

GURU



GURUMORTEHA SADAA DHYAAANAM
GURU MANTRAM SADAA JAPETA

One should incessantly meditate on the form of Guru
and recite the Mantra (Verse) pertaining to Guru

GURU

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ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಲಸಾ ನಾರಾಯಣೀ ದೇವಿ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಗಳು

SRI MAHAALASAA NAARAYANI DEVICHE CHARITRA (Marathi)
THE CHARITHRA OF GODDESS SHRI MAHAALASAA NAARAYANI
SRI MAHAALASAA NAARAYANI SAHASRA NAAMAVALI (with meaning)
SRI MAHAALASAA NAARAYANI SAHASRA NAAMAVALI (Marathi with meaning)
GURU

ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಲಸಾ ನಾರಾಯಣೀ ದೇವಿಯ ಚರಿತ್ರೆ

ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಲಸಾ ನಾರಾಯಣೀ ದೇವಿಯ ಸಹಸ್ರನಾಮಾವಳಿ (ಅರ್ಥ ಸಹಿತ)

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ಗುರು

GODDESS SHRI MAHAALASAA NAARAYANI



YAA DEVI SARVA BHOOTESHU MAATRA ROOPENA SANSTHITAA
NAMASTASYEYEI
NAMASTASYEYEI
NAMASTASYEYEI
NAMO NAMAH

Repeated salutations to the Goddess (Naarayani) who dwells in the
form of mother in all beings

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PREFACE

Being born as a human being, one needs to be essentially spiritual, i.e. he needs to be in search of truth. There is no other option for him for his upliftment. If he wants to promote his upliftment, he necessarily has to be a spiritual being. There is no future for people who have no spiritual vision. Without spiritual vision, one's future is very bleak. Spirituality prepares us for meaningful life. It channelizes positive energy in us. Spirituality is a continuous process of discovery of truth. One cannot become spiritual overnight. One cannot think of spirituality without Guru. Guru is indispensable to all spiritual aspirants.

Every one of us has to make spiritual journey sooner or later. It is only a question of time. Life has no meaning without spiritual discipline. Spiritual life is essentially an inner journey. For undertaking the journey, we need a guide.

Spirituality is a science of soul. Spiritualism is not a momentary feeling. It needs rigorous and sincere efforts. A man's own judgment and thinking proves to be of little relevance in spiritual field. Every human being is spiritually unlimited, the fact of which most of us are not aware. Though people by and large are God fearing and loving, only a few take to the spiritual path as it is not so charming and glamorous like the worldly path. There is spiritual sickness of people everywhere. If one does not accept spiritual discipline earlier, the nature will thrust upon him to accept it later. Spirituality can be promoted by conscious efforts.

The spiritual path is full of thorns, doubts and uncertainties. One needs an expert master to remove those thorns, doubts and uncertainties which are on the way and that expert master is none other than the spiritual master (preceptor, Guru). The magic touch of Guru awakens one's latent spirituality.

This book is attempted basically with an intention to assist the aspirants in the form of information related to several aspects of spiritual path like Guru, real Guru, disciple, his qualities and responsibilities, service to Guru, to quote a few examples. This is written with a view to facilitating the aspirants (to throw light on some aspects) to have some inklings about spiritual path, journey. Fundamentally, it aims at highlighting the role of Guru in spiritual life. The aspirants are reminded to note well that the main discipline for spiritual growth is studying and progressing under the guidance of a Guru. Guru is sine quanon for all spiritual aspirants.

It is the will of the Goddess/Guru that always prevails. I have a strong conviction that my mother Mahaalasa and Gurudev wanted me to come out with this title. I had a long standing desire to speak something about Guru, but this desire of mine could not be fulfilled due to my own limitations and may also be due to ripe time factor.

One can write something about God or Guru only through inspiration drawn from and under the guidance of the Goddess,not otherwise. One's own wisdom, scholarliness, knowledge is of very little help for such type of writings. Therefore, while writing on such subjects, one should never carry the feeling of egoism with him

I have a strong conviction and it is fact, that whatever I have written is only due to the grace of my Guru. It is my Guru who speaks through me. There is nothing in this writing which I can call as mine.

THREE THINGS ARE HARD TO OBTAIN WITHOUT GOD'S GRACE according to Shankaraachaarya, i.e. (1) Birth as a human being; (2) Urge to know the truth to get liberated and (3) Attainment of a holy, perfect preceptor. What I am today is due to the grace

of my Guru. I am fortunate enough to be gifted with all the three things stated above.

Whatever I have today with me belongs to my Guru. I had a sense of deficiency with regard to my service to Guru during my discipleship days about which I used to feel guilty quite often. Today, I have satisfaction that I could do a little more service at my Guru's lotus feet by bringing out this book. Whatever I have written is only due to the grace of my Guru. Needless to say that He is the inspiring force behind this work. Besides, I have with me my Mother Mahaalasa Naaraayani's blessings in this onerous task.

I had a feeling that a work containing comprehensive coverage about Guru, grace, disciple, surrender, service and such other matters related to spirituality was the need of the aspirants. Keeping this in my mind, I have made a little effort in this direction. Suggestions are most welcome.

I am confident that this work will be of some use to the aspirants who wish to be on the spiritual path.

DHYAAN MOOLAM GUROH MOORTIHI
POOJA MOOLAM GUROH PAADODAKAM
MANTRA MOOLAM GUROH VAAKYAM
MOKSHA MOOLAM GUROH KRIPA

The root, source of meditation is Guru's image and the root of worship is the feet of Guru. The word of Guru is source of couplet while grace of Guru is the root to liberation.

So long as one is not in touch with Guru he forgets his real nature. One who frequents Guru need not practice any more religious rituals. Guru makes one know one's real nature. God, Guru and Supreme Brahma are one and the same truth. Guru reveals disciples oneness with Brahman.

GURU

THINK NOTHING OTHER THAN GURU

Guru is highly revered in the Indian tradition. He has been held in higher esteem than one's parents and even God. The Guru principle, tradition, is not of recent origin. The practice of worshipping of Guru is prevalent in India since time immemorial. It existed even before the universe was created. If we trace the line of preceptors backwards, God Himself ultimately becomes the first preceptor to the first disciple. That is why we are taught not to forget God till the last moment of our life. In the ultimate analysis, God Himself is the Guru because none other than God possesses so much knowledge, strength, power and grace.

Lord Krishna is the original and Supreme Guru followed by sage Vyaasa. Sage Veda Vyaasa belongs to the disciplic succession initiated by Lord Shri Krishna. This disciplic tradition established by Lord Krishna Himself is prevalent since times immemorial. It is Lord Shri Krishna who, in the form of Vyaasa Muni, Shri Guru Dattatreya, sage Kapila and the like, preaches and spreads pure divine knowledge to the deserving disciples. Lord Shiva as Dakshinaamoorthy and Lord Shrimannaaraayana as Hayagreeva incarnated in the form of Gurus. Both are the first, original, primeval Gurus.

MEANING

Simply stated, Guru is a liberated soul. He is an enlightened soul. He is the one who confers knowledge. Guru is the one by whose grace one attains direct knowledge of the self. Guru means the dispeller of ignorance (darkness) ("Gu" stands for ignorance, while "Ru" for dispeller). He who destroys ignorance is "Guru". Guru is the bonafide representative of sage Veda Vyaasa.

Guru, who kindles the flame of enlightenment in the heart, is none other than the God Himself. The name "Guru" is one

amongst several names of God. Hence, no one should differentiate between God and Guru. Guru is the promoter of well-being of the universe.

Guru is the Supreme Lord of this world. He is the manifestation of Lord Krishna Himself. Guru bestows the knowledge which He has acquired from Lord Krishna, the original Guru, to His disciples through the disciplic order. By carrying out His instructions, one can certainly please the God; because the Guru is God and God is the Guru. It is the God who takes birth in the form of Guru on the earth. But the Guru never says that He is Guru or God. Guru Himself is the religion. Guru is a God with form. Guru is the supreme knowledge that dispels ignorance. Brahman resides in the mouth of Guru. Guru is not merely a body but also a principle. Guru is not a person. Human appearance of Guru is deceptive and as such, sometimes, we fail to appreciate the truth.

Guru is absolute. He is the symbol of perfection. Divinity finds full expression in Guru. In other words, Guru is the divinity itself in the form of a flesh. Guru is energy. He is an incarnation of purity. There is nothing greater than Guru. Guru is at the helm of affairs.

Guru leads His devotees from uncertainty towards certainty, from anguish to spiritual bliss. He annihilates the darkness of ignorance within us and fills it up with the light of knowledge. Guru leads His devotees from distress to spiritual bliss. He is the cause of all spiritual principles. He practices what He preaches and preaches what He practices. He is the powerful house of spirituality and ultimate reality. Guru exudes what He talks.

Guru is the one, who knows the eternal wisdom, the Veda and, who is devoted to the all pervasive Lord. He is pure and free from arrogance. Guru is devoted to His preceptors. He is the

one who has witnessed the Supreme God head. Guru is father, mother and everything for us. Therefore, one should constantly remember his Guru forever.

The Guru scolds, blames, insults, ignores, provokes, and pleads - all for the betterment of His disciples. He is the one who leads the fallen souls on the noble path by kindling the light of knowledge.

“GURU IS GREATER THAN GOD” - SCRIPTURES

"Writing about Guru will be incomplete even if I make the entire land as writing paper, making pens of wood from all jungles and making ink out of water from seven seas." - Saint Kabir.

It may be noted that Guru is a divine force that can be comprehended only through the soul and never with petty logical mind. Guru is the ultimate mystery. Guru only is the sole cause behind the creation of entire universe.

There is no truth beyond Guru. Guru's glory, influence is everlasting.

GURU'S MISSION

The generosity of mankind takes place when a Guru appears. Guru is God's grace bestowing power. God takes the physical form of a Guru, who, when worshipped with loving devotion, gives a sense of accomplishment in life and liberation to us. Saints and pious people are living Gods on earth. If we cannot find God in Guru, where else can we find Him? Spiritual teachers descend to renovate faith and promote welfare of the humanity. Guru's mission is to redeem the people from their misery and ignorance. Guru is a channel through which the power of divinity flows for the betterment of mankind.

Guru is commissioned by God to convey, spread and propagate the divine message to devotees. Divine will of God

speaks through saintly people. Therefore, Guru is commissioned at the behest of divine will itself. Guru's mission is to put us on the track of transformation. It is He who takes us to the right path of God.

Guru shows the ways for meaningful life and saves those who are in distress. A perfect seer is a representative of Lord Shri Krishna who descends on earth in human garb with a sacred mission of helping the common human beings to perform the sacred duty enjoined by the Brahman. That sacred duty is to realize the self which is possible only through the divine knowledge imparted by Guru. Guru happens to come here to remove the blindfold and instruct and lead the person who has missed the track, to go back to his original place. He is a guide to those who have missed the right track. Guru inspires by being an example. He sets an ideal, an example.

Guru's job is to rescue the disciple from ignorance and lead him on the path of knowledge. He leads one to God. Guru's concern is to see that no one suffers in this mundane world. The aim of the preceptor is to take the aspirant to the highest state. Guru follows the ideal of selfless service to all mankind. A Guru alleviates the sorrows of people by spiritual means like japa, tapa, yoga, devotion, selfless service, counselling, will power, knowledge and physical transfer of disease.

By following the path shown by Guru, one attains the highest emancipation. Just by remembrance of Guru, knowledge dawns in one automatically. Guru never shows the wrong path. Only Guru can save us from all calamities, troubles, problems and our weaknesses. He is the Supreme caretaker. He has the ability to make us all powerful. Worshipping Guru means worshipping truth (God), knowledge and experience which can only be learnt at the Guru's feet.

GURU IS NOT A BODY

Guru is a principle. The Guru, not being in a physical form, His link will continue even after His physical form disappears. Guru is the essence of the vedaas, smritis, puraanaas. Guru is not a particular body. Guru is the self, Guru is Jiva. But He is the Supreme grace bestowing power of God functioning through human being. Guru is the very manifestation of divinity and the Supreme truth. It is not necessary that only a living person can become a Guru. A Guru affects eternity. He can never tell where His influence, power stops. Hence, one should propitiate one's Guru for the attainment of emancipation. By the satisfaction of Guru, all Gods are satisfied. Guru is a truest and most precious wealth of the land.

REMEMBERING GURU

A real disciple is one who is engaged in constant remembrance of Guru. Constant remembrance of Guru is the supreme spiritual discipline.

There is nothing parallel to remembrance of Guru and God. If we wish that the eternal wisdom related to spiritual knowledge should blossom in us, then we should constantly remember our Guru. Remembering the Guru and God in itself is the daily food, for, there is nothing parallel to remembrance. It is the simplest means to attain peace of mind. Remembering Guru incessantly is very efficacious to promote spirituality. One should trust, listen, remember and obey Guru for realization. Constant remembering of Guru is the greatest Saadhana. Nothing is above it. Guru bhakti yoga is yoga by itself. A wise man should be engaged in constant remembrance of Guru. Remembrance is the simplest way of spiritual discipline. None of the practices are equivalent to devotion to Guru. Just by remembering the Guru, knowledge dawns in one automatically. By the japa of Guru's name, the sins accumulated in countless lives are destroyed. Heart gets purified just by the remembrance of Guru. An aspirant needs

certain qualities to be developed for chanting name, like austerity, purity, honesty, religiousness, tolerance, knowledge and wisdom.

SURRENDER TO GURU

“LEAVE EVERYTHING TO THE DIVINE WILL.”

Surrendering means becoming a pure and unconditional disciple of the Guru. It is leaving everything to the divine will of the Guru. It is resignation to the Guru's will.

Without surrender, one cannot learn anything from Guru. Total surrender to Guru will enable the seeker to overcome ego. The seeker should surrender to the will of Guru. Surrender means becoming a pure and unconditional devotee of the God/Guru. By surrendering, one loses nothing, but gains everything. Surrender is a path of love. If one surrenders to God or the preceptor, he gets liberated from all kinds of sinful reactions. Guru bhakti yoga is total surrender to satguru. Surrender is the best form of devotion. No one can harm a surrendered soul. Whoever surrenders himself to Guru is saved. The only language Guru understands is total surrender. All problems are solved simply by surrendering oneself to Guru. Everything yields to surrender. To acquire knowledge, a disciple should completely surrender his body, mind and soul to his Guru. Before we surrender to God, we must surrender to the Guru. God accepts our surrender to the Guru. The best one can give to Guru is total surrender. However, ego comes in between. Surrendered soul is well protected. Guru bhakta is not tainted by sin. One becomes free from the cycle of birth and death by pleasing the Guru. Guru's blessings can do anything. Everything should be surrendered to the Guru because everything yields to surrender. Surrender requires great mental strength. Surrender is the ultimate freedom. Real surrender means doing nothing unless prompted by the Guru. Surrender is better option than self efforts. Without surrender, we cannot learn anything from Guru.

GURU IS NOT SELFISH, HE IS SELFLESS

Generosity takes the form of Guru. Hence, naturally He cannot be selfish. In this world, Guru alone is selfless. He has everything with Him. He has nothing to possess or achieve. Only Guru gives real love. Guru's intellect is without any selfish desires. All worldly relations are governed, influenced by give and take considerations, i.e. selfishness. However, it is only the Guru, who is an exception to this principle. Guru is free from selfishness, desires and ego. He mainly guides and aids in the self-realisation process without any expectations. Guru does not ask for anything or any favour from any one, for, to give is His very nature. Guru wants nothing but improvement, welfare of His disciples. He is disinterested in name, fame, honour, money and wealth. He is not after any trivial gains. Nothing is desired by Guru. Even He does not seek His worship by disciples or celebration of His birthday by disciples. But, it is the disciples who desire them. Guru is the ocean of mercy without motive.

Though the disciple is prepared for any sacrifice, a true Guru never expects any sacrifice or anything for His sake, in return from disciples. A Guru does not keep a person under His control; instead He frees him from dependency. He is not for detaining but for relieving. Guru needs nothing from you. It is you who need Him.

Humility is one of the essential qualities of Guru. He promotes the welfare of the maximum. He alone is the savior of mankind who works without any motive. Guru gives perfection to many.

GURU IS THE ONLY REFUGE

“EVERYTHING CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED BY TAKING REFUGE UNDER GURU”

No known comparison exists in the universe for a real Guru.

He who takes refuge under Guru is safe. No power on earth can touch him. To a man, in this world, there is no refuge without a Guru. Guru is the ultimate and the only refuge. It is really impossible to cross over this material world without the help of a Guru. Guru is mother, father, God, relative, friend, guide and philosopher and everything for us. One who strives for perfection succeeds in his efforts only when the stamp of Guru's compassion falls on him. The wise ones should seek shelter under Guru's feet. Guru devotes himself to all those who seek refuge in Him. None other than Guru is closer to us in this world. Guru is all sympathy and passion. He is benevolent by nature. Nothing can be compared to the Guru in all the three worlds. Equality is His mantra.

Our relationship with Guru should be natural and eternal. Contact with Guru means second lease of life. Guru bhaktaas are bound to be happy. Devotees of Guru never fall, perish. There is no place for sorrow in the love for Guru. Guru is fully capable of taking care of His devotees in all their troubles and difficult times. Devotion towards Guru itself is strength and stratagem. Devotion does the miracle. Devotion to Guru is inclusive of all spiritual practices. Devotees graced with Gurukripa can do wonders in the world. Devotion to Guru is the key to success. Guru always stands by the devotee. It is for the sake of devotees that Guru has assumed human form. Devotees of the Guru are the richest men. Devotion never fails. Guru illuminates the hearts of those who take refuge in Him.

Guru fulfills all wishes of His devotees.

GOAL/PURPOSE OF LIFE

Goal gives meaning and direction to our lives. It gives an impetus to move forward. There can be no progress without goal. Goals determine the directions in which we have to proceed.

There is no future for the one who has no goal. Life has a meaning only when God is realized. We must have the highest goal. Lower goal is no goal at all. The true purpose of life is not sensuality, but spirituality. God realization is the highest goal of life because there is no other goal greater and better than this. The purpose of life is to search for the truth. To realize unity in diversity is the goal of life. Without goal, the mind becomes lame. Faith, dedication, devotion, honesty and love are the means to achieve the truth. For that, everything should be done in a spirit of dedication to God. Man's supremacy lies in his capacity to become aware of this truth. The purpose of human life is the merger of the man with the supreme power. Goal makes our life meaningful. Goal is a tool for progress. Just recitation of mantras and chanting of hymns are not means of self realization. Nothing materializes without Guru. An aspirant fails to make progress on the spiritual path due to certain flaws and obstacles. It is the Guru who removes the obstacles to self realization. When God is realized, life has meaning.

Guru mediates between God and the devotee. Without Guru, goal can never be achieved.

WHY GURU?

Truth itself is the life force. The life becomes meaningful through the means of truth only. One should go to Guru for solace and spiritual progress. Spiritual growth is a slow process. Guru accelerates the pace of progress. Life without Guru has no substance, charm. The mission for which we are born is God realization. Logic and reason do not help in realizing the God. Guru's guidance and grace is absolutely necessary for self realization. Guru Bhakti is the only means to self realization. There is no liberation without realization. Intellectual satisfaction or material achievement is not the highest goal. Anyone who desires to get liberated from worldly life (the unending cycle of

birth and death) needs to be a perfect man. Perfection needs knowledge. The darkness within us has cost us so many lives. Without self knowledge, perfection cannot be attained. And to acquire knowledge, there is a need for Guru because eternal knowledge cannot be acquired by any other means. Only a glowing lamp can kindle another.

The aspirant is infected with several lapses and sins. Many times, he is unaware of his own flaws. Hence, there is necessity of Guru who removes these flaws through proper guidance. By being born as human being, we should be prepared to enter a new life - a life of purity, sacrifice, truthfulness, dispassion and great restraint.

Lord Krishna has advised us to adopt three means to acquire knowledge - (i) Humility (humbleness) towards Guru; (ii) Asking probing questions to Guru; and (iii) Rendering reverential service to Guru. To attain self knowledge, one has to surrender himself totally and unconditionally to his Satguru. Without Guru, one cannot know the supreme truth, nor attain self knowledge. But whoever can call on the Almighty with utmost sincerity and intense earnestness needs no Guru. Such people are very rare indeed.

IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge means knowing things as they are. God is revealed through knowledge. All spiritual practices end in knowledge. Knowledge makes us strong. Knowledge itself is liberation. Knowledge elevates us to higher status. Knowledge is power, knowledge is wealth, and knowledge is God. Nothing is more purifying or holier than knowledge. Knowledge is the sole attribute of soul. Knowledge bestows humility. Knowledge descends by disciplic succession. All knowledge flows from God. The perfect

knowledge descends by the chain of disciplic succession only and not by any other medium.

The knowledge of the self can be imparted only through Guru-disciple tradition and not otherwise. Knowledge leads to unity with God. Guru makes His disciples expert, self effulgent, blissful and benevolent. Guru makes, turns His disciple like Himself. The essence of knowledge is its application. Knowledge must not be simply theoretical.

THE PLACE OF GURU

There is no parallel to Guru. At times, He is compared to a philosopher's stone which turns the base metal into gold. But this kind of comparison is not correct because the philosopher's stone turns base metal into gold; it does not transform that metal into another philosopher's stone. But the preceptor turns even the dullest one into a wise sage like Him. He can make even the animals to utter the scriptures.

The place of a Guru so far as the disciple is concerned is above that of his own father and mother. Guru is the eternal Brahma on Earth. There is no truth beyond Guru. The place where Guru lives is Kaashi Kshetra. Guru is undoubtedly the living Brahman saviour. There is nothing other than the Guru in this world. Therefore, the disciple should develop a feeling that his Guru Himself is God or even above God. This type of feeling only elevates the disciple to the higher status.

The one who thinks Guru to be an ordinary human being is the fool of the highest order and no matter which scriptures such a foolish person studies, shall go in vain. The Guru is the supreme cause, the ultimate destiny, the supreme resort, the end point and the most precious wealth. The Guru is the greatest because He teaches the supreme essence of life, the highest truth. He liberates the disciples from the terrible human life.

GOD AND GURU

God and Guru are not two different entities. He who makes distinction between Guru and Shiva is guilty of the crime. Divine Mother listens to Guru. All Gods preside in the preceptor. Therefore, when one offers salutations to Him, he earns the merit of saluting both, preceptor and God simultaneously. If instead of speaking to God and preceptor as two different persons, if we treat them as one and the same and that God has appeared in the form of preceptor, we need not practice twofold devotion. We can achieve the goal with this kind of belief, approach.

In the final analysis, God Himself can be accepted as the preceptor and we can surrender to Him totally. In that case, the God will save us by His grace through the Guru who is in the human form. One should know that after all, Guru is the manifestation of Lord Himself. The Guru is God and God is the Guru. Lord Krishna is the supreme embodiment of the Guru. Hence, the distinction between the two is uncalled for. Guru is a God with form. The power of God itself works in the form of Guru. Guru is the visible manifestation of the Lord. The ultimate Guru is the Lord who resides within all of us. Guru is the very manifestation of divinity and the Supreme Truth.

As the God Himself descends in the form of Guru, the grace of Guru never goes without fructification. It is the same power, grace that takes the form of Guru and appears before the disciple. Therefore, our religious scriptures declare not to disobey the instructions given by Guru. God's grace can be earned through Guru's grace only. Surrendering to Guru means surrendering to the God Himself. Guru should be revered in the same way as one reveres God. In this age of Kali, Guru Himself is the Holy Trinity. Hence, the distressed ones should seek shelter at Guru's feet. This is the easiest solution to the people in the present age. In this icon, to have direct vision of God is a rare phenomenon

to be accomplished. Therefore, we, aspirants should seek, see God in our respective preceptors only. The Guru is in the form of all 33000 crore forms of divinity. Guru is given the most exalted, supreme and highest position in Kali Yuga.

"DO NOT SEEK ME IN KAASHI, SEEK THE GURU INSTEAD" - SHRI SHANKAR BHAGWAAN

Guru is as good as God. When we offer respect, obeisance to the Guru, we are offering respect, obeisance to God only. He who is the Guru is Shiva Himself. There is no one who is equal to Guru.

"If Guru and the God both are in front of me, whom should I bow to? My Guru is the most revered one, for, He has shown me the path towards God. For, the Guru is more than a teacher. He is the staff, guide and the eyes through which the shishya perceives the internal and external world. A Guru does not differentiate between His disciples, for, He is aware that each one has his own limitations" - a saint.

It may be noted that God, Guru and self are the same in the ultimate analysis.

HOW ONE SUCCEEDS IN GETTING GURU?

One gets what he deserves. Guru shall come whenever a devotee needs Him. But he should have an intense longing for Guru.

There is a great and onerous responsibility on the aspirant to find a living true Guru. It is a rare opportunity to have a living Guru.

Guru is the precious gift conferred by the God to all those who have sincerely prayed God for His help to cross over the shackles of sansaara. Yearning for a Guru is rewarded by God

in the form of Guru. The mercy of God takes the form of Guru and appears before us. One is blessed with Guru due to the merit (punya) which he has acquired over the past several births. That is why noble deeds never go without reward. By the attainment of Guru, one attains everything. The Guru is always available, but the disciple lacks the strong will, urge for Guru.

Longing for Guru yields, materializes. Guru is within the range of disciple's spiritual sight. Guru is always ready to share but there are no takers. Guru will be ready when the disciple is waiting. Guru appears when the disciple is prepared. The very meeting with a Guru is the assurance of liberation. When the aspirant feels a strong urge for spiritual enlightenment, his Guru appears nearby. Only the fruits of pious deeds of a man and his good luck enable him to be in the company of a Guru.

When all past karmas, good as well as bad, are experienced and exhausted equally, that moment Guru is met automatically. It is all God's arrangement for the upliftment of humanity. If the disciple is sincere and has a genuine urge for God realization, he need not go in search of a Guru. On the contrary, he will be blessed with the Guru. A person with real devotion and urge gets a realized Guru. If we surrender ourselves to God, we shall get a true Guru. So long as a true yearning for God and salvation does not develop, one is not favoured with Guru. If the aspirant is very keen and sincere for salvation, God definitely helps by enabling him to be in the company of a Guru. Guru is approached through meditation, contemplation, dreams and such other means. We shall get a real Guru when the yearning for Him has flamed up in our heart.

Do not look for a Guru. Just be a seeker of the Truth. The Guru will appear before you. For that, no special efforts are necessary.

WHY IS DEVOTION TO GURU MORE MERITORIOUS THAN THAT TO GOD?

"I AM FOND OF GURUBHAKTA RATHER THAN MY OWN DEVOTEE" - SHRI KRISHNA

There is nothing greater or more valuable than the Guru. Guru is the ultimate mystery. Guru has eternal wisdom. God has not been seen by any one, but the preceptor is present here before us. We can see the preceptor in person, talk to Him freely, while God is not to be seen so easily. It is much easier to get things done by the grace of Guru than God. Guru is the greatest because He preaches the Supreme Essence. Even the highest deities spring from and subside in Guru.

Guru is above all. He is the God of Gods and without remembering Him, success cannot be attained in any assignment. The infinite powers of the world become slaves of Guru. Guru is Parabrahma. Sadguru reveals the Truth hidden within us. Our self elevation is possible only through Guru.

But simply by having a Guru one cannot attain salvation. The confused ones and worldly minded ones are after Guru for favours and not for His teachings. For that, one has to follow His teachings. One can attain it by one's own yearning and strong desire, rather than simply having a Guru.

However, we should not forget to practice devotion to God because it is the God who has taken us closer to the Guru. But for the grace of God, we could not have attained the proximity to the Guru. We are in proximity with the preceptor only due to God.

GURU IS A PLACE OF PILGRIMAGE

Guru bhakti is the greatest kind of pilgrimage. All places of pilgrimage are present at the sacred, holy feet of Guru. Guru's

feet are a nuclear centre of spiritual power. Guru Himself is a place of pilgrimage. The holy water of Guru's feet has the powers to wash out the mire of one's sins. It uproots the ignorance and helps to overcome the hurdles and the bondage of actions. Just by touching the holy feet of revered Guru, one gets rid of the sufferings from the cycle of birth and death.

A true disciple of a Guru does not need any pilgrimage to holy rivers or places. For him, the lotus feet of Guru are everything. Pilgrimage place gets sanctified by the presence of saints. In this world, the lotus feet of one's own mother, father and Guru are the greatest pilgrimage centres. Pilgrimage should continue till one gets a Guru. Pilgrimage is for those who do not have Guru.

NEVER ABANDON GURU

Guru is a priceless possession. Nobody would like to part with such priceless possession. It is a true possession which is invaluable.

Even if one is the knower of the entire truth, he should never abandon the Guru. Guru once is Guru for all the time. The relation between Guru and His disciple is ever lasting connection and relation. The abandoner is bound to go to hell particularly after finding faults with his Guru. Even after self realization, one should never abandon his Guru. One will not have peace of mind if he abandons Guru. One who abandons Guru becomes restless and confused. Guru is the real wealth, real shelter. Guru is everything. Hence, one should take refuge in Guru. Even if it comes to life, do not abandon your Guru. Even the mere thought of abandoning Guru must not originate in the mind.

THE COMPANY OF GURU - A RARE OPPORTUNITY

YOU NEED TO DO NOTHING. BUT SIMPLY GET ASSOCIATED WITH GURU

A Guru merely does not impart knowledge to His disciples. He does something more for the sake of disciples. He shares His being and illumination with them. The disciple learns the deeper meaning of life by living in the company of Guru. The Guru does not have to teach with His words. The company of Guru itself is a teacher. He guides with His own life, example. He inspires by being an example. The Guru shares His being (living) with His disciples. His love for disciple is without any expectations or conditions. The role of a Guru is to give you a glimpse of the real, not a teaching, but an awakening. Guru is really very great. Just by keeping His company, we can experience God directly. Only Guru gives real love. His very darshan gives us bliss, peace, patience, contentment, courage and confidence.

Where there is Guru, there is affinity of God. To be in the company of Guru means to be in the company of God. The greatest fortune in one's life is the company of Guru. The real beneficiaries in this world are those who are lucky enough to be in the company of Guru. Without the company of a Guru, the family is like a living dead being. In a person, total transformation takes place in the vicinity of a Guru. Path of liberation is accessible only to those who are being placed in the company of a Guru. Spiritual wealth can be acquired through the company of a Guru. It is certain that those who are in the holy company are sure to attain deliverance. Simply by being in the company of Guru, God or having the vision, one gets reminded about himself and his eternal obligations. The very presence of saintly people drives away all their mental worries and discomforts and brings joy and peace to them. It is always beneficial to be in the company of a Guru. Relationship with Guru cuts bondage and knot of ignorance.

Living near Guru means trusting, obeying, honouring and not letting the words and intentions of the Guru being neglected.

The less fortunate ones in this world should seek shelter under the preceptor or God. The bliss experienced in the company of the Guru is not found elsewhere. The company of Guru generates pure energies which purify us. Guru brings the feeling of oneness between us and divinity. Holy company is the source of all spiritual discipline and treasure.

For a spiritual aspirant, good company is more precious than spiritual discipline. In fact, one who is in the company of Guru needs no other religious practices. Holy company creates positive patterns and takes away mental burdens and frustrations. The holy company itself elevates one to the higher status. Holy company diverts negative energy. A saadhaka need not do anything but simply get associated with holy company. Nothing equals the company of Guru. Company helps build up a magnetic center of spiritual life. The presence of Guru purifies emotions and rejuvenates body, mind and spirit.

One's mind gets influenced instantly in a very natural way when one happens to be in the company of Guru. By the mere presence and contact with Guru, one's transformation takes place easily and instantly. Guru puts us on the speed track of transformation. For that, Guru does not do anything. It is the power (shakti) that does everything. One easily acquires the religious merit (punya) of visiting all the pilgrimage centers simply by being in the vicinity of the lotus feet of Guru. Glorification of Guru is the glorification of Shri Hari Himself. One will not be graced by God unless first he is graced by Guru.

HAVE FAITH IN GURU

A man without faith cannot achieve anything in life. Faith is the soul of spiritual life. Faith here means faith in the capacity and words of Guru. The relationship between a Guru and disciple is governed by mutual trust and confidence. Hence, one should

trust Guru. Faithless has no future. Want of faith is want of life. Faith and spiritual life are inseparable.

Faith is an expression of willingness. Faith is belief. It is exuberance of confidence. Faith is a force of life. It has tremendous power. Faith always pays rewards. Faith can even move mountain. To find a Guru and also to have trust in Him is a rare fortune. It does not happen in everyone's life.

One needs deep and implicit faith in his Guru to succeed in spiritual life. Faith is a basic requisite for the spiritual aspirant. Faith is security. For success, there must be immense longing for truth or absolute faith in the Guru. The aspirant should make his life journey an expression of his deep faith and intense love for his spiritual master. Faith in Guru and obedience to Him helps us in realization of self. An aspirant should give his heart and soul, attention, time, resources and everything to Guru. Faith in Guru and earnest application of His advice helps us to realize self easily. It is by having a childlike faith in His words that one can realize God and not through cleverness or intelligence. A real devotee never loses his faith and love towards Guru. A disciple, in his own interest, should have full faith in his Guru's words.

Doubt and disobedience delay the progress. If trusted fully, Guru cannot mislead. It is utter foolishness to distrust Guru. One must have immeasurable faith and sincerity and not hypocrisy in his Guru. Trust your Guru and leave the rest to Him. The faith in Guru-disciple tradition is absolutely necessary to seek Guru's grace. In spiritual line, a disciple progresses only when he trusts his own Guru. As Guru never misleads or shows wrong path, a disciple should repose strong faith in Him. The one who does not have faith, trust in Guru's words, is damned as wicked and treacherous.

To repose faith in Guru is the most beneficial and advisable course of action for the aspirants. A disciple never progresses if

he has doubts about Guru's preaching, ability or power. A disciple should realize that the form of Sadguru is everlasting. Therefore, the disciple should cultivate utmost faith and belief in His Guru for progress. By faith, anything and everything can be attained. Guru cannot fail. FAITHLESS ONES HAVE NO PLACE EITHER IN SPIRITUAL WORLD OR MATERIAL WORLD.

GURU IS COMMISSIONED BY GOD

Guru is power personified and not a person. He is the messenger of one's self. Eternal truths that come out of the mouth of Godly men are not their utterances but in reality descend from the kingdom of heaven. At times, one may wrongly presume that such utterances originate from human body and tend to ignore them. Brahma resides in the mouth of Guru. Guru is a knower of the Brahman. Guru is the most confidential servitor of God. He is in direct communion with God. Godliness is fully manifested in Guru. When God bestows grace upon jiva, He sends a Guru as His messenger. Guru possesses a transforming power. Guru is the mediator between God and devotees. He takes the devotees to God. Guru always succeeds.

SERVICE TO GURU, THE GOLDEN (BEST) SPIRITUAL MEANS. ANY TIME IS SERVICE TIME

SERVICE IS KEY TO SUCCESS. IT IS THE SECRET OF SPIRITUALISM.

The disciple cannot have a steady mind unless he serves Guru wholeheartedly. Mind emerges victorious when it is fixed on one direction. Our wavering mind becomes steady when we learn from Guru. Polluted mind is purified through service to Guru. God is accessible only when the mind is purified. Service is the best spiritual aid, means for success. The word service does not mean the same as is used in common parlance. In spiritual

line, it has altogether a different connotation. Here, it is not a commercial and personal service which is based on pecuniary gains or favours. It means reverential service rendered by a disciple to his Guru with a sense of self surrender and as a matter of duty, obligation. It is a voluntary act which is spontaneous and packed with love and sense of surrender. The service rendered is not under any external compulsion. It is an internal urge, expression so far as sincere devotees are concerned. In spiritual line, it is God's precious gift to the aspirant. Service to the Guru should be regarded as a blessing and privilege. All are not gifted with this rare privilege.

To render service to the Guru is the greatest blessing that can be conferred upon a human being in his life time. One should have the fortune to be in the service of Guru due to the religious merit which he has acquired through past several births. IT IS NOT A FAVOUR BY DISCIPLE TO GURU BUT HIS BOUNDEN OBLIGATION TOWARDS GURU. Service itself is a golden opportunity to achieve the goal of realization for the aspirants. Service to Guru itself is a great tapasya, saadhanaa. Service to Guru is a greatest spiritual practice. SERVICE TO THE GURU IS THE HIGHEST FORM OF RELIGION. One does not qualify for spiritual teachings without rendering service to Guru.

Really speaking, it is a great privilege to be in the service of Guru. The ecstasy which one draws from service to Guru cannot be expressed through words. It is a lifelong memorable event. In fact, Guru does not need any service but it is the disciple who needs it to wipe out his own limitations. Service to Guru is a very mysterious saadhana in which the knowledge of the truth springs up spontaneously in a seeker as he serves his Guru with dedication and sincerity. Hence, one who serves Guru need not practice any other spiritual discipline.

He who serves the Guru serves the whole universe. For fructification of knowledge, Guru seva is a necessity. One should serve his Guru with all surrendering feeling. It is not a routine or mechanical service which is expected by Guru. By mere satisfaction of the Guru, all spiritual practices become fruitful.

By serving the feet of the Guru, one gets purified of all sins. He gets everything simply by serving the Guru. Service of the Guru purifies the body. By the service of Guru, the entire family is purified. The service to Guru is the panacea for all evils of mankind. Sacrifice and service to Guru are the main aspects of the path of Guru Bhakti. One would gain everything from Guru when one simply serves Him wholeheartedly. One who serves Guru with deep faith and devotion attains the best and the highest in the universe.

One, who serves Guru with single-pointedness thinking Guru as God, attains everything. Nothing is left for him to attain. For the worship of Guru, sacrifice, service and single pointed love are absolutely necessary. By submissive enquiries and a service attitude, the aspirants should meet the spiritual master. The feeling that "I am in the service of Guru" should never emerge in the mind of disciple as "I am" implies egotism. God gets distanced when "I" feeling is cultivated.

WHAT TYPE OF SERVICE?

It is out of natural urge that one voluntarily gets engaged in service of Guru. Service to Guru is not a mere physical service. It is a disciplined service. It is to carry out the intentions of Guru with zeal, sincerity, love and faith. Service here means implementation of what Guru has in His mind. It is not a time pass or casual device. The greatest service which one can render to Guru is to obey and carry out the words of Guru.

DOES GURU NEED ANY SERVICE?

Guru does not need any one for His mission as God takes care of everything in His matter. Time is His assistant. In reality, Guru is not in need of any service from any one. It is the disciple who needs it for his own betterment, up-liftment. One does not do any favour by serving Guru. It is to redeem the debt due to Him that one has to serve Guru. A disciple becomes great by serving his Guru.

BE PREPARED TO SERVE GURU

One should live only to serve Guru. One who serves his Guru with all sincerity and money, mind and body, need not ask for anything from Guru. Guru's grace follows naturally. It is the natural course. The disciple should be engaged in the service of Guru tirelessly with open mind and packed with utter love. As he spends more and more time in the service of Guru, he qualifies to earn more and more power, grace.

While in service, a disciple should be prepared to offer everything including his body, because before Guru, every possession is trivial, insignificant. Besides everything should go back to that place wherefrom it has come. One should never feel tired while serving Guru. While serving Guru, consideration in terms of strain, money, convenience, hope, expectation, recognition should never weigh in the mind of the disciple. One should be prepared to serve the Guru till the last drop of the blood.

WHY AND HOW SHOULD ONE SERVE GURU?

The disciple should be ever ready to serve the Guru. He should eagerly wait for serving Guru. A disciple, while serving the Guru must be ever alert. One should serve his Guru without any self interest. He should give his heart to Guru. Language of heart is the guide for Guru's service.

Without serving a preceptor, liberation cannot be attained. Hence, one should serve Guru for the attainment of emancipation. To gain spiritual knowledge, rendering service to Guru is a must. Without serving a Guru, the aspirant remains a raw and faces stagnation.

To the one who happens to be the disciple, rendering service and hymns in favour of the preceptor are necessary.

God/Goddess is more active in Guru. As such, service to Guru implies service to God/Goddess alone. For attaining perfection, one should accept the Guru wholeheartedly and serve Him with deep faith and devotion. One who has the aim to attain God realization has to surrender to Guru who is in the disciplic succession. The spirit of submission at the feet of Guru uplifts the surrendered one.

GURU'S ADVICE, WORDS TO BE FOLLOWED IN TOTO

"GURU VAAKYAM PRAMAANAM" - the utterances of Guru shall be the ultimate truth.

It is to be noted that Guru is commissioned by God to convey divine message to the devotees. Hence, we should do what Guru tells us to do. An aspirant does not need any help, he needs only advice. To honour the Guru's advice is the greatest religion. Guru's advice is the panacea for ignorance, all evils and problems. The words of Guru are a source which fulfill all our desires. Words of Guru themselves are the doctrines. Guru's words are the containers of His grace. Therefore, they should not be taken lightly. They are to be carried out with due regard. To keep trust in Guru's utterances is the primary stage and concern towards spiritual path. The essence of Gurubhaktiyoga lies in utter obedience in carrying out the orders and translating His teachings in life, i.e. practicing.

The instructions of God are channelized through disciplic succession and passed on to the disciples by their spiritual

preceptors. Hence, the instructions of a real Guru should be accepted and followed as one's paramount duty in life. One is sure to be elevated if he follows the sayings of His Guru with due honour. Words of Guru are the origin of all perfections. Hence, only by respecting the advice of preceptor, we can attain perfection. Guru's voice itself is liberator, because Guru gives directions to the domain of realization. Real reverence to Guru is to obey His words in letter and spirit with all seriousness. In one's own interest, Guru is to be always obeyed and served. Guru's words, talks surpass that of God's.

The advice of Guru shall make the otherwise difficult worship of God much easier. By the advice of Guru, the mind comes to a definite conclusion. This is very important for the beginners. The words of a Guru have a power of dispelling ignorance and darkness in the world. In fact, Guru does nothing. His words work. Guru's words alone have got power to dissolve all problems within no time as Guru gives positive direction to all tendencies. Among all other words, words of Guru are supreme and ultimate. Guru's words are binding on the whole cosmos. IT IS NOT THE WORDS THAT MATTER, BUT THE POWER BEHIND THEM. THE POWER IS IN THE WORD, NOT IN THE PERSON. GURUVAANI (VOICE) IS THE CONTAINER AND CARRIER OF BRAHMA ONLY. The disciple understands the truth better by hearing it from the lips of the Guru. It is only a matter of time, experience and patience.

BOUNDEN DUTY TO FOLLOW

A disciple is duty bound to carry out the advice of Guru fully and faithfully. At times, it may appear to be impossible for the disciple to carry out the advice or meaningless. The disciple also may feel uncomfortable or embarrassed but still he should obey the advice. Nothing shall come in the way of implementation of Guru's instructions. We shall deem Guru's

words as everything. We shall abide by Guru's commands, even by putting our lives at stake. By not arguing, forgetting and just by remembering Guru, one can realize. We should follow Guru's instructions to the best of our knowledge and ability. Because master's words cannot be falsified. A devotee shall not try to thwart his Guru's will, wish and thereby invite problems.

Our success and well-being lies only in following the instructions of Guru. One gains perfection only through the words of Guru. Guru's words gain an entry and a seat in the abode of the self. For one's own betterment, one has to trust the words of Guru and practice what is told to him. There is no other option. Have Guru in your heart and remember His teachings. Undoubtedly, Guru's teachings and preachings lead to happy moments, but they are not to be uttered before those who have no faith in Guru. Since they originate from supreme power, sanctity must be preserved by all means. Guru's words of command are to be taken as blessings. Doing what is told by Guru is the proof of earnestness on the part of the disciple. One can realize by not ignoring, forgetting Guru's words. The disciple should take Guru's words as ultimate truth. One can realize by not ignoring Guru's words. Nothing can provide a gateway to salvation except Guru's instructions. The Guru's direction supersedes everything. The disciple has to accord first preference to Guru's instructions, because there is always a hidden message in them, which is beyond his comprehension.

Guru's words come true. They never fail. Guru's words will certainly work. But one must have faith in the words of Guru. Spend your every moment by remembering Guru and His words. For one's own welfare, one should never ignore the words of Guru. It is obligatory on the part of disciples to carefully follow the advice of Guru, both in letter and spirit. Everything lies in Guru's advice. Because words uttered by Guru possess

abundant invisible force. Guru delights the soul through His words. One should receive instructions, advice from a Guru who has realized the world to be unreal.

THE GLORY OF GURU

TO SING GURU'S GLORY ONE NEEDS A LOT OF MERIT
TO HIS CREDIT

Guru is Brahma (who sows the seeds of spiritualism), Vishnu (who protects and nurtures the aspirants) and Maheshwara (who liberates the disciple at the end). Guru is not an ornamental post or position. Guru possesses all the wealth and glories. Nobody is so wealthy and so generous as Guru is. Guru is never poverty stricken. He is venerated in all the three worlds. He occupies the first place in our life. None is above Him. He is in direct communion with the Lord.

Guru is our nearest and best kith and kin in this mundane world. He makes our life meaningful and interesting. Guru makes it happen what is considered impossible. The Guru is our supreme benefactor. No one stands in comparison with Him. With the appearance of a Guru, the entire humanity gets benefitted and a new era of help, life, hope opens before it.

"A MAN CAN GET RID OF ALL KINDS OF FLAWS AND SINS, BY PRACTISING DEVOTION TOWARDS HIS PRECEPTOR" - sage Naarad.

Guru is an eternal shelter. He always emerges victorious. Guru never gives up and lets us down. Guru's help and role is priceless. Guru has marvelous independent power. Guru can transmit holiness and purity to others by a touch, a word, a look or even a thought. Attachment to Guru results in detachment to sense objects. Guru is an instrument to cross over the ocean of sansaara. All worldly attachments vanish at the sight of Guru. Guru is the embodiment of vedaas. Guru knows and teaches the essence of scriptures.

Guru commands obedience from all. The whole universe including five great elements has to obey Guru's command. Guru is an instrument to cross over the ocean of sansaar. ONE WHO SEES GURU ALSO SEES GOD. When Guru is available, there is no need to see and search for God. Through Gurubhakti, one can tide over all types of adversaries. No one can describe the greatness or glory of Guru. The Guru is to be glorified from the point of view of a disciple. The Guru is at home at all levels. He is possessed with inexhaustible knowledge, patience, energy and compassion. Nothing is impossible for Guru. But very few can come to know of Guru's real mind and potentialities. Guru's glory and behavior cannot be understood and explained. We are just tools in the hands of Guru. A spiritual leader guides the destiny of men. So leave everything to the mercy of Guru. We are safe in His hands.

MAAYAAAND GURU

Maaya is a complex concept. Maaya is man's limited perception. It makes us to assume this world as ultimate reality, while in reality, the self alone is real.

Guru is devoid of Maaya. Maaya does not bind Guru. Maaya is the play of creation. The physical world operates under the principal law of Maaya. Maaya makes us to forget the ultimate reality and to be after unreal. It is the main hurdle on spiritual path. It makes us to roam aimlessly and is responsible for missing the track. All in this world are entrapped by Maaya except Guru. It makes us roam wildly. Maaya acts according to the dictates of Guru. The whole physical world is encircled by Maaya in different forms. It envelopes reality and projects illusion, unreality.

We are hypnotized by Maaya. Even great sages and aspirants have become the victims of Maaya. Then why to speak about others? Maaya separates us from God. Maaya is the creation

of God. Maaya is ignorance. Maaya imprisons, engulfs us. All of us are caught in the web of Maaya. In simple words, Maaya means attachment to worldly, unreal things. Anything that comes between God and soul is maayaa. Everything other than God is Maaya. A Siddha Guru has a full control over Maaya. He looks beyond Maaya and merges his consciousness with the supreme soul. Guru in action is a veiled personality. The illusionary powers of God are never revealed. Maaya destroys others except staunch devotees. Maaya is the background of supreme personality of Godhead. As soon as Maaya is recognized, it moves away, disappears. It has dominance over egoistic people. He alone crosses the ocean of Maaya, who has realized God face to face. Anyone who can surpass Maaya can accomplish anything. Such a person shall be considered as the king of the universe.

Except God, everything is Maaya. Guru is no longer influenced by the alternating faces of Maaya. He is also not subject to likes and dislikes (as he has overcome them) that confuse the judgment of enlightened men. The truth about Maaya was understood by Rishis. Maaya has no effect on a person who is free from attachment. Guru is capable of removing the Maaya, the veiling power that veils the self. When Guru opens the eye of knowledge of the disciple, the disciple slowly starts realizing the influence of Maaya on worldly people. It is only the Guru who can introduce us to the glamouring effect of Maaya and He alone is capable of saving us from the clutches of Maaya. Guru makes one know one's real nature, his inherent divinity. The surrendered ones are saved from the jaws of Maaya.

DO NOT BLAME, ABUSE, DEFAME GURU

Guru is the Lord Himself in the guise of a human being. Guru is the loving personification of vedaas and Upanishads. He is holiness personified. Guru who is possessed with divinity, is

God Himself. Guru is God moving on earth. What makes one a Guru is His spiritual stature. Guru is the gift of God's grace and Guru's blessings. God's will is illustrated by Guru's wish. Guru is born for the good and happiness of many. Guru is the embodiment of all well-being. Guru is a supreme grace bestowing power of God working through a body. Therefore, He should be treated with the greatest of respect, reverence and adoration. Guru works through principles. To a man, who has no Guru, there is no life and place in the world.

IF ONE DISPLEASES GURU, he will be nowhere. One, who abuses, blames the Guru through derogatory words or speech, shall qualify to be reborn in lower species and has to reap the fruits of his sinful behavior. The principle is, never abuse Guru. However, Guru neither gets perturbed or disturbed by what happens around Him or what is told about Him. Guru is never upset with worldly incidents, happenings. Disciple's distrust, disbelief or way of thinking does not matter to the Guru. To blame or condemn the Guru for worldly happenings is the height of foolishness. Wise people should never speak egoistically and should never tell a lie before the Guru. A good disciple never indulges in arguments with Guru. A disciple should not start looking for faults in Guru.

Those who practice perfidy against Guru both in dream and mind shall invariably suffer from incurable health and other problems. Whoever indulges in vilifying the Guru goes to terrible hell. He suffers for generations unless he amends for his wrong doing (atonement). The disciple should never cause disrepute or indulge in defamation of Guru. The supremacy of Guru shall never be suspected, questioned or challenged. It is the duty of the disciple to uphold the dignity, status, honour of His Guru without giving any chance for condemning Guru. Similarly, there should not be unwanted and unreasonable discussion about Guru's sayings. When someone abuses Guru or insults Him,

the disciple shall either strongly defend the Guru, teach him a lesson or leave the place at once. Otherwise, he also becomes a party to that and as a result of which, he carries the flaws with him for next birth.

Disciples must try to bring good name to their Guru by thought, action and words. They should serve their Guru keeping in mind the intention of their Guru. But sometimes, disciples do much harm and bring disrepute to their Guru. They have their own plans, programmes and strategies which they implement without the knowledge or consent of their Guru. This normally happens as one fails to read the mind of Guru. Once we are under the shelter of Guru, there should not be anything which may be termed as "I", "ME" and "MINE". One should never let down and see that Guru is not let down by others. Anything that mars the honour of Guru is objectionable and deserves to be condemned.

Such an objectionable behaviour of disciples puts the Guru in an awkward situation. Even the disciples will have some problems and worries later.

The patience of compassionate Guru has no limits. Usually, Guru does not get disturbed or lose temper. However, one should never try to test His patience. No one should become the object of anger of Guru. One should not indulge in passing any adverse comments or attempt to lower down the honour of his Guru before the public. An aspirant needs to be in service of Guru always keeping in mind the intentions, teachings and honour of his Guru.

We shall never ignore the instructions, order or advice of Guru. If someone commits an offence against the Guru, even God would not pardon him. One who abuses, hurts, insults Guru suffers for ages.

GURU AND MIRACLES

Miracle is a supernatural event performed by a super natural power. Miracles speak about the supremacy of all powerful God. Miracles are voice of God. Though possessed with miraculous powers, Guru's job is not to perform miracles but to spread knowledge and annihilate ignorance. Persons not highly developed spiritually are fond of performing miracles. In fact, miracles should strengthen one's devotion and belief in supreme power. Unfortunately, most of the people are after miracles and not after God or Guru. Miracles are lower level tendencies, demands. But they should know that to aspire for miracles is a kind of spiritual weakness. One who is after miracles never progresses on spiritual path. Miraculous powers destroy all spirituality of the aspirants. To associate religion or spirituality with miracles is to kill religion. Guru is a supreme principle. Nothing is impossible for Him. He does not want us to get entangled in the web of miraculous happenings.

Any man of God realization could perform miracles as he understands the subtle law of creation. But real masters never wish to appear as great healers or perform miracles because they are fully aware that they are stumbling blocks on the path. Besides, they wish, want their disciples to settle down for nothing less than supreme power. That way, miracles are lower level expectations, goals. Miracles are great hurdles for both master and the spiritual aspirants. A real Guru never allows ego principle to dominate over God by performing miracles or offering solutions and cure. A Guru, who is only after miracles, fails to perform his designated task of enlightening the people. Knowledge, not the miracles, is the mission of Guru. Therefore, true yogis do not care, bother for miracles.

Mother exhibits various miracles through saints only. But true spiritual masters never wish to present themselves as great

healers or performers. Because they want people to realize that ultimately God alone is the healer and that the only thing left to be achieved in this life is nothing lesser than God realisation. Saints, therefore, often, cloak with various disguises the powers they have humbly received from the Lord. Miracles of a permanent and beneficial nature are performed by true saints because they have attuned themselves to the omnipotent creator. Sometimes, on a selective basis, the miracles are being performed in order to establish the supremacy of God and to convince that nothing is impossible for God and that everything is under His domain. However they are not performed to boost the image of oneself (Guru).

As Guru works for the progress of his disciples on spiritual path, He does not attach much importance to tangible achievements, miracles, solutions. Great masters seldom deem it fit to display their powers openly. They never display their powers when challenged or questioned for a trivalry. Even though the Guru is the treasure house of infinite siddhis and miraculous powers, He is least interested in the exhibition of the same because he is aware that miracles have nothing to do with spirituality.

People, devotees, followers, who have trust in Guru, usually meet their Gurus with an expectation of miracles and tangible objects and such other expectations. In the initial stages, they may be tolerated but not at the later stage. In a few cases, Guru advises them to wear some tangible objects like ring, thread, pendent, stone on selective basis. All this is done in order to evince their faith in God and also to clamp down his importance or role i.e. glorification of Himself. No doubt, these things have hidden potentialities and curative powers but it should be noted that primarily it is the blessings, power of Guru that rewards/works. Really speaking, real Guru in heart of heart has no

inclination for such practices as His real concern is to make His followers to stand on their own, to make them stronger, i.e., to spread the knowledge. He doesn't want them to depend on him for anything.

One cannot lay down or formulate uniform invariable rules, principles about self realised masters. It is the Guru who has to decide, not the disciple, what to do and what not to. Because their actions are dictated by the God's will, i.e. intuition faculty. Therefore, everyone may not have such experiences. Finally, it is the faith, devotion and sincerity of the disciple which carry the rewards. Some perform miracles, whereas others do not, for obvious reasons. In some cases, his option is dictated by His Guru, God. Each saint reflects God in His own way. The expression of individuality varies from saint to saint.

Be after God/Guru and not after miracles or cures. Miracles are transitory, whereas God is not.

GRACE OF GURU

"MOKSHA MOOLAM GUROH KRIPA" - Mercy of Guru is the root cause of liberation.

"GURU KRIPAA HI KEVALAM SHISHYAM PARAM MANGALAM" - only the grace of Guru brings about the highest welfare of the disciple.

One attains Brahman by the grace of Guru. God realization is possible only through the grace of Guru. Grace resolves all problems. Disciple succeeds in saadhana when the seal of Guru's grace is imprinted. All spiritual practices are meant for attaining Guru's grace, which is a very rare privilege.

WHAT IS GRACE?

Grace is favour, mercy showered by Guru/God. It is the divine influence. Grace is the divine energy. Grace is a virtue from

Guru/God. Guru is necessary both for worldly men and spiritual men. One cannot think of achievement without Guru's grace. The most fortunate is one who is graced by Guru.

It is because of God's grace that we are blessed with Guru. God showers His grace over the whole world through Guru only. To find a living Guru is a rare opportunity and great responsibility. Guru is the grace and divinity personified. Grace is the super power which frees us from tension. It is a safeguard against moral decay. Whether a spiritual aspirant or a worldly man, he needs to earn the grace of Guru. In this world, nothing is more powerful and stronger than the grace of Guru. Guru's grace is the only remedy for the aspirant, devotees as well as worldly people. Blessed are those who have the grace of both Guru and God. However, to acquire grace, one needs merit. Guru's company means the shower of grace. It is because of grace that we are living, prospering.

Guru's grace can do wonders. When Guru's grace works, devotees can accomplish even the so-called impossible. Guru's grace can do and undo anything and everything. By Guru's grace everything takes place automatically. For that, Guru need not make any demonstration. There is no need for deliberation when there is Guru's grace. Guru's grace is the most effective and wonderful remedy that is effective in removing negativities of mind and at the same time, causing positive good effects. The grace of Guru sanctifies the disciple. Without Guru's infinite grace, it is difficult to attain peace of mind. We grow in peace and silence. Peace is a pre-condition for enlightenment. Without peace, there is no achievement.

WHY GURU'S GRACE?

The grace of Guru is necessary for everyone including Gods. Due to the grace of the preceptor, the destiny of a person gets transmuted. Without Guru's grace, even Devaas cannot

apprehend the truth. The disciple never progresses unless he receives Guru's grace. Without Guru's grace, one is not liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Grace puts an end to this cycle forever. Emancipation is not possible without the grace of Guru. Guru's grace liberates one forever. By the grace of Guru, one can go beyond the mind. Grace of Guru purifies the mind. When the mind is purified, it can be easily diverted in a spiritual direction, otherwise not. Guru's divine mercy is protection to His disciple.

The devotees who have purified their mind shall be graced with a pure Guru. The grace of a preceptor never goes without results. The value of Guru's grace is infinite. One can experience eternal bliss only through the grace of his Guru. Philosophers by arguments and scientists by scientific experiments cannot earn the divine grace of Guru. Grace does not depend on external tendencies or factors. By the grace of Guru, new self power and possibilities are awakened in the soul. The well-being of the disciple is promoted only through the grace of Guru. Man attains purity, sanctity and perfection with the kind help of Guru. Nothing is impossible for those fortunate ones who are blessed by Guru. One can attain everything through Guru's grace. To experience the truth, to attain perfection, one needs the grace of Guru.

Lord Shrimannaaraayana leads one to perfection only when he is graced by the preceptor. One, on whom the grace of Guru is showered, the sins of his past several lives are destroyed easily. By the grace of Guru, the self (Atman) becomes all powerful and capable of doing everything. One can attain everything through Guru's grace. Whatever happens in the life is only by the grace of Guru. To a person, who has earned the grace of Guru, nothing else is necessary. Anything can be achieved with the grace of Guru.

One who has grasped the grace of Guru needs no spiritual practices and religious ceremonies. A man gets second birth in

his life the moment he is graced by the Guru. The disciple can become a Guru only by the grace of His Guru.

WHEN GRACE DESCENDS?

Grace descends when we surrender to Guru. Where there is selflessness, sacrifice, dispassion, Guru's grace is bound to shower. Guru's grace does everything through initiation. All spiritual practices become a waste until the light of grace of Guru is obtained. God's grace descends only when Guru bestows His grace. Reverence to the spiritual master as a God is the fundamental belief. Those who embrace such a path find true protection, peace, love, joy, well being and the experience of the divine at every step because of the blessings from their spiritual master.

WHO RECEIVES GRACE?

The one who is truly inquisitive receives grace of a Guru. Only the merit that is gained by a disciple qualifies him for receiving the grace of Guru. The grace of Guru is uniform for everyone but it is up to the disciple to make use of it. In the pure heart Guru sows the mighty seed which sprouts later.

HOW GRACE SHOWERED?

The grace of Guru is showered in four ways, i.e. (i) by memory, thought; (ii) by sight; (iii) by words; and (iv) by a mere touch.

All possessions are of little value if one does not have the grace of Guru. The grace of Guru is like an ocean. The value of Guru's grace is infinite. It is entirely left to one to take a cup full or more from it. The bigger the cup, the more one will be able to carry. To qualify for higher grace, a disciple, devotee must enhance his merit. He, who completely fixes up his mind and thoughts upon his Guru, can cross over all difficulties by Guru's grace. Guru's grace alone opens eye of knowledge of devotees

and nothing else. The disciple reaches the highest stage only due to the grace of Guru. It is much easier to get the things done by the grace of Guru than God. There is nothing more precious than the grace of Guru.

GURU MANTRA

Mantra means vedic verse which protects and redeems one who recites it. It has a transforming power. It purifies and lifts us to higher state of awareness. Mantra breaks down the barriers between the God and the devotee. Guru mantra is given as per the merit and the need of the disciple. Once initiated, the disciple should utter only the mantra given by his Guru. It is the best means for progress and realization. Guru mantra is given only to those disciples who are very keen, sincere and have the quality of sacrifice. Faith in Guru is the corner stone for mantra. It is not given to those who are casual in their mission. Sometimes, the mantra is given through dream also. Guru mantra is given to those who are prepared and the surrendered ones. The mantra which we receive from an enlightened master is charged with power of the master's realized state. It is a life force.

Guru mantra shall be effective only when the Guru Himself is effective and a realized one. Mantra given by a realized Guru breaks open the door of ignorance and paves the way for spiritual progress. Guru mantra is conferred at the initiative of Guru and not at the instance of a disciple. It is the Guru who confers the mantra to the deserving aspirants at the ripe time. The aspirants shall never be after the Guru mantra. One should not hanker for Guru mantra. It is not to be conferred on demand. As a matter of right, principle a disciple should never press for Guru mantra.

As soon as we receive the mantra from Guru, we are no longer ordinary beings. We have certainly progressed because chanting has magnetic power that draws God's power. The body becomes love body when we start reciting it. Guru mantra

releases the disciple from earthly ills. Guru mantra cures the contagious diseases of the material world and opens the doors of spiritual world. Guru gives life to the disciple through the mantra. Hence, it should be repeated with utmost faith and respect.

After initiation, the disciple is given a chant such as "This Atma is Brahma", "Thou Art that", "I am He."

BE IN SEARCH OF A REAL/TRUE GURU

The genuine seekers of Guru are very few. One with stronger destiny finds a real Guru. The position of Guru is not an ornamental one. All those who have been taken as Guru need not be real Gurus. How can a Guru promote the welfare of others when He cannot promote His own welfare? Only the real Guru can do it.

A Guru is without a second. It is difficult to find a genuine Guru today. Real Gurus are very rare and they are limited in number. Most of the disciples are caught under the clutches of fake, imperfect Gurus. In that case, neither of them is benefitted. One should be attached to real Guru only.

LORD SHIVA TO BRAHMA DEVA - "He who indulges in mere reasoning, who entangles in a net of gossip, complicated words and arguments, can never be a true Guru."

He who knows the state in which there is neither the world nor the thought of it - is the supreme teacher.

Pure consciousness beyond consciousness is the Supreme Guru. Perfection can never be attained unless one is blessed by a great preceptor.

Guru is one who is learned in the scriptures, sinless, unpolluted by lust, desires and is a knower of the Brahman. A perfect seer

when approached with devotion, sense of surrender and inquisitiveness, bestows His grace and initiates one in to spiritual line. One cannot become a real Guru without renouncing the world. A true Guru comes from the lineage of Gurus founded by the Lord Himself. The lineage of Guru should be alive in true Guru. Real Guru attains an exalted spiritual stature.

A true Guru is one whose mere presence brings about a remarkable transformation in the disciple. His voice, more than utterances, serves as a vehicle to lasting inner peace and bliss with great ease. He instills confidence amongst the aspirants at once. Such a great man identifies Himself with the Supreme Godhead. He is the one who hails from Guru's lineage and enables us to retrieve our identification with divinity.

The real Guru is the one who links us to God. He enables us to realize God. One who does not lead us to God realization is indeed not a real Guru. It may be noted that Guru is not a degree, post or position. It is recognition and sanction by a great Guru (God). What makes one a Guru is His spiritual status, perfection and enlightenment. Only the liberated one can be a Guru.

A man does not become a Guru by simply wearing sandals, smearing ashes on body and counting beads on a rosary. Kaavi dress does not make one a Guru. External appearances may be deceptive. All those who are called as Gurus, designated as Gurus or self styled Gurus are not real Gurus. The greatness of a Guru is to be accepted from within and not for spreading or publicizing.

Just by watching itself, one would feel the presence of real Guru inside him and experience knowledge arising within. Without conversation, He gives instructions. He awakens the inner shakti without actions. Without lectures, sermons, He

imparts knowledge of the Supreme reality. Without answering people's questions verbally, He gives the answers the people need, to their satisfaction.

The real Guru is a person who has personally experienced the spiritual truth and also is capable of bringing about that experience in others. He is confident looking. The real ascetics are those who are engaged in carrying out the mission of their Guru. As a real Guru, he should be capable of showing the truth to the disciple. Aspects like caste, region, oratory skills, appearance, dress, living style and scholarliness cannot be taken as a sign of being the Sadguru. So also age, gender is no consideration for becoming a Guru.

Many Gurus are like lamps inside home, but rare is the Guru who illuminates outside world like the Sun. The real Guru is one who links us to God and enables us to realize God. The real Guru remains engrossed in the welfare of all beings. He helps others to become Gurus. Great Guru is one who can materialize at will. Humility is one of the essential qualities of a Guru.

A true Guru is ever willing to learn from any corner. He never considers Himself to be all perfect. His urge for learning is everlasting. The real Guru is one who wants His disciples to attain salvation and works for their welfare. He has a natural and genuine desire for the spiritual progress of the people. A true Guru turns a disciple into a Guru like Himself. A true Guru is a supreme benefactor of disciples. One gets instant peace, bliss and confidence in the presence of a true Guru. Just by contacting such a Guru, one gets rid of all worries, problems. So also, he forgets the world for a moment. A true Guru destroys our confusion and shows us our true nature. He highlights the purpose of human life. He helps us develop love for God and reveals God to us from within.

The real Guru does not wish the disciple to give him more importance than God. His concern is to get them devoted to

God and not to Himself. He does not want his disciples to be bonded to Him for long. His concern is to liberate them from Him sooner. However, to know the real nature of Guru, Guru's grace is a must. Guru cannot be understood without surrendering to Him fully.

A FEW FACTS ABOUT REAL GURU - SELECTING A RIGHT KIND OF GURU

A spiritual aspirant must carefully go through the following facts before selecting a real Guru. Of course, the union with Guru is not at our will, but at the mercy of God. It is God's great favour on a real disciple. Those who do not have such privilege, but still pursue the spiritual path, shall have to weigh the following considerations before they opt for Guru. Mistakes in selection will be costly as no purpose will be served by getting associated with a preceptor who is not real.

- He must have had a direct and complete personal experience of God (absolute reality), should have seen God and merged His individuality with Him. In short, he must be a self-realised one, i.e. must have realized the Truth. He must be a knower of God (Brahma Nisthta).
- He must be from disciplic succession.
- He must have realized the potency of mantra.
- He who can change the destiny of the disciple is a true Guru. He dispels the ignorance and bestows light.
- He is the real Guru who is liberated. Liberation results from knowledge alone.
- A knower of scriptures, must be learned - He must have studied many scriptures and philosophies. It is the knowledge of the spirit of the scriptures which alone constitutes true Guru.
- He must be knowledgeable about every area of life, i.e. well versed in mundane arts and skills.

- He is not only enlightened, but also can give the experience of enlightenment to others.
- He is always steady minded. His mind never moves from the self. He is the most happiest man in the world.
- He should have the ability to come down to the disciple's level to teach him. He must have compassion and love for all beings. He should be an ocean of mercy. He must aim at general well-being.
- He is the reservoir of all powers and holy places.
- Should be rich in spiritual knowledge, devotion and dispassion. Knowledge, once realized, is never sullied or destroyed.
- He must not be self styled Guru
- Equanimity in all circumstances, which is termed as yoga.
- Disinterested in worldly affairs. Not interested in money matters, possession. Refrains from malicious gossip.
- Renunciation of desire, anger, pride, jealousy, world.
- Possesses pure and noble character (sinless) that is impeccable. Has good righteous conduct. He is a reservoir of golden qualities. • Forgiveness.
- Absence of attachment to worldly life. He should be attached only to God. • Has a quest for Truth
- He is incorruptible by worldly thoughts and matters.
- Practices what He preaches. He is realistic as well as idealistic. • A true Guru is ever willing from any corner.
- Unbiased teaching. Gives equal treatment to all. Never favours any caste, creed, community and region.
- A true Guru does not intimidate. He encourages. He does not tell, but merely sets out an idea.

- He does not bind His disciples in miasma of theory and rituals. Instead, He leads by suggestions and examples.
- He is free from vices, drawbacks, pride and egotism.
- Absence of anger even on provocations. Possesses calm mind. • Fortitude. • Humanity-kindness to all creatures.
- Practices non-violence through body, mind and speech.
- Endowed with intellect. • Atma sanyam, Atma nigraha
- Follows strict celibacy. • Broad minded
- Unselfish motive - selfless and desireless.
- Pious, auspicious appearance.
- Does not bother about others' flaws and deficiencies.
- Fearlessness as He depends on God. He fears no one and is not feared by any one.
- He has a sense of accomplishment in life.
- Has control over the senses - not influenced by the tendencies of sense organs.
- He dreams, lives only to serve God.
- Treating enemies, opponents as friends, seeing God in every being. • Persuasive, not aggressive.
- One who incessantly works for those who have trust in Him.
- He never broods and grieves over the past nor wastes His time and energy in thinking and dreaming about the future.

The real Guru is not keen to make disciples. In the sense, He is not after disciples so as to boost His image by having

more and more disciples. The real Guru does not make disciples, seeks or accepts offerings. He is not after disciples, money, fame or publicity. A true Guru never demonstrates His miraculous powers, siddhis. He teaches by His behavior. True Guru never displays His power when challenged or for a petty gain. Guru must not be a self styled Guru. Not anyone and everyone can become a Guru. It is the God, real Guru decides who should be the next Guru in succession. No true Guru indulges in opinions, publicity. No one can become a Guru with only bookish knowledge. Only a Guru whose motives are pure, is really beneficial to the society. Others are a liability, burden to the society. A true disciple will never be trapped by a false Guru.

For progress and welfare, one should take refuge only in the self-realised Guru with single minded devotion and discrimination.

DISCIPLE

Most of those who appear spiritual are not really so. Spiritualism is not a momentary feeling or casual practice. In a spiritual life, there is nothing like a break, rest or holiday. In a disciple, the spiritual longing must be genuine. Without rigorous and sincere efforts, spiritual life has no meaning. A disciple must look upon everything as divine while leading a spiritual life. Real spiritual practice starts when the disciple meets a Guru.

Nobody can work for another on the spiritual path. Self help is the best help. Spiritual progress largely depends on self efforts, sacrifice and service. One cannot hope to make progress at the cost of others particularly when he is capable. It is the disciple who alone has to cover the distance with the kind help of Guru. The disciple has to take initiative to move on the path. There is a great responsibility on the part of an aspirant to pursue the path rigorously.

Those who have no Guru, have no future. Such people have not realized the truth. Guru appears when the disciple is

prepared. The Divine Mother has ordained that in the present age (Kaliyuga), it is through Guru only and not through God that the man can understand the mission of life and embark on the path of liberation. Anyone who has an earnest desire for spiritual advancement has to necessarily adore the lotus feet of his Guru. Guru is instrumental in enabling His disciple to have the vision of the Lord.

Real disciple is one who is keen to follow the spiritual path in a disciplined manner. Not that all disciples have a strong urge for God realization. Some are very casual even after having the fortune of being in the company of Guru. Real disciple gets real Guru. Guru works through disciple. A real disciple is not known by his mere physical service to Guru. He should identify himself with the purity of Guru's heart, His chosen principles and intellect.

Spiritual tradition holds the preceptor (Guru) in high esteem. He who is blessed with a competent teacher alone can discover the truth. Guru is an indispensable aid to a spiritual aspirant. Disciple must know Guru as the God Himself and give Him his wholehearted allegiance. For a true disciple, Guru is even greater than God. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement on spiritual path. Guru can protect a devotee from God's wrath but no God can save an unfortunate one from Guru's wrath.

For a disciple, Guru Himself is God. A true disciple should never think of anything except Guru. Whatever Guru pronounces is vedaas (scriptures) for him. The secret of spirituality is not understood by those who are not in the company of Guru. Really speaking, actual spiritual practice starts when one meets a Guru. One should approach his spiritual master in a spirit of reverential affection. The secret of penance, worship, meditation and other spiritual practices are not revealed to those who are not in the company or aspire for the company of a spiritual master. To

be perfect in devotion, knowledge and dispassion, one should seek shelter under Guru. Without understanding the Guru, all spiritual saadhanaas become utterly futile. One should be attached to the Guru with an open and free mind.

The seeker of truth (disciple) should first see God in his own Guru. If he fails to see God in his own Guru, where and how else can he see the God infinite? One's intense love at the feet of Guru is very much approved by God. By carrying out Guru's instructions, one can please God very easily. Guru is to be revered in the same manner as one reveres God.

If a disciple is not keen for gaining knowledge or for his salvation, then a Guru cannot help him. Without Guru, a disciple can never make much progress. The spiritual master simplifies the spiritual doctrine to the best of His ability, which otherwise is considered to be difficult to digest for a desiple. God manifests before that person who is devoted to the preceptor. As the preceptor carries with Him the blessings of God, the disciple easily succeeds in his practices and thus, his progress is expedited. Guru takes the full responsibility of the Shishya and monitors him continuously. Guru is a facilitator for the shift of disciples' consciousness from lower to higher level. Guru alone can make His disciple aware of his highest goal of human life. Guru lovingly and tirelessly labours to groom the disciple. The fire of knowledge ignited by the Guru burns away the desires of the disciple. Guru leads the disciple beyond all the relativity. He facilitates spiritual progress.

Guru comes only to help His disciple attain spiritual illumination. Guru transmits His power through giving initiation (Deeksha) to the disciple. However, without will, initiative, intelligence and energy on the part of the disciple, the outer Guru is helpless. Gurus are many but the real disciples are lacking. Guru is always ever ready, but the disciple is not. The

disciple struggles to come out of the clutches of Maaya and as such makes slow progress on the spiritual path.

If one is with Guru in person, his saadhanaas will progress quickly, provided he takes Guru as God Himself and gives him wholehearted allegiance. Saadhaka need not practice any more religious exercise after having a Guru. Once he happens to be in the holy company of Guru, what he needs is frequent company of Guru. One can attain the highest state only if he follows the teachings of his Guru. Love for Guru and for the self makes one to imbibe shakti (power) from Guru. Here, the love for Guru does not mean the love for His physical body but His teachings, convictions and principles. Essentially, it is a soul to soul relation. It may be noted that many disciples are after His physical body and not preaching. As such, all their efforts are directed towards physical needs of Guru. In the short run, this may be tolerated. But in the long run that does not serve any purpose. A real Guru is not interested in physical love but the love of disciple for his Guru's principles. In fact, occasionally Guru tests whether the disciples are after His physical appearance only or preaching. His concern is to make disciples to develop faith and confidence in the invisible power because after all the body is also a momentary phenomena. What remains for ever is the invisible.

When one keeps the company of a Great Master, he also becomes a Guru in due course of time provided he identifies himself with his Guru totally, i.e. when there is identity of minds. When one meets Guru, total transformation takes place in him. There is full stop for all types of agitations in the mind. Besides, he experiences the bliss of rare and unique nature. Once the state of perfection is reached, it does not change. But it may be noted that the disciple also should be keen to make progress and overcome his multiple obstacles. Guru can only guide him to receive the highest initiation. The disciple has to follow the teachings of Guru with a firm resolve. He must not be casual

and indolent in his behaviour. By the satisfaction of the spiritual master, the supreme personality of Godhead becomes satisfied. A disciple takes what he brings. Really speaking, the Guru neither gives nor takes. It is for the disciple to elicit the shakti of the Guru through his dedication, loyalty, faith, love and service, i.e. his own efforts.

HOW A DISCIPLE SHOULD APPROACH GURU?

You will never get a bad Guru if you are a good disciple. A disciple should approach the Guru with the attitude of discipleship and with a feeling of surrender. If there is no discipleship for teachings of the Guru discipleship cannot take root. The smaller you become before your Guru, the greater is the achievement. Whatever may be the merit or achievement, of the disciple, he needs to maintain a certain reverential distance with Guru. This is as a matter of discipline and decency. Cleverness and scholarliness before Guru does not help. So also his regional, racial, social, educational, political and economic status. To earn Guru's blessings, the disciple should prove his merit i.e., longing for God and humanity. For achievement, the disciple has to faithfully follow the path shown by Guru. If there is identity of minds between the two, God reveals Himself. The more the Guru tests one, the more one advances on the spiritual path. What is needed on the part of the disciple is great amount of patience and endurance. To succeed on the path, words, thoughts and actions of an aspirant should tally exactly with those of Guru. Unfortunately, this does not happen with many disciples.

SHOULD THE DISCIPLE GO IN SEARCH OF GURU?

A sincere aspirant need not go in search of a Guru. The disciple with an earnest desire, when vigorously follows the spiritual path, at the right time, God arranges for a meeting between the Guru and the disciple. At the opportune time, the

Guru appears before the disciple, i.e. when the disciple is prepared, the Guru appears before him. The right disciple is bound to get the right guru. God's arrangements are perfect.

GURU DARSHAN

THE DHARSHAN OF THE GURU TO A DISCIPLE is a moment of great joy and an unforgettable event, experience. Every disciple looks for that happy moment. An aspirant, when he meets Guru with love and respect for the first time, has some expectations from Guru. So also Guru has expectations from an aspirant. Even Guru from His side exhibits his greatness in terms of expression, compassion and love. It is an occasion when inner feelings are expressed by both Guru and the disciple. At the first sight itself the disciple undergoes tremendous transformation and the magnetic force of Guru creates an urge to be in the company of Guru incessantly. The gain is priceless and beyond expression. His half of the journey gets completed at the first sight only and the remaining half will be subject to rigorous testing by Guru. It is a moment of joy, inner satisfaction, confidence and love. When the Guru, the most revered person, appears before us, all negative tendencies cease to exist. Also, all worries, tensions, flaws disappear from the mind. In the matter of spiritual knowledge, all progress depends on the mercy of spiritual master. Hence, the disciple should make all efforts to keep Him happy by following the principles taught by Him. GURU GIVES SPIRITUAL BIRTH to the disciple when he meets Him. Guru lives for the sake of disciples only. Guru's living is not for His own sake but for promoting spirituality. He has a larger concern. His real concern is for disciples and nothing else. He is least interested in the worldly affairs. Guru facilitates spiritual progress. Guru's intervention in disciple's destiny is too subtle to be detected. A disciple who has a meeting with Guru carries away with him his own unique subjective experience, awakening of inner spirit, urge and a feeling of

purification and contentment. Darshan essentially here means his inner connection with Guru and the physical is only a symbolic. The aspirant, while in the company of Guru, gets freed from the jaws of Maaya by the grace of his master and attains the state of perfection. Guru lends a fresh lease of life to His disciple. Guru also liberates His disciple.

DEVOTEES WHO WORSHIP AND LOVE GURU ALSO BECOME GURU.

THE MOST FORTUNATE ONE

The most fortunate is the one who has the opportunity of becoming a disciple of Guru. This is the result of punya karma of the disciple for past several births. A disciple should know well that meditating on Guru is the form of meditation. Guru is the key for His future development. Guru is indispensable to all spiritual aspirants. Therefore, the disciple should be aware of the role and importance of Guru. The one, who progresses, marches on Guru's path, does not need any practice. Mere chanting of mantras alone does not make one spiritual. One cannot lead a spiritual life just by means of hymns, verses and scriptures. When one is blessed with Guru, he should be keen about the following.

- The first and foremost duty of the disciple is to obey the Guru and follow His instructions without questioning, arguments and doubts because there is always a hidden message in the direction of the Guru, which is highly beneficial to the disciple.
- Complete dedication and surrender of ego. Ego is the biggest enemy of the aspirant. It is an obstacle on the path of self realization. Egotism is the quality of being excessively conceited or absorbed in oneself. An egoistic person is concerned about his own activities or needs. In other words,

he is self interested, self centered, narrow minded. Ego creates the feeling, "I am the doer", "Without Me Nothing Happens", "I am indispensable", etc. Ego enhances self importance and arrogance. Ego claims credit for everything. Due to ego sense, the divinity is forgotten and the individual comes to despair. Ego is slow and silent killer. One with ego cannot progress on the path of spirituality. Besides, such a person also cannot realize God. When egotism disappears, one can certainly see the glory of God. Ego is not seen in Guru. Guru can easily dissolve the ego. The spirit of surrender to Guru takes care of ego howsoever strong it is. Everything should be done by the disciple in a spirit of dedication to God, Guru.

- The disciple should have deep faith in his Guru. He must fully trust his Guru since Guru is everything for him. Spiritual life cannot be based on doubtful foundation. For a faithless and doubting disciple, there is neither this world nor the next.
- Take initiative for everything. Do not wait for Guru's instructions all the times. Take instructions from the situation.
- Commitment to the cause. The disciple should stick to an ideal up to the last breath of his life. Commitment here means total commitment.
- He must be ever obedient and sincere to Guru. He must obey his Guru wholeheartedly.
- Reading the mind of Guru and acting upon the same
- Spiritual longing must be genuine. One becomes spiritual when his every thought, word or deed is routed in the spiritual principles.
- Discrimination between real and unreal. Discrimination between real and unreal is a basic requirement with a dis

cept. Our vision is obstructed by unreal. Most of the people are after unreal leaving real behind. The disciple must develop a strong conviction that only real lasts. Real is not invented and cannot be destroyed. Reality transcends reasoning. Real cannot be seen with bare eyes. What remains forever is real and not unreal. Real is eternal and lovable. A man who is willing to die for real will get it. The disciple should accept real and reject unreal. The real can be known only through faith and devotion.

- A disciple should contemplate none other than Guru. Contemplation is a means to realize self. Knowledge is the best spiritual technique. It is the root to self knowledge. Contemplation is a moment to moment awareness. It is not a one time or part time occupation. Contemplation on Guru opens the doors to new possibilities. The contemplator also gets Guru's instant guidance when he contemplates. Contemplation makes the mind strong. It liberates us from the shackles of karma and fate.
- Ever eager, ready to be in the service of Guru vigorously .
- Guru's wish shall be his concern. He shall not have his own agenda while in service of Guru.
- He should be prepared to do anything for the sake of Guru. Only this attitude, feeling promotes his spiritual growth.
- He must exhibit his love and affection towards Guru. In real love, there is no exchange of tangible objects between the two. What is to be exchanged is concern, longing, feelings and intention. • Never hurt others' feelings.
- He should be keen to serve his Guru vigorously.
- He must be curious to acquire knowledge and endeavour to clear all his doubts which come in the way of saadhanaa.

Knowledge is sole attribute of soul. It is a permanent treasure. Leaving out unreal things is knowledge. All knowledge flows from Guru/God. He who is after knowledge certainly walks on the path of God. There is no place for an ignorant one in this world. Knowledge never comes without renunciation of lust and possession. One should pray to God for nothing but knowledge and devotion. Nothing is more purifying or holier than knowledge. Knowledge elevates us to the higher state. It enlarges our view of life and gives it a meaning. Pure knowledge liberates one from the cycle of birth and death. Self knowledge alone can confer bliss and true liberation. However, a mere theoretical knowledge cannot give permanent happiness. Knowledge frees from mundane bondage.

- Broad mindedness qualifies for Guru's grace.
- Strong character and moral base.
- Be humble and simple before Guru. Come down to the lowest level.
- He must cultivate single pointed devotion considering Guru Himself as God.
- Have the feeling that Guru is everything for him. Devotion is a form of attachment. Devotion to the Guru is the secret of success. Devotion is the supreme wisdom. Devotion to Guru is inclusive of all saadhanaas. It overcomes all obstacles. Devotion never fails. True devotee never perishes. A true devotee worships God without any desire. Devotion essentially involves renunciation and discrimination. A true devotee has no plans of his own and he aligns himself with the interest and intentions of the preceptor. Pure devotion manifests the divinity which is hidden within us. God and devotees are united through devotion. Guru always stands by the devotees. God is fond of devotees, not offerings. A devotee graced with Guru kripa can do wonders.

The process of devotional service always begins with the service of devotee (Guru) who is in disciplic succession.

- He must accept Guru's words as testimony, authoritative.
- He must conduct as per the will, guidance of Guru.
- He must be prepared to come out of the worldly fascination, attraction. There is nothing wrong with the world. What is wrong is in the way we look at it. World is an ocean of misery. Worldly life is a ground for stagnation. One has to come out of it. The advice of worldly people does not help in our elevation to the higher status. Worldly attractions have adverse effects on the body. They also agitate our mind and make the mind restless, besides, they are futile. Worldly man cannot see the spiritual world, as his vision is blurred by worldly affairs. Worldly affairs cannot be an excuse for spiritual practices.
- However, in this meaningless and unreal world, there is a lot of meaning and charm when one happens to be a disciple of Guru. Spiritual achievements, after all, are to be accomplished in this physical world only. The disciple should realize that all worldly achievements are transitory, short lived and that human body is not meant for worldly objects. The disciple must rise above worldly levels. It should be noted that spiritual achievements are not to be used for meeting worldly needs.
- Surrender himself to Guru.
- The disciple should possess an alert mind and clear judgment
- A disciple may be unconcerned about several things or opinions, but should practice what is told to him by his Preceptor with deep concern

- The disciple must be prepared even to sacrifice his life for the sake of Guru.
- Must spend as much time as possible with Guru. For the sake of Guru, God, the disciple must be prepared to make any sacrifice to that end. Everyone is capable of sacrificing something or the other. There can be no life without sacrifice. Life without sacrifice is stagnant. Sacrifice purifies all our activities. Sacrifice brings strength to our life. It lifts us. It also promotes our spiritual growth. Thus, by sacrificing, the disciple must earn religious merit.
- A real disciple is one who is instrumental to carry on the disciplic succession.
- Without giving up attachment, there cannot be progress in spiritualism. Attachment is one of the main obstacles in spiritual journey. Most of us are attached to unreal due to ignorance. Attachment is caused by illusion. The attached ones can neither reform themselves nor the society. Such people cannot promote any noble deeds. Attachment pushes us to the shackles of birth and death. It also leads to misery. Self knowledge is detachment. Detachment leads to liberation. It also brings control. Love for God, Guru, puts an end to attachment. When the mind is totally given to the divine, naturally, one gets distanced from attachment. We must not be attached to anything except God, Guru. By performing actions without attachment, man attains the supreme. The disciple should work only for the sake of God, Guru without any worldly attachment or expectations. The lesser the attachment to the worldly objects, the more will be our love for God. By living in the world, i.e. not abandoning the world , the disciple must give up the attachment to it. Because world

is a playground for his activities. Without playground, he cannot practice. Attachment lasts till ignorance prevails. In other words, with the dawn of knowledge, the attachment disappears.

- Renunciation of the fruits of his actions. Renunciation is the first step towards the path of devotion. It is the central theme of all religions and essence of all spiritual teachings. Basically, renunciation should be more of mental than of physical affair. It is the means for attaining God. Without mental renunciation, God realization is impossibility. Renunciation is an ornament for the aspirant. Renunciation is flushing out worldly desires from the mind. It is not that one has to abandon the family or his bounden duties. Abandoning all selfish thoughts, desires, false ego and attachment is renunciation. Renunciation means abandoning, "I am the doer mentality" and desire for fruits of action. Bounden duties have to be fulfilled before we renounce. God Himself makes all arrangements for those who renounce for the sake of spirituality. Freedom follows renunciation. However, renunciation needs God's grace.
- The disciple must utilize every available moment for his spiritual development. Time gone cannot be regained.
- He must be pure and free from selfish desires. World is selfishness, unselfishness is God. World is a playground for selfish people.
- He must gracefully accept his limitations and shortcomings.
- He must be humble and submissive to divine.
- He should become childlike in his behavior before Guru. for speedy progress.
- Control of mind and senses. As one thinks so he becomes.

The functions of mind are thinking, carrying feelings and willing to act or not to act. The mind is the storehouse of infinite power. Most of our problems are created by mind. Amidst full of desires, problems, a wavering mind cannot reach out towards God. Our mind itself is our friend or enemy. A disturbed mind can never be spiritually inclined. It is the mind which is the source of both bondage and liberation, the source of both happiness and misery. What the mind has created, it itself has to destroy. The purer the mind, the happier one feels. Due to teachings of Guru, mind becomes steady and pure. A doubting mind cannot progress. A positive mind enables to make correct decisions. Guru's grace is the surest remedy for a confused, restless, depressed and disappointed mind. Love for God stills and quietens the mind. By mental resolve, a man can become even a God provided he has grace of God and blessings of Guru. Concentration is the key to success. Make your mind your faithful friend through Guru seva. The disciple must succeed in preparing his mind to respond readily to religious stimulus. Give your mind to Guru and the rest is assured.

NOS(DON'TS) FOR AN ASPIRANT

- Once Guru is accepted, not to be tested later. Instead, test Guru first and then accept.
- He must never attempt to find faults or lapses of Guru for, nothing is greater and reverential than Guru to Him.
- He should not have an iota of suspicion about Guru's affection towards him
- He should never cheat his Guru or speak lies with Him
- He should never expect any instant results or miracles from his Guru

- He should never distinguish between God and Guru
- He should never retaliate or pay back for what Guru says.
- Do not make Guru's place a gossiping centre, eating place.
- Do not aspire to fulfill personal desire, ambition or goal.

AN ASPIRANT SHOULD SHUN THE FOLLOWING QUALITIES

(1) Distrust. (2) Miserliness or calculative mentality. (3) Keeping an account of others' mistakes, flaws, and limitations. (4) Jealousy or greed for others' possessions. (5) Vanity, pride, ego. (6) Bad, unsound character. (7) Lowness, meanness. (8) Hostility towards elders, particularly parents. (9) Gossiping or talking too much. (10) Preaching knowledge without Guru's direction or realization. (11) Lack of faith in scriptures. Spiritualism is not scholarly exposition of religious doctrines but it requires steady and prolonged practice. (12) Not listening to holy people. (13) Cruelty towards all creatures. (14) Lethargic attitude, laziness. Laziness in any form is a hurdle on the spiritual path. (15) Promoting only self interest. (16) Not singing the glory of Lord and Guru. (17) There is no room for guesswork and imagination in spiritual practice. Guesswork is of no use to the spiritual aspirant. Mental, speculative theories are of no use for spirituality. In a spiritual line, one cannot learn anything from a person who is well versed only with academic knowledge. So called intellectual giants may be infants in the spiritual world. They are of no use for the spiritual aspirants. (18) Anger. The disciple should be free from anger. Anger is a terrible sin. In a fit of anger, several sinful actions are likely to be committed. Anger is a momentary madness. It serves invitation to deadly calamities. Angry man loses the faculty of rationality. The man who gives away to anger cannot work. He does nothing practical or worth mentioning.

Spiritual life is a very slow uphill task. The disciple is bound to undergo several hardships and tests. Those who wish to grow spiritually must keep the mind free from agitations. True love for Guru will never allow other useless worldly thoughts even to enter the mind because he always thinks of Guru only.

Generally, Guru is always concerned about the welfare of His disciples and the world. Guru becomes restless, uneasy and uncomfortable when His disciple is in trouble. Similarly, He is very much concerned when the disciple does not make progress on the expected lines on spiritual path. When Guru has concern for His disciples, He openly scolds and abuses publicly without showing any mercy. All this is only for the sake of disciple.

A disciple should remember his Guru till his life time. Even if he stays away from his Guru, he shall never forget Him. The greatest religion for a disciple is to follow the advice, instructions of his Guru. But, however powerful the Guru may be, he should not impose His will on His disciple. Willingness on the part of disciple and not the compulsion by Guru is the right solution.

WHO QUALIFIES TO BE IN GURU- DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION?

Without God's will and blessing, one does not qualify to be in Guru-disciplic succession.

Guru gives Himself to the real disciple. Faith and devotion make one develop close and intimate relation with Guru. The wish of Guru bhakta follows the will of Guru. No prayer fails in God's eyes. A disciple, to succeed, must live exactly up to his ideal. The wish of true disciple never goes in vain. God always reveals Himself to the true devotee in the form of Guru.

Only the one on whom Guru has confidence, faith and one whom Guru feels, has the ability to work in the capacity of a Guru, is chosen by Guru to continue the spiritual tradition,

lineage. Needless to say here that the Guru also goes by the direction of Supreme Soul, the Supreme Guru in the matter of selection. The one with egoistic tendencies and sense of attachment is not selected by Guru. The aspirant must have yearning for the freedom. To get qualified, one should have the basic urge to follow the principles of succession and the affection on Guru. The one, who is very sincere and honest in his service to Guru, has an advantage in the line. He must have identified himself with his Guru. The benefit the disciple draws from Guru depends on his understanding and receptivity. The disciple should have Guru in his heart and remember His teachings.

The teachings of a Guru should not be weighed from the stand point of view of His scholarliness. The ultimate test for accepting a Guru is that He should be the knower of Braahman.

The disciple cannot think of repaying the debt he owes to his Guru over several births. Spreading the knowledge which he has acquired from his Guru could be a little attempt in this direction. A disciple should endeavour to fulfill the sacred trust reposed by his Guru whatsoever difficulties or circumstances may be. He must aim at reforming the largest number of people.

EXCERPTS FROM GURU GEETAA - (SKANDA PURAANA)

Long ago, once, on the beautiful mountain Kailash, Goddess Paarvati, the consort of Lord Shiva, after worshipping and offering salutations at His lotus feet, prayed Lord Shiva, who is the Supremo in the matter of devotion to grace Her with Guru deeksha (initiation) and let Her know, enlighten Her as to which path one has to follow to attain realization, to become the knower of truth.

Pleased with Her inquisitive question, Lord Ishwara said thus "Hey Bhavaani! I am going to tell you something that is very difficult to be attained in all the three worlds. Except Guru, who is in the form of Brahma, nothing is true. One cannot get liberated

from worldly life by the means of scriptures, vedaas, puraanaas (epics), history, verses, an amulet, art of sorcery and the like. All sects including Shaiva, Shaakta, Aagam and others corrupt the wisdom of those living beings who are already bewildered. All those shall be deemed to be fools who, without understanding, knowing the principle of Guru, are engaged in the religious activities like sacred vow, penance, charity, pilgrimage.

Those who wish to get released from the bond of worldly life shall endeavour to seek Guru and acquire the prudence of serving Guru. This they shall think as their supreme obligation and through the advice of Guru come to the conclusion that except soul, the rest all is false projection and that he can get liberated only when he becomes a divine soul. There is no doubt about this truth. Ignorance is mysterious, the world is an illusion and the body is the product of ignorance. The one which is self effulgent and ever rising is known by the word Guru. Now I am going to tell you by which means one acquires the state of Brahma (supreme soul).

One gets rid of all sins when he engages himself in the service of lotus feet of Guru and he becomes a purified soul due to the grace of Guru. A devotee gets the religious merit of taking a holy dip in all pilgrimage centers, when he, after contemplating the lotus feet of Guru, sprinkles the water in which the feet of Guru has been washed, on his head. This holy water in which the lotus feet of Guru has been washed terminates the impurities of sinful activities, enhances the splendor of knowledge, virtue, brilliance and the boat that saves the living entities fully from the ocean of worldly life.

One should consume holy water of Guru's feet to annihilate the root of ignorance, rebirth, actions, for fructification of knowledge and renunciation of worldly passion. One should

consume the holy water of lotus feet of Guru, eat the remainder of Guru's food, incessantly meditate on the image of Guru and recite the verse (spell) pertaining to Guru.

The place where Guru resides itself is Kaashi. The water of lotus feet of Guru itself is holy river Ganga. Guru Himself is the living God of universe. He is the Eternal Brahma. The preaching of Guru shall save the living beings from the ocean of transmigration. The sprinkling of holy water of lotus feet of Guru is equivalent to taking holy dip in Prayaag, the king amongst the sanctified holy places. The holy water of lotus feet of Guru is the holy place of Gayaa and inexhaustible Banyan tree. Repeated salutation to the idol of Guru.

One should remember the form of Guru always, recite the Guru mantra and respectfully obey the instructions of Guru and have a feeling that there exists nothing else than Guru. The eternal knowledge which is rooted in the mouth of Guru can be acquired only by the grace of Guru. The aspirant should meditate on Guru always just as a devoted (faithful) wife remembers her husband. Abandoning his religious order (aashram), caste, fame, prosperity and the like, one should faithfully and honestly seek refuge only under Guru.

When he worships Guru with single pointed attention, he easily attains the supreme status. Therefore, by all efforts and means, one should worship the real Guru. Guru preaches the knowledge related to soul with all clarity. He is reverential to all Gods, deities, immortal ones, pannagaas (serpents) and others. The knowledge pertaining to soul which has its origin in the mouth of Guru can be possessed only through devotion to Guru. (Guru Bhakti). The word "Gu" signifies darkness and ignorance and the word "Ru" the Sun who dispels the darkness, ignorance. There is no doubt that Guru Himself is Lord Brahma (the Supreme Soul).

The first letter "Gu" implies Maaya (illusion), attributes, (qualities) and the second letter "Ru" implies Brahma, the destroyer of illusion and confusion. This way the position of Guru has a top ranking which is inaccessible even to the fraternity of Gods. Guru is worshipped with deep devotion by Haa Haa Hoohoo Hoohoo demigods, celestial singers and by all the rest. Really speaking, for all of them, there is no other superior principle than Guru. None of the objects, including seat, bedding, cloth, ornaments and vehicle are higher than Guru. An aspirant should offer only such things to Guru which delight Guru. He should offer his living for the mission of worshipping Guru. He should dedicate his life for adoring Guru. He should adore Guru by body, word and mind regularly. The aspirant, by shunning his status, honour, name, etc. should in the vicinity of Guru, offer his humble obeisance through eight limbs. He should offer his body, organs, life (soul) to sadguru. So also, his beloved ones and rest of all the subjects.

Hey beautiful woman! This body is full of worms, insects, ashes, filthy matter, odour, excretions, urine, flesh, blood, saliva, skin and flesh. This being so, in the matter of Sadguru, the body must not be subjected to deceit. Salutations to the Sadguru who has promoted the welfare of all, elevated those, who were riding the tree called worldly life and were slipping /falling down in the ocean of hell. Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, and Guru is Maheshwar. Guru Himself is the supreme soul. Salutations to such a Sadguru.

Obeisance to mighty (Lord) Sadguru who is the ultimate hope, object of the world, a bridge to the ocean of worldly life and the real master of all branches of education. Salutations to the Sadguru who opened the eyes of a man who was blinded by darkness known as ignorance, through an instrument/weapon called knowledge. Sadguru is my father, mother, relative and God. I am prostrating before that Sadguru to preach me in such

a way that the feeling of concern for worldly life disappears at once. Salutations to that Sadguru by whose presence it appears to be real, which shines like the form of Sun God, by the affection of which children and woman appear to be beloved. Prostrations to that Sadguru by whom everything is charged with life force (energy), but the fact of which cannot be realized (known) by mind. Salutations to that Sadguru who is in the awakening, dreaming and deep sleep and the like in His full form. Salutations to that Sadguru by whose knowledge the feeling of differentiation about the visible universe ceases to appear. Salutation to that Sadguru by whose knowledge I have realised that what remains is only the real form of Himself and nothing else.

Salutations to that Sadguru who has fixed His mind on one object only and who appears in the form of existence. One who says that He has known supreme soul, is not really the knower. But one who has concluded that the super soul is unknown, invisible, he only knows the truth. Salutations to that Sadguru who is instrumental for all that happens. Salutations to that Sadguru who is in the form of actions and cause of action and all that which is visible in differentiated forms, is not different from whom, to such a Sadguru my salutations.

Salutations to that Sadguru whose lotus feet annihilate the miseries caused by duality and who protects us from all sorts of calamities. Guru protects/shields, if Lord Shiva is agitated, but if Guru is agitated, Lord Shiva cannot protect him. Therefore, by means of all efforts, one should go in surrender to Sadguru. Salutation to the lotus feet of greatest (mightiest) Sadguru who cannot be comprehended by word, mind and reasoning, who is visible clearly through white, red and the like rays.

The letter "Gu" indicates the form of Guru with attributes, while "Ru" indicates the formless state of Guru. Only He shall be remembered as Guru who makes available to His disciple

formless appearance. Hey Dear Paarvati!. Though not possessed with three eyes like Shiva, He is a witness for all happenings, though not possessed with four arms like Vishnu, He is imperishable, though not possessed with four faces, He is like Brahma having four faces. This is how Guru has been described. With folded hands I am praying before that Sadguru by whose grace the living creature gets liberated from this variegated worldly life. With folded hands, I am praying before that Sadguru, who is the ocean of kindness, for His enhanced grace. Just as the blind ones cannot see the sunrise, the sinners also cannot see the immortal supreme form through their eyes, known as reasoning. Hey the beloved! The aspirant everyday needs to offer prostrations to that direction with utmost devotion, in which the lotus feet of Guru are visible, manifested. Hey Paarvati! The wise ones who aspire to cross over the ocean of material life, abandoning all six internal enemies, should contemplate the supreme soul continuously. Such people should offer salutations to that direction in which the sovereign Guru, who is the eyewitness to the drama of creation, sustenance and destruction, resides.

One who is troubled by polluted air, which is the cause of all diseases, repeatedly for a long time and one who, even after resorting to breathing exercise, finds it difficult to get cured, such a person, to get relieved from problems of these airs and for good health, should offer incessant service to that destination of Sadguru, from where a powerful wind emerges and so also naturally disappears. The contemplation of the body of Sadguru shall be the contemplation of infinite Shiva and celebrating the name of one's Guru's name shall be the celebration of name of infinite Shiva. I am worshipping that Sadguru, the dust particles of whose feet become a bridge for the ocean called sansaara (worldly life). I am offering obeisance to that Sadgurunaath for fulfilling my desires, by whose grace the terrible ignorance fades

away, gets discharged. Like an object which is purified by the touch of fire, Sadguru, who is purified of ignorance and evil qualities and who has enlightened vision, I feel, the powerful mantra (verse) of such a Sadguru, which is the king amongst mantras, comes to my rescue from the jaws of death, day and night. That the true nature of the soul is moveable and so also immoveable. It is far far away and at the same time, is very close by also. It pervades everywhere, inside as well as outside. I am not subject to old age, I am deathless, I am myself Brahma, I am formless, I am subtler than an atom and bigger than any biggest object. This being so, I am God with three attributes, i.e. Sat (truth), Chit (consciousness) and aanand (bliss). I am different from direction, place and time. I am supreme and everlasting and am of the nature of self effulgent lamp. I am diseaseless, superior than sky, an element out of five elements (Panchabhootaas), ever living, blissful, imperishable eternal Brahma. I always remember the omnipresent Sadguru who is absorbed in penance. Salutations to that Sadguru who pervades the whole universe and who leads me towards Brahma. I prostrate before that Sadguru by whose mere remembrance, knowledge blossoms and who happens to be the all worthy possession of the aspirant. Salutations to that Sadguru by whom this universe is pervaded. I am remembering that Sadguru always, whose penance is absorption in soul and who has come to the ultimate conclusion through scriptures, experience and knowledge, that there exists only one object which is all encompassing.

Hey the most intelligent one! Looking at your purity, I am going to tell you the causative force behind this universe, by contemplation of which you shall have soul feeling instantly. Salutation to that Sadguru who exposes to the supreme soul that pervades every where and in every object. Salutations to that Sadguru who is Sun (Ravi), responsible for blossoming lotus of Vedaantaa (Upanishat). Salutations to that Sadguru by

remembering whom, knowledge emerges on its own and who is in total possession of the aspirant. Salutations to that Sadguru, who is in the form of power (Chaitanya), quiet, ever existing and who is beyond sky, is incomparable and beyond the reach of sound, dot and skill. Salutations to that Sadguru by whom this universe is pervaded. Salutations to that Sadguru who, on the strength of His knowledge, has attained the status of perfection and who is adorned with the garland of principles, that looks magnificent and the bestower of fruition and liberation. Salutations to the Sadguru, who burnt down accumulated actions of past countless births by the influence of His preaching (by the influence of His self knowledge).

Salutations to that Sadguru, holy water of whose lotus feet dries up fully the ocean of worldly life and makes the treasure of knowledge, brilliant in a meticulous manner. Let me offer my salutations to that Sadguru who has pervaded the entire creation and who is instrumental to make me aware of my own real nature. Salutations to that Sadguru who has surpassed the entire triworlds in the form of energy (Chaitanya) and who has made me experience the word Asi (Thou Art), which is derived from the word "Tatvamasi" (Thou Art that). There is no higher principle than knowledge of soul, no principle above Guru, no penance higher than Guru. To such a Sadguru my humble salutations.

My Guru also happens to be the Guru of this world. He alone is my saviour (guardian). He alone is the master of the universe. My soul is soul of all entities. Salutations to such a Sadguru, who is in the form of soul. The idol of Sadguru is the prime object of meditation, the lotus feet of Sadguru is the root of worship and the words that originate from lotus face is original mantra. The grace of Sadguru is the root cause for liberation.

Guru is the primeval person, Guru is super soul and He is topmost amongst all Gods. Nothing is superior to Guru.

Salutations to such a Sadguru. The religious merit (punya) which accrues from the holy bath and charity given in all holy teertha places spread over seven seas, cannot be equivalent even to one drop of the holy water of lotus feet of Sadguru. Guru protects us if disregarded by Shiva, i.e. Guru saves us from the wrath of Shiva, but nobody can protect us if we are disgraced, disregarded by Guru. Therefore, every one of us, by all deliberate efforts, should go in surrender to Guru. The original form, appearance of everything that is in the world is the form of Sachitaanaanda Sadguru only. The same is true with Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. There is nothing superior to Guru. Hence, Sadguru should be worshipped through devotion. Devotion to Guru fetches the knowledge which is coupled with science. There is nothing higher than Guru. Thus, those who follow the path of Guru should meditate upon Guru only.

A Sadguru should be worshipped unflinching by the means of mind and voice (vaani). One should worship daily that elevated Sadguru by means of mind and voice, whose unquestioned higher status has been pronounced by Shrutis. The holy trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara are engaged efficiently in their respective missions only due to the grace bestowed by Guru. Service to Guru is the only root cause to attain highest status, i.e. Kaivalya (eternal emancipation). Gods, Kinnaraas, Gandharvaas, ancestors, Yakshaas - all those who are engaged in eulogizing God and even sages are not equipped with the knowledge related to the rituals of Guru seva.

The ascetics who are well equipped with strength of penance and whose heart is enriched with egoistic tendencies inside are repeatedly entering the cave called material life. Those devotees, Gandharvaas (celestial singers), Kinnaraas, Yakshaas, ancestors and Siddhaas and others who have not performed service at

Guru's feet shall not be considered liberated ones at all. "Oh Mahaadevi! I am going to tell you now about that meditation which yields all bliss, perennial happiness, fruition and final liberation. Listen to me, "I remember Shrimat Parabrahma Guru, I eulogize, offer salutations to Shrimat Parabrahma Guru, I worship Shrimat Prabrahma Guru. I am offering salutations to that Sadguru, who is the bestower of bliss, the highest happiness and the only one who is the knower of truth, on whom the pair of dualities have no impact (influence). My humble prostration to that Sadguru who is as vast as sky, the only one of His kind, the immortal one, the purified one, the unchangeable, is in the form of witness in the intellect of all, is not accessible to feelings and sentiments and who is sans triple qualities, namely, Satva-
raja-tama.

I eulogize day and night blissful Shri Sadguru, the giver of bliss to His disciple, the happiest one (the contended one), the knower of truth, the sun of real preaching, the king amongst ascetics (Yogindra), the reverential, the physician who cures the disease known as material life.

I am offering obeisance to that Parabrahma Sadguru who is eternal, purified, lustrous, formless, unparalleled, unknown, the propagator of pleasure yielding sat-chit and who is in the form of inner happiness. The aspirant should contemplate that Sadguru who is the brilliant idol, who manifests splendidly on the throne of self bliss that is located in the middle of lotus heart. The aspirant should meditate that Sadguru who is the giver of peace to the aspirants which resembles to that of cold rays of moon's lustre through the device of self knowledge, the bestower of a status, sat-chit-aanand, which is very much desired by the disciples.

One should meditate on Guru who is the reservoir of infinite grace, who has a gentle smile on His face, who is attired in

white cloth, one who has smeared white sandal paste, is adorned with rosary of pearls, two eyed, ever shining and who on His left thigh has accommodated divine power. I salute that Sadguru, by whose grace the eternal matter is known and all worldly activities are set in motion. One should remember that Sadguru along with His name verse who is cool tempered and blesses us with a boon of assurance. From the seat of Shiva, I am revealing the most secret matter four times that there is nothing superior, greater than the idol of Guru. Further, from my ruling I declare four times that this is the only course which is auspicious to the aspirant.

The aspirant, when he meditates upon Sadguru in this manner, there blossoms knowledge automatically in him. By the preaching of Sadguru, he should feel that he has been liberated forever. To attain self realization, the aspirant should purify his mind by following the path guided by preceptor and abandon all such things, objects, which are not long lasting even by slightest scale. One should arrive at a firm conclusion that the mind which is full of volitions and desires and the vision which is within the comprehension of wit (wisdom) are both not enduring. And he should attain the scientific status through the knowledge as imparted by his Guru and experience his real state. For this, there is no other way left for him.

Hey Goddess Mahaadevi! Even after listening to whatever I have conveyed to You so far about the glory of Guru , if any one criticizes Guru, he is bound to experience terrible hell till the existence of Sun and Moon. So long as this body lasts, one should shun the body feeling and lovingly, affectionately remember his Sadguru. There should not be any lapse or break to this practice of remembrance. Besides, the aspirant shall not get dictated by his own wisdom. The wise disciple shall never give in return to what has been told to him by Guru. He

shall never indulge in arguments with Guru and also never speak lies before Him. One who gives a rejoinder to the utterances of Guru and one, who defeats his Guru by arguments and debate, shall be born as a ghost of Brahma (Brahmarakshas) in water starved jungle.

Hey Paarvati!, Guru protects His disciple if he is cursed by sages, Gods and Pannagaas (serpents) or when he is afraid of death. One is sure to be perished soon if he is cursed by Guru or due to the anger of Guru. There is no doubt about that. Even Gods cannot save such a person. Hey Goddess! The mantra which comprises of alphabets "Guru" is the king amongst mantras. It is evident from the utterances of Smriti, Vedaas that the rank of Guru truly and certainly is the rank of supreme soul. Those who have resorted to service to Guru only are termed as real monks even if they have not studied Shruti and Smriti. Rest all others are monks in disguise. The disciple, after hearing from Guru, realizes that all that exists is one only, which is Brahma, sans illusion. Through the medium of Guru prasaad, the aspirant should behold attentively atmaaraam (soul). Only by this path of Guru, in him, the self knowledge illuminates.

My salutations to that supreme God (Guru), who has encompassed all, whether animate or inanimate in the universe, up to the mountain. I eulogize that Sadguru, who has attained the state of sachitaanand, perfection, who is impartial, formless, without attributes and is ever immersed in contemplation of soul. I meditate on that sanctified Sadguru who is greater than greater, bestower of everlasting bliss, supreme soul which is comparable to pure crystal and who is seated in the centre of the heart. The disciple should meditate on Guru, keeping all the attributes in mind as stated above and attain the full status of eternal soul. Should this advice be followed, the disciple shall get liberated undoubtedly in that form only in all situations. Hey Paarvati!

The advice of Guru and path shown by Guru leads one to the region of liberation. There is no doubt that one who constantly gets engrossed in meditation of Guru and the ones who are keen to acquire self knowledge will be freed from pleasure (possession), union and disease. The aspirant should get released by listening to Guru Geeta.

Hey Goddess! Pure principle itself has emerged as the soul of Guru Geeta from Me. He alone is the visible Guru who has completely known the real substance (reality) that is eternal soul. Whichever place he resides shall be the sanctified place. There is no doubt about this fact. The place where all pure and clean natured reside, class of gods naturally also, resides in that place. Just like water from different rivers when amalgamated into ocean, becomes one, and the ghee of different cattle, when poured into one vessel, becomes only one, so also the soul of enlightened one merges into supreme soul. Due to this unity, the enlightened one also leads a contented life in whichever condition he is placed. The wise devotee, who, by all efforts, is fully devoted to Sadguru with earnest feelings, gets liberated through his own self experience and conducts himself amongst the people as a liberated one through his own experience for ever. There will be an end to all sorts of suspicion and he attains liberation. The disciple on whom Guru is pleased, easily procures the necessities and liberation effortlessly and the Goddess of learning Saraswati resides on his tongue. The principle of Guru is the supreme principle. There is only one God and that God is Sadguru Himself. The disciple of Guru comes to one conclusion due to self knowledge, that there exists only one, i.e. soul. To have constant touch with the desired object (soul) itself is a great penance. Sadguru Himself is supreme soul. There is no other greater principle than Guru principle.

Practice of devotion to Guru is a very rare accomplishment. Guru Bhakta deems everything including his body, life force, money, wealth, relatives, mother and father as His own form (appearance). Guru bhakta easily gets the religious merit which is earned by performing japa, religious vow, penance and noble deeds over past several births (crores and crores births), just by the pleasure of his Guru.

Hey Goddess Paarvati! Those ones who are empowered by learning and penance shall be considered as the most unfortunate ones if they fail to serve Guru. This is truthful. Those ones shall be pushed down to disaster who do not have the grace of Guru on them. Further, all that they have, namely, education, power, riches and the like shall be futile without Guru's grace. Brahma, Vishnu, Ishwar, God, seers, Ancestors, Kinnaraas, Siddhaas, Chaaranas, Yakshaas and the rest of all sages shall be pleased, gratified when one practices devotion to Guru. Hey Goddess! Devotion towards Guru is the most excellent course. All pilgrimage places have taken refuge under the lotus feet of Guru. Except the holy feet of Sadguru, rest all holy places are meritless. There are many Gurus who rob the money of disciples but rare are those who clear triple miseries of disciples. I am saluting that Guru mantra which is adored by all including Brahma and sages. I am adoring that Guru mantra which annihilates poverty, misery, fear and sorrow and which wards off terrific fear and enables one to cross over the ocean called worldly life. This Guru Geeta shall not be treated as an ordinary one. It is, the chief amongst all scriptures, equivalent to all vedaas and more powerful than and superior to all hymns, verses.

(Guru Geeta is in the form of a conversation between Ishwara and Paarvati. This has a reference in Skanda Puraana)

RELIGION

SERVICE TO GURU IS THE HIGHER, BEST FORM OF RELIGION. A DISCIPLE NEED NOT PRACTICE ANY OTHER DISCIPLINE.

Religion is the revealed word of God. It is the manifestation of divinity. Religion is a path which leads to God. True religion is nothing but following the direction of the Lord/Guru faithfully. Religion is primarily a philosophy of God Realisation. Religion is being and becoming. Religion is realization. True religion is entirely transcendental. Faith is the basis of religion.

Religion is not manmade, it is made by God. Religion is the code of conduct and certain practices prescribed by highly evolved souls for the benefit of mankind and for its upliftment. Religion is realization of God. Religion is not merely observance of rituals and festivals as commonly understood. Love for God is the root of all religions. Religious life is open to all.

Religion helps us to attain salvation besides worldly prosperity. Religion teaches the oneness of all. It elevates the man. Religion is the backbone of a nation. Without religion, society becomes barbaric. Man, devoid of religion, is nothing but a beast. Life without religion is suicide. Religious life is the fabric of worldly life. Every one of us ought to be religious, sooner, or later. Earlier is better.

The goal of religion is spiritual experience. Religion without spirituality becomes lifeless. Religion is outer cell of spirituality. Real purpose of religion is surrendering to God and rendering loving service unto Himself. Religion can make a God out of man. Religion consists only in realization. Religion is not merely a matter of choice but need of the hour.

Unselfishness is the test of religion. It is coming out of the world of "I" and "Mine". For the sake of religion, one needs to

leave the world. Broad mindedness is the base of religion. Religion is neither word nor doctrine; it is action. Religion is not mere talk, nor preaching, belief and progress, but realization. No one can become religious by talk, doctrine or book.

True religion must express itself in universal love and unity. Religion transcends all barriers of caste and race and breaks down the limitation of time and space. Religion is a matter of inner experience and not a matter of belief or dogma or conformity. Religion is concerned with practice, not theory. Theories only lead to conflicts and differences. All religions are basically one.

Unfortunately, for most of the people, religion is formal and casual. For many people, religion means festivals, enjoyment and celebrations. It should be noted that in spite of scientific progress, a man has never ceased to be religious.

ONLY DIVINE DISCOURSES OF REALISED ONES, NOT OF SCHOLARS, HELP US IN RELIGIOUS LIFE.

BOOKS AND SCRIPTURES

BOOKS, SCRIPTURES DO NOT MAKE ONE SPIRITUAL

Books are useful in the beginning, but become the hindrance at a later stage. Books and scriptures can only give the idea, information but not the experience. Books and scriptures only remove the dirt of ignorance that places obstacles in the way of attaining self. The Vedaas and all other sacred books do not contain God; they simply contain information about God. Books and scriptures are necessary so long as one does not acquire a true love for God. By reading, one can only understand words. It is of no use to read the scriptures without vivek (discrimination) and vairaagya (dispassion). Discrimination and dispassion are basic requirements in spiritual life.

Mere reading philosophy does not imply assimilation of the knowledge. Books are of great use for beginners to evince

interest. Scriptures are means, not an end in themselves. Books are not so conducive for spiritual development. Books and lectures will not take us to the other end. Reading only enriches mind, does not help us much. Books are knots on the realization. In scriptures, one finds the way to realize God. But after getting all information about the path, one must begin to work, only then he can succeed in his goal. Just by reading and reciting nothing significant can be accomplished.

Scholars, intellectuals cannot see and understand the real nature of God. People who are puffed with mere bookish knowledge can be easily deluded and confused by apparent contradictions. One cannot achieve much simply by hearing scriptures from learned ones for a couple of years. Renowned vedic scholars in vedic literature cannot realize God. One cannot be termed as a scholar in true sense if his mind is not engrossed in God. After all, learned ones are not authorized to grant the realization of the self, independently.

For attainment of self, one has to go beyond vedaas and books. Man has to use that information which he has assimilated from reading, to find God for himself. Pandits (scholars), intellectuals are useful for logical presentation of the matter but hardly are of any use so far as actual realization is concerned. The so called intellectuals, philosophers who impressively deliver talk about God are nowhere near God. Howsoever intelligent a man may be, he can never know God.

The reasoning faculties cannot shed light on man's ultimate being. Reason and intellect cannot take us far away. The combination of scholarship with love for God is a very rare phenomenon. Theoretical knowledge should be coupled with guidance and assistance of a realized Guru.

BY THE GRACE OF GURU, THE DULLEST, IGNORANT, ILLETERATE ONE BECOMES A SCHOLAR, A KNOWER OF TRUTH, EVEN WITHOUT STUDYING BOOKS AND SCRIPTURES.

LIBERATION

TRUTH LIBERATES .UNITY LIBERATES.

Liberation IS ETERNAL FREEDOM. It is attaining eternal, sachitaanand state of Parabrahma. Liberation is a state in which a devotee merges himself completely with the Supreme Being. Liberation means to get released of body, worldly consciousness. Liberation is the end result of Dharma (religion). A person attains liberation by realizing the supreme soul. Actionlessness is a state of liberation. When one realizes that the world is illusion, he may be said to be on the way to liberation. This is the starting point. Liberation implies complete freedom from misery, worry, anxiety and fear.

It is the earnestness in efforts that liberates and not the mere gossip or theory. Liberation is possible only when one is detached from his body. A person who is free from the bondage of worldly life shall be deemed to be a liberated one. One who believes that everything is Vaasudeva and nothing prevails, is liberated. The one, who constantly thinks of God, works for Him and who dedicates fruits of actions to Him, attains liberation easily. There is no liberation without God realization. Liberation results from Jnaana (knowledge)alone.

A man who seeks liberation must shun all forms of attachment. One qualifies to get liberated when his mind is settled down, calm, quiet, tranquil and free from internal enemies. Of the three qualities, it is the Satwa that is capable of leading a person to liberation and as such, the aspirant must endeavour to cultivate saatvic tendencies. For entry into the kingdom of liberation, two things are very much necessary, i.e. selfless service to society in general and Guru in particular. If an aspirant wants to get liberated, he himself must get freed from all mental tendencies. Guru can only help and guide him. But the initiative should always come from the aspirant.

All actions come to an end, standstill when one gets liberated. A liberated man is not bound by karma doctrine. However, due to destiny (praarabhdha) and actions of the past lives, even after liberation, he may be engaged in actions. After liberation, his actions are not for self but for the humanity at large. When we attain liberation, we are freed from all sorts of bondage.

After countless births, one develops an urge, feeling for spiritualism and liberation. Liberation is possible only through the grace of God. Here God is the king maker.

WITHOUT GURU, NO ONE CAN BE LIBERATED. GRACE OF GURU IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF LIBERATION. THERE IS NO HIGHER STATUS THAN LIBERATION.

LIBERATION IS ONE'S OWN ORIGINAL FORM

SPIRITUALITY

GURU IS THE TORCH BEARER OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD. Spirituality is the science of soul. It is a continuous process of discovery of truth. Spirituality is the man's realization of spirit. It is the intense longing for realizing the God. Spirituality is to love God. Basically, the world is spiritual, not material. Spirituality is the complete cessation of vrittis, i.e., modification of mental tendencies.

Our life without spiritual discipline is futile. Spirituality helps us to seek Truth. Spirituality leads to happiness and liberation. God can be realized by spiritual practice only. The purpose of spirituality is to remain connected always to soul. Spirituality bestows eternal bliss which is the highest goal of life. Spirituality tells us how to lead life the right way. It tells us to distinguish right from wrong. Spirituality prepares us for leading a purposeful life. It channelizes all our possessions (time, efforts, qualities, etc.) in the right direction. Spiritual pleasure puts an end to miseries and problems of mundane world.

Spiritual truths are impersonal and therefore, have universal applicability. The lord reveals His identity according to the spiritual advancement of the devotees. Spirituality is moment to moment affair. True spirituality does not consist of dogmas and rituals. Spiritual awakening is a question of time. Every one of us has to prepare for spiritual journey somewhere, sometime. Each one of us is destined, born for undertaking spiritual journey. One who postpones spiritual practice will never do it. The principle is just now or never. By planning one cannot become spiritual.

The spiritual process is a process of inner conservation, transformation. Spirituality is the inner essence. Spiritual life is an inner journey. It is an inner affair concerning our feelings and thoughts. Spiritualization means looking upon everything as divine. Spirituality is evoked by religion. It is the foundation of religion. Spirituality begins where religion ends. Spirituality can be promoted by conscious and constant efforts. Nothing in the world purifies like spiritual wisdom.

We are starved of spirituality due to our false belief, ignorance, approach, habits, attachment, uncontrolled emotions, etc. One cannot become spiritual just by repetition of holy verses (mantras). Spirituality is the highest need; it is the need for enlightenment. People perish without spiritual vision. One can be said to be in spiritual life when his thought (mind), word, action, are rooted in the spiritual principles.

We do not lose anything when we begin with spiritual activities, but the gains are tremendous. Every moment we spend and every effort we make in our spiritual life brings us closer to God. Spiritual path is for the brave, determined souls. For spiritual progress, one has to shun worldly attachment, pleasures. Spiritual journey begins when one's heart yearns for the infinite and eternal. For a spiritual man, God does everything. Divinity lies beyond spirituality.

Spiritual path is beset with lot of pitfalls and temptations. There is no short cut formula for spirituality. Spirituality is a slow and gradual process. Worldly life interferes with spiritual life. In the beginning selfishness is the greatest barrier to the spiritual progress. Unselfish activities are conducive to spiritual development. The spiritual thoughts are to be nurtured repeatedly till they become the inward convictions. Solitude is more conducive to spiritual progress. Greatest virtue required in the spiritual search is patience. Laziness and boredom are the main hurdles in the spiritual life. An aspirant should be prepared to face certain hardships during the period of saadhana (practice). A spiritual aspirant should gracefully accept his limitations before Guru and try to overcome them.

No college, institution can train, prepare one in spiritual matters. Spiritual strength can be gained through the means of holy company, chanting of holy names, meditation, religious rituals and selfless service. The moment a man is freed from the clutches of material nature due to God's grace, he is placed under the control of spiritual nature and is guided.

Those who want to gain something by spiritual power, those who are after achievements for ulterior motives shall never succeed in the long run. After all, spiritual achievements are meant for the benefit of others.

WITH UTTER FAITH IN GURU, A LITTLE SPIRITUAL PRACTICE IS ENOUGH. THE MAGIC TOUCH OF GURU AWAKENS ONE'S LATENT SPIRITUALITY.

DESIRES AND EXPECTATIONS

DESIRE NOTHING FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU HAVE EVERYTHING WITH YOU. Desire is a strong urge to satisfy some kind of need, to have something. It is longing or craving for something that promises satisfaction, enjoyment. Desire is born out of ignorance. Desires result from delusion. Desires

are themselves the problems in our life. They are the main cause for all our sufferings and problems. Desires are universal in human beings. Most of our desires are imaginary and unreal. Our efforts in the satisfaction of desires are also meaningless. This body is the product, result of unfulfilled desires.

Desires make us weak. Desire is a trap. Desires bind us to the never ending cycle of birth and death. They ruin our happiness. Pain, misery are the product of desires. Desires finish us and lead us to hell. Desires make us sleepless. They trouble us day and night. Desires cloud our discrimination faculty. Desires pollute our mind. Chain of desires binds us to this mundane world. Desires and expectations lead to conflict both inside and outside. We are being deceived by desires at every step and every moment. Most importantly desires block spirituality.

Every desire generates fresh action leading to rebirth. Unfulfilled desires are the root cause of rebirth. Desires remain in next birth. They do not die with the death of the body. Desires are in queue. A satisfied desire breeds more desires. If not checked, controlled, suppressed, desires multiply and ruin us. So far as desires are concerned, the body is the main culprit. Most of our desires can be removed by introspection. With the dawn of knowledge, desires disappear.

A man without desires and expectations is free from worries, anxieties and distress. No one can fulfill all his desires during his life time. We rarely find a person who is not identified with some or the other kind of desire. Surprisingly, even the man who is on the death bed does not want to get rid of desires, expectations and money.

Before conquering desires, we should try to minimize the desires as a primary step. Our actions should be free from worldly thoughts and desires. Our desires should be in

consistence with Dharma. Reasonable desires are to be fulfilled, not the unreasonable ones. The desire for truth is the highest of all desires. All desires are not bad. But desires for God realization, to be in service of Guru are welcome. Subtle desires should occupy the place of gross desires. Desire is hell. Desirelessness is heaven.

Anyone who overcomes desires falls in to heaven. Person without a desire is closest to God. Even the slightest desire for worldly possession prevents us from coming closer to God. Desirelessness itself is liberation. It is the highest bliss. When all desires of devotees are destroyed, God appears before him. No desire is left when the mind is fully absorbed in God. A man who is free from desire attains real peace.

THERE SHOULD BE ONLY ONE DESIRE - THAT IS DESIRE FOR TRUTH.

DESTINY

THE LAW OF BALANCE REIGNS SUPREME. WHATEVER DESTINED TO HAPPEN HAPPENS. WHATEVER IS DESTINED NOT TO HAPPEN, WILL NEVER HAPPEN. IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD, NOTHING HAPPENS ACCIDENTALLY.

Destiny is a fate or fortune of a person. It means a predetermined course of events that will happen in one's life.

Every living entity in this world is governed by the laws of destiny and hence, he is not independent to do whatever he likes. Man himself plays a role in shaping his own destiny and as such, he should not pass on the blame to God or anyone for his destiny. Our destiny is our own accomplishment. Everything in our life is governed by destiny. It is what we deserve. We are the sole creators of our own destiny. We only are responsible for what we are today. Everyone in this world is suffering and enjoying the results of his own destiny.

Destiny, time, fate, luck are what we make. Destiny is self made, opted.

A man reaps what he sows. No one can avoid or escape from destiny. No one is responsible for our present status than ourselves. But one can certainly try to reshape his destiny with blessings. Our destiny is in our hands. We should never allow others to decide our destiny. Destiny treats all equally. It does not discriminate. All our actions, deeds, thoughts are prompted by destiny. Destiny is under the control of the Creator. We are all subject to the governance of destiny. At any cost, one cannot change the destiny. Destiny can take away everything within no time. No one can surpass destiny.

Whatever we wish to be in future can be achieved by our present actions. So our future lies in ourselves. Fortune is the result of all good (noble) deeds performed by one in the past several births. Destiny is manmade, self made. God does not interfere in man's material destiny. However, destiny will not work independently. It works under the control of God. God is the controller of destiny. The wheel of destiny moves according to the dictates of the Lord. Fortunes and misfortunes are passing conditions. All happenings are for our good only. It may be noted that we are not destined to lead worldly life only.

KARMA/ACTIONS

Karma is a process of fulfilling all our desires, obligations. A man is born to perform karma (actions). Karma is born with man. Birth essentially implies pending actions. No one can escape from destined actions. So also no one is spared from divine law. We get what we deserve. Karma only belongs to the body or the mind and not to the soul. Soul (Aatman) has nothing to do with karma. Soul is in no way concerned with actions. Karma can only cast a veil before the soul. The entire universe is governed by law of action. Actions have no independent existence. Ego that is "I am the doer" mentality is the cause of action.

Action belongs to the realm of matter. But it needs the presence of spirit. Action always brings with it the results. Good actions never bring ill results. As actions, so reactions. Karmakaanda is for worldly people and not for spiritual. Life ends when no action is left with.

KARMA YOGA. It implies discharging our family and social obligations with all sincerity and sense of responsibility without expecting any results (fruits). It means doing our work as worship to God. One should try to spiritualise all his actions. Our actions should be free from worldly thoughts and desires. Obligatory actions should be performed without any attachment and expectations. One should not become a victim to the greed for fruit of action, while performing actions. A true karmayogi will continue to work even after liberation, attaining perfection in order to inspire others. Realised ones should never give up actions so that they can set an ideal to others. Success never comes from resignation of karma. Success comes from renunciation of fruits of actions.

ACTIONS ARE OF THREE TYPES:

- (1) **SANCHIT** - are those which are not ripe, not yet operative. They are due for being operative.
- (2) **PRAARABHDHA** – which are due for fruition, which are already ruling. They are in operation.
- (3) **AAGAAMI** – which are yet to be operative in future over a period of time.

A man of saattwik nature engages himself in noble, pious, good actions. Saattwik karma yields happiness, contentment, calmness and purity. A raajasika man is reckless in undertaking actions for the purpose of fulfilling sensual instincts in a selfish way. Raajasik karmas make one restless, passionate and to be after series of actions. A man of taamasik nature indulges in deluded actions. Taamasik karmas promote indolence, laziness and stupidity.

Of the three types, saattwik action is always steady, blissful and to be undertaken. That itself should be regarded as worship of God.

THE FIRE OF DIVINE WISDOM BURNS DOWN ALL ACTIONS

MEDITATION

Meditation is a means to realize the self. It is the best spiritual technique. Meditation is the inner voice. It has no constraints of time and space. Meditation is to take us to self realization. The object of meditation is self awareness. Meditation means stopping all nonsensical, unproductive activities and tendencies. It is the technique to find inner peace and bliss. Meditation is the only way to bring the mind under control. It is basically bringing a wakeful energy in our life.

Meditation is not possible in a agitating mind. The purpose of meditation is to free the mind from all sorts of attractions and attachments. Meditation is chosen method of avoiding all irrelevant and useless dissipation of our vital energies and spending the so saved, conserved energy into more meaningful and rewarding areas of spiritual enquiry. Meditation transforms us from human beings to divine beings. It confers extra ordinary powers and activates all our energies. Meditation is a source of peace and tranquility. One can solve his problems through meditation. It is a tool to attain happiness and salvation. In perfect meditation, soul communes with God. The other benefits of meditation are. It purifies and charges our mind. Enhances the quality of life immensely. Promotes extremely sharp sense of awareness. Increases efficiency in work, performance. Exudes vitality and confidence. Reveals our vision. Makes us cheerful and creative. Helps us to become pure, soft and flexible. It assists in developing the faculty of intuition. It liberates us from the shackles of karma and fate. Lack of dispassion (vairaagya) is the reason for failure in meditation. Meditation is possible if only one has vairaagya. In other words, meditation will be successful only when dispassion is firmly rooted in our mind. It must be noted that meditation is a means and not an end in itself. Un manifest is not within the reach of meditation also. Meditation should be the way of life. Because it is a panacea for all human problemes. Any thing can be achieved if a person meditates daily even for some time.

|| SHRI DEVYAPARAADHA KSHAMAAPANA STROTRAM ||

**NA MANTRAM NO YANTRAM TADAPI CHA NA JAANE STUTI MAHO
NA CHAAHVAANAM DHYAANAM TADAPI CHA NA JAANE STUTI
KATHAAH |**

NA JAANE MUDRAASTE TADAPI CHA NA JAANE VILAPANAM

**PARAM JAANE MAATAH STVADANU SARANAM KLESHA
HARANAM ||1||**

Why only vedic verses, rituals, even I do not know how to eulogize You. I am also not aware of any mode of meditation, art of invocation and other rituals. Even I do not know anything about Your hymns and stories. I am ignorant of Your stignet (Mudra)also. I also do not know how to become tumultuous before You. But hey Mother Goddess!, I know very well how to become stubborn before You for getting myself relieved from all troubles, sins.

VIDHERA JNAANENA DRAVINA VIRAHENAALA SATAYAA

**VIDHEYAA SHAKTYATVAATTAVA CHARANAYORYAA
CHYUTIRABHOOT |**

TADETAT KSHANTAVYAM JANANISAKALODHAARINI SHIVE

KUPUTRO JAAYETA KVACHIDAPI KUMAATAA NA BHAVATI ||2||

As I am incapable of performing worship in a ritualistic manner due to my ignorance about the manner of worship, paucity of resources and indolence, I beg of your pardon for my deficiency of whatsoever nature in offering my services at your lotus feet. Therefore, hey Mother!, the deliverer of all, Goddess Shive! At times a wicked son may be born, but never shall a wicked mother.

PRITHIVYAM PUTRAASTE JANANI BAHAVAH SANTI SARALAAH

PARAM TESHAAM MADHYE VIRALATARALOHAM TAVA SUTAH

MADEEYOYAM TYAAGAH SAMUCHITAMIDAM NO TAVA SHIVE

KUPUTRO JAAYETA KVACHIDAPI KUMAATAA NA BHAVATI ||3||

Hey Mother! On this earth You are possessed with the riches of countless sons, who are all on the meritorious path. However, I alone happen to be a fool and low-witted (stupid) son. Your act of abandoning me shall never bring any honour (grace) to You. The reason is that at times, a wicked son may be born, but never shall a wicked mother.

**JAGANMAATARMAATASTAVA CHARANA SEVAA NA RACHITAA NA
VAA DATTAM DEVI DRAVINAMAPI BHOYASTAVAMAYAA**

**TATHA API TVAM SNEHAM MAYI NIRUPAMAM YATPRAKURUSHE
KUPUTRO JAAYETA KVACHIDAPI KUMAATAA NA BHAVATI ||4||**

Hey Goddess! The originator of the universe!, I have not offered any meritorious services at Your lotus feet so far. Hey Goddess! Even I could not offer ample resources to You. Still You love me profoundly. Because at times, a wicked son may be born, but never shall a wicked mother.

**PARITYAKTAA DEVAAN VIVIDHA VIDHA SEVAA KULATAYAA
MAYAA PANCHAASHITERADHIKA MAPANEETE TU VAYASI |**

**EDAANIM CHENMAATASTAVA YADI KRIPAA NAAPI BHAVITAA
NIRAALAMBO LAMBHODARA JANANI KANYAAMI SHARANAM ||5||**

Compelled by the necessity of performing varied worldly assignments, even I could not worship rest of the deities. Now I have passed over fifty valuable years of my life. Hey Goddess!, yet you have not showered your grace upon me. This being so, hey the progenitor of Lord Ganesh, to whom I, the most unfortunate one should surrender myself.

**SHVAPAAKO JALPAAKO BHAVATI MADHUPAAKOPA MAGIRA
NIRAATANKO RANKO VIHARATI CHIRAM KOTI KANAKAIH |**

**TAVAAPANE KARNE VISHATI MANUVARNE PHALAMIDAM
JANAH KO JAANEETE JANANI JAPANEEYAM JAPAVIDHAU ||6||**

Hey Goddess! By Your grace, the most cruel one (one who has very low noble virtues) also becomes an eloquent orator (speaker). The purest one, the helpless one, travels by spending crores of golden riches. Hey Manuvarne! All this happens even if a letter of your holy

verse falls on ears. This being so, Hey Mother! What gain (fruits) one may have if the whole verse falls on ears? Who may know this truth?

**CHITAABHASMAA LEPO GARALA MASHANAM DIKPATA DHARO
JATAADHAARI KANTHE BHUJAGAPATIHAARI PASHUPATHI |**

**KAPAALIBHOOTESHO BHAJATI JAGADEESHAIKA PADAVIM
BHAVANI TVAT PAANI GRAHANA PARI PAATI PHALAMIDAM ||7||**

God Shiva! Who has smeared the holy ashes over the limbs of his body, gulped poison of serpent copiously, is in the uncladen state perennially, has grown the hair matted and twisted together, has worn a garland made of king of serpent covering the neck, is the protector of cattle, has human skull in His hand, is the Lord of the entire class of spirits and appears as the Lord of the universe. Really speaking, all this is the result of taking refuge in You.

**NA MOKSHYASYA AKAANKSHAA BHAVA VIBHAVA VAANCHA API
CHANA ME**

**NA VIJNAANA APEKSHAA SHASHIMUKHI SUKHECHA API NA
PUNAH |**

ATASTVAAM SANYAACHE JANANI JANANAM YAATU MAMA VAI

MRIDAANI RUDRAANI SHIVA SHIVA BHAVA ANEETI JAPATAH ||8||

I am neither aspiring for liberation, fame (glory) nor knowledge pertaining to science. Hey Shashivadane! I am also not aspiring for happiness. I have only one request to You Mother. Let my remaining part of life pass thus by repeating Mridaani, Rudraani, Shiva Shiva, Bhavaani.

**NAARAADHITAASI VIDHINAA VIVIDHOPACHAARAIH
KIM RUKSHACHINTANA PARAIRNA KRITAM VACHOBHIH |**

**SHYAAME TVAMEVA YADI KINCHANA MAYAANAATHE
DHATSE KRIPAAMUCHITA MAMBA PARAM TADAIVA ||9||**

I never worshipped You through several ritualistic practices enshrined in scriptures. I have not indulged in heinous crimes by my rough talk or contemplation that lacks noble thoughts. Hey God-

dess! Even then, shall You not have pity on orphan child like me who is in hapless condition? Really speaking, hey Mother! This brings grace (credit) only to you.

**AAPATSU MAGNAH SMARANAM TVADEEYAM
KAROMI DURGE KARUNAARNAVE SHIVE |**

**NAITACHATHATVAM MAMA BHAAVAYETHAAH
KSHUDHAA TRISHAARTAA JANANEEM SMARANTI ||10||**

Hey compassionate Goddess Durga! I am habituated to remember only when I am in deep crisis, trouble. Hey Shive! Do not take me as a cheat, cunning fellow; just by taking cognizance of my untrue behavior. Because kids remember their mothers only when they are agitated by thirst and hunger.

**JAGADAMBA VICHITRA MATRA KIM PARI POORNA KARUNAASTI
CHENMAY |**

**APARAADHA PARAMPARAAVRITAM NA HI MAATAA
SAMUPEKSHATE SUTAM ||11||**

Hey the Goddess of universe! How is that You have absolute grace on me? Really this is most astonishing. Because the mother never neglects, abandons her children who even incessantly commit offences, mistakes.

**MATSAMAH PAATAKEE NAASTI PAAPAGNIM TVATSAMAA NA HI
EVAM JNAATVAAMAHADEVIYATHAA YOGYAM TATHAA KURU ||12||**

There is no other sinner like me. There is no other destroyer of sins like you. Considering this, Hey great Goddess! Do whatever You deem fit, meritorious for me. ●

|| SHRI JAGADAMBAARPANAMASTU ||

|| SHUBHAM BHAVATU ||

SHRI GURUPAADUKAASHTAKA

**JYAA SANGATINECHA VIRAAGA JHAALA | MANODAREECHAA
JADABHAASA GELA ||**

**SAAKSHAAT PARAMAATMAA MAJA BHETAVILAA | VISAROO
KASAA MIGURUPAADUKAALAA ||1||**

I met such a true preceptor in person, by whose holy company I attained dispassion, who, by attracting me towards Him changed my thoughts & behaviour, who freed my mind from passion, perturbation of indolence. How can I forget the holy feet of such a true preceptor?

**SADHYOGAPANTHE GHARI ANIYELE |
ANGECHIMAATE PARABRAHMA KELE ||**

**PRACHANDA TO BHODHARAVI UDELAA |
VISAROO KASAA MIGURUPAADUKAALAA ||2||**

How can I forget the holy feet of a virtuous preceptor, the Sun of stupendous preaching, who has emerged, by whose holy company and who, by accommodating me in his vicinity brought transformation in passions of my mind and behavior and who, by merely His touch, graced my original state of supreme soul (Eternal Brahma).

**CHARAACHARI VYAAPAKATAA JAYAACHI |
AKHANDA BHETI MAJALAA TAYAACHI ||**

**PARAMPADI SANGAMA POORNA JHAALAA |
VISAROO KASAA MIGURUPAADUKAALAA ||3||**

I have met the wholesome preceptor who pervades throughout the aggregate of all created matter (animate and inanimate). My union with His lotus feet has been accomplished. How can I forget the lotus feet of such a true teacher?

**JO SARVADAA GUPA JANAANTA VAAGE |
PRASANNA BHAKTAA NIJA BODHA SAANGE ||**

**SADBHAKTI BHAAVAA KARITAA BHOOKELAA | VISAROO KASAA
MIGURUPAADUKAALAA ||4||**

The true preceptor who, by being present amongst people in disguise, incessantly preaches philosophical truth (He behaves in such a manner that His true identity is not revealed to people. He chides His preceptorhood). He imparts true knowledge only to those propitious devotees who have genuine urge for it. How can I forget the holy feet of such a true preceptor who is hungry of true reverential devotion.

**ANANTA MAAJHE APARAADHA KOTI |
NAANI MANI GHALOONI SARVA POTI ||**

**PRABHODHA KARITAA SHRAMA PHAARA JHAALA |
VISAROO KASAA MI GURUPAADUKAALAA ||5||**

I have committed countless offences (crimes). I am very much tired of worldly life. How can I forget the lotus feet of a true preceptor who has taken so much of pain in flushing out mean and insignificant thoughts from my mind.

**KAAHIMALAA SEVANAHI NA JHAALE |
TATHAAPI TENE MAJA UDDHARILE||**

**AATAA TARI ARPINA PRAANA TYAALAA |
VISAROO KASAA MI GURUPAADUKAALAA ||6||**

I have not offered even a littlebit of service to the true preceptor. Even then, the preceptor has delivered me from this miserable life. At least now I am offering my life for the sake of true preceptor. How can I forget the lotus feet of such a true preceptor?

**MAJHYAA AHAMBHAAVA VASE SHAREERI |
TATHAAPITO SADGURU ANGIKAARI ||**

**NAAHI MANI ALPA VIKARA JYAALAA |
VISAROO KASAA MI GURUPAADUKAALAA ||7||**

Egotism is deeprooted in me. Even then the true teacher has accepted it. He does not have even slightest perturbation (ill feeling) in His mind about me. How can I forget the lotus feet of such a true preceptor?

**AATAAKASAA HAA UPAKAARA PHEDOO |
HAA DEHA OVAALUNI DOORA SAANDU |**

**MYAA EKA BHAAVE PRANIPAATA KELAA |
VISAROO KASAA MI GURUPAADUKAALAA ||8||**

How can I repay (redeem) the favours shown to me by virtuous preceptor. I am throwing this body away after waving (turning) around with a singular feeling in my mind that I shall never forget the true preceptor. I have offered myself to Him. How can I forget the lotus feet of such true preceptor?

**JAYAA VAANITAA VAANITAA VEDAVAANI |
MHANE NETI NETITEE LAAJE DUROONI ||**

**NAVHE ANTA NAA PAARA JYAACHA ROOPAALAA |
VISAROO KASAA MI GURUPAADUKAALAA ||9||**

Religious scriptures (Vedas), hymns and eulogy have failed to laud the preceptor and simply concluded by declaring not that not that and then preferred silence. It is beyond anybody's comprehension to lay down boundaries of description for true preceptor's phenomenon. It is an unending affair. How can I forget the lotus feet of such true preceptor?

**JO SAADUCHAA ANKITA JEEVA JHAALA |
TYAACHAA ASE BHAARA NIRANJANAALA ||**

**JAARAAYANAA CHAA BHARAMADOORA KELAA ||
VISAROO KASAA MI GURUPAADUKAALAA ||10||**

The true preceptor takes over the responsibility of one's affairs of material life the moment he comes under His subjection. My illusion (myself, Naaraayan, the author of this Guru Paadukaasthaka) about money, riches, material life and such other things faded away with the preaching of true preceptor. How can I forget the lotus feet of such a true preceptor?

