

Chapter 16

Girdharbhai's Realization

When Girdharbhai of Africa had requested Swamishri to visit his village of Valasan, Swamishri had replied, “Shastriji Maharaj has recently passed away to Akshardham. We are in mourning, so we cannot come.” Then he had said, “But, if you come with us, and travel with us, then we will go to central Gujarat.”

Girdharbhai immediately sent a telegram canceling his booking for Africa, rented a small vehicle, and set out to travel with Swamishri. From Anand, when they reached the crossroads to go to Vartal near Boriavi, Swamishri said, “Girdharbhai, take us to Vartal for Harikrishna Maharaj's darshan.”

Girdharbhai instructed the driver to go to Vartal. Swamishri did darshan in Vartal, and after doing *dandvats* to Harikrishna Maharaj, he stood before him in deep prayer. Then he traveled to Karamsad, where he fulfilled the

wishes of Shivilalbhai and other devotees before going to Valasan.

On 30 May 1951 (Vaishakh *sud* 10, V.S. 2007), Swamishri visited Valasan at the insistence of Girdharbhai and C.T. Patel. Then he visited Motibhai in Porda, Prabhudasbhai in Karoli, and Manibhai Mitralvala in Bhumel.

After visiting many homes in the village, Swamishri arrived at Ishvarbhai Bhailalbhai Patel's house. Swamishri asked, "What is the name of this village?"

Ishwarbhai said, "Bapa! It is Bhumel."

Swamishri laughed, rubbed his hand on the stone floor, and said, "Today we have removed the impurity of this earth.²"

Then, after asking who the village leaders were, Swamishri called all three of them, Ishwarbhai, Ashabhai, and Ambalalbhai, and visited their homes, granting everyone lasting memories of divine bliss.

In this way, to fulfill the wishes of the devotees in every village, Swamishri traveled

from Bhumel to Nadiad and Sandhana before arriving in Dabhan. Swamishri spoke words of strength and solace to the devotees and lightened their hearts. Until now, Swamishri had kept Girdharbhai with him and given him the four joys of darshan, spiritual discourses, prasad, and meeting. As Girdharbhai realized that Shastriji Maharaj has not left, Swamishri gave Girdharbhai leave to return to Africa. Girdharbhai had experienced that Shriji Maharaj remained present in Satsang through Swamishri.

Swamishri went to the Anand railway station to see Girdharbhai off. Girdharbhai felt pangs of separation at having to leave Swamishri. Seeing his guru at the station holding a garland of flowers to see him off, Girdharbhai's eyes welled with tears as he experienced Swamishri's motherly love, his compassion for devotees, and his intense affection. Swamishri placed the garland around his neck and affectionately bid him farewell.

Girdharbhai reached Africa ruminating upon the bliss that Swamishri had granted him. In Africa, he told the devotees, “Shastriji Maharaj has not left, but he remains forever present in Swamishri.” Now, his words rang with the force of conviction.

2 “Bhu” means earth, and “Mel” means impurity or foulness.