

Qualities of Veerashaiva

(As told by Akkamahadevi)

Guru S. Bale, Ph. D.

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In Memory of

B. Nijagunaiah

And

Sharadamma

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Preface

In 1998, I went to India to spend time with my mother. As per my mother wishes, we first went to Yadiyur. At Yadiyur we visited the temple of Guru Siddalingeshwara. We took prasada in the dasoha. Around two in the afternoon, we left Yadiyur to pay homage to the Guru Veerabhadra Swamy of Kalari Mata. I still remember the day Guru Veerabhadra Swamy blessed me with my Istalinga with instructions for worship. I never missed visiting him at Kalari during all my visits to India. This time I was not lucky to see him, yet my eyes could see him and ears could hear his sweet loving words. We spent some time at his resting-place and continued our journey to Gubbi.

Next day, we traveled to Tumkur to visit the family of my uncle Chennamallappa. My mother stayed for a few days in Tumkur. I continued my journey to Chitradurga to visit Murugarajendra Mata.

My cousin and myself arrived at the Mata at 10A.M. The Mata occupies several acres of land. There is lake in front of the Mata. The lake is dried up except for an occasional water hole. Mata is situated away from the main highway. I found the premises were extremely clean. Even the walkway was clean without any litters. I felt comfortable walking through the corridor of the Mata. I climbed the stairs to the second floor. I saw Sri. Shivamurthy Murugarajendra Swamiji sitting on a chair talking to devotees. I waited for my turn before entering the hall. Swamiji was surprised to see me. After usual question and answers, Swamiji asked me to

stay that night. While I was with Swamiji, a family came with a unique problem. The lady informed Swamiji that she is distressed with living. She is not responding to her child or to her loving husband, She sought his advice and assistance. Swamiji encouraged her with kind words and suggested her to spend a week in the Mata with her child and husband. Later I asked Swamiji, what if she does not get better? Swamiji replied with confidence that she would. The Mata provides an atmosphere for awakening the soul in understanding its responsibilities. In addition she will receive group therapy to snap out of her depressed condition. That evening Swamiji arranged a picnic in near by mountain.

While returning to the Mata, we saw a group of students dancing on the streets. We also saw some students carrying Ganesha made from clay. They were marching either towards a well or to a nearby lake for the traditional disposing of the idol Ganesha. Swamiji was sad to see the marching of the students with Ganesha. He said that water in many wells, lakes and rivers has been dried up because we discharge thousands of clay Ganesha every year. He wished for Ganesha made of sugar or other materials that can be recycled. He did not wish to see or hear any more dried up water sources. This shows his concern for the well being of people.

Swamiji arranged a small get together to honor a director who sought his blessings for the up coming movie production. Before the ceremony, a young man narrated stories of Basava. Also, the children from the

school sand vachanas. Swamiji blessed the director and myself by giving us with several books about Basava and other sharanas. One of them is 'Sadbaktha Charitrya' by P. M. Giriraju. It is the basis for this book.

I brought all the books to Edison, Nj. Within a few weeks of my return I read all the books. They contained a wealth of information about vachanas and about the traditions that exists in India. The books create interest among readers and they inspire with topics for research studies. Swamiji expressed interest in providing assistance to those willing to conduct research. I am particularly interested in the book based on Swamiji's speech, and his book 'Sadbaktha Charitrya' written by Giriraju.

Sharabendraiah compiled the speeches delivered by Swamiji at various occasions and published under the name 'Suliyodedha Bele'. This book has been made a text for the second pre-university students. I recommend that every one, especially Veerashaivas should read. The book brings out Swamiji's concern and his constant fight to eradicate ignorance by injecting awareness. The second book, 'Sadbaktha Charitrya', is very interesting. From the beginning. I fell in love with Akka's vachanas for two reasons. Akka, in one vachana summarized all the 52 qualities of Basava and they are the Veerashaiva philosophy. The author, Giriraju explains each of the 52 qualities with supporting vachanas of sharanas. His explanations are scholarly and in a simplistic manner. These two reasons made me to undertake this translation of

Akka's vachanas. In addition, I have included my own vachanas and their interpretations drawn from my life experiences.

I am grateful to Sri Shivamurthy Murugarajendra Swamy of Murugarajendra Mata, Chitradurga for giving me a copy of the book 'Sadbaktha Charitrya' by Giriraju. I would like to thank my brother-in-law Mr. H. K. Siddalinga Sastry, Professor B. N. Chandraiah, Mysore, and Sri Kuderu Veerabhadra Srikanta Swamy for their valuable suggestions.

Thanks are due to Mr. and Mrs.(Dr.) Thontadarya for their help in printing and publishing this book.

During the preparation of this book, I was fortunate to receive a great deal of support and encouragement from my children, Asha and Siddesh. In spite of their busy schedules, they took time to read the manuscript at every stage and suggested improvements. Without their support this book would not have been completed. Lastly, I would like to thank my wife Rathna for her support in completing this book.

Sharanas Signatue

Each vachana ends with a unique signature. They are helpful in the identification of the writer. Vachana writers included in this book are:

Kudala Sangamadeva - Vachanas written by **Basavanna** end with this signature. This is the way of showing respect to his Guru, Sangameshwara. Basavanna was responsible for the religious, social and economic revolutions in the 12th century. His revolution resulted in the eradication of the caste system. He promoted 'Kayaka and Dasoha'. Kayaka is working for living. Dasoha is caring for the needy by donating excess wealth earned through legitimate ways. The sharanas called Basava as their Anna or brother, He is also known as 'Guru Basava'.

Kudala Chennasangaiah - This is the signature used by **Chennabasavanna**, the nephew of Basavanna. This is his way of showing respect to his Guru Basava. Chennabasavanna is credited with saving sharana literature from destruction. He is considered to be the Linga in the human form..

Chennamallikarjuna - Vachanas of **Akkamahadevi** included this name to give respect to the formless and yet beautiful husband. She describes him as ' has no death, the beautiful formless person!'.

Guheshwara - **Allamaprabhu** wrote his vachanas giving respect to his Guru Animisha. He found his Guru through a peep and received Linga from him.

This act made him a learned person. He was the first president of Shunya Peeta in the Anubhavamantapa. Allama is a Jangama. There are 1643 vachanas of Allama.

Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve - Siddalingeshwara wrote vachanas ending with this signature. He lived in the fourteenth century. He is called the second Allama. He wrote 701 vachanas organizing them in 21 sthalas. Shatssthalas is the six steps in the life of a devotee that leads him to divinity.

Urilingadeva - Urilingadevaru wrote vachanas ending with Urilingadeva. This is probably the name of his Guru. He is known for convincing bavis to become bakthas or devotees of God. Forty-eight vachanas of him are available.

Urilingapeddi Priya Visweshvara - Urilingapeddi formerly a thief, and converted by his Guru Urilingadevaru. He educated himself and wrote vachanas end in with this signature. Here he is giving respect to his Guru Urilingadevaru and the Lord Shiva as Visweshvara. Twelve (12) vachanas of him are available.

Thelugeshwara - This is the signature of **Telugu Jommai**.

Kalidevara Deva - This signature of **Madivala Machaiah** refers to Lord Shiva, the God for all. Machaiah served sharanas by doing laundry. He was known as Madivala Machaiah, referring to his kayaka

of washing the clothes of the sharanas. Three hundred fifty three (353) vachanas of him are available.

Sowrastra Sameshwara - This signature of **Adaiah** refers to Lord Shiva. Adaiah is a merchant from Sowrastra. His vachanas describe Veerashaiva philosophy and methods of worship. There are 403 vachanas of him are found and published. The poets Harihara and Ragavanka have written about Adaiah.

Nishkalnka Mallikarjuna - This signature of **Moligeya Maraiah** refers to Lord Shiva. Moligeya Maraiah was the king for the city of Mondavya in Kashmir. He lived with his wife, queen **Gangadevi**, in Kalyana. His kayaka was to collect wood for sale. There are 818 vachanas of him are published. His wife has 69 vachanas to her credit.

Kapila Siddamallikarjuna - This is the signature of **Siddaramaiah**. Siddaramaiah came to Kalyana with Allamaprabhu to learn the secret of Shivayoga. Before his enlightenment at Srishaila, Siddarama was a cow herder. Later, he was involved in social work. Siddarama accompanied Allama in his journey to Kalyana. He wrote thousands of vachanas but only 1679 are available.

Basava Priya Kudala Sangamadeva - Signature of **Hadapada Appanna**. He was a barber. Many people believed seeing a barber in the morning was a bad omen. So Basava made Appanna his secretary. People saw the barber Appanna before seeing Basava. There are 279 vachanas of his. His wife **Lingamma** also

wrote vachanas. There are about 113 vachanas of her have been so far published.

Mahalinga Kalleshwara - signature of **Havinahala Kallaiah**. Kallaiah was a goldsmith. He is the deciple of Siddarama. After the death of Siddarama, he completed the unfinished works of Siddarama.

Sakaleshawara - Sakalesha Madarasa performed his worship of God in a grand way. Once the king was invited to worship in the home of a poor man. To finance the occasion, the poor man sold his daughter. While worshiping, the king saw the image of the poor man's daughter in bondage. Upon this discovery, the king became disgusted and relinquished his throne. There are 134 vacanas of his.

Akhandeshwara - Signature of **Shanmukha Swamy**. He is the head of Jivargi Mutt. He lived from 1630-1711. He wrote 717 vachanas and 41 poems, each with 4 lines (called Chowpati). He alos wrote other books. His work mostly deals with Shatssthal.

So said Guru - Authors Signature.

Introduction

The twelfth century is considered the golden age for Veerashaivism. During this century, Basavanna led the sharana movement and he revitalized Veerashaivism. Basava built Anubhavamantapa, the great hall, where sharanas held open discussions of social, economical and religious problems. The discussions resulted in the removal of many social, economical and religious barriers. They established equality between men and women, eradicated the caste system, and elevated individuals to new levels through the dignity of labor. The proceedings of the Anubhavamantapa and the discussions are recorded as Vachanas. These Vachanas are the basis of Veerashaiva Philosophy.

The Veerashaiva religion took rebirth in the twelfth century because of the atrocities committed by Vedic followers. In the name of religion, Vedic followers were persecuting people born in lower caste. Women were treated as second-class citizens. According to the Vedic philosophy, a woman could not get salvation without being a slave to her husband. In those days, women were excluded from participating and performing religious acts. Women did not have any religious rights in the society.

Vedic followers were very powerful. Even kings had to follow their advice in matters of war and when passing laws. In those days, Sudras (born in the working class) were not allowed either to listen or to recite Vedic hymns. Basava fought against these and other injustices that were carried out in the name of religion.

Basavas' religious and social revolution attracted many people and from as far away as Kashmir. The king of Kashmir, Mahadevaraya Bhuapala with his wife Mahadevamma came to Kalyana to witness the religious and social revolutions. Having seen and participated in the discussions of Anubhavamantapa, they renounced their kingdom and decided to stay in Kalyana. The king and the queen gave up their princely estate and followed the sharana way of life. For their living, the king sold wood that he collected in the forest. Selling wood was his daily routine and it became his Kayaka.

People of all castes joined the Veerashaiva movement and followed the sharanas' way of life. As more people joined this revolution, the Vedic followers began to lose their grip on people resulting in loss of revenue. They began to conspire against sharana movement and waited for an opportunity to revolt against the sharana movement. It came when Basava and other sharanas agreed and performed a marriage between a Sudra groom and a Brahmin bride.

The Vedic followers complained to the king. According to the laws, a Sudra groom could not marry a Brahmin bride; but a Brahmin groom could marry a Sudra bride. The king ordered death sentences to the Brahmin bride and to the Sudra groom. Basava could not tolerate the injustice and he resigned his ministerial position. He left Kalyana and went to Sangama. These events started unrest between the Vedic followers and the sharanas. Many sharanas were killed and Vachana books were burned during the unrest. Sharanas, afraid

for their safety, left Kalyana. Some carried Vachana books and hid them for safety. These events made Vachanas be scattered and stay obscure for many years.

Basava and his followers condemned pilgrimages, worship of idols, bathing in holy rivers in seeking salvation. They denounced being lazy, lying, stealing, and collecting wealth improperly. They suggested association with learned persons and encouraged kayaka, or engage in work. They established dasoha, for dissemination of excess wealth and to feed the poor. The caste system, that prevailed in India and had divided Indians by depriving them of opportunities, was eradicated. Women enjoyed social and religious freedom. Their participation in Anubhavamantapa discussions resulted in numerous vachanas.

Veerashaivism is a distinct religion, even though it is similar to Hinduism. Veerashaiva religion is not well known outside Karnataka. Many feel that Veerashaivism is part of Shaivism. This has prevented its recognition as a distinct religion. Some of the contributing factors are:

The revolution that took place in the twelfth century for preventing the spread of Veerashaivism ended Basava's social reforms in Kalyana. Anubhavamantapa, where sharanas discussed many sociologic, economic and, religious issues was destroyed. Vachanas containing their deliberations either were lost or burned by the Vedic followers. Sharanas, for their safety, left Kalyana and settled in

other parts of Karnataka. Some carried vachana tablets with them resulting in the fragmentation of vachana writings.

Sharanas wrote about 1.7 billion vachanas. So far a few thousand vachanas have been found. Yet, they portray vividly the social, economical, and religious revolution that took place in the twelfth century.

The vachanas are in Kannada the language of Karnataka. People outside Karnataka cannot read them leading to the obscurity of their existence. In recent years, efforts have been made to translate and publish vachanas in English and other languages of India.

Vachanas are the basis of Veerashaiva philosophy and they are also literary marvels of Kannada. The twelfth century sharanas have given us their knowledge and wisdom through vachanas. They reveal the core knowledge of sharanas experienced wisdom. By reading or just by listening to vachanas, one can understand its meaning as well as the underlying truth about God.

Chennabasavanna, the nephew of Basava and a highly acclaimed scholar of Veerashaivism, describes vachanas the following way:

*Without rope and tools
Can you get water from a deep well?
Possible with steps!
With vachanas
Our elders built steps*

*To reach the heavens!
To clean man's taints
Sharanas gave us the vachanas
Illuminated with knowledge
Kudala Chennasangaiah!*

Water in a deep well is useless without a rope and a vessel. They are not required if steps exist to reach the water. Similarly, knowing that heaven exists is not enough. Persons should possess the knowledge to reach it. Chennabasavanna says that Sharanas gave us the vachanas. Vachanas contain the knowledge required to reach heavens. Knowledge removes ignorance just like light dispels darkness. Vachanas are steps to the heavens.

Religious freedom for women encouraged them to participate in the Anubhavamantapa discussions. Many women actively participated. They have contributed in excess of 600,000 vachanas to Veerashaiva literature. Of these, Akkamahadevi wrote about 360,000 vachanas. So far, 314 of them have been found. About Akkamahadevi, Chennabasavanna says:

*Look Siddaramanna, it
Took sixty vachanas for sharanas
While twenty for Basava
Took twenty vachanas for Basava
While ten for Allama
Took ten vachanas for Allama
While five for Ajaganna
Took five vachanas for Ajaganna*

*While one for Akkamahadevi
Kudala Chennasangaiah*

Akkamahadevi could express in one vachana that took five for Ajaganna, 10 for Allama, 20 for Basava and 60 for other sharanas. She was blessed with literary power.

Some thoughts about Akkamahadevi

Uduthadi is a village in Shivamogga district, Karnataka State, India. Shivamogga is the abode for many devotees of Shiva including Allamaprabhu, the first president of the great spiritual house Anubhavamantapa.

Mahadevi was born in Uduthadi. Her parents were Sumathi and Nirmala. They were devotees of Shiva and as such Mahadevi had a great influence in the Shiva ways of life. Mahadevi was in love with the invisible Lord Chennamallikarjuna.

One day, the king Kausika while returning to his kingdom passed in front of Mahadevi's house. The king saw the youthful Mahadevi who was watching the king's pageantry from the balcony. He fell in love with her beauty. Later that day, he sent his ministers to her house asking for her hand in marriage. Her parents did not want their daughter to marry a Jain king. They also knew the punishment for not agreeing to the wishes of the king. Mahadevi, recognizing the situation of her parents, agreed to marry the king if the king met her condition that "she would not consider herself as his wife till he accepted the Shiva faith". The Jain king, full of lust, eagerly agreed to her conditions. The king and Mahadevi were married. But the marriage was short lived. After marriage, Mahadevi spent most of her time either in worshipping her Istalinga or hosting a stream of jangamas. She was spending enormous wealth from the treasury for hosting jangamas. The

king was not ready to spend the wealth the way Mahadevi was spending. The king broke the premarital agreement made with Mahadevi. Soon after, Mahadevi left the king. While she was leaving, the king taunted her for wearing clothes that belonged to him. On hearing this, she took her clothes off and walked out of the palace naked. To those who looked at her with lust, she said:

*Lump of meat, pot of urine!
Structure of bone, spring of pus!
Burn this body!
Spoil not
For stomach sake
But learn the mark
Chennamallikarjuna!*

The body is made of muscles and bones. It springs pus. It collects urine. This body should be burned. Most time is spent filling the stomach. She suggests learning the truth about God is the way to overcome the body's needs.

Before her departure to Kalyana some of her close friends and her parents pleaded her not to go. They asked her what she would do for her food and shelter. Her answer was

*:Satisfy hunger by
Begging for food in town
Satisfy thirst
From wells, streams and water holes
For sleeping
There are dilapidated temples*

*Soul mate
I have Chennamallikarjuna!*

For hunger, I can beg for food in towns. For thirst there are wells, streams and water holes. There are ruined temples for sleeping. For company I have Chennamallikarjuna with me.

Her goal was to reach Kalyana to seek the path of salvation from the sharanas. When she left the king, she was in her early 20's. However, through her vachanas, she has demonstrated knowledge that persons cannot acquire in their entire life.

In this vachana, Mahadevi suggests giving importance to learning the truth about God.

*After enjoying the fruit
Do we care who cut that fruit tree?
After husband leaves
Do we care whom she is with?
After having no crop
Do we care who tills the soil?
After learning Chennamallikarjuna
Do we care if dog eats this body?
Or disposed in water?*

After enjoying the fruit of the tree, we do not give much attention to that tree even if it is cut. When husband leaves his wife, we do not care who lives with her. When land becomes barren, none gives attention about its cultivator. After learning and enjoying the company of the Lord Chennamallikarjuna, Sharanas

will not care if the body is eaten by dogs or disposed in water. In this vachana, Mahadevi says that once the soul joins the Lord the body is rigid and it is disposed.

In the following vachana, Mahadevi suggests that we should face good and bad both equally. She says:

*Constructing a house on top of a hill
Can you be afraid of animals?
Constructing a house on ocean shore
Can you be afraid of waves?
Constructing a house in market place
Can you be afraid of sound?
Listen O lord Chennamallikarjuna!
After being born in the world
With praises and blames
Should be calm without anger!*

Building a house on top of a mountain, can we be afraid of animals. Building a house on the shore of an ocean, can we be afraid of waves. Building a house in market place, can we be afraid of noise. Similarly after being born in this world, we will be praised as well as blamed. When praised or when blamed we should face the situation calmly without being angry.

Dr. Shivakumara Swamy of Sri Tharlabalu Mata cited the following story to make us aware of birth, life and death. A person while walking through the forest was chased by an elephant. He ran and ran and finally saw a well. To escape the chasing elephant, he jumped into the well. While falling he managed to catch a bush. The elephant waited near the well and began to shake

the tree nearby. This shaking of the tree disturbed the bees domiciled in the tree. As he looked up, he saw bees swarming with anger. At the same time, honey from the beehives started to drip into the well and directly into his mouth. He enjoyed the taste of honey and forgot his troubles.

After reciting this story, Swamiji explained that the elephant is the time that never stops and chases every one towards death. The joy of honey is the joy of life between birth and death. During this period, every one should enjoy fruits of life.

In the next vachana Mahadevi suggests to be kind and helpful:

*Without shade!
What good is a tree?
Without compassion!
What good to have wealth?
Not ripe, for a hungry
What good to have that fruit?
Without character
What good to have beauty?
Without understanding
What good to have separation?
Without your knowledge
What good to be alive?
Chennamallikarjuna!*

People will not gather under a tree that has no shade.
Person with wealth but without compassion is like the tree without shade. Unripe fruits cannot take away hunger. Beauty without character is of no good.

Separation without understanding is impossible. After being born, person should possess the knowledge of God. Without knowledge there is no difference between animals and people. Knowledge is essential for every human being. Mahadevi expresses her love towards God.

Mahadevi arrives in Kalyana naked. She enters Anubhavamantapa covering herself with her long hair. Basava introduces Mahadevi to Allamaprabhu (also known as Allama, and Prabhu), the president of the Sunya Peeta (chair) in the Anubhavamantapa and to the sharanas that were assembled for that day. To the surprise of Basava and the sharanas, Allamaprabhu subjects Mahadevi to a rigorous test. Allama tells her to answer his questions before taking a seat in the Anubhavamantapa.

One of the questions was: "You say that you have conquered lust. Then why are you covering your sex organs"? Without hesitation, she answered

Allamaprabhu by reciting the following vachana

*Color of the skin changes
When fruit is ripe!
To prevent you from pain
Covered myself!
Do not tease
I am with Chennamallikarjuna!*

The color of the skin will not change till the fruit is ripe. I have covered myself to relieve you from pain

that brings from its sight. Do not tease me further for I am with Chennamallikarjuna

Allamaprabhu interrogates Akkamahadevi with many difficult spiritual and social questions. Without hesitation Mahadevi answers all the questions to the satisfaction of the sharanas. The sharanas accept her as their sister and call her as Akka. Thus Mahadevi becomes Akkamahadevi by winning the respect of sharanas, including Allamaprabhu, Basava, and Chennabasavanna.

Akkamahadevi stayed in Kalyana for a short period. She was eager to leave Kalyana in search of her lover Mallikarjuna. She says that Mallikarjuna is formless, but he is beautiful. Allamaprabhu advised her to go to the Kadalivana, the plantain grove in Srishaila. There she will receive her salvation. Before leaving Kalyana, Akkamahadevi expressed her gratitude to sharanas for their kindness and praised Basava with 52 qualities.

Qualities of Veerashaiva

Akka spent some time in Kalyana attending and participating in the Anubhavamantapa discussions. As time passed by, she was eager to depart Kalyana. The sharanas were not ready for her departure, but they were willing to send her off, with great sadness.

Allamaprabhu instructed Akkamahadevi to go to the Kadalivana (Banana plantain grove) in Srishaila, Andra Pradesh. There she would attain her salvation. Before departing Kalyana, she took time to praise the sharanas. Her vachana praising Basava is the most significant one. It summarizes the sharana philosophy of life as the qualities of Basava.

Akka praised Basava with the following vachana on the eve of her departure from Kalyana. Thus, she accomplished two things, praising of Basava and consolidating the discussions of the sharanas in the Anubhavamantapa. The following vachana by Akka expresses the Veerashaiva philosophy as the qualities of Basava.

*Without the beginning or the end
Shiva the Lord, who is with form and without
Who knows the truth about you!*

*Everlasting Vedas can't pierce you
Hidden from Puranas
Cannot be seen by Agamas
Logic cannot infer about you
You are above all prayers and praises*

O Lord Shiva

Some say you are Sakala (for all times)

Some say you are Nikhala (void)

Some say you are Sukshma (delicate)

*Some say you are Sthula (heavy) With these kind of
thinking Hari, Brahma, Indira, Chandra Ravi, Kala,
Kama and Daksha,*

Including all Devas and Manavas

Neither seen you nor realized you

Their ignorance made them bavis in this world

Expect them not to die as bavis

Our Basavanna came as a savior of this world

With his 52 qualities

Showed the Veerashaiva way

The 52 qualities of Basava are:

- 1. Guru karune*
- 2. Wears vibuthi*
- 3. Wears rudrakshi*
- 4. Knows Panchakshari mantra*
- 5. Wears Istalinga*
- 6. Worships Istalinga daily*
- 7. Offers everything to Linga*
- 8. Understands padodaka*
- 9. Receives everything as prasada*
- 10. Devoted to Guru*
- 11. Worships Istalinga only*
- 12. Worships Jangama as Charalinga*
- 13. Loves the company of sharanas*
- 14. - 16. Controls body, mind and soul*
- 17. - 19. Purity in what he sees, thinks and imagines*
- 20. - 22. Unity of three Lingas*

- 23 Does not think of other Gods*
- 24 Does not associate with bavis*
- 25 Does not eat with bavis*
- 26 Does not mix with other women*
- 27 Does not seek wealth of others*
- 28 Does not scold nor tolerate scolding*
- 29 Does not lie*
- 30 Does not torture nor supports torture*
- 31 Does not associate with those who follow blindly*
- 32 - 34 Offers everything to Guru, Linga and Jangama*
- 35 Does not tolerate abusiveness of Jangama*
- 36 Does not tolerate scolding of prasada*
- 37 Does not tempt others for greed*
- 38 Gives for good deeds*
- 39 Does not seek rewards except Linga worship*
- 40 Is not trapped by Arishadvarga*
- 41 Does not accept pride of kula*
- 42 Does not speak of Adwaita or Dwaita*
- 43 Does not do Sankalpa or Vikalpa*
- 44 does not waste time*
- 45 - 50 Practices Shatssthalas orderly*
- 51 He is Lingi*
- 52 He is dasohi*

In the above vachana Akkamahadevi not only praised Basava for his achievements but also summarized the philosophy of Veerashaivism. She arrived at these qualities because they were thoroughly discussed by the sharanas and recorded as the proceedings of the Anubhavamantapa in Shunya Sampadane. The qualities of Basava listed above are simple and easy to practice. These qualities are the steps to experience God.

Sharanas have discussed these qualities in detail. Their conclusions have been recorded in the form of vachanas.

The core of Veerashaiva philosophy is based on Astavarana, Panchacharas and Shatsthala. Astavarana are Guru, Linga, Jangama, Basma, Rudrakshi, Mantra, Padodaka and Prasada. These are aids in a devotees' life. Panchacharas are five codes of conducts. They are Lingachara, Sadachara, Shivachara, Ganachara and Bruthyachara. Each of these consists of many qualities. Shatsthala are six steps that a devotee passes through before merging with God. They are Baktha, Mahesha, Prasadi, Pranalingi, Sharana and Ikya. For a brief description of these, the reader is referred to Sri Siddalingeshwara Shatsthala Siddantha (1997).

Each of the 52 qualities is further discussed citing additional vachanas by various sharanas.

Guru Karune

Guru occupies a unique position in Veerashaivism. Guru is the guiding light that shows us the path to Shiva. Karune is grace. Seeking Guru's grace is the most important achievement in the life of Veerashaiva. The Guru blesses the child with Linga, the symbol of Parashiva, at an early age and sometimes even before birth. By so doing he installs the knowledge of Shiva in the child (that was lost after birth). Between the ages of seven and eleven, the Guru instructs and demonstrates the art of Linga worship to the child. By these acts, the Guru brings the Lord close and makes the child realize his life's destiny. It is the Guru who opens the inner soul of a person so that he can realize his relationship with God.

Basavanna says that:

*To learn the Path to Shiva
Guru comes first.*

Allamaprabhu says that:

*Guru is the one who shows
That which can't be seen*

When Allama took the Linga from the palm of his Guru, Animisha, he was enlightened. He realized and experienced the relationship between himself and God. Thus, he saw things that were not tangible and he

realized things beyond comprehension. All this happened because of the grace of his Guru.

Telugu Jommaiah says the following about Guru:

*Linga is the symbol
Having received the Guru's grace
It is the Linga on the body.
With out Linga on the body
How can one say?
He has the grace of Guru.
Can one have grace?
Without Linga on the body!
No! Cannot hear that
As such, Sadachara is having Linga
Say Anachara is not having it
Thelugeshwara!*

Linga is the symbol of Parashiva. Only through the grace of Guru, the devotee receives Linga. Receiving Linga is the first step in learning the truth. Wearing Linga on the body is the second step. Without Linga on the body, no one can say that he has received the grace of the Guru. Sadachara is one of the five acharas. Sadachara is receiving Linga from the grace of Guru and wearing it on the body. Anachara is the opposite of Sadachara. Anachara is not having Linga or not receiving the blessings of Guru. Without the blessing, the path to Shiva is not revealed.

Siddarama, an accomplished sharana, explains the power of Guru in this vachana:

*By applying the ointment
Named Shiva's knowledge
Removed the cataract named ignorance
Gained knowledge of Shiva
Kapilasidda Mallinatha!*

Siddarama says that his Guru, by applying the ointment named Shiva knowledge, removed his cataract named ignorance. Thus, Siddarama acquired divine knowledge by the grace of Guru. Guru, by exposing Siddarama to Shiva's knowledge helped him to attain purity. Receiving Istalinga (Linga received from Guru is called Istalinga) from Guru gave him the divine knowledge. The divine knowledge reveals the path of salvation.

*Guru is not the one
Who teaches alphabet
He is the one
Who shows path to Shiva
So said Guru.*

Children are told that Guru is the one who teaches alphabet. It is not so. Guru is the one who gives the symbol of the Lord and is the one who shows the path of salvation. Guru is the one who ultimately leads us to Shiva.

The above vachanas impart the truth about the significance of Guru in Veerashaivism. This is what Akka emphasized in her first statement. Basava was indeed blessed by his Guru Sangameshwara and he received his Istalinga from him.

Wears Vibhuthi

Vibuthi is made from sacred ash. Vibuthi is applied to various parts of the body by smearing it from the middle three fingers. Lord Shiva has vibuthi on his forehead and on his body. A devotee with vibuthi on his forehead and on his body is Shiva himself. The wearer of vibuthi detaches himself from Arishadvarga, six earthly bonds. They are Kama (Lust), Kroda (Anger), Lopa (Miserly), Moha (Desire or Love), Mada (Pride) and Mathsara (Jealousy). These six characters are responsible for deviating persons from God. Persons wearing vibuthi will succeed in detaching themselves from the web of these six. Siddalingeswara says the following about the power of vibuthi

Bathing with vibuthi is superior to
Millions of baths in the holy river Ganga!
Bathing with vibuthi is superior to
Millions of baths in Mantras!
The mere touch of vibuthi
Transfers devotees to Shiva!
How can I describe
The person who wears vibuthi on all of his body!
That person is indeed Shiva himself!
For him I bow.
Mahalinga Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve.

Hindus consider bathing in the river Ganga holy. According to sharanas, bathing in vibuthi is far superior to millions of baths in the river Ganga. Also,

it is superior to millions of baths with various mantras. Vibuthi radiates the wearer. The wearer of vibuthi appears as Shiva. Hence he is far beyond any description. I bow to the wearer of vibuthi on his body.

The following vachana by Adaiah explains vibuthi:

*Vibuthi is the foundation
Vibuthi is the power of Shiva's knowledge
By wearing vibuthi
Even in the brightest light
Seeing you, I am saved
Sowrastra Simeshwara!*

Vibuthi is the foundation and the wearer is free from the influence of Arishadvarga. Hence, the wearer of vibuthi acquires divine knowledge. Adaiah says that persons having vibuthi on their body are Shiva themselves. Even in the brightest light the wearer of vibuthi can be seen. Seeing the wearer of vibuthi is like seeing the Lord. I bow to that person.

Thontada Siddalingeshwara says that:

*Wearing the magical vibuthi
Dispelled all my sensual desires
No doubt for salvation
Wear vibuthi
It bonds with Shiva
Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve*

Wearing vibuthi dispels all sensual desires. Once the person is freed from the bond of sensual desires, he

will be free to see himself through his inner soul. This experience is the road to salvation. Vibuthi has the magical powers to dispel the wearer from the sensual desires.

*Vibuthi shines the best
And costs the least
To seek Shiva
Wear vibuthi
So said Guru*

*Creams and powder
Adds beauty to skin
Wearing vibuthi
Makes him radiate
So said Guru*

Sharanas say that a person with vibuthi on his forehead and his body is truly Shiva. Vibuthi has magical and mystical powers. Applying vibuthi to the body makes a person beautiful. With its medicinal properties, it protects the body. The person with vibuthi on his forehead and on his body truly radiates. Advantages of vibuthi are plenty. Only the person who applies vibuthi to his body experiences its benefit and enjoys its fruit. Basava knew the power of vibuthi. He wore vibuthi on his forehead and on his body. In fact he has not been seen without vibuthi on his forehead. Akka praised Basava as the one who wears vibuthi and knows its power. Vibuthi is the symbol of the power of Shiva's knowledge

Wears Rudrakshi

Rudrakshi is a seed from the rudrakshi tree. It grows in the foothills of the Himalayas. The story behind the rudrakshi tree is that it grew from a drop of water that fell on the earth when Lord Shiva opened his third eye to destroy the abode of Tripura. Tripura literally means three towns. The myth says that Lord Shiva opened his third eye to destroy the three towns. According to the sharanas, it was the removal of the impurities of the body, soul and mind through the teachings of Guru.

Adaiah says how rudrakshi came into existence:

*While destroying Tripura
From the third eye of Shiva
A drop of water fell on the ground
The rudrakshi that grew from its grace
It is above all reasons
One who wears is Rudra himself*

Adaiah says that the rudrakshi tree grew from the water that fell from Shiva's eyes. Hence the wearer of rudrakshi is Rudra (Shiva).

Siddalingeshwara explains the mystical powers of Rudrakshi in the following vachana:

*Rudrakshi, the philosophical beads
Having made a garland of rudrakshi
Using devotion as thread
And wearing it smartly*

*Freed from all impurities
Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve*

Impurities result from improper thoughts that affect the body, mind and soul. Wearing a garland of rudrakshi dispels these. This will make the wearer be pure and free from these earthly bonds. Purity of the mind, body and soul leads to the path of salvation.

*Jewels and necklaces are aids to beauty
But rudrakshi makes one Rudra
Takes him close to Shiva
So said Guru*

*To be a clown
Wear a costume!
To become Shiva
Wear Linga, Vibuthi and Rudrakshi!
So said Guru*

Wearing appropriate dress and jewels makes a person beautiful. The jewels of sharanas are: Linga, vibuthi and rudrakshi. They wear Linga on their body, Vibuthi on the fore head and body, and rudrakshi on their neck. Wearing these makes a sharana look like Shiva, and think like Shiva. In fact, he becomes Shiva himself. In addition to vibuthi, Basava wore rudrakshi on his body. Akka praised Basava as the one who wore rudrakshi and knew its power. The wearing of rudrakshi makes the wearer a Rudra

Knows Panchakshari Mantra

Panchakshari mantra is a five-letter word used for praying to Parashiva. It is "Na Ma Shi Va Ya". By adding the letter "Om" it is called shadakshari mantra. The powers of mantra are many. Siddalingeshwara explains Panchakshari mantra as follows:

*Guru is the one
That whispers mantra in the ears
Plants the seed of salvation
This seed is called the Panchakshari mantra.
He who receives it is the one with the
knowledge
All others are nothing but bodies in the world
The latter is the ignorant one.
The two kinds of people are;
The one with knowledge
And the other, ignorant
Receiving the Panchakshari mantra
The ignorant gains knowledge
Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve*

Between the ages of seven and eleven, the Guru teaches the art of Linga worship. At this time he whispers Panchakshari mantra in the ear, with instruction how to use it while praying. The mantra should not be received in any other way. This mantra frees one from earthly taints. Taints are the hurdles to overcome when seeking the knowledge of Shiva. Without Panchakshari mantra, a seeker will be in the midst of taints. It instills knowledge of Shiva by removing ignorance.

Siddalingeshwara explains the benefit of the Panchakshari mantra as follows:

*Saying Shiva! Shiva!
Cleans the bodily impurities
Saying Hara! Hara!
Frees from the death hurdles
As such
Walking, talking, and with every second
Remember the Panchakshari mantra
Om Na Ma ShivaYa, Om Na Ma ShivaYa
Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve*

Chanting the Shiva mantra removes the impurities of the body and mind. Chanting the mantra, Hara, Hara, removes the obstacles of salvation. Remembering Panchakshari mantra every second protects one from the six impurities of mind namely Arishadvarga. Arishadvarga are Kama, Kroda, Lopa, Moha, Mada, and Mathsara. Pure thoughts lead to better understanding of oneself.

*Listening to music
Brings the stress down
Listening to the chanting
Om Na Ma ShivaYa, Om Na Ma ShivaYa
It excites
So said Guru*

*For the mind to be pure
Say OM NAMASHIVAYA
For the mouth to be gossip free*

*Say OM NAMASHIVAYA
So said Guru*

*Exercise keeps body in shape
Mantra makes mind sharp
So said Guru*

Taints gather from imperfect thoughts, ill acts, and improper sayings. Such acts take people away from the path of Shiva. Chanting the mantra, Om Namashivaya, makes the mind pure. Listening to music relaxes us. Similarly, chanting of the mantra Om Namashivaya, energize a devotee and makes him experience the unity with God.

Panchakshari mantra should be remembered and/or uttered daily. Chanting Om Namashivaya makes the body, mind and soul free from taints.

Wears Istalinga

Sharanas strongly objected the worship of idols in temples through a priest. Linga, though an idol, when given by Guru is the symbol of the Lord and is called Istalinga. The importance of receiving and wearing Linga on the body is discussed vividly by sharanas as the sampadane of Siddarama.

Siddarama, one of the greatest accomplisher of social work, believed that building temples, lakes, and performing social works bring him salvation. With this belief, he was always engaged in social works. During the course of his work, he acquired pride, a form of taint for his accomplishments. Allama, on his way to Kalyana, stopped at one of Siddarama's work site and made him realize that his accomplishments were insignificant when compared with the works of the sharanas in Kalyana. To learn from sharanas, Siddarama accompanies Allamaprabhu to Kalyana.

Sharanas stopped Siddarama from entering the great hall, Anubhavamantapa, for not having Linga on his body. A discussion ensues about the importance of receiving Linga from Guru and wearing it on the body. Siddarama requested Linga initiation and accepts Chennabasavanna as his Guru. Chennabasavanna performed the Linga initiation ceremony for Siddarama. Wearing the symbol of the Lord, Siddarama entered Anubhavamantapa. This discussion is recorded as the sampadane or earnings of Siddarama in Sunya sampadane.

Akkamahadevi describes Istalinga in this way:

*The deepest world is this side
That side is His feet!
The entire world is this side
That side is His ornate head!
The ten directions are this side
That side is His ten hands!
Lord Chennamallikarjuna
He has become small to settle on my palm!*

In this vachana Akkamahadevi describes the Lord as being bigger than the galaxy, but small enough to be in her palm.

The human body without the Istalinga is exposed to all types of taints. Istalinga is the link between the mind and the soul. Linga in the palm establishes the link between body, mind and soul. The person with Linga will have the relation with his soul (Pranalinga). This relationship makes him to experience the association with Linga and to gain the knowledge of Linga. He will continue his search of truth between himself and of God.

Ambigara Chowdaiah says the following about Istalinga:

*No garlands of Asuras
No ornaments of Shiva (Trisula and
Damaruga)
No garment of Basma
No chariot of Vrushaba*

*No sons-in-law of sage
No bond with birth, death and in between
Can you tell his name?*

Said Ambigara Chowdaiah

Linga is free from everything. Linga has no ornaments, garlands, or other things. Linga is free from birth, death and bonds of life. Linga surrounds everything and contains everything. Linga is the symbol of Parashiva.

*Only Guru bestows
Symbol of Parashiva
Other Lingas are nothing but stones
So said Guru*

Guru is the one who can bless persons with Linga. Linga received in any other way is only a stone. Hence, it is not fit for worship.

Worships Istalinga daily

Without drinking water, thirst will continue. Without food, there will be hunger. Wearing Linga on the body will bring the body close to Linga. But wearing Linga only is not enough. The Linga should be worshiped daily by the wearer. We eat food daily to keep the body strong and in good health. Similarly, we should worship the Istalinga daily to curb the desires of the body. Wearing Linga on the body brings peace of mind. Worship of Linga unites the body, the mind and the soul. This leads to the understanding of the relationship between body and soul. Basava explains the need for worshipping the Linga daily as follows:

*What can be said about life!
Who does not see Shivalinga even for a
second?
His life, his fall, his walk and his talk
All is wasted.
How can it be explained, the life of?
Who does not do His work!
Lord Kudala Sangamadeva*

The devotee accepts responsibility to serve the Lord when he receives Linga by the grace of his Guru. Each day, it is his responsibility to worship and to serve his master. The Linga is the master, the devotee is the servant, or the Linga is Pathi (master) and the devotee is Pashu (animal). This relationship between the two, the Linga and the devotee, is an important one.

Allamaprabhu explains Linga worship in the following way:

*Like my Guru Animisha
Having Linga in the palm
Uniting all senses in the vision of Linga
Experience the inexperienced*

For worship, Istalinga is placed on the palm. There are two other Lingas namely, Bhavalinga and Pranalinga. Bhavalinga is in the mind and Pranalinga is in the soul. It is necessary to unite these three Lingas through daily worship. Keeping the Istalinga on the palm, undisturbed with clear mind and thoughts, and concentrating the senses in the three Lingas: Istalinga, Bhavalinga, and Pranalinga will make the devotee experience union with the Lord.

*Worship Linga daily
Achieve peace in life
Do it correctly
This brings Lord to you
So said Guru
Exercise puts the body in shape
Leading to a healthy life
Worship puts the body, mind and soul in shape
It opens the door for salvation
So said Guru*

Daily worship of Istalinga brings harmony with body, mind and soul. It helps to resist temptation from bodily desires. Worship of Linga opens the door to understanding oneself.

Offers everything to Linga

The Lord is the master; the sharana is his devotee. Everything including the devotee belongs to the master. According to the sharanas, the Lord is 'Pathi' or the Master and every one else is 'Pashu' or animal. The master controls his animals with 'Pasha' or rope. The rope is desire. Every person is bounded by desires. Escaping from desires leads to freedom. This is called Moksha or salvation. Freedom is possible only when a person detaches himself from worldly desires. Sharanas suggest offering everything to Linga. Offer everything to Linga means accepting the Lord. Without the acceptance, realization of God is not possible.

Hadapada Appanna explains as follows:

*There is no doubt
He who eats
Without performing daily worship
Without offering the daily bread to the Lord
Eats the fruit of his bad deeds*

*He who eats without offering
Definitely will have no salvation
Basava Priya Kudala Chennasangamadeva*

Whatever a sharana consumes is due to the grace of his Master. Sharanas strongly advocate offering everything to the Lord. Those who do not submit themselves to God will not get salvation.

Moligeya Marithande says:

*Bathing will not cleanse the soul
Learning the secrets of the body
It is the way to the truth!
Having doubts
No relation exists with Linga
Tell this to them!
Nishkalanka Mallikarjuna!*

Bathing will not rid evil thoughts. Noble thoughts help the devotee to control desires of the body. Controlling desires leads to noble thoughts. With noble thoughts, the devotee experiences and learns his relationship with God.

*Equality is the best relation
One who know
Enjoys the fruit to his heart's content
So said guru*

Love prospers with equality. This bonds the relationship with true love. Only those having equality will enjoy the relationship. This kind of relationship is truly heavenly. A devotee, who lives like Pashu, is really seeking equality with his Master. When he does achieve equality through freedom from all bonds he will have salvation

Understands Padodaka

Padodaka is made up of two words. They are Pada and Udaka. Pada means feet and Udaka means spring, or fountain, or water springing up. Padodaka means water from feet. According to the sharanas, Padodaka is the knowledge that flows to the devotee who submits to the Guru, Linga and/or Jangama.

Chennabasavanna explains Padodaka in the following vachana:

*Three Padodakas: Pity, Polite and Equality
Pity is for Guru Padodaka
Politeness is for Linga Padodaka
Equality is for Jangama Padodaka
Guru Padodaka destroys attached impurities
Linga Padodaka destroys carried impurities
Jangama Padodaka destroys accumulated
impurities
The three impurities cleared with three Padodakas
As such, Kudala Chennasangaiah
The fruit of the Padodaka
Is known only to your sharana*

Pity, politeness, and equality are the three kinds of Padodaka. They are associated with Guru, Linga and Jangama, representing the three forms of Parashiva. Total acceptance of Guru, Linga and Jangama will result with knowledge. The knowledge received from these three cleanses the body, mind and soul. Total surrender will free persons from desires. Desires are

due to Maya or illusions. Freeing from Maya will enlighten a person and assist him in realizing eternal joy.

Madivala Machaiah says the following about Padodaka:

*Submitting to the feet of Guru, Linga and
Jangama
Grace will be on the devotee
Who receives fruits of Padodaka!
Relationship with these three
Provides happiness
Happiness is Padodaka
Basava was content with the fruit of Padodaka
Praying I am saved, Kalidevaiah.*

Guru, Linga and Jangama are considered the three images of Lord Parashiva. Complete acceptance of these three brings their good wishes in the form of knowledge. The knowledge gained from these three will provide happiness. This knowledge leads to better understanding of oneself.

*Water cleans
Leaves them bright
Padodaka dispels ignorance
Makes them learned
So said Guru*

Ignorance can be removed with knowledge. Knowledge is received through the grace of the learned. Accepting Guru, Linga and Jangama lead to divine knowledge.

Receives everything as prasada

People receive rewards for their work. Sometimes they receive bonuses for the job well done. Similarly, every person receives rewards for their work of the Lord. The rewards differ from person to person. The rewards may be divine knowledge's. It may be in the form of wealth, and/or health. In fact, everything that we recognize, or fail to recognize is due to His grace. According to the sharanas, the reward is prasada. Prasada is the knowledge received from the grace of the Lord. The knowledge is the basis for acquiring and sustaining the required qualities for life.

Urilingapeddi describes prasada as follows:

*Things that touch fire become fire
When prasada from Guru touches the devotee
The devotee will become part of the Guru
When prasada from Linga touches the soul
The soul will become part of the Linga
When prasada from Jangama touches the mind
The knowledge gained will make him the prasadi
O Lord! How else can I explain prasada?
Prasada is Guru
Prasada is Linga
Prasada is Jangama
Prasada is everything
Prasada is happiness
Prasada is the life*

*Prasada is the greatest knowledge
Prasada is the words that please the mind
Prasada is complete
I am saved from prasada
Urilingapeddi Priya Visweshvara!*

Things will catch fire when touched by fire. Similarly, prasada from Guru, Linga and Jangama transform the devotee into a learned one. The knowledge gained by receiving prasada makes the devotee realize the truth about himself and God.

Allama says the following about Prasada:

*Instead of feeding the mind
They eat from the stove
Eat what is not on the stove
Smoke thickened
Looking at that
I am disappointed!
Guheshvara*

In this vachana, Allama says that people spend most of their lives working only to satisfy their hunger. He suggests that people should also work to feed their minds with knowledge of God and truth. It is difficult to free oneself from desires. Desire is like a smoke screen. He suggests becoming free from desires, before those desires engulf us, similar to a thick smoke. Smoke of the mind is ignorance.

*Food fills the body
Keeps the body alive*

*Prasada, nourish the mind
While it keeps body alive
Shows the path of salvation
So said Guru*

Food is required to keep alive. Food cannot fill the mind with knowledge. Prasada provides both food and knowledge to the devotee who is seeking the truth about God

Devotion to Guru

The Guru is the one who starts the seed of devotion. He is the one who blesses us by presenting the Linga. He is the one who whispers the mantra. He is the one who gives the divine knowledge through padodaka and prasada. Without the Guru, none of these are possible. The Guru is also the guide throughout the life of a devotee. Devotion to the Guru at all times is essential for his continued grace. Akka exemplified these qualities in Basava by praising him for being devoted to his Guru.

Adaiah says the following about devotion to the Guru:

*Guru is the one
Free from impurities
Free from life's bonds
Faces bravely all situations
Does not have greed or desires
Stays above the illusions
Holding the feet of the Guru
Receiving blessings from Him
I have been saved!
Sowrastra Someshwara*

The Guru is not an ordinary person. He is brave, pure and has no desire or illusions. He is not greedy. The Guru we seek should have superior qualities and the knowledge to show us the path of God.

Akka says the following about the qualities of Guru:

*Examines inside and cleans outside
Removes doubts both inside and out
With pure thoughts
Learns about conditions
Before sowing the seeds
Knowledge about truth
Thus uplifts the devotee
The learned Guru is the Lord of the world
To his feet I do bow
Chennamallikarjuna*

The Guru examines devotees for their intentions just like we examine fruits for their ripeness. Through his teachings, he clears all the doubts of devotees and plants the seed of knowledge to seek the path of God.

*People seek rewards
Calling themselves Guru
They are the wolves
In colored clothes
So said Guru
Guru takes no money
Guru needs no wealth
Guru seek no status
Guru cares for his pupils
Sowing devotional seeds
Shows the truth
So said Guru*

People pretend to be Guru wearing saffron colored clothes, so they can make a living at the expense of others. Just as the Guru examines his pupil, the pupil also should examine knowledge of the Guru before accepting him as Guru. Otherwise, time is wasted.

Worships Istalinga only

Ista means desire. Istalinga is the Linga received from desire. Only the Linga received from Guru is called the Istalinga. Receiving Linga from the Guru is the first step in seeking salvation. Worship of Istalinga alone leads to salvation. Worship of other idols including those in temples is forbidden by the sharanas. Idols in temples are worshiped through an intermediary. Hence, such practice is not acceptable to the sharanas. One should enjoy the fruits of his labor, and not through an intermediary. Akka praised Basava worshiped Istalinga only.

For those who do not worship their Istalinga, Chennabasavanna has these words:

*Not a bigamist! Then
Why associate with another?
Have Istalinga! Then
Why chant in a temple?
Married to one,
Promised to one
But follows another!
Like a prostitute!
Having Pranalinga
Why promise to the Linga in temple
With offerings and other rewards?
...
Let me not see their faces
Kudala Chennasangamadeva*

Once receiving the Istalinga from Guru, the devotee accepts responsibility to seek salvation from the Istalinga alone. The Istalinga and devotee are like husband and wife. Sharanas advocate the worship of Istalinga alone. They condemn the worship of Linga in any other form.

Akka says the following in support of Istalinga worship:

*Having milk, can one look for butter?
Having Istalinga, can one go for pilgrimage?
Having received the knowledge of Istalinga
Why seek other teachings?
Having Istalinga
Bowling to Linga in a temple
Leads to rebirth in a dog's womb
...
Know this,
Istalinga received from Guru
Contains all sacred water and sacred places
Istalinga is above all
Consider different from this
Then he will be far from salvation
Chennamallikarjuna*

People do not look for butter when they have milk. Similarly people should not seek salvation from other deities when they have their Istalinga. Worship of Istalinga is far superior to visiting holy places and bathing in holy rivers. The knowledge possessed by accepting Istalinga and worshipping is much more than one can get from other sources.

*Say He is omnipotent
Say He is omnipresent
Say He is omniscient
Then why look elsewhere
Believe in Istalinga!
So says Guru*

God is said to be omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. Then why look for God elsewhere. If the devotee believes in Him, God is with him always!

Worships Jangama as Charalinga

Chara means move and Charalinga means the Linga that moves. Sharanas gave the highest importance to the Guru, Linga and Jangama. They considered these three as the three faces of Parashiva. The Guru is the one who instills devotion thus making the devotee close to God. Wearing Linga on the body and worshiping Linga daily brings the body close to Linga. It also purifies the mind and soul. Jangama is responsible to aid the devotees in their mission. Jangama is the one that travels from place to place. Jangama instructs and guides the devotees. Linga is static and Jangama is dynamic. With the help of the Guru, Linga and Jangama, and with the aid of vibuthi, rudrakshi and mantra, the devotee learns the secrets of padodaka and receives knowledge as prasada. Through prasada, devotees receive their salvation.

Adaiah explains the types of associations that a devotee has with Jangama:

*How can I explain?
The association of devotee and Jangama
Is like the soul and body
The body experiences relationship with
Jangama
The soul experiences the knowledge of
Jangama
To them the relation is pranalinga
How can I explain the two!
Knowledge has the experience*

*Experience has the knowledge
A devotee is Jangama
Jangama is in a devotee
This relationship is known only to
Sharanas of Sowrastra Someshwara*

The Jangama is the source of divine knowledge. The devotee receives and experiences divine knowledge from the Jangama. The association of Jangama exposes the body, mind and soul with knowledge. The union of these two (soul and body) leads to divine experience.

Jangama being dynamic should possess many qualities to guide devotees. Without knowledge, a person cannot be Jangama. Shanmukha Swamy says that devotees should reject Jangama who do not possess the divine knowledge.

*The one who is attached to the three
impurities?
He is not Guru
Receiving different results from worship
Receiving different results from Prasada
It is not Linga
If the veil of ignorance does not disappear
Then he is not Jangama
This association is like
The blind leading the blind
The devotee who worships
Guru, Linga and Jangama with ignorance
Cannot escape rebirths
Akandeshwara*

Anava, Maya and Karmika are the three kinds of impurities that attach the body, mind and soul. The Guru and Jangama have purity in body mind and soul. They are also learned and posses divine knowledge. A devotee should seek the path of salvation only by associating with knowledgeable Gurus and/or Jangamas.

*Learn from the learned
Seek from the knowledgeable
You will be the best
Achieve that cannot be achieved
So said Guru*

Achieving the highest milestones is only possible through association. Association with ignorant people leads to failures. Success in life is possible only through association with the learned. To learn the truth about oneself, seek the help of a learned Guru and/ or Jangama.

Loves the company of sharanas

Association with knowledgeable persons is essential for learning. A sharana is also known as Anubhavi or the one who has experienced the union between himself and the God. A sharana is the one who has experienced the divine truth. Association with such persons will eventually lead to self-realization.

Basava says the following about being in the company of sharanas:

*Being with good people lead to great people
Being with great people lead to Guru
Being with Guru lead to Linga
Having Linga brings Jangama
Prasada comes from Jangama
From prasada can see achara or ways of life
From achara comes realization
As such, Kudala Sangamadeva
Give me the association of your good people*

The company of good people leads to great people. This in turn leads to Guru, then to Linga, and finally to Jangama. Knowledge comes from Jangama. Knowledge leads to the understanding of padodaka and prasada. This is called acharas or ways of life. From acharas comes self-realization. Sharanas are not ordinary persons. They are learned and they have acquired divine knowledge. A devotee achieves realization through association with the sharanas.

Akka narrates association with the sharanas the following way:

*No fire without association
No growth of seed without association
No flower without association
No happiness without association
I am the happiest
Associating with your sharanas
Chennamallikarjuna*

Fire cannot be started without wood and matches; seeds cannot germinate without water; flowers will not be produced without right environment. Similarly, a devotee will not attain salvation without the divine knowledge. A divine knowledge is possible through association with the sharanas.

*Association makes the weak strong
Association with sharanas
Brings knowledge
Leads for eternal happiness
So said Guru*

Association with sharanas brings the devotee close to spiritual knowledge. In the in the company of the strong, a weak person is also strong. A devotee can seek eternal happiness with the influence of being in the company of sharanas

Controls body, mind and soul

The soul needs the body and the body needs the mind to function. The soul transmits its desires to the mind. Mind seeks the action of the body to fulfill the desires of the soul. Arishadvarga, the six illusions (enemies) of the sensory organs, tempts the body to deviate from seeking the truth. The body, if not controlled, will be influenced by illusions. The illusions make the body deviate from its mission. This deviation makes the body collect three types of taints, namely Anava, Maya and Karmika. These taints are due to our daily actions. Control over the body, mind, and soul is necessary to be free from taints. Guru, by performing dikshe for a devotee, removes the taints and instructs on ways to control desires of the body, mind and soul. Akka praised Basava for having control over his body, mind and soul. In other words, Basava was free from taints. Chennabasavanna describes the dikshe ceremony for the removal of taints as follows:

*Three taints namely Anava, Maya and Karmika
Lose them with dikshe
Learn about dikshe
Seven for the body
Seven for the mind
Seven more for the soul
Kudala Chennasangaiah!*

The body, mind and soul, they each acquire taints. Guru performs 21 types of dikshe and removes the taints. He performs seven types of dikshe each for the body, mind and soul. By performing dikshe, Guru

transforms the body, mind and soul, which then all work together. Through dikshe a devotee will be free from taints and learn to concentrate his efforts towards achieving his goal.

Adaiah says that the dikshe ceremony removes taints from the body, mind and soul. Taints are removed by installing three types of Linga, namely, Istalinga, Bhavalinga and Pranalinga. Istalinga is for the body, Bhavalinga is for the mind and Pranalinga is for the Soul.

*Istalinga is on the body
Pranalinga is the will of organs
It is complete
It shelters Istalinga
Its forerunner is Bhavalinga
Bhavalinga is in the mind
Union of these three Lingas
Cause for devotee's union with God
Makes the devotee the God
Sowrastra Someshwara!*

Istalinga is placed on the palm of a devotee by the grace of Guru. Pranalinga is installed in the heart and Bhavalinga in the mind. With these three Lingas, a devotee loses the taints associated with the body, heart and mind. His body is pure and fit to worship the Istalinga. His mind is pure with good thoughts. This results in purity of the heart. Purity in the body, mind and heart lead a devotee to experience union with the Lord. This unification makes the devotee the God.

Chennabasavanna says

*Learning duty from Istalinga
Makes the body act
Learning knowledge from Pranalinga
Makes the mind act
Learning experience from Bhavalinga
Makes the soul react
After learning these
Can there be duality?
Kudala Chennasangaiah.*

The body, mind and soul cannot exist separately. The soul needs the mind to instigate its desires. The mind needs the body. Without the body, there is no action. Working together, the body, mind and soul, lead to truth. The truth unites the body, mind and soul. Adaiah further says:

*The three Lingas are close
With body, mind and soul
Istalinga with the association of Guru
Pranalinga with the association of Linga
Trupthilinga with the association of Jangama*

*Istalinga in the hand
Pranalinga in the mind
Thrupthilinga in the soul
Sharana will have
Lingas both inside and out
With three types of wealth Guru, Linga, Jangama
Sowrastra Someshwara!*

Istalinga from Guru is on the body. The association of Jangama leads to Thrupthilinga, or contentment. Pranalinga is in the mind. Unification of these three Lingas provides the knowledge to realize the truth about God.

*Attend school
Pass exams
Receive a certificate
Land a better job.
Receive the grace of Guru
Receive Guru dikshe
Walk in Linga's path
To make yourself the divine
So said Guru*

A good education leads to a better job. Similarly, receiving dikshe from Guru leads to the righteous path. Following the Linga's path makes a devotee free from external influences.

Purity in what he sees, thinks and imagines

Dikshe removes Anava, Manava and Karmika taints. Removal of the taints results in pure thoughts and actions, which then lead to the path of truth. This brings control over the body, mind and soul. With purity, devotee's outlook of things is divine. The results in a better understanding of his surroundings, what he sees, what he thinks and what he imagines Siddalingeshwara explains the purity of the body, mind and soul as follows:

*Kriya (action), dikshe frees the body from desires
To realize the relationship with Shiva
Mantra dikshe makes the heart
Lose its past
To realize its glorious relationship
Its support for Linga
Gnana dikshe makes the soul
Realize its wisdom
Removing the doubts
From Guru's teachings
There is no doubt
Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve*

Kriya is action. It is for the body. Mantra is for the soul and gnana or knowledge is for the mind. These dikshe make the body, mind and soul to lose taints. Loosing taints makes the devotee pure. Purity leads to good actions and thoughts. All this is possible through the teachings of the Guru.

Akka says the following:

*Purity in action
Purity in talk
Purity in body
Purity in heart
Purity in imagination
Show me a sharana on earth
With these five types of purity
I am saved
Chennamallikarjuna!*

Good actions and good thoughts bring purity to the body. Good thoughts and good imagination are essential for attaining equality with God. Akka says that purity in action, talking and hearing, all lead to truth and salvation.

Further Akka pleads God

*Show me at least once!
The one who has pure body, heart and mind,
His action is simple
His talk is about Shiva
Show me at least once!
The one who is always pure,
The one who has conquered darkness,
And shines both inside and out
Show me your sharana at least once!
Chennamallikarjuna.*

In this vachana, Akka pleads to God to show her a sharana who is pure in all respects. A sharana cannot

think of bad nor can he imagine evil. Basava had all the qualities of a sharana. Basava, through his actions, shined both inside and outside.

Allamaprabhu said the following:

*The body is to worship you
The mind is to remember you
The soul is to give happiness to you
After the body, mind and soul join you
See the one who is detached
He is the one united with you
Guheshvara!*

Prabhu says that as humans we should worship the Istalinga. The human mind should be absorbed in prayer if the soul is to provide happiness. When the body, mind and soul is absorbed with the Lord's work, the devotee will be detached from all earthly things. This detachment from earthly things brings the eternal happiness.

Chennabasavanna said the following:

*Worship Istalinga with a pure body
Remember Pranalinga with a pure mind
Picture Bhavalinga with pure thoughts
Without the knowledge of these three
As the saying
'The body with Linga is always clean'.
To forget to do the right action to achieve
To fail to bathe and worship,
Suppressing the body's desires.*

*Without having purity,
To say that I am pure,
This will keep one away from truth
Kudala Chennasangamadeva.*

The seeker should worship the Lord with the pure body, mind and soul. Wearing Linga on the body will not make one pure. To be pure, the actions and thoughts should also be pure. Being pure, a devotee is not bound by the forces of Arishadvarga.

*Evil deeds and evil thoughts
Bring havoc
Good deeds and good thoughts
Bring the Lord
So said Guru*

Evil deeds and evil thoughts bring pain and sorrow. But pure deeds bring the Lord closer. Good deeds cannot be achieved without good thoughts

Unity of three Lingas

A person, having control over the body, mind and soul, will have different life experiences than his counterpart. What he sees, thinks and imagines differs from those who lack control over the body, mind and soul. With control, the three Lingas installed by Guru are united. The three Lingas are the Istalinga on the body, Bhavalinga in the mind and Pranalinga in the heart. The unity of these three Lingas is the result of control over the body, mind and soul.

Chennabasavanna says the following about this relationship:

*Knowing son and friends are in a foreign land
Brings happiness
Happiness is greater
With just remembering!
Happiness is still greater
When embracing them!
But the greatest happiness
Is being with them always!
Likewise,
Remembering is better than imagining,
Seeing is better than remembering
Worshiping is better than seeing
Wearing on the body is the best of all
As such the sharanas of Kudala
Chennasangaiah
From mind to heart,
From heart to eyes
From eyes to palm*

*Bring their Linga
Worship Linga always with respect.*

Just knowing that one's son and friends are in a far off land brings happiness. Greater happiness comes talking to them and still more happiness by embracing them. The greatest happiness comes from being with them all the time. Similarly, remembering the Linga is better than imagining it, and worshiping of Linga is better than remembering it. The greatest happiness for a sharana comes from wearing the Linga on his body. This is the reason that a sharana wears the Linga on his body and also worships it.

Siddalingeshwara says:

*With Veda, Mantra, and Kriya dikshe
I lost my support
And gained Linga relation
With Veda dikshe
Guru putting his palm on my cheek
With Mantra dikshe
Guru whispering in my ears
The Panchakshari mantra
With Kriya dikshe
Guru placed the Istalinga on my palm
Gave me these three relations
As such:
Veda dikshe resulted with Bhavalinga
Mantra dikshe resulted with Pranalinga
Kriya dikshe resulted with Istalinga
This way the body wore Lingas
Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve!*

Guru frees a devotee from illusions by giving him three types of dikshe namely Veda, mantra, and kriya. A devotee receives three Lingas- Bhavalinga, Pranalinga, and Istalinga. A devotee can achieve eternal life by worshiping and uniting the Lingas.

Separation leads to weakness

Unity leads to strength

Seek unity

It brings peace

So said Guru.

Weakness exists where there is no unity. Strength is in unity. The unification of the three Lingas, Istalinga on the palm, Bhavalinga in the mind and Pranalinga in the heart, leads to self- realization. Realization is eternal happiness.

Does not think of other Gods

Prior to the twelfth century religious revolution, people born outside the Brahmin caste were not allowed to read and/or to hear Vedic hymns. People were persecuted in the name of religion. Women had no religious rights except through their husbands. Listening or reciting of Vedic hymns was prohibited. The punishment for listening Vedic hymns, by people born in lower castes, was to pour hot lead in to their ears. For reciting, it was to cut their tongues.

The sharanas religious philosophy gave hope to the vast majority of people by giving them religious freedom. This included women. Istalinga became the symbol of God. Sharanas promoted the worship of Istalinga alone. They declared that worship of God through Istalinga was superior to any other form of worship, including pilgrimages to holy places for the worship of God. They also condemned worshipping God through an intermediary. Istalinga is the only Linga for sharanas. Worship of Istalinga alone leads to salvation. Worship of Linga other than Istalinga and visits to temples were not encouraged.

Basava says the following

:

*Only one husband for a trusted wife
Only one God for a trusting devotee
No! No! Association with other Gods
No! No! Association with different Gods
No! No! Association with other Gods is*

prostitution

If He sees, He will cut off your nose

Kudala Sangamadeva

As there is only one husband for a trusted wife, there is only one god for a true devotee. According to Basava, Istalinga, the symbol of God, is alone worthy of worship. Lingas other than Istalinga, however important they may be, should not be worshiped by sharanas.

Further Basava says:

Don't speak of other Gods

Don't see the worship of other Gods

Don't bow to other Gods

Don't receive blessings from other Gods

These will make a true devotee

All else will bring

Mountains of problems

Kudala Sangamadeva

A devotee should be faithful to his Istalinga. Jangama will assist a devotee to concentrate his attention on Istalinga. Basava does not suggest either speak or bow or worship other Gods. Devotees are to worship Istalinga alone, and follow instructions that they received from their Guru.

Seeking God every where

Is like seeking pleasure

Outside of marriage

Be faithful to your own

*This brings peace and salvation
So said Guru*

A devotee should be inseparable from his Istalinga. He receives Istalinga on his own accord. The worship of Istalinga opens the mind and shows the path to salvation. It is not necessary to look elsewhere.

Does not associate with bavis

A bavi is a person who believes in many Gods. He worships many Gods. He seeks blessings from all. He has doubts about himself and his Gods. A bavi is like a raw fruit. Raw fruit cannot satisfy hunger. Association with a bavi is not productive since he cannot contribute towards learning. Akka and other sharanas suggest that a devotee should not associate with a bavi.

Akka defines bavi as follows:

*Virtue! Virtue! Say where is it?
If you know speak of it!
Else listen!
Lust (Kama) is the first bavi
Anger (Kroda) is the second bavi!
Miserly (Lopa) is the third bavi!
Love (Moha) is the fourth bavi!
Pride (Mada) is the fifth bavi!
Jealousy (Mathsara) is the sixth bavi!
Amisha is the seventh bavi!
Keeping these seven bavi inside
They say those without Linga!
Bavi! Bavi!
Without learning about
Body and soul
Calling them selves as prasadi!
This is like
Drilling a tunnel in water
To bring water
To bathe their Linga!*

*Does the Lord Chennamallikarjuna
Trust this kind of day thief?*

In this vachana, Akka strongly objects labeling one bavi when the caller himself had not learned the truth about the body and soul. She says those who call others a bavi are like thieves who dig tunnels in water just to bring water for the Linga worship. God will never accept them.

Chennabasavanna says the following:

*Bavi! Sorry for his state
Bavi becoming a devotee
But continues associating with bavis
He is neither here nor there
Kudala Chennasangaiah*

Once a bavi becomes a devotee, he should not associate with another bavi. Association with a bavi leads to ignorance. This hinders progress towards salvation and truth.

Basava says the following about a bavi:

*No! No! Association with a bavi
Brings many problems
No! No! Chanting of other Gods
Also brings more problems
Without being touched by these two
I am standing
Kudala Sangamadeva*

Association with bavis and chanting the names of other Gods hold one back from achieving salvation. Basava says that he has been saved from problems that arise from associating with bavis.

*Bavis show everything
Except the real,
Give up bavis
See and experience the real thing
So said Guru*

A bavi is nothing but a distraction in the devotee's life. A devotee should keep away from bavis and seek the path of realization. A devotee should refuse to take prasada from bavis.

Does not eat with Bhavis

Prasada is the knowledge acquired through complete acceptance of the Guru, Linga and Jangama. A bavi seeks blessing from many Gods. He cannot accept one God. He has many doubts. Either he can offer prasada or he can receive prasada. He is still a seeker of pleasure. A devotee should not associate with him and should not receive prasada from him.

Chennabasavanna explains the reasons as follows:

*Those with no Linga on their bodies
Cannot offer things to Linga
What if they did? Let them?
A devotee offers things to Linga
And if he receives it as Prasada
Then he sure suffers from great maladies
Kudala Chennasangaiah*

A bavi has no Istalinga. He has not received it from Guru. He does not wear Linga. He cannot offer food to Linga and cannot receive prasada. Devotees should refuse prasada from a bavi because it is not prasada of the Istalinga.

Chennabasavanna further states that:

*Food from bavi is the first taint
Bowling to statues and idols is the second taint
Disregard the teachings of Guru is the third taint
Desire for others wealth and other women is the*

fourth taint

Hearing abuses about Lord Shiva is the fifth taint

How can a bavi know about these five?

These are for devotees only.

Kudala Chennasangamadeva

Devotees should avoid the following five taints. They are: 1. Receiving prasada from a bavi, 2. Bowing to statues, 3. Disregarding the teachings of Guru, 4. Desire for wealth, and 5. Hearing wrong things about Shiva.

To protect the house

The owner fights

To protect the religion

The devotee fights

So said Guru

Devotees should protect their religious philosophy from outside attacks. This is the same as an owner protects his house from vandals and thieves.

Does not mix with other women

Achara or action is very important to a sharana. Good action results in purity of the body, mind and soul. Purity of body, mind and soul leads to unity of the three associated Lingas namely, Istalinga, Bhavalinga and Pranalinga. The unity of the Lingas further brings the knowledge required to experience true and eternal happiness. Basava summarizes the actions of a sharana as follows:

Don't steal

Don't kill

Don't lie

Don't scold others

Don't praise one self

These make the inside pure

These make the outside pure

These actions agree with the Lord

Kudala Sangamadeva!

Stealing, killing, lying, scolding and self-praising are to be avoided. Even thinking of these leads to impurities of the mind and soul. Actions should be impeccable for purity of the body, mind and soul.

Basava not only preached but he practiced what he preached without any blemishes. Akka praised Basava for not mixing with other women.

Basava says the following about seeking the company of women:

*Other women! Can't see; can't speak
Say No! To their company
Their company is like
The dog teasing the tom goat
Say No!
For seeking little pleasure
One gets many years of punishment
Kudala Sangamadeva*

Sharanas strongly prohibit seeking pleasures outside marriage. They also condemn staring, gossiping, and even thinking about other women with lust. These actions lead to impurities of the body, mind and soul.

Further Basava says:

*Not afraid of snake
Not afraid of fire
Not afraid of poison spear
I am afraid of one thing
I am afraid of other women and others wealth
Look, What happened to the great Ravana!
I am afraid. Kudala Sangamadeva*

Ravana, the mighty king, terror to all Gods, brought destruction to himself when he kidnapped Sita, wife of Rama, and brought her to his kingdom. Basava says that he is not afraid of snakes, or fire, or poison. He can be saved from them. But he is afraid of other women. Devotees must be free of lust to pursue.

*Seek pleasure from the master
It opens the door to heaven
Seek pleasure outside of marriage
It brings stones to the head
So said Guru*

A devotee enjoys the company of his master, Linga.
He seeks pleasure from worship, prayer, and prasada.
He keeps himself away from earthly pleasure that
brings happiness to the body

Does not seek wealth of others

Not seeking pleasures from other women is not sufficient. In addition, devotees should not seek wealth that belongs to others. Seeking wealth that belongs to others is stealing. Stealing leads to impurity of the body, mind and soul. With impurities, the unity of the three Lingas, Istalinga, Bhavalinga and Pranalinga, is not possible. Hence a devotee, who steals, cannot experience unity with the Lord. Wealth in any form, not earned, is undesirable to sharanas.

Basava says:

*Oh! (Holy) river bathers,
Give up desire for others wealth!
With out leaving desire
Bathing with desires
Definitely dries up the river
God will join you only
When wealth is not stolen
Kudala Sangamadeva*

Taking wealth from others using deceitful methods hurts every one. Neither bathing in holy rivers nor making pilgrimages, nor offering wealth to the Gods, will clear, one's taints. As such, sharanas encouraged earning money through honest labor.

Basava further states that:

*Being deceitful after worship of Linga
It is like hiding behind the white ox
To shoot the deer
God does not want worship from these
Kudala Sangamadeva*

Hiding behind a white ox to kill the deer is deception. Similarly, desire for wealth without earning it through labor, is not acceptable to sharanas. Wealth should not be acquired through games of deception, but only through hard work. Basava also says " what good is it to have wealth if there is no life line to enjoy it?"

*What good is it to have wealth?
That is earned without sweat
If money accumulates
One need lot of sweat to spend
So said Guru*

*Money from deception
Brings joy to the wealthy
It also brings happiness
To the finder of corruption
So said Guru*

Money gained without hard work brings sorrow and unhappiness throughout life. Those with wealth from deceptive methods, enjoys until caught by tax -man. A devotee should resist the temptation to seek wealth through deceptive ways.

Does not scold nor tolerate scolding

Scolding is improper thinking of the mind. It taints the mind. Also, it is a type of degradation to another soul. Scolding keeps the body, mind and soul away from being pure. Sharanas advise not to scold or criticize others.

Basava says the following:

*Devotees seeking approval from the sharanas
Cannot have enlightenment
Being attached to body desires
Until he stops self praise and scolding others
Until he is free from Arishadvarga
These are for those absorbed in life
But they are not for sharanas
Kudala Sangamadeva*

A devotee should be free from desires and self-praise. He should not scold or criticize others. He should be free from lust, greed, anger, jealousy, and desires. Sharanas free from these Arishadvarga will be able to realize God and experience union with God.

*A father advises his children
Scolding their action
Not scolding the children
Devotee advises one
With anger for his action
No anger for the devotee
When showing the path of Linga*

*Harsh words for the devotee
Agrees with our Lord
Kudala Sangamadeva*

A father shows his children the correct path when they make mistakes. Similarly, devotees should guide others to Linga's path when they deviate. It is acceptable to use harsh words to bring them back to the path of Linga

*Know Yea! Know yea!
Scolding others to gain
It is immoral
Accept it if it brings good
So said Guru*

Scolding is unacceptable to sharanas. However, scolding with harsh words is acceptable when used to guide others back to the righteous path.

Does not lie

The sharanas recognized that lying is harmful, and they advocated that one should always speak the truth. One should not only tell the truth, but the truth should reflect in one's actions. Lying brings taint for mouth. The soul sways the mind for the body to lie. Continued lying leads to impurity of the mind and soul. Akka praised Basava for not lying.

Basava says:

*Tell the truth
Do as you say
Shows the way to God
God does not like those
Who lie and cheat
Kudala Sangamadeva*

Telling the truth and doing things as promised are good qualities of a sharana. Lying, cheating, and taking the wealth of others will not help to keep the body, mind and soul free from taint.

Basava describes the consequences of lying and cheating:

*Like the frog in the serpent's mouth
Wishing for the fly
That flies around!
Condemned thief
Drinking milk and honey
How long can he be alive?*

*God does not want those
Lying to fill their tummy
Kudala Sangamadeva*

The snake has a frog in its mouth, but the frog wishes for the free fly. Similarly, the condemned thief enjoys milk and honey in the face of death. This will be the fate of those who lie to make a living.

*To lie is easy
It leads to more
Soon one will be in a web
Web cutting instrument
Truth is its name
So said Guru*

*Lying, cheating and stealing
Brands for life
Branded! None can remove
So said Guru*

Sharana should not lie, cheat or steal. If he does, the world brands him. Once branded, always branded. True even after death.

Does not torture nor supports torture

Devotees, who do not think of other Gods, who do not associate or eat with bavis, who do not wish for wealth that is not earned, and who do not scold others or hear abusive remarks, will follow the path of non-violence. In this path, devotees do not torture nor tolerate torture. This includes both physical and other forms of tortures. All forms of torture suggest pride and supremacy and none is acceptable. Sharanas proclaimed all people are equal in the eyes of God. Akka praised Basava for not torturing or tolerating torture.

Akka describes torture as follows:

*The fisherman casts his net
Dances for his bounty
But, he cries aloud
When death visits his child!
The fisherman's cry
Is a matter of laughter for the world!
O lord Chennamallikarjuna!
What can I say about your devotee!
Who torture the living!*

A fisherman is happy when he catches plenty of fish. He does not think of their sufferings. But when death strikes his own child, he cries. A devotee should have compassion for all living things and abstain from any kind of torture.

The following vachana of Basava questions religion that does not have compassion:

*Which religion is without compassion?
Compassion is a must
In all living things
Compassion is the basis of all religion
Kudala Sangamadeva will not accept
That without*

Compassion is the basis of all religion. God will not accept uncompassionate persons. All religions exhibit compassion towards living things.

*Pain when touched
It hurts a lot
Sufferings without pain
Brings knowledge
So said Guru*

A devotee experiences pain on his own. But the pain he experiences through the eyes of others provides him with the necessary knowledge to comfort them.

Does not associate with those following blindly

Sharanas did not follow blindly. They discussed every issue openly and candidly in the Anubhavamantapa. Their discussions led to religious freedom for women and religious equality for those people born in the lower castes. They suggested not associating with those who follow blindly. Following blindly leads to ignorance. Ignorance results in accepting things far from the truth.

Basava said that devotees should not associate with those who follow the faith blindly:

*No talking! No walking!
Those who are half a devotee
I would rather be a slave to those
Devotees accepted by the Lord
Kudala Sangamadeva*

Basava says that he would rather be a slave to a devotee, leading a simple life, who is accepted by the Lord. He strongly suggests not associating with those who lack knowledge of religion or those who follow blindly.

In support of the above Kallaiah says the following:

*When thoughts are not unified!
When desires are not ridden!
When the mind is not controlled!
When character is not equal!*

*With these, do not sit nor talk
Association with these
Who does not have devotion?
Keeps away from His abode!
Mahalinga Kalleshwara!*

Kallaiah says that a devotee who does not control his desires of the body, mind and soul will be on the wrong path. Association with those lacking devotion keeps one away from the path of Linga.

*Play with an idiot
And become an idiot
Fight with a learned
And learn from him!
Then you will be a learned!
So said Guru*

Having a learned friend will lead to scholarly activities. Mingling with the ignorant will lead to ignorance.

Offers everything to Guru, Linga and Jangama

The Lord is the master. Everything possessed by a sharana, including his body, belongs to the master. Guru, Linga and Jangama are the three faces of the master. The sharanas suggested offering everything to these three. Through this action the body wins over the six bounds of Arishadvarga. This results in purity of the body, mind and soul. The purity is the basis for receiving knowledge in the form of Prasada. A person who offers everything is called a Baktha, or a devotee. Akka praised Basava for offering everything to Guru, Linga and Jangama.

Adaiah said:

*The Guru is the instigator
The devotee is the one who acts
Even for a moment
Remaining free from all taints
The pupil serving the Guru
Without any doubts
Will have Guru
Linga and Jangama follow
Leading him to Prasada
That pupil is saved from Prasada
Sowrastra Someshwara*

Prasada is knowledge. The knowledge comes only through purity of the body, mind and soul. Serving the master with purity leads to knowledge of truth. Guru,

Linga and Jangama are the three faces of the Lord.
Accepting them will lead to knowledge of God
Siddalingeshwara says the following about the baktha
State:

*Giving away wealth, soul and trust
In the face of Guru, Linga and Jangama
That Guru, Linga and Jangama
Will be the devotee's
Body, soul and mind
This I call the baktha state
Mahalinga Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve!*

The devotee submits everything, including himself, to
Guru, Linga and Jangama. Guru, Linga and Jangama
are said to be in the bakthi state. This state is the first
step for a devotee seeking eternal happiness.

Chennabasavanna says the following about prasada:

*For Linga, I remember
For Linga, I give
For Linga I offer
Everything is for Linga, I say!
I do not know the body's desire
My mind, body and soul are for Linga's desires
Linga is the Master
Give to Linga and receive from Linga
Kudala Chennasangamadeva
I do not know of not offering!*

Chennabasavanna says that he has no bodily desires.
Linga is his master and he is willing to fulfill the

desires of his master. He has offered everything, including himself to his master. Whatever he receives is due to His grace.

Adaiah said that the devotee should receive prasada. He said:

*Losing body character
The body fades in Guru
Without an itinerary
The soul fades in Linga
Without desires
Wealth fades in Jangama
What can I say?
About lost taints
But still he enjoys prasada!
Sowrastra Someshwara*

After a devotee submits himself to Guru, Linga and Jangama, all that he receives is prasada. He enjoys prasada has no desire for worldly things, and has lost all the senses except the sense of God.

Chennabasavanna describes the qualities of a devotee and Jangama as follows:

*The one who asks is not Jangama
The one who gives when asked is not a devotee
Jangama enjoys what he receives
Knowing the desire of Jangama
A devotee is the one
Who gives without asking!
A devotee should not give!
Jangama should not ask
Like a tired animal*

*Standing still for the wolf!
God loves those who give
God loves those who receive
Only if it happens without asking!
Kudala Chennasangaiah*

Devotee should donate his wealth without being asked to good deeds. God helps those who donate to good causes.

Madarasa praises those who give without being asked:

*The one who helps a devotee,
The one who gives and forgets his hunger,
The one who gives everything,
Yet he feels sad when they depart.
In the devotee's house
He who gives to Jangama,
Let me be born in his house
At least as a bug
Sakaleshwara!*

The one who helps a devotee is Jangama and the one who gives to Jangama is a true baktha. Being born in the house of a true baktha, even as a creature is a great achievement.

*Give to the deserved
Assist the frail
These act surely
Please God
So said Guru*

Helping those in need is a service to God. A devotee should perform such deeds.

Does not tolerate abusiveness of Jangama

Guru, Linga and Jangama are the three faces of Parashiva. A devotee, through his noble action receives the grace of Guru. The Guru bestows him with Linga. Having Linga brings him to the company of Jangama. Jangama is the source of knowledge for enlightenment and salvation. A devotee that does not scold nor torture, will not tolerate the abusiveness of Jangama. Akka praised Basava for not tolerating the abusiveness of the Jangamas.

Chennabasavanna says the following about Jangamas:

*Listen! Advocate of castes
Which is greater, caste or Guru?
If you say caste!
Then caste will be the Guru!
Receiving Guru's grace
Erasing birth lineage
Why lie of birth?
Jangama has no caste
He is the one who is pleased with the Lord
...
Followers of Jangama
Who talks about castes!
Talks for filling his stomach
For them, No Guru! No Linga!
No Jangama! No prasada!
O lord! Those who lack these three*

*Are not fit for prasada
Kudala Chennasangamadeva.*

Jangama does not belong to any caste. He has spiritual knowledge that is required to achieve salvation.

The above vachana by Chennabasavanna discouraged the caste system in the society. The sharanas of the 12th century were successful in creating a caste less society. Veerashaivas do not belong to any Vedic caste groupings. Veerashaivism is a distinct religion and vachanas are its scriptures.

Moligeys Maraiah says the following:

*Becomes Linga when installed properly
If fractured, it cannot be Linga!
Jangama who leaves his path
Jangama, he cannot be!*

...
*No worship for a fractured Linga!
No bowing to that Jangama either!
They don't possess quality
Nishkalanka Mallikarjuna.*

People worship Linga if installed properly. If that Linga is damaged, it is not worshiped. Similarly, association with Jangama provides the devotee with the knowledge required for salvation. A person cannot be Jangama without spiritual knowledge.

*A stone is Linga!
When carved and installed!
Linga is a stone!*

*When fractured and not worshiped!
Jangama leads
Leads for the stomach
Lose Jangama status!*

Jangama should lead devotees to the path of salvation. If he is interested only in physical needs, then he is not Jangama. This is similar to a damaged Linga that is not worshiped. A person without noble qualities is not Jangama.

*Jangama follow devotees
Show them the path of salvation
Jangama caring about himself
Also leads, but away from God
So said Guru*

A deceptive Jangama only cares for himself. The true Jangama, the one who is knowledgeable, follows devotees and guide them to the path of salvation.

Does not tolerate the scolding of prasada

Prasada is not mere food. A devotee who submits himself to Guru, Linga and/or Jangama receives prasada. Prasada is that which is received due to the grace of the Lord. It may be in the form of food, knowledge, good health, or some other form. A devotee should not tolerate the scolding of prasada. Akka praised Basava for not tolerating the scolding of prasada.

Chennabasavanna says the following about prasada:

*The King's love for meat
He ate what was left of the dogs
Kept away from God
Love affairs
Brought love left by lover's
Kept away from God
Devotee with love for Istalinga
Ate what was left of Guru-Linga-Jangama
Walked the path of salvation*

...

*Criticisms of prasada
Surely brings worms in their mouths
Kudala Chennasangamadeva!*

A king eats the left over meat from his dog's hunt. A promiscuous person enjoys love that is left by her lovers. However, a devotee eating prasada receives

knowledge from Guru-Linga-Jangama. By eating prasada, a devotee is enlightened with knowledge. This will assist him to see the path of salvation.

Chennabasavanna further says that:

Food in bavi's house!

In fact it is food.

Food in devotee's house!

It is made with Linga on the body

It is acceptable for Guru-Linga-Jangama!

It is Prasada

Such food cannot be criticized

Kudala Sangamadeva

Food prepared in a bavi's house is not offered to Linga. A bavi lacks the grace of Guru and has no Linga on his body. The food prepared in a devotee's house is offered to Linga. That food is received as prasada.

Criticize

You will be judged!

Scold

You will be punished!

Have prasada

You will be saved!

So said Guru

Criticizing, cursing and abusiveness leads to unpleasant actions. Receiving prasada leads to the path of salvation

Does not beg

Sharanas condemned begging. They promoted Kayaka. Kayaka means work to earn the daily bread. They also they discouraged accumulation of wealth. They encouraged spending of excess wealth in dasoha. Dasoha is a way of spending excess wealth by caring for the needy. In fact, Basava said that he worked for the King so he could provide for charity or dasoha. Akka praised Basava for not begging.

Chennabasavanna says that:

*Helping others
Can't beg with open hand!
After worship of Linga
The hand is reserved
The eyes will not see evil
The mind will not think of wealth
The body will not serve humans
After worship of Linga
One will not beg Linga!
One will not be in the mercy of Linga!
True sharana seeks equality!
Kudala Chennasangamadeva!*

In this vachana, Chennabasavanna says that he cannot beg because his hands are reserved for helping others. The hands that worship Linga are reserved. The eyes cannot see evil, the mind cannot think of wealth, and the body cannot serve any humans. He is under the mercy of Linga. In this state he cannot beg.

Chennabasavanna says that begging is the character of the ignorant. He says the following:

*Wearing Vibuthi and Rudrakshi
Well versed with Vedas and Puranas
Yet they stand like idols
In the front door
Who offers food and money!
They brought truth to the sayings!
The learned became guards for the wealthy!
Is this the fate of knowledge?
It is the scene to forget!
Kudala Chennasangaiah!*

People dress like Jangama, wearing vibuthi and rudrakshi and are well versed with Vedas and Puranas. They are the learned ones! They stand in front of doors begging for food and money. Chennabasavanna asks: "Is this the fate of knowledge? Is this God's will?" A sharana, with all his might, works hard to please God to gain equality. This is what true sharana desires.

*Begging! Gets food and money
Makes one survive.
The sharanas' way
Brings eternal happiness
It makes you the God!
So said Guru*

Sharanas suggest kayaka to earn a living. The sharanas' way of life not only leads to eternal happiness. It also makes a devotee earn equality with God

Does give for good deeds

Sharanas followed the philosophy " It is better to give than to receive." They encouraged every one to engage in kayaka, and established equality of labor. Every job, no matter how menial it may be, is important for the welfare of the community. Sharanas were engaged in all types of work. They were also engaged in dasoha or charity work. Even today, matas in India are engaged in several types of dasoha. They feed the hungry, educate the masses, provide health care to the sick and most importantly, provide religious teachings. These good deeds must be done in a timely manner. Akka praised Basava for performing good deeds in a timely manner.

Basava says:

*Money earned by immoral ways
Is wasted! Not useful for good deeds!
Dog's milk is good only for dogs
It cannot be used for good deeds!
The wealth of people is good only for people
That wealth is not good for Jangamas!
Money not spent on sharanas
Is wasted and useless!
Kudala Sangamadeva*

Money earned through kayaka is good for sharanas' use. All else is wasted. Here, Basava advises earning money only through work, and not by immoral and unethical ways. He says that "Kayakava Maduve

Dasohakkendu". He works (for the king) to support charitable causes. Money earned using immoral ways is not good even for charity.

Basava further says:

*Doing, doing repeatedly gone bad!
For not having heart,
Giving, giving repeatedly gone bad!
For not having truth,
Doing, giving with mind and truth
Kudala Sangamadeva joins them*

A devotee should never accumulate wealth through immoral means. Wealth accumulated immorally is not good even for charitable work.

*Not earned
What good to have wealth
Hurting others
Leaves deep wounds
So said Guru*

Money earned using deceptive methods leaves permanent scar in the minds of the people who lost it. Such wealth is not good for charitable work.

Does not seek rewards except Linga worship

Devotees spend wealth on good deeds. They do not seek or expect any rewards or increased status for their deeds. Sharanas grouped reward seekers into four types. They are Salokya, Samipya, Sarupya and Sayujya. Salokya seekers are those wishing to live in His world; Samipya seekers wish to live close to Him; Sarupya seekers want to look like Him, and Sayujya seekers wish to live with him. None of these four positions bring happiness to a sharana. Sharanas do not seek any status with the Lord. The following analogy explains this concept further:

People wishing to get favors from the President may try to live near the White House, or live close to the White House or live in the White House. However, none of these will satisfy their desires. Even those who dress like the President are not rewarded. Similarly, none of these situations will satisfy a sharana in his quest for knowledge.

Akka praised Basava for not seeking rewards of any type. Istalinga worship is his reward itself. Regarding the four types of status, Chennabasavanna says the following:

*Worship for salokya, got salokya.
Worship for samipya, got samipya
Worship for sayujya, got sayujya
Worship for sarupya, got sarupya*

*Worship, then requesting these
Got them, but they did not realize!
Those who followed this way
Become the daily wagers!
O lord Kudala Chennasangaiah
Your sharanas have no desire for these four!*

Through worship and requesting for rewards, only got what was desired. But they were away from learning the truth. Sharanas do not desire status, but only truth and eternal happiness.

Urilingapeddi says the following about the four statuses:

*Why seek salokya?
When Linga is on the body!
Why seek samipya?
When Guru-Linga-Jangama is near dasoha!
Why seek samipya?
When worshiping all of the time!
Why seek sayujya?
When remembering you all of the time!
What good is it to have the status?
Urilingapeddi Priya Visweshvara!*

Having Linga on the body is salokya. Having Guru-Linga-Jangama near Dasoha is sarupya. Worshiping every day is itself sarupya and remembering God is sayujya. Then why ask for them again?

*Cowards seek status
The brave need no status*

*Status seeks the brave
So said Guru*

Status is a symbol of weakness, for it provides false security. Status naturally comes to the brave. Similarly, those seeking status will be out of the Lords path. They cannot understand or experience Him.

Is above Arishadvarga

Arishadvarga are six desires. They are kama, kroda, lopa, moha, madha, and mathsara. Kama is lust, kroda is temper or anger, lopa is miserly, moha is desire, mada is pride, and mathsara is jealousy. These six bodily desires are called Arishadvarga. These are responsible for all tainted actions committed by the sense organs and the mind and the soul. These acts keep a person away from learning the truth about the relationship between himself and God. Conquering the influence of Arishadvarga is required for enlightenment. Akka praised Basava for not yielding to Arishadvarga.

Basava says:

*Why lust for a lover of Linga
Why temper when seeking greatness in a
sharana
Why be stingy when expecting reward for
devotion
Why lust when considering prasada's greatness
How can be pure with pride and jealousy
Our Lord joins
Those free from earthly taints!
Kudala Sangamadeva*

A devotee's love for Linga is his lust. To see and hear the greatness of sharanas is his moha. His reward for devotion is his mada. Getting prasada from worship gives one pride. Being pure, a devotee seeks only truth

and eternal happiness. Purity frees a devotee from taints.

Urilingapeddi says:

*The greatest lover
Is a devotee of Shiva!
The greatest anger
Is in a devotee with Linga!
The greatest miser
Is a devotee for Linga!
Angry for anger
Conqueror of the six taints
He is our Lord in the body
Urilingapeddi Priya Visweshvara*

A devotee is a great lover of God. How can any one say that his love is not great? He is a miser because he does not want to share the fruit of his worship, prasada. He is angry that he is not with the Lord. When he has conquered the taints he is free to enjoy union with God.

*Dust falls and collects
So the six taints
Get clean
Shake the dust
Get pure
Free the taints
Become righteous
So said Guru*

The six taints are like dust that falls and collects everywhere. It is easier to fall victim to the taints, but difficult to conquer them. Devotees must be free of all taints to reach the path of Linga.

Does not accept pride of kula

To say "I" is pride and "we" is humility. Pride is associated with the following eight possessions. They are: kula, chala, dhana, rupa, yavvana, vidya, rajya and thapas. Kula is belonging to a caste or a group, chala is determination, dhana is money or wealth, rupa is beauty, yavvana is youth, vidya is education, rajya is kingdom or property, and thapas is meditation. Either collectively or individually, having these things brings pride in a person. Pride is not eternal. It is short lived. Sharanas do not accept pride. Akka praised Basava for being humble.

Akka says the following about pride:

*Being with Guru
No pride of kula and of others
Reject competition
For every one is equal
No pride from wealth
For he is pure, body, mind and spirit
No pride from education
For he has accomplished the unaccomplished
No other pride
For he has the Lord's blessing
Your sharana has no body
Chennamallikarjuna.*

After receiving the blessing of Guru, the devotee is free from taints. He will not compete with others for they are his family. He has no desire to acquire wealth

because he is pure and he has the blessing of the Lord. Without desire, a devotee has no ambitions. Hence he has no pride.

Basava says the following:

*Lose the past
Receive Linga from Guru
Will be a devotee
Then, Your kula is that of Shiva's
What other kula is there for a sharana?
Look for Linga!
Look for a way of life!
This is the one with kula!
There is no other kula for a sharana
They are your children!
Since there is no other kula
Those finding fault in it
Are sure to be born again
Kudala Sangamadeva*

According to Basava, we are the children of God. The only kula we have is the kula of God. Irrespective of birth kula, when one has Istalinga on the body, he belongs to the kula of God.

According to sharanas, there are two groups of people, one with Linga (a baktha or a devotee), and the other without Linga (a bavi).

*There are two types
Man and woman
But for sharanas*

*They are bavi and baktha
So said Guru*

According to sharanas, there are two groups of people namely a bavi and a baktha. A bavi is one without the grace of Guru and the other is a baktha who has the grace of Guru.

Does not speak of Adwaitha or Dwaitha

Adwaitha and dwaitha are two philosophies in Hinduism. People belonging to these two groups argue that "I" is Parabramha and the other says that "I" alone is not Parabramha. There were many arguments about this. Sharanas spent time trying to understand and follow the path to truth. Akka praised Basava for not involved in arguments that could not be concluded.

Adaiah said that the truth could not be found in arguing about the Adwaitha or Dwaitha philosophy. He said the following:

*Adwaitha and Dwaitha
Followed the path of Veda and Agamas
But truth was not found!
Tired and restless
Arguing and debating
But truth was not found!
Many were happy
But found none
For finding the truth!
Sowrastra Someshwara*

Although people argue about different philosophies, truth about God has not been found or realized. Siddalingeshwara said:

*Boasting "I am Parabramha"
Cannot be Adwaitha
Saying "I" is not*

*It cannot be Dwaitha
In all the worlds
Sharanas kula is different!
Only those with knowledge about Shiva
Know truth about the sharana-Linga
relationship.
Others cannot learn about it.
Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve!*

The Adwaitha philosophy says that "I" is Parabramha. The Dwaitha philosophy says that "I" alone is not Parabramha. They argue with out reaching to any conclusion. However, sharanas do not participate in the arguments. Rather, they spend time in understanding and learning the relationship between oneself and the Lord.

*Talk, discuss, or argue
These will not lead to truth
Accept the proof
Enjoy the union
So said Guru*

Sharanas did not spend time in arguing that "I" is not Parabramha or that " I is Parabramha". Sharanas accepted God and spent time in understanding the truth and ways to enjoy the union with God.

Does not do Sankalpa or Vikalpa

Sankalpa means wishing for things that do not exist. Vikalpa means not recognizing things that do exist. Sankalpa and/or vikalpa do not interest sharanas because it takes them away from purity of body, mind and soul. Akka said that Basava did not do sankalpa or vikalpa.

Siddaramaiah explains sankalpa and vikalpa in the following way:

*Listen. I will tell you about the five ears
Heart, mind, soul, pride and wisdom
Heart falls to Sankalpa-Vikalpa
Imagining that which is not is Sankalpa
Lack of awareness of that which exists is
Vikalpa
Constructing what was imagined is mind
Doing what is imagined is to soul
Saying I is pride
Awareness is for wisdom
Doing and giving is the Lord's wish
Learning what cannot be learned
It is the greatest wisdom
It is the path to eternal happiness
Kapilasidda Mallikarjuna*

Imagination is for the mind. We imagine things that are not there and attempt to make them happen. When a person accomplishes what was imagined, pride sets in. The form of pride is "I did it" or "I accomplished

it", etc. Remember! All things we do fulfill God's wishes. This knowledge or awareness is wisdom. The greatest wisdom is to learn that which cannot be learned the truth about oneself. Learning this truth leads to eternal happiness.

Siddaramaiah further says:

*The heart is not different
It has wisdom for learning truth!
If it wears Sankalpa-Vikalpa
Then it is a heart
If it lets go of them
Then it has wisdom and
Upholds His image
Says Kapilasiddha Mallikarjuna*

We imagine things that are not visible and also, at times we fail to recognize that which does exist. We cannot seek truth because we do not know about its existence. Only when we are free from the influence of Sankalpa and Vikalpa, will we be able to learn about the truth about ourselves.

*Two bandits namely
Sankalpa - Vikalpa.
Take you away from your goal
Let go! Let go!
Become light hearted
This is the way to truth
So said Guru*

The heart should be free from Sankalpa and Vikalpa. Then it is easier to learn the truth. The influence of Sankalpa and Vikalpa is so great that it will be hard to let go. With concentrated effort and through Istalinga worship, it is possible to be free from their influence. This will assist devotees to learn about the truth about himself and God

Does not waste time

Time has no beginning and it has no ending. A person spends much time away from appreciating the creations of God. It is hard to keep away from the influence of Arishadvarga. This is the reason sharanas left us with vachanas the source of knowledge. A devotee should strive to be free from the influence of earthly bonds including Sankalpa and Vikalpa. He should spend time understanding the truth about himself and his relationship with God. Akka praised Basava for not wasting time.

Akka says:

*Two measuring pots
Named rising and setting
Measures heaps of life
Before it ends
Remember God! Remember God!
This life does not remain
By remembering God
Lose all taints
Salvation is yours
Chennamallikarjuna.*

Akka says to remember God before death arrives. Remembering God will free the soul from all taints acquired during life. It leads to salvation and eternal happiness.

Basava says:

*A serpent named heart
Basket is the body
Serpent plays in the basket
Not knowing when it kills
With its poison
The medicine is
Timely worship of God
It is the enemy Garuda
Kudala Sangamadeva.*

Basava compares the human heart to a snake. It lives in a basket, named body. The body does not know when the snake releases its venom. The venom is the taint acquired throughout life. Basava suggests that prayer and worship is the medicine to overcome the venom.

*A pardon is for the condemned
Prayer is for the living
It brings happiness
So said Guru*

A condemned man will be delighted to hear the word pardon. With prayer, a devotee is happy to experience the union with God. Before the death arrives pray to God.

Orderly practices shatsthala

The Veerashaiva philosophy is based on shatsthala. Shatsthala means six steps. The six steps of shatsthala are: Baktha, Mahesha, Prasadi, Pranalingi, Sharana, and Ikya. Corresponding to these six steps, there are six types of devotion, six types of Acharas and six types of Lingas. These are the six steps that lead the body or anga to unite with the Linga. Akka praised Basava for the orderly practice of shatsthala.

Chennabasavanna says that vachanas are the steps to God:

*With out rope and tools
Can you get water from a deep well?
It is possible with steps!
With vachanas
Our elders built steps
To reach the heavens!
To clean the mans taints
Sharanas gave us the vachanas
Illuminated with knowledge
Kudala Chennasangaiah!*

Standing near a well is not enough to quench thirst. Seeing the steps that lead to the water is also not enough to quench thirst. One must take the steps to the water and drink the water to quench thirst. The latter is called Acharas. Similarly, having devotion is not sufficient to realize God. Devotion with action is necessary to experience God. Ultimately, the action will lead to unity with God. This unity with God is called Ling-Anga-Samarasya.

Shatsthala: Baktha sthala

Every seed has potential to grow. But, to reach their maximal growth, they require nourishment and proper care. Transplanting a sprouted plant several times also diminishes its growth. Similarly, persons with devotion to God require guidance. The devotion should be nurtured so a devotee can reach the Baktha sthala. Just like plants of all sizes reach maturity and yield fruits, devotees also mature through their actions with the guidance from Guru and Jangama. This leads a devotee to experience union with God. In this sthala, Baktha, Shradda bakthi, and Acharalinga are united through devotion.

Shanmukha Swamy describes the baktha sthala as:

*The marks of a Shiva devotee are:
Follows sadachara (simplistic ways)
Is devoted to Shiva
Treats Guru-Linga-Jangama as one
Among Shiva devotees
Wearing basma, rudrakshi
The one who exhibits devotion,
He is the true devotee
Save me showing this kind of Shiva devotee's
Akandeshwara!*

A devotee will be in baktha sthala by leading a simple life. He treats Guru-Linga and Jangama equally, and wears Linga, basma, and rudrakshi. He worships his

Istalinga daily and receives things as prasada. As his devotion intensifies, he will be in the baktha sthala.

Chennabasavanna explains baktha as:

*Baktha should be in peace
Should speak truth
No taints with Guru-Linga-Jangama
Speaks with compassion
Treats equally all animals
Will not donate to unworthy causes
Has control over his sense organs
These will keep him pure
In this state, worship of Linga
Receives prasada
This itself is accomplishment
Kudala Chennasangamadeva!*

According to Chennabasavanna, a baktha will be calm and has conquered Arishadvarga (love, anger, miserly, lust, pride, and jealousy). He speaks truth with compassion. He emphasizes equality. He donates to worthy causes. He controls his senses and sees Guru-Linga and Jangama as one. He receives prasada, leads a simple life, and enjoys his unity with God.

*With devotion and motivation
Conquering Arishadvarga with actions
A devotee promotes himself
With his devotion will be a baktha
So said Guru*

A devotee promotes himself to the baktha sthala through his actions. Guru and Jangama will guide him through his endeavors to reach his potentials and finally to achieve his goal. The goal is to experience union with God.

Shatsthala: Maheshwara sthala

A devotee through his actions, determination and motivation reaches the next state and becomes a maheshwara. In this state, he exhibits enormous and intense devotion to God through his Istalinga. In this state, Maheshwara, Nista bakthi and Gurulinga are united.

Shanmukha Swamy describes the qualities of maheshwara as:

*Has not touched other woman
Has not touched others wealth
Has not worshiped other Gods
Has not tortured others
Has not sought status
With pure mind and heart
Has ripened devotion in Istalinga
I bow to the feet of maheshwara
With these qualities
Akandeshwara!*

Maheshwara sthala is the second sthala. In this sthala, a devotee will not think of other women, will not seek wealth, will not worship other gods, and will not seek any status. He worships Istalinga with a pure mind and heart. I bow to the person with these qualities.

Urilingadevaru narrates the qualities of maheshwara as:

*Give up Shruthi, Puranas
Trust Shiva Agamas.
Give up kula and caste
Trust in Shiva kula.
Forget other Gods
Trust in one God Shiva.
Give up idol worship
Trust in Istalinga.
Leave out all mathas
Trust in your own.
This is maheshwara sthala!
All Vedas, Shastras, Puranas, Agamas, and
logic's
Made by man, Not by God!
The idol is the Knowledge
Inside is my Urilingadevaru
This is my will.*

According to Urilingadevaru, maheshwara has no kula, matha or caste. He does not worship idols and worships only Istalinga. He trusts his own Istalinga for salvation. Vedas, Puranas, Agamas, and logic's are all the creations of humans. As such, maheshwara will not seek salvation or enlightenment through them. His actions and his belief in Istalinga alone will make him a maheshwara.

*A baktha becomes a maheshwara
Through his actions
Through his beliefs
Through his motivation
Through his guidance
So said Guru*

A baktha cannot become a maheshwara if his actions are faulty. To be a maheshwara, a devotee intensifies his devotion through his Istalinga. He has complete trust in his Istalinga. Through his Istalinga and his actions he will gain knowledge and he become a maheshwara

Shatsthala: Prasadhi Sthala

A maheshwara becomes a prasadi by the knowledge he gains through intense worship of his Istalinga. He receives all things and every thing as prasada or the grace of the Lord. This action and his knowledge of prasada make him a prasadi. In this sthala, prasadi, Avadana bakthi, and Shivalinga are united through the knowledge of the prasadi.

Shanmukha Swamy describes the qualities of prasadi as:

*Wealth offered to Linga
Enjoy with Linga
When not offered
It cannot be enjoyed.
Having devotion for Linga
I bow to the feet of a sharana
With these qualities
Akandeshwara!*

A prasadi offers every thing to Istalinga. He consumes only things given to him as prasada. He does not use things that have not been offered to Linga.

Chennabasavanna describes ways of making offers to Linga:

*Offer to Linga before touching the body
Offer to Linga before touching the mind
Offer to Linga before touching the sense organs
This is the way to be a prasadi*

Kudala Chennasangaiah!
Or else they remain as bodies.

Prasada are those things offered to Linga before consumption. During the offering, the mind should be pure and the five sense organs should be controlled. Offering with a wandering mind and with impure thoughts is not acceptable.

The body seeks food
The mind seeks prasada
The mind learns from prasada
Prasada reveals the truth about the soul
It is the knowledge for the union of the two
So said Guru

Prasada is the knowledge from the grace of the Lord. Receiving prasada makes a devotee learn the truth about himself. This knowledge makes the devotee to experience the union with the Lord.

Shatsthala: Pranalingi sthala

A Prasadi knows the secret of prasada. Prasada are those things offered to Linga and received with the grace of Linga. As a prasadi lose desire for prasada, he will intensify his love towards Istalinga. He sees everything as Linga. His look will be of Linga. His touch will be of Linga. In fact he becomes a Lingi in all respects. He is in the pranalingi sthala. In this state, pranalingi, Anubhava bakthi, and Charalinga are united.

Shanmukha Swamy describes the qualities of a pranalingi as:

*Should have lost awareness of his five senses
Chith has made its mark in Linga
The Soul must be in Linga and Linga in the soul
They should be equal
Should lose the sense of happiness and sorrow
I bow to him with these
Akandeshwara!*

Pranalingi has control over his five senses. His Chith (is the power of the Lord that surrounds the world) is in Linga. The soul is in Linga and Linga is in his soul. He has established equality between happiness and sorrow.

Siddalingeshwara explains pranalingi as:

*Good characters are of Linga
Bad characters are for the body
Discarding both of these
With equality for happiness and sadness
Equality between friends and enemies
Equality between praises and abuses
Discarding all exciting events
Forgets the past,
With Linga relation
Realizes Linga is life
This is pranalingi sthala
Mahalinga Guru Shiva Siddeshwara Prabhuve!*

Being happy or sad, or being rich or poor is the same for a pranalingi. He experiences them equally. He has control over his body and the Arishadvarga. He has devoted his life to Linga.

*His look is for Linga
His action is for Linga
Every thing he does is for Linga
In fact he is Lingi
So said Guru*

In this state, a devotee acts and speaks for Linga. Whatever he does is for the Linga. His actions are for Linga. In all respect he represents Linga. Then he is a pranalingi

Shatsthala: Sharana sthala

With the qualities of a baktha, maheshwara, prasadi and pranalingi, a sharana is a vibrant and content person. He speaks less and when he speaks, he speaks the truth. In this state, the sharana, ananda bakthi and prasadalina are united.

Shanmukha Swamy describes the qualities of sharanas:

*With six qualities of
Sath, Chith, Ananda,
Nithya, Paripurna, and Akhanda
Linga is the husband
I am the wife.
With this determination
Then, without thinking
Of independence and of support
Leaving behind all body needs
Looking forward to the needs of Linga
He is the true sharana
Keep me in their association
Akandeshwara!*

A sharana has devoted himself to Linga and enjoys serving God. He anticipates the needs of Linga. He is happy to serve Linga. He is always happy. He is the perfect wife for Linga.

Sri Suttur Desikendra Swamiji narrated this story of Devara Dasimaiah about a perfect wife:

Two people were arguing about finding a perfect wife. They argued for long hours but could not decide what makes a perfect wife. Then they saw Devara Dasimaiah. Knowing that he was the right person to answer their question, they posed it to him. Devara Dasimaiah without answering their question directly, asked them to bring a lamp from his wife so he could see well. It was a clear day with the sun shining above their heads when Dasimaiah asked for the lamp. They did not understand his request. They went to Dasimaiah's house. They informed his wife that Dasimaiah wants a lamp so he can see well. She gave them a lighted lamp. They brought the lamp to Dasimaiah. Dasimaiah, then asked them to return to his house and bring him several quilts because he was very cold. Again they did not understand his request. It was a hot day and they were perspiring. But they went to the house and informed his wife that her husband was very cold and wanted quilts. Again his wife gave several quilts to them. This time they asked Dasimaiah why his wife did not object to his strange requests. Dasimaiah told them that if they could find a woman like her they should get married, because she was the perfect wife.

A devotee will be a perfect wife for his Linga when he fulfills the desires of his Linga than the desires of his body.

Shanmukha Swamy describes the qualities of sharana:

*Call him a sharana, for he tells the truth
Call him sharana for his ways is sadachara*

*Discarding worldly knowledge
The mind, full of Linga thoughts
I call him the true sharana
Akandeshwara!*

A sharana is an honest individual who follows the sadachara or simplistic ways of life. He is full with thoughts of Linga. He has no desire for worldly things.

Chennabasavanna describes the sharana sthala as follows:

*A sharana's walk is of Linga
A sharana's talk is of Linga
A sharana's content is of Linga
Linga is sharana
Because of these
Kudala Chennasangaiah
Your sharana is all Linga.*

A sharana's walks and talks are for Linga. A sharana is completely devoted to Linga. He has matured to be with Linga. Hence a sharana is Linga.

Shatsthala: Ikya sthala

In this sthala, the anga is unified with Linga. The anga is above all desires. Arishadvarga has no influence on the Anga. A sharana has achieved Linga-Anga-Samarasa. Linga- Anga-Samarasa means equality between the body and the Linga in all respect. In this sthala, Ikya, samarasa bakthi and mahalinga are united. Shanmukha Swamy describes the qualities of an Ikya:

*No hunger, no thirst, no sadness,
No desire, no birth, and no death
Burn these six (Shadurmies)
Blow out their residues
Kama, Kroda, Lopa, Moha, Madha, and
Mathsara
Pull out all their roots (Arishadvarga)
Throw them away.
He worships Istalinga
With the aid of
Guru, Linga, Jangama
Vibuthi, rudrakshi, mantra
Padodaka, and prasada,
With these eight things (Astavarana)
Then with meditation,
Transfers that Linga inside
He establishes in his lotus heart.
Worships again with the aid of astavarna
The Chith is calm and in stable state
A void mind buried in Brahma
With out knowledge, he is
Like burned camphor*

*Having equality
He is truly in the Ikya State
I bow to him for his stand
Akandeshwara!*

A sharana is truly in the Ikya state when he attains equality between himself and the Lord. This is possible when the devotee loses all desires of his body.

Allama describes this state as

*Void yearning Void
Void joining Void
Became Void!*
The soul yearns to join the Lord. When it does join it also becomes the Lord.
*Devotion is inherent in the devotee
Guru liberates the devotion
The devotion is focused with Linga
The Jangama nurtures it to grow
This brings him to the baktha sthala*

*A baktha, leading life in sadachara,
Becomes a maheshwara.
Knowing the secrets of prasada
He will become a pranalingi!*

*Leaving the knowledge of the world
Aspiring for the divine knowledge
And practicing equality
He becomes a sharana*

*A sharana is like a fruit
That clings to the branch until ripe
Then it falls to the ground, or else it is picked
In Ikya sthala, he enjoys
Equality with the Lord
So said Guru*

Guru, Linga, and Jangama nurture devotion in a devotee. The devotee, following the sadachara way of life, is in baktha sthala and then moves to the maheshwara sthala. With his knowledge of prasada, and continues to worship of Istalinga, he moves toward unity with God. Finally, he will be in Ikya sthala where he enjoys union with God

Is a Lingi

A devotee is fully absorbed by the Linga, with his talk, walk, and his every action. He sees and hears for the Linga and nothing else. He is called the Lingi. He no longer lives as pashu (animal) with pasha (thread) around his collar. Here, the pasha stands for the illusions that surround a person and bind him to the earthly things of Arishadvarga. After the thread is cut, the person is free. He has earned equality with the Lord. The practice of shatsthala is a way for the body, mind and soul to free themselves from earthly illusions. Breaking away from the earthly illusions gives one the qualities of Linga. Akka praised Basava for being a lingi in all respects.

Chennabasavanna says that the devotee is Linga:

*A Body's relationship with Linga
Changes it into Linga
Like a caterpillar and a butterfly
With the body touching Linga
It became Linga
There are no more parts of body
They all became Linga
Consider them as Linga
Thus your sharana becomes a
Lingi in all respects
Kudala Chennasangamadeva.*

A sharana becomes a Lingi when he is free from earthly constraints. He has extreme devotion towards

Linga. His devotion ripens in stages just like a caterpillar metamorphosis's into a butterfly.

Chennabasavanna further says that:

*Walking ahead of Linga is a sharana!
Talking ahead of Linga is a sharana
Eating ahead of Linga is a sharana!
Seeing ahead of Linga is a sharana!
Associateing ahead of Linga is a sharana!
Feeling contempt ahead of Linga is a sharana!
The sharana's body is Linga
Linga is sharana!
This is why a Sharana is
A Lingi in all respects!
Kudala Chennasangaiah*

When a sharana becomes a lingi, he is ahead of Linga. He is very spiritual and his activities are divine.

Cut off the thread
That binds with the world.
Then devotee becomes a Lingi
So said Guru.

Illusion is the name of the game. The things of this world attract every person. Attraction leads to bondage. Bondage is the hurdle that prevents from learning oneself. To become a Lingi the chain that bonds with this world should be broken.

Does dasoha

Dasoha is unique to Veerashaivism. Providing food, education, and healthcare to the needy are the three types of dasoha. Most matas in Karnataka provide one or more types of dasoha. The largest dasoha is in Yadiyur. On special occasions, the dasoha at Yadiyur serves in excess of 100,000 free meals per day to devotees. Throughout the year, the dasoha serves prasada to visiting devotees. Many matas conduct schools and colleges. Recently, they have also been assisting elderly people with boarding homes.

There are two types of people. One believes in giving and the other does not. The vocabulary of the later person does not contain the word "Give". It contains only the word "Take". Even in the face of death they will not respond to the word "Give". The following story was narrated by a Swamiji is interesting in supporting this theory.

Two friends traveled together to a neighboring town on business. One of them was known well for taking from others. He never knew the word "Give". He never gave anything away. This fact was well known to his friend. To reach the town, they had to cross a river. While walking through the river, the water level began to rise. It came very close to their chest. At that time, the person who never gave experienced difficulty continuing his travel. With one hand stretched, his friend said " Give me your hand". He refused to give his hand in spite of repeated requests. During this time, the water level rose to his head. He kept asking "Give

me your hand", so he can pull him to safety. Finally, tired, he shouted "take my hand". The moment he said the word "Take", he grabbed his hand and was pulled to safety.

Urilingapeddi says about dasoha:

*Wealth earned but not looted
Spend in dasoha
Without pride or status
He is dasohi!
He is a baktha; He is a maheshwara;
He is a prasadi; He is a pranalingi;
He is a sharana; He is an Ikya.
He is the blessed one!
Both here and there
He is precious
He is learned
He is knowledgeable.*

*Deceit, for him
Guru-Linga-Jangama is not the same
An arrogant man cannot do dasoha
An unworthy and unimportant is
Not a baktha; not a maheshwara;
Not a prasadi; not a pranalingi;
Not a sharana; not an Ikya.
He is wicked and ignorant
He is worthless for everything
Urilingapeddi Priya Visweshvara.*

A dasohi is the blessed person who practices shatsthala. He donates his earned wealth through

honest work, serving the people. Wealth not earned through legitimate means cannot be donated; it is unfit for dasoha.

Chennabasavanna says that the Jangama should take charge of dasoha if devotees have no funds to continue.

*A baktha when broke
Cannot continue his dasoha
Jangama spends money to
Continue dasoha
He worships Linga with the baktha
Making him responsible for dasoha
Jangama is instigator
After doing these, he will become Jangama
For him I bow.
'Did it before', 'Do it now'
'What is happening now?'
Scolding a person, he is not Jangama
He deceives! He is not pure! He is a burden!
Kudala Chennasangamadeva*

If a baktha cannot support dasoha for any reason, Jangama should support the devotee to continue his dasoha. Jangama should not criticize the devotee for lacking funds. Jangama should always support devotees to lead their lives in the Veerashaiva way or else he will not be Jangama!

Without dasoha
There is no Veerashaiva,
There is no compassion.

Dasoha leads to immortality.
So said Guru.

Veerashaivas support dasoha. Dasoha is a way to service to the needy by offering food, knowledge and other things. Matas provide different types of dasoha

Conclusion

The above 52 qualities of Basava are the qualities of true Veerashaivas. In fact they are the essence of Veerashaiva religious principles. Each of these qualities was discussed in the Anubhavamantapa by sharanas. These were then summarized as vachanas. This is the reason that vachanas are not mere sayings. They are the sayings of Anubhavi's or "one who have experienced". As Chennabasavanna said, vachanas are the steps to God.

Summary

The contributions of Akkamahadevi to the society are unique. Her accomplishments earned her the title "Akka" and she has become the role model for all Veerashaivas. In her short life span, she showed and proved that women, irrespective of age, could face aggression boldly. She made the king yield to her premarital demands, and adhere to his promises. When the king broke his promises to her, she left him. When her parents and friends discouraged her travel to Kalyana, she consoled them. When she was introduced to Allamaprabhu in the Anubhavamantapa, he interrogated her in the presence of sharanas. Without hesitation, she boldly answered all questions to the satisfaction of the assembly. Her answers won her the praise of sharanas. The sharanas gave her the title "Akka". The dialogue between Akka and Allama is beautifully described in 'Shunya Sampadane' as 'Sampadane of Mahadevi'.

Before leaving Kalyana, she thanked the sharanas for their love and affection. Then, she cleverly and ingeniously molding all the 52 qualities of Veerashaiva in a single vachana, she praised Basava. Thus, she succeeded in summarizing the essential qualities of Veerashaivas.

Many writers have called Akkamahadevi the "Rudra Kanya". By calling her a Rudra Kanya, they have elevated her to divinity. Her accomplishments were extraordinary in any measure and they are truly divine. She is the blessed one.