

The Way and the Goal

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Avatar Meher Baba

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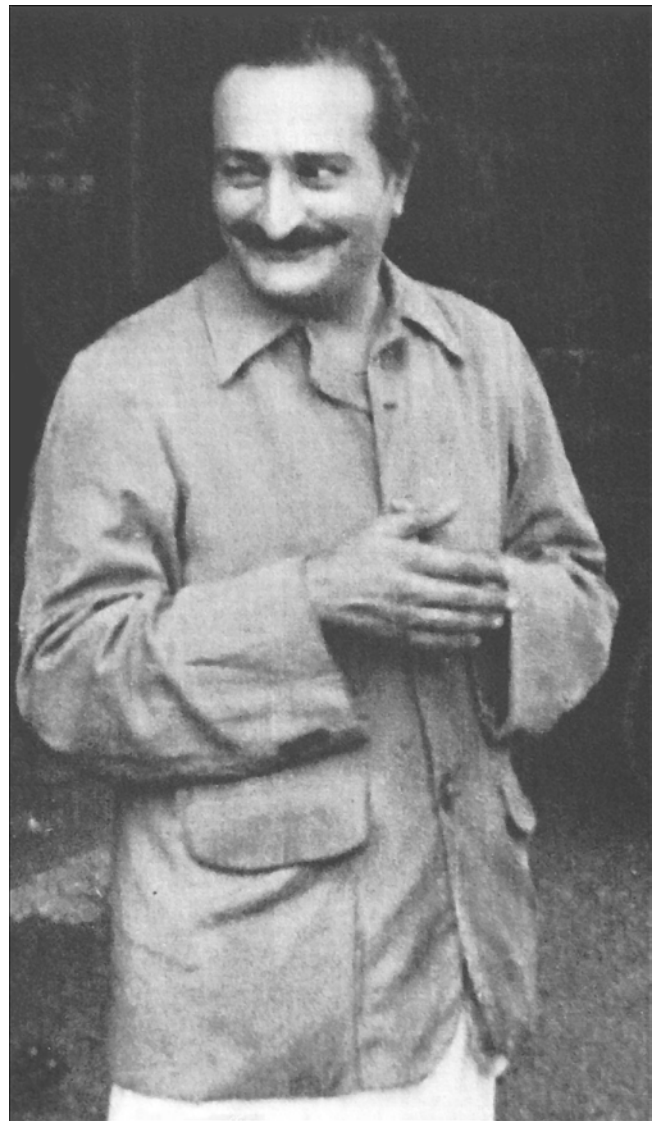
Diet and Baba

Your Real Diet Should Be Your Diet of Meher Baba

By Dr. Harry Kenmore

Let us consider an area of belief and practice whose clarification has been long overdue. The pilgrim who sets out to approach the Spiritual Path is pretty much in a quandary. He usually makes the approach to this Path, as a rule, through the cellar of so-called "spiritual" practices. First he or she becomes the dupe of the "sleight of hand" perpetrated by the psychometrist, the medium, the "spiritual healer," the fortune teller, the astral plane materializer, diverse and sundry metaphysical cults, and a varied assortment of dubious yogis, occultists and self-styled psychics and swamis. What a dilemma! Then, accidentally, he stumbles across a book by Meher Baba. This at once fills him with a desire for great devotion and a legitimate determination to prove his sincerity in his quest for Reality. In this mood, our pilgrim is willing to undertake one of the disciplines required to approach the Spiritual Path.

At this time, the easiest acceptable discipline he tackles is the kind of food he eats—his diet. There are a variety of opinions held by an even greater variety of people concerning food and diet for whatever reason it may be ingested. The aspirant who is seeking to get onto the Spiritual Path is told that should he eat animal food such as meat, eggs, fish, or fowl he's going to assume the burden of increased sanskaras or impressions of lust, anger, and greed associated with the animal kingdom. Well,



Reprint of photo given by Mehera to the Society.

isn't this a rather far-fetched conclusion, for you don't really become what you eat.! If you eat horse meat, you're not going to become a horse, and if you eat bacon and pork you're not going to become a pig. If you eat a delicious salmon steak you're not going to become a salmon, and if you eat the meat of a cow you're not going to become that vacant-eyed and vacant-headed bovine creature, either.

The kind of food to be consumed by a particular species is usually determined by the kind of G.I. or gastrointestinal track possessed by the creature. The design of a part usually indicates its function. The grinding molars of the herbivori (cow) aided by three hundred feet of intestines, which includes several stomachs, makes the cow peculiarly adapted to the consumption and digestion of vegetation. The human has a mouth cavity equipped with teeth for tearing, chewing and grinding coupled with an intestinal track less than one fifth the length of the herbivori. The human stomach and small intestine secretes enzymes (catalytic agents) whose function it is to hasten the digestive process by breaking down highly complex proteins, starches and sugars. The presence of these enzymes in the human eliminates the necessity for having an overly long intestinal track.

Should the human stomach demonstrate the absence of hydrochloric acid (hypochlorhydria or achlorhydria), the chief constituent of gastric or stomach juice, not only the destruction of offensive bacteria but the process of adequate protein breakdown will suffer efficiency impairment. Now should a person have this HCL deficiency the ensuing fermentation, putrefaction, and flatulence (gas) would produce abdominal bloating and discomfort, headache, dullness, malaise, and fatigue. Also should gall bladder inadequacy be present, the fats which are found with the protein in meat, eggs, and fowl will not be efficiently broken down compounding the digestive distress.

Excusable ignorance of these physiological deficiency factors leads to faddism, because the sufferers of faulty food breakdown fare much better on a bland or animal-food free diet consisting mostly of vegetables and fruits. Moreover, should such a dietary course meet with happy digestive results they aggressively seek to proselytize others who may have excellent digestive apparatus to be companions with them in their fanatical fadism.

Nourishment for the body is necessary because food

is needed to maintain the vital functions of the organism. However, food intake gives no nourishment to our minds or hearts. Our minds harbor the very seat of our ego, this little tencent personality self of ours. Our minds are the evolutionary and reincarnation storehouse and reservoir into which all of the impressions, the thoughts, desires, tendencies, motivations, conditionings, habits, etc. have fallen. In other words, we are nought but a monstrous mass of impression-bound consciousness. The mountain of impressions stored in our mind has arisen out of our present and previous human lifetimes as well as from our evolutionary trek through the prehuman kingdoms. The kind of food that we eat will have absolutely no effect on these impressions.

Now Meher Baba was always opposed to faddism and fetishism. Let it be recorded that Meher Baba was not interested in the kind of diet you followed, but in your *attachment* to the food consumed. If you were attached to a so-called vegetarian diet Baba immediately removed your attachment to that diet by removing *you* from that diet. If you were attached to a meatarian diet, He removed you from *that* diet. Were you not attached to your accustomed diet, i.e. if you were eating to live rather than living to eat, Baba didn't interfere with your food intake habits. The food that one eats is ingested for only one purpose, and that is to support the vital biologic functions: to supply the body with the energy to sustain and promote its activities. Your food intake has *nothing* to do with God; it has absolutely nothing to do with the Spiritual Path. What on earth has the gross or physico-chemical properties of food have to do with the genuine spiritual aspirations of those who seek advancement on the Spiritual Path under the guidance of the Highest of the High, Meher Baba? Whether it be a meatball, fishcake, wheatgerm, flapjack or egg omelet, how can any of these delectable concoctions influence your progress or retrogression with respect to loving our Lord of Lords, Avatar Meher Baba?

Let's mull over this quotation from Meher Baba, "When in you the limited "I" disappears, the infinite "I" in you manifests itself automatically. God reveals Himself only to the mind which is entirely devoid of egoism and egotism." In other words, God doesn't reveal Himself to the vegetarian, the meatarian, the fruitarian, the "fadarian" or the health food faddist. Neither does He reveal Himself to the so-called discriminating food-munching

particularist.

You know food fads are started by some who are imbued with complexes of self-guilt and other complex unresolved hangups, and to eradicate their deep feeling of self-guilt they seek self-exculpation by entreating others to join in their faddist venture. This pseudo-service to others gives them the illusion of purity for which they crave.

A vegetarian diet doesn't "purify" a body because the food ingredients must pass through the organs, glands, and tissues of an animal-like body, and the end-product metabolites and acids find their way into and through the emunctory or waste eliminating organs of excretion. A diet comprised of any food from an animal or non-animal source will give rise to the same end product ingredients of excretion. Also, the kind of food we eat cannot alter the animal-like tissues of the body—the animal-like body will function according to its animal-like design irrespective of the kind of character of food consumed.

Let's recall the experiments made with the arctic explorer George Stephanson who camped in the arctic for over two years living exclusively on a mono diet of meat. On his return to civilization he was hospitalized for complete observation and examination. They found that his organs, glands and body tissues were intact, free of damage, and well. They gave him a clear and excellent bill of health, though not estimating whether this diet brought him nearer to or farther from God. I've known many to proudly point to George Bernard Shaw, who lived to be about ninety, giving as a reason for his longevity his vegetarian diet. However, they neglect to add that for twenty-two years prior to his demise G.B.S. received regular liver injections to combat a chronic pernicious anemia.

It is well known that people who are on vegetarian diets die of the same diseases as people who are on non-vegetarian diets. You see, meat, eggs and fish are sources of "complete proteins." For consistent and stable health maintenance we pretty much have to eat the kind of food out of which our own body tissues are made, i.e. from meat, fish, eggs and cheese rather than from the food sources containing incomplete protein such as vegetables, fruits and nuts. The westerner, dominated by the demands of materialism and high pressure technology, can shoulder these pressures more efficiently by consuming the foods containing the complete proteins.

When Meher Baba began His Avatarhood in the early twenties He fastened His attention on a great number of Brahmins who, of course, are traditionally vegetarians. In order to win their confidence and loyalty to Him, Meher Baba allowed them to indulge in their traditional dietary customs. Then as these Brahmins drew closer in their love for Meher Baba, the strength of their conviction about His Divinity supplanted their attachment to this age-old traditional practice. It was at this time that Baba introduced the foods that had been taboo in their religion.

Meher Baba always insisted that one should take care of one's health, because the body is the vehicle through which we are going to take this Journey inside of us to get to the Goal of Self-Realization. Remember, we're not going to get there with the body but with the *heart*. Meher Baba says, "One who gets control of his mind, gets control of everything." It matters not the type of food we eat, but the discriminating food in the form of Values and Ideals our minds and hearts feed upon—that really does matter. Remember, the amount of phony animal-like impressions we can *unload* from our overstuffed minds will be vastly more pertinent to the achievement of our Goal than the kind of food we load into our stomachs.

Vivekananda, Ramakrishna Paramhansa's publicist, was severely criticised, while lecturing in this country, for eating meat, fish and eggs. He turned on his critics in sheer disgust saying, "It doesn't matter what goes into your mouth, it's what comes out of your mouth that really matters!" Vegetarian-bitten persons are like as not to be chock full of bilious envy and anger and smoldering jealousy and resentment even as non-vegetarian consumers whose minds are not yet empty of Maya-ridden trash. The purified heart is empty of this trash. Haven't you known some to inquire of others, "What do you think of Meher Baba?" or "How do you feel about Meher Baba?" but you have never heard "What do you eat for Baba?"

Your diet of Baba—the ideas and ideals He inspires, the determination, sincerity and genuineness of purpose with which He equips you—is what really counts. Baba doesn't want our body or the food that we eat: He wants a pure heart and a naked mind. When we speak of the heart we're not referring to that anatomical organ that occupies a portion of our chest cage; the heart is that second part

of the mind which is its feeling portion. This is what our Lord of hearts wants from us.

There was a Brahmin who wanted to achieve Self-Realization, and feeling that Meher Baba could fulfill his desire he made a visit to Baba's residence in Meherabad. The man told Baba he had come to surrender his all and to obey Him one hundred per cent, but Baba queried him further: "Think well on what you've just said. You're prepared to obey Me completely, in every respect?" "Yes, Baba." "In that case this is what Baba wants you to do when you return home: I would like you to eat a large portion of meat and fish and two or three eggs, every day. Secondly, I want you to have a couple of jiggersful of whisky before or between your meals, as you wish, and thirdly, Baba would like you to consort with a woman three or four times a week." The Brahmin looked pale. "Uhh, Baba. Look here, Baba. I'm just a *child* at your feet. Really, Baba, you must be pulling my leg." Baba's reply was to the point: "You've just said you're ready to surrender completely to Baba and now this is what Baba wants you to do." This Brahmin protested a second time and finally blurted out the reason for his refusal, "You know, Baba, I'm a Brahmin." Of course, he didn't know the meaning of the word "surrender." When you surrender to the God-Man you lose everything to Him, and you let all your attachments disappear in His Divine Ocean of Love. This Brahmin didn't know that when he surrendered his life to Baba he had also surrendered his Brahminism (the tenets, rules, dogma) as well. (Meher Baba came amongst us not only to destroy rites, ceremonies, and rituals but our attachment to them as well. The one irrevocable attachment He wants to establish is our attachment to Him—our Real Beloved.) Unable to follow Baba's order, he returned home a disheartened, disappointed, and dejected man. Years later, word came to the Mandali that this man, *on his own*, was attending to the jiggers of whisky, eating meat, and consorting with women. And because he was doing these things on his own, they had absolutely no spiritual value.

A self-imposed fasting program by a spiritual seeker is of *no* spiritual value. The aspirant receives spiritual benefit in the exercise of a discipline only when that discipline is instituted or ordered by the Avatar or a Perfect Master. Meher Baba's Mandali, on certain occasions, abstained from all food except water and tea for periods lasting up to forty days. They enjoyed this abstinence so much that their

only dread was for its termination. During these fasts they lost not a single pound because they were completely sustained in this program by their Lord of Lords.

Should anyone undertake a fast on his own, it won't bring him *one inch* nearer to God, even though he may feel that it will. One's ego feels titillated with self-pride in this diet sport and should anyone come to know of this private venture the ego expansion is the more accentuated, because we haven't learned to keep our lips sealed. One's attachment should be not to any program or activity, but to Meher Baba.

I can recall the incident of one devotee from Baroda whose habit of drinking tea was removed by Meher Baba. Do you know why? It was very simple. Whenever his friends would serve him at tea-time he would be compelled to refuse their courtesy. And what happened? He would remember Baba! His tea intake was removed not because it would render his body or mind impure, but because it provided him with a concrete opportunity for remembering the Beloved. Whenever he has to refuse an offer of tea, he must remember Baba who instituted this abstinence.

Meher Baba is very jealous of those who love any false beloveds, because he wants his devotees to love only the Real Beloved. You show your love for the God-Man through your continuous remembrance of Him. In the above mentioned incident of the Brahmin, he was asked to eat meat, drink liquor and consort with women in direct opposition to his religious tradition, because in breaking the rules of custom he would be remembering Baba. It was only done because Baba wants to be remembered by the one who surrenders to Him. Baba, and only Baba, is remembered by the one who surrenders to Him. He doesn't give a "hoot" about what a diet is or isn't going to do for us: He only gives a "hail" about our remembrance of Him. Continuous remembrance of the Real Beloved will ensure your closeness to Him.

The Spiritual objective is to please your Lord, and to make Him happy with your love, obedience and surrender to Him. This God that we're worshipping, as is given to us in the Avatar's Prayer, is the Only One worthy of worship. This God is someone we have to *give* to; He's not a "getting", supermarket slot-machine Santa Claus God that we get something from. We must give ourselves to Him. We've got to surrender that mind; we must surrender that heart; we must give it up to Him. Then He'll give us what

we need, and what we need is not only His Love, His Compassion and all of the attributes personified by Meher Baba, He'll give us our original Inheritance—He'll give it back to us as our own lost Real Self.

That's why He has come. He hasn't come to have us dabble in all kinds of fads, fetishes, and dogmas—that's not His purpose. He wants us to dabble with a God-Man; He wants us to dabble with God Himself. He wants us to take that animal nature, convert it into a human nature, to be converted into Divine nature. This can only be done through total surrender to Avatar Meher Baba.

Note that word "surrender"—it isn't easy. When a female bee is to be made officially the queen of a given hive, she is pursued by virtually hundreds of drone bees. Only one of these bees will outdistance all of the pursuers, catch up with the queen that's soaring high up into the sky, and only that one male drone bee will copulate with the queen bee. And in this one grand majestic ecstasy, lasting just a single moment, the drone bee surrenders and loses its entire genitalia in the body of the queen bee and falls back to the earth, dead. The drone bee sacrificed all including his life for union with the queen bee. We must also sacrifice everything—everything we hold dear in our attachment to Maya as well as that damnable little personality self of ours which says I am John, I am Helen, I am a lawyer, I am doctor, a truck driver, the son I am of this and the daughter of that, and on and on. This attachment to personality reference keeps one immersed in the "Maya syndrome." The "Maya syndrome" turns one away from Divine considerations to those of material consequence. When our hearts are drowned in our Beloved's Divine Ocean of Love we'll really have what we're aching for and searching for and yearning for. You see, surrender is serious business, and what I've just described has *nothing* to do with diet, nothing to do with food.

Food only gives you the energy to carry on. Look to your health; if your health isn't working as well as it should, Baba says, "Consult a doctor." We must do our level best to keep our bodies in top shape because we need that body as an adequate vehicle for His service. This is an action era. Baba doesn't want people sitting around meditating like phony yogis. Baba wants everyone who is dedicated to Him to go into action with genuine selfless service. Selfless service—that's the key. He wants us to serve selflessly because in such service

we will be forgetting our little phony selves and remembering Him. When we forget the false, we can remember the Real. When you serve Him, you're really serving your own Self.

Meher Baba says, "Take good care of your body, but do not be a slave to it. If you think constantly of its welfare you are like a miser who thinks constantly of his gold." Again Baba is reminding us—don't be a food faddist; don't be a faddist in anything. If you want to renounce anything, Baba says over and over, renounce your low desires and renounce every tendency which will have you fall a victim to greed, to anger, and to lust. Greed, anger and lust—that's the *GAL* you have to beware of.

We talk about doing things on the basis of the authority of the heart. This is laughable because the heart has no authority. Baba says there are millions of strangers in our hearts. "I cannot enter; I am too shy and reluctant." Before you can claim authority of the heart you must remove the millions of strangers so Meher Baba can find room enough to occupy His palace and say, "This heart is Mine. It belongs to Me and not to the millions of false beloved strangers." Your heart is totally without authority when strangers occupy it. Real, genuine authority of the heart is present only when Avatar Meher Baba can take up complete residence in it. Only when He takes up active, awakened residence in our hearts does *He* become the Authority of our hearts. This can take place only when we've given up to Him in complete surrender. God has always wanted our hearts; He's never wanted our diet. If our diet is continuous remembrance of the Real Beloved in the Person of Meher Baba, that is the most nutritious "food" our bodies and minds can have. And it's the only food that should be continuously ingested. So see to your diet—of Meher Baba!

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