



## NEW YEAR MESSAGE 1999

Of all the religions in the world, Hinduism presents the largest number of energy-forms known as '*Devas*' and '*Devotas*'. An '*Ishta*' or the desired deity is the one to be worshipped mainly besides others. There are thirty-three crores of such energy forms. Every Hindu, therefore, worships a number of them. The important five prescribed are known as the '*Panchdevotas*'. They are Shiva, Vishnu, Surya, Ganesh and Hanuman. Again there are '*Adhi-Devotas*'. Most of the people, it is found, are not clear as to which ones and how many of these deities have to be worshipped, and for what purpose. As a result, they visit different temples, carry on worship of one deity or the other on the prescription of the *Pandit*, and lack in focusing their thought on one form or on the qualities of that form. At times, the roles of some of these deities seem to be cutting-across those of others. To add to this problem is the method of worship varying widely in various parts of the country and abroad, and there is a certain amount of assertiveness among various groups, sects following different paths. An ordinary Hindu finds it difficult to cope with this situation.

Christianity, Islam, Sikhism and Buddhism do not have these problems. The devotees in these religions only have to focus on the preaching of the divine incarnations that created their religion and pray to the Almighty. In some of these religions there have been followers of the main incarnation who interpreted the roles and preachings of these religions.

Incarnations, have been born from time to time, to reestablish a society in the process of moral degeneration. The activities of the incarnations reveal that their divine activities go through a certain process. Leaving aside the exception of Lord Krishna, whose divine activities started even before and immediately after His birth, in case of others the earlier parts of their lives went through certain amount of trials and tribulations. At times, such trials and tribulations have been extremely strenuous, but the incarnations have overcome them. The initial stage is self experiential for them - God in human form experiencing Himself. During that period some of the other spiritual souls who are already born or taken birth during the period of the incarnation also undergo certain amount of such experience. At a predetermined point of time, under the leadership of the incarnation a crisis gets precipitated, often in the form of war. As a result, the evil forces are annihilated.

History of Hinduism in terms of *Ramayana*, *Mahabharat*, Muslim religion in terms of wars conducted by Prophet Mohammed; Sikhism in terms of activities of the Sikh Gurus, particularly Guru Gobind Singh, are a pointer towards such role. Thus, destruction is as much a divine role as creation. After this powerful action of destruction of evils a new order or society is established based on principles of *Dharma* (rules of balanced sustenance), and thereafter the incarnations leave the human body.

An incarnation, even after He has left His human embodiment, one aspect of His mission continues in which He guides people in a subtler form. That is the role of *Sadguru*. Sri Krishna as an incarnation changed the social order through *Mahabharat* but thereafter, His role remains till today as a 'Sadguru' in *Geeta*. While following *Geeta* millions of Hindus are following the path laid down by the *Sadguru* aspect of Sri Krishna. Similarly, through Bible, Koran, Guru Grantha Saheb, Christ, Prophet Mohammed and the Sikh Masters continue their divine roles. The followers of these religions don't worship numerous deities, they only pray to God, the Almighty and follow the path prescribed by the Prophets or Sadgurus and their preachings. Search of God, search of self and peace need not necessarily be a difficult or complicated process. The Incarnations/Sadgurus have always tried to offer the simplest path to humanity.

### **The easiest way to spiritual evolution is:**

1. to believe that the *Sadguru* is the divine incarnation to lead people towards temporal and spiritual development.
2. to follow the path laid down by him, as reflected in his earthly conduct and preachings.
3. to understand that no man however he strives, can evolve in the spiritual field beyond a certain limit without the help and kindness of a *Sadguru*. Even incarnations like Sri Krishna and Sri Rama, in the process of experiencing the God state in them, had to be helped by Sandeepani and Vasishtha, the *Sadgurus* of their time.
4. to focus the entire spiritual consciousness on the *Sadgurus*, both in *Sakara(formed)* or *Nirakar(formless)*, and worship them.
5. to believe that the Guru is the repository of all divine powers and therefore, He alone should be made the mainstay of one's life. All needs, worries and questions should be projected towards him.

Experience has shown that the people devoted to *Sadgurus*, evolve faster in the spiritual field than those following other methods, because such devotees believe in surrender to divinity which is the ultimate requirement for spiritual evolution.

Every devotee of Shirdi Sai, therefore, on this New Year, should decide whether he wants to hold Baba as his 'Ishta' - the only one to be prayed, worshipped and called in time of need. Personally, for me Sri Sai is the only one and the ultimate. I don't seek anything from elsewhere. Who would like to join me?