

Chapter 14

“Manibhai Humiliated Me by Having Me Sit Atop an Elephant”

Then, on 28 January 1947, everyone went to Salad for the remarkable *parayan* that had been organized with great enthusiasm by Manibhai Bhatt.

Manibhai had resolved to sit Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj atop an elephant and lead them in a procession through the entire village. At the conclusion of the *parayan*, Manibhai prayed to Shastriji Maharaj to accept the seat of honor in the grand procession. Seeing his pure devotion, Shastriji Maharaj agreed. Then, Manibhai requested Yogi Maharaj to join Shastriji Maharaj atop the elephant. Yogi Maharaj gently but firmly refused, saying, “I’m not suited for that. Such honor befits Shastriji Maharaj, not me. I am a servant.”

Then, Shastriji Maharaj said, “Jogi! You are not going to be sitting alone. You will be sitting with Thakorji. Moreover, your greatness is not due to an elephant. Moving forward, people will realize your greatness infinite times more than what they do today. Your greatness is due to God.”

Accepting the command of his guru, Yogi Maharaj haltingly climbed atop the elephant. When Yogi Maharaj dismounted from the elephant at the end of the procession, he said sadly, “Manibhai humiliated me by having me sit atop an elephant.”

These were the words of a Gunatit Purush to whom the honor of being borne on an elephant in a grand procession was as insignificant as a blade of grass. Moreover, how could this ideal servant be happy with receiving the honor that he felt was befitting his guru. Such sentiments were given voice by these words. It is easy to speak of equanimity in honor and insult, between garbage and gold, but it is quite difficult to live such a sentiment. Truly, to

constantly sit on the summit of equanimity like Yogi Maharaj requires the development of a state of spiritual enlightenment for which countless lives of spiritual endeavor would be insufficient!

From Salad, Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj traveled to Goriyad, Chansad, Ghaj, Sarsa, and Anand before arriving in Ahmedabad. While in Ahmedabad, Shastriji Maharaj received a message from the King of Gondal asking him to send Yogiraj to Gondal. Thus, Yogi Maharaj went to Gondal, and from there, traveled to Sarangpur for the Fuldol festival.

A deaf potter devotee served in Sarangpur mandir by churning the buttermilk to make butter and ghee. Yogi Maharaj often used to help him churn the buttermilk. Anyone who visited the mandir developed a great admiration for Yogi Maharaj’s constant engagement in service. Yogi Maharaj’s affectionate nature was such that even if someone were meeting him for the first time,

he felt like Yogi Maharaj was an old friend. This was his God-given, innate nature.