

'Shri Ram'

MESSAGE FOR NEW YEAR 2009

My countless *Pranams* at your feet – please accept. It is the auspicious beginning of the Year 2009. May God bless that this year be auspicious [*mangal-maya*]. May our entire lives be auspicious. Boundless Auspicious and Blessed Wishes. May God's Benevolence and the Blessing of my Gurus be continually showered upon you.

Till yesterday it was the Year 2008. Today is 2009. It is the first dawn of the New Year. Has only the date changed, or has our life also changed somewhat? Yesterday was 31st, today is 1 January. For the common man, it is just a change of the date. But we are not common, we are devotees (*sadhaks*). One more year has passed. The date signals a warning; be warned. No person knows how long one would live – how many days, months or years. The devotee (*sadhak*) is the one who remains fore-warned (*savdhan*).

Today perhaps the need is felt of changing the words. Earlier I used to stress before you to become worthy devotees. Today I am requesting you to become disciples (*shishya*). Strive to become a worthy disciple. The spiritual realm is the ideal relationship between the *shishya* and Guru. This relationship enables all the qualities of the Guru or the God to be imbibed by the disciple. You are adept at becoming a sister, a daughter, a mother, a son and in forging worldly relationships. However, there is unwillingness to become a disciple. Today, at the auspicious beginning of the new year, I am solemnly making the submission to you, devotees, that we all have to become disciples if we want to achieve something from the Guru and – through the medium of the Guru – from God as the Guru is the channel. You can make the Guru your father, your elder brother. However, these relations will hinder the progress. Thus it is imperative to become a disciple as a disciple alone can have the propensity to receive the blessing. The disciple alone can be humble, can learn how to bow and be devoid of ego. Without all these attributes, no person can be the recipient of

God's Grace. You have all blocked your channels, placed obstructions by establishing these worldly relations, of mother, father, son— you are ever ready to be in these roles. These are easy to do.

However, to become a disciple is very difficult and nobody is willing to become one. Once again I request you – without becoming a disciple you would neither be able to receive Guru's Grace nor will you be the recipient of God's Blessings. The first point to note today is — we all need to become disciples ; this is a spiritual relationship between two beings which does not die. The body dies. Therefore, forging worldly relations is a sign of ignorance. Do not forge these; become a disciple. This is a spiritual relationship, an eternal relationship which can never be broken and which has existed from time immemorial. This is not today's relationship and as such it cannot be with the body alone. Thus, recognize the Guru. The Guru is not the body but the essence (*tatva*), just as God is the essence. If you begin from there, the progress will be easy and rapid. Your journey will be airborne, you will become humble. However, if you continue the association with the body, then your journey will continue sometimes on cycle, sometimes on foot. There will be no balance but life itself will be consumed in ups and downs and you shall not reach anywhere.

One devotee who is now a disciple has gone to a Saint. He touches the Guru's feet and says: "I have neither intelligence, nor words nor sentiments. I do not know what I want to ask. Therefore, there are no questions in my heart. I do not even know what all you want to bestow upon me." [Amazed silence]. "If you consider me worthy of learning something or giving me something, then please quickly grant it as I am praying to receive it." The Saint, an enlightened being, is pleased to hear this from the disciple. The enlightened Saint closed his eyes in contemplation; the disciple closed his too. Both sat quietly in meditation. After a while the disciple opened his eyes and bowed and said with tears flowing from his eyes. "Maharaj, how wonderful to have your limitless and unbounded blessings." He left with tears in his eyes. People asked the Guru: "What did he get from the Saint". The Saint replied: "He received everything. All blessings." "Maharaj, neither did

we see you give him something, nor did we see him receive anything. What did he receive and what have you given him?" The Saint replied: "He was a sensible disciple, completely prepared in every way. He did not need to say anything or to take anything. Some things I uttered in my mind and same he received silently in his mind. The meeting of minds led not to two but to oneness. I gave him EVERYTHING." Strive to become a disciple. Devotees -- here it appears that this disciple is of the highest order. One who surrenders his all by surrendering his mind is able to surrender his entire self. The meeting of minds of the Guru and the disciple is able to attract the Supreme Being Himself. There is no further need for the meeting of minds. By the merger they do not become 2 or 11, but become One. They become so powerful that they are able to captivate everyone.

Today a rich man's son is worthless. The father is unhappy; it is a matter of worry. He heard about a particular Saint and the reputation that his mere *darshan* can be life-transforming. The rich man (*seth*) was told to take his son there, hoping that his son's fortunes may change. With that the rich man's own fortunes may change too. No one ever came back from the Saint or his abode (*sthan*) empty-handed. You will not need to ask for anything, he was told. Those who ask are beggars. There is no need for begging from places which are capable of giving. One only needs to take oneself in the refuge of their feet. One does not need to beg the sun for its light and warmth; one does not need to beg for cool feelings from a cold place. Likewise, one does not need to beg before the moon for its coolness and sublimity. One gets everything on its own... asking is a sign of lack of faith. Yet, we enjoy being beggars. Thus, if we do not get something from this place, we go to a second place and then to a third place. We have become professional beggars. Neither have we remained devotees, nor have we the desire to become disciples.

The rich man went and greeted the Saint. The Saint looked at both of them and said: "Ask me five questions." The first question the rich man asked: "*Maharaja-dhiraj*, if one gets the opportunity to ask God something what should one ask?" Today we have this opportunity, as

we are sitting in God's Presence (*darbar*). When we have the God to ask, why not ask HIM, rather than ask human beings, By asking humans, nobody has ever achieved anything. If you gain something, it is only when it is granted by God. Why not contact HIM? HE is not afar. Where is the need to look for HIM and to find HIM when HE is within us? If you have this much faith, then the matter is resolved — then everything is worked out. In reality, the Guru is one who can install this faith that God resides within one's one self. Contact HIM there. Ring your own number. It is stated by the Sages that you should ask the Almighty for the highest truth. You should ask for a life filled with devotion.

First ask God for a life filled with devotion – without this there can be no sense of fulfilment in life. Without this, there can be no spiritual life. Until one becomes devoted, there can be no fulfillment or progress and life itself cannot be successful. Who has achieved this bounty, what are his signs? What is his creed? Somebody asked: "Can one escape death by singing praises of Almighty (*bhajan-path*), by worshipping God, by devotion to God?" The reply was: "Yes, certainly one can be saved but one cannot ultimately escape from death. Everyone must die. It is possible that one may escape death at a particular moment, but one day, die one must." This is taught by the highest spirituality (*paramarth*). Ask God for this wealth of spirituality.

If you have to ask for some other things, then the next to ask for is wealth earned with honesty and hard-work. Earn you must, but only with honesty and through hard-work. This alone commands respect before God. With dishonest means, you could become a millionaire or a billionaire. But in HIS eyes it means nothing. What is it called- black money? When there is a lot of dishonest money, then there is also the need to dispose it off, as it has to be given away somewhere. May I clarify one thing, what becomes of this kind of charity. People do charity with a lot of enthusiasm. There is no doubt that in *Kaliyug*, charity has a lot of importance. However, this is so only with money earned with honesty.

After honesty, the third question is generosity which means giving in the name of God. But we have deformed charity, as in charity done with black money, the fruit accrues to the person to whom the money legitimately belongs, not to the person who is giving it. Who will receive the fruit of charity? The fruit itself is restless, as it wants to accrue truthfully to the charity. But to whom does the fruit [of this charity] belong? To the one who has given the charity, or the person whose money has been appropriated? God destroys the fruit of such charity. Nothing accrues from it.

We have pondered over three things- spirituality, honesty and generosity. Learn to give only after taking from God. The fourth thing, if you feel the need to ask, you should pray to God to make you choose the righteous path rather than the path of wrong-doing. Follow God closely. Walk behind HIM. We need this, we want to become like this. We draw up long wish-lists as if God is our servant! Just as we give a list to our servant to go to the market for vegetables, likewise we place wish-lists before God. May no ailment afflict myself, or my dear ones, etc. etc. We have prepared long wish-lists. The Sages say: "Learn to follow God. Do not make HIM follow you according to your small, inferior thinking. This should never be done".

The Saint said: "If there is any need to ask for anything further, then ask: 'May my behavior and conduct with everyone be righteous'. Guru Maharaj says "Rich man, once you have been blessed with these attributes, there is nothing else to be asked from God." The rich man's son was sitting and listening. The Saint said: "One who does not have these five qualities, his life is a burden upon earth". The son was deeply affected by this. It is said that with this spiritual communion (*sat-sangati*) the rich man's son's life was transformed. If the life of an incompetent, slothful and lazy person could be changed, then we are the disciples of our Gurus. Why can't our lives also change? These five truths should fill our lives. If you have ask for something from God, ask for these. As these are worth asking for, unlike the many things that we ask for which are worthless and cause restlessness and sorrow. How

touching are some of the precepts of the Sages! We hear them, but we do not imbibe them in our lives.

The inquisitive (*jigyasu*) asked, " Please convey to me the vital essence in one word which I may imbibe in my life. A short span is left, I cannot perform a long journey, as I no longer have the stamina." The enlightened Saint, having observed the curiosity and motivation, says: "Disciple! The essence you are seeking is LOVE. The five attributes which were discussed earlier are all imbued with love. Even the blessings of the five qualities are not required if someone only demands the blessing of love. If in life one can love, then that is sufficient and the rest will take care of itself." Therefore, the Sages say: Love is Ram, Ram is Love. Love is God, God is Love. There can be no two opinions about this. To pray for love, is to pray for GOD HIMSELF.

Bharatji Maharaj is on the way to Chitrakut to persuade Prabhu Ram. Bharat is a *kshatriya*. The inherent nature of a *kshatriya* is to give charity, not to beg. Discarding his nature, Bharatji Maharaj today has become a beggar. Whoever he comes across, he begs before. Bharat has reached *tirtha-raj* Prayag in this way: "Mother – you are a bestower of Grace! Whoever prays to you, their wishes are fulfilled. Please grant my wishes too. I have no interest in material things. I have also given up the four goals worth striving for (*purusharth*). I do not seek the blessings of wealth (*artha*), duty (*karma*), righteousness (*dharma*), nor do I seek salvation (*moksha* or *sadgati*). Please grant me the boon that I may have love at the feet of Prabhu Ram and this love may never cease even after successive births. Such love which, like the moon, does not wax or wane on a full moon night (*puranmasi*) or a moonless night (*amavasya*). May I be blessed with such love which increases every moment (*pratikshan vardhanam*). I do not desire salvation but love at the feet of Lord Shri Ram.

The scriptures describe that Devrishi Narad always comes to watch the playful acts of the Lord (Baal Bhagwan). The Lord is trying to cross the threshold of Nandbaba's home but unsuccessfully. He is requesting the Mother for help. Devrishi Narad is feeling joyous upon observing this beautiful act of the Lord. By the bank of the Yamuna, he is crying upon

recalling this. Somebody asked: "Why are you crying?" Devrishi Narad replied: "I am crying for those who have been liberated and thus are unable to see the divine acts of the Lord."

"Oh Triveni! I do not desire salvation. Grant me the love of the Lord's feet, that too which flows everyday and every moment. Thereafter, I may thus be able to serve the Lord every time I take birth."

Somebody asked Ramakrishna Paramhansa : "Master (*Thakur*), these attachments, worldliness, ego do not disappear." The reply was : "Why do you want to eradicate them, what is wrong with them, dear fellow. They only require a change of direction". If you attach yourself to the world, then only sorrow would follow. If you attach yourself to GOD, you will receive eternal bliss and God HIMSELF."

May our lives be pure in every respect. May our thinking, speech and deeds be the same. Purity in Thought, Purity in Words and Purity in Deeds. May God bless us all. May we become noble and help each other. Being of help to each other is a sign of love. Lord— please keep us on the righteous path. May we never deviate from it even by mistake.

Today is the day to ask God what Bharatji Maharaj had asked, nothing more than that. Pray for a life filled with devotion. Pray for Love at the Feet of the Lord. It is the same thing.

Hearty and Auspicious Wishes. May not just 2009 but your entire life becomes Highly Auspicious (*mangal-maya*)!