

Chapter 6

Bereft of Jogi, Junagadh Dazed

Many of the sadhus and *parshads* of Junagadh lamented the departure of such virtuous sadhus. Chaturbhujdas Swami was especially sad that Yogi Maharaj had left Junagadh as he had been the jewel of their *mandal* and an embodiment of austerities and spiritual knowledge. About a week after the sadhus left, Chaturbhuj Swami sent a letter to Visavadar to Yogi Maharaj's elder brother, Kamalshibhai, asking him to come to Junagadh. As soon as Kamalshibhai received the letter, he set out for Junagadh. On the evening that he arrived, Balmukunddas Swami, Narandas Swami, Chaturbhujdas Swami, and several other sadhus called him to Krishnacharandas Swami's *asan*. Kamalshibhai bowed at the feet of each of the sadhus and sat down before them. Balmukunddas Swami told Kamalshibhai, "The departure of Vignandas

Swami and the other sadhus has caused our *mandal* to be met with significant hostile reactions. In particular, because many of the sadhus who had left were from Krishnacharandas Swami's *mandal*, many are now harassing him by declaring him a rebel."

Narandas Swami added, "We will, of course, attempt to quell this opposition. Moreover, while all the sadhus may not return, if at least Gnanji Swami returns, it will do much to mitigate the misery experienced by Krishnacharandas Swami's *mandal*."

Narandas Swami was close friends with Krishnacharandas Swami. Both of their *mandals* would typically travel together in the villages. Strong affection between both *sadgurus* was reflected in the bonds of affection between the sadhus of their *mandals*. Due to these close relations, Narandas Swami was keenly aware of Gnanji Swami's spiritual brilliance and his guru's deep love for him. With Balmukunddas Swami's permission, Chaturbhujdas Swami insisted that

Kamalshibhai go to Rajkot and convince Gnanji Swami to return to Junagadh.

Kamalshibhai went to Rajkot, did darshan in the mandir, and went straight to Krishnaji Ada's house. Krishnaji Ada respectfully welcomed him to his home. Although he instantly discerned why he had come, still he inquired about the purpose of his visit. Kamalshibhai shared with him the entire situation. Krishnaji Ada spoke to him at length about the truth of Akshar Purushottam *upasana*. Moreover, he described in detail Shastriji Maharaj's glory. Kamalshibhai was satisfied with Krishnaji Ada's explanations. Then Krishnaji Ada suggested, "Go to Swami Balmukunddasji and raise the topic of Askhar. Swami possesses divine foresight and can read minds, so he knows everything. He will explain everything to you."

Kamalshibhai returned to Junagadh and conveyed Krishnaji Ada's talks to all the *sadgurus*. The *sadgurus* with foresight had known what would happen from the beginning.

Balmukunddas Swami and Krishnacharandas Swami were both very pleased with Kamalshibhai.

However, Kamalshibhai shared a concern that was bothering him: “Due to Krishnacharandasji’s request, I had convinced my family to permit Gnanji Swami to become a sadhu, and so I was hoping that I would have received a tenth of his spiritual merit.” With these words, Kamalshibhai’s eyes filled with tears.

Balmukunddas Swami laughed and said, “Kamalshi! The tenth portion of spiritual merit that you receive will be greater than everyone’s. Swami and Maharaj clearly have great affection for you because it is through Shastri Yagnapurushdas and Gnanjivandas Swami that Maharaj and Swami wish to do the work of the Akshar Purushottam Sanstha and raise the flag of Swaminarayan over the entire country. Thus what has happened has occurred only due to their wish. So you should not be upset. Both of us are forever very pleased with you.”

Kamalshibhai found comfort in Balmukunddas Swami's affectionate words.

Yet, despite all this, the departure of the Jogi of Junagadh, Gnanjivandas, had struck the mandir like a bolt of lightning, leaving everyone in Junagadh dazed.

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