

# Chapter 25

## **An Exposition on Satsang, Shraddha, and Vishvas**

On the morning of Sunday, 31 July 1955, Swamishri visited the home of Prabhudasbhai, which served as the local mandir. Here, he installed new *murtis* and did *arti*. As Swamishri was leaving from Prabhudasbhai's house, he stood in the doorway and said, “*Mandal ni Jay...Ashirvad ni Jay...Mandir ni Jay...*”.

Then, Swamishri traveled to Ranchhodbhai's ginnery in Nazigo. All the devotees had also arrived there in about thirty cars and lorries. Around 500 devotees had lunch, and there was a splendid spiritual assembly.

At 4 p.m., Swamishri offered his blessings to all, saying, “Everyone should visit the mandir every evening.” As Swamishri was departing from Kampala, the devotees' eyes were wet with tears. Swamishri had granted everyone divine

bliss. From today, the devotees would no longer benefit from Swamishri's divine presence, so naturally everyone, big and small, experienced the pain of separation.

Swamishri reached Jinja in the evening. In the assembly at 9:15 p.m., Swamishri said, "Develop *atmabuddhi* with the Satpurush similar to that which one has for one's body, one's relatives, and places of pilgrimage. A holy abode of pilgrimage—sixty-eight places of pilgrimage reside in the feet of the Sant. We do not know all their names, but they reside in the Sant. Turning the *mala* and chanting God's name means that we have begun walking on the path, but to attach one's *jiva* to the Sant is satsang. We hear and deliver discourses on satsang topics, but how much have we imbibed in our life? Do you experience its exhilaration? When one becomes intoxicated with spirits, just see the exhilaration that is experienced! When true conviction occurs in the *jiva*, then no attachment to anything else will remain. Satsang is the Truth that is Paramatma and the

shastras and the Truth that is the *ekantik Sant*. If we experience their true influence, then we will be spiritually exhilarated.

“There was once a Nawab of Junagadh. He lost the ability to produce saliva. A Barot heard of this and went to him. He said, ‘Here, let me treat you.’ The Barot took some sour substances and made a chutney out of them. He had the Nawab eat it, and he started producing saliva again. The Nawab gave him land that yielded `5,000 of profit a year. The sourness made his mouth water. We have not fully cultivated our internal satsang as it should be. If we go from here to the bazaar, our mouth begins to water for the bazaar.

“This is a topic that transcends *maya*. But the zeal for it has not awakened within us. ‘Sugarcane bagasse is very tasty; let me eat some.’ Would anyone say that? One could properly cultivate one’s satsang only if one understands its true glory.

“Unity should be maintained within Satsang. When mango trees bear fruit, they bow low. But

when castor oil plants and similar species grow, they rise up. Similarly, we must bow before those who possess the virtues of God. The devotion of servanthood is the greatest. One attains that through the grace of the Satpurush.

“Just as the presence of weeds in a plantation would spoil the yield, similarly when we have set out to attain *ekantik dharma*, if we uproot anger, ego and similar vices, God would be ready to stay forever with us. God would stay right with us; he would not step away. This is what we must do. When such a garden blossoms, fountains of joy will spring forth from within.”

As soon as Swamishri said this, the lights suddenly went out. Swamishri remarked, “So is it for our body as well. It can fall at any time. Thus, for the next three days, take the opportunity to do satsang.”

At 11 a.m. on Shravan *sud* Punam, Swamishri visited Owen Falls on the Nile River. Swamishri granted all the sadhus and devotees the bliss of Brahman. Swamishri and the

sadhus bathed in the river after which the devotees bathed as well. Brahmin devotees changed their *janois*. Then Swamishri led everyone in the *dhun* for many auspicious wishes.

On 4 August 1955, Swamishri traveled to Tororo.

Addressing the assembly at night, Swamishri recounted how in Junagadh, Pragji Bhakta went to call Mt. Girnar at Swami's behest and said, "This is called *vishvas* (trust). This is called *shraddha* (faith). God enters into one's heart. Never harbor any doubts. Resolve to follow their commands implicitly. If we possess that level of trust, God comes to our aid; he watches over us. If we trust the words of the Satpurush, he becomes pleased with us.

"King Pruthu asked for 10,000 ears in order to better hear spiritual discourses. No matter if one has only two ears, one should maintain such eagerness to listen to spiritual discourses as if one had 10,000 ears. One should never be sated with respect to God's *murti*. Listening to

spiritual discourses would increase one's eagerness, provide one with strength, and leave one feeling spiritually exhilarated. Without it, one would become spiritually enfeebled. Maharaj propagated the practice of listening to spiritual discourses five times a day. What do we have to do? We have to keep satsang primary in our life. If one listens to and delivers discourses with intensity, it would sustain one's spiritual vigor.

“No matter how much we serve or develop *atmabuddhi*, it would still not be enough. No matter how many spiritual discourses we deliver, we need to keep our target firmly in our sights. Our target is *atmabuddhi*—if we divert from that, we have lost our purpose.

“The true characteristic is to have *atmabuddhi* for the devotees of God. If someone has spoken the name of Swaminarayan by accident, we should make shoes for him from our own skin. That is *atmabuddhi*. What would we not do? If we consolidate such a conviction, then we can

understand the true glory. There is nothing else to do. When one constantly perceives God's devotees as divine and fountains of joy spout upon seeing one another, then one can be said to have attained *atmabuddhi*. Shastriji Maharaj used to say just this.

“We need *atmabuddhi* and loyalty. Only then can we be said to be children of Gunatit, who have made worldly affairs secondary. Through *samagam* one's deficiencies dissolve, one experiences constant joy, and one feels as if one is sitting in Akshardham. If we had not met a great soul like Shastriji Maharaj, then our work would have remained incomplete.

“The extent that we can perceive them as completely flawless is the extent to which we would develop virtues and gain spiritual strength. The more we serve, the stronger we become spiritually. People spend hundreds of thousands of rupees in their worldly affairs, whereas this is for God and the Sant. If we understand them to be free of worldly desires, they would make us free of worldly desires. As

one continues to do *samagam*, one's flaws would continue to be eradicated.

“After we leave here, Satsang will grow a lot. Because you all have fulfilled Shastriji Maharaj's wish, that will leave a strong impression on everyone.

“We could not obtain this opportunity, this association, and this understanding of their glory even if we went looking for it. Speak words of strength. Remain without doubts. If you engage in negative talks, then you should fast as penance. In this universe, we have attained the Sant, therefore there is no one more fortunate than us. This attainment has come through Shastriji Maharaj's grace. How else could we have possibly attained this association? So we should strive greatly, maintain such unity, and become the servant of the servant.

“We have appointed Harmanbhai, Ranchhodbhai, Tribhovandas, C.T. Patel, and Ambalal as the seniors. Do as they instruct. Two years hence rent a steamer of our own and



come. We will come to Mumbai to receive you. The *kalashes* will rise and *sinhasans* will be completed in Gadhada. Then we will perform an *arti* of thousands of wicks and take you on a pilgrimage around the five sacred pilgrimage places in Sorath. We want to leave you with such spiritual fare that you realize there is no pilgrimage place like the pilgrimage place in the form of manifest God. Let this be your final birth. Many people will attend.”

As he departed from Uganda, Swamishri left everyone with divine words of wisdom that they would cherish. Every word was imbued with the radiance of enthusiasm, love, God’s glory, and sentiments of divinity. Everyone had become immersed in his speech. The bonds of *maya* had dissolved. Such was his divine speech!