

The Downfall of Saubhari Muni



Yuvanāśva had no sons, and thus he retired from family life and went to the forest. Although Yuvanāśva went into the forest with his one hundred wives, all of them were very morose. The sages in the forest,

however, being very kind to the King, began very carefully and attentively performing an Indra-yajña so that the King might have a son. Being thirsty one night, the King entered the arena of sacrifice, and when he saw all the brāhmaṇas lying down, he personally drank the sanctified water meant to be drunk by his wife. When the brāhmaṇas got up from bed and saw the waterpot empty, they inquired who had done this work of drinking the water meant for begetting a child.

When the brāhmaṇas came to understand that the King, inspired by the supreme

controller, had drunk the water, they all exclaimed “Alas! The power of providence is real power. No one can counteract the power of the Supreme.” In this way they offered their respectful obeisances unto the Lord.

Thereafter, in due course of time, a son with all the good symptoms of a powerful king came forth from the lower right side of King Yuvanāśva’s abdomen.

The baby cried so much for breast milk that all the brāhmaṇas were very unhappy. “Who will take care of this baby?” they said. Then Indra, who was worshiped in that yajña,

came and solaced the baby. “Do not cry,” Indra said. Then Indra put his index finger in the baby’s mouth and said, “You may drink me.”

Because Yuvanāśva, the father of the baby, was blessed by the brāhmaṇas, he did not fall a victim to death. After this incident, he performed severe austerities and achieved perfection in that very spot.

Māndhātā, the son of Yuvanāśva, was the cause of fear for Rāvaṇa and other thieves and rogues who caused anxiety. By the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the son of Yuvanāśva was so

powerful that when he became emperor he ruled the entire world, consisting of seven islands, without any second ruler.

Māndhātā begot three sons in the womb of Bindumatī, the daughter of Śaśabindu. These sons were Purukutsa, Ambarīṣa, and Mucukunda, a great mystic yogī. These three brothers had fifty sisters, who all accepted the great sage Saubhari as their husband.

Saubhari Ṛṣi was engaged in austerity, deep in the water of the river Yamunā, when he saw a pair of fish engaged in sexual affairs. Thus he perceived the pleasure of sex life,

and induced by this desire he went to King Māndhātā and begged for one of the King's daughters. In response to this request, the King said, "O brāhmaṇa, any of my daughters may accept any husband according to her personal selection."

Saubhari Muni thought: I am now feeble because of old age. My hair has become grey, my skin is slack, and my head always trembles. Besides, I am a yogī. Therefore women do not like me. Since the King has thus rejected me, I shall reform my body in such a way as to be desirable even to celestial women, what to speak of the

daughters of worldly kings.

Thereafter, when Saubhari Muni became quite a young and beautiful person, the messenger of the palace took him inside the residential quarters of the princesses, which were extremely opulent. All fifty princesses then accepted him as their husband, although he was only one man. Thereafter, the princesses, being attracted by Saubhari Muni, gave up their sisterly relationship and quarreled among themselves, each one of them contending, “This man is just suitable for me, and not for you.” In this way there ensued a great disagreement.

Because Saubhari Muni was expert in chanting mantras perfectly, his severe austerities resulted in an opulent home, with garments, ornaments, properly dressed and decorated maidservants and man servants, and varieties of parks with clear-water lakes and gardens. In the gardens, fragrant with varieties of flowers, birds chirped and bees hummed, surrounded by professional singers. Saubhari Muni's home was amply provided with valuable beds, seats, ornaments, and arrangements for bathing, and there were varieties of sandalwood creams, flower garlands, and palatable

dishes. Thus surrounded by opulent paraphernalia, the muni engaged in family affairs with his numerous wives.

Māndhātā, the King of the entire world, consisting of seven islands, was struck with wonder when he saw the household opulence of Saubhari Muni. Thus he gave up his false prestige in his position as emperor of the world. In this way, Saubhari Muni enjoyed sense gratification in the material world, but he was not at all satisfied, just as a fire never ceases blazing if constantly supplied with drops of fat.

Thereafter, one day while Saubhari Muni,

who was expert in chanting mantras, was sitting in a secluded place, he thought to himself about the cause of his falldown, which was simply that he had associated himself with the sexual affairs of the fish.

Alas! While practicing austerity, even within the depths of the water, and while observing all the rules and regulations practiced by saintly persons, I lost the results of my long austerities simply by association with the sexual affairs of fish. Everyone should observe this falldown and learn from it.

A person desiring liberation from material

bondage must give up the association of persons interested in sex life and should not employ his senses externally [in seeing, hearing, talking, walking and so on]. One should always stay in a secluded place, completely fixing his mind at the lotus feet of the unlimited Personality of Godhead, and if one wants any association at all, he should associate with persons similarly engaged.

In the beginning I was alone and engaged in performing the austerities of mystic yoga, but later, because of the association of fish engaged in sex, I desired to marry. Then I

became the husband of fifty wives, and in each of them I begot one hundred sons, and thus my family increased to five thousand members. By the influence of the modes of material nature, I became fallen and thought that I would be happy in material life. Thus there is no end to my material desires for enjoyment, in this life and the next.

In this way he passed his life in household affairs for some time, but then he became detached from material enjoyment. To renounce material association, he accepted the vānaprastha order and went to the forest. His devoted wives followed him, for they

had no shelter other than their husband.

When Saubhari Muni, who was quite conversant with the self, went to the forest, he performed severe penances. In this way, in the fire at the time of death, he ultimately engaged himself in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, by observing their husband progressing in spiritual existence, Saubhari Muni's wives were also able to enter the spiritual world by his spiritual power, just as the flames of a fire cease when the fire is extinguished.