

SRI SATHYA SAI CENTRAL COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA
National Spiritual Wing

R 14 – BUDDHA POORNIMA

1. Name of religious event / Observance / Celebration:

Buddha Poornima

2. Picture:

2.1 Picture or symbol pertaining to the particular observance/celebration



2.2 The date/period of the religious event

Around May, every year

http://www.srisathyasai.org.in/Pages/AshramInfo/Buddha_Poornima.htm

3. About the festival:

The day of Vaisakh Purnima, which usually falls in the month of May, is considered most sacred by Buddhists all over the world. This day is significant for three reasons. It was on this day that Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was born as Prince Siddhartha at Lumbini in Nepal in 560 B.C. It is also the day when He attained enlightenment at Gaya in India, after years of search and enquiry into the causes and remedy for sorrow in the world. Thereafter, Siddhartha came to be known as Buddha, or the Enlightened one. He preached that desires are at the root of all sorrow and hence advocated the path of right conduct and the right use of senses as the way to enlightenment. He attained Nirvana (Unity with the Absolute) in 480 B.C., again on the day of Vaisakh Purnima. This auspicious day is observed as Buddha Purnima with reverence and piety by believers in the Far East countries and in Sri Lanka and India as well.

The Mandir is attractively decorated in the artistic traditions of the Orient. In the morning, special dance troupes from these countries perform invocatory dance programme welcoming Bhagawan. Bhagawan is generally greeted with the famous Buddhist prayer: 'Bhuddham Sharanam Gachchami' (I take refuge in Buddha). The programme usually features speeches by Buddhist devotees and dignitaries and a variety of other presentations depicting the rich cultural traditions of those lands.

Excerpts from Bhagawan's Discourses:

“Siddhartha, who came to be known as Gautama Buddha, undertook various spiritual practices in order to realize his true Self. He studied the Vedas and sacred texts. He met many elderly wise men and tried to know the truth from them. But none of these practices could show him the path to Nirvana. Ultimately, he realized that Nirvana lies in making use of the five senses of speech, touch, vision, taste and smell in a sacred manner. He understood that Japa, Dhyana, Yoga, Yajna, etc. were mere physical activities. These spiritual practices are needed only for those who are attached to the body. One who abides in the Self need not undertake any of these practices. Buddha taught that Nirvana can be attained only by cultivating Samyak Drishti (sacred vision), Samyak Vaak (sacred speech), Samyak Shravanam

SRI SATHYA SAI CENTRAL COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA
National Spiritual Wing

(sacred listening), Samyak Bhavam (sacred feeling) and Samyak Kriya (sacred action). Today man is polluting his mind because of his evil vision. Once the mind is polluted, how can he expect to attain Nirvana? So, first of all he should develop sacred vision. See no evil, see what is good. Man is subjected to hardships because of his unsacred vision. Evil vision is sure to lead to sinful acts. In fact, it destroys his humanness itself...

What is Nirvana? Today man aspires to attain Mukthi (liberation). What is Mukthi? It is not the attainment of a heavenly abode. Mukthi means freedom from suffering. You need to have Mukthi at three levels – body, mind and soul. For example, you are hungry. When you eat food, your hunger is satiated. This is a kind of Mukthi. Say, you are suffering from a disease. You take medicine and get cured. This is also Mukthi. All this is related to the body. At the mental level, Mukthi means controlling the vagaries of the mind. But true liberation lies in understanding the principle of the Atma which neither comes nor goes. This is termed as Nirvana.

One should have Daiva Preethi, Papa Bheethi and Sangha Neethi (Love for God, fear of sin and morality in society). That is true Nirvana. Be away from sin. Understand that Daiva Sannidhi (proximity to the Divine) is true Pennidhi (wealth). But ignorant people are unable to understand the Divine principle. They feel that they can experience God through meditation. What is meditation? It is a way of life. While you are walking on the road or driving a car, if your vision is not focused on the road, you may meet with an accident. Concentration is necessary in all aspects of life. But concentration does not become meditation. One should go beyond concentration which means the mind should become still. You should be free from thoughts. That is true meditation". *Divine Discourse: May 7th, 2001*

http://www.srisathyasai.org.in/Pages/AshramInfo/Buddha_Poornima.htm