



MESSAGE GURUPURNIMA 2003

WHY A GURU?

Hindu scriptures have extensively extolled the virtues and role of the Sadgurus and Gurus. In Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism also, the role of the Gurus in evolving the devotees, in ushering in a better social order and their spiritual and miraculous powers has been accepted. In Christianity and many other religions in the world the divine role of these magnificent personalities, variedly known as Apostles, Perfect Masters, Masters, Qutubs, etc. has been accepted.

Ever since the human civilization developed its consciousness, there always have been some who opened the treasures of knowledge in different fields of knowledge including the spiritual field. The methods of imparting such knowledge have not always been in a formalized manner. That is why the parents, who teach the infant to grow are held as the first Gurus of the child and are held in the highest esteem in Hinduism. The parents have been eulogized in the Hindu literature and scriptures. Thus, in the formal systems of education starting from the stage of Baby sitting in a nursery to the stage of super-specialization in any field, imparting knowledge has been made the responsibility of the teachers, Professors, etc.

The Hindu society, in earlier times also had a formalized educational system under the Gurus. We had Gurukula Ashramas. However, the modern education system does not prescribe for such Gurus. The difference is that whereas in the earlier Hindu system of education a lot of religious sanctity was attached to these Gurus, in today's society, the religious sanctity is not there. The Gurus of the past have been depicted as highly honorable personalities of a lofty nature. Besides opening the different vistas of knowledge, the teacher or the Guru is supposed to be a role model for the pupils. Even today, good teachers are highly appreciated by the students and the society. Thus the "Guru" has been a universally accepted and respected concept of the society from whom the society drew wisdom.

In a way one can say that a society will be what its teachers are. History lends evidence that the best societies of the world had the best teachers and the worst societies had the worst teachers or Gurus. However, except the spiritual Guru, the job of the other Gurus end with the imparting of knowledge in certain fields. The role of the spiritual Guru or Sadgurus is

much more expansive and is much above the ordinary Gurus. A Sadguru or Guru is a unique phenomenon of nature. The Kulgurus, Siksha Gurus, the Mantragurus, etc. impart knowledge within their limits. The Sadguru, on the other hand using his spiritual powers can evolve the human souls by leading them through a path of piety, discipline and conduct.

Not only this but by awakening the inner spiritual potentialities of the pupils or devotees through a method called 'Shaktipaat' they prepare the devotees to become the instruments of God to serve others. Whereas in the formal system of education, the teachers are paid for the duties they perform, in the spiritual field these highly evolved beings do not want any material returns. The only thing they seek is evolution of the souls of the devotees so that they became the agents to carry out God's will. When they take care of any devotee, they give them training through a series of direct experiences. Therefore, formal education when compared with the knowledge imparted by the Gurus is very limited. It is basically meant for giving knowledge, skill and an attitude (an exercise in the personality building of the students). Such teachings are basically meant to carry out a livelihood or to enhance their intellectual creativity in a certain field.

The Sadgurus however, give direct knowledge through a chain of experiences leading to the purification of the souls. These Masters are themselves evolved souls having gone through a process of evolution through a series of births and deaths and therefore, are competent enough to lead the devotees in the path of God realisation. Some people have a wrong concept that these Gurus, who sometimes do not adorn the garb of a modern man, are unintelligent and emotional propagators of an imaginary concept of God. What they fail to understand is that an evolved species of the human race will not be governed by the rules of a society which they had left far behind in time. Further, their consciousness is highly evolved to comprehend any issue on which their consciousness is focused. Their powers of concentration and performance are the highest and their brain capacity is immense. Every human being not only wants to learn the biggest things of life but also the smallest ones. To get the best results from such teachings some factors are essentially required. They are: the time spent both by the teacher and the pupil together, the eagerness of both the student and the teacher to learn and teach respectively, the emotional relationship between the teacher and the pupil and most important of all, the capacity of the pupil to receive the teachings.

When one wants to specialize in only one out of the thousands streams of knowledge, one spends a considerable number of years in different academic institutions. From this one can imagine how much of time it would take to learn and practice spiritualism and what quality of relationship is required between the Guru and the disciple. It is because of this reason that, in the early Hindu society, the pupils (Sishyas) and the Gurus used to live together for a number of years tied in an emotional bond. The outer forms of societies may go on changing but the inner spiritual essence of the human beings always remains the same. The real Spiritual Masters of today are playing the same role but in different forms, adapting to the existing societal ethos. All the creations of God are changeable but the essence of divinity never changes. Therefore, the vital and divine role of these Sadgurus, the agents of knowledge and compassion will never change. Human society will always need them.