

# Chapter 24

## Inner Inclination

In Anand mandir, Swamishri was delivering a discourse on Vachanamrut Gadhada II 52 when he came to the portion of the Vachanamrut in which Maharaj states, “That which befits a renunciant is not appropriate for a householder.”

A youth asked, “Bapa, you encourage us to follow the vows of a renunciant—to refrain from touching women, to mix our food and add water before eating it... What should we make of this?”

Swamishri replied, “As long as you have not married, you can be said to be a renunciant.”

At that, a married youth said, “Bapa, what about me? You have commanded me to eat my food only after mixing it together.”

Swamishri instantly said, “Your *jīva* is a renunciant! Do you not want to go to

Akshardham? At God's command, one should engage in actions, and at his command, one should renounce them. We ask you to observe these vows because we wish to make you *ekantik*. Do we tell anyone else?" With these words, Swamishri's expression became serious.

Whenever anyone was lax in observing religious vows or displayed any aversion to following the vows strictly, Swamishri would not be pleased with them.

After Nirgundas Swami and Shastriji Maharaj returned to Akshardham, some of Shastriji Maharaj's disciples remain depressed in the depths of their heart and were unable to fully attach themselves to Swamishri with the understanding that he was the manifest form of God.

The senior and prominent devotee of Anand, Motibhai Bhagwandas, suffered from this deficiency in understanding to some extent. He had offered unconditional service to Shastriji Maharaj and composed many kirtans. Shastriji Maharaj had granted him immense bliss,

however Motibhai experienced a mental hesitation in attaching himself to Swamishri with the same sentiment.

As Swamishri was leaving Anand, he instructed Harshadbhai, “Stay here for three more days and help Motikaka attain faith in the manifest form of God. Only leave after you have accomplished that.”

At Swamishri’s behest, Harshadbhai and Manibhai Narayanbhai both began a constant barrage of talks that helped Motibhai develop the staunch conviction in his soul that there is not an iota of difference between Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj as the manifest form of God.

On 16 February 1955, Swamishri traveled from Anand to Atladara and was on his way to Sokhada when he stopped at the village of Chhani to do darshan of the memorial shrine there. From there, Swamishri went to the Chhani mandir. While delivering discourses to the assembled devotees, Swamishri asked, “In Vachanamrut Gadhada II 30, when Maharaj

mentions that transcendent of Prakruti-Purush is the pure *chaitanya* Brahman, what Brahman is there other than that?”

Answering his own question, Swamishri explained, “According to Vachanamrut Gadhada II 31, Mahapurush is Brahman immersed in Prakruti.”<sup>1</sup>

After departing from Chhani, Swamishri reached Sokhada by dusk. In the evening assembly at 8 p.m., Swamishri addressed the youths, “You should engage this body in the service of the Satpurush, but you should not pamper it. All flaws reside in body-consciousness and all virtues reside in the realization of the self as the *atma*. Thus, by oversleeping and otherwise pampering the body, the enemy in the form of body-consciousness is strengthened. But, by engaging the body in the service of the Satpurush, the Satpurush is pleased. So, when we have attained the Sadhu who is like God, then we must eradicate our ignorance and our desire for the sense pleasures and follow his

commands. Everything that God can do for us, this Sadhu can do for us.

“Gnānkuchi guru gamase gayā tālā ughadi...”

(With the keys of knowledge bestowed by the guru, all the locks have been opened...)

“Through that Satpurush, one attains true spiritual knowledge, and primordial ignorance is eradicated. What is that primordial ignorance? The failure to understand Maharaj as supreme is primordial ignorance.”

The youths could see the reflection of their own *atma* in Swamishri’s penetrating talks. Everyone always felt a profound devotional humility towards this guru who constantly strove to eradicate their deficiencies. Thus, everyone yearned to listen to his talks and follow his every command.

The following day, when Swamishri was visiting devotees’ homes, he recited the Swamini Vat, “Never before has this *jīva* attempted to walk the path towards God. It is a completely novel pursuit for the *jīva*...” Then

Swamishri asked, “What is the path towards God? And what is meant by attempting to walk that path?”

Swamishri explained, “The extent to which one does *samagam* of the *ekantik Satpurush* is the extent to which one can be said to have walked the path towards God. For whoever does that type of *samagam*, his worldly affairs are automatically taken care of, just as in acquiring an ox the gadfly accompanies it, but it doesn’t need to be specially acquired. So one who stays in Swami’s company and constantly listens to spiritual discourses can be said to be walking the path towards God. At your deathbed, that is the only thing that will go with you. When one attains God’s constant presence, all spiritual deficiencies will dissolve. To understand this, think over Vachanamrut Gadhada I 27.

“The two major deficiencies that hinder us in worshiping God are in becoming *brahmarup* and attaching ourselves to the Satpurush. If these deficiencies are not remedied, you will

have to take another birth. The extent to which our dreams are full of worldly affairs signals the extent to which satsang has not become sufficiently predominant in our life. For Shivalalbhai, Dada Khachar, and other devotees, satsang was always predominant and worldly affairs subordinate. But, when worldly affairs become paramount in one's life, one cannot experience happiness.

“There are three ways to earn Swami’s favor —by serving him through thought, word, and deed. The doubts and skepticism that linger in one’s mind become particularly vicious impediments to one’s spiritual progress. While one may physically offer service and verbally sing their praises, believing oneself to have sovereign dominion over one’s affairs is a deficiency in faith (a repudiation of God’s doership). Thus, believing that Maharaj and Swami are our masters and everything belongs to them is true faith and conviction in God. One who possesses this perspective attains the dissolution of their negative psychological

complexes and the consolidation of an indomitable faith in God.

“Swami asked a devotee from Mojidad, ‘Is it day or night?’ The devotee replied, ‘Day and night have been created by Swami. So, if you say it is night, it is night. I have no problem with that. But if you ask me for money, it will break my heart.’ So, one should not be like that.

“The names of Parvatbhai and Govardhanbhai have been written in the Scriptures because they followed God’s commands implicitly and sacrificed their all—giving up their everything to Maharaj. Maharaj and Swami are looking after our worldly affairs. The great are sitting ready to make us great, to make us *brahmarup*, and to grant us the bliss of their *murti*, but *jiava* doesn’t know how to avail of their beneficence.”

Again, during his discourses on the morning of Friday, 18 February 1955, Swamishri said, “When one attains true spiritual knowledge, he would not be ensnared in the web of *maya*. The

web of *maya* is the constant stream of worldly affairs.”

Then, Swamishri read aloud Vachanamrut Gadhada I 40 and said, “What are the characteristics of *savikalp samadhi* and *nirvikalp samadhi*? Which samadhi are you experiencing? First, when one does not recognize the form of God and is attached to many things in this world, how can he recognize God’s form? So, one should maintain the unquestioning faith of Vajiba of Vijapur. First one should recognize the form of God and develop affection for him. Even if someone else displays a miracle, one should not be attracted by that. As for the *nirvikalp* state, one must attain a state similar to that of Aksharbrahma. But if one doesn’t even recognize Aksharbrahma, how can he hope to attain a state similar to his?”

On Maha *vad* Ekadashi, Swamishri traveled to Thikariya. Manibhai had invited devotees from many surrounding villages and organized a grand festival.

At 5 p.m. on Saturday, 19 February 1955, Swamishri read aloud Vachanamrut Gadhada II 1 and said, “Maharaj had greatly suppressed any revelation of his own true glory and rarely spoke of it to anyone. However, once he commanded Swami to do so, Swami pulled out all the stops and spoke about Maharaj’s glory as it is, helping thousands of devotees to attach their *jivas* to Maharaj’s *murti*.”

Harshadbhai asked, “At present, how can one attach oneself to the *murti* of God manifest before us?”

Swamishri laughed and said, “There is no problem in speaking of their glory as much as you want as long as Maharaj, Swami, and Shastriji Maharaj remain primary. Without them we are absolutely nothing!”

From Thikariya, Swamishri traveled to Bharuch on Shivratri, where he bathed in the holy Narmada River. On Sunday, Swamishri blessed the evening assembly, saying:

“What is true *jnan*? If one attains spiritual knowledge but loses respect for everyone else and disregards the observance of religious vows, that is fruitless knowledge. Productive knowledge is when one perceives divinity in everyone understanding their glory, when one observes all religious vows, and when one behaves in a way where everyone benefits spiritually. The cultivation of that type of *jnan* brings peace to oneself and others. One who is unfettered can break the bonds of others.” Swamishri illustrated that principle with the example of the Bandhitod guru (bond-breaking guru).

From here, Swamishri traveled to Shuklatirth and Mangaleshwar before reaching Natvarbhai’s house in Zadeshwar. Swamishri sanctified many homes in this village. On the new moon day, Swamishri again bathed in the holy Narmada River before traveling to Matroj on Wednesday, 23 February 1955.

During the morning assembly, Swamishri discoursed on Vachanamrut Sarangpur 6, explaining:

“*Paravani* is singing the praises of Parabrahma. That is the greatest thing worth doing. All day. We should not engage in the other types of speech.

“In Vachanamrut Gadhada II 37, Maharaj has said, ‘Even a person possessing *jnan* behaves according to his nature. Even if the giver of guidance speaks harsh truths, if one maintains deep affection and total faith in his words, then one’s innate natures will be eradicated. Thus, one should not become agitated. One’s innate natures are not removed by becoming agitated. No matter how painfully strong the Satpurush’s words may be, and no matter how intent one might be in one’s decision, if one gives all that up and does exactly as the Satpurush says, only then will his innate natures be eradicated.’”

Whenever Swamishri traveled in the region of Kanam, Manubhai of Saring would insist

that Swamishri and the *sadgurus* visit his village. Large numbers of devotees from the surrounding village would flock to Saring to avail of Swamishri's darshan and *samagam*. On this occasion, Swamishri spent two days in Saring and granted the devotees the bliss of his discourses.

On 24 February 1955, Swamishri told the devotee next to him who was busy writing letters, "Only do that which fosters *samp* amongst all and helps everyone perceive divinity in all. If that happens, then Satsang will grow. Swami Shastriji Maharaj would always foster such an atmosphere. Nirgundas Swami behaved in the same fashion. If you cultivate *divyabhav*, *samp* will be fostered and there will be no conflicts. Satsang will grow."

That evening, the sadhus and devotees were sitting together on the fields next to Muljibhai's water pump, when Swamishri said:

"One must overcome five hurdles. To stay with someone and understand their glory is a difficult hurdle. However, through the

*samagam* of the Sadhu, even that hurdle can be overcome. By speaking the praises of God's devotee, the *jiva* becomes *brahmarup*. Thus, one should constantly sing their praises but never speak of their flaws.

“There is no service as great as *nirdosh buddhi* (perceiving God and the devotee as flawless). As an act of devotion, *nirdosh buddhi* is unparalleled. *Nirdosh buddhi* is the very definition of devotion. Thus, one should forever understand God and God's devotee as flawless. If one keeps no barrier between oneself and the Satpurush, one is spiritually transformed. Spiritual transformation means that one would experience a constant inclination to listen to his discourses and stay in his *samagam*, and in his company, one would experience peace.

“Bhai Ramdasji was from this village. The sacred places associated with such great souls bring one peace. When we did darshan of the sanctified places associated with Gopalanand Swami in Torda, we experienced peace. The darshan of such sacred places as well as the

darshan of such great devotees of God quiets the heart and steers the inclination in a positive direction. However, when such great souls are present before us, one cannot recognize them. Many were unable to recognize Shastriji Maharaj's greatness as it truly was. Those who did recognize it and offered their timely service now experience unbroken peace. Only after such great souls pass away do people understand their glory.

“Thus, those of little spiritual merit are unable to recognize the manifest form of God. When one fully recognizes them, one experiences unending peace and joy within.

“When one imbibes the principle expressed in Vachanamrut Gadhada III 11, ‘Understanding like that of Sitaji,’ only then can one be said to have attained true understanding and *nirdosh buddhi* for God.”

Then Swamishri went for a bath. During his bath, he gave everyone great memories. He had just drenched everyone with his holy river of spiritual knowledge, and now he blessed

everyone with immersion in the water sport of Brahman. Thus, everyone was delighted. Then everyone sat in a dry area next to the water pump.

When all the youths had settled down around him, Swamishri continued his talk, “In Vachanamrut Gadhada I 58, Maharaj asks, ‘How can the great Satpurush be pleased?’” Swamishri explained, “If one is honest with him, forsakes one’s own flaws, behaves as the Sant’s servant, maintains a constant effort to eradicate egotism from his heart, and physically continues to bow to everyone, then the great Sant is pleased. Shriji Maharaj showed a subtle path to pleasing the Sant: *‘Charanome shish nāmi, dinatā uchchārie.’* (To bow one’s head at their feet, and utter words of humility...).

“Bhagwanbhai Thakkar of Dholerva had offered tremendous service, including the sponsorship of decorative silver-plated altar doors. However, desires continually assailed him. He confided in Jaga Swami regarding his

internal struggles. Jaga Swami advised him to tell Swami, ‘I am yours.’ After he conveyed this to Swami, the desires abated, and he was at peace. In this way, one should forget oneself and offer one’s mind to the Satpurush.”

The following day, on 25 February 1955, Swamishri sanctified many homes around the village. Swamishri would briefly sit in each home and lovingly ask, “How long have you been in Satsang? Do you have a puja and *kanthi*?” He would distribute prasad and also speak briefly on spiritual topics.

Today, Harshad bhai Dave was accompanying Swamishri to the devotees’ homes. He asked Swamishri about Vachanamrut Gadhada II 42, “Why is this Vachanamrut referred to as ‘The Key’?”

Swamishri explained, “Gunatitanand Swami has referred to this Vachanamrut as ‘The Key’ because in it Maharaj describes the *sagun* and *nirgun* forms of Akshar. Purushottam Narayan cannot be described as *sagun* or *nirgun*, thus one does not say that. Indeed, even Akshar’s

form is not describable. Yet, in describing Akshar's *sagun* and *nirgun* forms, one gets a point of reference in understanding the greatness of Purushottam. That is, 'If Akshar is this great, then how great must be his master, Purushottam?' That is the point. And if one can fully understand Akshar's greatness in this fashion, then one has grasped the key to liberation."

Since Ashabhai of Surat had organized a Ganga pujan ceremony at his house in Valasan, at his insistence, Swamishri went straight to Valasan on 26 February 1955 (Fagun sud 4, V.S. 2011). After completing the Ganga pujan ceremony, delivering discourses to the assembled devotees, visiting many devotees' homes, and thus pleasing all the devotees, Swamishri returned to the village of Shinor.

At the invitation of Shamalbhai of Africa, at 3:15 p.m. on 28 February 1955 (Fagun sud 6, V.S. 2011), Swamishri left Shinor for Panetha together with Pramukh Swami, Mota Swami, Sant Swami, Aksharswarup Swami, and a total

of eleven sadhus, along with Daji, Manibhai, Bavajibhai and several other devotees. As Panetha was about eight miles downstream from Shinor on the Narmada River, everyone boarded a small boat to take them there. Along the way, Swamishri delivered spiritual discourses and distributed pomegranate seeds as prasad. Then, everyone did *arti*, *stuti*, and *ashtak*. After four hours, they reached the village of Panetha on the opposite bank of the Narmada. The devotees welcomed Swamishri with great enthusiasm. Swamishri sanctified many homes and delivered spiritual discourses, pleasing all the devotees.

The following afternoon, everyone bathed in the holy Narmada River. Swamishri bathed Thakorji and sprinkled holy water on everyone's head. Then, Swamishri and the sadhus and devotees accompanying him boarded a boat, and listening to discourses, singing *dhun* and *bhajans*, reached Shinor by 8:30 p.m. From here, Swamishri traveled to Kandari, Salad, and the surrounding villages.

In this way, Swamishri kept a very hectic travel schedule without any consideration for his bodily comforts. Due to his delicate health, he experienced severe fatigue and weakness. Moreover, he was suffering from a boil. But disregarding all these hardships, Swamishri spared no effort in pleasing the devotees, daily visiting three to four villages in the Kanam region. The devotees of every village had so much affection for Swamishri, that Swamishri was unable to disappoint anyone. Thus, Swamishri would visit numerous devotees' homes in each village. He was never able to get sufficient rest. Because most of the traveling was by bullock cart, the bumpy ride would exacerbate Swamishri's hernia, causing him to suffer from diarrhea and requiring hernia treatment. Despite all this, Swamishri would continue his travels.

Finally, Swamishri traveled to Sarangpur via Ahmedabad for the *Fagun sud Punam* festival.