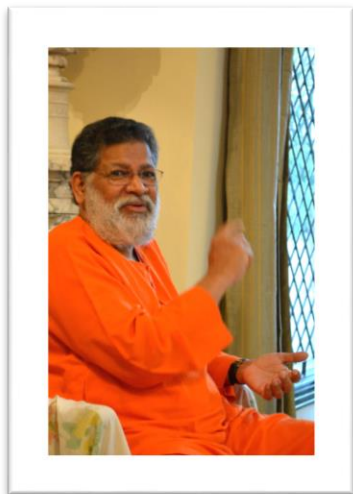


Guru Purnima Message - 2003

SWAMI BODHANANDA

(On the occasion of Vyasa Purnima on 13th July, 2003)



We celebrate Guru Purnima on 13 July, the day five thousand years ago Sage Vyasa was born as a love child to Parasara Muni and Satyavati, the fisher woman.

Vyasa was called 'Krishna' because of his black complexion, and 'Dvaipayana' because he was born in an island (dvip)

flanked by the Yamuna.

He was also called Badarayana, the inhabitant of the Badarika (Jujube tree) forest. Later this great saint came to be known as Veda Vyasa for his seminal work of collecting, editing, publishing, interpreting and propagating the four Vedas- Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva. Thus Vyasa's full name was 'Paarasara Krishna Dvaipayana Badarayana Veda Vyasa'. His independent works are, the 'Mahabharata', 'the Puranas' and the 'Brahmasutras'.

The Prasthanatrayee, that is, the 'Brahmasutras', the ten principal 'Upanishad's and the 'Bhagavad Gita' are essentially the work of Sri Veda Vyasa. The Prasthanatrayee are the triple scriptures of the present day Hinduism. The great Acaryas of Hinduism such as Sankaracarya, Ramanujacarya and Madhvacharya and later Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi wrote commentaries for at least one of these scriptures.

Therefore Sri Veda Vyasa can be called the father/mother/Guru of Hinduism as we know and practice it today. Sri Vyasa was not only a scholar, but he also was an active statesman who took interest in the affairs of the nation. He came to the help of his mother/queen Satyavati in running the kingdom when his half-brothers, who were kings, were found inadequate for the task. Sri Vyasa even went to the

extent of siring children in Ambalika and Ambika, the royal queens, who could not conceive from their husband kings- Vicitravirya and Citrangada.

The central teachings of Vyasa can be condensed into the following:

- (1) Truth is one , but paths are many.
- (2) World is one family, hence to exist is to co-exist.
- (3) God/ Divinity lives in the heart of each human/being.
- (4) God/Divinity can be experienced moment to moment in a pure mind.
- (5) Purity of mind is attained when engaged in the world through self-giving work.

Whenever Hindus have forgotten to live these immortal teachings of Veda Vyasa then they came to suffer humiliation and cultural degradation. That has been happening to us, Hindus, for the last 1500 years. Instead of responding creatively to challenges of the Muslims and the British, and grow in stature, we withdrew from the arena of action, and tried to find our god in seclusion and in the cocoon of our small self. Now Vyasa's teachings are finding world acceptance and are experimented on the world theatre by globally conscious individuals.

I have no doubt that Veda Vyasa's teachings will be the foundation of the emerging world spiritual consciousness.

Salutations to Our Guru, Sri Veda Vyasa.

Jai Jai Gurudeva,

Swami Bodhananda
Thursday, 10 Jul 2003, 20:07:59
Sambodh Center for Human Excellence
Kalamazoo, Michigan

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.