

HAZRAT BABAJAN

The Emperor of Spiritual Realm of her time

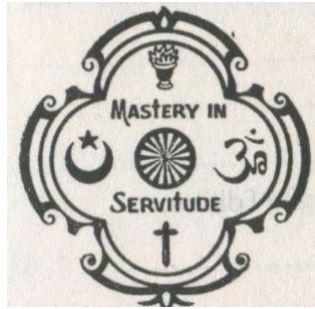




BABAJAN AND HER "PYARA BETA" MERWAN

Hazrat Babajan

*The Emperor of
the Spiritual Realm
of her time*



Avatar Meher Baba

Dr. A. G. Munsiff

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Contents

Acknowledgement	4
Introduction	5
Hazrat Babajan	9
What is a Miracle ?	36
Babajan The Perfect Master	118

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K.K. Ramakrishnan
Secretary,
Avatar Meher Baba Poona Centre.

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Introduction

Originally the book on Hazrat Babajan was compiled out of material drawn from the writings of Dr. A.G. Munsiff in 'Meher Baba Journal' (1938-1942) based on what Meher Baba had revealed. Though Hazrat Babajan's role in the Avataric advent in our time has been mentioned in the three editions of this book so far published, it was not exhaustive enough to impart a detailed account of her work in relation to the life and work of the Avatar in our time. In this fourth revised enlarged edition we have tried to present various interesting events in her life which contributed towards the advent, life and work of Avatar Meher Baba, whom she always called her 'beloved son'.

In the personal life of Babajan one finds how the spirit of renunciation possesses the true lover of God, how it provokes the courage, strength and determination to face all obstacles on the path leading to ultimate union with Beloved God. A girl of eighteen years brought up under delicate care natural for a princely family of ancient time to leave the protection of the home and travel through rugged mountainous region of Baluchistan infested with dangerous dacoits was an incredible venture. Later after the attainment of God-Realization, her travels through the middle eastern

countries, particularly her second and last visit to Mecca and Medina and, on return to India, her visit to Ajmer before settling down in Poona had great significance in revealing the clear spiritual link with the previous advent of the Avatar as Prophet Mohammed. The impetus of the spiritual push given in the last Advent appears to have touched India - the Homeland of Spirituality - when the impulse of divine love released by Prophet Mohammed was brought to India by Khwaja Saheb Chishti of Ajmer in 1200, which brought about the inherent underlying unity of Sufi tradition with Vedantic tradition. It is interesting to remember that it was during this period that saints of Maharashtra led by Dnyaneshwar and Namdev went on a tour towards north as if to absorb the fresh waves of spiritual impulses from the last Avataric Advent arriving in India at the time. Then followed the march of 1400 Sufi saints from north led by the Perfect Master Zar-Zari-Zar Baksh to Khuldabad near Aurangabad thus preparing the ground for the Avataric Advent in our time in Maharashtra. Meher Baba revealed that Sai Baba of Shirdi had served the Perfect Master Zar Zari Zar Baksh in a former incarnation and by his grace attained God-Realization while living in a cave near the Samadhi of his Master at Khuldabad. And Sai Baba was the Head of the Spiritual Hierarchy which precipitated the Advent of the Avatar in our time.

"War is a necessary evil," said Meher Baba. It is in the divine plan and it is an aspect of divinity itself.

The new direction the Avatar gives in each advent towards the spiritual and material progress of mankind is made effective by the Perfect Masters according to the divine plan drawn by the Avatar. Material devastation through wars helps the process of spiritual awakening of mankind. Thus we find in 1200 Allauddin Khilji attacked Deogiri and defeated Raja Ramdevrao a descendent of the Yadava dynasty. Three ascetics from Persia accompanied the forces of Allauddin Khilji and they settled in Kasba Peth in Poona. Khwaja Sallaudin is one of them. At his darga even now both the Hindus and Muslims worship. It was in the vicinity of this place, Meher Baba began his initial activities as the Avatar. Hazrat Babajan had sanctified the place through her wanderings in Poona before finally settling down under the Neem Tree at Char Bawdi, where her mission of unveiling the Avatar was fulfilled.

India's exalted place in the spiritual history of the world is highlighted by the arrival of Prophet Mohammed's staff, shirt and bowl, brought to India by Khwaja Saheb Chishti which lie buried in Delhi just as the body of Jesus Christ lies buried in a cave twelve kilometers from Srinagar in Kashmir.

As one of the five Perfect Masters of our time Hazrat Babajan's place is unique being the elder member of the five and store-house of spiritual forces of her time. Also in this book are some of the secrets revealed by Meher Baba as to how the five hold the key of the world together and control the affairs of all.

Hazrat Babajan was truly the Emperor of the spiritual realm of her time and by her physical presence in Poona over a quarter of a century she released the fragrance of divine love and energy to such an extent that seekers of Truth and lovers of God are irresistibly drawn to Poona from all over the world, and her spiritual presence is felt even today at the tomb-shrine under the neem tree under which she sat and blessed all those who came to her. It was here in May 1913 that Babajan embraced Merwan - the physical form of the Avatar - and in January 1914, with a kiss on his forehead unveiled Meher Baba, the Ancient One, the Avatar of the Age for His work of awakening all life to the love of God. Thus Poona became not only the birth place of the Avatar, but also where He had the experience of His indivisible existence as the Avatar. Poona thus will be eternally remembered in the spiritual history of the world.

Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai.

K. K. Ramakrishnan

Hazrat Babajan

....**W**hen the Avatar takes an incarnation in the human form, he brings upon himself a veil; and this veil has to be removed by some master or masters.

The veil with which the Avatar descends in the human form is placed upon him by the five Perfect Masters who bring him down from his formless being. In the Avataric periods, the five masters always put this veil upon the infinite consciousness of the Avatar, because if he were to be brought without such a veil into the world of forms, the existing balance between reality and illusion would be profoundly disturbed. However, when the five masters think that the moment is ripe, they remove this veil which they have placed on the Avataric consciousness. From that moment the Avatar consciously starts his role as the Avatar.

The incarnation of the Avatar does not take place unless it is precipitated by the five Perfect Masters of the cycle.

- Meher Baba

Hazrat Babajan

The Emperor of the Spiritual Realm of her time.

A place where four roads meet is called a chowk. Babajan Chowk is a place in Poona cantonment where four roads meet in front of the Tomb-Shrine of Hazrat Babajan, whom Avatar Meher Baba used to call the Emperor of the Spiritual realm.

Hazrat Babajan's name at birth was Gool Rukh. She was born to a royal Muslim family of Baluchistan in northern India between 1790, and 1800. Her name truly befitted her. Gool Rukh means 'like a rose' or 'with cheeks like roses'. Her physical appearance was beautiful, and her inner spirit was like a rose, fragrance and beauty of which never faded. Gool Rukh retained this delicate beauty throughout her life and, as Hazrat Babajan people were attracted to her wherever she went.

Gool Rukh was raised as a rich princess. She was given all the training and education appropriate to her royal position. The girl was bright and intelligent. As a child she learned the whole of Koran by heart, and she became as a Hafiz-e-Koran at a very early age. She also became fluent in several languages, including Arabic, Persian, Pushtu, Urdu and even English.

Gool Rukh was spiritually inclined from childhood. She spent much of her time in solitude reciting prayers she learned from the Koran or in silent meditation. When children of her age found pleasure in games, Gool Rukh found joy in prayers. Her childhood companions were disappointed and they sorrowfully missed her.

As Gool Rukh grew into a young woman her spiritual inclinations increased, and she spent more and more time in solitude. Her physical beauty also increased, and seeing her was such a pleasure that all remarked that Gool Rukh's husband would be a lucky man indeed! When Gool Rukh matured to a marriageable age her parents thought of her marriage, but when the subject was raised, they were astonished at her staunch refusal to marry. For a Pathan princess to remain single was unheard of - especially one as lovely as she was.

Gool Rukh's parents then tried to force her into wedlock, not knowing she had already chosen her Beloved. Like Saint Meera as a child fell in love with Lord Krishna, Gool Rukh had fallen in love with Allah, who had captured her heart long, long ago. No prince or handsome groom could take this One's place. Gool Rukh's heart was intoxicated in divine rapture and she wept in divine love to become united with her Beloved.

As months passed, her parents became even more insistent and made plans to celebrate her wedding on a certain date to a certain prince. Gool Rukh was informed that she had no choice and all arrangements

have been finalized. Although she loved her parents, their plans were unbearable to her. Her longing to find her true Beloved overcame all obstacles and hardships and she escaped from her home and Baluchistan - never to be found by her parents.

Gool Rukh journeyed to the northeast, first to Peshawar and then to Rawalpindi. Peshawar and Rawalpindi are cities now in Pakistan. When Babajan lived there they were cities of northern India. When Babajan was born Baluchistan itself was part of British ruled India. The Principal city is Quetta which Meher Baba visited several times during the 1920s.

For a young woman of eighteen years to run away from home and travel alone across the mountainous regions of India was an incredible undertaking. But Beloved God, for whose sake she left home and all her near and dear ones, was watching over her. Under the veil of God's love-nazar she was neither recognized nor captured on the rough mountain roads. Because it was God's grace that was preparing her to remove the veil of duality and experience the oneness of existence - God.

Gool Rukh's heart was burning with the fire of divine love, suffering the terrible pangs of separation from God, and the state of fiery restlessness made her oblivious to hunger, thirst and sleep. The young princess had now become homeless in this world. Day and night she roamed the streets of Rawalpindi absorbed in divine longing for the beloved God. A wayfarer now, this constant restlessness was her only rest. Who

knows how many lifetimes of severe penances and austerities had created this spiritual longing in her? It is said that she had been the famous Rabia Al-Adawiya of Basra, Iraq, in a previous incarnation - the woman saint who was exceptional in her beauty and grace. But Gool Rukh was destined for that which is greater than sainthood. She was to hold the key of the world to open the door to the Kingdom of bliss, knowledge and power for all. People saw what appeared to be a mad woman wandering the streets and alleyways, but her heart was set on the only wish to see the Beloved's face, crying out for ultimate union with God.

Years passed like this, but Gool Rukh's tears of longing never stopped. It is madness to love God, who is all-pervading - a shoreless ocean of infinite existence. But this madness is the destiny of each and every soul in existence. For Gool Rukh the divine madness had become a divine intoxication melting her heart to endless tears. It was only after tears of longing had broken her heart that Gool Rukh met a Hindu Sadguru whose divine duty was to guide her to perfection. Under this Sadguru's guidance she climbed a mountain in the wilderness and lived in a secluded cave. For a year and half she remained in the mountainous regions of what is now Pakistan undergoing rigorous austerity and penance.

At all times on this earth, there are five Perfect Masters - Sadgurus or Qutubs - who guide the destinies of all men and creatures. Their attention is on all men.

When one is finished with the world of illusion and turns towards God, these Masters draw the individual and guide him or her on the path. Thus Gool Rukh was drawn to the Sadguru and following the instructions of the Sadguru she left this region and journeyed on foot into Punjab of India. The divine longing for union with the Beloved God had become intense and the flames of separation were now consuming Gool Rukh and her heart cried out, 'Oh God.... Oh God,' with every breath. Beloved God had become the breath of her life.

Except for the pink cheeks of rose the princess was unrecognizable after almost twenty years of austerity. Gool Rukh was thirty-seven years old when she was completely ready to die the final death! All sanskaras that bind the soul to the earth wiped out, she was ready to give her own self up. The Beloved God was also ready to embrace her, then to absorb her.

In Multan, she met a Muslim Qutub by name Maula Shah. By his grace Gool Rukh attained union with Beloved God. Gool Rukh's individuality was dissolved in the bliss of union with Beloved God who is Infinite Bliss. Gool Rukh died the spiritual death. Her individual existence was merged in the indivisible existence of God. She became God-realized, and nothing remained but God! She experienced, "I alone am! There is no one besides me! I am God! - Anal Haq!" The illusion of the universe faded away before her eyes as she became the Creator!

"Anal Haq" literally means "I am God". A person who has attained the consciousness of God has lost his or her individual human consciousness and can proclaim, "I am God". This divine state is the goal of all individual consciousness and purpose of creation.

Meher Baba explained: Most God-realized souls leave the body at once and for ever, and remain eternally merged in the unmanifest aspect of God. They are conscious only of the bliss of union. Creation no longer exists for them. Their constant round of births and deaths is ended. This is known as mukti or liberation.

Some God-realized souls retain the body for a time, but their consciousness is merged completely in the unmanifest aspect of God, and they are therefore not conscious either of their bodies or of creation. They experience constantly the infinite bliss, power and knowledge of God, but they cannot consciously use them in creation and help others to liberation. These souls are called Majzoobs, and this particular type of liberation is called Videh Mukti or liberation with body.

But Gool Rukh could not remain in her state of Majzoobiyat for long, although she had temporarily lost all consciousness of the universe and herself. In her state of Majzoobiyat, she was aware of being God-conscious, but unconscious of creation and her body and mind. Gool Rukh now spiritually perfect, had to know and control illusion as illusion, in order to play the supremely magnificent role for which she alone

was divinely destined - to summon the Awakener to earth - to unveil the Infinite Consciousness of the Avatar of the Age, Meher Baba.

So in her God-realized state, which the Hindus call "Brahmi-Bhoot" and the Sufis call "Majzoobivat". Gool Rukh now in her late thirties journeyed back to the northern region, drawn again to Rawalpindi to her previous Hindu Master. She was aware of being God but was unconscious of herself - her body. The goal had been achieved but the master's consciousness to lead others to the goal was not perfected in her. In her perfect bliss, she alone existed. Gool Rukh had become perfect, one with God, but had no consciousness of the gross world. She had to come down to the gross consciousness of the illusory world, retaining her God-consciousness.

After several years, with the help of her Hindu Master, Gool Rukh regained consciousness of the universe of duality and was transformed into a Perfect Master. Along with her divine consciousness of the Unlimited Ocean of Reality, she began seeing every drop as drop and was empowered to turn each into the ocean itself.

Upon becoming one of the five Perfect Masters on the earth, she left Rawalpindi and embarked on several journeys through the middle eastern countries - Syria, Labanon, Iraq and others. It is said that she travelled to Mecca disguised as a man, by way of Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and doubling back to Arabia. At the Kaaba in Mecca, she offered the customary

Mohammedan prayers five times a day, always sitting at one selected spot. While in Mecca, she would often gather food for the poor, and personally nursed pilgrims who had fallen ill. She also spent long hours gathering fodder for abandoned cattle.

From Mecca, Gool Rukh journeyed to the tomb of the Prophet Mohammed at Medina, where she again adopted the same routine of offering prayers and caring for fellow pilgrims. Leaving Arabia, she wandered overland to Baghdad, and from Iraq back to the Punjab. In India she travelled south to Nasik and established herself in Panchwati, an area known by Hindus to be sanctified by Lord Rama Himself. To the local people, her spiritual "manliness" was apparent. The power of her glance overshadowed her feminine body and attire. From Nasik, Gool Rukh went further south to Bombay where she stayed for several months. After finishing her spiritual work there, she returned to the Punjab and spent several years wandering throughout northern India.

During this period, while in Rawalpindi she was in a glorious spiritually intoxicated state and declared in the presence of a group of Mohammedans that she had divine authority. "It is I who created the universe! I am the creator of everything!" Such declarations caused a group of Baluchi soldiers to become furious fanatics. They attacked her and held her by force while some dug a pit. Then they buried her alive! The soldiers had no idea that she whom they considered insane, was actually conscious of being God!

Ignorant as they were of the Divine Theme and the spiritual status of God-conscious beings, these proud soldiers considered her utterances blasphemy against holy Islam. They believed that they would be spiritually rewarded by killing the mad woman and saving their religion from her blasphemy. Thus reveling in their wicked deed and hoping to find a special place for themselves in paradise by killing this fakir-infidel or heretic, they left her grave.

In spite of being left to die in a nameless grave, Gool Rukh did not die! She survived this ordeal by her divine powers, and around 1900 appeared again in Bombay, over a thousand miles south, where she lived on the side walk at a street called Chuna Bhatti near Byculla. Such events of a miraculous nature in the lives of Masters impress the mind of the masses. Perfect Masters perform miracles only to awaken the masses to spirituality.

When these same soldiers saw Babajan alive in Poona years later, however, their pride and ill-formed conceptions were completely shattered. They then understood that it was not Babajan who was the unbeliever, but they themselves! They were overcome with repentance for their horrible deed and fell at her feet seeking forgiveness. Some of these same soldiers became her devotees and served as her bodyguards. Gradually Gool Rukh's fame spread and many believed her to be a Qutub. The Mohammedans began referring her as Hazrat, meaning 'Your Highness' and began worshipping her as a person who was one with God

- Babajan.

Babajan was seen in Bombay again around 1901. She wandered particularly about the district known as Pydhonie. Occasionally she would meet with the saint Moulana Saheb of Bandra, and with saint Baba Abdul Rehman of Dongri. It was glorious to see how happy the ancient woman was in their company and she would lovingly address them as her children. These two saints became part of her circle of disciples and later she was to bestow God-Realization to both of them.

Babajan's Second Visit To Mecca

In April, 1903, Babajan sailed from Bombay on the S. S. Hyderi on her second pilgrimage to Mecca. Although every second Babajan was absorbed in her blissful state, aboard the ship she acted quite normal. She would openly converse with the other passengers, reciting couplets from the Persian poets Hafiz and Rumi and expound in simple terms about the deep mysteries of the Absolute. All were attracted to the old woman, now well over one hundred years old, including the crew with whom she spoke in English.

One unusual incident occurred during this voyage. It started raining heavily and a terrible storm arose. All were terrified and people panicked, convinced the ship would sink. Babajan appeared on the deck unmindful of the danger. In an unusually loud voice, she shouted to one of the passengers named Nooma Pankhawala, "Wrap a kerchief around

your throat to form a bag and approach every passenger - including the children and Europeans - and collect one paisa from each. Then have them beseech God with this prayer, saying, "Oh God! Save our ship from this storm! On reaching Medina, in the name of your Beloved Prophet, we will offer food to the poor!" Immediately, the man, Nooma, collected one paisa from each person and all fervently repeated what Babajan had commanded. Gradually the storm subsided and miraculously they escaped what appeared to be certain death.

Among the passengers aboard the S. S. Hyderi were Noor Mohammed Kasam Mitha, Nooma Pankhawala, Seth Saleh Mohammed, Hyder Ibrahim Sayani, and his mother and brother. Hyder Ibrahim Sayani was a professor at Deccan College in Poona, and this story was narrated by him.

Upon arriving in Mecca, word of the miraculous rescue spread and a great multitude gathered to be personally blessed by Babajan. Perfect Masters seldom perform miracles. They do so only when they have to shower their grace on large section of humanity. Babajan showered her grace on all the passengers on board S. S. Hyderi and all those who gathered at Mecca and Medina. At the Kaaba, Babajan assumed the role of an ordinary pilgrim, performing prayers five times a day at the shrine, but after a few days she journeyed north to Medina. There in the name of Mohammed, the Prophet of the All-Merciful, she distributed grain to the poor.

About 1904, Babajan returned to Bombay and soon afterward proceeded to Ajmer in northern India to pay homage at the tomb of the Muslim Perfect Master, Khwaja Saheb Chishti. From Ajmer she returned to Bombay and then soon after travelled west to Poona.

It is significant that Babajan paid her second and last visit to Mecca-Medina before returning to Bombay in about 1904, and before proceeding to Poona went to Ajmer to pay homage at the tomb of Khwaja Saheb Chishti. Meher Baba had revealed that the Avataric advent is divinely ordained between seven hundred and fourteen hundred years. It is exactly fourteen hundred years after Prophet Mohammed that Meher Baba was born.

It is the rare fortune of the few who by the grace of God accept the Avatar during his life time on earth. It is always through them that the atmosphere of love and bliss prevailing around his person is perpetuated which ultimately became a religion in the name of each advent. It is always through them that the life and activities of the Avatar is passed on to mankind gradually.

The impact of the Avataric advent is felt all over the world imperceptibly, and the new direction the Avatar gives in each advent for humanity's spiritual and material ongoing is received by all according to a plan drawn by the Avatar through the Perfect Masters who execute the divine plan.

Meher Baba revealed that the Sufi Master Khwaja Saheb Chishti was the Qutub-e-Irshad (the Head of the spiritual hierarchy) of his time. He is acknowledged throughout Indo-Pakistan continent as the supreme figure among the Sufi saints and masters of that area of the world. Chishti is popularly known as Gharib-Nawaz - the protector of the poor. He is also called Sultan-e-Hind - the Emperor of India. The impulse of divine love released by Prophet Mohammed was carried to India by Khwaja Saheb Chishti and the largest number of people in India embraced Islam through him, and during his life time.

Most significantly, Chishti brought Sufism into India and merged its teachings with Vedant... The nature of all Chishti Masters was to remain aloof from kings and politics. Most importantly, these Masters emphasized ecstatic love for God as a way to approach Him, the Divine Beloved - not austerity, not discipline, not prayer, not penance, not scholarship, not service. Ecstatic love was their way and their path.

Details of his life are obscured by legends. But he is believed to have come to India from Central Asia after many years of travelling in the Middle East. The Chishti Sufi Order, from which he took his name, was then based in the town of Chishti in Afghanistan during the twelfth century.

Chishti came to India via Lahore and lived in Delhi, and then proceeded to Rajasthan city in Ajmer shortly before the year 1200, about the same time

when Delhi fell before the invading armies of Muslim Turks. Some stories claim Chishti entered India before the Muslim armies invaded, and he encountered hostility and opposition from the local Brahmin authorities. His high status was demonstrated in a "battle of miraculous powers" with, and conquest over, a revered yogi in Delhi, and thus humbled the Hindu opposition to him. Legends also describe him battling tantric magicians who opposed him. Other stories claim that he arrived in India after the Turkish conquest and lived aloof in quietude with his disciples in the mountainous region of Ajmer, where he died in 1236. One of his chief disciples was Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki whose revered tomb is near the Qutub Minar in Delhi.

Meher Baba went to the shrine of Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer several times. It was here in 1939 that He contacted the God realised seventh plane Majzoob Noor Ali Sha Pathan also known as Chacha who was one of the few rare ones in the world and was living in a hovel near the tomb shrine of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti

For hundreds of years, Chishti's tomb and shrine in Ajmer has been the center of an elaborate annual pilgrimage attended by thousands of pilgrims, both Hindu and Muslim, many still experiencing miracles there.

Chishti's spiritual lineage of perfection is traceable - without a gap to the Prophet Mohammed himself through Ali and Chishti brought with him to India the

robe, staff and bowl of the Prophet which was given by Mohammed to Ali.

From Chishti comes the line of Qutubs - Perfect Masters - that extends down to Sai Baba of Shirdi, who was the Chief of the Spiritual Hierarchy of our time, who precipitated the advent of the Avatar - Meher Baba - in our time.

Qutub-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki who was the Master of Baba Farid-i-Ganji-Shakkar, who became the Master of Nizam-ul-din Awliya of Delhi, who was the Master first of Zar Zari Zar Baksh, who led the caravan of one thousand four hundred saints from Delhi to Khuldabad; and Nizam-ul-din Awliya was secondly succeeded by his brother, named Burhag-ul-din there in Khuldabad.

In Delhi, the Qutub Chirag-i-Delhi followed Nizam-ul-din Awliya. In Chirag's tomb, according to his instructions are the robe, staff and bowl of the Prophet handed to Ali and passed on to Chishti. Before passing, Chirag said he had no successor and hence it is believed that the sacred relics of Prophet Mohammed had been buried with him.

The Sufi establishment in the Deccan at Khuldabad is the source of Sai Baba of Shirdi, who became God-realized by the grace of his Master, Zar Zari Zar Baksh, while living in a cave near the tomb of his Master. Thus through Sai Baba, Meher Baba has a spiritual link with Moinuddin Chishti, and through Chishti, Meher Baba has a spiritual link with the Prophet of the previous advent, Mohammed himself.

Babajan's visit to Mecca-Medina and Khwaja Saheb Moinuddin Chishti's tomb at Ajmer before coming to Poona is significant. It was to cleanse these centres of pilgrimage the atmosphere of which were full of the sanskaras (impressions) of thoughts and desires of worldly people and to recharge with impulses of divine love. Meher Baba said: "True sanctity does not lie in the dead walls of brick and stone, or even in the waters of the sacred rivers, but in the living beings who fill the environment with the fire of their devotion, love and worship, and in the great spiritual forces released by the Masters during their stay there."

India is the great land of spirituality, the home of all great religions of the world. The sacred fire of Zoroaster is held in a temple in Udwada in Gujarat. Avataric advent of Ram, Krishna and Buddha took place in India. The body of Jesus Christ lay buried in a cave at Harven, twelve kilometers from Srinagar in Kashmir, and the sacred relics of Prophet Mohammed lay buried in Delhi. Again in our time Meher Baba, the Avatar of the Age was born in India, and His Samadhi-Tomb-Shrine at Meherabad, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, has become the Home of New Humanity.

When Babajan came to Poona in 1905, Merwan, whom she always lovingly called her "beloved son" - was eleven years old. Babajan's days of travelling throughout India came to an end, and she remained in Poona permanently to watch over Merwan. Babajan settled in Poona only to fulfill her spiritual duty to eventually unveil Merwan as the Avatar.

When she first lived in Poona, Babajan would not remain in any fixed place. She would wander in the Cantonment area or roam about the city and frequented even the filthy slums. Although her clothes were ragged and soiled, her beauty and the glow of her face attracted many people to her. She had been a princess, now her true majesty was unmistakable - it was that of an emperor.

After a while Babajan was never found alone, but always surrounded by a crowd. Her physical needs were practically nil and she seldom ate. She was very fond of tea, however, and her followers would bring cup after cup for her which she would offer as prasad .

If someone happened to bring flowers, she would abuse the person for wasting money saying, "Why didn't you spend your money wisely on something like sweets or tea which all can enjoy?"

If Babajan happened to look at someone who was passing by, the person would stand transfixed gazing at her divine face. Restaurant owners and fruit vendors would beg her to visit, and offer her whatever she wanted. If Babajan happened to comply, they would consider themselves fortunate in God's eyes.

When Babajan went to the Poona Cantonment area, she frequently visited the house of a Muslim named Shaikh Imam, a watchmaker. Seeing her ragged clothes, the Shaikh's mother wished to bathe and dress Babajan in new clothes but she always refused. One

day, however, Babajan agreed and with the utmost difficulty and patience, the Shaikh's mother gently bathed her old body and attired her in a new clean robe and undergarments especially stitched for her. This was the last bath Babajan was to have for as long as she lived. But despite this, her body was always fragrant. It was free from the impurities of the world as if it were always bathed in the wine of love that flowed from her intoxicated eyes.

Having no permanent place to stay in Poona, Babajan would rest alongside any street at night. Once she stayed near the Muslim shrine of Wakadia Bagh and from there went to sit for some time near another Muslim shrine of Panch Pir at Dighi. There were many ant colonies near Panch Pir's shrine and the ants would swarm over Babajan, biting her and causing large welts on her body, yet she remained quietly seated as if nothing was happening.

One day a man named Kasam V. Rafai went to Dighi and upon seeing Babajan covered with ants, tears ran down his cheeks. Kasam with Babajan's permission tried to remove all the ants, but he was not successful in his attempts. Somehow he persuaded Babajan to come to his house where, with much difficulty, he removed hundreds of the tiny insects - one by one. Throughout this painful ordeal, Babajan barely indicated any discomfort.

After temporarily staying at several different places throughout the city of Poona, Babajan took up residence under a neem tree near Bukhari Shah's mosque in

Rasta Peth, next door to the home of a devotee named Sardar Raste. Larger crowds began to congregate there and Babajan was hampered by the limited space around her. Her devoted followers implored her to change her seat but Babajan sternly replied, "One devil is here and unless and until I get rid of him, it is not possible for me to move an inch!"

Opposite her chosen site was a large banyan tree and when the Municipality chopped down the tree to expand the road, Babajan suddenly decided to move. For two weeks she was seen near a deserted tomb in the Swar Gate locality and from there she shifted to the area called Char Bawdi, meaning Four Wells, on Malcolm Tank Road where she sat beneath a neem tree. This spot proved to be her final site where she remained for many years until the ancient woman discarded her form.

When Babajan first moved to Char Bawdi, there was just a dirt road infested with hordes of mosquitoes; plague germs were even suspected there. During the day the area was desolate and deserted, but at night it sprung into life with thieves and the city's most dangerous criminals.

In Char Bawdi, Babajan remained seated under the neem tree - a rock of absolute Godhood in the shifting dust of pitiful ignorance moving about her. After months of exposure to nature's elements, she grudgingly allowed her devotees to build a shelter of gunny sacks above her. Here she stayed throughout all seasons - alleviating humanity's suffering by allowing

anyone to come to her - to sip the wine of her continual presence. Some years later there was a marvelous change in the locality. Large modern buildings were constructed, tea shops and restaurants appeared and electricity was brought to the homes in the area. Due to establishment of Babajan's seat under the neem tree, Four Wells became a charming area in which to live and raise a family.

Babajan would often mutter to herself words like, "Vermis are troubling me incessantly: I sweep them away, but still they keep on gathering." Simultaneous with these mutterings, unintelligible to listeners, she would keep on moving the palms of her hand all over her body, as if removing dust or cobwebs.

Meher Baba explained: "Annihilation of all AMAL (actions or sanskaras or impressions) good and bad means NAJAT (salvation or mukti) and Babajan being God-Realized was much above the state of salvation. She not only had no AMAL (actions) to account for but was in a position to destroy the AMALS of others. The physical body of a saint like Babajan, when working on earthly planes after realization, becomes the focal point to which myriads and myriads of AMAL of the universe get attracted, and getting purified in the furnace of Divinity, i.e., the body of the saint, they go out again into the universe as spiritual AMAL. Take for instance the white ants which, you know, have a tremendous power of multiplying. The queen of the white ants, a fat round bulky creature about three or four inches in length, feeds upon its own kind, the

smaller ants. But the queen procreates much more I than what she consumes. Likewise perfect saints like Babajan give out more spiritual AMAL to the world than what they destroy. Hence it is that living saints are a blessing and mercy to the world, whether one knows it or not." This condition (halat) in saints is the aspects of divine love and beauty (shane-jamal).

Thus infinite number of sanskaras (impressions) are attracted to the five Perfect Masters and are purified or annihilated in the divine fire (YOGAYOGA SANSKARAS). If the sanskaras are purified they return, spreading all over the universe as SPIRITUAL SANSKARAS. In this way the Perfect Masters' bodies serve as centers for collecting and cleansing the UNIVERSAL SANSKARAS of the world and again disseminating them as SPIRITUAL SANSKARAS. If the Perfect Masters annihilate sanskaras then they are gone or wiped out of the universal flow of mental, subtle and gross sanskaras (impressions).

Babajan often times, when the aspect of divine glory (shane-jalal) possessed her, used to rave and grumble in following strain. "Why do you torment my children; nay, you even kill them. They have done no wrong to you. Do I not feed you, and clothe you? What is it you lack? And still you perpetrate all these atrocities on them. What have I done to merit all this?" Words conveying this sense have been frequently heard from Babajan and naturally they gave rise to some guess-work on the part of the hearers, who interpreted the words to mean that Babajan was

remembering and bemoaning the loss of her children who perhaps were cruelly dealt with by her people.

Meher Baba explained: "There can be nothing further from truth. Babajan was never married and had no children. By children, she evidently meant the saints of the time (Awliya-e-waqt), who are misunderstood, vilified and persecuted by the churches of all denominations, unmindful of the circumstances of which they are the outcome. Babajan was equally concerned with the enlightened and the ignorant, and hence her reference to feeding and clothing latter. She was as much for the material well-being of the world at large, as for the godly few whom she called her children. Perfect Masters work for the spiritual and material progress of all men and creatures.

Hazrat Babajan's spiritual status in the hierarchy of saints is that of a Qutub. Literally the word Qutub means a peg or a pin, and a Qutub functioning on the physical plane is the hub round which the universe revolves. Babajan's subjective experience (halat) of gnosis (Irfan) would be described by the Sufis as that of a Salik-Majzoob. After God-Realization, one returning to normal consciousness is possessed both of Divinity and Gnosis (Haqiqat and Marefat). When Divinity is uppermost in him he is called Majzoob, and when gnosis predominates he is a Salik. Babajan had both these aspects in her equally balanced, and hence she was Salik-Majzoob of the time, possessing all the characteristics of a Qalandar.

Once a Fakir complained that Tajuddin's durbar

was more lavish and free in providing worldly amenities than hers. Babajan retorted by saying, "What can Tajuddin give? He gives what I give him." This incident is significantly eloquent of Babajan's relationship with the saint referred to above.

No one can escape the light of illumination when one nears its source. Even when veiled, one feels the effect of this light; its flame burns away the veil! Such was the light of Babajan - in her and around her.

The Court of Babajan was on the street. Qawallis - Persian devotional songs - were sung before her. Crowds came and bowed down to her as an emperor. The fragrance of flowers wafted on all sides. The sweet burning of incense purified the air. Those who received her darshan and were blessed by her thanked God for their rare good fortune.

On one occasion in 1919, Babajan forewarned the large group gathered around her, "All should leave immediately for your homes. Go!" Her wishes were respected but no one understood why she was so insistent on sending them away.

Shortly thereafter, however, a tornado with heavy rains swept throughout Poona causing terrible damage throughout the city. Babajan's devotees begged her to come to their homes for shelter but she refused to move from under the tree and sent them away. Although she saw to the safety of others, she herself withstood the rigors of the furious storm.

Gradually the ancient woman's fame spread and Hindus, Muslims and Zoroastrians from different places came for her darshan. Char Bawdi became a holy place of pilgrimage and Babajan poured the wine of divine love unto the sincere. After meeting the old holy lady, a person's heart was content and grateful. Day after day the number of devotees increased and Babajan was worshipped and revered by thousands throughout India.

The British military authorities were annoyed at finding the road near Babajan blocked with traffic and surging crowds each day. The authorities were helpless however, to do anything about it, because they knew that if Babajan was forcibly removed, there would be an uproar which would not easily subside. It became apparent that a strong permanent shelter needed to be erected for the old woman. Initial funds were provided by the British military but when the new shelter was built, Babajan obstinately refused to shift as it had been constructed a few feet away from her original seat. So the structure was extended at additional cost to the city authorities to cover the seat under the neem tree, but again she refused to sit under it. When her devotees pleaded with her, at last she consented, muttering her complaints that it was not quite right. Perfect Masters seldom or never change their chosen seat.

Babajan's nature was majestic. She was an emperor in a fakir's rags. Although between 120 to 130 years old, Babajan's wrinkled face was still like

blossoming rose and the expression in her brown blue eyes would draw anyone to look at her more closely. It is said that her gaze had driven some mad. Mad for God! She was somewhat stooped and short in height, but her gait was of one intoxicated. Her skin was white, her wrinkles were deep as if curved, her crown of soft hair was pure white and curls fell at her shoulders. Her voice was commonly sweet and pleasing to the ear. She did not beg although she lived as a simple fakir. She possessed only what she wore, but her simplicity held invaluable and untold treasure. Seated under the tree in the street, she became like dust, no one knew that she had been raised as a princess and had renounced her royal heritage. Her renunciation showed that by her life of utter purity she had gained priceless divine wealth. Inside her was hidden everything. It was this divine inheritance - Qutubiyat, Perfect Mastery - that she consecrated to the world.

Whether in winter or summer, Babajan would dress in loose white cotton pants with a long white tunic. A shawl always lay across her shoulders and besides these humble garments she wore no other protection against the elements. Her head was always bare and her hair was never washed, combed or oiled. When she walked down the streets her stride was swift like that of young girls. While listening to devotional music her body would rock to the rhythm of its melody. Babajan's physical condition changed frequently. One day she would have a high fever and

the next, without taking any medication, she would be fine. She would address everyone, whether young or old, man or woman, as "child" or "baba." If anyone called her "Mai" (Mother), she would grimace and rebuke them. "I am a man, not a woman." This declaration of hers was faithful to the words of the prophet Mohammed who said, 'A lover of world is a woman, a lover of Paradise is an eunuch, and a lover of God is a man.' People would therefore, affectionately call her "Amrna Saheb" meaning mother and sir at the same time.

Miracles were associated with Babajan. She was a physician in her own unusual manner. If someone sick approached for relief, she would say, "The child is being tormented by goliyan (small round pellets), meaning thereby the effect of Amal – sanskaras - here wrong actions. To the amusement of those around, she would hold between her fingers, the painful or diseased part of the person concerned, and calling upon some imaginary being, she would give two or three sharp jerks to the affected part, simultaneously ordering the troublesome entity to quit. Surprisingly enough, this funny operation would impart instantaneous relief, and person concerned would depart smiling and happy.

One day, a Zoroastrian child, who had completely lost his eye sight, was brought to Babajan. She took the child in her arms, mumbled something and blew her breath upon the child's eyes. Immediately the child regained his vision and jumped out of her lap joyfully crying, "I can see! - I can see!"

What is a Miracle

Miracle means a supernatural occurrence or act. Miracles are performed by the unseen hands of nature all around us. The rising sun of the dawn dispelling the darkness of the night on this earth, giving light, life and energy is a daily occurring miracle, but because of familiarity or knowing it as an astronomical phenomena no one seems to be surprised of this great miracle of everyday life. But when we hear or read an episode in the life of a spiritual master in which while the disciple is taking lesson at night the light goes off and the master produces light from his fingers and lets the disciple take lesson uninterrupted, we are astonished by the power of the master and bow down to him. Miracles play a great role in the religious life of mankind, and the life stories of all saints, Sadgurus and Avatar are coloured with miraculous events. The life of Babajan is not an exception. Hence it is necessary that we should know the meaning and purpose of what we call miracle in the spiritual pursuits of mankind.

Meher Baba says, "in order to understand creation in terms of thought, it is necessary to posit a will-to-be conscious in the Absolute in an involved state prior to the act of manifestation. Thus God in Beyond-Beyond (Paratpar-Parabrahma) state is characterized

or imagined by the seeker of Truth as in a sound sleep state. In the infinite Beyond state of God, which transcends the categories of consciousness as well as unconsciousness there appeared the first initial urge for God to know Himself. And with the arising of this initial urge there was an instantaneous manifestation of infinite consciousness as well as infinite unconsciousness as simultaneous resultants. Of these two seemingly opposite but complementary aspects, the infinite consciousness plays the role of the Avatar or Divine Incarnation. The infinite unconsciousness finds its expression through an evolution, which seeks to develop full consciousness through time processes. In the human form, the full consciousness strives to have Self-knowledge and Self-realization.*

But the soul has to go through a process of reincarnation of eighty-four lakhs of births and deaths before it can shake loose the hold of sanskaras or impressions accumulated around the consciousness of the soul during the evolutionary processes and enter the path of liberating involution and process of realization.

In order to achieve complete development of consciousness in human form the soul in the evolutionary process had to take seven major leaps, viz: from stone to metal, from metal to vegetables, from vegetables to worm, from worm to fish, from fish to bird, from bird to animal and finally from animal to

* Beams From Meher Baba

the human being, each possessing different characteristics. The process of involution is generally gradual. Man's heritage of form as well as impressions is from animals, so the gross impressions are very strong. The process of reincarnation therefore, is to enable the soul to eliminate the sanskaras by passing through the furnace of pain and pleasure... gross impressions become subtle impressions, subtle impressions become mental impressions and mental impressions are ultimately wiped out, leaving consciousness to reflect truth.

As the gross consciousness of the gross-conscious human soul gradually involves, the involving gross consciousness experiences partially the first plane of the subtle world through the medium of the fully developed subtle body of the soul. With his gross eyes he sees glimpses of the subtle plane, with his gross ears he hears celestial music of the subtle plane, and with his gross nose he enjoys subtle scents. Gradually, with further involution of gross consciousness, the gross conscious human soul experiences completely the first plane of the subtle world. This subtle conscious human soul gradually becomes conscious of the second plane of the subtle world. This subtle world is the domain of infinite Energy, the infinite power of God, which when translated into the finite, here manifests in the form of the infinite energy of the subtle world.

The subtle conscious human soul on the second plane, with greater involution of consciousness is gradually gaining consciousness of the infinite energy

of the subtle world and is capable of performing tricks, or minor miracles of lower degree. For instance, with one wish he can make a dry tree green and vice versa; he can stop railway trains and motor cars, fill a dry well with fresh water, and so forth. This subtle-conscious human soul on the second plane experiences the subtle world with the subtle senses of his subtle body... Further involution of the subtle consciousness of the subtle-conscious human soul makes the soul experience the third plane of the subtle world. Here the subtle consciousness gains greater consciousness of the infinite energy of the subtle world and the soul experiences greater finite power. Here he is capable of performing grand miracles such as giving sight to the blind and restoring limbs to the maimed. Here this subtle-conscious human soul is also capable of experiencing the different planes and worlds of the subtle sphere, just as a gross conscious human soul is capable of travelling from Asia to Australia or America using the gross vehicles at his disposal.

With a gradual and further gain in the involution of the consciousness of the subtle-conscious human soul, the consciousness of the soul inclines the soul to experience the fourth plane. On the fourth plane the soul is fully conscious of INFINITE ENERGY. It is the very same infinite energy which is the shadowy aspect of that infinite power of God. Here the soul is equipped with full power and is even capable of raising the dead and of creating new forms and worlds breathing with life. On the fourth plane there are no

occult powers. They are divine powers... the subtle-conscious human soul on the fourth plane, possessing the key to the store of infinite power, is seen on the threshold of the mental world, confronted by the full blast of intense desires and emotions which are the aspects of Mind of the mental world. At this stage, the soul experiences, as it were, a state of the darkest night. He finds himself caught up between the Devil and the deep. The overpowering incitement by intense desires to wield and use this infinite energy at will, proves a treacherous foe at this juncture when the involution of consciousness of this subtle-conscious human soul is unfailingly progressing rapidly towards gaining mastery over all desires.

If these desires at their zenith overpower the soul on the fourth plane, and if the powers are misused, then the experience of liberating this infinite energy invariably proves fatal at this juncture for the soul on the fourth plane. The result is that all of the consciousness gained by the soul is violently disintegrated, and the soul retains only the most finite consciousness and identifies itself once again with the stone-form. This soul then has to pass through the whole process of evolution from the stone-form onward to regain full consciousness.*

The entire process of withdrawing consciousness from the universe and becoming conscious of the Self is accompanied by an increasing control of all the

* GOD SPEAKS, Pg 9, 30, 44, 48

vehicles of consciousness. Such control is made possible by the vivification and activities of unused centres of control; and functioning of new centres brings in its train a number of occult powers. These new powers are commonly known as siddhis, and they can come before the aspirant has become spiritually perfect. In fact, egoism can flourish through the acquisition of such occult powers. The aspirant may not only delight in possessing them, but might actually use them for mundane purposes from which he has not necessarily freed himself. Siddhis are therefore, rightly regarded as obstacles to the attainment of realization. However, after God is realized, all these occult powers dwindle in their importance. The siddhis have their field in the nothingness which is the universe, and the person who realizes God is permanently and immovably established in the Supreme Reality. Although the whole universe is like a zero to the GodRealized person, he may voluntarily assume responsibility toward those souls who are enmeshed in the tangles of the universe. In that case he can freely and legitimately make use of his occult powers for the spiritual good of others.

There is nothing which does not admit of direct or indirect control by Masters of wisdom. Large social phenomena such as wars, revolutions and epidemics, as well as cosmic phenomena such as earthquakes, floods and other changes, are equally amenable to their control and direction through the release of the forces of the exalted planes on which the Masters are

constantly stationed. The Masters can also use the occult forces and possibilities for securing co-operative and co-ordinate spiritual work. They frequently hold meetings and conferences on the higher planes for securing advancement of humanity. The Over-Soul in all is only One and it always functions as a unity. Those who have become conscious of this unity become fit to undertake unlimited responsibility, because they have shed the lower limitations of human mind and have become so impersonal and universal in their interest that they are effective vehicles for the execution and furtherance of Divine Plan on earth.

Babajan lived as a poor fakir on the street, but out of reverence her devotees would bring her expensive cloth or jewelry as gifts. Babajan was indifferent toward such material offerings but thieves would slyly swipe the cloth or jewelry away - some would even steal from her while she watched. Babajan never tried to stop them.

Perfect Masters do not sleep as an ordinary man. Their apparent sleep is rest to the body, but their consciousness functions at all times.

Once Babajan was seemingly sleeping under her tree covered by a fine shawl. A thief sneaked up and seeing the shawl, was tempted to steal it. But as a corner of the shawl was under Babajan's body, to pull it out was risky. The thief was wondering how to manage it, when at that moment Babajan turned over. Taking advantage of her changed position, the thief grabbed the shawl and ran away. In this way Babajan

helped the thief, who was never caught, fulfill his desire.

On another occasion, a devotee from Bombay brought Babajan two expensive bangles and after bowing down to her put them on her wrist. The man told her that through her past blessing some worldly desire of his had been fulfilled and as a token of appreciation he had brought the bangles for her. The man had no idea of her indifference to them. One night soon after a robber crept up behind Babajan and roughly forced the bangles off making her wrist bleed. The robber attempted a speedy escape, but people nearby witnessing the incident shouted for help. Hearing their cries, a policeman came and enquired about the uproar. But what did Babajan, the perfect fakir do? The old woman startled everyone by raising a stick and exclaimed, "Arrest those people who are shouting. It is they who are disturbing me. Take them away!"

Babajan was seldom seen eating. A man was appointed as Babajan's mujaver, whose duty it was to look after the personal needs and serve her. He was a good humoured person and whenever he would ask Babajan to eat, he would jokingly say, "Ammasahab, the Jodna (patch of a cloth) is ready now." This refers to Babajan's constant protests that eating was similar to patching this cloth of a body to preserve it.

Perfect Masters, such as Babajan, have their inner way of working. For example, one night, in the town of Talegaon about twenty miles from Poona a

play was being staged in a local theatre. There was a large crowd and the theatre was packed to capacity. Seating was sold out and the management locked the doors to prevent people entering. During the play a fire broke out and the audience panicked since the doors were locked.

Simultaneously in Poona, Babajan was observed to be behaving quite strangely. She began restlessly pacing back and forth quite excitedly and angrily shouted, "Fire! Fire! The doors are locked and people are going to burn. You dam fire – extinguish!" The people around her could not understand what was happening. But in Talegaon suddenly the doors of the theatre flew open and the panicked crowd rushed out, averting a horrible tragedy.

The Perfect Masters' ways are unique as well as curious; boundlessness of their spiritual work is outside the limits of rational human understanding. One example of this is the following incident. Although Babajan had an aversion to the presents of jewelry, she kept tight, gaudy rings on her fingers which she would never remove. One ring was so tight that her finger began to swell and a deep wound developed. Maggots crawled in and out of the wound. When the worms would fall off, Babajan would pick them up and placing them back on the wound utter, "My children, feed and be at ease." Naturally, people tried to take her to a doctor, but she always refused, not even agreeing to let a doctor come to her to treat the infection, and consequently, gangrene set in, the

finger wasted away and fell off. The wound healed on her hand but seeing her condition, the ancient woman's devotees would shed tears and she would scold them saying, "Why do you weep? I enjoy the suffering."

Babajan was very generous toward the ailing and the destitute. If a hungry man came to her, she would hand him her own food. In winter if a shivering man approached her, she would give her shawl to him. But once an exception was observed in her generosity. It was bitterly cold one night and an old man, shaking pitifully, came to her. He had a severe cold and high fever and prayed to Babajan to cure him by her nazar - gaze. Babajan, however became furious and angrily snatched away the thin blanket wrapped around his shoulders which was his sole scanty protection against the cold. After this Babajan ignored him and the old man silently sat down to spend the bitter night beside her. However, by the morning he was feeling unusually strong and healthy, and happily left fully recovered.

Babajan would usually speak in Pashtu or Persian and frequently utter the names of the Persian poets Shams-al-din Hafiz and Amir Khushru. She would often quote these couplets:

"Despite millions of learned pundits
and thousands of wise men,
Only God understands His own way of working!"
"Wonderful is Your creation, Oh God!
Wonderful is Your game!

You pour jasmine oil on the head of a shrew!"

Sometimes she mentioned different saints or masters and would remark particularly about Tajuddin Baba, "Taj is my Khalifa - Supreme Ruler or Successor!. ... What Taj gives he gets from me!"

On August 17th, 1925, at midnight Babajan suddenly exclaimed, "My poor fakir Taj has gone!" No one could understand what she meant, but the next morning when the newspapers carried the story of Tajuddin Baba's demise in Nagpur, people grasped the significance of her utterance.

Babajan resided continuously on the streets of Poona for almost twenty-six years, during which time thousands of hearts were "wounded" by the dagger of her glance. Around her was an unseen fire, where all kinds of impressions hovered and burned.

Babajan Kisses The Light of The Age

In May, 1913, her flame also kissed the Light of the Age, Merwan Sheriar Irani, whom Babajan always called, "My beloved son." To unveil Merwan was her mission. It was for her "beloved son" that Babajan had travelled to Poona from the Punjab so many years before. Her seat under the neem tree was just a few streets away from his home. Often she would see him pass by, walking with his friends. But she waited for many years before she embraced him. People would see her weeping and when they inquired why, she would reply, "I weep out of love for my son." This

statement was astonishing because it was inconceivable for this old woman fakir to have given birth to a child.

With tears in her intoxicated eyes, she would utter, "One day my son will come... He will come and shake the world!" No one had any idea what her words meant.

The son she was waiting for was Merwan Sheriar Irani born in David Sassoon Hospital on 25th February 1894, at 5 A.M. The five Perfect Masters gave form to the all pervading infinite state of God, put a veil over the infinite consciousness of the Avatar at the time of his birth and this veil is lifted by one of them when it is time for him to begin his work.

The Five Perfect Masters Hold the Key of the World.

The Key of the world is only one but it is in the hands of the five Perfect Masters. For example, a safe has only one key and no other key can unlock it. The five Perfect Masters control the safe - the world. One Master is the keeper of the key, without which the safe cannot be opened. The second guards the safe which cannot be opened without his prior consent. The third is the one who alone has the authority to use the key to unlock the safe. The fourth is the one who has the right to distribute the riches in the safe. And the fifth Master is the one who has the power to authorize the distribution. Thus there is only one key to the world - equally shared among the five Masters.

The five Perfect Masters plus the fifty-one other God-Realized souls (Majzoobs and Jeevan-muktas) control the key. These fifty-one are the members of the parliament of the five Perfect Masters. Fifty-one plus five equals fifty-six; this number 56 never changes. In this way does the game of the world go on and on.*

Merwan would ride his bicycle to the college every day from his house. He was preparing for his final exams. as a college sophomore in May, 1913 at Deccan College. One day, as Merwan was riding his bicycle on his way to college, he noticed a large crowd gathered on Malcolm Tank Road near Char Bawdi. The crowd was surrounding the old woman, Hazrat Babajan, who was seated under her neem tree. Merwan had passed this old woman many times but had seemingly never paid much attention to her, although he was aware that Babajan was regarded as a saint by the local Mohammedan community.*

The religious orthodox or people of high status would seldom approach Babajan because of the Pathan soldiers who guarded her were forbidding personages, and idle beggars who lived off the dakshina or money given her by devotees were despicable. Strangers who passed by considered Babajan to be a mad woman or a witch or sorceress.

As Merwan rode by that day in May 1913, he happened to glance at Babajan who at that moment,

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* Lord Meher Vol 1 Pg 194 and Pg 196

looked at him - and with a nod of her head beckoned him to her. Merwan could not disregard her. At once he got off his bicycle and walked over to her. Their eyes met and Merwan could sense that the old woman was extremely happy to see him.

Babajan was eagerly awaiting him and as Merwan approached her, he felt as if he was magnetically drawn to her eyes. Babajan then stood up with her arms spread wide. The ancient woman embraced Merwan with the fervor of a mother finding her lost son. Tears started streaming down her wrinkled cheeks as she repeated, "Mera pyara beta... Mera pyara beta!" - "My beloved son... My beloved son!"

Babajan then represented the ailing humanity - the entire creation - and her tears were the tears of our Age, the Avatar has come to wipe off. At this most touching scene, the echo of her loving cry, "My beloved son," was eventually to affect the innermost recesses of every heart, because the cry came out of 'Mother Earth.' Those who witnessed this incident undoubtedly were moved deeply.

Merwan was speechless and stood motionless like a statue in front of the ancient woman. From the moment of her embrace, Merwan felt as if an electric current was passing through his body sending impulses from his head to his toes. What he then experienced is indescribable - his individual consciousness was merging with the ocean of bliss! Although Merwan was dazzled by the effect of the lustre Babajan's embrace gave, he maintained some consciousness of

the environment and walked home, leaving his bicycle behind. Though inwardly his total being was profoundly affected, outwardly he appeared, for the most part, normal.

Gradually, however, the young man lost interest in all his studies and was also indifferent to participating in sports or games. As the weeks and months passed he preferred more and more to be left alone. Merwan was no longer enthusiastic about anything in life. In every aspect in which he had excelled he became a failure. He was unable to concentrate on anything and was unable to communicate to his family, teachers or friends what he was experiencing.

Life was now totally empty except for one person - that ancient woman. The only thing Merwan did regularly for the next seven months was to visit Babajan from that day in May onward, every evening. For hours he would sit by the old woman's side - sometimes very late into the night.

The atmosphere around Babajan made it difficult to believe that she was a "holy" woman. The ancient woman was surrounded by ruffians - the Pathan soldiers (her body-guards), parasitical beggars, and even thieves, who would not hesitate to steal whatever a devotee placed as a gift before her.

Some say love is blind. But love sees beyond good and evil, and it was the inner link of divine love which had been established between Merwan and Babajan. He did not care about the slanderous remarks of people who shook their head and venomously

backbited, "Such a good boy was Merwan, the son of religious and respectable parents - that he should visit the haunt of that witch is a sin!" His good name and admirable character were slandered. But he did not care, for with that one embrace from Babajan the merging of Merwan's life in divinity began! The world had nothing to offer him and the world was becoming nothing to him.

When Babajan and Merwan would sit together under her tree they seldom spoke. One night during January, 1914, as Merwan was about to leave, he kissed Babajan's hands and she in turn held his face in her hands. The time had come. The moment our Age had been waiting for had arrived. As she held his face, Babajan looked into Merwan's eyes with all her love, and kissed him on the forehead. Turning to her followers nearby, she pointed her little finger at the dazed Merwan and declared. "This is my beloved son... He will one day shake the world and all of humanity will be benefitted by him."

Merwan just stood there; for as soon as Babajan had kissed him he became insensible. He had lost the grips of his mind! Yet somehow he mechanically retraced his steps back home. His mind had no conception of anything in his surroundings; his body was moving, although he was unaware of what he was doing and where he was. In this stage of entering obliviousness, about eleven o'clock in the evening he reached home and went straight to his room to lay on his bed.

The Lifting of The Veil had occurred through an extraordinary divine experience. Within ten minutes of lying down, Merwan again experienced the same feeling he had experienced after Babajan's embrace in May - but now it was intensified a thousand fold! The light came! He felt as if millions of watts of electric currents were speeding through his body - dissolving his flesh and bones! He felt he was without a body. He felt he was without flesh and bones. His body and mind had dissolved. He was now made of electricity - his veins and arteries had transformed into electric currents! His body was transformed into light.

Then Merwan's breath was stifled and he felt as if thousands of hands were strangling him by the throat. His heart was about to stop. He was frightened at that moment and was overwhelmed by the forces of some tremendous power. He could not breathe; his heart was stopping. He did not know where he was. He could not feel his body. One cannot imagine how terrified he was.

To understand Merwan's frightened state during his Realization, take the fear of man who does not know how to swim. Suppose he was forcefully held under deep water and starts to suffocate. This man experiences fright due to suffocation and fear due to the expectancy that he is to die. Or, take the terror of someone being violently murdered, strangled to death. Even when compared to these phenomena of fear and terror, there was a vast difference in the fear and fright which Merwan experienced that night. His experience

cannot be grasped by the intellect; it had to do with the vacuum of NIRVAN or FANA-FILLA state of self-annihilation and the rising of the spiritual consciousness latent in each one's Infinite Unconsciousness.

The cause of Merwan's terror was the total loss of his individual identity - his drop-soul identity. He was at one point. He was crossing beyond his individuality - his dropness - becoming universal - becoming that which exists eternally since time immemorial. He had gone beyond this one point. The veil that the five Perfect Masters had drawn over him had been torn away by Babajan's kiss. "Merwan" was gone! He found himself to be the Infinite self - the Ocean of God! He had gone beyond the creation point. Merwan had been drowned and absorbed by the Ocean - the Infinitude of God! He found himself to be infinite - beyond all creation. And when he had gone beyond Merwan was no longer human-conscious.

Merwan was given, through Babajan's kiss, the Infinite Consciousness of being God. He was God - he had attained the same Infinite Consciousness as God's! He had no awareness of time and space or of his body and mind. He had only the experience of "I Am God... I Am God... I Am God." Nothing else existed.

Merwan was enraptured in an unspeakable ecstasy, an ineffable bliss of realizing himself to be God! All of his divine experiences were completely internal. There was no sound heard from him. An unearthly silence pervaded his room. No one in the family knew what had happened to him that night.

Not seeing Merwan in the morning, Shireen, his mother began asking "Where is Merog? Where is Merog? Did you see him go out early this morning? I'll see if he went back to his room". Speaking thus she went into his room and found her son in this state. "Merog, get up, It's late. Breakfast is ready. Get up. Time to get going to your classes."

With a palpitating heart she went over to him and stood by his bed. "Merog... Merog... Can you hear me?" she cried. His mother was stunned and became speechless to find him lying motionless, staring outward. She looked closer at him. "Merog... Merog... Can you see me?" she cried. She had no doubt that her boy was alive, though his lips and eyes did not move. His expression startled her. His eyes were open, but did they see her? They were as if gazing somewhere into a distance far, far beyond - without the slightest movement of his eyelids. His face looked normal, but there was no life in his body; yet he was not dead. "Merog... Merog... what has happened to you, my darling?" she cried.

Until then, no one in the family except his father (who did not speak much about it) had any idea of Merwan's true spiritual status. In spite of being enraptured in a whirl of divine glimpses over the past months with a resulting aloofness from others, Merwan had not confided in anyone. Although the family had observed some abnormality in his behaviour since he had started associating with Babajan, they ignored it and thought it was no more than a fascination with the

old saint that would soon pass.

Shireen was bewildered. She grabbed Merwan and shook him, making him sit upon the bed. Examining him she saw that he had neither fever nor any physical injury. "Merog, you will be all right," she said. She confided in Sheriar. "Merog must be very upset over something, because he refuses to speak... we will let him rest all day and lie in bed. He seems very much withdrawn. This evening he should come out of it." The father nodded agreement.

But no matter what the mother did, Merwan remained in this coma-like condition for three days. Only when he was made to sit up did he change his prone position. The family was becoming more and more worried.

Suddenly on the fourth day, Merwan began to move. He went down-stairs and, without saying a word, started pacing back and forth in the house. His eyes had not closed in three days. He had not slept the past three nights and his eyes looked vacant- hollowed out. He seemed subdued, for his manner was reserved around his parents and brothers. He showed no appetite or thirst. His body simply moved about the house; he behaved similar to a somnambulist or robot.

After a few more days of Merwan's strange behaviour, Shireen had enough. Terribly worried the parents spent a lot of money consulting with the best physicians in Poona. Many were called to treat Merwan - chief among them was a family friend, Dr. Bharucha. He gave Merwan an injection of morphine, trying at

least to induce sleep. But the narcotic had no effect and his eyes remained open. Nothing the other doctors did seemed to change Merwan's mood or behaviour. His mother thought his mind was disturbed and hoped the doctors could re-establish peace of mind. To his mother he appeared absorbed in something but refused to divulge what it was. Shireen understandably became more and more upset and superstitiously concluded that some "evileye" or "witch's spell" was responsible for the son's condition.

For the following nine months Merwan lived without sleep, and his eyes became glassy. A vacant stare remained the fixed expression on his once-animated, handsome face. If he sat, he would sit for hours - just staring. If he paced about the house, he would keep it up until someone could not stand it any longer and stopped him. Shireen was afraid to believe that her son was so seriously ill that he might have gone insane.

On one very hot day, Merwan slipped out of the house and started walking toward the river. He reached Bund Gardens, but without stopping there he turned around and hurried toward home again. But after going some distance he again turned around and headed back toward Bund Gardens. When he reached the park he quickly changed direction again and walked toward home. He did this three times, walking fifteen miles in the blazing afternoon sun. He had walked so fast it would have exhausted an ordinary person, yet he did not seem affected by it.

Also during these nine months, Merwan never ate solid food, grew gaunt and pale. When food was thrust on him forcibly by his mother, he would hide it in his coat pocket or in his dresser drawer where it would rot. Sometimes Merwan would take the plate of food to his room and when his mother would leave the house he would take it outside, feeding the dogs, cats or cows on the street. If his mother returned and happened to see him doing this she would be even more distressed. The young man's once cheerful, sunny disposition seemed to have vanished into the eccentricity of a lunatic.

During this period Merwan would often slip out of the house to visit Babajan. At one point Shireen became so desperate and worried about Merwan's condition that she persuaded her mother, Golandoon, to accompany her to confront Babajan.

The two ladies approached Babajan and Shireen poignantly asked the ancient woman, "I know Merwan visits you frequently - what have you done to my son? What have you to do with him? ...Why does he visit you? He has never acted like this before."

Babajan meanwhile cast glancing smiles at the two ladies and kept muttering, "Merwan... Merwan... Mera pyara beta... Mera pyara beta."

Babajan's remarks intensely irritated Shireen who turned to her mother and said, "The nerve of her to call Merog her son! How dare she!"

Babajan kept muttering "Merwan... Merwan... He

will shake the world... He will awaken the world."

When asked by Shireen what she meant, Babajan refused to explain. Soon Babajan shifted the focus of the conversation and had reminiscing about the old days in Persia. Golandoon and Babajan ended up in tears of emotion, singing together in Persian and swapping stories - much to Shireen's chagrin. Shireen was certainly not happy with Babajan's remarks and was dissatisfied with her meeting though Golandoon was delighted with Babajan's personality and warmth.

In the course of the following nine months, Merwan spent more and more of his time alone - aloof and incommunicable with his family. Once he left the house for three days without saying where he was going and went to the village of Kondhwa to the Zoroastrian Tower of Silence outside of Poona, There he lay motionless like a corpse under a tree for three days and nights without food or water. The family was extremely relieved when Merwan returned, thinking he had become lost in the city.

Having exhausted all available means to return their son to normality, Merwan's parents decided that a change of environment might help him and he was sent to Bombay for a few months to stay with his brother, Jamshed, who was working as a clerk in the Bombay municipality office. Jamshed had rented a room opposite the Zoological Gardens - known as Victoria Gardens - in the district of Parel. Jamshed welcomed Merwan and tried carefully to watch over him. When Jamshed would go to the office, Merwan

would go to the seashore at Chowpatty district early each morning. There he would sit for several hours and watch the waves roll in and recede - usually until afternoon. Then Merwan would walk back to Victoria Gardens and again sit for hours. He would sit on one particular bench in an isolated area of the public gardens distant from other benches and pedestrians. He would remain alone until evening when Jamshed would arrive and accompany him back to the room.

For weeks Merwan followed this routine every day undisturbed. One day, however, his favourite bench in the gardens was occupied by a Parsi family. Merwan started nervously walking back and forth. He would stride swiftly up to the people on the bench, then turn abruptly and walk quickly in the opposite direction; and again stride up to them and suddenly turn around when he got near.

The fact that Merwan never batted his eyelids made the Parsi man think that he was staring at his daughter. The man did not leave the bench and Merwan walked again in front of them; he angrily got up, grabbed hold of Merwan, and slapped him across the face. But Merwan was actually oblivious to what was happening and unconscious of his own physical body, and the slap had no effect on him. He did not react to the man's violence, but continued as before - walking swiftly back and forth in front of the bench, staring straight ahead.

The man could not stand it any longer and, thinking the young man to be a lunatic, finally left

with his wife and daughter. Immediately, Merwan headed straight for the empty bench and settled himself in his usual manner until Jamshed arrived that evening to escort him to their room.

When Merwan returned to Poona in November, 1914, he became somewhat normal and started recognising people and places around him. Yet his mind could still not concentrate on anything or premeditatively do anything, though his eyelids started to open and close as his vacant stare gradually disappeared. When this change was noticed, Merwan's family was greatly relieved and thought that he had been given a new chance in life. Merwan started eating again but in very small quantities, feeding what remained on his plate to the dogs.

Merwan had selected a tiny dark cubicle for himself upstairs at the Bhopla House and during the process of regaining normal consciousness he would spend the whole day sitting there in solitude in total darkness. On rare occasions he would go out for a stroll with his former friends, like Khodu, Tirandaz and others. Except for a walk with one of these fellows, Merwan would remain in his tiny room cooped up in the dark.

Once during these strange days, Merwan suddenly decided to visit an important place of pilgrimage in Gujarat. Like Benares to the Hindus and Mecca to the Muslims, Udwada in India is the holiest place of pilgrimage to the Parsis and Iranis. It was in

Upwada over 1,200 years ago that the first Zoroastrian emigrants to India from Persia had settled. They brought with them the fire of Zarathustra and established a temple to house this sacred fire started by Zarathustra over 7000 years ago. Zarathustra established the worship of fire which all Zoroastrians continue. The flames in fire temples all over India are the segments of the original fire brought to Udwada which is guarded by the temple priests, never to be extinguished.

Merwan with his brother Jamshed and five of his close friends set out from Poona to Udwada to pay their respects at the oldest Zoroastrian fire temple in India. They spent three days at Udwada and each morning the young men, led by Merwan would visit the fire temple for prayers.

On their way back from Udwada one day, while in Bombay, Merwan had another experience of a deep trance state. At this time, Merwan's friends had no idea that he was absorbed in the highest state of spiritual consciousness - Aham Brahmasmi (I Am God).

The divine pull by the rest of the four Perfect Masters made Merwan leave Poona with Behramji visiting different places in search of holy men - saints. It was during this period, in the month of April, 1915, Merwan visited the remote village of Kedgaon and met Narayan Maharaj.

A large crowd was in the palace and Narayan Maharaj, wearing a gold crown, was seated on the silver throne of Dattatraya. Upon seeing Merwan,

Narayan Maharaj stopped the darshan and had all the people disperse. He came down from his throne and, taking Merwan by the hand, gently led him up a few steps to allow him to sit upon the throne. From his own shoulders Narayan Maharaj removed a flower garland, placed it around Merwan's neck and called for mango juice, which was given to Merwan to drink. Merwan and Narayan then talked together for a while, though what they conversed about is not known.

Merwan's visit to Kedgaon demonstrated one of the five Perfect Master's profound love for Merwan.

The functioning of a spiritual hierarchy of seven thousand beings, controlled by fifty-six God-Realized perfect ones out of which the five Perfect Masters guard and guide the destinies of all men and creatures of this world and worlds unseen to our gross eyes is not known to the world.

Our Age knows not what the love of each of the five Perfect Masters was for Merwan. These five persons were the ones who really brought God Himself on earth: It was they who had drawn their Vidnyani Veil over Merwan for nineteen years to hide his divine identity and to protect him until the time was right. It was Babajan who was called upon to lift this vidnyani veil away from Merwan - uncovering his glory - his true identity. It was through Babajan that our Age has come to know that it is Merwan who is the Incarnation of God for whom the world has been longing to return - humanity has been waiting for his return for nearly fourteen hundred years:

Through his contact with Narayan Maharaj, Merwan was now becoming to feel the glory of his Godhood. He was still dazzled by the glorious light and bliss, but now his light and bliss was to begin to dazzle others.

After some days in Poona following his contact with Narayan Maharaj, Merwan with three of his close friends - Behramji, Latoos and Baily - went to Bombay first. There they met a man called Tipu Baba who was a God-intoxicated mast of a very high order (the sixth plane) and was the spiritual chargeman of the whole city of Bombay. Tipu Baba had inherited his spiritual charge from Abdul Rehman who had been a Perfect Master before Merwan was born.

Then Merwan and his three friends travelled to Aurangabad - famous for the Ellora caves and the tombs of saints. There they met a Majzoob of the seventh plane named Bane Miyan Baba, who was considered a great saint by the local people, and this man had a close connection with Sai Baba of Shirdi. It was Sai Baba who had given God-Realization to Bane Miyan Baba and stationed him in Aurangabad.

Merwan sent Latoos and Baily back to Poona and then took a train to Nagpur with Behramji to meet the third Perfect Master of the age - the Qutub Tajuddin Baba, who lived at a place called Vaki Shariff, some seventeen kilometers away. They reached the place in horse-drawn tonga. Merwan and Behramji walked to where Tajuddin was seated. Tajuddin, a balding, grey-haired man, was dressed simply. Merwan took the

lead as they approached Tajuddin - the fragrance of roses perfumed the air. Tajuddin stood up and started walking toward Merwan with roses in his hand. Their eyes met and their gaze locked. What divine messages were these two exchanging? Tajuddin caressed the roses on Merwan's cheeks and forehead. No words were spoken.

Tajuddin then waved the roses in farewell gesture. He seemed overcome with profound happiness as he gazed upon Merwan. Silently, in the stillness of the crowd of devotees Merwan and Behramji slipped away. The perfume of roses permeated Vaki Shariff. "My rose, my heavenly rose!" Tajuddin finally muttered.

Merwan and Behramji headed straight toward the train station and boarded the first train to Poona. "Taj! Taj! My Taj!" muttered Merwan, None knew what he meant. He had received his crown!

On returning to Poona, Merwan began visiting Babajan along with his close childhood friend, Khodu. They would sit by Babajan's side, hour upon hour, late in the night, returning to Khodu's house as late as four o'clock in the morning. Often they would discuss the significance of the quawali singing held earlier that night before Babajan.

After few months, Babajan often repeated to Merwan, "My son, the Treasure which you seek and the key to that treasure are not with me! I am not the one to give it to you. The treasure is yours - it is for you alone - there is no doubt about that, the treasure is yours! But, my son, you must have the key... you

must take the key!"

Babajan would always speak about this in a cryptic fashion - it seemed unclear what she meant. Then one night she spoke in a very clear manner, "The treasure is yours to have now! The key is there, go to Shirdi, my son. There is a Sai - a holy one there... Go and see the Sai. See if he will give you the key now... Take the key from the Sai!"

A few days passed after Babajan said this and then one day Merwan with Khodu went to Shirdi to see Sai Baba. But when they arrived at Shirdi the villagers were blocking the road with clubs in their hands, saying that it was Sai Baba's order that no one should come for his darshan that day. So they had to pass the night under a tree. Merwan was determined to see Sai Baba. It was winter time and Khodu shivered all night in the bitter cold, while Merwan seemed oblivious of the temperature. Next day in the afternoon Sai Baba was on his way after performing his lendi in a field with a large procession following, a band playing and the atmosphere very joyful though at the same time solemn with reverence. As Sai Baba was about to pass him, Merwan stretched himself full length on the ground in front of his feet. Seeing him in the sashtang namaskar - bowing full length to the Master's feet - in a deep, voice as if rising from the depth of the ocean, Sai Baba uttered, "PARVARDIGAR!" - meaning GOD - THE ALMIGHTY - SUSTAINER! Sai Baba's eyes were lustrous with universes shining out of them as he conveyed this holy word. The old fakir's

lustrous eyes were sending messages to Merwan but to the ignorant, his word was inexplicable. For at that instant when Sai Baba had spoken, Merwan had become all-powerful - Sai Baba had given him Infinite power!

After Merwan had risen, Sai Baba paid obeisance to him; no one could explain why he was bowing to this young man. With a cry he again uttered, "PARVARDIGAR" and rose, beckoning Merwan to walk on. As Merwan and Khodu slowly walked away, Sai Baba, with a loud cry, again clearly repeated, "PARVARDIGAR!"

Khodu followed Merwan as he led the way to the Khandoba temple where Upasni Maharaj was seated on its steps, naked and virtually as thin as a skeleton. As Merwan approached the Sadguru, Upasni Maharaj picked up a stone, then stood up and threw it with all his strength at Merwan, striking him on the forehead exactly on the spot where Babajan had kissed him! Upasni Maharaj's throwing of that stone was a holy act when Merwan first regained consciousness of our world again after nearly two years. And it took seven years for Upasni Maharaj to bring Merwan's consciousness to the gross plane while retaining his God-consciousness and enable him to function as the Avatar of the Age.

Settled back in Poona, Merwan continued his regular nightly visits to Babajan, staying by her side for at least two or three hours. It was rare for Babajan to allow anyone to touch her person - even to bow at her

feet or kiss her hand - yet she would tell Merwan to scratch or massage her back during those hours. When she would mutter, "enough" he would stop and depart for home at about midnight. By that time Merwan's fingers were so cramped it would be difficult for him to straighten them.

During the seven years period Merwan's consciousness was coming down from God-consciousness to gross consciousness of the world, he had to undertake the grossest of the most low manual labour. Merwan started working in his father's toddy shop. He did all sorts of chores to help his father manage the shop - washing and filling the bottles, sweeping the floor, and selling drinks.

During this period inspired by the divine light manifesting through him he used to write poems. One day in the toddy shop, Merwan composed the following ghazal dedicated to Babajan to whom it was also read (it was written in both Hindi and Urdu) :

Oh Beloved Master, you are the Emperor!
I am eternally grateful to you.
If I had a hundred thousand lives -
I would sacrifice every one of them at your feet.
You drowned me in the Eternal Ocean of oneness
and transformed me into the Ocean like yourself.
In the twinkling of an eye, you transformed a
lover into God -
God I have become!
Oh Emperor of Masters! Oh Ocean of Mercy!

Oh Perfection Personified!
Oh Perfect Master, if your merciful glance
lights on anyone –
a beggar can turn into a king!
The gods and goddesses - the angels -
the celestial devas
and men of the heavens
Are all awed at the brilliance of your divinity!
Oh Enlightened Master of the three worlds!
even if I were
to change my body into the sandals of your feet,
It would be nothing in comparison with what
You have done for Merwan!

Since Merwan would be seen regularly around Hazrat Babajan, her own followers would inquire about him. She would often repeat to them, "He is my son, my beloved son... He is why I am here in Poona... One day my son will shake the world. You have no idea of his greatness."

Gradually all of Babajan's followers started to look upon Merwan with respect and reverence as he revealed his own spiritual greatness to them. One of Babajan's devotees was Babu Genuba Ubale. He heard Babajan speak of Merwan often and was so taken by Babajan's statements that he sought Merwan out. One time Merwan revealed his inner majesty to Babu who became overpowered in Merwan's presence and lay dazed on the floor. Later Babu went to

Babajan who told him, "I told you he is my son, didn't I? You have no idea who he is!"

Sayyed Saheb Pirzade was a regular visitor to Babajan who personally introduced him to Merwan. Gradually Sayyed met Merwanji more frequently and was profoundly drawn closer to him. Merwanji would take personal interest in Sayyed's individual difficulties, financial as well as otherwise. Because of Merwanji's deep concern Sayyed opened his heart to him. It was Sayyed Saheb who named Merwanji as Meher Baba in 1920.

Gustadji With Babajan

The Perfect Master Sai Baba had died in October, 1918 and since then Gustadji was living with Upasni Maharaj, who was acknowledged as a Perfect Master also and heir of Sai Baba's spiritual charge. During the month of December, Upasni instructed Gustadji to leave Sakori and join Merwan, who had previously written Gustadji that he had arranged a job for him in Poona, and sent money to defray his travelling expenses.

After arriving in Poona, Gustadji was under Merwan's instructions and orders, because Upasni Maharaj had ordered him to obey Merwan. Gustadji was first instructed to work all day in the toddy shop. He would then perform the daily puja and arti ceremonies in the temple room next door, but there was no place for him to stay. So Merwan ordered him to spend all night with Babajan on the street. Gustadji

got little or no rest, however, because Babajan did not sleep and he had to attend to her every need. It was bitter cold at night, and Gustadji would carry wood on his head from the toddy shop to Babajan's area to make a fire at night and keep the old woman and himself warm.

After some months, Gustadji suggested to Merwan, "It would be more proper if Babajan had a better place to rest than the dirt road." Merwan agreed, then said, "But find out if it is all right with her. And ask if a wooden platform is good enough."

Gustadji explained the situation to Babajan; and with some hesitation she agreed. Merwan paid for the platform and arranged to have it built.

Again after some months, Gustadji approached Merwan saying, "It would be more proper if Babajan had a better place on which to rest. How about getting a mattress?"

Merwan agreed, then said, " But first find out if it is all right with her."

Gustadji explained the situation to her, again she agreed, and Merwan paid for the mattress. However, Babajan told Gustadji, "You will have to carry the mattress wherever I go." Gustadji agreed, but that very first night it rained! He had to carry the wet mattress on his head which grew heavier and heavier as the rain soaked it, and that night Babajan roamed throughout the streets of Poona with Gustadji following behind her! Eventually, the mattress rotted and was discarded, much to Gustadji's relief.

Babajan Guides Merwan to Upasni Maharaj

"My son, Go!... Now go and get your share from a Hindu." Thus spoke Babajan to Merwan on different occasions during 1917. Upasni Maharaj moved away from Khandoba's temple in Shirdi to the village of Sakori in July, 1917, and Merwan became a regular visitor to Upasni's new abode, which at first was the village crematory grounds. And at the end of December 1921 one day Upasni Maharaj declared Merwan as the Avatar of the Age and Merwan left Sakori and began his Avataric mission.

Freiny Nouroj Driver was a daily visitor to Babajan. It was in Babajan's presence that she first met Merwan (Meher Baba) and was drawn to him. Frieny told her sister Daulat about both Babajan and Meher Baba, and took her to see Babajan one day. Another time Freiny took Daulat to meet Meher Baba at Sadashiv's home in Kasba Peth. From the first meeting, both sisters, Freiny and Daulat, had tremendous love and faith in Meher Baba and their connection was extremely significant. Daulat, on Meher Baba's order, later maintained silence for many years, and her younger daughter became his chief woman disciple. Freiny's son was also to become one of the close disciples, later known as Padri.

Babajan Blessed Mehera

Daulat J. Irani, after her husband's death settled in Poona with her two daughters, Mehera and Piroja.

Mehera had been staying at Sakori under Upasni Maharaj's guidance and had noticed Meher Baba, the day he left Sakori in January, 1922; she remembered how remarkable his face had looked. She was destined to become the chief woman disciple of Meher Baba. At this time, she was a young girl of fifteen, quite preoccupied with her school studies. Mehera was also very fond of horses, her father had taught her much about them. But after the death of her father, she had no opportunity to pursue her pleasure of riding horses.

One day a school friend took Mehera to meet Babajan, saying that the ancient woman would grant any wish she asked. Babajan inquired Mehera, "What you want, my daughter?"

Mehera spontaneously replied. "I wish I had a horse!" Babajan gazed into the invisible in the sky and muttered, "A fine horse... You will have a very fine horse which will carry you to the heavens!"

Babajan's words were usually enigmatic and Mehera could not understand what she meant.

To her amazement, when she returned home, Mehera found that her mother had bought her a beautiful white horse that very day!

Perfect Masters Love All

Behli Jehangir Irani (who always spelled his name Baily) was one of Merwan's intimate neighbourhood playmates and also school mates. As

the world war raged on, Baily enlisted and joined the British Indian Navy. His military duties took him to England, France, Greece, Egypt and Arabia. While he was out of the country, Baily maintained his friendship with Merwan through correspondence. Baily would read Merwan¹'s letters not once but many times.

After few years, Baily became tired of his life at sea and applied for a land position. His application was accepted and he was transferred to Poona, where he obtained leave for a month. Baily promptly went in search of Merwan and found his friend helping his father in the toddy shop at Sachapir Street. It was a happy reunion. When Baily's leave ended, he received new orders to be ready to proceed to Egypt aboard a hospital ship. Since his application for transfer to land duties had been approved, he got this order cancelled, but he was then ordered to leave on the next ship for Africa within twenty four hours.

When Merwan was informed of Baily's transfer, he remarked, "I would never have liked going to a place like Africa". Merwan persuaded Baily to try to get his orders changed. Though seemed unlikely, Baily met with the officer concerned and after much persuasion his pleas were successful. Someone else was appointed to go to Africa in his place and he was then ordered on the next ship to Aden, the capital of Yemen.

Merwan again remarked, "I would not have liked going to a place like Aden. Find out if you can get that order cancelled." Baily tried but failed.

Merwan was unhappy about Baily's leaving India. He said, "Come with me to meet Babajan... Take her darshan first before going to Aden". This did not appeal to Baily and he resisted, but Merwan insisted he come. Later Baily wrote in his diary:

I took Babajan to be nothing short of a sorceress. I did not believe in her in the least and bore contempt for her as a witch! I disliked it that Merwan was calling himself "her disciple!"

I did not like the idea of meeting her and I was irritated by Merwan's insistence. In spite of that, I could not displease him, so I consented and had to approach the ancient woman.

In those days Babajan had nowhere to stay except underneath a neem tree near Char Bawdi. Merwan had told me to put my head on her feet, but I refused proudly saying, "I will bow only to Him wherever He may be. Except for Him, neither my body nor my mind will I lower to anyone else!"

I sensed that Merwan was grieved by my expression of arrogance, but showed no reaction and gave me permission to act as I like before her.

The instant Babajan saw me, I raised my hand in salutation to her saying, "Salaam, Babajan."

"Welcome my son, welcome", she mumbled in an almost inaudible, sweet and humble voice. "Come and sit near me.... Who are you?.... From where do you come?"

Merwan had anticipated such a question and told me to tell her, "I come from your son."

To this she replied: "Except God, who else is my son? Well, if you have come from God Himself, I will inform Him that my son has met me!... Anything else?"

Without understanding what she meant, except her last words, I explained that I was in the navy and was about to proceed to Aden, and would she permit me to do so.

She heard me with interest and then closing her eyes repeated softly, "Aden! Aden!" Then in a loud voice quite startling from her previous sweet one, she spoke with a hoarse whisper as if moved by some sorrow: "Aden is my land! ... It has come out of me, I created it!... But today it wants to mock me!" She stopped, then the sweet voice returned: "Well son, you may go - Khuda Hafiz - God be with you!" Then she said, "When will we meet again?"

"When you wish. When it pleases you," I said. My reply sent her deep in thought. Then she mumbled the words: "You will have to wait... to wait for five years... He tells me two years... No, I won't allow two years! So come exactly after a year and half."

She continued, but I could not follow the meaning of her words: "I have come here after staying there seven years... many, many used to stay with me... And I will be with you. Also, I will keep my child with me... I am with the world and God is with me!"

Saying this she extended her left hand to me, which in veneration I held and submitting to some

secret feeling, I kissed. Thereafter I departed and immediately found Merwan, and explained to him all that had happened.

Merwan remarked, "It is better that we don't understand the rigmarole of these great saints. Whatever she has signified about you I believe refers to some coming calamity."

Sorrily, Merwan continued, " And from what I think of it I can say that the future does not hold well for you, Baily. You will have to face terrible difficulties and you will have to suffer much! May God protect you!"

Still I really did not give much credence to either Babajan or to Merwan's warning. Consequently, I did not pay much attention to what they said. I left the same night for Bombay where I had to wait a full month to catch a ship - not knowing what lay in store for me.

Baily was stationed in Aden at a navy port along Arabian sea. But for some reason Merwan was not receiving any correspondence from Baily. Within a year, Merwan later was informed that circumstances landed Baily in serious trouble. He had been living luxuriously, as if he was a high ranking and important officer (which he was not) and his salary could not keep up with his extravagant lifestyle. Baily developed a serious drinking problem, frequented brothels and found himself struggling with pressing debts.

To escape his creditors he applied for a leave of

one month, which was granted. However, the officer who was to take his post committed suicide and Baily's leave was cancelled. In the meantime, a junior officer filed a complaint to headquarters that Baily had been embezzling funds. At the trial he was found guilty, courtmartialed, stripped the rank and jailed. The judge sentenced him to two years in prison, but the General in charge had it reduced by six months. After serving his sentence in prison, Baily was dishonourably discharged from the navy and, in 1919, returned to Poona.

After this incident, Baily remembered Babajan's words, "You will have to wait for five years... He tells me two years .. No, I will not allow two years! So come after a year and half." He then understood what she had meant.

He had been sentenced to two years in prison but the General had reduced it to a year and a half. Similarly, he remembered that Merwan had foretold that something terrible would happen if he left for Aden and had wanted his orders changed.

Inner Link Between Masters

Dr. Ghani was a childhood friend and schoolmate of Meher Baba, residing in Bombay during this period in 1922. On Saturday, February 25th, Dr. Ghani arrived in Poona for his weekly visit. Meher Baba had instructed him that whenever he came to Poona, he should first pay respects to Babajan and have her darshan before doing anything else. On this particular

day however, Ghani delayed visiting Babajan and it was not until late that evening when he finally went to her. Upon his arrival, Babajan grabbed Ghani and began shaking him in the presence of the crowd around her. Then she scolded him, "You scoundrel! You are due here in the morning; and are arriving now! You have no shame to show your face here!" Ghani was in utter shock.

The next morning, Ghani went to see Meher Baba at the hut, on Fergusson road near Chaturshrungi where Meher Baba was living then, carrying a basket of luscious fruits which he had especially brought from Bombay to be used as prasad. Baba turned his face away when Ghani approached, then soon after told him in a harsh tone, "Throw that basket of fruits into a well and immediately return to Bombay! Why did you come here without my permission?" Ghani tried to placate him, but Baba demanded that he obey. Ghani left, from this he learned a lesson that by not following Meher Baba's orders, he would be unwelcome in his durbar (royal court). This was the first time that Ghani had been given a cold reception and the incident revealed to him the inner link of communication between two perfect ones Hazrat Babajan and Meher Baba.

Babajan Unveils The Avatar

As the Avatar, the direct descent of God into a male human body, God descended into the body of Merwan from his state of the Absolute - BEYOND

GOD. This man, M.S. Irani, never passed through the processes of evolution, reincarnation and involution prior to his birth. The five Perfect Masters of our Age brought Him down into the form of Merwan from His formless state of God. But from 1894 to 1913, the five Perfect Masters veiled him from his own divinity, his own identity as Original God. Babajan's gentle kiss in January, 1914, tore that protective veil of vidnyani sanskaras away, and within minutes he became infinitely aware of his Real Self as Infinite Existence. However, after Babajan's kiss, simultaneously with the attainment of the "I am God" state, Merwan lost every tinge of normal consciousness. He had a human body that automatically acted, but he had not the slightest awareness of that body; he was only conscious of being infinite in knowledge, infinite in power, infinite in bliss.

It was through Babajan that Merwan attained Infinite Bliss, through Sai Baba that he attained Infinite Power, and through Upasni Maharaj that he attained Infinite Knowledge. Narayan Maharaj and Tajuddin Baba played direct roles in bringing him into creation also, but indirect roles in bringing him down after he was God-Realized. One may conclude that Narayan Maharaj and Tajuddin Baba brought Merwan down through the planes, and Sai Baba brought him across the fourth plane of Infinite Power and divine powers, and then through the three planes of the subtle world. When Upasni Maharaj struck Merwan with the stone at their initial encounter, it was the first time in nearly

two years that he received an iota of gross consciousness. All the five Perfect Masters play a direct or indirect role in bringing the Avatar into creation forming a veil of vidnyani sanskaras through a blending of their individual personalities, then giving back his God-Consciousness, and bringing him back down to function perfectly on all planes and all levels of consciousness. Upasni Maharaj played the most direct role in bringing Merwan back down to function on every level and all planes of existence. It was during this seven year contact with Upasni Maharaj that Merwan fully regained his individual human consciousness while simultaneously being God-Conscious.

Merwan Belongs To The World Said Babajan

During Merwan's stay at Sakori, Shireen was becoming terribly upset that her son had not come back to Poona. She went to Babajan and asked when her son would return home.

Babajan murmured "My beloved son... My son..." Shireen shouted at her, "He is not your son! He is my son!"

Babajan softly murmured, "From where did you bring him? From where did he come?" Then she raised her voice, "He belongs to the whole world, not to you!" Again she murmured, "Ah mera pyara beta! Oh, my beloved son!" Shireen sensed it was hopeless to try to get any definite answer from Babajan and she

returned home frustrated. Later she requested her mother, Golandoon, with Naja to try to persuade Babajan to call Merwan back to Poona. However, as before, Babajan shifted the conversation with Golandoon to their homeland and to Persian poetry. The two Persian ladies began reminiscing, laughing and crying together like closest of friends and Golandoon forgot to ask Babajan to send for Merwan.

Golandoon was sent several times to Babajan at Shireen's insistence. Once when Golandoon remembered to ask, Babajan replied, "He is my son, not hers!... My beloved son belongs to the world... He will shake the world to the foundation one day!... Why do you worry about him? He is now out of your hands!" Her remarks touched Golandoon but they did not console Shireen.

Meher Baba Nodded Farewell

Through Upasni Maharaj's direct help, Merwan had achieved the Knowledge and Authority to control the activity of the universe. When it was time to begin to release the necessary push in consciousness for the next phase of humanity's development, he was ready to bid farewell to Upasni Maharaj and establish himself on earth as the Lord of the universe - the Avatar. This time came during January 1922, when Merwan fully perfect left Sakori as a Master.

From 27th January 1922 to 21st May, 1922 he lived in a thatched hut erected in a barren field

surrounded by mango trees along Fergusson College Road, near the locality of Chaturshrungi. Here he collected around him his early disciples. On the morning of 22nd May 1922 at two o'clock led by the Master all walked to Char Bawdi to see Babajan. While Baba stood at a distance, the rest of the men approached the ancient holy woman and bowed before her. Meher Baba nodded farewell to Babajan and walked with his disciples to Bombay, where he established Manzil-e-Meem, (House of the Master) - for training those who followed him.

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White Pigeon Brings Babajan's Message

The Manzil-e-Meem phase of Meher Baba's activities began on 7th June 1922. On September 10th, a white pigeon flew into the Manzil. The bird looked ill and exhausted and when an attempt was made to catch it, it was easily trapped. The bird was taken to Baba, who lovingly held and caressed it. But it was so sick that it was unable to walk. It was exceptionally beautiful, and Baba looked after it the whole night. The next day, he told the men that despite his care the pigeon had died. He had been up three times during the night to nurse it. He told all men to come and see the bird, for it had died in a peculiar position - on its legs with its head bent - as if offering namaskar (salutations).

Baba then posed the question to the mandali, "Tell me how this pigeon suddenly happened to be here and then, just as suddenly, died?" As no one

could reply, he explained, "Do you remember sometime ago when I told you that I would be receiving an important message from Babajan? This pigeon has come here with that message. The importance of the message can well be imagined and gauged in that soon after delivering the heavy burden, the pigeon died."

Thereafter, Baba himself dug a hole in the backyard of Manzil and buried the bird. The grave was made in the form of a small tomb which was covered with a green sheet (according to Muslim burial rites) as flowers were strewn over it. He then wrote the following ghazal in Persian dedicated to this bird:

O pigeon! I accepted you as my honoured guest,
Because you had come from the Emperor
But what a guest you were!
By obeying the Emperor's orders
You became the dust of his feet.
No one knew where you came, or why
But your coming portends departure.
You came to annihilate your life of duality in illusion
And now you won't be born again,
as if you had never suffered.
What a message you brought from the Emperor!
The importance of it cost your life!
Oh God! What a wonderful game

You are playing behind the veil!
Though you are ever manifest,
Your game is a riddle
To those who have eyes but are blind
Royal Pigeon, you have become a saint!
You now are buried in Manzil-e-Meem
and Merwan kisses your feet in reverence.

That night, September 11th, 1922, Meher Baba with Gustadji, Ghani, Sadashiv, Adi and Sayyed Saheb, left Bombay by the Gujarat Mail train for Ajmer in northern India arriving at midnight of the following day. They stayed in the Edward Memorial Hotel, where Baba suffered dysentery and was seriously ill. The next day all rested well except Baba, who suffered six painful bowel movements.

It is said the Perfect Masters who control and direct the spiritual and material welfare of the universe, usually do so through their agents who are scattered in different parts of the world and who hold different spiritual jurisdictions in accordance with their spiritual status. Some of these agents from the higher planes are vaguely conscious of the source of directions and orders that they carry out, but the majority of those from the lower planes are unaware of the source of the orders from which they implicitly and automatically carry out. It is for this reason that many of those from the different planes who are known and worshipped as saints cannot and do not recognize the Sadgurus or Perfect Masters who direct and control the affairs of

the universe.... Perfect Masters while engaged in the act of evacuating the bowels, at such a time dispense altogether with the agency of saints and directly control the universe. Believe it or not, it is possible for Sadgurus, while thus engaged, to determine and calculate numerically all the forms and stages of the evolving creation in detail.

So it is possible the message the pigeon brought from Hazrat Babajan to Avatar Meher Baba had something to do with taking control of the universe.

On September 14th, all fasted for twenty-four hours by the Master's order while visiting the tomb of the Mohammedan Perfect Master Khwaja Saheb Chishti. Chishti is famous for being the Qutub-e-Irshad - the head of the spiritual hierarchy - during the 12th century. Sayyed Saheb and Ghani were told to recite the Fateha (Muslim prayer in honor of the departed souls) inside the shrine.

The Master continued to suffer dysentery in a terrible manner, passing green, black, brown and gray stools. The men were sent to visit the Jain Golden Temple, the Daulat Gardens and Anna Sagar lake, while Baba remained at the hotel. Ghani and Sayyed Saheb also went to Shah Jehan Mosque where they offered Friday namaz.

On September 18th, Meher Baba directed the mandali to go to Pushkar, an important historical place of pilgrimage - ten miles to the northwest of Ajmer. Considering his state of health, the men refused to leave without him. Baba tried to explain, "If I had

stayed here alone, I would have been all right by this evening. Yet since you will not go without me and I do not wish to deprive you of enjoyment, I will come. But remember my words, it will be your fault that the present illness of mine will be prolonged for fifteen more days!"

However, the men did not listen and insisted he join them. Despite his discomfort, he accompanied them to Pushkar Raj. Without complaint, Baba bore the tough jolts of the long ride in an ekka - a horse-drawn conveyance mostly used in northern India and Rajasthan.

The Hindu temple of Pushkar is exceptionally beautiful and fascinating; the lake is the one of the most sacred in India. According to legend, Brahma, while creating the earth, looked at this spot and dropped a lotus flower from his hand; water sprang forth immediately. Thus, over centuries it became one of the most famous places of pilgrimage in India. The temple is one of the few in India dedicated to the creator of the universe - Brahma.

According to the Master's behest, the Irani and Muslim members of the mandali offered worship in the temple, adhering to Hindu rites. They bathed in the lake as the Brahmin priests on the bank parapet recited incantations and applied red teeka marks to their foreheads. They then took darshan of the idol in the temple and returned to the hotel. Boarding the night train they reached Bombay on the 19th of September. Baba was still unwell, suffering diarrhea

during the entire journey.

Baba recovered completely after a fortnight as he had predicted in Ajmer, and on the sixteenth day, September 27th, he sang sweetly with the men during a session of devotional songs as Adi played the sitar and he played the dholak.

The message of Hazrat Babajan conveyed through the pigeon to Meher Baba at Manzil-e-Meem on 10th September, 1922, seems to be a direction from the Emperor to cleanse the ancient sacred places of pilgrimage for humanity of the impressions (sanskaras of thoughts and desires) accumulated there for the last several centuries through the physical suffering of the Avatar and prayers offered through his companions. The Hindu temple of Pushkar dedicated to Brahma with the lake is one of the most ancient and sacred seats of pilgrimage for the Hindus. Jain golden temple represents the oldest of all religions. Dowlat Garden, Anna Sagar lake, Shah Jehan Mosque, Taragarh mosque said to have been miraculously created in only two and a half days and the tomb of Perfect Master Khwaja Saheb Chishti. Sanctity of the places of worship and pilgrimage is sustained by the fire of devotion of the devotees and activated and energised by the presence of the Perfect Masters and the Avatar.

Masters Guide Aspirants Through Dreams

From 27 December 1922, Meher Baba started observing one meal fast. Since the day Meher Baba started his one-meal fast, he had been serving food to

the mandali himself. On December 29th, when he was serving Ghani's plate, Ghani said, "I don't have much of an appetite today; I don't wish to eat."

Baba became upset by this remark and angrily told him, "You have just broken one of the twenty-eight orders." Ghani replied, "According to my understanding, I haven't broken any." While scolding Ghani, Baba suddenly threw the plate he was holding at Behramji. The atmosphere was tense as Behramji cleaned up the mess, but within a short time the argument stopped and Baba became calm.

Ghani left the room without eating. He was distressed throughout the day and the next, weeping frequently. On the 30th December he had a vivid dream of Hazrat Babajan :

"I found myself sitting near Babajan at Char Bawdi in Poona. At first, I felt Babajan frowning angrily at me. But after some time she drew near and made me sit in an odd position - back to back with her. In this position, she continued rocking me to and fro. Then reclining in my lap, she began to caress me in a most lovable manner. I then had a novel experience. One moment I felt Babajan laughing and playing in my arms and the very next moment it was Baba instead! This continued for some time.

While napping in the afternoon of the next day, Ghani had a dream of Narayan Maharaj. "I saw Sadguru Narayan Maharaj walking on the road, followed by a throng of devotees. Some of the mandali, too, were with him. When my turn came to approach

Narayan Maharaj, I saluted him reverently. He asked me many questions about my life. I told him I had renounced the world in the service of Upasni Maharaj. Narayan took my hand in his and, looking at my palm for some time, told me, "You are twenty-five years old." Then he uttered some other things, but I don't remember what else he said.

Then the scene changed and I found myself in front of my house in Lonavla. There were many other people, some standing and other loitering about. I heard Asar Saheb loudly cracking obscene jokes about sex. I turned my back to him and, seeing this, Asar remarked, "Why should Ghani listen to us now, he has become a Wali!"

Meanwhile the crowd began shouting, "Hail Upasni Maharaj! All hail him!" Turning around, I saw Maharaj coming toward my house. I could see he was extremely tired. He was covered with dust from head to foot, and looked as if he had travelled a long distance.

Khak Saheb and myself were the first to approach him, kissing his hands in reverence. Although internally I offered Sashtang namaskar (prostrating before a Guru), externally I could not do so with the crowd of Muslims outside. In reply to the obeisance given by the people, Maharaj himself did Sashtang namaskar to the crowd and then walked straight into my house.

No one was inside the house except the women of my family. They kissed Maharaj's hand in reverence. He sat down on the bare floor and told them in a

serious tone, "I have come to talk about something with these people." He meant us at the Manzi!, but I was the only one from the mandali present. "They don't understand things and misinterpret everything. They are trying to find loopholes in Merwan's orders so they can escape from them instead of facing them boldly.

Pointing to me, he then said in a cryptic tone, "Are you a child? Don't you understand these things? Do you eat hen's droppings? Be particular to take a bath."

Ghani awakened at this point and was happily relieved to find his mental distress had left him. After he narrated these dreams to Baba, Ghani posted a description of them on the notice board.

Master and Disciple Had Identical Dreams

On 13th of January, 1923, Meher Baba described to the mandali a dream he had that night.

"I was travelling with the mandali by train. From the opposite direction a funeral procession was coming. On inquiry, I learned that this was Babajan's funeral. At Poona, I got down from the train and went to Char Bawdi. There I saw Babajan lying down, surrounded by a large crowd, wailing and shouting that she had died. I passed my hand over Babajan's face, and she rose! I told her that people thought she was dead and gone, and her only reply was, "Yes, that is right – I really *am* dead!"

While listening, Abdur Rehman burst out laughing, and Baba asked him why. Abdur said, "That is the very same dream I had last night." The others were amazed that Abdur and Baba had experienced identical dreams.

Babajan's Comment on Posing

Hazrat Babajan, at times, would refer to someone saying "No langoti around the waist, and named Fateh Khan." On November 19th, 1923, Meher Baba asked Ghani if he understood what this phrase meant.

Ghani replied, "While his bottom is bare, the man brags of his self importance! It means to pose as being rich though being poor, and go about with your nose arrogantly stuck up in the air, as if you are a great man.

The reason Ghani was asked about this was that despite Baba's order, he would still awaken late every morning. Baba slapped him repeatedly for this and as a punishment ordered Ghani and Ramju to both awaken each morning by four o'clock and, after taking cold bath, go to the mosque for prayers.

Adi Jr. Remembered Babajan's Words

Adi Jr., Meher Baba's brother was also spiritually inclined. Adi met Upasni Maharaj in Sakori with his mother and greatly admired the great yogi's awesome personality. During this period Adi was attending St. Vincent's High School and became very captivated

with Babajan. In fact, he was so fascinated with the ancient woman that, at this time, he had higher regard for her than for his own brother. Almost every day on his way home from school Adi would stop by her seat under the neem tree in Char Bawdi. He would stand near her and gaze at her. Sometimes Babajan would beckon him to have a cup of tea with her, but she would not speak intelligently around him and would not mention Merwan or ask Adi anything about himself.

The language Babajan uttered was something which was virtually incomprehensible. Her language was distinctly her own, for she would usually mutter something in different languages or enigmatic sounds which no one could follow. However, one day, for no apparent reason, she gazed deeply into Adi's eyes and spoke in clear Persian: Speak the truth, no matter how bitter it may be.

Adi was startled by her words. That moment made a great impact on him for the rest of his life. He never heard Babajan speak intelligently again, but he never forgot her words.

Perfect Masters speak in a language of their own often unintelligible to ordinary men. For few months in the year 1925, Babajan had been saying, "My seven months and thirteen days are over!" Perhaps it means that as a child takes nine months to be born, a month and seventeen days are left to complete some of her most important work.

Once Naval Talati, a close disciple of Avatar Meher Baba went to Babajan and told her that he had

come from Meher Baba, whereupon Babajan replied, "He is my shopkeeper." By this she meant that she was the source of all the spiritual force working at that time, and Meher Baba was her sole agent whose warehouse was full of untold treasures. She then composed and recited the following rhyme:

My shop is not located in any building or world;

My world consists of only Yezdan or Merwan!

On one occasion in 1925, Meher Baba remarked: Babajan is a Qutub, one of the five of this age. From the fifty-six God-Realized people, one woman becomes a Perfect Master and another is also perfect - a jivan-mukta or majzoob. That woman is presently in Tibet. She has a group of disciples, but usually stays in the mountains and very, very few ever see her. The remaining fifty-four God-Realised beings are men. The number of God-Realized souls on earth is eternally fixed at fifty-six and is never altered, except during Avataric ages when God directly descends as a man.

Meher Baba started observing silence from 10th July 1925. On July 10th, 1926, the first anniversary of the Master's silence was observed. The school and dispensary were closed and all the mandali fasted with Baba for twenty-four hours. Meanwhile, from nine to ten in the morning, Baba sat near the dhuni. Three of the men drifted into sleep in Baba's presence and had a similar dream about Hazrat Babajan's demise. After they awoke, they narrated their dreams.

Baba explained in response: "From today,

Babajan has stopped all her activities and duties, and they have been transferred elsewhere. Within ten or twenty days or at the most two hundred days, she will give up her body. After that, for two or three years, there will be chaos and confusion in the world, and after that there will be peace and spiritual progress. Some while later, there will be a change in my lifestyle as well."

Wanderings of Hazrat Babajan

On one occasion - August 7th, 1926 - discussing on the current wanderings of Upasni Maharaj and Hazrat Babajan Meher Baba said:

While I was travelling all over India and Persia, Maharaj kept himself at Sakori. But now that I am staying in Meherabad, Maharaj is travelling from one place to another.

As in the case of important dignitaries being received by the nobility and higher echelon of society, Babajan was always accorded the highest honors while wandering from place to place, and the highest persons from among the spiritual hierarchy used to present themselves at such times. As in the worldly way, when she was about to move out of her headquarters, spiritual wires used to hum, inviting all the top members of the spiritual hierarchy to be in her presence when she came to their town or city. It is said that Tajuddin Baba, who generally would move about naked, once put on a dhoti when he went to pay his respects to Babajan.

Hazrat Babajan was referred to as the "Doyen of

Masters." In this sense, she was the eldest Master, or the senior member of the spiritual hierarchy.

Once Mother Shireen had gone to Hazrat Babajan with a garland of flowers one night. She wanted to put it around Babajan's neck, but when she stood before the ancient woman, Babajan asked her to garland herself with it. Shireen hesitated, but persuaded by those present she garlanded herself and then immediately took off the garland and gave it to Babajan. Merwan's photograph was kept nearby. Babajan placed the garland of flowers around it and resting her hand on the photograph began to weep. She told Shireen, "My son will shake the whole world!" And she slyly added, "You are in for a surprise today."

When Shireen returned home, she heard her daughter Mani cry out and when she went over to her, Mani exclaimed, "Look, a string is wrapped around my leg and won't come off! It moves!" To her horror, Shireen saw a small snake wrapped around Mani's leg. It quickly disappeared and she later explained to Mani that it was not a string but a snake.

Meher Baba's masters would openly express their love and affection for him. During this period Babajan would bow every day to Merwan's photograph and shed tears.

During December 1926, Meher Baba was staying in Bombay with His mandali. Unusual news was received from Poona that there were great throngs of people surrounding Hazrat Babajan every day. The ancient woman had become very active and welcomed

the crowds, who usually gathered around her under a great tree in Bund Gardens. She was also frequently making herself conspicuous by riding about the city in a horse tonga.

Hearing this, Meher Baba remarked, "This is the sign of Babajan's dropping her body, and I should now be as near to her boundary of work as I possibly can."

He reminded the mandali that when Sai Baba was about to expire in 1918, Upasni Maharaj returned to Sakori (a few kilometers from Shirdi), abruptly cancelling his tour to Bengal.

On Saturday, January 1st, 1927, a year and half after Meher Baba began His silence, He wrote this message: "I intend to stop writing from tomorrow. It is not definite when I will resume writing or speaking. I may start again after some days, some months or even some years. It all depends on Hazrat Babajan."

When with women devotees while giving darshan or while visiting houses of intimate ones, Meher Baba often narrated incidents from Hazrat Babajan's life and urged them, "Many women have become saints and masters.. Although you are married, still try to intensely long for God."¹¹

It was on 1st June, 1927, Beheram Dorab Jessawala, who was known as Papa Jessawala came for Meher Baba's darshan along with the Satha family of Nagar. While explaining to him about saints and in particular Hazrat Babajan, the Master related:

Babajan lost two of her fingers by allowing them to be eaten away by worms and bugs. So many maggots were in her wounds that they would fall out. She would pick them up and put them back in the wound without in the least minding the horrible pain. Instead of taking treatment for her fingers, she was feeding the worms! Babajan deliberately suffered unimaginable agony, and in the end lost both fingers.

At the present, I too have a deep cut inside my mouth which pains me severely, but I don't pay any attention to it. Saints are always happy, even while in agony.

Meherabad phase of Meher Baba's work

For two months Meher Baba stayed in the Bharucha Building in Bombay often fasting and in seclusion. On January 25th, 1925 he returned to Meherabad with the men mandali and a whole new phase of Meher Baba's activities began. The once quiet atmosphere at Meherabad rapidly changed. Hazrat Babajan School was opened for the children of Arangaon on March 25th, 1925. Marathi was taught up to the seventh grade and elementary English was also taught. Excellent primary instruction was offered and boarding house for the children was also opened. The children who lived there were kept well-fed, well-clothed, well exercised and happy. Their books and writing materials were provided free of charge.

On April 5th, 1927, Hazrat Babajan Girls' School was opened. On May 1st, 1927 Meher Ashram for

boys of different religious communities, castes and nationalities started. On Sunday March 25th, 1928 the Prem Ashram for selected boys for spiritual education and experience was established. Besides these educational activities, there was a Meher Charitable Dispensary and Hospital, Leper Ashram and House for the destitutes. When these activities were going on in full swing, Hazrat Babajan paid a visit to Meherabad on April 1st, 1928.

The event that took place at Meherabad on April 1st, 1928, was meant to be written in a mystical language - the language of Love. In that language things are not read, but felt. Words fail to describe such a unique occurrence, the true meaning of which can be grasped only by those Perfect Ones with divine consciousness.

From 8:15 that morning, the Master began walking about on Meherabad Hill barefooted. All were surprised to see him doing so and it seemed to signal that something unusual was about to occur. The meaning of Meher Baba's behaviour became clear when suddenly at eleven-thirty Hazrat Babajan arrived by car in Meherabad. The car stopped in front of the girls' school bearing her name.

Since moving to Poona many years before, Babajan had never left the city for any reason. Therefore, everyone was truly astonished to see her at Meherabad. A week before, she had expressed her desire to leave Poona and go "to my child's place". She was found to be constantly talking about Baba

and remembering him very lovingly and wanting to visit Ahmednagar.

After Rustom K. Irani's departure to England for bringing boys from Britain for Meher Ashram, Padri was made the superintendent of Meherabad. In those days, the procedure before any visitor was allowed to meet Meher Baba was to inform him about the person's arrival through a secret slip of paper with his or her name and address written on it. When the note was read to Baba, he would respond whether or not he would meet the person. Following this procedure, Padri sent this very understated slip:

Date: April 1st, 1928

Name: Hazrat Babajan

Address: Poona.

Still barefooted, Meher Baba immediately came walking down the hill, not using the rickshaw as was his usual habit. He stopped at the railway tracks about fifty yards away from Babajan who was standing on the opposite side. Keeping one of the mandali near him, he motioned to the rest to take Babajan's darshan as he watched from a distance. As the mandali bowed at the ancient woman's feet, she was talking to herself, praising Meher Baba and addressing him as usual as "my child." She spoke with authority and usual sweetness, and also mysteriously referred to many spiritual secrets which the mandali could not follow. Babajan was offered a little water to drink and within a short time she departed. The two Masters had

actually neither talked nor had any physical contact.

Only their eyes had met; but who knows what message they conveyed.

After her departure, Meher Baba explained at length about Babajan, concluding with an extraordinary remark: "Today is the most eventful and significant day of my life!!"

The next day, he went by car to Poona with the mandali to pay a return visit to Hazrat Babajan, who was seated with a crowd in Bund Gardens. He remained at a distance again, this time standing across the river on the opposite bank. After the mandali had gone back and forth over the bridge for her darshan, Baba returned to Meherabad. Again there was a union of sight between the two Masters.

From April 15th, two weeks after his visit to Babajan, Meher Baba went on a strict fast, not even taking his usual two cups of coffee. After a few days he stated, "If two hundred persons fast for twenty-four hours, then I will take food."

Accordingly, from the morning of April 24th, two hundred persons at Meherabad fasted for twenty-four hours on water and milkless tea, taken only once. Baba also took a little milkless tea and broke his fast simultaneously with the rest on the following morning. Instead of being the first to eat, Baba stated that he preferred to serve all those who fasted with him first. After serving the food at about nine o'clock - after a lapse of five months and fifteen days - Baba ate a little

curry and rice.

The external movements and activities of the Perfect Masters and the Avatar are but the reflection of the shadow of the inner spiritual work they do for the spiritual and material advancement of humanity, hence unintelligible to ordinary men. Because of average man's incapacity to understand the ways of their work, those who are directly or indirectly involved in such activities become an obstacle to their work through misunderstanding their intentions and bring about apparent failure in their efforts. But because of their unbounded love for humanity they work again and again bearing ineffable agony and suffering. During the Meher Ashram and Prem Ashram phase of his work Meher Baba had to face such situations causing great suffering to him and his mandali.

Some months before, Meher Baba had remarked that a great march would take place, but at the time no one understood what he meant... When Aga Ali an inmate of Premashram was taken by his father, Baba had commented in reference to the Ashram, "This will have to be done all over again." Because of these hints, the mandali came to believe that a great change was about to occur, but no one could foresee that the entire Meherabad community would be shifted to a completely different location.

Early in the morning on May 8th, 1928, Meher Baba left Meherabad for Poona at four-thirty, taking Abdulla (Chhota Baba) and a few of the mandali with

him to see a suitable place near Poona for Meher Ashram suggested by one of his close devotees.

The mandali remaining behind again witnessed a rare and remarkable event when Hazrat Babajan unexpectedly arrived for the second time at Meherabad on the very day that Meher Baba went to Poona. The ancient woman met the mandali and boys, kissing each boy and embracing the residents. After a brief visit she left.

On the way to Poona, Meher Baba's car had actually passed Babajan's and it passed hers again on the return to Meherabad. Twice both cars, carrying the Masters, passed each other in opposite directions on the road, but neither stopped.

While in Poona, Baba saw but did not approve of the recommended location. After returning to Meherabad, he revealed that shifting Meher Ashram was unavoidable. Then in reference to Babajan, he remarked, "It has now become imperative after the Old Man's second visit here." Babajan used to refer to herself as a man instead of a woman, and to please her Meher Baba used to either call her the "Old Man" or "Emperor."

Accordingly, the entire Meherabad community of some seven hundred persons - the children of Meher Ashram, teachers, men and women mandali - was shifted to Toka on Sunday, June 3rd, 1928. Toka is located between Ahmednagar and Aurangabad, forty-five miles from Ahmednagar, situated at the confluence of the Godavari and Pravara rivers

surrounding it. All the activities of the different institutions were carried out in Toka till December 4th, 1928, when the whole community was again shifted back to Meherabad.

Dr. Paul Brunton Shaken

In fact no one goes to a Perfect Master or the Avatar. It is always the Master draws an individual to Him either due to past connections or for some work He wishes to accomplish through him. This is exactly what Hazrat Babajan said when Paul Brunton met her; "He has been called to India and soon he will understand." The meaning of the next sentence she said would better be kept in my memory than in print, says Paul Brunton in his book, "A Search In Secret India."

Although he was not able to recognize the divinity of Meher Baba, Paul Brunton felt Babajan's gaze penetrated into him with weird sensation which disturbed his self confidence, and when he returned to his hotel in Poona, he felt that Babajan had in her some deep psychological attainment which commanded respect from him. He found that his brief contact with the Ancient Woman had diverted his normal thought currents and raised up an inexplicable sense of that element of mystery which surrounds the earthly lives despite all the discoveries and speculations of the scientists. He could not understand why a brief contact with the woman fakir should so sap at the very base of his confident mental certainties. The cryptic

statement she made recurred to his mind and he was sure he came to India of his own free will.

The Avatar is God in human form. God who is existence, indivisible and infinite is contained in the human form. All creation is within that form and the Avatar is consciously one with all men and creatures in existence and all act according to his will. Such a concept hadn't reached the western world when Paul Brunton ventured his search in secret India. West investigate with the mind and intellect that which is experienced at the annihilation of the mind and intellect.

It was after two long hours in the presence of Ramana Maharashi who was silent and who did not even once gaze at Paul Brunton during that period that he was made to realize that the intellect is the obstacle to Truth. Ten minutes after listening to many questions about the possibility of something beyond the material existence, how to experience that, about the world conditions and solution to the problems of the world etc. Ramana Maharashi asked Paul Brunton to find out who the "I" he was referring to himself was, and told him that the answer to all his questions will be found in the answer to who this "I" was.

Earlier Paul Brunton met Meher Baba at Meherabad. Meher Baba told Paul Brunton that He was from God, as was Jesus, Buddha, Muhammed and Zoroaster. They do not differ in their teachings. All these Prophets came from God and hence religions established in their names are essentially one. He

further explained, "as Jesus came to impart spirituality to a materialistic age, so have I come to impart a spiritual push to present-day mankind. 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 one string."

Meher Baba drew the attention of Paul Brunton to how all the nations have been brought into quick communication with each other during the modern epoch, with railways, steamships, telephones, cables, wireless and newspapers causing the whole world to become a closely woven unit. All these are an indication that a way is being prepared to enable me to deliver a world-wide message. These profound announcements made Paul Brunton to feel Meher Baba possessed an unlimited faith in his own future and indeed, his whole manner confirmed it, and he asked Baba, "When shall you tell the world about your mission?" Baba replied, "I shall break my silence and deliver my message only when there is chaos and confusion everywhere, for then I shall be most needed; when the world is rocking in upheavals – earthquakes, floods and volcanic eruptions; when both East and West are aflame with war. Truly the whole world must suffer, for the whole world must be redeemed."

"That is a terrible prophecy," exclaimed Paul Brunton. All these and other statements Baba made on His mission on earth sounded tall talk by a deluded person to Brunton. But Baba asked Brunton to go to the West as His representative and spread His message to which Paul Brunton said that people would call him mad.

As a Perfect Master Meher Baba could enact any role perfectly. He could not only hide his divinity when required but even change His physical features to a visitor. This is evident from the description Paul Brunton narrates in his book "A Search in Secret India".

Meher Baba wanted someone to oppose Him in the West as he had in India Col. M.S. Irani, as opposition helps the spiritual work of the masters. So Baba had created an atmosphere around Him in order to generate an antagonistic feeling against him in the mind of Paul Brunton. Paul Brunton's comments on Meher Baba in his widely circulated book, "A Search In Secret India" helped large number of people both in the East and in the West to come into the orbit of Meher Baba's love. Even to this day more and more people are drawn to the Avatar through this book. Thus Dr. Paul Brunton had the opportunity of rendering a great service to Meher Baba's cause, and in turn he also received the blessing of Meher Baba's love through his constant remembrance of Him.

Paul Brunton lived to witness through events that unfolded all that Meher Baba had declared. The terrible war He predicted not only occurred, but also changed

the political map of the world, fulfilling Meher Baba's pronouncement that He would change the history of the world. Observing Meher Baba Lovers all over the world, one can clearly see the bringing together of all religions of the world like beads on one string, because Meher Baba has his followers from all religions of the world.

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

It is an accomplished fact today as Meher Baba has awakened in mankind a new awareness of oneness of all life, which draws all races of people from all countries of the world to his Samadhi-Tomb-Shrine at Meherabad, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra State, India.

Paul Brunton's understanding about Meher Baba proved to be wrong and in the latter years of his life he was asked by one of Meher Baba lovers whether he still holds the same opinion about Meher Baba, as that expressed by him in his book "A search in secret India"!

Paul Brunton confessed that if he was to write now, about Meher Baba, he would write differently.

Was that confirming Babajan's cryptic remark, "He has been called to India and soon he will understand"?

Masters meet again

On October 3rd, 1928, for a change, Meher Baba left Toka for Nasik. On the way the car stopped briefly near the tomb of Bapu Saheb in Ahmednagar, who was a God Realized Majzoob, and then proceeded to Akbar Press for lunch before going to Nasik. Within a few minutes another car passed them from opposite direction, noticeably slowing down for a few moments before continuing on. To the amazement of the mandali accompanying Baba, seated in the car was Hazrat Babajan.

This was not the only coincidental meeting of the two Masters during this trip. On his return to Ahmednagar two days later on October 5th, Baba again stopped at Nusserwan Satha's. A special room had been kept at Akbar Press for Baba to rest, and he went there while the mandali had their meal. Within moments, Baba came out into the compound and sat on the verandah by himself. Thinking that the Master was sitting in solitude for his special work, the mandali and devotees purposely kept silent at a distance. Again to their utter surprise, they saw a car drive up with Babajan inside and stop on the road exactly opposite to where Baba was seated. Meher Baba's face looked wonderfully joyful. There was an exchange of glance between the two Masters which signified some mysterious message between them. After only a few minutes, the car with Babajan drove off.

This was the second meeting between Babajan

and Meher Baba. Asked about the significance of these meetings, Baba cryptically replied, "Babajan met me today for the second time. It means that I am now free."

Coincidentally, on the very same day that Baba left Toka for Nasik, Aga Ali began his second escape from Bombay to Toka. More significantly, Ali arrived at the exact time that Babajan and Meher Baba met at Akbar Press. At seven in the evening, Baba and group arrived back in Toka where Baba happily welcomed Ali back, embracing his "hero" tenderly.

Miracles of Hazrat Babajan

Many miracles were attributed to Babajan, some of which have already appeared elsewhere in this book.

Once a Fakir from Ajmer appeared before Hazrat Babajan and said that he had a request to make. When ordered to utter it, the fakir continued, "I had in mind a pilgrimage to Baghdad. For that matter I had been to the shrine of Khwaja Saheb of Ajmer. From there I have been ordered to submit my request to Hazrat Babajan who would see to the fulfillment thereof. And here I am. Kindly provide me with funds enough to meet the expenses of food and travel so that I may start early." For two days the fakir was in Babajan's Darbar (presence). The third day being winter it was piercing cold early in the morning, Babajan, being in playful mood indulged in a very humorous spree.

She addressed the fakir, "You want to go to Baghdad, isn't it? Very well, you will be in Baghdad, I will send you there in a jiffy. Go on to the road and stand erect. When I order you to fly, you should begin flying in the air. Do you understand?"

The fakir believed in what Babajan said, and knew that it was easy for saints to transport human beings thousands of miles away even physically. Accordingly, he took up his stand by the roadside, opposite to Babajan's seat, expectant every moment to rise in the air at the words of Babajan for an aerial flight to Baghdad.

When he stood there a few seconds, Babajan rasped out the words, "Oorh," i.e. "Fly". The fakir was just where he was, the ground and his feet parting company a few inches only when he himself attempted a little jumping on hearing Babajan's word, "Oorh". At the initial failure the fakir looked dismayed, and turned towards Babajan. The poor fellow did as he was told, and hoped any minute the earth would part company with his feet.

After a time Babajan asked him to come away and said, "My good man, you wish to fly to Baghdad without wings, without money? Whoever suggested you this trick? Do you sincerely desire to go to Baghdad?" On receiving an affirmative reply, Babajan called out to some unknown entity, "Is there anyone around? Yes brother, see that this man reaches Baghdad." Within ten minutes after the utterance of the words, a gentleman from Gujarat came up, and

after rendering obeisance, tenders a purse to Babajan, containing rupees three hundred in cash. Babajan immediately earmarked the amount with a view to safeguarding it from the attacks of other mendicants by saying, "This belongs to Baghdadwala." Thus speaking she threw the purse to the fakir from Ajmer, and asked him to depart. He left immediately singing Babajan's praises.

One day a man approached Babajan and offered to take her for tea to a nearby teashop. Babajan stipulated, "Yes, I go with you to tea-shop, but I shall pay for the tea." The man replied, "I have money with me in my pockets. You are a fakir. Where can you get money from?" Babajan asked, "Where is the cash with you?" The man very egoistically jingled coins in his pocket which amounted to near about rupees thirty to forty. Babajan and the party wended their way towards a tea-shop. Tea was ordered and drunk by everybody. When it came to paying at the counter, before coming out of the tea-shop, the man puts his hands in his pockets to find to his utter dismay that there was no money there. He appealingly told Babajan, "How is it? I haven't a pie in my pocket!" Babajan said, "You just now jingled a good quantity of money." He became crestfallen and came out with Babajan to the seat underneath the tree. On reaching the destination he discovered that the cash was there intact in his pocket.

A man happened to lose his horse, and he could trace it nowhere. He approached Babajan, and let

forth his complaint. Babajan pointed out with her finger in one particular direction, and asked him to go straight until the horse was found. Getting this hint, he left immediately, and proceeded in the direction pointed out by Babajan. He had not proceeded far, when to his surprise, the horse was observed coming towards him from the opposite direction. He was awfully pleased and loading a good quantity of sweets on the back of the horse, he came along with it to Babajan and requested her to distribute the sweets to the crowd with her own august hands. Babajan caressed the horse, and distributed the sweets as requested.

One Hindu woman a devotee of Babajan, very humbly and supplicantly submitted to Babajan that she was married these ten years, but was not yet blessed with an issue. She requested Babajan's blessings in her case. Babajan blessed her, and said, "Your first issue would be a son." Exactly after a year and half, the lady returned and placed the male baby at the feet of Babajan. Babajan took up the child in her arms, played with it for some time and allowed the mother and the child to depart with her blessings.

Once a motor driver, coming towards Poona from Mahabaleshwar, saw Babajan near Shivapur walking on foot towards Poona. He accosted Babajan and offered a seat but she refused. The motor driver happened to come straight to Babajan's seat under the margosa tree near Char Bawdi, and what a surprise was there for him! Babajan was seated as usual surrounded by people. It could never have been

possible for Babajan to walk fourteen miles from Shivapur to Poona in half an hour. The motor driver related the incident to everyone assembled there.

A Hindu gentleman, a great devotee of Babajan, used to live in a village near Parvati Hills outside Poona. He used to come daily in the evenings for Babajan's darshan, and return home in the night. One day after darshan, while he was about to return, Babajan said, "You are going but beware, if you come across any danger on the road, draw a line with your finger on the ground and repeat my name." After giving this warning Babajan allowed him to go. When the man reached the outskirts of Poona city and entered to the open countryside he heard somebody calling him by his name. He recognized the *voice* to belong to some relative of his who was dead. He became very much perplexed and frightened. When he advanced a few steps further, he was frightened out of his wits to see the same dead relation standing before him and addressing him in the following words: "Now what can *save* you today from out of my clutches?" The man was so much scared that he stood rooted to the spot. All of a sudden he remembered Babajan's parting words of advice. He immediately did as he was told, and after drawing the line with his finger on the ground, when he raised himself up, instead of the apparition before him he was surprisingly pleased to see Babajan standing before him. Babajan spoke a few words of comfort and solace and asked him to proceed, promising that nothing would disturb him hereafter.

Once a man brought three jilebis (Indian sweets) to Babajan. At the time, there was a considerable crowd standing around about Babajan's seat. Babajan gave away the three jilebis to one faqir from amongst them. One person complained, saying, "Babajan, what have we done that you have not given us a little of those jilebis?" Babajan smiled and just called out in a sweet voice, "Brother, bring sufficient jilebis so that each one may get three." In a short while thereafter an unknown man brings a trayful of jilebis, which were distributed amongst the crowd and right enough each one from amongst the crowd got three jilebis.

Babajan, had a number of rings - brass, copper and iron - on almost all her fingers. Once one of the rings on the fingers got stuck, and consequently the finger became frightfully swollen. Ultimately it began to drain pus and blood, but Babajan refused to apply any medicine. Once, one devotee from Nasik, who was a daily visitor to Babajan, proposed application of boric powder. Babajan thereupon became enraged and said, "You want to belittle my Faqiri (Perfection)?" For days together Babajan suffered unimaginable pain due to that festering finger. One day a Hindu gentleman brought a little pickles of mango for Babajan which she received and directly tied it on to the wound. Surprisingly enough by this strange medication the wound healed within a few days.

Babajan was usually radiant and vibrant in health. On one occasion she was ill and restless in Poona. Strangely enough, Meher Baba's health at Meherabad

in Ahmednagar seems to coincide with Babajan's health in Poona. The mandali observed that many of their symptoms were similar and that as long as Babajan did not recover, Meher Baba's health also did not improve.

Mental and physical healing of the afflicted was an every day affair with Babajan throughout her stay in Poona, but the greatest miracle that she may be truly said to have performed was the giving of God-Realization to Meher Baba. Her parting words to Meher Baba were, "I have made you that perfect today that very soon half the world would be at your feet."

During the fag end of her life, Babajan was observed to grow weaker and weaker, and would have attacks of fever which would make her lie unconscious for days together. The condition of her health naturally aroused concern amongst the trustees who constituted themselves into a body for attending to the obsequies and the construction of the shrine.

Babajan's seat being in the Cantonment area, everyone thought that the military authorities would refuse permission for Babajan's burial within their limits. The trustees saw and proposed many sites in different parts of the city, but there was no unanimity amongst them about any one particular spot. One day they decided to approach Babajan herself and settle the question of her burial ground direct. No sooner they approached her, Babajan flew into rage at the sight of them, and said, "Get away from here. How can the dead show concern for the living? I am not

going to leave this place." Thus Babajan decided the question of her burial ground, and at the same time conveyed to them that material-minded people are more dead than alive.

After a spiritual sojourn of about 35 years in Poona, Hazrat Babajan left her mortal coil on 21st September 1931 at the ripe old age of 125 years. Her funeral procession was a tremendous affair, never accorded to any dignitary or royalty in the annals of Poona. Her remains were laid at rest at the very spot underneath the neem tree where she sat and dispensed Divine Grace for such a long number of years, thus confirming the Sufi belief that

**"Cycles change,
the worlds rotate,
But Qutubs ne'er their
seat vacate."**

Meher Baba was in England on his first visit to the West. He was staying at the Spiritual Retreat in East Challacombe, North Devonshire, run by Meredith Starr, surrounded by his early Western lovers, when a telegram arrived from Vishnu in Nasik, conveying the news that Hazrat Babajan had dropped her body in Poona on Monday, September 21st, whereupon Meher Baba commented: "By Babajan having dropped her body, numerous difficulties will crop up and circumstances will soon change. For this reason, I changed my plans about proceeding to Persia and then returning to India, and have decided instead to

go to America. The Round Table Conference, the precarious economy of England, the chaos in Russia, Japan and China and the rumours of war all convey that circumstances will now rapidly change."

Baba then sent a telegram to Ghani Munsiff directing him to donate four thousand rupees on his behalf toward erecting Babajan¹'s marble tomb. The beautiful shrine in marble stone is built out of Rs. 4000/- provided by Meher Baba and held in Trust on his behalf by a Muslim Society, "The Anjuman-e-Khuddam-e-Able-Sunnatul Jamat, Poona."

The Evening News of India

Wednesday, September 23rd, 1931 Newspaper caption reads: The Muslim community in Poona has been greatly moved by the death of the famous saint Babajan. It is claimed that she was 125 years of age, and the possessor of magical powers in addition to her powers of sight into the future. Her funeral yesterday, as the picture shows, was very largely attended with thousands of people both Muslims and Hindus taking part in the procession.

★★

Babajan - The Perfect Master

Babajan was one of the five Perfect Masters of this age. She was true Fakir, the earth her bed, the tree and sky her roof, her food,

Whatever the earth through the loving house-holder's hands gave her -

The way of the loveliest and the greatest of east and west: "Poverty is My glory." Such was Baba's John to his this-time Jesus.

The others of the Five were Sai Baba of Shirdi, Tajuddin Baba of Nagpur,

Upasni Maharaj of Sakori and Narayan Maharaj of Kedgaon.

The office of the perfect five is permanent. Before one "dies,"

He raises another person to Perfect Mastership to take his place.

They are the sole functioning of God in the earth, the Guidance of creation.

The Grace whereby man love, and travel the path to truth.

When in the sweep of time the cry of men reaches to God, they bring down

The "Son" from the heaven of the "Father" to his mission in the world -

Bring him down wrapped in their love and veiled from Knowledge of himself.

They choose his parents, attend to every detail of his birth;

Throughout his childhood years they watch him tenderly.

Theirs is God's motherhood and His father's protectiveness

And when it is time for him to go out to work to his job of world-truing,

And soul-inspiring, they give him his own knowledge of himself.

And hand over to him his own world and its management, and themselves

Retire, leaving the world empty of God save him - God and God-Man.

Babajan gave him the inconceptual experience of his own reality,

And the world and its worlds, gross, subtle and mental, vanished -

And existed not even as illusion: he alone was the existent and existing.

This is the bliss that alone may be called the bliss, and which

Alone will exist when his work in the world is done

And he returns to his own-father-self again

Leaving another Five to tend this dusty garden of the earth.

The five brought him down wrapped in the veil of humanity.

Babajan with a kiss, unwrapped him to Who he was;

Upasni gave him knowledge of what he was to do and brought him down

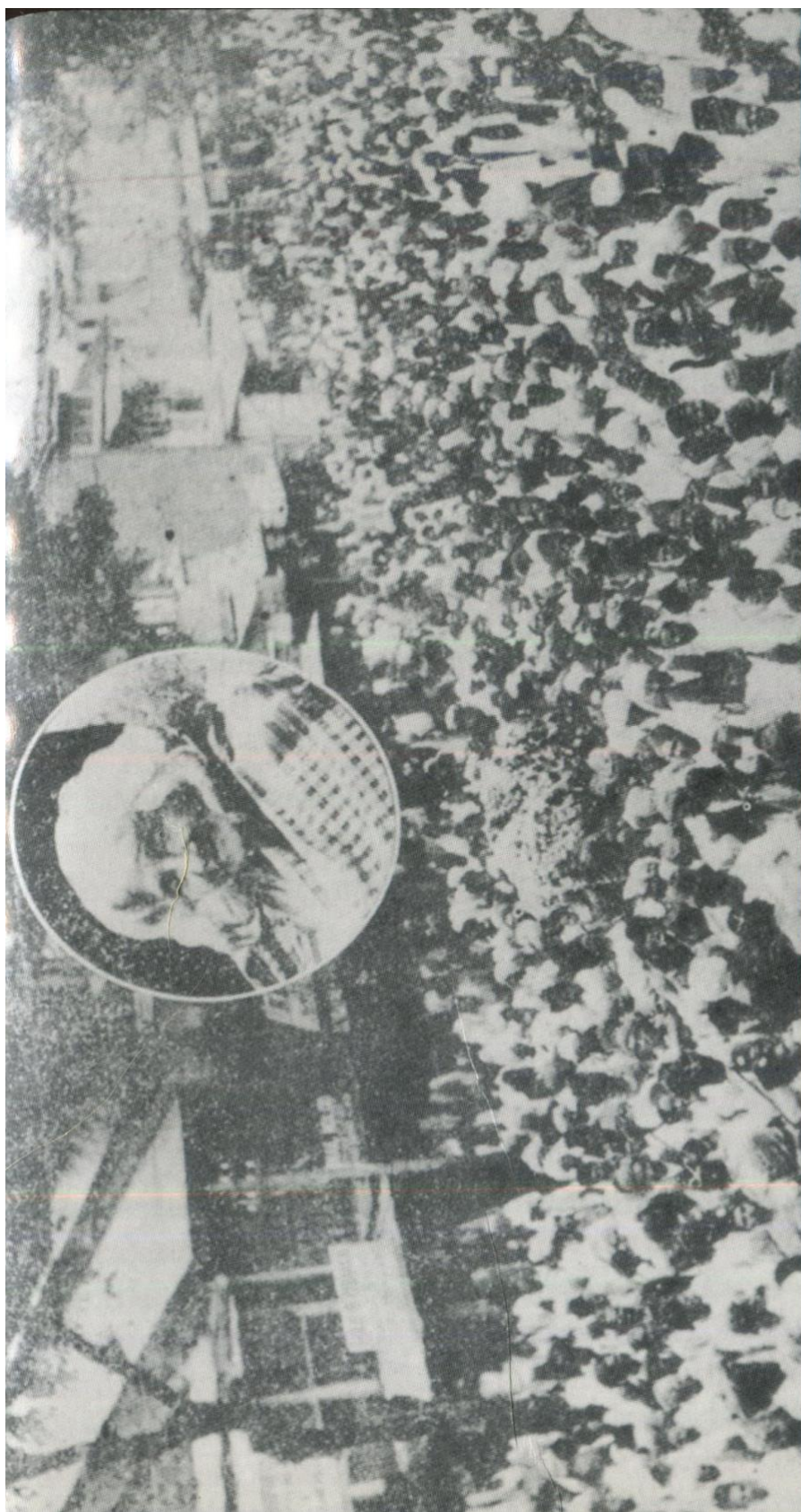
Through the seven planes dressed again in the triple-garment of the world,

Though loosely - his God-Brightness not diminished; a journey

Of unspeakable agony taking seven years. God had again performed

His periodic miracle of down coming and awakening and returning.

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POONA BADES FAREWELL TO HAZRAT BABAJAN
SEPTEMBER 23, 1931

Register of Editorial Alterations

Page 5, para 2, line 9, decoits changed to dacoits
Page 12, para 2, line 4, nothern changed to northern
Page 12, para 3, line 9, existance changed to existence
Page 12, para 4, line 3, "and" changed to "and the"
Page 14, para 1, line 1, turn changed to turns
Page 15, para 4, line 8, magnificent changed to magnificent
Page 16, para 2, line 3, thirtees changed to thirties
Page 16, para 4, line 7, customery changed to customary
Page 19, para 4, line 2, "and" changed to "and a"
Page 22, para 3, line 5, twelfth changed to twelfth
Page 23, para 1, line 10, and changed to in
Page 25, para 1, line 7, be changed to lie
Page 32, para 5, line 6, "saw" changed to "saw to the"
Page 35, para 1, line 7, ennuch changed to eunuch
Page 36, para 1, line 11, let changed to lets
Page 37, para 1, line 9, complimentary changed to complementary
Page 43, para 1, line 1, fulfilled changed to fulfill
Page 44, para 3, line 13, "treat" changed to "to treat"
Page 44, para 3, line 14, gangarene changed to gangrene
Page 48, para 3, line 7, sorcerous changed to sorceress
Page 66, para 3, line 4, appoached changed to approached
Page 69, para 1, line 1, don't changed to didn't
Page 70, para 6, line 2, matteress changed to mattress
Page 70, para 6, line 8, street changed to streets
Page 73, para 3, line 5, persuation changed to persuasion
Page 80, para 1, line 4, sankaras changed to sanskaras
Page 80, para 1, line 9, "and" changed to "and all"
Page 81, para 3, line 5, bit changed to bid
Page 81, para 3, line 8, When changed to when
Page 84, para 2, line 6, dysentry changed to dysentery
Page 85, para 4, line 1, dysentry changed to dysentery
Page 87, para 3, line 5, sankaras changed to sanskaras
Page 87, para 3, line 10, seat changed to seats
Page 98, para 2, line 5, occurence changed to occurrence
Page 99, para 2, line 2, Briton changed to Britain
Page 106, para 4, line 1, "events" changed to "events that"
Page 106, para 4, line 3, occured changed to occurred
Page 107, para 2, line 5, casts changed to castes
Page 120, stanza 3, dustry changed to dusty
Page 120, stanza 6, "brought" changed to "and brought"

