



God is the Only Guru

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*Eashwaramba Sutam Devam Kama Krodha
Adimardhanam,
Anandam Sarvabhaktaanaam Saieem Vande
Jagadgurum*

With love and gratitude, I offer my prayerful pranams at the divine lotus feet of our dearest, loving, and omnipresent lord, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, who is a Jagadguru, the universal teacher, and who is the son of the chosen mother- Easwaramma, and who came to destroy all the negative tendencies in our hearts like *Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Adimardhanam*. That means, He came to destroy the negative qualities of selfish desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride, and jealousy and He came to bestow on us, supreme bliss. That is why His first message was “*Akhila manavuluku anandamonagurchute deeksha naku*”, “I’m going to give bliss to all humanity”. So, we are blessed and fortunate. Dear brothers and sisters, I wish all of you a happy and holy Gurupoornima, filled with love, peace, and bliss. Loving Sairam to all of you.

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This is a special day when we offer our homage to our Guru because Swami is our Jagadguru, our universal teacher, because His message and His teachings are eternal and universal, applicable in all places, all times, irrespective of race, religion, and creed. He is Sadguru, He is the true teacher, because His very name is Sathya, that means He came to teach the Truth.

That is why, “*Sathyame na pracharam*”, He said, “Truth is what I teach”. He is also *Paramaguru*, He is the divine teacher. He is not like any other teacher, but He is the divine come as a teacher. And He is *Gurunaam* Guru, teacher of teachers, because there is no teacher for Him, nobody above Him. He is the highest because He is the supreme *Parabrahman* Himself. This day is the Poornima day, the full moon day, which comes in the month of *Ashadi*, once a year, when the moon gives beautiful coolness and light as full moon, since it is celebrated once a year in the month of *Ashadi*. This is also called Vyasa Poornima, as Swami was saying in the discourse, to pay respects to Sage Veda Vyasa, who gave so much to humanity by codifying the four Vedas: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Atharva Veda. And also, he wrote the 18 Puranas, and he wrote the fifth Veda, *Panchama Veda*, called Mahabharata.

Essence of All Scriptures – Help Ever, Hurt Never

Sage Vyasa gave so much information and literature and uplifting material to all humanity. But, in one place he summarises, “*Ashtadasapuranesu Vyasaya Vachana Dwayam, Paropakaraya Punyam, Papaya Parapeedanam*”. Swami often used to quote this in His discourses. What does it mean? I will summarise the meaning of all the 18 puranas, and what is that? *Paropakaraya Punyam*, helping other people is good merit. *Papaya Parapeedanam*,

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hurting other people is sinful. That is why Swami beautifully summarised as His commandment, 'Help Ever, Hurt Never'. This is the day that spiritual seekers all over the world pay homage to their guru because he shows them the way to God. They worship their guru, offer them gifts, as Swami says, *dakshina*. But, we are fortunate; we have guru and God as one. As Swami Himself has said, only God is the true guru. And we are blessed and fortunate to be the contemporaries of the Avatar, having received His *darshan*, *sparshan*, and *sambhavan*. So, He is our Guru and God.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba – Embodiment of Shiva and Shakti

I want to share with you a brief incident, where Swami Himself for the first time, revealed His identity as Shiva and Shakti. This happened on 6th of July 1963 during Guru Poornima. Swami, at that time, had paralysis of His left side of the body, His left arm, left leg, and left eye. It happened for almost 8 days from June 29th to July 6th. So, they were wondering what happened to Him, and then on the day of Guru Poornima, Swami wanted to come and give darshan to the devotees and bless them. When He came to give the discourse, Swami could not even say a word. He said, "*Vinipisthundhaa*" that means, "Are you able to hear me?", and people could not. Then Swami told his attendant to bring some water, and He took the water and sprinkled it on His left side of the body and rubbed His left side. Lo and behold, He became usual, and started giving His wonderful discourse in His melodious voice. Then, He revealed certain truths, we can go and verify in the discourse, but I will just give the main highlights.

Swami said His body will never get any illness. He had to take the illness of a devotee who was critically ill, and had a series of heart attacks, and so Swami had to take a stroke. Because He said one of His missions is not only *Dharma Sthapana*, to establish dharma, but also *Bhakta Samrakshana*, to save devotees. Then He revealed another truth. He said He had to do this to fulfil the boons He had given to Sage Bharadwaja in the Treta Yuga. That is why we say He is

from the Apastamba Sutra, Bharadwaja Gotra. He belongs to the lineage of Bharadwaja. But that is for the body. One time Swami corrected people, saying He has no beginning, no end, no restrictions, but for that particular Sathya Sai form, He is of the Apastamba Sutra, and Bharadwaja Gotra. He gave an assurance to Sage Bharadwaja that for the great yajna he did, as a fulfilment for the boon, He said "I'll be born in your Gotra three times". He and Mother Shakti, because Shiva and Shakti were dancing together, ignored Sage Bharadwaja for eight days. So, He said, "to compensate for that, I'll be born in your lineage three times". Once as Shiva alone as Shirdi Sai Baba, and as Shiva and Shakti in Puttaparthi as Sathya Sai, and as Shakti alone as Prema Sai. Also, to fulfil the assurance He had given, because Bharadwaja had to wait for eight days and the left side represents Mother Shakti, He had to have the paralysis for eight days and He cured Himself by sprinkling water.

Swami is not only all names and forms, here He revealed He is Shiva-Shakti, and He is here to help us, all the devotees, wherever we are. This is the assurance He has given. On this day, the spiritual seekers, what do they do? As Swami said, they give *dakshina*, they give some gifts to their guru, they worship them, and they also do pradakshina after giving *dakshina*, they go around the guru and do circumambulation. Swami said the best *dakshina*, the best gift we can give to Him, is pure love, our heart filled with pure love. And in the discourse we heard just now, He also said, once we recognise we are that same divinity, then that is also a *dakshina*, that is the gift offered to Swami. Second, the circumambulation, the *pradakshina*, Swami says, is knowing the omnipresence of God, to realise that God is everywhere, in everything, at all times. Once we realise that, it is *pradakshina*. This is how Swami gave the inner significance of *dakshina* and *pradakshina*.

His First Message to Humanity

As all of us know by now, the theme of this Guru Poornima celebration is *Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam*, because this is the first message Baba gave to the whole humanity on 20th

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October 1940. I think we know that Swami gave this message in Uravakonda. He went to the devotee, Anjanayelu's house, sat on a rock in the garden, and sang this beautiful bhajan. We should really know its significance. He says, "Worship My feet in your heart to cross this samsara, which is the cycle of birth and death". So, once we worship Him in the heart with much devotion and sincerity, we will cross this cycle of birth and death.

Once this happened to me, about 30 years ago. Swami in His kindness used to always give *padanamaskar*, soon after we go from the USA. Swami always likes to test us, and test is His taste. For almost three weeks, He did not look at us and did not give *padanamaskar*. Finally, we were lucky. He called us in and then He gave *padanamaskar*. Then I asked a question, "Swami, worshipping you and having *padanamaskar* in the heart, is it as powerful as touching you physically?" Swami said, "Definitely, yes". So, if we worship His feet in our heart, it will have equivalent benefit. But, there is another incidence that shows how Swami gives importance to this inner Sai.

In 1996, Swami wanted me to speak on the occasion of *Krishnashtami* – Sri Krishna's birthday. I went to take Swami's *padanamaskar*, and I prayed to him, "Swami, please speak through me". Swami said "No". I was perplexed. Then He said, "I do not want to come in the way of the inner Sai". So, Swami Himself, being next to me, is giving importance to the inner Sai, because this inner Sai comes with us at all times and in all places. That is the importance of inner Sai. But when we want to establish the feet of the guru in our heart, we should have purity of the heart.

Swami gave a nice example. A landlord has thousands of acres of land, but when he goes to visit it, where does he sit? He wants to go and sit in a place that is clean and good. Similarly, God will sit in a place which is clean and pure. So, it is imperative, very important for us, to get rid of all our negative qualities, and make our hearts pure, so that He can establish Himself. Also, when we talk about worshipping the feet,

Swami said it is not just worshipping with flowers, and praising His glory, and doing *stotras*. That is good, but more important is following His footsteps, following His message, following His teachings.

Goal of Human Life

We should be followers of His teachings, that is important. What is His teaching? Very simply, in all the discourses, what does He say? *Divya Atmaswaroopulara*, *Divya Premaswaroopulara*, embodiments of divine Atma, embodiments of divine love. So, He wants us to realise that is what we are. How do we do that? Swami gave a beautiful clue. In the previous Avatar of Shirdi Baba, and as a guru, He used to ask *dakshina*, two coins. What are those two coins? One is *nishta* another is *saburi*. One is faith, conviction, and the other is patience and forbearance. In this Avatar, He beautifully said two things, faith and love and gave an example. If we want to write a letter to somebody, we need a stamp and we need an address. Stamp is comparable to faith; address is comparable to love. So, we should have both faith and love. I will dwell on these two things which lead us to the goal.

Faith

Number one is faith. Swami said faith should be our life-breath. A man without faith, Swami said, is equivalent to a dead corpse. So, He emphasised faith. The whole journey, spiritual journey, Swami said, is, as said in Gita by Lord Krishna. One shore of the river is *sanshayatma vinyasyati*, man with doubts will perish. And if we cross and go to the other shore, the other bank of the river, *sraddhavan labathe jnanam*, man with complete faith will be enlightened. So, our journey is from doubt to absolute faith. The minute we have complete, absolute faith, we are enlightened. What is this faith? In what should we have faith? Faith should be in our Guru and God and we have Guru and God both in Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. We should have absolute, unshakable, unwavering faith at all times. Yes, He will test us. But, if we pass the test, we will get rest. Swami says test is His taste.

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Faith in the Guru

Swami told a nice story to illustrate this. Once a man was going in a jungle, a forest, and suddenly he heard the roar of a lion. So he was scared and went up a banyan tree. He got up, crept up in the tree. As he went up, he saw a big bear, on top of the tree. At the bottom is the lion, and at the top is the bear. He was scared, and then he saw a big branch from the banyan tree, coming down with two huge roots. He slid down that branch, holding on to the roots. Meanwhile, on the upper branch of the tree, there was a nice honeycomb with drips of honey coming down. This man wanted to have the honey drops, while holding on to the roots. At the base of the roots, there were two rats - one black and one white, gnawing at the base of the roots. So, he thought he was gone, his life was gone. In despair he cried out to his guru, "Please come and save me". Meanwhile the guru came - the guru always comes running. He came with his bow and arrows and hit the lion and the bear and killed them. Then he frightened off the rats and saved the disciple.

Swami said this is the life story for all of us. We are all going in the jungle of the world. What happens? This lion comes. What does the lion represent? Fear. We all have different kinds of fear, everybody. Fear of losing health, fear of losing wealth, fear of losing youth, fear of losing beauty, fear of losing power, fear of losing name and fame. Ultimately, fear of death. So, these are all the various fears we are fraught with. So this lion, our fear, is attacking us. To escape from it, we go into this tree. What does the tree represent? *Samsara*. At the top, Swami says, the bear represents anxiety. We get many kinds of anxiety because of various challenges, like the world right now is going through. Meanwhile to escape that, we come across this root, and branches, which represents our attachments, our hope, and despair.

The black rat and white rat represents day and night - black for night, and white for day. So they are cutting our life, every day. Each day we are marching towards our grave. We should all remember that. Swami says, remember death, so that we can intensify our sadhana. We just

want to have that little drops of honey. What is that honey? Swami said that is our *ahamkara* and *mamakara*, ego and attachment. For that little pleasure we get bombarded with this fear, anxiety, attachment, hope, and despair. Then we go and hold on to the guru who will save our life.

Faith in the Scriptures

Here, Swami was talking about another thing. Whatever spiritual practices we do, they always benefit us. We should have such faith in our spiritual practices. There is a nice story about this. There was a great sage called Swami Amritananda, who was the follower of Bhagawan Ramana Maharshi for seventeen years. He came to Prasanthi Nilayam, and Swami right away called him "Amritam". Only his guru called him "Amritam". He was very touched, because of the endearing term which his guru used to call him. Then He called Amritananda for interview. At that time Amritananda was eighty-five years old, and Swami was only in his thirties. Swami told him, "You did a *homa* when you were seven years old, right?", and he said, "Yes, Swami". Swami was not even born by then, and it was a few decades before Swami's birth. It shows Swami is eternal, He knows about the past, present, and future.

Then Amritananda said, "Yes, Swami, I did a big *homam* called Ganapati *homam*. I was only seven years old, I did it for forty-one days. Every day, a thousand times I chanted this mantra, and offered a thousand coconuts. And I did this sacrificial fire, *homa*". Then Swami said, "What is supposed to happen at the end?" He replied, "A golden Ganesha is supposed to appear in the *homa kunda*". Swami asked, "Did it appear?" He said "No, Swami, I was only seven years". Swami said, "Whatever spiritual practices you do, it will never go to waste. It is always recorded in the cosmic records". He said, "Because of those good deeds you did, you came to Me, to see the Avatar". Then Swami said, "Look at Me". Then suddenly, lo and behold, he sees the golden Ganesha in Swami. He was in so much bliss, for four days he was in bliss, he forgot his food, drink, and sleep. This

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shows why we should have faith in our spiritual practices and faith in the scriptures.

And thirdly, faith in oneself -- *Atmaviswas*, Self-confidence, is another thing we should have. This is about faith.

Love

Second is love. I will briefly touch on it because of time constraint. Swami said, 'God is Love, Love is God, Live in Love'. He also said, 'Start the day with love, Fill the day with love, End the day with love --- This is the way to God'. We also had a conference -- 'Love is the source, Love is the path, Love is the goal'. But here, just three points I want to touch upon. When we love God, number one, we should have **intensity**. That is very important, Swami said. The intensity, the longing for God is important, and it should be the combined intensity of the mother for the only child, and the lover for the beloved, and the miser for wealth -- it should be like the combined, intense longing. If somebody drowning is gasping for the last breath, that kind of longing for God we should have, with such intensity. Swami assured us - even if we have it for eleven seconds, Swami said, "You will have My darshan and I will be there wherever you are".

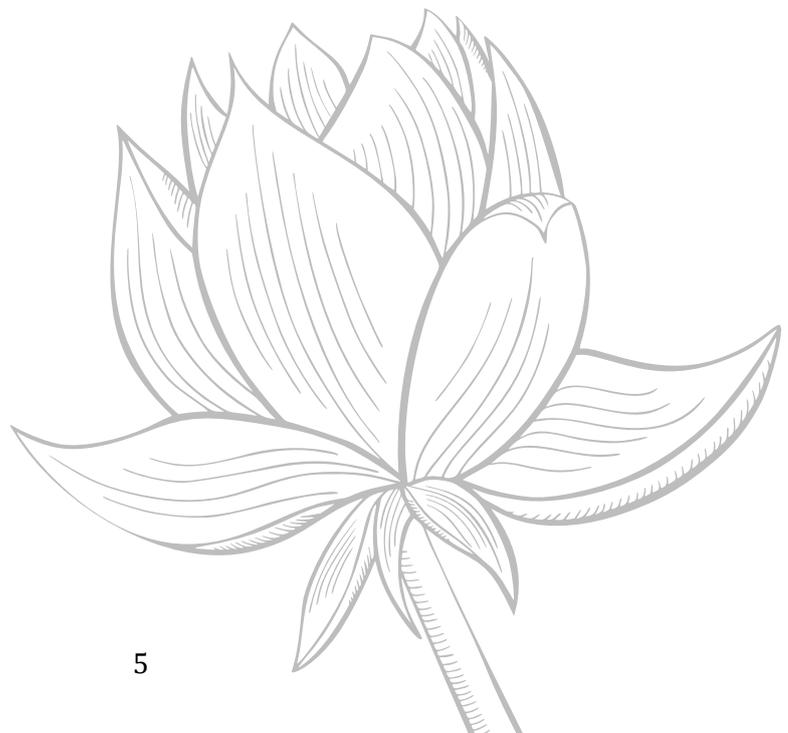
Second thing is we need to give **priority** to God in our life. Number one is God, number two is

others, and our little self is the last. And the third thing is, **love should be for love's sake**. No bargaining, no bartering with God - "If you do this, then I will do this". We should love Him because He is love itself. As Swami says, how can you see the moon? Through moonlight. Similarly, God who is love, we can experience Him only through love. When we want to harvest this love, there are two things - one is, whenever we have harvest, we have weeds. We need to remove the weeds so that the crop grows well. The weeds are finding faults in others. Second thing is all the negative tendencies we have -- selfish desire, anger, greed, jealousy, attachment, and pride. All these negative qualities should go away, and then the harvest will grow. What is the fertilizer to have this love grow -- two things are needed. One is satsang, like what we are having right now, holy company, and second is *namasmarana*, repetition of the name of the Lord. When we have these, we will reach the goal.

I pray to Swami to bless all of us with absolute, unflinching, unwavering faith in Him, and have pure, divine love. Let us move forward till we reach the goal of self-realisation. *Uttishthata Jagrata Prapya Varan Nibodhata* - arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.

Jai Sai Ram.

Thank you very much.



Concluding Remarks

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Loving Sairam again. First, I want to express gratitude to Bhagawan for His blessings, guidance, and presence for this beautiful programme. I want to thank everyone of you who have been participating in this sacred programme on this auspicious day of holy Guru Poornima. I also want to appreciate very much, the dedication and hard work of the Chairs and members of the IT Committee, Media Committee and Events Committee. I want to appreciate the valuable contribution and participation of the SSIO members, SSIO officers, the young children, and the young adults to make this programme successful.

I would like to touch on the take home messages – what Swami has said about Guru Poornima: One should always remember that God is the only guru and Guru is *gunatheetha*, beyond all attributes and *rooparahita*, beyond all forms. Guru is the one who removes the darkness of ignorance. ‘Gu’ for ignorance and ‘Ru’ for removal. So, he removes the ignorance, gives us knowledge and that guru is within each one of us. The Second important take home point Swami said is, “Follow me and I will give you bliss. And for this bliss please do not search outside, because it is in each one of us.” The third important point is that we are all

Sat-Chit-Ananda Swarupa, embodiments of knowledge, existence, and bliss. As He said this is *Sathyam Jnanam and Anantham Brahma*. But to experience that we should get rid of Maya, the illusion that makes us think that we are the name and form. Let us dive deep into this, contemplate on these messages of Swami, ruminate, and live life accordingly.

I want to conclude by sharing with you three precious jewels that I received in the past from Swami on the occasion of Guru Purnima.

Three Jewels

Om Sri Sai Namamrutam Saranam Gachami

Let me take refuge in the sweet nectarine name of Sai.

Om Sri Sai Bodhamrutam Saranam Gachami

Let me take refuge in the nectarine teachings of Lord Sai.

Om Sri Sai Premamrutam Saranam Gachami

Let me take refuge in the nectarine Love of Sai.

I pray to Swami to bless all of us so that we can progress in our spiritual path.

Jai Sai Ram.

