

# SAINT SHIVALINGAVVA



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Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Belagavi



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(1867-1930)

A brief life-sketch

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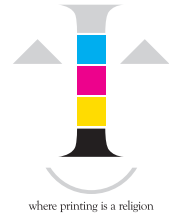
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## **PUBLISHER’S NOTE**

Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, an international Institution is founded in 1952 by Dr.Shri. R.D.Ranade, one of the greatest saints of modern India. ACPR is a global platform for the call of “Awareness of Unity” given by this modern prophet. It is a global gallery echoing the ever eternity whispering the tune of our philosophical, spiritual, cultural and historical heritage.

Besides the publication of English Quarterly journal Pathway to God, ACPR publishes books on philosophy and spiritualism for spreading the message of peace and harmony among the people across the world.

We are immensely happy that the year 2019-20 has been a year of bonanza of publications and ‘The life and Sadhana of Saint Shivalingavva’ is the tenth publication within a span of six months. Shri Gurudev Ranade emphasised, ‘The publication work is more durable than work in marble. Instead of raising buildings we should attend to publishing important works.’ Accordingly we have undertaken reprinting of Shivalingavva Akka’s treasure of spiritual literature into booklet forms for the convenience of the young modern spiritual aspirants.

The present booklet on Shiva Sharane Shivalingavva is extracted from ACPR’s Silver Jubilee Souvenir published in 1978 written by Shri.M.S.Deshpande, Athani. She was the lady disciple Shri Bhausahab Maharaj. The intensity of her devotion

culminating into innumerable spiritual experiences is par excellence.

We are very much indebted to Prof.A.V.Kapileshwar, Editorial

Board of Pathway to God Quarterly Journal, ACPR, Belagavi and Dr.Vandana Joshi, Belagavi for editing the entire text so meticulously. May Gurudev bestow his infinite Grace upon all these souls.

We are beholden to Shri. Ajay Bhadu, Advocate, Jodhpur, Rajasthan for his financial help in bearing the printing cost of the booklet. May the spirit of Gurudev Ranade bestow upon his family peace, prosperity and enlighten his spiritual path.

We thank the entire team at Impressions for their elegant printing work.

May all the spiritual aspirants derive inspiration and enlightenment from this booklet.

Shri Gurudev Jayanthi

Date : 03-07-2020

Place : Belagavi

**Adv. Maruti B. Zirali**

Hon. Secretary  
ACPR, Belagavi.

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# Saint Shivalingavva

(1867-1930)

## A brief life-sketch

(M.S. Deshpande)



Smt. Sivalingavva was the foremost lady-disciple of Shri Bhausahab Maharaj. What Muktabai was to Jnānadev what Veṇuakka was to Ramadas, what Mahādevi was to Prabhudev, that was Sivalingavva to Shri Maharaj. She belonged to a *Jangama* family of *Jat*. Hers was also a case of blessing at first sight. Shri Maharaja's discerning eye at once visualised the bright spiritual future of Shivalingavva, a girl of 6 years playing with her playmates in front of her house. He called her by his side, uttered the Divine *Nāma* in her wondering ears, and lovingly advised her to remember it. As she had inherited an innate liking for God Śhiva, she began to remember it often. As she grew up she developed a distaste for married life and desired to devote herself entirely to spiritual meditation and to

realise the Lord. It was only through the affectionate intervention of Shri Maharaj that she could be persuaded to agree for the marriage, arranged by her parents. Her married life, however, was far from being a happy one. After she lost her two dear children as well as her husband, she concentrated her whole attention on the meditation on the *Divine Nāma* and was constantly absorbed in meditation, day and night. As a result of this intense devotion as well as the grace of her Master, she could soon enjoy wonderful spiritual experiences and Bliss. However, she had also her own profuse share of trials and tribulations in her life. It is this bliss and the grace that enabled her to face and bear these diverse difficulties. Śhivakka also was a poetic genius. The few songs and *Vachanās* enshrining her struggles and spiritual experiences have got a supreme poetic charm all their own. They are sources of light, inspiration and delight to all genuine *Sādhakas* and aspirants.

The noble sentiments expressed by Shri Gurudev in the following letters to Saint Shivalingavva clearly demonstrate the supreme regard entertained by him about her:

"For many days I had a strong desire to see you. Its fulfilment during the last *Mārgashirsha Saptāh* gave me great delight. Like a Saint who expressed : "My heart is overwhelmed with extreme joy today as I have met a Saint." I am supremely delighted to see you. You have advanced along the Pathway to *Ātman* and have attained a very high spiritual position. You have realised the identity between the spiritual experience of your Master as well as that of your own Self. Hence I consider it a duty of an ignorant person like me to adopt the model placed before the world by Saints like your great Self." (20-12-1912).



"I was immensely grieved to learn about the merging of Śhivakka in the Light Divine. The extreme grief felt by me cannot be described in words. My heart is sorely distressed to lose such a Spiritual Jewel like Shivakka. Still what can we poor creatures do, before Divine dispensation? We must take refuge in His *Nāma* only." (26-11-1930)



# Spiritual Blossoms

(Free English rendering of some of her selected *Vachanās* and songs)

(arranged topically)

(A) *VACHANĀS*



## 1) *Human Life*

1. Rare indeed is Human Life. It enables a person to understand the nature of sin and merit, of religious and secular duty, and of proper thought and action (II-6)
2. Hence realise the greatness of this human life. Act in the presence of the Lord. Realise Shiva and cross this *Bhava* (Worldly life). And be free from birth and death. For achieving this, first act up to the advice of the Guru without fail. Thereby all your sins will be destroyed. There is no doubt about it. (II-3)
3. Don't defile your word and deed. Try to preserve their purity with care, then alone will you be able to reach the

End of Life. Those who protect their words and deeds, would be endowed with power and devotion. They alone are real devotees of Guru, *Śhiva* and *Hara*. They alone are, undoubtedly, the devotees of All. (1-16)

4. This body is the City of the Lord. If you leave it without realising the Lord, it would be desolate. Since you have arrived in this City, you should labour hard, remember Him with firm devotion and realise His real Form. You should pray your Guru to lead you to this blessed goal, bow down to him with folded palms, be united with the Lord and become immortal. Then alone would you have fulfilled the object of arriving in this City. (11-10)
5. So long as you maintain physical health, you should attain Spiritual Wealth. Then your further journey would be smooth. If you neglect it you would be cutting your own throat, (III-7)

## 2) *Grace of the Guru.*

- 6) This Human Life will not attain its Goal without the help of a *Guru*. So, you should achieve the Grace of a *Guru* and realise the Goal of this rare life. Never should you remain without it.
7. Those alone are blessed who have got the company and the wealth (grace) of a Guru. Those that are blessed by a Guru will become the beloved devotees of the Lord and will ever be protected by Him. There is no doubt about it. (1-3)
8. Unless blessed by a *Guru*, this human body will not be

able to receive the knowledge ( of the Lord). The grace of the *Guru* would grant to it,(flaming) garment of illumination, in the absence of which human life would be a failure. (1-8)

9. Both the Grace of a Guru as well as the Divine *Nāma* are of supreme importance and value. Strenuous *Sādhana* would secure for the *Sādhaka* an exalted place in Kailas (Spiritual world). Hence your body should ever be harnessed in the service of the Lord. If you labour hard in spiritual life as you labour in worldly life, the Lord would not remain far away from you. (II-3)
10. If you want pleasure you won't get (spiritual) fame; and if you want (such) fame, you won't have pleasure. Hence, you should receive the blessing of a *Guru*, meditate on the Lord (*His Nāma*) with perfect reverence and unfurl the Flag of the Lord's Glory in this world. (II-9)

### 3) *Shiva-Mantra & Meditation.*

11. We should constantly repeat the *Nāma* of *Shiva* and should be merged in it. Then alone would the life's purpose be fulfilled. For, ineffable is the glory of *Shiva-Mantra* (*Nāma* Divine). Those who ensure the growth of this *Mantra* (Seed-Name) and reap its full harvest, would be free from the pitchy darkness (of ignorance). The illumination of the Atman would gladden their hearts and would free them from the fear of death. (I-3)
12. Hence we should meditate on the *Paramātman* (Lord) day and night. We should ever repeat the *Nāma* of *Shiva*. The meditation on *Shiva* would unloosen the bonds of

*Bhava* (worldly life) and would pave the path to liberation. The Grace of the Guru is the means of Liberation. Nothing else is superior to it. (I-16)

13. We should meditate on the *Ātman* day and night. Never should we forget it. Rare indeed is this Path of Knowledge. We would never get it without the grace of the *Guru*. Hence we should abandon our vices, secure the grace of the Guru and meditate on the *Nāma* of *Shiva*. That alone will accompany us to the end of life and none else.(1-16)
14. You should endure the buffets-shocks-of sorrow, meditate on the *Name Divine* and attain eternal Liberation. Then you will enjoy happiness in this world as well as in the other (spiritual) world. The terrible worldly life would be destroyed. Keep the cradle of the precious Divine *Nāma* swinging constantly. You will be happy both in the worldly as well as spiritual life. The *Name Divine* is very precious. So meditate on it. (III-8)
15. Thrice blessed are those, both here and hereafter, who have received the boon (*Name*) from a *Guru*. Those who repeat it will have no fear of death. Words fail to describe the greatness of the *Mantra* granted by the Guru. "O Lord No offering of mine can ever repay Thy obligation." (I-22)

#### 4) *Spiritual Experience*

16. Through the grace of my Guru I had the vision of the Spiritual Reality. Through his grace I could visualise the Spiritual World; I could visualise the Holy Feet of my

paternal Master, enveloped in the light of varied beauty.  
Hence I bowed down to him. ( I-23 )

17. Those who sow the Seed of Divine Name will not fail to have the harvest of Pearls. Such is the assurance of the Saints. It can never be false. We must recognise the sign of our Creator and remember Him at every step. We would certainly be benefited thereby. ( II-9 )
18. We should wear the precious pearl contained in the Treasure of Jewels (of the Lord) on our nose and begin to have a look at the *Ātma-ling*. The Divine Name (*Shiva mantra*) granted by the *Guru*, will display before us the Light of the Three Worlds,
19. O my Master! I shall worship Thy Holy Feet with perfect bliss. I will bring the holy water of Love from the well of my heart (and wash your feet with it). I will then place my head on them and will offer everything to Thee. And finally I will burn incense and wave lights of camphor before Thee. (IV-12)
20. I was extremely astonished by the vision of such a fragrant worship in my super-conscious trance. It was a worship with nothing. Still it was a worship with everything. I became one with myself. My mind was full of forgetfulness. My ears were filled with Divine Sound. My eyes were filled with Divine Light. Such was the worship of my paternal Guru that was blissfully being performed in that state. ( IV-13 )
21. My Guru cleansed and polished my mind, made me absorbed in his meditation, transformed me in his own

likeness, brought about my unison with his effulgence, granted me the direct vision of the Universal Lord and at once dissolved himself in the Infinite, leaving me in the region of *Kailās*. (IV - 10)

22. O my Guru ! let me, therefore, travel throughout the world and spread the glory of your devotion, everywhere. Let the creeper of your Divine *Nāma* cover the whole world and even transcend it: (IV - 6)



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\* The number at the close of each Vachana refers to the numbers of the chapter and Vachanas in her original Kannad Biography written by Shri R. P. Kulkarni and published by the Academy.

## (B) Songs



### 1) *An Assembly of Saints*

(This is the description of a Vision by Sister Shivalingavva, renowned advanced lady-disciple of Shri Bhausahb Maharaj. She was a modern Mystic-poetess. Shri Gurudev had a very high regard for her superb Spiritual attainments, which were, according to him not less brilliant than those of Saints Mirabai of Rajasthan, Muktabai of Maharashtra and Mahadevi of Karnataka. This is one of the songs translated and included by Shri Gurudev in his book *Pathway to God in Kannada Literature.*)

While I was sitting for Meditation, I was able to visualise a large number of faces. I saw the *Santa Sabhā*, the Assembly of



Saints, where a number of saints, sages, *Yogins* and *fakirs* had taken their seats. I was also able to fully visualise Lord *Shiva*, who was presiding over them. How shall I adequately describe this assembly? *Vaikuntha* itself seemed to have descended there upon earth for him who realises the full significance of what was presented on this vision. The Assembly was all lit up with stars, moving in the all-pervading crimson dust. The great *Śeṣha* appeared in designs of various colours— blue, green, yellow and red, each one of them being the unique form of God with a beauty that baffles description.

How easy it is to find access to this God ? What is wanted is only a sincere uprising of devotion in the heart. When the door of the heart is opened and God is visualised, there bursts forth the supremely reverberating sound in which I drowned. Where will you be able to see all this vision ? In the centre of your forehead, if you will. It can be seen only by him who has transcended the three qualities and has devoutly followed the great advice of his spiritual teacher. Such a great Saint was the Saint of *Nimbargi*, who had fully realised the nature of the *Ātman* by Yogic process, and had been able to merge himself in the personality of his Master.

## 2) *Birth of a Spiritual Son.*

**(This is another beautiful song of this Saint. "In the prime of her youth she lost her son and took to her spiritual practices with great zeal, and as a result of her great devotion to God, a new SPIRITUAL SON was born to her i.e. she had the mystical experience of vision of the SPIRITUAL CHILD which she has described in the present song)**

"A son is born to me. and he put an end to all my attachment to self and consequently towards the world. He put an end to all my future lives. He is a veritable magician born; for, after nine months' pain all over my body, he was born to me without touching my body. He is one who is entirely beyond all illusion. When he was born, my whole house was filled with illumination. At the time the son was born to me, I saw all kinds of lights and colours in myriad forms, such as the crackers that send forth arrows, and produce flowers of variegated colours and lights; and in the midst of terrible throes a veritable son was born to me. I prepared for him a strong cradle of five colours, skilfully mixed, I touched the cradle with my own hand and gave it a swing to the empyrean. I gave him a name and sang cradlesongs to him. All this is due to the grace of the *Guru* of unfathomable greatness, of *Shri Nimbargi Maharaj*. I prostrated before him in absolute submission and on account of his grace I got this son."

### 3) *Spiritual Cradle-Song.*

**(After the birth of a Spiritual Son, it was but natural for the Saint to compose and sing a Cradle Song. In this song she describes some salient spiritual experiences conferred on her by her Master-especially the experience of a Spiritual Son. She tells us how he was born and how he grew up day by day-month by month. She puts him in a Spiritual Cradle and invites realised Spiritual Sisters to join her in swinging the Cradle, singing the Lullaby glorifying her Son as well as her Master. This is a versified English rendering of the same by M.S.D)**

(1)

Remember your Master, the moment you arise  
And fill your mind with *Nāma* likewise.  
Impart Self-Knowledge to your ignorant frame  
And live in the Light of the Self Supreme.

(2)

Free your mind from the *Guna's* grip,  
Entrust your emotions to the care of Self,  
Then will you know the *Yogi's* Bliss,  
For which soon seek a *Sadguru's* grace.

(3)

He cleansed my mind of the filth of sin  
And made me realise my meritorious form.  
Well did he feed me with nectar of *Nāma*  
And revealed the Reality in my daily *Nema*.

(4)

He annulled my great attraction  
for base material pleasure.  
And granted me a feeling  
that all was a dreamy treasure.  
From him I got a Son Spiritual  
who grew up month by month  
And became my sole Ideal  
of highest spiritual worth.

(5)

He turned Himself into *Vastu*  
in my top-most brain-centre  
And I had the Lord's Vision  
with the power of perfect *Mantra*  
And soon my mind, enraptured  
merged in His superb Lustre.

(6)

A Spiritual Son is born to me  
To him let's sing a Lullaby !  
All the objects of pleasure now,  
have been flung far away,  
Swing the Spiritual Cradle soon  
and attain the Lord's benign boon.

(7)

Gather ye ! my sisters dear  
Ye good realised souls !  
Wear ye the nose-rings fair,  
of brilliant spiritual pearls  
Come ye to swing the Cradle fine  
And sing the blissful song divine.

(8)

My Master has graciously granted  
a supremely beautiful baby.  
Never shall I fail now  
to sing him a sweet Lullaby.  
You have broken my vicious cycle  
of recurring birth and death.  
Ever, hence, shall I worship Thee  
constantly day and night.

(9)

Of the ambrosial juice of *Nāma* Divine  
is born this paragon of Beauty fine  
Unsoiled by the filth of flesh  
Suddenly did he alight afresh.  
Thus have we seen the *Vastu*  
in the fine form of this son  
Let's sing a sweet Lullaby  
in the Light of his lustrous vision.

(10)

This song is the gift  
of my Master's grace,  
A blessing to those aspirants  
who realise its deep significance.  
But to those who don't care to know

Saint shivalingavva

It's a mere mire of illusion.  
Realise, hence, this Indweller  
and cross this ocean of delusion.

(11)

Hush ! Let's sing the glory of our Master,  
the glory of genuine saints.  
Lets have the vision of Śhiva  
and sing His blessing great.  
Let's remember and sing the glory  
of our revered *Umadi Saint*.



# About the Founder of ACPR Belagavi

Shri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade, M. A., D. Litt, was one of the greatest mystic saints of the modern India. Dr. R. D. Ranade, proposed and profounded that the "Humanity" is the new religion and "Rational Mysticism" is the new secular language for managing "Diversities", for the conflictless unity of peaceful and joyous human co- existence. He was the world known Philosopher. His philosophic literary work from his books **"THE CONSTRUCTIVE SURVEY OF UPANISHADIC PHILOSOPHY"** to **"BHAGVADGITA"** as the philosophy of "God Realization" has left behind memorable glorious imprints . He has been Vice- Chancellor of Allahabad University (U.P.) and also Professor, Head and Dean of Philosophy therein.



The International Institution, **ACADEMY OF COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION (ACPR), BELGAUM** is founded by him. ACPR is the global call for "Awareness of Unity" given by the modern Prophet, Gurudev Dr. Ramachandra Dattatreya Ranade. Having conceived the ACPR in 1924 at Pune, he worked and processed on his mission to deliver the ACPR Belgaum, in 1952. ACPR Belgaum is his immortal heritage to the world at large. ACPR's Head Quarters is in Hindwadi, Belgaum, and its Branches are running all over the world spreading message of Dr. R. D. Ranade. As a fitting tribute to the great founder and his vision in the ACPR, Belgaum King-Philosopher-Spokesman of India, President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan took pride in volunteering to inaugurate the Head Quarters of ACPR building at Belgaum in 1965.

ACPR is a global gallery where eternity will keep on whispering. ACPR is a historical, philosophical and spiritual place. National and International personalities in the field of Philosophy, Spirituality and Politics have paid visit and sensed inspiration and peace and prosperity in their life. "Pathway to God" Quarterly Journal published by this esteem Institution in English language is reaching to every corner of the planet spreading the message of peace and harmony.