

Chapter 12

Eternal Joy

Once, Shastriji Maharaj was traveling by train from Jasdan to Sarangpur. As Shastriji Maharaj had some work in Lathidad, he, Nirgundas Swami, two other sadhus, Ashabhai's son Desaibhai, Khengarjibhai, and a few other devotees disembarked at Lathidad, while Yogi Maharaj and the other sadhus and devotees continued to Sarangpur.

After completing his work in Lathidad, Shastriji Maharaj declared, "We want to reach Sarangpur before *sandhya arti* no matter what."

Since it was planting season, all the farmers had taken their bullock carts to their farms. So, Shastriji Maharaj took one companion sadhu, held onto Khengarjibhai's hand, and began walking. Nirgundas Swami was unable to walk that far, so he informed them that he would

stay in Lathidad and arrive later that night by bullock cart.

On the way to Sarangpur, Khengarjibhai casually asked, “Bapa, when the Satpurush reaches an advanced age and passes to Akshardham, what becomes of his poor disciples who were attached to him?”

Swamishri looked at Khengarjibhai with compassion and said, “Oi, do you think this *bawa* is some ordinary *bawa*? God is manifest here. He would leave another great sadhu like himself to care for everyone and complete his work after him. Just like me, this Jogi Maharaj will take care of everyone. Swami doesn’t abandon anyone.”

Just as they reached Sarangpur, they heard the bells ringing for *sandhya arti*.

On that occasion, 400 to 500 devotees from central Gujarat had come in various groups for darshan. Yogi Maharaj had made preparations to feed everyone after *arti*, and he had promised that Shastriji Maharaj would arrive

by *sandhya arti*. When Shastriji Maharaj entered the mandir campus, the devotees were sitting in lines to be served dinner. When they had darshan of Shastriji Maharaj, a joyous *jay naad* rang out from hundreds of throats and reverberated around the mandir.

Shastriji Maharaj walked along the lines of seated devotees and blessed everyone. Then, after doing darshan, all the devotees had dinner and departed.

Nirgundas Swami arrived in Sarangpur via bullock cart at 1 a.m. He was very upset that he had been unable to meet the devotees of Gujarat who harbored a special affection for him.

Yogi Maharaj called Khengarjibhai and said, “Because you came with Swami, what fun you had! Swami granted you eternal joy, didn’t he!”

In reference to Khengarjibhai’s conversation on the road with Shastriji Maharaj, Yogi Maharaj omnisciently reminded him of Shastriji Maharaj’s answer and gave him a

knowing smile. Khengarjibhai experienced the spiritual oneness of both Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj!

Yogi Maharaj would further consolidate this conviction in Khengarjibhai's heart soon after Shastriji Maharaj returned to Akshardham.

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On Vaishakhi Punam (21 May 1940), Mohanbhai Ajagiya and other devotees from Rajkot came to Sarangpur for Shastriji Maharaj's darshan. They invited Swamishri to Rajkot for a *parayan*, but Shastriji Maharaj sent Yogi Maharaj and Nirgundas Swami in his stead to do a three-day *parayan*.

Meanwhile, Shastriji Maharaj visited Atladara and then went to Mumbai. Shastriji Maharaj always felt a little lonely without Yogi Maharaj. The devotees were also very inspired by 'Jogi's' divine perspective, contagious laughter, memorable parables, and talks that effortlessly weaved together lessons on practical living and profound spirituality.

Moreover, Yogi Maharaj was so adept at meeting and taking care of the devotees that Shastriji Maharaj would never have to worry about that. Thus, on the day the *parayan* started in Mumbai, Shastriji Maharaj sent a telegram summoning Yogi Maharaj to Mumbai. The devotees of Mumbai were overjoyed.

After completing the *parayan* in Mumbai, Shastriji Maharaj visited Surat and then went to Songadh to procure teakwood for the ongoing construction at the Gondal mandir. Then, Shastriji Maharaj traveled to Atladara, and after some deliberation, decided to build homes on Goswami's farm for the Harijans who had sold their land to the mandir. On 19 June 1940 (Jeth *sud* Punam, V.S. 1996), Shastriji Maharaj went to Vadodara Station to catch a train for Bochasan. Unfortunately, he missed the train. Since the next train was the following morning, Shastriji Maharaj spent the night at Vadodara Station.

After he finished his bath and puja early the next morning, many devotees came for

darshan. While Shastriji Maharaj delivered spiritual discourses to the devotees, Yogiji Maharaj sat at a distance with a group of children. He led them in singing the *dhun*, “*Swāmi ane Nārāyan, Akshar ane Purushottam, ātmā ane Paramātmā, Brahma ane Parabrahma...*”

The children enthusiastically sang along. Then, Yogi Maharaj led them in singing the prayer, “*Dayālu Prabhu! Akshar Purushottam...*” After this, Yogi Maharaj took out some *patasas* from his bag and distributed them as prasad to the children. All the children were delighted.

Until the train arrived, the devotees were able to peacefully listen to Shastriji Maharaj’s spiritual discourses because Yogi Maharaj had engaged the children in *dhun*-kirtan and the remembrance of God. Everywhere Yogi Maharaj went, children became instantly attached to him.

Shastriji Maharaj and all the devotees were very pleased and praised Yogi Maharaj. He was truly beloved by children.