

Chapter 13

Vidyadhikari Bows to Jogi's Sentiment of Service

Due to Yogi Maharaj's loving and insistent letters of invitation, many distinguished spiritual aspirants came to Bochasan for this auspicious occasion. The education minister of Gondal, Chandubhai Patel, had come to Bochasan for the first time due to his profound love for Yogi Maharaj.

After vigorous spiritual discourses and kirtans in the evening, everyone dispersed. Late at night, Chandubhai had to use the toilet. However, he was a complete stranger to this place, and he did not know where to go. Where could he find water to wash up? Moreover, where would he find a lantern or a wick to see where he was going? Thus, Chandubhai became terribly flustered. Although he tried to look around, he felt helpless in the dark night. He woke up two or three people to ask, but the

local devotees of central Gujarat could not understand his situation.

Just then, Yogi Maharaj walked past with a lantern in his hand. Seeing him, Chandubhai was perplexed. How could he ask Yogi Maharaj about such a thing? However, upon seeing Chandubhai, Yogi Maharaj instantly understood the situation and said, “You need to visit the toilet? Come with me.” So saying, Yogi Maharaj quickly filled up a gourd with water, and holding the lantern, led Chandubhai to the toilet block. Chandubhai was astounded by the thought that here is the mahant of Akshar Mandir, a great sadhu venerated by thousands, who is so naturally taking care of a householder like me!

When Chandubhai returned from the toilet, Yogi Maharaj helped him wash his hands. Although Chandubhai was such a shrewd person that he would think a hundred times before bowing his head to someone, this incident impacted him profoundly as he was overwhelmed by Yogi Maharaj’s loving-

kindness. Throughout his life, he ruminated on this incident and would routinely lose himself in the incomparable image of Jogi that he had witnessed that night. What was distinctive about Yogi Maharaj was that although he spoke few words in his interactions with people, his profound affection laid such deep roots in people's hearts that even life's worst circumstances could not wither them.

On 17 January 1945, the second day of the festival was celebrated with great enthusiasm. There were countless ebullient speeches and kirtans. The presence of the sadhus lent a sense of auspiciousness to the entire atmosphere. Nirgundas Swami, Yogi Maharaj, Bhaktivallabh Swami, Narayanswarupdas Swami, Aksharapurushottam das Swami, Aksharswarupdas Swami, Balmukunddas Swami, Harivallabhdas Swami, Govind Swami, Aksharjivandas Swami, and the other sadhus offered their untiring service to make the event possible.

Moreover, during the festival, countless dignitaries offered their goodwill to Shastriji Maharaj. Chandulal Vidyadhikari said in his speech, “I have also had the opportunity to come into close contact with Paramatma-Swarup Swamishri’s two great sadhu disciples. They are Pujya Gnajivandasji and Pujya Nirgundas Swami.” Then he narrated in detail the incident in which the Swaminarayan mantra had saved Yogi Maharaj from succumbing to a deadly cobra bite.

“The powers of ‘Jnan’ (knowledge) and ‘Nirgun’ (transcendence) are intimately connected with and surround the ‘Yagna.’ Pujya Swamishri has created great *shikharbaddha mandirs*, but he has also created amazing ambulatory mandirs as well. Pujya Swami Gnajivan Swami and Nirgun Swami are those ambulatory mandirs.” Everyone was thrilled by his speech.

Afterward, everyone dispersed, overflowing with enthusiasm and singing the praises of Shastriji Maharaj and the celebration.

After the Fulldol and Swaminarayan Jayanti festivals, the *patotsav* of Gondal mandir was celebrated in the month of Vaishakh. On 24 May 1945 (Vaishakh sud 13, V.S. 2001), Yogi Maharaj traveled to Porbandar, where the devotees had organized a Swamini Vato *parayan*.

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On Monday, 18 June 1945, when Shastriji Maharaj arrived in Sarangpur from Ahmedabad, Yogi Maharaj was in Adval. As soon as he heard of Shastriji Maharaj's arrival, he immediately traveled to Sarangpur.