

Chapter 14

Glimpses of Innate Saintliness in Offering Solace to Devotees

From Anand, Yogi Maharaj set out for Ahmedabad. The original plan had been to travel to Karachi, but since that was postponed, Yogi Maharaj decided to go from Ahmedabad to Rajkot to celebrate Punam.

The sadhus were breaking their fast on the day following Ekadashi. Sanatan Swami had prepared some moong *khichdi* and yogurt and offered it to Thakorji. Then, Yogi Maharaj ate a little.

At that time, Vallabhdas had come for darshan. Yogi Maharaj called him to one side and said, “Currently, we don’t have anyone to assist us, so please come with us to Gondal. Sanatan Swami is my companion sadhu. Babubhai Kothari has `400 that have come for Gondal mandir. There is a dire need for funds in Gondal. If you come with us, you can take

the money from Babubhai, and we can get to Gondal by train.”

Vallabhdas was happy to accompany Yogi Maharaj. They went to the train station, bought tickets, and settled down in the third-class compartment of the train. Enduring the overcrowding and other physical hardships of third-class train travel, they reached Viramgam station. Since Yogi Maharaj had previously sent a letter informing Chhotubhai Manibhai of their journey, he was waiting for them at the station with *penda* and other items. While traveling, Yogi Maharaj generally didn’t have food or water, but seeing Chhotubhai’s affection, he offered the *pendas* to Thakorji and distributed them to everyone. He gave the remaining *pendas* back to Chhotubhai and said, “This is prasad. Take it home with you!”

Chhotubhai just stared. Captivated by Yogi Maharaj’s loving affection, he forgot to even insist, “Swami, please have some,” and the train left for Surendranagar. From there, when the train reached Limbdi, Vallabhdas asked,

“Instead of traveling to Rajkot for Ashadh Punam, why did you arrange your program here?”

Yogi Maharaj said, “In Limbdi, Keshubha Bapu is in jail. So, we want to go there and personally meet him.”

When the train reached Limbdi station, Jasubha Bapu, Govubha Bapu, and other Darbars were waiting there to greet them. They arranged for a horse cart to take the sadhus to Bapu’s house. That evening, Yogi Maharaj granted the devotees the divine bliss of his spiritual discourses and, after singing *cheshta*, went to sleep.

Yogi Maharaj was exhausted. Moreover, he had observed a waterless fast the previous day as it had been Ekadashi. After breaking his fast with a little *khichdi* in the morning, he had not eaten anything the entire day. It had been like a second consecutive fast! Despite his delicate health and slight frame, he endured intense hardships to perform such austerities. And yet, he found immense joy in feeding others.

The next morning, after delivering spiritual discourses to the Darbars, Yogi Maharaj went to Limbdi Jail to give blessings to Keshubha Bapu. The jailer bowed to Yogi Maharaj's feet. He opened the jail cell and summoned Keshubha Bapu. When he saw Yogi Maharaj, Keshubha began weeping and fell at Yogi Maharaj's feet. Yogi Maharaj affectionately lifted him up and embraced him. He patted him on the shoulder and affectionately consoled him, "Shriji Maharaj will make everything better."

On this occasion, the jailer and the other Darbars also teared up. Yogi Maharaj then blessed the other prisoners by giving them strong pats on the back. Then, Yogi Maharaj again offered words of comfort and consolation to Keshubha Bapu, gave him prasad, and took his leave. Astounded, the jailer felt that Yogi Maharaj was the sin-destroying Ganga coming of its own accord who washed away my and the prisoners' sins before departing!

In going to meet Keshubha Bapu, Yogi Maharaj had simultaneously blessed so many more.

At noon, after doing Thakorji's *thal*, Yogi Maharaj said, "Darbars! Sit for lunch. *Thal* is finished."

The Darbars replied, "We come to Gondal as guests, so there we eat first. But today, you have come to our house, so you should eat first. Only after you eat will we have our lunch."

At the Darbar's insistence, Yogi Maharaj and Sanatan Swami ate first and then fed the Darbars. Yogi Maharaj then personally packed lunch for Keshubha Bapu and had it sent to Limbdi Jail.

Following the afternoon discourses, in the evening, Yogi Maharaj visited the homes of Nathubhai Soni, Balubha Bapu, Jatubha Bapu, and other devotees before returning to his accommodations.

After *sandhya arti*, Yogi Maharaj sang the kirtans, "*Sant jan soi sadā mohe bhāve...*" and

“*Hāji bhalā sādhu...*”. Then, after delivering discourses briefly, Yogi Maharaj said, “Now, Sanatan Swami will address us.” As Sanatan Swami began singing kirtans, Yogi Maharaj leaned back against a cushion, closed his eyes, and appeared to be asleep. It was clear that he was exhausted. After *cheshta*, he went to sleep.

The next morning, after his puja, he ate some puffed rice. The fatigue was still evident on his face. Since he was leaving for Rajkot today, many devotees were coming to meet him.

That evening, Yogi Maharaj traveled by train to Vadhwan. There, he met the devotees who had come to the station for his darshan. After blessing them, he continued his journey and reached Rajkot at 2 a.m. The devotees who had come to the station to pick him up greeted him with *jay naad*. After blessing everyone, Yogi Maharaj traveled by horse cart to his accommodations. Finally, at 3 a.m., he went to sleep.

Since Pratapsinhji, the Darbar of Dared, was ill, the following evening, his son, Mahipatsinhji, took Yogi Maharaj by car to the hospital to visit him.

Then, from Rajkot, Yogi Maharaj took the train to Jamnagar. He went to Ramjibhai Mistry's house and delighted everyone with his discourses. Then, Yogi Maharaj said, "Mistry! Shastriji Maharaj has specifically said that he wants you to complete the work of the grand gate in Sarangpur. He has specially sent me here to inform you of this. So, you should take this opportunity to please Shastriji Maharaj."

Ramjibhai immediately agreed, and Yogi Maharaj happily blessed him.

From here, Yogi Maharaj returned to Gondal late at night. He reverently did darshan of the mandir's *shikhars*, and he went to sleep exhausted. At 4 a.m. Yogi Maharaj woke up Vallabhdas and said, "This morning, the guard rang the bell four times to signal it was 4 a.m., but he seems to have forgotten to ring the wind gong afterward."

Vallabhdas said, “Swami, since you had appeared very tired last night, I had instructed him not to sound the wind gong this morning so as not to wake you. Please sleep for two more hours. Now we are at home!”

“But guru!” said Yogi Maharaj, “Last night we were not able to get darshan of Akshar Deri! Now we will do darshan. For me, the darshan of Akshar Deri is rest. This body may be hale or ill, but we should not look to that. Today, I want to offer service in the Deri.”

Then, Yogi Maharaj had a bath, got ready, and came to Akshar Deri to offer service. After completing his puja, he performed the *artī* in Akshar Deri and then upstairs in the mandir. After that, he performed *mahapuja* in Akshar Deri.

Then he called Vallabhdas and said, “Go to the *kothar* and deposit all the donations we have received from Ahmedabad, Limbdi, Rajkot, and Jamnagar so that the risk of losing it is no longer on our heads.”

Vallabhdas went to the accounting office to deposit the donations. Yogi Maharaj was conscientious even in the smallest matters.

After *shangar arti* in the morning, Yogi Maharaj met all the sadhus individually. He was very pleased to meet Bhaktipriyadas Swami, Vasudev Swami, and the other sadhus.

Yogi Maharaj had planned to go to Ahmedabad the next day. So, Bahadursinhji, the Darbar of Ganod, took Yogi Maharaj in his car to Rajkot. In Rajkot, Yogi Maharaj again went to the hospital to visit Pratapsinhji, the Darbar of Dared. Yogi Maharaj offered him a sanctified garland and several sanctified *paans* that he had brought from Gondal. Pratapsinhji became emotional with gratitude at how much Yogi Maharaj cared for him. Moreover, at Yogi Maharaj's behest, the senior devotees of Rajkot regularly visited Pratapsinhji and made sure to provide him with whatever he needed.

After taking leave from the Darbar, Yogi Maharaj went straight to the Rajkot train station. Early the next morning, on 8 July 1947,

he reached Ahmedabad and met Shastriji Maharaj in Ambli Vali Pol. He did *dandvats* to Shastriji Maharaj and updated him on recent events. Shastriji Maharaj was very happy to hear that Ramjibhai Mistry and his masonry laborers would be coming to construct the Sarangpur mandir gate. Shastriji Maharaj said, “Great job! Only Jogi can exert such efforts. Jogi Maharaj has a special ability to make devotees happy.”

Just seeing Yogi Maharaj would bring peace to Shastriji Maharaj’s heart. Looking at Vallabhdas, Shastriji Maharaj quipped, “It looks like Jogi has brought his attendant with him.”

When everyone sat down for lunch at noon, Purushottamanand Brahmachari brought out a hot pot of dal. He was holding the pot with pincers and serving everyone when the pot suddenly slipped, and the steaming dal spilled everywhere.

Several sadhus began to scold Purushottamanand Brahmachari for his

carelessness. Yogi Maharaj, however, got up from his meal, went to Purushottamanand Brahmachari, and lovingly asked him, “You didn’t get scalded, did you?”

Yogi Maharaj anxiously began to move his hand over the Brahmachari’s clothes to check that he hadn’t been scalded by splashes of hot dal. Purushottamanand Brahmachari was certain that if Jogiraj had not come to his aid, he would have broken down in tears. It was Jogiraj’s innate nature to offer comfort to the suffering.