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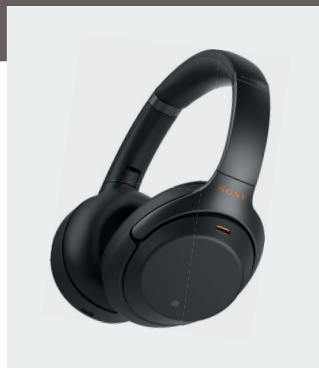
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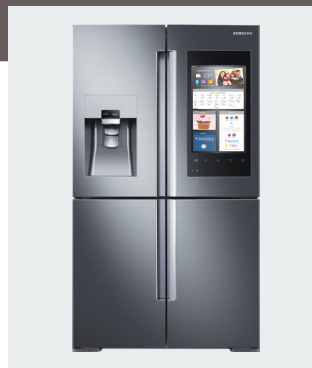
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33 Wargrave Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 8LL UK.

Phone: +442088649228 E-Mail: sikhcouier@gmail.com, bablibharara@hotmail.com, drachopra@aol.com
Website: www.sikhcourierintl.org.uk

FOUNDERS:

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Editorial

In this century, the Sikhs all over the globe, have had the honour of celebrating many historical Gurpurbs. Recently, it was 550 Prakash Divas of Guru Nanak and 400 Prakash Divas of Guru Tegh Bahadur. These two Gurpurbs were celebrated with great pomp and show all over the known world, wherever there were even a handful of Sikhs.

Recently, the celebration of Guru Tegh Bahadur's Prakash divas from the Red fort (Delhi, India), where 400 ragis (hymn singers) were reciting the glories of God, was a landmark in the history of such celebrations. It was the Red fort, from where the orders of the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur were issued by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1675. From the same Fort the world witnessed the most startling homage to the great Guru by the Prime Minister of India and also the people of India at large.

Last year, the Government also announced that to remember the great sacrifices of Guru Gobind Singh and the martyrdom of his four sons, who preferred to embrace death rather than change their faith, the nation will celebrate 'Veer Bal Divas' (Brave Children Day) every year on 26th December.

No doubt, it is its history which keeps the religion alive.

We have a quote from 'Sarb Loh Granth, that 'raj bina na dharam chala hain, dharam bina sab dale male hain' [ਰਾਜ ਬਿਨਾ ਨਾ ਧਰਮ ਚਲੇ ਹੈਂ, ਧਰਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਬ ਦੱਲੇ ਮੱਲੇ ਹੈਂ] meaning that without the backing of the ruling administration, religions cannot progress and without religion people will forget the meaning of ethics and morals. The saying is a proof that without the backing of the administration the religions cannot survive.

The Sikhs and victory are perhaps synonyms. It has been proved repeatedly in the history. Recently, when the Government declared to withdraw the farm laws, which were contested, tooth and nail, by the farmers from Punjab, Haryana, west UP and many other states. The credit of this victory goes to the farmers of Punjab, mainly Sikhs, who spearheaded this movement. The tragedy of the movement was the loss of 700 innocent lives which were lost in this unprecedented struggle. Perhaps, in life, all just struggles demand sacrifices.

Since the days of Banda Singh Bahadur, the Sikhs had very few leaders to lead this young and brave nation. From 1708 – 1772 the Sikh history has its darkest period, when there was a price on the head of every Sikh. The mass killing of Sikhs was a game for the Mughal rulers. Many a times it was declared that even the last child of the Sikh faith has been killed and no more Sikhs exist. The two genocides in Sikh history are proof enough of these nasty announcements. But astonishingly in 1772, the rise of the Sikh Misls (Confederations) and later the unprecedented

victories over Mughals and others by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, changed the pages of the Sikh history. The Sikh nation rose like a phoenix, and amongst many battles with Mughals the two historic battles, the battle of Chamkaur (40 Sikh against 80,000 Mughals) in 1704 and battle of Mukatsar (40 Sikhs against 10,000 Mughals) in 1706 and later in history the battle of Saragarhi, 21 Sikhs against 24,000 Muslim tribes-men in 1897, proved the saying of Guru Gobind Singh, “ਸਦਾ ਲਖ ਸੇ ਏਕ ਲੜਾਓ, ਤਬੀ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਕਹਾਓ”. (When my one Sikh daringly faces 1.25 lakhs enemies, only then I call myself Gobind Singh)

Guru Gobind Singh called the Sikhs ‘Saint Sipahi’ (Saint Soldier). Where the Sikhs have repeatedly proved their might as soldiers in both pre-independence and post-independence period. First with the might of British rulers (war of independence) and then wars with Pakistan and China. Their role as saints, remembering God and helping His people, is also unprecedented. During the wrath of Covid -19 Pandemic, it is this God-fearing nation which went from door to door to deliver food to the needy, opened the doors of Gurdwaras and attached residential quarters to give shelter to million displaced people. Their divine oriented generous activities were in almost every country of the world, as pandemic had attacked all over the globe. Even recently, in the Russian-Ukraine war, they have set up stalls, in the midst of war affected land, to provide food and clothing to the refugees.

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SHAHEED UDHAM SINGH

Bhupinder Rai

"He is a mad man" - said Gandhi.

"His act was a senseless deed" - said Nehru.

"We condemn his act of terror and apologize and hope we are not punished for it" - resolution passed by Congress.

The man in question was **Shaheed Udham Singh**. The 'senseless deed' he did was that he shot dead Michael Dwyer on 13 March 1940.

Udham Singh (1899-1940) was born as Sher Singh on 26 December 1899, at Sunam in the Sangrur district of Punjab. He came from a humble *Kambo* caste Sikh family and his father Sardar Tehal Singh was a watchman of a railway crossing. He became an orphan before he attained the age of seven and was admitted along with his brother Mukta Singh to the Central Khalsa Orphanage at Amritsar on 24 October 1907. Both the brothers were administered *amrit* or the Khalsa baptism at the orphanage and became Udham Singh and Sadhu Singh respectively. In 1917, Udham Singh lost his brother and was left all alone to fend for himself in this big bad world. He passed the matriculation exam in 1918 and left the orphanage in 1919.

Massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. After the protest against the Rowlatt Act and rioting, rampage and arson that broke out on 10 April 1919, the army was called in. Brigadier General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer (09 October 1864 - 24 July 1927), commander 45 Infantry Brigade marched from Jullundur to Amritsar with Gorkha troops and armoured cars and arrived in Amritsar in the evening on 11 April. The Brigadier General proclaimed a state of emergency and declared all meetings illegal (majority of the citizens were unaware of this declaration). Meanwhile

the local Congress had already announced a meeting at Jallianwala Bagh at 4.30 pm for the *Baisakhi* fair on 13 April.

From the early hours of the morning on 13 April, a large number of people mostly Sikhs, had poured into the city from the surrounding villages for the *Baisakhi* festival (first of *Baisakh* being the birth anniversary of the Khalsa). These Sikhs, ignorant of the announcement went to the nearby Bagh to pass time till it was cool enough to return home. For the Sikh villagers (mostly illiterate) it was just another diversion, a *tamasa*. As soon as Brigadier General Dyer received news of the meeting, he marched a platoon of infantry to Jallianwala and on reaching there at about 5.15 pm; he occupied the only entrance/exit to the Bagh and without giving any warning to the crowd to disperse, opened fire on the innocent and unsuspecting gathering with 303 rifles. The firing lasted for about 20 minutes, in which 1650 rounds of ammunition were fired. The official figures of the casualties were 379 killed and 1200 wounded, whereas the unofficial figures were much more. Brigadier Dyer imposed a curfew in the city and returned to his camp leaving the dying with the dead without any possibility of help reaching them.

Hundreds of unarmed, defenseless Indians had been murdered in cold blood by a senior British military officer, in the heart of Amritsar, the holiest city of the Sikhs, on a day sacred to them. It was indeed a **black Sunday**. When the news was conveyed to **Sir Michael O'Dwyer** (1864-1940), the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, he fully approved of the action. Udham Singh and his friends from the orphanage were involved in administering aid and serving water to the wounded and dying. The massacre of over

a thousand people had a life-long impact on his conscience and psyche and the Nankana Sahib tragedy of 21 February 1921 added on and affected him equally.

This incident turned Udham Singh on the path of revolution. Soon after, he left India and went to the USA and became involved in revolutionary politics; he was influenced by the militant activities of the Ghadar Party and the Babar Akalis in the early 1920s and returned home in 1927. He had secretly brought revolvers with him and was arrested by the police in Amritsar; he was sentenced to four years imprisonment under the Arms Act. On release in 1931, he returned to Sunam, but harassment by the local police forced him to return to Amritsar and there he opened a shop as a signboard painter, assuming the name of Ram Mohammad Singh Azad. This name, which he was to use later in England, was adopted to represent the three major religions of Punjab (Hindu, Muslim and Sikh) and Azad for his anti-colonial sentiment.

Udam Singh was profoundly influenced by Sardar Bhagat Singh's ideology and politics and invariably referred to him as his guru; he was also very fond of the songs of Ram Prasad Bismal, the leading poet of the revolutionaries; his songs motivated and aroused him. Udham Singh made his way to Kashmir, where he was able to evade the police and escape to Germany. In 1934, he reached London. Privately he made plans to assassinate Michael O'Dwyer, the former lieutenant governor of Punjab when the Amritsar massacre took place.

The opportunity came after waiting for 21 years. At 4.30 pm, on 13 March 1940, Michael O'Dwyer was scheduled to speak at a joint meeting of the East India Association and the Central Asian (now Royal society for Asian Affairs) at Caxton Hall, London. Udham Singh hid a pistol in a book in which he had carved out a place for it. He sat in the front row and

after the lecture was over, he fired at Michael O'Dwyer, who was hit twice and fell down dead; Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, who was presiding over the meeting, was injured. Udham Singh made no attempt to escape and was immediately arrested.

On 01 April 1940, Udham Singh was formally charged for the murder of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. On 4 June 1940, he was committed to trial, at the Central Criminal Court, Old Baily, before Justice Atkinson, who sentenced him to death. An appeal was filed on his behalf which was dismissed on 15 July 1940. On 31 July 1940, Udham Singh was hanged in Pentonville Prison in London.

POST SCRIPT

What was the aftermath and what happened to the characters that played such a dramatic role in the whole saga of tragic events.

Brigadier General Dyer - After the Jallianwala massacre, martial Law was clamped in Punjab, the agitations and demonstrations all over the province of Punjab took a very ugly turn. There was arson, looting, riots, rampage and assaults all over. The army administrator Brigadier General Dyer had Amritsar city's water and electric supply cut; in the street where the missionary lady had been assaulted, he made Indian passers-by crawl on their bellies; specially constituted courts tried and summarily sentenced people to death and terms of imprisonment. All over the province there was public flogging and many other humiliating atrocities committed on Indians. In the seven weeks that Punjab was administered by martial law nearly 1,200 people were killed and at least 3,600 wounded.

Few know that Dyer was born on 9 October 1864, at Murree, Pakistan and raised in Punjab or that he was as well-versed in Hindustani as in English. Brigadier General Dyer tried to win over the Sikhs as best he could. He threatened the

sarbarah (manager) of the Golden Temple and Majithia and asked them to use their influence with the Sikhs in favor of the government. He sent out movable columns through Sikh villages to wean them away from the influence of mischief makers and to prove that ‘*sircar*’ (government) was still strong.

Priests of the Golden Temple invited the general to the sacred shrine and presented him with a *siropa* (turban and kirpan). There was an agitation and demand for removal of *sarbarah* gathered momentum day by day. Ultimately Sardar Arur Singh, the *sarbarah* bowed to popular will. He not only resigned the office of *sarbarah* but also tendered a public apology for his acts of omission and commission relating to management of shrines under his charge at a meeting in Jallianwala Bagh, sometime in August 1920.

The Hunter Inquiry Committee (named after its chairman, Lord Hunter) held Brigadier General R.E.H. Dyer (nicknamed the Butcher of Amritsar) guilty of a mistaken notion of duty, and he was relieved of his command and prematurely retired. He received a sum of 26,317 pounds from his English admirers who called him, ‘The man who saved India’. Brigadier General Dyer lived over eight years after his retirement and during part of this, he was wheel chair bound. He was looked after by his daughter-in-law and niece. He had two strokes in a short time before he died of cerebral hemorrhage and arteriosclerosis in 1927. After his death, most unexpectedly he was given a military burial with full honours. The Union Jack that flew over the Jalandhar Headquarters was specially brought in to wrap his coffin; this speaks volumes of the British society that thus honoured a cashiered soldier, who lived his life without any retirement benefits or pension.

Sir Michael O’Dwyer, the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, an Irishman, had fully approved of

the action of Brigadier General Dyer. This is precisely what he said, “I approved of General Dyer’s action in dispersing by force the rebellious gathering and thus preventing further rebellious acts..... speaking with perhaps a more intimate knowledge of the then situation than anyone else. I have no hesitation in saying that General Dyer’s action that day was the decisive factor in crushing the rebellion, the seriousness of which is only now being generally realized.” Hunter Committee Report, *Disorders Inquiry Committee Report*, p. 48.

Sir Michael O’Dwyer, who claimed that Brigadier General Dyer had saved the empire, had in fact dealt it the most grievous blow by alienating all Indians, including its staunchest supporters, the Sikhs. "No British action, during the whole course of our history in India, has struck a more severe blow to Indian faith in British justice than the massacre at Amritsar," wrote the Westminster Gazette. The sun had begun to set on the British Empire. Rabindranath Tagore renounced his British Knighthood. Sir Michael O’Dwyer, as mentioned earlier was shot dead by a Sikh, Udham Singh, at a public meeting in London on 13 March 1940.

During his trial Udham Singh had made a request that his ashes be sent back to his country, but this was not allowed. However, in 1974, his remains were exhumed and repatriated to India at the request of MLA Sadhu Singh Thind. Mr Thind accompanied the remains back to India, where the casket was received by Indira Gandhi (prime minister), Shankar Dyal Sharma (president) and Giani Zail Singh (minister for home affairs). Udham Singh was later cremated in his birthplace Sunam in Punjab and his ashes were scattered in the River Sutlej. Some of these were retained and are kept in a sealed urn at Jallianwala Bagh. Every year on 31 July marches are held in Sunam by various organizations and tribute is paid to every statue of Shaheed-I-

Azam (the great martyr) Sardar Udham Singh in the city with flower garlands.

Following his conviction, Udham Singh made a speech which the judge directed should not be released to the press. However, political activists who had set up the Shaheed Udham Singh Trust and working with the Indian Workers Association (GB) ran a campaign to have the court record of his statement published along with other material. This proved successful in 1996, when his speech was published along with three further files covering the trial, and the *Ghadar Directory*, a document compiled by British intelligence in 1934 detailing 792 people regarded as a threat including Udham Singh.

The speech of Sardar Udham Singh was largely a denunciation of British Imperialism. He said the British rule amounted to nothing but atrocities and enslaving Indian people. He called the British ‘bastards’ and ‘dirty dogs’. He further said that he had nothing against the English people but was against the British government and that he was not afraid of dying. The judge refused to hear any more, but Singh continued and said that he had been asked to speak and say what he wanted to say and now that he was speaking they did not want to hear what they were doing in India. He ended his speech by shouting “Down with British Imperialism! Down with British dirty dogs!” and turned to leave the dock, spitting across the solicitor’s table. Udham Singh remained bold, defiant and fearless to the very end.

When this material was published, it was reported in both British and Asian press, the statement was translated into Gurmukhi script and distributed at the Sikh Basakhi Festival in Birmingham, April 1997. John Major, the prime minister at that time remarked: "The Amritsar Massacre was an unhappy episode in Indo-British relations which was controversial in both countries. Today [8 October 1996] I am

glad to say, our relationship is excellent. India is an important partner and a close friend of this country

Jallianwala Bagh was acquired by the nation for a sum of Rs 5, 60,472/- on 21 August 1920 and today it is a memorial (the monument that was constructed after India’s independence was inaugurated by Dr Rajendra Prasad, the first President of the Republic of India, on 13 April 1961).

The reactions to Udham’s Singh’s actions were different at different platforms i.e. official, public and media. Officially, his actions were deplored and condemned in India, Mahatma Gandhi referred to Singh's actions as "an act of insanity", stating: "The outrage has caused me deep pain. I regard it as an act of insanity... I hope this will not be allowed to affect political judgement." Ironically, it was Gandhi who coined the term ‘Dyerism’ to describe brute force and violent suppression, thus making General Dyer the most referred name in that context. He described untouchability as ‘Dyerism of Hindu religion’. He also drew a parallel between General Dyer’s acts of cruelty with murder in the name of cow protection.

Gandhi even forgave General Dyer again and again, even as he warned people against ‘Dyerism’. At that time Mahatma Gandhi was trying to show the country a different path – a path of non-violence and forgiveness. Gandhi even wrote that Dyer “merely destroyed a few bodies but the others tried to kill the soul of a nation.” He said that “the fury that has been spent upon General Dyer is, I am sure, largely misdirected”. (Collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, Volume 18, p.46, *Young India*, 14 July 1920). This was perhaps confusion of the mind and hypocrisy. For him everyone except him was a misguided patriot.

Pandit Jawhar Lal Nehru wrote in *The National Herald*. “[The] assassination is regretted but it is earnestly hoped that it will not have far-reaching repercussions on [the] political future of India.” In March 1940, Indian National Congress leader Jawhar Lal Nehru, condemned the action of Udham Singh as senseless, however, in 1962, Nehru reversed his stance and applauded Singh with the following published statement: “I salute Shaheed-i-Azam Udham Singh with reverence who had kissed the noose so that we may be free.” What hypocrisy! The deft and subtle art of chicanery and shrewdness was inherent in this wily man.

Many Indians regarded Singh's actions as a response to some brutal aspects of British colonial rule. The Hindustan Socialist Republican Army condemned Mahatma Gandhi's statement, considering this to be a challenge to the Indian Youth. In its 18 March 1940 issue, *Amrita Bazar Patrika* wrote, "O'Dwyer's name is connected with Punjab incidents which India will never forget". The Punjab section of Congress in the Punjab Assembly led by Dewan Chaman Lal refused to vote for the Premier's motion to condemn the assassination. In April 1940, at the Annual Session of the All India Congress Committee held in commemoration of 21st anniversary of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, the youth wing of the Indian National Congress Party displayed revolutionary slogans in support of Singh, applauding his action as patriotic and heroic. Singh had some support from the international press too. *The Times* of London called him a "fighter for freedom", "his actions" an expression of the pent-up fury of the downtrodden Indian people. "*Bergeret* from Rome praised Singh's action as courageous.”

In India, Congress had condemned his act. Gandhi and Nehru had abused him for making British angry and they forced Congress to pass

a resolution against killing of O’Dwyer. They were very busy those days helping British recruit Indian soldiers for World War - II and they didn’t want Punjab to get upset with the British. Meanwhile, like other freedom fighters, except in his native place, this patriot is almost forgotten in India. No textbooks talk about him. Few people know about him. But the story of Shaheed-I-Azam (the great martyr) Sardar Udham Singh is truly an inspiring one; his **legacy** lives on; he will be remembered forever, even if it is by a few, and his immortal name will live till eternity.

- ❖ A charity dedicated to Udham Singh operates on Soho Road, Birmingham.
- ❖ A museum dedicated to Singh is located in Amritsar, near Jallianwala Bagh.
- ❖ Udham Singh’s weapon, a knife, his diary, and a bullet from the shooting are kept in the Black Museum of Scotland Yard.
- ❖ He has been the subject of a number of films: Jallianwala Bagh (1977), Shaheed Udham Singh (1977), and Shaheed Udham Singh (2000).
- ❖ Mayawati named a District (Udham Singh Nagar), in Uttarakhand after him in 1995.
- ❖ There is a Shaheed Udham Singh Chowk in Anupgarh (Rajasthan).
- ❖ A statue of him was installed at the Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar in March 2018.
- ❖ Singh is the subject of the 1998 track "Assassin" by Asian Dub Foundation.
- ❖ Singh is the subject of the 2015 music video and track "Frank Brazil" by The Ska Vengers.
- ❖ The death anniversary Sahaheed Udham Singh is a public holiday in certain places in Punjab and Haryana.

By Bhupinder Rai

★ ★ ★



WORLD SIKH UNIVERSITY LONDON

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SIKHISM & OTHER RELIGIONS

Nanak Singh Nishter

1. Preface

The topic of this paper may create some confusion. So let me clarify the intention and theme of the paper to project amicable relations of Sikhs & Other Religions in no way whatsoever for comparing them. It is presented in furtherance of the topic of this seminar to project and promote Inter-Religious Understanding.

I heartily congratulate the Forum for Inter-Religious Understanding of Institute of Objective Studies, New Delhi and Magadh University, Bodh Gaya, Bihar for organizing a “National Seminar on Importance of Inter-Religious Understanding, its implications for mankind” in this historical city. I am grateful to the organizers for inviting me to present this paper before this august audience. Regarding the concept, I would like you to recollect our age old Sanskrit phrase “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” from the Maha Upanishad. It means “the world is one family”. Unfortunately it is rarely practiced and is confined to the scripture alone. But Sikhism took the lead to implement this theme, by practicing equality of human beings, giving dignified status to women who give birth to the humankind and the people who serve the society, but were regarded as untouchables. ***It took up the most important crusade never heard before “Freedom of Faith to all equally for the conquerors and conquered”***. It derecognized the age old traditional barriers of religion, caste, creed, Deen and Dharam. It gave an altogether new philosophy of worshipping the Creator by unifying the concept of humankind, as one. Its first founder Shri Guru Nanak Sahib (1469-1539) gave a clarion call saying, “Na ko Hindu –

Na Musalman”, that means there is nobody as Hindu and nobody as Muslim. All human beings are one, created by the Lone Creator, who is also sustainer and destroyer of all. Instead of simple and just prayers which could not do anything good and positive to serve anyone, Guru Sahib emphasized upon rightful living of the person, and to perform the responsibilities assigned by God towards his/her dependents and the society.

On page 62 of Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Sahib says, “Truth is high but still is truthful living”.

One poet has beautifully described the reason for division of human kind in the following couplet:

Koyee jannat ka talib hai
koi gham se preshan hai.

Zaroorat sijda karwati hai,
ibadat kaun karta hai.

Koyee sheikh bun gaya,
koyee bun gaya Brahmin.

Har shakhas aadmi tha,
Teri bandagee se pehley.

It means, “Someone is desirous of paradise and someone grieves to get rid of worries. A person bows before GOD for his needs, without which who worships HIM? The mode of worship has divided the people into Muslim or Hindu otherwise earlier everybody was a human.”

Sikhism on the contrary has invented such a mode of worship basing strictly on spirituality disowning the barriers of religiosity and rituals

with the aim to bring all the religions and faiths together. The beauty of Sikhism is that it has threaded the divided religious communities into one garland inculcating the concept of oneness among different sections of the society under umbrella of ONE LONE CREATOR.

2. Relations with other Religions

History has evidently a commonality that every founder of a new religion has claimed, that it was revealed to him by the GOD HIMSELF, and thus discarding the earlier and prevailing religions in the same manner as every enactment of a new law repeals the prevailing law for enforcing the new one.

Though Sikhism is the latest of all faiths, revealed to its founders and has brought an altogether different, separate and independent ideology. It maintained that the prevailing religions and Scriptures had merits but people misunderstood them. Its scripture is a Universal Digest of the teachings from different faiths by their respective spiritual leaders in their own original languages but in one Script of Gurmukhi, specially invented to scribe all languages. It should not be inferred that it is confined to the Sikhs for implementing and spreading Sikhism. The teachings of its messengers from different faiths are for the people of their own religion for promoting of understanding of oneness among Humankind.

The opening verse of its Scripture Shri Guru Granth Sahib, the 1st Guru Shri Guru Nanak Sahib (1469-1539) starts it by saying “Mangla Charan which is generally quoted as Mool Mantar”. It is not confined to any particular name of God. It starts with a new attributed name of GOD as numerical “1”. At the same time the Scripture later sanctifies all the innumerable names of God attributed by different traditions

as correct and also makes use of those names in their teachings (bani).

The beauty of this new concept of numerical “1” is that HE is not mentioned in word. As the word can be interpreted with more than one meaning, but the number bears only one meaning and cannot be misinterpreted by any other classification. It indicates, you may attribute any number of names but HE is alone. Then HIS definition starts that, HE is all pervading. HIS name is TRUE. HE is the doer of all deeds. HE is without fear. HE does not have enmity. HIS existence is eternal. HE does not take birth. HE is self-existent. I start with the grace of such GOD (Gur prasad)”.

In Shri Guru Granth Sahib it appears before beginning of 524 chapters, in total form or abbreviated forms. Due to different misinterpretations of this clause, the 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji started to write “Tav Prasad (By your grace)” before beginning of his chapters, to concentrate more and clarify this version and leaving no room for any confusion.

On page 458 of Shri Guru Granth Sahib, 5th Guru Shri Guru Arjan Sahib (1563-1606) says, “If the entire earth is used as paper and the total vegetation is used as pen and the air tries to scribe, then also the unlimited vast and tremendous Creator God could not be described. Nanak says, he is at the feet and shelter of such God”.

On pages 765-766 Shri Guru Nanak sahib says. “If someone has a basket of fragrant virtues, I should enjoy its fragrance. I will share their virtues. Let us form a partnership to share our virtues like silken clothes, decorate ourselves and enter the arena of God. Let us speak of goodness, wherever we go and sit, let us skim off the Ambrosial Nectar and drink it”.

On page 1290, Guru Sahib says, “Says Nanak, the (Maya) illusion of after death may or may not be true, but the fact is evident that our deeds are the tree which we sow; bear the fruits of poison or Amrit (nectar). Our doing so is better known to the God himself, who is the reason and doer of all deeds, why HE makes us to do so?”

On page 266, 5th Guru Shri Guru Arjan Sahib says, “Of all the religions the best one is, always remember the Name of God and do the good deeds.”

On page 1350, Bhagat Sheikh Kabir Ji (1398-1495) says, “Do not say that the scriptures of Semitic religions and Indian religions are false. They are correct and true, but the person who does not understand them is false.”

On page 853, the 3rd Guru Shri Guru Amar Das ji (1479-1574) further says, “This world is burning on fire, O God! Be merciful and save all those whoever comes out through any passage i.e., through any of the different religions and faiths.”

On page 696, 4th Guru Shri Guru Ram Das ji (1534-1581), O the Merciful Lord of the Universe! I pray you to make me a slave of the slave, the salve of YOUR worshipper”.

On page 671, 5th Guru Shri Guru Arjan sahib says, “I have made friendship with everybody and I am friend of all”.

On page 19 of Shri Dasam Granth sahib, the 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji says, “Hindu Temples and Muslim Mosques, and the way of worships of offering Puja and Nimaz are different ways of worshipping the same Lone God.....It is an illusion that human beings are different by labeling them by different religions, but realize the truth that all humankind belong to ONE RELIGION”.

3. After Death - Salvation & Paradise

Interestingly, for converting people to their religion, preachers and followers of almost all religions speak about the issues of after death – salvation or hell and heaven and claim their religion to be the only way to enter into the heaven. They need the support of a blind belief about the unseen, uncertain and unconfirmed future to accept their faith. They also go to the extent of finding faults with other religions and try to prove that only their religion is superior in all respects to the religions in which the other people are born. This is hurting the religious sentiments and widening the gulf between the communities and causing disharmony and a growing threat for the world peace. This attempt to impose any religion on the people of other faiths with incentives, deceit or punishment was resisted by Sikhism, which always stood for Freedom of Faith.

Sikhism does not invite people to join their fold. It neither spreads any hatred against any other religion nor claims to be the superior than others. If anybody wants to embrace Sikhism they are welcome. It deals with the issues of present day life which we are undergoing and not confined to the after death issues.

There is an age old proverb, “As you sow, so shall you reap”. Which tells you don’t be misled; you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. You can never have fruits by sowing a plant of thorn. Sikhism’s approach is quite realistic and does not give any incentives and promise for any Heaven or Salvation. It declares that all depends upon your own deeds and justice will be pronounced in the Court of God.

Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal (1877-1938) beautifully says in the following couplet:

*Behishat O hoor O ghulman iwaz ta-ath mein
na manoonga.*

*In hi hatoon se aiye zahid zayeef eeman
hota hai.*

It means, “As reward of my obeisance, I will not accept the paradise with its hours (beautiful ladies) and slaves. O preacher! Don’t allure me with these incentives; it weakens my faith in Allah.”

On page 728, Shri Guru Nanak Sahib says, “Says Nanak, neither we are good nor any one is bad. Only God is savior of all”.

On page 156 Guru Sahib says, “I am the greater sinner sinking in the ocean of water. O’God, kindly do the mercy. You are so benevolence and rescued even the sinners like stones from this ocean of the world”. Neither he nor any other Guru ever claimed to rescue any sinner. They themselves asked to get pardon from the sins from the God.

On page 474 Guru Sahib says, “When you are bound to get reward or punishment according to your own deeds, then why do you do the bad things?” It gives clarion call that nobody and nothing is coming to your rescue from punishment for your committed SINS in the Court of God, who is the ultimate impartial and final authority without any fear or favour.

On page 9, Guru Sahib declares, “Don’t ask the religion and caste of a person. After the death in the Court of God, no such thing is asked.”

On page 1257, he specifically says, “After the death, the limbs or body will not accompany you as it is made up of air, water and fire, and will disintegrate here”.

On page 648, Guru Sahib’s mandate is above any confusion, “Some bodies are cremated, some are buried and dogs eat some. Some bodies are thrown into water and some cast into tower of

silence. It is not known, as to where do they go and disappear?”

On page 1290, Guru Sahib says, “Says Nanak, the Maya (illusion) of after death may or may not be true, but the fact is evident that our deeds are the tree which we sow, bear the fruits of poison or Amrit (nectar). Our doing so is better known to the God Himself, who is the reason and doer of all deeds, why HE makes us to do so?”

On page 3, Guru Sahib says, “The Dharam (righteousness-religion is not true translation) is the son (born by) of Daya (mercy), and contentment is its son (born to it)”.

On page 468, he says, “He alone is the true human being, who receives good teachings and shows mercy to other living beings and gives something in charity”.

On page 521-522, 5th Guru Shri Guru Arjan Sahib (1563-1606) says, “O worshipper! For his worship, remember HIM while awakened, standing and sitting and always do the good deeds.”

On page 522, Guru Sahib further says, how to lead life get salvation during life itself, “Do rightful efforts for earning and enjoy the comforts of life. Nanak says, always (round the clock) remember God, all your worries will be wiped off and you will be assimilated into God (Mukti - Salvation – imbibe in the source of God wherefrom you have come).

On page 266, Guru Sahib says “Of all the religions the best religion is to always remember the Name of God and do the good deeds”.

4. Religion of the Gurus

Without the doubt of any contradiction, it can be said that Sikhism is the essential product to pacify the conflict between the two major religions of Islam and Hinduism. To bridge the gap between

these two communities, Bhagti Movement also carried the same motive, but it was confined during the life of the individual saints, afterwards no follow-up process was organized to carry forward their mission. But in case of Sikhism, ten Gurus consolidated this mission during their life span of 239 years. To continue eternally their mission through the Scripture Shri Guru Granth Sahib, it was bestowed Guruship in 1708 by the 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji. Hence the Sikhs have their Guru present forever to guide the same message and guidance.

The 1st founder of Sikhism Shri Guru Nanak Sahib was born to the upper caste Hindu-Khatri parents. When he was eleven years of age, he refused to wear Janevoo the sacred thread put across the chest of the Hindu male members of high caste. Females and lower caste people are denied. He not only disagreed but discarded every sort of discrimination and pleaded equality among the human beings. He started a movement for oneness of mankind, gender and social equality in the society. His movement was against the exploitations at the hands of both the priestly class and the rulers. He declared his religion as name of True God and the rituals and customs are truthful living. On page 353 of Shri Guru Granth Sahib he says:

*“Hamri, jath-path, sachch Navoo.
Karam, dharam, sanjam, sath, bhavo”*

It means, “My caste and community is The True Name of God. And my rituals are good and righteous deeds, patience, truthfulness and good behavior.”

On page 1136 of the 5th Guru Shri Guru Arjan Sahib declares that, “I don’t keep fasts like Hindus or fasts of Ramazan as Muslim do. I worship the ALONE CREATOR, to whom Hindus says Gosayeen and Muslims say Allah, like this I have relinquished both of them. I don’t go for

Haj as Muslims go nor I go to the Hindu pilgrim stations. I don’t offer Puja as Hindus nor offer Nimaz as Muslims do. I keep the FORMLESS GOD in my heart and bow before HIM. I am neither Hindu nor Muslim. My soul consists of Ram (all pervading God-not the prophet Ram) and my body is of Allah.”

On page 874 Bhagat Namdev ji (1267-1335) says, “The Hindu worships at temples and Muslims at the Mosques. But Nama serves (worships) that GOD, who has neither a temple nor a mosque.”

Similarly, Sant Dadu Dayal (1544-1603) a saint from Gujrat, has said (not from Guru Granth sahib).

*Jin pahunchey tin keh gaye, sabh ki ekai baath.
Sabhi siyaney eik math, sabh ki ekai zaath.*

It means, “Those who approached Almighty God have said the same thing. All wise persons are of the same opinion. They all belong to the same religion, caste and community.”

5. Guru For the Hindu & Muslim Both

Shri Guru Nanak Sahib is such a unique personality which has no parallel in the history. Though he declared that he does not profess any religion, but both Hindus and Muslims claimed him to be one among them. He is the only person who visited Jaggan Nath Dwara Temple at Puri in Odhisa, where non-Hindus were not permitted to enter. Even in modern times, our prime ministers Smt. Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi were not permitted, who claimed themselves not only to be Hindus but much more as saviors of Hindus and Hindustan. At the same time Guru Sahib also visited “Kabatul Allah” at Mecca, where non-Muslims were not permitted to enter. The strange thing is that at both the places Guru Sahib was welcomed, heard with patience and respected for his views. Though, he was critical at both the

places, for the futility of their rituals performed, instead of true worship of the Lone Creator of all. A proverb was very much popular that:

Guru Nanak Shah faqir,

Hindoovon ka guru, Musalmano ka peer.

Interestingly Shri Guru Granth Sahib is a multi-religious and multi-lingual digest, a compilation of 36 contributors. Among them 6 are the Sikh Gurus, 7 are the Muslims, 2 are untouchables, 1 Sikh and remaining are from different Hindu traditions. The name given to it was “Aad Granth Sahib”, means the voluminous book relating to Aad Purakh (primal person-God). Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji bestowed succession to this in September 1708, from then onwards it is called Shri Guru Granth Sahib which indicates its stature as a present and eternal Guru, kept in every Gurdwara that is place of worship of the Sikhs. And its recitation and singing of its verses is the way of prayer.

6. Concept of Khalsa

From the days of Shri Guru Nanak Sahib Ji, the Sikhs are mostly misrepresented and misunderstood. The reason is, the Sikhs are satisfied in creating history and do not respond to what other people say or write about them. The climax is witnessed during the last three decades, when much has been distorted about the image of the Sikhs. They still require some more time to breathe fresh air, free from polluted and poisonous atmosphere. Though the Sikhs are the essential product of Hindu-Muslim conflict, came into existence to bring harmony between all human beings.

Let me draw your kind attention towards a very important, distorted and severely tarnished concept of Sikhism. At the outset, the concept of Sikhism by itself does not connote any religion, deen or dharam as generally perceived. It is a

way of life with absolutely free, independent and separate ideology above the barriers of any religion, preferences, prejudices and discrimination.

From the inception, Sikhism was wrongly labelled as an offshoot of Hinduism and some plead it to be derived from Islam. Some labelled Sikhs as Nanak Prasath (Persian-followers of Nanak) or Nanak Panthi. Initially neither code of conduct nor any distinct appearance was prescribed for the Sikhs. 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji has organized it and gave a name “Wah Guru ji ka Khalsa”, means fearless and sovereign people of Wondrous God.

The word Khalsa was already in use of Indian vocabulary and was used by Bhagat Sheikh Kabir ji (1398-1448) on page 655, he says:

*“Kaho Kabir jan bhaiye Khalsey,
prem bhagat jin jani”.*

It means, “Kabir says, those fearless who loved and worshipped God have become Khalsa.”

In Sikh tradition, the word Khalsa first appears in a *hukmanama* (order) by Guru Har Gobind ji (the sixth Guru) which refers to a *Sangat* as "Guru ka khalsa" ("Guru's Khalsa"). It also appears in a letter by Guru Tegh Bahadar (the ninth Guru), in the same sense.

The word Khalsa does not denote purity. To mean Khalsa as pure, demolishes the very purpose of the basic philosophy of equality for all. To define Khalsa as pure shows disrespect towards other religions and faiths as impure, inferior and adulterated. This interpretation is totally wrong and against the very fundamental principle and teachings of Sikhism.

The origin of the word Khalsa is from Arabic. It was adopted in Persian and Urdu languages. This means a land which belongs to the king, and not to any individual person. In India during

the period of Akbar the system of maintaining of Revenue Records was started. And this Khalsa word has become a part and parcel of Indian languages. Till today all the government lands are recorded as “Khalsa Lands”.

I will show a glaring example of my city of Hyderabad where there are around 6 villages named as “Bandla Guda”. Now these areas have been included in the city. Four centuries back while constructing the famous historical monument “Char Minar”, stones were brought from different directions of surrounding areas. The mode of transport was bullock carts called Bandi, its plural form in Telugu is Bandla. Guda denotes village or area. These surrounding villages were named as Bandla Guda, as the carts used to halt there before entering. Out of these six villages, one was designated as “Bandla Guda Khalsa”, in the south near the present “Falak Numa Palace”. Till today it carries the same name and entered so in Revenue Records, because this village used to be the King Nizam’s personal land, hence designated as “Bandla Guda Khalsa”.

7. Concept of Arms in Sikhism

There is another misconception about Sikhism that it was started as a Bhagti Movement by later deviated and converted into a Martial Movement. Actually its TEN FOUNDERS have jointly shaped it in 239 years from 1469 to 1708, and gradually step by step moulded their followers as “Saint–Soldiers”. The 1st founder Shri Guru Nanak Sahib was not only a saint but also a Social and Political Rebel. Through his preaching, he started building up the steely nerves to take on the mighty tyrant by the future generations of the Khalsa, which is quite evident from his revolutionary Bani (verses) in Shri Guru Granth Sahib which has changed the mind-set of his followers who were suppressed

and enslaved since centuries. They could dare to raise their head and voice in protest in honour of self respect. He successfully wiped off the fear of death to make them brave enough and made them to die for fighting the cause of others.

On page 1412 Guru Sahib says, “If you want to play the game of love of God, enter into my path by keeping your head in your palm (a proverb to be prepared to sacrifice your life). After entering in this path, do not hesitate to offer your head”.

Right from the days of Dharam of Indian civilization and Deen of Islam, arms were treated as an important factor for holding the sacred cause of protection of righteousness. Present days we can witness the Image of Justice holding scale in one hand and sword in another hand, indicating that importance of weapon even for delivering of justice. Thus right from the days of inception of civilization till today, arms are holding its importance and sanctity in human life.

There is an anecdote, once a priest was preaching saying that Jesus has asked, if any person slaps you on one cheek, offer him the other cheek. On listening this one young man from the audience rose and approached the priest and slapped him, upon this the priest offered him the other cheek and got the another slap. Now it was the turn of priest, he started beating the young man, when asked the reason the priest said, the Jesus has told him what to do after getting the second slap. Such is the position of the Sikhs; they were peaceful and sacrificing all the time. When all means failed, Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji declared on page 1428 of Shri Dasam Granth Sahib:

*Ba lachargee darmiyaa amdam. Ba tadabeer
teer o tufang amdam.*

*Chu kaar as hama heelate dar guzashat.
Halaal asath burdhan ba shamsheer dasat.*

It means, “For this reason, I had to intervene and had to come fully armed. When all other methods fail, it is proper to hold the sword in hand.”

It is not out of place to mention that use of weapon for protection of the oppressed and righteousness is not a new concept in Sikhism. At the same time a new thing added is lenient attitude towards the oppressors.

You may witness the images of all Gods and goddesses of Hindu Faith holding weapons in their hands, except Goddess Saraswathi and Goddess Laxmi, as they are the Goddesses of knowledge and wealth respectively. The famous Hindi poet Tulsidas has gone to the extent in his couplet saying that, “Tulsi will bow his head only before that Ram who holds bow and arrow in his hand”.

*Tulsi sees than nivaai,
jaan dhanush baan boye hath.*

You may witness the image of “Goddess of Justice” erected all over the world, with set of scales in one hand and holding Sword in another hand, which indicates the necessity and philosophy of justice is based on punishment, and sword has been admitted as a symbol for peaceful delivery of justice. Any weapon in the hands of law abiding citizen or the forces responsible for maintaining the security is a guarantee of protection for a common man and betterment of the society.

It is universal tradition that slaves and defeated enemies are first unarmed. During these days of growing terrorism in the entire world, any person however high may be, is not permitted to carry any weapon on his person in security zones. But the glory and sovereignty of the Khalsa is such that he is permitted with the Kirpan everywhere, with the exemption on the grounds of it being a religious ritual.

8. Kafir – Aaqui – Nastik

There is another misconception about Khalsa. After every Ardas (prayers) it is recited:-

*Raj karega Khalsa, Aaqui rahey na koye.
Khawar hoye sabh milengey, bachey sharan jo
hoye.*

It means, “The day will come when Khalsa the sovereign and fearless worshippers of God will rule the world and the nonbelievers will vanish or start believing in God. (Aaqui is a Persian word for nonbeliever of God like Kafir in Arabic and Nastik in Hindi). To misinterpret it as “baaqui rahey na koye” instead of “Aaqui rahey na koye”, means the followers of Khalsa faith will rule, seems ludicrous. When nobody will remain, then whom will the Khalsa rule?

9. Conclusion

In view of the above presentation, one has to come to the conclusion that the ONLY CREATOR is the Supreme Being who created and runs this world and several other cosmos in HIS WILL. And all religions and faiths came into existence under HIS COMMAND, so let us gain correct knowledge of our own religion by reading and understanding of our respective Scripture and practice it in life. This is the only way to live in peace and harmony working for the welfare, betterment and worthy humankind, like different flowers enhance beauty of the Garden.

*Chaman mein Iqtaalaf-i rang
O boo se baath banti hai.
Agar hum hi hum hain tho hum kiya hain, agar
thum hi thum ho tho thum kiya ho.*

Nanak Singh Nishter Hyderabad

TRUE LOVE IN THE SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI

Dr Paramjit Kaur Virdee

The Sikhi is a path of Love for Waheguru, Mool Mantar¹. Guru Nanak Dev Ji recites:

ੴ ਸਿਤਿਨਾਮ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ
ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Ikoankaar Sathnaam Karathaa Purakh Nirabho
Niravair Akaal Moorath Ajoonee Saibhan
Gurprasaadh

One Universal Creator God The Name Is Truth
Creative Being Personified No Fear No Hatred
Image of The Undying, Beyond Birth, Self-
Existent. By Guru's Grace.

॥ ਜਪ ॥

॥ Jap ॥²

Chant and Meditate:

Throughout the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Love is God and God is Love. True Love is that which never dies nor, does it ever change.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji's Salok in Jap and in
Sukhmani³ Sahib, Ashtpadi 17, pada 8.

ਆਦਿ ਸਚ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚ ॥

Aadh Sach Jugaadh Sach ॥

True in The Primal Beginning. True
Throughout the Ages.

ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚ॥੧॥

Hai Bhee Sach Naanak Hosee Bhee Sach ॥1॥

True Here and Now. O Nanak, Forever and
Ever True. ॥1॥⁴

What is True love?

In the West, the media equates love with sexual desire. But love actually comes from the soul. Love is our natural state of being.

You earned this human form through an act of devotion in a previous life. Having a body is a chance to experience love. You have five tattvas (elements) to experience love, but they all have shadows - lust, anger, greed, pride, and attachment. Lust poisons love. When we conquer these shadows, then love can live. That is why we do sadhana and bow to the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. Love is fullness.

We reincarnate because we got it wrong. The ones who get it right are the ones who learned to love. Every religion begins with someone who just knew how to love. The wound of love is when the poisons block us from experiencing the love that is the natural condition of the Spirit.⁵

The Love

Love is not emotional or hormonal. You can feel emotional, then share your emotions with others. Love comes from the inner being., the Ji, the light. Love can be kind and gentle in many ways to share with others. When you love somebody, the love can change over time. But love is like gold. Whether it is a gold necklace or a gold ring, gold remains gold. So real love never dies.

Love exists deep within your being as a subtle, sophisticated sensitivity. You are the spark of Divine Immortal Light, but it is in your subtlety

and sensitivity that you find love, and there you find your own Divinity.

Love gives one to have the ability to stop their drama, sacrifice their emotions, to live in peace and harmony with someone.

To find the sophistication of real love. Firstly, one needs to meditate because love exists as this quiet voice inside you. At the same time, there are a lot of loud voices which are vying for your attention. Our Guru Ji calls these loud voices the five thieves, lust, anger, greed, pride, and attachment. Having these five thieves within us drowns out the whisper of love. The five thieves take away the love from you and pull you in the opposite direction.

Where there is anger it is hard to feel the love. When there is lust, which is sex for sex's sake that sophisticated sensitivity disappears. Greed. Attachment. Pride. All of them block the experience of love. Daily, when you meditate you open to what real love feels within you. Your meditation, your bani, your kirtan your sadhana is the time and the place where you can learn the difference between what the sound of thieves is like and what the call of the love sound is like.

The True Love that we look for does not come from anyone outside of us. The love that already exists within you and then sharing it with another person. Guru Ji says we are born in love. What tool has the Guru given us to understand love? To break through the blocks within us so we can experience love. There are four beautiful love letters written by Guru Arjan Dev Ji to his father, Guru Ram Das Ji. We call these letters Shabad⁶ Hazare.

Two of the four letters have an amazingly unique story behind them. Guru Arjan Dev Ji was not actually the Guru when he wrote them. On the contrary, he was simply Arjan Mal, the youngest

son of Guru Ram Das Ji. These letters have a special quality to them. Through the process of composing these letters, and through the profound love that these letters embody, Arjan Mal became Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

The first letter comes with the line:

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਘਾਰ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

Prabh Abinaasee Ghar Mehi Paaeiaa ||

I have found the Indestructible Creator

In the home of my own heart.

This line describes another aspect of true love. The Creator lives in every single heart. The experience of real love will recognize that. Love reflects your Divinity back to you and never makes you feel less than. Love flows from soul to soul, from Divine Light to Divine Light. And when love fills you, you become aware of your own essential Divinity.

The second key theme comes with the line:

ਸੇਵ ਕਰੀ ਪਲ ਵਸਾ ਨ ਵਿਛੁੜਾ ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਤੁਮਾਰੇ
ਜੀਉ॥੪॥

Saev Karee Pal Chasaa N Vishhurraa Jan
Nanak Dhaas Thumaarae Jeeo ||4||

Serving you each moment,

I am never separated from You

Not even for an instant.

The longing we feel comes from an illusion of separation. But when you serve someone with love, the illusion of separation disappears. You feel connected to them, regardless of the distance in time and space. Service, then, represents the ultimate expression of love.⁷

There is a very famous and often quoted line from the writing of Guru Gobind Singh Ji titled "Tav Prasad Savaiye" in which he says:

ਸਾਚੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੁਨ ਲੇ ਸਭੇ ਜਿਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀਓ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪਾਇਓ
॥੯॥੨੯॥

Saachu Kahou Suna Lehu Sabhai Jin Parema
Keeao Tin Hee Parbhu Paaeiaio ||9||29||

Meaning: Listen all! I declare the truth, that those of you who become loving alone will realize God.⁸

But, we usually associate the term love with loving another person; usually of the opposite sex. That is the kind of love that we nurture with another person of flesh and blood. However, here Guru Ji is talking about another dimension of love. This love is neither for a person; nor of a romantic type, as is immortalized in the legions of books like Romeo and Juliet, Heer and Ranjha, etc. Instead, it is love for God and that, too, is steeped in a deep sense of reverence. The love that Guru Ji is referring to is not for a person, but a personal nature and a trait.

The love and longing are evident in all the pages of the Sikh Scripture, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The Master is referred to as “Husband Master”, “Beloved”, “Immaculate”, etc. all words of affectionate for a tender, caring, and powerful being. God is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. Guru Ram Das Ji, says in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji:

ਅੰਤਰਿ ਪਿਰੀ ਪਿਆਰ ਕਿਓ ਪਿਰ ਬਿਨ ਜੀਵੀਐ ਰਾਮ ॥

Anthar Piree Pjaar Kio Pir Bin Jeeveeai Raam ||

My inner being is filled with love for my Beloved Husband Master. How can I live without Him?⁹

To conclude this article, for all Sikhs, The Beloved is God.

The beautiful words of Guru Arjan Dev Ji:

ਤੇਰਾ ਕੀਆ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਗੈ ॥

Thaeraa Keeaa Meethaa Laagai ||

Your actions seem so sweet to me.¹⁰

The entire Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is an explanation for all of us. Reading Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji becomes a reality and is perfect in every way.

References:

- ¹ The Mool Mantar (also spelt *Mool Mantra*) is the most important composition contained within the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the holy scripture of the Sikhs; it is the basis of Sikhism. The word “*Mool*” means “*main*”, “*root*” or “*chief*” and “*Mantar*” means “*magic chant*” or “*magic potion*”.
- ² Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Jap, Ang- 1.
- ³ Sukhmani Sahib is usually translated to mean Prayer of Peace and joy of mind is a set of 192 padas (stanzas of 10 hymns) present in the holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the main scripture and living Guru of Sikhism from Ang 262 to Ang 296 (about 35 count). This Gurbani text (writing of the Gurus) was written by the Fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev Ji (1563–1606) at Amritsar in around 1602.
- ⁴ Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Jap, Ang - 1 and Raag Gauri, 285.
- ⁵ <http://www.sikhnet.com/video/what-true-love> (16 May 2018)
- ⁶ Shabad is the term used by Sikhs to refer to a hymn or paragraph or sections of the Holy Text that appears in their several Holy Books. The main holy scripture of the Sikhs is the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The first Shabad in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is the Mool Mantar. The text used for the Shabad in the holy book is Gurmukhi. Below is the Shabad in English transliteration and translation.
- ⁷ Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Raag Majh, Ang – 96-97.
- ⁸ Amrit Keertan, Ang – 664 and Dasam Granth Sahib, Ang – 40.
- ⁹ Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Raag Tukhari, Ang – 1113.
- ¹⁰ Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Raag Asa, Ang – 394.

Dr. Paramjit Kaur Virdee

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Thinking Ahead - Moving Forward

GURU HARRAI

THE ECO-FRIENDLY GURU

Dr Sukhbir Singh Kapoor



“You can repair or rebuild a shrine but not a broken heart.”



Gurdwara Kiratpur, Birthplace Guru Harrai

Basic Facts

Place of birth: Kiratpur in Shish Mahal

Date and year of birth: 16th January 1630

Parents: Baba Gurditta and Mata Nihal Kaur (also known as Mata Ananti)

Place and date of demise: Kiratpur, 6th October 1661

Age: 31 years

Age, place and year of anointment as 7th Guru: Age 14th yrs at Kiratpur, 8th March 1644

Guruship period: 17 years

Age and date of marriage: Age 10 yrs, 18th June 1640

Wife: Sulakhni, some historian say it was Krishan Kaur

Children: Ramrai born in 1646, Roop Kaur 1651, and Harkrishen (Guru) born in 1656.

Some scholars give the following relationship as wives and children of Guru Harrai

Wives:

Though according to authentic historical evidence, the Guru was married to Sulakhni. Some ancient historians (Suraj Prakash) state that Guru Harrai wed seven sisters who were the daughters of Daya Ram of Anupshar, Bulandshahr district, Uttar Pradesh. The names of Guru Harrai's wives recorded in different chronicles are as follows:

Gulab Singh's Gurpranally gives eight marriages and divides wives between mistresses and their maid servants.

Mistresses

Kishen Kaur

Chand Kaur

Prem Kaur

Ram Kaur

Maid servant

Kot Kalyani

Tokhi

Anokhi

Ladiki

Table of wives as recorded by different historians:

	Sulakhni	Krishan Kaur	Kot Kalyani**	Toki***	Anokhi***	Ladiki***	Chand Kaur	Prem Kaur	Ram Kaur
Kesar Singh Chibbar			yes						yes
Gurpranalies*		yes		yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Gurpranalies 2		yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Gurpranaly 3		yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
Kavi Santokh Singh		yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	Yes
Sarup Das Bhalla	yes								
Bhhat Vahis	yes								
Dr Gopal Singh		yes	yes						
Mehima Prakash	yes								

*Published by SGPC

Children

Gulab Singh further writes that Ram Rai was son of Kot Kalyani and Harkrishen (Guru) was son of Kishen Kaur.

Please note that the final agreement amongst modern scholars is that all children Ramrai, Roop Kaur and HarKrishan were children of Mata Sulakhni, and she was the only wife of Guru Harrai.

Children (Mother Mata Sulakhni):

- ❖ Ramrai – 1647 A.D, born in Kiratpur
- ❖ Roop Kaur – 1651A.D, born in Kiratpur (some authors say that he was born at Nahan)
- ❖ Har Krishan – 1656 A.D (Monday, 7th July), born in Kiatpur

Bibi Roop Kaur compiled a 559-page pothi (book) during her life time. It is preserved in the collection of books which are in Kiratpur. The pothi contains some hymns (banis) of Gurus, 33 sakhis/statements about Guru Harrai and some

Sakhis/statements about Guru Amardas and Guru Arjan.

A few sample extracts from Sakhis/Statements are as follows:

Sakhi/Statement (2)

Orders are of two kinds || One Order is Mukhta, and One is Amukhta || If one is in pain and remembers God he is Mukhta || If someone has all Sukh (comforts) and does not remember God then he is Amukhta || True Righteous/duty is Mukhta || Guru said pride is the ugly face || Peace is the beautiful face || 2 ||

Sakhi/Statement (9)

Master has given order to focus/simran on Him|| Someone asked how do I focus simran (the way of continuously remembering God) on the Master|| Permitting to accept and wishing for the good of others is the way to focus on simran ||9||

Sakhi/Statement (14)

A Sikh asked the Guru that those Sikhs who do not do vocal ardas and do inner ardas || O Master which ardas makes you happy || Guru spoke, O child I do listen to the outwardly-vocal ardas

anyway || but I also listen to the inner ardas as well || Guru is all knowing || || 14 ||

Sakhi/statement (17)

One Sikh was on his way to see the Guru, a farmer asked him where was he going. The Sikh said that he was going to see the Guru. The farmer said that he would go too. The Sikh said that it was the season for farming. Your going now was not right. The farmer replied, that he did not care what happens after he was gone. Then the Sikh said leave your duties to someone else and that he would take him to the Guru.

The farmer assured the Sikh that he had completely left his work with someone. Thus the farmer came with the Sikh to pay respects to the Guru.

They came and bowed in reverence. Guru spoke to the Sikh with satisfaction. Seeing the farmer Guru asked him to leave. Go and sit in the temple. Farmer bowed in Guru's presence three times. He felt an inner realisation. Then he went and sat in the temple II Three days passed and he was still sitting there. Then on the third day the Guru asked the Sikh that where was the farmer II. The Sikh replied that he was sitting in the temple, as per Guru's orders. That he was sitting there for the last three days, he had not eaten or drunk anything. Guru in his mercy went to see him. He saw Guru coming and with his hands closed together he bowed his head. The Guru gave his blessings. He reached the highest state. Thus, if a Sikh follows Guru's words, then he will reap eternal benefits || 17 ||

Places of Domicile

Kiratpur:

First stay - 6 years: 1630-1645;
second stay -4 years: 1658-1661

Nahan (Sirmoor state): Lived there for 14 years: 1645-1658

Some scholars say that he went and lived somewhere near present day Kasauli, east of Chandigarh in relative seclusion in a small village.

Travels and Missionary Work:

a. Doaba and Malwa: 2 years (1655-1656)

Doaba: The Guru covered far and near places in Doaba to spread the message of Guru Nanak.

Malwa: For sometimes the Guru made his headquarters in Daroli and Nathana and travelled extensively the territory of Malwa.

The Guru was successful in converting many farmers (Jats) and land- lords (zamindars) to Sikhism. He appointed a Bairagi (recluse) Bhagat Bhagwan to preach in the east, where he established many Sikh centres.

Many sangats accompanied the Guru in his journeys.

Babak, son of Satta and his wife Chitra were the main ragis to do kirtan everywhere the Guru went.



The routine of day, during journeys, was as follows:

Morning- noon

Recital of Nitnem by Guru himself

Asa di var; sung by Babak

Selected Shabads sung by Babak and their meaning explained by the Guru himself

Six pauris of Anand Sahib by Babask

Ardas: by a selected few

Guru ka langar

Evening:

Sodar – recited by Sangat, turn by turn.

Ardas – by a selected few

Guru ka langar

Night time:

Kirtan Sohila: recited jointly by the Sangat.

The rules of the holy tour were as follows:

1. All, who join-in the cavalcade will sing Gurbani as they march on
2. The Guru-ka-langar will be prepared and served by sewadars throughout the journey. No special food from outside, for anyone, will be allowed.
3. Some essential medicines will be available, if anyone falls ill.
4. Some Sikhs trained in First-aid will always be there to help, in case of need.
5. Selected shabads from, only, Adi Granth will be recited. [Shabads included hereunder are taken, as mentioned, in various sources.]

About 22 important places were visited during this journey of Malwa and Doaba including Ropar, Kartarpur, Papurtha, Droli and Kangar – Lakhi Jungle. The total distance covered is about 200 miles.

Time: 2 years – 1655-1656

The Malwa is in the shape of a rough parallelogram lying by the River Sutlej in the north, Haryana in the east and the south, Rajasthan in the southwest corner, and Bahawalpur state of Pakistan in the west.

[A parallelogram, in geometry, is a simple (non-self-intersecting) quadrilateral with two pairs of parallel sides. The opposite or facing sides of a parallelogram are of equal length and the opposite angles of a parallelogram are of equal measure.]

[Punjab is divided into three regions namely Malwa, Majha and Doaba. Malwa region of Punjab covers as many as 11 districts. The major districts under this region are Ludhiana, Bhatinda, Mohali, Sangrur and Patiala.]

Doaba also known as Bist Doab, is the region of Punjab that lies between the Beas River and the Sutlej River. The term "Doaba" or "Doab" is derived from Persian word meaning "land of two rivers". The river Sutlej separates Doaba from the Malwa region to its south and the river Beas separates Doaba from the Majha region to its north.

[Doaba region of Punjab include districts like Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Nawanshahar and Kapurthala.]

Ropar (Rupnagar)

The first place of the missionary tour after leaving Kiratpur, where the Guru camped, was Ropar. The distance between Ropar (also known as Rupnagar) and Kiratpur is about 17 miles. The elders and holy men of the area came out of the town to welcome the Guru and his convoy of devotees. The Guru stayed in Ropar for about 3 days.

The following is one of the key shabads recited, during the stay, in Ropar.

ਮਾਝ ਮਹਲਾ ੫॥

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ॥

(Waheguru) You are my father, and You are my mother.

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਬੰਧਪੁ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਭ੍ਰਾਤਾ॥

You are my love relation, and You are my brother.

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਸਭਨੀ ਥਾਈ ਤਾ ਭਉ ਕੇਹਾ ਕਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥੧॥

You are my protector everywhere; why should I feel any fear or worry? ||1||

ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਤੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਪਛਾਣਾ॥

By Your grace, I now recognise You.

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰੀ ਓਟ ਤੂੰਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਣਾ॥

You are my shelter, and You are my honour.
ਤੁਝ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਖੇਲੁ ਅਖਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ
॥੨॥

Without You, there is no one other; the entire universe is the arena of Your grand play. ||2||

ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਸਭਿ ਤੁਧੁ ਉਪਾਏ॥

You have created all beings and creatures.

ਜਿਤੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਭਾਣਾ ਤਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਲਾਏ॥

As it pleases You, You assign tasks to one and all.

ਸਭ ਕਿਛੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਅਸਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥੩॥

All events are Your doing; we can do nothing on our own. ||3||

ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇ ਮਹਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ॥

Meditating on the Naam, I have found great peace.

ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੁ ਸੀਤਲਾਇਆ॥

Singing the praises of the Master, my mind is cooled and soothed.

ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਵਜੀ ਵਾਧਾਈ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਤਾ ਬਿਖਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ
॥੪॥੨੪॥੩੧॥

Through the perfect Guru, congratulations are pouring in - Nanak is victorious on the arduous battlefield of life ||4||24||31||

(GGS page 103)

Travel in and around Majha (1657-1659) – Distance covered is about 400 miles. About 13 places were covered in this missionary tour.

Time 2 years: 1657 -1659

Majha is a region located in the central parts of the historical Punjab region split between India and Pakistan. It extends from the banks of the river Beas, and reaches as far north as the river Jhelum. The most populous city in the area is Lahore on the Pakistani side and Amritsar on the Indian side of the border.

The Majha region of Punjab contains fourteen districts of the Pakistani province of Punjab, including the cities of Lahore, Faisalabad, Sahiwal, Gujranwala, Gujrat, and Sialkot. Four districts of Indian state of Punjab – Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Gurdaspur, and Pathankot.

The people of the Majha region have been historically known for their warrior-like nature and are called the "Sword Arm of the Country". Maharaja Ranjit's empire was also founded in the Majha region.

Though Guru Harrai's stay in various villages of Majha was not very long and a lot of time was spent in travelling as the conditions of roads were not very good during those days. Most of the roads were narrow and unsurfaced with pools of water here and there.

The important places of visit include: Phagwara, Baba Bakala, Khadur Sahib, Goindval, Amritsar, Lahore and Nankana Sahib.

Amritsar

It is stated in many religious books that after Guru Hargobind no Sikh Guru went to Amritsar to pay homage in Harimandir, except Guru Tegh Bahadur, who too was refused entry to go in the santum sanctorum to pay obeisance.

But, a few sources mention Guru Harrai's visit to Amritsar and Harimandir Sahib. Harji, the

grandson of Prthi Chand was in occupation of Harmandir at that time, but he hurriedly left the place and went to a nearby place called HeyHari. May be, he was scared to face the Guru Harrai, Guru Harrai stayed there for about 4 days and then went to Lahore.

Amongst many Shabads recited here during the morning and evening Kirtan, one Shabad was as follows:

ਰਾਗੁ ਆਸਾ ਘਰੁ ੨ ਮਹਲਾ ੩
ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਵਡਭਾਗਿ॥

The meeting of the Master is obtained by great good fortune.

ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਚੈ ਬੈਰਾਗਿ॥

Through the Guru's Shabad, true detachment is obtained.

ਖਟੁ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਵਰਤੈ ਵਰਤਾਰਾ॥

The six systems of philosophy are universal,
ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਅਗਮ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥੧॥

but the meeting with Guru is profound and unequalled. ||1||

ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਦਰਸਨਿ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਗਤਿ ਹੋਇ॥

The meeting with Guru is the way to liberation.

ਸਾਚਾ ਆਪਿ ਵਸੈ ਮਨਿ ਸੋਇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥

Then the True Master Himself comes to dwell in the mind||1||rahau||

ਗੁਰ ਦਰਸਨਿ ਉਧਰੈ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ॥

Through the Guru's manifestation, the world is saved,

ਜੇ ਕੇ ਲਾਏ ਭਾਉ ਪਿਆਰਾ॥

if it is embraced with

Dr Sukhbir Singh Kapoor

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THREE PILLARS OF A FULFILLED LIFE

Dr Harbans Lal

Many research studies on the purpose of life indicate that every living human being is seeking fulfillment as their most cherished purpose. A recent survey concluded that, more and more, North Americans tend to live lives driven by their most precious goals. They continue to be physically active and otherwise engaged in achieving the goals they cherish.

This essential purpose of fulfillment is becoming the primary preoccupation of every conscientious person. Therefore, we must evaluate the characteristics of those objectives to understand if they will enable our communities to have purposeful lives.

To help the ordinary citizen in achieving this goal, Guru Nanak evolved three categories of core values to live by. These core values were the central theme during his wide-ranging missionary endeavors. Both he and his nine successors detailed in their teachings the kinds of actions that would constitute the three categories, and create a fulfilling human life.

In his teachings, Guru Nanak designated three core values that, when blended, would transform life into something wonderful. In doctrinal terms, Guru Nanak named them as *NAAM*, *DAAN*, *ISNAAN*. Translated into today's idiom, they are:

NAAM – Mindful Awareness of Divine Presence

DAAN – Live Out the Culture of Altruism when Seeking Divine Benevolence

ISNAAN – Implement Ethics of Good Deeds that Cleanse Body and Mind

I hope to dedicate considerable time to write several essays exploring what these doctrines mean. They are detailed in Sikh scriptures. In this essay, I will only review the scriptural authority as well as historical evidence in support of whether *NAAM- DAAN- ISNAAN* was indeed the terminology the Gurus selected to communicate their primary teachings. I will also review how these heavenly terms have been altered into newer vocabulary that the Gurus neither ordained nor spoke. However, this more recent vocabulary is being adopted subtly by our clergy, entirely out of ignorance.

ORIGIN AND GROUNDWORK

The principles of the Sikh *Rehat*, which are guidelines for daily practice, first originated in Guru Nanak's teachings. The Guru spread the divine message to all those coming to him and thus laid the groundwork for a universal Code of Conduct (*Rehat Maryada*). This code was meant to be timeless and meant for everyone without any prejudice of race, religion, gender or nationality. It is a comprehensive guide to living pertinently for every member of humanity.

As the tradition goes, the original code of values was summed up by the Guru himself in three theological terms, *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* (ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸਨਾਨੁ). In every opportunity to transmit his ministry, the Guru emphasized a lifestyle based upon these precepts. For example, this was the first pronouncement of his ministry after his enlightening meditation along the banks of the rivulet *vein nadi*, at the age of 27.

The enlightening meditation around *vein nadi* is considered the most significant event in the life of the founder of the Sikh religion [1]. Historians describe this event as the occasion immediately after which Guru Nanak undertook his universal ministry. It is then that he spoke to the public and pronounced that he was inspired by the Creator with messages for all humanity.

Referring to this message, the writers of the oldest available Sikh history, ancient *Meharban Vaalee Janam Sakhi*, described the Divine instructions to the Guru as saying,

O' Nanak, those you accept, will be given salvation in the court of the Divine, ...you are ordained to undertake the mission of both articulating and inculcating the practice of NAAM DAAN ISNAAN in the millennium of the coming ages [2]...

In recorded Sikh history, it is from this event and time that the *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* terms were rightfully regarded as representing the core doctrines of Sikhism. The same doctrines were routinely preached in the Sikh congregations, and a lot has been written about their meanings and implications in life.

Following this event of *vein nadi*, the sacred terms, *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* (ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ, ਦਿਸਨਾਨੁ) were made a part of the Gurmat philosophy, and Sikh values. Thereafter, the Gurus and other Sikh theologians as well as Sikh exegetists actively popularized these terms and the teachings behind them. From this time onward, these terms and the concepts they represented would continue to be recognized as the fundamentals of Sikhism. They were variously translated and explained with the changing times according to the needs of the local languages and customs. This is not unusual. With the changing socio-political milieu, with the cultural as well as the etymological needs, it is expected that,

with time, more contemporary terms would be employed to express the essence of the original diction and basic concepts contained in Nanak's three canons.

The evolution of terminology is expected with time; however, a great caution must be exercised to preserve the original terms and their meanings as they embody the canons and the doctrines. When newer terms are introduced, they may subtly begin to taint the original significance of the canons to accommodate the expression of many cultural and geographical needs. Once accepted, the subtle changes have a tendency to introduce distortions of the original meaning.

To guard against any long-lasting variation in the essence of the terms, it must be emphasized periodically that the basic principles must be referred to by the original doctrinal terms coined by the founders themselves; or by those subsequently authenticated by the Gurus themselves; or done so by their contemporary theologians.

SCRIPTURAL SANCTITY OF NAAM DAAN ISHAAN

Sikhs consider the verses contained in the volume of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) as the Eternal Guru whose wisdom must not be contested. It is these verses that provide indisputable support for the terms that Guru Nanak had chosen. They are then promoted by the Guru's contemporary theologians and exegetists. Let us examine those documents.

THE GURU'S OWN SERMONS

Above all the other supporting evidence, the Gurus themselves emphasized the *rehat* of *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN*. For instance, the Guru wrote down the terms in their own verses as,

ਸੁਣਿ ਗਲਾ ਗੁਰ ਪਹਿ ਆਇਆ ॥ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ
ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ॥ ਸਭੁ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਹੋਆ ਸੈਸਾਰੜਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚੀ ਬੇੜੀ
ਚਾੜਿ ਜੀਉ, SGGS, p. 74

*I heard of the Guru's repute, and so I went to the
Guru. The Guru instilled within me the teaching
of Naam, Daan, Isnaan. Said Nanak, this was
the path through which whole humanity may
be liberated as the way of Naam, Daan, Isnaan
puts the seeker on the boat of eternal truths.*

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ SGGS, p, 942

*The Guru-Oriented seekers receive the wisdom
of "NAAM, DAAN, ISNAAN (ਨਾਮੁ, ਦਾਨੁ,
ਇਸਨਾਨੁ)" to attune to the blissful state.*

ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੁ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਸੁ ਜਾਗੇ, SGGS,
p. 419

*The devout is awakened to the Worship of the
Divine with firm faith in the lifestyle of "NAAM
DAAN ISNAAN"*

ਦ੍ਰੜਿ ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਸੁਚਾਰੀ, SGGS, p. 740

*Instill in your life, NAAM DAAN AND ISNAAN
as the acts of piousness.*

When the Guru found an occasion to deliver his
sermon, he used those opportunities to stress
his mission. He emphasized the principles of
his new religion irrespective of the faith of the
audience. For example, on two premier holy
festivals of Hindus, both Guru Nanak and Guru
Arjan preached as follows.

ਦਸਮੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸਨਾਨੁ, SGGS, p. 840

*On the day of Dasami observance, dedicate
yourself to the life of NAAM DAAN AND
ISNAAN.*

ਦੁਆਦਸੀ ਦਾਨੁ ਨਾਮੁ, ਇਸਨਾਨੁ, SGGS, p. 299

*On the day of Duadsi observance, commit
yourself to the practice of NAAM DAAN AND
ISNAAN.*

The Guru instructed the Sikh theologians to use
NAAM DAAN ISNAAN as subjects for their
exegeses.

ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੁ ਸਦਾ ਕਰਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਕਥਾ, SGGS,
p. 1101

*Confirm your faith in the NAAM DAAN ISNAAN,
and always use these topics for exegeses.*

As far as we know, like other Gurus, Guru
Gobind Singh continued the tradition of using
the terms: "NAAM, DAAN, ISNAAN." There
are several references to them in the Guru's
teachings.

It is thus clear that the terms employed to
describe the three pillars of the Sikh way of
life were never allowed to any alteration in
over two centuries of the Gurus' lives. It is
not wise, therefore, to permit any change now.
This certainly does not preclude any restriction,
however, on translating them into contemporary
idioms when necessary, as long as the original
terms are not forgotten.

TESTIMONY OF BHAI GURDAS

Bhai Gurdas (1551 – 1636) was Guru Arjun's
scribe who compiled the first recension of the
Guru Granth. Bhai Gurdas was the son of Datar
Chand Bhalla, a first cousin of Guru Amar Das;
his cousin's sister, Bibi Bhani, was married to
Guru Ram Das and was the mother of Guru
Arjan. This made Bhai Gurdas the maternal
uncle of Guru Arjan. Thus, Bhai Gurdas may be
considered the Sikh best connected to the Gurus'
family and the Guru's teachings. Also, he had
a singular privilege of living through the time
up to the sixth Guru and is considered the first
missionary of Sikh philosophy and mysticism.

Bhai Gurdas wrote extensively on the *Gurmat*
philosophy and the Sikh way of life. Guru
Arjan designated Bhai Gurdas's writings as the

key to the Guru Granth Sahib. In this capacity, Bhai Gurdas was the first to outline Guru's own instructions on the theology and morality of the Sikh community in the Gurus' time and for the times to come.

Bhai Gurdas elected to include his testimony on the injunctions of *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* (ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨ, ਇਸਨਾਨ) in his very first *Pauri or verse*. This *pauri* was composed as an homage to the founder of the religion, Guru Nanak, and as an overview of his composition. It goes as follows:

ਭਾਉ ਭਗਤਿ ਗੁਰਪੁਰਬ ਕਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨ ਇਸਨਾਨ
ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਯਾ [3]

I bow to Guru Nanak who transformed his followers world into those who continually rededicate themselves to the Guru's principles through the celebration of the Guru's greatness and emphasize on others the Guru's path of NAAM DAAN ISNAAN.

Similarly, when Bhai Gurdas narrated the foundation of the Panth, he included the injunctions of *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* as its essential component.

ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਪੰਥੁ ਚਲਾਇਨੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨ ਸ੍ਰਿੜਾਯਾ [4]

The Guru founded the path of Guru oriented by emphasizing NAAM DAAN ISNAAN

Further, when Bhai Gurdas described the teachings that Guru asked his followers to abide by, it contained *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* as a critical component.

ਪਰਤਨ ਪਰਧਨ ਪਰਨਿੰਦ ਮੇਟਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ॥ [5]

You must extinguish any evil eye on other's body, on other's wealth or badmouthing of others, then adopt the path of NNAM DAAN ISNAAN

Among the virtues that the Guru had emphasized included; to be truthful, content, merciful,

religious and the practitioner of NAAM, DAAN, AND ISNAAN, as in the following verse.

ਸਤਿ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਦਯਾ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨ ਇਸਨਾਨ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਯਾ 6

For inculcating the Truth, fulfillment, mercy and divinity, the Guru emphasized NAAM DAAN ISNAAN

Bhai Gurdas considered the practice of *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* as a fulfillment of the Guru's teachings. He wrote,

ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਕਮਾਵਣਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨਾ [7]

To a Guru oriented individual, the practice of NAAM DAAN ISNAAN constitutes the fulfillment of Guru's teachings.

TESTIMONY OF BHAI NAND LAL

Bhai Nand Lal was the Poet Laureate of Guru's court and the most dearly loved disciple of Guru Gobind Singh. He wrote two *rehatnamas*; one known as *Rehatnama* written in 1695, i.e., four years before the presently most celebrated Vaisakhi of 1699, and the other in 1699 known as *Tankhahnama*.

Guru Gobind Singh himself asked Nand Lal to compile Guru's injunctions for the guidance of the Sikh communities after the Guru left his human body for his heavenly abode. Both *Rehatnama* and *Tankhahnama* were believed to be written under the personal guidance of Guru Gobind Singh. These pieces were composed in the style of a conversation between the Guru and Bhai Nand Lal.

In these compositions, Guru Gobind Singh asked Bhai Nand Lal to convey to the Sikhs the following message for inclusion in their daily code of conduct.

ਸੁਨਹੁ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ ਜੀ ਸਿਖ ਕਰਮ ਹੈ ਏਹੁ ॥ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ
ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਬਿਨ ਕਰੇ ਨ ਅੰਨ ਸਿਉ ਨੇਹ [8]

Listen, O, my dear Bhai Nand Lal, the religious deeds of the Sikhs are defined as follows – but for NAAM, DAAN, ISNAAN, a Sikh should not form an association with anything else.

After perusing the testimonies above, there should be no question or doubt that NAAM, DAAN, ISNAAN were the major doctrines and the doctrinal terms that form all of the Sikh teachings.

REPLACEMENT OF ORIGINAL TERMS: ORIGIN AND IMPLICATIONS

A cursory view of current trends in Sikh publications, youth programs, and other ceremonies reveals that the essence of certain textual canons of Sikh principles may be gradually altering without any one's notice. The Guru's principles of *NAAMDANISNAAN* (ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ, ਦਿਸਨਾਨੁ) [8] are being substituted by virtually non-Gurbani terms to suit the convenience and circumstances. Whereas the motives of the writers and speakers may be genuine, there is a risk of tainting the fundamental canons of Sikhism with the passage of time.

Other terms which are becoming more popular in the Punjabi regions of the Indian sub-continent to describe the Guru's three precepts are *Naam Japo, Vand Chhako, Kirat Karo*, instead of *NAAM, DAAN, ISNAAN*. These are newer terms that Guru never spoke or wrote; they were coined during the post-Guru periods and only recently. The time of their exact origin is not known, but I have a hunch. They certainly came to exist only after the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947.

Very different terms erroneously considered equivalent to represent the same ideas were mentioned by Bhai Mani Singh. But he used each of them separately, never troika of three words. It is a common belief that Bhai Vir

Singh allowed the use of these terms *naam japo, vand chhako, dharam di kirat karo* only to blunt Communist influence on the Sikh Youth, and never to replace the original doctrines. The motivation was to stress that Sikhism had already imbibed two major slogans of the Communist movement. And Sikhism goes beyond that, by emphasizing a belief in God to which Communism was opposed.

I distinctly recall this point being highlighted in the Sikh youth gatherings by the All India Sikh Students Federation, and other Sikh activist movements, myself being included and enthusiastically part of it. The idea was noble. It was to not permit heavily propagated communism to impact our youth. All the youth leaders supported the idea and heavily emphasized these points in our presentations.

Although the intention at that time was laudable, and it served its purpose well, the vast popularity of these new terms gradually began to erode the originals *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN doctrines*. The newer terms, *naam japo, vand chhako, dharam di kirat karo* that were only meant to halt communist inroads, over time began to corrupt the original intention. Some authors even unwittingly started to go astray in their exposition while explaining the terms in the context of their own understanding. They would preach these words of *naam japo, vand chhako, dharam di kirat karo* as if they the original injunctions of the Gurus. But certainly that is not true. None of the ten gurus ever spoken those terms as a troika. However, the temporarily employed terms became to enter encyclopedias and other literature. That need to be halted and discouraged whenever there is opportunity to do so.

CONCLUSION

It was Guru Nanak who gave us the divinely inspired guidelines towards a most fulfilled life. All his successors and the exegetes of the time actively promoted the same, so we may live our life in the most fulfilled way. We continued to follow the Guru for centuries afterward.

A cursory view of the present trend in Sikh publications, youth programs, and other ceremonies reveals that the essence of certain textual canons of Sikh principles may be gradually losing the original intention of the Guru without any one's notice. The Guru's principles of *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* (ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸਨਾਨੁ) [9] are being substituted by virtually non-Gurbani phrases to suit the convenience and circumstances. Whereas the motives of those who are popularizing the much-altered terms may be genuine, there is a risk of tainting the Gurmat doctrines this way with the passage of time.

To halt this erosion of the real intention of the Guru, it is prudent to favor references to the doctrinally precise words chosen by the Gurus themselves. It is for this reason that this author decided to cite the original testimonies of the Scriptures in support of the correct representation of these terms. They were for sure, *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* ((ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸਨਾਨੁ) and none else. It is certainly time for the leadership of our institutions to actively stop the erosion of Gurus' given original terms by preserving and actively propagating their usage again.

Future essays will delve into our current understanding of the Guru's teachings as defined in his spiritually inspired doctrines of *NAAM DAAN ISNAAN* (ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ, ਇਸਨਾਨੁ). It will also be deliberated that the doctrines embedded in

these terms are meant for universal application in today's civil societies.

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- [9] For detailed discussion on the meanings of these terms see, Harbans Lal, *The Three Pillars of Spiritual Living, From Both sides of the Ocean*, January-February Issue, 16-19, 1996.

Dr Harbans Lal, Ph.D.; D.Litt (Hons)
Japji08@yahoo.com

MYTHOLOGICAL REFERENCES IN RAGA GAURI - RAGA 3

Dr Jaya Patil

*Gauri has the largest number of composition which cover about 14 per cent of the total number of pages of the Scripture. It contains two important compositions of Guru Arjan, **Sukhmani and Bavan-akhri** (acrostic). As it is a serious **raga**, the Gurus have given herein the exposition of profound concepts like fear, consciousness, soul and salvation.*

Gauri is one of several Gauri ragas and appears in the Ragmala as a ragini of Siri Raga. This is an evening raga assigned to autumn and its mood is contemplative. The composition in Gauri is very voluminous. Gauri was used by Guru Nanak, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur. Several forms of Gauri exist historically and this probably accounts for the large number of variants: Gauri Cheti, Gauri Bairagan, Gauri Dipaki, Gauri PurbiDipaki, Gauri Guareri, Gauri-Majh, Gauri Malava, Gauri Mala, Gauri Sorath, Gauri Dakhani.

Aroh : Sa Re Ga Re Ma Pa Ni Sa

Avroh : Sa Ni Dha Nfa Pa, Dha Pa Ila Ga, Ga _Re Sa Ni Sa

Vadi : _Re

Samvadi : Pa

Occasionally Re is performed with a vibrate as in Siri Raga which has the same vadis. Ni is given prominence through either stopping or lingering on this note.

AJRAIL (Azrail) (Gauri ki var Mehla 4, pauri 27 of Guru Arjan, page 315)

ਪਉੜੀ ੫ ॥ ਲੈ ਫਾਹੇ ਰਾਤੀ ਤੁਰਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ॥ ਤਕਹਿ ਨਾਰਿ ਪਰਾਈਆ ਲੁਕਿ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਠਾਣੀ ॥

ਸੰਨੀ ਦੇਨਿ ਵਿਖੰਮ ਥਾਇ ਮਿਠਾ ਮਦੁ ਮਾਣੀ ॥ ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੋ ਆਪਣੀ ਆਪੋ ਪਛੁਤਾਣੀ ॥ ਅਜਰਾਈਲੁ ਫਰੇਸਤਾ ਤਿਲ ਪੀੜੇ ਘਾਣੀ ॥ ੨੭ ॥

PAURI 5: Some take a noose in their hands, and go out in the dark of night to strangle others, but all pervading Waheguru knows everything, O mortal. They look with evil eyes on other men's women, concealed in their hiding places. They break into well-protected places, and revel in sweet wine. But they shall come to regret their actions — they create their own karma. Ajrail, the angel of death, shall crush them like sesame seeds in the oil-press. || 27 ||

According to the Islamic faith Ajrail is the angel of death. He punishes the evil-doers and helps the virtuous. In Persian he is called Malick-ul-maut.

2. KRISHAN, BALBHADRA (Gauri Guararari Mehla 4, page 165 shabad 43 pada 4)

ਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਆਪਿ ਹਰਿ ਭਾਵੈ ॥ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਨੁ ਬਲਭਦ੍ਰੁ ਗੁਰ ਪਗ ਲਗਿ ਧਿਆਵੈ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ਤਰਾਵੈ ॥ ੪ ॥ ੫ ॥ ੪੩ ॥

Service to Waheguru and humanity is pleasing to him. Even Krishna and Balbhadar meditated on Waheguru and bowed on his feet. God himself saves Gurmukhs (His true devotees) || 4 || 5 || 43 ||

Krishna

According to the Hindu belief Krishna, the author of Geeta, was an incarnation of Vishnu in the Dwapar age.

Balabhadra

Balabhadra is the other name of Balram, the elder brother of Krishna. In Mahabharat it is stated that Vishnu took two hairs of Brahma, one white and

one black. Of white hair Balram was born and of black hair Krishna was born. It is stated that Balram was transferred from Deviki's womb to Rohini's womb to save him from the wrath of his maternal uncle Kans. Some Hindus consider him as an incarnation of Sheshnag, the divine snake on whose head the *patal* is resting.

1. BALI (Gauri Mehla 1, page 224, Ashtpadi 9)] ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧]

ਬ੍ਰਹਮੈ ਗਰਬੁ ਕੀਆ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਬੇਦ ਕੀ ਬਿਪਤਿ ਪੜੀ ਪਛੁਤਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਜਹ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਿਮਰੇ ਤਹੀ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਐਸਾ ਗਰਬੁ ਬੁਰਾ ਸੰਸਾਰੈ ॥ ਜਿਸੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਗਰਬੁ ਨਿਵਾਰੈ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਜਾ ਮਾਇਆ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੀ ॥ ਜਗਨ ਕਰੈ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਰ ਅਫਾਰੀ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਪੂਛੇ ਜਾਇ ਪਇਆਰੀ ॥ ੨ ॥ ਹਰੀਚੰਦੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਕਰੈ ਜਸੁ ਲੇਵੈ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਇ ਅਭੇਵੈ ॥ ਆਪਿ ਭੁਲਾਇ ਆਪੇ ਮਤਿ ਦੇਵੈ ॥ ੩ ॥ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਹਰਣਾਖਸੁ ਦੁਰਾਚਾਰੀ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਨਾਰਾਇਣੁ ਗਰਬ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਰੀ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਉਧਾਰੇ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰੀ ॥ ੪ ॥ ਭੂਲੇ ਰਾਵਣੁ ਮੁਗਧੁ ਅਚੇਤਿ ॥ ਲੁਟੀ ਲੰਕਾ ਸੀਸ ਸਮੇਤਿ ॥ ਗਰਬਿ ਗਇਆ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਹੇਤਿ ॥ ੫ ॥ ਸਹਸਬਾਹੁ ਮਧੁ ਕੀਟ ਮਹਿਖਾਸਾ ॥ ਹਰਣਾਖਸੁ ਲੇ ਨਖਹੁ ਬਿਖਾਸਾ ॥ ਦੈਤ ਸੰਘਾਰੇ ਬਿਨੁ ਭਗਤਿ ਅਭਿਆਸਾ ॥ ੬ ॥ ਜਰਾਸੰਧਿ ਕਾਲਜਮੁਨ ਸੰਘਾਰੇ ॥ ਰਕਤਬੀਜੁ ਕਾਲਨੇਮੁ ਬਿਦਾਰੇ ॥ ਦੈਤ ਸੰਘਾਰਿ ਸੰਤ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥ ੭ ॥ ਆਪੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੇ ॥ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ ਦੈਤ ਸੰਘਾਰੇ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਚਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੇ ॥ ੮ ॥ ਬੂਛਾ ਦੁਰਜੋਧਨੁ ਪਤਿ ਖੋਈ ॥ ਰਾਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਕਰਤਾ ਸੋਈ ॥ ਜਨ ਕਉ ਦੂਖਿ ਪਚੈ ਦੁਖੁ ਹੋਈ ॥ ੯ ॥ ਜਨਮੇਜੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਕਿਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਇਕੁ ਤਿਲੁ ਭੂਲੈ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਪਛੁਤਾਨਿਆ ॥ ੧੦ ॥ ਕੰਸੁ ਕੇਸੁ ਚਾਂਡੂਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥ ਰਾਮੁ ਨ ਚੀਨਿਆ ਅਪਨੀ ਪਤਿ ਖੋਈ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਜਗਦੀਸ ਨ ਰਾਖੈ ਕੋਈ ॥ ੧੧ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਗਰਬੁ ਨ ਮੇਟਿਆ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਧਰਮੁ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ॥ ੧੨ ॥ ੯ ॥

GAURI MEHLA 1: **Brahma** acted in pride, and did not understand. Only when he was faced with the downfall of the Vedas did he repent. Remembering God in meditation, the mind is conciliated. || 1 || Such is the horrible pride of the world. The Guru eliminates the pride of those who meet Him. || 1 || Rahau || **Bal** the King, in Maya and egotism, held his ceremonial feasts, but he was puffed up with pride. Without the Guru's advice, he had to go to the underworld. || 2 || **Hari Chand** gave in charity, and earned public praise. But without the Guru, he did not find the limits of the mysterious creator. God himself misleads people, and he Himself imparts understanding. || 3 || The evil-minded **Harnaakhash** committed evil deeds. God, the Master of all, is the destroyer of pride. He bestowed his mercy, and saved **Prahlaad**. || 4 || **Ravan** was deluded, foolish and unwise. Sri Lanka was plundered, and he lost his head. He indulged in ego, and lacked the love of the true Guru. || 5 || Waheguru killed the thousand-armed **Arjun**, and the demons **Madhu-keetab** and **Meh-khaasaa**. He seized Harnaakhash and tore him apart with his nails. The demons were slain; they did not practise devotional worship. || 6 || The demons **Jaraa-sandh** and **Kaal-jamun** were destroyed. **Rakat-beej** and **Kaal-naym** were annihilated. Slaying the demons, Waheguru saved His saints. || 7 || He Himself, as the true teacher, contemplates the Shabad. Because of the love of duality, God killed the demons. By their true devotion, the Gurmukhs have been saved. || 8 || Sinking down, **Durodhan** lost his honour. He did not know the creator. One who makes Waheguru's humble servant suffer, shall himself suffer and rot. || 9 || **Janameja** did not know the Word of the Guru's Shabad. Deluded by doubt, how could he find peace? Making a mistake, for even an instant, you shall regret and repent later on. || 10 || **Kansa** the King and his warriors **Kays** and **Chandoor** had no equals. But they did not remember Waheguru, and they lost their honour. Without the help of the Master of the Universe, no one can be saved. || 11 || Without the Guru, pride cannot be eradicated. Following the Guru's teachings, one obtains Dharmic faith, composure and Waheguru's Name. Singing the glories of God, his Name is received. || 12 || 9 ||

Brahma (see previous issue of Sikh Courier)

Vedas

Vedas are the oldest of the Hindu scriptures. They are four in number – Rig, Sam, Yajur and Athrav. It is believed that originally there were only first three Vedas, Athrav Veda was found later. These books are called ‘Srutis’ meaning that they in olden times, when there were no printing facilities, they were memorised by heart and were passed on from one generation to another generation. Some believers say that Bramaha is the author of these books, while others state that Hindu Rishis are the true authors still others say that they were written by Aryans when they settled in Punjab.

Rig Ved contains hymns in the praises of gods like Fire, Indra and Varuna; Sam Ved presents these hymn in musical measures; Yajur Ved has hymns which are chanted on ceremonies and havans; and Atharv Ved has mantars concerning magic, jantar and tantar etc.

BALI

Bali, the demon king was the son of Virochana, grandson of Prahalad. He humiliated the gods and defeated Indra who went to Vishnu for help. Vishnu assumed the form of a dwarf (Vamana) and asked Bali for a boon of two and a half steps. When the boon was granted, Vishnu enlarged himself to such a big size that in two strides, he stepped over the heaven and earth. Vishnu with his third step thrust Bali into the nether regions and then for his good qualities made him the king of *Patala*.

Raja Hari Chand

Harish Chander was the twenty-eighth king of the solar dynasty. He was famous for his truthfulness, honesty, promises and righteousness. Vishwamitra was his *kulguru*. Once, when Vishwamitra was not available, Harish Chander arranged another Brahmin to perform family rituals. Vishwamitra got angry and through a cunning move got from Harish

Chander his kingdom and property in charity. Vishwamitra still persisted that the promised gift was not yet fully paid. To pay for this the king sold himself, his wife and his son. As a slave the king then worked as a Chandal at a graveyard and the queen became a sweeper in the house of a Brahmin. Their son was bitten by a snake and died. The queen took him to the cemetery for cremation, where she recognised her husband. The king asked her to pay cremation fee to cremate the child. She wept as she did not have any money. They then decided to die upon the funeral pyre of their son. The gods then appeared along with Vishwamitra and the period of the king’s oppression was put to an end.

Later Narad induced Harish Chander to boast of his qualities, whereupon, because of the ego shown by Harish Chander his heavenly kingdom began descending towards the earth. Again it was saved by the timely interference of gods. It is said that till today the king and his followers dwell in an aerial city which according to the tradition is still visible occasionally in the mid-air.

Harnakhas (Hiranyaksha)

Hiranyaksha was the father of Prehlad. He pleased Brahma with his meditation and attained the boon of invincibility which excluded his death either by man or animal, during day or night, inside a house or outside a house. It is believed that he meditated for 11,000 years. He then thought if he had become immortal. In this pride he started harassing both gods and men. He even dragged earth to patal where it was saved by Vishnu, who assumed the form of a boar and caused it to float again. Hanakhas was killed by Narsingh avtar, who was half man half animal. Narsingh dragged Harnashas on his threshold at tore him apart at dusk time.

Narain

It the other name of Vishnu, the god who preserves the universe. Most of the Hindu incarnations e.g., Rama and Krishna were incarnations of

Vishnu. Guru Gobind Singh has mentioned 24 incarnations of Vishnu in the Dasam Granth.

Prehlad

Prehlad was the son of demon king Harnakhas (some authors state that Prehlad was the son of Hiranyaksha, a brother of Harnakhas). Prehlad was a devotee of Vishnu. He refused to worship his father as an incarnation of God. Harnakhas then tried to kill him by various means. Prehlad was thrown in a river tied with chains, he was poisoned, he was tied to the burning hot pole and he was made to sit in fire with his aunty Holika (where Holika was consumed by the fire and Prehlad was saved). Despite all the efforts of Harnakhas, Prehlad was saved by God himself.

Ravana

Ravan was the king of Lanka (Ceylon) an island built in gold by divine architect Vishkarma. Ravan was a Brahmin by birth and a grandson of rishi Pulastya. He meditated and pleased Brahma and got the boon of invincibility. He could die only by a woman's curse or involvement. In Ramayana he is described as a man of great strength having ten heads, twenty arms, copper coloured eyes and bright teeth. After attaining the boon he started evil designs and became a tyrant king. Vishnu, then incarnated as Rama to destroy him. Ravan's main wife was Mandodri, his son was Indrajit, his brothers were Kumbkaran (who was famous for his large volume of eating and long duration of sleeping bouts) and Vibhishna (who left Ravna and joined Rama's forces).

Ravana came in the disguise of a sadhu and kidnapped Sita, wife of Rama, from her hut where she was living in exile with her husband Rama and brother-in-law Luxman. A great war was fought between the armies of Ravan and the monkey army of Rama. Sugriva was the king of the monkeys and Hanuman was his General.

Ravan was defeated and killed in the battle by Rama, and the island of Lanka was burnt by Hanuman.

Sahasbhau

Sahasbhau literally means a person with one thousand arms. There are two separate episodes which describe two different Sahasbhau.

First episode is about a king who had one thousand arms. Once he stole the divine cow Kamadhenu from the hermitage of Jamadagni, father of Parashrama. Later knowing about the incident Parashrama attacked the king and killed him in the battle and rescued the cow.

Second episode is about Bana, the eldest son of Bali. He too had one thousand arms. His daughter Usha saw a beautiful prince in her dreams and fell in love with him. Her friend Chiterlekha, an artiste by profession, drew on a canvass pictures of all the living princes. One of such images was of Aniruddha, a grandson of Krishna. Usha immediately recognised him, he was the prince of her dreams. Later Usha and Chiterlekha planned to kidnap Aniruddha from Dwarka. They brought him in their palace and hid him there. Usha became pregnant of him and the matter was reported to Bana Aniruddha was later found and was thrown in the dungeons. When Krishna came to know about Anirudha he attacked Bana. Bana was defeated, and later Usha was married to Aniruddha and couple lived happily in Dwarka.

Madhau and Kaitabha

Madhu and Kaitabha were two demons who had sprung from the ears of Vishnu. Once they cast a spell on gods, stole the Vedas from Brahma's household and hid them in the ocean.

Without Vedas, gods could not perform rituals and Brahma could not carry on with the creation. Vishu assumed the form of a boar, killed the demons and recovered the Vedas.

Mehkhasa

There are two Mehkhasas in Hindu mythology. First one is in the story of Mahabharat; here Mehkhasa was a buffalo-headed demon king who was killed by Skanda. Secondly, in Markandeya Purana, a demon of the name of Mehkhasa was killed by Chandi.

Jarasand

Jarasanda was the king of Megadha. His two daughters Asti and Prapti were married to Kans, the maternal uncle of Krishna.

Jarasand was born as a still child split into two halves. His father was king Brihtrath. He was thrown away on a rubbish dump by his parents. An evil woman named Jara picked up these pieces and by her magical powers joined them together and brought back the body into life. She named the child as Jarasand, where sand means one who is joined together.

Krishna killed Kans and then faced the mighty armies of Jarasand who attacked Mathrua eighteen times. Jarasand could not be killed, for whenever his body was cut into pieces it would automatically join together due to the magical powers with which he was created. At the end Bhim killed him by tearing him apart and killing each piece of his body separately.

Kalajamuna

Kalajamna was the king of Yavan and a friend of Jarsanda. For his intense meditation he got a boon from Shiva that none of the Yadav could kill him. The boon made him fearless of Krishna who at that time was the mentor of the people of Mathura. When Krishna came to know of this boon, he left Mathura and retired to Dwarka. Kalajamna followed Krishna to kill him. Krishna by diplomacy allowed Kalajamuna to follow him into a cave where Muchukunda was sleeping. Muchukunda had a boon from Indra that whosoever would disturb him in his sleep

he would be reduced to ashes by his every first looks. In the cave Krishna hid himself and put his clothes on Muchukunda. Kalajamuna mistook Muchukunda to be Krishna and hit him hard and challenged him to get up and have a fight with him. Muchukunda woke up from his sleep and looked at Kalajamuna, who was immediately reduced to ashes.

Rakatbeej

Rakatbeej was commander-in-chief of the forces of two demon brothers, king Sumbh and king Nisumbh. Raktbeej had been blessed with a boon that any drop of his blood which will fall on the ground will produce a new Raktbeej.

Once goddess Durga was approached by gods to save them from the persecution of the two demon kings. Durga attacked the brothers, but each time she would inflict a wound on Raktbeej many Raktbeej would spring up from his blood. Durga then prayed to goddess Kali for help. Kali manifested herself and started drinking Raktbeej's blood before it could fall on ground. This helped Durga to kill the demon kings and Raktbeej.

Kalanem

Kalnem was a maternal uncle of Ravan. He was sent by Ravan to obstruct the way of Hanuman from bringing Sanjivni herb for reviving Luxman who had fallen unconscious. Kalnem assumed the form of a hermit and went to Gandhamadana where Hanuman had gone for the herb. He tried many tricks to engage Hanuman. One day Hanuman went into a nearby pool for bath, here he was seized by a crocodile. Hanuman dragged the crocodile out from the water and killed him, but to his surprise the dead crocodile turned into a beautiful damsel, who had become a crocodile due to a curse by hermit Daksha. The damsel told Hanuma about the secret of Kalanem. Hanuman went straight to Kalanem's hut, seized him by his feet and threw him with such a force that he flew all the way and fell dead at the feet of Ravana.

Duryodhan

Duryodhan was the eldest brother of Kaurav family and first cousin of Pandav brothers. He opposed the coronation of Yudhishthira as the king of Hastinapur. The rivalries of the two families grew and resulted in one of the greatest battles of history, the Mahabharat. Duryodhan was killed by cousin Bhishm with his mace. He was the last of the Kaurav brothers to die in the battle.

Jameja

Jameja was the grandson of Arjan and son of Parikshit. His guru Vyas advised him not to pursue certain acts, the happening of which could harm Jameja. The forbidden acts included:

- ❖ riding a particular mare
- ❖ sending the filly born to the mare to an Ashwamedha Yajna.
- ❖ marrying a special beautiful woman who would meet him on a hunting expedition, and

- ❖ not to hold Yajna and invite Brahmins.

The destiny prevailed and Jameja performed all the forbidden acts. At the Yajna when the Brahmins laughed looking at the transparent costume of the queen, Jameja killed them. With the curse of the Brahmins he became a leper. Later a divine voice advised him to listen to the commentary of Mahabharat to cure himself from the nasty disease.

Kesi

Kesi was a demon, who took the form of a horse and attacked Krishna. Krishna put his arm in the horse's mouth and tore it apart.

Chandur

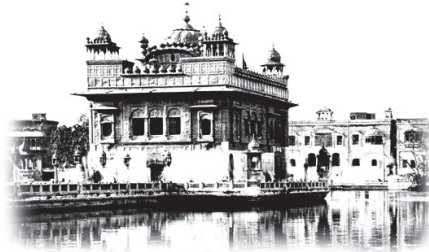
He was a wrestler in the service of Kansa. He was killed by Krishna after a fierce contest

Dr Jaya Patil

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