

Chapter 25

“We Will Take You around Akshardham”

On 6 October 1955, Swamishri was scheduled to fly to Zanzibar at 1:30 p.m.

The Patel Samaj Hall in which Swamishri’s farewell assembly had been organized was packed with devotees and new spiritual aspirants even before Swamishri’s arrival. Swamishri arrived, blessed the assembly, and at 12:30 p.m., left for the airport. As Swamishri waited to board the plane, a crowd of devotees gathered around Swamishri, and he engaged them in a spiritual discussion.

When it came time for Swamishri to board the plane, all the devotees became emotional. In the span of his three-day stay, everyone had developed a profound love for Swamishri.

Swamishri arrived in Zanzibar at 2:30 p.m. A large group of pious Gujaratis had gathered

at the airport to welcome Swamishri. The sadhus’ accommodations had been arranged at the home of Swamishri’s beloved devotee, Bhaktaraj Karamshi Prabhudas of Vadgam. He had offered important service during the Mombasa *murti-pratishtha*. At night, Mota Swami addressed the assembly for ninety minutes. Then, Swamishri addressed the assembly and regaled everyone with his spiritually infused humor, to everyone’s great delight.

On 7 October 1955, a public assembly was organized so that countless spiritual aspirants on the island might get the opportunity of Swamishri’s company. Hearing the divine discourses of the sadhus and Swamishri, everyone felt, “Never before have we heard such talks.” Everyone developed an immense reverence for Swamishri upon hearing his captivating, spiritually beneficial, and scripturally grounded talks.

On 8 October 1955, Swamishri departed from Zanzibar for Nairobi by plane. The plane

had a stopover in Dar es Salaam, where countless devotees had come to the airport for Swamishri’s darshan. From Dar es Salaam, the plane had another stopover in Tanga, where many devotees crowded the airport for Swamishri’s darshan. As the plane departed from Tanga, Swamishri, the sadhus, and devotees were headed for the next stop in Mombasa. Swamishri asked C.T. Patel, “What can you see down below?”

C.T. Patel said, “I can see the Madhvani sugar plantation below.”

Swamishri said, “Oho! We have gotten here so quickly!

“Yes, Bapa! In about five minutes, we will land in Mombasa.”

Swamishri laughed and said, “Just as you are taking us around everywhere, in the same way, we will take you around Akshardham and bring you joy. You are the guide for this land, whereas we are the guide there!”

C.T. Patel thought, “Only one who resides in Akshardham can say such words.”

C.T. Patel disembarked from the plane in Mombasa. About 2,000 devotees had gathered at the Mombasa airport for Swamishri’s final darshan. Swamishri came out of the airplane, presided in the assembly, and affectionately offered some final words of wisdom. Then, taking everyone’s leave, Swamishri reboarded the plane to Nairobi.

Many devotees had also come to the Nairobi airport for Swamishri’s darshan. Swamishri then went to the mandir, where he was to spend the night. All the devotees cherished these final precious moments with Swamishri.

The next day, on 9 October 1955, Swamishri took the devotees’ leave and departed from Nairobi by plane to go to Jinja. Swamishri’s plane landed at the Jinja airport at 9:20 a.m. Around 300 devotees had gathered at the Jinja airport to welcome Swamishri. The devotees led Swamishri in a festive procession accompanied by a band through the city.

Swamishri spent several hours here and, at 3:30 p.m., left for Kampala. Since Nanjibhai had organized a *parayan* in Kampala, Swamishri had canceled several of his programs to be present here.

Countless devotees, male and female, participated in the grand procession that had been organized here. Everyone was delighted to avail of Swamishri’s darshan and discourses. But the thought that Swamishri would return to India in just a week filled everyone’s hearts with sadness. The five-day *parayan* was concluded on the morning of 13 October 1955. Swamishri left Kampala in the afternoon and traveled to Jinja, where he spent the night and imparted final words of wisdom to the local devotees. On 14 October, Swamishri granted the devotees of Tororo the bliss of his company for one day before reaching Nairobi on 15 October, where Swamishri was to stay for three days.