

Chapter 16

Ashabhai Prabhudas Becomes Yagnapriyadas

Every year, the devotees had been celebrating the Guru Punam festival in Shastriji Maharaj's presence. While they celebrated it this year in Swamishri's presence, all the devotees felt that Shastriji Maharaj remained present before them. In his divine way, Swamishri had fulfilled the sentiments of young and old, small and great in every way, but he did not let anyone feel that something was missing. Crowds of devotees from central Gujarat had come to the original seat of the Sanstha, Bochasan, to offer their homage to Guruhari. The same Shastriji Maharaj who had established this first '*upasana-mandir*' forty-five years ago was today fulfilling everyone with his presence through Yogiji Maharaj. The senior devotees and villagers of Bochasan enjoyed themselves as if they were in Shastriji

Maharaj's presence. The festival was celebrated with great fanfare. As everyone offered puja to the manifest Guruhari, they received his blessings and experienced fulfillment.

A remarkable event took place on the occasion of this festival. Ashabhai Prabhudas, originally of Sadhi, who had for years stood firmly by Shastriji Maharaj's side and sacrificed his all for his guru through thought, word, and deed had today offered a unique sacrifice. To further please Shastriji Maharaj, he renounced the false ties of the world and, pledging to serve the Sanstha and Satsang community according to Swamishri's commands, he took initiation as a sadhu and became known a Sadhu Yagnapriyadas. Along with him, about fifteen *satsangis* were initiated into the monastic order for the first time by Yogiji Maharaj.³

Naranji Maharaj of Dadma officiated at the initiation ceremony. Swamishri blessed the newly initiated sadhus. Everyone was overjoyed as they realized that under Swamishri's able

leadership, the Gunatit garden would continue to blossom ever more beautifully.

Shankar Bhagat of Kalol delighted everyone with his performance of *sankirtan*, and a mood of enthusiasm spread through the Satsang community. From here, Swamishri traveled to Ahmedabad.

- 3 1. Ashabhai Prabhudas Patel (Sadhi): Sadhu Yagnapriyadas
2. Narayanbhai Patel (Jesangpura): Sadhu Ishwarcharandas
3. Chhotabhai Patel (Gana): Sadhu Ghanshyamprasaddas
4. Motibhai (Gana): Sadhu Devprasaddas
5. Becharbhai (Tajpur): Sadhu Krishnacharandas
6. Maganbhai (Sujanpur): Sadhu Shriharidas
7. Bavabhai (Gondal): Sadhu Bhagvatswarupdas
8. Nirmaldas: Sadhu Vignandas
9. Chhotalal (Khas): Gnananand Brahmachari
10. Purushottamdas (Una): Aksharanand Brahmachari
11. Soma Bhagat (Radhu)
12. Shankar Bhagat (Radhu)
13. Dahya Bhagat (Karoli)
14. Gordhan Bhagat (Aniyali)
15. Khoda Bhagat (Aniyali)