

Chapter 25

Amidst a Torrent of Affection

On Thursday, 11 August 1955, the festival of Janmashtami was celebrated in Nairobi with great enthusiasm. In the festival assembly that night, Swamishri said, “Today is Janmashtami. It is not a day to amble in the bazaar or gaze at alluring forms. One should listen to the talks of God. One should observe all the vows. Do not play cards and other games of chance. Here, they don’t even apply the *tilak-chandlo*. Shriji Maharaj has given us this symbol which we should apply no matter where we go. Let them tease us. Even if they say the name Swaminarayan, good will come of it. Everyone should apply the *tilak-chandlo*. If we do that, it will leave an impression and increase our prestige. Hariprasad Choksi is a High Court lawyer, and he applies the *tilak-chandlo* and then goes to court.”

As he was visiting devotees' homes in Nairobi, today Swamishri went to the house of Bhudarbhai Nagardas Jajal. Swamishri said, "I know him." With these words, Swamishri pulled Bhudarbhai close and said, "We have known you since you were young. When you lived in Mojidad (Limbdi), you used to tie a red *madrasiyu* cloth around your head and wear a *panchiyu* and *kediyu*. We still remember that!"

Bhudarbhai was stunned. He thought, how much must Swamishri love me that he remembers something from forty-five years ago as if it were yesterday! Bhudarbhai became emotional. Swamishri said, "You are happy, aren't you?" Swamishri glanced at the surrounding houses and said, "This is our house." Bhudarbhai had already been swept away in this torrent of affection. Swamishri said, "Read one Vachanamrut. Deliver discourses." He instantly accepted Swamishri's commands and became a staunch *satsangi*.

From 13 August, Swamishri was to travel in the villages surrounding Nairobi. Thus,

Swamishri left Nairobi in the morning and traveled to Kijabe. In honor of Swamishri's arrival, all the shops remained shut. Everyone joined the spiritual assembly and benefited greatly from it.

In the evening, Swamishri traveled to Nakuru. Many devotees had gathered here to welcome Swamishri. The evening assembly was held in the Radha Krishna Mandir. Swamishri stayed in Nakuru for four days. The leading villagers also took this opportunity to avail themselves of Swamishri's company. Vakil Saheb of Dharmaj and Jashbhai of Bhadran were the leading devotees in Nakuru. They asked Swamishri many questions. During his stay, Swamishri established the *satsang mandal* here. Swamishri remarked, "I stayed with Swami Shastriji Maharaj for 40 years, but every day there was some new joy! Swami granted us immense bliss."

On the evening of 17 August, Swamishri traveled to Naivasha via Gilgil. A large satsang assembly had gathered in the Naivasha mandir.

Many devotees had also come by car from Nairobi.