

14. Be Grateful To The Doctors

Though I have been coming to this city for over twenty years now, this is the first time I am speaking to a gathering of the people living here. The time, the need, and the deed have to coincide, and today they have. Guru Purnima has provided all three and collected together in this sea of humanity the waters of many areas through many channels and tributaries. Mysore City has earned fame by its devotion to music, sculpture, and other fine arts, but there is an all finer than all these: the Art of Living. Many a person skilled in other fields is a failure in so far as this art is concerned. He lives miserably, without a trace of joy or contentment or peace. He knows only pain and he gives others only pain.

Mysore is also famous for the fragrance of its sandalwood. So far so good. But I would like the fragrance to emanate from your feelings and thoughts and deeds, not so much from the trees that grow in the forests. Then only is the fame fully deserved. If the sense of beauty and the sense of harmony are not translated into the daily life of men and women and children, then that life is a waste, a burden, a hoax.

People have to lift themselves from the animal level through their own spiritual practices. There are three types of people: the animal type, the human type, and the divine type. Humanity has evolved from the stone through plant and tree, worm and insect, bird and mammal, but some are still groveling in the early stages though they have achieved the human form.

Everyone has some illness or other

Chief Minister Jatti said that you are all like boulders, rough and hard, and that devotion has the power to make you soft and smooth. Now, what does a sculptor do when he sees a good boulder? He pictures in his mind the lovely idol of God that is sleeping inside it. He becomes possessed with idea of liberating the idol from the hard clasp of the stone. He takes up his chisel and removes the extra stone that lies around the beautiful figure, and, at last, he liberates the image. The boulder has to suffer all that hard chiseling in order to become the image of God. So too, you should cast off all the impediments, all the encumbrances that drag you down and make you a boulder instead of a devotee, an ascetic of the highest order (*Paramahansa*), or even the Supreme Being (*Paramatma*).

The world is a huge hospital, and humanity is bedridden. Some are writhing in the pain of envy, some are bloated with pride, some are losing sleep through hate, some have become blind through miserliness, some are struck down by selfishness. Everyone has some illness or other. On this Guru Purnima Day, you have to render gratitude to the doctors who diagnose your diseases and prescribe remedies and to the nurses who tend you back to health.

Resolve today to follow the treatment recommended and the regimen ordered; it is not enough to learn the prescription by heart, read the label on the bottle three times a day, or visit the hospital every day. Praising the doctor or worshipping him might induce him to take pity on you, but your illness can be cured only by your taking the drug and obeying the restrictions on food and drink and on your habit.

While talking of doctors, I must also say that doctors who fight for the patient's purse or who try to grab a patient before a rival appropriates him are a danger to society. The doctor who despises other doctors, or sticks to his own patent cures irrespective of the experience of failure, or is guided more by whims, fancies, and prejudices,

or considers the patient's caste rather than his disease as more important — such doctors are also dangerous. Today, we find doctors and gurus who have deteriorated to the level of wrangling for patients and their purses, and for the sake of their own or other people's patent remedies.

Vyasa is the greatest of spiritual doctors

This day is a day when mankind pays homage to the greatest of spiritual doctors, Sage Vyasa. Vyasa is the greatest of spiritual doctors, for he put together the *Vedas*, composed the *Puranas* and the *Mahabharatha*, and gave humanity the *Bhagavatha*. He is the primal guru for all who walk in the Path of God. He planted the seed of theism and nurtured it through *sruthi* (orally transmitted sacred revelations), *smrithi* (codes of law), *sastra* (holy scripture), and the *Mahabharatha*. He gave the world the *Gita* and the *Brahma Sutra*, the idea of the immanent *Atma*, the story of the divine Play (*Leela*), and the secret of this changeful Creation.

Vyasa lived in about 3800 B.C. He was the great grandson of the sage Vasishta, the son of Parasara, and the father of that celebrated gem among sages, Suka. His life story is a series of miracles, a divine saga. He came from Vasudeva (a name for Krishna), announced the *Leela* of Vasudeva to all, and, finally, got merged in Vasudeva. He established the era of repeating and discoursing on Lord's Name and made all aware of the sweetness of the Name of the Lord, which evokes His Form and His Grace.

Vyasa first revealed to humanity the secret of making the mind as clear and as full of cool rays as the moon on a full moon night; that is why this Guru Purnami is associated with him and with all gurus.

The prayers to be offered daily

Today, every believer in God must refuse to be content with a feast and a lecture. The believer should try to plant today the seed of Lord's Name in a well-prepared heart, devoid of the thorns of egoism, and water it with love, fence the sprout with faith, feed it with the fertiliser of remembrance of the Name, and, from the grown-up tree of the mantra (holy letters), pluck the fruit of bliss and relish the sweetness.

People may boast of the vast treasures in the vaults of their bank, but they will get credit only for that which they have actually earned and deposited therein. Do not fritter away the time allotted to you; offer it to Kesava (Krishna), who is Time personified (*Kalaswarupa*).

Know that waking from sleep is but birth and going into sleep is death. On waking, pray every morning of your life, "Oh Lord, I am born now from the womb of sleep. I am determined to carry out all tasks this day as offerings to Thee, with Thee ever present before my mind's eye. Make my words, thoughts, and deeds sacred and pure. Let me not inflict pain on anyone; let no one inflict pain on me. Direct me, guide me, this day."

And when you enter the portals of sleep at night, pray, "Oh Lord! the tasks of this day, whose burden I placed on you this morning, are over. It was You who made me walk and talk and think and act. I therefore place at Thy Feet all my words, thoughts, and deeds. My task is done. Receive me, I am coming back to you."

Adopt these as your daily prayers.

The best thing is to have your own Self as the source of Light, as the guru. The Inner Intelligence, the Inner Guru will reveal the Truth. This prayerful attitude will so educate your impulses that the Inner Intelligence will be fully revealed.

Do everything with a spirit of dedication

Begin with the cultivation of Love (*Prema*). I have found that the people of Karnataka have great faith and devotion. They are simple in their habits and thoughts. Do not allow these to decline; cultivate them with care. The Chief Minister said that all are children of the Lord. It is better to say that all are actors in the drama designed by Him —dolls dancing and acting as He pulls the strings. The role you have might be that of an officer, a soldier, a farmer, a beggar or a clerk. Act well your part so that the drama might be a success.

Do everything in a spirit of dedication, as if in each moment you act, speak, and even feel in response to a command received. To get that mood of dedication, the *Bhakthi Sutras* (aphorisms on devotion) prescribe nine paths, but the easiest and the most practicable is a life lived in the constant remembrance of the Lord.

A bar of iron sinks in water, but beat it into a hollow vessel and it will float merrily and even carry some weight. So too, man's mind sinks easily in the sea of sense; beat it hollow, hammering it with the Name of the Lord. It will float safely on a sea of troubles. Do not be like gramophone records singing someone else's song, ignorant of the genuine thrill of music. Sing from your own experience of the Glory and Grace of the Lord.

If you win the Grace of the Lord, even the decrees of destiny can be overcome. Certain drugs come in bottles on which the manufacturer has given an ultimate date beyond which the drug loses its efficacy. Of course, the drug will be in the bottle but would no longer be effective. Similarly, the Lord's Grace can make decrees of destiny inoperative.

The guru is one who shows you the path for getting that Grace, and to such a guru this day is dedicated.

Guru Purnima, Mysore, 1961-07-27

Prayers is a very forceful weapon – much more effective than any bomb. The word is an effective instrument: it can move mountains. In these critical times, every one of you should pray deeply and sincerely for the peace and prosperity of Mother India (*Bharatha Matha*).

Sathya Sai Baba