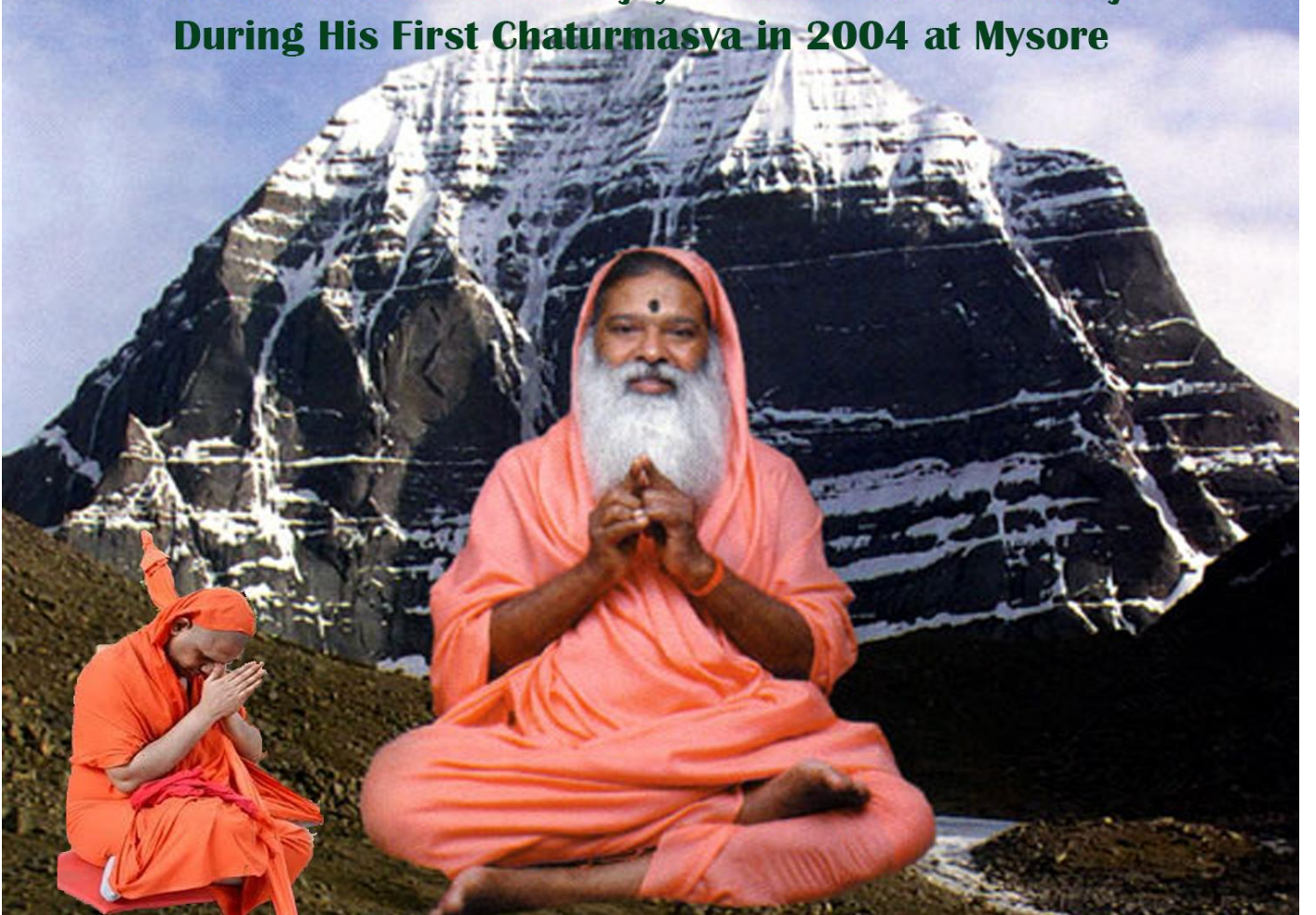


SRI GURU GITA



**Discourse of Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji
During His First Chaturmasya in 2004 at Mysore**



**Gurugita discourse by Sri Datta Vijayananda Teertha Swamiji during his first
Chaturmasya Vrata - 2004.**

Jaya guru datta, sri guru datta

Sharanam sadguru charanam.....bhavabdi santaranam

What is chaaturmasa? This is a period lasting for three months in the rainy season in India.

It begins from Aashadha Poornima to Bhadrapada Poornima. It is the rainy season in India. During this season, a Sadguru is expected to stay in one place and give discourses, sing Bhajans and spread his knowledge to the public. Every second there are hundreds of thoughts, good and bad, that keep flowing in our mind. In order to feed good thoughts, we go to Sadguru. He invokes noble thoughts in us. How is this done? Only through Saadhana or practice. Example: Current is always flowing, but, we have to switch on the light and then it glows. Swamiji has arranged numerous ways of doing Saadhana in the form of morning prayer, meditation, worship, Paada puja, Srichakrarchana, interview with Sri Swamiji, Kriya yoga classes and many more. In this way, Sri Swamiji has prepared the ground for Saadhana or spiritual practice. Bhajans and Nama Sankeerthana are equally important and nobody should miss this. Sri Swamiji has composed many types of Bhajans like Manipravala (Amba bhavani sharade), Tripura - Navavarana compositions which explains Srichakra Tatva (Traipurim Sundarim). We should sing these Bhajans and remember and recall the meaning of these Bhajans.

These four months, saints , yatis are not supposed to travel. They need rest. Every day there will be discourse on Guru Gita, bhajan singing and talk about Sadguru leela (Sadguru's ways). I pray to Pujya Swamiji to help in delivering Guru Gita.

Guru's compassion is boundless. When Swamiji landed in Tonga islands in the year 2000, the first question He asked was when are we returning to Malaysia. He cannot live without his devotees. This is Guru's affection. The basis for real knowledge is worshipping Guru Paduka. All chant: Sharanam Sadguru Charanam, Nigama Bharanam (from Viveka Chudamani). It means we should surrender at

Sadguru's feet. Guru's holy feet is like Abharana (jewel) and it washes away our sins. The first step is Guru Paduka Dhyana . What is its use? Ganges river is sacred. Why? Because she removes our sins, she cleanses all just as light brightens up the surroundings that come into its contact. If we sit at home and pray, will Sadguru come to us? There is nothing like Sadguru coming or going. He is omnipresent. Our mind keeps on wandering searching good things or to fulfill desires. Chanting God's name, singing Bhajans checks the wandering mind. We should tune our mind and stay calm.

Listening to Guru Gita or chanting it helps us to develop devotion to Guru. Good thoughts flow, our life becomes more meaningful. He also says, "Read Guru's life history, do seva to Vagdevi school for the hearing impaired children, do Godaana (gifting cows)." It means we do selfless service with total devotion.

Wrong actions bring problems but there is a solution to these problems and that is Sadguru Seva or true service. We will commence Guru Gita discourse with Dhyana Shloka.

Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu.....

This stanza is in the beginning of Guru Gita. Sri Swamiji said that it is for His own learning, He is doing Guru Gita Parayana. If there are any mistakes, they are mine and I am responsible. It begins with the question who am I? Then, like a big ocean, the answer comes. Guru is omnipresent. He is Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara Himself. Once we attain real knowledge, we also become Param Brahma. The shloka can be coined into Guru Saakshat Twameva and then we can say Guru and we are not different. But beware! We should not associate with Guru's form, never Advaita with Guru. We should remember that Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara are at the top. To the right is the Sadguru and to the left is the disciple. Sadguru and Brahma have merged. But how can we reach that stage? We should get the feeling that we are merging with Brahma not Sadguru.

Na dwaitham guruna saha.....it means we should never equate ourselves with Sadguru

To remember this Guru Dhyana is important. Many devotees are under the illusion that they are equal to Swamiji because of their long association. But it is wrong. Kalidasa was a famous poet. He had performed penance to get the blessings of Goddess Kalika Devi. He was called Kavir Dandi. When asked Mother Goddess the question "Who am I?" She answered "Twamevaham" three times. It means "You are me" and "I am you". To reach this state of oneness with mother goddess, it requires consistent practice and concentration of mind. For these reasons Guru Dhyana is very important.

Guru brahma guru vishnu guru devo.....

What do the scriptures say about this statement? Who am I? It begins with a small question and then like a big ocean the answer comes. Guru is omnipresent. Once we attain Jnana (true knowledge), we become Param Brahma.

2. Dattatrya samaarambha nrasihmaadika madhyamam.....

Sage Atri and Anasuya Mata performed severe penance for the welfare of mankind. They had a desire to get Trimurthis (Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara) as their son. Thus, Lord Dattatreya appeared before them as their son. He was none other than the embodiment of Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara (trinity). This was to show us that all three Godheads are one and the same. Lord Dattatreya is Aadi Guru (primordial Guru). He is eternal, has no beginning or end. In order to protect Guru parampara (lineage), Dattatreya was born. There are 24 Gurus in this lineage. They took birth or incarnated to save mankind and protect Dharma. So it is our duty to remember them and hence "Naarayana Samaarambham."

Narasihma Saraswathi and Sripada Vallabha incarnated to spread the Datta principle. It is our duty to remember and worship our spiritual Guru who is guiding our lives.

3. Hamsaabhyaam parivratta hardha kamale.....

In this verse, the importance of Pranayama or controlled breathing is emphasized. There are two Naadis (subtle nerves) - Ida and Pingala Naadi. In between these, the energy source lies (Paramatma).

When we inhale and exhale air, it is compared to two Hamsas (swans) and in between this there is the mind which is compared to a lotus. The mind is getting cleansed by Pranayama. The heart gets purified by regular breathing techniques. We should feel the sacred feet of Sadguru in our heart and then get ready to listen to the discourse on Guru Gita.

3. Namami sadgurum shantham, pratyaksha shivarupinam.....

Next we should think of how to do Guru seva using this body? First we should prostrate before Sadguru wherever He is, without any hesitation. It means we should give a little exercise to the body by bending it and offering prostrations to our Guru. It also conveys that we should reduce attachment to the body. Only then we can hope to achieve liberation. We should always pray to God to give us knowledge and wisdom. The purpose behind meditation or Dhyana is to develop dispassion or Vairagya.

4. Pratahshirasi shuklabje.....

In order to develop faith in mantras (sacred syllables), we keep on chanting the names of Gods. The next question is which form of god should we worship? The answer is we should imagine our mind to be in the form of a lotus and fix the form of Sadguru with Abhaya Hasta and Vara Mudra. The picture of Guru should remain in our mind and we should meditate upon it. We should use our sense organs to meditate and then we feel the flow of nectar through the body. When we experience this state of mind our intellect gets enlightened. We should feel that sacred nectar (teertha) is falling on our intellect when we are meditating and that result in Antarshuddhi or inner cleaning of the mind. In this way meditation helps in external and internal cleansing and improves concentration of mind. After this we attain Aasana Siddhi (sitting in one posture). We chant the particular Dhyana Shloka (hymn) of the God whom we are worshipping and this bestows good results.

5. Teerthani dakshine paade vedaastanmukha maashritaaha.....

When we go to a temple, we see idols of Gods like Ganapathi, Hanuman etc. Our intention is to seek blessings of those Gods. Instead what we do is, we criticize, we find fault saying that the priest is not doing Pooja properly or we say the idol is broken. Our duty is to pray sincerely placing faith in god.

The reason why each God has a unique form is because the sacred scriptures have described them in a particular way. For example Goddess Rajarajeshwari has sugarcane beet in her hand. What does it symbolize? In order to give us the essence of that form, the divine manifests itself in that form of idol or image. Rajarajeshwari resides in Dattatreya.

The sacred feet of Guru has all the Teerthas (holy rivers). The holy feet of Lord Vishnu has Ganges. How is it possible? When Lord Vishnu in the form of Trivikrama placed the third step, Ganges flowed. Thus, Sadguru's feet has all the sacred waters and when we meditate on His form (His face), we get the benefit of chanting all the sacred scriptures. His eyes and hands are pure from which the sweet nectar flows and purifies us.

6. Aapadamouli paryantha gurunamakritim smareth.....

We should always remember to worship Guru beginning from His feet. Then we should visualize His full form till His head and meditate upon this form. Many devotees have the life size photo of Sri Swamiji and pray. This method of worship gives us confidence and courage and helps us to counter the obstacles that come in the way of our spiritual practice.

Sadguru is the ocean of compassion and kindness. When we meditate upon His form with such feelings, then the impression remains in our mind permanently. I have taken four days to explain the importance of Guru Dhyana, so we should meditate at least for four minutes now.

Skanda purana – Guru Gita begins

Rushaya oochuhu-

What did the Rishis ask? Why did they get doubts?

When the sages went to Naimisharanya (forest), they had Satsanga, discussed spiritual subjects, raised good questions and found answers. In the same way, Shouna and other Maharshis questioned Suta Puranika and wanted clarification.

Guhaayd guhyatara sara guru gita visheshathaha.....

They were eager to know about Guru Gita which has the essence of all scriptures. Why it is referred to as Rahasya? What is so secretive about it? Even in Lalitha Sahasranama, the word Rahasya is used. It means the biggest secret is in understanding God or Guru.

Kailasa shikare ramye.....

We waste lot of time in unwanted talk. Instead we should chant Guru mantra or read holy books in the prayer hall. Sri Swamiji was very unhappy that devotees are not following rules laid by ashram. We all need Guru's blessings not His curses. We forget, so Swamiji is reminding us again and again about spending time usefully.

Goddess Parvathi is praying to Lord Shiva who is seated in Mount Kailasa to bless the sages who had gathered. Lord Shankara was compassionate to listen to her and clarify all the doubts.

Namaste deva devesha paratpara jagadguro.....

Goddess Parvathi, in all humility is praying to Lord Shiva to bless them with the knowledge of Guru Gita.

This verse also tells us that Parvathi addressed Shiva, her husband, with respect and raised questions in a dignified manner befitting a noble wife. She was polite, courteous and humble. For the welfare of entire mankind she raises the question - Which is the most sacred of all vrathas (austerities)?

She prays to Shiva to give them knowledge of Guru Mahatme (Greatness of Guru) and initiate them with Guru Deeksha (Initiation).

When a devotee comes to a Sadguru, from that very moment Guru Deeksha begins (initiation). It means thinking of good things, speaking kindly to others and doing good deeds. Guru Deeksha means deciding to lead a disciplined life. What is the meaning of initiation? It means leading a pious life, chanting God's name consistently, and reading sacred books. All these good habits help us to solve problems in our life.

Bhagavan sarva dhrmajna vratanamuttamottamam.....

It means we should respect all religions. We should not look down upon any religion or consider them inferior. We always equate religion(sect) with dharma(righteousness). It is wrong. Dharma means Manava dharma (noble life, humanity). Dharme sarvam pratishtitham - it contains everything. Dharma is only one and that is Sama Dharma (equality). In ashram, all are equal. Nobody is superior or inferior. All devotees should sit together, eat together and pray together. This promotes the feeling of equality and oneness among us. Swamiji performs Saamohika Homa and Srichakra Puja. All devotees take part in these spiritual activities. This in turn helps us to develop equanimity. Lord Shiva is called Shambhu. 'Sham' means noble thoughts and 'bha' means that which originates from good thoughts. Goddess Parvathi prays to Shiva to enlighten them about Guru Mahatme (the glory of Guru).

Kenamaargena bhoswamin devi brahmamayo bhaveth.....

We identify ourselves with the body so much that we think body is everything. The body is going through an unending cycle of happiness, sorrow, heat, cold, impressions of the past and so on. Is there no way of identifying ourselves with God (Brahma)? Is there no salvation from the cycle of births and deaths? These were some of the questions that Goddess Parvathi asked Shiva and humbly requested him to clarify all those doubts.

Who am I? To understand this we need the guidance of Sadguru.

Mama rupasi devitvam-.....

Swamiji says ask questions. What kind of questions one should ask. Questions that benefit the whole mankind should be asked. Lord Shiva says no one had asked him such genuine questions. Mother Parvathi is the all knowing mother of the universe. She herself is in the place of Guru. The scriptures say Maatru Devo Bhava meaning mother is equal to God. The purpose of asking questions was to enlighten and elevate all the great sages who had gathered to listen to this conversation between Shiva and Parvathi. Why children go to father to clarify doubts. It is because when father speaks we hear it with respect and fear also. The words of father has more weight and impact on the children. That is the reason Parvathi begs Shiva to clarify doubts. But it does not mean the mother is less important or inferior. Mother is an embodiment of godliness. Parvathi with all devotion and respect to Shiva, requests Him to explain Guru Gita.

SLOKA: YOGURU SA SHIVA PROKTO, YASHIVA SA GURUSMRTAHA.....7

We should always believe that Guru is Lord Shiva himself. We derive energy by praying to Guru. He knows what He should bless His devotees with. We should become deserving to receive His blessings.

There should be no duality in our feelings. We should develop non duality. We should never look upon Sadguru as an ordinary human being. Just because Guru eats like us or moves around like us, we should never mistake Him to be an ordinary soul like us. Guru is Shiva who is an embodiment of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara (the trinity). We should understand that it is Dattatreya principle.

SLOKA - DURLABHAM TRISHU LOKESHU TAT SHRUNU
PRAVADAMYAHAM.....8

In Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to fight the war without any fear or favor. After that, Krishna gave Arjuna Gitopadesha which cleared all his doubts. Arjuna was enlightened and his mind was clear. Many of us pray to God and whenever we see a temple our hands pray and we bow down to the image. We do this out of fear or reverence. The demons and Gods alike prayed to realize the

Guru. The Gods succeeded by their determination to know Guru Gita. In the same way once we decide to follow Sadguru, we should never deviate from the path shown by our Guru. He removes our difficulties and gives us Jnana (wisdom). SATYAM SATYAM VARANANE - The word Satya means truth. This word has been repeated twice only to strengthen our devotion and faith towards Guru. He represents truth and nothing else.

SLOKA- VEDA SHASTRA PURANANI CHETIHASADIKANI.....9 AND 10

Veda, Shastra, Purana, all contain real knowledge. But due to our lack of understanding we feel that holy scriptures are misleading. Without faith and devotion to Guru we will not be able to comprehend their meaning. All our effort to master the scriptures will go a waste. This is depicted in the story of Kacha, Devayani and Shuklacharya. The Rakshasas (demons) did not have good Sankalpa (intention) of protecting mankind. They wanted to kill people to achieve their selfish motives. But the Gods had Shuddha sankalpa (pure intentions), meaning they wanted to do good to mankind and so they succeeded. Swamiji says that while trying to gain knowledge, one should have faith and devotion to learn. Just as spider weaves a cobweb and knows how to come out of it without getting trapped, we should learn to come out of the bondages. To achieve this we should develop faith, sincerity and unflinching effort.

SLOKA-YAJNO VRATAM TAPO DHYANAM.....11,12

Rituals, austerities, penance, pilgrimages and various other paths cannot be fruitful unless we have staunch faith in the path that we are following. People say that the knowledge we have acquired or the command we have on some branches of study are all deceitful and misleading. All these are futile. In what sense has this statement been made? Penance or acquiring knowledge is not wrong. But if we try these methods with the intention of causing harm to others then it is wrong. On the other hand if we follow this path with good intentions and cause good to others, our effort will bear good results. With sincere devotion and faith if we follow the above mentioned paths, the results will be good. Without Guru Bhakti, all these paths will not bear the expected good results.

SLOKA - GURU VIDYATMANO NANYAT SATHYAM SATHYAM
NASAMSHAYAHA.....13,

Why should go to a Guru? What should we try to gain from a Guru? We should go to a Guru to seek knowledge and enlightenment. It is true that we have to work hard to acquire the four Purusharthas namely - Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Earning lot of money and becoming rich is not the ultimate goal.

Take the example of giving freedom to women or women's emancipation. We talk a lot about this issue but in actual practice, we do not follow this. We have kept women backward.

What should a disciple do to earn Guru's grace? We should question ourselves and do some introspection. Why have we gathered in Ashram? What is our purpose in coming to Ashram?

Most of the times, we are drowned in unwanted talk and useless thinking. Unless we remain focused on the path shown by our Guru we cannot achieve the desired result.

SLOKA - ROODHA VIDYA JAGANMAYA DEHESTI DWANTA RUPINI.....14

Yesterday Sri Swamiji talked about many subjects. He cracked jokes, made us laugh. He got angry about certain undesirable things in Ashram. He sang beautiful Bhajans. This is how I have interpreted His message – Sri Swamiji spoke about the senses, about Shoonya (Non-existence), about Maya or illusion, about Avidhya (lack of proper knowledge), distraction of the mind etc. Quite often we mistake a rope to be a snake in darkness. What appears to be good to us may not be good to others. All of us do not have uniformity in feelings. How did these conflicting situations arise? It is due to Maaya or illusion. This is swallowing us fully, so how to get rid of delusion? How to come out of this darkness? Consider the example of Bhakta Prahlada who was a devotee of Lord Vishnu (Narasimha Swamy). The Lord was ready to grant him a boon. Prahlada did not ask for kingdom, wealth or long life. He asked for Satsanga (association with the noble) and Sadguru's association. We can get rid of Maaya by constant practice and following Guru's words. We should control the wandering mind by singing Bhajans, reading good books or

listening to Appaji's music. We should pray for wisdom or Jnana Buddhi. This helps us to drive bad thoughts away and do good deeds. Caste discrimination is very prevalent - upper caste, lower caste and other differences. We even discriminate Gods and Goddesses. We say this god is superior or other gods are not so powerful. All this is because of our wrong understanding. Swamiji has consecrated lord Shiva, Ganapathi , Vishalakshi and Narasimha swamy to create the feeling of oneness of all gods.

Another very important aspect is that we rarely think of the passing time. We are drowned in worldly things. We should have devotion and respect and love for Guru, then Guru is attracted to his devotees.

Devotion, knowledge and sense of duty is like having a pure crystal in rudrakshi mala that enhances its beauty.

SLOKA-YOGURU SASHIVA PROKTO YA SHIVA SA GURU
SMRITAH.....7CONTD

It is very important to meditate that helps in developing concentration of mind. Mind should be focused on Guru's teachings. This happens only when we have true devotion not with a wavering mind. We need an object for concentration. It may be an image of God or picture of our beloved Guru. We also should follow the teachings of Guru in thought, word and deed. Janaka Maharaja (king) was known for his devotion to Guru. Although he was immersed in worldly duties, he practised spiritual path systematically.(story) There was a disciple who came to Janaka and requested him to give initiation in spiritual practice. This disciple observed that the king was drowned in luxuries and wondered how he can give him Guru Upadesha. King Janaka told him to carry a potful of water on his head and without spilling a drop he should go round the kingdom (Vidheha kingdom). He also warned him that even if he spills a drop of water, the guards at his back will behead him immediately. Thus in a big procession , with the musicians performing in the front, he carried the pot of water without spilling a drop. When he returned, the king asked him whether he saw the kingdom and liked it, he said that his mind was concentrating only on the pot and the fear of punishment that followed it if he erred. In this example we see that what started as fear gave way

to determination and single pointed devotion. It emphasises the value of time which is always moving. It is our duty to make valuable use of time.

SLOKA--YADANGHRI KAMALA DWANDAM, DWANDA TAAPA

NIVARAKAM.....15

This verse tells us how to get rid of duality and confusion. Quite often we are disturbed by conflicting thoughts. The mind says something and the intellect rejects it. The mind keeps on wandering like an uncontrolled horse and we cannot prevent such thoughts. Sometimes we are unable to take the right decisions. We should not question or argue Gods ways. We should wholeheartedly surrender to Guru submitting our ego at his feet. One should try to understand the Guru principle. It comes by experiencing Guru's compassion. We should have unwavering faith and devotion in our Guru. It is important to develop concentration of mind. This comes by constant practice and unfailing effort. We should believe in Guru's words, follow it to the last letter and He will see that we get the desired result. The mind is so strong and powerful that it can mislead us sometimes. The story of Jaimini Maharshi was narrated where in he gets distracted by the presence of a woman in the night. Sage Veda vyasa had come in the guise of a woman to test his self control. Immediately Jaimini Maharshi apologises for his action. This story tells us that there should be regularity in our spiritual practice like bathing on time, chanting, doing pooja, meditation and so on. This in turn helps us to develop self control. It is important to pray regularly and have darshana(seeing Guru) of our beloved Guru whenever we get an opportunity. We should consult our Guru about our problems and we should follow His advice and implement it. If we follow this sincerely, surely our problems will be solved. The importance of reading Holy books was emphasised. Just as there are innumerable nerves in our body, there are innumerable sacred texts in our country. We should read them, analyse and understand them. By doing this we can clarify many of our doubts. Sri Datta darshana is one such sacred book which has answers to all our doubts.

SLOKA--DEHI BRAHMA BHAVEDYASMAAT TADIDAANIM -----

-----16

One of the main question is how to reach higher levels of spiritual understanding. There are two questions to be answered here. One is why are we suffering from one problem or the other?It is because of our bad actions. Good actions reap good fruits and bad actions yield unpleasant results. Just as a doctor diagnoses our illness and recommends medicines to be taken regularly, in the same way Guru gives us a prescription which has to be followed with trust and faith in his words. Faith in God can move mountains.We should believe in the existence of God, pray to Him, meditate up on Him. Guru is like a doctor, we should consult Him when the need arises and He will surely find a way out of our problems. We have to follow a systematic life. For example, getting up early in the morning, cleaning the house, the pooja room, lighting the lamp, chanting hymns or verses in praise of the Lord and so on.This is the path of truth.One should give up ego and possessiveness. Following Guru's words, unflinching effort from our side can certainly ward off the sins and make us pure.Guru is great, at the same time He is humble. He is our protector and our guide in our life. Therefore let us become humble, surrender our ego at the lotus feet of our Sadguru, only then our spiritual upliftment is possible.Swamiji gives a warning that it is better to stay away from those people who doubt everything and can mislead us in our path. They may pose to be intelligent but they may not have proper knowledge .

GURU PAADODAKAM PEETVA DHRITVA SHIRASI-----17

It is important to do Guru seva in all possible ways.Guru's sacred feet is compared to all the holy rivers that merge at His feet. Just as our body is made up of innumerable nerves that carry blood, so also there are many rivers, seas, oceans that reside in Guru's sacred feet.In the method of Sri Vidya upasana, the first step is to visit all the holy places, to know about the presiding dieties, the names of Gods and Goddesses, the weapons and vehicles of these Gods, the tall pillar in front of the temple and the height and size of the idols etc.We generally dont look at these details and waste our time.Whatever we experience and benefit by visiting holy places, the same experience is there when we perform Guru paduka seva.This feeling cannot be debated or analysed,it is purely one's own experience and our feelings. It is beyond any description.The five stanzas explain only about worshipping Guru and believing that surrendering at Guru's feet is equal to going

on pilgrimages and bathing in holy rivers. Our feelings should be pure and unpolluted to experience the significance of the sacred feet of Guru.

Before we sleep at night, it is important to meditate upon the good and bad deeds committed by us. try to reduce the wrong deeds and balance our account. This kind of introspection helps us to become better human beings. This is the process of purification of the self.

SLOKA-SHOSHANAM PAAPA PANKASYA DEEPANAM JNANA TEJASAH-----18

We have realised that because of our bad actions we are suffering and how by surrendering at Guru's feet we can overcome sorrows and sufferings. In order to learn new, useful things, we have to unlearn the past information. We have ego problems, we tend to think that we know everything, we believe that we are superior to others in our knowledge or wealth. All this is false pride that blinds us and hinders true realisation. Thirst for knowledge is good, it builds self confidence. But one should remember that we are ignorant about so many things. Thus in the path of self realisation, sincere effort is important. Half knowledge is dangerous. There is no end to learning until we become realised souls.

sloka--Avidya moola naashaya janma karma nivrittaye-----19

Avidya means lack of genuine knowledge or ignorance. In order to attain real knowledge we should get rid of past karmas (bad actions). Along with true knowledge one should develop dispassion or detachment. Again in order to reach the level of higher understanding it is important to drink the nectar of knowledge that is at Guru's feet. Real knowledge cannot be obtained by drowning ourselves in material life and by having worldly attachments. Dispassion or vairagya is essential for acquiring wisdom. Devotion, knowledge and total surrender of our ego is the path to progress. Reading sacred texts like Dattadarshana again and again reinforces our faith and we find new meanings. This in turn strengthens our devotion and makes us physically and mentally strong.

SLOKA--GURU PAADODAKAM PAANAM GURORUSHISHTA BHOJANAM-----

Whenever we eat food or wear newclothes, it is important to offer it to Guru and believe that these are his blessings. We offer food to God and then have it. It is the prescribed by scriptures. By doing this we develop pure thoughts, get good health and the day goes smoothly. Erratic life style is not good for one's health. Those who eat food without remembering Guru and God are compared to thieves. We should never forget the Almighty who is the provider of all our needs. When we start the days work, we should chant Guru slokas (hymns) everyday.

SLOKA--SWA DESHIKAI SAIVA CHA NAAMA KEERTHANAM-----21

Chanting Gurugita, glorifying His blessings, singing bhajans are equal to chanting the name of God because Guru is none other than Lord Shiva Himself. We should constantly chant and remember Guru's name who is the embodiment of Datta principle. We should always begin chanting by Ganapathi sloka, Goddess saraswathi's sloka and then Guru sloka. This procedure energises our body and mind. We should never feel shy or hesitate to chant Guru's name. We should begin with loud chanting and then silent chanting. This should be an on going process.

SLOKA--YATPADA PAAMSAVA SANTHAHA-----22

Our life is compared to a big ocean which has no beginning or end. We are drowned in our worldly responsibilities. To cross this deep ocean of worldly life, we should take shelter at SadGuru's feet. Only Guru can sail us through the ocean of life. The place where Guru walks or lives is so sacred that we should touch that ground and take His blessings. In Pandarapura, even today, devotees touch the ground where the saints sing bhajans and keep the dust of their feet on their head like Vibhuti. After worship, we offer food or naivedya to the God. It is a sign of sacrifice and gratitude. Whatever we earn, a part of our earning should be offered to God or help others. Sometimes it so happens that people who are really bad, do not suffer much, in fact good things happen to them. Why is it so? It is because of the good deeds he has performed in his previous birth. We are fortunate because we all are under the care and guidance of our Sadguru who is navigating us in this ocean of worldly life. It is important to develop dispassion or vairagya

like King Janaka. That is why he had a great daughter like Sita Devi. In order to obtain Guru's blessings , we should strive hard. We should always keep spiritual bank balance in our account. For this we should live a systematic life, observe EKADASHI VRATA and learn to be detached while performing our worldly duties.

Going back to the origin of the universe, it is because of the big bang theory. It was formed by atomic fusion and fission. We should take refuge in Sadguru and try to understand the creation of this universe. Our mind should be always contemplating and meditating upon SadGuru's words or His advice.

SLOKA-23 KASHI KSHETRA NIVASACHA, JANHAVI CHARANODAKAM-----

We go to holy places or shrines to purify our body and mind. But many people are not able to go on pilgrimages due to various reasons. A true devotee should always think that where ever Sadguru is residing, that place itself is Kashi or Gaya. We generally think that if we dont visit holy places, we dont get good results or punya. Swamiji says that our pure thoughts and feelings are important. If we think that Datta venkataramana temple is Thirupathi and pray sincerely, it is as good as going to Tirupathi. We should believe that sapta Kshetras like Kashi, Gaya or Mathura is in Guru's holy feet. All the sacred waters of rivers flow from His Feet. This is the foundation of Gurugita. We should believe that Guru is none other than Lord Vishveshwara or Shiva . In order to strengthen this faith, we should worship God, sing His glory and feel His presence. We should never think that life means husband, wife children and wealth. This is an illusion and we should realise this truth.

SLOKA 24--GURU PAADANKITA YATRA GAYA SAADOKSHA JODHBHAVA-----

Why is it that only holy places like Gaya and Kashi are taken as examples in this verse? Because these two places have become great by the sacrifice made by great king like Divodasa. The demon Gayasura offered his body as sacrifice to the fire god. Lord Vishnu placed His feet on his head and blessed Gaya.

Remember that in Sadguru seva or service, sacrifice is important. We should feel Guru's presence every where and meditate up on Him where ever we are. This is the essence of this verse.

SLOKA 25--GURU MURTHI SMARE NITYAM, GURU NAMA SADA JAPETH-----
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We should always imagine our Guru's form, His face, His words. We should greet people with the words JAYA GURU DATTA. We should always follow Master's words. We should recall the advice given by our Sadguru, repeat it, remember it and follow it. Just as a teacher repeats the lessons for the benefit of his students, even Guru repeats sermons and discourses so that it remains in our mind. We should not have any other feeling other than devotion to Sadguru. We should meditate in such a way that we should feel His presence in every Atom. This is known as Triputi Swaroop in Lalithasahasranama. We should develop interest in worship and meditation. Then we become eligible to do good things. Then we can see His Omnipresence in fire, earth, ether, water, sun, moon and other planets. When we develop such feelings, we become broad minded, narrow feelings disappear. We realise how the energy of God is moving the entire creation. This realisation comes to us through the guidance of Sadguru. Kabir a great devotee of lord Rama says that if God and Guru come and appear before him together, he will prostrate before Sadguru first. He says because of Guru, he was able to see God. All the eight forms of creation are merged in Guru. It is important to always have immense faith, devotion and understanding towards Guru.

SLOKA 26--GURU VAKTRA STITHA VIDYAA PRAPYATE TATPRASAADATAHA-----

If we love and worship the creator of the universe, we learn to love and respect all His creations. We overcome the feelings of inferior, superior, high and low. We learn not to look down upon anything in this creation. We are involved in our worldly duties but our mind should be always rested on Guru dhyana just as a newly married girl will be thinking of her husband always, our mind should be meditating on Sadguru.

SLOKA 27--SWASHRAMANCHA SWAJAANTINCHA SWAKEERTHIM-----

We always talk about our caste, our wealth, our knowledge and education. We give a lot of importance to these things and isolate ourselves from the rest of the society. But Sri Swamiji has brought people together in Ashram and makes us pray together without seeing any difference. Sadguru's guidance and blessing is very important to achieve something great in life. We should strengthen devotion, faith and steadiness of mind. Praying to God only when we are in difficulty is not the correct way. God has gifted us this human body. We should use it for service. We should not compare Gods and judge that this God is superior and other Gods are not powerful. We should not give too much of importance to caste, position, wealth and so on. This identification is only for carrying on worldly duties. For example, to go on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Amarnath in the Himalayas, we have to depend on a mule or a pony. If the pony drops us down, our life is gone. No creature is inferior. In order to climb the ladder of spiritual evolution, what we need is determination and tireless effort, not these worldly identification. Chanting Gods name, singing His glory, reading sacred books, will help us to face the final reality - Death. Give up afflictions, develop dispassion and stay away from arrogance or ego. Let everyone attain this state.

SLOKA 28--ANANYASHINTAYANTO YE DHRAVAM TESHAM PARAM PADAM-----

This verse is very important. It emphasizes that we should always revere and respect our parents and Guru till we die. There are no two ways in this practice. If we err, we should repent. A spiritual aspirant should develop purity of mind. Mind should be free from bad thoughts and we should develop pure love towards God just like Radha towards Lord Krishna. Radha is an embodiment of pure love. The word Radha means full of divine love towards Lord Krishna. It also means going to the temple regularly, doing service without any selfish motive. It is worshipping God whole heartedly and the feeling that God is within us always and fill our heart with Godly feelings. Sri Swamiji in the book Neeti Maala has mentioned that if we want to compete in Bhakti or devotion, we should compete with Radha. In the

holy Bhagavad Gita it is said that whoever surrenders to God completely, He will take care of their welfare. Incessant practice, pure devotion is important to achieve peace of mind. This is the result or benefit we get by sincere prayers. It is important to persistently put in our efforts and not worry about the result. It should be left to God's will. We should preserve and maintain pure devotion. Physically, we should render service but all our service should be performed with devotion and sincerity.

SLOKA-29 GURORMUKHASCHA SAMPRAPYA DEVI BRAHMATMA SAMVIDAM-----

In our relationship with God, there should be no calculations of gains and losses. It should not be business like relation. Praying to God to fulfill a desire is not wrong but to think that if I do this Seva or service, You should grant this boon to me - this kind of thinking is wrong. If things do not work out the way we want, we stop believing God. Untiring devotion and determination should be practiced. Napoleon was a great king. He was confronted by a big army of his enemy. The war was not declared. Napoleon requested that he should be given one minute time to speak his mind to the enemies. All the enemy soldiers turned towards him to listen to him and in that one minute Napoleon's army attacked the enemies and they were victorious. In this example we learn that words are like pearls of wisdom but it can bring about one's end also (mrityu). Clarity in speech and control over our speech is very important.

SLOKA-30 GUKHARA SCHANDAKARO HI RUKHARASTEJA USCHYATE-----

The letter GU means darkness, ignorance and lack of proper knowledge. The letter RU means one who dispels ignorance. Thus the word GURU has comprehensive meaning. Guru shows various paths to God realization. He removes darkness and gives light meaning wisdom.

SLOKA-31 GUKHARA SCHANDAKHATASTU RUKHARASTANNIRUDHAKAHA-----

In this verse, darkness means being sinful also. A true Guru is always concerned about the baggage of sins that we accumulate. He finds ways and means to reduce the baggage of sins. We should be very cautious in our approach to Guru.

We should follow His words of wisdom and not question it. We some times make a mountain of a mole hill when we are confronted with difficulties. Others with a strong mind take it in their stride and face the challenges boldly. Thus the main objective of Guru Gita is to dispel ignorance and give wisdom.

SLOKA 32 GUKHARASYAT GUNATEETHO ROOPATEETHO RUKHARAKHAHA-----

Guna means intellect and Gunateetha means beyond intellect. Roopa means form and Roopateetha means beyond any form or formless. Since Guru is beyond intellect and form, He is regarded as the Supreme soul. Sri Narasimha Saraswati, one of the incarnations of Dattatreya, appeared before many disciples at the same time. How was that possible? It is because He is Roopateetha. We should give up too much of affliction to this body. Why? This helps us to develop dispassion. It also kills our ego and keeps the mind crystal clear.

SLOKA 33--GUKHARO PRATHAMO VARNAHA-----

The word GU denotes ignorance or false identification with the body. The word RU denotes that it removes the illusion of mind that blinds us and to understand supreme reality. The verses from 29 to 35 have taught us the origin and meaning of the word GURU. It is important to chant these verses and initial shlokas in the preamble everyday so that we constantly remember and follow the teachings. Take the example of Sage Yajnavalkya who forgot the mantras because of some sin. He forgot all that he had learnt and again by the blessings of Goddess Saraswathi and Guru, he could recall all the knowledge. Swamiji cautions us that if we forget Guru and do spiritual practice, it will not give expected result. We should always chant GURU BRAHMA, GURU VISHNU, GURU DEVO MAHESHWARAHA...

SLOKA 34--EVAM GURU PADAM SRESHTAM DEVANAMAPI DURLABHAM-----

In this way, the word GURU is very auspicious and precious too. Even the celestial singers like Gandharvas, Haa Haa Hoo Hoo keep chanting Guru Gita as they have realized that nothing is superior to Sadguru. It is difficult to explain in words the glory of Guru Principle. We fail in our words to describe His greatness. Then we just utter haa haa hoo hoo unable to find suitable words to sing in praise of God.

So far we learnt the origin, importance and significance of Guru Principle. It is equally important to follow Guru's teachings to the last letter and be safe.

SLOKA 35--GURORARADHANAM KARYAM SWAJIVATVAM NIVEDAYET-----

Devotion, dedication and humility are important in doing service to Guru. By chanting and singing Gods name, breathing improves, blood gets purified and we obtain merit or punya. Shabari was a great devotee of Lord Rama. When he was in exile in forest, he meets Shabari and accepts fruits offered by her. He came to bless Shabari and fulfill her wish. God will not accept anything without giving something; that is God's principle. Even we should follow the same rule. We should have gratitude and be grateful for all His mercies. When we make an offering to Guru, we should do it wholeheartedly renouncing desires. Some devotees pluck flowers from Appaji's garden and offer it to Him. This is nothing great. We should grow flowers in our garden by our effort and then offer it to Sadguru. Then it means you have offered something by your effort. After having done that, give up the feeling that it is mine and I have offered it. Samarpane means giving up the "I" feeling. Consider the example of Chanakya who established Magadha kingdom and gave it to Chandragupta, similarly Saint Vidyanarya built the famous Vijayanagar kingdom and gave to Hakka Bukka brothers. Even Sri Shankaracharya established Mutts in all 4 corners of India but none of these great people kept it for themselves. They gave it to the society. All this was done for our benefit or for the sake of mankind.

SLOKA 36--AASANAM SHAYANAM VASTRAM VAAHANAM BHOOSHANADHIKAM

In order to offer something to Guru, we should become deserving to offer. For example to offer a seat, we should first clean the place, spread a clean carpet and with a clean mind we should sit and meditate. It is also our duty to provide things used by Sadguru like clothes, bed or a sofa. He may use those things just for our satisfaction. Guru feels happy not because of the things we offer but by our readiness to give up. Way back in 1970's, Sri Swamiji lived in a thatched hut and it was open to sun and rain and even snakes. For the benefit of devotees and their comfort, He built such a beautiful Universal prayer hall. Thus what we offer to Guru, He gives it back to us with more benefits. The essence of this verse is that

we should sit in a clean place, with a clean mind, with clean clothes, without a wavering mind and meditate. Guru feels happy not because of our offerings but by our renunciation.

SLOKA 37--KARMANA MANASA VAACHA NITYA MAARADHAYODGURUM-----

When we prostrate before Guru, it means we are showing our intellect to Him. From this action, wisdom emerges. Doing Namaskara means we are offering everything at Sadguru's lotus feet. SAASHTAANGA Namaskara means with our 8 organs we bow down to Sadguru. This implies total surrender. We should maintain purity in our thoughts, words and deeds. This will help us control our senses gradually. We should not hesitate or feel shy to prostrate in front of Sadguru. When we go to a temple, we bow down to the deity. This action helps us to blend our mind with God. In other words, mind becomes wedded to God. This leads to attain good health and peace of mind.

SLOKA 38--SHAREERAMARTHAM PRAANAANSCHA SADGURUBHYO NIVEDHAYET--

Sage Vasishta, Shukha, Janaka are remembered for their depth in knowledge and wisdom. Janaka was a great king, had great knowledge but He was very humble. His Guru was Sage Yajnavalka. He teaches Janaka sacred scriptures, Vedas and Puranas. King Janaka learnt everything with devotion. As Guru dakshina (fees) Janaka offers his kingdom itself. He carried his Guru on his shoulders to show Mithila kingdom. This was the extent of Janaka's devotion and humility. This is an example of total surrender to Sadguru and it is called Daasya bhava.

SLOKA 39--GURUREVA JAGATSARVAM BRAHMA VISHNU SHIVATMAKAM-----

Sri Swamiji is transforming our lives by teaching us the importance of service, sacrifice, kindness, selflessness and surrender. Lord Rama did not become great by killing Ravana but by his devotion to parents, his love and concern for his subjects, to always keep up his words and as an able administrator. In the same manner Sri Swamiji is training us to be good and useful human beings. He teaches us unity, harmony with nature. He even rears birds and animals and transforms them. Sri Swamiji is like a huge tree and we take shelter under this tree and avail the fruit of spirituality, sincere devotion and peace of mind.

SLOKA 40----YASYANUGRAHA MAATRENA HRUDYUTAPADYET TATAKSHANAT-----

This verse tells us how to know who our Guru is. By whose blessings we enjoy a state of Bliss, by His glance, one becomes enlightened, by seeing Him, we forget our miseries and we become more courageous, zealous and happy, HE ALONE IS OUR SADGURU.

SLOKA 41-BHASMA KEETA VIDAMTAM HI DEHAM STOOLAM VARAANANE-----

Till now Swamiji taught us about the path to be followed to worship Sadguru, from this sloka onwards, Swamiji teaches us the secret of chanting GURUGITA and the hidden meaning and benefits. This body is made up of water, air, fire and so on. When the body dies, it is burnt and it becomes ash or bhasma. The soul continues its journey. Our association is with the body 'I' and that should disappear. So the question is when will this journey end? In order to travel in the right direction, Swamiji has given us the following address - that is devotion, knowledge, dispassion, service, merit by doing noble deeds. This address will help us to reach our destination namely salvation or freedom from rebirth.

SLOKA 42-SAMSAARA VRUKSHA MAARUDHAHA PATANTE NARAKARNAVE-----

Here our worldly life is compared to a tree and we have climbed the tree of material life. We do not know when we would fall from this tree. So let us become alert and follow Sadguru's teachings before it is too late. In fact at every stage of our life, there is a reminder of death. A young baby grows to be a grown up girl, then she gets married, bears children, becomes old, loses her teeth and finally she dies. In this example, there is death of childhood, adulthood, middle age and old age. The body perishes but the soul continues its journey. Sadguru lifts us from this fall, protects us and guides us in the right direction.

SLOKA 43-GURU BRAHMA GURU VISHNU GURU DEVO MAHESWARAHA-----

This verse is a constant reminder to us about the importance of Sadguru in our life. We should regularly chant GURUGITA, assimilate its meaning and follow it in our life.

SLOKA 44-AKHANDA MANDALAAKARAM VYAPTAM YENA CHARACHARAM-----

This verse has lot of significance. We should bring up our children in the path ordained by our Sadguru. They should be trained to chant, recite and sing bhajans. They should listen to Guru's advice and implement it in their lives. We should gather punya or merit by good actions. Heaven and hell is here, we suffer it or enjoy it according to our actions. So, let us always make a positive effort to be on right track, practice and should not give up half way under any circumstance. We go to Sadguru seeking redemption from our difficulties. There is nothing wrong in this but gradually we should change our ways for better by constantly listening to Guru's discourses, bhajans, music and meditation. This verse also tells us that God is all pervading and Guru helps us to realize that God resides everywhere, living or non living things. We bow to such a Guru who guides us towards the realization of God who is Jyothi Swaroopa (of the form of light).

SLOKA 45 - DEHE JEEVATVA MAAPANNAM CHAITANYAM NISHKALAM-----

The God principle is without any division, it is all pervading, limitless and not visible easily. But if we try to think who has created this universe and moving it in a systematic way according to a definite principle, we will understand the presence of God everywhere. It is through our Sadguru, we are able to get this realization and we humbly bow down to Him.

SLOKA 46--AKHANDAM PARAMAARTHAM SATH IKYAMCHATVAM
TATHOSHUBHAM-----

"TAT" means that which is indivisible and infinite. "TVAM" means that which is small, when both of them unite and become one, we merge into it. This verse highlights the importance of merging with creation. This feeling can be experienced but it is difficult to explain it. For example, there is an iron rod or ingot and this will be transformed into a steel vessel or a sauce pan or a ladle. But the original raw material is lump of iron ore. By such examples, we can deduce that things cannot be created without anything.

SLOKA-47-SARVASHRUTHI SHIRO RATHNA NEERAJITA PADAAMBUJAM-----

Sadguru bestows knowledge, wisdom and bliss. Do we gain knowledge by reading books alone? No, we need experience. For example, fire is present in stone, oil,

wood etc. When stones are crushed, fire comes out of it. This is how we experience the various sources of fire. Similarly in order to experience the state of bliss, we start reading, understanding and analyzing. To reach the state of real experience of Godhood, we need the guidance of great souls, and then we can verify whether our experience was right or wrong. Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa , Sri Ramana Maharshi had divine experiences and they shared it with others. Sadguru makes us do noble deeds, He creates positive thoughts in us and in this way we attain SAT, CHIT AND ANANDA (bliss). Sadguru is the embodiment of that state of bliss and like powerful light He is spreading it to those who follow His teachings. All the sacred scriptures, Vedas and Holy texts offer Neerajana or Haarathi to the Sadguru. AMBUJA means lotus flower. It blooms when the sun rises. Even the sacred scriptures cannot be understood by merely reading it. VEDANTA is like the lotus bud. It opens up by the grace of Sadguru. Worldly subjects can be understood easily but the scriptures are not understood easily. We get many doubts when we read Holy Scriptures. We feel it is beyond our intellect. So, what should we do? We should experience it by constant reading, assimilation and repetition. We get light by switching it on. Similarly, there is a beautiful lotus bud in our heart, when the light of Sadguru's teachings falls on it, it blooms. For reaching this state we need rigorous practice and probably many human births.

SLOKA-48-CHAITANYAM SHASHWATHAM SHANTHAM MAAYATEETHAM-----

It means that that the energy of God has no beginning or end. It is all pervading. It is permanent. It represents calmness or tranquility of mind. This feeling should permanently reside in our mind. This should sink in to our conscience. We are faced with numerous big problems in our lives. By Sadguru's guidance and advice we are able to confront those difficulties and find solutions. Many others do not have the blessings of Guru and they cry and become helpless when they face testing times. We are fortunate because Guru has trained us in the path of devotion, dispassion, meditation and singing Bhajans. We should always tread in this path, be it good times or bad times. Maayateeta means Guru is beyond illusion and knowledge. Niranjana means one who is unattached to any thing in

this world. The mind should dissolve in Naada or the primordial sound. When we chant DRAAM the 'AUM' is the origin and it merges in DRAAM. When we sing bhajans, our mind becomes calm and one with God. That is NAADOPAASANA. We all should tune our mind to sing the glory of God constantly. Guru is so compassionate that He illuminates wisdom in us and makes us deserving to experience oneness with God.

SLOKA 49-STAAVARAM JANGAMAM CHETI YATKINCHIJAGATICHALE-----

Staavara means the unmoving plants, trees hills and mountains. Jangama means the moving life such as birds, animals, reptiles, insects and human beings. In this world there are 81 lakh variety of creation.

We human beings know one thing very well - that is crying. We cry when we leave the world and we cry when we come to this world. Gradually we develop some awareness about this cycle of births and deaths. Imagine there is a running race competition and three prizes namely first, second and third is awarded. The first prize winner stands on the top victory stand and the 2nd and 3rd prize winners stand down. This example shows that the 2nd and 3rd place winners should strive to reach the top by continuous effort. This applies in our spiritual life also. So we should be alert, cautious and remember that energy comes from God alone. The all knowing God has filled us with energy which helps us to acquire knowledge. This knowledge turns into wisdom by the infinite grace of Sadguru. We bow down to the all pervading Guru principle.

SLOKA-50-TVAM PITA TVAM CHA ME MAATA TVAM BANDHUSTAVAM-----

Guru is our father, mother, friend and God Himself. We have come closer to Guru through devotion, chanting and meditation. He removes worldly attachments which is transient. We should not worship Sadguru only to remove our difficulties but also to transform our lives spiritually. We should give up attachments be it in good times or bad times because both are not permanent. Only when we develop dispassion, our mind gets wedded to Guru principle. We should sincerely perform

worldly duties and good results will automatically follow it. We should be focused in our aim and steadily follow the path shown by our beloved Guru. Swamiji says turn inwards, do some introspection, our conscience will guide us in the right direction. Guru Himself grants the ability to analyze and interpret our true self.

SLOKA-51-YATSATTAYA JAGATSATVAM YATHPRAKASHENA-----

As long as God or Shiva resides in us we have praana or life. Once Shiva leaves the body only Shava (corpse) remains which is lifeless. It is because of the presence of God energy we are living. This energy is filled in all beings. This power of realization comes to us by Sadguru's grace. When we meditate with concentration, we experience a kind of happiness or joy. This state of bliss should become everlasting and permanent. We should pray to Sadguru to bless us with permanent Bliss.

SLOKA-52-YENA CHETAYATAPURYA CHITTAM CHETAYATE NARAHA-----

One who is present in my conscious and sub conscious level, one who is creating thoughts in my mind, one who is energizing me into action, to that Guru I bow down in all humility. Even an inert object becomes active by the grace of Sadguru. We should remember that it is only by Sadguru's energy, we are alive in all the three levels of consciousness that is the dream state, the wakeful state and sub conscious state.

SLOKA-53-YASYA JNANADIDAM VISHWA MADRUSHAM BHEDA BHEDATAHA-----

We human beings always show discrimination. Sometimes we are prejudiced towards some people. We do not treat everybody alike. It is only by Guru's grace, we can overcome differences and develop equanimity. I bow down to such a Sadguru who helps us to go beyond these differences and realize the truth.

SLOKA 54--YA YEVA KARYA ROOPENA KARANENAPI BHATI CHA-----

Karya means work or duty. Lakshya means goal or destination. We put in lot of effort to reach our goal. Guru is both the means and end in our lives. Sage Bharadwaja performed a long penance. There was a big deluge but He lived even after the destruction. Atma has no birth or death, it is immortal. To reach this stage of understanding, we need Sadguru's guidance and blessing. I bow down to such a Sadguru who is beyond reasoning.

SLOKA 55--JNANA SHAKTI SWAROOPAYA KAAMITARTHA PRADAYINE-----

Guru represents wisdom and divine energy .He fulfills our worldly wishes such as wealth, education, jobs and much more. He also grants salvation. He has the ability to grant anything that we ask for. He is our guide in worldly life and also spiritual life. (PRAVRITTI MARGA AND NIVRITTI MARGA).The most important fact to be remembered is that our devotion should not be an outward show or fake display of Bhakti (devotion). To follow the path of Dharma(righteousness), Artha (earning honestly and spending it usefully), Kama (having wishes or desires that benefit the society at large) and Moksha or the desire for salvation, should be our main objectives in life. This is Pravritti Marga or the path of karma. Nivritti Marga is the path of detachment or dispassion. Santh Kabir was great devotee of Lord Ram. He begs God for one more life so that he can be in the company of pious people, he wished for Satsanga or the company of enlightened devotees.

SLOKA 56--ANEKA JANMA SAMPRAPTA KARMA KOTI VIDHAHINE -----

Gurugita is taking us towards the path of detachment now. We pray to Guru to relieve us of our sufferings and bless us with peace of mind. To wash away our sins we should pray and do service. We should always remember our Sadguru, in times of happiness as well in times of sorrow. The word Guru has two syllables, GA and VU. GA symbolizes Ganapathi, the remover of obstacles. He grants boons or Ashta Siddhis. VU represents the all powerful God or Paramatma. We have committed thousands of mistakes in our life. So we should get rid of these sins. The only way is to pray and see that we do not make those mistakes again. Take the case of a beggar. He is begging because of his sins . Let us be kind to them and

donate whatever is possible. We should not become beggars in the next birth because of our selfishness or miserly attitude. All good deeds amounts to Daana or charity. Sri Swamiji conducted Vedanta classes. Once He told the students to fill pots with water and then see the reflection of the Moon in it. A number of Moons were seen although it is one Moon. In this way God is one but we see Him and worship Him in different forms and different ways. Once a disciple asked his Guru to show him God. The Guru agreed and took him to a river and made him immerse his head in water. The disciple got scared and was anxious to come out of water. He was struggling to get fresh air and breathe. Then Guru lifts him up and says just as you consciously struggled to breathe while drowned in the river, the same kind of effort and eagerness and longing should be there to see God. Air is life. Without selfishness we should be prepared to acquire Jnana or wisdom. To see the Sun, we should have proper vision and eye sight. Our mind should always dwell on Guru and keep on chanting His divine names and bhajans. Guru has the capacity to burn our past accumulated sins but we should become deserving to undergo that kind of purification process.

SLOKA 57--NA GURURADHIKAM TATVAM NA GURORADHIKAM TAPAH-----

This statement is declared in Gurugita and nobody can dispute it. It is valid and proven in the scriptures. No penance is greater than Guru, there is nothing more important than Guru Tattva and there is no wisdom that is greater than Guru. Lord Krishna has proclaimed that He is the end goal of all kinds of penance in Geetha. The tapasya, wisdom or the deep knowledge of scriptures is of no use without Guru Smarana or praying to Guru. When we begin a puja ritual we chant the words from scriptures "Sri Gurubhyo Namaha". Brahma the creator, created Guru. He is Brahma Swaroopa or symbolizes Brahma. Following this He explained the Vedas and other holy texts. Brahma in the form of Guru shows the right path to his disciples. We cannot fathom the depth of Guru principle. It is like looking for salt in the vast ocean. We cannot measure the depth of Guru's knowledge or wisdom. We are too small and our thinking is shallow. In the epic Ramayana, Ram and Seetha should be our role models not Ravana or Shurpanaka. Without Guru's blessings our spiritual practice will not be fruitful. Take the example of Ekalavya,

the great archer who could rival even Arjuna in his archery skills. He had single pointed concentration of mind, had respect and reverence for Guru but did not have Guru's guidance or direction. The knowledge obtained by reading sacred books has to be assimilated. This is possible only when we take shelter under Sadguru. Because He knows our capacity and also whether we are progressing in the right direction or not.

SLOKA 58--MANNATHASRI JAGANNATHO MADGURUSTRI JAGADGURU-----

My Guru is my Lord and Master, therefore, He is the master of the entire universe. He is guiding me in my spiritual path, so He is verily the Guru of all the three worlds. Lord Dattatreya is Adiguru. He has no beginning or end in the real sense. He is my Soul, so He is residing in all forms of life. I bow down to such a Sadguru.

SLOKA 59--GURURADHIANADHISCHA GURO PARAMA DAIVATAM-----

Is there anybody who is equal to Guru in this world? When we make a comparison, we realize Sadguru is greater than everyone else. We should believe that He is the incarnation of Brahma. He is always with us protecting us every minute. We are leading a good life because of Sadguru's grace. He is incomparable and His grace is unmatched. I bow down humbly to such a Sadguru.

SLOKA 60--EKA EVA PARO BANDHU VISHAME SAMUPASTITE-----

Sri Swamiji says think of me as your family member or friend and you can discuss all your problems which you cannot disclose to others. He is our true friend who can solve our problems because He is not prejudiced. Lord Rama had a old charioteer who was very loyal to him. When Ram returned with Seetha after vanquishing Ravana, people started talking all kinds of unpleasant things about Seetha Maatha. Ram was perturbed and asks the charioteer what he should do in this situation. The charioteer questions Rama why He is seeking his advice. To this Rama says the charioteer has no likes or dislikes, has no love or hatred towards

anybody, is without pride or prejudice and has equanimity. Therefore he is asking his opinion. All these traits are there in our Sadguru. He empathizes with us. Only Sadguru can give us convincing solutions to our problems. He does not talk ill of us, does not think bad about us. He is like a trusted relative or friend to us to whom we can disclose all our problems. At the same time we should share our joy and happiness with Him. Guru does not expect anything from us. He is without any desires. He is an ocean of compassion. We are so fortunate to have such a Sadguru who guides even in our worldly matters and gives focus to our spiritual life also. I bow down to such a Sadguru.

SLOKA 61--GURU MADHYE STITHAM VISHWAM VISHWA MADHYE STITHO GURU-

It is the 40th day of Chaturmasa. Gurugita discourse is flowing like a river incessantly. When we are listening to an interesting topic like this, we feel we do not need anything else. I am very touched by the phrase SACHCHIDANANDA LALITHAM. It is like a mother fondling her baby.

The entire Universe is in Guru and Guru resides in the universe. Therefore He is verily VISHVARUPA or the all pervading energy. God has five important aspects. He is ASTI, BHATI, PRIYAM--meaning He is there, is shining brightly and He is ANANDA RUPA or in the state of bliss. VIRUPA means He has forms but it is difficult to describe them. When Satrajith came to Dwaraka wearing the precious gem, people exclaimed the Sun God has come because of the brightness of the gem. The same Lord Shiva is worshipped in cylindrical form (lingakara). We have given these forms to God. We want to identify God by giving Him form and name. At the end, we attain blissful state.

PRAPANCHA means the combination of five elements. The all pervading Sadguru is in the form of a small atom, He is in the form of TARANGA or waves. He is in the midst of us when we are listening to a discourse, singing bhajans, or while doing Puja. This means VISHWA MADHYE STITHO GURU. But it is a little difficult to visualize GURU MADHYE STITHAM VISHWAM. We should train ourselves to reach this stage. In the epic Mahabharatha, Arjuna sees the magnificent form of Lord Krishna. Similarly Yashodha sees the entire universe in Krishna's mouth. The great

king Bali saw the Vamana Rupa or the dwarf form of Lord Vishnu. All these examples show that God has form and He is formless too. The highest form of meditation is experiencing God in the whole universe. Kumaraswamy and Ganapathi were put to a test by their parents Shiva and Parvathi. They were asked to go round the world and come back to see who reaches first. Skanda went swiftly mounting on his peacock. Ganapathi thought for a while and then went round His parents three times and completed the circumbulation. This instance proves GURU MADHYE STITHAM VISHWAM, VISHWA MADHYE STITHO GURU.

SLOKA 62-BHAVARANYA PRAVISHTASYA DINGMOHA BRANTHA CHETASA-----

Our sense organs are like thieves. We do not know when they will enter and loot or destroy everything. We should be always on guard and keep them away from controlling us. The life of a house holder is compared to a dense forest and we do not know the way out of this forest. It is the grace of Sadguru that helps us to find a path to come out of the jungle. For this we need some preparation like remembering and chanting His divine names, some service to the needy and a little detachment to worldly life. In KALIYUGA whoever is in Bhakti Marga and is doing Guru Seva will not be harmed by anybody- this instruction was given by the creator Brahma Himself.

SLOKA 63, 64, 65,66 NOT IN THE FOLDER. FIND TRACK 37 AND 38.

SLOKA 67--SHIVERUSHTE GURUSTRATA GURORUSHTENA KASCHANA-----

If we do something wrong knowingly, God will get angry at us and may punish us. In that situation Guru comes to our help and protects us. But if Guru gets angry, there is nobody to save us from His wrath. So we should be always cautious and see that our bad behavior is avoided and we should not annoy Sadguru. It is important to follow the instructions given by our Guru. Sage Patanjali is said to be the incarnation of ADISHESHA. He is the embodiment of all knowledge. Once he thought of recording all this knowledge in writing. So he entrusted this work to

his 1000 disciples who were seated on one side. There was a screen in between the Guru and the disciples and they were asked not to look this side or that side. Till the lessons were completed they were asked not to lift their head and not even look at others. This was the rule. Many days passed like this. One of the boys wanted to go out to attend nature's call. Then he saw the other boys who were busy writing about SHILPA SHASTRA, SASYA SHASTRA, DEVASTHANA SHASTRA, SAMUDRA SHASTRA and many more. He wanted to know the secret and he became curious. He opened the curtain and to his astonishment, he saw the thousand headed snake reciting all the Shastras simultaneously. He was shell shocked and forgot everything. The serpent became angry and all the boys turned into ashes in no time. The boy who had gone out returned and found a big heap of ash. The Guru was angry because he went out without his permission and cursed him to become a Brahma Rakshasa. This instance warns us that we should not misbehave and face Guru's wrath. Sage Patanjali wrote the YOGA SUTRA and removed Vak dosha or mistakes in words and grammar. Charaka was a famous physician who had discovered medicines for various kinds of ailments. He was great doctor who cured people of their illnesses. He would personally visit the patients and thus wrote CHARAKA SAMHITA a treatise on medicine. We should be wise enough to make use of Sadguru in our spiritual life. We may commit mistakes but we should not repeat them. We should not think ill of our Sadguru even in our dreams.

SIGNIFICANCE OF RUDRAKSHA BEED.

Tripurasura was a demon who had acquired lot of powers by severe penance. He was a staunch Shiva bhakta (devotee). He was troubling the pious and innocent people. So Lord Shiva used the Aghoraastra (a weapon) and destroyed him. During the battle so many innocent people were also killed and Shiva was full of sorrow seeing the death of innocent people. Tears rolled down from His eyes and they fell on the earth. From these tears Rudraksha sapling was born and it grew into a big tree. Rudrakshi is used in worship and chanting as a Japamala (rosary). Rudra means Shiva, Akshi means eyes. This tree was born from Shiva, his compassion and kindness. After 18 years the Rudraksha tree is giving the seeds and it is very auspicious.

SLOKA 68-ATRI NETRA SHIVA SAAKSHAT DVIBHUJASCHA PARO HARI -----

Gurugita is not a mere compilation of verses or Slokas. It is a comprehensive, sacred literature. The heritage of Guru worship is very ancient. It started with Lord Krishna who is Jagadguru. Sage Vyasa explained Guru principle in Skanda purana and gave us the Gurugita. Shiva is shown as having three eyes, residing in Mount Kailasa. The three eyes represent the sun, the moon and the fire. We worship these forces of nature. Sadguru is Shiva Himself and He is Managalakari (who gives auspicious results). Lord Vishnu is depicted as SHANKU, CHAKRA, GADHADAARI (the conch, the wheel, the mace, the lotus) with four arms. Guru is Hari without the four arms. Brahma the creator has four heads, represents four Vedas and grants wisdom. Guru is truly Brahma without the four heads. All the three energies of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva is encompassed in Guru. He dispels ignorance and gives us knowledge. In Kritayuga, Dattatreya lived and preached the common people. He went to every house hold, heard their difficulties and showed them the way to come out of it. Sage Vasishtha was Lord Rama's Guru in Tretayuga. Sri Krishna was the Guru in Dwapara yuga and in Kaliyuga, Adi Shankaracharya is the Guru. We are so fortunate that we have Sri Swamiji as our Guru in our midst to guide us. Dattatreya is the son of Sage Atri and Anasuya. Netra means eyes and the son is like eyes to his parents. This is the meaning of ATRI NETRA. Dattatreya has three heads and six hands. Truly enlightened souls could see this form of Lord Dattatreya.

SLOKA 69--NITYAYA NIRVIKARAYA NIRAVADYAYA YOGINE NISHKALAYA-----

Shiva is one who brings auspiciousness. Guru is none other than Shiva Swaroopa. So He removes evil effects and gives us good results. Shiva cools our mind when we are faced with difficulties. Guru is without any desire, faultless, unattached and several other traits are there in Him. Since Guru is an embodiment of all these qualities, He is able to give it to us. I bow down to such a Sadguru who is Mangalaprada.

SLOKA 70--SHISHYA HRUTPADMA SURYAYA SATYAYA JNANA ROOPINE-----

In our day , there three important necessities. They are listening holy scriptures, talking about dispassion or detachment and being under the guidance of Sadguru. Our mind should be just like a lotus which is unaffected by the dirt that surrounds it. It is pure. Then the rays of wisdom from Sadguru fall on it and then it blooms. Being truthful, practicing the truth and living up to it are very important. We should chant Guru mantra unceasingly and this should be experienced and should be firmly rooted in us. All this is possible by true devotion.

SLOKA 71-UPAYOPEYA ROOPAYA SADUPAYA PRADARSHINE-----

Gurugita chanting is going on in this Chaturmasa and the crown mantra or verse is SHIVAYA GURAVE NAMAHA. We may get a question what do we gain by all this? One probable answer is we get knowledge. It may not be possible for everyone to be engaged in Guru seva. Everyone may not be given the chance to do Guru Seva , only some selected souls are there for it. So what should others do? Physical Seva or service alone is not Guru Seva. We should be engaged in social service as directed by our Sadguru. We can even clean the Ashram or temple premises, read and explain holy scriptures. Taking the family members also in this path of service is essential. We should be in the habit of reading Datta Charita regularly. Angirasa was a great sage and had a disciple by name Deepaka. He was constantly engaged in Guru seva, looking after His needs and attending to him always. He was very much interested in doing physical seva. Once when he was washing his Guru's feet, he noticed a wound and asked his Guru about it. Angirasa said, "Long ago, I harmed an insect and killed it and this wound is the result of that sin. He also says that this wound will grow bigger and will cause him more pain and he is bound to suffer this. So he planned to go to Kashi the holy pilgrimage of Shiva and spend his last days there. In case the wound heals he would come back. Hearing this Deepaka became sad and decided to go with his Guru to Kashi. Thus they reached Kashi and had darshan of Annapurna devi and Vishveshwara. Soon the wound spread and caused a terrible skin infection all over the body. Guru lost his vision

also. Deepaka, the disciple, whole heartedly took care of his Guru, used to clean the wounds, apply medicine and cook food for him. Every morning he would get up early, have bath in the Ganga river and attended to the needs of his Guru. Sometimes his Guru would get angry at him, shout at him, scold him but he never lost patience. Touched by this Guru seva, Lord Vishveshwara appeared before him what he wants. He replied that he does not want anything. Lord Vishnu appeared before him and asked him what boon he wants because he has done so much of Guru seva. Deepaka said he will ask his Guru what he wants and goes to him. Then he thought if he asks the gods to cure his Guru, he will not be able to serve him and so he said give me real devotion to Guru and service to guru always and that is all I want. Like this they lived in Kashi for 21 years and this was done to test the strength of his devotion. We should be mentally and physically be prepared for Guru seva. All forms of service is holy, even cleaning the temple and keeping the surroundings clean is a holy act . Whenever we get an opportunity, we should do service . We should give work to the body, keep it well engaged, pray, chant, recite, repeat guru mantra, do puja, sing bhajans, read good books. Direct and indirect service-both are beneficial to us.

SLOKA 72-KARYA KAARANA ROOPAYA ROOPAROOPAYA TE SADAA-----

When Sri Swamiji was in Trinidad, someone asked what is the difference between Guru, Sadguru and Jagadguru. The teacher who gives us formal education in a school is Guru. Sadguru means one who gives us spiritual education. He may initiate us with Guru mantra and show the way to get rid of our sins. Sri Krishna is called Jagadguru. All the three Gurus are important. Worldly education is necessary to get a job and deliver our responsibilities. This worldly education leads us to spiritual life and acquire knowledge . Each one is complementary to the other. There was an incident in Vijayawada when Gurugita discourse was going on. KARYAKAARANA ROOPAYA- some people thought chanting this verse will give them rupaya means money and so they were chanting Gurugita! We should love chanting Gods name, we should have faith and untiring practice. Our doubts will get clarified when we have clarity in our thinking. Kaarana means that which is required to prepare something, Kaarya means the end product. The

pot is made of mud, it breaks and we cannot separate mud, it has lost its identity. God created this body, gave a form, gave energy. So we should make use of this birth . God has granted immeasurable energy to see Him, feel His presence, establish Him in our heart permanently.

SSLOKA 73-DRIGDRUSHYA DRUSHTA ROOPAYA NISHPANNA NIJA ROOPINE-----

There are certain adjectives or phrase to glorify God. They are NITYA, SHUDDHA, BUDDHA, MUKTA. These cannot be applied anywhere else. These are the characteristics of God. The one who is seeing, the seen and the sight are all one, that is God. All are His divine forms only. He is infinite and is unmatched. There is nobody superior to Him. In Andhra there was a Muslim devotee who used to watch Swamiji's program regularly on the ETV. He said Swamiji's teachings are similar to what is given in the holy Koran. He used to recite OM NAMAHA SHIVAYA. He wanted Shiva mantra. We can pray to God in many ways but the energy is one and the same.

SLOKA 74--GUNADHARAYA GUNINE GUNAVARJITA ROOPINE

Gurugita contains teachings for one and all. What we need to do is to have sincere devotion, faith and intense practice. There should be no confusion. He is the foundation for all noble qualities, He is the embodiment and essence of all virtues. He is born at the same time he has no birth also. He is ATMA SWAROOPA and within us. I bow down to such a Sadguru.

SLOKA 75--ANAADYAYA AKILADYAYA MAAYINE GATAMAAYINE-----

It is the general practice to reaffirm the truth by repeating it again and again. The truth is one but it has to be driven home, therefore repetition is necessary. Galava Maharshi set off on a pilgrimage from the forest. He saw Hanuman idol consecrated in a temple on the way. He believed that Hanuman had supernatural powers and wanted to see him. He asked his Guru. He gave him the mantra HANUMATHE NAMAHA. He told him to keep on chanting this mantra and also to keep away weapons that he had with him. Nonstop, he chanted the mantra,

Hanuman appeared to Him in the form of a monkey. This is intense faith and tireless effort to reach the goal. We should withstand the tests Guru puts us through, we should never lose heart, we should believe in our strength. Slowly we will reach the destination. Guru helps us to come out of illusions.

SLOKA-76--SARVA MANTRA SWAROOPAYA SARVA TANTRA SWAROOPINE-----

There are thousands of ways to realize the existence of God. Tantra means the form of God and how it came into being. Yantra means all that is required in creating something, twenty four principles, Lalitha Sahasra Nama has a line SARVAMANTRA SWAROOPINI. To understand the purpose of creation, we need mantra. There are 72,000 crore mantras in scriptures. These alphabets or seed letters help us to understand the secret behind Gods creation. The letter DA has several meanings. For Gods or Angels, DA means self control or mano nigraha. For Demons DA means destruction or annihilation. For human beings DA means Datta - means give charity, donate for a good cause. Yantra means that which works or functions, mantra means creating good thoughts. Tantra means imagination and assembling the good thoughts, Yantra means putting them into action. God Himself creates, gives us realization and takes us towards the ultimate goal. All this is possible only by the grace of Sadguru.

SLOKA 77--MANUSHYA CHARMANA BADDHA-----

If we see Sadguru as an ordinary being, then the greatness of Sadguru cannot be experienced.

This is because we do not have true devotion and faith. We worship Him as a matter of routine. We should always compare ourselves with people who are better than us in virtues. When it comes to wealth, we should compare ourselves with less fortunate souls. We should always see good qualities in others not their faults or short comings. Vidvan means one who identifies the bad qualities in others and removes them. Generally, we only see the wrong in others thereby we also become like them. So what is the difference between Sadguru and us? He

sees only good in others. He comes down to our level to do good to us. For ex if Rama or Lord Krishna had proclaimed that they are great incarnations of Lord Vishnu, Ramayana or Bhagavata would not have become great epics. Lord Rama humbly said that He is the son of Dasharatha. Lord Krishna said that if people have faith and real devotion in Him, they too can attain Godliness like Him. Lord Rama took the form of an ordinary being and performed noble acts and extraordinary deeds. In the same way, even Guru does not display His extraordinary powers but remains simple and humble to guide us .The great Paramacharya of Kanchi kamakoti peetam ordained our Pujya Swamiji to take up the cause of spreading righteousness among ordinary souls like us and lead us to the path of salvation. If this instruction was not given to our Pujya Gurudeva, imagine what would have happened to us, our plight without our Sadguru. But it is Guru's unlimited compassion that is guiding us in our lives. We are in our SadGuru's boat, He is the captain of this boat and He is helping us to sail through this ocean of life. Guru is not getting any personal benefit by this and He does not expect anything in return for having helped us. The spring season comes not for its joy but for our sake. That is the time when flowers bloom and the trees bear fruits. In the year 1966, there was just Narayana peetha made of brick in ashram for Sri Swamiji to sit and give discourses. But He worked hard and brought up ashram to this level only for our benefit. Sri Balaswamiji gave the example of a silk worm in a cocoon which does not know how to come out of the cocoon and dies there. Similarly, the honey bee collects nectar from all the flowers and sucks from the lotus flower also. It gets covered or hidden in the lotus flower and does not make an attempt to come out. After the night passes, the day begins and from somewhere an elephant comes and tramples the lotus plant and the honey bee also dies. We should be like a spider in a cobweb which knows how to disentangle and come out of the web. Only by constant spiritual practice, we can identify Lord Shiva in Sadguru and follow Him incessantly.

SLOKA 78--SHIVAVADRASHYATE SAAKSHAT SRIGURU PUNYA KARMANAM-----

There are two types of human beings. virtuous and non-virtuous, sinful and kind. If we have done noble and kind deeds, Guru appears to us as Lord Shiva Himself.

We worship Him like God incarnate. But there are others who see the Guru as a human being and unable to comprehend His greatness. For instance, The Pandavas saw Lord Krishna as the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. They were able to identify His greatness. In the battle of Kurukshetra, Pandavas wanted only Krishna on their side not the million army. But Dhuryodhana wanted the billion army on his side thinking that with such a huge army they can win the battle. They were unable to realise the greatness of Lord Krishna. We should have strong determination to do good deeds. We should develop the power of discrimination. We should not harm any living being. For example, when Sri Swamiji offers firewood to perform Homa, He sees that all the insects that are there in firewood are removed carefully and then offers to fire god. Knowingly we should not harm these creatures. Swamiji says don't kill the mosquitoes instead use mosquito repellent like ALLOUT. Intelligently one should avoid committing sins. Be selfless, help the poor and the needy. Our body is like a Radio, we should tune it properly, so that it relays good programmes.

We should inculcate good habits, earn money by following righteous ways. Lord Hanuman is in the form of monkey but He attained the highest level of Godhood by constant practice and real devotion. Similarly to bless Bhakta Prahlada, Lord Vishnu appeared in the pillar and protected him. There was a senior devotee who used to come to Ashram regularly but had bad habits like drinking and smoking. One day Swamiji was sitting in the flower decked Mantapa and this old devotee came. Swamiji told him to fan him with a handmade fan as it was very hot. He stood close to Swamiji and fanned Him till the long queue of devotees had darshan of Swamiji. For nearly three hours he did that seva and he forgot about his drinking habit. Swamiji controlled his temptation to drink and over a period of time, he gave up alcohol completely and started doing service in ashram. Thus he gave up bad habits and the seeds of devotion was planted in his mind.

SLOKA 79--SRINATHA CHARANA DVANDVAM YASYAM DISHI VIRAJATE-----

It is said that the direction in which the holy place Kashi, Gaya or Mysore is located, we should bow down in reverence. Similarly, wherever our Sadguru is

travelling or staying, we should prostrate in that direction with the feeling that our Sadguru is always with us at all times. We should have the faith that my Guru is none other than Lord Srinath Himself. Sri Balaswamiji remembered the service rendered by Gangadhar the famous artist who did the cover page of Bhajana yogam book and also the service of late Chandrashekaraiah who used to accompany Swamiji on His tours.

SLOKA 80--TASMAIDISHE SATATA MANJALIRESHA NITYAM-----

Bala swamiji spoke about Sri Narahariteertha, (Swamiji's father) as it was the remembrance day. He was a great soul who attained salvation and in the month of shravana ashtami Narahariteertha Aaradhana is performed every year. He lived in Jayalakshmipuram and then shifted to mysore ashram. He lived in the then Rama shankara kuteera. He was good at composing poems on the spot and was very fond of doing Shiva japa(chanting shiva's name)

He used chant Shiva japa a million times and then offer it to Swamiji. He knew the sacred Mahabharatha and Bhagavatha by heart and would recite verses from that epic very often. He used to say that treading in the path of righteousness is very important . Sri Swamiji has shown by example how we respect our parents and elders.

Balaswamiji spoke about Arjuna the great archer and close follower of Lord Krishna. Arjuna was born in Phalguni star and Krishna was born in Shravana nakshtra and their age difference was just eight days. Both of them took many births and came in different forms. But Lord Krishna incarnated for uplifting the suffering people. He is aware of His previous incarnations . He knows the future also. He taught Geetha shastra to Lord Surya(Sun god) Himself. Thus Lord Krishna is Jagadguru meaning the Lord of all the worlds. Sadguru is in the form of light guiding us in darkness. We may get doubts like why did not Lord Krishna prevent the kurukshetra war or why did He not stop the great deluge. Why Krishna was injured by a hunter that eventually killed Lord Krishna? These are events that were destined to happen .These were just some reasons to bring the End of the world.

Sadguru is an embodiment of kindness who shows us the way in our most difficult times. He is the witness for all our good and bad actions. He is verily the King who resides in the palace of our heart. When we sincerely surrender ourselves and our lotus like heart at SadGuru's feet, all our doubts and apprehensions vanish. Mind gets clarity in thinking and dealing with worldly affairs also. Clarity in our thought and action comes by constant spiritual practice like observing rituals, chanting Gods name constantly, performing pooja, fasting on EKADASHI days, Sankashta chaturthi days, eating a few tulasi leaves, doing Abhishekha to SAALAGRAMAS, drinking teertha or sacred water after oblution are some rules that all of us need to follow.

SLOKA 81---URASA SHIRASA CHAIVA MANASA VACHASA DRISHA-----

The mind, the heart, the head, the hands, the limbs, the ears, the tongue and the eyes should together do prostration which is called ASHTANGA NAMASKARA. All these vital organs should visualise the presence of God and then do Namaskara. Concentration of mind is very important. Quite often our mind is wandering in hundred directions when we offer prostrations but that does not yield the desired result. Tongue will be chanting but eyes will be seeing something else. This is not correct. It is important to fix the mind in Guru either by singing bhajans with closed eyes or by chanting Guru mantra.

SLOKA 82--GURUKRUPA PRASADENA BRAHMA VISHNU MAHESHARAH-----

Today let us try to understand how to obtain Guru's blessings. What is the method we have to follow to obtain Guru's grace. Sometimes we may get a question who gives the energy or power to Brahma, Vishnu or Maheshwara to create, sustain and destroy. Whom does Lord Shiva worship. He says that he worships Lord Brahma to carry out the act of destruction. Ultimately it is clear that they too get their strength and energy by worshipping Guru. In whatever way we worship and pray, God comes to us and blesses us in that form. We accept God in that form when He blesses us. It is depending on the method of spiritual practice and our true devotion and the spiritual experience that we gain. All

these methods show us that Guru seva or service is important. We get energy by doing Guru seva. Here service means following the path shown by our Sadguru. It could be helping the poor, the needy or doing physical service like cleaning or washing. Thus it is clear that even Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva have obtained energy by doing Guru seva. We are fortunate because our Swamiji is our Sadguru who has come in the present form to guide us and uplift us.

SLOKA 83--DEVA KINNARA GANDHARVAHA PITARO YAKDHA CHARANAHA-----

It is very important to do service to Guru. When sage Kanva had to send his foster daughter Shakuntala to her husband's house, he advises her to affectionately serve elders and parents and respect them at all times. When Sudhama, Lord Krishna's childhood friend visits Him, Krishna makes him sit on a throne, washes his feet and offers respect. They both talk about their childhood days. Krishna asks whether sudhama remembers his guru Saandepani , worship him regularly or he has forgotten his Guru. Sudhama was in poverty and was finding it difficult lead his life. Krishna says that he is suffering because he has forgotten his Guru and he is completely drowned in worldly affairs. Krishna recalls how they would go together to collect sacred wood for fire worship and help Guru's wife in household duties also. One day it rained heavily and the wood got wet. They could not return home and Sandeepani was worried about his disciples welfare. When he finds them completely wet he said that they should have returned home immediately. But Krishna said that it is important to do their duty and they managed to reach home and deliver the necessary articles required for puja and fire worship. That is real Guru seva. Lord Krishna asks Sudhama whether he has brought some eatables for him and shyly he opened the sack and offered the beaten rice his wife had given. Krishna ate it and was satisfied. Sudhama felt ashamed to ask for any help and kept quiet but when he reached home he found that his house was transformed into a palace and his wife wore costly clothes and children looked happy. All this was granted by the Lord without asking Him . In this way Krishna teaches kuchela the importance of Guru seva and equally important to be grateful for Guru's teachings and the determination to follow it persistently. We should be always indebted to our parents, God and Guru. These

are known as three types of RUNAS. In order to repay our gratitude, we should offer food even to insects and animals. For example worshipping cow or GOPUJA. By making offerings to fire god during fire worship, we are indirectly giving food to the Gods. Then we should go round the temple three times which we call PRADAKSHINA. All these are ways of repaying our parents and Gods.

SLOKA 84--MADAHANKARA GARVENA TAPO VIDYABALANVITAHA-----

Ego or very high self esteem is an impediment to Guru seva. Service to Guru means following the path shown by Guru. In the story of Mahabharatha, the yakshas put a question to Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandavas. The question was what is the most surprising thing in the world. To this Yudhishtira replies although we see so many people dying and leaving this world every day, we tend to think that we are permanent in this world. Our life is like the mud pot or the water sack made of animal skin. When we immerse it in the well, it half fills itself and floats on the surface, again we immerse it in water and fill it. This action is repeated several times before we actually fill the pot fully with water and then we use the pulley and the rope to draw water to the surface. This is called GHATA YANTRA. Similarly our life is caught in the wheel of worldly life and find it difficult to come out of it. We should make the best use of this human birth which is rare and one should never think of committing suicide. That is a very cowardly act. We should face life boldly and wait till our natural end comes. Once a poor man wanted drown in the river and die. As he was walking towards the river, he happened to walk over a sack or a bag but he did not bother to check its contents. Actually the king had dropped a bag of gold coins but the poor man failed to see it. Like this the ever benevolent God shows us the way but we fail to see it. We commit mistakes in haste. There are blind people who read Bhagavadgita in Braille script but we don't have the sense to do it although all our faculties are in good condition.

Knowledge, wisdom and Penance are important in our life. When we meditate or do penance, the count is not very important. But our mind should be wedded to God while chanting or in meditation. We should experience ONENESS with God.

Sometimes we become arrogant even with our limited knowledge. We keep on bragging that we did one crore japa (chanting divine names.) Here the count is not so important but the concentration of mind is very important. The great sanskrit scholar Panini's Guru was vasanthopadyaya. He was aged, full of knowledge and humility. He gave initiation to Panini. He did not have a grain of ego in him in spite of his great knowledge. VIDYA DADATI VINAYAM meaning education should make us humble. Sometimes strength also makes us arrogant. In such a situation whatever we offer to Sadguru, it will not reach Him because we don't surrender to Sadguru with true devotion and simplicity. Offerings should be made in a humble way with total devotion. After all God gives us and we offer the same to Him in the form of fresh fruits, flowers or any kind of food(naivedya). Once Sri shankaracharya was confronted by a Buddha sanyasi(monk). The Buddhist monk asked him what makes him so great and powerful. To this Adi shankara replied that his Sadguru is residing in his heart always, his Guru is an embodiment of compassion, He has shown him the correct path and he is following the words of his Guru and moving in the right direction. We need Guru's grace to move in the correct path. Shankara was not arrogant or egoistic of his achievements, on the other hand he was humble and faithful to his Guru and that was the secret of his strength and knowledge. People may ask what is the use of chanting RAMANAMA?. We should know and believe that wherever Lord Rama's name is chanted with devotion, Hanuman resides there and protects us. YATRA YATRA RAGHUNATHA KEERTHANAM TATRA TATRA SHUBHA MASTAKANJALIM----

When the great poet Tulasidas was composing Ramayana in common language, a monkey used to sit with him regularly until he finished his writing. It was none other than Hanuman who came in that form and blessed him. If we have strong faith and belief, good results will definitely follow it. Swami Ramakrishna paramahansa prayed to Goddess Kaali in all devotion and attained salvation. God's benovelent hands are stretched in all directions to save us but we should have the common sense to hold on to it. We should acquire knowledge, strength and the ability to do Tapasya but we should never be arrogant or egoistic of our achievements. We should constantly watch our mind and caution it about these feelings.

SLOKA 85--DYANAM SHRUNU MAHADEVI SRI GURO KATHAYAM TE-----

Our life should be useful just like the sacred cow that gives milk and manure. We should be humble in our approach to Guru or God and firmly believe that we are just his tools in His creation. Everything happens by the will of God and we should give up the feeling of doer ship. We should stay away from false pride and arrogance. THE GREATEST HEIGHT IS THE LOWEST DEPTH, ATTYUNNATHI PATHANA HETUVU--meaning pride has fall. During a heavy flood or cyclone, so many huge trees are uprooted but the humble blade of grass lies flat . Once the flood waters recede, the grass stands upright! We should be like the blade of grass and never claim that we have done such great things.

In the present sloka, it is said that there are different ways of praying to God. Guru gita is the narration by Lord Shiva to Goddess Parvathi about the importance of Sadguru in our life. He explains the methods we have to follow in our worship. Some follow the path of realization or jnana, others move in the path of Bhakti or true devotion, yet others follow the path of meditation. All these efforts give us health, wealth and happiness. For good health, we should pray to The Sun God and regularly do Suryanamaskara or obeisance to Sun God.

SLOKA 86--SRIMATPARABRAHMA GURUM SMARAMI-----

In this verse, four different ways of worship is explained. They are Smarami, Bhajami, Vadami and Namami. Remembering the divine form of Sadguru is smarami, singing the glory of Sadguru is Bhajami, sharing the greatness of Guru with others and the benefits we have gained by our association with Guru is vadami and bowing down at the holy feet of Sadguru by bending our head showing the Sahasrara is Namami. It is a form of salutation to Sadguru. When we fold both the hands and do namaskara, it signifies the oneness of God Almighty and we mortal beings. In olden days, during wars, the officers used to read the palm lines when somebody saluted and thereby read the strength and weakness of the soldiers and then decide whether to fight the enemy or not! Similarly shaking hands was a way to find out the strength of the opponent. These are

related to worldly affairs. In order to attain higher levels of spirituality, we have to follow the four paths of smarami, bhajami, vadami and namami.

SLOKA 87--BRAHMANANDAM PARAMASUKHADAM KEVALAM
JNNNNANAMURTHIM-----

This verse is referred to as MAHAVAKYA or a great saying for a person who is actively into spiritual practice. This verse emphasizes the Guru principle or God principle. God Almighty and Sadguru is always in the state of happiness and He transfers that state of Bliss to us. What is the first official address of God means being in the state of happiness. Parama sukhadam means, bestowing all that is good to us. What is His form means, kevalam jnanamurthim--one should experience the divine form of Sadguru. To reach that state of experience, constant practice and faith is required .For example there is a high wall and there is a ladder. We have to climb the ladder to scale the wall and see what is on the other side of the wall. Our mind should be devoid of conflict. We think from our intellect or from our heart. Is there any object in the world that can be compared to God? Then the answer was Ether or the sky.(aakasha) It is limitless and infinite. Thus the first creation was AAKASHA or Ether. It is closer to God. God is only one, He is omnipresent, He is the past, the present and the future. Vimalam means He is without any bad qualities. He represents Equality or Samabhava. He is unmoving like a mountain. He is strong like a rock. Probably this is the reason why many Holy places are situated on top of Hills and Mountains. He always remains as a witness to all our good and bad actions. He is beyond good and bad thoughts. We are seeing all these great qualities in our Sadguru . Through these characteristics, we are able to visualize God.

SLOKA 88--ANANDAMANANDAKARAM PRASANNAM, JNANA SWAROOPAM-----

Pujya Swamiji is returning from Europe tour and all the ashramites and devotees are eagerly waiting to see dear Appaji and listen to Him. There is a longing to see our Sadguru, be with Him and enjoy His presence. What are we gaining by this? The benefit is happiness or a state of pure bliss. This verse highlights the importance of being with Sadguru, listen to His discourses and incessantly follow

it. The result is we attain the state of pure happiness. Sadguru reflects happiness but we should be deserving to receive happiness from Him. How do we reach that stage when we can also experience the blissful state? We should develop the feeling of happiness within us. Our receiving station should be well tuned to receive that frequency which is the state of bliss. For this the method of worship should be correct. We should constantly remember and recall His teachings, understand and follow it. It is very difficult for ordinary mortals like us to identify the greatness of Guru. We see only His physical form through our ordinary eyes which is blurred most of the time with all kinds of worldly attachments. But Sadguru is an embodiment of happiness and He gives it to others. In the ANNAPURNA UPANISHATH there is a special meaning given to the word ANANDA or happiness. Once sage Brighu performed a severe penance to understand what is true about God. Then he declared ANNAM BRAHMA meaning food gives us happiness when we are hungry. Lord Brahma was not satisfied and asked the sage to continue his penance. He declared whatever gives us life like air, water, food is AnnaBrahma and that is the truth. Brahma still asked him to continue his penance and search for truth. He then declared that the Mind is Brahma as everything originates from the mind. He was almost close to the Truth and finally he declared that VIJNANAM BRAHMETHI. Generally we believe that Vijnana is science but according to the scriptures Vijnana means experience. Ultimately sage Brighu realized that our determination to do good deeds and find out the real truth comes only by Experiencing it. The state of experiencing happiness is the real truth. When we permanently establish Sadguru in our heart and constantly feel His presence, that is ANANDA.

There is a word of caution for all of us that we cannot be committing mistakes repeatedly and beg our Sadguru to pardon us. Such a method is not acceptable. We should surrender to Sadguru and follow Him in word and deed. We become wiser by following His advice. Awareness comes by constant practice. To the wise and intelligent God is everywhere. We know that we get good merit by helping the poor and the needy. Likewise, we become sinful by harming or troubling others. The sense of true wisdom comes by our association with Sadguru. That is the reason Swamiji has started JNANA BODHA SABHAS all over the world so that

we carry forward His teachings and socially beneficial activities. We are in the lower class now, we have to pass and go to the next higher class in spirituality. This needs constant reminder by Sadguru and our determination to follow. If we just sit in a room and pray while we are in Ashram is not a good idea. It is important to come to the physical presence of our Sadguru, see Him, listen to Him and follow His words. He relieves us of our sorrow, pain and other worldly problems and there is no doubt about it.

SLOKA 89--NITYAM SHUDDHAM NIRABHASAM NIRAKARAM-----

Nityam means one who has no beginning or end. Shuddham means one who is beyond the feelings of love or hatred and has no conflicting thoughts. Nirabhasam means that which cannot be seen easily by our eyes but visible only to HRIDAYA CHAKSHU or the inner eye. Nirakaram means that which is formless. We usually worship God or Guru visualizing the form. The next stage is to worship as Nirakara or the one without any form. God has form and He is formless too. In order to reach that state we begin with Saguna upasana and then attain the level of Nirguna upasana. In this way a spiritual aspirant should follow the method as ordained in the scriptures, one can experience the state of worshipping Sadguru as formless entity. All these experiences does not happen in a day. It requires deep contemplation and rigorous practice. To understand the essence of Gurugita, systematic approach is very important. Then it becomes as easy as tearing a blade of grass from the centre.

SLOKA 90--HRIDAMBHUJE KARNIKA MADHYA SAMSTHE-----

It is important to establish the image of our Sadguru in our heart permanently. This is the next stage of realization to feel the presence of Guru within us and blessing us with sat, chit ananda--the ever blissful state. CHIDVANTE SARVA SAMSHAYAHA--Meaning when we feel His presence within us, all the conflicting thoughts disappear and we enjoy the state of happiness. Nanda- means Lord Krishna and He is always in childlike state. A child is always happy and playing with itself. Even our Sadguru is in childlike state of happiness. He spreads this happiness among those who are in sorrow or in difficult situations. There is an

interesting story that by remembering Sadguru, we can come out of the most difficult situations. Once the Gods and Demons had a wish to have lunch in Lord Brahma's house. So they expressed their wish to Brahma. On Kalyana panchami day, Brahma agreed to give them sumptuous lunch. The demons forgot to invite their Guru Shukracharya for the lunch and did not even inform Him about it. The Gods went to their Guru Brihaspati and requested Him to accompany them to Brahma's house for lunch. He agreed and went with them. Brahma wanted the gods and demons to have food together without any discrimination. But the demons insisted that they are the children of Diti, Indra's wife and preferred to sit separately and have food. Thus the great feast started and all their hands were tied with a rope as instructed by Brahma. The demons found it difficult to enjoy the food as their hands were tied. But the Gods were under the care of their Guru Brihaspathi. He instructed them to sit opposite each other and feed each other with the delicious meal!. This plan worked very well and the Gods enjoyed the food. Although this story appears to be funny, there is a hidden meaning here. When there is unity among us coupled with Guru's guidance and blessing, even the most tricky situation can be overcome easily.

SLOKA 91--SHVETAMBARAM SHVETHA VILEPA PUSHPAM-----

This verse is unique in the sense all great qualities are compared to the white color. The Saatvic(pious, righteous) qualities are compared to white hue. Where there is true devotion, there exists Satva guna. We should constantly introspect and check whether we have these characteristics. We should develop our own rating scale to self judge ourselves. In the famous epic of Ramayana, Ram had all these 16 virtues which made him a perfect human being. Lord Shiva is adorned in white robes, white flowers and white pearl beads. Shiva's charming smile is a flash of white color. The word HIMALAYA means the mountain which is covered by snow. HIMA also means Lord Shiva's smile. It is as white and pure as snow. What is the idea in comparing Lord Shiva to white colour? It dispels our TAMO GUNA (being lazy, inactive or causing harm to others). When we see our Sadguru, a sense of peace is experienced. We have the freedom to put forward our grievances in front of our Sadguru but we should not talk too much or misuse the

liberty given. Other benefits derived by being in the presence of Sadguru--we develop self confidence, we feel energized and we feel worthy. We should at all times listen carefully to the words of our Guru and we definitely get answers to all the problems. This feeling develops by continuous association with Guru, by studying sacred scriptures and by combining it with our own experience.

SLOKA 92--YASMIN SRISHTI STHITHI DHWAMSA-----

In God's creation, there are five important activities that are continuously happening--they are creation, sustenance, destruction, Nigraha and Anugraha. The influence and impact of Guru's grace becomes important for us. After the first visit to ashram and Sri Swamiji, we get a feeling that we should continue the relationship. In this way a legacy is built between Sadguru and the disciple. Somebody put a question that Gurugita is the conversation between Shiva and Parvathi . So instead of Shivagita, why is it called Gurugita or Dattagita? The answer is Lord Shiva came in the form of Guru, hence, it is called Gurugita. Dattatrya is AADI GURU. It means the tradition of Guru worship began with Lord Dattatreya who is the embodiment of Trinity. In ancient times Guru was worshipped in lineage of great sages like Parashara. Over a period of time Guru was worshipped in the form of Shankaracharya, Ramanuja and Madhwacharya and this system continues even now. In simple words, in whichever God we have strong faith, we worship that God as Guru. Going back to the second line, Nigraha means taking back everything that was given. It means, during pralaya or deluge, everything is taken away which is called destruction. Again, the ever compassionate God gives back in the form of creation. We worship such a Guru who demonstrates the power behind all these five important activities of SRISHTI, STITHI, LAYA, THIRODHANA AND ANUGRAHA.

SLOKA 96--NA GURORADHIKAM, NA GURORADHIKAM-----

This verse is very important in Gurugita. The word Naguroradhikam has been repeated four times and even the word Shivashasanatha has been emphasized four times. Guru represents the four steps of wisdom(jnana), practice(saadhana)

,principles(tatva) and God(daiva).It is not possible to acquire wisdom without the grace of Guru. Nothing else in this world is superior to Guru. We should constantly nurture the feeling that everything happens by the will of Guru . Without seeking the permission of Guru, we should never venture in the path of spirituality. We should never supersede the Guru or be ungrateful to Him. Guru reflects SATVA GUNA meaning all the pious qualities. His mind is pure without any blemish. Our faith in Guru should be as strong as a rock. It should be firm even in most trying situations. SHIVASHASANA means it is declared in the holy scriptures that nobody is greater than Sadguru. This statement is true and cannot be contradicted.

SLOKA 94--JNEYAM SARVAM VILAPYETA VISHUDDHA JNANA YOGATAHA-----

People follow different paths in spiritual practice. It depends on our eligibility and capability. Therefore, the path of wisdom or search for truth is best adopted by seekers. Vishuddha jnana means pure wisdom. What does it mean? It means we have pre assumed wrong notions in our mind which is called Avidya or misconceptions. These have to be removed first and that paves the way for attaining pure knowledge. JNEYA means Lakshya or focus.We should be focused in our effort. What is learnt or acquired should be offered to Sadguru without any expectation in return. It is called BRAHMA HAVI meaning we are offering certain materials to the Fire God during fire worship. For example cooked rice is offered during fire worship. Similarly we use water in our worship and we purify it by covering the sacred pot with our hands and chant GANGE CHA YAMUNE CHAIVA GODAVARI SARASWATHI believing all the sacred waters of the holy rivers are in the pot. Even when we offer fruits, flowers and naivedya we purify it with water. We should develop the feeling that all these offerings made with a pure mind certainly reaches Guru or God. We definitely get good results when the offerings are made with sincerity and firm belief. By following this procedure our devotion increases and faith gets strengthened. Wisdom is compared to light that is always burning. There are various forms of YAJNA. For example Japa yajna, Dravya yajna and so on. Even studying well to get good grades is also Yajna or holy activity. Even our breathing, thinking, preparing food are all Yajnas. we perform these

activities with the feeling that it is nothing but Guru's grace that is motivating us to carry out work . Divine feeling and respect for work is important. It is wrong to develop the feeling that everything is happening by my will and I KNOW ALL FEELING is also wrong. WE should surrender our ego and doer ship at SadGuru's feet . This will help us to attain Guru's grace.

SLOKA 95--YAVATHISHTATHI DEHOSOU TAAVADEVI GURUM SMARETH-----

While performing our daily activities, we should do it with the feeling that Sadguru is guiding us in this work. There is a saying work is worship--meaning we should discharge our duties with a sacred or divine feeling. What is the result of doing work with such a feeling? We attain Guru's grace and blessing.

Sri Bala swami spoke in Sanskrit language for some time. He said it is important to remember and converse in Sanskrit which is God's language. That is how we keep the language alive. Till here we discussed about Guru principle as explained in Skanda Purana. Now we have to read further and understand the important rules we have to follow to obtain Guru's grace. Earlier we learnt that JNEYA means the feeling of Godliness, JNATRU means ego or arrogance that i am doing everything and i know everything. This feeling should be removed. Only then we become eligible to get real wisdom. All our actions and feelings should merge in Guru, what remains is the pure blissful state. With devotion and humility, one can acquire greater knowledge but we should get rid of the feeling I AM DOING IT. When such a feeling develops, true realization dawns. When we try to see and feel the presence of God in every animate or inanimate object, we experience Godliness. After attaining this stage, the next important step is retaining the feeling of God's presence always and at all times. We cannot say that our spiritual practice is over and we do not need SadGuru's guidance any more. We should retain respect and devotion to Guru even after attaining the highest level of realization. We should pray and pay reverence to our Sadguru till the end of our lives. We should always maintain the Guru- disciple relationship. For example a person might become a great professor after completing his studies. But that does not mean he should forget his Guru or teacher. There was a certain pundit

by name Bhagiratha shastri. He had a great disciple(student) who became very great scholar. Once he happened to see his old teacher, immediately he bowed down and offered his respect to him. The other great scholars were surprised by this act and they asked him as to why he is bowing down before an ordinary teacher. He replied that Teacher taught him the basics of learning various subjects and with that foundation he could become a great scholar. We should never forget our teachers however great we may be. In the story of Mahabharata, there was a celestial being called ANGAPARNA. The Pandavas had fight to him in a battle and defeat him. The war went on for several days and it was not easy to vanquish Angaparna. Finally the Pandavas were victorious. Then Angaparna king told the Pandavas that they have a drawback because of which they could not win the war easily. He said that they have not taken the guidance and advice of a Sadguru and that is the reason they are facing so many difficulties. Padavas enquired who could be their Guru or preceptor. Then they were sent to sage Dhoumya under whose guidance they could move in the right direction. His role is mentioned in Aranya parva of Mahabharata. Sage Dhoumya directed them to go to Lord Krishna and take His help to win the Kurukshetra war.. Thus Yudhishtir remembered his first teacher sage Dhoumya, paid respects to him and then with the help of Lord Krishna, he fought the war and was victorious. But Dhuryodhana, forgot to pay respect and take the blessings of his Guru and was defeated in the war. This episode clearly tells us that we should never forget our Guru in whatever great position we may be.

SIGNIFICANCE OF KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI-- Today is Krishna janmashtami or Lord Krishna's birthday. It is a happy festival which is celebrated by all members of the family. Krishna has given an important gift to us--that is Geeta shastra or Bhagavadgita. It is a comprehensive scripture that contains every aspect of life. That is why Krishna is referred to as Jagadguru or teacher of the entire world. Krishna left this world at the end of Dwapara yuga and the beginning of Kaliyuga. It is important for children to know about Krishna's childhood, His pranks and His ways. Krishna had five very close friends. Among them two children did not have any respect or fear of elders .Krishna used to repeatedly tell them to behave well but they did not bother. One day Krishna locked them up in a room and threw a

snake inside the room. They got frightened and took off their clothes and threw it on the snake. At that moment Krishna opened the door along with other people and they all laughed at them seeing them bare bodied. After that incident they started behaving well and mended their ways. On another occasion, there was a girl(Gopika) who used to herd the cows and look after them in the cow shed. She used to often beat the poor cows for no reason. Krishna got wild and warned her not thrash the cows but she did not heed His words. When she was sleeping, he tied her long hair to the cow's tail and went away. When she got up she could not disentangle herself and she struggled a lot pulling her hair. In this way Krishna taught her a lesson not to harm animals.

Krishna was fond of eating butter which was churned out of cow's milk. One day he went to some body's house and stole butter from the pot and began to eat. At that moment he heard the mother-in-law's voice and quickly he smeared butter on the daughter-in-law's mouth and disappeared from there. So there was a fight and argument between the two ladies about the stolen butter. He taught them a lesson and there after both of them lived with good understanding and there was peace at home. Our body is compared to the mud pot in which butter is stored. God is compared to butter in the pot. We search for the pot with butter meaning we look into ourselves to experience the presence of God within us.

As Krishna grew up, He stated attending the school(Gurukula). He became serious about His studies. He developed keen interest in studies, became obedient, disciplined. He respected His Guru(teacher) and served him sincerely. The story of Krishna and Sudhama was recalled (Sloka 83.) Krishna's Guru was Saandepani. After completing His education successfully, Krishna wanted to give Guru Dakshina or make some offerings to His Guru as it was the practice in those days. He asked His Guru what he wants as Guru dakshina. Sandepani replied that Krishna should bring back his dead son who was drowned in Prabhasa kshetra(holy place). Krishna had super natural powers, He dived into the ocean and requested the God of oceans to return Sandepani's son. Then He goes to Yama loka or the world of the dead and pleads with Yama, the God of death to give back Sandepani's son. Krishna says He is Shouri or the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Immediately, Yama brings the boy to life and handed him over to Krishna.

In this way Krishna gave Guru Dakshina. But we are ordinary people and do not have extraordinary powers to offer this kind of Guru dakshina but we can always do small little seva or service to Guru.

Another story is about precious Shamantaka gem and Krishna wanted to have it at any cost. He was accused of stealing the gem and finally the truth was revealed. Bal swami cautioned that unwanted desires will land us in difficult situations . Krishna fought with Jambuvanta to get the rare Gem.

In this way Bal swami enlightened the ashram children about Krishna janmashtami.

SLOKA 96--HUMKARENA NA VYAKTAM PRAJNE SHISHYE KADACHANA-----

When we are in the presence of Sadguru, there are many rules that we should follow. One should not brag about his or her educational qualifications. We should not be arrogant in our talk. One of the characteristics of good education is humility. VIDYA DADATI VINAYAM. It means we may have any number of Degrees or educational qualifications but we should be humble. We should not have false pride or ego .Sometimes we forget our teachers who taught us and that shows our arrogance. We should try and speak the truth always. We should never utter lies in front of Sadguru. We should have the courage and conviction to admit our mistakes. Christians go to the church and make a confession of the wrong things they have done and beg the Lord to pardon them. They also vow not to commit mistakes or tell lies in future. These are good practices.

SLOKA 97--GURUM TVAM KRITYA HUM KRITYA GURUM NIRJITYA VAADATAHA-----

We should never address our Guru in singular or ekavachana. We should not talk with arrogance or pride. Once Sri Swamiji was composing a bhajan SIDDHIDHUTA BUDDHINATA SIDDHINAYAKA. Sri Balaswami was noting down the lyrics. There is a line that says SOOKSHMA NETRA BHAKTA HASITA BHOKTA VAADANE. There was a pundit in the gathering who stood up and said BHOKTAVAADANE has no meaning. Sri Swamiji said that the correction and editing will be done. This pundit

went home and looked for the above said word in Akshara shastra, a book that deals with words and their meaning. To his surprise he found that the word VA means Nectar or Amrita and VAADANE means one who gives Nectar or happiness. Lord Ganapati represents Nectar and He bestows happiness. The Pundit begged Sri Swamiji to forgive him and he accepted his ignorance. Guru is very powerful, He knows everything. Once a certain brahmin came to sage Gautama and said that he is very hungry and thirsty and asked for something to quench his thirst. Immediately the sage said there is a cow outside, milk it and drink it. From nowhere a cow appeared and gave him milk. This example shows that anything can happen by the Will of Sadguru. We have limited knowledge. We read a little and think that we know everything. Guru's words should not be debated. He knows the past, the present and the future too. We should never think that our knowledge is superior to that of our Sadguru. If we ever think that we know more than what our Guru knows, there is no greater sin than this. We may end up taking birth as a demon or Brahma rakshasa in a place without food, water or shelter. We should exercise caution when we talk to our Sadguru.

SLOKA 98--UPABHUNJITA NO VASTU GURO KINCHDAPI SWAYAM-----

We should never offer things or objects that we have used to our Sadguru. We should offer fruits, food or other things which are fresh and new. They should not be used by anybody else. We should maintain the sanctity in our offerings. After making the offerings, we can take a fruit or flower as a blessing or prasada. We should not taste or eat food and then offer it to Sadguru. It amounts to a sin. In these ways we are learning the dos and don'ts that we have to follow in our association with Sadguru. In the holy scriptures these are referred to as VIDHIVAAKYA AND NISHEDHA. These are not ordinary rules or regulations but they are prescribed in SKANDA PURANA through which we are reading Gurugita.

SLOKA 99--PADUKASANA SHAYYADI GURU NA DADHISHTITAM-----

The sacred feet of Sadguru should be worshipped. The objects used by Sadguru like Paadukas(foot wear) ,puja utensils, the place where He rests should be kept

clean and neat. They deserve to be worshipped. They are holy. Once Lord Krishna was worshipping a wooden box in all sincerity and sage Narada happened to go there. He was surprised to see Krishna performing a vratha(austerity) and worshipping a box. He thought Krishna is the Guru of the entire universe and we all worship Him and who is He worshipping? What is the secret ,he wanted to know. After the completion of worship Narada asked Him, what is there in the box and what are you worshipping so reverentially? Krishna brought the box and opened it and Lo! there were several other boxes one inside the other. Finally He took out a small box and opened it. Inside there was some dust and Lord Krishna said that it is the sacred dust of the feet of His great devotees who have surrendered everything to Him. He said He worships the dust everyday and in this way Krishna revealed the greatness of true devotees who have totally surrendered to Him. They are worthy to be worshipped. In Amritsar, Punjab the Golden temple of Sikh Guru is there. At the entrance, there are people who take care of the foot wear of the devotees who come to pray there. It is a kind of great service. When such is the case with ordinary mortals like us, think of the sacred Guru paadukas of Sadguru which should be revered and respected. We should bow down to the Holy feet in all reverence and devotion. We should look up on with respect all those things which are used by Sadguru like the Holy throne or seat, His foot wear, clothes, vessels and experience the divinity in them. We should not ignore or show disrespect to these things.

SLOKA 100--GACHCHATAHA PRASHTATO GACHCHETH GURUPAADAU NA
LANGAYET-----

We should never walk in front of Sadguru unless He commands us to do so. We should follow Him from behind. It is said that one should not even walk over Guru's shadow. We may be affected by psychological problems if we do so. We should not show our back to our Sadguru. We should not dress up too much with lot of jewelry and ornaments, expensive clothes in front of Sadguru. We should be simple and humble in our attire and behaviour.

SLOKA 101--GURU NINDAA PARAM DHRUSHTVA DAAVAYADATHAVAARAYETH-----

Out of genuine interest we may ask questions about SadGuru's daily routine or His ways of worship and other rituals and learn from other devotees. But if somebody is criticizing or talking ill of our Sadguru, we should confront them and give convincing answers. If we cannot defend our Sadguru, immediately we should leave the place and should not divert our mind towards those criticisms. This is NISHEDHA as mentioned earlier. We should try to change or reform the person who is criticizing, if we cannot do it we should not be there and listen to the non sense. It is better to cut our tongue than talk ill of our Sadguru.

SLOKA 102--APRIYASYA CHA HAASYASYA NAVAKASHO GURO PURAHA-----

We should not crack indecent or cheap jokes in front of Sadguru. We should not talk unwanted things in front of Him. We should eagerly wait for His orders or instructions and follow them with respect. An incident was narrated in this context. A certain devotee was given an important work by Sri Swamiji and he promised to do it. Then Sri Swamiji sent for him to know the progress in that work. This devotee went on with all kinds of unwanted reasons like when he started his scooter there was no petrol, so he pushed the vehicle back home and then he thought of going by bus only to find that there was a bus strike. Sri Swamiji was patiently waiting to know whether he would talk about the task assigned to him. He went on saying that his son was down with fever and requested Swamiji to give him Vibhuti. Finally it was clear that he had not bothered about the work given to him but went on giving unwanted explanations wasting Sri Swamiji's precious time. This incident clearly tells us that we should just do the work given or frankly say that it cannot be done. There may be a little difficulty when we have to serve Sadguru but we should be prepared for it and deliver the task on time. Deepaka was a great disciple who sacrificed everything to take care of His Guru. There are three persons who are important in our life, they are Mata(mother), Pita(father) and Aacharya(Guru). They guide us in our worldly life and the life after. Mother is compared to the earth so full of patience and tolerance, so she is worthy to be worshipped. Learned people, great scholars, elderly people should be respected. They are Brahma swaroopa. Service to them is equal to serving God Himself. We should follow our Swadharma or the religion

in which we are born. We should never change our religion. SWADHARME NIDHANAM SHREYAHA- meaning we protect our religion and it is better to die for our religion. What is the benefit we derive by following Sadguru? We get Sadgati or the doors of heaven will be open to us.. All these rules are endorsed in SHRUTI(PURANAS, SACRED SCRIPTURES), AND SMRUTHI(VEDAS) which highlights the importance of Guru Seva and the teachings of Guru gita.

SLOKA 103--MUNIBHYA PANNAGEBHYASCHA SUREBHYASCHAPATOPIVA-----

Guru has the capacity to save us from untimely death. He even protects us from the bite of poisonous insects. He removes our sins and purifies us. Such is the greatness of Sadguru. Now let us find out how Sadguru can remove our sins as declared in the sacred scriptures. What are those rules that all of us should follow to avoid committing sins. One should not display his intelligence or knowledge unasked. We should rise early in the morning and observe the morning rituals as ordained by our Sadguru. We should not bite our nails or stretch our legs and sit in front of Sadguru. We should not show our legs or knees in front of Him. We should not address our Sadguru in singular. That is the reason we call Him Appaji, Swamiji or Sri Ganapathi Sachchidananda Swamiji. We should not mimic His actions . We should not try to smile or talk like Him. Many parents feel very proud when their children imitate their teachers. It is absolutely wrong. It develops into a bad habit. Even after shaving our head or face, we should take a bath. Our elders made these rules and there is lot of sense in it. The scriptures have tried to enforce these good habits by instilling a kind of moral fear in us. If we ever try to speak low of our Sadguru, we will be born as donkeys, dogs or insects in the next birth . So beware, watch your words and actions. Those who are jealous of others will be born as insects or vermin's. It is a great blessing to be born as a human being and we should strive to reach greater heights with noble deeds. We should not stoop down low by our sinful actions. But there is greatness in other forms of life too like Garutmanta or Garuda the vehicle of Lord Vishnu. Those who want to attain everything in life including wealth should serve their Mother(MATRU SEVA). By serving Father and respecting him, we reach Swarga loka or heaven. By serving Sadguru, we attain Brahmaloaka. Thus all the three types of service to

MAATA, PITAA AND GURU is important. The reference Munibhya means great souls who are treading in the spiritual path, such noble souls should not be harmed in any way by others.

SLOKA 104--NITYAM BRAHMA NIRAKARAM YENA PRAPTAM SA VAI GURU-----

When a reference is made to God, we remember these characteristics such as NITYA, BUDDHA, NIRAKARA, SACHCHIDANANDA SWAROOPA and worship Him in these forms. Even the scriptures endorse the use of these words. Sadguru gives focus to our life. He shows the path we should follow to reach the goal. DEEPO DEEPANTARAM TATHA means just as one candle lights the other and spreads light, Guru kindles wisdom in us without our knowledge and takes us forward in our spiritual journey. Datta Sadguru has been the guiding light for disciples like PINGALANAGA, KARTHAVEERYRJUNA, VISHNUDATTA and many others. Each one of them followed a different way according to their capabilities. Attainig JNAJA or wisdom is not very easy. Slowly and steadily we should climb the ladder of self-realization. In GEETHA SHASTRA, VIBHUTI YOGA, Lord Krishna has given examples to show how Sadguru can elevate his devotees to experience the state of pure bliss. Examples, discussions and references are important tools that help us in realization. Here is a story about the validity and authority of words or instructions that come from the mouth of great people. Once the great Mogul king Akbar asked Birbal why Hindus always refer to the famous epics Ramayana or Mahabharatha? Are there no other books in Hinduism? Are people not fed up of hearing the same references from these epics? Why cannot scholars write something new and more interesting? To this Birbal replied that there are several other great works by authors but nothing can match the authority of the Epics. We should never forget old works or writings. In fact they encompass everything in them. The words are energized and they have moral values in them. But Akbar was not convinced. Birbal called the attendant who was standing next to the emperor and told him to thrash the king. But the attendant stood still without moving with his bent head. Birbal ordered him several times to beat up Akbar but he did not budge. Then Akbar felt insulted and commanded his attendant to beat up Birbal . Immediately several blows were hurled on Birbal by the attendant.

Birbal started laughing and Akbar asked him why he was laughing like a mad person. Then Birbal said that the king's question has been answered. He said when he asked the attendant to beat up the king, he refused to do so but when the king asked the attendant to thrash Birbal, immediately he obeyed the king . The attendant had to follow the orders of the king and that is the rule. The king's words carry weight and have value. In the same way, the great epics although they are ancient are invaluable. Their authority cannot be questioned because they are world. On the other hand they are comprehensive and have valuable solutions to every problem.

Another incident was narrated--In Hyderabad there was a rich and powerful devotee of Sri Swamiji and he was trying hard to buy some land at a certain place. He could not strike the deal in spite of trying very hard. The land was under some dispute. After some years the devotee met Sri Swamiji and admitted that he was not successful in getting the land. Immediately Sri Swamiji advised to get the land on lease for a period of 30 years. The devotee was wonder struck because this thought had not occurred to him at all. The land owner was ready to lease out the land and all the formalities were completed. This incident shows the intelligence, alertness of Sri Swamiji and timely solutions which only Guru can offer.

Bhagavadgita--TESHAAM SATATA YUKTAM--This verse reveals that whoever has strong devotion and faith, to them He will bestow great intellect and ultimately they will merge in Him.

Another verse TESHAM AJNANAM TAMAHAM--He dispels darkness or ignorance by showing the light of wisdom. To light a lamp we require a wick, oil, lamp stand and a match stick to light it.

It also needs air to burn. The wind should not be too strong or too feeble, it should be just right. The wick symbolises our effort. The light is JNANA or wisdom. The support is the lamp stand. It is comparable to our mind which should be devoid of all the six enemies like desire, anger, greed and so on. Our mind should be pure and should experience Godliness through our inner eye. That is the light of knowledge. Along with all these ingredients, our strength of devotion which should be unwavering becomes the foundation for our spiritual practice.

So far the explanations in Gurugita focused on the methods and practices that one should follow to obtain Guru's grace. We also learnt how to overcome difficulties associated with the body and the mind. After crossing this stage of endurance, we attain Brahma bhava or the state of oneness with God. This is the path of salvation. The bhajan MUMUKSHU INTIRABEKANNA was recalled and it describes all the stages that we have to pass through to attain salvation. But there should be no short cuts or short comings in our effort in this direction. There should be continuity and regularity in our effort, and spiritual practice. Nothing should be done mechanically. We should put our heart and soul into it. It is not enough if we just proclaim that we are already in the path of MUKTI OR SALVATION. But we should tread in the path shown by our Sadguru without any distraction or wavering mind. Dedication to the cause and renewed effort is the key to success. Once sage Ashtavakra came to king Janaka's court and found that a big discussion was going on. The debate was how to get instant Mukti or salvation. Ashtavakra offered to give the answer. He asked King Janaka to go with him to horse stable. He told Janaka to keep his foot on the first step before mounting the horse. His other foot was down and it started paining. He kept waiting for Ashtavakra's orders. Finally the sage asked him what are you thinking at this moment. To this Janaka said if you give permission, I will mount the horse and ride it. In the same way a Saadhaka or a spiritual aspirant should focus his mind on the task and wait for SadGuru's orders. We generally want everything to happen swiftly, we consult so many people, get distracted and become doubtful. This is wrong. All we need is total surrender and complete faith in Guru's words. So the first step is PRANIPATHA or total surrender. Otherwise we face PATHANA or downfall. Second step is PARIPRASHNENA or getting doubts clarified by questioning. When we get the opportunity, we should talk to Sadguru, clear the doubts and follow the message given. The third step is Seva and shushrushe meaning doing service and taking care of the needs of Sadguru. After this stage, we become eligible to attain JNANA or wisdom. Guru is so compassionate that without any selfishness and only out of pure love He bestows His grace on the

disciples or the aspirant. He is like KALPATARU or the wish fulfilling tree. In the rainy season we face lot of hardships unable to move around or do our work. Once the rainy season ends, cold season(fall) begins. We relax and rest well and feel rejuvenated. During CHATURMASA VRUTHA, seers stay in one place and give spiritual discourses for three and half months. Everything has a passing phase, just as rainy season makes way for winter.

SLOKA 106--SAMPASHYESHRI GURUM SHANTHAM

The last slokas of Gurugita contains the essence. It is like caramelized sugar which is solidifying. We learn the subtle truths in the ending verses of Gurugita. To ignite the inner light within us, there is another hidden path. It involves overcoming conflicts, belief in equality of all, ending discrimination, being kind, compassionate, staying calm and composed at all times--this leads to peace and calmness of mind. We become aware of the presence of God or the all pervading energy that drives everyone's life. We should be able to identify Godliness in moving and non moving forms of life. Our mind should rid itself of all dualities, then the mind can see the inner light burning bright. This leads to the identification of the self.

SLOKA 107--SRI GURUM SACHCHIDANANDAM BHAVATEETHAM-----

Guru has shown us the prescribed according to the scriptures. Each one of us may follow different paths under the watchful eyes of Sadguru. Whichever path is suitable to us, we follow that path. Guru knows and He decides what is best suited for each one of us. We need not worry about the method followed by others and land ourselves in confusion and doubt. When we follow the path ordained by our Sadguru with a firm mind, we will surely obtain the right kind of wisdom or understanding. For this our mind should be free from anger, greed lust, violence, selfishness and so on.

SLOKA 108--PARATPARAM DHYAYETH SHUDDHS SPATIKA SANNIBHAM-----

We have reached the pinnacle of our spiritual journey. Here at this stage we are contemplating on the form of God. He is present even in a tiny atom. He is smaller than a minute particle or an atom. At the same time He is mightier and bigger than the biggest of mountains. He is greater than the greatest of beings. SWANGUSHTA PARIMANAKAM means we establish His form permanently in our heart and constantly feel His presence. In this way we worship the divine Guru who is residing in our HRIDAYA KAMALA or the lotus like form in our heart. This consciousness comes to us only by the grace of Sadguru. In this way Guru is the path, He is the destination, He is the means to attain realization and He is the end goal. In this way we develop ADVAITHA BHAVA or non duality. This leads to the feeling of oneness with God or Guru. The form of ARDHANAREESHWARA indicates the union of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvathi. Similarly Lord Srinivasa with Goddess Lakshmi in His vakshastala or heart symbolises Advaita philosophy. The ultimate destination of spiritual journey is uniting or merging with God. Rigorous and regular spiritual practice is the key to success.

SLOKA 109--ANGUSHTAMATRAM PURUSHAM DHYAYATA CHINMAYAM HRIDI-----

Just as the words and feelings are related to each other, the chanting of powerful mantras or verses brings us closer to God. Through chanting we try to consecrate God in our heart. God is mighty in form but we can establish His subtle form in our heart. Thus we become one with God. Pure, sincere devotion alone will help us to attain this state of Advaita that God is within us and there is no duality or difference.

SLOKA 110--VIRAJAM PARAMAKASHAM DRUVAMANANDAMAVYAYAM-----

Virajam means purity of heart devoid of all unwanted thoughts. We perform puja or observe rituals because this method gives us peace of mind. Doing puja or ritualistic worship is like conducting experiments in a laboratory and finding new things or testifying them. This comes by personal experience. Paramakasham means the all pervading energy which is termed as God or Guru. He is

omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient--these are His qualities. Through Guru dhyana, puja and japa we experience the permanent state of happiness or bliss.

SLOKA 111--YATHA NIJA SVABHAVENA KEYURA KATAKADAYAHA-----

Although God can be worshipped in several forms, He is only one. Just as we wear different types of jewelry made of gold , in the same way God can be worshipped as Muruga, Shiva or Devi but He is indivisible. When we develop the feeling that we are a part of Him, it is called BRAHMA BHAVA . This feeling should last forever and it should not be momentary.

SLOKA 112--YEVAM DHYAYAN PARAM BRAHMA-----

In the path of bhakti or devotion, we involve ourselves in worship, singing, chanting divine names of God. We also try to see God in helping the poor and the needy. In VEDANTA MARGA the realization that I am Brahma dawns up on us. It is like BRAMARA KEETA NYAYA. It means there is a honey bee and there is another insect. The insect goes round and round the honey bee and it is finally transformed into a honey bee!. In the same way the BRAHMA BHAVA or the feeling that i am God sinks into us after constant, steadfast practice. This is a very important stage in Gurugita. We have achieved maturity in understanding the meaning of Gurugita. The last 25 stanzas of Gurugita take us towards realization. We should be focused and digest the teachings by our own experience. We need not fear but eagerness to realize the truth should be there in us. We should constantly recall and churn the verses of Gurugita. We should try to see divinity in all forms of work, then nothing becomes boring or monotonous. On the other hand , if we think that all work is sacred, we get more energy, there develops a sense of purpose and we feel Godly. Ultimately our mind resides permanently in Guru, we merge in Him, we become one with Him.

SLOKA 113--YADRUCHAYA CHOPANNAM HYALPAM BAHULA MEVAVA-----

What is the right time for spiritual practice? Our life itself is a big field for practice. All work has a role to play in our spiritual practice. We should be engaged in noble actions useful to the society. Sri Swamiji commands us to do poor feeding, donate money to orphanages, old age homes and so on. Divinity pervades all good actions. At Ashram, Sri Swamiji provides us food, shelter and many other facilities so that we don't get unduly worried about cooking food. He wants us to concentrate on puja or bhajan singing without any distraction. We should make use of the opportunities and go ahead with our spiritual practice. Sri Swamiji is very kind and compassionate, but we are so stupid that we find fault in everything saying that salt is less or chilly is more and all kinds of non sense forgetting the purpose of our visit to Ashram. We should follow strict rules and regulations in our everyday life. Shankaracharya has written SOPANA PANCHAKAM or the five steps to be followed by spiritual aspirants. The first step is in matters of food, we should give up our likes and dislikes. If we get a delicious meal, fine ,be happy. If you get ordinary simple food, then also be happy, don't grumble . This helps us to develop food control. We should not throw food or disrespect food when it is served. Good food taken in limited quantity gives us good health. ABHYASA means chanting the divine names of God or Guru mantra, always contemplating on the teachings of Sadguru. Just as a drummer or tabala player plays spontaneously in spite of the noise around , house wife who cooks food finding various ingredients in the kitchen effortlessly because of continuous practice, so should be a saadhaka or spiritual aspirant. We should not waste time when we come to ashram, we should share our divine experiences with others, chant Lalitha sahasranama or Vishnu sahasranama or read Gurugita. Children emulate the elders, we should be a role model to them, only then they also develop good practices.

SLOKA 114-EKAMEVADVITIYOHAM GURUVAKHYAT SUNISCHITAM-----

When we think positively , positive actions follow it. When noble thoughts linger in our mind, we become purified and holy. By Constantly thinking of Guru and His blessings, His teachings and examples, we get only good thoughts in our mind, evil thoughts disappear. We try to see only the good qualities in others and also see

the divinity in them. This helps us to recognize Godliness and we can feel His presence behind all noble actions. We realize that there is nothing greater than God and the divine feeling gets rooted in our mind. We see God in our everyday activities or duties. We need not go to a forest and sit and meditate. We can practice at home to reach this state of mind.

SLOKA 115--ABHYASANIMISHENAIVA SAMADHIMADHIGACHCHATI-----

Everything happens by the will of God. He is present everywhere and in everything. Reading Gurugita helps in strengthening this faith. In this world there are great scholars and ignorant people also. Many scholars are also in a confused state because of lack of proper understanding. They argue every word that is in the sacred scriptures. Belief and faith are important. During the Gurugita discourse in Vijayawada, Sri Swamiji gave an example. People think that they can get rid of their sins by building a temple by looting rich people. Yes, to some extent, at least the evil thoughts may vanish by doing good actions. We should have fear of god and fear of doing wrong things. We have discrimination power, we know what is good or bad. The gist of Gurugita is sincere devotion and service to Sadguru is important. Equally important is implementing the teachings of Gurugita in our everyday life . By this our mind gets fixed on God and only positive and good thoughts will flow. ABHYASA means constantly thinking and practicing good deeds.

SLOKA 116--NA TAT SUKHAM SURENDRASYA NA SUKHAM CHAKRAVARTHINAM---

The path of devotion to God or Guru helps us to get rid of unwanted fears. We find ways to overcome difficulties. We become seekers of truth and do not get too involved in worldly affairs. This does not mean we are running away from responsibilities but we develop the faith that by Guru's grace, even mundane matters will be taken care of. Guru fulfils all our material needs so that at least now we turn our mind towards God and contemplate on our existence. The lives of Great saints like Ramana maharshi, Buddha or our Sri Swamiji, their life history is a open book that reveals their trials and tribulations in worldly as well as

spiritual life. We should not get detracted by small trivial problems. Gradually, we get rid of the initial fears and doubts and the mind becomes strong. By regular practice and prayer, we develop the ability to endure and face difficulties. The main focus of Gurugita is to find out the origin of DUKHA or unhappiness and to explore the solutions to get rid of sorrow. Listening, understanding, practicing are the key steps to progress. We are a forgetful lot. We easily forget things because of lack of practice. Even Datta stava lines we forget sometimes. Therefore constant, regular practice in the right direction as shown by Sadguru will certainly lead us to our goal. Saying prayers everyday is important, this is a way of connecting with God and retaining our relationship with Him. Sometimes, when we are in Mysore ashram, we do not go to have Sri SWAMIJI'S darshan. It is our own loss as we miss out important teachings and we miss Guru Drishti or His eye contact. We should be positive in our approach, should not be hasty and tensed up, we should avoid negative thoughts by replacing it with a prayer, avoid anger and lust(greed), be contented and do not always think of the result or the benefit. Suppose we do not get the desired result ,we stop praying or stop doing worship or other good service. This is wrong. There should be continuity in our effort and not always look at the result. In order to build a house, we dig the land, place the foundation, lay the bricks, make the roof and finally the house gets ready for house warming. There is so much of effort and hard work, in the same way, our devotion and faith in Sadguru should be strong and we should seek lasting benefit like moksha or freedom from rebirth. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are the four main objectives of life. Treading in the path of righteousness, earning money for self and also to help the poor or needy, entertaining noble thoughts and wishes and finally seeking Moksha or salvation is prescribed in the Vedas. Nachiketa was a fearless boy who was confronted by Yama, the God of death. Moved by his devotion Yama wants to grant him a boon. Nachiketa says he does not want any worldly pleasures but wants self realization which should be our goal.

SLOKA 117--RASAM BRAHMA PIBEDYASCHA TRUPTOYO PARAMATMANI-----

God provides everything to us still we are dissatisfied. We are so foolish that when we go to Sri Swamiji, we ask Him silly things and waste His precious time. To those who are enlightened even the position of Indra, the God of heaven looks small or insignificant.

SLOKA 119--DEHI BRAHMA BHAVE DEVAM PRASADAT DHYANATO GURO-----

Greater the devotion, greater is the benefit. However well read one may be, without pure and sincere devotion, all our knowledge or effort becomes futile(useless). Bhakti means devoid of Vibhakti- meaning without bad or polluted thoughts. We should have complete faith that Guru will give us protection and take care of us always. If we have not succeeded in our work, it is because of half backed faith.

SLOKA 120--MUKTASYA LAKSHANAM DEVI TAVAGRE KATITAM MAYA-----

The last and the final state(goal) is to be free from worldly bondages and other afflictions.. We reach the state of SAMADHI through immense devotion. There are several ways explained in Gurugita to realize our self. We can adopt which ever method is best suited to us and follow it with regularity. Thus GURUGITA is a comprehensive text on self realization. We have to follow the teachings with complete faith.

SLOKA 121--GURUGITATI GUHYEYAM MAYASTI KATITA SHUBHA-----

The renowned musical saint PURANDARADASA has sung INDINA DINAVE SHUBHA DINA NAMAGE, INDINA VARA SHUBHA VAARA,INDINA KARANAVE SHUBHA KARNA-- it means it is an auspicious day, even this week is very holy because we have spent our time usefully in listening to Gurugita. In CHATURMASA, we heard read and followed Gurugita in great detail. These are the words of Lord SHIVA and has immense value. Practice, implement and experience the teachings. True devotion and faith in Guru's words is the foundation of our life. We may ask what is the benefit we get in this life by chanting Gurugita. The answer is Guru will

remove our sorrows, bestow health, wealth and happiness. Thus a bonding or true relationship develops between the Guru and the disciple. The ultimate result is peace of mind and blissful state.

SLOKA 122 TO142 WERE RECITED TOGETHER BY THE DEVOTEES.

According to SHRUTHI or VEDAS which is the authority for our scriptures-- SADGURU is the truth, the store house of wisdom, He is all pervading, Infinite and final Goal of our spiritual Endeavour. Even after reaching the highest level of realization, we should continue to pray and remember our Sadguru. We should not fall down or stoop down to lower levels. Our practice should continue. When we leave this body, we should be eligible to unite with Sadguru. In the sacred Bhagavatha, Lord Narasimha tells Prahlada to ask for a boon. Prahlada says he does not want BRAHMA PADAVI, not even a long healthy life or knowledge or wealth because none of these last forever. He asked for SATSANGA or the association with pious, virtuous people always. This will increase the merit or Punya. By the divine grace of Sri Swamiji , we have concluded Gurugita discourse and Chaturmasya vratha. By Pujya Swamiji"s blessings alone the sacred Gurugita has been read and discussed. It is like offering sacred water to the Moon stone from where water actually originates . It is like showing camphor light to the Sun God who lights up the entire world.

The full moon day or poornima is very auspicious day. Ashram does Annadana or mass feeding on this day at Dattavenkateswara temple every month. Take part in these socially beneficial activities.

DISCOURSE ON NARADA BHAKTI SUTRA.

Where there is devotion and faith, the benefit we derive by Japa, puja is immense. This is the formula or sutra. In Vishnu purana, there is a prayer which says just as people wish for material benefits and struggle all the way to obtain it, let me struggle and achieve Bhagavat chintana keerthana and shravana. Let me chant your divine name always. Let your form and great qualities be imprinted in my mind and let me be always in the company of pious people. From selfishness, let me move towards selflessness. These are the noble principles in NARADA

BHAKTI SUTRA. Just as a river eagerly waits to drain into the sea, we should eagerly wait to reach God. Just as river flows incessantly till it reaches the sea, even our flow of devotion should be full and unstoppable. The Gopikas were so devoted to Krishna, their heart always rested on Krishna. They kept on chanting Krishna's name even while doing household duties. Their example shows one can be immersed in chanting the divine names in worldly life too. It is in fact the highest form of devotion. The kriyas or actions become the Mudras of worship, let my talk be your nama japa, our mischievous actions carve out your divine form. When I lie down to rest, let that be my Saastanga namaskara. When we experience happiness, let others also get happiness. This is the superior state of devotion as expressed by Narada. Lord Krishna blessed Draupadi when he ate a grain of rice served by her with devotion. That vessel became AKSHAYA PATRA which used to give enough food to the Pandavas. Among the great Bhakti saints, these are the names we should remember. They are Prahlada, Parashara, Pundarika, Vyasa, Ambharisha, Shuka, Shounaka, Rukmangada, Vasishtha and Vibhishana. To obtain Guru's blessings, we should surrender completely specially our ego. There are great saints who propagated Devotion, and died for spreading the idea of Bhakti. It means selfless love towards God or Guru. There are two types of Bhakti-PARA BHAKTI and APARA BHAKTI. The latter is the highest form in devotion where the mind is always dwelling on God and His Leelas. We should offer prayers without any desire or wish. Prahlada's devotion was devoid of any kind of desire. This leads to the state of dispassion or vairagya.

