CHAPTER-V
CONCEPT OF DIVINE GRACE

Grace

Akka has wooed and pined for Cennamallikarjuna without end but her lord has not yet bestowed upon her his grace.

Some how this love of hers appears to be mundane and selfish to the ordinary eye. She decided not to ask that he necessarily requite her love. She says she will love him for his own sake rather than for herself. Whether He listens to her or not, she sings His praise. Whether He bestows his favour on her or not, she sings His praise. Whether He bestows His favour on her or not, she continue loving him and yearning for him.

Whether he glanced at her or not, she continued to gaze at him and dance around him. She vowed "Oh! Cennamallikarjuna. I will abandon myself to the ecstasy of your adoration."

*Barad bhavangalalli Bandenaya
*Kadeyillad tapangalalli nondu
*Nimma karunege balisandenaya
*Idu karan ennadev cennamallikarjunange
*Tanuwanuwagi man maruwoge
*Mattillad tavakod snehakke
*Terahinnentu Hela tande?*

I come, O lord, to births

Where I should not have come;
Labouring in endless pains,
I drew me near to Thy compassion, Lord.
Therefore, when I have made my body fit
For Cenna Mallikarjuna my Lord
And when my heart is wholly lost to Him,
Tell me, how can be room again
For ardent love ?

Akkamahadevi has come to may births in which she has experienced pains in different stages of life. Later she regretted that she shouldn't have come or been born. With these pains and problems, she got the compassion of Lord Channa Mallikarjuna. Here Akkamahadevi has found no end to the philosophy of life. Therefore she wanted Lord Cennamallikarjuna to take her to the meaningful end of life by accepting her. Akka submitted her will and comforts to the will of Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

Akka asks the Lord how can there be another place to her ardent love rather than him. She came to the conclusion that only the Lord can rule the world and her. She has no option to search further. Lord Cennamallikarjuna is ultimate to her to join him.

Kangalalli kambenendu
Kattaley a hokkadentahudaya?
Bettad tudiya mettalendu
Hallkollangalalli llidadentahudaya?
Ninikkid sayadanawanollade
Bere bayasidadentahudaya?
Cennamallikarjun
Ghanawanariyalendu
Kirukulakke sandadentahudaya? 

How will it be if I
Go into dark to see with eyes?
How will it be if I
Descend into a gorge
To stand upon a mountain-peak?
How will it be if I,
Spurning the grace that thou hast given,
Desire aught else?
How will it be if I
Draw near the baser ones to know
Cennamallikarjuna’s majesty?

Without eyes we cannot see anything. If we go in dark our eyes become useless. Eyes need light to visualise anything on the earth. Therefore, it should be known that a man should open his inner eye, which enlightens him to lead on a safe path to the Lord.

Here Akkamahadevi puts a question how can one reach a mountain peak, if he works and wades in vallies down.? So she advises that one should be up right, to reach any zenith. Akkamahadevi says that one should be content with whatever he she has. One shouldn’t crave for what one doesn’t have. Selfishness, ego, jealousy, shouldn’t be given any place in anybody’s life.

According to her, one should be away from these personal enemies to tread towards heaven. In search of God, one shouldn’t fear or need the
criticism of others. Here Akkamahadevi's craving for Cennamallikarjukan is unshaken. Her faith, devotion and dedication have became a polestar to guide one.

Knowledge, which is add of the spirit and which alone can guide our steps to our destiny, should come as his Grace, as the following lines of Akka testify:

Thou, Cennamallikarjuna
Shouldst lift me up with Thy tender grace
Do away with my oblivion
And vouchsafe a glimpse of Thy feet!

Knowledge that leaves him out is no knowledge at all, declares Akka:

What use is riches without generosity?
What use is a cow, if it is dry?
What use is beauty without virtue?
So is my being of no use.
As long as I have not known you.
Oh! Cennamallikarjuna!

That is why she is thankful to him for having guided her steps to the understanding of Him. It was his tender mercy, his grace, she concedes, he is at once nearer than the nearest and farther than the farthest corner of the earth. But all the while he was seated at her heart.

Akkagal Yoganga Trividi

Ennawagunagal innu nodade guru
Cennamallesh krupegaíd karan
Enna paribhavav pariyittu
Because thou hast ignored my vices and
Vouchsafed thy blessing
O cenna mallesa
The bondage of my births
Is torn apart

Hear me, my sister, sister, hear!
I dreamt a dream: Wherein I saw
Areca, rice, a palm-leaf, coconut:
A beggar, with his pretty locks
And white teeth, come for alms.
And, as he passed by needlessly,
I followed him and caught his hand...
The moment that I saw
Cenna Mallikarjuna, I woke!

Here 'I dreamt a dream' means 'I have realized consciousness'; rice and nuts represent Bhavalinga and Pranalinga. She means thereby that she won consciousness through meditation upon Pranalinga and Bhavalinga.

When Jangama, the Siva-incarnate, came to beg, i.e., to remove her fear, she followed him and got Linga in her palm. Thus she gained Cennamallikarjukan as her Guru and wisdom through His grace.

In this vacana, Akkamahadevi tells a story to her friend which she found in her dream. In this dream, Akkamahadevi saw rice, areca, a palm-leaf and coconut, which are the symbols of marriage and Linga of life, Linga of
feelings and Linga of light, - all these things have been mysticised. They are given, a special meaning, along with areca, rice, palm-leaf, and coconut she saw a beggar in her dream to whom she followed and caught his hand.

The man was walking carelessly but this lady Akka, being attracted walked and joined him. As soon as she joined him, she found that he was Lord Cennamallikarjuna. This lord has become her every life breath. In Akkamahadevi's opinion one shouldn't work and worship to show one's devotion to the people instead one should worship and remember God at every step.

Akka offers a verbal portrait of her divine lover. She describes how, in a dream that she dreamt, she caught sight of Cennamallikarjuna, her divine lover, and how she followed him forthwith and took him by the hand.

*Akkagal Sruistivacan*

*Kaya guru, pranalinga jnan jangam*

*Guruvinalli shuddha prasad*

*Lingadalli siddhaprasad*

*Jangadallalli prasiddprasad*

*Inti trividh prasadava ekarthavagi*

*Mahaghana paripurna prasadavalavatt Sharan*

*Knowledge as Jangama, and these three*

*The pure grace in the guru*

*The perfect in the linga and*

*The absolute in the jangama*

*Become one gift the sarana*
Who has attained in full
The perfect grace

All the auspicious signs appearing in the dream betoken good news in store.

"If spark has kindled spark,
I say it quenched my hunger and thirst,
If a cloud comes tearing down,
I say it's water pouring for my bath.
Should a mountain fall on me,
I say it's flowers showering down.
Should my head break and drop,
I say my life is offered unto Thee,
O Cenna Mallikarjuna Lord!"^8

She invites him to pour upon her an endless series of perils and smash her sense of 'I' and mine:

"Lord, make me beg from door to door,
Not missing one, with hand outstretched;
Lord make that, when I beg.
No alms is given: and if it should,
Let it drop to the ground;
And ere I pick up what has dropped, let a dog pick it up.
O Cenna Mallikarjuna lord!"^9

She implores him to burn her in the crucible of travails and purge her mind of the stain of sin, strike her a thousand strokes and chisel her into a
handsome image and pour upon her his bountiful grace. Thus her cry of naisthika-bhakti runs to him.

On her way to Kalyana, she had to face perils and ordeals at every step. Besides, wherever she went, the dazzling beauty of her person plagued her, as it were her enemy.

*Can I win you through eightfold rightes?*

*You live, O lord, beyond*

*The commerce of the outer sense!*

*Can I win you by taking thought*

*Within my heart? You are, O lord,*

*Beyond both thought and speech!*

*Can I win you by telling beads*

*Or singing hymns? You are, O lord.*

*Beyond all sound! Shall I win You*

*Through knowledge of the heart?*

*You are, O Lord, beyond all reasonable sense!*

*Can I take you within*

*The lotus of my heart? But you, O lord.*

*Pervade the entire world of me!*

*It's not in me to win you, Lord:*

*That you should love me is all my bliss,*

*O Cenna Mallikarjuna Lord!*\(^{10}\)

Akkamahadevi presents eightfold paths to enjoy the warmth of the embrace of Lord Cennamallikarjuna. She asks manyfold questions to the Lord
but confesses that it is not in her power to have him. It is all in his power to love her and to gladden her with this blessings. To be blessed by him, she searches many ways by imagination, by telling beads, or singing hymns and through the knowledge of heart, but finally she comes to the reality that she cannot be blessed until, He shawers over her the bliss of solitude.

Akkamahadevi realized that the Lord was beyond the commerce of the outer sense. Beyond both thought and speech, beyond all sound and all reasonable sense. Therefore, she begs of Him to spread all the place and her inside and outside. Mystic power, or any power, cannot be got easily. It is not there the hands of human beings. All power is rested in the hands the Lord or creator.

The creator controls the whole universe. Everything in the world is moved by the orders and words of Him. Even a single straw is not allowed to move without his consent. Therefore, Akkamahadevi leaves everything to her husband-Lord Cennamallikarjuna. According to Akkamahadevi, counting beads, singing hymns and a medical heart are not counted in the court of the Lord. God considers the selected soul which He likes.

This is the eternal life that knows no parting. Mahadeviyakka suggests that she has won such a union with Cennamallikarjuna. We may see in such vacanas to what heights bridal devotion can rise.

What need of flower when breath itself is sweet?
What need of ecstasy where patience is,
And self-command, endurance, peace?
What need of solitude, pray, when the world
Has became Yourself, O Cennamallikarjuna?
This verse of Akka explains the beauty of life. She says that if breath itself is sweeter, what is the need of a flower. It could be meant that if our inner soul or body is clean and pure, where is the need of fragrance of any temporal thing? Instead of applying sweet smelling scent to the body, the body itself should be so pure and sweet, as to smell fragrant.

Also Akkamahadevi advises that patience, self command, endurance and peace are one's friends. Where is the need of ecstasy?

Instead of spending age and time in search of ecstasy, one should cultivate patience, acquire self command, gain endurance and peace which are stronger than ecstasy. To Akkamahadevi there is no need of prayer and solitude, besides the presence of Lord Cennamallikarjuna. The Lord Himself has become the world of Akkamahadevi.

_O hearken, Lord, unto my cry,_

_But only if Thou wilt:_

_Do not, if Thou wilt not._

_O turn Thy eyes upon my griefs,_

_But only if Thou wilt:_

_Do not if Thou wilt rather not_

_That is my fate!_

_How can I win Thee, Lord if Thou refuse?_

_And when my yearning heart is lost to Thee_

_If thou shouldst hide Thyself_

_How should I catch Thee,_

_O Cenna Mallikarjuna?_12
A completely devoted devotee raises his voice unto the Lord and appeals to accept his painful and self-less services. Here Akkamahadevi prays Cennamallikarjuna to consider her proposal, if he wishes. She asks him to hear her cry, her griefs, if only He wishes or else not, because accepting or rejecting, her is in his hands only. So she left everything to her Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

Akkamahadevi believes that all the powers are rested in him. Without His will nothing can be done. So helplessly she has left everything and every decision to Him. She knows that if He wishes He can save her and if he wills he can undo her. She is even ready to meet her end even if he doesn’t consider her prayer, She accepts it as her fate.

One should come to "firm decision that whatever happens, happens only with His command and whatever happens, it will be good for him. So no one should not be disheartened. Finally, Akkamahadevi humbly demand. Him that if he hides Himself, when her yearning heart is listening to him, how can she catch him?

'The wind of God's grace is incessantly blowing. Lazy sailors on the sea of life do not take advantage of it. But the active and the strong always keep the sails of their minds unfurled to catch the favourable wind and thus reach their destination very soon.13

Every devotee is inspired by this truth, that there is god’s grace available to him or her. That is what will carry him or her onward in life in a beautiful and natural and rewarding manner blending self-effort and divine grace, until the flood of divine grace engulfs the devotee.
The strength of a devotee lies in self-surrender to the Divine. This is the only occasion when surrender becomes supreme victory. The knowledge dawns that the breeze of divine grace has been gently carrying onward his or her little boat of individuality on the waters of life towards the ocean of total fulfillment.

So, in Vedanta it is said, even to turn towards god or towards striving for liberation, man needs His grace. Only through the grace, the of god do you get even this tendency towards spirituality, this thirst for the highest.

Guru, who savest those
Who, seeking Thee, surrender unto Thee,
O Guru, to Thee all hail!
Thou who hast manifested on my palm
Incorporating that void being which
Abides in the unknowable void,
O Guru, hail, O hail!
Cenna Mallikarjuna Lord!

Akkamahadevi is sure that Guru will save and manifest on the palm in the form of Istalinga. Akka, here, is delighted to find her Guru, Lord Cennamallikarjuna on her palm in the form of Istalinga.

To incorporate with the lord one must reach to a void, i.e., a zero level. All the worldly comforts should be abandoned and only the goal to unite with Him should remain. If this happens there is no doubt that the two will enjoy the communion of each other into an immeasurable depth.

Akkamahadevi hails her Guru who saved and showed the proper path of salvation. As Akka said, the presence of Him cannot be felt by a common
man, because He is Void. He cannot be touched or felt. So if any wants to see or meet Him he/she should become void. Then only is it possible to enjoy the communion.

_The eternal is come walking to my home;
Salvation is come walking to my home;
Glory to Thee, O Guru : I salute
The Supreme Guru : hail ! O hail
Who hast brought Cennamallikarjuna
And made Him manifest :
O Guru, hail, O hail ! 15_

Akkamahadevi praises the eternal presence of her Guru at her home, who comes walking in search of her. The eternal here is the Lord Himself in the eyes of Akkamahadevi. So she has been blessed by his presence in her, and she got salvation after a long suffering and pain. Akka found her lord in her with his presence. She got salvation. This is what Akkamahadevi craves for.

When she has realized the eternal Istalinga on her palm, she praises the glory of the lord. With immense pleasure and pent up feelings of joy bursting out, she started. Singing His glory. She saluted the supreme Guru who had brought her Cennamallikarjuna to her and made Him manifest in her.

That is the way grace operates in human life; but we fully recognize it only when we become spiritually mature with the strength of manliness leading to the strength of godliness or saintliness in total self-surrender.

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Then, from that height, one can say: "My play is done; now I see the truth; everything was and is Divine Grace, personal effort and self-surrender to the divine are only the earlier and later phases of man's spiritual life in divine grace. ¹⁶

Might bear in mind that what he really does is to assert the equal importance of interpersonal relations, and also to assert the absolute meaningless of substance apart from change.

God is at once the principle of abstraction, of unbounded possibility and of concretion of limited realization of possibility. God is not the only agent of abstraction or of concretion, but he is the "Supreme" agent. God is the only such agent whose functioning is presupposed by all existence through all time, the only strictly cosmic agent.

_If is as if a stream_  
_Had rushed into a mud-caked tank;_  
_It is as if the rain_  
_Had poured upon a withered plant;_  
_It is as if, today,_  
_This world's delight, that other's goal_  
_Had, walking come! Behold,_  
_Seeing the Guru Cennamallikarjuna's_  
_Feet, I have been blest!_¹⁷

Akkamahadevi has penned about how she has been delighted when she saw Lord Cennamallikarjuna. She expressed her outburst of over joy through some similes of stream, rain, tank and plant. Her ecstasy bursted out as when a dried tank is filled with a running stream suddenly and as a withered plant
which is bloomed as a consequence of heavy downpour. With the presence of Lord Cennamallikarjuna, she felt the presence of this world as well as that of the abstract world which is her real goal Akka's final goal of reaching Lord Channa Mallikarjuna is under her feet So she said that on seeing her Guru and his feet, she has been blessed and lifted, up by the blessings of Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

When Akkamahadevi found the feet of Lord Cennamallikarjuna she expressed her extreme joy by giving many similes such as of a mind lake filled by a sudden flow of a stream into it. And as withered free sprouting when a heavy downpour suddenly drenches it.

In this Vacana, Akkamahadevi has found Cennamallikarjuna as a Guru, and says that there was no comparison to Him. Her faith in Cennamallikarjuna is firm. He can turn a dried tank into a ocean of water within a short span of time, a bare tree can be turned into an evergreen one only by the rain of his presence.

Its perfume is so like a ball of scent
Before beginning was or the unbegun
Himself he was, so with no manner of touch
Channabasavanna gaining the Guru's grace,
Himself became the Linga
That he might show me
Both goal and way, assumed this form
In Lord Kudala Sangama! 18

From all this it becomes clear that Channabasavanna was born of prasada (grace), and that knowledge was initiated into him at his birth. There is a difference between a physical body and a spiritual body.
A Sadhaka has to pass through different stages - Bhakta, Mahesvara Prasadi, etc. The signs of an enlightened soul begin to manifest only when the sadhaka reaches the Prasadi stage. Saranas have recognized Channabasavanna as belonging to the Prasadi stage, because he was born enlightened.

This type of enlightenment is proper only to the prasadi stage. The chief among them are four as mentioned already, namely, his birth by Jangama Prasada, Basava’s Prasada, Kakkayya’s Prasada and finally Shivaprasad.19

My heart is pierced with Linga ecstasy:
How then, can I
Be part and parcel of Thyself?
How, then, O lord can I unite with Thee?
Tell me, O Mallikarjuna, where
I can attain the absolute
With my heart full and overflowing with
The peace that comes of the supermest bliss.20

This verse contained the heart of Akkamahadevi. Her heart and soul have been united with ecstasy of Linga. Linga may be inanimate to a layman but to akka. It is spiritual power and has a great influence on her minute to minute life.

In this vachan, she says that her heart has been pierced with Linga, and she is no more an individual now. Indeed, she is even not a part and parcel of herself. She has totally imbibed Linga into her. Therefore, she asks Cennamallikarjuna how can she unite with Him. She wants to attain the
absolute with her overflowing with the peace which hails from the supreme bliss.

O Guru who, erasing mortal birth
Hast deified my life;
O Guru who, untying the bonds of birth
Hast shown to me the supreme bliss;
O Guru who, effacing every trace
That clings to worldings hast
Made me reputed as a devotee;
O Guru who hast brought and placed
Cennamallikarjuna in my hands,
I bow to Thee!21

This vacana presents the immortality of Akkamahadevi and her Linga. She bows to the Guru who made Akkamahadevi's mortal life immortal. He has deified her life by erasing her mortal birth. As we have found there are many bonds in this birth. It is highly difficult to unbond those bonded duties. Here the Guru of Akkamahadevi has made of easy for her to come out of this bonded life. He liberated Akkayya from all worldly bonds. By erasing them, he showered on her the supreme bliss.

The guru of Mhadevi presented her the Linga which is supreme and eternal. Therefore, she surrenders herself completely to him for giving and placing Cennamallikarjuna in her hands. In this vacana one thing is clear that placing god in ones hand is found only in Veerashaiva religion. This is the specialty of this religion.
The Prasadi Sthala:

The soul which loves Siva with indomitable faith becomes Siva’s favoured one: God pours into him grace, through which he begins to understand God himself. Everything becomes God’s gift to him. All his impulses take a new turn towards a greater spirituality. Such a man is known as prasadi.\textsuperscript{22}

The Sivasaranas, instead of running away from life, lived a life of responsibility, and thus sanctified it. Their aim was to realize the kingdom of God on earth.

Individual effort waits on the divine Grace and needs self-renunciation too. This problem of individual effort and divine grace has been exaggerated by some of the schismatic thinkers, but each has its own due place.

Individual effort directed towards deserving God’s grace and God’s grace not measuring the quantum of the individual effort but supremely giving itself to the individual who has thrown himself at the feet of God are both complementary. Thus the earlier Vaisnava thinkers synthesized individual effort (yoga) with the divine Grace and made all God’s own supreme yoga. Thus the twin concepts of saulabhyatva (accessibility) and antaryamitva (indwelling Lordship) of God, the means have been synthesised. This is the synthesis of the means (upayasamanvaya).\textsuperscript{23}

\begin{quote}
The body’s grace is mine, mine is minds’s:
The grace of soul is mine, and of the Will:
\end{quote}
The grace that issues from
Experience in union is mine:
O Cennamallikarjuna, I spread,
They grace, and wrap myself with it!\textsuperscript{124}

In this vacana, Mahadeviyakka has shown that the divine grace of Lord Cennamallikarjuna is found in every action, word and deed. Therefore, she says that the union of her body, mind, and soul is the grace of God.

With the grace of Guru-Ling-Jangama, she has been blessed, and is communed with the divine world.

Here we could understand that there is no detachment from the Linga. Akkamahadevi and Jangama-Linga have been wrapped into one and made grown inseperable. Body, Mind and soul—everything has been dedicated to Linga-God, Lord Cennamallikarjuna. Her union with Linga-God made her forget this mortal world.

The Gita also lays emphasis on the grace of God.\textsuperscript{25} But the Gita introduces its own concept of divine Grace. Grace has no place in atheistic monism, which is incompatible with God as the supreme personal ethical will.

Grace has the connotation of that sort of relationship which can hold good only between persons.

Once there is a transformation in their mental outlook with the awakening of the spark of divinity in them, the grace of God begins its operation in elevating them to higher and higher levels of moral perfection and purity Kabir says:
“The counting of rosary beads.
The giving of alms.
All these are meaningless without the Guru.
The Vedas and Puranas will confirm
That giving alms, unless it is done
Under the direction of the Guru,
Is an act of sin and harm.”

Mark, lady, the young Moon
Upon His glistening locks,
And in his ear-rings look the serpent-gem!
If you should see the mighty one
Skull-garlanded around his neck,
Tell him to come to me!
Govinda's eye is resting on his toe:
This is the emblem, lady, of
Lord Cennamallikarjuna

Akkamahadevi told her friend to send Lord Cennamallikarjuna, if she happened to see Him any where.

While telling this, she introduces the marks to recognize him a young bright moon upon his glistening locks, the serpent ear-ring in his ears, Skull-garland around his neck, and an eye of Krishna on his toe-these are the emblems of her Lord.

Mahadeviyakka is so eager to meet and join Cennamallikarjuna.

Here she doesn't show her fixed mind. Sometimes she says that he is in her and she clasped him tightly and some other time she says she doesn't
have any confidence that she could have salvation by meeting Him. Therefore Akkamahadevi requests her friends to inform her about the whereabouts of Lord Cennamallikarjuna.

He also mentions another source which he has used. It is the divine Grace ingrained in him. He ascribes the authenticity of his work to this God’s grace.

Grace ingrained in me, I publish Sivaprakasam, a work of hundred verses of virutham metre according to the methods of podu and unmail.

The concept of Tiruvarutkan is specific to mystical experience. This grace-experience takes place in the following way: The divine love with which he is filled wells up within him and affects both his soul and body; now the paramporul which was within him as ‘arul’ becomes intensified and consequently his soul attains ‘arulmayam’ (the nature of grace) kodikkavi (hereater kk)1. Both the primordial impurity (darkness) and the divine grace (light) are in the self-same self when one dominates the other remains resolved. However, the primordial impurity can never take hold of the inner-light. I hoist this flag so that the grace which lies embedded in the core of the inner self might shine forth and get rid of the malas.

What need of sword when there’s the disk
To obey you? What need of lamp for you
Who own the ruby’s radiance?
What need of wealth for one
Possessing the alchemic stone?
What need of calf when the wishing cow gives
Milk inexhaustible?
When my God, Cennamallikarjuna Linga
Is on my palm, what else need I? 29

Akkamahadevi says in clear voice that she needs nothing that is nothing is required, if Lord Cennamallikarjuna is present in her. She gives a few examples to prove if her point a person knows how to handle the disk, there is no need of a sword, and there is no need of a lamp in the presence of ruby’s radiance. Like wise no wealth is needed if alchemic stone is possessed and there is if a wishing cow there is no need of a calf.

According to Akka, Lord Cennamallikarjuna fulfills all these wishes and whims of a man. Then why should one go to others and serve them? Therefore one must not go. In search of butter holding it in his palm. This vacana reveals that one has to be content with whatever he / she has. There should be sincere faith and ardent desire to possess anything in the world. Here Akka doesn’t want anything from the world, because she has had Linga on her palm, bestows on her everything.

Umapati claims to have had the grace-experience of these mystics (Arutalars) of the Tirumarais and to have witnessed the realities in the light of divine grace. The following poem from Arputha Tiruvantati confirms this:

Arule ulakelam alvippatu I can
Arule pirapparuppatu apal arulale
Meypporulai nokkum vitiyutaiyen
Ennanrum
Eporulum avatenakku.

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That is to say god rules over the world through His grace; since the
divine grace removes the cycle of births, I am able to know the ultimate
realities always through divine grace.\textsuperscript{30}

Umapati exposes what he had seen with the eye of divine grace: viz.,
the prior condition of the Lord, the self, the dark impurity and the existential
dimension of divine grace in its two phases. In what follows the ariyumneri,
he expounds the fruits and consequences of knowing with the ‘eye of divine
grace’.

\begin{quote}
\textit{If you expect Siva to approve}
\textit{of piety that lasts not to the end,}
\textit{or servanthood that lacks in steadfastness}
\textit{How will he, pray?}
\textit{Do not indulge in baseness of the mind;}
\textit{And if you do, the lord of mind}
\textit{Is sure to know. Think you}
\textit{Wise Cennamallikarjuna will be pleased}
\textit{If you but tell your beads without a pause?} \textsuperscript{31}
\end{quote}

If you show your devotion in the end of what use is it? How can the
Lord be pleased with your false servitude?

If you are devoted to the Lord right from the beginning you can win
his grace, and not otherwise. If your devotion and faith are not real,
Cennamallikarjuna will never approve of you, and you can never have His
grace.

Only when the beads are closely knit and arranged carefully you can
prepare a fine necklace. If you carelessly arrange them and keep them at
irregular spaces, it will never be a good necklace. In the same way only when you are devoted to Him firmly and without any wavering, He will approve of you. When once you win His approval, your life’s mission is over.

*It is as if a poor man’s life is gone*

*The while the rich man’s granary is shut.*

*Tell me, O father, is this my lot*

*The while Thou put’st me to the test*

*By thus tormenting me? It is as if*

*The chaff is blown away*

*The while one fans and piles the grain*

*What manner dost Thou bless me, Lord Cennamallikarjuna?*32

Rich people are generally reluctant to part with their wealth and help poor people. After repeated requests, say a rich man agrees to open the door of his granary with a view to distributing it to the poor. But because of the delay in opening the granery, the poor man dies. Then of what are of is the rich man’s action? Oh! God, is it proper on your part to torture and torment a devotee of yours like me? I have been imploring you to show me the way for salvation, but you are just ignoring all my pleas! Is it fair on your part?, asks Akka of her Lord Chenna Mallikarjuna?

Just as a lean and rickety bufflow flew away in air in a hurricane, even if you open your eyes and try to save, when I am almost dying of what good is it to shower grace at the last moment? Please tell me in what way you would like to show your kindness to me before my life breath is blown ant of me?
O brother, brother!
No fool you are!
O brother, is it within my power or yours:
The virtue of the arrow of that love
That swallowed up the fourteen worlds?
If a horse stumbled, would you strike
And tear his heel?
The shame of stumbling you must clear
In the field afterwards... first slay yourself
And then, brother, take up arms!
Do not, O brother, turn your back
On Cennamallikarjuna, your foe.33

Desire in human beings has always been there, and it is this element that is playing havoc with the lives of the people. It is making all people terribly miserable, and it is in fact creating a hell in their lives. Of all the desires, kama the desire of sexual satisfaction is one of the strongest urges in human beings.

Though in it temporary happiness might be there, it creates a lot of problems, and makes persons very sad and miserable. It also takes one away from our Lord Cennamallikarjuna. You should always try to control yourself and kick out all desires, especially the urge to have sexual satisfaction. Only then, Lord Cennamallikarjuna will bless you and show His grace upon you.

It's surely true that one's disciple is
One's son: why so?
Unless one is a father to his wealth
Can he be father to his mind? why so?
Because he did not know his mind,
He proved to be a father to his wealth
O Cennamallikarjuna, they are not
Thy real devotees who, for the belly's sake,
Put up for sale the piety
That is in them!"34

In this vacana, we see clearly the roles of father and guru. The father, no doubt, is responsible for bringing this body into this world. But a guru teaches him all the things and thereby makes him grow into a decent and gentle human being. He showers love on him and treats him as if he were his own son. The son becomes a heir to the property of the father. But a true disciple, in a way, becomes a heir to the wealth of knowledge of the guru.

Because the disciple will have received much from the guru, in a way, he is like a son to the guru. A father cannot be the owner of knowledge and is not accountable for intellectual growth of the son. But a guru contributes much to the knowledge and intelligence of the disciple. Guru shows the way of Bhakti and also shows us the ways of reaching god. A real bhakta is one who is ever ready to sacrifice his all for the sake of God.

He has no pride of caste, because
He was delivered of no womb;
He has no pride of self, because
He knows no other near;
He has no pride of pelf, because
In all three senses he is pure;
He has no pride of learning because
He has accomplished the impossible;
He has no pride at all, because
Thou has possessed him, Cennamallikarjuna
Because he lives a disembodied life.\textsuperscript{35}

The pride of caste comes to those who are born out of the womb in
the usual way. But a ‘Sharana’ thinks that the divine spark within him directly
belongs to Cennamallikarjuna, and therefore, it has no caste identifications.
A sharana doesn’t believe in caste, much less the superiority of one over the
other.

As a sharana does not compete with anybody, and further as he has
no enymity also with anybody, he is never obstinate towards anybody as he
has surrendered his everything to he does not consider anything has his own
and therefore he has no pride at all of any type such as pride of knowledge,
wealth etc. He is always humbleness personified. As he considers himself the
spark of the almighty, we can almost think him to be an ‘Ayonija’.

\textit{Can you grow shoots again}
\textit{Upon a bamboo tough and dry ?}
\textit{Can a burnt earthen pot become}
\textit{Again the earth it was ?}
\textit{Can the fruit, once slipped off}
\textit{Its stalk,}
\textit{Return to it again ?}
\textit{If men who drudge speak thoughtlessly,}
Shall saranas who had faith
Return to earth again,
Θ Cennamallikarjuna?36

In the extremely dry bambo groves you will get a type of grain (it will be similar to rice) which is fit to be eaten by human beings. The tenderest portion of the bamboo (called ‘kalale’) will sprout out in the initial stage and only that tender plant (bushes) will grow later on in to a boinboo burnt. The well earthen pot (well burnt pot) cannot become soft mud again even after it is broken up into pieces.

A well ripened fruit which has fallen from its stalk to the ground cannot be returned to the stalk. The ‘sharanas’ who are totally devoted to the lord after totally renouncing the world, will never take birth again and come back to the world. They will never again be enmeshed in the vicious circle of birth and death.

\begin{verbatim}
What is to come tomorrow, let it come
Today: and what today: this very hour
O Cennamallikarjuna, do not say
This time, another time!37
\end{verbatim}

If only harm is to come to me tomorrow, let it come today only. If anything harmful and disastrous (for me) is to happen today, let it happen now. These are the requests to the lord of a real Sharana (Bhakta). He has firm belief and knows well that God is always with him and protects him as it is his business to look after the well-being of a Bhakta.

As I am your own and belong to you, I have absolutely no fear of any type, even if death comes to me, I will welcome it, because it is a great deliverance and I know that by dying, I will get merged in you.
That is to say, to the one who has dived into the sea of divine grace (arutkadal), seeing everything with the 'eye of divine grace' becomes a true and authentic way of knowing.\textsuperscript{38}

This idea has been expressed by Umapati in the following kural:

\begin{quote}
Easy the way of vision:
\begin{quote}
\emph{But twixt eye and Object light must be Without the light of grace.}
\emph{Twixt soul and Known soul sees not}
\end{quote}
\end{quote}

That is to say the self cannot know anything really of its own accord without peeping into the world through the eye of divine grace.

His grace for the purification of one's mind is the fifth commandment.

It is only by god's grace that we may even recognize such an avatara. We should feel honoured and doubly blessed if in addition we can enjoy his beatific presence.\textsuperscript{39}

\begin{quote}
\emph{Four quarters of the day they toil for food;}
\emph{Four watches of the night, for joys of sense;}
\emph{Like washerman, who stands}
\emph{In water and yet dies with parched mouth,}
\emph{That is within themselves}
\emph{O Cennamallikarjuna.}\textsuperscript{40}
\end{quote}

Ordinary people, during the entire life time they are very busy and working incessantly to amass wealth for their living. Their night time is spent
in indulging in carnal pleasures. They are so deeply immersed in worthless activities that they are left with no time think at all about our Cennamallikarjuna.

They are something like washermen, standing in kneedeep stream water and yet dying out of thirst. In the same way, they do not know that lord Cennamallikarjuna. Who is capable of giving eternal peace, happiness and bliss, is within themselves. They search for bliss in external things such as wealth, power etc. but real bliss is not in those external things. Deep disillusionment, misery and sorrow are bound to fall upon them. They cannot reach Cennamallikarjuna who is right within themselves only.

You cut and saw and rub the sandal-wood;
Does it, being hurt, refuse its scent?
You cut and rub a piece of gold;
Does it, being heated, take in dross?
You cut a sugarcane joint by joint,
Put it and squeeze it in a press;
When heated, it gives sugar and jaggery;
Does it, being hurt refuse its sweet?
When you collect my by gone sins
And cast them in my face,
The loss is yours...
O father Channa Mallikarjuna Lord
Though you may slay me,
I'll never cease
To love the hand that slays !"
If sandal wood is cut into pieces and rubbed on a rough stone to make a fresh paste, or it will never stops its good quality of giving fresh fragrance. If gold is cut and mercilessly burnt, it will never lose its fine yellow shine and become black.

If sugarcane is cut into pieces and crushed in a crusher, it will never lose its fine quality of sweetness. Oh Lord, I might have committed many sins in my many births and in all those births you have been with me as a witness and I cannot hide from you any of them.

You are my protector and savior and I do not like to leave you. I totally prostrate before you and surrender myself totally to you. Kindly show your grace to me and take me into your fold and make me free from the cycle of births and deaths.

*If spark has kindled spark*

*I say it quenched my hunger and my thirst*

*If a cloud comes tearing down*

*I say it’s water pouring for my bath.*

*Should a mountain fall on me,*

*I say it’s flowers showering down.*

*Should my head break and drop*

*I say my life is offered unto Thee,*

*O Cennamallikarjuna lord*[^42]

If nature showers a big rain of embers, I take it as having sent to quench my thirst and fill my stomach. If the whole sky falls upon me, I will take it as...
as a shower sent by God and I bathe in it nicely. If mountains fall upon me, I do not care at all. They are like fine flowers falling upon my head. If at last my head is to be cut off, I gracefully accept that position and I will gradually offer to you.

*As the word goes the form of hara is wed
To body, the form of Guru united to the breath,
The Guru's Grace to the disciple given
Is joined unto the disembodied soul.*

"With deep prostrations, without shame,
Your body, wealth and life be offered
Unto a virtuous Guru face to face."

*My heart bows low to Kudala Sangama
Believing Him healer of this malady of birth.*

The vacana which tells how Basavaraja paid homage to Prabhudeva with the eight forms of worship and sixteen kinds of service, thereupon Channabasavanna having done obeisance and feet-worship received the padodaka.43

The grace of god plays a very important and significant role in Virashaiva mysticism. With the God's grace, God is not an invited guest from without or it is not like a patch put on externally. But He is the very kernel and inseparable part and parcel of Virashaiva mysticism.44

*All those who come to you for money's sake
Are parasites, and not true friends at all.
The friend is he who seeks your heart.
Who stays to scold and rail*
Yet knows to point the path to you
Does Cennamallikarjuna care
for hypocrites who flatter with
their mouths
for belly’s sake

People will flock to moneyed persons just as ants flock to a piece of jaugery. They enormously praise the monyed man, pretend to love him and show him that they follow him. They behave like servants before him. They do all these things to the rich man in order to fulfill their own selfish ends. Such persons are never true friends of the rich man. They can’t show the rich man the correct path for his progress and ultimate salvation.

But a real relative, friend or guru is one who is not at all selfish. As he is not selfish, he has the courage to point out his defects, mistakes and shortcomings. By pointing out them to the concerned person, he corrects him, puts him on the right track and even helps him in realizing God. They are really his true well wishers, and they have the capacity to love persons in spite of their many defects. God will never approve of selfish people who dance to the tune of the rich. Your real well wisher is one who shows you the right path.

It is not easy to be born a man
Not easy to have love for Hara;
It is not easy to get Guru’s grace
Nor the experience of true Saranas.
Therefore, mark you, O soul,
Revel and roll in the experience
Of Lord Cennamallikarjuna’s saranas
Of all the different forms of living things, human life (Narajanma) is the most difficult to get and the most important also. Only human beings have the consciousness and it is they who have the knowledge such as an all powerful universal force (which is nothing but you my lord Cennamallikarjuna) is in existence.

Only human beings are capable of gaining real knowledge and become total devotees of yours, my Lord! Only by experiencing the sorrows and pains of the worldly life, one becomes dijected and turns away from them. That is exactly the time when one becomes attracted to the Lord and starts seriously searching him. He tries to find a guru (or master) because it is possible to get God easily through him.

Thus, if one is serious in one’s pursuit, one will definitely come across great saints and sharanas. Then serving them through various means and associating himself with them, he might be in a position to experience the joys of sharanas, which ultimately help one to reach the Lord of lords, Cennamallikarjuna, When that happens to a person, his objective of having come on this earth becomes fulfilled. Virashaivism is a god-intoxicated system. God’s love and grace have spiritized this entire system, and in all Indian philosophy it is this peculiarity of Virashaivism that has heightened the greatness and visualized indistinctiveness of this system.47

**Importance of Guru, Linga and Jangama:**

According to Virashaivism Guru, Linga and Jangama are a trinity, Kumar Swamiji has rightly pointed out, “Virashaiva is enjoined not to make any distinction between the Guru, Linga and Jangama, as all of them are believed to be equal and command the same reverence.”
Cennabasaveshwara has said,

*Body is purified by Guru.*

*Mind is purified by Linga.*

*Property is purified by Jangama.*

*Life is purified by Prasada.*

*Because of these, all become purified,*

*Kudala Channasangamadeva* 48

*How shall I know what these things be*  
*Ayata; Swayata, Anubhava, Lord?*

*I can be only*  
*A servant to the servants of Thy devotees*  
*Who have surrendered wealth, honour and life*  
*To Guru, Linga and Jangama*  
*O Cennamallikarjuna, I have no other wish*  
*Except the company of the Saranas.* 49

The three important philosophical concepts are:

“*Ayata, Swayata and Anubhava.*” By the grace of Guru, welcoming the lord towards us is called Ayata. Making it permanently establish within yourself is known as ‘swayati. Experiencing the great truth or the Lord within yourself is known as ‘Anubhava’, Oh! Lord, as of now, I do not know any of these things. To know them, we have to surrender our bodies to Guru, mind to the Lord (Cennamallikarjuna and our wealth to the divotees of god in addition to these)

One should throw away one’s ego and one should prostrate and totally surrender to the Lord. Only then salvation is possible. That is why
Akkamahadevi likes to become a slave of sharanas. She would like to be only with sharanas. She has nothing to do with ordinary worldly people.

Immaculate both in word and deed
In body, mind and will;
Save me, O Cennamallikarjuna,
By showing me Thy saranas
Who live upon this mortal earth
Endued with these five holy traits

O Lord, I would like to become a person whose mind, word and deed always work in unison. As of now, I am not in a position to accomplish it. I know that if I can accomplish it, I will be making a big stride towards you.

God, kindly show me a sharana who has attained that stage. By becoming a trusted disciple of such a Guru, I hope to come to you and merge in your soul.

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