

Chapter 9

Sixty-Eight Places of Pilgrimage at the Feet of My Sant

As Shastriji Maharaj traveled from Sarangpur to Bochasan, Yogi Maharaj went to the village of Ashi at Shastriji Maharaj's instruction. Every morning, Yogi Maharaj would wake up early and sing *prabhatiya* and other kirtans. In Ashi one morning, he began singing, "*Prān thaki mune Vaishnav vahālā...*" (Vaishnav devotees are dearer to me than life itself...)

One verse of that kirtan states:

Lakshmiji ardhāṅganā māri, te mārā santni dāsi re;

Adsath tirtha mārā santne charane, koti Gangā koti Kāshi re.

(Lakshmiji is my better half {my consort}, but she is a servant to my Sant,

The sixty-eight places of pilgrimage are at the feet of my Sant, including millions of Gangas and millions of Kashis.)

As soon as he sang this line, Ranchhoddas, an Arya Samaj follower who was sleeping in the mandir, objected, “Maharaj! Don’t sing such kirtans. In this age of Kali, no such sadhus exist. So, please sing something else.”

The ever-accommodating Yogi Maharaj said, “I don’t want any strife. So here, I’ll sing something else.” With that, Yogi Maharaj began another kirtan.

That evening, Shastriji Maharaj arrived and delivered discourses to the assembled devotees. After the assembly, he went to bed around midnight. At around 2 a.m., the mandir gates opened of their own accord, and a pure white cow entered the mandir compound. It slowly approached Shastriji Maharaj’s cot and began rolling around on the ground near his exposed feet. Due to his asthma, Ranchhodas often battled insomnia, and while lying awake in bed that night, he witnessed this scene with

astonishment. After a bit, the cow rose and left the mandir compound. Thinking that he would follow the cow to see where it went, Ranchhoddas also exited the mandir compound. He continued to follow the cow to the village outskirts where, suddenly, the cow ascended into the sky and disappeared. Astounded, Ranchhoddas began to contemplate what he had just witnessed, and his delusions began to dissolve.

At dawn, when Yogi Maharaj began singing *prabhatiya*, Ranchhoddas said, “Swami, please sing that kirtan about the sixty-eight places of pilgrimage.”

Yogi Maharaj said, “Didn’t you, just yesterday, prohibit me from singing that kirtan?”

Ranchhoddas explained everything he had seen at night. He had become convinced that Shastriji Maharaj was a true Vaishnav *sant*. He accepted initiation into the Satsang fellowship that very morning. Thereafter, he stayed full-time in the mandir and would explain the glory

of Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj to everyone he met.