

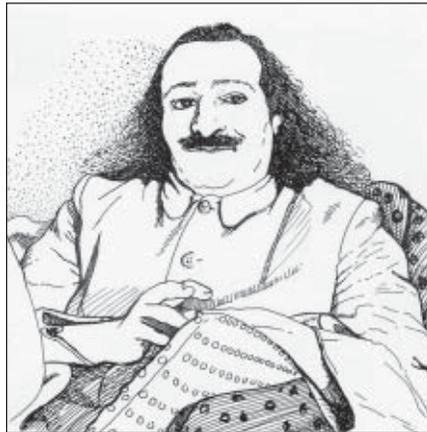
Stories from Sam Kerawalla

Sam Kerawalla was a telegraph operator in the merchant marine. He married Roshan Satha, who was his cousin and part of the extended family of Eruch Jessawalla. Sam had frequent contact with Baba, and is well-known for his extensive repertoire of Sufi stories, which he tells regularly at the Pilgrim Center. He and Roshan and their beloved dogs currently live down the hill from Baba's Samadhi.

A LITTLE VIGNETTE SHOWING BELOVED BABA'S SENSE OF HUMOR

I was in the merchant marine and on one or another ship all the time, so the only Sahavas programs I was able to attend were 1954 and 1958. At one of them, I think 1958, I recall this incident. In India, at 3 PM is the time for tea, and Beloved Baba had given the order that the entire congregation should have their tea. Somewhere between 300 and 500 people were to have tea, and a large amount had been made in huge aluminium kettles.

It so happened that I was standing midway between where Beloved Baba was seated on the stage and the musicians were seated, entertaining Baba. Baba loved two Indian musical forms very much: the kawwal and the ghazal. In the particular ghazal that the musicians were performing at this time, the musician sings a poetic line to the effect that "Lord, if you can not quench my thirst, don't declare yourself to be Ocean-hearted." The thirst is a metaphor for divine love, of course. Now the singer kept on repeating those two lines again and again, and Beloved Baba is saying to him, with gestures, "Come on, move forward in the song," but the singer kept repeating them over and over. I, too, was very eager to see how God would react to this problem. As the singer was carrying on like this, the person from the kitchen was passing with a now-full kettle of tea, taking it to the serving table. Baba snapped His fingers and everything stopped; the musicians stopped, the people sat up and there was pin-drop silence. "Two cups," Baba said, pointing to the singer, "He is very thirsty." The whole thing was over, and we all went for our tea.



A DOG STORY

The Perfect Master Bayazid used to teach his disciples through very simple parables. Once he said, "Before I was enlightened, I used to go to the masjid to offer prayers regularly, and on one occasion I had to pass through a very narrow lane and a dog came by."

Now, Muslims have an aversion to dogs. He drew his cloak close to him to avoid being touched by the dog, with great revulsion and contempt for the animal.

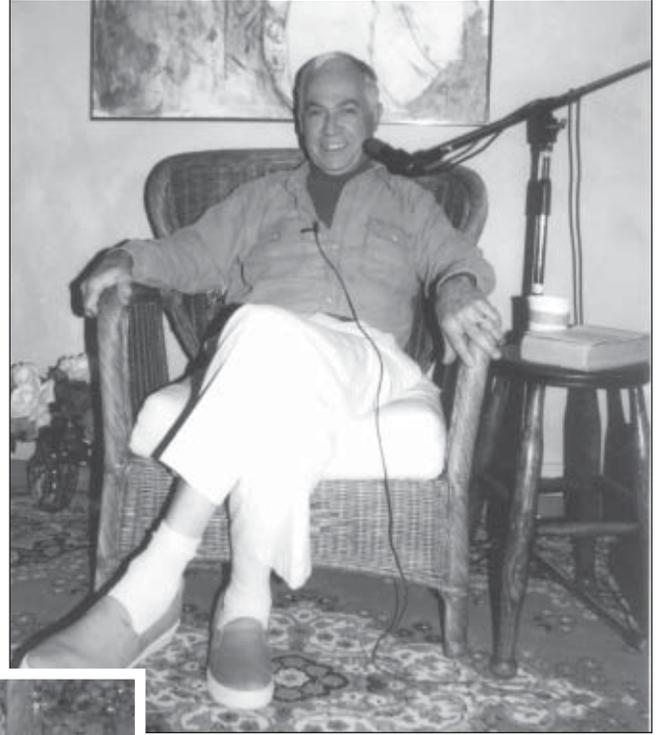
This particular dog, however, was no ordinary dog, but Khwaja Khishr in disguise. For those of you who don't know, Khwaja Khishr is a discarnate perfect being who can bestow God realization. In the Hindu tradition, he is known as Lord Dattatreya, the same being. Khwaja Khishr performs the function of giving the final push to the seventh plane of those souls who are worthy of realization, when there is no perfect master available to do the job. Baba said that Khwaja Khishr was responsible for the realization of Saint Francis, for example, though in some traditions it is said that Jesus himself came to Saint Francis. In either way of saying it, it was not an incarnate perfect master who gave Francis the final push.

But back to our story. The dog says to Bayazid, "Bayazid, as you can see, my fur is absolutely clean. Suppose if I were dirty and I rubbed against your robe and your robe had become dirty. All you would need to do is to go home and wash your robe and it would be all right. But you drew your cloak close to you with utter contempt and revulsion towards one creature. The same Allah created you and me. This act of contempt and revulsion has been entered in your book of records. Tell me, Bayazid, how are you going to clean that up?"

Bayazid began to cry. And he said, "Dog, permit me to follow you."

And the dog says to him, "I am sorry. You can not follow me, you are a respected member of the society, and I am shunned by society. People kick me and throw stones at me. Till such time as society abuses you, kicks you and

NEWSLETTER



Clockwise: Dave Miotke and Cathy Riley in concert, Tom Riley speaking at the center, Alan Talbot and Tom having a good laugh, Cathy entertaining the crowd at the center.

Photos by Brian Drygas and Matt Talbot.

Our First Urban Sahavas, with Tom and Cathy Riley

Tom and Cathy Riley were welcome guests at our inaugural Urban Sahavas last month. Tom's impressions of Russians, Indians, bikers and Australians, done with great accents, were delightful. He related his private interviews with Baba with great clarity.

Baba asked Tom, "What of My works have you read?"

Tom responded, "I think I've read almost everything You've written, Baba."

Then Baba asked, "Have you read *God Speaks*?" and Tom replied, "Yes, Baba. I've read it three times."

Baba asked, "Could you sum up in a nutshell for Me the essence of *God Speaks*?"

Tom's simple answer was, "The whole of creation exists so that the soul can find its way back to You."

Tom was going to say... "back to God" but then he knew that, for him, Baba was God, so he said..."back to You."

Baba seemed extremely pleased with his answer and while smiling at him and at the mandali present, made the sign of perfection with His right hand.

On another occasion, at the East-West gathering, the musicians went on and on... until Tom and some people near him were glancing at each other in a helplessly concerned way... and Tom said to himself with some exasperation, "For God's sake, that's enough!"

Baba instantly looked at Tom and then gestured to the musicians "You've done a wonderful job. Now it's time to take a break."

Cathy Riley, with her beautiful, melodic voice, sang a historical review of Baba music from the 70s to today. Some of the songs she originally sang with Bob Brown. They brought back wonderful memories for many of us.

Tom's last story described an encounter with a motorcycle "biker" in full gear at a talk by Darwin Shaw about 20 years ago. Just last year, someone heard this biker speak to a crowd of other bikers about how his life had been turned around by the messages he learned from that talk by Darwin. Tom's story brought forth resounding applause from the happy audience seated in chairs and on blankets on this bright spring day.

C A L E N D A R

Meetings are held Saturday nights at 7:30, doors open at 7 PM. Directions to the new center: From Hwy 80 in El Cerrito, take the Central exit east, toward the hills, cross San Pablo, go under the BART tracks to Richmond Ave. turn left, go a few blocks to Stockton (the first stop light), turn right at Stockton, go a couple of blocks, park on the street. The center is on the left side of the street, 6923 Stockton Ave. El Cerrito, CA.

Saturday, May 29 - No Meeting

Saturday, June 5 Annual General Meeting

This is an important event, as it is our opportunity to be involved in the democratic workings of the Meher Baba Center of Northern California. This is your chance to voice your opinions, vote on next year's budget, elect a new board of directors and volunteer for a sanskara-burning position. We'd like to see all members of the Baba community there!

Friday, June 11 - Saturday, June 26

Bhau Kalchuri's Bay Area visit. See schedule for events.

**Saturday, July 10 - El Cerrito Meher Baba Center
Silence Day Open House**

Our center will be open from 10 AM - 8 PM. Stop by to read, meditate, play games or just sit with Baba and others in an atmosphere of His Love and Divine Silence.

**Saturday, July 17 - Cindy Lowe and Friends in
Concert**

Cindy, a longtime Baba-lover and Bay Area resident now living in Mexico, will be in the area in July to work on her fifth album. At this concert, she will present some of her recent songs and classic Baba hits. She will be joined by some fantastic musicians. A good time will be had by all!

Saturday, July 24 - No meeting

Saturday, July 31 - Ron Greenstein in Concert

Our own Ron Greenstein has become a hit on the Sahavas circuit, but always gives his best performances at his home by the bay.

Sunday, August 8 - Women's Tea 3:00 - 5:30 PM

Join us for another round of sharing Baba in our daily lives. Please bring snacks to share.

FOR ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER CHANGES:

e-mail amba42@yahoo.com or write or call:

Paul Christy 28 Domingo Ave. Apt.A,
Berkeley, CA 94705 (510) 525-4779

Saturday, August 14 - No Meeting

**Saturday - Sunday, Aug 21-22 - Urban Sahavas
with Billy Goodrum**

Following the success of the Urban Sahavas this spring, we are continuing this new tradition with the Summer Urban Sahavas. Come hear the music by Billy Goodrum and company. More program details will follow.

**Sunday, Aug 29, 5:30 - 9:00 PM - Mani, Eruch
and Aloha: An Informal Evening of Reminiscing**

August is a month when many of Baba's beloved mandali were called back to His loving arms. Tonight let's come together to share and remember the many blessings we received from our contact with Mani, Eruch and Aloha. Please bring photos, videos or tapes to share. The evening will begin with a potluck dinner.

MEHER BABA, AVATAR OF THE AGE

The movie *Meher Baba, Avatar of the Age* is scheduled to premiere at the Palace of Fine Arts Theater, 3301 Lyon St., San Francisco, from July 2 to July 15 (2 weeks). There will be four shows daily: 4 PM, 5:40 PM, 7:30 PM and 9:10 PM.

This event will be advertised in various media to about 6 million people throughout the San Francisco Bay Area cities. This will be a two-week celebration announcing the advent of the Avatar of this Age. There will also be an exhibition of art work of Avatar Meher Baba by artists from all over the country.

Project Director Irwin Luck says, "When Meher Baba asked me in 1960 to spread His message of Love and Truth, I had no idea of what was to come and how it would transform my life and the lives of so many others over the years. Now, I am very happy to present to one and all the Avatar of the Age in this timeless movie. Meher Baba uses every means to uplift humanity. As Meher Baba stated, 'I created the media because I have a universal message to give to the world.'"

Local volunteers are needed to help with with this grand venture. Contact Irwin Luck, phone: 843-267-8524, e-mail: opfd1@yahoo.com.

DISCOURSE MEETINGS

Our circle for reading and discussion of Meher Baba's *Discourses* will meet at the center at 7:15 PM on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Call Janet White at (510) 843-4417 if you are interested.

Meher Baba Center of Northern California, Inc.

President, Brian Drygas, Vice President, Ron Greenstein, Secretary, Ed Munnich, Treasurer, Cheryl Longo

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Meherabad Young Adult Sahavas

All young adult Baba lovers between the ages of 19 to 30, from around the world, are invited to participate in the 2004 Young Adult Sahavas at Meherabad, India.

Date: 2nd August to 9th August 2004

What: The Sahavas is a gathering for young people to join together in their love for Meher Baba while in His home.

Program: Speakers, visits to Meherabad, music and art, discussions of Baba's life and teachings, service projects, sports and much more.

Information available on line or by mail:

<http://www.avatarmeherbaba.com/events/sahavas.php>

Meherabad Young Adult Sahavas

Avatar Meher Baba P.P.C. Trust

King's Road, Post Bag #31 Ahmednagar, M.S., 414001 INDIA

A DOG STORY, (continued)

throws stones at you, till that time you can not follow me. And this is the path to God."

In the Mahabharata, there are five pandavas, and at a certain point there is only one left alive. At this time, the fifth one, Yudhishti, is being followed everywhere by a dog. When the time comes for the fifth one to depart and enter the heavens, the angels came to receive him. Yudhishti said, "What about this dog that is following me?"

The angels said, "Dogs are not permitted. We are sorry."

"In that case, he said, you keep your heavens to yourselves. I will remain with my dog..." The dog was none other than Lord Krishna, and He revealed himself and said, "This was your final test."

Upasni Maharaj gave an entire discourse on domestic animals. He said that by taking care of them, both sides gain. The dogs take over our impressions and because of the service they render, they are given a further push on the path.



LOCAL MEETINGS

Lafayette - Sunday Afternoons

Monthly meeting at the home of Kirk and Marlene Allen. Please call to confirm. (925)-284-4066.

Los Gatos - Saturday Evenings - 8:00 PM

Arti, singing and readings at the home of Clint and Sharon Snyder. Call them at (408) 395-6865, or Betty Lowman at (650) 323-1900.

Petaluma - Sunday Mornings - 11:00 AM

Arti, readings and fellowship. Contact Hermann or Jeanette Loew at (707) 778-1195. Please call ahead.

Sacramento - Sunday Mornings - 11:00 AM

Discourse readings and occasional gatherings. Contact Mike and Jean Ross, (916) 359-2954. Introductory meetings listed on our web page: www.premsay.com/MeherBaba

Check out our Web Site:

www.MeherBabaMeherBaba.org

See program information and much more.

THE TRUST

All who wish to share in the commitment laid down by Meher Baba through the Trust should contact Jack Mormon, P.O. Box 70383, Richmond, CA 94807-0383.

To receive e-mail updates from the Center, send an e-mail to Fred White: faledw@aol.com

MEHER BABA INFORMATION

For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail MeherBabal@aol.com, or write to P.O. Box 1101, Berkeley, CA 94701. See our online catalog of books and other materials at www.MeherBabalInformation.org.

MEHER BABA CENTER

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El Cerrito, California 94530
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