

Haralayya

Compiled by Harish R Hiremath
For narration in Chat with Chocolate Program for VSNA Children



Haralayya, Madhuvarasa & Kalyana Kranthi: Most important principle of our belief system is “Every person who has become shiva sharana is equal in every aspect irrespective of his birth or way of life before”. Even after 9 centuries it is very difficult for some in our community to accept and adopt this principle in life and in developing marital relationships. UNTOUCHABILITY, CASTE SYSTEM and treating people Pure & Impure, Up and Down is still a bane for our society.

For couple of millennia this has been propagated and sustained by the Manusmruthi as ideal social order ordained by divinity. Our lord Basaveshwara fought against this many centuries before Abraham Lincoln, Ambedkar and Gandhiji. Our sharanas Haralayya and Madhuvarasa gave their life to bridge this gap and has become two permanent stars in our pantheon of great sharanas. Let us look at the life of Haralayya.

Haralayya

Haralayya lived in a small hut in one of the streets of Kalyana with his wife Kalyani and son Sheelavanthaiah. Haralayya was born as a shoemaker (chammara) by professions belonging to the lowest rung of the society belonging to Untouchables. He used to peel the skin of dead buffaloes, clean it and make it ready to use as the raw material for making chappals and shoes.

Later by the influence of Basaveshwara and other sharanas, he became a Lingayath Veerashiva and started wearing and worshipping Isha linga. Due to his devotion in his work (Kayaka) he became very popular among the people for the best quality of chappals.

As he started moving with the sharanas, his horizon of his mind expanded, he started writing vachanas and sharanas were amazed by his wisdom. Turning ordinary people into extraordinary is innate goal of sharana dharma. Haralayya is another great example for this rare phenomenon in the history.

One day Basava, after taking food Haralayya's area, was walking towards king's palace in the streets of Kalyana and he was wishing all the sharanas on the way. When Basava crossed Haralayya on the street, Haralayya moved to the side of the street and wished "Sharanu Basava". Looking at the humility of Haralayya, Basava stopped and addressed him back "Sharanu Sharanartha" and continued to palace.

Haralayya stood like a stone and was affected! Basava addressing him twice as "Sharanu Sharanartha" when he addressed Basava only once as "Sharanu". He started repenting why he stood as a stone. He thought he should have immediately fallen to the feet of Basava. He became very unhappy and continued for days like that.

Looking at his repentance and sadness, his wife Kalyani told him "let us prepare and present a set of chappal to Basava and ask his forgiveness. Kind Basava will definitely forgive us" They started to prepare a nice chappal set for Basava, again Haralayya started thinking "How can we give the same chappal set to Basava which we prepare for all. It must be special, and an idea flashed to him. Happily, he shared his idea with Kalyani, and she also happily accepted and they prepared a special chappal for Basava. This set of chappal for completely new idea and it was shining.

Next day they got up, took bath, applied vibhuti to their forehead and to that special chappal set, did linga Pooja. Afterwards, took that Special Chappal in a clean cloth and went to Basaveshwara's palace. Basavanna's palace was full of sharanas, but somehow Basava realized the arrival of Haralayya and came to him and saluted him "Sharanu". Not only that, he called his wife Neelambe to meet Haralayya and she also saluted him by addressing him "Sharanu". This made Haralayya to become sad further. He wanted to present the special chappals to Basava to placate his uncomfortable situation. Basava and Neelambike made it worse by saluting him again. He felt that he doesn't deserve this kind of respect!

Basava understood his inner feelings and tried to calm him down by saying that "Don't feel bad that you were born as untouchable, by becoming Sharana you are equal to all of us" Hearing Basava words, Haralayya's eyes filled with tears. He fell to the feet of Basava and requested him to accept his present and bless his family.

Basava took his present and opened the clothes to see the special chappals. Surprised to see the special shine of the chappals, he asked "Haralayya, these chappals are shining and unique, how did you make them? What animal skin you have used to make them". Haralayya replied "Basava, Kalyani and I wanted to give you a special chappal and hence we used the skin of our thighs to make the chappal for you.

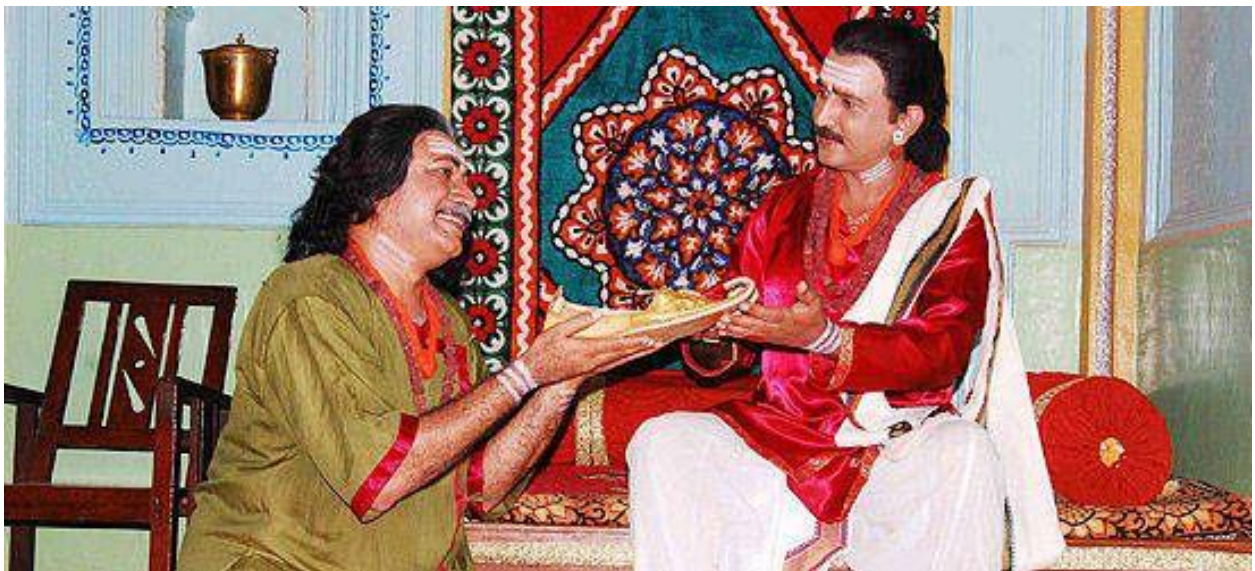
Basava got surprised "Sharana's thigh skin! Why have you done such a painful act? What is the reason to punish yourself like this? What wrong you did?". Haralayya Replied "Basava, I addressed you once "Sharanu" and a pure person like you addressed an impure person like me twice as "Sharanu Sharanartha" With utter shock Basava said "This is an epitome of your faith. Kalyani and you have reached a level of using your own thigh skin to atone the feeling of guilt. This is unparalleled instance in the history of Sharanas. How can I wear this Chappal? Shiva Shiva, I can never wear this chappal, I can do only this" Basava took both the chappals and placed them on his head and started chanting "Om Namah Shivaya"



Haralayya felt very bad further and told “I wanted to correct the mistake and by keeping our chappal on your head, you have made us more guilt. Now, I am feeling why even tried to come here to rectify my mistake. How can you do this for us? You pushed us to make sin further”.

Basava replied “You are not a sinner. You are one who can remove the sins of other people. Lord Koodala Sangama is the only one who can wear your chappals. Please take it to him and give it

to him. Those who touches these chappals will be blessed. Without any choice, Haralayya left Basava palace. Such is the simple, humble and great personalities of Haralayya and Basava.





Haralayya and Kalyanammanna Padukegalu

Bijanalli, Sedam Taluk, Kalaburagi, Karnataka





Haralayyana Chilume

Ulavi, Karwar District, Karnataka

