

Chapter 25

God's Darshan in Six Months!

Six months ago, when Swamishri and Mota Swami were headed to Africa, their plane had stopped at Aden airport, and the spiritually inclined Hindus of Aden had taken the opportunity of their darshan. At the time, the devotees had pleaded with Swamishri and the sadhus to spend some time in Aden on the way back from Africa.

Although Swamishri had not had time to halt in Aden, due to the devotees' insistence communicated through numerous letters, Swamishri had agreed to spend five days in Aden on his way back from Africa. Thus, from 18 to 22 October 1955, the people of Aden were blessed with Swamishri's divine presence. Even in such a short span, Swamishri had enkindled the sentiments of dharma within the local population.

Surprisingly, there were only five to seven *satsangis* in Aden. They were worried whether they would be able to welcome Swamishri with the pomp and festivity that he deserved. But due to the expansion of the Swaminarayan Sampradaya, the *satsangis* had received letters from many people in the community who were not *satsangi*, requesting that they be allowed to participate in Swamishri's reception. Thus, the city's leading citizens, as well as all the devotees and well-wishers, had gathered at the Aden airport at 7 p.m. on 18 October 1955 to welcome Swamishri with great enthusiasm and honor.

As there was no Swaminarayan mandir in the city, the sadhus were accommodated at the home of Girdharbhai Prabhudas Depala, where everyone came to have darshan of Swamishri and the sadhus as if it were a mandir.

On 19 and 20 October 1955, a public assembly was organized in the Vaishnav Mandir Haveli, during which Swamishri blessed the audience. Many devotees participated in the event. Because the venue

turned out to be too small to accommodate the large number of devotees coming to the public spiritual assembly, on 21 October, the spiritual assembly was held on the open ground of the Gujarati Education Society.

Here, Ishwarbhai of Anand (originally Palana) had come for Swamishri’s darshan. Although he was an atheist with little respect for the sadhus of any faith, he strongly felt the need to live an ethically grounded life. Because Girdharbhai Depala was his friend, he had come for Swamishri’s darshan. Within the first moments of darshan, Swamishri’s divine form unlocked the doors of his heart. He asked, “Swamiji, will you grant me the darshan of God in six months?”

“Go. It will certainly happen.” Swamishri laughed and said, “But you must accept *vartman* initiation and become a *satsangi*.”

Ishwarbhai accepted *vartman*, became a *satsangi*, and one night exactly six months later, Shriji Maharaj, Gunatitanand Swami, and

Yogiji Maharaj gave him darshan in a divine form.

By then, he had already understood that Shriji Maharaj manifests on Earth fully within this Sant. Thus, he realized that to insist on such darshan was a mark of his insufficient faith. He began to offer his service in Satsang with unwavering faith. He would ultimately end up making great contributions to the growth of Satsang in Aden.

During his short stay here, many people were attracted to Swamishri. Thinking that sadhus who had fully renounced women and wealth had come to Aden for the first time, many people invited Swamishri to sanctify their homes. However, four days was not nearly enough time to satisfy everyone. Many people pleaded with Swamishri to extend his stay, but it was not possible.

Swamishri departed from Aden at 4:15 p.m. on 22 October 1955 and headed to India.