

God as Guru and Guide

Since time immemorial, across religions, cultures and spiritual traditions there is a deep yearning and reverence for a teacher/guide to lead man through this great adventure called life. This is evidenced through the life of holy persons and scriptures. Since a very young age, Sathya Sai Baba began His role as a spiritual teacher, guiding all on the path to goodness and godliness through His personal example and through secular initiatives like Pandhari bhajan group (children's choir) and street theater based on stories from scriptures or contemporary social issues calling for reform and equality. In October 1940, Sathya Sai Baba declared His mission and the first message as the Avatar of the age was, "[Manasa Bhajore Guru Charanam, Dusthara Bhava Sagara Taranam...](#)" (O Mind, take refuge at the feet of the Guru; He will guide you across this ocean called life.)

Guru Poornima is celebrated in the lunar month of Ashad (July) on the full moon day (Poornima) as a day dedicated to the Guru (spiritual teacher). However, Bhagawan Sathya Sai Baba formally revived this ancient tradition of honoring the Guru in 1956 as an important spiritual festival to be celebrated by all aspirants. It is a day dedicated to i) remembering the Guru with gratitude, ii) reflecting on the Guru's teachings and iii) resolving to put it into daily practice. In preparation for Guru Poornima (July 19, 2016), here are a few excerpts from Guru Poornima discourses given by Sathya Sai Baba for individual or group study.

Significance of Guru Poornima

The moon is the presiding deity for the mind. Today, it is Poornima (full moon day). What does Poornima signify? It means the completion of the full circle by returning to the starting point. One half of the circle is represented by worldly life. It is like the letter "C". This is equated with science, which is incomplete knowledge. The full circle represented by the moon represents the state of the mind when it is filled with Love. Guru Poornima is observed today. *Gu* means darkness and *Ru* means dispelling. *Guru* means one who dispels darkness. Guru Poornima is the day on which one celebrates the dispersal of the darkness of ignorance from the mind. Hence, people should fill their minds with the all-embracing Love Principle. To experience the fullness of Love, you have to fill your hearts completely with Love. That will be the result of total devotion. Divine Discourse July 22, 1994

<http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume27/sss27-21.pdf>

What is the significance of Guru Poornima? Guru is one who illumines the path to divinity. Poornima stands for the cool full moonlight. Full moon stands for a mind with total illumination and purity. Even if there is a trace of blemish in the mind, it will lead to darkness. It cannot give you total bliss.

Embodiments of Love! Let your mind be filled with the radiance of divine love. Acquiring mere textual knowledge is of no avail. What you have studied is only a fraction of the total knowledge. Yet you feel proud about it. Your worldly education is insignificant compared to divine wisdom. You cannot attain God with your education, power and wealth. He is accessible by Love and Love alone. You can experience Him only when you develop Love. Devotion means to Love God wholeheartedly. Divine Discourse July 24, 2002
<http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume35/sss35-13.pdf>

This day, thousands of you have gathered here because it is Guru Poornima (the full moon day dedicated to Guru). The fully worth-while Guru must facilitate that vision of Unity without the discords and divisions that 'mine' and 'thine' engender in the mind of man. Such a Guru was the sage Vyasa. This day is also called Vyasa Poornima, a day when mankind offers him the gratitude he deserves. 'Vyaso Naaraayano Harih': Vyasa is the Lord Narayana, Hari. Narayana, the Lord Himself, came as a man called Vyasa, to collate the Vedas and teach man the path towards God. He has made the path plain and easy to climb...

Sage Vyasa sympathised with man who was caught in the coils of do's and don'ts, of success and failure, of desire and despair. He demarcated many practices which leads man along to fulfilment. The fulfilment consists in eliminating animalistic tendencies that lurks in man and reaching out to Divinity that is his essence.

Divine Discourse July 9, 1979 <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume14/sss14-27.pdf>

Who is a Guru?

The first Guru is the mother; her example, her advice, her admonition affects man deepest and longest. The second is the father, who is admired by the child for his strength and knowledge and feared for the punishments he inflicts. Next is the teacher, who leads him and guides him into the maze of material knowledge. But, the Guru (spiritual preceptor) alone can open the inner eye and cleanse the inner instruments of intuition. He induces you to question yourself, "Dheham?" (Am I this body or is this body only a vehicle which I am using) and discover the answer, "Naaham" (I am not this Body). Then the investigation starts to delve into the reality of the I, "Koham" (Who am I then?) and the answer reveals itself in the purified consciousness, "Soham" (I am He); I am a spark of that Glory; I am Divine. Divine Discourse July 26, 1972 <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-44.pdf>

This day is a day set apart for the worship of the Guru. Who is the Guru? How can a person who has not reached the goal guide you towards it? When he is himself groping in the dark, how can he illumine your path? Most Gurus who profess to lead are themselves not quite sure of the road or quite convinced of the rightness of their path. 'Gu' means darkness, or ignorance; "ru" its removal. So the Guru must know the process by which ignorance can be removed in another. How can he do it when he has not done it for himself? The blind cannot lead the blind.

Guru has another meaning too. 'Gu' means *gunaatheetha* (beyond the three strands of energy of which the Cosmos is composed) and 'ru' means *rupa-rahitha* (devoid of any particular form). Now, no mortal has transcended the *guna* (quality) and *rupa* (form). God alone can be described as unaffected by these. And, God is the Guru, right in your heart, ready to lead and enlighten. He is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-pervading. Divine Discourse July 1974 <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume12/sss12-42.pdf>

Signs and qualities of a true Guru

Embodiments of Divine Love! Today is Guru Poornima day. What is its inner significance? There is no guru other than the One Divine. As long as you consider yourself a mere human being, you may regard yourself as a disciple. But when you realise that you are the embodiment of the Atma, you become your own Guru. In going after gurus and teachers, men are deluding themselves and forgetting Brahman. Seek refuge in yourself. Recognise your Reality. That is the right path. And that is the way to revere the Guru. Divine Discourse, July 26, 1991 <http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume24/sss24-21.pdf>

The true Guru is one, who has no ego or selfishness, and who can raise the student to his own level. Donning the saffron robe, mouthing a few mantras (sacred formulas) and expounding some texts are the signs of many Gurus these days. The signs of a true Guru are large heartedness, absolute selflessness, purity in living, freedom from acquisitiveness, absence of envy, and equal mindedness in his conduct towards everyone. Freedom from envy is an essential quality in a Guru or student, because envy is the root cause of many evils.

The Guru's role is to lead the student on the Godward path. He must teach the student the true purpose for which each of his sense organs is to be used--his eyes, his tongue, and his limbs. All the senses are to be used for discovering and experiencing the Divine. Divine Discourse, July 13, 1984

<http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume17/sss17-14.pdf>

God is the only Guru

In the name of Guru Poornima, you perform some pujas for some persons and waste your lives. There is only one Guru. He is God. That Guru is within you. You are seeking the Guru all over the world. Your gunas (qualities) are in you in the form of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara (Trinity), and can protect you, elevate you or ruin you. When you act righteously and pursue the right path, they will protect you by their Vishnutva (Divine potency).

Sin or God have no separate existence. Our actions and thoughts assume the forms of sin or merit as the case may be. The royal road to happiness and the removal of sorrow is fight action. The essence of all religions, all teachings and spiritual paths is only one thing: Love. Develop that Divine Love. Above all, whatever your difficulties, whatever the ordeals you have to undergo, in any situation, do not give up God. God is One. Divine Discourse, July 29, 1988

<http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-21.pdf>

Message for Guru Poornima- "God Is"

On this Guru Poornima day I do not intend to give you any *Ashtakshari* (eight letter) or *Panchaakshari* (five-letter) mantra based on any particular deity's name. Nor am I enjoining you to study any Upanishad, or the Gita or the Brahma Sutras. There is a simple five-letter pronouncement in Telugu- "*Devudu unnaadu*," (God is). Make this your sheet-anchor. If you go on reciting it, thinking over it, acting up to it and conveying it to others, immersing yourself in the bliss of this experience, you will be making the greatest contribution to the welfare of the world. (Swami recited a poem on the glories of God's creation to prove "*Devudu unnaadu*").

Consider this mantra, "God Is", as the message for this Guru Poornima and proclaim it under all circumstances and in all places with all the conviction and strength you can command. The world can be turned into an earthly paradise if you strengthen your faith in God and demonstrate it in your actions. You must have the courage and determination to face any kind of problems and difficulties. By propagating this mantra you can promote the love of God and the fear of sin among the people. The mantra "God is" can be more powerful than a mantra based on any particular deity's name. Moreover, mere repetition of any mantra is of little use. Greater than the power of mantra or yantra is the power of a pure heart (*chithasuddhi*). Your faith must stem from the heart, which is the seat of the Divine. Divine Discourse July 21, 1986.

<http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume19/sss19-14.pdf>