

Chapter 9

On a Pilgrimage with Shastriji Maharaj

Accompanying Shastriji Maharaj on the pilgrimage of Sorath were Vignandas Swami, Yogi Maharaj, Narayancharandas Swami, Aksharpurushdas Swami, Bhaktivallabhdas Swami, Ramji Lakshman Mavadiya, Bapubha Saheb, Ramchandra Thakar, and other devotees.

After doing darshan in Agatrali and Meghpur, everyone traveled to Mangrol. Here, Dr. Arjunbhai Gagabhai had provided provisions for their meal. However, the strenuous pace of the pilgrimage and the long journey by bullock cart had exhausted all the sadhus, and as soon as they reached the accommodations arranged by Dr. Arjunbhai, they went straight to sleep. Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj remained awake and began preparing everyone's meal. Yogi Maharaj

insisted that Shastriji Maharaj rest and that he would prepare the food single-handedly. However, Shastriji Maharaj worked with Yogi Maharaj to prepare all the food. After they offered *thal* to Thakorji, they woke the sadhus and devotees and served them dinner. Then, they sat on the bullock carts that Dr. Arjunbhai had rented and went to Loj, Panchala, Kalvani, Upleta, and Bhader before finally arriving in Manavadar.

They made their accommodations in the Manavadar mandir. They did darshan at all the sanctified spots around the village, and by the time they returned to the mandir, Ishwaranandji Brahmachari had prepared an excellent meal for them, which he served with great affection. He was a disciple of Brahmachari Krishnaswarupanandji, and thus, he had great love and reverence for Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj. Kanjibhai and Thakarsibhai of Manavadar also offered their sincere service and pleased Shastriji Maharaj.

The sadhus continued onwards from Manavadar to Gondal. Here, Brahmachari Ghanshyamanandji arranged for their accommodation in the mandir and served a meal to the sadhus and devotees.

In the evening, they went to Akshar Deri for darshan. Here, Shastriji Maharaj said, “Bhagatji Maharaj and great sadhus have declared that a large mandir will be built here in the future.” Then, everyone did *dandvats* and *pradakshina* of Akshar Deri, and in this sacred place, prayed to Aksharbrahma Gunatitanand Swami, “Swami! O compassionate one! For how much longer will you keep this divine place desolate and reside here alone?”

Yogi Maharaj swayed from side to side in ecstasy as he continued doing *pradakshina* of Akshar Deri.