

Chapter 9

Upon the Altar of Forgiveness

The village of Mirsapura was similarly full of affectionate devotees. Shastriji Maharaj used to call it a Gokul-like⁵ village. On a farm on the village outskirts was Jivabhai Ranchhod's brick house, where Vignandas Swami and Yogi Maharaj would stay when they visited the village.

One day, Yogi Maharaj was preparing lunch at Jivabhai's house. After Yogi Maharaj offered *thal* to Thakorji, Vignandas Swami suddenly commanded him to fast that day. Yogi Maharaj instantly accepted the guru's command and put his bowl back into his cloth bag without a single objection.

Jivabhai and his relatives begged Vignandas Swami to reconsider, but he refused to listen. Yogi Maharaj laughed and asked everyone to discontinue their requests, saying, "We must

follow the guru's commands. Please don't upset the guru."

Despite everything, Vignandas Swami stubbornly refused to budge.

Yogi Maharaj used to fast every two or three days anyways. He would observe a fast eight to ten days every month. Whenever devotees sponsored a feast with sweets, Yogi Maharaj would invariably fast. He would cook all the food himself and lovingly feed the devotees, but he would remain hungry without letting anyone know. Thus, it had become routine for him to fast. However, Vignandas Swami's constant harassment and harsh mistreatment of Yogi Maharaj pained the devotees and increased their reverence for him.

⁵ Gokul was the village where Shri Krishna Bhagwan spent his childhood in the midst of cowherds who had intense affection for him.