

The Celestial Blessing

Cholera had become an epidemic in Puri during those days. Several practices like yajna, puja, mantra chanting etc. went on but the killing power of the disease went on unabated. Many monks and sanyasins of different ashrams started group kirtans on the street but due to unknown reasons, Radharaman Charandas Babaji, the spiritual stalwart did not embark for the street kirtan till then.



Sri Radharaman
Charandas Babaji

One day, Babaji, accompanied by other devotees were performing kirtana in front of the deity of Lord Jagannath. Suddenly the necklace of the deity got torn and dropped down. The priest

picked up the necklace, put it on Babaji's neck and said that, "it is the divine desire that you go out for kirtan in the streets of the city."

Next morning Babaji said, "Because of Nitaichand's holy desire, we will be going out for street kirtan today. Nobody should detach himself from this company. Anybody who violates this, parts himself from the chanting group and suffers any consequences, Nitaichand will not be responsible anyway."

Thus he went out to the streets and everybody started singing kirtan melodiously in the name of God, while Babaji went on roaring 'Jai Nitai' at times. It seemed that the entire atmosphere was trembling due to the deep and earnest pronouncements of the divine name. Babaji lead the kirtan group through the lanes and

byelanes of Puri, as if he was searching for some missing miscreant.

It was an ill-destiny of Phanidada, one of Babaji's disciples, that he left the kirtan group and went off. On the other hand Babaji led the kirtan group through different parts of the city and finally concluded in front of the Lord. In the meantime news rushed to Babaji that Phanidada was having several bouts of vomiting and diarrhoea with excruciating pain in his abdomen that made him immobile and he was tossing in pain on the ashram floor.



Sree Lalita Sakhi

Babaji was relaxing in one side of his ashram and the devotees were fanning him. Lolitadidi came running to Babaji and gave him the shocking news of Phanidada's condition. Babaji heard everything in detail and said, "He is suffering because of his detachment from the kirtan group. Had he remained within the shield of the great Nitaichand, he would not have faced this consequence. Moreover he had kichri at Aolia math, which was not offered to the Lord."

Lolitadidi said, "He is childish and now he is a patient. It is meaningless to say him anything now. Please come and see him once."

Babaji said, "What can I do by seeing him now. You are all his well-wishers, do whatever you think apt."

Lolitadidi was persistent and finally Babaji went and saw Phanidada. He said, "The condition is very serious and gloomy. You perform your duty by serving him to

your might." He said this and quickly left the room.

Lolita didi was extremely nagging. She went behind Babaji and insisted. "How could you do nothing when such a healthy boy is going to die. Then how could one have faith in the holy name of God (Naam) that you boast off?"

Babaji said, "The jeeva suffers because of his own misdoings. It is no point in blaming God for their destiny."

Lolita didi said, "I am not blaming God rather I blame you. You can jolly well ease these destinies and shed blessings on the jeevas. It is your negligence that makes jeeva's sufferings so acute."

Babaji was pleased to hear the sincerity and dependence of Lolita but he pretended to be more angry and said, "Do you mean that I have to pray to 'Naam' for these petty causes, like suffering from diseases or court cases or to get glory from the people? Whenever your prayer is not granted by 'Naam', it becomes powerless! It is very mean to nurture these ideas in the 'Naam' or God!"

In the meantime, the condition of Phanidada fast deteriorated. His pulses became feeble, body cold and clammy and he failed to recognize people. Lolita didi repeatedly requested Babaji. Babaji said Lolita to earnestly request Baba Gour Haridas to do something.

Gour Haridas mohant maharaj was residing at Jhahpeetha math during those days. Lolita didi said to the mohant maharaj following Babaji's instruction but he said, "What can I do? Tell Babaji, if he can do something."

As time was ticking off and the patient deteriorated, Lolita didi started crying and said, "Both the father and the son are physically present in the math. I swear by the name of God that if the boy dies, I will tear the divine necklace (konthi) of all the Vaishnav devotees and monks of the ashram

and send them back to their houses. I will also proclaim that there is no glory of the holy name or the great saints in this world. You have come for the benefit of the world, you are so benevolent at your heart to the poor, mundane creatures. Then why this boy, a devotee of this ashram, will die because of such a minor mistake? I admit he has not followed his Guru's instruction. But death as a punishment for that?"

Babaji quietly bowed down his head to the old mohant maharaj and went and sat near the head of Phanidada. The devotees anticipated a ray of hope, already chanting name softly, started to chant loudly - 'Nitai Gour Radhe Shyam, Hare Krishna Hare Ram'. Suddenly Phanidada gasped a breath and then his body became still and lifeless.

Babaji sat in Padmasana, cried loudly 'Ha Nitai' and touched the great toe of his right foot to Phanidada's head. His eyes became red and ptotic and it seemed he was muttering with someone. After sometime, there was pulsation in Phanidada's body. Lolita didi became busy to relay this sign of life to Babaji but to his utter surprise he saw a bright valiant mahatma sitting in place of Babaji. He was carrying a mallet and a plough, wearing blue dress and his eyes were red. Lolita didi could not look at the mahatma's radiance for long. She moved her eyes off and shouted, "Look! What a holy and wonderful scene!" She could not speak more and her throat was choked.

In the meantime, Phanidada came back to his normal senses and Babaji walked off ordering his devotees to chant the holy name.

This incident points out that Radha Raman Charandas Babaji is the incarnation of Lord Balaram of Goloka, who had also descended as Lord Nityananda with Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Her Blessed Child
-Dr Barun Dutta