

# Chapter 14

## **Forever Engrossed in the Service of Devotees**

Before long, Shastriji Maharaj's 85th birthday celebrations were upon them. Massive crowds of devotees from all corners of Gujarat were flowing to Atladara. Nirgundas Swami, Yogi Maharaj, Narayanswarupdas Swami, and other sadhus had worked very hard to make excellent arrangements for the countless devotees. Yogi Maharaj showered his affection upon the arriving devotees, feeding them, serving them, and inquiring about their welfare.

In the main festival assembly, Shastriji Maharaj was weighed against an equal weight of sugar crystals, which were then weighed against gold. This divine devotion to the guru and subsequent hails of victory reverberated in all directions.

The night before the celebration, everyone had gone to sleep wherever they found space. In the mandir, in the village, on the outskirts of the village—whether they found a comfortable spot or not, no one cared.

C.T. Patel of Mombasa began to search for a spot to sleep after 11 p.m., but there was not even an inch of open space anywhere to be found. He continued searching until the clock struck midnight. When he reached the mandir kitchen, he found that Yogi Maharaj was still awake, quietly sitting and turning the *mala*. As C.T. Patel approached him, Yogi Maharaj asked, “You’re still awake?”

C.T. Patel replied, “I’ll go to sleep soon, but why are you still awake? You must be exhausted, so why are you burning the midnight oil?”

Laughing, Yogi Maharaj, “This is a festival, and devotees will arrive late at night. I am staying awake to help them with necessary arrangements when they arrive.”

With that, Yogi Maharaj got up and made arrangements for C.T. Patel to sleep. From that moment, C.T. Patel began to perceive divinity in this great soul of Akshardham, who remained vigilant in serving devotees in the middle of the night.