

Chapter 12

Curing Illness with Dust from the Deri

Shastri Maharaj continued his travels until he arrived back in Ahmedabad. Shastriji Maharaj called Yogi Maharaj from Sarangpur and traveled with him to Pipalav, Bochasan, Karamsad, and Gana before arriving in Napad.

Here, twenty-five-year-old Mangalbhai Vallabhbhai Patel was suffering from a severe case of gonorrhea. He had tried multiple medical treatments without any success, so finally, at the end of his rope, he had come to Shastriji Maharaj and prayed that he be cured. Shastriji Maharaj said, “Go to Jogi Maharaj and tell him about your illness. If he blesses you, you will be cured.”

Mangalbhai went to Yogi Maharaj, informed him of what Shastriji Maharaj had said, and asked for blessings that he may be cured.

Yogi Maharaj said, “As you have received Shriji Maharaj’s blessings, Maharaj will cure your illness. When we return to Gondal, we will send you sanctified flowers and dust from Akshar Deri. Every morning and evening, mix it in water and drink it.”

Then, Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj traveled to Atladara.

Meanwhile, Mangalbhai was waiting to receive the sanctified flowers and dust from Akshar Deri. After some time, he began to wonder whether Swami had forgotten his request. But a few days later, he received an envelope in the mail containing some sanctified flowers and dust from Akshar Deri and a letter of blessings from Yogi Maharaj. As soon as he received the letter, his illness began to recede.

In a few days, he was completely cured, never to be afflicted again. Yogi Maharaj always gave all credit to Shastriji Maharaj and resolutely asserted that whatever had been accomplished was by Shastriji Maharaj’s grace.

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During this time, the foundations were being dug for the Atladara mandir. Vallabhbhai of Anand and four other young devotees were fully engaged in the strenuous service of mandir construction. But the strain of the work became so intense that their bodies shut down from hunger and fatigue. In those days, there was no breakfast or dinner. The only food available came once a day at lunch. If there were any leftovers from lunch, they might have something to eat at night. But, it was always first-come-first-served! Everyone else would be left with nothing.

Amidst such hardship, one day, everyone sat to eat at night. Although they had requested just one *rotlo* each, there was only enough to give a half *rotlo* to each person. When Yogi Maharaj found out, from the next day, he would make extra *rotla* in the morning and set them aside so that he could personally serve them to these devotees for dinner. Often, Yogi Maharaj would give away his own food to the

devotees. But, enduring such physical and mental hardships, Yogi Maharaj remained focused on how he might please the devotees. Yogi Maharaj's sentiments doubled the devotees' enthusiasm to serve.

Once, Nirgundas Swami wanted to go to Vadodara. So, he told Yogi Maharaj, "Jogi! Go sit in the horse cart. I need to go to Vadodara, and you need to come as my companion sadhu."

When Nirgundas Swami reached the horse cart, Yogi Maharaj was nowhere to be found. He became angry, "Where has Jogi gone?"

After searching for him around the mandir campus, he found Yogi Maharaj seated in a horse cart to which no horses had been yoked. Incensed, Nirgundas Swami said, "What is the need to be so oblivious to the world! When would this cart without a horse ever reach Vadodara? It has no engine!"

Years later, when this incident was mentioned before Yogi Maharaj, he remarked,

“I was very dim-witted. But I was fortunate to have learned everything in Nirgundas Swami’s school!”

In reality, Nirgundas Swami was so intimidating that in front of him, people would forget what to do and what not to do. But, no matter how much Nirgundas Swami scolded him, Yogi Maharaj would remain forever smiling.

Whenever anyone brought up Nirgundas Swami’s stern nature, Yogi Maharaj would sing Nirgundas Swami’s praises, saying, “With Nirgundas Swami, the merriment was constant. We used to have so much fun.”

In the history of the world, there have been very few people born who would derive joy from being scolded and rebuked.

But from “Jogi’s” mouth, no one had ever heard even a single word about another’s flaws. That was his spiritual greatness!

From Atladara, Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj traveled by bullock cart to Pragjipura,

Chitrasar, and Dholka. At Dhamadka station, the train was delayed, so everyone sat at the station for ninety minutes and engaged in singing kirtans and listening to spiritual discourses. Thereafter, they went from Rayka to Adval. After spending two days in Adval, Shastriji Maharaj left for Sarangpur.

Yogi Maharaj remained in Adval. The Darbars of the village had become very close to Yogi Maharaj. Within this affectionate, ever-accommodating, and service-oriented sadhu, the Darbars perceived the elevated spiritual state of a senior *paramhansa*. Forever lost in spiritual bliss, granting countless the bliss of Brahman, and elevating all those around him beyond the worldly realm, Yogi Maharaj had a special place in these Darbars' hearts. Thus, when it came time for Yogi Maharaj to take his leave, the eyes of these hard-hearted Darbars would fill with tears, and when it was time for Yogi Maharaj to return, only then would absolute joy shine again on their faces.