

Chapter 16

The Sun Shines upon Suryanarayan's Vadi

On 25 August 1951 (Shravan *vad* 9, V.S. 2007), Swamishri, Mota Swami (Yagnapriya Swami), Pramukh Swami, and other sadhus along with Daji Bapu boarded the Gujarat Mail train from Vadodara station and arrived in Mumbai the following morning, Sunday 26 August. At Dadar Station, the devotees from the suburbs, and at Central Station, the devotees from the city center welcomed Swamishri with flower garlands. The sadhus' accommodations had been arranged in the Suryanarayan Vadi. On the same day, Swamishri visited Sion Hospital to meet a devotee who had been admitted there.

On the following day, Pramukh Swami began a *parayan* on the *Satsangijivan* in his sweet voice. Swamishri expounded on the Swamini Vato in his captivating style. His

sermons overflowed with incontrovertible experience and boundless love for all humanity.

Explaining Vachanamrut Gadhada II 28, Swamishri said, “Maharaj says that I am a devotee of the devotee of God, and this is my greatest virtue. In this, Maharaj has made all other virtues secondary and declared devotion to the devotee of God to be the greatest virtue. Without that virtue, there is no value to any other virtue. See, this was the greatest virtue in Shastriji Maharaj. That is why his greatness dazzled the world. He maintained the singular resolution to offer devotion to God's preeminent devotee, Mul Aksharmurti Gunatitanand Swami, together with God—that is, to become Aksharrup and worship Purushottam. He nurtured this principle in every way. For this purpose, he strove tirelessly and constructed grand mandirs. He spread their glory around the world. This Vachanamrut is a lifeline.”

From Swamishri's remarks, it appeared that Swamishri had a special affinity for this

particular Vachanamrut. As described, he had become a devotee of the devotee of God. He continued to serve everyone with a sentiment of humble service coupled with an understanding of their greatness.

Then Swamishri read Vachanamrut Gadhada II 46 and said, “According to this ‘death-line’ Vachanamrut, whenever an aversion arises in one’s heart towards God or his Sant, that devotee should be known to have fallen from *ekantik dharma*. To fall from *ekantik dharma* is true death for *ekantik bhaktas*. To perceive flaws in God and his devotee is a greater sin than committing the five grave sins. Thus, one should do as much *seva* as one can, but one should never do *aseva*, or perceive flaws in God and his devotee.”

Swamishri had recited and explained these two Vachanamruts countless times, strongly emphasizing the above two points. He would insist that devotees act accordingly.

Swamishri continued, “Gunatitanand Swami used to tell everyone, ‘Eat the mandir’s food,

but do satsang,' because by doing satsang, one attains spiritual discernment. One can recognize the difference between right and wrong, true (*sat*) and false (*asat*). Then one can renounce the false and associate with the true. The true (*sat*) being *atma*, Paramatma, the holy Scriptures, and the Satpurush. First, one must recognize the Satpurush. He says what he thinks, and he does what he says. By his mere darshan one's worldly desires are extinguished. From him, one hears only talks of God, not talks of this world. He is pure of heart, omniscient, and free of all flaws. One should hear the holy Scriptures from his mouth; only then can one realize one's *atma* and attain Paramatma.

“Mumbai is a large city. No one is at peace. It is ‘Anxiety City.’ Swamishri used to say and explain: ‘May I meet a hundred enemies, but let me not meet a single city-dweller.’ If one comes across 100 enemies, they would end us in the blink of an eye and with a single stroke. They would remove us from the travails of this

world. But if one meets a single city-dweller, he would spread countless sense pleasures in front of us. Offering all kinds of indulgences—he would show us dramas and films and feed us countless types of delicacies, and our senses would go berserk. Instead of becoming liberated from the clutches of *maya*, one would be drowned neck-deep in *maya*. Gunatitanand Swami had also said that the association of a large city is a cause of bondage. Maharaj also preferred to stay in the seclusion of the forests rather than amidst the crowds in populated areas.”

After Swamishri finished delivering his discourses, Mota Swami would narrate incidents about Shriji Maharaj and Shastriji Maharaj and share his relevant experiences. His words were an inspiration to all, tempered as they were by a lifetime of experience and absolute loyalty, sacrifice, and resolute association with Shastriji Maharaj.

Every day, Swamishri would visit the homes of different devotees and have meals at their

place. At the insistence of Morarka Sheth, on 5 September 1951 (Bhadharva *sud* 4, V.S. 2007), Swamishri went to stay at his bungalow. Although his bungalow was quite far from the city, the local devotees came every day to benefit from Swamishri's company. The devotees of Mumbai, including Chhaganbhai, Bhagwandas Sheth, Nanubhai, Mahitpatbhai, Harshadbhai and the other Dave brothers, Jesangbhai, Manibhai Barot, Sorabji Mistry, and other devotees had made the most of the opportunity of the darshan, association, and service to Swamishri. Everyone felt that it was as if Shastriji Maharaj was granting them divine bliss!