

Guru Purnima Message - 2007

SWAMI BODHANANDA



In a pluralistic, living tradition, like the Hindu Wisdom tradition, the role of Guru is paramount. In such a culture wisdom is not locked in a book, however sublime and quintessential the book might be.

In such traditions wisdom is possessed by living Gurus who have dedicated their lives to the disciplines of study, reflection,

practice and teaching by exemplary behaviour.

Every Guru worth his/her salt must experience the Truth directly and speak from the authority of personal enlightenment. The Sat Guru's words do not spring from memory learned by rote, but from the fresh springs of contemplative experience. The true Guru enjoys the freedom to interpret wisdom according to the needs of the times and circumstances without compromising the core vision. He alone has the clarity and steadiness to take spirituality to the everyday humdrum of practical living - to the workplace, to the family, to community life, to academics, and engage in creative dialogue with opposing belief systems and assumptions of reality.

The Hindus believe that periodically paradigm shifts occur in human understanding and mighty movements led by great incarnations/avatars re-evaluate and reinterpret reality and redefine human aspirations. Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Gandhi, Moses, Jesus, Mohammad, Confucius, Newton, Darwin, Einstein et.al. were such epochal manifestations of the Divine. The Hindus had the unique good fortune of having great Gurus appearing from time to time to clean the Aegean stables of misunderstanding, corruption, confusion, greed and violence in human behaviour and community living. Sage Yagnavalkya, Sage Vashishta, Sage Valmiki, Veda Vyasa, Gaudapadacharya, Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madvacharya, Tulasidasa, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Swami

Vivekananda, and Ramana Maharshi were some of them.

Of all these Hindu Gurus, the name of Sage Badarayana Paraasara Krishna Dvaipayana Veda Vyasa, or simply, Veda Vyasa stands out as a beacon light through millennia of Hindu history. He was the compiler of Vedas, and the author of Mahabharata and Brahma Sutras. He laid the firm foundation of Hinduism by his crystal clear and uncompromising teachings and tireless dedicated work.

Vyasa was a great synthesizer and emphasised on mystic statements like: " Truth is one, but paths are many"; " Thou art That"; " Consciousness is Truth"; "The creation is non-separate from the Creator" etc. In a multicultural global society and when science and technology has become the nursery rhymes of every child and material progress the dominant mantra, Vyasa's insights and wisdom help us integrate the best in all traditions and systems of knowledge and create a unifying vision of ethics, conduct and meaning for human striving. I have no doubt that Sage Vyasa's teachings will have more and more relevance as the world becomes more integrated, complex and multicultural.

On the auspicious day of Guru Purnima/Vyasa Jayanti I wish all of you blessings from all Gurus who appeared and yet keep appearing on the planet to teach and enlighten humanity.

Jai Gurudeva! Jai Sri Vyasa Bhagavan! Jai Sri Sankaracharya!

Love,

Swami Bodhananda
17 July, 2007, San Francisco

Swami Bodhananda is Chairman, Sambodh Foundation, India; The Sambodh Society Inc. USA; and Bodhananda Research Foundation for Management & Leadership Studies. He is the Inspiration and Guiding Force for all Sambodh institutions.