

## Humility

*"Inverse is the game of the beloved. The Guru spread the etiquette of humbly touching the feet of the saints and recited 'Sat Naam' Mantra for one and all."*

## Feeling Love

*"Baba Nanak visited the pilgrimage centres of the major world religions and by participating in the ceremonies, he observed them minutely. People were busy in performing the rituals of the ceremonies but since being bereft of loving devotion, the rituals were of no avail. Having gone through the Vedas and Simritis (Hindu scriptures), one finds that Brahma has nowhere written about the Sentiment of love. Without loving devotion no one will get any place anywhere in Kali Yug. If somebody now, in spite of being an individual of importance and achievement, erases from his self an attitude of 'I know' and prefers to be called lowly, only then will his spiritual practice yield fruit."*

## Repetition of the Holy Name

*"In Kali Yug only repeating the name of the Lord is considered grand."*

## Communal Prayer

*"Without the holy congregation of the saints and the recitation of the Gurus hymns even the very good person will not find acceptance."*

## THE WORLD BOWS TO GURU NANAK

Guru Nanak won the hearts and minds of people from many different religious groups and therefore is known by many different names. As a summary he is known as:

- Guru Rimpoche or Nanak Lama by Nepalese and Tibetan Buddhist monks
- Hadhrat Baba Nanak by Ahmadiyya Muslims
- Guru Nanak by Hindus, Sikhs and Yogis

## A SUMMARY OF THE NEW AGE SPIRITUALITY

Sikhs believe that the new age spirituality specifically for this age is the recognition of the oneness of religion and the oneness of mankind. The Sikh Gurus revealed teachings designed to bring about this cosmic brotherhood.

## At an Individual / Family Level

*Knowing Through Experience* - Living spirituality (Naam) instead of just assuming a set of beliefs

*Life Long Learning* – in all aspects of life including emotional, physical, spiritual, mental etc.

*Saint Soldier* – a spiritual practice is now a balance of meditation and a martial spirit.

## At a Community Level

*Self Sufficiency* - The development of self sustaining communities through the 3 core principles of Earning an honest living, Meditation and giving back to the community with both time, skills and money.

## At a Global/Cosmic Level

*Unconditional Love* - Heart centred individuals building a democratic society based on unconditional love.

*Total Equality* - Recognising humanity as one and helping to create a society where people are treated equally in economic, political social and spiritual spheres of life.

*Scientific Advancement* - A harmonisation between Science and Religion

*Environmental Consciousness* - Love, respect and responsibility towards mother Earth and its resources

# New Age Spirituality

## WHAT IS THE NEW AGE SPIRITUALITY?

Each age has a spirituality which dominates it. Progressive revelation is the idea that God will reveal or re-reveal Truth, over time according to the needs of humanity. Bhai Gurdas, the first Sikh Philosopher, recorded a summary of the main Prophets which God has sent to Earth in the four ages (Yugs) and has mentioned the rules which humans need to use in our current age to ensure their spiritual practices bear fruit.

## BACKGROUND ON THE AGES

There are a total of four ages (Yugs) called the Golden Age (Sat Yug) lasting 1,728,000 years; Silver Age (Treta Yug) lasting 1,296,000 years; Bronze Age (Dvapara Yug) lasting 864,000 years and the Iron Age (Kali Yug) lasting 432,000 years. A full cycle of the four Yugs is called a Maha Yug totalling 4,320,000 years.

### The 1<sup>st</sup> Age

In the Golden Age, people had conquered anger and all the elements of nature were in harmony with each other. People lived for thousands of years and they would construct palaces, forts and grand mansions. A sinful action by even one person would require the whole of humanity to pay the karmic consequences. In this age Vishnu came to earth as Han-savar and explained the problems pertaining to the nature of the world, reality, and existence also known as Metaphysics.

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> Age

In the Silver Age, the lifespan of humans decreased and illusion, attachment and ego inflated. A sinful action by one person would require a whole country to pay the karmic consequences. During this time the Sun-dynasty was in power in the form of the Kshatriya (Warrior) Caste and Ram was the incarnation of Vishnu in this age.

### The 3<sup>rd</sup> Age

In the Bronze Age, the lifespan of humans decreased further and the Yadav dynasty became powerful. Vishnu was incarnated as the magnificent Krishna.

## The 4<sup>th</sup> Age

We are currently living in the Iron Age and the following is said of this age:

*"There will be numerous rulers fighting with each other. They will have no character. Violence, falsehood and wickedness will be the order of the day. Piety and good nature will dwindle slowly. Passion and lust will be the only attraction between the sexes. Women will be the objects of sensual pleasure. Dishonesty will be considered acceptable behaviour. Learned people will be ridiculed and put to shame and the word of the wealthy person will be the only law. Nobody will worship anyone and the sense of respect for the younger and elder will vanish into thin air."*

## SPIRITUAL DISUNITY AND SUFFERING IN THE 4<sup>TH</sup> YUG

Four castes and four ashrams were established. Then ten orders of Ascetics and twelve orders of Yogis came into being. Further Jangam (followers of Lord Shiva), Sramans (Buddhist monks) and Digambrs (Jains), also started their different ways.

Alchemy, Tantra, Mantra and Miracles became everything for people. Some teachers were instructing people to worship rocks and some were guiding people to worship cemeteries. Some were worshipping moon, the sun, earth and sky. Others were worshipping air, water, fire and Yama the god of death.

With common folk getting divided into many different groups, the true path was nowhere to be found. Due to this confusion Muhammad, the beloved of God, was born and the world was now bound to roza (fasting), id and namaz (5 prayers). Pirs (Sufi Masters), Paigambar (Prophets), Aulias (Sufi Saints), Gaus (Defenders) and Qutabs (Religious Beggars) came into being in many countries. The temples were replaced by mosques. Unfortunately the less powerful groups were forcibly killed and the Earth became replete with sin. The Armenians and Byzantines (both Christian groups) were declared apostates (Kafirs) by Muslims and they were decimated in the Battle fields.

## THE ARRIVAL OF GURU NANAK

As long as God does not descend on Earth in the form of a True Guru, no mystery can be understood. The Guru and God are one. The Guru is the true master and the whole world craves for Him. The Guru rises like the sun and the darkness is dispelled.

The Lord listened to the cries of humanity and sent Guru Nanak, an incarnation of God. Guru Nanak is the Prophet / Messiah / Avatar who has come to redeem and give light to humanity in the Iron Age (Kali Yug).

With the emergence of Guru Nanak, the mist cleared and the light scattered all around. Wherever Baba put his feet, a religious place was erected and established.

All the siddh-places now have been renamed on the name of Nanak. Every home has become a place of dharma (spirituality). Baba liberated all four directions and nine divisions of earth.

Guru Nanak declared that empty rituals, Yajna (pouring offerings into a divine fire), symbolism, religious garbs and worship of the human guru was the discipline of the earlier ages. Karma and yoga are activities of the body and both of these are momentary and perishable.

During Guru Nanak's journey to Mecca, the Guru was asked whether a Hindu is great or a Muslim. Baba replied to the pilgrim Hajjis that, without good deeds both will have to weep and wail. Only by labelling yourself a Christian, Buddhist, Hindu or a Muslim will not provide acceptance in the court of the Lord. As the colour of safflower is impermanent and is washed away in water, likewise the colours of religiosity are also temporary.

## WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL KEYS FOR SALVATION IN KALIYUG?

Guru Nanak taught a new universal, non-divisive approach to spiritual practice. Bhai Gurdas describes four crucial ingredients which every member of humanity should include as part of their spiritual practice to ensure spiritual fruit.