

Chapter 19

Jogi's Spellbinding Speech

On Monday, 27 April 1953 (Adhik Vaishakh *sud* 14, V.S. 2009), Swamishri and his group of sadhus traveled to Mumbai. Their accommodations were arranged in the Brahmakshatriya Community Center. Together with Balubhai, Suryakantbhai, and other youths, we decorated the community center and the main seat of the *parayan* with *toranas*, flags, and boards with positive sayings. Pramukh Swami began the *parayan* with a discourse on the *Satsangijivan*. Narayanji Maharaj narrated divine incidents from the lives of God and guru in his simple style. Akshar Swami delivered discourses on the Vachanamrut. At night, Harshadbhai would read aloud from the Bhaktachintamani. Sheth Bhagwandas, Jesangbhai, Nanubhai, and Mahipatbhai Dave looked after the kitchen arrangements.

At night after *arti* and *dhun*, Swamishri would deliver extraordinary discourses for an hour and grant everyone the bliss of Akshardham. Swamishri had said:

“If one has taken nourishment from the Satpurush, one's knees would never buckle in the practice of *agna* and *upasana*. One would not be overcome by lust, anger, and other flaws. But one has to learn how to experience happiness. Thus, recognize and associate with the Satpurush, lest you regret it later. There is a verse on that point:

‘Samjan vinānā sāngalā, pinjan pabedā khāy,
Chichodo chu chu kare, ras to kundimā jāy.’

Thus, only a worthy vessel can hold the nectar of knowledge. Others would merely make a big fuss, like the sugarcane crusher and cotton carder.

“Become a Sant. Janak, Dada Khachar, and others were householders, but they were considered Sants. Today, one reaches Akshardham on the third death rattle. What are

these death rattles? The first death rattle entails the escape from *maya* to become a liberated soul, the second death rattle entails becoming Aksharrup, and the third death rattle entails the attainment and realization of Purushottam.

“In the scriptures, Uddhav has been praised for his understanding of the glory of God and his devotees, the *gopis* have been praised for their devotion, Hanumanji has been praised as an ideal servant, and Janak has been praised for his *vairagya*. But amongst Swami's devotees, we generally see all four of these virtues. We should cultivate these four virtues to the highest level so that they may be particularly resplendent.

“What is the gateway in the form of awareness? One should prevent the infiltration of aversion for God and his devotee. Only if we can maintain this state can we be said to have stood guard at the gateway of awareness. To understand the greatness of the Sant is itself service, and not understanding the greatness of the Sant is itself *vasana*. The extent of our love

for the Satpurush is the extent that our *vasanas* have been eradicated. So if one has developed such love, one should not feel unfulfilled. Since we possess this body, we must continue with our worldly responsibilities.

“One should maintain constant *divyabhav* in the manifest God in human form that one has attained. When one realizes that the resplendent, divine form in Akshardham is the very same form manifest before us, then can one be said to have had pure-hearted darshan. On one's deathbed, one has darshan of God and the Sant for ten to twelve minutes, but one is overjoyed by that darshan because one realizes it as divine. However, one constantly has darshan in the human form, but being unable to accept that darshan as divine, one does not feel the same joy.”

Thus, Swamishri delivered an extraordinary speech about his own divine glory. Upon seeing devotees who possessed an inclination to understand the greatness of God and the Sant, talks of glory and faith came naturally to

Swamishri's lips. What is the meaning of service, *mahima*, love for God, *vasana*, and pure-hearted darshan? What is true awareness? A distinguishing characteristic of Swamishri's speech was that he provided practical definitions of spiritual concepts, infused with the experience of his own spiritual endeavor and in harmony with the scriptures, that could be applied in one's daily life. It was as if the sacred words of the Vedas were conveyed through his simple, colloquial speech! This was the sentiment that arose in the devotees. Everyone was enthralled by these words springing up from his own spiritual experience. It was as if the spiritual ambience existing in the presence of the enlightened sages in the Himalayan forests of the Upanishadic era was being rekindled here. Oh! This was even greater than that—an assembly within Akshardham itself! Everyone was worshiping Parabrahma in the presence of that very Aksharbrahma whose glory was extolled in the Upanishads. Everyone experienced the bliss of Brahman. They felt as

if they could just continue forever to imbibe that divine speech.

Swamishri continued:

“Association with the Satpurush means to cultivate the virtues of the Satpurush. One cannot be said to have offered one's mind if one withholds one's preferred items and offers other things. One should offer all of one's body, mind, and wealth. To not allow a loss of faith in the Satpurush is the highest service by one's mind. One should feel a profound self-reproach if one develops an aversion towards a devotee of God.

“Although we impart so much wisdom, it doesn't penetrate your heart because it is hindered by the two enemies of procrastination and infatuation. Procrastination is to do what should not be done and not to do what should be done; infatuation is to perceive truth in what is false and falsity in what is true.

“When one is filled up to the neck with this world, the talks of the Satpurush will not take

root. Here is an example to illustrate this point: a Brahmin was sent to another village to deliver a wedding invitation. He bought five pounds of roasted chickpeas on the road and kept eating them throughout his trip. Once he reached his destination and delivered the invitation, the recipient provided him with provisions to make a full meal with laddus. As the Brahmin prepared the meal, he drank copious amounts of water to quench his thirst due to the large quantity of roasted chickpeas he had eaten. When the laddus were finally prepared, he could not eat them as he was full to the brim with roasted chickpeas and water. Similarly, if one is filled to the brim with this world, then one will not be able to consume the immortalizing ambrosia of laddus in the form of the Satpurush's talks.

“Where there is true *jnan*, *maya* cannot show her strength. When one attains God, and then one experiences insults and condemnation, then one should understand that now I have truly attained God. Elsewhere

one will be honored in a procession and venerated.”

This extraordinary nectarine shower of Gunatit *jnan* left the entire assembly spellbound. One of the Sampradaya's senior devotees, a trustee of the Vartal Temple Managing Committee and government lawyer, Hariprasad Choksi, found himself transfixed by these talks. He used to say, “If you have not seen Maharaj's *paramhansas*, you can see one in this Yogiji Maharaj.”

Bhogilalbhai D.T.S. would rush to the community center to hear Swamishri's talks. Manu Subedar, the Marwadi Sheths Gokulchand Morarka and Saksariya Sheth, the Sindhi Katnani Sheth, Police Commissioner M.M. Chudasama, the Gandhi Sheths of Una—Manekchandbhai, Panachandbhai, Abhaychandbhai, and Mohanlal Shrijina, as well as many senior devotees of the Sampradaya made sure never to miss an opportunity to hear Swamishri speak.

Having darshan of Swamishri swaying in spiritual bliss, laughing, clapping his hands, and showering his nectarine speech upon the audience, the multimillionaire Morarka Sheth would exclaim, “Great sadhu! Yogi Maharaj is a very great sadhu!”

A captivating facet of Swamishri's speech were his examples and illustrations. Using the full range of expressive capacities to bring to life the illustration or example he was speaking about, Swamishri kept the audience rapt. He kept his talks engaging through dialogues, humor, and vivid description. If we were to describe his speech with one word, we could say it was magical. Despite being exhausted by the hustle and bustle of daily life in Mumbai, the listener would make sure he had taken his seat in the assembly by the time the clock struck eight. Then, from Swamishri's mouth, the glorification of Maharaj and guru Shastriji Maharaj would commence. As the *jay naad* rang out, one would hear Swamishri clearing

his throat and begin in his melodious baritone voice, “Swaminarayan hare, Swami has said...”

“This human body is unattainable and invaluable. It is priceless. Only after the accumulated merit of countless births does one attain this human birth. It is rare to obtain a human birth in the land of Bharat. It is even rarer to attain it within Satsang. In that, it is exceedingly rare to attain such a Sant. After attaining all of this, what should we do? The same love and identification we have for this body and its relations, we should cultivate with the Sant. We want to become God's and make God ours. Just as during a wedding ceremony, a man and woman grasp each other's hands in holy matrimony, similarly, we should grasp the hand of God and the Sant. If one does this, then even if he has committed the five grave sins, he would still attain ultimate liberation.

“Only from manifest Paramatma or God in the form of the *sadguru* can one attain ultimate *jnan*. What is that ultimate *jnan*? To purify one's mind having realized all forms of *maya* as

false and having kept one's senses under control. By thus becoming *chaitanyarup*, one can attain God. To become *brahmarup* is Shriji Maharaj's command. Thus, after becoming free of worldly desires, one should cultivate firm faith in the manifest form of Parabrahma Paramatma Purushottam Narayan with the conviction, 'He who has met me is the manifest form of Parabrahma Paramatma Purushottam Narayan. He is the cause of all the avatars. He is the cause of all causes. He is the Lord of all celestial abodes.' If one offers unbroken devotion to God, having cultivated such conviction, then the *jiva* attains Akshardham. And what happens to those who have not understood this? Let me explain with an example:

“There was once a merchant who conducted hundreds of thousands of rupees of trade. He had one son. The son was extremely lazy. Despite his father's urging, the son never took any interest in the business. However, one day the son remarked, 'I want to go to foreign

shores to make a living.’ So, the father gave him seven ships filled with gold coins. The son went to the island of Java and spent all the gold coins filling up his ships with rocks. Many years later, he returned home. The father and his merchant friends came to the dock to welcome and honor the returning son. When they found out that he had just brought back rocks, everyone was mortified.

“Similarly, if we do not attain this *jnan*, then at the time of our death, when Shriji Maharaj, Gunatitanand Swami, and Gopalanand Swami come to fetch us, they will be mortified and say, ‘Instead of attaining the ultimate *jnan*, he has remained brutish. What had we sent him for, and what has he done?’ Thus, we should imbibe this *jnan* into our lives.”

Once anyone experienced the enchantment of this divine sadhu, how could they be restrained from inviting him to their home? On Vaishakh *vad* 4, the anniversary of Shastriji Maharaj's return to Akshardham, Swamishri set out at 7 a.m. to visit devotees' homes. He

visited the homes of the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's brother, Kashibhai, Sheth Shyamlal Vaidya, and many other devotees in the Matunga area. Then he went to Bombay Central for lunch at the house of Govindbhai Negos. Then, after sanctifying the shop of Vajubhai Gheewala, he went to visit devotees' homes in Santa Cruz. For fourteen hours straight, Swamishri visited devotees' homes from one corner of Mumbai to the other.

Pratapsinh Inamdar used to bring many police officers for Swamishri's darshan. He called Swamishri, the sadhus, and about 300 devotees to his brother's house in Versova and held a memorable beach gathering.

During the *parayan*, since Kumar Balvantsinh of Mengani was going abroad to study, Swamishri specially went to Santa Cruz airport to give him blessings and see him off. Many devotees had come from Gujarat to Mumbai for Swamishri's darshan and *samagam*. For the last two days, Swamishri stayed at the bungalow of Morarka Sheth,

where many Marwadi businessmen and industrialists had come for Swamishri's darshan.

One day, a devotee brought a covered basket full of *penda*, and without saying anything, held it out to Swamishri unopened. Swamishri said, "Look, *penda* have come! Offer them to Thakorji."

Many of the Mumbai devotees as well as Dahyabhai of Bhadran were sitting next to Swamishri at the time. When the attendant opened the packed container, he found that there were indeed *pendas* inside! One of the devotees told Swamishri, "You used your omniscient powers!"

Swamishri replied, "No, no. It's not like that. It was just a coincidence, like when the crow sat, and the branch fell!" Hearing Swamishri's innocent explanation, everyone laughed, including Swamishri himself! Swamishri was always engaged in trying to conceal his powers. On such occasions when his concealed powers happened to manifest themselves, he would

expertly change the subject without letting anyone even realize what had happened.

On 21 May 1953, Swamishri was leaving Mumbai for Surat on the express train. A large crowd of devotees had gathered at the station. A mass of garlands offered by the devotees had collected around Swamishri's neck. The thousands of other travelers at the station looked upon the scene with wonder. Knowingly or unknowingly, through Swamishri's darshan, they received immense spiritual merit.

As Jekishandas Sheth was going abroad, Swamishri stayed at his bungalow in Surat.