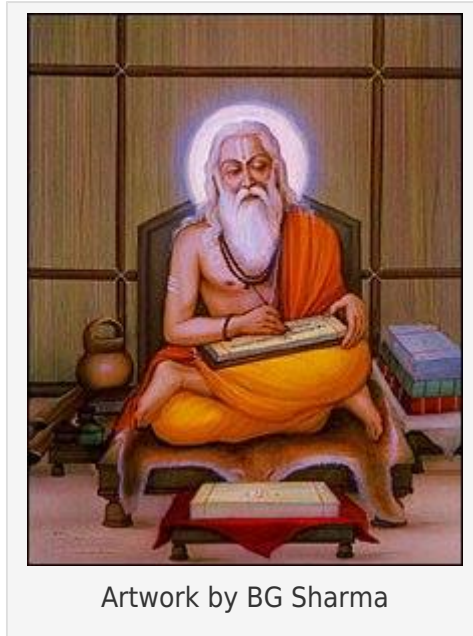


By: Madya Lila.

Happy Guru Purnima! Celebrated as the appearance day of Srila Vyasadeva, one of the most revered Gurus and the compiler of the Vedas, Guru Purnima is the auspicious day to honour our spiritual guides.

Throughout India and in Hindu communities around the world, disciples offer Guru Puja (worship) and express their gratitude to their Guru. Special celebrations are held to recite the scriptures authored by Vyasadeva, accompanied by the singing of hymns, bhajans and kirtan. The system of Guru Sishya Parampara is also followed in the traditional schools of Indian classical music and dance. In India and Nepal, school students honour their teachers on this day, expressing their gratitude and presenting gifts.



In the Vedic system, accepting a guru is considered to be crucial for advancement in spiritual life. The human form of life is sometimes compared to a boat, and the guru is the expert captain who can guide the boat across the ocean of birth and death. It is not possible for a boat to cross the vast and treacherous ocean without a captain, and similarly, it is not possible for a person to solve the problems of life unless he takes shelter of a genuine guru. The word "guru" is composed from two words, gu and ru. The Sanskrit root gu means darkness or ignorance, and ru denotes the remover of that darkness. Therefore, a Guru is one who removes the darkness of our ignorance.

Sri Guru Pranama

om ajnana-timirandhasya jnananjana-salakaya
caksur unmilitam yena tasmai sri-gurave namah

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who with the torchlight of knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

Artwork by BG Sharma

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