HH Sri Swamiji's Upadesha 3/7/2022, KSHT

Jai Veera hanuman ki jai
Jai Siya rama chandra maha prabhu ki jai

Many people are born in the tradition of devotion. They are educated, and they are performing Sadguru's service. Even though they have so many qualifications like good devotion, knowledge, experience, devotion inherited from forefathers, experience in chanting Bhagavadgita, listening to Mahabharata, they are still asking one question, why vigraharadhana? (idol worship). The question is not good.

Even if they have little knowledge, they don't have intellect. Maybe there's confusion. Maybe they haven't found good answers. There's a lot of confusion.
Some doubts are naturally created since they haven't found the correct answer or answers they come across don't stick to their mind. But I have already given answers in so many ways like stories. Some people catch them, and some people don't. If you don't concentrate and listen to Sadguru's upadesha, you won't understand His words. Remember this.

We won't get satiated even if food is taken. Because we must focus, trust that it's nourishing, and it has the energy. Then even a little will satiate. If we do something else while eating, we don't get satisfaction. Since we don't concentrate and keep our minds on something else it seems that we are not getting the correct answer.

If you do anything with utmost concentration, then the result will be good. While doing some work we keep thinking about something else. For example, if you operate machinery while not paying attention, you might get hurt. Even a small chore like cutting your nails while watching TV might cause you to cut your finger.

Any tasks - little or big will get spoiled if you don't concentrate 100% on them. If you don't concentrate 100%, Sadguru's words might seem like some other meaning. Our body is here, but the mind is somewhere else. If you don't understand it's okay, but misunderstanding is a huge problem.
You are misunderstanding the words.

Our mind is not here, only the body is. We are not listening with good concentration. Just listening to one word, or one time, will not get a good meaning. Even if we don't understand, it's okay. We must not misunderstand the teachings of the Guru. Misunderstanding Guru's teachings is a big problem. You must listen again and again, then only you will understand.

While doing anything, if you put your mind to it, then only it will be successful. While doing one business, we move on to some other business. While studying one subject we think about some other subject. Finish one thing at a time and then pick up another subject. Experience one thing at a time. You won't be able to do many things at the same time. Don't mix everything.

Coming back to why is idol worship needed, there is a very short answer. We must think that the object of our worship (deity) is our family member. There are mantras for taking care of them as if they are our guests in our home. In our tradition, we offer water to wash feet, wash hands. Nowadays, we are giving hand sanitizer when someone comes to our home. We offer tea or coffee. We offer them a seat to sit. Then we enquire about their welfare and the trip. Then we offer them food to eat, beverages to drink. Then we ask them what their schedule is, similar to Mangalarti given to God. Similarly, we do very similar actions to God during worship. God is watching every one of our actions. Since we don't have nigraha - self-control, the vigraha (idol) gives us peace, concentration, assurance.

During Puja, we are treating God as our family member, we are giving a bath, decorating, giving food, praying to God to stay with us and not leave us. Every day avahayami — inviting God into our object of worship (Vigraha / photo / kalasha) etc. We must talk to our guests every day. Since we don't have nigraha, we perform vigraha Aradhana (idol worship). Just as God's Murthy (idol) doesn't move, it gives us steadfast faith. It can be any Murthy - Rama, Siva, Mother Goddess, Sadguru, hanuman, Shiva, Datta - whatever form gives us happiness. So, we are performing vigraharadhana to give us self-control. Secondly - we get courage and trust that God is watching over us all the time, protecting us. "Goddess is in my house, within my mind. I am offering food before I consume it. If I buy something for myself, I am also getting it for You. You are my family member." - these should be our thoughts. A lot of devotees buy a saree for Swamiji when they buy clothes for their family members during weddings etc. They consider Swamiji to be a member of their family. If we keep that sort of devotion and nurture friendship, then we get a lot of energy. The energy comes from our actions only. Whatever we offer, He will give back. If you offer one saree, He will give ten. You don't even know how He gives back. Once Krishna was helping his sister Draupadi collect flowers. During this, a thorn picked Krishna's finger and He started bleeding. Then Draupadi cut a part of her cloth to tie to the wound. That's why Krishna saved her by giving endless sarees (during Draupadi's disrobing by Dusshasana). He doesn't keep any favors and duly returns several times over. Even if it doesn't come back to you, your children will get benefits from God.

We are only offering to God, what is given by him to us. We just buy flowers from a shop and offer them to God. He will return it to us again whatever we offer Him several times over. As much worship we perform to the Vigraha (deity) in the temple, we get more nigraha (self-control) We attain peace and self-control proportional to our worship to the Murthy (idol). We attain mental peace. There is so much power installed with the Murthy in the temple. Our prayers reach the supreme God in the cosmos and give us blessings.

Another day, I will teach you what a Devasthana (temple) is.
All of you close your eyes and pray silently. See the God within you. Visualize your favorite form. Chant dattastava. You all have contributed to all services, poojas in corona time in Mysore ashrama, I am very happy. For 2 years, there were no devotees or donations. Many devotees contributed online. and the donations sustained some other ashrams with your contributions. I can't forget the devotees in the USA. That ability to donate is given by God to you. You participated in even a small pooja. Corona pandemic will decrease. May Russian leadership also get a good mind. People shouldn't be killed. May all this pass without further massacres. Since many animals, cattle, cows are being killed, humanity is suffering. when someone asked when it will reduce, this is what I said, when Cow slaughter reduces, then the suffering will subside.

Jaya Guru Datta.