

**Je svaroop samajyā vinā, pämyo dukha  
anant, Samajävyu te pad namu,  
shri sadguru bhagavant.**

I bow to the feet of the True Guru, who explained the true nature of the Soul; without its understanding, I suffered infinite misery.

**Deh chhatä jeni dashä, varte dehätit, Te  
gnäninä charanmä, ho vandan aganit.**

I often bow to the feet of the True Guru who lives in a human body, but his actions are beyond all attachments to the body and other worldly relations

**“Asato Ma Satgamaya, Tamaso Ma Jotirgamaya, Mrityor Ma Amritam Gamaya” (Upanishads)  
“Take me from the temporal (feeling of individuality) to the Eternal (feeling of universality),  
from darkness (ignorance) to Light (wisdom), from death (fear)  
to Immortality (reliance which gives permanent happiness).”**

Guru Purnima is celebrated every year in the month of Ashadh on full moon day by different faiths including Buddhists, Hindus and Jains. Jains on this day pay veneration to Mahavir who became Guru to his first disciple – Gautam Swami. Jains also honour Gautam Swami, as well as Acharyas and Jain ascetics who are our current spiritual teachers and guides.

### **The Need of A Guru**

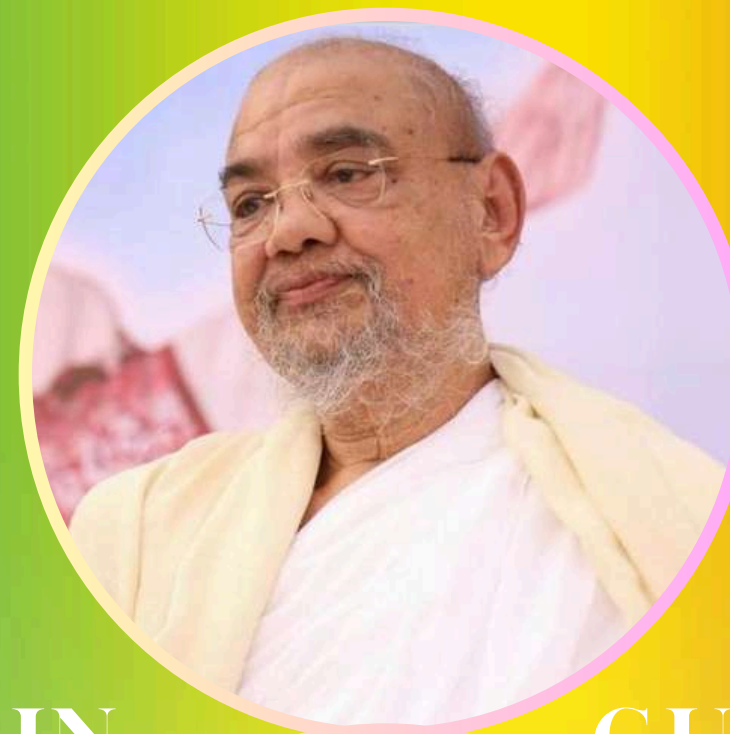
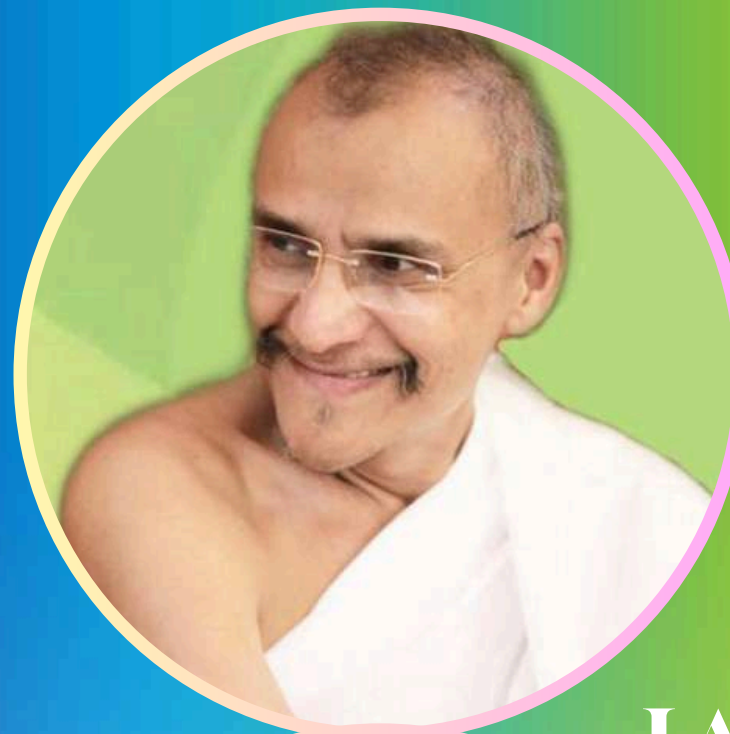
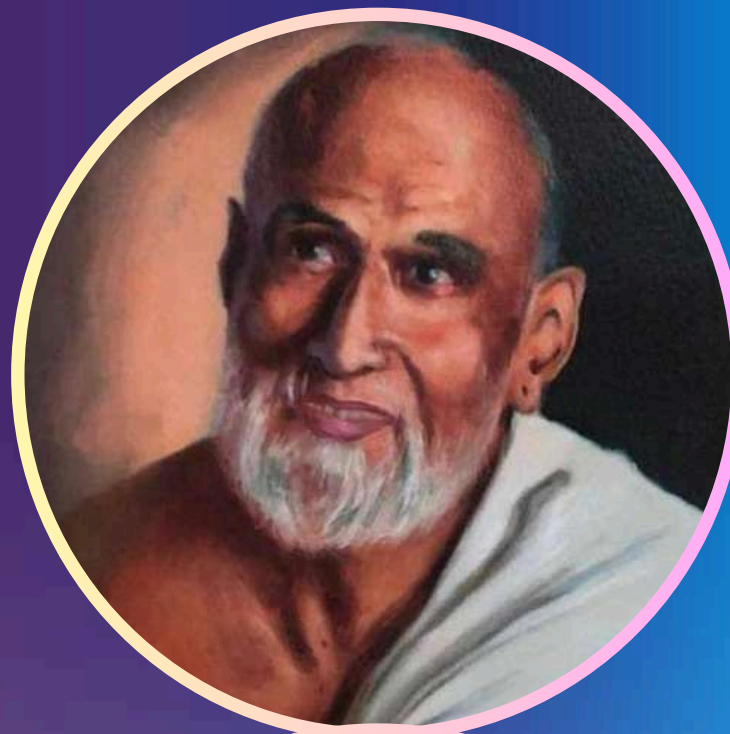
In this modern age, the term ‘Guru’ is probably one of the most overused and least understood and acutely misrepresented word. Guru means “dispeller of darkness” from the Sanskrit, gu, meaning “darkness,” and ru, meaning “that which dispels.” Guru is the one who can guide us from the darkness of our ignorance to the light of self-realisation. “Vattho sahavo dhammo” (Tattvartha Sutra) – meaning Dharma is the essential nature of an individual or an object. Thus, a Guru is the one who helps us understand dharma or the true nature of things – that I am the Soul and separate from the body and all circumstances. Like a sculpture removes all unwanted material from a stone to create a statue, the Guru, in a spiritual sense helps us remove the layers of ignorance to reveal our true essence and assists us on our spiritual journey of self-realisation.

**“Understand that your own soul is your  
guru - look inwards to realise the  
answers of life”**

**Guru Purnima**

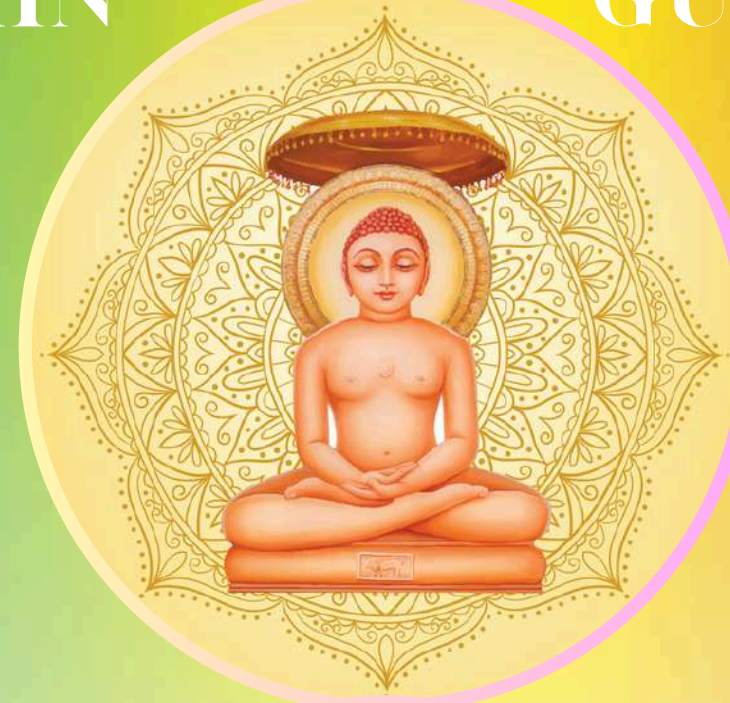
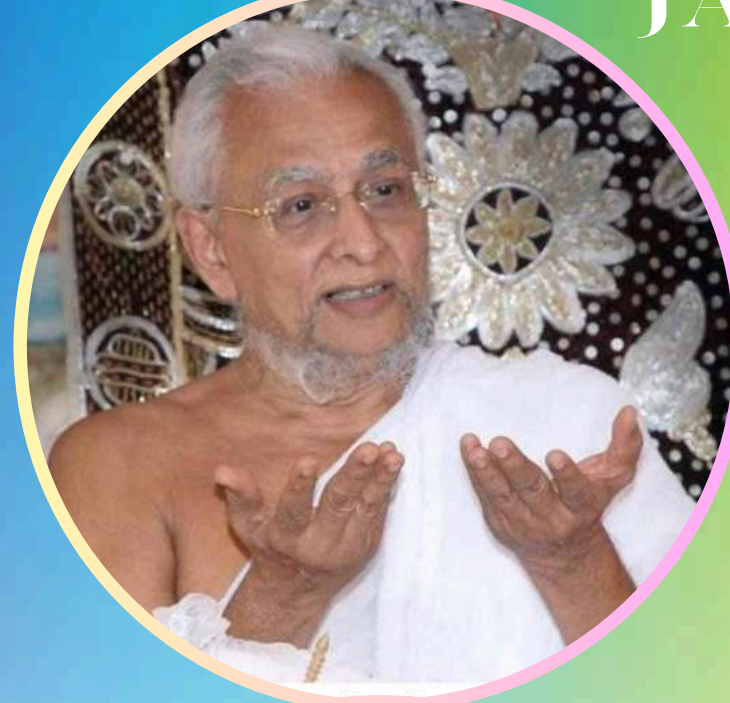






JAIN

GURUS





# Guru Purnima

Teachers, coaches, mentors, who are often referred to as Gurus are the architects of our worldly materialist life. Teachers expand our knowledge and skills; coaches improve our skills in sports whilst mentors encourage and assist us by highlighting our strengths and weaknesses. Thus teachers, coaches, mentors help us establish our 'vyaktiva' – our worldly identity. Guru is the one who helps us to establish our 'astitva' – our spiritual self – the true self. Just like the Moon which can give brightness unlike millions of stars that only sparkle, a true Guru lights the path and shows the way. A Guru will not and cannot walk your path for you but can guide you on the path

\*Shrimad Rajchandra in Atmasiddhi elaborates on the qualities of a true Guru in the following sutra:

**Ätmä-jnän samadarshitä, vichare uday-prayog;  
Apurv väni param-shrut, sadguru lakshan yogya.**

The admirable qualities of the Holy Teacher are knowledge of self –self–realization, equanimity, compassion, pious speech, and the knowledge of the highest scriptures. He lives worldly life without any attachment or aversion.

- **Ätmä-jnän** – Knowledge of Self – therefore is free from all desires of the 'not-self'. One, who has knowledge of Self, either abides in that state or strives to reach that state. The emphasis is laid on right knowledge
- **Samadarshitä** – Equanimity – indifferent to worldly opposites such as friend and foe, pleasure and suffering, respect and disrespect, etc. The emphasis is laid on right perception.
- **Vichare uday-prayog** – Behaves or conducts activities as destined – living to enjoy or suffer the fruits of the actions of his past births. The emphasis is laid on right conduct.
- **Apurv väni** – Pious speech – having the capability to use the words, which can help in removing the wrong beliefs.
- **Param-shrut** – Mastery over the highest scriptures– well versed in the fundamentals (tattva) and the truth (satya)  
(\*Source: Atmasiddhi)

**"If I encounter God and Guru both on my way, I will first bow down to the Guru as he is the one who showed me where to look for the God. My Guru introduced me to the inexhaustible one – the god. No one can replace a Guru. He opens up the treasure which is beyond all the measures."**

*Couplets by Kabir*

We as human beings have the capacity to evolve beyond all limitations provided, he/she is willing to strive. Guru is the one who illuminates the path of liberation for us. In the Navkar Mantra, we revere Arihants before Siddhas – the pure liberated souls, as Arihants are the ones who guide us on the journey to liberation to stop the endless cycle of birth and death. The relationship with the Guru is of deep love, reverence, surrender and faith. We can get the first glimpse of divinity and enlightenment through the Guru.

Wise sages have said that one can find one's Guru through meditation, purity of intent and deep longing for liberation. As Jains, we have Tirthankara Mahavir and Ganadhar Gautam Swami as two of the greatest Gurus of all time but are we ready to follow in their path to ultimate liberation.

BY KISHOR B SHAH





# *The Need of a Guru*



Every soul is destined to be perfect, and every being, in the end, will attain the state of perfection. Whatever we are not is the result of our acts and thoughts in the past; and whatever we shall be in the future will be the result of what we think and do now. But this, the shaping of our own destinies, does not preclude our receiving help from outside; nay, in the vast majority of cases, such help is absolutely necessary. When it comes, the higher powers and possibilities of the soul are quickened, spiritual life is awakened, growth is animated, and man becomes holy and perfect in the end. This quickening impulse cannot be derived from books. The soul can only receive impulses from another soul, and from nothing else.

The person from whose soul such impulse comes is called the Guru — the teacher; and the person to whose soul the impulse is conveyed is called the Shishya — the student. To convey such an impulse to any soul, in the first place, the soul from which it proceeds must possess the power of transmitting it, as it were, to another; and, in the second place, the soul to which it is transmitted must be fit to receive it.

The true preacher of religion must be of wonderful capabilities, and clever shall his bearer be — and when both of these are really wonderful and extraordinary, then will a splendid spiritual awakening result, and not otherwise. Such alone are the real teachers, and such alone are also the real students, the real aspirants.

Extract from the complete Works of Swami Vivekananda by Swami Vivekananda (wikisource.org)

