

Chapter 18

Without My Will, No One Can Even Pluck a Blade of Grass

On 7 September 1952 (Bhadarva *vad 4*, V.S. 2008), the first anniversary of Shastriji Maharaj's return to Akshardham, Swamishri attended a memorial assembly in Sarangpur. Then, Swamishri traveled to Mojidad, where he had organized a *parayan*. After that, he visited Vagad, Kanthariya, Limbdi, and Kharva, before arriving in Vadhwan.

Swamishri stayed at Chandubhai's house in Vadhwan and went for darshan to the Swaminarayan mandir with ten sadhus, Daji Bapu, and other devotees. Then, Swamishri went out from the Khandi Pol gate to visit some devotees' homes. However, large numbers of women were passing through that route on their way to fill up water from the river. As Chandubhai and Daji Bapu were leading the

sadhus, Swamishri told Daji Bapu, “Ask the women to move.”

Daji Bapu kept walking without saying a word. Swamishri told him again. Daji Bapu again didn’t pay Swamishri any heed. This happened two more times. Then, Swamishri emphatically told Daji Bapu to ask the women to move. Daji Bapu became upset and said, “Do you think I have ministers and police officers at home whose authority I can use to get the women to move!”

Swamishri became silent. Then he raised his *mala* in his right hand and began to turn it while chanting the Swaminarayan mantra. As if the *mala* were a conduit for the power of Swamishri’s will, within moments, no women could be seen along the entire road! It was as if Swamishri had adjusted everyone’s will to safeguard his vows. Otherwise, it was impossible for this road at this time to be devoid of women. This miraculous occurrence led everyone to contemplate Swamishri’s greatness with astonishment.

From here, Swamishri traveled via Rajkot to Gondal. Then, Swamishri went with the sadhus and devotees for one day to Bandhiya, where he showed everyone the spots sanctified by Ramanand Swami.

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Harijivandas Swami and some sadhus and devotees left Gadhada to come to the Sharad Punam festival in Gondal. Pramukh Swami, Maganbhai Secretary, Hakabhai, and others had left Gadhada by taxi while Harijivandas Swami was traveling in a goods carrier truck. On the way, the truck had a terrible accident and flipped over. Harijivandas Swami's thumb was severed, and he was badly injured. Prabhucharan Swami and Pranlalbhai, the Vaidya from Gadhada, died on the spot. A police jeep that had been behind them flagged down another vehicle to transport them to Bhavnagar for first-aid.

Meanwhile, Pramukh Swami waited for the goods carrier truck to arrive in Jasdan. When a police officer saw the saffron-robed sadhus

waiting on the roadside, he stopped his jeep and informed them of the accident. Pramukh Swami rushed with everyone else to the site of the accident.

When Swamishri received news of the accident, he was deeply saddened. He wanted to see Harijivandas Swami immediately, but the Sharad Punam festival had already begun.

Khengarjibhai, Maganbhai, Mohanbhai Ajagiya, Chandubhai Vidyadhikari, Govindsinh Chudasama, and other devotees delivered speeches in the festival's main assembly. Mota Swami also spoke before Swamishri concluded the assembly with his blessings. Five *artis* were performed, and *dudh-powa* was distributed to everyone as prasad. Swamishri had a Brahmin perform a special ceremony in Akshar Deri for the speedy completion of the Mombasa mandir, and he also joined in *dhun* and prayers. Due to his blessings, the construction work for the Mombasa mandir soon picked up speed.

After this, Swamishri traveled to the hospital in Bhavnagar to meet Kothari Harijivandas

Swami. Swamishri blessed him profusely, and Harijivandas Swami experienced profound peace due to Swamishri's presence. Swamishri spoke words of solace and strength and chanted the *dhun*. Then, taking his leave, Swamishri returned to Gondal to celebrate the Annakut festival.

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Kanjibhai Jasmatbhai Patel and Devrajbhai of Rohishala had come to Gondal for the Annakut festival.

Kanjibhai was very active in politics and was a Gopinathji Mandir Temple Committee member. He was a shrewd and diplomatic leader who had earned the respect of the entire village. However, he disliked the fact that his son-in-law, Devrajbhai, has faith in the principles of Akshar Purushottam. Consequently, he has broken social ties with his son-in-law. After this, he experienced personal failures in the political realm and other setbacks that left him profoundly depressed. His days and nights became a long experience

of melancholy and darkness. Nothing felt right to him anymore, so he went to Gadhada and stood for days on one leg, turning the *mala* in front of Gopinathji's *murti*, but he experienced no improvement in his mental state.

Coincidentally, Devrajbhai happened to visit Rohishala, where he heard of Kanjibhai's depression. So, Devrajbhai went to meet his father-in-law, and Kanjibhai put aside his differences and openly shared his experience of disquiet with Devrajbhai. Seeing his utter dejection, Devrajbhai said, "If you promise not to feel offended, I do have one suggestion. Come to Gondal for the Sharad Punam festival and speak to Yogi Bapa. Have his darshan and take his blessings, and you will instantly feel at peace. This is not just my experience; it is the experience of countless people."

Just as a drowning man will clutch at straws, Kanjibhai agreed to go to Gondal. In Gondal, Kanjibhai witnessed Swamishri's spiritual abandon and experienced the divine presence of a Gunatit Sant. Swamishri's transparent

purity granted him clarity in his thinking and peace of mind. Kanjibhai was absorbed in the bliss of Brahman.

That evening, Devrajbhai asked, “How are you feeling now?”

Kanjibhai breathlessly replied, “Peace, peace, peace... I am convinced now that Maharaj remains forever present in Satsang. Tomorrow morning, I want to accept *vartman* and get initiated by Swamishri. If I had died and gone to Akshardham before having Swami’s darshan, then surely Maharaj would have kicked me out of Akshardham for having hatred for such a Sant. You have done me a tremendous kindness by bringing me in touch with such a Sant...”

Devrajbhai warned him that accepting *vartman* from Swamishri may cause him some trouble and grief elsewhere: “If you accept initiation here, you will likely be forced to resign from the Gopinathji Temple Committee.”

“Then I will resign,” said Kanjibhai with spirit. He was exhilarated by the peace he had experienced from Swamishri’s darshan and blessings. “I don’t mind letting go of my post on the committee, but now that I have attained Yogiji Maharaj, who possesses the spiritual state of Maharaj’s nand *paramhansas*, I will never let him go!”

Devrajbhai was stunned. He could not believe that this person could be so quickly and profoundly transformed!

Kanjibhai accepted *vartman* from Swamishri, and the *satsang mandal* in Rohishala received a tremendous boost. As Kanjibhai was well-respected and sought out for advice throughout the village, his new-found conviction in Gunatit *jnan* convinced many villagers to trust it as well. Because of him, many families became more inclined towards Satsang.