

Significance of Gurupoornima

The full moon day in the Hindu month of Ashad (July-August) is observed as the auspicious day of Guru Poornima, a day sacred to the memory of the great sage Vyasa. All Hindus are indebted to this ancient saint who edited the four Vedas, wrote the 18 Puranas, the Mahabharata and the Srimad Bhagavata.

This is a very sacred day on which special worship is performed to the Acharyas (Gurus), who, through their Infinite Compassion and Supreme Grace, have imparted the Knowledge of the Absolute (Brahma Vidya) through a long and continuous line of Acharyas (Guru Parampara) to all the Seekers of the Self.

Description of Guru:

The human soul, even though initiated in the spiritual path, cannot love an abstract power; and it is for this reason that the scriptures advise us to venerate those who lead us to God and to love their physical presence as the Divine manifesting itself in human form. The Guru's physical body is just a receptacle of the mighty Divine, and as such worthy of the utmost devotion and reverence.

God as the abstract Creator eludes our imagination, but when a human temple enshrines divinity we begin to understand through this familiar medium the purpose of our own ultimate destiny. Thus, when God assumes a human form, He establishes Himself as the Guru. The Guru as manifested God soon becomes the Light, the inspiration and the great exemplar. The Guru and God are one because the Almighty and His medium of manifestation cannot be different. The Guru embodies not only the Sadguna (characteristics) but also the Nirguna (quality) of the Supreme Being, and so to that extent the Guru is approachable and accessible to man's needs and comprehension.

Relationship between a Guru and a Disciple:

Once a contact between the Guru and the bhakta (disciple) is established, the relationship between master and disciple becomes a thing of beauty. In return for the innumerable demands which a bhakta makes on the Master, it is but natural that the Guru too should impose a few conditions on the bhakta. The Guru expects total surrender, absolute obedience, and, the last and most important, supreme effort.

Saint of Shirdi – Shri Sai Baba – Saguna Brahma – Guru:

The saint of Shirdi recognized and emphasized the beauty of a Guru-guided life. Shri Sai Baba of Shirdi is the Guru incarnate to live on this earth in the late part of last century and early part of this century. Shri Sai Baba gave tremendous importance to the adoption of the Guru in one's spiritual "Sadhana" (pursuit). With an innate compassion Shri Sai Baba often declared - "I am your savior, not only from the weight of sin, but from the weight of care and misery".

"Guru is all the Gods", said the Saint of Shirdi. Moreover, the Baba declared

reassuringly though as the all pervading Guru he would naturally expect complete surrender, obedience and loyalty.

Is Surrender to the Guru the only Sadhana Prayer?:

This question was hotly debated even in the presence of Baba. The answer to this complex question as given by Shri Sai Baba comes straight out of Sri Sai Satcharita.

Kakasaheb Dixit(an ardent Devotee of Shri Sai Baba) has published his notes regarding this matter. Next day after Hemadpant's meeting with Sai Baba, Kakasaheb went to Baba and asked whether he should leave Shirdi. Baba Said, "Yes". Then someone asked – "Baba, where to go?" Baba said, "High up." Then the man said, "How is the way?" Baba said, "There are many ways leading there; there is one way also from here (Shirdi). The way is difficult. There are tigers and wolves in the jungles on the way." I (Kakasaheb) asked – "But Baba, what if we take a guide with us?" Baba answered, – "Then there is no difficulty. The guide will take you straight to your destination, avoiding wolves, tigers and ditches etc. on the way. If there be no