

## Chapter 16

### **“Deliver Discourses to the Pillars, but Attend the Sunday Sabha”**

As Swamishri traveled from Mumbai to Atladara, he met with a crowd devotees who had gathered at Surat station for darshan. One of the devotees was Harikrishna Maganbhai. Amidst the crowd of devotees, Swamishri first asked him, “How is the Sunday *sabha* going?”

Harikrishnabhai said, “Bapa, only three or four devotees attend. There is no growth. So, from this week, we will discontinue the Sunday satsang gathering and just read the texts in our own respective homes.”

“Oh, ho, ho! Three people attend!” exclaimed Swamishri with joy.

Harikrishnabhai was rendered speechless as he thought, “How is he so joyful about this?”

Swamishri said, “Guru! If none of these three come, still you should vow to conduct the

Sunday *sabha* on your own. You actually get three people to come! But, if no one comes, and you are forced to deliver discourses to the pillars, you should do that! But today, you must resolve that never again will you harbor the thought of stopping the *sabha*. You must maintain this level of zeal.”

In the precious few minutes that Swamishri was at the train station, he explained the importance of the Sunday *sabha* to Harikrishnabhai. As the train left the station, Harikrishnabhai resolved that come what may, he would continue organizing the Sunday *sabhas* and would never again harbor a negative thought about them.

Swamishri and sadhus traveled to Sarangpur for the Jal-Jhilani festival. Many devotees had arrived from central Gujarat and Saurashtra for the festival. Everyone became emotional upon seeing the place where Shastriji Maharaj had left his body. However, everyone gained the bliss and solace of Shastriji Maharaj’s darshan upon seeing Swamishri’s enchanting *murti*.

At 1 p.m., all the sadhus and devotees carried Thakorji in a palanquin and sang kirtans in a procession to the Jaliya stream pool. After performing Thakorji’s puja and *arti*, Thakorji was taken around in a small boat. Finally, after the immersion of the *murti* of Ganesh, everyone headed back at 4 p.m. Carrying Thakorji in a palanquin, Swamishri, the sadhus, and devotees sanctified all the devotees’ homes in the village. The heat of the month of Bhadarva, coupled with a waterless fast, made this Ekadashi festival difficult. Yet, Swamishri enthusiastically sanctified every devotees’ home in the village.

On 13 September 1951, Swamishri and the sadhus traveled in a small open truck to Gadhada. On the way, they stopped to visit the newly built *hari mandir* in Tajpur. Then they reached Gadhada via Ningala, all the while singing kirtans. In Gadhada, Swamishri, the sadhus, and the devotees went to the Ghela River with Thakorji. At Rama Ghat, Thakorji was taken five times around the water by boat,

interspersed with sessions of Thakorji’s puja and *arti*. Then, Swamishri, the sadhus, and the devotees bathed in the Ghela River. Just as Shriji Maharaj would grant everyone divine memories by playing with devotees in the river, Swamishri granted everyone divine memories remaining within his limits as a sadhu by pouring sanctified water on sadhus’ and devotees’ heads, making auspicious wishes, chanting *dhun*, and blessing the devotees. Swamishri would always bathe reverently in the rivers and ponds sanctified by Shriji Maharaj.

On this occasion, Bhagatji Maharaj’s disciple, Ullasrambhai of Mandala, had come specially for darshan. Swamishri welcomed him warmly. Most of the devotees who had come for the festival in Sarangpur had accompanied Swamishri to Gadhada. Moreover, Mohanbhai, the prominent businessman of Gadhada, Dadabhai Darbar, and many others, had also availed of this opportunity for Swamishri’s darshan.

At the time, a river-facing building for devotees’ accommodations was under construction. After inspecting the construction, Swamishri blessed Kothari Harijivandas for his excellent work in all aspects of mandir construction. Then, Swamishri met Sadguru Harikrishna Swami.

While in Gadhada, Swamishri received the message that Gulzarilal Nandaji had been appointed the Planning Minister in the Cabinet of the government of India and a member of the working committee of the Indian National Congress party. Everyone was pleased to hear the news. Swamishri blessed him that he would continue to progress in his career by Shastriji Maharaj’s blessings and be able to serve the Satsang community.