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SAI SANDESH

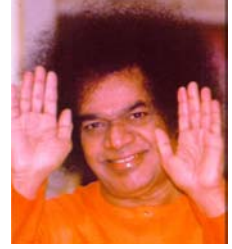
The Monthly Newsletter of Om Sai Mandir

July 2005; Volume 2, Issue 7

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Love All, Serve All

Guru Poornima Special Issue

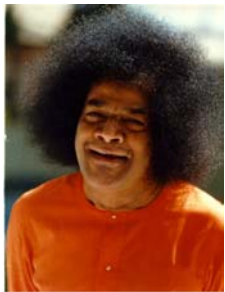


Loka Samastha...Sukhino Bhavantu...

GURU POORNIMA: IN HONOR OF THE GURU



(Image Credit: shirdisaibabasamsthan.org) considered to be the first guru on the path of theism. Sri Veda Vyasa, Lord Krishna incarnate, has given man an enormous gift in the form of the four vedas, eighteen puranas, the Mahabharata, and the Bhagawata. These texts have benefited millions. Vyasa first revealed to man the secret of making the mind as clear and as full of cool rays as the moon on a full moon night; that is the reason this poornima is associated with him and with all gurus.³



within and He will surely lead you to the doors of immortality.

The letter “Gu” signifies one who transcends all attributes. “Ru” signifies one who has no form. Thus “Guru” signifies one who dispels ignorance. Only God can be regarded as one who is beyond attributes and forms. The guru who grants mantras is considered as the “Deeksha Guru”; the one who recasts the personality is the “Siksha Guru”. It is the latter who is reverentially praised in great texts. He removes faults in the vision and destroys the darkness of ignorance. He reveals the Aatma (self/soul) to the individual and makes him free.²

The sacredness of this day. This day is sacred for various reasons. This day, the seeker who suffers from the delusion that the objective world is real is guided into the truth and those who have not felt the urge to explore their own inner reality are inspired to do so. When the sun rises, the world is blessed with heat and light. When the Guru blesses, the pupil gets peace and joy. Guru

Poornima, however, should not be considered as one day alone. It is all the days when the mind of man, whose presiding deity is the moon, is poorna (full), with cool refreshing rays, which it receives from the sun (intelligence). The mind must derive illumination from the intellect, the discriminative faculty, and not from the senses, which are the deluding forces.

Poornima (full moon day) celebrates the fulfillment that is the goal of all life. This day is dedicated for thanksgiving to the guru, for moon (the presiding deity of the mind) on this day is full, clear, cool, and bright. He has no blemish or dullness which diminishes His glow. The guru too is pictured and praised today as unblemished, bright, and affectionate. He is full of devotion and the sense of surrender to God.²

On this day, sadhakas undertake the study of scriptures and practice all they have assimilated. Guru Poornima also marks the beginning of chaturmasa (rainy season) that heralds the advent of fresh life through showers of rain. This also indicates that one needs to perform serious sadhana to generate fresh waves of spirituality.

God is also considered to be “truth”. There is an ancient legend about truth. Once the Gods approached *Ishvara* (Shiva) and pleaded with Him to keep the knowledge of truth away from men and demons, for it would make them irresistible. So, it was hidden in the unreachable heights of the *Aakaasha* (sky). The demons lost interest in this kind of knowledge but men suffered agony in its absence. So, *Ishvara* hid it in the ocean and finally, when human yearning became overwhelming, *Ishvara* planted it in the heart of every human being. Even there it was not easily available for man. He had to penetrate through the evils of the five elements that comprise the gross body, the sheaths of the subtle body and the causal body, to have a vision of the indwelling *Aatma*.²

On this day we need to decide to become masters of senses and intellect, emotions and passions, thoughts and feelings, by saadhana. Once Sister Niveditha asked for advice from Vivekaanandha to gain one-pointedness during meditation. Vivekaanandha said, “Do not allow Margaret Noble (herself) to come between you and God.” “*Niveditha*” means “offering.” So Vivekaananda explained, “offer yourself fully to God.”

1. Guru Poornima Discourse, Prashanti Nilayam, 1970
2. Guru Poornima Discourse, Prashanti Nilayam, 1980
3. Guru Poornima Discourse, Mysore, 1961

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

“Love is a ceaseless flow of divine effulgence. Sages call this love, atma. This atma, which is full of love, is shining in all hearts. Love, atma and heart are synonyms for God. For such pure love, there cannot be any differences based on mine and thine. This love is selfless. Where there is confidence, there is Love. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is truth. Where there is truth, there is bliss. Where there is bliss, there is God.”
- Baba

UPCOMING EVENTS

July

Monday, July 04: America's Independence Day

Thursday, July 21: Guru Poornima/Vyasa Poornima

August

Friday, August 19: Raksha Bandhan

Monday, August 15: India's Independence Day

Saturday, August 27: Sri Krishna Janmashtami

OM SAI MANDIR'S DAILY ACTIVITIES

DAILY ARATIS:

Kakad Arati	8.00 A.M.
Madhyana Arati	12.00 P.M.
Dhoop Arati	6.00 P.M.
Sheja Arati	8.00 P.M.

SPECIAL BHAJANS:

Every Thursday	7.00 P.M. – 8.30 P.M.
Every Sunday	2.00 P.M. – 3.00 P.M.

SAI NAAM JAP (CHANTING BABA'S HOLY NAME):

Last Saturday of Every Month 8.30 A.M. – 8.30 P.M.

STOTRAS (CHANTING SAHASRANAM, BABA'S 108 NAMES, ETC.): Daily 12.30 P.M. and 6.30 P.M.

ANNADAN [FOOD SERVICE]: Daily at the Temple
ANNADAN [FOOD SERVICE] FOR HOMELESS

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Every Saturday at 1 p.m 29th and 1st Ave. For more information, call the temple at: (718) 461-0454.

PUJA SPONSORSHIP

Archana.....	\$11
Abishekam.....	\$51
Satyanarayana Vrata.....	\$81
Vahana Puja.....	\$15
Annadan.....	\$251

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Once there, submit your email address. It takes less than a minute to sign-up.

DEVOTEES ARE REQUESTED TO CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES, EXPERIENCES, STORIES, ETC. FOR PUBLICATION IN THE FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF SAI SANDESH

WHY MAN IS CONSIDERED THE ACME OF CREATION

One day a clever fox began wondering, "Why man is considered the acme of creation and in what way is he superior to animals? Both man and beast have emotions and passions. Both have their own good and bad qualities. Why then this superiority? Let me go to the king lion and seek his advice." Thinking thus, the fox hurried to the lion's den. "How nice to see you after so many days! Come tell me what is it that you want?" said the lion. The fox said in all humility, "Oh, king! Man is growing all-powerful and is claiming sovereignty over the entire creation! I cannot tolerate man's arrogance and his claim of superiority over all animals. In what way are we inferior? Can we not establish our superiority? We must do something about it." The lion nodded its head and said, "True dear, what shall we do?" The lion and the fox discussed the problem for a long time and decided finally to call for a conference of all animals in the forest. They would discuss thoroughly the relative merits and demerits of man versus animals. The lion then said to the fox, "Go and make all arrangements for the conference. Invite all animals, big and small without any exception. But, who will preside over the conference?" The fox replied, "There is a sage in our forest who has been doing penance since a long time. He is a friend of both man and animals. He will certainly have no preference or prejudices. Why not request him to be the chairman?" "Do so," replied the lion.

In a week's time the fox executed the whole plan. A vast area in the forest was cleared to hold the conference. On the appointed day the animals began filling up towards the conference venue. Very soon, all the animals were seated in their respective places. The sage arrived in time and took his presidential seat. The lion and the elephant stood on either side of the sage, while the fox stood in front of the gathering.

The fox being the secretary of the conference welcomed the gathering and said, "I welcome you all and thank you for attending this conference." Referring to the agenda of the conference, the fox said, "I am pleased to place before you four major points over which we have to deliberate. You have to think well and come forth with your opinions as these points have a vital bearing on our self-respect.

Man as well as animals are born alike, of the womb of the mother. Then why should animals be called 'janthu' and man as 'manava'? They should be addressed alike.

There is a fantastic notion that man is wise and animals are foolish. We cannot accept this humiliation and baseless stigma. It is claimed that man has the most blessed faculty of speech. But what is the reason for pride when man is only abusing this faculty? In what way do we suffer for want of this faculty? Though we are dumb, we are able to procure food, find shelter, raise our children and live happily. So, man cannot be considered superior to us only because of this rare faculty.

Finally, they say that we are cruel and that man is kind and compassionate. In fact, we are more kind and considerate than man. So, we have to refute this allegation, as well. Having read out the agenda, the fox went and sat in its place. The lion stepped forward and raising his head, said in a dignified manner: "I totally approve of all the points of the agenda. I cannot consider man superior to us in any way. Let us first of all take up the point of valor and strength. Is there one among men who can excel me in strength and valor? Even though I am the sole monarch of the forest, I do not indulge in any act of injustice and corruption. I don't kill any animal unless I am hungry. Such being the case, can man claim to be superior to us?" "Never, never," roared the whole assembly.

The lion then resumed its seat beside the sage. The elephant got up and trumpeted its own glory. "In form, stature, and strength, I am far superior to man. He is a pigmy beside me. As for intelligence, I am reputed for my subtle intellect. Since time immemorial, for every important and auspicious function in the temple or in the palace my presence is considered auspicious. In fact pious men offer me fruits and flowers with deep feelings of reverence. How can man call himself superior to us?" The whole assembly roared, "He can't, he can't." The elephant went back to its seat by the side of the sage.

Then came forward the dog and saluting one and all in the assembly said aloud, "I have sound reason to claim that the animals are certainly superior to mankind. Take for example, the quality of love, faithfulness and loyalty. Can any man boast of himself being superior to the dog in these qualities? Man himself keeps us and treats us as a member of his family because of these rare qualities. But, what about men? They have no sense of gratitude even. They keep us on cheap food or on the left over bits at their meal. Man, in his relation to his own master whom he serves is ungrateful to the core. Sir, I am sure, we animals are far superior in these characteristics to man." Having spoken thus, it went and sat in its place.

It was now the turn of the president to give out his decision on the matter under dispute. The sage got up and said, "My dear friends, what the dog has said is true. Man often says one thing and does another. This inconsistency is not to be found in animals." All the animals clapped for long with joy. The sage continued, "In the matter of food, sleep and allied habits of living, there is absolutely no difference between man and animals. But, there is one fundamental difference. The animals cannot transform themselves, while man can transform himself through education, company and emulation.

The animals cannot even change their food habits." The fox at once got up and questioned, "Oh Master! What you have said is true. But do you think that all men transform themselves?" The sage said, "Why, without doubt, such men who do not, are worse than animals." At once all the animals clapped and cheered the president. The sage continued, "Men have got another virtue, discrimination."

The fox said, "It is true that they have discrimination, but what is the use? They put even animals to shame in their bad conduct. Oh, what a pity! Man spends all his time, talents, strength and money to earn his bread, while we animals procure food without any labor." The sage could see that the fox was trying to exceed the limits and make much of their instinctive nature. So, he said, "Oh, dear animals! You must also be told about another important distinction. Man can conquer illusion. He can realize the self or atma and attain immortality. In fact the very word "man" indicates these attributes:

M - means Maya;

A - means the Atmic vision and

N - means Nirvana.

By getting rid of illusion and attaining Atmic vision, man can become God. Why don't you own and admit your limitations?" The animals asked him, "Oh Wise one! Do you mean to say that all men make use of these three attributes?" "No, not all of them," replied the sage. "Then those who do not attain nirvana by conquering illusion and having atmic vision must be treated as our comrades," asserted the animals, in one voice. "Oh, Dear ones!" replied the sage, "I have come to this forest only to be your friend and prove myself a true Man."

- Adapted from *Oka Chinna Katha* by N. Kasturi

DEVOTEES' EXPERIENCES

Mr. Ajay Singh, Mukundapur, Baroli Post, Gonda District, U.P.

Mr. Ajay Singh (22), a businessman, relates a few of his experiences of the Divinity of Bhagavan in his own words.

"My father, Mr. Dhuvraj Singh has been a devotee of Bhagavan for several years. Therefore, we have all been brought up in Sai environment. We all came to Prasanthi Nilayam in 1992. That was my first visit to Prasanthi Nilayam. We had Darshan. I could fortunately get padanamaskar also.

In 2002, we were all engaged in wood work. My father was cutting timber. Just at that time a log positioned on the side suddenly fell on him. It was of seven to eight quintals weight. We were all there, but could not do anything while he lay unconscious under that heavy log. One of our workers, Mr. Mataprasad went forward, lifted up the log alone and placed it to a side relieving my father from the heavy weight on him. We all assumed that he would have been crushed into pulp by the impact of the log but he escaped miraculously with a scratch on his lips and tooth gums, and a fracture to his collarbone.

After my father regained consciousness and was able to speak, he asked us, 'who lifted up that log that had fallen on me?' We said, 'Mataprasad.' 'You are mistaken,' my father told us, 'how can that lean and weak fellow lift such a heavy log all by himself?'

Till that time, we had not applied our mind to that aspect. It is true that Mataprasad could not lift even half a quintal weight without help. How did he do it on that day? 'But we all saw him lift it up and put it to a side,' we chorused.

'What I saw is different,' my father told us, 'one old person resembling Shirdi Sai came and lifted it. Soon he disappeared and Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba appeared in his place with a serene look. He stood by my side and said, 'don't worry. You will be all right.'

We were all amazed. That explained how Mataprasad could lift the log up all alone.

My elder brother, Mr. Sanjay Singh was taking coaching for IIT entrance exam in Lucknow. He appeared for the entrance once and did not get through. He tried a second time also in vain. He continued his efforts to write the exam for the third time. He had a habit of eating eggs. One day, he ate eggs for dinner and came to his room. While he was asleep, he had a dream. Bhagavan Baba appeared in his dream.

'I am annoyed at you,' Swami told my brother in the dream, 'why are you eating eggs? Give up.'

My brother began to cry in the dream and told Bhagavan, 'I won't eat, Baba! I am failing in IIT entrance, pray help me.'

'Give up eating all non-vegetarian food, including eggs,' Swami told my brother, 'give it up all your life. I am with you. You will succeed in your attempt this time.'

My brother gave up eating eggs. He passed the entrance and secured a seat in NIT, Trichnapalli, Tamilnadu. By Swami's grace, he is studying engineering there.

In 2003, my mother, Mrs. Pushpa Singh had a dream. At that time our family was facing financial cringe. We did not know what to do. One night my mother was crying silently as she lay on her bed praying to Bhagavan about our problems. As she dozed off into sleep, Bhagavan appeared in her dream and said, 'why do you weep? All your problems would be solved soon. You will have no cause to worry. I am with you.'

Within 10-15 days after that day, our problems began to get solved. Within a few weeks, our business was back on track. There was marked improvement in our finances and we felt a change for the better on all fronts. Since that day there has been no looking back for us, owing to Bhagavan's grace.

-- Mr. Ajay Singh

(As narrated to Mr. B. Parvatala Rao at Prasanthi Nilayam on 06.06.2005)

Source:

<http://www.vedamu.org/forum/ExperienceoftheDivinityofBhagavan/MrAjaySingh.asp>

TEMPLE JOURNAL

HANUMAN JAYANTI, JUNE 01, 2005



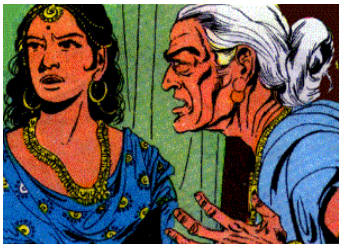
CHILDREN'S CORNER

Sai Ram,

Story on Lord Rama continued...

Lord Rama and Sita lived happily in Ayodhya for 12 years. King Dasharatha was growing old and was thinking about crowning Lord Rama as the king of Ayodhya. All the ministers and learned men in the kingdom agreed with King Dasharatha. So the king announced his decision and started making preparations for the crowning ceremony.

All the three queens of King Dasharatha were also excited with the news. However,



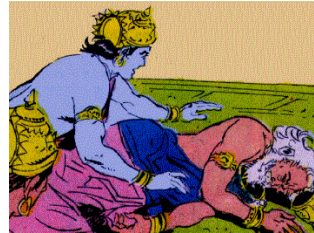
Manthara who was Kaikeyi's maid was unhappy with the news. She wanted Bharatha, Lord Rama's brother, to be crowned as the king of Ayodhya. So she approached Kaikeyi, Bharatha's mother, about her concern.

She reminded Kaikeyi that the king had always loved her the most and if Lord Rama were to become the king then his mother, Kausalya, would get all the powers. Manthara was able to convince Kaikeyi about forcing the king to crown Bharatha as the king. Manthara reminded Kaikeyi that a long time ago King Dasharatha had promised her that he would fulfill two of her wishes at any cost. She told Kaikeyi to ask the king to crown Bharatha as the king of Ayodhya and to send Lord Rama to the forest for 14 years.

That evening when King Dasharatha came to Kaikeyi's room, she was lying down with her hair open and looked angry. When the king inquired about her unhappiness, she reminded him of

the two wishes that he had promised to fulfill. She told him that she wants her son to be crowned the king and Lord Rama sent to the forest for 14 years. The king was shocked and he fell down unconscious. He pleaded her to ask for anything else. But Kaikeyi did not change her mind.

The next day when everyone was ready for the celebration, King Dasharatha was still in Kaikeyi's room, sobbing and calling out Lord



Rama's name. Kaikeyi asked one of the ministers to call Lord Rama. Lord Rama was shocked to see his father in that state. Kaikeyi told

him about the two wishes.

Lord Rama replied with a smile, "Mother, is that all?" "Your wishes shall be granted; I am leaving for the forest right now and let us crown Bharatha, as the king of Ayodhya." With this Lord Rama bowed in front of his father and mother Kaikeyi and left the room. News spread all over the kingdom and everyone was surprised and upset that King Dasharatha agreed to Kaikeyi's wishes.

Courtesy:

<http://www.indolink.com/Kidz/Stories/ramayana1.html>

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