

# Question and Answers about a Guru

( Guru Vishayak Prashnoutter )



Tvameva Maata Cha Pita Tvameva  
Tvameva Bandhusha Sakhaa Tvameva  
Tvameva Vidyaa Dravinam Tvameva  
Tvameva Sarvam Mama Deva Deva

**Swami Ramsukhdas**

॥ Shri Hari ॥

# Question and Answers about a Guru

( Guru Vishayak Prashnouter )



**Question:** How can salvation be attained without a *Guru* because it is mentioned in *Ramacharitamanasa* that no one can cross the worldly ocean without a *Guru*? "Guru binu bhav nidhi tarayi na koyi" (Manas, Utter. 93/3)

**Answer:** It is also mentioned in the same *Ramayana* that -  
Guru shish badhir andh ka lekhaa | ek na sunai ek nahin dekhaa ||  
Harayi shishya dhan sok na harayi | so gur ghor narak mahun parayi ||  
(Manas. Uter. 99/3-4)

It means that salvation is not possible with the help of a fraud *Guru*. Only having a *Guru* is not sufficient. Salvation is only possible when you follow the path shown by a real saint and in that case he is your *Guru*. Saint *Dattatreya* has mentioned about his twenty-four *Gurus* in *Srimad Bhagawat*. It clearly establishes that a person can attain salvation from teachings of any noble soul. Therefore having a *Guru* is not as important as following the noble teachings. When anybody's teachings help us to attain salvation, he becomes our *Guru* even without declaring so. On the contrary if we have a *Guru* but we do not follow his teachings, it amounts to be a sin and offence and it will not lead us to salvation.

These days a large number of persons are initiated as disciples collectively. In such cases neither the *Guru* nor the disciples feel concerned about their salvation. The *Guru* is not worthy to lead the disciples to salvation and the disciples are not allowed to go somewhere else. Hence it creates a hindrance

in the upliftment and salvation of the disciples!

**Question:** This is a common belief that a person who does not have a *Guru*, cannot attain salvation. Therefore is it not essential to have a *Guru*?

**Answer:** How can a person who can differentiate between good and evil be called one without a *Guru*? Everyone possesses the discretionary knowledge (*vivek*) to judge good and bad. He also knows to repeat the Name of the Lord, to remember God and to not harm anybody. The source of all this knowledge is a *Guru* whether we accept him as a *Guru* or not.

A person who has made a *Guru* but does not follow the teaching of his *Guru* is indeed "guru-less" and is held at fault for disobedience but how can a person who does not have any *Guru* be blameworthy?

It is not necessary that one can attain salvation simply by having a *Guru*, but one can attain it by one's own yearning and strong desire, not by having a *Guru*.

God is the *Guru* of the whole world " *Krishnam Vande Jagatgurum*" You are also a part of this world, then how can you be without a *Guru*? Therefore stay in company of noble saints and follow their teachings. *Guru*-disciple relationship or bondage is never required. Actually the God realized enlightened and devoted saints never like to have disciples. They show you the path to salvation, but do not make disciples. If you follow as many of their teachings without making them your *Guru*, you will be benefited proportionately with certainty. If you do not follow their teachings, then it shall not amount to be a sin but if you have a *Guru* and do not follow his commands, it is a sin, an offense.

**Question:** It is believed that when a *Guru* gives a secret teaching (*Guru Mantra*), it becomes more effective, is it true?

**Answer:** Such a secret teaching or *Guru Mantra* shall be effective only when the *Guru* (teacher) himself is effective. One who does not possess any effective power, how can he impart effective power through his secret *mantra*? Therefore it is said -

Vachan aagale sant ka, hariyaa hasti dant |  
Taakh na tute bharam ka, saidhe hi binu sant ||

It means that utterances of a realized saint are as powerful as the teeth of an elephant, which break open the doors of ignorance. An elephant can break the doors of a fort with his teeth, but without the elephant, and merely with his teeth alone, one cannot break the doors even if they so desire. The reason being that the actual strength is in the elephant, and not only in his

teeth. Similarly, effective influence lies in the life experiences and impressions (*anubhav*) of the saint and not in his hollow utterances alone.

Now a days so many people are fond of becoming *Gurus* and propagating their sects, but none of them are bothered about the salvation of human beings. By giving a secret *mantra*, the size of such sects expands, but it does not help in attaining knowledge of the truth. You can attain the truth only when you practice the spiritual discipline according to your belief, faith, inclination (*ruchi*) and ability. All types of worship and prayer are good, but the one that takes place spontaneously and naturally is genuine, while those which require special efforts are all artificial.

These days the seekers and devotees are facing a big dilemma. The *Guru* has given *Krishna* mantra, while the disciple's inclination is towards *Ram Mantra*, what to do? In this matter, my sincere advice is that one whose inclination, faith or devotion is towards Lord *Ram*, should worship and chant the name of only *Ram*. Prayer and worship are effective only when these are in tune with the devotee's nature and inclination. The forcibly imposed acts of worship never produce any effective result.

The mantra in which you have dedication and faith, that mantra will naturally acquire powers. The reason being that the real power is God's, not some individuals. The spiritual powers possessed by sages like *Agastya* and *Vishvamitra* etc., were not given to them by their *Gurus*, but were derived from God through their immense efforts and dedication. The power of God is eternal, ever present and ever available for all. There is no question of any partiality. Whosoever seeks it, gets this power abundantly.

**Question:** How will awakening of *Kundalini* take place without a *Guru*?

**Answer:** God Realization does not take place by the awakening of *Kundalini*. Salvation does not take place. By stirring and instigating a sleeping female snake, can you attain salvation? Somebody enquired with Swami *Sharananandaji's* view on *Kundalini*. His simple reply was that, "We know that we have no relation with *Kundalini*. It hardly matters whether *Kundalini* sleeps or is awakened, what has it got to do with us? *Kundalini* is in the body and not in our true self. How will a striver transcend the body by the awakening of *Kundalini*? Without transcending the body, how will he attain salvation? Salvation is possible only when you are fully detached from the body.

*Question:* Some people get super natural experience from awakening of *Kundalini* with the help of some *Gurus*. What is this?

**Answer:** Such miracles do happen but they do not help in attainment of eternal bliss or salvation. Salvation takes place when one transcends the body and the world.

**Question:** I have accepted a *mala* (chain of beads, like a rosary) from a *Guru*, but now I have no faith in him. Should I return the mala?

**Answer:** I never say to return the *mala*. My advice is that you may count the beads of the mala once of with the sacred message (*guru mantra*), imparted to you by your *Guru* and the remaining time you should chant the holy name of your favorite deity, according to your liking, study the holy books and attend the divine discourses of exalted souls.

**Question:** Though I accepted someone as my *Guru* but now I have lost faith in him. Would it be a sin if I give him up?

**Answer:** When you have developed a strong disliking for the *Guru*, and have lost faith in him, it means that you have left him already. Better thing would be, neither to criticize him nor to have any bondage with him. **There is no sin or offence in leaving a *Guru* who is greedy, has strong craving for women, has no sense of distinction between good and bad and indulges in undesirable activities.**

The scriptures recommend leaving such a *Guru* -

Gurorpyavaliptasya kaaryaakaaryamajaanatah |  
Utpathpratipannasya oarityaago vidheeyate ||  
(Mahabharat, Udh yog. 178/48)

"If a *Guru*, out of his false ego, forgets what to do and what not to do and proceeds on a wrong path, he should be given up, it is sanctioned by the scriptures."

Gyaanaheeno guroostyaajyo mithyaavaadee vikalpakah |  
Swavishraanti na jaanaati parashaanti karoti kim ||  
(Sidhsidhaantsangrah, Gurugeeta)

"An ignorant, untruthful and confusing *Guru* should be given up, because the one who could not attain tranquility and peace himself, how can he give peace to others?"

Patitaa guruvasyaajyaa maataa cha na kathnchan |  
Garbhdhaaranaposhabhyam ten maataa gareeyasee ||

(skandpuran, Ma. Kou. 6/7, matsyapuram 227/150)

"Though a degraded *Guru* is to be renounce a mother is never so. Giving birth to a child and then upbringing him make a mother much greater than *Gurus*."

**Question:** May a woman make someone a *Guru*?

**Answer:** A woman should never make someone a *Guru*. If she has already made one, then she should give him up. For a woman, her husband itself is her *Guru*. Scriptures say –

Gururgrirdvijaateenaam varnaanaam braahmano guruh |  
Patireva guruh strinaam sarvasyaabhyaagato guruh ||  
(padmapuran, 51/51, brahmapuran 80/47)

Fire is regarded as *Guru* of the twice born, a Brahmin is the *Guru* of all the four castes (*Varnas*), while the husband is the only *Guru* for a woman and a guest is the *Guru* of all.

Vaivaahiko vidhih sweeyaanm sanskaaro vaidikh smrutah |  
Patiseva gurou vaaso gruhaarthoghnparikriyaa || (Manusmriti 2/67)

For women obedience to the marital rites is the only vedic activity (sacred thread), service of the husband is the only period of study and household duties are her only religious sacrifice (*agnihotra*).

A woman should not develop any type of relationship with anybody other than her husband. It is my personal request to the ladies not to get involved with any *Sadhu* or monk. These days various types of frauds, deception and superficialities are being practiced. I receive such letters and victimized women also come to me and explain their unfortunate experiences; from which I have formed a strong opinion that in the present days it is disastrous for a woman to make a *Guru* or to develop relationship with any person other than her husband.

A monk should also not initiate any woman his disciple. At the time of initiation ceremony, a *Guru* is required to touch the chest (breast) etc., of the new disciple. Whereas it is strictly prohibited for an ascetic even to touch a woman. In *Srimad Bhagwat* it is prescribed – not to talk of a woman in flesh and blood, an ascetic should not even touch a woman's figurine (statue) made of wood and that too not only by hands but even by feet.

Padaapi yuvatim bhikshurn sprushed daaraveemapu (Sri. Bhagwat. 11/8/13)

The scriptures even go on to say:

Maatraa swasthraa duhitraa vaa na viviktaasano bhavet |  
Balavaanindriyagraamo vidvasamaoi karshati || (Manu. 2/215)

A man should not stay even with his mother, sister, and daughter in solitude, because sensual temptations are very strong which even the learned persons cannot overcome or resist.

Sangam na kuryaatpramadaasu jaatu  
Yogasya paaram paramaarurukshah |  
Matsevayaa pratilabdhaatmalaabho  
Vadanti yaa niryadvaaramasya || (Srimad Bhagwat. 3/31/39)

"A person who wants to attain the supreme state of *yoga* or one who has realized the truth of the self and the non-self by rendering service to Me, should never indulge with women because the women have been declared to be the open gateway to hell for such a person."

**Question:**

Vishvaamitraparaasharprabhrutayo vaataambu parnaashanaa-  
Steapi strimukhapankjam sulalitam dooshaidvava moham gataah |  
Shaalyannam saghrutam payodadihyutam bhunjanti ye maanavaa-  
Steshaamindriyanigraho yadi bhavedvindhyastaretsaagare ||  
(Bhartruharishatak)

"Even sages like Vishvaamitra and Paraasara etc., who led a life of extreme austerity merely by breathing air or drinking water and eating dry leaves, could not resist their lust for beautiful women and were deluded. It shall be a great wonder and rather an impossibility if people surrounded by all types of foods and luxuries can control their sensual cravings."

Under such a situation, it is unbelievable, rather impossible, that those people who initiate young women as their disciples and keep them in their *Ashramas* (hermitages) can attain liberation in their lifetime. How can such persons help you? It would be a pure and simple breach of trust.

**Question:** It is sometimes said that a realized exalted soul is not adversely affected even if he indulges in worldly pleasures. Is it correct?

**Answer:** It is just impossible. **Total liberation and indulgence in worldly pleasure can never go together.** Craving for pleasures vanishes even during

the period while the aspirant practices spiritual discipline. The question of such pleasures does not arise at all for a realized soul. Such nonsense utterances are made and spread by selfish unscrupulous element for their selfish end. It is said in Ramayana:

Mithyaarambh dambh rat joyi | ta kahun sant kahayi sab koyi ||  
Niraachaar jo shruti path tyaagi | kalijug soyi gyaani so biraagi || (Manas, Utter. 98/2)

Par triya lampat kapat sayaane | Moha droha mamataa lapataane ||  
Teyi abhedbaadee gyaanee nar | dekhaa mein charitr kalijug kar (Manas, Utter, 98/2, 4)

Budhadvaitasatattvasya yetheshtaacharanam yadi |  
Shunaam tatvedrushaam chaiva ko bhedoashuchi bhakshane ||

"Even after attaining the Supreme knowledge of real self, if a person remains engaged in irresponsible conduct such as impure food (meat and wine etc.) then what is the difference between that so called realized soul and a dog?

Yatsu pravrajito bhootvaa punah sevet maithunam |  
Shashti varsh sahastraani vishthaayaam jaayate krumih ||  
(Skandapuran, Kaashi. Pu. 40/107)

"One who indulges in sex with a woman even after renouncing the world, such a *Sannyasi* has to spend sixty thousand years as an insect in excrement".

Desires are real cause of worldly pleasures and a person attains liberation (salvation), only after completely getting rid of such desires. Worldly desires disappear even of an aspirant when he starts spiritual practice. If at all it is mentioned somewhere in a volume that a liberated soul is not spoilt even on indulging in material pleasures, it is there to show the dimension of his greatness and glory. It is not a rule. For example, it is mentioned in *Gita* that a liberated soul who has diluted his ego and whose intellect is not tainted, is never regarded guilty of killing even if he does so nor he is bound. It does not mean that he actually kills anybody.

**Question:** Some people claim that there is nothing wrong in making such people disciples who otherwise would be converted to Islam or Christianity?

**Answer:** This is a totally wrong statement. Those who wish to become Muslims or Christians, shall never come to a *Guru*. Alternatively if somebody becomes a Muslim or Christian on *Guru's* refusal to initiate him, the *Guru* will

not be held guilty. But if the *Guru* initiates a disciple and does not allow him to go anywhere else for attaining salvation and he himself is not worthy to lead the disciple to salvation, he will certainly be held guilty. Such a *Guru* is certainly not a *Guru*. By becoming a disciple a person is restrained from taking refuge in God; instead, he takes refuge in the *Guru*, he is forced to bind himself with the guru instead of God it is a great sin and injustice.

**Question:** "Guru kijai jaan ke, paani peejai chaan ke" It is said that "know a spiritual master before making him a *Guru*; filter water before drinking it", then what is the means to get to know a *Guru*? How to cross-examine a *Guru*?

**Answer:** You are not capable of testing or cross-examining a *Guru*. If you were able to test a *Guru*, then you have become the *Guru* of the *Guru*. Can one who can test a *Guru* be any thing less than the *Guru*? The one who can examine a *Guru*, is great. In such a state, it is best that you not make anyone a *Guru* and simply engage in spiritual discourses and self-study, and whatever talks appear to be appealing, imbibe them in your life. Have association of such saints in whose company, your intensity for God Realization increases, bad conduct and bad qualities naturally go away on their own, and good qualities and good conduct come on their own, when God is remembered in a special way, when faith and trust in God increases, without even asking questions, the doubts are resolved on their own and the spiritual guide desires to take nothing from us. Benefit from them without engaging in a *Guru*-Disciple relationship. If you see any faults in him, or something appears to not be right, then leave that place.

In reality, one is not testing or cross examining a *Guru*, rather they are testing their own self. There is a story on this subject. There was a youthful king. He invited all the elders and grown-ups and wise men in his kingdom, and he asked them to please tell him the truth, was his grandfather's ruling better or his father's or his ruling? You all have seen all the three kings rule, then which one was the best? On hearing this question, all became silent. Then an old man spoke up, O' Maharaj ! We are your subjects, and you are our ruler. How can we decide about you? We cannot test you, but if you ask me, I will tell you my own story. The king said, please continue and share your story. The old man said, that when your grandfather was ruling, at that time I was about 20-25 years old. I used to carry a stick. I knew how to fight. One day I was going somewhere, then in the forest I heard the sound of someone crying. It sounded like a female voice. When I went there, I saw a young female dressed in beautiful clothes and adorned with ornaments, sitting there and crying. I asked what was wrong, and why was she crying? She was startled and scared on seeing me.

I consoled her, saying my child, do not fear, tell me what is wrong? She said that I left with my relatives to go to my husband's home. On the way, we came across some dacoits and got into a fight with them. I became scared and ran into the forest. Thereafter I did not know what transpired. Now what should I do? Where should I go? I do not know which direction is my husband's home? And which direction is my father's home? I asked the name of the husband's village and she shared it. I told her that that village is close by, I can take you there, do not fear. I asked her the name of her father-in-law. She wrote it down on the floor. I told her that I know your father-in-law. I will take you there safely.

It was late night. Taking that lady, I reached the father-in-law's house. Everyone there were worried stiff that while they were engrossed in fighting with the bandits, those robbers had possibly taken away the new bride and killed her! She was wearing jewelry worth thousands, they must have definitely robbed her. Now how are we to find her etc. etc? Seeing the young bride, their daughter-in-law, they were all very pleased. The girl also said to the women in the family that this man, behaved like a father, very caringly and with great respect has brought me here. They offered a reward of 400-500 Rs. And insisted that I take. I said that I have not done this for money. I have not done anything difficult. I have regarded this to be my duty and done so. One much insistence also, I did not take anything and left. I was very pleased within, that today I was able to serve one in distress ! This was the incident that took place when your grandfather was the king.

After much time had passed, and I had suffered many losses in my business, and faced a great shortage of money, at that time I thought that I made a big mistake that I let the young girl go away. If I had beaten her, I would have got her jewelry worth 10-15 thousand. Then I would not be in the financial crunch that I am in at present. Her father-in-law was giving me the money, but that too I refused. But what can be done now, the time has slipped away ! It was about that time when your father was ruling. Now O' King! I feel ashamed to even speak in front of you; because you are like my grandson. But since you are asking, I am telling you. Now the thought that comes to my mind is that it would have been good if I had threatened that lady and somehow tricked her to become my wife, then I would have her, as well as, her jewelry! At such a time, both would have been of use to me. I have shared with you my thoughts. How am I to say how you are ruling your kingdom? The king understood that this man is very intelligent and wise! By talking about his own condition he conveyed the message, that as the king is, so are his people - "yatha raja, tatha praja."

The point is, that we are not capable of testing or cross examining a *Guru*,

but we can surely test our self that by having their association, what kind of effect has it had on our feelings and sentiments. What kind of result has it had on our conduct? How much have the like-dislikes (attraction-aversion), desires-anger reduced?

**Question:** There are examples in history which clearly indicate that it is imperative to have a *Guru*?

**Answer:** Truth cannot be determined based on history. Talks of history are not rock solid, rather they are quite weak. The reason is that the decisions arrived at by an individual, in a certain relationship, in a particular situation and why he acted in a certain manner, all that cannot be known completely and fully. Therefore, the good points that were brought out from history can provide direction, but the decisions pertaining to Truth can only be determined based on the dos and don't from the scriptures. The laws and legislations are more powerful than history, and more potent than laws is the things that are to be avoided (*nished*).

The messages pertaining to *Guru-Disciple* have been propagated by those only who are fond of being a *Guru*. Therefore in present times, of *Kaliyug*, it is imperative to be extra careful.

**Narayana ! Narayana !! Narayana !!!**

From book "Is Salvation Not Possible without a Guru?" by Swami Ramsukhdasji



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