

5. More potent than portents

FIRM faith in God's name will ward off of the portents indicated by the planetary conjunctions in the new year *Pramoduta*. There are indications of various kinds of conflicts and dangers from fire disasters during the year, but many joyous events are also likely. I advise the devotees to carry on their duties in a spirit of dedication, with firm faith in God.

Embodiments of Love! Time is the embodiment of God. Hence one of the names of God is *Samvatsara*. Because Time is the essential spirit of God, He is also known as *Kaalaatmaka* (The Time-Spirit). God is called the protector of the wise. The wise man directs his intelligence and talents towards God, not content with using them for mere living. God is also known as the Lord of Aeons because He creates and dissolves aeons like *Krita Yuga, Dwapara Yuga and Kali Yuga*. God is thus not only the creator of *yugas* (aeons) but also their extinguisher. Hence God is described as *Yugadi-krit*.

Because He contains within Himself everything and protects everything, God is also called *Kaalagarbha* (The One who is the womb of Time).

We regard *Yugadi* as marking the beginning of a new year. In fact, it is one of the forms of God. The entire cosmos is bound by Time. It is permeated by Time. It is a product of Time. It is destroyed by Time. No one can fully comprehend the power of Time.

The *Bharatiyas*, from ancient times, recognising the sacredness of Time, followed certain observances to propitiate Time. They viewed every object, not in terms of its external appearance, but from its inner spiritual essence and based their life on that principle. Even if something appeared externally beautiful, if spiritually it was valueless, *Bharatiyas* used to discard it.

God is not attracted by external appearances

People in the world attach value to all 'kinds of objects, ideals and personalities. God, however, is not attracted by external appearances but values only the inner spiritual urges. Here is a simple example. Parvathi was the most beautiful woman in the world. Conscious of her charms, she wished to wed the Lord Himself. But the Lord does not succumb to external attraction. Disappointed by her failures, Parvathi embarked on a very severe penance. Indifferent to sun-and rain, wind and weather, Parvathi concentrated her thoughts on the Lord, wearing out her body in her *tapas*. Because of the penance she lost all her beauty. All her physical powers were gone. At that moment, the Lord accepted her as one half of his body.

What is the inner meaning of this episode? *Prakriti* (Nature) is Parvathi. This *Prakriti* is filled with various kinds of prides: the pride of wealth, strength, beauty, knowledge, virtues, power and penance. Man's ego is inflated by these different kinds of pride. It is only when man gets rid of these eight categories of pride will he become acceptable to God. So long as ego prevails, the power of the Spirit will not be cognised. Without realising the power of the Spirit man cannot experience the bliss of the Divine. It is out of a recognition of this truth that *Bharatiyas* declared that only through renunciation can immortality be attained.

The primary qualities to be renounced

What is it we should renounce? Is it hearth and home, wealth and possessions? If God could be realised by renouncing these things, Self-realisation should be quite easy. But, it is not the

external appurtenances that have to be sacrificed. The road to man's liberation is barred by three gates' *Kama* (lust), *Krodha* (hatred) and *Lobha* (greed). The primary things which have to be given up are these three. When a man is filled with these three, he is steeped in folly. When a man is subject to *Kama* (lustful desire), he loses all sense of right and wrong. Greed destroys man's devotion. *Krodha* (hatred) undermines *Jnana* (wisdom). The man filled with anger and hatred becomes utterly thoughtless. He loses his sense of discrimination. These three destroy a man's spiritual practices--*Karma*, *Upasana* and *Dhyana* (rituals, worship and meditation). When there are no spiritual practices, man becomes a creature of whims.

Man has a *Vijnana Prajna* (higher wisdom) which is obtained only by spiritual *sadhana*. The purpose of the *sadhana* is to realise the *Atma* (Self). What is the *Atma*? It is the combination of *Manas*, *Buddhi*, and *Prana* (mind, intellect and life). This triune combination is called *Triputi*. Man is the embodiment of this *Triputi*. It is otherwise known as the *Mano-vaak-kaayam* (mind-speech-body complex). *Vaak* (speech), represents life. Man should seek to sanctify these three.

A man's *Karma* reveals his nature

True humanness consists in the harmony of thought, word and deed. When there is no accord between words and deeds, of what value are one's words? It is for the purpose of harmonising thought, word and deed that *Karma*, *Upasana* and *Dhyana* have been prescribed for man. *Karma* is like a mirror in which a man's good and bad deeds are reflected. A man's *karma* reveals the nature of man--whether he is *Satwic*, *Rajasic* or *Tamasic*--even as a thermometer reveals the temperature of the body. Therefore, all actions should be turned towards *Satwic* purposes. The Bhagavad Gita describes such actions as *Nishkama Karma* (desireless actions). It is only when actions are performed in this spirit that the body accomplishes its purpose. It is only when the body and the actions are sublimated that the mind gets transformed. Right action results in purity of mind.

Men today are not aware of the sacredness of action. They are caught up in the pursuit of their desires. They are impelled entirely by selfishness and self-centredness. Man is moved by desires and not by ideals.

What we should aim at is a life inspired by ideals. The ideal life is one in which there is complete harmony and purity in thought, word and deed--*Trikarana* suddhi. Man is judged by the nature of his actions. To make the proper use of time, man has to engage himself in right actions.

Strive to make proper use of Time

Embodiments of Love! Remember that time is fleeting. Time and tide wait for no one. Time will not submit itself to you. You have to surrender to it. Time is its own master. Hence, you must strive to make proper use of Time.

I have often told you how God represents Time in its various aspects. God is described as *Samvatsara*. *Vatsara* means one who is engaged in sport. *Govatsara*, referring to Krishna, means one who sports with cows. *Samvatsara* means "playing with all." This Time is available equally to all--whether he is a millionaire or a pauper. Even an emperor is subject to the passage of Time. Time is a witness to what everyone is doing. On a stage, there are a number of lights. One light is turned towards an actor in the role of a king. Another light is turned towards a beggar. Yet another light is focused on a man reading the Ramayana. Another light may be focused on a fighting scene. Although the lights illumine a variety of scenes, they remain unaffected by the

behaviour of the actors. The lights simply bear witness to the actions but no blame attaches to them for what the actors do. The actors alone are affected by what they do. In the same manner, the Divine, as the Lord of Time, remains only as witness to the passing show. Your actions may be unholy. But Time remains untainted

Your primary duty is to make right use of Time. For this purpose, there is no need for you to wait for the beginning of a new year. Every moment is a manifestation of Time. From seconds to minutes, from minutes to hours, from hours to days and months, and from months to a year--this is the endless procession of Time. The second is the basis for the year. Hence every second should be filled with purposeful action. What is the meaning of a life in which from waking in the morning to sleeping at night one is concerned only about his belly and has no thought of God? What is the result of all this hectic activity? Has it given a single moment of real joy? Purposeful living can come only by contemplation of God. People talk about service. Whom are you serving? When you render service, you are really serving yourself. You have to perform all actions in a spirit of dedication--to please the Divine.

Men today are misusing all their knowledge, wealth, energies and talents for purely material ends and wasting their lives. Leading a worldly life is unavoidable. But in doing so, the spiritual goal should be borne in mind. The goal is spiritual; actions are worldly. It is when actions are dedicated to spiritual ends that they become sanctified. Unfortunately, today even spiritual practices are tainted with mundane motives.

The spiritual heritage of Bharat

It is because of the intensely spiritual life led by kings, sages, scholars and pious men and women in ancient days that even today the spiritual heritage of Bharat has survived the vicissitudes of centuries. Men should realise their inherent divinity and live up to their true nature. If their real nature is forgotten and their behaviour is far from human, they cease to be human beings. For instance, sweetness is the basic quality of jaggery. If it loses its sweetness it ceases to be jaggery and is just a piece of clod. Likewise for man to be regarded as man, he has to manifest his humanness by practising *Trikarana suddhi* purity in thought, word and deed. Without this purity, man is merely a lump of clay.

Man engages himself in various exercises, pursues all kinds of studies and makes various enquiries. What is the use of all this? He fills his mind with a vast mass of information, but there is no change in his behaviour or living. There is no end to economic changes, political and social reforms. But no mental transformation is taking place. People have been listening to Bhagavan's discourses and reading Swami's books for years. How far have you changed as a consequence? Of what use are studies if they are not put into practice even to a small extent?

Portents and warnings of the New Year

Today it is the beginning of the new year *Pramoda*. *Pramoda* means that which is filled with excessive joy. It includes such expressions as *Nityananda*, *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, *Advaitananda* and *Brahmananda*----the supreme forms of bliss. The name of the year should fill us with infinite joy. But when you consider the conjunction of planets at the beginning of the year, it forebodes a period of conflicts. There are likely to be many conflicts with no apparent reason. Even good men are likely to fall out. Apart from conflicts, there are likely to be dangers from fire disasters. Along with these evil portents, there are likely to be joyous events also. This year is a mixture of good and bad events. Life is like that.

Embodiments of the Divine Atma! This is a year in which everyone will have to be on his guard. One should keep a watch on every word he uses. Even a small slip of the tongue may have serious consequences. Every action has to be done after due deliberation. Differences are likely to arise among kith and kin and members of the family circle. Conflicts may arise all over. In such a dire situation, contemplation on God is like a shower of grace. Placing your firm faith in God, if you carry on your duties, none of your actions will have untoward results. Remember the name of God at all times. In the *Kali* age, God's name is the only refuge. Without firm faith in the Lord's name, all other studies and worship are of no avail. Yearn for the love of God. From the beginning of this year, with its dire portents, engage yourself in good thoughts and good deeds and overcome the forces of evil by full faith in God.

Discourse at Kalyana Mandap in Brindavan on Yugadi day, 27-3-1990.

The tendencies towards hate, malice and greed which cause individual and social conflicts and complexes can be overcome by Yoga and Thyaga, the practice of emotional imperturbability and the reduction of wants and mental cravings. This is the message of Bharat, through the centuries.

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