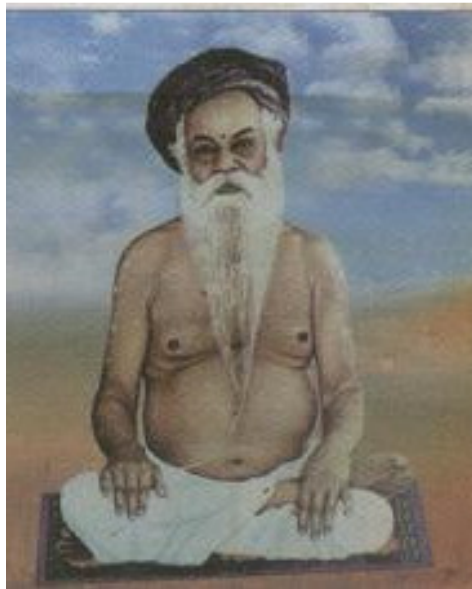


A
Biography
of
Shrimat Swami Dhananjoy Dasji
Kathia Baba



By
Binoy Krishna Mukherjee

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This small booklet is published on the occasion of the Birth Centenary of our Gurudeva – SRI SRI 108 SWAMI DHANANJOYDASJI KATHIA BABA. This will give the readers some idea about this great Vaishnava Saint whose eminence as a great ascetic and a profound scholar still inspires the spiritually minded people, not only of this country but abroad.

We sincerely hope and trust that our enterprise will be highly useful to those who pray for blessings and peace of mind.

Publisher:

Sri Sri Brindaban Bihari Das
Mahanta, Kathiababar Ashram,
Sukhchar, Phone: 563-2017

Year: 2001

PREFACE

To write the biography of a man is the most difficult task. It is even more difficult to depict the life of a Yogi. The present writer faced this problem while attempting to give a glimpse of the life and attainments of his Guru – Shrimat Swami Dhananjoy Dasji Kathia Baba.

We always felt that he was not an ordinary mortal. His calm and composed appearance, his eagerness for the welfare of the entire humanity helped us to understand that he had come down to the ordinary mortals for their benefit.

Our Gurudeva had crossed through hurdles to attain spiritual eminence. His erudition, Scholarship and attractive way of speaking to the people and above all, his affectionate association helped us to recognise Him as our friend, philosopher and guide.

This small Treatise is only an attempt to show how a Divine Soul came to bless us, how he lived and with great devotion, perseverance and adherence to the dictates of his master, how he transformed himself from Dharendra Mohan to Sri Dhananjoy Dasji and from Dhananjoy Dasji to the great Saviour of humanity.

- Binoy Krishna Mukherjee

CHAPTER - 1

Introduction

In his famous “Vedanta-Kamdhenu”, Swami Nimbarkacharyaya said, “The Lord manifests Himself in fulfillment of the desire of the devotees and takes such conceivable forms as would be pleasing to the eyes of those devotees. Thus, incarnation of the Brahman is only a natural phenomenon and there is no wonder in the fact that the Supreme Lord descends down to this mundane world to fulfill His own design. Sometimes, He Himself comes down in full power and glory and again sometimes His advent is less spectacular but more meaningful.”

Our Master Srimat Swami 108 Dhananjoydasji Kathia Baba was the manifestation of the Supreme Being of the latter type. He descended to this world as Sad-Guru on 30/7/1308(15.11.1901). The date of his holy descendance was very significant and auspicious, because the month of Agrahayana is known as the month when the Lord awakes from His sleep. Our Lord also suddenly crossed the barrier of non–existence and announced the beginning of worldly sojourn. The day was thrice auspicious and blessed because on that date and at that particular moment, five planets remained in one place in His horoscope giving a clear indication that he was born to be an ascetic of rare distinction.

In India, Mahamuni Vrighu, who was both an ascetic of exceptional distinction and an astrologer of hitherto insurmountable calibre, kept prepared various types of horoscopes with his masterly analysis. One such horoscope was found in Benaras which was exactly similar to what was prepared by the village-astrologer where our Master was born. Thus, the coming of Srimat Swami Dhananjoydasji Kathia Baba was planned long long before, even thousands of years ago and his horoscope was kept ready even when nobody could conceive of his arrival.

In that horoscope, Vriagu had given us the following account of the Swami's life:

He will be a holy man whose wisdom will always be guided by religious tendencies. He would be devoted to Super Conscious and obedient to his superiors. He would be of religious bent of mind. He would have complete union with the Super-Conscious, attain all sorts of fulfillment and will be a possessor of third eye. He will have both transcendental wisdom and vision and will be victorious in all spheres of his life. He will be a 'paramahansa'. After leaving this world he will be in complete union with the Param Brahman.

The life of Sri Sri Babaji Maharaj has fully justified the prophecy of that ancient sage.

CHAPTER - II

Early Life

Bankura is one of the districts in the State of West Bengal where our Guru was born. The name of his ancestral village is Bhara, which is under the territorial jurisdiction of Bishnupur Subdivision. Bishnupur, the subdivisional town, has a long tradition of Bhakti cult. As the very name suggests, the rulers of the area were Vaishnavas, who were worshippers of Lord Vishnu. As it is only natural, the subjects would toe the line of their rulers the entire population of Bishnupur followed and accepted the religion of their king. The people of Bhara were also no exception to that.

The ancestors of Sri Sri Dhananjoydasji had a long tradition of Vishnu-worship. They used to worship two family-deities: Dadhi Vamana and Radha Madhava. Religious rites of various types were regularly performed in addition to daily worshipping.

That the Lord had manifested Himself in Sri Sri Babaji Maharaj was revealed to him through a dream when he was but a mere child. This happened when he was a boy of five. He used to lie down and sleep in a room in the first storey which was just by the side of the holy temple of Sri Sri Radhamadhava Jiu. In the last part of a night he had a vision, that in order to fulfill the earnest prayer of his parents, the ancestral deity Sri Sri Radhamadhava was born as Dhirendra Mohan. Thus, Babaji Maharaj was none but the incarnation of the super-conscient. The boy did not tell about this vision to anybody. After renunciation of his 'Garhasthya Ashrama' (family association) he told this to his Guru, Sri Sri 108 Santadasji Kathia Baba and enquired about the cause of such a thing. His Master smiled and answered that it was not a dream, it was only revelation of that truth which would be perfectly known to him as days would pass by.

Thus the Holy of Holies came and was reared up in an atmosphere of religious fervour.

When he was in the womb of his mother, she could not take any food. Somehow or other she had maintained her frail existence by taking water of the holy Ganges and its earth content. Knowingly or unknowingly she was keeping her body pure by observing this type of austere penance.

His father Purna Chandra Chakraborty was a very well-to-do person but lost most of his property for his charitable bent of mind. As Purna Chandra lost his father when he was quite young, he was cheated by men with ill design and fell easy prey to their hands. Though he had lost most of his property, the doors of his house had always remained open for the poor and the suffering masses. The Sanyasis also had free access there. Purna Chandra was tall, strongly-built and handsome. His mother, Kshudumoni, was highly accommodating and possessed a pleasing personality. Thus, the parents of Dharendra Mohan (this was the name given to him by them) were honoured by the people of the locality for their religious sagacity, integrity and winning manners.

Our Babaji Maharaj was very intelligent as a student. His student life began, as usual, when he was only five. He was initiated to reading and writing at the temple of Radhamadhava as if the deity Himself took charge of his education. He began his life as a student in a local Junior High School where he was always the best boy of his class. Not only that, he was considered a peer in all other respects. His affection towards his class mates, respect for his teachers and sympathy for the poor and the down-trodden marked him above others. His father could not send him to High School to have higher western education for weak pecuniary condition. Thus, he was sent to a Tole for schooling in traditional Sanskrit education. At first he had his schooling in the Chatuspathi of Pandit Ananga Mohan Tarkabhusan. He, then, went to Navadvip- the world famous seat for traditional Sanskrit learning and joined the Tole of Pandit Ajit Nyayaratna. He used to live in the Tole as a boarder and took his lessons from Pandit Tripathanath Kavya-Byakarana-Smrititirtha. He earned his distribution as a very meritorious student and was able to attract affectionate admiration from his teachers. In different examinations he had also proved his worth and had won scholarship and medals.

Navadwip was not only famous as a seat of learning but it was more known to the people as the holy birth place of Sri Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu or Lord Sri Gouranga Deva. Thus providence had ordained young Dharendra Mohan to live in an environment of Bhakti or total surrender to the Supreme. This environment immensely helped the young man in developing his mental faculties. He could now feel that real salvation lies in renunciation and penance and not in day to day dealings of this mundane world. He, then, had decided that he would sever all normal family connections and would be a Sadhu (an ascetic). With this end in view he wrote a letter to Swami Santadasji Maharaj giving vent to his thought and soliciting his kind advice.

A series of correspondence passed between the disciple and the Guru. The letters from the disciple revealed, the contemporary state of his mind. At that young age, he had fully realized the futility of our day-to-day life and living, the ultimate uselessness of so called human relations such as family-ties and insatiable nature of human desires. He was determined to get rid of these things. His analytical mind uncovered to him what was real and what was not. He found that men and women were running after what was naught and in their vain attempt to acquire a plethora of worldly possessions, they were making the world more and more unworthy of living. They always attempted at things which were beyond their reach. This failure was making them adamant, rousing anger, leading ultimately to self-destruction. This, he found, was to be the iron round of destiny. Ordinary mortals move within this limit, only those who have sincere craving for truth can discard this and after fully knowing who he was, what he was, from where he had come and to which destination he would go that a man could reach a state of absolute bliss and felicity.

This earnestness of mind found expression in the letters that he had written to his Guru. Though his Guru asked him to remain calm and complete the task taken in hand, he could not remain so at Navadwip. The urge for renunciation overpowered and flood-gate of patience was burst open. One night he jumped for an unknown future leaving behind his known surroundings.

He was so emotionally charged that he even discarded the idea of appearing at the examination and thought of leaving for Vrindavan. He practically escaped from Navadwip and reached the Ashrama at Vrindavan. There, to his utter

dismay and sorrow he found that his Guru had just left the Ashrama only an hour before on pilgrimage. The inmates of the Ashrama informed him that Sri Santadasji Maharaj would come back after a month and a half. So his desire for a quick initiation and acceptance of Brahmacharya Ashrama was not fulfilled. In the correspondence that passed on between them previously, Sri Swami indicated that in order to test the earnestness of one's intention, the Lord places some barrier between him and the goal. Those whose eagerness was lip-deep could not pass the test and would become a renegade. But those who had firm faith in their conviction and those who were ready to suffer for the cause would not mind these obstacles. They would heroically fight them out. This was exactly what happened in this case. The absence of the Guru could not dishearten the disciple. His determination became stronger and his desire to achieve salvation had become more intense. At last he could achieve his target. Sri Swami Santadas Babaji Maharaj, after his return, examined Dharendra Mohan, accepted him as his disciple, agreed to give him initiation and offered him his long coveted sannyas.

His Guru asked him to send this information to his father and plead for his blessings. But his father was not in a mood to forsake his son. He sent Dharendra Mohan's elder brother to bring him back but the mission was a failure.

Dharendra Mohan wrote a long letter to his father. This letter bore testimony to the depth and his intensity to follow the path of renunciation. Thus he wrote:

“It is not a fact that I have come here on the advice of my Gurudeva. On the other hand, he asked me not to leave Navadwip before I could complete my study and appear for the final examination. But my ardent desire to accept the path of renunciation inspired me to leave this beaten track leading to thirst for worldly possession. Ordinarily, it is the duty of a son to abide by the orders of his parents. But this rule is applicable to those who have a misconception about the Atma. Duties to the parents or other members of the family are obligatory for those who accept traditional family ties. He who has understood the significance of Atman, has realized that these so called family ties are nothing but illusion, to him the normal rules of this mundane world has no application. If any such person is born in a family, then his penance brings benefits for the whole lineage. His austere asceticism takes his ancestors to the highest plane of Salvation.

My Gurudev explained these things in details to me and allowed me the liberty to find out my own choice. I conveyed about my state of mind to you before I came here. You said to me on that occasion that this awakening of the spirit of renunciation was not an ordinary phenomenon. It was the resultant factor of many noble deeds done in previous births. Knowing that you considered this state of mind as a sign of great fortune, I decided to join the company of ascetics, which would uplift the Atma in me through yoga. I know that good intentions do not appear frequently, when I found that really good sense had developed in me & you had considered it as a sign of great fortune, I had no hesitation to come over here and embrace the most difficult and painstaking life of a Yogi. This is not a temporary fit of mind. This nature is inherent in me from my early child hood. I have no feeling for worldly success. I am totally incapable of achieving that. Considering all these aspects, I pray to you, to allow me to accept the path of celibacy, renunciation and penance.”

CHAPTER - III

Ashram Life

His long cherished desire has now come true. Our familiar Dharendra Mohan is now Dhananjoy Das. His become complete, his Guru has formally admitted him to take recourse to absolute abstinence.

Swami Arjundas, who was also disciple of Sri Swami Santadasji was a room-mate of this young ascetic. While giving his impression about Sri Dhananjoydasji's way of living at that time, he said :

“Dhananjoydas was at first given the charge of the kitchen, where he worked as a cook. He also used to come to the main temple to have a first hand knowledge of dressing up the deities. I have not seen him to offer prayer and worship for any abnormally long period of time. In this respect he might be considered as equal to us. But what distinguished him from us all, was his devotion to Guru, full faith in him, and total submission, - complete surrender. In these respects, he surpassed us all.”

At the time of initiation he was blessed by his Guru with three Mantras. The first one would have to be repeated constantly, the second one would be revealed in him in due time and the third one, he was asked, only to listen. He was asked by his Guru to consider the entire universe as all pervasive Brahman. When he would acquire complete mastery in this practice, he would realize that everything, even a grain of sand was but manifestation of that Supreme Being. He began to practice this. As he had full faith in his master he was confident that today or tomorrow this idea would also find full expression in him Very soon he had a proof of that. One day, while he was standing in front of the main gate of the Ashrama and was repeating silently the Mantras given to him by his Guru, he saw a cow pass by the other side of the road and move slowly away from him. The essence of the Mantra was to find the existence of Brahman in everything –

animate and inanimate. Sri Dhananjoydas thought that as this cow was nothing but a manifestation of that Supreme Being, she would definitely respond to his prayer, come back and bless him with her affection. To his utter surprise, the expectation came true. When he uttered the Mantra, the cow stopped going, when it was repeated, she came back. Just after second repetition she licked him affectionately. Thus he was convinced of his Guru's infallibility.

He was not satisfied with one experiment. His Gurudev had told him that every object – both animate and inanimate – is manifestation of Supreme Being. This was not a utopia but reality. All saints and savants had complete realization of this truth. He advised his young disciples to make every effort to realize this truth. The first episode helped him to move towards that realization. Very soon he made another experiment. The incident was narrated by him as thus :

One day when I went for a bath in a well by the back side of the Ashram, I saw a peacock drinking water. Seeing that a person was coming, the bird flew away and sat on the boundary wall. I thought that the bird and myself were but manifestation of the Supreme. The 'Paramatma' who was omnipresent reside in the peacock and in me as well. Hence the bird should not get afraid of me. If my finding was correct, the bird would come down to me, open up its plumage and would begin to dance. With this thought in my mind, I began chanting the Mantra and offering prayer to the peacock. To my great surprise I saw the bird come down and did what I wanted it to do. I was not satisfied because I took it as a fluke and thought that my faith in the dictum that everything was surely the incarnation of God would be strengthened if the bird would come to me twice and also dance on every occasion. I could not believe my eyes when I saw the bird come to me again and again and twice repeat the performances. All my doubts were dispelled and I was convinced that Brahman was all pervading.

A true ascetic is endowed with some astonishing supernatural power. By dint of his austere spiritual practice, Dhananjoydas had already acquired these powers. But he took every care to see that they were not displayed. Sri Sri Swami Ramdas Kathia Baba used to say that the Vaishnavas lead a very clever way of life. They find pleasure in keeping their spiritual powers totally hidden in themselves.

Dhananjoydas was also a Saint of the same nature. He always kept himself away from playing to the gallery. Yet, in spite of his wishes he had shown evidences of his powers on rare occasions. One such occasion came when at the instance of his Guru he came to his ancestral village to see his ailing father. There, one day, he saw one of his elder brother suffering from rheumatoid arthritis. The disease was severely painful. The extent of pain was so great that it was unbearable to him. When the physicians found no answer to this, the ailing elder brother begged of him for relief. He said that the sadhu could work wonders. He should apply his power to give him relief. Dhananjoydas had a tender heart. He could not stand the sight of his severe suffering. He remembered his Guru and addressed to him thus: "My Master! These people do neither believe in Guru nor do they have any faith in his words, By your grace, I will show them what a Guru can do. Please have grace on me." With these words he silently began to chant the Mantra and placed his hand on the body of his elder brother and puffed it thrice.

Everybody was surprised to see that the man who could not even move from his bed and was crying like a child in pain, stood up erect and declared that all his pain had gone. Dhananjoydas told his brother that this would not recur if he would not dance while singing. His brother promised not to do so in his life. But he could not keep his promise. He fell ill again on and from the day when he broke his vow.

Dhananjoydas was then spending his days under the strict supervision of his Guru as if he was serving his term of apprenticeship. He had to perform his duties in the kitchen, offer daily prayers and all the rites of worship of the deities in the temple. This apart, he remained deeply absorbed in meditation. The mode of teaching of his Guru was unique. Sri Swami Santadasji Maharaj used to explain about one particular aspect of all pervasive Brahman and ask his disciple to translate the idea into practice. When he was sure that the disciple had fully gathered the idea and had attained complete mastery of it, then he would pass on to some other aspect of the super conscient. In this way, he helped his disciples to know the theory as well as to transcend them practice.

The ascetic-life of Sri Dhananjoydas was progressing through this normal course. At this time one thing happened. Prof. Sudhir Gopal Mukhopadhyay, a very learned and devoted disciple of Swami Santadasji, came to

Vrindaban during the Puja Vacation. One day, he said to his Guru that he had some questions which were to be answered by him and proposed that he would take down the answers. The master agreed but just after completing answers to the fourth question Prof. Mukhopadhyay had to leave for his place of work. The charge of writing down the answers to other questions fell on Srimat Dhananjoydasji Maharaj. As usual the Guru used to dictate the answers but asked his disciple to realize the real meaning of the answer by heart. He would examine whether his disciple had really been able to realize it properly and had also applied the same in practice. This question-answer was later on published in a book entitled “Guru Sishya Sambad”.

The subject of discussion and analysis was Vedanta which among other things, always harped on a very important truth : “Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma”- -everything, animate and inanimate is manifestation of the Supreme Being. As he did earlier, here again, he impressed upon his disciples the need for a complete realization of this message. The disciple had already started to comprehend this idea and examine the reality of it. Through penance and meditation. He also began seeing Brahman in everything and everywhere.

At this time, due to long, continuous, concentrated meditation, signs of insanity began to develop in him. His Master said that the abnormal behaviour was mainly due to continuous association with him. His physical state of body was not capable of such concentration and association. He, therefore, asked him to go to the members of his family because association with the people of the common and ordinary world would help his mind to come down from its very high plane to a lower plane and it would thus held him to become normal. He was sent to his elder brother who was then serving as a Station master near Asansol. One day a strange thing happened there. He was confined in a room at his elder brother’s residence. The rail line was by the side of the quarter. He saw that a train was passing through with great speed. This had roused engine was ignoring his power. He also thought that he should teach the engine a good lesson and make it stop. In order to prove that he was more powerful than the engine, he muttered a few Mantras and asked the engine to stop. To the amazement of everybody driver came down to find out what was wrong, but he could not find any. By that time the wrath in him had cooled down. He was satisfied to see that the engine had acted in

obedience to his order. Pleased with its behaviour, he ordered the train to move. Everybody saw the engine to start and move.

His elder brother was not in a position to control him. He was sent to his village home. His father applied a particular type of oil which was offered previously to a deity and Dhananjoydas was fully cured within three days of its application.

Every man is obliged to complete the iron-round of his destiny. Even saints would have to abide by these general rules. The Hindus believe that what happens to him in his present birth is the result of his deeds in the previous ones. Every living being can get out of it by suffering from it alone. The testimony to this universal truth can be found in the life of Sri Ramakrishna Deva who died of throat cancer; the famous Loknath Brahmachari of Barudi, who was a symbol of great super natural power was compelled for some time to remain in contact with bad people and was compelled to take such food as was unfit for his consumption. The great Swami Vivekananda suffered from diabetes. Ramdas Kathia Baba was given poison in his food by his own disciple. The priests of Puri twice applied venom on Prabhu Bijoy Krishna Goswami. There was thus nothing special in Dhananjoydas's becoming insane for a couple of months or so and thereby completing the suffering that was pre-ordained.

Studies

Dhananjoydas had always shown keen interest in studies. No doubt, his first love was renunciation, penance and attainment of salvation. Yet his love for studies of shastras and scriptures was not less. When he got cured of his temporary insanity, he wanted to devote himself to higher studies. He had heard of a famous Pandit at Bhatpara. He was Panchanan Tarakaratra-a famous scholar of Nyaya and Vedanta. Dhananjoydas wrote a letter to him with the request to accept him as a student. He presented himself as a disciple of Sri Swami Santadasji Maharaj. Tarakaratra accepted him as a student and asked him to stay in his residence. Dhananjoydas was initiated to devout Brahmacharya by his Guru. For this he was obliged to abide

by certain rules and regulations related to it. While at Bhatpara he, very strictly, adhered to these principles - holy dip in the Ganges three times a day. Prayer and meditation were practiced as usual. His teacher was very satisfied with his intelligence, sincerity and devotion. Dhananjoydas passed his examination in Kavya with distinction. But his Gurudev asked him not to proceed further in this branch of knowledge because it was not compatible to asceticism.

On hearing that Dhananjoydas was staying at Bhatpara, his ex-teacher Tripatha Nath Kavya-Vyakarana-Smriti-Tirtha came to see him. Both the teachers, after discussion had agreed to bring back this young and devoted disciple to normal family life and conveyed this proposal to him. But he modestly, yet firmly, refused to accept it.

Therefore, he met his Guru at Shibpur, Howrah. Sri Santadasji Maharaj asked him to proceed to Doulatpur, now in Bangladesh and undertake the study of Nyaya (Logic), old and new. But the disciple thought otherwise. He felt that instead of going to some unknown place, it would be better to return to Bhatpara for continuance of studies. With this end in view, he came to the residence of Pandit Tarkaratna along with his Salagram Sila (a black god worshipped as the symbol of Vishnu) named Vasudeva.

One day he was suddenly attacked with very high fever. At night, while in sleep, he saw the Guru appearing before him in the form of Vishnu and ordering him to go to Doulatpur without any further delay. Dhananjoydas deeply pondered over this incident and thought that his ailment and other distresses were resultant of non compliance with the order of his Guru. He decided to go to Doulatpur, where his master had ordered him to go. On the very next morning he wired to Prof. Mukherjee came to Bhatpara and took him to the place where his Gurudev had previously asked him to go and prosecuted his studies.

He began his study in Logic (Nyaya) and stayed at Doulatpur for three years. There he faithfully observed all the duties of his Sannyasa Ashram. But whenever he got time he utilised it in preparation for the preliminary and intermediate course of Savda Khanda. But very soon he was attacked with severe malarial fever. His health broke down totally. Though his condition of health was not permitting him to work hard, yet in order to fulfill the desire of his Guru that he

should appear at both the examinations at the same time, Dhananjoydas totally ignored the wretched condition of his health. But his teacher could not approve of the strain that the student had undertaken and asked him to appear at the preliminary examination only. Dhananjoydas referred the matter to his Guru and sought for his direction. The Guru wrote back : “I have not asked you to work beyond your capacity, but what I want is that you complete your studies there as early as possible and come back to me. My health is failing. I intend to mould you with my instructions and under my supervision as early as possible. In modern times, ordinary people enquire after the academic attainment of their Guru. I have sent you for studies for this reason only. Complete your examination and undertake only that volume of labour which your health permits you to do. Be sincere to your task but don't think of the result. It is absolutely in the hands of the Almighty”.

As the letter indicated about the failing health of Sri Santadasji Maharaj, Dhananjoydas thought that whatever the condition of his health might be he would appear for both the examinations at a time. But his health began to deteriorate beyond imagination. His teacher, finding no other way out, wrote to Santadasji Maharaj requesting him to refrain his disciple from taking such a suicidal step. Sri Santadasji Maharaj, accordingly, asked him to appear for the preliminary examination only. As he could not prepare himself properly for the examination, his teacher said that he would somehow get through the examination. But Dhananjoydas firmly replied that as it was the desire of his Gurudev that he should secure the top most position, no power on earth would stand in the way of his obtaining this goal. He repeated the same performance in other two examinations also and thereby proved the infallibility of his Guru. On completion of his examination, he was very keen to meet Gurudev at Vrindaban. There, Sri Santadasji Maharaj asked him to go to Doulatpur again and complete his study in another branch of Logic. Dhananjoydas abided by his dictates and went back to Doulatpur. One day he thought that it was futile to read this dry subject, which would not help him to attain salvation. He, therefore, decided to go to Hardwar and thereafter to proceed to Uttarakhand for deep meditation. He decided the date of leaving Doulatpur in due time. Meanwhile, the reply came. Santadasji Maharaj had written to him : ‘when the Lord had adopted you, he would never relieve you.’ In spite of his best effort Dhananjoydas could not go to Hardwar. At Howrah Station, he asked for a ticket for Hardwar. But the booking clerk issued him a ticket for

Vrindaban. He asked the clerk to change the ticket which he refused to do. So Dhananjoy Das decided to go to Hardwar by Doon Express with that ticket. But when he arrived at the platform he found that the train had just left. He then planned to go to Mughal Sarai by Delhi Express from where he would proceed to Hardwar. In the train he had fallen fast asleep. When he woke up he found himself at Allahabad. Thus no option was left for him but to go to Vrindavan. When he arrived at the Ashram he found his Gurudev smiling at him as if he was expecting Dhananjoydas's arrival. After spending a couple of months and being relieved of mental strains he went to Doulatpur, appeared for the examination and as usual obtained the topmost position. That Guru-Shakti is always all pervading and infallible was proved once again.

Though he remained engaged in studies for eight long years and had to stay away from the Guru, yet whenever he found any opportunity he used to come to his Master and spend as many hours in a day as he could in personal contact with the Guru. Those who were present at the Ashram at that time found him as an apostle of devotion and surrender. When he performed Gurupuja on three occasions-one at Sylleht, another at Hobilgange and the third at Shibpur Ashram. On every occasion, the devotees present, were amazed to see the whole-hearted eagerness and total dedication. Everybody felt that with every chanting of the Mantra, Dhananjoydas was not only offering himself. It was a unique feat of self effacement at the feet of the Master. The Guru is considered to be omniscient. Sri Santadasji Maharaj was a saint with great supernatural power. He could easily measure the depth of devotion and found in his disciple full embodiment of Bhakti. He was so pleased with him that he gave him his own sitting mat and in ecstatic jubilation blessed his disciple by saying "My boy, your boat has reached its destination". The meaning was clear. The aim of every ascetic is to know the Supreme Being. Dhananjoydas had achieved the goal by sincere devotion to his Guru.

In 1340 B S, Sri Santadasji Maharaj directed Dhananjoydasji Maharaj to accompany his elder ascetic brother to the Kumbha Mela scheduled to be held at Ujjain. There he came in contact with famous Siddha-Baba. The Baba was very much pleased to see him and said that even Gods and Saints of mythical fame often visited and still visit the Kumbha. Sri Dhananjoydasji asked whether Ramdas Kathia Baba was present there. Siddhababa replied, "Yes, both he and

Goswami Probhu have come and you will be able to see them. But before that you will have to chant your sacred Mantra for 1,25,000 times.” When he completed repeating it one lakh times he saw two Sadhus coming to him. Though their faces were very much known to him and they appeared to be familiar to him, yet he could not remember the place where he had seen them. One of them wanted to know the way to the river. Dhananjoydas gave them the direction. But they, instead of following that, wanted to proceed through a very thorny track. Sri Dhananjoydasji requested them not to go by that track. But they, instead of paying any heed to the request, advanced through that way and suddenly disappeared. When Sri Dhananjoydasji reported the matter to Siddhababa, he said that the Sadhu who had talked to him was none but Kathia Baba himself.



Other Activities

In that year the responsibility of conducting the Braja Parikrama was given to Sri Dhananjoydas by his Guru. As Sri Santadasji Maharaj was suffering from protracted illness for the last three years, he was not in a position to lead the Parikrama and Sri Anantadasji, his eldest disciple, was deputising him. But this year he had left for the deep jungles of Narmada for meditation. His Guru, therefore, decided that that year’s Braja Parikrama would be conducted by Sri Dhananjoydasji. But Sri Dhananjoydasji appealed to him very modestly to revise his decision on the ground that inexperienced as he was, he should not be entrusted with such great responsibility. But his Guru told him that in course of his journey he would be fully guided and protected by the Deity and his Guru (Ramdas Kathia Baba). In course of his journey he had to pass through many trying times, but on each occasion this inexperienced and young sadhu won over all difficulties. Even the hostile Nagas could not do anything against him.

In the month of January next, Sri Santadasji Maharaj informed the Ashram Committee that he was unable to carry on with his duty as the Chief of the Monastery and as head of all the four sects of Vaishnava Sadhu Samaj. At that

time he was suffering from various ailments and he was gradually getting physically incapacitated. The Committee properly understood the need for a new head of the institution and after deliberation decided to install Sri Anantadasji Maharaj, the first Sadhu disciple of Sri Santadasji Maharaj as the Mahanta or the Head. Anantadasji was then performing a vow of silence. When he heard of this decision he informed them in writing, his inability to assume office. He further added that he had shunned normal family life for renunciation and meditation. Ashram, in reality, was a very big family of Sadhus with various intricacies. He had no desire to enter into a new type of family life whatever its composition might be. When all the requests of the members of the committee went in vain, the members asked Sri Dhananjoydasji to go to Anantadasji and request him personally and he did the same very gladly. But he was also sternly refused. Sri Anantadasji suggested that in his view, Dhananjoydasji was widely respected by the Sadhu associates and it was he who would be fit to adorn the post. Dhananjoydasji Maharaj was not at all ready for the turn of events. He immediately rushed to his Guru, sought for his intervention and prayed in all humility to select some other efficient ascetic for the office. But his Guru told him helplessly that if he did not accept the charge, the whole arrangement would go to disarray and the desire of the great Kathia Baba would remain unfulfilled. As Sri Dhananjoydasji Maharaj was feeling hesitant and shaky, Sri Santadasji Maharaj blessed him by saying, "My boy, you need not be worried. In every future action that you would take, you would feel the presence of my Guru and the Lord in you. They would show you the right path and save you from all dangers. You would never feel for any want, you would get whatever you desire."

Dhananjoydasji could not do otherwise. he had dedicated himself completely at the lotus feet of his Guru. He accepted responsibility as his Guru desired him to do. Throughout his life, he considered himself as an instrument at the disposal of his Master. An instrument has no wish of its own, cannot work according to its will, it is totally regulated by its owner. Sri Dhananjoydas always thought him as an instrument at the disposal of Santadasji Maharaj. He, thus, abided by the dictates of his Master.

The arrangement for performing religious rites needed for solemnising the occasion, was elaborately made. Chiefs from other Sadhu Sampradayas came and garlanded him, marked Vijay Tilak on his forehead and

offered him various presentations as symbols of their acceptance. They, one by one, flew scarves over his head. At last came his Master, blessed him from the core of his heart and in full throat, subdued with emotion. He further asked him to preach the message of his Guru, Sri Sri 108 Ramdas Kathia Babaji Maharaj. On that occasion, he reiterated that the new chief would always be guarded and guided by perennial flow of Guru Shakti which descended from the Supreme Being., the Hansa Bhagaban.

Assumption of an office is easy, but it is very difficult to retain it. This requires efficiency as well as wisdom. The new Mahanta possessed both. His modest behavior, respect for the seniors, combined with well disciplined administration of the Ashram drew admiration from all. Some of the inmates of the Ashram thought that he would not be able to act as the leader of all the Vaishnava sects in the Kumbha Mela. They had also doubts regarding his ability to speak in a meeting convincingly and forcefully. But all these doubts were dispelled. The young Chief proved his ability as an administrator and orator. Thus, Sri Dhananjoydasji Maharaj convinced the Sadhu Samaj and the members of general public that he had not only attained spiritual fulfillment but also possessed complete mastery over Vedas, Upanishads and other Scriptures. He also had established himself as a very good orator who could speak convincingly with clarity, lucidity and conviction.

That Sri Sri 108 Dhananjoydasji Kathia Baba had already acquired great spiritual power was eminently demonstrated in the Hardwar Kumbha in 1345 B.S. It was at this Kumbha that he was accepted as the Sri Mahanta of all the four sects of Vaishnavas and he was adorned as Brajabidehi Sri Mahanta. The last title, admitted, on critical examination, that he was far above this mundane world, had no feeling even for his body and lived in complete union with the Supreme. The entire Sadhu Samaj after a thorough and critical examination of his spiritual attainment, were pleased to grant him this distinction and offered him this very respectable title.

This Kumbha Mela also witnessed a miracle. It is a tradition prevalent in the Sadhu Samaj that in order to celebrate this distinction that Sri

Mahanta would send invitation to all the Chiefs of the Camps to a dinner. No person would be invited individually. It was customary to send some representatives from each camp to attend the festival. Some sadhus, who were jealous of the new chief, wanted to put him in disgrace and secretly invited thousands of monks to attend it. Babaji Maharaj and the organizers were kept in complete dark about this. Arrangements were made for ten thousand of Sadhus, but in reality the number swelled to over twenty five thousands. The organizers, seeing the numbers of guests smelt danger and hurried to Babaji Maharaj to give him the information so that by using supernatural power he could avert this danger. They requested him to offer "Tulsi" in the store where all the food stuffs were kept, so that it would be inexhaustible. Babaji Maharaj remained unperturbed and said that by the grace of the Lord there would be no shortage of any food article. One of the disciples fervently prayed to him to offer 'Tulsi' guarded with spiritual power. At last he agreed to do so. He took one Tulsi, muttered some Mantras and gave it to the disciple for placing it inside the store room. He offered special prayer to Ramdas Kathia Baba, his grand Guru, and sought for his grace. To the utter surprise of everybody, including the mischief-mongers all the sadhus were pleased to receive as much as they could consume and went away after taking with them as much food as they could. This incident thwarted the design of the mischief-mongers. The entire Sadhu Samaj, present at that Kumbha, came to know about this miraculous power of the new Sri Mahanta and at one stroke of event he was highly acclaimed of his uncommon spiritual power.

Another very interesting event also took place here. One boy, Kshatriya by caste, came to Hardwar in search of his Guru, when at home he had dreamt of a Sadhu clad in white dress with wooden waist-band. He thought that as Kumbha Mela was a gathering of ascetics, he might find out his Guru there. His desire was fulfilled and the Guru accepted him and got him initiated. This boy was no other than our beloved and respected Sri Sri 108 Radhabeharidasji Maharaj.

This shows that the tie between the Guru and his disciple is unbreakable and continuous.

At the time of ascendancy to the Headship of the Ashram, some of the members of the Ashram Committee were not happy over the selection. Though they had neither the courage nor any support to challenge the selection of Sri Swami Santadasji Maharaj, they began to mark time. These designers started their work after the demise of our Dada Guruji Maharaj. Character-assassination is a very common allegation and ordinary people find pleasure in accepting it without verification. But these people knew very well that none in Vrindavan and no disciple of Sri Sri Babaji Maharaj would believe in it. They thought of a second allegation and it was financial dishonesty. They charged him with usurping the money offered to the holy deities. These conspirators, at first, started whispering campaign against Him and were successful in finding out few other associates. It is known to everybody that determined few always dominate over indifferent many. This dictum came true in this case also. These people even instituted law-suit against Babaji Maharaj.

When these people were busy creating a chaos in the Ashram and making propaganda against Him, Babaji Maharaj remained as unperturbed as ever. He was then observing a vow of silence. Late Brajen Bose of Benares who was also a disciple of Sri Swami Santa Dasji Maharaj was in the Ashram at that time and wanted to know about the matter Babaji Maharaj gave out his mind, in writing as follow :

“At the time of my selection as Head of the
Ashram, particularly when religious rites
Were performed, jubilant Babaji Maharaj
blessed me by saying that the holy deities
and He himself would always remain by me
and would help me to tide over all
difficulties. Nothing can be kept hidden from
Him, Myself and these motivated people
are all under his discerning observation.

My Gurudev and Thakurji will definitely inflict punishment on the guilty. If I am found guilty by them, they will punish me to make me pure. In reality this is a method of correction.

If you ask about my mental condition, I don't find any reason to be disturbed, when everything is preordained. It is futile to make one tense for that. Further more, I have completely surrendered to my Master.

A servant has no independence. He is an instrument at the hands of the Master.

Hence I do not find any reason to become disturbed at all.”

Babaji Maharaj took this as a condition precedent to attainment of fulfillment. This is a means to an end. “He whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrows and is free from eager desire amid pleasure, he from whom passion, fear and rage have passed away, is called a sage of settled intelligence. He who is without affection on any side, who does not rejoice or loathe as he obtain good or evil, his intelligence is firmly set in wisdom. Flowers bloom and they fade. There is no need to praise the former and condemn the latter. We must receive whatever comes without excitement, pain or revolt.” Thus Babaji Maharaj took it as a test by his Guru who always measured the achievement of his favourite disciple by putting him in difficult situations.

Babaji Maharaj, at first, thought that he would fight tooth and nail to vindicate his position. At that time an incident had occurred which changed the entire situation. When these disturbances were going on, the priest of the temple

reported to him one morning, that the deities inside the temple were burnt and got cracked. This had happened as the quilts caught fire at night. He said that he was not in a position to say as to how this accident had occurred.

Babaji Maharaj was greatly shocked. While offering him the duty of worship his Gurudev had said that the deities in the temple were not mere dolls, they were incarnation of the great Lord and His holy consort. Now as these deities were burnt, there was no necessity for him to remain in the Ashram. the whole world to him was a meaningless empty space. So long he was taking all steps against those who were trying to remove him from his post. Now he decided that as the deities had left, there was no necessity for him to remain in the Ashram. in the court at Mathura he gave a vent to his state of mind and offered to quit the Ashram unconditionally and leaving his personal possession in the Ashram except his books and the 'Salagram' given to him by his Guru. The Law-suit was thus disposed of.

CHAPTER - IV

The Great Renunciation

Babaji Maharaj had already arranged for installation of the new deities, performance of all religious rites associated with it, hosting a Bhandara on the one hand and preparing of accounts of the Ashram, including the jeweleries of the Lord Krishna and Priyaji and other assets as well as cash-in-hand and cash-in-bank. In spite of a very tense situation he remained replica of unperturbed calm. On the previously determined day, he stepped out of his room, offered his homage to the deities in the temple and came out of the Ashram even leaving his outer clothings.

Sri Sri Anandamoyee Ma was among those who were observing the entire episode. When Sri Babaji Maharaj came to the road, Sri Sri Anandamoyee Ma approached him, took his matted hair on her breast and exclaimed, “My dear son, the gesture which you have shown today has elevated you even above your Guru. Even Gods have appeared above to see you. Your Gurudev has also come to bless you. “She gave Rs. 101 for the worship of the Salagramji and four dhotis for his use.

Babaji Maharaj, at first went to Varanasi, thereafter to Dehradoon and engaged himself in an uninterrupted penance. He also observed strictly the vow of silence.

The strictness of penance and the climate of Dehradoon had taken toll upon his health. His disciples fervently appealed to him to come down to Calcutta for treatment. The earnestness of his devotees compelled him to come to Calcutta. After staying there for some time he went to Assam. At this time, chiefs of four Vaishnava sects remained him that the holy Kumbha would start soon and as Sri Mahanta he had many obligations to perform. He went to Allahabad and attended the Kumbha. All the sadhus who attended there had impressed upon him

the necessity of his staying at Vrindavan as that was the head quarter of all Vaishnavas. Some of them also agreed to hand over to him some of their Ashrams, Sri Babaji Maharaj remained silent. He was compelled by them to accede to their request. He came back to Vrindavan. After his arrival, a search for suitable land for establishing a new Ashram began. At first he was not interested in installation of deities. But he had to change his decision under compelling circumstances. Brishnudas Zerath had purchased Idols of Lord Krishna and Priyaji for consecration at home. But he could not do so even though he had attempted for it on several times. These two Idols were kept at Sanket (the place where the Lord and His Holy Consort secretly kept information about each other regarding time of meeting). Babaji Maharaj was requested to have a look at these two Idols. On being persistently requested he went to Sanket with his Sadhu disciple Sankarsandas. The incident that took place on that night has been described by Babaji Maharaj as thus:

“In the night some uncommon thing had happened
and I was compelled to bring those two Idols
with me.”

Babaji Maharaj had not explained actually what happened there. But his sadhu disciple had explained to the present writer in confidence and said :

“At that time Babaji Maharaj was lying in the
bed. I was fast asleep. Suddenly I woke up
from sleep and heard a voice. I tried to look
at the person who had come to the room but
could not see anything. The whole room was
flooded with such an intensity dazzling light
that I could see nothing. I could only hear
two voices. One of the voices was that of our

Babaji Maharaj. The unknown voice was telling him – ‘Why are you so late in coming here ? I have been waiting for you for quite a long time’. Babaji Maharaj agreed to take them to Vrindavan and said – ‘Well, you two will go with me tomorrow ‘ – Suddenly the light disappeared and I saw Babaji Maharaj sitting on his bed.”

In the early morning he said to the host that he had decided to take the Idols to Vrindavan for their consecration in the new Ashram. In this way the miracle happened. Those who had left the old Ashram came back in new shape and in a new setting.

When he was coming out of the Ashram of his Guru, he thought that he would not found any new Ashram. but his Guru and his Thakurji with Priyaji had compelled him to found Ashrams at Sri Vrindavan, Sukhchar (near Calcutta), Agartala (in Tripura), Silchar (in Assam) and at Bhara (in the district of Bankura, West Bengal) for propagation of Sri Nimbarkacharyaya’s teaching.

An ascetic weilds his power from his penance, austerity and devotion. He also gets it through the grace of his power from his penance, austerity and devotion. He also gets it through the grace of his Guru. Ordinary, we describe them as super-natural power. The ascetics normally do not want to make a display of all these powers. This is all the more true in the case of Sadhus belonging to Vaishnava sects.

His Holiness Ramdas Kathia Baba once said to his disciple, “The Vaishnavas are very much found of playing with ordinary people. They do not want to give out what they really are. They are just like elephants. An elephant has two tusks. The out ward tusk is visible but another which is inside is invisible and is used for his own purpose.” Similarly a Vaishnava sadhu shuns of supernatural attainment.

But there are occasions when these spiritual powers reveal them inspite of his wish. He cannot refrain himself from bestowing his kindness to an ill-fated human being. As a matter of fact, our Babaji Maharaj also had willingly or unwillingly shown immense signs of these spiritual powers.

We know that our Babaji Maharaj was rather compelled to build a new temple and Ashram at the Gurukul Road in Vrindaban. We also know how the Lord and His holy consort came to be installed in the temple. The entire matter bore the stamp of super natural power and manifestation of divine will. The festival that was arranged for this purpose also had made the power manifest. In this case it was Babaji Maharaj who had to use his power. It was decided that all those who would attend the ceremony would be invited to take mid-day prasad. On the advice of the principle cook, Keshabdasji Maharaj, fooding arrangement was made for about 2500 persons. But the Sadhus who assembled there were no less than 10,000. The organizers were at a loss. Keshabdasji apprised Babaji Maharaj of this enormous gathering and had requested him to bring more materials from the market for preparation of a larger quantity of Puri and Sweet-meats. But this was a great time-consuming matter. If it was agreed upon, the Pangat (starting of distribution of food) would commence not before 10 p.m. The proposal was considered to be absurd and hence rejected. Anxious Babaji Maharaj visited the stores, found that the quantity was inadequate. Still he ordered for the distribution and said;

“The deity who was now on the throne, would take care of the store. If it was His desire that these people would get only grains of Prasad then we would distribute it in that way, if He felt otherwise, it is the responsibility of Him to arrange accordingly”

The Pangat started at 3.30 p.m. and continued up to 10 p.m. Every person was fully fed. Most of them took Puri and Sweetmeats to their homes and to the utter surprise of all it was found that huge amount of food-stuff remained in

stock. The remaining sweet meats etc. were distributed to those who came to the Ashram for fifteen more days after the installation ceremony was over.

This was not the only occasion when Sri Gurudev exhibited this kind of miraculous power. On 9.6.43 the former Sriji Maharaj of Salimabad had left the world. Prior to his demise, he nominated Sri Sri Radha Sorveswar Sarandev as his successor. But there were other powerful aspirants who were not only senior to him but were also very capable. On the contrary the successor designate was a mere boy and had neither education nor training. The then Sriji Maharaj had requested Kathia Baba to take charge of the boy. Babaji Maharaj acceded to his request because he found that the innocent boy was surrounded by persons inimical to him and it would not be impossible for them to kill the boy. When Babaji Maharaj heard that the old Sriji Maharaj was no more, he immediately rushed to Salimabad and made every arrangement for his installation to the gaddi or elevation to the post of Mahanta. As was expected, there was great resentment from amongst interested quarters. But our Babaji Maharaj was determined to fulfill the last desire of Sri Balkrishnasaran Devacharyayaji. Kathia Baba was held in high esteem by the Sadhu Samaj. The miscreants dared not oppose him openly. Instead, they hatched conspiracy to prove that Kathia Baba was not a superman and there would be no harm if his mandates were not carried out. But on each occasion their evil designs were foiled. But the last stroke was yet to come. On the date of the Abhishek (coronation) arrangements were made for distribution of mid-day Prasad (food stuff offered to the deity which was to be distributed among the invitees) to about fifteen thousand people. But during the time of distribution, the number was so high that it went beyond expectation. It was estimated that the number would be as high as sixty thousand. The conspirators had seized this opportunity with both hands. They had said to the public that Kathia Baba was so powerful an ascetic that with the help of his miraculous power he was in a position to feed the entire mass. But the Organizers thought it impossible. The shrewd conspirators with apparent innocence asked some organizers to go to Kathia Baba and request him to place blessed Tulsi leaves in the store which would make the store inexhaustible.

They thought that Kathia Baba had no supernatural power and he would not be able to manage the huge gathering with such a small quantity of food stuff. This would lower Kathia Baba in the eyes of the people and they would

succeed in proving that the story of his supernatural power was nothing but a myth. But all their designs ultimately proved abortive. Babaji Maharaj asked one of his disciples to place one sacred Tulsi leaf in the store and ordered the organizers to start the distribution of food. To the total bewilderment of the designers, sixty thousand people were fed to their entire satisfaction. Not only that, the surplus was distributed for about a fortnight to those who prayed for the same.

Though Babaji Maharaj never wanted to give an exhibition of his power, yet knowingly or unknowingly these things came from him on grounds of compassion. The present writer had seen one such thing. His father was a patient of chronic amoebic dysentery. At times it became so acute that he always felt that his bowels needed immediate clearing. During this period he used to suspend all his programmes and remained in his residence. On one such occasion when the disease was in a acute stage, Babaji Maharaj sent for him and asked him to go to Agartala with Babaji Maharaj. His father humbly submitted to him of his condition of health and requested him not to take him to Agartala because that would be risky. Babaji Maharaj smiled at him, prescribed him medicine and had said that the application of the medicine would cure his disease. My father was not very hopeful. Babaji Maharaj understood that. He smiled again and said, "Let us see, what Thakurji does in this case." The readers would be surprised to know that my father had never suffered from that type of ailment during and after his journey to Agartala. This miracle happened so spontaneously that we thought it was only natural for Babaji Maharaj. Babaji Maharaj used to lead the Annual Journey known as Braja Chourasi Crose Parikrama. This was and still is one of the charges assigned to the Sri Mahanta of the four religious sects. In one such annual pilgrimage, an ascetic came to Babaji Maharaj and enquired whether he would like to witness the power of herbs. Baba answered in the affirmative. Then the magician sadhu brought two very strong bamboo pieces and selected two palwans to hold the two ends of each bamboo piece. He also asked the 'palwans' to hold them with as much might as was possible for them. The distance between the two pieces of bamboo was about a yard. Then the magician-sadhu brought out a root of a tree and touched it to both the bamboos. To the utter amazement, all the spectators saw that those two palwans, in spite of their best effort, could not hold them firmly. The sticks began to bend and very soon touched each other. Everybody present was in full praise for the Sadhu.

But our Babaji Maharaj remained silent. This sadhu was disheartened as his leader had not spoken a single word in praise for his feat. He, then, came to him and asked whether the Babaji Maharaj could have measured the power of herbs. Babaji Maharaj was then in a very sporting mood. In his child-like simplicity he replied that he had in his possession more powerful mantras than these herbs. Everybody present there, insisted him on showing the power of Mantra over herbs. Babaji Maharaj asked the sadhu to repeat his feat and looked at the bamboo pieces for a while. To one's great surprise, everybody present there saw that the bamboo pieces had neither moved nor bent by even a fraction of an inch. The sadhu tried again and again and applied more and more herbs, but all his efforts went in vain. All sadhus and laymen present there saw that Mantra was more powerful than herbs and Kathia Baba was a Master in its application.

Our Babaji Maharaj once wrote to his Guru as to whether God is capable of knowing the minds of His devotees. The Guru had not only replied in the affirmative but added: "If by his grace you attain necessary spiritual power, you also will be able to know the minds of your disciples, even if they remain far away from you." This thing actually happened and none of his disciples ever remained out of his sight. Many of his disciples who lived far away from him had felt this in their lives. When we offer our prayers we describe Him as our Saviour, Friend, Philosopher and Guide. Not only that, the cure of all ills rests in Him. These are not hyperbolic sounds but are true in all respects, which can be ascertained from the life of one sadhu disciple of Babaji Maharaj.

Late Madandasji came from Varanasi. He was the son of a traditional Sanskrit scholar. Like his father, he was also devoted to studies. He was invited by Babaji Maharaj in the Nimbarka Ashram and kept himself isolated from others. During the time of disturbance in the Ashram, he decided to leave it and go to some lonely place, where he would be able to devote more time in peaceful meditation and study of the scriptures. He apprised his Guru of his desire and sought his kind permission. The Guru was fully aware of the nature of his disciple and granted him permission to do the same.

Madandasji went to Punjab and selected a lonely place for performing his religious activities. The nearby-people were immediately attracted to him and used to come to him with various offerings. The sadhu had never used

these articles for his own consumption. He used to cook food for his deities and after offering the same to his Lord, used to take prasad out of it. The consumable materials offered by the villagers were cooked and distributed to them in the verandah.

Another sadhu used to stay nearby. He had come there long before Madandasji's arrival. But he could not attract any respect from the villagers. Hence, he had a feeling of animosity towards Madandasji. One day this sadhu offered Madandasji a glass of sharbat as Prasad of his deity and requested him to drink the same. Madandasji by dint of his sixth sense could feel that the offer was not innocent and the sadhu had applied poison in it. He was in a dilemma. If he had refused it, it would mean an insult to the sadhu and dishonor to the prasad and if he accepted and drank it, then it would mean sure death. He remembered his Guru who had taken full charge of him and decided that he would accept the poisonous substance. If it was the desire of his Guru that he would die this way, then his desire would be fulfilled, but if it was not so, his Guru would surely save him. He drank the sharbat and the action of poison was felt immediately. His whole intestine had a burning sensation. He felt that the last moment of his life had come. Suddenly he took a little bit of buffer, boiled it and offered it to his Guru and Lord and swallowed it. He was surprised to feel that all his agony was abated.

He thought that this type of incident may occur again there. So he decided to go back to Vrindaban and live there under the care of the Guru. After his arrival, he described how this incident took place and what happened afterwards. When he was giving his account, Sanyasis of Ramakrishna Mission were present there. They took him to their hospital for examination of his health. He was admitted to the hospital but he refused to take any diet there. He said he would take nothing but the prasad of his Gurudev because he was confident that it was his medicine.

After a few days the Sanyasis reported to him that the doctors who examined Madandasji found that his entire intestine was totally non-functioning. They were surprised to find him still living. Madandasji came back from the hospital, lived in the Ashram accepting Prasad and died of malaria six years later. Three or four days before his death, he told of his imminent demise to

inmates of the Ashram. This is a glaring example of the spiritual attainment of our Babaji Maharaj.

Another account of his great spiritual power was given by Late Shyam Sundardasji Maharaj – the first Sadhu disciple of Babaji Maharaj and the first chief of our Sukhchar Ashram. his account runs thus :

During his Assam tours, while at Shillong he used to put up at the residence of Sri Janmenjoy Barman, the retired Deputy Commissioner. He and his wife were greatly devoted to their Guru. Once their only son was attacked with a dangerous disease. Gradually he was sinking. One evening the doctor, who was attending him, told Mrs. Barman that the condition of the patient was so critical that the boy might not survive that night. The lady who was sitting by the side of the patient's head silently prayed to her Guru to save the life of the boy. The Guru was then residing in the Ashram at Vrindavan. The lady who was spending a sleepless night by the bed side of her ailing son and offering prayers to her Gurudev was bewildered to see her Guru approaching towards her with a white plate in his hand. The mother stood up in reverence and humility, when Babaji Maharaj told her to apply the medicine kept in the plate on the boy. Mrs. Barman abide by the orders of her Master. She took the medicine from the plate, put it in the mouth of the diseased son but could not see either the plate or Babaji Maharaj after wards, anywhere near her. In the morning, the worried physician came with the firm belief that he would have to do nothing except issuing a death certificate. He was surprised to see the boy living and was at his wit's end when on examination he found that there was no sign of any disease in the boy. A Sadguru is omnipresent and omniscient. He takes charges of his devotes in this way.

Great Sadhus who have complete realization of the Brahman, themselves become Brahman. They also possess the powers that Brahman possesses. He becomes omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. That our Babaji Maharaj possessed all these spiritual powers to the fullest extent may be illustrated from the following also.

Sometime in 1975, most of us had received one communication from Babaji Maharaj in which he had narrated that as the Mahanta of the Ashram had left it, he thought it better to come back to Vrindaban and stay

there to the last lat of his life. Some of us had gone there to see him by the side of the deities whom he had placed in the temple. After our arrival we found him very happy, active and in a jovial mood. He said that after coming out from the old Ashram he had no intention to set up any other Ashram anywhere in India. But Lord Krishna thought differently. He waited for quite a long time to be installed in the Ashram to be founded by Sri Sri 108 Dhananjoydasji Kathia Baba. But that was a part of his total desire. The Lord then intended that there should be centers of association or common meeting places for hundreds of devotees belonging to the Nimbarka Sect. they had all arrived from East Pakistan and required to have one such Ashram near their places of residence. Apart from that, he had another mission to fulfill. This part of India was not well conversant with the Philosophy of Sri Nimbarka. The philosophy propounded by Sri Nimbarkacharyaya and His disciples were hardly known to the people of Eastern India. At the Sukhchar Ashram he wrote a large number of books, got them printed and in this way made the philosophy known and popular. He kept himself engaged in spreading and propagating the ideas conveyed through the writings of the master-minds of the sect or Sampradaya to which he belonged. With this end in view, the Lord wished that Sri Sri 108 Dhananjoy Dasji Maharaj should establish some other Ashrams. Accordingly, Ashrams were established at Sukhchar, Agartala, Silchar and Bhara. After the round was complete, Lord Krishna and Priyaji brought him back to his old abode.

At Vrindavan, we became intimate with Chaturbhujdas, the then priest of the temple. On being requested, he gave an account of his becoming a sadhu and a disciple of Sri Sri 108, Swami Dhananjoydasji Kathia Baba. In his private life, he, at first, was a teacher and then a political worker. He joined the freedom movement under the banner of Congress Party. After that he migrated to Acharya Narendra Dev. But being dissatisfied with the Socialist Party, he joined the Communist Party. Very soon, he realized that politics will not bring salvation to the people. He thought to lead an ascetic's life. He began to read different religious texts, decided to accept Vaishdavan to live there as a sadhu for the rest of his life. He made two conditions for him before entering Vrindavan, first, he would not ask for any food in any Ashram. He would remain on fast till he was voluntarily invited to break it. Second, make that person his Guru who would not only be a good sadhu but also a great scholar.

On the first day, Srimati Radharani kept him in starvation. He went to many Ashrams but nobody had asked him to take prasad. On the next day also, he was passing from one Ashram to another but no invitation was forth-coming. At last, he came to Gurukul Road and entered Kathia Baba Ka Sthan. He saw that a good number of sadhus were taking their mid-day prasad (meal) and a noble looking sadhu with huge matted hair was moving in the middle of the rows and inspecting the distribution. Chaturbhujdas suddenly saw the sadhu approaching him. At last the sadhu came to him and said, "You are on fast from yesterday". Chaturbhujdas was surprised. The next sentence was still more amazing: "You are coming from Bihar, I think." The third sentence was no less interesting to Chaturbhujdas. "Go and have your prasad immediately and so long as you would remain in Vrindavan, you would have your daily prasad - both day and night - here in the Ashram." Chaturbhujdas was not only surprised but also was in a state of ecstasy. He was a newcomer to Vrindavan. Nobody knew from where he had come. None was informed of his starvation. He was confident that, that sadhu could delve deep into the heart of a man and can read the mind to the minutest details.

While moving in Vrindavan, he came to know that Sri Sri Swami 108 Dhananjoydas Kathia Baba drew respect from the people, not only for his spiritual attainment but also for his academic distribution. He was a scholar of great repute. Sri Chaturbhujdasji's joy knew no bounds. At last he had found out the Guru from whom he would receive his initiation. After initiation he was made the priest of the temple. While assigning him this duty, Babaji Maharaj had said that the deities inside the temple were very much living. He should not take them merely as stones. Chaturbhuj Dasji Maharaj went on doing his duties faithfully. But he had some suspicion in his mind as to whether these deities were really living or not. He was not getting any opportunity to put this question to Babaji Maharaj. His Guru was then observing a vow of silence. At that time Babaji Maharaj had planned for a journey to Bengal and Assam. On the scheduled day Kathia Baba came to the Railway Station at Vrindavan and got into his compartment. Chaturbhujdasji along with other sadhus stood in the platform to see him off. Suddenly he asked Chaturbhujdas to come to him. On his arrival he saw that Babaji Maharaj was writing something on his slate. He gave it to Chaturbhujdas so that he read it. To his great surprise he saw that Babaji Maharaj had written the following :

“My Thakurji, Lord Krishna is really
the Supreme Lord incarnate. Don’t
take the deity as a mass of stone.
Keep firm faith in what I had already
said to you about my Lord.”

Could anybody question about the omniscience of our Master ?

CHAPTER - V

The Journey's End.

After returning to Vrindavan in 1975, Babaji Maharaj was gradually winding himself up. His close associates could feel that he was more and more getting composed as if the conch was entering into its shell. Previously, we found him as a prolific writer. Now he had left his pen and composed nothing. He hardly wrote any letter but dictated answers to questions of disciple. During this time the condition of his health was also deteriorating. On more than one occasion, he revived himself from death bed.

One such occasion was at Bombay in the year 1981. Everybody thought that Babaji Maharaj would not survive this attack. But God's will moved on the other way. Gradually, he recovered himself from his ailment. He came back to Vrindaban but we found that he had least interest in any worldly matter. He remained engaged in meditation. Still then, he showed great affection to the disciples, pouring in the Ashram and wanted them to have as his audience, enquired as to whether they had any difficulty.

The present writer was fortunate enough to remain present in the Ashram for some days, at that time, with his wife and eldest son. When we had informed him that we had an intention to visit Mathura, Gokul and Barsana, he asked us to go to Dauji, Nandgaon and Sanket also. He also chalked out a programme for our journey. We had our pilgrimage as directed by him.

Babaji Maharaj was then keeping very indifferent health. Doctors from Ramakrishna Mission used to come twice a day to examine his health. But Babaji Maharaj always used to smile and say that his time of leaving this world was approaching nearer and nearer. They used to give him injections twice a day to keep his blood sugar normal. But whenever I wanted to know about the reading of

pathological test, he used to tell me about the measurement, amidst laughter, used to say, “I do not find any difference. When they say it is high, I do not feel it, when they say it is low, I do not find any difference.”

Though he was not physically fit, yet he showed no sign of fatigue in initiating into discipleship by giving Mantras.

We had come to know that Babaji Maharaj had said to somebody that his passing away would not take place in the Brajamandal. The devotees present there, had requested the authorities of the Ashram not to make any programme for Babaji Maharaj outside Sri Vrindavan Dham. But to our utter disappointment we came to know that a programme had already been finalised to take him to Sukhchar. As train services were not convenient from Mathura, he would be taken to Delhi in the afternoon of 16.4.1983. It was the second of Baisakh 1389 B.S. the day before, was the commencement of Bengali New Year. On the Chaitra Sankranti he initiated my eldest son to the Nimbarka Sampradaya and gave him the sacred Mantra. His initiation was Babaji Maharaj’s last such work in Vrindavan.

Babaji Maharaj knew that we would be leaving on 16th morning. 15th being holy NabaVarsa according to the Bengali Calendar, he made elaborate arrangement for preparing different items of food and vegetables for offering them to the deities. These constituted delicious dishes for those who had the great fortune of getting mid-day prasad there. In the evening, we were discussing about the varieties in the sitting room of Babaji Maharaj. He was very happy and joyful. When the time of his audience was over, Babaji Maharaj asked Satchidanandasji to cook food in the morning and offer it to the Lord and His Holy consort and then give it to us so that we might leave Vrindavan after taking prasad. In the early morning, next day, when Mangal Arati was over, we went to his sitting room, offered our respectful homage and humble pronams. He blessed us as usual and touched our heads with his palm. He was smiling like a child.

Sri Radhakrishnadasji and Sri Satchidanandasji told us that Babaji Maharaj would be taking rest at the time of our departure. Hence we would not have any darshan of our Gurudev at that time of leaving. Though this had distressed us greatly, there was no way out. After taking prasad in the Ashram, we

went near the bed room of our Gurudev, bent down silently and offered our pronam and approached towards the main gate. We were waiting there for the conveyance, Suddenly my wife shouted in ecstatic joy, saying, “Look at the verandah, Babaji Maharaj is standing there with a rising right hand.” To our great wonder we saw him standing with beaming smile and dazzling in the sunshine. That was our last darshan of our Guru but that darshan will illumine us throughout our lives.

Sri Gurudev came to Calcutta on 18.4.1983. His condition of health was very critical. Though weak in body, his mind was full of vigour and strength. His attendants, it appeared to us, had imposed unnecessary restriction on his movements. Nobody was allowed to meet him or talk to him. They would have to wait for his darshan in the courtyard. Babaji Maharaj used to come out to the verandah, adjacent to his bed room, raised his hand in a mood of blessing, threw chocolates and lozenges to them and go back to his room.

After a few days it was decided that in order to fulfill the desire of many devotees, he would admit them to Vaishnava Order on Akshaya Tritiya. In the meanwhile, arrangements were also being made to take him to Silchar.

But his Guru, to whom he had remained ever obedient and devoted, had made a different tour programme for him. Sri Sri 108 Santadasji Maharaj thought that it was high time to take back his beloved child to him. It was in the evening of 11th May, 1983 while distributing chocolates to the devotees he felt a serious convulsion. This was the fourth of its kind. The attending physician took him to the Hospital. But on the way, at 19.10 hours when the evening Arati in the temple was going on, our Babaji Maharaj had breathed his last.

Thus came the end. The light was out. Though the light was out of the body, yet its flame remains ever burning. It will help us to come out of darkness. Its warmth will enliven us and lead us to immortality for ever and ever.