

Chapter 19

Teaching Children Spirituality

From Gondal, Swamishri traveled to Karamsad, where he stayed at the old *hari mandir*. The elder Narsinhbhai Bhagat brought a boy to Swamishri. Seeing the *tilak-chandlo* on his forehead, Swamishri said, “Oh, ho, ho! That looks wonderful!”

At that, the boy walked away, smeared the *tilak-chandlo* on his forehead, and began to snicker. Swamishri said, “Come here. I want to tell you something.”

When he came close, Swamishri wiped his forehead with a cloth and reapplied the *chandlo*. Then he said, “I will give you prasad, but now don’t smear your *chandlo*.”

The boy took the prasad, ate it, and then once again purposely smeared his *chandlo*. Angered by his impertinence, Narsinhbhai began yelling at him, and moved toward him

threateningly. Immediately, Swamishri said, “Hey, hey, Bhagat! Don’t hit him. Come here, let me apply your *chandlo* again!”

Just then, the boy’s younger brother came to Swamishri. Swamishri lovingly applied a *chandlo* to his forehead. Seeing this, his mischievous older brother also came and stood next to Swamishri. Swamishri was very pleased with him. He not only applied a *chandlo* to his forehead, but he applied sandalwood paste *archa* to his forehead.

Standing nearby, Vinubhai wondered what this duplicitous boy must be thinking?

Just then, Swamishri began the spiritual discourses saying, “These talks are such that they will overpower a person’s malign intentions and rise to the top!”

Vinubhai was startled. He felt that Swamishri had spoken on this topic to uproot even his slight dislike towards this boy. Later, while they were going to visit devotees’ homes, Vinubhai told Swamishri, “Even the slight

dislike that I had begun to feel for that boy, you uprooted through your talks.”

Swamishri laughed and said, “I don’t know anything about that. Shastriji Maharaj comes and speaks.”

Vinubhai thought to himself, “Isn’t this Swamishri’s omniscience?”

But, before he could ask this question, Swamishri said, “Maharaj controls all of this. Whether he is omniscient or not, why should that matter to us? For us, a mango tree is a mango tree, and a neem tree is a neem tree. We must ensure our conviction becomes similarly unflinching. Don’t fall into the cycle of establishing and uprooting it.”

“It is being nurtured by you,” said Vinubhai.

Swamishri replied, “That is the only way to make it solid!”

In his mobile *brahmavidya* college, Swamishri casually taught so many such life lessons without the need of any laboratories, research seminars, or special educational

programs. Moreover, everyone was convinced that the deficiencies assailing one for countless lifetimes were being eradicated.

Then, Swamishri went to Gana before arriving in Bochasan on 25 July 1953. Harmanbhai had come from Africa for the Guru Punam festival. He spoke about the glory of God and the Sant with great zeal and inspired great enthusiasm in everyone.

After the festival, Swamishri went to Rajkot before arriving in Gondal. Ranchhoddasji Maharaj had come to Akshar Deri for darshan. He was very pleased also to have darshan of Swamishri.