

Chapter 15

Yogi Belongs to the Whole Universe

The groundbreaking ceremony of the Gadhada mandir had not yet occurred. At the time, funds were needed for some essential expenses, including repairs on Gadhada's *hari mandir*. Harijivandas Swami conveyed this to Yogi Maharaj. As the devotees of Rajkot had come to Gadhada for darshan, Yogi Maharaj informed them of this need and inspired them to donate the requisite funds for the *hari mandir*.

Yogi Maharaj was about to embark on his travels through the surrounding villages, so he asked Harijivan Swami for some *kanthis*. Harijivan Swami replied, "We have run out of *kanthis*. Once I find the appropriate person, I will order some more." In reality, he had a stock of *kanthis* but refused to give any to Yogi Maharaj. Yogi Maharaj remained silent and left for his travels through the villages.

A few days later, on 25 June 1949, Shastriji Maharaj arrived in Gadhada from Sarangpur. Nirgundas Swami, Narayanswarupdas Swami, Aksharpriyadas Swami, Govindsinh Chudasama, and others had gone to Sarangpur and made a case to Shastriji Maharaj to “build the mandir on the hill.” Accordingly, Shastriji Maharaj had come to Gadhada to survey and map out the land.

While they were all going for darshan to the sanctified spots around town, Nirgundas Swami raised the question that had been roiling in his mind for several days. He asked Shastriji Maharaj, “Swami! At Kothari Harijivandas Swami’s behest, Yogi Maharaj inspired the devotees of Rajkot to donate a significant amount for the work in Gadhada, yet Harijivandas refused to give Jogi a handful of *kanthis*. His behavior must have upset Jogi.”

Shastriji Maharaj replied, “One who is the Satpurush would never get upset, and he who gets upset cannot be said to be the Satpurush. Jogi is a Satpurush. He would never get upset.”

Nirgundas Swami was relieved.

After darshan at the sanctified spots around the town, everyone returned to their accommodations. In the ensuing conversation, Govindsinh Chudasama said, “For many years, you have nourished a desire to build a mandir here according to Shriji Maharaj’s wish. You want to spend hundreds of thousands of rupees to build a marble mandir. So, if Yogi Maharaj stays here to give impetus to the work, it will be doubly beneficial.”

Shastriji Maharaj emphatically said, “We can’t keep Jogi in Gadhada. He belongs to the whole universe!” Govindsinh Chudasama was stunned. He was grateful to witness this additional facet of “Yogi” from Shastriji Maharaj.

Shastriji Maharaj stayed in Gadhada for three days before returning to Sarangpur.

In Nairobi, Himabhai Patel's friendship with Shivabhai had drawn him towards the Satsang fellowship. Then, spending time with Jashbhai

Gard, Harmanbhai, Maganbhai, and other devotees had helped his satsang develop further.

During this period, when Himabhai came to India, Nirgundas Swami wrote a letter asking him to come to Bhadran to meet. Himabhai went to Bhadran and had Nirgundas Swami's darshan. Nirgundas Swami wrote a note to Rasikbhai Secretary in Ahmedabad to make arrangements for Himabhai to visit Sarangpur. Accordingly, Himabhai traveled to Sarangpur.

He had darshan of Shastriji Maharaj in his room. Shastriji Maharaj inquired about Himabhai's background and made arrangements for his accommodations and meals. Himabhai was touched by Shastriji Maharaj's care, and he asked Shastriji Maharaj to offer him *vartman* and make him a *satsangi*.

The next day, when Himabhai went to take his leave from Shastriji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj told him, "Jogi Maharaj is traveling in the surrounding villages. Once he returns, have his darshan and then go."

Himabhai waited for two more days, yet Yogi Maharaj did not arrive in Sarangpur. On the third day, Himabhai told Shastriji Maharaj, “Now, I can wait no longer and must go. So, compassionate one, please give me leave to go.”

Shastriji Maharaj replied, “You cannot leave without having darshan of Jogi Maharaj. Let us send someone to call him here.”

Shastriji Maharaj sent a devotee to summon Yogi Maharaj from the surrounding villages. At Shastriji Maharaj’s command, Yogi Maharaj immediately returned to Sarangpur. He performed *dandvats* to Shastriji Maharaj and inquired about his health, “You are happy?”

Shastriji Maharaj immediately said, “Meeting a sadhu like you makes me happier.”

Then Shastriji Maharaj introduced Himabhai to Yogi Maharaj and asked Yogi Maharaj to bless him.

Shastriji Maharaj and Yogi Maharaj both blessed Himabhai, packed some prasad for him, and gave him leave. Himabhai was very

surprised by Shastriji Maharaj's repeated insistence that he leave only after having Yogi Maharaj's darshan. Although he was dazzled by Yogi Maharaj's loving smile and affectionate speech, only after Shastriji Maharaj returned to Akshardham and Yogi Maharaj succeeded him as guru did Himabhai realize why Shastriji Maharaj had insisted that he stay and meet Yogi Maharaj that day.¹

On Devshayani Ekadashi, Shastriji Maharaj instructed Yogi Maharaj to go from Sarangpur to Adval and then to Gondal. Shastriji Maharaj was unable to travel to Bochasan for the Guru Punam festival due to his extremely delicate health. During that period, the severity of Shastriji Maharaj's illness frightened everyone. Shastriji Maharaj would lose consciousness while his body burned with a high fever.

On 26 July 1949, Shastriji Maharaj told his attendants, "Call Jogi."

His attendant said, "Bapa, Yogi Maharaj in Gondal."

Shastriji Maharaj replied, “Call him from there.”

So, a message was sent, and Yogi Maharaj immediately came from Gondal to Sarangpur. He inquired about Shastriji Maharaj’s health and sat with him for a bit. Then, Shastriji Maharaj said, “Now, go back to Gondal!”

Yogi Maharaj humbly said, “As you wish, Swami,” and departed for Gondal.

¹ After Himabhai had darshan of Yogi Maharaj in Sarangpur, he had darshan of Yogi Maharaj again in Nairobi in 1955. At that time, he and his four sons, Bhaskarbhai, Krushnakantbhai, Sureshbhai, and Nareshbhai, all developed a deep affection for Yogi Maharaj.

When Yogi Maharaj came to Nairobi again in 1959, Bhaskarbhai had applied for a salesman job at the Mercantile Bank, and he asked Yogi Maharaj for blessings that he might get the job. Yogi Maharaj blessed him and said, “Go, you will get that job.”

The very next day, Bhaskarbhai got an offer letter from the bank informing him that he had been hired.