



Visions of the New Millennium Global Peace through Meditation

by Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

Address at the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations

Today we have gathered from all over the globe at a crossroads in time. We meet together to reflect on and to celebrate the past fifty years of the United Nations and to look ahead to a vision of the 21st century. I offer my congratulations to the United Nations on their golden anniversary. Fifty years of organized dialogue among nations of the world is a monumental achievement. We celebrate this golden anniversary of the United Nations at the end of a millennium in which our technological progress has made global communications simple.

The continued existence of the United Nations is a reflection of the growing desire of humanity to achieve lasting peace on our planet. Each member of our global society, therefore, has a shared responsibility toward the attainment of peace. Let us join together, rising above labels and divisions, and set a course for the United Nations and for all people that calls forth the highest aspirations of humanity. If we can do so, posterity will look back on this moment and say that we were leaders who inspired and moved humanity forward in its evolution to a higher consciousness and brought peace to a weary planet.

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This transformation can take place through four steps. First, we need an inspiring vision of the new millennium. Second, moved by that inspiration, we need to live the vision. Third, each of us needs to share and promote the vision to our respective countries, religious groups, organizations, and circles. Fourth, we need to teach people how they can live the vision. In a few words, we need inspiration, meditation, communication, and education to bring about the transformation we so earnestly seek.

Have a Vision

Let us begin with a vision of a second renaissance on earth - a time for renewal and enlightenment where noble human values illumine every heart. It is time to hear the laughter of every child on this planet instead of their cries of hunger and screams of terror. It is time to see families live out their destiny in peace and joy instead of being torn apart by war and violence. It is time to smell the fragrance of flowers in instead of the stifling smell of pollution. It is time to see people of all nations, colors, and religions embrace one another, conscious of their unity while celebrating their differences. The time for rededication and renewal is now. Let us seize the moment for the sake of our children, our planet, and our souls.

Let us join together to offer an action plan to lay the foundation of the United Nations' future. In the past, people have focused on bringing about peace in the strife-torn parts of the world. Despite the best of efforts, there is still war and violence. I would like to share with you another point of view, a shift in thinking, and offer a solution that is so simple, it is startling. It is not my solution, but one that already lies in each one of our hearts. It is one that has been taught by the saints, mystics, philosophers, and prophets that have walked the face of this earth. That message is that our efforts in making other countries, communities, and people peaceful are only a part of the solution. The missing key is that we begin finding peace within ourselves. In truth, peace begins within us.

At this critical juncture in the United Nations' growth, it is time for new solutions. So many attempts have been made to bring about outer peace and so much good has been accomplished over the past fifty years. But peace still eludes us. What has been missing has been spoken of since the dawn of time. If we scan the pages of history, we will find that the great saints and founders of every religion brought to the world a simple message- peace lies within. The process of achieving inner peace is called meditation. If we want lasting outer peace, then let each of us explore inner peace.

Live the Vision

For this transformation we need to live the vision ourselves. We are busy trying to make other countries peaceful, but do we have

peace in our own countries? We are busy trying to make every other community peaceful, but do we have peace in our own communities? We are busy worrying about whether the family next door is peaceful, but do we have peace in our own household? We are busy worrying about making everyone around us peaceful, but do we have peace within our own selves? Let us turn this formula around. If we want to bring about world peace, let us first find peace within ourselves. If we want to have global peace for our generation, let us begin with personal peace through meditation.

Let us make a commitment from this day forward to explore inner peace within ourselves by practicing meditation. By meditating, we discover the Light of the Creator shining within each of us. Contact with the inner Light brings about a profound transformation. We are bathed in love. We realize the same Light that is within us is in every human being and each living creature. We recognize that we are all souls, drops of the one Creator, and as such we are all brothers and sisters in the Lord. We see all creation knit together in the silken bonds of love. We start to treat all humanity as members of one family and begin to love, respect, and serve one another. We want to eliminate the pain and suffering in the lives of others for we realize that the pain of others is our pain and the joy of others is our joy. We must feel the world's pain, and then heal the world's pain. The dreams and goals of the United Nations can become reality as a by-product of inner spiritual growth.

By realizing our oneness through meditation we see that we are all one family. Hunger will be eliminated, because who would let their family go hungry? By realizing our oneness through meditation, poverty will be eliminated, because who would let their family be homeless in the streets? By realizing our oneness through meditation, war will be eliminated, because who turns a gun on one's brothers or sisters?

If we discover peace and happiness through meditation, we would live our lives in a state of calm and equipoise, and we would radiate that peace to others. Anyone who came in contact with us would naturally feel peaceful. We would no longer have to pray for peace - we would be peace. Meditation elevates us to achieve an angle of vision in which we become a witness to the unity in the fabric of life. We look upon the world as an embroidered whole. All life may appear like a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes but, in reality, the texture is the same: the texture of love. Imagine a world in which everyone lived this vision. How many wars would come to an end? How many cities would become safe? How many community problems would be solved? How many domestic fights would dissolve? We would have a world permeated with peace where people could live their lives safe from the threat of crime and war.

Share and Promote the Vision

The third step in making the vision of the new millennium a reality is to share and promote it in our respective countries, religious groups, organizations, and circles. Let us make a commitment today to be an inspiration to others by spending some time daily in meditation ourselves and encouraging others in our countries and religions to do the same. If we are leaders or representatives of a nation, a religion, a spiritual path, or an organization we must set an example. We can not merely engage in preaching and lecturing. We ourselves must live a life of meditation, ethical values, and love for all.

When people see us living up to the noble ideas taught by the great saints, philosophers, and humanitarians they will be motivated to lead such a life themselves. No saint or enlightened being taught hatred and violence. Yet throughout history we find, time and again, religious wars bringing untold death, destruction, and misery. We find throughout history, people of all religions at one time or another killing in the name of God. We even find followers of the same religious founder divided into different sects within the same religion engaged in religious persecution and wars with each other. Among nations, we find people taking pride in their own way of doing things. People come to believe that their own culture and customs are the best and begin to denigrate those from other cultures and religions. Instead of differences being a source of beauty, diversity, and joy they become a breeding ground of bigotry, intolerance, and hatred. It is time to call a halt to the fires of hatred and violence, and we can do so by first extinguishing these flames within ourselves. Before we heal the world we must heal ourselves. Before we can bring lasting peace to the world we must have peace ourselves. Through meditation we can attain this state of peace. Then we can radiate it to our families, communities, religious groups, and countries.

Once someone asked a gardener to plant a certain kind of tree. The gardener replied, "But this tree grows so slowly that it will not reach its maturity for a hundred years." The man replied, "Then, we have no time to waste - plant it today." Similarly, let us not waste a single moment - let us plant the tree of peace today. Let us start now by learning a simple technique of meditation that will bring about this desired peace. This process of inversion lies at the core of every religion, and has been taught by all saints and founders. My own spiritual teachers, Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj and Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj, made an intense comparative study of all religions and found that at the heart of each lies an underlying message: There is Light within. There is a divine Sound Current within. There is universal love within, and we can find all these gifts through meditation. Search the sacred works of the world and you will find references to the same Light and Sound, whether it is called *Word* in the holy Bible, *Kalma* in the Muslim

scriptures, *Jyoti* and *Sruti* or *Naad* in the Hindu scriptures, *Sraosha* in the Zoroastrian scriptures, *Naam* in the Sikh scriptures, or *Baang-i-Asmaani* in the Sufi scriptures, or many other terms in other religions. By merging in the divine Light within, we will find eternal love, eternal happiness, and eternal peace.

Love, which is lying dormant in each of us, is awakened by nonviolence. Nonviolence is not limited only to humans, but extends to animals, plants, insects, and each living form. It is nonviolence that awakens the love in us, and that love is actually the love of God. Once the love of God is awakened, we are not going to hurt any other living form. It is ahimsa or nonviolence that makes one a true human being - the human being that God wants us to be. When nonviolence comes in the presence of violence, then with joy in its heart, nonviolence sacrificed itself and lets its own blood flow. It is one who walks on the path of nonviolence who removes the pain and anguish of the whole world. When we look at the lives of the great saints and mystics, whether it was Buddha, Krishna, Mahavira, Moses, Christ, Mohammed, or Guru Nanak, we see how much they sacrificed - not for themselves, but for the world. Without sacrifice, there can be no nonviolence. Without sacrifice there can be no love. Without sacrifice there can be no selfless service. Without sacrifice we can not be a true human being. It is that sacrifice that we have to make and that God expects us to make if we want to walk on the path of nonviolence. If we walk on the path of nonviolence, the whole world comes close to us and we draw close to the whole world. Our life is then lived for every human being who shares the planet. Strife, tension, and wars will disappear, and if we are at peace ourselves, our communities, our nations, and the whole world will be at peace.

Some may ask, "If I had inner peace, how can I alone bring about outer peace. In reply to this I would like to relate an anecdote. A man was walking along the beach and he spotted another man from afar picking something up, twirling around and tossing it in the water. The man kept repeating these movements, so the first man was curious, approached him and asked, "What are you doing?" The man called back, "I am throwing the starfish back into the ocean. If I do not do this, they will die on the shore." Scanning the beach, the first man said, "But there are thousands of starfish on the beach. What difference can you possibly make?" Without the least hesitation the second man picked up another starfish, threw it back in the water and said, "It made a difference for that one!"

We too can make a difference for all humanity and for posterity by the actions we choose to take. Let us begin with our own transformation and pursuit of peace.

Teach Others How They Can Live the Vision

Along with promoting the vision, we need to teach people how they can live the vision by giving them the tools to do so. We need to teach people how to meditate, how to live in a nonviolent, peaceful way, and how to help end the suffering of others. Let us teach people to reject the infliction of pain and instead infect affection and love. We need to set an example and teach others how to make all decisions in a manner that will not cause pain, injury, or death to any being, but instead will bring about peace and harmony to all.

In this century, there are two noble examples of saints who lived this vision and taught others to do the same. One example was Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj, the great saint of Sant Mat and Surat Shabd Yoga in India, founder-president of the World Fellowship of Religion and convener of the first Human Unity Conference held in India in 1974. Thirty-nine years ago, he addressed the 9th General Session of UNESCO, saying: "Without love, no lasting peace can be maintained in the world and without the spiritual aspect of man being realized you cannot have true love." He cited instances from the past in which heads of state consulted the saints and enlightened beings of their times in matters affecting humanity as whole and asked them for solutions to carrying out the work of their state without recourse to physical force or violence. Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj then said, "If similar guidance can now be had, it would go a long way to secure peace in the world."

The second example of one who continued this work for peace was Sant Darshan Singh Ji Maharaj, founder of the Science of Spirituality, a renowned Urdu mystic-poet who won four Urdu Academy Awards for his poetry, and president of the 6th World Religions Conference. He lived a life of meditation, service to humanity, and love for all and taught others how to lead such a life. He wrote in his verse:

*Life is not a dagger stained with the blood of hatred;
It is a branch filled with the flowers of love and
compassion.*

In another verse he said:

*Life itself is restless for peace in the world,
Let its noble dream materialize.
May the garden be illumined with wave after wave of
light.
May the wealth of love grow greater and greater and
enrich every heart.*

It is my heartfelt prayer that we see the fulfillment of their mission as we enter the new millennium. We are holding gatherings where civic, religious, and social leaders can explore these ideas in such forums as the annual International Conference on Human Integration and the Global Conference on Mysticism. We convened the 7th World Religions Conference in which we held the first "Spiritual Dialogue on Meditation, Prayer, and Nonviolence." Next September 1996, we will hold the Sixteenth International Human Unity Conference.

The United Nations can take a more active role in leading the world into an era of peace if each member of the United Nations, from the ambassadors and delegates to its agencies and NGO's, becomes an expert in peace by learning meditation and encouraging others to practice it as well, seeing the Light of God in every human being, and letting love, nonviolence, and service for all humanity guide their every decision.

So let us sit for a few moments to learn a simple method of meditation and then share it with others. The technique is simple and after learning it, you can practice it in your homes every day. Meditation is the process of concentration and can be practiced by people of any age, any religion and background. We concentrate our attention at a point between and behind the two eyebrows known as the seat of the soul, the single eye, or the third eye. By focusing our attention there, we come in contact with a current of Light and Sound which leads to a state of higher consciousness and peace. In each religion one finds references to a power that flows out from the Creator. This power has two manifestations Light and Sound. This current flows out from the Creator and also returns to the Source. When we withdraw our attention to the seat of the soul, we can tap into this inner Light and Sound. Contact with it fills us with a profound peace, love and happiness, more fulfilling and blissful than any we knew on earth. So if you would like to meditate, sit in a pose that is most comfortable to you. Close your eyes. Focus your attention in the field of darkness lying in front of you. Do not put any strain or tension on the forehead or eyes. You are not looking in front of you with your outer eyes. Instead, it is your inner eye that sees the darkness. Continue looking into the middle of whatever is in front of you with closed eyes. To keep your mind from distracting your gaze by sending thoughts, repeat any name of the Creator with which you feel comfortable. Repeat that Name slowly and mentally and not out loud. Continue concentrating on whatever comes in front of you. By concentrating in front of you, Light will sprout forth. You may see Light - Lights of any color, white, gold, blue, red, yellow, orange, purple, etc. You may see an inner vista of sky, stars, moon, and sun, or other inner experience. Keep looking into the middle of whatever you see in front of you. That Light will give you peace. Let us sit now in meditation for a few moments and I pray that

each of you receive whatever is best for you. (Meditation for a few minutes).

As you can see, this technique is very simple and can be practiced by people of every country, religion, age group, and walk of life. You can practice it in the comfort of your home or anywhere you want. If each person practices this, it will not be long before we find that everyone attains inner peace. With an inner core of peace nurturing our lives, we will live in the world in a spirit of positive mysticism. Meditation is not life-negating; instead it is active. Along with meditation, we live in the world, make a positive contribution to society, and do our best to help make the world a better place. As a by-product, outer peace will be a reality.

So let us begin today with this simple action plan: Inspiration, meditation, communication, and education to bring about transformation. As we set forth a vision for the United Nations for the 21st century, it is my hope and prayer that our meditation today be the start of a continuous exploration of inner peace so that all of us, our families, our children, our grandchildren, and posterity will finally experience inner and outer peace. May God bless us in our endeavors. Thank you.

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