

The Sunday Talk Given by Prof. Anil Kumar

“Happy New Year 2010”

December 27, 2009

OM...OM...OM...

Sai Ram

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I wish you all a Happy New Year! May Bhagavan Baba shower His choicest blessings on each and every one of you and your families. May the coming year, 2010, be filled with His Divine grace and blessings. May this year be one of service, dedication, steadfastness and devotion, filled with joy and ecstasy; and may this year take us nearer and nearer, dearer and dearer to the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

You will be glad to know that the Christmas celebration in Prashanthi Nilayam was a grand, thumping success. It has been so every year. Then why should I say that it has been a thumping success? The reason, my friends, is that the crowd in Prashanthi Nilayam for Christmas this year has been more than ever before — perhaps equal to that during Swami’s birthday celebrations.

Secondly, the decorations in Prashanthi Nilayam for Christmas have been unprecedented. All of Sai Kulwant Hall was decorated. Every supporting pillar had a crown of red silk cloth around it with a gold border; hanging, shining stars were glittering all over Kulwant Hall, indicating the star of the east signifying the birth of Jesus Christ — according to which the wise men proceeded. The decorations at the altar near Bhagavan had a Christmas tree. There were balls of silver and gold, as well as Santa Claus, and Christmas bells hanging all around — all of it was really fantastic! These decorations were the first of their kind. I understand that devotees from Atlanta USA undertook the decorations, as described yesterday by Behner, the regional Chairman.

DECORATE THE DECORATOR

Swami appeared in a dream to a devotee and said, “Decorate the Decorator.” And that dream came true. Bhagavan decorates us, and we decorate Him on Christmas day — that was the feeling translated into action yesterday. It was a thrilling, exciting, marvellous experience indeed. Then the Christmas carols by overseas devotees . . . with joy bubbling on their faces, full of devotion, with many smiles . . . pleased Swami very much.

And the Christmas carols presented by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Education Institution and also the Sathya Sai University were of a high order. The orchestra is an annual feature, but this time, the drums added musical flavour to the entire choir; the Christmas choir and the Christmas hymns were really excellent.

And the presentation — the text dramatised in the form of a dialogue, depicting the birth of Jesus Christ — was also very interesting. I pray for Baba’s blessings for all who contributed to the success of the entire proceedings of Christmas . . . those who actively participated, and those who were responsible for the excellent decorations. I pray for Baba’s blessings especially on the “procession children” wearing Christmas costumes and proceeding in front of Bhagavan — these children are again a feather in the cap of the international organisation. Hats off to all of you! May Bhagavan be with you forever and ever.

THE COMING NEW YEAR 2010

On the same wavelength, in the same spirit of joy, I would like to share with you a few ideas to treasure and keep in mind, in the light of the coming New Year 2010.

May this New Year be filled with harmony and love in our families. We have everything today, but we do not have harmony. We do not have love. Let us pray that harmony and love prevail, and that they are bestowed upon us by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in the year 2010.

We also pray to Baba to help us with unity — the identity between the Creator and His creation. When we consider creation as separate from the Creator we may abuse and misuse His creation, leading to pollution at a global level — we have pollution everywhere. Why? Because we consider creation as separate from the Creator. Creation is nothing but a reflection of the Creator. So we have to be respectful, worshipful and grateful towards all of creation, as the Creator and His creation are one and the same.

FROM ZERO TO HERO

I also pray to Bhagavan to instil in us the spirit of heroism . . . because we are not heroes today. We are still zeros in spite of all our achievements, our accomplishments, our money, position, authority and the influence that we command in society. We are in continuous despair, disappointment and despondency. But may this New Year 2010 take us from this role of being zero to the role of a hero, by the Divine grace of our Bhagavan. How is it possible to become a hero? It is possible by following the Master. Follow the Master — follow Bhagavan Baba and His teachings — so that we can be heroic in life.

And I also pray to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba to bless us, so that in the year 2010 we will make an honest effort to know the inherent Divinity within us, the God within. This is true *sadhana*.

EVERY SECOND IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENQUIRE WITHIN OURSELVES

My friends, what are the views of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the New Year? Let us first understand what a year is: a second — every moment — is the basic unit. Sixty seconds make a minute. Sixty minutes make an hour. Twenty four hours make a day. Thirty days make a month. Twelve months make a year. So a year has seconds as the basic unit. Without the second, there is no minute, there are no hours, days, months or years; the whole wheel of time — the entire year — has moments, i.e. seconds, as the unit.

Therefore, the meaning of the New Year is that it calls for a celebration of every second in our life. This second is new, because it has come out of the past second. The next second is fresh and new born because it is born out of the present second. Therefore, let us learn to celebrate every moment of our lives, every second, by being grateful to God for this wonderful gift of human life. Let us be grateful to God for this birth as a human being. It is only a human being who can realise the Divine. It is the human being who is gifted with the intellect of discrimination, the spirit of determination and the spirit of enquiry.

Let every second help to us to enquire within ourselves, such that we will have a new life, a new birth. Every birth of a second can be a new birth in our life. We should understand that every second is a chance given to us to achieve victory. We are in different fields of life . . . professions, business, political careers, social responsibilities, and economic commitment; whatever it may be, let every second be a chance to lead us towards success and victory. Let every second be an opportunity to experience *Atma*, or consciousness, which is inherent within us.

TRUTH IS GOD, GOD IS TRUTH

It is also necessary to know our main duty. (As I often say, whatever I have been sharing with you is Bhagavan's message only). Bhagavan wants to remind all of us about our duty on this New Year's Day. What is our duty? Let us know that God is in our heart — so it has to be pure. You can have a pure heart out of Divine grace. And this Divine grace can be earned by total devotion. And from this total devotion we can experience and realise the Truth. And Truth is God. God is Truth.

Therefore, realisation and experience of Truth are possible by earning God's grace through devotion and dedication. Ultimately, it is God's grace that will help us feel the Divine within our heart, which has to be pure and sacred. This is man's duty; we have to remind ourselves about this on New Year's Day 2010.

Secondly, we should understand that service is most important to feel a sense of identity and oneness with God, because service is based on pure and noble thoughts. It is only a noble thought that prompts you to serve, and it is this service that acts as a step towards Self-realisation. As you serve, you see the Self in you reflected in the person whom you serve. You are not serving anybody. You are serving your own Self, because the Self-consciousness is one and the same — and this is Self-realisation.

Therefore, the New Year should be a meaningful celebration, in full awareness of experiencing the Self by entertaining noble thoughts through the path of service, which is our main responsibility and duty.

TAKE UP THE RIGHT PATH

Bhagavan also wants us to know: this New Year is a warning — indeed, a warning — to you and me — because we have not yet taken up the right path. We have not yet started our spiritual journey. We have not yet reached, or stepped towards Self-realisation. Thus, it is a reminder, besides a warning on this date.

However, we may wonder what we will get by this ‘Self-realisation’ or this experiencing of the Self? It is the sacred duty of every one of us to dedicate our lives to Self-realisation . . . the result is ever-lasting joy. Permanent joy, the blissful state and Divine bliss are guaranteed by proceeding along the path of spirituality and religion.

Baba wants us to celebrate this New Year as an opportunity for Self-enquiry. What do we do? We say, “Good-bye, farewell to the year 2009. Welcome to the New Year, 2010.” Farewell on one side and welcome on the other. Yes, we hope to be happy this year. We hope to be successful this year. But we have not yet been successful. Despite all our resolves, resolutions, and decisions, the peace that we want to experience is cut into pieces, as Bhagavan often says. Let me experience peace within myself, and bring about peace in the community subsequently.

We should also know that our constant search, our constant struggle for power, money, and authority are dead against the effort to be peaceful. You cannot be peaceful if you value money more than peace. You cannot experience peace if you consider position as more important than peace. Therefore, our aspirations for power, authority and money are just the opposite of peace. Let us understand that.

Let us strive to remain in peace by being prayerful, thoughtful, and religious in our individual life. Baba gives us a beautiful example: Here we have a fruit — an orange. This orange has a bitter rind around it. And there is sweet juice inside. Unless you remove the skin, you cannot get this sweet juice. Therefore, removing the skin is akin to discipline. And experiencing the juice inside is equal to peace. So the sweet juice inside is peace, which can come into our experience through discipline, which is removing the rind of the fruit.

And Bhagavan further says that human life is a chance for upliftment. Every New Year, let us remind ourselves: “Oh God, thank You for this chance of life. Oh Bhagavan, thank You for the privilege of being born as a human being. Oh Swami, I am eternally thankful to You for this New Year, because it is another chance for my upliftment, for my advancement, for my spiritual progress, and for the realisation of the ultimate goal of life.”

TRAIN THE MIND

What do we mean by upliftment? Bhagavan clearly tells us these points, which I want all Sai devotees to carefully note. The first point is this: This New Year is a chance first to train our mind. We can train animals; dogs can be trained, and tigers can be tamed. In a circus, lions and tigers are tamed by the ringmaster. Dogs can be trained so much that they get degrees and awards in western countries. But we are not able to train our mind. So the New Year offers us a chance to train our mind. Training the mind means to turn the mind inward.

REFINE OUR INTELLECT AND EMOTIONS

The second point is this: this New Year is a chance to refine our intellect. Refinement of the intellect is very necessary. Why? Our intellect which is intelligent, judgmental, discriminatory,

discreet and decisive will always support our wrong actions. It is clear that we are wrong . . . but the intellect always tries to justify our action. The intellect wants to support it by using all its intellectual gimmicks, reasoning and rationality. But a refined intellect will not support sinful actions or direct your life on the wrong path. A refined intellect will guide you in the right direction.

The third point: this New Year is a chance to develop sacred emotions. We don't have sacred, noble, pure, selfless emotions today. See a newspaper of any country — it is full of bad emotions, bad sentiments. That's why you find restlessness in society today. Right from hijacking a flight to kidnapping a school child, bank robberies, indiscipline and students' agitations — all these show that emotional sentiments rule society today. We are all emotional. But may this New Year 2010, with Baba's grace, bring about a balanced mind and intellect, and not one that is emotional and full of passion.

Another point is this: we should have the determination to possess a strong will; however we suffer from a wavering, shaking, and unsteady will. If we have a strong will, we will never run away from the chosen path. We will never act against the Divine command. We will never turn away from God. Therefore, this year 2010 should help us cultivate and strengthen our will.

EXPERIENCING THE SELF

Finally, may this New Year take us to a state of experiencing the Self in our individual lives. How is it possible? First, let us be convinced that we are not just the physical frame, that we are not just this psychological thinking mind, that we are not this discriminating intellect. Truly, truly we are Divine. May we be convinced that we are the consciousness, the eternal spirit, *Atma*. May this conviction be confirmed in this year 2010.

Bhagavan gives us an example of a silkworm. The silkworm, out of its saliva, will spin all around itself and then die in the web of its own making. The spider dies in the cobweb built by it; it doesn't know that it is going to be entrapped, imprisoned, and encased within a web of its own making. Similar to the spinning of the silkworm or the cobweb of a spider, we keep making so many plans, so many designs, and building up excessive desires and meaningless aspirations. These imprison us, making our lives frustrating, painful and miserable.

Therefore we should escape from these — this is what Bhagavan says. How? My mind designs and my intellect supports all the ambitions in which I am held captive like a prisoner behind bars. Nobody is pushing me into the prison. It is of my own making, with my own thoughts; my own designs are responsible for this imprisonment. How to escape from it? What is the way to be free from this prison of our own making? Baba suggests the following: a spiritual teacher will show you a path out of this prison.

'I AM THE WAY, I AM THE TRUTH'

Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, is a spiritual teacher, a spiritual master. The Holy Bible says. "I am the way. I am the Truth. I am the Life." So a spiritual teacher will show us the way to escape from this encasement, this imprisonment of our own making.

The second way is this. We need to remember that Bhagavan Baba, God, Christ, or any other name that you give to the God within you as conscience, guides you properly. Follow the master; the master is one's own conscience. The conscience will correctly guide you. You can

depend on the conscience. Don't follow the body, as it is a water bubble. Don't follow the mind, as it is a mad monkey. Follow your conscience. That takes you towards the goal.

Let us understand that we have made a mockery of our lives. We have made life a joke; we have become jokers. We have not taken life purposefully, seriously. We have not understood the value of life. May this New Year 2010 help us to take life in the right spirit . . . not as a clown . . . but as a hero, so as to realise the significance of life in full spirit and depth.

PAST IS HISTORY, FUTURE IS MYSTERY

This year 2010, we should all resolve to forget the past. Baba was mentioning in the Christmas message, "Forget the past."

"I have committed so many sins and crimes in the year 2009." So what? 2009 is gone. It will never come back. Do not brood over the past; don't think of the future, because it is yet to come. Past is history. Future is mystery. Where is life? Right now! This moment. Therefore this New Year 2010 should take us into this moment of life, which is existential, which is the reality. We should know that human life is not merely for our livelihood or *annanveshana*, to eke out our living. No! It is *Atmanveshana*; it is gifted to enquire into the true Self.

Bhagavan was saying in His Christmas discourse, "Why this human life? It is to discover my true nature; to identify my spirit, Self, consciousness which is Divine." And life is worth living only then, or else life is just wasted garbage.

Therefore my friends, the mind and the intellect are not merely for living. They are to know the essence of life, the fruit of life. Regarding this Swami says, "If you want to see your face, turn the mirror towards it. If you turn the mirror in the opposite direction, how will you see your face? Similarly, let the mind and intellect turn inward; only then can you see the Self blossom." The flowering of the Self, the blossoming of the Self, and the experience of the Self is possible only if we turn inwards.

Baba tells further that in a busy, crowded place like Prashanthi Nilayam, we acquire many acquaintances and contacts. We go on questioning, "Who are you, who are you?" My friend, this life is not given to know everyone. This life is not given to enquire who is who. This life is given to know who *you* are.

KNOW THY SELF

Baba repeatedly said in His Christmas discourse, "Put a question to yourself, 'Who am I?'" Is it not ridiculous to know everyone without knowing your own Self? Is it not shameful to know everybody, without knowing one's own Self? Therefore in 2010, instead of questioning everybody, know yourself. Let everyone put a question to themselves asking, 'Who am I?' It is ignorance to know others; it is bliss to know one's own Self through self-enquiry.

Baba was saying in the Christmas discourse, "This is my paper; you are not the paper. This is my car; you are not the car. Then who are you?" Then Swami said, "You are *Brahman*, the eternal, the supreme God, the essential Divinity. You are God." In Sanskrit, a year is called *Samvatsara*. And it is the name of God also. *Samvatsara* is the name of God and the year, meaning that He is the master of time, designer of time, transcending time. Let us worship Him; let us contemplate on Him.

Baba also says, “On this New Year’s day, let us use our intellect to know and follow the essence of the *Avatar* and His teachings with a firm determination.” Therefore, may this intellect know the *Avatar*, God incarnate and His teachings, so that we can implement and practice them scrupulously in our lives now and hereafter.

May this New Year 2010 take us from old mistaken ideas to sublime sacred thoughts. Until now our ideas may have been narrow, mistaken. But from now on, we should go to the heights of sublime and sacred thoughts. May 2010 be filled with all the good qualities like compassion, love and sympathy.

SELF-PUNISHMENT

Above all, let me not wait for anybody to assist me. Let me not allow anybody to comment or criticise or evaluate or decide or judge my life. Let me judge my own life. Let me assess my own life. Let me evaluate and calculate my own life. And if I find fault with myself, let me not hesitate to punish myself . . . self-punishment. I don’t have to be punished by anybody else. I know the mistakes that I have committed. So to ensure that I don’t commit them again, self-punishment is necessary. That should be the call for the New Year 2010.

May 2010 help us to control our emotions, our anger, our jealousies, our enmities, our rivalries and our differences of opinion; because these feelings will not only harm you, they will also harm society and the neighbourhood. So let us reduce, let us cut down our anger in this New Year 2010.

DEPEND ON GOD

Let us also resolve firmly to depend on God in this New Year 2010. We depend on our bank accounts. We depend on our friends. We depend on our positions. We depend on our scholarships. No, my dear friends. Let us depend on God. Let us rely on God, because there is nothing we cannot achieve in this life with the power of God.

I would like to quote some of Baba’s sayings and teachings relevant to the occasion of the celebration of New Year 2010.

*Manchikalamu Padavulu Manchi Bratuku Koruchunduru,
Manchikalamu Padavulu Manchi Bratuku Korucunduru*

People want good times, favourable times, fortunes and a happy life.

*Koraboru Manchibuddhulu Gyanambu Manchi Nadata.
Koraboru Manchibuddhulu Gyanambu Manchi Nadata*

*We don’t desire to be good.
We don’t pray for goodness.
We don’t pray for good behaviour.
We don’t pray for wisdom.*

But we want good positions, a good life and good living. Therefore we should change the direction of our thoughts. Let us pray for wisdom — that is the beginning. That wisdom is the royal path that will take you towards the Godhead and God-realisation.

Manasunandu Manchi Matalanduna Manchi Nadatalayandu Manchi.

Be good in the mind, in your words and in whatever action you undertake

Manasunandu Manchi - Goodness in the mind.

Matalanduna Manchi - Goodness in your words and expressions.

Nadataluyandu Manchi Podamukunna - If there is no good behaviour . . . without good words, without good expressions, without good mind, without good behaviour . . .

*Sai mimmu Mecchi Santoshamu Etulicchu
Sai Mimmu Mecchi Santoshamu Etulicchu Shanthi Prema Daayi Sathya Sai
Shanthi Prema Daayi Sathya Sai*

. . . how can the ever loving and embodiment of peace, Sai, be pleased and grant you bliss ?

If you're a pervert and are going in the wrong direction without goodness, how do you expect Him to come and confer peace and joy on you? Baba questions this clearly.

*Panulayandhali Punya Paapamula Batti
Anubhavamu Teera Jeevulu Avanibuttu*

*As is the merit or sin of an individual's action
So is his life experience.*

As Baba points out in the Christmas discourse, "We are born because of the consequences of our past actions, be it due to merit or sin." The whole cycle of human life goes around one fundamental Divine law, 'Reaction, reflection and resound.' We are today a reaction. We are born as a reaction, as a reflection, as a resound, based on our past actions.

Therefore let us know that: *Kanuka Satkaryamulucheyagarigireni
Satkaryamulucheyagarigireni*

You must undertake good actions. Do good, be good, see good.

*Deva Me Todugaanundu Dharaniyandu
Daiva Me Todugaanundu Dharaniyandu*

God will be around you and with you.

God will be with you. God is with you, in you, above you, below you and around you if you proceed along the right path, the Divine path. That is what Bhagavan says to every one of us.

And we should also pray for what, my friends? Let us say, “In 2010, Oh Baba, Oh God, teach me how to pray.” It was Jesus who taught us to pray, “Oh God in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come.” This is Our Lord’s Prayer, as taught by Jesus. Baba has also given us a prayer. Baba also wants us to pray — like the Lord’s Prayer. What is it?

*Sirulakemi Prasanna Chittundavainacho
Chaalunaku Adhe, Padivelu Tandri.*

*Not riches and prosperity do I pray for,
But for being that person by which You are pleased with me
That is all I need, O Father.*

Baba, I am not bothered about plenty and prosperity. “Oh Swami, if You are pleased with me, that is enough. If You are happy with me that is enough for me in this life.”

What is the second prayer?

*Sukha Sampadalakemi Sumukundavainacho
Sukha Sampadalakemi Sumukundavainacho
Chaalunaku Adhe Padivelu Tandri*

*Not for comforts and luxuries do I pray,
But for doing those actions that will bring Your approval,
That is all I need, O Father.*

Let me not bother about comforts, conveniences, luxuries, extravaganzas, pomp and show. But if You are positively disposed towards me, if I am in Your good books, that is enough for me Swami in this life.

Korikalaku Emi Mee Katakshamu Unnacho,

Chaalunaku Adhiye Padivelu Tandri

*Not fulfilment of my unending desires,
But give me Your grace,
That is all I need, O Father.*

Life is burdened with unfulfilled desires; I am tired, vexed with these unending desires. Oh Bhagavan! It is enough if I deserve Your grace; that is enough Swami.

*Vibhavaniki Emi Nee Abhimanamunnacho Matso
Chaalunaku Adhiye Padivelu Tandri*

*Glory and position are not what I aspire for,
I aspire for a position in Your heart,*

That is all I need, O Father.

Why do I need positions, Swami? If I have a position in Your heart, if I am the recipient of Your love, that is enough for this life, O Swami.

*Icchinaivi Yevo Unnavi Anthe Chaalu
Icchinaivi Yevo Unnavi Anthe Chaalu*

Whatever You have bestowed on me, that is more than enough.

Oh God, what countless blessings we enjoy! How You have showered that benign grace upon me. What was I, before coming to You? And what am I, after coming to You? What was I in the wilderness? What am I at Your Lotus Feet today? What am I? Swami, You have given me enough. Yes!

Adikamulakemi Avi Yepudaina Kalugu

Anything more that God confers will come about in due course of time.

All that You want to give me, and all that You want to bless me with, will happen in due course of time anyway. But Swami, my prayer is this . . .

*Veedu Naa Bhakthudu Ani
Ella Velala Ella Velala NeeKu
NeeKu Oku Reethi Anugrahamunna Chaalu
Oku Reethi Anugrahamunna Chaalu
Veedu Naa Bhakthudu Ani Ella Velala*

'Here is My devotee' is the only statement that I yearn to hear from You at all times.

Swami, of all the desires, the greatest desire and prayer I have is that You would say, "Here is My devotee. You are My devotee." If You say that, it is enough for me. If I enjoy Your grace this way, that is enough for this life. O Bhagavan, this is my prayer for this New Year.

And in this year 2010, help me O God to proceed along the spiritual path. Forgive my trespasses O Lord. Excuse me, so that I can excuse others. Deliver me from evil, O God, lead me not into temptation. Be with me God. Be with everybody. Be in the community. Help us! Guide us! Lead us unto your Lotus Feet! This is our prayer.

May the New Year be full of joy, laughter, purpose and meaning. May Bhagavan be with you forever and ever more. Jai Sai Ram!

*Om Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu
Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu
Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu*

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

