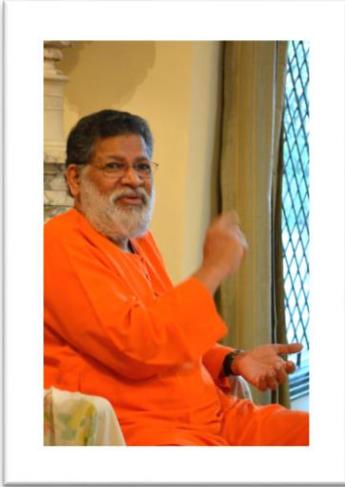


Guru Purnima Message - 2002

SWAMI BODHANANDA

(On the occasion of Vyasa Purnima on 24th July, 2002)



Guru Purnima falls on 24th July. This was the day

Bhagavan Krishna Dvaipayana Paaraasara Veda Vyasa was born.

He was born to Matsyagandhi Satyavati, the fisherman's daughter, by Sage Parasara, the great

master of the Vedas. Shri Veda Vyasa is the greatest proponent of Hinduism as we know and practice it today. Veda Vyasa enjoyed royal patronage of the Kurus as his mother later married the Kuru king Santanu. Santanu's children in Satyavati were Vichitravirya and Chitrangada. They married the princesses of Kasi - Ambika and Ambalika. Since the princes remained childless, Vyasa procreated children in those princesses. These two boys were called Dritarashtra and Pandu. Shri Vyasa continued to take interest in the affairs of the state. This provided him insights into the behaviour of men and women in powerful positions. That is how Vyasa was able to weave spirituality into the nitty-gritty of daily life. The Mahabharata is a classic work of Veda Vyasa in which he describes the passions and drives that fuel people to do stupendous as well as horrendous deeds. The ethical issues arising out of dilemmaic situations and powerful men, caught in the web of their past, struggling to come out of the swamp of their inner confusions are fascinating themes depicted in this epic. And the great teaching of the Bhagavad Gita, showing a way out of this mental paralysis, a beacon light shines in centre of this storm.

Shri Veda Vyasa composed, according to traditional wisdom, all the 18 Puranas including the Bhagavata Purana. He is the undoubted author of Mahabharata and Brahmasutras. Shri Veda Vyasa got his best spiritual training under the tutelage of his Scholar-Saint father who was an authority in the Vedas. It was Vyasa who later collected the vast repertoire of the Vedic lore, edited and published in the form that we know the four Vedas today. There could not have been the future Hinduism without Vyasa's foundational work. The later Acharyas like Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Nimbarka, Vallabha, Chaitanya, Tulasi Das and others have only interpreted variously the texts written by Vyasa. Shri Veda Vyasa was the defining moment in the long story of Hinduism. The Hindu world view and ultimate aspirations which determine the Vedantic culture of India and of one billion strong Hindus all over the world were inspired by this great Rishi.

These are the reasons why Hindus worship Vyasa as the Guru of gurus - Adi Guru. Krishna claims in the Gita that among Muni-s He is Vyasa, who is considered an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Guru is one who guides us beyond the ocean of ignorance, limitations and sorrow. His energy arises from a vast sea of compassion, born of spiritual vision. Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, Jesus Christ, Prophet Mohammad, Moses, Confucius, Socrates were all great teachers who strove to lift human kind from their little selves to the Oceanic Vastness of the Self. By offering Salutations to Vyasa we are actually honouring this long succession of teachers who manifested, from time to time, to bless suffering humanity. It is said that our biological parents bring us into the turmoil of the world and our Guru help us remain above those turbulences.

On this auspicious Day of the Guru, we offer our prostrations at the lotus feet of our Guru, so that He may purify our hearts and lift our spirits to

the presence of the all-pervading Spirit - The ultimate Bliss of Union. On this day we rededicate ourselves to the path of spiritual knowledge and self-realization, of ineffable Love and the all-encompassing Consciousness, to the study of the scriptures and a life of contemplation.

Salutations! Salutations! Salutations At The Lotus Feet Of The Guru.

Swami Bodhananda
July 21st, 2002, 3.30pm,
Sambodh Centre for Human Excellence
Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA

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.