

Chapter 11

A Vigilant Watchman for the Propagation of Upasana

In December 1938 (Magshar, V.S. 1995), Shastriji Maharaj graced the home of Kalyanjibhai Sheth in Junagadh. When Kamalshibhai of Visavadar received a letter informing him of Swamishri's arrival in Junagadh, he went first for darshan to the Junagadh mandir and then to Kalyanjibhai's house. He performed *dandvats* to Shastriji Maharaj and sat before him. Shastriji Maharaj was pleased to see Kamalshibhai.

After an exchange of pleasantries, Shastriji Maharaj began to deliver discourses:

“Pragji Bhakta, Jaga Swami, Balmukunddas Swami, and Krishnaji Ada had all become *Swamirup* through their service of Gunatitanand Swami. Throughout the Junagadh region, Balmukunddas Swami was considered to be spiritually great. Whatever he

willed came to be. When you had gone to retrieve Yogi Maharaj, he had told you, ‘This Jogi has come to inspire hundreds of thousands to worship God. He won’t return home at your request because he was born to become Aksharrup and propagate the pure *upasana* of Purushottam and inspire countless *jivas* to worship God. Hundreds of thousands of people will be drawn to him, and he will bring glory to your family throughout the world. Jogi will greatly expand Satsang.’ At that time, you had laid claim to one-tenth of his spiritual merit in return for letting him become a sadhu. But then Yogi Maharaj came to us. Thus, you felt that the one-tenth portion of his spiritual merit had ceased to accrue to you. We had previously discussed all of this.

“Jogi Maharaj remains as great as ever. Had he remained in Junagadh, no one would have understood his greatness as described by Balmukund Swami. Over there, he would not have been able to have this level of spiritual impact on the Satsang fellowship as he would

have been subject to the restrictions of Vartal and the mandir's *kothari*; whereas here, he is not restricted by anyone. He lives with the singular focus of fulfilling my wishes and serving everyone. He keeps everyone happy. Even by spending tens of millions of rupees, one cannot get a sadhu like Jogi Maharaj. Vyas Bhagwan wrote about the virtues of a sadhu in the scriptures, and those virtues, as well as any others he may have forgotten to write, can all be witnessed in Jogi Maharaj.

“You are his brother. You have deep sentiments of friendship, affection, and love for him. Therefore, your liberation is ensured. But because of your meek nature, you are unable to renounce your ties with other sadhus. Thus, you cannot openly join in what you know to be the truth. But we know that you have profound love for us. So, stay very strong. Whenever you travel to Junagadh, make sure you visit Gondal. By coming to visit us regularly, your affection along with your sense of belonging will increase.” After showering Kamalshibhai with

warmth and hospitality, Shastriji Maharaj saw him off.

Shastriji Maharaj had made an official request for land in the Prakashpuri area of Junagadh, but it was denied. Shastriji Maharaj had planned to visit Una, but he changed his mind and wrote a letter to Kamalshibhai in Visavadar, saying, “We are coming to visit you.” However, the letter did not reach Kamalshibhai in time. So, when Shastriji Maharaj, Nirgundas Swami, Yogi Maharaj, and a *parshad* reached Visavadar on the 12:30 p.m. train, there were no devotees at the station to receive them. So, the sadhus carried their *potlas* on their heads and walked to the mandir without a porter. When they reached the mandir, they had a devotee go to other devotees’ homes to inform them that sadhus had arrived in the mandir.

Shastriji Maharaj’s letter finally arrived in the mail at 4 p.m. that day. But, by then, the message had been passed to all the devotees in Visavadar and the nearby Kalasari. So, that

evening, everyone gathered in the mandir for a spiritual assembly.

Nirgundas Swami captivated everyone with his explanation of Vachanamrut Gadhada I 67. Explaining the glory of Shastriji Maharaj, he said, “Even Swami Balmukunddasji, who was considered the guru of the entire Junagadh region, believed in Akshar Purushottam. In every mandir in the region, he installed the painted *murtis* of Akshar Purushottam Maharaj and propagated the true knowledge of *upasana*. Similarly, Shastriji Maharaj constructed *shikharbaddha mandirs*, revealing true *upasana* to the entire world. We are sons of the same parents. Gunatitanand Swami, the incarnation of Akshardham, is the guru of us all. So, if you all support us and we work together, victory bells will surely toll for Akshar Purushottam *upasana*.”

Nirgundas Swami spoke like this for two hours, whereby the devotees realized the limitless glory of Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj.

The next day, the sadhus visited the homes of all the devotees in the town. In the evening, a large group of devotees assembled for the discourses, as people had found Nirgundas Swami's talks from the day before to be very compelling. Today, Shastriji Maharaj asked Yogi Maharaj to deliver the evening discourses.

Yogi Maharaj recited some Swami Vato and began to explain: "By constructing mandirs dedicated to becoming Aksharrup and worshiping Purushottam, Shastriji Maharaj has laid open our pathway to liberation. So, it is our duty to support his work. What support can we offer? We can go to Gondal for darshan of Akshar Deri. Perform *pradakshina*, participate in the *mahapuja*, and inspire others to do the same. When we go for darshan to Gadhada or Vartal, we should also do darshan at the Sarangpur and Bochasan mandirs. Share your testimony of faith with a handful of people close to you. In doing so, you will have supported Shastriji Maharaj's work.

“The other thing we must understand is that amidst all our worldly affairs, we should seize every opportunity to please Shastriji Maharaj. There is a parable illustrating this point. Once, a horse became thirsty. Its rider noticed a nearby farmer drawing water using a *kosh*¹, so the rider took the horse there to quench its thirst. However, the operation of the *kosh*, with its system of pulleys and ropes, made a ‘kichaduk-kichaduk’ noise that spooked the horse, and it shied away from the watercourse. As the horse was unable to quench his thirst due to the noise, the rider asked the farmer, ‘Brother, please stop operating this *kosh*, so that this ‘kichaduk-kichaduk’ noise stops.’ The farmer replied, ‘My dear rider, if I stop operating this *kosh*, the water will stop flowing into the basin. Then how will this horse be able to drink? So, if you want to quench your horse’s thirst, it will have to be while the ‘kichaduk-kichaduk’ noise continues. Otherwise, you will not get any water.’

“What is the point of this parable? We have met a great saint like Shastriji Maharaj, so we should please him by doing his darshan, offering our service, and staying in his company. Many devotees say, ‘If you join with Junagadh or Vartal, then we will accept you.’ But if we join with them, they will place many restrictions upon us to prevent us from openly propagating the true knowledge of Akshar Purushottam. So, despite the ‘kichaduk-kichaduk’ noise you have to tolerate, you must drink water from where it is available. Shastriji Maharaj has lifted the Mt.Goverdhan of *upasana*. So, we should raise our finger to lend our support, and in offering some minuscule service, our *jiva*’s work will be accomplished.

“At present, Shastriji Maharaj has let flow a veritable Ganga of the knowledge of Akshar Purushottam. Others will accuse you of joining the rebels. But only if you ignore that will you be able to understand this work of Shriji Maharaj and join in it to benefit from this opportunity to serve. Great *paramhansas* did

not have such an opportunity to serve, which Shastriji Maharaj has compassionately given to us. So, you should join in it.”

His talks, rising out of an unparalleled conviction, shook spiritual aspirants out of their *upasana*-related stupor of ignorance. Yogi Maharaj explained the glory of Shastriji Maharaj. Such talks from the watchman of *upasana*, Yogiji Maharaj, coupled with the spiritually pristine character of Shastriji Maharaj, granted all the assembled devotees an experience of the bliss of Brahman.

This duo of Nirgun-Yogi remained constantly involved in propagating Shastriji Maharaj’s divine glory and the true knowledge of Akshar Purushottam. Their experience-laden words inspired everyone to connect with the Satpurush.

In this way, Yogi Maharaj would regularly travel throughout the region surrounding Gondal and propagate satsang as well as the glory of Akshar Mandir before returning to his responsibilities in Gondal.

1 In order to irrigate their fields through the eight-month dry season, farmers often drew large quantities of water from a well with a *kosh*. Using a rope and pulley, farmers would lower a large leather pail into a well. Then, attaching the other end of the rope to a pair of oxen, they would drive the oxen to lift the water from the well and empty it into an adjacent trough. The oxen would be driven back and forth to draw water from the well. The leather pail was called a *kosh*, but it lent its name to the entire apparatus.