

Chapter 3

Atmanivedi Child Devotee

About a mile from Dhari, there is a beautiful mango grove. The teachers would sometimes take the schoolboys to that grove for a picnic. The children would bring snacks such as *sevmamra*, puri-pickle, and *dhebra* from home.

The teachers would organize various games for the children to play, which they would enjoy with light-hearted delight. When it was time to eat, each child would sit down with the snacks they had brought. At that time, Jhinabhai would take out a *murti* of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and Gunatitanand Swami printed on cloth and lovingly offer his snacks to them.

Seeing this, the other children would initially express surprise, but then they too would bring their snacks to Jhinabhai so he could offer them to God. Jhinabhai would lovingly offer each child's snacks to God.

Surprised by the scene, even the teachers would gather around. Witnessing Jhinabhai immersed in devotionally offering these snacks to God, they would be wonderstruck and murmur, “This child possesses a unique set of virtues. In the future, Jhino will surely be a great devotee.”

When the children returned home after the picnic, many would tell their parents that they had offered their snacks to the *murti* of Thakorji that Jhinabhai kept with him. Soon, the entire village recognized Jhinabhai as a true devotee.