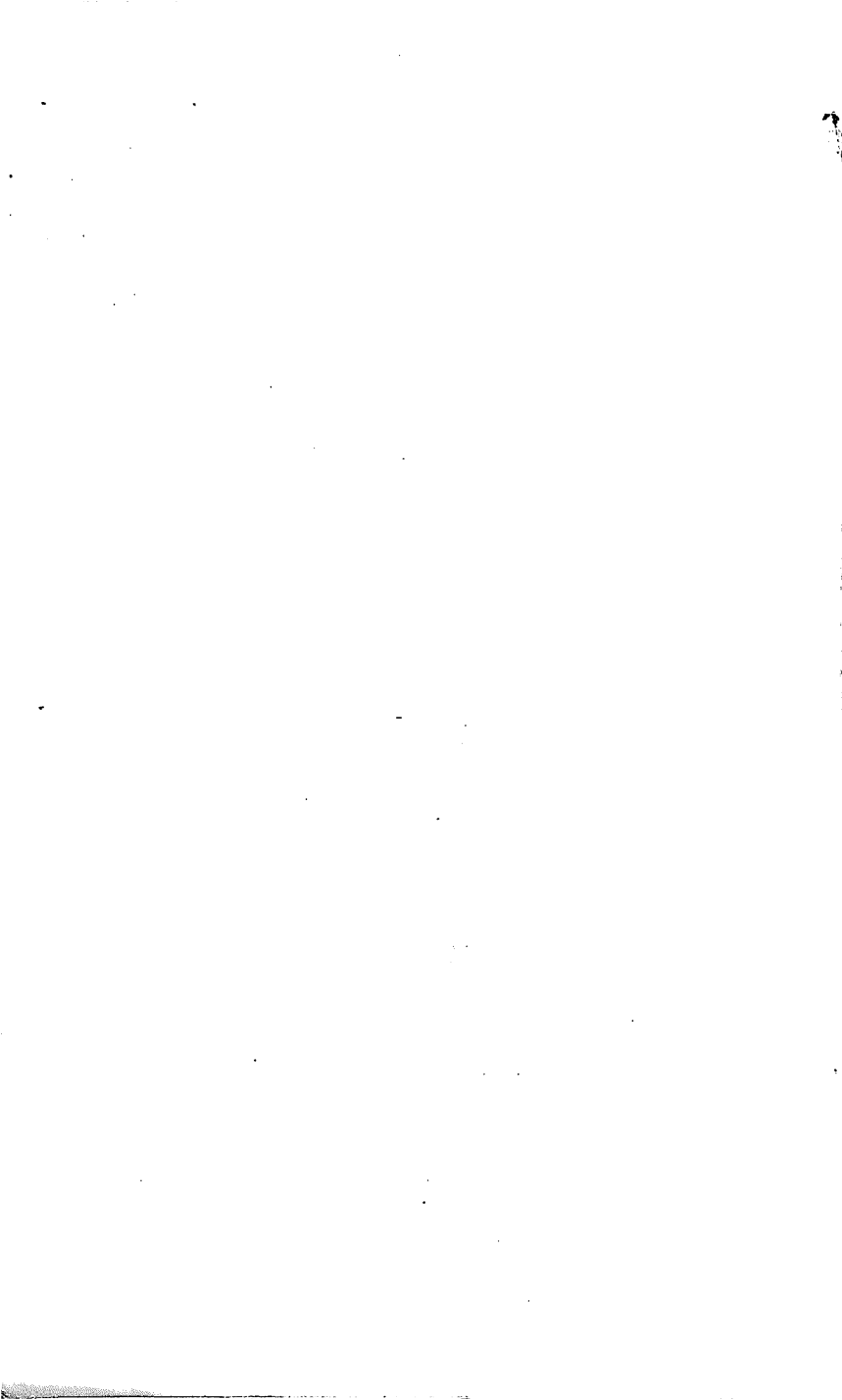


'THE GOD THAT DESCENDED'



By

M. S. V. Subbaramayya, M. A., M Ed., D. T. E.



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First Edition 1986

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For Copies :

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RAJAHMUNDRY

Andhra Pradesh

Printed at :

SRI RATNA PRINTERS

Muthangi vari Street

Rajahmundry - 1

Phone : 6345

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge with thanks for the permission given to me by Avatar Meher Baba perpetual Charitable Trust' Ahmednagar, India, for printing excerpts taken from different works of Meher Baba.

— 'Author'

1-702395

A WORD OF GRATITUDE

The real power of motivation behind every action whether great or small, comes from God and its result is also the will of God. I am indeed proud of being taken into the warm fold of Avatar Meher Baba whom I believe God's incarnation. I believe that I have been given necessary inspiration by Him to sing His praise and write a few lines about His glory. Had He not sown the seed of love in me, my life would have been, I am afraid, a waste land that yields nothing worthy. This book-let is nothing but a visible proof of the sprouting of the seed of His love in my life after its spiritual reclamation. I will be grateful to Baba, my Beloved God for lives to come praying Him to give me power to sing His praise and draw me into still warmer regions of His love and happiness,

Secondly I am deeply indebted to brother Eruch who, being a devoted lover of Baba and the lover of Baba lovers, gave me excellent encouragement through the few letters he wrote to me. Everytime I read them I used to feel as if I had received fresh enthusiasm till I completed the script. Besides his own good wishes he used to convey the good wishes of Mani Behan who appreciated my triffling efforts to praise Beloved Baba. He used to communicate the good wishes of the members of the dear Mandali also. I gratefully express my thanks to Br. Eruch for his loving encouragement and my hearty thanks to Mani Behan for her encouraging appreciation of my efforts and my thankful gratitude to all the members of Mandali whose love is ever shared by all Baba lovers.

I owe a lot to Br. Steve Klein who despite his restless work, had patiently and thoroughly gone through

every line of the original script and suggested alterations for improvement, and accuracies of happenings by pointing out the omissions and commissions that crept into the script. In a word Br. Lteve Klein is chiefly responsible for the book-let as you see it in your hands. I sincerely thank him for the excellent help he rendered to me in successfully completing the book and the prompt replies he gave me whenever I wrote to him.

I specially thank Br. Bal Natu who, along with Br. Steve Klein, had gone through the few pages particularly on 'The New Life' led by Meher Baba. He too offered important suggestions for improvement of the material and I gratefully acknowledge his help.

I am no less grateful to Br. Jack C. Small who conveyed the ready permission of Avatar Meher Baba's perpetual charitable Trust for quoting excerpts from various books of Baba and giving me suggestions on other matters like printing of copy right etc.,

Once again I bow down at the lotus feet of Baba who is the inexhaustible source of every inspiration and power and who sent me His help through different persons and different means for the completion of the script and publication of the book-let. May His loving hand guide me through everyday life in such a way that I become worthy of His love.

— M. S. V. Subbaramayya

JAI BABA !!



JAI BABA

'About the book let'

It is not my intention to introduce Meher Baba through this book let to those who know little about him. It is not an attempt to write either a short biography or a profile on the life and work of Meher Baba. To attempt the biography of One who declared that 'He is the Highest of the High' is no small venture for a very ordinary man like me who am no writer at all in the right sense of the word. Even to give an outline of his life one must be thoroughly conversant with different phases of his activities and above all one ought to be not only in close contact with the God-man but also have His blessings. I admit I am too small and unqualified for such a big task. What I want to do through the book-let is to make a small aperture to the gross human sight so that one may see through his own seeing the 'Infinite Beauty' which is wrapped by his gross vision. In other words it is like shouting of a mischievous boy at his play-fellows to steal a peep at the Big Elephant through the tear he made in the coarse canvas enclosure. Having enjoyed a glimpse of the excellent majesty of the Big Elephant through the seam, the boy is now anxious that his friends who are engaged in playing childish games, should also enjoy the sight of that 'Majestic Elephant'.

This book let is of no avail to those who have been well seated in the chairs reserved for them. (It is nothing but a reward for their deep love and devotion for God). Nor the book-let is for those sitting in the gallery. They

are also fortunate for they have a good though distant view of how the Elephant carries the heaviest loads, bears the burden, and how He makes the trumpeting sound and so on. This book is an attempt of the mischievous boy to gather the other lads playing outside the canvas enclosure and enjoy showing them the 'Beautiful Elephant' through the small tear he made so that one day their curiosity may grow fully and render them restless till they see the whole show from a very near place by hoarding and investing every pie they have earned.

There are excellent books on Meher Baba. Many more books come out every year throwing new light on what he said and what he did. Every book is a fresh flower of special hue and fragrance. They adore Baba like garlands of rich flowers. Let mine be a wild violet lovingly placed at the lotus feet of 'Beloved Baba'.

'Avatar Meher Baba-ki-Jai'



JAI BABA

'THE GOD THAT DESCENDED'

Every religion no doubt, does preach us to believe in the existence of God and some of them authoritatively assert God's incarnation on this earth at the appropriate time. It is perhaps so, because each religion on earth owes its origin to a great individual whom the world believes to be one of such incarnations of God. Therefore it is not correct to say that God must really exist because religions tell us so, but the correct approach should be that religions come into existence because God ever exists and incarnates into the world long before the birth of the religion that flourishes after Him or after His name. It is a pity that in course of time, each religion breaks into different intolerant sub-cults which not only weaken themselves but their mother religion from which they have branched off. This spiritual complacency and dissipation gradually become so complete and inevitable that religions cease to exist for God and on the other hand they make a god exist for them. A natural corollary to such decadence in the spiritual pursuits of man, let alone the innumerable other walks or life, is that the majority of people instead of devoutly seeking God through their respective religions, unwittingly leave God or change their allegiance from one religion to another to suit their idiosyncratic conceptions on Godhood and spirituality. But God to be God must be unchanging and must be for His creation in which man (being His own image as the wise say) occupies the crucial place. As man's aberrations force him to stray off the path, God, as the wise say, is constrained to give the essential drift in the right direction, to the entire human

race and establish once again His eternal reality by His appearance in this ever changing creation. It means that God being the sole Author and Director of the play of creation does not only incorporate necessary changes in its screen play but Himself acts the inimitable role of a spiritual hero whose words and deeds startle the contemporary world and illumine generations that come into the world after him. In other words He draws himself much closer to creation through His debut on the stage of illusion on the one hand while on the other He pulls the humanity much nearer by perfectly living in His role and through His sacrifice binds mankind fast unto Him with hoops of love. Wherever He is born and whenever He is born, God being infinite the tremors of the pull He gives to mankind will have universal effect with the result each religion receives at its core a fresh orientation and a new power like the sharp edge of a well furbished sword and above all a spiritual impulse that imperceptibly drives mankind to the eventual climax or destination laid down in the script of universal drama. This renaissance of spirit emanating the human life by the advent of God seems to be the secret behind mankind's belief in the unknowable existence of God and its hope in His incarnation whom it tries to seek through one religion or other long after He left the stage.

For instance Hinduism says when the righteous and the pious suffer in the hands of the wicked and when 'Dharma' suffers eclipse and 'Adharma' holds the reins of life, God descends onto the earth in human body to protect the just and the honest by putting an end to Adharma (evil) when mankind will be rid of ignorance and bask itself in the brilliant radiance of divinity. Thus in the Gita avouched Lord Krishna whom the Hindus worship as 'God-incarnate'. This principle of divine incarnation has

been from times immemorial, the bed rock of 'Hindu-faith and philosophy. The God so descends in human body is called 'The Avatar' by them. The Buddhists bow down to him as the 'Buddha' while the Christians hail Him as 'The Messiah', and the Muslims follow Him as 'The Prophet'. Whatever be the nomenclature of the appellations, they are all equivalent to the term 'Avatar'. Thus not only faith in God but also faith in His descent lies at the core of all religions. Nevertheless except for a few wise men, it becomes impossible for the contemporary mankind to recognise the Avatar even if He declares in no unclear language about His coming down from his highest state. This is chiefly due to the built in ignorance of man which is further deepened by his proximity to the Avatatic period. But the Avatar repeats His call again and again so that mankind may not miss the benefit of physically rallying round Him, enjoying His company and accelerating the pace of realising its true spiritual nature. However unambiguous and compelling the Avatar's call may be, mankind pays no heed to his words in the confusion of the babble of incompatible interpretations of scriptures, and insistence on rigid adherence to dogmatic orthodoxies and rituals prescribed by the erudite pundits of the time.

Such machinized religion will emphasize empty speculations of false spirituality while the Avatar upholds the life of practical divinity. False interpretations of scriptures try to drive off man from the Avatar who, by virtue of living the life of absolute honesty, tries to draw mankind closer to Himself. The Reality of the Avatar unfailingly kindles the spark of Love while the falsity of understanding of man tries to blow it off by creating an irresistible craving for the life of lust. Nevertheless the

Avatar remains undeterred. No power on earth would silence His voice. He repeatedly reminds the world of His divinity with unprecedented authority. For instance Lord Krishna said to Arjuna, "surrender yourself unto Me" which is not different from Jesus saying 'I am the way to Father' or Buddha's exhorting total surrender or the prophet's asking people to take shelter under His banyan tree. It would be indeed a surprising shock to majority if one declares Himself during a particular period and in a particular country as the Avatar or the Messiah descended into the world in flesh and blood. There may be a few who by a reason beyond reason and through an intuition beyond intuition may believe in the possible occurrence of such a divine event. Very few of them may try to understand his call. Still fewer of them may not only listen to the Avatar's call but follow Him in total dedication.

Whether one is shocked or exhilarated, whether one denies or invites or whether one turns a sceptic or a votary, Meher Baba in the present century, declared in unequivocal language that he is the same Ancient One (Sanathana) who had come into the world many times before as Zoraster, as Rama, as Krishna, as Jesus, as Mohammad as this One and as that One. Furthermore he added that he would come once again in flesh and blood after seven hundred years. It means that he does not merely declare His present advent that followed the past advents but professes his next coming that extends into the future for its fulfilment. In this connection it is very appropriate to quote his own words that give excellent insight into the concept of 'Avatar'. "Irrespective of doubts and convictions, and for the infinite love I bear for one and all, I continue to come as the Avatar to be

judged time and again by humanity in its ignorance in order to help man distinguish the real from the false". Therefore it is no wonder that humanity ignores the unique event of God's coming and some times turns antagonistic to Him. Though the whole world turns against Him, it cannot suppress the reverberations of His words in the ears of people; cannot still the undulations of His love that reclaims the hearts of people in course of time. Here in lies the real triumph of God despite His apparent defeat or helplessness. That His word has ever been heard in the world through mankind's reading of the Gita or the Bible, or the Koran is a proof of the Avataric triumph.

Though one agrees with the proposition of God's coming in flesh and blood one may ask, 'How is He obliged to come into the world? Is there any link between God (who is said to be the Real) and the world (which is said to be the unreal) before His coming? If so how is this link eternally maintained? Meher Baba answered these questions by disclosing certain divine truths hitherto unknown to the world. He revealed that there are, and ever will be five perfect masters (Sadgurus) in this world. The perfect Masters hold the link between God (the eternal Reality) and the universe which is nothing but God's eternal shadow. At the appropriate time when the wayward mankind needs divine help, the five Perfect Masters bring the Ancient One into the world with a veil on His divinity so that mankind will be able to see Him with naked eyes and feel His tangible presence. Meher Baba declared that Sai Baba of Shiridi who on first seeing hailed him 'Parvardigar!, (Hail, O! God! The sustainer or the Vishnu), Upasini Maharaj of Sakori, Babajan of Poona, Narayana Maharaj of Kedgaon and Tajuddin Baba of Nagapore were the five Sadgurus of the age, who precipitated

His advent on earth. A brief account of his life will not only demonstrate how Meher Baba is God that has come to our midst but also give us a correct perspective and clear knowledge of God's Avatarhood in general.

On 25th February in 1894 Meher Baba was born in a Persian family that lived in Poona. His baptismal name was Merwan Sheriar Irani. His father was a Zoroastrian and had been an ardent seeker of God all his life. Merwan's childhood was said to be normal except that he was found one day playing with a cobra that entwined his body. He was then merely eleven months old. Hardly did his mother see the horrifying sight when she made a fearful shriek. Before long the cobra crawled away. The neighbours who heard her cry, rushed in and some of them having learnt what had happened, predicted that the child would live a life of unprecedented glory. The rest of his boyhood period was quite normal. After completing his education in Camp Government English School and St. Vincent's School Merwan joined Deccan College. During this period he read Shakespeare with great avidity. The works of renowned writers like Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats and other English writers no less fascinated him. Besides English poets he assiduously read the books of the famous Indian and Persian poets. Merwan showed keen interest in inditing poems in English, Persian, Gujarati and Hindustani, which were published in some of the journals of those days. In addition to reading and writing he was a good lover of music and himself a good singer too. He was much liked by his compeers and class fellows for the excellent qualities he possessed. He was looked upon as their leader for his potential sense of judgement and candour in fighting against injustice. His unalloyed honesty coupled with sympathetic love in dealing with

others endeared Merwan all the more to the students and elders as well,

During this period of college education a momentous event took place in Merwan's life which had significantly changed the normal course of his career. On his way home from the college he used to visit frequently a Muslim woman Saint popularly known as Hazarat Babajan who was always found sitting under a neem tree. On one such occasion Babajan beckoned to him to go near her. As Merwan moved closer she abruptly kissed him on the forehead. This kissing of the woman saint was not like the usual fond caressing of a mother but proved to be a unique event the significance of which had gradually unfolded itself in unusual proportions. It proved to be a great prelude to the tremendous part he had to play in the story of human race. As Baba explained its spiritual significance later that through the act of kissing, Babajan yanked off the veil in the shroud of which he came into the world and in a fraction of a second revealed Godhood to God. Thus no sooner did Babajan restore Merwan to the supreme God consciousness than he lost his earlier earth consciousness. The obvious change in his behaviour was that he began to look vacant, ate little, slept little, and seemed to be guided by some unusual instinct rather than by the usual ratiocinative power of man. As he began to regain by and by the normal consciousness, he inwardly felt an impulsive urge to visit the other four Sadgurus of the period who were responsible for effecting his advent on the earth.

As intuitively prompted by the divine impulse Merwan first went to Shiridi where he met 'Sai Baba', a

widely respected saint all over the country. On seeing Merwan the great Saint hailed him, " O ! Parvardigar ! " which means God, the sustainer of the universe. In the tone of Sai Baba's address one could not only see the divine welcome o Merwan but also the introducing of Merwan to the world as 'The Sustainer' or the Vishnu. In other words Sai Baba of Shiridi called upon mankind to recognise God coming in the human cloak who could not be easily identified by others (It is just the way Yohan introduced Jesus to the world) Sai Baba then directed him to upasini Maharaj, another Perfect Master of the time, who was then sitting in Khandoba's temple near by. When the Maharaj observed Merwan approaching him, he flung a small stone which hit him exactly on that part of the forehead where Babajan, the Muslim woman saint kissed him to divine raptures. Blood dripped down Merwan's forehead and it helped him regain gradually normal consciousness of the surroundings without loss to the possession of the eternal treasure of supreme god-consciousness already gained by him As days rolled on and as the veil was totally removed, Merwan met the remaining two perfect Masters namely Narayana Maharaj of Kedgaon and Tajjudin Baba of Nagapore. After seven years Upasini Maharaj gave Arati to Merwan as the priests do in temples and declared with folded hands that he had given the key to Merwan. The Maharaj asked his disciples to follow Merwan thereafter. What the Sadguru Maharaj did appears to be a symbolic representation of how the world would realise the spiritual stature of Merwan and devoutly worship him as the living God in the days ahead. It was Babajan who woke up God to his Godhood and it was Sai Baba who woke-up the world to God while it was Upasini Maharaj who made God ready for his work

and asked people to worship Him and follow Him. Thus from 1921 he embarked upon his Avataric mission and ever since was affectionately called by his disciples 'Meher Baba' which means 'compassionate father'.

Near Ahamednagar Meher Baba started an Asram which later became popular as Meherbad. He opened a free school where spiritual training was given besides formal education. In addition to the school a free hospital, a dispensary and shelters for the poor also started functioning. His disciples implicitly carried out the duties assigned to them notwithstanding the difference in their religions, castes and regions. Under His instruction all of them moved in a spirit of ideal brotherhood showing the universal nature of Baba's work.

Baba observed silence from 10th July, 1925 and used an English Alphabet board for communicating with others and for elaborating spiritual issues.

About his silence Baba said, ".....because man has been deaf to the principles and precepts laid down by God in the past, in the present Avataric form I observe silence. You have asked for and been given enough words. Now it is time to live them". His silence was quite in accordance with His mission which he said "..... is to awaken the divinity in man but not to preach" divinity through abstract expositions. It is our daily experience that speech, though forms an effective liaison between two or more minds for exchange of thoughts, miserably fails to establish inner communion between two or more hearts which is possible through intrinsic channels of soundlessness. A score and nine years afterwards, i.e., in 1954, Baba gave up the alphabet board too and adopted another unique system of gestures as means of communica-

tion. It is a wonder that Baba set aside many sophisticated language systems and preferred the most primitive variety of making gestures with hand fingers to explain the astoundingly complex aspects of spiritual knowledge to the world. Perhaps the inner communion that he had established with the learned as well as the lewd was of more profound consequence than that of verbal communication he overtly made with others either through alphabet board or hand gestures. No exaggeration to say that he made possible what is impossible to any one else.

Meher Baba travelled thirteen times to Western countries which are materially far advanced than Asiatic nations. Thousands of people met Baba and got their doubts clarified. Some of them interviewed Baba with prepared questionnaires on different topics concerning man, God and universe and were well convinced with his explanations. What really matters in these contacts and interviews is not so much the abstruse discourses or interpretations as the personal contact they could fortunately establish with Meher Baba for it proved to be of enduring value in their lives by turning them into the most envied lovers of the God-man in course of time by instilling in them a faith that could not be done by assimilating all the spiritual literature in the world. The result was that some people from Western countries like France, England, Portugal, Spain, Australia, America and Italy were drawn towards Baba. Baba's tours to eastern countries are of no less importance and interest. He contacted thousands of people in Afghanistan, Ceylon, Pakistan, Egypt, China and Bangladesh. Some of them were drawn to Baba's love as profoundly as the Western lovers. During his visit to America he established a centre in Myrtle Beach which may grow into a powerful transmitting tower eter-

nally broadcasting the word of God to the materially advanced people living in spiritual wilderness of the occident.

Just as it is difficult to explain the spiritual import of much of Baba's work, the real significance of the different phases of The New Life that Baba chose to live from 16th October 1949 to the First of February, 1952 can hardly be explained by intellectual speculations. But the exacting ordeals gone through by Baba with his small group of companions during The New Life period which lasted a little over two years, surprises us how humanly impossible it is to live through such unpropitious challenges with the resolution of a stoic and the resignation of a saint. At the same time we also wonder at the concomitant freedom and happiness that attends such life which is consciously resigned to the will of God. Of Baba's New Life. C. B. Purdom writes :

*** The New Life provides an example of extreme deprivation, hopelessness and helplessness over a period of three years in which his work in its outward aspects can be observed a life of nothingness culminating in annihilation emerging in freedom".**

Before embarking upon 'The New Life' Baba surprised the Mandali by offering prayers to God for its success. They had never seen Baba praying for God's help like a layman in distress who does not know what is in store for him. Nevertheless Baba declared himself free from all bindings and at the same time demanded implicit obedience from his companions. He cautioned them that they should not hesitate to spit on his face or kick him when asked, Baba actually got himself kicked by his followers one day for deliberately committing a big mistake which he had not

revealed. On another day Baba asked one of his disciples to slap him on his face for his anger and asked their forgiveness by placing his head upon their feet. It is possible to obey the Master with the submission of a disciple or slave. But how difficult it is for the devoted disciple to show his obedience by punishing his Master !

After going through the different phases of 'The New Life' led by Baba one doubtlessly feels a change of attitude towards life in general and finds a totally new perspective of values which seem overturned like the hour-glass. If we take all life as God's life manifesting through countless forms, we have to conclude that everyone's life is but part of God's life and everyone is part and parcel of God. It follows therefore, that no one's life is superior and no one's life is inferior. The difference is one of form but not of essence. So God can live the life of a powerful prince with as much ease and happiness as he can live the life of an obedient slave. Viewed in this light can we conceive of a type of life that Baba who declared himself God in human body, does not live or cannot live? Rama being God, suffered untold misery during the exile and wept like an ordinary man for the separation of his wife, Sita. Being the son of God Jesus allowed himself to be whipped mercilessly, and nailed to the cross. He prayed to the Father like the helpless son or an ordinary human being. Perhaps in every advent the God Man lives through such ordeals which make gradual and lasting impact on human consciousness so that it may ultimately realize the full perfection of that impact. Baba said :

* "My old life places me on the alter of Absolute God-hood and divine perfection. My New Life makes

* God Man (Page 189)

me take the stand of a humble servant of God and His people. In my New Life perfect divinity is replaced by perfect humanity. Both these aspects, perfect divinity and perfect humanity have been by God's will and both are everlastingly linked with God's eternal life".

On 24 th November 1949 Baba started begging in Varanasi. He wore a white Kafni and had an ochre-satchel on his left arm besides a cotton bag and a brass bowl. He walked without footwear through the streets begging food. On first December Baba and his companions went on foot to Saranath, a holy place associated with the life of Buddha. They visited an underground passage in the ruins with Langotis * only and spent fifteen minutes there in meditation. A camel-cart, two cows, two donkeys, a white horse and carvan, bullocks and a cart added to the companions' troubles. During this period when they were in need of money Baba asked most of them to sell their wrist watches. What greatness lies in such suffering? It is better to remind ourselves of what Baba had said on an earlier occasion.

* "This New Life is endless and even after my physical death, it will be kept alive by those who live the life of complete renunciation of false-hood, hatred; anger, greed and lust...do not let go the hand of truth."

It means that the world will never be without a few selfless souls atleast, through the lives of whom mankind sees glimpses of divinity. Later Baba said :

* "This New-Life will live by itself eternally even if there is no one to live it"

* A piece of 'Lion cloth'

* God Man (Page 187)

* God Man (Page 188)

The words Baba seem to be enigmatic for how can we conceive of a life without an individual to live it. Supposing poverty is driven away from the earth, will there be still suffering among mankind? Through Baba's words what we understand is that it is not a question of poverty or wealth. The epic life lived by God-Man through hopeless and challenging adversities will be like a crown on top of all patterns of living and is ever admired, cherished and narrated through song and verse by generation after generation as if it were all taking place just before their very eyes. Even wealthy millionaires and powerful kings have to bow down their heads to the glories of the helpless life of the God Man realising the hallowness of their wealth and power. Secondly if we can conceive of life without persons we begin to see life no longer limited by forms and shapes that belong to illusion. Seeing life stripped off different cloaks and masks of illusion amounts to seeing life in all its naked and unmuffled Reality. We see then life as one continuous flow in essence though looks variegated and panoramic in appearance in which every wave, ripple, and splash manifests nothing but divinity because the source of every speck in space and time is eternal existence.

During the New Life period Baba with his followers visited Andhra Pradesh, Bihar. West Bengal, Orissa, Madras, and Bombay. He used to fast for weeks some times or take one meal a day for months to successfully complete the work undertaken by him. Another important aspect of the New Life was the 'Manonash' work which lasted for four months. Manonash means annihilation of false ego which is the seat of all desires, cravings and lust. After the disappearance of the false ego emerges the real ego which is the key to the treasure of infinite know-

ledge, power, peace and glory. It means annihilation of plurality and emergence of unity; breaking off all bindings and attaining of freedom. The significance of the New Life lies

* "in its absorption of the old life and emergence of Free Life. The New Life was the voluntary suspension of the state of perfect master to become a common man and a perfect seeker."

Baba said that he was absolutely helpless and weak during his Mononash period. His four companions helped him accomplish the externalities of his work while he was helped in his internal work by the real saints and by the devout prayers of his lovers.

The most important phase of Baba's work in the eastern countries is his personal contact with saints and sadhus, 'pirs', 'valis' and the mad and the God-mad who are spiritually far advanced people. The God-mad are known as 'masts'. They outwardly appear like the insane people but they are not at all mad. Being drowned themselves in the enchanting inebriations of divine love they are lost to the world which is apt to mistake them for the mad. Baba travelled about 75,000 miles throughout the length and breadth of India, (including the present Pakistan and Bangladesh) and Ceylon (the present Sri Lanka) to contact these masts. He travelled beyond Gangotri where the sacred river Ganges is born and skips down through the silvery lap of the mother Himalayas. He journeyed upto Kanyakumar in the far south where the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea unite into a sacred confluence. He crossed the sea and reached Srilanka for meeting these god intoxicated souls. Thus

between 1922 and 1949 vigorous journeys were undertaken by Baba in search of 'masts'. He walked across rugged and rocky ghats, moors and mountains, waded across canals and plodded marshy lands, visited cities and towns and travelled to villages and hamlets by different modes of travel like trains, buses, bullock carts, tongas and the typical South Indian jutkas. He pressed on his tours in freezing cold winds and in scorching sun or rainy days and suffered every hardship to help these child like souls. Ofcourse how he helped them is beyond our conjecture. What could be seen was that he established ashrams not only for these God mad but also for the really mad people. Besides the ashrams he started a leper home and a beggar colony. Baba bathed these lepers, clothed them and fed them with his own hands. He declared that through this token service to lepers, he would completely eradicate the dreadful disease from the world for ever. On the whole Meher Baba contacted more than 20,000 people including sadhus, saints, masts, beggars and lepers. It is not out of pity or mere compassion that Meher Baba gave token material help to these cadgers, lepers and the poor just as the charitable institutions render succour to the neglected sections. No doubt munificent organisations with missionary enthusiasm have ever been engaged in looking after the earthly needs of these millions of destitutes. As far as Meher Baba is concerned, he made it clearly discernable that these beggars, lepers and the hopeless sufferers are dearer to God than the happy lots of men for God Himself is the worst sufferer and to serve those like whom God loves to live with humility, is the real worship that one can offer to God. Secondly through washing the feet of the beggars, the lepers and the poor with his own hands, Meher Baba had shown us that he could go down to the

level of the lowest of the low with as much ease as he could rise to the state of the highest of the high from which he descended and could incessantly enjoy its uninterrupted bliss. It is not a question of adjustment to a couple of inescapable situations but it is the question of living at the two levels experiencing the two extreme states which is impossible for a human being even to surmise because he can seldom detach his awareness glued inseparably to his particular physical body. Nor can he wrench himself out consciously even for a second of the station and its paraphernalia in which he is made to live. Therefore it can be reasonably said that Baba's work is only a symbolic demonstration of the highest spiritual value inherent in the service to the neglected millions with humility. Lastly I must admit my limited capacity to see through what Meher Baba did spiritually to the low and the down trodden people and how he would help them through their lives of long journey that should promisingly lead them one day to the eventual Destiny.

Meher Baba held a meeting of the Eastern lovers and the Western lovers from first to fourth of November, 1962 in Guruprasad, the beautiful building of the Maharani of Baroda, and it has become famous as 'THE EAST-WEST GATHERING'. Besides a few Thousands of lovers from India and Pakistan, a few hundred inspired participants from all corners of the western world arrived in planes and ships and in special trains and cars to spend a few days sojourn in God's abode and to relax themselves from the stress and strain of exacting labour of living that ropes them further into illusion. It was not simply bringing some people from the east and some people from the west for a mutual understanding. The real implication of assembling a few thousands from the Eastern countries

and the Western countries seems to consciously turn mankind towards the essential inner spirit which, in truth, is eternally One in everyone and which knows no territorial divisions like the East and the West and which knows no ethnic discriminations like the white and the black and which knows no classes as the rich and the poor. These divisions and cross-divisions due to ignorance of mind are superimposed upon the one indivisible spirit in such a way that it gives, when we look at it, Kaleidoscopic vision and distorted delusion to the unity of life. By withdrawing man's mind from this unreal view and concentrating it on the inner unity of the spirit, the much needed new humanity will take its birth in course of time. This newly emerged humanity displays rare noble qualities like sacrifice of self instead of selfishness of the self, helping others instead of exploiting others, loving everyone instead of hating anyone, and emphasizes the oneness of mankind instead of the present manyness. This transition, whether one may foresee or may not be able to foresee at present is the only malady capable of putting an end to the persistent unrest in the world and of individual nations.

A promise of this healthy transition was indeed latent in the East-West Gathering held under the aegis of Meher Baba.

In 1952 on 24th of May Meher Baba, while driving in North America had severe accident in which the left side of his body was badly bruised and blood profusely split on the American soil. Despite the extreme bodily suffering and the inevitable handicaps that followed the accident, Meher Baba remained undeterred as ever and attended to his work at the physical level with greater vigour and cheerfulness. Again on 2nd December, 1956 Meher Baba was met with another road accident perhaps

more serious than the one that took place in America. The second accident occurred near Satar and this time the right side of his body was severely mauled, bones were battered and blood gushed out of his body reddening the Indian soil. It seems to be a superficial venture to indulge in wild surmises about the spiritual significance of these accidents. But it is a blunder on our part if we ignore the surprising poise, in spite of such abnormal physical suffering, maintained by Meher Baba who was obviously hospitalised and crippled. On the fourth day of the accident i. e., on 6th December, 1956, Baba sent a personal message to all his lovers who were no doubt perturbed greatly and who could not bear with the thought of Baba suffering fracture of bones and bleeding injuries. The message was **‘Don’t worry, be happy. All will be well. Faithfully carry out the instructions given by me’**. What we see in the accident and in Baba’s message that followed the accident is that nobody on earth, not even God can escape suffering. Suffering is inevitable for soul’s progress for we grow wiser in our woes than in our weal. Perhaps that is why ‘sorrows seldom come in single spies but visit us in battalions’ as written by the great play wright, Shakespeare. Therefore from the outward poise of Baba we must learn atleast not to give in to adversities however acute they may be and we must not allow our spirit crippled. As Baba directed us in his message and demonstrated through his work we should never allow our duties to suffer even in the midst of worst affliction. On the contrary we should apply ourselves with greater diligence to our duties and fill this beautiful cup of life given us by God with the best wine laboured and crushed out of life’s

struggle and offer it to our Heavenly Father when we reach the Beloved One.

After the accident Baba continued his work with the support of a staff in spite of the limp in the fractured hip-joint. Apart from the physical impact of Baba's suffering which is visible, we cannot ignore its spiritual import because we are finally concerned with the principle that is hidden in the suffering of Baba who says that he is "the Avatar". On an earlier occasion Baba clarified certain doubts about the difference between the ordinary suffering of man, and the suffering of the Godman. He said "Nobody suffers in vain, for true freedom is spiritual freedom and suffering is a ladder towards it. Men unknowingly suffer for God and God knowingly suffers for men". Here in lies the divine quality of Meher Baba's suffering. If we can honestly account for the untold hardships of Rama who suffered exile with his wife and brother for fourteen years, and if we can really account for the cruelest torture that Jesus suffered on the cross, then we may be able to have a glimpse of Baba's suffering not only during the periods of accidents but at other times too. Baba used to go on fasting for weeks together and some times he fasted for months. He used to confine himself to seclusions for much longer periods some times taking tea without milk, some times with-milk and some other times he used to drink water only. Some times he embarked upon prodigious whirlwind tours to far off places without food and rest. It would be appropriate to leave to the faith-inspired and intuitive minds of readers to mull over the vicarious sufferings of the Avatar rather than trying to explain into them.

Whether one believes it or denies it, Meher Baba used to repeatedly say that he was same Ancient One

whom "So many seek and so few found". The ring of authority in his succinct utterance was more convincing than surprising. This and many other authoritative revelations of Baba about his spiritual status have kindled conviction in the hearts of millions of people gradually dispelling their deep rooted misgivings about God and his advent into the world. Meher Baba added that He came again to redeem man "from the bondage of Sanskaras". About the purpose of his coming he further said, "I do not intend to found any religion, cult or creed or society. I have come to help people realise their ideals in their daily life". The spirit of the present century, as it were, is nothing but a mad race for accumulation of as many material comforts as possible. They are multiplying infinitely everyday. Even spiritualists and philosophers who preach people austerity have been enjoying material comforts of the most modern variety. It seems today that there are no real spiritualists except spiritual teachers, no real philosophers except teachers of philosophy. Thus there has grown an ever widening hiatus between the professions and practices of men. How does Meher Baba then bridge the gulf between the ideals that man professes and the actual life he lives? Meher Baba replies, "Love is my principal agent; the Infinite One can be obtained only through love". Love being divine attribute, cannot be so easily obtained. You cannot love God yourself or for that matter you cannot love anyone yourself unless God shares His love with you first and foremost. That is Why Baba said, "Love is the gift of God to man". He added, "I have come to sow the seed of love in your hearts so that in spite of all superficial diversity which your life in illusion must experience and endure the feeling of oneness through love is brought about

amongst all nations, creeds, sects and castes of the world". We must bear in our minds that love as divine quality is quite different from the love that we show for our families, friends and our dear ones. Such love of ours is nothing but an euphemistic substitute for selfishness. Being finite it binds us while divine love being infinite delivers us from all bindings and unites us unto God which is the real goal of every individual.

Notwithstanding his silence over a period of two score and four years Meher Baba gave enough words to mankind that it might take hundreds of years to assimilate them. Most of his clarifications and explanations on different philosophical and spiritual topics were brought out in three volumes with the caption, 'Discourses' (The elaborate and exhaustive discourses are edited and brought out again in a single volume with the title 'God to man and man God') The other important and popular books in which Baba's messages, clarifications and explanations are published are 'listen Humanity', 'Life at its Best', 'Beams on the spiritual panorama', 'The Everything and The Nothing, and 'Sparks'. The precious pendant to all the other books of Baba is the one published with the title, 'God speaks' This colossal book is a "minutely detailed description of the evolution of the soul from the time of its creation until it has completed its function of the evolution and the involution of consciousness and returned to the Over Soul from which it originated" 'The way farers' is another voluminous book that contains a meticulous account of Meher Baba's laborious work with masts and aspirants on the one hand and the poor and the mad and the lepers on the other hand over a period of twenty seven years.

Meher Baba had stayed on this earth for about seventy five years. Tens of thousands of people from different countries were drawn towards Him during the period. Some of them proved beyond doubt to be his devoted soldiers, who dedicated their lives to tell the world that Meher Baba is the Avatar of this age and spread his message of love. Baba often said that his end would be very violent and he would be put to utmost physical suffering. Thus he prepared his followers and lovers to that inevitable event. On 31st January 1969 Meher Baba dropped his body at 12-15 PM (suffering violent spasms) The news was broadcast by the A.I.R. The B.B.C. also announced the news three times on that day of Baba leaving his mortal body. His lovers all over the world were shocked at the announcement. Thousands of people from all corners of the world began to pour into Meherabad with heavy hearts to have the last Darsan of their Beloved's body and pay their loving homage to Him whom they worshipped as the Avatar, whom, they vied with one another, to garland cheerfully at the first opportunity, whom they obviously embraced when invited by Him and from whose hands they received Prasad with great reverence. The body of Baba was kept for the 'Darsan' of these pilgrims of love who flew in from different countries for a week before it was finally laid to rest in the tomb. Ever since Baba left us thousands of people from all corners of the world visit the tomb on 31st every year to pay their homage afresh to their beloved Avatar. The day which is known as Amartidhi, is a sacred day for his lovers because it was on the day He cast off his physical body to be in our hearts for ever Meher Baba before dropping his body said that He had successfully completed his work with cent percent perfection and to his best satisfaction.

Ofcourse it is beyond our power to understand the full meaning of his words. But we as votaries of God, do not dispute the truth that God belongs to the entire mankind and his work cannot be confined to a particular clime or particular time. If Meher Baba is God as he declared of Himself, it is too early for us to assess the full scope of his work and the tremendous spiritual jolt he gave to mankind now itself. Secondly we are too near the period for such an evaluation. But what surprises us is that millions of young people who have never seen Baba, have been coming into his fold professing Him to be the Avatar, and spreading his messages with great fervour and enthusiasm. Their loving devotion to Baba seems to be a convincing pointer to the fact that the Avatar glorifies Himself through generations that follow. Ofcourse it is not the number of people that really count. It is the manner in which they became His lovers that really matters. They are drawn towards Baba because the spark of love is mysteriously kindled in their hearts when they chanced to see Baba's photos or read his literature or chanced to hear his prayers recited and so on and in the light of such newly kindled love they could unhesitatingly recognise Baba as the Avatar or the Saviour of mankind. This can be evidently gathered from the accounts of the visions and experiences that thousands of people narrate when asked how they could come to accept Baba as the Avatar. Thus this process of kindling divine love in the hearts of mankind will continue unabated for centuries to come and one day people in large numbers will enjoy the infinite glow of that divine love illuminating more and more hearts. For example how many people did believe and follow Jesus when he walked on this earth in flesh and blood? How many people did follow the Buddha or the prophet when alive? But today millions of people accept Jesus as our Saviour. Similarly

Buddhism had spread not only all over India but also crossed the mountains into China, Tibet, Japan, Nepal and sailed to Burma, Cylon and many countries in the far east. Likewise the spread of Islam was rapid in Afro-Asian countries after Mohammed.

Therefore we may reasonably infer that the influence of the Avatar or the Messaiah will be wider and deeper on the minds of the future generations than those of His own time. This is because the future generations will be too far away from the Avatar who reveals them more of His divinity than of his humanity while to the people of His time who remain too near Him, He shows more of his humanity than of His divinity by moving with them perfectly like a man. As decades roll on people may witness the full manifestation of His glory and deify Him by raising temples or sacred centres of worship for him. I do not deny there may be a few fortunate and advanced souls of His own period who could enjoy Meher Baba's real glory fully in His own time. What I want to impress upon the minds of the readers is that the future generations will only hear the tales of His humanity but cannot witness as his followers did. Yet they enjoy the full manifestation of His glory. We hope that the Avatarhood of Meher Baba may spread more rapidly to every nook and corner place in the world during the coming decades. Similarly the fruits of His work may be tasted better by the coming new generations and the depth of His discourses may be more vividly interpreted by future scholars. In this respect the future seems to be more fortunate than the present generation. But none can be more fortunate than those of the present generation of Baba lovers who, while living in the period of the God-Man and living with the God-Man, see-

ing Him in flesh and blood, and observing His helplessness, unhesitatingly profess their faith in His Avatarhood. More fortunate are those who not only have professed unswerving faith but responded to His call by implicitly following Him wherever He leads them to just as Simon and Andrews followed Jesus Christ at the sea of Galilee.

It is not enough if we as Baba lovers simply accept Meher Baba as Avatar and profess our faith in the God-man. We must ever endeavour to draw ourselves closer to His real stature; closer than the much inspired new generations of the future who may go far closer to Him. To achieve this Baba asked us 'to love Him still more intensely'. He added "I am the eternal beloved who loves you more than you can ever love yourself". To love Avatar Meher Baba as he ought to be loved one must live the spirit of His words with courage, leaving to the future pundits the burden of interpreting the depth of His words and the breadth of His work which may endlessly and infinitely unfold itself into the lives of people when the world echoes Meher Baba as the Awakener of mankind just as Rama and Krishna are hailed as the Avatars of Tretayug and Dwaparayug respectively or as Jesus Christ is hailed as the son of God that came to redeem man or as Mohammed as the prophet of mankind. It is very appropriate in this connection to recall the prophetic utterances of Babajan, the woman perfect master who said,

".....Some day the whole world will call out, 'Meher, Meher, all the trees will cry out 'Meher', all the birds will sing; "Meher" Needless to write how human hearts too will throb 'Meher, Meher, Meher' in harmony with Nature's carol.

JAI BABA



Meher Baba's Universal Message

“I have come to sow the seed of love in your hearts so that in spite of all superficial diversity which your life in illusion must experience and endure, the feeling of oneness through love is brought about amongst all nations, Creeds, Sects and Castes of the world”

“Because man has 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 to 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. It is possible for you to renounce your limited self by my Grace. I have come to release that Grace.”
