

Ward Parks Seminars
2025 Avatar's Abode
Baba's House



The New Life Then and Now

The History and Significance of Meher Baba's New Life
16th October 1949 to the Conclusion of Manonash February 1952

Four live Monday sessions:
May 19, 26,
June 2, (not 9), 16
10am to 12pm

On 16th October 1949, Meher Baba renounced the Old Life and with twenty companions set out on a New Life of “helplessness and hopelessness.” Cutting all ties with His Old Life disciples and devotees, for two and a half years Baba and His companions wandered without fixed residence around the Indian subcontinent, at times begging for food and sleeping under the stars. The New Life came to a head between October and February 1951–52 with what Baba called “Manonash” or the “annihilation of the mind.” And through this radical act Meher Baba drew the New Life to a close, stepping into a new kind of “LIFE” in which the Old and New Lives were both encompassed. This was the “LIFE” that provided the platform for His public declaration of Avatarhood in Feb. 1954.

While the community of Baba's lovers generally agrees that the New Life holds a special place in Baba's life and prepares the ground for a future New Humanity, it remains profoundly enigmatic and often baffling. What exactly was the New Life? Most of Baba's statements describe it in purely negational terms, setting forth rules and restrictions and prohibitions. Yet some of the “New Life Companions” said that this was the freest time during all their years with Meher Baba. How to reconcile such stark contradictions? How to fathom the essence of a life that exhibits no visible positive content and eludes unequivocal terms of characterization? And what are we to make of Baba Himself, and the roles He played? During the Old Life, He generally presented Himself as a God-realized Sadguru. At the outset of the New Life He stepped down from this office and became an ordinary seeker of God. But through the course of Manonash He seems to have regained His divine station, and indeed, augmented it, to the point of establishing the grounds of His Avatarhood. What work was He engaged in through this strange process? Was the Meher Baba of the New Life the same One that His lovers pray to today and relate to as their Friend and Beloved and Master?

Schedule of Sessions and Topics (excluding June 9th - Anniversary)

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| Monday morning, May 19, 10:00 a.m. – 12 noon | Session 1. From the Old Life to the New Life: The Preparatory Phase and the Training Period in Belgaum | Topic A. Characteristics of the Old Life and the role of the Perfect Master Topic B. Adumbrations: The Great Seclusion (June–July 1949) Topic C. The meetings at Meherabad (August 1949) Topic D. Dismantling the Old Life and Preparing for the New (1 September thru 16 October 1949) Topic E. Launching the New Life: setting out from Meherabad (16–20 October 1949) Topic F. The Training period in Belgaum (October 20 thru 12 th November) |
| Monday morning, May 26, 10:00 a.m. – 12 noon | Session 2. Conclusion of the Training Period, and the New Life in North India | Topic A. The Benares and Sarnath Interlude (15 November thru 12 December 1949) Topic B. “The Song of the New Life” Topic C. From Benares to Dehra Dun: The Begging, Gypsy, Langoti, and Labor Phrases (12 December 1949 thru 12 January 1950) Topic D. Manjri Mafi and the Three New Life Plans (January thru May 1950) Topic E. Meher Baba’s Work at the Kumbha Mela (March–April 1950) Topic F. Final Months in North India: A New Plan, the Labor Phase, and the New Life Ghee Business (May–June 1950) |
| Monday morning, June 2, 10:00 a.m. – 12 noon | Session 3. The Shift to South India, the 100-Day Seclusion in Hyderabad, and the Meeting at Hyderabad | Topic A. The literature of the New Life: The diaries and the New Life circulars Topic B. The meeting at Mahabaleshwar and work with the masts and poor (October 1950 – January 1951) Topic C. The Great One-Hundred-Day Seclusion and the Move from Mahabaleshwar to Hyderabad (January – May 1951) Topic D. The meeting at Hyderabad and the enunciation of Manonash (June 1951) |
| Monday morning, June 16, 10:00 a.m. – 12 noon | Session 4. Manonash, the Emergence of “Life,” and Meher Baba’s Declaration of Avatarhood | Topic A. The Inauguration of Manonash: the cave in Hyderabad, the journey north, and the work in Aurangabad (October – December 1951) Topic B. The culmination of Manonash in Meherabad (December 1951 – 6 th February 1952) Topic C. The Three Free Lives: the complicated Free Life, the full Free Life, and the Fiery Free Life (21 st March 1952 thru April 1953) Topic D. Meher Baba’s declaration of Avatarhood in “The Highest of the High” (September 1953) and Hamirpur (February 1954) |

The course of study.

Since the New Life produced few texts of a “philosophical” variety, this seminar the study program will be historically grounded and segmented chronologically, with much attention given to “tales of the New Life” and their meaning. This approach organizes the schedule of sessions and topics, as listed above.

The focal texts.

Our principal source text will be Bhau Kalchuri’s *Meher Baba’s New Life* (2008). We will also devote attention to some of the significant publication from that period, particularly *The New Life Circulars* and some shorter pamphlets published by Ramjoo Abdulla and others. “The Song of the New Life” will receive special attention. Participants are encouraged to peruse other accounts as well, particularly the reminiscences of Eruch, Mani, Mehera, and other companions in *Tales of the New Life* (a new edition has just been published and is available); Vol. 2 of Bal Natsu’s *Glimpses of the God Man*; and the volume devoted to the New Life in Lord Meher.

Zoom:

Avatars Abode Trust is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: The New Life

Time: May 19, 2025 10:00 AM Brisbane

Every week on Mon, until Jun 16, 2025, 5 occurrences **(excluding June 9th: 4 sessions)**

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: <https://us06web.zoom.us/join/82629437374?pwd=9mkh007dYLEkvYnPMX637Y1hrflu0c.1>

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Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 826 2943 7374

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