

Chapter 13

Expert in Nirdosh Buddhi

From Panchala, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogi Maharaj, and the sadhus traveled to Liyara, and at 10 p.m. they reached Manavadar. Shastriji Maharaj had a high fever, yet, the next day, riding on a bullock cart, he sanctified thirty-five homes around the village. From here, Shastriji Maharaj wanted to catch the Porbandar line train from Jetalsar junction. Two carriages were sitting opposite one another at some distance from the platform.

Shastriji Maharaj, Nirgundas Swami, Yogi Maharaj, and Arjunbhai were traveling together. Shastriji Maharaj stood next to one of the carriages and told Yogi Maharaj, “Come to this carriage.” So, Yogi Maharaj, lifting everyone’s luggage, walked towards that carriage. Then Nirgundas Swami, who was standing next to the other carriage, called out, “Come over here.” So, Yogi Maharaj, still

carrying all the luggage, began to walk in that direction.

Then, one after the other, Shastriji Maharaj and Nirgundas Swami continued to call out to him to come to where they were respectively standing. So, Yogi Maharaj, carrying seven to eight *potlas*, walked from one carriage to the other. This continued for about fifteen minutes. Shastriji Maharaj said, “The carriage I am standing next to will go.” And Nirgundas Swami said, “This carriage will be joined to the train.” Without the slightest frustration, Yogi Maharaj continued to go back and forth, carrying everyone’s luggage.

Meanwhile, an announcement was made that both carriages would be joining the train. So, everyone went to the carriage Shastriji Maharaj was standing next to and sat down together. As soon as Yogi Maharaj sat down, he began laughing heartily and said with complete *nirdoshbhav*, “Today was really hilarious. Swami performed a weighty exploit. He gave great bliss!”

In such a situation, even staunch devotees would be unable to prevent their intellect from raising doubts about their elders' behavior. At the very least, they would definitely make a suggestion. But Yogi Maharaj's perspective of divinity not only remained wholly uneclipsed, but his enthusiasm and joy increased from this incident! As he possessed such expert devotion to the guru and understanding of both the guru and *sadgurus'* greatness, it was no wonder that the entire Satsang community considered Yogi Maharaj to be a Gunatit being of Akshardham!

Contentment shone on Shastriji Maharaj's face as he looked over, showering his inexpressible favor upon Yogi Maharaj. Then, at the beginning of November 1942, Yogi Maharaj went to Gondal to prepare for the Annakut festival.

Yogi Maharaj summoned a confectioner from the town and gave him an order for sweets. According to his list of provisions, Yogi Maharaj himself went to the storeroom to measure out the flour, ghee, vegetable oil, and

other raw materials that the confectioner required. After measuring out the required quantity of provisions, Yogi Maharaj would put a small note in each vessel stating, “This flour-sugar-ghee is for *mohanthal*,” “This is for *motaiya* laddus,” “This is for *bundi* laddus,” “This is for *sata*.” Within 3 to 4 days, Yogi Maharaj had all the required provisions separated. The confectioner wouldn’t have to make any extra effort. When the confectioner completed his task, Yogi Maharaj would have a Brahmin serve him food, and Yogi Maharaj would stand there and insist that he take more. Yogi Maharaj would also ensure that the confectioner was served water and tea at the appropriate times. In this way, it was Yogiji Maharaj’s distinctive nature to ensure he had taken care of every individual’s needs. This loving nature made him beloved of all.

If extra utensils were required, Yogi Maharaj would properly wash them and supply them to the confectioner. He wouldn’t simply delegate or blindly trust anyone in order to save him the

effort, but he assumed this responsibility himself to maintain the cleanliness and ritual protocol of Thakorji's food preparation. Once the foodstuff was prepared, Yogi Maharaj was always ready to shape the sweets into balls, cut the *mohanthal* into squares, arrange the sweets on dishes, or do whatever was required. He was always ready and willing. At that time, Hariswarupdas Swami was responsible for managing the kitchen and Thakorji's *thal*, and Yogi Maharaj served as his assistant. Yogi Maharaj would also be in the mandir to perform all five *artis*, and in Akshar Deri to perform the *arti* twice a day. He would bring the *thal* to Akshar Deri every morning and evening. In this way, his entire day was filled with *seva*. Fatigue was not even a part of his vocabulary. He constantly had a smile on his face.

On Annakut day, Yogi Maharaj and Harijivandas Swami arranged all the items in front of Thakorji. Yogi Maharaj was also an expert in arranging the Annakut. His artistic

sense was readily apparent to all. Yogi Maharaj would arrange the wooden steps before Thakorji and spread a red cloth atop the steps. On the highest steps he would place dishes of *mesur*, *jalebi*, *sata*, and other rich sweets. Below that would be various other items. In between two items, he would arrange *fafada* and *mathiya*. He would place various fruits in the empty spaces, and on top of each dish of sweets, he would put a wrapped *paan*. He would decorate the surroundings with rods of sugarcane. After such a strenuous effort, one's enthusiasm to sing the *thal* would naturally decline, but for Yogi Maharaj, he was feeding the manifest form of God. So he would sing five *thals*. In between, he would offer water, and at the end, he would perform the *arti* and offer *dandvats*. For Yogi Maharaj, the Annakut season was an extremely auspicious festival to lovingly indulge Thakorji with all one's devotion!

Devotees from the town of Gondal and the surrounding villages would throng the mandir

for darshan of the Annakut. After performing the Annakut *arti* at noon, Yogi Maharaj would feed all the sadhus and devotees. In the evening, Yogi Maharaj would arrange selected items onto trays, cover them with a clean cloth, and take them with a companion sadhu to the palace of the Maharaja. The Maharaja would be happy to receive the prasad from Yogi Maharaj. After giving the prasad, Yogi Maharaj would invite him to the mandir for darshan.

After returning to the mandir, Yogi Maharaj would prepare baskets of prasad to distribute to the villages. Then he would load the baskets into the mandir's bullock cart and first visit the village of Devchadi. He would take with him Purushottamvallabh Swami or some other sadhu. Before leaving the mandir, he would ask the driver, "Have you given the bullocks enough water to drink?" After he reached the villages, he would not forget the driver. He would tell the driver, "Come, let's eat." After feeding him, Yogi Maharaj would send him back to Gondal. This was Yogi Maharaj's routine every year.

From here, Yogi Maharaj would continue traveling through the villages to distribute the Annakut prasad.

In the villages, all the devotees would gather at the mandir in the evening. Yogi Maharaj would take note of their tithes of wheat or peanuts, and his accompanying sadhu would wrap packets of Annakut prasad and distribute them to the devotees. Yogi Maharaj would affectionately meet everyone who came, calling them by name. He would inquire about their welfare and would affectionately urge them regarding their tithes, “Try to progress from last year. Here, the more you give, the more you get!” Thus, he would make everyone laugh and, through humor encourage them towards the path of good action.