

Chapter 22

At Present, How Can We Earn Your Favor?

Then a devotee asked Swamishri, “Bapa, in the Swamini Vato, a question is asked about how one can earn Shriji Maharaj’s favor at present? Similarly, I am asking you how we can earn Shastriji Maharaj’s favor at present?”

Laughing, Swamishri replied, “At present, Shastriji Maharaj’s favor can be earned by supporting through mind, word, and deed the work of furthering the principle of becoming Aksharrup and worshiping Purushottam which he aimed to establish through the construction of these five mandirs. Moreover, it is in helping others develop faith in the *ekantik Sant* and strengthening their connection with the manifest God and Sant. Additionally, his favor can be earned by behaving in such a way that the codes of conduct that Shriji Maharaj established for householders and renunciants

are not flouted in any way. Finally, sadhus and devotees should maintain mutual affection and understand each other's greatness." Everyone was immensely gratified to hear such extraordinary talks.

On the following morning of 20 March 1954, Swamishri did darshan in the mandir of Maharaj dressed in saffron-colored clothes. Then, singing the kirtan, "*Kesariye vāghe kasumbal pāghe*," he went to Shastriji Maharaj's memorial shrine, where he completed fifty-one *pradakshinas*. Mohan Bhagat had made excellent arrangements for the morning assembly. Mota Swami distributed *barfi* to everyone as prasad. Then several kirtans were sung in the assembly, followed by Swamishri's recitation and explanation of the Swamini Vato. Everyone enjoyed Swamishri's talks so much, no one felt like getting up. They were completely engrossed in Swamishri's joyful, peaceful, purifying form. Then, Swamishri, the sadhus, and devotees walked to the Hanumanji Mandir for darshan. After they

returned, all the devotees joyfully celebrated Holi by sprinkling colored powder on each other. Finally, Swamishri distributed the sanctified prasad of *fagwa* by his own hand.

After celebrating the Fuldol festival, Swamishri departed for Adval with Aksharprakash Swami and Chuni Bhagat. Swamishri disembarked from the train at Rayka station. However, since his letter informing the devotees of Adval had not reached in time, no one had come to the station to pick them up. So, Swamishri picked up Aksharprakash Swami's *potlu* as well as his own. He tried to take the heavy bag of letters that Chuni Bhagat was carrying as well as Chuni Bhagat's own luggage, but Chuni Bhagat refused to give him either. Still, carrying the heavy weight of both his own and Aksharprakash Swami's luggage, Swamishri walked from the station to the village of Adval.

When the devotees of Adval received the message that Swamishri was walking from the station, they rushed to receive him on the way.

The first devotees to reach Swamishri began to insist on taking the luggage that Swamishri was carrying, but Swamishri said, “First, take the luggage from Chuni Bhagat because he is lifting a lot of weight.” Chuni Bhagat was slim and delicately framed, so Swamishri was concerned that he should not overstrain himself by carrying the extra luggage.

Swamishri possessed an innate empathy, evident in his eyes and actions, that caused him to feel the pain of any type of hardship that befell the devotees.

On 23 March 1954, after granting Nandaji darshan in Ahmedabad and traveling through the villages surrounding Atladara, Swamishri arrived at the home of Dr. Maganbhai in Bharuch. Motilal Veen, one of the city’s prominent citizens, together with other lawyers and officers benefited from Swamishri’s company.