
PUKAR

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36:18

PILGRIM 1: Eruch will you tell us the story of Pukar?

ERUCH: What story you want?

PILGRIM 1: How he came to Baba?

PILGRIM 2: Pukar is the one in the movie when Baba is walking and He sits on him.

ERUCH: Yeah on his back.

PILGRIM 2: On his back.

ERUCH: Makes him a sort of a stool for Him.

PILGRIM 2: Yes, yes.

ERUCH: After the accident what happened He would go out for little strolls for His rehabilitation you may call it. Yeah. So He's taken to the parks. Even in Guruprasad which has a long approach road and there He would have strolls and all that. And in the beginning naturally it. A distance you see of some yards naturally would.

PILGRIM 1: Get tired.

ERUCH: Make Him feel tired. So He needs to rest you see. Formerly we used to carry chair there behind Him and He didn't like that idea. And He looks at Pukar and says, "Well you loved Ram you see." And He considers himself to be the devotee of

Ram. Aspired for being the Hanuman of Ram, Pukar. who was the foremost disciple of Ram. So Baba says, "Well you be my Hanuman and give me the seat." So Pukar had a big body and all that and make him be on his fours and Baba would sit on his back. And just rest for a while and then again like that. Yeah he's that.

PILGRIM 1: But originally he was a terrorist?

ERUCH: But originally what happened is that he was at the time of the Britishers one of the much wanted persons. Because he used to play havoc you see and incite people. Because they were all freedom fighters. Freedom for India. Naturally the Britishers could not tolerate such sort of propaganda or such inciting speeches and all that so they were tramped and put into prison. And they didn't realise that in the beginning. Then after they had filled in some terms they thought it best to go underground when they get out of it. So he was the one of them who went underground and became a revolutionary. And not only that, but it seems that he became the leader of revolutionaries. The commander as he was known as.

And the word Pukar means 'the call'. And he had that roar of a lion when he would stand before the public. That's Pukar. Calling out. Like that. So that's why he's nicknamed as Pukar. Because he had that call to attention all the people you see and

whatever he would say that they would naturally listen. And their hearts would be stirred. Stirred with what? Feelings against the Britishers [Eruch laughs]. So that they be out you see out of the country. That's how it was.

So it went on for years together and so often he would be in prison and well he had to deal with weapons and he had to deal with many things which seemed to be undesirable for the government at that time.

So in 1947. Is it true? Yeah it is '47 yeah. And in 1949 Baba launched the New Life. So between the Independence, era of Independence that India had just attained to and New Life there was a gap of about a year and a half or two years. A year and a half. And because India is now independent Pukar you know Pukar is famous. Because of his activities. Revolutionary activities. No longer he has any fear of being caught. Of being ill-treated by the government and all that sort of thing. Of being imprisoned and all. So he's a free man. Not only that he deserves a pension from the government. Yeah and he's in his full glory now. And people obeyed him. He became the leader of the people. He dabbled into politics and got. Became a leader of the public. The sector of public.

So while he is that, all of a sudden it seems that news comes to his ears that there is some person from Bombay side who's called Meher Baba and He professes to be God in human form. People are what do you call? Well, duped into believing. That's how he felt. They are being duped by Him and they are made to believe that He is a deity. Which he didn't like. He being a leader and he felt that there is another

potential leader that is on the rise. So well if he's a leader, well and good, but then we don't mind but then the one. He cannot tolerate the leader to be God Himself. Calling Himself God and all that.

So what had happened was that in 1954 you will notice that around the records it is in 1954 for the first time Baba introduced Himself to be the Ancient One. God in human form, the Avatar of the time. But here is 1949, '48-'49 and already this has started percolating. Because those who were close ones, those who lived with Him they. He would pass such hints and He's the one. Of course it had not gone in the public yet but those who lived with Him and those, the families of those who lived with Him, they began to become aware of it. And so they would speak to their friends and those friends would speak to their acquaintances and the acquaintances would speak to the public and so that's how it went out. Before He even introduced Himself as the Avatar. He yeah. It is right from the very beginning it was. From the early '30's. '20's even.

PILGRIM 1: [inaudible]

ERUCH: Yeah it was there. So that's how it was. Because in 1930 my mother himself told me that He's Zoroaster come again. So I said, "So what if He's Zoroaster? What have I to do with it?" [pilgrims laughing]. It's like that yeah. So Pukar was very much infuriated to hear this.

These are just whispers coming to him. So he resolves to find out to denounce Him. And if it leads him to confront Him and manhandle Him he would do it. And he didn't care even to take His life. Because such a thing he could not tolerate that innocent people are being duped like this.

Yeah it's no good for such persons to live here. Because it's his country now. So he's after Meher Baba. So how did he happen to be after Meher Baba is that there was another person by name Babadas whose real name was Dharam. Dharmare. From Nagpur he was. He was a political canvasser. You know these political leaders who come and have their. They want to be elected and all that so they need canvasses isn't it? So he was the canvasser at the time of the elections and all that. So he used to work that way and earn his livelihood. When Baba gave darshan in Nagpur at our place, at my parents' house, there he met Baba for the first time, this Dharmare. And he changed his routine of life and all that and he dedicated himself to the service of Baba.

Being a canvasser he could work much in the public. You know they have the art to impress upon their own leader and all that and so forth. So here in his heart of hearts he felt that here is the real One and why shouldn't I go out to the public and inform the public that He is the one. So he used to go out like that and do that. Through his activities Pukar heard the whispers. And when he heard the whispers then he wanted to contact this person because they told him so and so is speaking there in his own district. So he went and confronted him. So he said, "Yeah He is that." He says, "He is that? How do you say that He is that?" He says, "Well because He says so." "Do you mean to say that because He says so, you tell public like that and mislead them?" Well he was very arrogant with Babadas and all that. So he says, "If you want to see Him personally then you won't say such things." That's what Babadas said to him. He says, "How am I to see?" He says, "No, He cannot be seen." Because now it is

now 1949, past. Baba's already set out in New Life. He says, "You can't see Him. Now He's in His New Life and He's now leading a life of helplessness and hopelessness." "Helplessness and hopelessness for God who calls Himself the Avatar of the time and all? What is this all?" So then Babadas of course was with a ready reply, "Didn't Ram go out in exile?" Says, "Yeah." And he was Ram's bhakta [foreign] this Pukar. So he said, "Yeah he did go out." "Then? Why didn't you tell Ram, why did he go out like that begging and all that sort of thing?" It's like that. It's their way of working and so forth.

Says, "But is there no opportunity for me to see?" He says, "Yeah there is one remote possibility but very soon there will be the greatest Kumbh Mela." Kumbh Mela is such an occasion. It is traditionally known that once in 12 years a mass congregation. It's a massive thing of millions of people congregating at a place on the banks of the river Ganges. Where the rivers are. The confluence is and so. And it is traditionally believed that once in 12 years if you happen to go there and join that mass of people not only your. It is said, it is believed like that that well if you were to bathe on a certain day your sins are all wiped off and you come out. It's like baptism. you follow?

So there is that tradition there. But how the tradition started was this that never has there been an occasion when in such mass gathering there is the absence of the great one. So whether He be the Perfect One or the Ancient One, it matters little. Because His presence is such that it's the presence of God Himself. So that's the reason why people amass there. And masses go there. Maybe they might come across Him yeah. It's just taking a chance. And if they don't

come across Him well He may have had a dip in the river, the river is sanctified. If we have a dip in that river our sins will be also washed away, you follow? That's how it's all there. With permutations and combinations you have this feeling. All rests on this imagination as we were talking the other day. It's a happy imagination.

So Babadas took advantage of that and said, "Well there's a remote possibility but I should say that well if you want to have a look at Him and see Him from a distance it is possible." "But how is it possible? How can it be possible?" Well he says, "At the time of Kumbh Mela." You know when there is a mass gathering of millions of people [clock chimes] and if you want to pinpoint a certain person you can't be in that crowd there. All that you have to stand out from the crowd. So he says, "If you cross the river and stand out on the other bank then maybe there's a possibility of having a view of Him." Otherwise how is it possible? You follow what I'm saying? His logic is true. It's quite logical.

So he says, "Means you mean to say that on the bank of the river He'll be there?" He says, "Yeah there's a possibility." In the meantime what had happened is that Babadas came to know that. You know Shatrugan Kumar? Yeah. In New Life we started going from one place to another, and when we went we stationed at his farm. Which is known now. At that time it was known as Manjari Maafi. But then it is now officially recorded and known as Meher Maafi. It's named after Meher Baba. So by the government. So he came in contact and he came to know through Shatrugana that Shatrugana has made arrangement at a certain, what do you call? Terrace that has been taken by his.

Was owned by his friend, Shatrugana's friend. And Baba and the women and the mandali will be on that terrace to view this whole occasion, instead of being inside the crowd. So he tried to get the address. Babadas got the address there and immediately went and informed Pukar about this. Because it's near to that district this place Rishikesh, Haridwar. It was Haridwar.

So says. Pukar said, "Yes, I'm sure to come." So he says, "You have to cross the river and go on the other bank and see there." And then Pukar told him that he might be appearing there on the terrace there and from a distance you can see Him if you want to. That is the only possibility." He said, "Never mind I will hazard that." So that's how for the first time he had a view of Baba from that distance. It's a long distance and Ganges river is not a small river or a rivulet as you call it. But it's a huge thing. And but from there he actually saw Him as a dazzling figure there. Yeah. So he says. Babadas. No he tells Babadas. He asks Babadas. Babadas was there he says, "Is that the person there in that white that is loose standing there?" He says, "Yeah that's the robe of the New Life." That kafni [foreign] as it is called. "Yeah, He's the One." And he looks at Him and looks at Him. And somehow or the other his thought felt that there is something in this man. Because thus far he could accept Him. There is something in the man.

And then he tells Babadas. That was the first glimpse of Pukar's of Baba. So then he tells Babadas, "Will it be possible whenever the opportunity is afforded to us is it possible for us to have a close darshan of Him or interview or anything?" He says, "No interview. In New Life He doesn't see anybody or anything. It's not possible." He

didn't know that Baba would make it possible exactly after a year. Because if you'll know, if you'll go through the records you will find that for one day He stepped into Old Life. On 16th of October 1950.

PILGRIM 1: In Mahabaleshwar.

ERUCH: In Mahabaleshwar. So well Babadas naturally was at that time in the circle so he came to know about that and he informed Pukar and then Pukar. There were many other colleagues of his who were also underground workers. Keshav Nigam was a prisoner. You know Keshav Nigam?

PILGRIM 1: I can show you the story.

ERUCH: Yeah where is it?

PILGRIM 1: Is it not in this one?

ERUCH: Ah yeah in "The Glow". Yeah that is there. And there was another MLA at the time. Member of the Legislative Assembly for long many years. His name was Rawat. Shripad Sahib. So he was there also. So they were the invitees at that time. So he inquired and they were all colleagues you see in prison at the time you see. They knew. They were followers of Baba. They had heard of Baba and they accepted Him. Whereas Pukar is yet to accept Baba. He has not accepted Him. But he has seen Him from a distance. So what happened is this now. Somehow or other Pukar tries to wangle his way into the assembly for that one day and get his admission there. So through these people who very close to Baba, had come close to Baba. Not they were not very close but they were the new ones you see. Just like yeah the Westerners at the time you see and their eagerness

and their enthusiasm. And Baba is slave to their love you see it's like that. So although Baba didn't want any outsiders or anything but they had said so Baba said, "Alright let him come. Bring him there with you." That's how he got into that stable at that time.

And that meeting for one day He stepped for a few hours in New Life. From New Life to Old Life in the stable of Aga Khan's place there. It's known as Aga Khan's stable there in Mahabaleshwar. It was known. Now. It had been given the name of Florence Hall. Now somebody, some religious organisation has taken it. I don't know how many years have passed by. So in this stable we are all assembled there on that appointed day on 16th October. And of course those New Life companions are with Baba. And Baba is there. Baba has not come and the stable is now. It's not a small thing. Aga Khan is a very well-known figure if you have heard of his name. Yeah. It's a dynasty you see. They are the heads of millions of people, followers. They have a following, religious following. He's a religious head, Aga Khan. And his son and his son's son and all, they are on the throne you may call it.

So Baba had assembled. Invitees were there on their appointed time and Baba walks inside the stable. And it had a gate like this. This corrugated sheet like thing. Huge gate is there. But a very shabby looking. It's all in a dilapidated condition. With Him I don't know why being the Ancient One He seems to be attached to dilapidated things you see [general laughter]. It seems so to me. Huh pardon?

MANI: Lucky for us.

ERUCH: Yeah it is lucky yeah it's good yeah. So we are all there squatting on the earth. There's a stable means the earth of course yeah. You can't have any marble paved things you see or anything of this sort. So we are all there and rickety chair is put for Him in a corner at the far end of the stable. And He walks in with us. I was there and others 2 or 3 companions of New Life are there. All the companions are there. The 21. Twenty of them that were there. And we walk in and Baba walks in with a few of us. And we lead Him to the chair and He sits down. And doesn't sit down. He enters and all of a sudden they were all seated. They had come few minutes before by half an hour or fifteen minutes before and they all stand up. So Baba just puts. Tells them to sit down. And the injunction was nobody should bow down. Just they can fold their hands. So they folded their hands when they stood up and Baba told them to sit down. And He takes the seat there.

When He takes His seat there He turns to me and says. Asks me, "Have they all come?" I can't count on who were there and all that. So I look at them and I see the hall full and I said, "Yeah all have come because the time is up." Because they knew about the punctuality and all that. So I said, "Yes, they have come." "Then shut the gate." So He calls one of the other companions by name Vishnu. He remembered Vishnu this morning. You remembered no Vinoo? So he Vishnu was there. So Vishnu is there. So He signals to Vishnu, "Shut the gate now." So poor Vishnu from nearby the [inaudible]. It's a long distance. Although it's. The stable is a big one. Long. So he walks the distance and he goes to shut the gate. The two gates are to be brought together to lock them. And mind you there is no such thing as

window or anything on that stable you see. We are all like horses stabled there you know.

There is of course between the roof and the wall there is that little ventilation that's all. Just an opening, a gap. That was the only ventilation. And that was the thing through which the light filtered in. So while he's shutting the gate, to his notice comes Gustadji who is an old companion of Baba. And being old of age and he needs to pee many times you see. Frequently, frequently. So he was coming with his cord you know tying and all and walking and he's coming you know. So just respect but naturally he was our New Life companion, Baba's very old companion and he was with Baba from the time of Sai Baba and Upasani Maharaj. It's a matter of respect. We don't just do that you see immediately shut the gate when Gustadji is kept out like that for such an important meeting here Baba has stepped into Old Life for one day from New Life. Although Gustadji was an old, New Life companion also. So he waits for him. So while he's waiting there his back is turned to look at Gustadji and he's signalling to him to come soon. In the meantime three persons dashed inside the stable. They had heard they had seen people coming you know flocking to Mahabaleshwar and they were all from different parts of India. Somebody had come from Pakistan, somebody from Bombay and somebody there. All UP and other places. And Mahabaleshwar is a place small place. It's a small hill station. Hilly place.

MANI: They were gate crashing?

ERUCH: Yeah. They came inside. They just rushed inside and they had heard that Meher Baba is there. They had heard His

name before. Because Baba would be visiting Mahabaleshwar in the Old Life. So they had heard and they said, "It's a good opportunity Meher Baba has come," So they rushed inside and they went straight to the chair unawares I was taken up because I was there by His side, Baba's side. I should know better that they should not bow down. But before I could do anything they fell at His feet all three of them together. So Baba immediately gets up from His chair and bows down to them. They are embarrassed and they bow down again. And Baba again bows down and this goes on for two three times. Then I get back my senses. It happened within a minute you may call it. So I catch hold of them I said, "What are you doing?" I just said loudly a bit. It was rudeness on my part. I caught hold of them I said, "What are you trying to do? Don't you know that He doesn't want you to bow down?" Of course they didn't know. He says, "We didn't know." And all. Baba says, "Don't worry," And He caressed their cheeks and petted them and all that embraced them and all that. "Now you have met me you go." So they were happy and they left. Because they got the physical touch of Baba, the contact and all they were happy.

So then of course when they left, Vishnu locked the door. Vishnu comes close to Baba. And Pukar is seeing all this. Pukar is seeing this. Pukar, who is an observer now in the company of all the followers of Meher Baba. He's the only one stranger there. So he views all this. And he says, "What sort of a man He is that a person bows down to Him and He returns it with. Takes such great pains and He goes down on the floor, on the ground and bows down and all that?" And now these are the things that come later on to our notice because he narrates this to me. So but his

mind is saying at that time I have to depict that. So he is. His mind says that, "Well I have been with leaders, I am myself a leader and I don't mind anybody paying me great respect you see. I on the contrary feel happy and my day is a good day when somebody does that. [pilgrims laughing]. And I have seen many political leaders all over the places and they feel happy about being garlanded and this and that and here is somebody. Somebody, something we must find out with Him." So this is how it has started playing upon his mind the situation.

But when Vishnu came close to Baba and Baba looks at him and says, "You are in the New Life. You were isn't it? Yesterday. We have stepped into Old Life today. But you know the rules. I told you to obey implicitly. I told you to shut the gate and why did you not shut the gate? In the meantime these people came in. What stopped you? What prevented you from shutting the gate?" So he naturally he innocently tells Baba, "Baba, Gustadji was coming and I saw him coming and so I was trying to call him soon to the place." "Gustadji? What has Gustadji to do with my order? I had ordered you to do it. Even if you had seen God coming so what has that to do with my order to you? Why did you wait?" And then He turns to the people and He says, "How often I have been driving home to you all that I want you to obey me. Nobody seems to pay any." Means He's lamenting now on His own. As if He. A soliloquy you may call it.

PILGRIM 1: Soliloquy.

ERUCH: Yeah. And I am the interpreter. So He says, "Nobody pays heed to what I mean by obedience and all that." And then He says, "Even if I were to tell you to give

me a slap you should do it. Come here. Give me a slap now." So that person gets up with all this now naturally. So he goes and just does this. Baba again says, "This is the way to obey me? Is this the slap? If you were to give a slap to somebody do you pat him on the cheek? Is this the way to obey me?" All this Pukar is seeing all this, mind you. We did not know that all this drama He had called a meeting a very important meeting. He is stepping into Old Life for one, few hours. From His New Life that He would never return to Old Life and He has done all this. Why should He do all this sort of? And it seemed as if but it is so logical that Baba is not emphasising the fact on obedience and all that. But drama behind this. Behind the stage is something different. Which we came to know later on.

So what happened is that He is lamenting the fact that nobody seems to pay heed to my injunction to obey me implicitly. So He says He is disgusted with that man. He called somebody, "You come and give me a slap." So the person comes and gives like that. "Ha," Baba says, "Is this the slap that a person gives to another one? Is this the way that you'll do it? Nobody seems to pay heed anything. You come and give me." And then He calls out one Minoo Kharas there from Pakistan. And now this is the third time now he should do something and Minoo Kharas those who know him know, yeah what a fanatic he is and obedient. He gave such a tight slap to Baba that turned His head like that. I saw it. What a thunderous slap that was. And Baba says, "This is what I mean by obedience to you'll. This is obedience." And Baba patted him and says, "Yeah I'm very happy and pleased with you. Go and sit down."

MANI: Glad the women weren't there. [pilgrims laughing].

ERUCH: So what had happened is now all this is being witnessed by Pukar. And his mind is in a turmoil. He says, "What a leader He is. We give them orders and they carry them out but nobody has taken upon. No leader has taken upon Himself to give an example of obedience. And here He is being slapped one after the other. And He's never satisfied till the real slap is there." And that changed his heart immediately. He got up there the giant of man, took all his clothes out including his dhoti and everything naked, stark naked. A person you know like a giant and just falls at the feet of Baba. He says.

MANI: [Foreign]

ERUCH: [Foreign] actually it is yeah everything [pilgrims laughing]. Yeah. Then he tells [crosstalk]. But there you know in Northern India we all. Most Indians they have that langoti [foreign] always. That is there. What do you call that? What do you call it? Is there any English word for that langoti?

PILGRIM 3: Loin cloth.

PILGRIM 4: Loin cloth is the closest

ERUCH: No, no loin cloth is like a lungi [foreign] or something like that.

PILGRIM 5: G-string.

ERUCH: Huh? What do you call it?

PILGRIM 3: G string.

ERUCH: Cheese?

PILGRIM 3: G string.

ERUCH: G string oh I see.

MANI: That's what the Sadhus wear.

ERUCH: Yeah one string and a piece of cloth. Just a little strip of cloth. That it. All Indians have that you see. So there he was there. So Baba looks at him He says, "What is this?" So he says, "Body, possessions, mind everything I surrender." Baba says, "I'm happy to hear from you but you just wear the clothes back [pilgrims laughing]. This is my order. Wear them." So he wears them. And he sits quietly and from that day on the impact was so great on him that he instead of being after his life now he has dedicated his life to Baba. That's the story.

And soon after that then of course he was on the line at the time. He went from place to place in the district telling about Baba, telling about His love, telling about Him being the Ancient One and all that sort of thing. Yeah. He did much work.

PILGRIM 1: But formerly he had even planned to assassinate Him?

ERUCH: Assassinate Him yeah.

MANI: Even when he was not well and his legs had edema and they were swollen like that and you know we would advise him he said, "No." He just went on.

ERUCH: Yeah. Who Pukar? Yeah yeah yeah Pukar would go. He had a heart trouble also because of his huge fatty structure.

PILGRIM 5: You know when he came to Maine it was wonderful. [inaudible] People were telling you know when he

came to Maine. Pukar was invited to Maine to that mela [foreign]. I don't know when it was.

PILGRIM 6: '75

PILGRIM 5: '75? And then he came toward Myrtle Beach. He came down to Myrtle Beach. But people were saying was such an experience taking Pukar down you know the highway down from Maine to Myrtle Beach because in America you know we're not used to sadhus and all. So he would stop at these truck stops. I don't know if that means anything to you but just you know the truckers are sitting down with their cup of coffee and nobody said 'boo' to anybody. There's a waitress you know yelling 5 you know [inaudible]. So Pukar would come in [inaudible] He would go and embrace all the truckers [pilgrims laughing].

What was so interesting is that that the love was genuine you know that people would be taken aback but if it were anybody else they would just you know slap them or something like that.

MANI: Even non Baba lovers he was embracing?

PILGRIM 5: Yeah.

PILGRIM 1: Strangers [crosstalk].

PILGRIM 5: Scary no nonsense people.

ERUCH: So now what happens is that it's not just for that time that this Baba set us an example of obedience for whenever He commanded or gave an order or anything. Of course it was there and what had happened was that at that time the meeting dispersed after you know the

deliberations were over. He had given that little message which is you know somebody has made it that it's the Sermon on the Mount and all that sort of thing. You know how it is at Mahableshtar.

DON: Baba's sermon, yes.

ERUCH: Yes Baba's sermon. And mount because Mahableshtar is a mount [general laughter]. So it became Sermon on the Mount in this Advent and all that. It's a very beautiful message no doubt. So all this is there. And of course we again started on our New Life. This is our New Life. We knew it and that's the end of our Old Life. People and all that nothing. We had no contact, nothing of that sort. But that episode served us best you see when later on after He dropped His body and you all started coming over here, and in the early years when you'll come you'll were not after what Meher Baba has said or hear whatever His discourses or what did "God Speaks" say. He said it in "God Speaks" or anything of that sort. They were after every details of His personal life and what happened and this and that and New Life and Old Life and this. All was there.

And in the midst of the topic and talks one day it so happened that I described as to. What happened? How did He come from New Life to this place again? So I described then what happened a night prior to that. And in that night you'll know the story about the bird and how Baba wanted us to beat Him with our shoes and

spit upon Him and all that. That story is famous there. So they would ask me the question. Says, "How did you feel at the time? Did you all? Didn't you'll feel anything to spit on Him and to shoe Him like that?" And at the time we had never given a thought to it you see. And I said, "No we never felt anything." "Never felt anything?" So I said, "No."

Then all of a sudden it struck me why we didn't feel anything. Because the lesson that He had taught us of implicit obedience on that day in New Life itself yeah. He wanted it so He had it. Yeah. Who are we to question Him and why we should do it? On the contrary we felt happy for having shoed Him because He felt happy and relieved because of His well cruelty to the bird. He said, "Ah now I am relieved of the burden. Now to top it all spit on me." And then we spat on Him and He says, "Now I'm very happy." And because He was happy we were happy that's all. And people when we narrate them they say, "What sort of people you all were to be happy like that." You see this is what I'm saying that what is the difference you see. Anything that gives Him happiness. Anything that what do you call? Caters to His pleasure is a pleasure to us. It's our happiness. That's all.