

Chapter 5

Sadhu Initiation

The time had come for Jina Bhagat, clad in the white robes of a *parshad*, to don the saffron robes and be initiated as a sadhu. Jina Bhagat traveled with Swami Chaturbhujdasji to Vartal for his initiation ceremony.

On the morning of Tuesday, 11 April 1911 (Chaitra sud 13, V.S. 1967) Acharya Shripatiprasadji Maharaj initiated Jina Bhagat as a sadhu. Since he led a life immersed in *seva* and *bhakti*, infused with the highest spiritual knowledge, Jina Bhagat was named Sadhu Gnanjivandas. On this occasion, eleven *parshads* from Junagadh were ordained as sadhus.

After the initiation ceremony in Vartal, the newly initiated sadhus of Junagadh went to Ahmedabad for darshan of the Nar-Narayan mandir.

The new sadhus decided that the following day they would go for darshan and a holy bath at the Adalaj stepwell, which had been sanctified by Shriji Maharaj. As the trip would entail a 21-mile round-trip walk, the sadhus planned to set off in the morning and return to Ahmedabad by evening.

On the day of the trip, Gnanjivan Swami and his companion sadhu, Hariprasad Swami, the *bhandari* of Junagadh, decided to fast. Only at noon, when the sadhus sat next to the Adalaj stepwell for a lunch of puris, pickle, and other items, did anyone realize that these two sadhus were fasting. Everyone tried to convince them to eat, but these two sadhus were extremely enthusiastic to complete their fast. In particular, ‘Gnanji’ Swami was bubbling with joy and showed no signs of fatigue even after such a long journey.

So, these two young sadhus completed their waterless fast despite walking 21 miles in the blistering summer heat! When the *sadgurus*, sadhus, and *brahmacharis* of Ahmedabad

mandir heard about this, they marveled at the enthusiasm for austerities embodied by these two young sadhus of Junagadh, and they praised their spirit of *vairagya*.