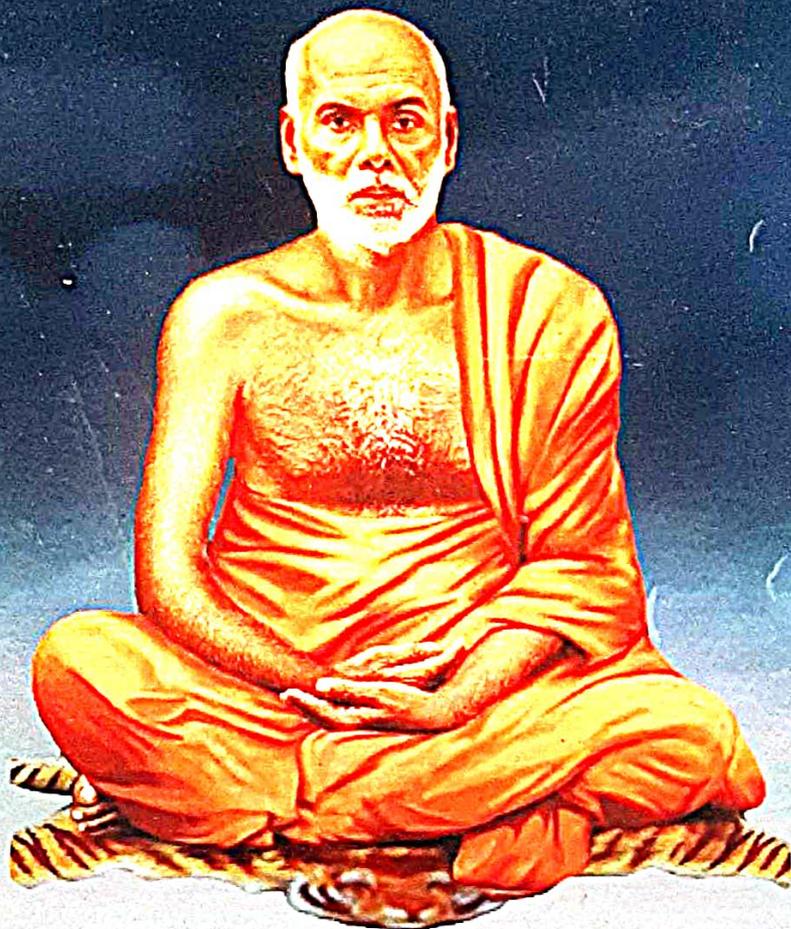


SREE NARAYANA GURU

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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Doctrines of Sree Narayana Guru Devan

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Guru's Life - A Portrayal

Sree Narayana Guru was born 28th August, 1855 to middle class parents in Chempazhanthy village in Kerala. At the age of five, Guru started his primary education and exhibited brilliance at early stages. His quest for knowledge was so great that in a short span of time he became proficient in Vedic literature, Astrology and Ayurveda. He was very disciplined and humane right from childhood. He had qualities like humanity, compassion, love and devotion. His longer periods of meditation made him realise that the answer to all problems can be found discovering oneself from within.

He spent long hours in isolation and meditation in search of answers to human sufferings and erratic behaviours. He also set out on wandering to different holy places in search of peace and tranquility. One such example is when he remained in deep meditation in a forest known as Maruthwamala for about 5 years and that is when his soul was enlightened with self realisation, an experience which he described as thousands of sun shining at the same time.

Doctrines of Sree Narayana Guru Devan

Narayana Guru Devan started with historic consecration of a Shiva idol in Aruvippuram (1886) where he kept a notice that states as below:

"Without difference in caste or rancor of religion, this is a model place where all live in brotherhood"

When upper caste people questioned his right to consecrate idols, he replied that it was not theirs to hold ownership. Millions of lower caste devotees found solace having gotten the opportunity to worship inside the temple. It was a symbolic move that unleashed a sea of social reforms. The Aruvippuram incident made Guru famous in Kerala. He seized this opportunity to eradicate the social evil likes untouchability, child marriage, animal sacrifice, worship of evilspirit etc.

Educationalist

At the age of 21, he went to central Travancore to learn from Raman Pillai Asan, a Sanskrit scholar who taught him Vedas, Upanishads and the literature and logical rhetoric of

Sanskrit. He returned to his village in 1881 when his father was seriously ill, and started a village school where he taught local children which earned him the name *Nanu Asan*. Later he started schools in the temple premises giving opportunity to the less privileged. He also motivated educated people to start industry and business. He insisted that all human beings deserve equal opportunity. He formed a new organisation Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP) through which his disciples Kumaran Asan, Sivalinga Swamy, Dr. Palpu and others reformed many educational institutions which resulted in 100% literacy in Kerala.

Visionary Saint

Many social organizations and community groups followed Guru's ideas and propagated not only in Kerala, but also in Tamilnadu, Karnataka. Also Guru visited SriLanka attracting many followers. Guru successfully organised all religious conference in 1924 on the theme *"Not to argue and win, but to know and to be known"*

Poet

Guru has authored 63 articles in three languages Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit. Daivadasakam is a universal prayer invoking protection of almighty and happiness for all. Atmopadesa Satakam, Darsana Mala, Advaita Deepika, Brahavidya Panchakam describe the essence of Universe. Anukampa Dasakam, Jeevakarunya Panchakam, Dharma Panchakam and Suddhi Panchakam tell about good living.

Teachings

- *"One Caste, One Religion, One God for All"* (Oru Jathi, Oru Matham, Oru Daivam, Manushyanu) which has become popular as a saying in Kerala.
- *"Whatever be the religion, it is enough if it makes a man virtuous"*
- *"What each performs for the happiness of self shall be conducive to happiness of others"*
- *"Be enlightened through education, strengthened through organisation, make progress through industry"*
- *"Liquor is poison; make it not, sell it not, drink it not"*
- *"Eight fold paths for good living - Education, Cleanliness, Piety, Organization, Agriculture, Trade and Industry, Handicrafts, Scientific and Technological Training".*

Conclusion

The utmost dedication and the concerns to social blackspots led Guru to follow a path of social upbringing where he uplifted the status of the people in need or indigence. His help was not just physically but by providing educational empowerment and right to equality by eradicating biases based on caste and religion. The urge and disquiet to help the people in any way possible is what made it possible for him to put his thoughts into action. And hope that continues by the descendants.

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