



## Glory of Bharath » Acharyas

### Acharya Devo Bhava

The profession of a teacher is the most responsible one in every country. Of all the professions, his is the noblest, the most difficult, the most important, for he is an ideal and example to his pupils.



**"A Guru like Vasishtha, and  
A student like Rama  
A Guru like Sandeepa and  
Students like Balarama and Krishna  
A Guru like Suka and  
A student like King Janaka  
A Guru like Datta Govinda and  
A student like Adi Shankaracharya  
A Guru like Samartha Ramadas and  
A student like Shivaji  
A Guru like Sri RamaKrishna Paramahansa and  
A student like Narendranath"**

The teacher is yet another sculptor of an individual's personality. In olden days, students used to be sent to residential institutions situated in the forests. The teacher used to instruct them not only in secular subjects but in spiritual matters. The students used to be given some time for calm contemplation to assimilate what had been taught and question their master if they had any doubts. The convocation address used to be to "Speak only truth", "Be righteous in conduct". Such was the concern of the educators to see the welfare of the students.

**Sage Vashishtha** was Rama's guru and the Rajpurohit of "Ikshwaku" dynasty. He was a peace loving, selfless, intelligent and great Rishi. Prince Rama returns from touring the country and becomes utterly disillusioned after experiencing the apparent reality of the world. This worries his father, King Dasaratha. The King expresses his concern to Sage Vasistha, upon his arrival. Sage Vasistha consoles the king by telling him that Rama's dispassion (vairagya) is a sign that the prince is now ready for spiritual enlightenment. He says that Rama has begun understanding profound spiritual truths, which is the cause of his confusion and he just needs confirmation. Sage Vasistha asks King Dasaratha to summon Rama. Then, in the court of King Dasaratha, the sage begins the discourse to Rama which lasts for several days. The answer to Rama's questions forms the entire scripture that is Yoga Vasistha.

**Sage Sandeepani** is the tutor or guru of Krishna and Balarama. Sage Sandeepani was so astonished at the rapid progress and development of the brothers Krishna and Balarama that He thought that the sun and moon had become his scholars. They had acquired all their knowledge that Sandeepani could teach. His pupil, Krishna and Balarama then enquired about the gurudakshina. Sage Sandipani as Gurudakshina requested them to give him his dead son who had drowned in the sea of Prabhasa. The son of the Sage was not drowned but a demon named Panchajana, who lives in the form of a conch shell, seized the boy. Lord Krishna then plunged into the sea and having slain the demon, took the conch shell as his horn. The son of Sandeepani was restored to life and given to his father.



For **Sage Suka** King Janaka was the ideal disciple because if one King like Janaka can become sacred, then he can transform his entire kingdom, and turn it into a sacred realm that will be an example to the whole world.

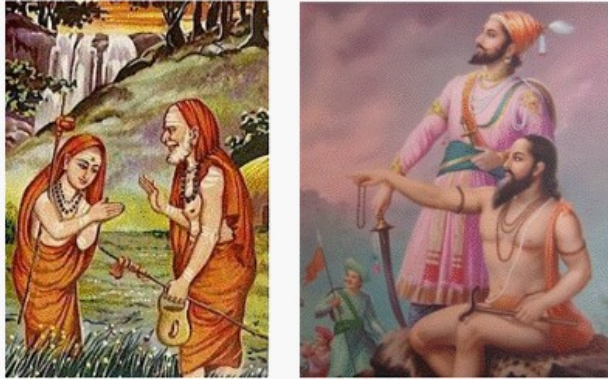
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Sri Sankaracharya went in the search of a Guru to be formally initiated as a Sanyasi. At the banks of the river Narmada, he found the river gushing forth into floods. By using his powers, he encapsulated the river in his Kamandal and released it in the banks of the river. **Sri Govinda Bhagawathpathar**, an ascetic who saw this, marvelled at Sri Sankara and took him on as a Shishya. Sri Govinda Bhagawathpadar taught various vedas to Sri Sankara. He also taught about Advaita, the principle that every one in this world is the manifestation of God and that God and Atman are one and the same. He advised Sri Sankara to go out in the world and spread this truth throughout the country.

Chhatrapati Shivaji was the 17th century Hindu King who inspired and organized the native people for the fight against the Moguls and five Sultanats (Shahas) -foreign invaders who had conquered Bharat to loot its wealth and intellect and to destroy its ancient culture and civilization. After 36 years of fighting, Shivaji established the ideal kingdom with rule of law, a Hindu kingdom, rather than a kingdom under his own name. Shivaji's Guru, **Samarth Ramdas**, stood behind him in his quest as his philosophical guiding hand. The philosophy of Samarth Ramdas is based on pragmatism, and consists of guiding principles for living life with fulfilment, yet being responsible to family and society. Shivaji lived by these values. He achieved a great deal but also gave it back to the society, so Samarth Ramdas rightfully acknowledged him as "Shrimant Yogi," or a person achieving desires with detachment.



Narendranath's first introduction to Ramakrishna occurred in a literature class, when he heard Principal Hastie lecturing on William Wordsworth's poem The Excursion and the poet's nature-mysticism. In the course of explaining the word trance in the poem, Hastie told his students that if they wanted to know the real meaning of it, they should go to Ramakrishna of Dakshineswar. This prompted some of his students, including Narendranath to visit Ramakrishna.

His meeting with **Ramakrishna Paramahansa** in November 1881 proved to be a turning point in his life. About this meeting, Narendranath said, "He [Ramakrishna] looked just like an ordinary man, with nothing remarkable about him. He used the most simple language and I thought 'Can this man be a great teacher?'- I crept near to him and asked him the question which I had been asking others all my life: 'Do you believe in God, Sir?' 'Yes,' he replied. 'Can you prove it, Sir?' 'Yes.' 'How?' 'Because I see Him just as I see you here, only in a much intenser sense.' That impressed me at once. I began to go to that man, day after day, and I actually saw that religion could be given. One touch, one glance, can change a whole life."



**Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa**  
(Dakshineswar 1884)

**Swami Vivekananda**  
(London 1896)

Though Nendra could not accept Ramakrishna and his visions, he could not neglect him either. It had always been in Nendra's nature to test something thoroughly before he would accept it. He tested Ramakrishna, who never asked Nendra to abandon reason, and faced all of Nendra's arguments and examinations with patience-"Try to see the truth from all angles" was his reply. During the course of five years of his training under Ramakrishna, Nendra was transformed from a restless, puzzled, impatient youth to a mature man who was ready to renounce everything for the sake of God-realization. In time, Nendra accepted Ramakrishna as guru, and when he accepted, his acceptance was whole-hearted and with complete surrendering as disciple.

