

Chapter 11

Jogi's 'Wish Yoga'

The construction of the Gondal mandir and adjacent accommodations were progressing under the supervision of Mota Akshar Swami. Aksharswarup Swami was the *kothari*, and Hakabhai managed the mandir accounts.

All the sadhus and devotees would go for their daily bath in the Gondali River. In those days, there were no steps leading to the river. As Hakabhai was unaccustomed to taking a cold bath, Yogi Maharaj would wake up early each morning, light a fire under the tamarind tree near the stables, and heat water in a metal container for Hakabhai's bath. Yogi Maharaj bore profound reverence for such devotees who were associated with Shastriji Maharaj and served according to his command.

Only seven or eight sadhus resided in the mandir in those days, so each sadhu had multiple responsibilities. Every morning, Yogi

Maharaj would wake up early and sing *prabhatiya*. After that, he would attend *mangala arti* and then perform the *mahapuja* in Akshar Deri. Then, he would begin to make lunch. After singing *thal* and offering food to Thakorji, Yogi Maharaj would feed all the sadhus and devotees in the mandir. Then he would sit outside and wait to see if any visitors had arrived in Gondal on the afternoon train. If any visitors had come, Yogi Maharaj would first feed them, and only then would he eat. Then, he would clean all the utensils and engage in various other service activities around the mandir. In the evening, he would prepare food and offer it to Thakorji. After *sandhya arti*, Yogi Maharaj would stand on one leg before Thakorji's *murti* and turn fifty-one *malas* while chanting the Swaminarayan mantra. After this, he would loudly sing *dhun* while clapping in rhythm.

Hearing the sound of his *dhun*, the handful of devotees in the mandir would join him. While chanting the *dhun*, Yogi Maharaj would

take the names of devotees from villages all over Gujarat and pray for their peace and prosperity.

Every day, Yogi Maharaj would pray for the fulfillment of three wishes: 1) That Satsang may spread throughout the entire universe, 2) that the number of sadhus increases, and 3) that piles of rupees come to the mandir so that the construction work can be completed.

Every day Hakabhai witnessed Yogi Maharaj praying for these wishes. Seeing this thin, slightly dark-skinned sadhu immersed in *dhun* with a countenance resplendent with the light of Brahman, Hakabhai would wonder how possible these piles of rupees could be when, in his time writing the mandir accounts, he had never seen more than half a rupee on the mandir's balance sheet? Of course, Hakabhai's doubts stemmed from his ignorance of the divine power of Yogi Maharaj's wishes.

Once, when Shastriji Maharaj was visiting Gondal, he called Hakabhai to him and inquired about his welfare. Then, Shastriji

Maharaj explained Yogi Maharaj’s glory, saying, “Hakabhai! You are extremely fortunate to have attained the opportunity to serve in Akshar Deri and stay in close association with a sadhu like Jogi. Make sure you please Jogi.”

Hakabhai responded, “Bapa, it is by your grace that I can offer this service. However, I do have a couple of questions.”

Shastriji Maharaj said “Ask.”

Hakabhai said, “Bapa, every evening after *arti*, this Jogi Swami prays that Satsang may spread through the entire universe. But from the entire town of Gondal, two blacksmith devotees, Keshavji Luhar and Naranbhai Luhar, come to Akshar Deri every evening to light a *diva*. A third person is Viramjibhai, and a fourth person to visit Gondal mandir daily would be Mavji Luhar. But other than these four, you cannot find a fifth devotee in the mandir. And in case someone else does come, they would be from out of town. In this situation, how can one conceive of Satsang spreading throughout the universe?”

Hakabhai continued, “Moreover, the second wish he always prays for is that the number of sadhus may increase. But of the seven or eight sadhus who serve here, two or three are talking about going to central Gujarat with you. Furthermore, since I write the mandir accounts, I know that there is no money on the balance sheet. So how do we get to piles of rupees from that?”

Listening to his rant, Shastriji Maharaj began to laugh. What could the *jīva* understand about the power of Yogi Maharaj's resolutions? Shastriji Maharaj said, “Hakabhai! This Jogi is a *jogi* from eternity. He is a *sant* whose every word comes true. Whatever he wishes and prays for, Swami-Shriji must fulfill; such is his divine form. One day, you will witness the fulfillment of these wishes with your own eyes.” With these words, Shastriji Maharaj blessed Hakabhai.

Then, Shastriji Maharaj inspected the mandir and offered necessary guidance.

Hakabhai rejoined his *seva* thinking about this Jogi's "Wish Yoga."