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Datta Jayanti -

8th December,2003.

English Section

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**LORD DATTA -
THE MASTER
OF MASTERS**

TRUTH IS UNIVERSAL AND THE
QUEST FOR TRUTH IS ETERNAL

"Lord Dattatreya declared that "just like i gave Myself and became the adopted child of sage Arti and Anasuya similary, I give Myself to all those devotees who give themselves unto Me".in other words,to those who became My adopted children,I became their adopted child."

Lord Sri Dattatreya is The Incarnation of the Three Murtis of The Holy Trinity known as Brahma,Vishnu and Shiva, Whose Avatar is for the specific purpose of teaching that God Himself is the Guru and Guru is God.He is the Guru of all Gurus, an ever-living Master,present even now and all times to come Whose perennial message is Universal. He is one of the great primordial symbolizations of The one Supreme Holy Truth and Reality and The ultimate manifestations of God-head, appearing to humanity in a Tripartite Form, a Divine Trinity, The Being with Three Faces, representing Creation, Sustenance and Withdrawal.

We get glimpses of the idea of Trinity in Rigveda, the oldest document of the World, Where in various Triads also were indicated. The Universe is classified into three domains: the Earth, The Air (atmosphere)and The Heavens and this Triad found favour with Rig Vedic poets, in their ityacy works.

Coming to the Upanishadic concept of the Trinity : Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar, the function and significance of the Three aspect of Parabrahman;- The Absolute as; Creation- Preservation and Destruction is glorified that are not rigorously distinct or different but invisibly co-related to each other in perfect co-ordination.

Avadhuta Gita contains the wisdom of Lord Dattatreya and its essence as well as the message is "There is only the Great Self and all the Creation is nothing but the Self and absolute freedom is the nature of the ultimate Truth."

God is the Real Self in me, i am That,
He is the Self of all Beings, I am That,
All pervading like the Sky, I am That,
Spotless pure Consciousness, I am That."

-Avadhuta Gita, Cha.1,Can.6

There are two kinds of approach to Divinity. One is called the Saguna approach which means God is worshipped with Form and the devotee meditates on Him as Father-Mother God, while praying and attaining to Him for favour and protection.While sincerely practising such devotion to God with Form for a long time, one gradually begin to feel that the Lord is in his heart, in his great self within and grow into Nirguna worship, which means meditation on the Formless, Attributeless Principle of the Truth. Lord Dattatreya teaches this philosophy of Formless-Truth, which is followed and revered by the great Masters of the World who meditate on the Self.

Featureless and Attributeless is the nature of Truth,
Everlasting, Invincible and pure is the Form of Truth,
Formless, Nameless,Absolute Existence is the Essence of Truth,
"All pervading,Bliss Absolute is the Power of Truth."
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- Avadhuta Gita - Chap. 1 - Can. 20



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Lord Dattatreya is the Avadhuta of highest degree, Who is beyond all disciplines and formalities and teaches the highest teaching of freedom, not only from desires and Karma but also from sectarianism, fanaticism, superstitions and formalities i.e. this path is good and that path is bad etc. and the basic reality that all this is God and everything is God and God is the 'Great Self' in every one of us.

"Never you had birth, never you had death, you are the Eternal Self,
Body you have not, body you are not, you are the Shining Self,
Scriptures declare the Truth with all voices All this is Brahman,
Upanishadas and Vedas declare this All is Paramatman."

- Avadhuta Gita - Chap. 1 - Can. 20

Though Avadhuta naturally implies renunciation, it includes an additional and yet higher state, which is neither attachment nor detachment but beyond both. He seeks nothing, avoids nothing He has neither knowledge nor ignorance. Having realised that, He is the Infinite Self, He lives in that vivid realisation.

"Remove all attachments and delight in your Blissful Self
Do not wonder about deluded, O : devilish mind, dwell in the Self,
Self is limitless, Self is peaceful; State of the Self is equipoise,
Be happy, rid of the attachment, enjoying the Supreme Peace."

- Avadhuta Gita - Chap. 1 - Can. 18

In our concept and perception, we see the World, predominantly with the characteristic of multiplicity, but on deep reflection, it soon vanishes and the character of Unity, reveals itself out of its true functioning. The World of multiplicity and the World of Unity do not exist separately. The relationship of the two orders of the World is just the relation that subsists between appearance and Reality. They are only the two possibilities, in the World, depending upon the mental outlook of the observer.

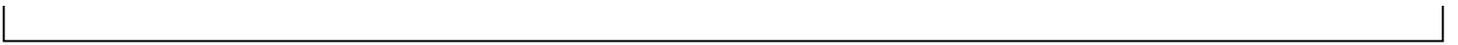
People who see in the World, only multiplicity do not rise above the common view of things. To see Unity in multiplicity needs a subtime vision that leads to necessary illumination to see Unity in diversity for which philosophically we put it : "Diversity is bondage and Unity is Liberation."

Lord Sri Datta Who combines in One, all the three aspects of God-head speaks :

"Delusion created by Maya, causes distinction between duality and Non-duality,
The entire Universe appears to Me as one uninterrupted entity,
To My eyes there is but one flow of consciousness without break maintaining equality,
To one who has attained equanimity there is nothing but Unity in diversity."

- Avadhuta Gita - Chap. 1 - Can. 61

All faiths of the World are harmonised in Datta Philosophy : Karmayoga, Bhaktiyoga, Rajayoga and Gnanayoga - all these four spiritual disciplines are wholesomely and harmoniously blended and integrated in His Philosophy. All religions of the World declare that the Absolute Spirit has projected this Universe of It's Own Will. This Will to create is Brahma, the Power that sustains is Vishnu and the Principle of dissolution is Maheshwara. The Absolute in which these Three Divine Principles interact with each other at all levels, resulting in the emergence of Power of nature that work together, as the Cosmic Yagna of Creation. Hence the Vedas recognise the essence of every thing as the Absolute and the Form as a Manifestation of interaction of Brahma - Vishnu - Maheshwara. Any subsequent phenomenon that threatens to defeat the purpose and mechanism of creation, evokes a response from All The Three to see it right and the resultant Manifestation on the human plane is the Avatar of The Three Principles as Lord Dattatreya, the Light of all Lights Who ever continues to fulfil the perennial need of enlightenment.



“Before the Creation I am, the Eternal Truth, Creation emerged out of Me; I am Omnipresent,
I am free from the clouds of Maya, I am Wisdom Light and Omniscient,
I am the Nectar of Knowledge, the Essence of every thing and Limitless as space, Truth Marvellous,
I am Self Effulgent and Self Luminous, I am the Light of all the Lights.”

Avadhuta Gita - Chap. III - Can. 3

Dattatreya Avatar unlike others does not withdraw from phenomenal existence but persists in One Form or the other as a Realised Soul, invariably as an Avadhuta. Lord Krishna speaks of such Avadhuta to His disciple Uddhava in the Bhagavata and illustrates Rishabha and Jada Bharata. It is in this spirit that Bhagavata says, that The Supreme Lord appears in the Form of Avadhuta as He cannot be perceived by ordinary people and only sages could recognise Him in dhyana. Among saints generally we come across two categories : Siddhas and Gnannis. Siddhas are distinguished by their incredible Power over natural phenomenon, but most of them retain the source of duality so as to be able to do so. Gnannis ever abide in the state of Non-duality and hardly manifest any Power over nature. Very rarely we come across saints in whom Siddhi and Gnana are perfectly harmonized that is revealed in the Manifestation of Dattatreya the Born Avadhuta.

“I see only the Universal Spirit, for the matter and spirit are one and the same,
Like water mixed with water is water all the time,
Matter is Energy, Energy is Consci-ousness, Consciousness is Self Divine,
Realizing thus, I see the ‘Oneness’ with the eye of Illumination.”

- Avadhuta Gita - Chap. I - Can. 51

The Avatar of Sri Dattatreya is intended for the welfare of all creatures and as this mission has to be carried out as long as creation exists, He does not lay-out His body and leave for the heavenly realm but goes on wondering from place to place for imparting wisdom with the sole purpose to lead the Jeeva for Self-realisation. He is the Divine Embodiment of compassion neither incomprehensible nor inaccessible Who synthesises the three schools : Dwaita, Adwaita, Vishishtaadwaita and also the tenants of Mayabadha, Parinamabadha, Chid Vilasabadha and is the Inner Soul of all known cults and moods of worship, ever concerned for all the creatures in the Universe :

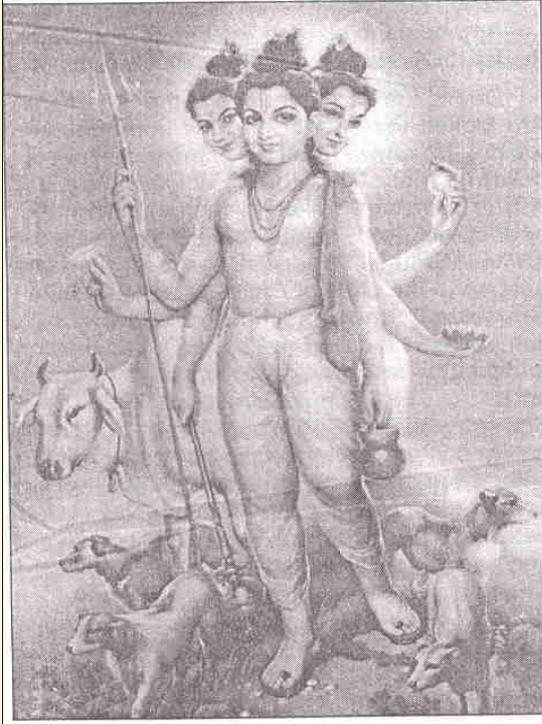
“I am the Father, I have no father, I am the Mother, I have no mother, I am the Family, I have no family,
Everything belongs to Me; I belong to no race, I have no creed nor colour - I am beyond simile,
I have no birth, I have no death and I am beyond emotions and delusion,
By nature I am Blissful and Ever Free; I am the Supreme Brahman”.

- Avadhuta Gita - Chap. IV - Can. 21

I am neither in comprehensible nor inaccessible to all for I am every where,
I am neither invisible nor unattainable by a true devotee, the moment they invoke, I am there,
I am neither far nor near nor difficult of apprehension to the devotee’s sight,
I am Brahman, the nectar of wisdom, the essence of everything and limitless as space, shining Bright.”

- Avadhuta Gita - Chap. III - Can. 8 - Dwarika Mohan Misra

Bhagwan Dattatreya's Sixteen Avatars



Bhagwan Shri Dattatreya is known as Avinashi (non-destroyable), Siddharaj, Yogiraj etc. He has been ever advising and guiding his devotees in the worldly and spiritual affairs, yogasadhana and devotion to God. He had many Avatars from Vedic times to date. Of these, sixteen Avatars are regarded as the chief ones. 'Shri Gurucharitra' is a great volume in Marathi in ovi form, which depicts the life-mission of Shripad Shri Vallabha and Shri Narsinha Saraswati, the two Avatars of Datta which took place in the Kaliyug. In the fourth chapter of this volume, the account of the birth of Shri Datta under the parentage of Atri-Anasuya in Krityug has been given. This is the fifth Avatar amongst the above mentioned sixteen Avatars. The celebration of the birth days of the sixteen Avatars of Shri Datta, was introduced at Ambejogai (Marathwada), Maharashtra by Shri Datta's great favourite devotee Shri Dasopant. This was recorded by the revered Vasudevanand Saraswati, another great devotee of Shri Datta and he wrote in Sanskrit 'Shri Dattatreya Shodash Avatar Jayanti Kalp'. Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pandurang-shastri Goswamy has written a most erudite precious volume 'Dattopasana Kalpadrum' in Marathi to depict all the information about Shri Dattatreya from Vedic times.

Hence it can be really called 'An Encyclopedia' of Shri Datta. It has five parts and the fourth part depicts elaborately the biographies of sixteen Avatars of Shri Datta, based on the Sanskrit script of revered Vasudevanand Saraswati. The devotees of Shri Datta may keenly desire to know about these Avatars and so I am attempting to give this account in brief.

FIRST AVATAR - YOGIRAJ

After the creation of this universe the living beings had to suffer from miseries as per their past actions. This made Brahmadeo anxious and so he surrendered to Shri Vishnu, the Lord of the universe saying, "**Dattoham Dattoham**" (I give myself). Shri Vishnu appeared before Brahmadeo and advised him to practise yoga and know the eternal principle whereby he was relieved of the miseries, and had the peace of mind. Those, who recite "**Dattoham Dattomam**", will also gain the same fruit. This Avatar took place on Kartik Shuddha 15, Krittika Nakshatra, Wednesday, first prahar at sun-rise.

This Avatar propagated yoga, hence it is known as 'Yogeshwar' or 'Yogiraj'. He looked most charming, delicate and snowwhite in colour. Like Shri Krishna, he had one head and four hands.

SECOND AVATAR - ATRIVARAD

When Atri lived as a grahastha, he had many sons. They were learned and erudite; but he longed to have a son, who would be famous in all the three lokas and would guide the people to attain the highest goal of life. He, therefore, observed severe penance on the Riksha mountain. Due to the lustre of his penance, the three lokas suffered from heat and all the creatures and birds became uneasy. All the Gods, Rishi-munis approached Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Then Brahma, riding on hans, Vishnu on garud and Mahesh on nandi appeared before Atri and roused him from his meditation. Atri bowed to them and said, "I adored only one God then who are you three?" The three Gods said, "We are the same whom you aimed at. We appear in three forms; but we are one. Maya (illusion) is threefold sattwa, raj and tamas. Raj creates, sattwa protects and tam destroys. These three powers are prominent. Parmatma possesses all these three powers." Atri was blessed with a son by the three Gods as desired. Hence this Avatar is known as 'Atrivarad'. He had lustre like hot gold and a smiling face. This Avatar appeared on Kartik Vadya Pratipada, Rohini Nakshatra, Thursday, first prahar and first muhurta. He had one or three heads and held Brahma's garland and kamandalu in the lower two hands, God Shiva's drum and trishul in the middle two hands and Vishnu's shankha and chakra in the upper two hands.

THIRD AVATAR - SHRI DATTATREYA

Bhagwan Shri Hari appeared before Atri as a boy on the Kartik Vadya 2, Mrug Nakshatra, Friday at sun-rise on the first muhurta. He looked bluish as Indranil in colour. His face was pleasant as the moon, his four hands possessed shankha, chakra, gada and padma. Vibhuti was applied on his body and he had locks of hair on his head. He appeared saying, "Dattoham". Atri and Anasuya said, "We shall not be content till you take birth from us." Being pleased with their speech, he entered in the heart of Atri as a spark of lightening and afterwards took birth as a son of Anasuya.

FOURTH AVATAR - KALAGNI SHAMAN

Amongst the sixteen Avatars of Shri Datta, this fourth Avatar is regarded as most prominent. Due to the hard penance at the Riksha hill, Atri looked very bright and his body became too hot. Bhagwan Shri Hari came to Atri to cool down his heat. Due to this achievement this Avatar is known as 'Kalagnishaman'. When Atri opened his eyes, he saw before him the most loving Anasuya. The bright lustre of his eyes entered in the body of Anasuya on Margshirsh Shuddha 7 and nine month's period was completed in 9 days (one day being or ritatithi) and the Divine Form appeared before Anasuya on Kartik 15. Anasuya wondered to see this. She entreated the God in humility saying, "I shall not be content until you take birth as a human being from my womb." Subsequently Shri Hari appeared as a newly born baby and lay on her bedstead. At this time it was Mrug Nakshatra and the moon was just rising. Durwas and Chandra also were born at the same time.

FIFTH AVATAR - YOGIJAN VALLABHA

When Shri Dattatreya appeared at Anasuya's ashram, Indra followed by the Gods, Rishi-munis, Gandharvas, Charanas, Yogis and saints came to see him. Knowing their eagerness, Shri Datta appeared as a boy and advised them about yoga. He said, "I have no body, no time. I am devoid of birth and death. I take various forms to bless the devotees. Though these acts are transitory this does not affect my tatvic state." This Avatar is known for the propagation of yogapath and for removing the obstacles coming in the way and blessing the followers of yoga. This Avatar is, therefore, known as 'Yogijan Vallabha'.

SIXTH AVATAR - LEELA VISHWAMBHAR

The love for children and intense mercifulness of Shri Datta are observed in this Avatar.

There was a great famine in the country. Animals could not get food and water. So they were reduced to boney skeletons. Thieves and dacoits looted the public. Rishi-munis could not perform their rites and sacrifices were stopped. Rishi-munis, Brahmins etc. surrendered to Shri Datta, who was lying in the laps of Anasuya and feeding on her breast. Hearing the prayers of the people, Shri Datta appeared as Leela Vishwambhar before them and offered to them food, clothes and provisions and satisfied them all. This was achieved easily and hence he is known as 'Leela Vishwambhar'. One day Shri Datta addressed the devotees as follows, "This life is like a vast forest. Ahankar is like a big mountain surrounded by big trees, creepers and plants. Kama i.e. cupid is a fierce lion, krodha (anger) is an enraged serpent, vasana (desires) are great lakes. Those, who cannot swim in the water, get drowned." Shri Datta then changed this scene. The devotees, therefore, asked, "Where is the fierce forest?" Shri Datta replied smilingly, "It has immersed whence it was created. It comes into existence due to ignorance and when it is wiped off, it vanishes. Those, who remember me, get rid of the family miseries. All this physical world is destroyable and Atma, which is at the root, is only lasting." The devotees enquired, "How is the Atma?" Shri Datta replied, "I am that Atma. I am known by good action and intense devotion."

SEVENTH AVATAR-SIDDHARAJ

Shri Datta Guru appeared as a boy named Vishwambhar in the Badri forest, where several siddhas were observing penance of different sorts. Some had achieved siddhis and were enjoying many pleasures. Some believed in God, while some did not. Vishwambhar sat in a corner in the assembly of the siddhas. Seeing the lustrous boy, the siddhas asked him, "Who are you?"

"Shri Datta." I am not discernible.

- Q. "Which is your abode?"
- A. "I have no abode. No one is my master."
- Q. "Which is your yoga? What is the mode of your study?"
- A. "Mine is Chitra yoga and there is no special mode of my study."
- Q. "Which is your mudra?"
- A. "Mine is a compassionate niranjani mudra."
- Q. "What do you see in this mudra?"
- A. "I see what is beyond meditation. My aim is that principle which is beyond the threefold meditations, meditator and the object of meditation."
- Q. "Which is your path?"
- A. "My path is that which gives realisation of the Shivatattva (eternal principle)."

While this dialogue was going on, 11 Rudras, 12 Adityas, 49 Rudraganas, Rishis, Munis, Sadhyadeo, Gandharva, Yaksha, Kinnar etc. were passing through the sky. Their motion being hindered, they all came down on the floor of Badrivan. All the siddhas wondered to see this. Each siddha said that because of his penance, their motion was hindered and they came down on the earth.

Shri Datta, in the body-form, said, "Why do you struggle? One, who can remove the hindrance of their motion and allow them to go through the sky, will be the best siddha."

All agreed to this and each one came forward and said one after another, "I have removed the obstacle in your movement. You can go to your places." But none of them could move a bit.

Then Shri Datta said, "Oh you Rishi-munis and others, you may please go to your places as the hindrance in your movement has since been removed." Hearing this, all those who had descended, bowed to Shri Datta and flew away in the sky. Seeing this, all the siddhas realised that the boy Yogi was the Parmatma. They, therefore, gave up their vanity and surrendered to him.

The boy Yogi, Shri Datta, said, "I am 'Siddharaj', 'Yogiraj'. I am called 'Hari' being Kalagnishaman and remover of miseries. While thinking about Atma and in order to attain me, one should study mantras. I am Mantraraj, undestroyable and Parabrahma. All the universe is under my control; but I am controlled by mantras. All mantras, studied as per due procedure, give siddhi (power of doing certain things) to sadhak." Saying this, he further told them some mantras and their procedure. This is known as 'Siddha Rajagam'. Shri Datta told this again, about 500 years ago, to his great favourite devotee Dasopant of Ambejogai (Maharashtra), who has preserved it in a written script. The publication of 'Siddha Rajagam' will be truly most valuable and appreciable.

This Avatar took place on Magh Shuddha 15 on Magh Nakshatra in the morning when it is the time of the cows.

EIGHTH AVATAR - DNYANSAGAR

Bhagwan Shri Dattatreya once contemplated, "These persons have achieved yoga siddhis etc. Still, until kam, krodha, lobha etc. are not conquered by them, they would not have real peace of mind and they will have no pleasure. Kam i.e. desire, is at the root of all the miseries and everyone is struggling in his life to get one's desires fulfilled. Krodha i.e. anger, follows desires. All the world is engrossed in this struggle and is suffering from threefold miseries viz. physical, metaphysical and mental. Therefore, all the people should be above the bondage of kam, krodha, lobha etc. then they will gain knowledge and attain my place."

So, Shri Datta appeared in the form of a Kumar known as 'Dnyansagar'. This Avatar appeared in air at the height of a man, on Falgun Shuddha 10, Sunday, Punarvasu Nakshatra at sunrise.

The siddhas tried to bring this Kumar on the ground; but they could not do so. They, therefore, realised that he was Parmatma and surrendered to him and began to praise him.

Shri Datta then said, "Kam begets anger, anger begets delusion of intellect and untoward actions take place. Those, who go after siddhis, do not get my place and consequently they do not get pleasure.

Therefore, you should adore me, recite mantras and know the eternal principle and lead a moral life. You cannot gain me by intellect or logic, without longing for the fruit. So, one should win over kam, krodha etc. and continue my devotion.

The siddhas thereafter followed the path, shown by Shri Datta and attained the bliss. This Avatar took place in Badrivan for the well-being of the siddhas, who were staying there.

NINETH AVATAR - VISHWAMBHARAVDHOOT

With a view to test the siddhas and see how far they have progressed, Shri Datta assumed the dirty form of a mlenchha. His face was robust. He had black string round his neck, a zigzag stick in his hand and a black dog followed him. He saw that some siddhas were meditating, while some were enjoying the jokes and some others suffering from miseries.

This Avatar appeared on Chaitra Shuddha Poornima, Tuesday, Chitra Nakshatra, in the second prahar. The siddhas asked him questions as before and he replied in the same style. Then realising him to be Shri Datta, they surrendered to him and began to praise him. Shri Datta then appeared before them in his usual lovely form and advised them to give up doubts and concentrate their minds on him.

TENTH AVATAR - MAYAMUKTAVADHOOT

Shri Datta appeared on Vaishakh Shuddha 14, mid-day, in the form of a mendicant (bairagi) at the house of one pious devotee, named Sheel. He was performing the anniversary rites and brahmins were invited. He looked handsome and had golden lustre. He had a pot in one hand for the alms and a stick in the right hand. There was a wreath of rudrakshas round his neck. The brahmins, who were invited, got enraged to see the bairagi. They asked him, "Who are you ?"

The bairagi said, "I am undiscernible, all pervading Avadhoot." Hearing this, Sheel knew that he was Siddhraj Dynansagar of former times. To remove his doubt, he asked, "What is your abode (ashraya) and who is your master ?" The reply was, "I have no abode and no master. I am the master of all the three lokas." Realising him to be his Sadguru, he prostrated before him, seated him with due regard, duly worshipped him and offered him good delicious food. Seeing this, the brahmins scolded Sheel, saying that he acted unpiusly.

The mendicant then asked the brahmins, "What is Brahmas ?" The brahmins said, "Om is Parabrahma and it has assumed the form of Vedas. You are unpious and irreligious and so you are not eligible even to hear Vedas." The mendicant said, "I am above Maya and hence not bound by rules and regulations. Vedas and their acts are of three qualities and this world is also three-fold and it is with me in the form of a black dog. This dog is well-versed in Vedas and shastras. He will satisfy you." Saying so, he asked the dog to say Vedas. Like a learned pandit the dog began to chant the Vedas. The brahmins were simply stunned to see this miracle.

Shri Avadhoot called the forefathers of Sheel and in the presence of all assimilated them in himself. The vanity of the brahmins was wiped off and they surrendered to Shri Datta, who advised them to have devotion for him. This pleased them all. They prayed to him to bestow on them the lasting well-being of their families.

ELEVENTH AVATAR - MAYAYUKTAVADHOOT

This Avatar took place on Jeshth Shuddha 13, Friday, Swati Nakshatra, at sunrise.

This Avatar appeared in a young meditating pose, having a beautiful young woman on his left lap. Knowing them as Lakshmi-Narayan, all narrated their family shortcomings; but none showed a liking for the spiritual matters. Shri Datta began to sing and dance with the young woman. People thought that Shri Datta was playing with Maya and they did not leave him. Shri Datta then brought forward flesh, wine and similar unpious articles and said, "I am enjoying all these things, so I have no power and ability to fulfil your desires." Hearing this, many persons forsook him and only few remained there. Shri Datta then told them, "Faith, devotion, meditation, practising rules of sam, dam and by conquering the desires the human beings can get rid of the family bondages."

Then Mayayuktavadhoot roamed in the region from the south of Narmada to the Mahur hills.

The Gods, harassed by Jambasur, Kartavirya – Sahasrarjun and Parashuram met Shri Datta in this region. Shri Datta advised, 'Tripura Rahasya' to Parashuram in order to get rid of the effects of his sins of wars against the kshatriyas and to attain the peace of mind.

TWELFTH AVATAR - ADIGURU

Shri Datta advised Alark, the son of Madalsa. While ruling as a king, Alark was engrossed in the worldly pleasures. Dnyani Subahu, his elder brother, thought that Alark was wasting away his life as dogs and cats do in enjoyment of passions. He intended to awaken him spiritually. He, therefore, came to his city and asked for his share in the kingdom. When it was refused, he sought the help of Kashi Raja and attacked and besieged his city. Consequently the provisions coming in the city were stopped. Due to this, the subjects could not get food grains and they began to suffer from hunger. Alark was dejected to see this. His mother, Madalsa, had told him to see her letter of advice, placed in the box in times of calamity. He left the city, entered a forest and next morning opened the box and saw his dear mother's letter. It was said in it that in times of adversity, one should forsake all and have the company of a saint and think of salvation. He should go to Shri Datta at Mahurgad for spiritual guidance. This Avatar appeared on Ashadh Shuddha 15 on Tuesday, in the first prahar, on first muhurt.

Alark went to Mahur, surrendered to Shri Datta and narrated his misery. Shri Datta placed his palm on his head and asked, "Where is your misery ? Just think who you are." Only due to this one question, Alark began to think of himself. His ignorance was wiped off and his ego and greed also vanished. The feeling of enmity was extinct.

THIRTEENTH AVATAR - SHIVA GURU DATTATREYA

Pingalnag, a pious brahmin knowing Vedashastra lived at Mahur. He saw a lustrous youth under a black awala tree. The youth had a naked young woman. He knew Vedas. Pingalnag asked him, "Who are you ? You do not look to be pious; but you say Vedas. You have not the 'dand' of a brahmachari agnihotra of a grihastha. Your age is not due for proceeding a sannyasin. Then which is your ashram ?" The youth said, "All the universe is Atmaroop. Mine is the fifth ashram, who sees Atma everywhere."

Pingalnag recognised him as Shri Dattatreya, the son of Anasuya and so bowed to him humbly and prayed to bless him and give proper advice. This Avatar appeared on Shravan Shuddha 8, Monday.

FOURTEENTH AVATAR - DEVDEVESHWAR

Shri Datta roamed from the south of Narmada to Mahur in the forest. He bathed in rivers, lakes, at holy places and gave darshan to Rushi-munis. This region was full of black awala trees and so it was called 'Krishnamalaki Tirth'. The Gods, Brahmadeo, Shatanand, son of Goutam had come and seen Shri Datta here.

This Avatar appeared on Bhadrapad Shuddha 14, Friday, Shatatarka Nakshatra in the first prahar of the day.

FIFTEENTH AVATAR - DIGAMBAR

This Avatar took place on Ashwin Shuddha Poornima, Wednesday, Ashwini Nakshatra, at sunrise.

In this Avatar Shri Datta blessed Yadu of Somvansh and Pralhad, son of Kayadhu.

When Yadu Raja was wandering in the forest in the Kaveri region, he saw a Digambar Avadhoot. He prostrated before him and said, "You are young, lustrous and healthy and then why do you stay in such a desolate forest and yet you are joyful and carefree." Digambar Avadhoot said, "I have acquired 24 Gurus from nature and learnt lessons of different types from them. Thus I have acquired vivek, vairagya, peace of mind and contentment.

AVADHOTA'S 24 GURUS

I learnt forgiveness and the quality of favouring others from the earth and mountains. Pran or vayu is still. It is not attached to anything. Our Atma is like the sky, which pervades all yet it is aloof. Cleanliness and sweetness are learnt from water. I took brightness from fire. The moon shows that Atma is devoid of increase and decrease. The sun takes away the water from the earth by his rays and returns the same to the earth in the form of rain. Similarly one should give what one acquires and not hoard it.

Intense love is undesirable, is known by me from a kapoti who loved her kitten and fell in the trap of a hunter. One should be contented with what is obtained easily, is learnt from a large serpent.

An ocean does not increase in rains and does not decrease, during summer, but it is deep and unfathomable. A man should live a life similarly. Patang insect leaps on the flame and burns itself. So, by being engrossed in passions, one should not ruin oneself. Black bee enters a flower and succumbs when the petals of the flower are closed. Honeybees hoard precious honey in honey-comb but it is taken away by other persons. So, one should not hoard. An elephant chases a she elephant and falls in a ditch. So, lust for a female is undesirable. A deer is attracted by good singing and falls a prey to the arrow of a hunter. So, one should not be after a desire or a habit. Pingla, a prostitute, kept awake in the night longing to get a rich costumer and his money, but being disappointed at last, she repented and concentrated on God. Titwi bird held a piece of flesh in its beak and other birds attacked it to get the piece; but when it threw the piece of flesh, it was happy. A child after drinking the mother's milk rests on the ground and plays by itself. It has no anxiety of any kind. Similarly, I also live carefree. A kumari was beating paddy for the food of the guests; but the bangles, around her arms, made noise. So, she put only one bangle around each wrist and did her work smoothly. There is no strife if one lives singly. A serpent lives in a hole in the ground away from the society due to fear. So, one should live in the forest for meditation. A fish is tempted by the eatable attached to the fish-hook and is caught by the fisherman. A blacksmith concentrates his mind when sharpening the end of an arrow. So, in meditation, one should have the concentration of mind. Larva of a kumari bird always thinks about kumari bird and becomes kumari in course of time. Similarly, one should concentrate on Brahma. A spider prepares a net of fibre and remains in it and at last assimilates the fibres in itself and remains alone.

Brahma begets the universe, which ultimately immersed in the Brahma. I learnt vairagya from my body itself. O Raja, you also see the nature and get enlightened and think of Brahma and you will be free from all miseries and shall be happy."

Yadu was much pleased to listen all this. He prostrated before Shri Datta. The dynasty of Yadu prospered in later time Shrikrishna, a Purnavatar of Shri Vishnu, was born in this dynasty.

Pralhad was also blessed by Shri Datta in this Avatar. After the death of Hiranyakashyapu, Pralhad's thread ceremony was performed by Shukra and he was enthroned as Raja. He ruled his country for thousands of years very efficiently as a most popular king; but he could not have peace of mind being void of Brahmadnyan. So, he roamed in the Kavery regions in a dejected mood. He perceived a lustrous Avadhoot, lying on the ground. His body was covered by dust. Pralhad bowed to him and said, "How can you live in such a dense forest quite hail and hearty and contented." Shri Datta told about some of the 24 Gurus and the lessons learnt from them. Pralhad was fully satisfied and got enlightened.

SIXTEENTH AVATAR - SHRIKRISHNA SHYAM KAMALNAYAN

This Avatar took place on Kartik Shuddha 12, Wednesday, Revati Nakshatra at sunrise. Shri Datta had different Avatars as Yogiraj, Atrivarad etc. and advised his devotees with dnyan, bhakti, vairagya, eight fold yoga sadhana etc. Bhagwan Shri Datta was lying on the bed of dnyan and was engrossed in yoga. At that time, some devotees and disciples came to see him. Shri Datta appeared pleasant and in the form of Sat Chit (lasting and lustrous). Shri Datta said, "Having studied all the shastras, I tell you the real essence. Practising it you will soon get salvation. Vedic dharma is ever lasting. Veda is at its root, hence dharma has prominence and lasting status. I am 'Datta' not only for Atri, but I give myself to all those who have unprejudiced devotion for me. I give sayujyata (i.e. immersion in myself) to such devotees."