

"Brahmamokkate" Series

BHAKTA TINNADU

English Version

Dr. V. V. B. Rama Rao

Telugu Original

Vidwan Lagadapati Bhaskar



Published by

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati.

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FOREWORD

From time immemorial in Bharat, very great individuals in various areas, from different castes in different times, appeared before us. All those great people, besides leading their lives, did their best and served mankind in their own way. Through their works they helped to promote the spiritual thinking along with sociological awareness in people.

Life stories, biographies of great people and their teachings, are sought to be presented to devotees by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams in small books in the series 'Brahmamokkate'. Accordingly some scholars have been asked to write books presenting the life and works of eminent persons.

As a part of the scheme, Vidwan Lagadapati Bhaskar's "Bhakta Tinnadu" is brought before you. Hoping and desiring that by reading these works the young and all others would become spiritually inspired.

"Bhakta Tinnadu" has been translated into English by Dr. V.V.B. Rama Rao, and I hope that this book will definitely help all the readers to gain Mythological knowledge.

In the Service of Lord Venkateswara



Executive Officer,

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,
Tirupati.

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BHAKTA TINNADU

1. God and Devotee - One for the other

When one thinks of or remembers Sri Ramachandra, the one who comes to one's mind is Sri Hanuman. When we think of Bhagavan Shiva the people whom we remember immediately are Markandeya, Upamanyu and Tinnadu, also known as Kannappa. Those who are held dearest to Sri Mahavishnu are those child like devotees, Prahlada and Dhruva. In the same way there are many very close to Sri Mahavishnu. For Lord Sri Krishna the very first devotees are His own parents Devaki and Vasudeva. Those who gave Him the nectar of love are Yashoda and Nanda. Thus there are umpteen who became dear to God with their service, thirst, uttering His name, praying, love and even passion, with innocence, friendliness and nearness. These devotees have been making God their own in many ways.

How can one bring into the nine ways or modes of devotion the various feelings and ideas of devotees? Is Hanuman, an incarnation of Rudra, a servant of Sri Rama? A servant, friend, brother or one like a son to Him? Dhruva and Markandeya pleased God with their persistence and devotion and became deathless, ever-living. Upamanyu, son of Sage Vyaghrapadu, born in a family where there is no milk for him to drink, won the love and admiration of Shiva. That he did at the

direction of his mother to go into tapas, contemplation intense, of Shiva. Shiva gave the little one to Devi Parvati. They treated him as their son. Parvati Devi made the ocean of milk to butter and fed the child. The earliest couple, Shiva and Parvati blessed him and made him a tatwagnani, the one who knows tatwa, the nature and quality of all and wisdom. That boy, in a later period became a preceptor (guru) to Sri Krishna and taught Him Shiva tatwa, the nature and quality of Shiva. The devotion of this devotee is beyond the nine modes of devotion. In the same way, rejecting the teachings of preceptors, not frightened even by the punishments given by his father, with a fixed, unmoving devotion, uttering Gods name Prahlada showed his Sri Hari who came out of a pillar to his father. With his devotional praise and bhajan (singing the glory of God) he pacified the fury of Ugra Narasimha. He also prayed the Deity to forgive his physically dead (killed) father and give him liberation from birth-death cycle (Mukti). Thus he became the founder of the traditions of Bhakti (devotion) and Bhajan (songs praising God). Ravana, Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipa wanted to reach God through Vyra Bhakti (devotion with enmity). Vidura and Kunti saw Sri Krishna more as a Deity, as God, then as a blood - relative. Kuntidevi (mother of the Pandavas) went a step further and prayed God to give her always tribulations, she should forget Him. She did not pray like many others for comfort or riches. Vibhishana and Sugreeva were very close to God with

their feeling of friendliness. Rukmini offered herself (body and soul) in devotion to Sri Krishna. Kubja with her disabled body prayed to Sri Krishna to remove her ugliness, make her beautiful and also bless her with a son. The Lord fulfilled her desire and granted her wish. Love of God is the real definition of devotion or Bhakti. Radha Devi and Gopika also loved God as Swami, Master. Their love is divine, unearthly. There is no feeling or idea of bodily or physical love. It is selfless. With the Lords joy as their won joy, being always prepared for any sacrifice (giving up) at any time with strong intention is real love. It is the secret of love also.

2. Devotees - Members of God's family

creation, growth and ending - all these are the acts of God.

**Antastamo bahissattwa strijagatpalako Harih,
Antassattwastamobahya**

**strijagallayakruddharah
Antarbahiraschaiva trijagatsrustikrudvidhih**

When being Vishnu, into the mode of ignorance inside and with mode of goodness outside, He protects all the three lokas (world). When being Brahma, with mode of passion both inside and outside, He creates the world. While being Maheshwar the Lord with the mode of goodness inside and the mode of passion outside He acts as the destroyer and brings in the deluge.

While being Shiva He has a large, powerful group of close people. Jalada was born like Markandeya with

a short life time. Like Markandeya he too was born as a boon from Shiva. With his own tapas (intense contemplation) he got the appearance of Shiva in his presence. It is not that alone. He did not desire things that ordinary devotees wanted and prayed for. Intelligently, he asked for God's constant presence and nearness. As a fruit of his tapas, he became Nandikeshwara, Shiva's mount, the president of Shiva's entourage (Parivara), representative of Shiva being always in Shiva's presence as the president of Shiva ganas, servants of Shiva. Shiva has taken the hyde of Gajasura (the elephant demon) who defied Him as His raiment (dress). He made serpents his ornaments. He made the flower on His head the one who acquired the bad reputation of a lapse and sin. He became a servant of the devotee Bana.

Being the Lord of Srikalahasteeshwara centre of Pilgrimage, Parameswara with eight bodies becoming Vayulingeswara, right from the Kruta aeon till this Kali aeon He embraced many a devotee with affection and took them all into Himself. Among those there is a spider (Sreenamudu), there is a serpent (Kaludu), the elephant, with the name of Hasti. The deities Indra, Yama, and Vayoo all prayed to and worshipped Him and got their wishes fulfilled. The creator Brahma, Sage Vashishtha worshipped Him with great devotion and with His grace got rid of the grief of son's death and the tribulation of Samsara.

Kalahasteeshwara as Vayulinga has a history of four aeons. This was explained in detail by Lomasa

Maharshi, also known as Sage Rimasa. In that way many are the devotees who had been elevated to higher levels of existence. Their tales are given in Romasa's listing. In the aeon of Treta, Shrimannarayana performed tapas and with Shiva's Grace got the position of Sabhapati, president of the assembly and the status of all world worship. Worshipping Gnanamba, Sri Mahalakshmi obtained the supreme benefit of being the head of all good fortunes. As the most beautiful one she could also have the fortune of having Srimannarayana as her husband with the grace of Sree Gnanambika. Shiva's son Kumara swamy performed tapas here and learnt from Swamy the secrets of Vidya (learning) and became the preceptor of Vidya. Sri Ramachandra with His tapas gets peace of mind and comfort. Markandeya also performed tapas here. Sudarshana (the wheel) also performed tapas and obtained relief from sin. Thus there are many in the previous aeons who worshipped swamy and obtained salvation and elevated conditions. Counting their numbers is impossible. The town with this pilgrimage point was called Brahmapuram in Kritayuga, Vishnupuram in Tretayuga, Naradapuram in Dwaparayuga and Varagunapuram in Kaliyuga. Varaguna was a person who worshipped Vayulingesa and got elevation. But the name that this place has one as Srikalahasti. By chance the names of a spider, serpent and elephant worshipped Shiva, and their names merged into this place of pilgrimage. This is sthalapurana, the epic name of this place.

From dumb beings upto Brahma, devotees at many levels being devotees and worshipers of Shiva got redemption (mukti) and became path makers of Bhakti. Once being unable to stand the fangs of hunger a person who lost his caste tried to steal the Prasad (food offering to Shiva and so a Sinner) was killed within the temple campus. Wishing away his sin he was made to be a king who worshipped Shiva by God. Was it not Shiva bhagavan who made him in a further birth one who performed the festival of lights in Kasi (Banaras - Varanasi) and in the next the master of wealth, Kubera? One poor young man, a Shudra, suddenly became a devotee of Shiva and in the next birth was born in a family of Brahmins. His parents named him Eesaana. The little one kept totally silent without any speech with his devotion to Shiva. After hundred years Shiva appeared before him and asked him to seek a boon. Very clearly he asked for a boon giving him life for a Kalpa when every hair falls down and thus lined for many, many Kalpas (Kalpa is a length of several hundred of years). Parameswara gave him that boon though it was impossible to bless one with deathlessness. The person was Romasa Maharshi, also called Sage Lomasa. This incident was there in Skaandhapurana Khanda - 12/41).

**Na durlabham na dushprayam na chasadhyam
mahatmanam,
Sivabhakti krutam pumsam trilokyamiti
nischitam**

If one goes on observing like this, either owing to the merit in the previous birth, or by sudden inspiration or by teaching there are many who with God's grace viewed the world around as weak, worthless and fruitless. Elders say that it is love of God alone that leads to or gives comfort and joy, or waking up to absolute reality. Advaita philosopher, the founder of that school of thinking Adi Sankara, said while speaking of the permanence and utility of loving God that for entering moksha the best path is Bhakti, or devotion. He explained that only in devotion there are power, greatness, utility and that alone is necessary. According to Adi Sankara's belief and preaching it is only with the love of the divine that even the liberated ones perform Bhajan to Paramatma the Supreme Being. This bhakti is the fifth purushardha. This is what converts those who want glory and comfort becoming lovers of goodness and worshippers of God. This makes the miser donors and the selfish people desirous of ultimate goal - Paramardha.

The little boy did not think of seeing Sri Kalahasteeshwara, did not want to worship him. He went into the forest for hunting. The quality, simplicity, kindness and goodness are obtained to Tinnappa only through his parents. Tande and Nathanatha called their son Tinna seeing his behaviour and conduct (nadavadi). They named him Tinnadu. Later he became famous and came to be called Kannappa. As per the tradition of caste, he went to the forest to learn the tactics of hunting. But seeing the Vayulinga form of Sri

kalahasteeshwara he was inspired and got into an ecstasy. Even through the methods unacceptable he worshipped Shiva, pleased Him and got His nearness. This story is a divine story which everyone, the common and great people should read again and again.

3. How the dumb devotee Tinna's story became famous

Palkurki Somanathudu was an exponent of Veera shaiva religion. Besides being a poet of eminence he worked hard for the propagation of the Veerashaiva cult. In his Dwipada Basavapuram there is a story of Undumuri Kannappa. In his 'Panditaraadhya Charita' (another dwipada) he mentioned Kannappa Deva in several places. He mentioned several times the incidents of Kannappa touching Shiva linga with his foot wear, bringing water from Suvarnamukhi river in his mouth and splashing it on the linga and offering the meat of pig to Him again and again. In Tamil and Kannada this devotee's story is widely prevalent. These are made available in Telugu for the first time in Basavapurana.

After nearly three centuries, the great poet Dhoorjati gave us Tinna's story as the story of a devotee. Poets described Kannappa as the one who gave away his Kannu (eye) to Shiva. Adi Sankara also mentioned Kannappa in his 'Shivanandalahari'.

**Margavartita puduka Pashupate rangasya
kurchayate
gandushambu nishchanam, puraripoh
piyushadharayate,**

**Kinchidbhakshita mamsasesha kabalam
navyapaharayat
bhaktim kim na karotyaho! vanacharo
bhaktavatamsayate**

He said: "Oh Lord of Beasts ! even the human is a Pashu, a beast and Shiva is the Lord of Beasts Pashupati. Your Head became a stage for the foot wear, the tainted, tasted water became water for Your worship or to quench Your thirst. The pigs meat that was tasted by him became a offering to Your sacred person. Bhakti can achieve success, succeed in anything and everything. Oh! A resident of forest became the best of devotees!"

There is a verse in a book found by Dr. Divakarla Venkataavadhaani with great effort entitled Shiva Sataka (Hundred verses on Shiva).

**Doppem dengili dechi ichinanu
gandushambudharavalin
Doppamdogina cheppugala talapy drokkanga
natlyna ga
nnappam batruni jesi tantatiki, sanmanambu
depimpanga
cheppanneramu nee vihara mahimal Sri
kalahasteeswara!**

'Oh! Kalahasteeshwara! For bringing palmsfull of once tasted bits of meat, for covering with water spit on You, for putting his foot with foot wear on Your Head, the innocent (meaning uneducated) Kannappa

received great honour and got Your Grace. What could be the reason for Your doing so? Who can ever guess the abundance of Your Grace!

This ascription is sent as Adi Sankara's description. The sweetness and flavour of Dhoorjati's poetic compositions thrilled the great king Krishnadevaraya.

Let us listen to the story of Bhakta Tinnadu praised as the greatest among Shiva Bhaktas, devotees of Shiva, now in detail.

4. Birth of Bhakta Tinnadu, (the devout Tinnadu)

Tinnadu was born in a hamlet of hunters. The name of the small hamlet is 'Vudumuru'. This used to be in the South India in a region called "Pothapinadu". The area between Sri Kalahasti and Srisailam was full of dense forests. Amidst those there used to be small hamlets. Those living there were forest tribes. Among the hamlets there, Vudumuru was with a larger population. The chief of Vudumuru was Nathanatha.

He was respected by the hamlets around and he was trusted too. He was of Yeruka caste. The hill region's head was Nathanatha. Tande was the name of his wife.

The surrounding areas of Srikalahasti were full of forests. Attached to the big pilgrimage town were Kailasagiri's, Kailasa hills. In that area there were natural beauties - rivulets, water falls, and lovely mountain sides. Here and there, there used to be fields where paddy used to be raised. But people depended mostly

on hunting. All those living there were not extremely poor. Regions around Vudumuru were not only naturally beautiful but also possessed good things too. Immediately after waking up, they used to see rivulets flowing with melodious sounds, lakes shining like mirrors with red eyed white lotuses. In those there used to be ducks, and other water creatures. For nature's beauties, the mountain side areas were beautiful and they were representatives of Pothapinadu village hamlets.

The people living in those hamlets were forest men and women; very strong in build, healthy and simple, with no deceitfulness. They used to live along with the forest animals, birds etc. They were Vananarulu, people living in Vanas, forests. They considered forests as the boon for them and they made forests their own. They lived as those who live in forests with their own natural dress and led simple and satisfied lives. They were called chenchus and made hunting their profession. The men who went on hunting remained days together in the forest. All the time their families and children were looked after by their women folk. They used to bring home valuable forest wealth, honey and things like peacock feathers. They used to bring tiger claws and elephant tusks and sell them in towns. They used to bring home the meat of the hunted animals too.

On occasions when the men folk were away, women used to kill birds for their food. When they

too were not available they used to cook grass seeds. Since they were not always available, they used to grow these around their own cottage limits. If we think one way, it was those women alone who introduced that method of growing food grains of that kind.

In the Boya (hunter) Palle, Village men and women considered themselves the owners of forest products and that way they were fortunate. We should now study how fortunate they really were. Pearls and diamonds are valuable to us all. But for those in forests they were not. This was so because their diamonds and pearls were in the heads of elephants, forest animals, and bamboos, in fruits and forest sugarcane. For that reason they considered pearls and diamonds not valuable. The pearls from elephant heads were like goose berries for them, not valuable at all.

What was more, they used sandal wood and branches of valuable (for us) trees as fire wood. They kept in their pots all perfumes like punugu, javvadi and kasturi (extremely expensive perfumes got from animals). Their women mixed these to mudwash their wall like structures to give them fragrance. How can we understand their glory? Their women kept to their own way of living however 'rich' they were. Though very rich and rich enough to dress themselves in pure silk sarees, they covered their body with ripe leaves. They ate their own grain cooked by themselves unlike the rice, the rich people in the towns and cities eat. Though they could embellish themselves with diamonds

and ornaments, they wore only garlands of gurivenda (small round grains with black at their bottoms). They liked raised platform (manchas) in the midst of fields and swings that hung down.

It was common to protect cultivated fields from birds or beasts, by putting dishti kundalu called 'seetamma kundalu' to frighten the spoilers. The women in these forests made marks with expensive (for us) kasturi. They used very rich material for crop protection in fields. Vudumuru was not a town but not a very small hamlet either. The poet called it Pakkaram the town of the forest dwellers (boyas). We know that Tinna's parents were Tande and Nathanatha. The couple was right worshipful for the people in the villages around. They not only obeyed the couple but actually worshipped them. Nathanatha treated those people as children.

5. Unique things about Tinna When he was in his mother's womb

It was with Lord Shiva's Grace alone that the courageous Nathanatha was blessed with a wife like Tande, a very suitable and agreeable woman. Though they are innocent and unlettered, the Bhilla couple (couple of forest hunters kirathas) had extraordinary Bhakti. They have Kaati Redu - God of the burning ghat. During festivals these kirathas (also called Yerukas) held jaataras (enthusiastic celebrations with religious and spiritual fervour). Like the citizens of cities and towns, in their own way they performed worship

and festivities. Their worships (pujas) and their mantras (chants) would be different in their archakas (priests). Ignorant and innocent devotees offered things that they usually ate and drank to the Deities. We worship Deities by decorating them and offer them in worship while singing and dancing, some fruit, sweet or something cooked for giving (offering) to God. Born and grown up in the forest, the forest dwellers live with the beasts and birds there. Their devotion was not less than that of town dwellers. It was the merit they acquired in the previous birth that though they were cruel to animals, killed them and ate their meat, there was no dearth or deficiency in their devotion, bhakti. This devotion brought them God's Grace. With Shiva's Grace in Tande's womb came out the rich devotee of Shiva.

Surprisingly the pregnant Tande's body got the radiance of the divine. The babe full of devotion to Shiva was eager to come out into this world with intense bhakti, devotion. He was eager to serve and worship Shiva. His mother too got the feeling of worshipping Shiva. It is believed that the mother's feelings influence the one in the womb. But it was the little one's feelings in the womb that influenced the mother.

For this, mother wished her son to hunt cruel animals like the lion, tiger and the forest animals. She desired to be near a mountain, a rivulet or the cool and clean sand dunes. She felt like going to Shiva temple and offering worship there. She wished to spout water from her mouth to Shiva. She had a desire to offer the

well - cooked meat of the boar to God. She had the desire to worship Shiva with her eyes which looked like black lotuses. The little one's feelings used to appear in the mother's heart and mind.

All these deeds Tinna did after his birth. All these acts, having the darshan of Shiva, performing Abhisheka with water in his mouth, offering boar meat to Him, giving away his eye to Shiva were performed by Tinna when he grew up. The infant's wishes cropping in the mother's mind is no common or ordinary thing. We should understand that he had signs of the divine in him.

The auspicious moment of his birth arrived. Tinna was born with the devotion to Shiva. Bhakti came first and later the baby. The midwife cut off the umbilical connection as if it was the love of samsara. The baby's forehead was marked with Vibhuti, sacred ash, a symbol of faith in the divine and love of God. The baby was washed clean as though the mud of sin was to be washed away. The first thing given for the baby, 'uggu' appeared making the little one drink amrut, nectar. We have read in books that gnaanis in the form of babies kept their eyes closed, do not weep or cry but they are seen in anandamudra, a condition of being in great gnana, wisdom and knowledge.

6. Infant Tinna's strange behaviour

Like an evolved gnaani, Tinnadu too appeared unique. This infant was always in the contemplation (dhyana) of Gnanambikas consort, Shiva. The infant

stayed long without opening its eyes, as though it wanted to see the ways of the world, later the infant opened its eyes.

Whatever might be the caste, this episode is about the birth of an extremely great one. Poet Dhoorjati's description of the birth of Tinna in Srikalahasti Maahaatmyam till childhood is especially note worthy. In God's view what is important is devotion, bhakti. Caste, colour, birth, way of life etc., are not of importance. It is the vasanas, tendencies of earlier births that determine and control devotees. In that context, among other devotees Tinna was one. But he had some special qualities. While being a babe in swathes, till he became a child and a youth the way he behaved was unusual and every of his deed were great. The way the poet described those are captivating and extremely pleasant.

It was said that the acts of the infant reminded the deeds of Shiva yogis. His smile appeared to comment about the world being degraded because of the lack of devotion to Shiva. In due course the little one began to move farward. When the infant lifted up the feet and began moving them, they appeared to be like kicking mohabandhas (links of desire). when the infant fell stomach down, it appeared to be making an effort for janmaraahitya, absence of any other further birth.

A little later the infant was able to sit, it appeared like sitting on the throne of the king of welfare. The little one later used to be searching for something lost

on the floor. His movements appeared as if he was searching for Shivatatwa, to be caught and held When he toddled he appeared to be trying to touch and hold Shiva moving forward slowly.

Thus seeing the kid in the house of that forest king, people praised the little one for his soft thinking mind and heart singing songs with devotion to Shiva. People considered his parents very fortunate. The little one never had any pride or unruly behaviour usually found in the children of the rich. His calmness pleased his parents also. It was for that reason that he was named Tinnadu, the straight going one. People used to feel and say that the little one was correctly named.

7. Tinna's Childhood Playfulness

Tinna grew up to the age of playing with other children. He used to play a number of games. There used to be a number of games even then in the distant past known new. They used to play chakalipaddu like games. Children sit down in a circle. A piece of cloth twined and made like a rope and placed behind a boy. If he doesn't recognize that boy going round would beat him with the rope. They used to play games in moonlight. These games are not played now-a-days. They used to play a game like Vamanaguntalu short round pits filled with tamarind seeds. Tinnadu spent his childhood playing with children of his age.

As time passed by, Tinna grew and his games changed too. He began Hunting as a game, going with the elders into the wild. Right from his early childhood

he used to play with their bows, arrows, spears and other hunting equipment. He used to kill even with his small instruments. Then people used to comment that he would be dear to God, otherwise he would have not been so skilful.

With his small bow and arrows even in childhood he used to kill running deer and flying birds. Forty days after he held the bow, he began to use various kinds of bows too. Like Ekalavya he learnt all on his own and became a skilled archer.

8. Beginning of Tinna's Archery

Till Tinnadu grew upto a certain age, Nathanatha did not celebrate the festivity of the beginning of his learning. Learning must come from a guru, the teacher. Only then there would be perfection. An auspicious moment was chosen for the beginning of the learning of archery. A festival was organized in which the young and old of all in the chenchu gudem (hamlet of chenchus - kiratas) participated. All kinds of musical instruments used by chenchus were brought in. The whole forest rang up with the playing of all those instruments. There was so much of dance and drink.

But Tinna's parents observed fast on that day. They got ready for the worship decorating themselves in the way of chenchus and kiratas. The little boy was made up suitably and was taken to the worship of Kaaliredu. He was washed in rose water and vibhuti (sacred ash) was smeared on him. His hair was combed and then

bound high on his head. He was given a bow. A quiver of arrows was hung on his back. His head was decorated with feathers and across his waist was a tiger skin.

The boy was taken walking in front of God.

He should be taught and trained in all varieties of archery and the using of weapons. Bow, Sword, Spear, net should be used for the hunting of beasts, birds and animals. Elders taught these skills to the youngers. They were going to teach cruel skills to Tinna. But in Tinna only a devotee of Shiva was seen. That was God's decision. That was the sign of his future ahead.

Yeruka sent round tom-tan about the worship for the beginning of his son's learning of archery. With the first tom-tan the residents of manya (the forest region) made their own arrangements to go to the jatara (festive ceremony). On the second day, a Tuesday, there was another tom-tan. Those who set act took with them the various food offerings thus wanted to present to their Deity. They prepared all those with great devotion and intense attention.

Women of the kiratas made themselves up with extreme care and set out for the celebration. In chenchus folk, all the women were beautiful. Their moon like faces and above them on the head beautiful hair and locks fell on their foreheads. The marks of vernation on their foreheads were brilliant. They wore on their bosoms lotus stems. They had on their

shoulders garlands of peacock feathers and red flowers of henna. They used the perfumes kasturi and javvadi. They smeared turmeric before bathing and their bodies exuded great fragrance.

They took with them various food offerings they prepared for the blessed progress of their lord's son. They brought cooked rice - rice of the best variety. They brought kheer (milk preparation with rice and sugar), Kudumus, they took and pumpkin pieces with garlic covering. They carried several meat preparations too. They took along with them animals for sacrifice and food later. The forest area sang with their noisy songs, playing drums and trumpets.

Seeing their son Tinna's upliftment, his parents got themselves up suitably. Tinna smeared holy ash and wore raksha bandanas (wrist bands for safety and good fortune). Like the boy they got themselves up and started to the Deity's place for worship.

The groups of boyas would reach there before their master reached waiting to see the little master along with his parents. Tinna participated in the worship. They kept all their weapons, bows and arrows, before the Deity katreni lord. The Deity was fabulously decorated. All the offering brought from their homes were placed before the Deity and the smoke of incense rose high into the air. A number of lamps were lit and placed before their God. The whole area was wafting deeply into fragrant air. The chenchus began singing and dancing with great devotion and excitement. Then

there was frenzied animal sacrifice to propitiate the Deity. Later all of them drank water first, ended their fasting and had a feast. Many drank intoxicating home made liquor and played all kinds of mischief in joy. That was indicative of their unity, obedience to the Deity, joy and great satisfaction. That way the worship went to a close.

9. Happenings when Tinnadu went for hunting

Tinnadu set out for hunting after the Jatara on the next day. This is a game that went on for many days. The hunters have to go with all the equipment necessary. They also took out with them the various animals like dogs, oxen, mangoose and pets. These were used to trap and attract other animals. They took along with them birds and nets, ropes, traps and weapons for hunting and went towards the forest of venkatachalam.

Along with Tinna a number of young men also went. They divided into small groups and went in different directions. With every group went some experienced hunters too. The principle was that all should not gather in one place while hunting. Afterwards in the evening before sunset they met again at the same place to eat the hunted animals and keep in safe custody for sending to the elders to towns. They used to remove the hydes and nails and make them saleable in the towns.

Tinnadu was equal to a group of young men of the chenchu families from Vudumuru. Before he was

taught, he learnt all the techniques and skills. One day he would go for hunting of fierce animals. Sometimes he would bring a deer, sometimes he would catch birds and put them in cages. Using a hawk or falcon he would bring various birds. He learnt many a skill and acquired competence in hunting.

With a bell ringing, all tamed animals like hares and rabbits got frightened and ran away. Using the bell and to drive them to another direction was skill. While they were running they would be trapped in nets by the hunters. They followed behind the ox and trapped some smaller animals in nets. Hunting had several ways and several names.

Tinna caught many a gentle and many a ferocious animals. Every day he used to send home the animals or birds meat caught or killed, to his parents. The hunt that began in venkatachala hill used to go towards Agasthya mountain. They used to go till kailasagiri in the South.

10. Shiva appearing in a dream to Tinna with a suggestion

Tinna was born as a kirata according to a reason and purpose (Karanajanma). Following the family tradition he became a hunter and acquired proficiency. He used to pray to his caste Deity before setting act to hunt. Friends and elders who went along with him used to go into the forest in different directions. Tinna used to follow the animal he wanted to hunt and went long

distances. once one day he got tired and went into the shade under a Pogada tree. He sat down there for a little rest and fell asleep soon. He went into deep sleep and in the sleep he had a strange dream.

With holy ash smeared all over the body wearing a tiger hyde as clothing, with reddened hair in plaits as a Jangama, one approached Tinna. He wore a garland of skulls and on his neck was hanging a shiva linga. He appeared like a great 'Yogi'. Nearing Tinna said the Shiva Yogi:

"O! young one! very near to this place there is a river called suvarnamukhari. On the bank of the river there is a kalujuvvi tree. In its shade Parvati and Parama Shiva are there. You can go and worship the lord and every thing good would happen to you".

Tinna could not understand who he was. Tinna had never seen him earlier. He could not understand whether he was a guru or God. That person made Tinna sleep on his lap, smeared holy ash on his forehead. He made the young man drink the holy water, Shiva theertham. He called the young affectionately 'kannappa' and fondled his cheeks, "Go, Kannappa! You would see the Shivalinga I told you about very near. You'd see it. That is your Praanalinga", he said teaching the young one. The next moment the yogi disappeared.

The devout we called Tinna was called in his dream as 'kannappa' by Shiva with great love and affection.

The young man's dream faded and he woke up suddenly. The effect of the dream stayed in his mind. was it dream? Or, was it reality? He fell in doubt.

"This surely is a dream. Otherwise the jangama I saw in dream must be here. Its just a little ago. Where could he have gone?" wondering, Tinna felt the holy ash on his forehead. It was there. The fragrance of the vibhuti went right into his heart. That great man told me that there stood the way before me and asked me to go. He also said that my praanalinga would be seen there. Tinna found a foot path very clearly before him. That was a wonder too! He thought he would go and see what was there very quickly. The words of the Jangam sang in his ears. Kannappa took the path immediately. very soon he found Shiva linga shining brilliantly like camphor. The linga looked different not on the Paanavatta or the base on which it usually stood. It was not thin and round above the floor. The linga looked fascinating.

The descriptions of Tinna's dream, his walking on the path and beyond Sadashiva kona and nearer kailasagiri near SrikalaHasti, his getting tired and going to sleep under a tree were all alike in poetry of palkurki somanadha's BasavaPurana and the composition that came three hundred years later as SriKalahasti Maahaatmyam by Dhoorjeti. But this poet gave a different reason for Tinnadu going alone far away from his group. He followed a wild boar and perhaps it eluded him. Appearing to be within reach it must have

surprisingly disappeared. Then Tinnadu, tired, must have slept under a tree in its shadow. Some consider this the maya of Shiva.

Both Somanatha and Dhoorjeti were very great Telugu poets describing the true powers of Sri Kalahasteeshwara. The statements the two poets made it present here, in my own words.

The divine linga that appeared to the devout kirata (Tinna) stood high near the base of the tree trunk of a kalujuvvi tree. It had ringed hair with snake hoods looking from above. It had a wide 'Panavattam' the base on which the lingam stood. It was brilliant, sparkling with the radiance of camphor, with the sign of rudrakshas, not as man made but as the one born on its own several aeons before. It was not in a temple but underneath the expansive sky in nature declaring that, it was Shiva's form. 'Lingam', perhaps you already knew is Parama Shivas form. This is not seen anywhere else. It is Nirakara, without shape but with Mother Amba in this linga shape. Such a shape Tinna had seen physically. That was a breathing 'Vayu linga.' In the entire world this is the only vayu linga (the air linga). Many mahatmas, highly revered persons, consider this linga as endless and philosophical one full of supreme, sublime body of the supreme being, Shiva. Tinna saw that first. He experienced horripilation. His eyes were filled with tears of joy. He fell down in prostration. Linga gives ignorant people bodily comfort and joy wisdom and shows the way to mukti (liberation from

the birth and death cycle). Tinna saw linga swaroopa in the very first instance. The feeling of intense devotion woke up in him. Immediately he lost the feeling that linga was static and immovable. For that Shiva appeared then in form and as an intimate blood relative. The young man tried to speak to him affectionately. He tried to make kind enquiries about Shiva's welfare.

11. Tinna's innocent words to Shiva:

"Oh, Swami (master, Lord)! Fortune is mine now. Having mercy on me with grace You told me where You stay. As asked by You I came and could see you. I feel that our relationship has been continuing from several of my births. From the moment I became aware, the moment buddhi came to me, I have been having the strange feeling of losing some who is mine. Now, Swami, I know! I know who the relative of mine I have been losing. Oh Lord! Why did You come and sit here in the forest as if there is no city or town for You to stay! This is a wild forest with tigers, lions. How can You stay here, getting drenched in rain and getting scorched in the heat? Do You have a house here to take shelter? Don't You have hunger and thirst? Suffering severe cold how are You staying under a tree? Who would give You food and water? No.... This place is not good for You... Come along with me. We will go to our gudem (hamlet) I would provide You every thing there."

"In our house, there are sisters, along with young and old people. They cook very well. They cook the

meat of the animals we bring home from the forest. Please don't say 'no' to me, come with me. If You do not eat meat, numerous types of rice are there to prepare for You to make Sweet 'payasams' porridges. Not just that, you would have honey of the rarest variety of, cheese and things like that which we plentifully find- we can also feed You with fruits of several trees... would You come to our hamlet?"

"Lord! What do You have here? Who is here for You? There is no home, no house to live in? Do You have close friends, relations, children or a shelter? All those would be provided to You if you come to our village. Why do You stay alone in this wild forests ? come with me, my dear one!"

"There are several young yeruka girls. I would keep several with You to serve You. If You have any mercy for me come to our village. If You say You don't come, that would not be accepted. I too will stay here with You.... I donot go away leaving You here.... Why don't You say even a single word while I am speaking? All right You reply when You want to. Till then I don't leave You and I don't press You any further". Tinna entreated but Shiva didn't move or say a word. Tinna was intoxicated with his devotion like the bee by the fragrance of Sampenga flower not leaving the flower.

12. Tinna's friends calling him to come back home

Noticing that Tinna had not come to meet them, the group of young chenchus began to search for their

friend. somehow, after some time, they reached the place where Tinna was. Though he saw them, he did not speak to them. Even when they greeted him he did not reply. He was talking to himself in low tones. The youth got agitated seeing his strange behaviour. Got worried, they said:

"Young one! What happened to the wild boar you had been pursuing? Though we greeted you did not look at us. Why are your eyes shedding tears? Why are you murmuring to yourself? Look here! Hunting dogs could locate you, from the smell in the breeze coming from your side. They brought us here dragging, with their belts which we held. They are going round and round around you. Why don't you even look at them with affection? You came here for hunting and became like this. Wouldn't your father and mother be worried about you? Please come, let us go home. we will not go back home without you", they said sadly. Tinna smiled without any feeling and did not reply.

His friends did not know what to do. Very pitifully with their worry and pain they continued their efforts to take him back home. They said "Young one! though we came here to hunt, we have not completed our work yet. The animals we killed are lying with the weapons in their bodies. We have not put together all the equipment to carry it back home. We did not feed the small birds we brought along with us. We have not burnt the animals we killed. Since you are not there hunting dogs and deer are not eating any food.

"We have not sent the news of our hunting to your father. Why have you fallen silent like this? Oh! dear one! How can we go away leaving you here? Your brothers and sisters and your parents will enquire about you. How can we give any answer to their questions? Wouldn't lives just disappear? You are not looking at us, talking to us or answering our questions," so saying so they touched Tinna's feet in utter helplessness and fear.

Tinnadu who was till now lost in his thought of Shivalinga, slowly raised his eyes towards his friends. He said, "I tied my prana and twisted it into a knot to the Shivalinga. Like boat tied to another, till my death my life is with this linga. Why do you worry or feel sad? You go back to the hamlet. If swami comes along with me I would come to our gudem (hamlet) or else I will stay back with him. This God is my relative. He is my father, mother, friend and lord. If you chase me, I will not at all come with you. I will die here." Saying this he went into dhyana, contemplation again.

Not able to do anything else the young men went back to give the news to their king.

13 Tinna's behaviour as Shiva's devotee

Tinnadu, the one who entreated Shiva and made promises to Shiva, fell in deep thought. Why did the swami come at all and stay here in the forest? He appeared himself in a dream and made me go there to his living place.

**Kalaganna chotiki gampa gompova
phalasiddhi agutella bhagyambu kade!
munu tapomurti neppina lingamidiya!
tana prananadhudau.....**

(Basava Puranam)

Tinnadu had a dream and there was sign that a great treasure would be seen. Does anyone in good sense take a basket to bring the treasure seen in a dream? In this case the treasure is Shiva himself. He made the dream, real for the young man.

**Basa gadinka ee pranalingambu
basipo tagadu ma palliya kitani
konipoyi kattudu - 'paka'.....**

Thinking thus, Tinnadu decided that he should take Shiva getting exposed to sun and rain and lodge him in a hut. He may not think of a temple right then. Kannappa had the intention of building a hut. He thought that he must somehow convince Shiva to follow him into gudem, their hamlet in vudumuru. The idea goose bumps. In that joy, so many questions came up about swami's stay. He asked thus-

"Why did You come and stay here alone in this forest? Were You angry with someone. Please tell me Shiva? If necessary I will come and do something for reconciliation. Did anyone worship You with ummetta flowers (datura) whose smell must have made You like this. So You must have come here running. Otherwise, You would have not left Srisailam where devotees please You with ceremonies and festivities. You must have come not bearing their noise. Did You come away

disgusted because of the quarrel between 'Gangamma' and 'Parvatamma'? Did You come running away tired by serving odayamsi? Did You come here to hide yourself ? Or is it because poorvabrahma violated the agreement and broke dharma? How long would You stay here. Did You come here to save me out of Your mercy? Where did You leave Your mount Nandi? Tell me, it would go, search and bring the ox here. The half of Your person Parvatamma, where did she go leaving You? After all You have just a g-string (gochi). Leaving even that, why did You come here naked? There is no little begging bag in Your armpit. How can You fill the alms here after?

"O Sankarayya, father sankar, aren't You afraid of these wild forests? There are innumerable serpents and cruel, wild animals here. It is dangerous. Come with me. In the hamlet I would arrange everything to You."

**Ravayya mrokkeda devadevunda!
prevulu madanga chava tappinade!**

(Basava Puranam)

Saying so, he fell at Shiva's feet. He shed tears, begged Him and did several things. But Shiva was adamant and silent. But it appeared that He had been looking at Tinnadu with pity and kindness. Tinnadu thought of many other possible reasons for Shiva being in the forest. He began to discuss and think in his own mind. Perhaps, He had come there after burning madana (Manmadha). After coming He must be straving without food. He must be feeling wane, weak and

without any strength left. That must be the reason for His silence. First, He must be fed." Thinking so, Tinnadu the innocent one walked further into the forest.

14. Tinna's Worship and 'sevas' to Shiva

Didn't Tinna tell us as to how he would serve Shiva when He comes to his village! He had already submitted to swami which eatables he would be offered and which servants offer him various services. But there was no answer from Him, because of His weakness owing to starvation. Tinnadu set out to the forest to get tasty meat for Shiva. But, he was surprised that he could not get even tubers like Kandamula. No fruits were also found. He went further. Then something surprising happened. Some sturdy and friendly type of animals approached Tinnadu on their own. That was the first day and he was delighted. He immediately killed some, cut off the meat, cooked it and took it to his swami in a leaf cup. The meat was of a wild boar. Tinnadu once saw how food was offered to Shiva but he didn't know how to prepare it. He decided while bringing food to Shiva as to how to offer it to swami. But he wanted to do his best and went to the river suvarnamukhari, bathed there and filled his mouth with the water. The bow and quiver were on him and he had his footwear on his feet. In his hands he carried the leaf cup. He went near Shiva.

There was something offered to Shiva earlier With his foot (with his foot wear on) he cleaned the linga. He threw the water in his mouth in a quick spout on

the linga. It fell like a rain of love and devotion. As if the swami shed tears of joy, water ran down from his face. Tinnadu threw the bilwa leaves he brought with him in devotion. He sat on his knees before the 'linga' and kept the leaf cup of wild boar meat before Shiva. He prayed to swami to eat and quench his hunger. But parameshwara in the shape of linga was not innocent to eat just like that. Swami did not eat, did not speak.

Once again there was disturbance in the devotee's heart. Did I not bring the food with devotion? Is the lord not hungry? Are the pieces of meat not cooked well? Why is the master so silent? "O, lord! Have mercy on me, I know You have been starving and for that reason must be weak. I can feed You... here... take it". Tinnadu went on appealing, begging the linga.

Shiva was pleased with young man's devotion and innocence. Pitying him, he lifted the young man up and said affectionately: "Little one I would eat the food you brought. Come! Give it to me." Kannappa in ecstasy went on uttering the mantra 'Om Namahshivaya' without any effort, automatically it came to his mind. He went on repeating it. He went on extending to the lord the food. For us giving wild boar meat may appear a sacrilege. But Shiva did not feel it so. Thus the pooja of the firstday came to a close. Tinna did not feel surprised that he had done something nobody had ever done. He was delighted that his request had been heard. The kirata's devotion which began on that day continued.

Kannappa would go for hunting daily and wild animals would be caught without any effort of his. He would carry the meat in leaf cups. He would bathe in the river and carry the water in his mouth, he would offer the leaves of Maredu tree, spout the water from the mouth on the linga and worship Shiva with his foot wear on.

He would remove whatever was there on the linga with his foot and perform Abhisheka in his own way. He would go on repeating 'Om Namahshivaya' and go on feeding Shiva with devotion and affection. The pieces of meat which shiva did not take were taken by Tinna to satisfy his hunger. Only during hunt, Kannappa was away from Shiva.

15. The Brahmin worried about Tinna's sacrilegious deeds

A Brahmin used to worship daily the linga of Vayulingeswara that was being worshipped by kannappa. The Brahmin was angry because the young man was clearing the linga with his foot (with footwear on), spitting on the linga and leaving the whole area unclean. He felt that the mischievous fellow was doing all that willfully. The Brahmin begged swami saying: 'What is this? I worship you as my house hold God, coming everyday and cleaning the place first and decorating it before offering my prayer and during my puja (worship), someone is coming, spitting and doing all unholy things. Are You testing me? Or are You doing all those things for Yourself ? I cannot tolerate them,

bear them, swami! None of these are acceptable to You but You are habituated to many of such things. You smear Yourself with the ash from the burning ghat. You don't feel agitated for this "small" nuisance whether you like this worship or not, show me the one who is doing all this. If not I will fast unto death, not any where else, but at your feet." The poor Brahmin stood before swami.

16. Shiva shows the Brahmin Tinna's devotion

Then, surprisingly Shiva's words were audible. "Shiva devotee! do not worry. A chenchu devotee has been worshiping me in a mode not seen in the Vedas. His devotion is sincere and intense. He is innocent too. He has a strong desire and will. For that reason, I had pity for him. I am accepting his worship which he has been offering in his own way. He is an extraordinary devotee. You hide behind me. In a short while he will come here. You can see for yourself the intensity of his devotion". Listening to these words of Shiva the Brahmin was astounded. No doubt, these are the words of Shiva. I will stand behind swami and observe. I am delighted because swami has agreed and accepted my wish. Thinking so the Brahmin hid himself behind the linga and waited to see the one spoiling his worship. A while later, Kannappa came there. With his foot he kicked the things on the linga. With the water in his mouth, as usual, he worshipped the linga in his own way. He placed before swami the pieces of meat he fried. But on that day Shiva wanted to test Tinnadu.

He wanted to show the shaivite Brahmin Tinnadu's devotion for Shiva. He neither appeared nor did he eat the offering. On the other hand he showed the three eyes on his face. One of the eyes was oozing water. The water started flowing down slowly. Tinnadu was agitated because swami did not eat the food he offered and more over, his eyes were oozing water. First he thought he should know what happened to swami's eye. He removed the Maredu leaves from the head and saw. He thought that something had happened to swami's eye. He did not know any treatment and there was none in the forest to help or treat the eye. He started the treatment himself.

In the meantime the anger in the Brahmin disappeared. He felt that the young man was born for a great purpose. As a recompense the water from the eyes began to wash away the maredu leaves and Shiva appeared very holy and auspicious. Brahmin's hatred vanished. The Brahmin began respecting the young chenchu. The Ganga on Shiva's head flowing down appeared to be the holy water from shiva's feet. Linga murty appeared as though he was shedding tears of joy and happiness. How sublime is the devotion of this innocent devotee! The Brahmin went on observing carefully the young man's treatment.

17. Tinna's deep mental suffering

Tinna had the desire to offer a medical help to Shiva to make him get relieved from the suffering. If the pain subsides to some extent he could be taken to

a Vaidya. With this intention he went close to Shiva's eye and saw it carefully. The eye was red and water was oozing from it. The young man felt very pained and his grief exploded out. He Said to Swami : "what happened to you God? You did not shed tears even when Your consort who went uninvited to her father's yagna, unable to tolerate her father's bad treatment towards her, jumped into the yagna pit. Your eye did not shed tears when you saw little Siriyala being killed by his own father. You did not weep even when the sages in Badarikavanam got agitated and tore your clothing. Even when a devotee worshipped with stones when flowers were not available, Your eyes did not shed tears. You did not feel grieved to this extent even when in Nambi's house You had to carry dirty clothes on bonded labour. Today with no reason why are You shedding tears?

"Are You feeling bad for having come here leaving Your wife and children? Are You worried as to how You would be able to protect all the world alone? Did You feel unhappy and pained that I have not come in time to feed you? Were You worried about me imagining that some cruel animal has harmed me in the forest? Are You feeling sad that I have gone leaving You behind? Our relationship would never get broken. Other Jangas, Your equals, wouldn't they laugh to see You weeping?"

Saying these words, he hugged Shivalinga and wiped the eye. He felt that none of the reasons he guessed would have made Shiva so tearful. He went

on asking himself in several ways what could have caused Shiva's grief and what the problem of His eye would be? He went on thinking of various possibilities that he could think of. He was disturbed that he had no way of helping or curing Shiva.

He went on worrying as to how the Three Eyed Divine had an eye problem. Once again he thought of many reasons like Mother parvati's beauty being seen very close must have reddened His eyes. But the young man knew that no other woman can win His heart, however beautiful she might be. "You have Three Eyes, while everyone has only two. You are known as Virupaksha...if one is lost now, won't You become ugly? Would any woman take even a look at you? Wouldn't your devotees laugh at you?" Tinna's thoughts and questions went on within himself.

He remembered how Sri Hari Himself came to Shiva took the wheel (Chakra) from Him and gave Him an eye. The eye with the problem was the one given by Sri Hari Himself. If this were to be damaged what must have happened to Your mahima, extraordinary power. The young man felt sorry that this life has become like that of a holy ox being taken away by a tiger. He thought that he was in no position to tell anybody, go anywhere and do anything. Determined to do whatever he could, he started treatment for Shiva's eye.

18. Tinna's treatment to Sri Kalahasteeshwara's eye

Parameshwara wanted to test kannappa's devotion. He also wanted to show the power of Bhakti to the

Shaivite Brahmin. As His maya appeared in the eyes of Shivalinga he shivered. From the right eye water was running down and was increasing every moment. Though Tinna tried to stop it, did it not stop, for that reason he began the treatment he knew.

Filling his mouth with steam he began fomenting the eye with a piece of warm cloth. After drying he rubbed both his palms till they became warm and he pressed the right palm on the eye. He brought the leaf of Tangedu and spread on Swamy's head. Lemon leaves bitten to softness he applied on the eye as paste. He dropped the juice of white Dintena flower in His eye. He dropped curdled ghee on the eye over the paste. He put the curdled wicks on that. With breast milk he rubbed conch and applied the paste. Thus he used many medicines he knew and as many he heard. In spite of this, there was no use. His knowledge was insufficient for the treatment. All of a sudden instead of water, blood began to run down and Tinna shook with helplessness.

Now swami had problem in His eye. So he thought that the eye should be replaced. Yes, he thought, he should replace Shiva's eye with his own. He thought that there should be no more delay. He wanted to fix his own eye in the place of Swami's eye, which would relieve swami's pain.

That very moment he took out the arrow from his quiver. He did not think that his body would become ugly or even death could occur to Him. He plucked

out his eye with the arrow and put it in Swami's right eye socket. Surprisingly Swami's eye was cured. It began shining more than ever before.

19. Tinnadu becomes the second donar of Shiva's eye

We know that Vishnu giving His Pundarika eye, took sudarshana chakra (wheel) in return from Shiva. Now, Tinna giving Shiva his eye became the second eye donar to Shiva. When Tinna placed his eye on Shiva's right eye it suddenly got fixed on Shiva's face. It was Shiva's maya. But it became the treatment of the innocent devotee. This eye appeared effulgent, than the previous eye.

Kannappa's joy was limitless. He said emotionally: "Swami! You have shown Your grace and took mercy on me". When he said that water started coming down from shiva's left eye. Kannappa understood. He smiled. His eye became the eye of the divine now. Now seeing the left eye, Tinnappa thought that if he gave His second eye too, Shiva would see all lokas with His eyes. He knew that it was a test by Swami. He said to Swami that he would give away his second eye too and for the third eye he would give away his Praana (life essence). Then he was about to pluck out his second eye too. "When I pluck it I would not be able to see," saying this, he put his foot wear at the end of Shiva's left eye as a mark. The next moment he was about to pluck out his eye, "Stop, Stop!" said Shiva appearing and held Tinna's hand with his own. Along with Swami

Devi Parvati also appeared. The Brahmin devotee who was hiding behind the linga saw all this. The one he thought was an uncivilized and an enemy was no longer an enemy. The old idea disappeared giving way to reverence. Earlier he submitted to Shiva that he would not be able to fight with the strong. But now there was no feeling of enmity. He remembered how the spider, the Serpent and the elephant worshipped Shiva. The weak spider entering the elephant's head and killing that, killed itself....Earlier he thought of fighting either to win or be defeated or be killed by the chenchu. But all that feeling disappeared now.

The Brahmin realized after seeing Tinna's devotion that his ideas and feelings were wrong and bad. His enmity was gone, by obtaining the darshan of Shiva and Parvati, and this made him treat the chenchu with great adoration.

20. The excellent scene of Shiva and Parvati appearing before Kannappa

Shiva's hand stopped Tinnappa's when he was about to pluck out his second eye with an arrow. At that very moment a new eye came in the place of the old eye which was already plucked. That looked like Shiva's own eye. Shiva, who took the devotee's eye, gave his own to him. Kannappa was an accomplished one, a dhanya, fully rewarded. This was so because that eye was the one taken from Sri MahaVishnu. Now the eye became Kannappa's. How great! Not just right eye, the left one is resplendent. Perhaps Swami gave

Kannappa both his eyes and might have taken away Kannappa's.

While from Kannappa's eyes tears of joy flowed down, in Shiva's eyes the streams of 'maya' (the unreal) disappeared. How were the tears of joy of Kannappa's eyes? They were like the tears that flowed down when Shiva saw the Tripura demons. When God spills the rasa of Mercy, will there be any dearth of joyful tears in the devotee's eyes? At that moment celestials showered flowers and played resounding musical instruments. They sang, songs in praise of God.

The Brahmin giving up and throwing away his old feelings and opinion, fell down at Kannappa's feet, prostrated and asked him for forgiveness, for his mistake.

**Talapa nee sahaja mugdhatvamerugami,
talachiti nee kahitambu seyanga,
tappu syrimpu kannappa! dayatma!**

He praised Kannappa as "you are Shiva". There would be none like him in all the three worlds.

**Bapure kannappa! paramalingamba!
bapure kannappa! pradhama vilasa!
nallavo kannappa! nalinga mugdha!
nallavo kannappa! nallanyara!**

(Basava Puranam)

He praised Kannappa in many a verse as described in BasavaPurana. Devi Parvati was surprised that

Kannappa's eye shone like Shiva's own. Then Shiva and Kannappa looked into each other's eyes. They shone alike. Their eyes met. Both joined and appeared beautiful. The eyes of both appeared like lotus flowers and shone with friendship with the same appearance with God's mercy and grace the devotee would become God. When Kannappa gave his eye as a donor, in return swami graced Kannappa's eyes as divine and everlasting. Now Swami's hot, fire like eye became cool. The other two eyes underneath becoming Kannappa's with Swami's real eyes became four, altogether. In those eyes there were both mercy and large heartedness. These qualities hid the seriousness of the Swami's third eye above. The poet stated that here after the third eye of Shiva would not frighten anybody.

21. With Kannappa's eye Bhava (Shiva), becomes Bhavya (the auspicious)

See how poets play with words and attract the readers with their skill.

"Swami! Now Your power is gone. Even if you see fiercely the three puras would not be burnt. Another Manmadha would not be reduced to ashes. If yama violates, You cannot punish him. You cannot destroy the world with deluge. The eyes Kannappa gave You are kind and merciful. If You had them before, You would not have been called 'Ugraksha' (the fierce eyed one). If You had them before, you would have been called 'Sundara' the beautiful one, only because

Kannappa touched you. You become opulent. Even though Kannappa touched You with his foot wear, you ignored because it was not a mistake in Your view, and therefore You become Bhaktavatsala. It is because of that again the chandra on your head got the name 'Doshaakarudu'. It is only after that the moon became respectable and pleasure giving. Ganga got the touch of the foot wear and became a holy pilgrimage site. Had Brahma done this, Brahma who made a bet would have had a darshan of the head touched by Kannappa's chappal (foot wear). It was with Kannappa's nirmalya (withered flowers are called nirmalya) Shiva became spotless bodied. It was because of Kannappa that Swami obtained the wisdom of the Vedas. Since He ate the devotee's 'tainted' food, Shiva became the one above and beyond vidhi nishedas - the impermitted duties.

**Lingambu kannappa engilikana
angamantayu uttamangamayye!**

'Uttamanga' is the head alone. In Shivalinga everything is sacred, everything is worthy. That is so because it touched what Tinna's mouth touched. Those who say that it was the tainted one it is sure that they do not know the inner meaning of Kannappa's episode. The proof for that was the wisdom, humility and foresight that Kannappa had shown.

22. The way Tinna accepted Shiva's blessing

The Shaivite Brahmin saw how Shiva stopped Tinna going to pluck out his eye. We heard of the flower

rain sent by the angels in the sky. Tinna was not frightened. He had the joy of seeing his parents. When Shiva asked him what he wanted, he had the intimacy to answer Shiva. With the darshan of Shiva Tinna's ignorance disappeared. Wisdom got enlarged in him. He said with humility "Swami! How do I know what I want? I don't know anything about desire. I don't know what Moksha or Liberation is. I don't know what I should seek or ask for." He said that he knows, knows him and knowns only him. Is that not enough for one who knows the form and shape of God? What a quality of deep wisdom!

The wise one with the knowledge of Vedas and the devotee, the Shaivite Brahmin too joined his palms in reverence to Shiva and Parvati and stood with humility and devotion before them. Swami said to him:

"Tapaswi! Did you see and now understand why I have been accepting the pooja (not acceptable by the Vedas) from this Kirata devotee? Everything in this creation is mine. There is nothing which I don't like detest or hate. The devotee offers, me what he likes more. Whatever is within their reach, they offer saying "I offer," (samarpayami). There would be nothing in that to be rejected or be objected to. I accept only the devotion and the sincere attention (shraddha). The rich man's gifts or ornaments do not allure Me. I love only those who love me whole heartedly."

Thus Shiva explained to the Brahmin the nature of the world and the ignorance of some people. The

Brahmin devotee said that he too wanted bhakti towards Shiva with one and only humility.

Shiva asked both the two devotees to come nearer and He embraced them. The moment he embraced them, Gnana prasoonamba too began to bless them. The whole family of Shiva with "Jaya, Jaya" and "Hara Hara Mahadeva" began praising the two devotees. Shiva invited the two into him and the two merged in Shiva. Thus the two were given Shiva Saayoojya the nearness and oneness with him. The two became celebrities. The maids of the heaven showered flowers on them expressing joy and blessed them.

23. Like Tinna there are some more innocent devotees

This is the story of Tinnadu or Kannappa otherwise known as 'Kannappa devudu' the innocent devotee. Among the sixty three great devotees known as Nayanmars, Tinnadu is the top most. In the same way a devotee called "Mugdhra Sangayya" in Basaveswara's time innocently went to a prostitute's house and worshipped her breasts as Shiva lingas. Another devotee Natya namittandi saw Nataraja in Chidambaram and seeing his form asked the Poojari, (priest) as to what happened to him. As a Joke the priest said that he had vaayu roga, a disease of wind. Hearing that, the innocent bhakta sold all his property and gave away all the money to the priest to make medicine for cure. At the end he had darshan of Nataraj and heard from the Deity himself the secret of Shivatattwa.

In the same way a devotee called Deepakaliyaru spent all the money he had for the lamp observance (deepavrata) and at the end burnt his own hair and thus won Shiva's appreciation. There was another devotee Bijja Devi. She worshipped Shiva by treating Him as her own baby because she accepted the belief when somebody told her that Shiva had no father and mother. She is the innocent devotee who treated Shiva as her own son. In the same way an innocent devotee Nimmavva killed her own son, cooked the flesh, and served the guest not knowing that He was Shiva himself, Kalayanayar sold his wife's tali (golden coin like thing given at the time of wedding) and completed the dhoopavrata, the ceremony of offering light with a lamp. Thanga was given wealth by Shiva, but he did not stop worshipping Shiva. It is only the Shiva linga being worshipped as Shadapparu in Tiruppamandal village. Once the Shiva linga leaned and could not be set straight though the king made the elephants dragged it and put it properly, and it all went in vain. But the devotee with the thread of Darbha (grass) on his neck straightened it. There was one devotee Rudrapashupati who innocently believed that Shiva swallowed poison. When someone told him that story, he went to swami and compelled him to spit out the poison. With great persuasion (hatham) he sat on Shiva's lap and put a sword against his own neck saying that he would kill himself if Shiva did not spit it out. A little girl called Godagoochi made Shiva drink milk and later lost herself

in Shiva linga. All these are stories about the very innocent devotees of Shiva. After listening to these, one would not see anything wondrous in Shiva taking into himself the innocent Tinna. But then, what is the secret of this devotee's devotion in his previous birth?

24. The history of Tinna's earlier births

In the Dwapara aeon Shri Maha Vishnu took incarnation as Sri Krishna Paramatma only to reduce the heavy burden of mother Earth. His strategy was the instant for the Mahabharata war and the director too. That war was famous as the war of Kauravas and Pandavas. But that great epic is a mega legend, a history, an epic, a moral book and a textbook on Dharma and Political Science. Above all it is the story of Sri Krishna.

Among Sri Maha Vishnu's incarnations (avatars), ten avatars are the most important. Among them, two incarnations are important related to deciding factor of human dharma. First he incarnated as Sri Rama Chandra, the most respectable of humans Maryada Purushottama. He taught the Dharma which is to be practised. In that incarnation he was perfect in all the twelve radiances. Without showing Godly deeds, he showed himself as a good Human, ruler, an ideal, son, an ideal husband and best of brotherhood. He was a beloved king, ruler, yama, deity of death for demons like Ravana, and friend to Vibhishana, Sugreeva and others and source of Sharanagati for Hanuman and others like him. He was the most adorable incarnation.

Sri Krishna's incarnation is a perfect and wholesome one. With sixteen radiances (Kalas) the avatara was replete with wonderful powers. From the moment of taking birth in a prison, and after joining Gokul, as Bala Brahma, he displayed great (leelas) deeds of extreme power. Though he showed the splendour of a Kshatriya he was never a ruler. He laid down standards of ruling and administration by preventing bad kingship. He did not give undue prominence to relatives. He never got himself entangled in relationships. He never stopped or tried to stop the destruction of yadava caste. He never hesitated to leave the most beloved friends and the village of cowherds. Who is this swami? What is that he did not do in so many aeons and so many Kalpas, (very long period of thousands of years). In Nara narayanas he was Narayana. His friends of the past, themselves appeared like Arjuna, appears before us as the middle one among the pandavas and the friend of Sri Krishna in Mahabharata. Giving his sister Subhadra in marriage to Arjuna, Sri Krishna became Arjuna's brother-in-law. Since Pandavas were his aunt's Children, for them he became a bava (brother-in-law). Even though he had close relationship with Pandavas, he had intimate relationship with Kauravas too. Even then he was known as Paandava Pakshapati being always bias favouring Pandavas. True, God takes the side of the righteous Dharma.

In Dwapara yuga there was plentifulness in population it was along with that wickedness and

crucked Administration. In Kurukshetra known as Dharmakshetra eighteen Akshouni's of army fought. Eleven on the side of Duryodhan and eight on pandava side. Before the war, both the parties selected kings who supported them joined them into their party. Duryodhan who wanted to have Krishna on his side, took ten thousand maha veeras (great warriors) and a big army. Both the parties tried and used not only great weapons but also acquired divine astras (magical, divine arms).

Karna the friend of Duryodhan who acquired a piece of land as a gift and who was a statesman acquired an astra (weapon) - 'Sarpa mukhastra' and fed the serpent headed astra with milk and hid it with him. He also had with him great weapons presented by parashurama. He had Indra's gift, 'Shakti', with him when karna gave his Kavacha (armour) and Kundalas (ear studs) as donation to Indra. On Duryodhana's side there were Bhishmapitamah and great teacher of Archary Drona, and Ashwathama the one born with Rudramsa. Only Vijaya Arjuna had the power to defeat these two. Sri Krishna provoked Arjuna and made him acquire pashupatastra from Shiva by performing intense tapas (contemplation). If he acquires Pashupatham, under any circumstances, Pandavas would win. Sri Krishna, just by advising and not handling any weapon helped Pandavas to win the battle. Arjuna requested Sri Krishna to be his charioteer.

While Arjuna, the pandava madhyama is in the chariot with Sri Krishna as the charioteer they played

their roles in the battle. Their bodies though were two, their souls were one. As per the statistics made at Arjuna's behest those who were killed in the battle were seventy-six crores. They included gandharvas, demons, celestials and the divine ones too. In such a war there was need for divine weapons (astras). For that reason Arjuna was sent for tapas to make Shiva happy and obtain pashupata from him. Shiva tested Arjuna by coming along with his consort parvati as a Kiraata couple. Mookasura came as a wild boar. The four Vedas came as hunting dogs. Pramadha ganas came as boyas, forest dwellers. For that wild boar Shiva and Arjuna fought. Both of them claimed that he himself was the killer of the wild boar. The two had to fight malla yuddha (wrestling). In that Arjuna could not win and he attacked Shiva with his dhanurdanda the bow loosening the bowstring. Unable to control anger Arjuna beat Kapardi, Shiva on the head.

The test was over. Shiva appeared. Arjuna trembled in fear and fell at Shiva's feet. Shiva raised him. Parvati was seen in the guise of a forecaster, of the jungle tribe. Parvati and pramadha ganas appeared in their real forms. Shiva asked Arjuna to seek a boon, Vijay asked him to bless him by giving Pashupatastra. Then he asked for salvation for him in that very birth. Shiva blessed him by giving pashupatastra but said that it could be used only once. Shiva asked him to demand another boon. Shiva's bhakta Arjuna demanded Moksha in this birth itself. Since he fought a war and killed relatives he could not be given salvation in that

birth. He had to wait for another birth for that. In that, the next birth, Shiva said he would be born as a Kiraata and with his devotion and worship using methods not accepted in the Vedas. Meat was offered as offering (naivedya) because of Shiva's order. That was because of the earlier episode. Shiva told Arjuna that in a later birth he would get the life of a kiraata and in that birth he would have devotion on Shiva and he would worship him in a method other than the Vedic. For that reason while still being in Tande's womb Kannappa or Tinna has made devotion to Shiva in his own way. As a boy in the birth as Kiraata he behaved differently. At the end for the Three eyed he gave his own eye and became renowned as Kannappa Deva. In Shiva's view his ways of worship were not unacceptable. That is the secret in Shiva Bhakti.

25. The former birth histories of the animals whose flesh Tinna gave as an offering to Shiva

We have spoken about the ways how Tinna in worshipped Shiva by offering cooked flesh and how shaivite Brahmin objected Tinna's prayer and how he performed an orthodox puja following the Vedas. Shiva accepted the ways of worship of Tinna as well as the Brahmin. Why? Because both were devotees with clean hearts and minds.

But it may appear strange that meat obtained with violence was offered to shiva. The poet Palkuriki Somanadha in his Basavapurana has given an answer. In the distant past a gandharva called Jeemoota Vaahana

offered his Praana (life breath) to garuda to protect the lives of serpents. At that time he was a newly wedded groom. In the same way, emperor Sibi put his life at stake to save a dove and got the permanent fame of a great giver (Donar). Keertimukha following Shiva's order ate his own body to quench his hunger. Only his head remained. Shiva blessed him and made him the leader (ganadhipati) of his followers. Not only that, he appears on the front gates of Shiva temples and receives the first worship of devotees who come to worship Shiva. There are several instances of offering their own physical bodies to the deity Shiva. While it was acceptable how can Tinna's meat offerings become unholy? That meat was given as per Shiva's order. That was its earlier history, and it is narrated thus -

Once demons with beautiful bodies performed tapas to propitiate and win Shiva's grace. "What was the purpose of your Tapas?" Shiva asked them. He also said that they pleased him highly. "I would give you the positions like indra's to you".

Then they replied that among demons Jalandhara respectfully took Indra's position and for that reason they would not take it. They did not want Brahmas position because Brahma received death from gajasura. Indra was driven away by Tarakasura and they did not want indra's position. Demons among them like Vyaghra and Andhaka died at his hand but secured heavenly condition. So they wanted their beautiful bodies to be directly eaten by him. Then Swami, Shiva

asked them to give up their existing bodies and take birth again as animals in the forests near Sri Kalahasti. Kannappa, the Kiraata devotee, would come and kill them and offer their bodies. Shiva graced them all with salvation. Afterwards those demons along with their women took their birth as various animals in Kailasagiri forests. They were never seen by other cruel animals. They simply waited for Kannappa's arrival and be killed by him. Those animals were waiting like sacred yogis.

Those animals approached Kannappa on their own to quench Shiva's hunger. They went wilfully surrendering themselves to the arrow shots of Tinna. Thus, the good looking demons had their wish fulfilled and got salvation i.e., mukti. Owing to their devotion and tapas, Tinna too got an opportunity to donate his physical parts which was a boon given to him in his previous birth.

To bless his devotee Tinna and other devotees. Swami settled permanently on the banks of Suvarnamukhari as Vaayulingeshwara. As a mark of an indication and a sign that everyone should respect Kannappa, as they worship Shiva with respect, he made Kannappa stay on the top of the mountain because he Himself has regard for Kannappa. The very sacred river water which Kannappa as a devotee spouted on Shiva is performing Abhisheka (sacred bathing) for Him.

**"Nikkambu Kannappa pukkiti neeru,
Mukkanti Abhisheka muna kella proddu,**

**nedunu Kannappa nirmalyamandu,
podigaa Sivunaku pooja seyuduru!
Mrududu Kannappa Karpinchina gani
Adaranga nedunu aaragimpandu!
Kannarpitamujese kaana lokamula
Kannappa danaga mahonnatikekke..."**

(Basava puranam)

Water spouted by Kannappa
being used for Mukkanti's Abhishekam
drooped flowers of Kannappa's temple, even for
today

are used for Shiva's worship
unless naivedyam is offered first to Kannappa
Shiva doesn't accept it
having donated his eye sometime immemorial
gets the supreme name Kannappa (Eye donar)

(Basava puranam)

The priests worship Kannappa first and then only start worshipping Shiva. Basavapurana tells us that Kannappa spouted water from his mouth and performed Abhishekam to Shiva. Even today the nirmalya (the drooped flowers from Kannappa temple) would be used for the worship of Shiva. Shiva wouldn't accept an offering until it is offered first to Kannappa. Since he had offered his eye to Shiva this devotee is named Kannappa. This is a sacred tale of Kannappa nayanar. He is worshipped as Bhakta Tinnadu by the Telugus and as Kannappa by kannadigas and Tamilians. He is the one on the peak of devotees and he is one born with a purpose.

To prove that Sri Kalahasteeshwara is Vaayulingeswara himself, only two flames shaking amidst many stable flames in the Sanctum Sanctorum gives the proof. That is a visible (eye) witness. The linga which was touched by sages, celestials and devotees like Kannappa is not supposed to be touched today even by priests. Once, a priest touched the linga, and to everyones surprise, his finger turned into gold. Now-a-days, priests offer Abhishekam and Alankarana (divine decoration) without touching the linga. The divine decoration is done only on the golden robes (Swarna Kavacham).

O my beloved readers! the powerful deity Sri Kalahasteeswara, who is spreading his power from time immemorial, may have given a respectable place to Kannappa among his ganas in his own Kailasa. But for Kannappa, he is being respected by theists in the same manner as they pray God Shiva.

Shiva's great power is spread in the way Tinnadu is made one in the impert and ganas. He receives the worship of devotees equal to the one Shiva himself is offered.

This is a proof that there is no difference between God and his devotee. This is God's owe too.

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