

Chapter 9

Enduring Venom with a Smile Is Called Saintliness

Vignandas Swami and his group of sadhus continued their travels through the Kanam region until they reached Sokhada, where they helped in the ongoing renovations of the Sokhada mandir. Yogi Maharaj's all-around expertise allowed him to efficiently and effectively complete any service task.

Once, some sadhus and devotees working on the mandir's upper floor required a crowbar for something. So, Vignandas Swami yelled for the young Nathabhai Jethabhai to bring a crowbar up. Nathabhai climbed the ladder with a crowbar in hand, but just as he reached the top, his foot slipped, and he tumbled to the ground. He struck the ground with such force that he lost consciousness.

The news quickly reached his father, Jethabhai Prabhudas, who rushed from his

shop to the mandir. He arrived to see Vignandas Swami screaming at the meek-natured Yogi Maharaj, who stood silently with folded hands. Vignandas Swami shouted, “Why did you tell this boy to bring a crowbar here? Don’t you know better than to make a child climb up here? Now that he has fallen, who will be responsible for it?” With vile abuses and swears, he falsely cast all the blame onto Yogi Maharaj.

Seeing Vignandas Swami’s unhinged ranting, Jethabhai said, “It’s okay, Swami! Please don’t scream at him. Whatever has happened is God’s will.”

Yogi Maharaj softly but firmly said, “Don’t worry, Jethabhai! He is God’s son, and God will bring him back.” And after exactly one hour, to everyone’s astonishment, Nathabhai regained consciousness.

In the face of Yogi Maharaj’s unparalleled saintliness, Vignandas Swami felt abashed. He often found himself on the back foot in the public eye. Although Vignandas Swami had

asked the boy to bring up the crowbar, he had falsely accused his disciple to shield himself from blame. However, an image of goodness built on hypocrisy and deceit is eventually proven to be vicious and hollow.

Jalu paya sarisa bikāi, dekhahun priti ki riti
bhali;

Bilaga hoi rasu jāi, kapat khatāi parat puni.

-Shri Ramcharit-Manas 1.8.57

(Water mixes with milk and is sold at the price of milk, but when the sourness of deceit is introduced, the water separates and the flavor is lost.)

The relationship between Vignandas Swami and Yogi Maharaj was very similar to the example in this verse. Until now, Yogi Maharaj had endured intolerable oppression with a smiling face, but these events foretold a future in which Yogi Maharaj would separate from him, forever tearing away the shroud of his guru's hypocrisy and deceit.