

REGISTRATION NO. 1137019

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1054913

ISSN. 2054-9067



**The
Sikh Courier
INTERNATIONAL**

www.sikhcourierintl.org



**SPECIAL DIAMOND JUBILEE NUMBER
(1960-2020)**

**A JOURNAL OF
THE WORLD SIKH FOUNDATION
(THE SITA AND AMAR SINGH CHHATWAL SIKH TRUST)**

SUMMER 2020



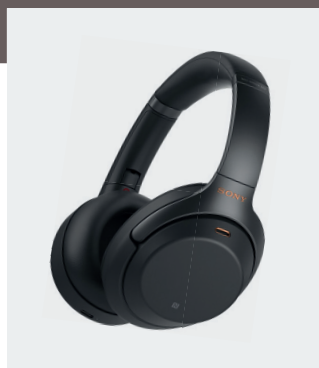
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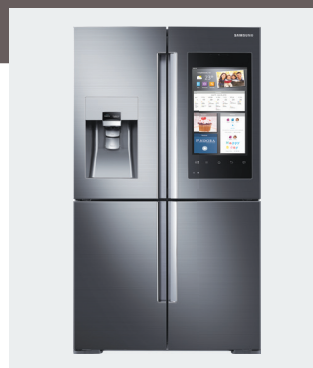
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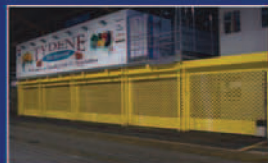
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24th June, 2020

Dear Mrs. Bharara,

I have been asked to thank you, the trustees and members of the World Sikh Foundation for your kind letter containing loyal greetings to The Queen, sent on the Diamond Jubilee Celebration of the publication of its journal 'The Sikh Courier International'.

Her Majesty much appreciates your thoughtfulness in writing as you did and, in return, sends her warm good wishes to all concerned on this most special anniversary.

Yours sincerely,

David Ryan
Director, Private Secretary's Office

Mrs. Babli Bharara.

MESSAGES FOR DIAMOND JUBILEE ISSUE

Lord Rami Ranger, London

I am delighted to send my very best wishes to the Sikh Courier on reaching the 60th glorious milestone of publication.

The Dr Jit Singh Chandan started the Sikh Cultural Society of Great Briton along with the publication of the Sikh Courier.

Sardar Amar Singh Chhatwal joined him in 1962 and took over the reign and made the magazine widely circulated across the world.

The founders were visionaries who felt the need to spread the teachings and wisdom of the Sikh Gurus and their followers to humanity. Over the years the Sikh Courier has become a massive reservoir of knowledge about the Sikh faith. It provides a prospectus on Sikhism by accomplished writers and scholars to benefit us all.

It is worth remembering that when the Sikh Courier began its publication in 1962, we were a struggling community in a foreign country. Most of us were trying to secure ourselves and our families and for someone to think beyond themselves speak volumes about their love and commitment for our faith and Gurus. We owe them a debt of gratitude for continuing to serve their community and belief, especially when most of us could not think beyond ourselves.

I wish Mrs Bably Bharara the daughter of late Sardar Amar Singh Chhatwal and his son in law Dr Amarjit Chopra every success in their endeavour to carry on with the legacy of their illustrious father. The editor in chief, Dr Sukhbir Singh Kapoor OBE, is a highly educated individual who has written approximately 40 books on Sikhism. He is also the Vice-Chancellor of the World Sikh University. His invaluable contribution has made the magazine a must for every household to keep our next generation informed about the rich Sikh philosophy and its contribution to the broader world.

Dr. Bhai Harbans Lal, Ph.D.; D.Litt. USA

Our best wishes on your celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the Sikh Courier International.

Down in my memory lane, it was not long ago that I remember chatting with Sardar Amar Singh Chhatwal, Pamela Wylam, and several alike pioneers whom I had found

MESSAGES FOR DIAMOND JUBILEE ISSUE

spending continued hours and days in planning and nourishing what then was a new journal, Sikh Courier International.

The earlier days were indeed a struggle. But the purpose was a revered ideal; to spread the wisdom of Sikhism among the societies in the West. It is a pleasant coincidence that in this issue my article, “When light is dimmed darkness will inevitably come” is published. Turning on the lights in the West was your purpose.

The Sikh world should be pleased to realize that your efforts had continued for sixty long years, and we may look forward to your Centennial celebration.

My warm and sincere congratulations on the completion of the 60 successful years of our esteemed journal, the Sikh Courier International.

Dr. Narinder Singh Kapani, USA

It was the early Sixties that my dear uncle Mr. Amar Singh Chhatwal came to London and started work on his new and the first Sikh magazine in English outside India. Over the decades he worked hard to present the Sikh religious and historical subjects through this the only Sikh magazine in English printed outside India. In the early years in the 1960's my son Raj used to spend the weekends with the Chhatwal family and was helping them mail the magazine to various clients.

We are eternally thankful to Mr. Chhatwal for his diligence, clarity and contacts with historians in India, Britain and USA. Now Babli Bharara and Dr. Amarjit Singh Chopra are carrying this activity with deep interest.

Prof Dr. Dalvinder Singh Grewal India

I am really shocked to know the fact at the poor response shown on your survey with such a wonderful journal which surpasses any other journal on Sikhism in quality of material, print and paper. Indeed, this remains the best magazine and if this is allowed to close it will be a great loss to the world of knowledge on Sikhism.

THE SIKH COURIER INTERNATIONAL Established 1960

THE ONLY WIDELY CIRCULATED SIKH RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE IN ENGLISH PUBLISHED OUTSIDE INDIA
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The Sikh Courier

INTERNATIONAL

BI-ANNUALLY

First Published October 1960

Volume 77

SUMMER 2020

No.: 129

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Editorial

60TH ANNIVERSARY

Time is the indefinite continued progress of existence and events that occur in an apparently irreversible succession from the past, through the present, into the future. Sixty long years have passed since the inception of this magazine, which still is a beacon in the religious circles.

We, the team of the Sikh Courier, salute the founders of this esteemed magazine, especially, Sardar (Dr) Amar Singh Chhatwal, who, literally gave this magazine his ‘tan’ ਤਨ (labour time), ‘man’ ਮਨ (conscious, knowledge) and ‘ਧਨ’ (wealth). His complete life was devoted to this great magazine. This editorial is dedicated to him.

On the eve of the 60th Anniversary of the Sikh Courier International I want to thank the Almighty for showing us the right path to march the path of righteousness and virtue. I want to thank and make it known to all readers and subscribers that the success, progress and ascent of this magazine is solely due to the untiring and determined efforts of Dr Amarjit Singh Chopra, and Babli Bharara who are looking after all the departments of its publication. I salute to their endeavour and pray to Waheguru for their good health.

The objectives of the publication of this magazine have always been to advance the values of the Sikh faith covering all aspects of this world religion. The magazine has covered

religious and spiritual writings of a wide range of Sikh scholars, past and present.

In honour of this momentous occasion, despite the difficulties and restrictions of Covid-19, we have undertaken to publish this special issue. We hope the readers will enjoy the articles especially those from our archives from famous writers who are no more.

The magazine, in its early years of publication has brought to the readers articles by most of the following prominent writers of 1960s, who have immortalised their names by their writings:

Bhai Vir Singh, Prof. Gurmukh Singh, Giani Dit Singh, Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, Dr. Sher Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh, Prof. Sahib Singh, Bhai Randhir Singh, Sirdar Kapur Singh, Dr. Surinder Singh Kohli, Dr. Taran Singh, Dr. Darshan Singh, Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, Dr. Jodh Singh, Dr. Wazir Singh, Dr. Ganda Singh, Dr Kirpal Singh, Principal Teja Singh, Giani Lal Singh, Prof. Harbans Singh, Prof. Kirpal Singh, Sardar Khushwant Singh and many more.

We are reproducing 3 articles from our archives from Khushwant Singh, W H McLeod and Fauja Singh in this issue.

Dr Sukhbir Singh Kapoor

ARDAS

Dr. J.S. Randhawa

PREFACE

The idea of writing this booklet regarding 'Ardas' came to my mind due to my daughter Melissa. Whenever she accompanied me to Gurdwara she would take a book of Enid Blyton's stories with her. While I recharged my spiritual batteries she enjoyed her book. On our way home I would ask her if she had learnt anything, and she would reply with a standard answer 'Nothing at all'. The Punjabi spoken in the Gurdwara was quite difficult for her. In an attempt to make it worthwhile for children to go to Gurdwara, I once requested a very popular priest to preach in English as well. However, the priest stated that he was unable to properly translate Gurbani in English. Then it occurred to me that I should at least familiarize Melissa about 'Ardas'. A thought also came to my mind that there are many children, especially born outside India, who do not understand the meaning or know the incidents associated with 'Ardas'. Thus I decided to write this small booklet to help children understand at least one aspect of going to the Gurdwara.

God inspired me to make this little contribution to my society. However, this would not have been possible without a great deal of help and encouragement from many friends. I am very grateful to Dr. Kultar Singh, Giani Inderjit Singh, Mrs. and Dr Sethi, Mr. Saeed Rattoo, Gurdeep, Dharminder, Jyoti, Surinder, my wife Rajinder, the children of my friends: Jasleen, Ishveen, Navneet, Gunmeet, Rasmeet and my daughters Zubi and Melissa who contributed a lot to make this booklet understandable. I plan to continue

improving this work. Suggestions to improve this are most welcome especially from my teenage friends. If the children can understand even a little part of our heritage, I shall feel that this effort has been worthwhile. I dedicate this book to all of them.

'Ardas' is a part of the Sikh prayer that is usually recited at the end of a religious ceremony with participants standing up concentrating on God with folded hands, facing Guru Granth Sahib Ji (most of Sikh religious ceremonies happen in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib Ji). It can be any direction, if Guru Granth Sahib is not there.

The text that follows describes the meaning of Ardas and explains all events stated in there.

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ ।

IK ONKAR WAHEGURU JI KI FATEH.

'God is one. The victory belongs to God.'

'Onkar' and 'Waheguru' are names of God. In Gurbani (the Sikh scripture), God has been addressed by many names like Ishwar, Allah, Parmatama, Prabhu, Ram, Mohan and Gobind, but Satnam and Waheguru are most commonly used.

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੌਤੀ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਏ।

SRI BHAGAUTI JI SAHAI.

We are starting the prayer by asking **'the Great Eternal Power to help us.'** Bhagauti is the name of the 'Great Eternal Power' (God). 'Sahai' means 'help'.

ਵਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੌਤੀ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ੧੦ ।

VAR SRI BHAGAUTI JI KI PATSHAI
DASWEEN.

‘This Var, addressed to the Almighty was written by Guru Gobind Singh Ji’

‘Var’ is one of the types of poetry, which is usually sung in praise of martyrs. You will notice that the first five lines are written as a poem and the rest of the Ardas is prose.

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮ ਭਗੌਤੀ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਕੈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈਂ ਧਿਆਏ ।

**PRITHAM BHAGAUTI SIMAR KE GURU
NANAK LAIN DHIAE**

First of all after thinking of the Great Eternal Power I put my mind to Guru Nanak.

‘Pritham’ means first of all, ‘simar’ is reciting repeatedly and ‘dhiae’ is to meditate (think deeply). As most of you know Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was the first Guru whose followers were called Sikhs. Sikh means a student. Whenever anybody went to Guru Nanak and listened and adhered to his teachings, other people called him ‘Guru ka Sikh’ (Sikh of the Guru).

ਫਿਰ ਅੰਗਦ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਅਮਰਦਾਸੁ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੈ ਹੋਈਂ ਸਹਾਏ ।

**PHIR ANGAD GUR TE AMARDAS,
RAMDASAE HOIE SAHAI.**

‘Then I pray to Guru Angad, Guru Amardas and Guru Ramdas to look after me.’ Nine Gurus, whose names appear in Ardas in order of succession, succeeded Guru Nanak Dev. Guru Angad Dev was second, Guru Amardas was third and Guru Ramdas was the fourth Guru. (Gur is short for Guru). Guru Angad Dev compiled the Gurmukhi script in which Sri Guru Granth Sahib is written. Guru Amardas started the ‘Langar’ (the community kitchen) where every hungry

person was fed irrespective of colour, caste or creed. Everybody sat at the same level and ate the same food, thus showing that everyone is equal. Guru Ramdas laid the foundation of Amritsar city, where later his son Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru, built the Golden Temple.

ਅਰਜਨ ਹਰਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਨੇ ਸਿਮਰੋ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇ ।

**ARJAN HARGOBIND NO SIMRAU SRI
HAR RAI.**

‘I will meditate on Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rai.’ These were the fifth, sixth and seventh Gurus respectively. Besides building the Golden Temple, Guru Arjan Dev wrote and compiled Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in which the Gurbani, written by his four predecessor Gurus and contemporary ‘*Baghats*’ (religious teachers; saints) was arranged. He was also the first Sikh martyr who was tortured to death by one of the Emperor Jahangir’s courtiers (Chandu). Guru Hargobind taught the Sikhs to be brave, to look after themselves and to fight for their own rights, even with the swords, if need be. He wore two swords, one of ‘*Miri*’ (the political) and one of ‘*Piri*’ (the spiritual). He fought a few battles with the Emperor’s army and won conclusively, which actually won him the Emperor’s friendship. Guru Har Rai continued the good work of his predecessors.

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿ ਕਿਸ਼ਨ ਧਿਆਇਐ ਜਿਸ ਡਿਠੇ ਸਭਿ ਦੁਖਿ ਜਾਇ ।

**SRI HARKISHAN DHIAEY, JIS DITHE
SABH DUKH JAIE.**

‘I think of Guru Harkishan, on seeing his calm face all agonies disappear.’ Guru Harkrishan was the eighth Guru. He was invited by Emperor Aurangzeb to see him. But when Guru Harkishan reached Delhi, there was an outbreak of small pox. Instead of seeing the Emperor, he

started looking after the poorly and sick people. He himself caught small pox infection and left for heavenly abode while he was still in Delhi. He was merely eight years old at that time.

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਿਮਰਿਐ ਘਰਿ ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਆਵੈ ਧਾਇ ।

**TEG BAHADAR SIMARIYE, GHAR NAO
NIDH AWAI DHAI. SABH THAIN HOI
SAHAI.**

‘If you meditate on Guru Teg Bahadar you will get the key for all the riches. He will help you everywhere.’ Teg Bahader was the ninth Guru. He was the second martyr Sikh Guru. He was beheaded on Emperor Aurangzeb’s orders when he refused to accept Islam.

ਸਭ ਥਾਈਂ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ । ਦਸਵਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦਿ
ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ, ਸਭ ਥਾਈਂ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ ।

**DASWAN PATSHAH SRI GURU GOBIND
SINGH SAHIB JI, SABH THAIN HOI
SAHAI.**

‘I request Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Guru, to look after me everywhere.’ Guru Gobind Singh is also known as a ‘SAINT-SOLDIER’. He changed the Sikhs into ‘KHALSA’, which means ‘pure’. He also gave the name ‘Singh’ (lion) to his followers. He sacrificed all his family members for the sake of his ideals. Before leaving this world Guru Gobind Singh told the Sikhs to accept Guru Granth Sahib as their Guru. They would find the path leading to a better life, truth and high morals if they study, understand and follow the teachings written in the holy book.

ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਜੋਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਾਠ
ਦੀਦਾਰ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ।

**DASAN PATSHAHIAN DI JOT SRI
GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI DE PATH
DIDAR DA DHAYAN DHAR KE BOLO JI
‘WAHEGURU’.**

‘Meditate on the teaching of SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB Ji which is the gospel of all the ten Gurus, and say ‘WAHEGURU’.’

You will notice that ‘BOLO JI WAHEGURU’ (say ‘Waheguru’) is repeated many times during Ardas, always at the end of the counting of praise-worthy adjectives. It is one of the ways to pay respect and homage to whatever is said during that passage in the prayer.

ਪੰਜਾਂ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ, ਚੌਹਾਂ ਸ਼ਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਿਆਂ, ਚਾਲੀਆਂ ਮੁਕਤਿਆਂ,
ਹਠੀਆਂ, ਜਪੀਆਂ, ਤਪੀਆਂ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਿਆ, ਵੰਡ ਛਕਿਆ,
ਦੇਗ ਚਲਾਈ, ਤੇਗ ਵਾਹੀ, ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਅਣਡਿੱਠ ਕੀਤਾ, ਤਿਨਾਂ
ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ, ਸਚਿਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ,
ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ, ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ।

**PANJAN PIARIAN, CHOHAN
SAHIBZADIAN, CHALI MUKTIAN,
HATHIAN, JAPIAN, TAPIAN, JINHAN
NAAM JAPPIA, WAND CHHAKIA, DEG
CHALAI, TEG WAHI, DEKH KE UNDITH
KEETA, TINNA PIARIAN SACHIARIAN DI
KAMAI DA DHIAN DHAR KE KHALSA JI
BOLO JI - ‘WAHEGURU’.**

‘Think of the five chosen ones; the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh Ji; the forty martyrs and all those who meditated on God’s name with strong faith and determination; shared with everybody whatever they had; participated in feeding the hungry; fought for the community; forgave the wrong doers; remember the great pieces of work done by those lovely and truthful people and say ‘WAHEGURU’.’

PANJ PIARE: The incidence of the ‘Five chosen ones’ is one of the most important happenings in the Sikh history. It was during the harvest festival of Vaisakhi (30th of March 1699); while the congregation at Anandpur (a town in Punjab, India) were enjoying the hymns; that Guru Gobind Singh stood up, took his sword out and said in a very loud voice, “I need the head of a Sikh. Who is ready to offer me his head?” Everybody was stunned, and a deadly silence immediately fell all around. One man named Daya Ram came forward, bowed his head and said, “I offer my head.” He was taken into a tent, which had already been erected there. Nobody knew what was happening inside. They heard a ‘thud’, which came from inside the tent as if a person had been beheaded. After a while Guru Ji came out with the sword dripping with blood and said, “I need another head”. This shocked even the bravest hearted man. Many people started leaving the place. But one brave man Dharam Das came forward and said, “I offer my head”. He was also taken in. After a few more tense minutes Guru Ji came out and demanded another head. Three times the same thing was repeated and every time one Sikh would come and offer his head. The other three who came were Himmant Rai, Mohkam Chand and Sahib Chand. They went in the same tent one after the other. People outside the tent did not know what was happening inside. The tension and anxiety hung thickly in the air. The silence was so complete that the dropping of a pin could have echoed for miles around. Nobody dared to question what was happening. Those who remained watched in awe whilst the faint hearted left.

After a long wait, the flap of the tent opened, Guru Ji came out, followed by the Five Chosen Ones (PANJ PIARE - Panj means five, Piare means loved ones). These five were dressed in a uniform; they wore a long shirt, a long sword on one side and a neatly tied turban. Then Guru Ji prepared Amrit (Holy water) by reciting five ‘*Banis*’ of Nitnem (the hymns for the morning prayer) while moving the ‘Khanda’ (a double edged sword) in a bowl of water in which sugar was mixed. Amrit was offered to all the five. It was sprinkled in their eyes (to make their spiritual vision clear), in their hair (to make their thinking clear) and given them to drink from the same pot (ending the class and caste system).

Guru Ji stood in front of them and said in a very loud voice, “From today all of you are brothers, no one is higher or lower and there will not be a caste system amongst you. You are an army of lions. Your name will be Singh (lion). You will fight for the sake of truth. You will always fight to help the poor. You will have the courage that for the sake of your ideals you would not be scared to fight even a million people single-handed. You will believe only in One God and will not worship any idols, deities or ghosts. God will always look after you. You will always keep five Ks, that are Kes (uncut hair), Kangha (a personal wooden comb, to keep the hair clean), Karha (an iron bracelet on the wrist), Kachha (the under pant), and Kirpan (the sword). This uniform will keep you ready for your mission. During a fight you will fight with soldiers, you will not attack if he is unarmed, if he is asleep, if he is running away or if he throws his arms. You belong to God. When you win in battle, the honour of the victory will also belong to God, not to an individual. All women, except your wife, are either your mothers or sisters or daughters. You will never

harm the women, children or elderly people. You will have no relationship with the women of your enemy. You will not smoke nor will you consume intoxicating drinks nor eat 'Halal' meat".

"I am your Guru and you are to obey me. But now I will change my place. You are my Guru. I would request you to offer me this Amrit. From now onward, if ever, five Sikhs order me to do anything, I will obey."

Guru Ji was given Amrit the same way as the Panj Piare were given.

Then Guru Ji addressed the whole of the congregation. "These five are the most courageous people. I want all of you to follow their example. Those who want to abide by these rules can take Amrit and join this army of true people - THE KHALSA. I would also like to invite all women to take Amrit. They will be called 'KAUR' (meaning Princess). They too will play an equal part in the Khalsa."

It is said that almost twenty thousand people took Amrit that day.

CHAR SAHIBZADE: 'Char' means four, 'Sahibzade' means sons (usually belonging to a respectable family.) Here, this refers to the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. They were Ajit Singh, Jujhar Singh, Zoraver Singh and Fateh Singh. When Guru Gobind Singh Ji formed the Khalsa the neighbouring kings were very unhappy and jealous. They attacked Anandpur a few times but were badly defeated by the Khalsa. They told Emperor Aurangzeb that Gobind Singh had made a very big army and was planning to attack Delhi. They succeeded in getting his army to attack Anandpur. The army surrounded the city but the Sikhs did not give in. More than a year passed and at last the Mogul commander

(on behalf of the Emperor) suggested under oath that if Guru Ji could leave Anandpur he would be given a safe passage by which to go and would not be followed or captured. Inside the fort the Sikhs were also suffering from sickness and hunger. The Sikhs urged Guru Ji and all his family members (including his mother Mata Gujri Ji), to leave Anandpur. The entire army lead by Guru Ji left Anandpur. They had hardly gone out of the city when the Emperor's army broke all their promises. They attacked the Sikhs. The Sikhs were forced to cross the river 'Sarsa' which was flooded at that time. While crossing the river the two elder sons Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh were with Guru Ji but the younger ones Zoraver Singh and Fateh Singh were separated and went in a different direction along with their grandmother and a cook (Gangu). Guru Ji had to take shelter in a small fort at a village, Chamkaur, along with a few Sikhs and his two sons. The army had surrounded the village and were desperately trying to capture Guru Ji, dead or alive. The Sikhs and Guru Ji decided to fight to the end. The Sikhs would go in the formation of three to five persons at one time and fight. They would kill as many soldiers as possible before laying down their own lives. Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh also got excited and wanted to go out and fight. Guru Ji prepared them and blessed them to meet their end bravely. They went out in turn with a couple of older Sikhs and fought bravely. Although they were very young (17 and 15 years old), they did not care to save themselves. Both died fighting bravely.

Gangu betrayed Zoraver Singh and Fateh Singh and handed them over to the men of the Muslim Governor of Sarhand (a neighbouring town). The governor tried to coax them to convert to Islam, which they flatly refused. They were

neither enchanted by the attractions of a royal living nor scared by the tortures, which were waiting for them. They opted for the latter. They were made to stand on a platform and a wall was erected around them. The news of their martyrdom was conveyed to their grandmother. She prayed sitting in the cold tower, where she was imprisoned, and died.

When the news of his younger sons, age 9 and 7 years, and his mother reached Guru Gobind Singh Ji, he sat in meditation, prayed and thanked God saying, “Thank God, I have returned to you what belonged to you, the children have sacrificed themselves for the sake of the nation.”

CHALI MUKTE: When the Emperor’s army had surrounded Anandpur the condition inside the fort started getting worse after sometime, as the food supply dwindled. Sikhs tried their best to eat less. Sometimes they would attack the army to loot their ration, but time took its toll. Some Sikhs were more desperate than others were. They thought of leaving Guru Ji’s army and going home where they would work in their fields and look after their families. They went to Guru Ji and told their decision. Guru Ji did not get cross with them, rather he smiled and said, “I respect your decision and it is your choice to stay or to leave. If you have decided to leave I would like it if you would write your names on a piece of paper saying that I am not your Guru and you are not my Sikhs.” They did it as soon as they could and escaped in the darkness to avoid being captured.

When they reached home their families were first surprised and then upset. They were not expecting them so soon since the battle was still continuing. When they heard that their loved

ones had deserted Guru Ji, they were extremely annoyed. No welcome home, no smiling faces and no hospitality was offered. Instead a very brave lady Mai Bhago suggested to them that they should stay at home, look after the children and work in the fields; and that she would go in the battlefield along with a few women and fight in their place. They were very ashamed and sorry for what they had done, especially when the news came that Guru Ji was forced to leave Anandpur. They had learnt their lesson. Under the leadership of Mai Bhago forty of them decided to return to Guru Ji and fight.

In the mean while Emperor’s army was surrounding the village Chamkaur and was trying to capture Guru Ji. Guru Ji had lost both of his elder sons and many Sikhs. Nightfall came and the army stopped fighting, as this was the unwritten law of battle in those days. Inside the little fort everybody knew that in the morning the army would attack and kill or capture them. The Sikhs suggested to Guru Ji that he should leave in the dark of the night and they would hold the fort for as long as possible. Sikhs thought that by the morning Guru Ji would have escaped to the safety of the nearby forest. However, Guru Ji refused to leave his Sikhs under these circumstances. The Sikhs thought of a plan. Five Sikhs stood in front of Guru Ji, reminded him of the promise he had made with ‘*Panj Piare*’, and ‘ordered’ him to leave the fort. Thus Guru Ji had no choice since he had promised to follow the orders of his ‘*Panj Piare*’. Guru Ji stood at the wall of the fort and shouted, “I, Gobind Singh, the Guru of the Sikhs, am leaving this fort. Capture me if you dare.” It was a very dark night. Although the army tried to run in every direction to catch Guru Ji, they could not find him. In the morning the army commander came

to know that Guru Ji was going towards a small village. They followed him.

It was in the nick of time that the forty Sikhs under the command of Mai Bhago reached Guru Ji. Guru Ji got control of a small and the only source of water at that place. These forty Sikhs fought bravely with their swords and arrows; Guru Ji's arrows also uprooted the army. The army was dying not only due to injuries but also the thirst in the extreme heat of mid-day. They ran away without capturing Guru Ji. But by this time many of the Sikhs were dead and others were dying. Guru Ji walked amongst his true followers. He sat with every dead Sikh and blessed him. One of them, named Mahan Singh, was taking his last breath when Guru Ji saw him. He rushed to the dying Sikh, cleaned his face and said, "You are my beloved Sikh. I am very impressed by your bravery, devotion and sacrifice. You can ask for anything at this time and I will try to get it for you." A glow came into Mahan Singh's eyes and then his eyes were filled with water. He gathered all his strength, tried to touch Guru Ji's feet and said, "Guru Ji, I have only one request. Please, tear up that piece of paper on which I, with my other friends, wrote our names when we deserted you. Just say that you have forgiven us." Guru Ji smiled, put Mahan Singh's head in his lap, took out the paper and tore it. "I forgive you and your brothers and I appreciate your courage and bravery." Mahan Singh died peacefully in Guru Ji's lap. These forty Sikh are known as 'Chali Mukte - The forty who attained salvation.' There is a big Gurdwara at this place called 'Mukatsar'. Sikhs celebrate the occasion every year on the 14th of January all over the world. It is known as 'Maghi Festival'.

ਜਿਨਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸੀਸ ਦਿਤੇ, ਬੰਦ ਬੰਦ ਕਟਾਏ, ਖੋਪਰੀਆਂ ਲੁਹਾਈਆਂ, ਚਰਖੜੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਚੜ੍ਹੇ, ਆਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਚਿਰਾਏ ਗਏ, ਦੇਗਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਬਾਲੇ ਗਏ, ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਟੋਟੇ ਕਰਾ ਕੇ ਝੋਲੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਪਵਾਏ, ਗੁਰਦਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਈ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀਆਂ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ, ਧਰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਾਰਿਆ, ਸਿਖੀ ਕੇਸਾਂ ਸੁਆਸਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਬਾਹੀ, ਤਿਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ, ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ।

*JINHAN SINGHAN SINGHANIAN
NE DHARAM HET SIS DITTE, BAND
BAND KATAE, KHOPRIAN LAHAIAN,
CHARKHRIAN TE CHARHE, AAREAN
NAAL CHEERAI GAE, DEGAN WICH
UBALE GAE, BACHIAN DE TOTE KRA KE
JHOLIAN WICH PWAE, GURDWARIAN
DI SEWA LAI QURBANIAN KEETIAN,
DHARAM NAHEEN HARIA, SIKHI KESAN
SWASAN NAAL NIBAHEE, TINNA DI
KAMAI DA DHIAN DHAR KE, KHALSA JI,
BOLO JI 'WAHEGURU.'*

'Those Sikhs, both men and women, who, for the sake of their religion, offered their heads; let their bodies be cut piece by piece; let their heads be scalped off; suffered torture under the body cutting wheel; let their body be sawed through the middle; boiled to death; who received the cut parts of their children's bodies into their laps; who sacrificed themselves for the sake of the reformation of the Gurdwaras; but they did not relinquish their religion; who stuck to the principles of 'Sikhi' up to their last breath, think of their heroic performance and say 'WAHEGURU'.'

DHARAM HET SIS DITTE: (Offered their heads). There have been many brave Sikhs who were beheaded for the sake of their principles. After Guru Gobind Singh Ji left this world, Baba Banda Singh Bahader (who was assigned as

commander by Guru Ji) led the Sikhs for a few years. He revenged the torture and assassination of Guru Ji's younger sons, killed the governor of Sarhand and destroyed the city. He started Sikh rule, which lasted for a very short time. But unfortunately, he was captured with a handful of Sikhs. To make up a good number of the spoil the army caught a few hundred civilian Sikhs as well. They were presented to the governor. He ordered them to be killed in front of Banda Bahader, who was put in a cage. Every day one hundred Sikhs were beheaded in an open slaughterhouse. They were given one last chance to save themselves, by converting to Islam. Strangely nobody took this offer.

One of the prisoners was a boy in his mid-teens, whose father had died. His poor widowed mother approached the governor to spare his life because he was innocent, because she was dependent on him and also that he was not a Sikh. The governor took pity on her and gave the order for his release. He was going to be beheaded when the order came through. His mother cried with joy that her son would live. The boy was given the good news, but he refused to accept his release, even refused to recognize his mother and preferred to be killed as a brave Sikh than to live a life of a coward.

BAND BAND KATTAE: (chopped at every joint) Bhai Mani Singh will always be remembered as the man who was tortured to death by being cut at every joint. He was one of the most literate Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh Ji dictated to him the whole of Guru Granth Sahib Ji, also incorporating the hymns written by his father, Guru Teg Bahader Ji. When Guru Ji left Punjab to go to South India (Nander in Andhra Pradesh), Bhai Mani Singh was sent to the Golden

Temple Amritsar, as the head priest. He looked after the general affairs of the Sikh community and had a relatively better relationship with the authorities. One year he asked the authorities if he could organize the Diwali fair without any intervention from them. It was agreed for a fixed amount of money to be paid after the fair. All the Sikh leaders, who were hiding, were sent the invitations. A few days before the fair Bhai Mani Singh came to know the secret plot of the government, which was to attack and kill all the Sikh leaders who would come to attend the fair. Immediately this new information was sent out and the fair was cancelled. As a result only a handful of people came and there was not enough money raised to pay the authorities. Bhai Ji was arrested. When he told them the reason why the money could not be paid, he was prosecuted in the court and, of course, found guilty. According to the Islamic law the punishment was that he should be killed by chopping him at each joint. He smiled at them. When the executioner came to him he asked, "Where are you going to start from?"

"Your wrist," answered the executioner as he got hold of his forearm.

"You foolish illiterate man! Can't you see any joint before my wrist? Start with the small joints of the fingers before you come to the wrist. Keep chopping as ordered and if I fall unconscious don't forget the small joints of my toes when you start cutting my feet."

He was chopped joint by joint.

KHOPRIAN LAHAIAN: 'Khopri' is the scalp where the hair grows; 'Lahaian' means 'let it be removed'. ('Khoprian' is plural and 'khopri' is singular). This particular incident happened with Bhai Taru Singh Ji. He was also caught

during the reign of terror and given the choice of either to accept Islam or to be ready to die. He accepted the latter. The punishment was to cut his hair first. Unfortunately when the barber tried, his scissors were very blunt and did not cut at all. The executioner could not wait, so he ordered that Bhai Ji's scalp should be removed. Bhai Ji stayed calm as the order was carried out and he became a martyr in Sikh history.

CHARKHRIAN TE CHARE: This was a very popular torture of that time. 'Charkhri' was a device like a Catherine Wheel. The person was mounted on one wheel, the other wheel was covered with sharp knives or nails. Both the wheels were rotated and every time the person's body touched the other wheel a part of his body was ripped. There were many Sikhs who died on these wheels but Shabeg Singh and Shahbaz Singh will always be remembered. They were father and son and were very well respected by the commoners as well as the officials. For quite a while they were a go between for the government officials and the rebel Sikhs. But a time came when a Qazi (the Islamic Judge) set them up and the authorities accepted his unfair verdict. They were given a last chance to save their lives by accepting Islam or die on the 'charkhri', ('charkhri' is singular and 'charkhrian' is plural). As expected of the brave Sikhs of the day they preferred the latter. Both of them laid down their lives for the sake of the community.

AAREAN NAAL CHEERAI GAE: (cut with a saw); **DEGAN WICH UBALE GAE** (boiled to death). These incidence happened to Bhai Mati Das Ji and Bhai Dyala Ji. They accompanied Guru Teg Bahadar Ji to Delhi along with three more Sikhs, when he went to see Emperor

Aurangzeb. Pressure was put on Guru Ji to convert to Islam otherwise all the five Sikhs accompanying him would be tortured painfully to death. Guru Ji refused the conversion. All of them were ready to prove their point that Sikhs could die for the sake of their religion. According to the 'Qazi' Bhai Mati Das was to be sawed vertically through the middle, Bhai Dyala was to be boiled to death and the third one, Bhai Sati Das was to be burnt alive. They preferred to die and expressed only one last desire, 'Our faces should be towards Guru Ji when we die.'

Their wish was granted and all three of them died gladly. The other two were smuggled out of the prison on Guru Ji's advice. Guru Ji was beheaded in an open market (Chandni Chowk, Delhi) on the 11th of November 1675.

BACHIAN DE TOTE KRA KE JHOLIAN WICH PAWAE: (pieces of their children were put in their laps). This is an incidence of one of the most inhumane tortures, which can be given to a mother. During the reign of terror the army was trying to capture the Sikhs, who were hiding in the woods. They could not catch any. In desperation, just to save their skin, they raided a village and caught all the women and children. All of them were put into prison. The women were given only one glass of water, one loaf of bread per day and were ordered to grind around fifty pounds of grain per head with a grinding stone moved with hands. The only way they could avoid the torture was to convert to Islam, which no one accepted. When all the routine tortures could not break the dedication to their faith the governor thought of the ultimate torture for the mothers. He ordered that every child should be slain, cut into small pieces, which would be made like a garland and put

around the mother's neck or alternatively, all the pieces put into her lap. Only a stone hearted butcher could afflict such torture to a mother. And someone had the brutal nature to carry out this ghastly task. Some children were thrown into the air and pierced with a spear as they fell down and others were beheaded. The women kept chanting 'Satnam Waheguru' continuously. They did not cry, shout or curse the authorities. They accepted it as 'God's Will'.

GURDWARIAN DI SEWA LAI QURBANIAN KEETIAN: (sacrificed themselves for the sake of Gurdwaras). These are relatively modern martyrs. During the third decade of twentieth century (1920 onward), when the British Empire was ruling India, every Gurdwara was run by one priest. These priests became very greedy. They would take all the money for themselves and would not spend even a small amount on the welfare of the community or Gurdwara. Sikh intellectuals started the reformation movement that this 'priesthood' should be abolished and an elected central committee should control all the Gurdwaras. The proposal was put to the government and also to the priests. It was rejected immediately by both. The Sikhs wanted to protest against it, nonviolently. The incidents which happened at three Gurdwaras, that is, Nankana Sahib, Jaito Ji and Guru KaBagh (Punjab, India) are the most well remembered for the clashes between the nonviolent Sikhs and the government.

At Nankana Sahib, the Sikhs went calmly and started reading Guru Granth Sahib. They were shot at, pulled away by their hair and one man called Lashman Singh was hung upside down and set alight.

At Jaito Ji they were also shot at.

Sikhs would walk about twenty miles from Amritsar to reach Guru Ka Bagh, where the police would be waiting for them. The police would start beating the Sikhs mercilessly and then imprison them. They were transported over long distances without food or water. Once, while they were being taken from Amritsar to Peshawer, the Sikhs at Hasan Abdal (where the famous Gurdwara Panja Sahib is situated) came to know that the Sikhs in the train were hungry and thirsty. They requested the stationmaster to stop the train and allow them to feed the hungry Sikhs, but he could not disobey the order of his superiors. The Sikhs laid down on the track, insisting that the train should be stopped or they were prepared to die under the wheels of the train. The train ran over the first two Sikhs and then stopped. It was a big triumph for Sikhs and their campaign of nonviolence. At last the government had to give in and agreed that a central committee would run all the Gurdwaras.

ਪੰਜਾਂ ਤਖਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ।

PANJAN TAKHTAN, SARBATT GURDWARIAN DADHIAN DHAR KE BOLO JI 'WAHEGURU'

'Think of the five supreme Gurdwaras and all the other Gurdwaras and say 'Waheguru'.'

'Takhat' means 'Throne.' Five Gurdwaras, in India, are given a higher status (like a throne) mainly from an administrative point of view. These are Akal Takhat Sahib (Amritsar), KesGarh Sahib (Anandpur), Damdama Sahib (Bhatinda), Patna Sahib (Bihar) and Hazoor Sahib (Andhra Pardesh). Akal Takhat was built by Guru Hargobind Ji, the sixth Guru, and since then has been used as the central point for administration.

It is situated right in front of the Golden Temple. Even now all the ‘Hukamnamas’ (the orders) are issued from there, after consultation with the other ‘Takhts’.

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਜੈ ਜੀ, ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਚਿਤ ਆਵੇ, ਚਿਤ ਆਵਨ ਕਾ ਸਦਕਾ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਵੇ। ਜਹਾਂ ਜਹਾਂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਤਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਰਛਿਆ ਰਿਆਇਤ, ਦੇਗ ਤੇਗ ਫਤਿਹ, ਬਿਰਧ ਕੀ ਪੈਜ, ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਜੀਤ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਬੋਲ ਬਾਲੇ, ਬੋਲੇ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ।

PRITHAMAE SARBATT KHALSA JI KI ARDAS HAI JI, SARBATT KHALSA JI KO WAHEGURU, WAHEGURU, WAHEGURU CHITAWAI. CHITAWAN KASADKASARAB SUKH HOVEY; JAHAN JAHAN KHALSA JI SAHIB TAHAN TAHAN RACHHIA RIAYAT, DEG TEG FATEH, BIRDH KI PAIJ, PANTH KI JEET, SRI SAHIB JI SAHAI, KHALSA JI KE BOL BALE, BOLO JI ‘WAHEGURU.’

‘The first and foremost prayer of the Khalsa is to remember ‘Waheguru’ and through this, there should be peace everywhere. Wherever there is Khalsa, may God’s grace be there. Khalsa should succeed in feeding and in protecting the poor people. Waheguru Ji, look after your people as your graceful nature is, Khalsa should always be successful, may the Eternal Power help us; think of the high esteem of the Khalsa and say ‘Waheguru’.’

From this piece of Ardas onward there are requests to the Almighty to look after the community, to be kind to whole of the humanity, including the Khalsa. More requests follow in the rest of the prayer.

ਸਿਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਖੀ ਦਾਨ, ਕੇਸ ਦਾਨ, ਰਹਿਤ ਦਾਨ, ਬਿਬੇਕ ਦਾਨ, ਵਿਸਾਹ ਦਾਨ, ਭਰੋਸਾ ਦਾਨ, ਦਾਨਾਂ ਸਿਰ ਦਾਨ ਨਾਮਦਾਨ, ਸ੍ਰੀ

ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਇਸਨਾਨ, ਚੌਕੀਆਂ ਝੰਡੇ, ਬੁੰਗੇ, ਜੁਗੋ ਜੁਗ ਅਟੱਲ, ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਜੈਕਾਰ, ਬੋਲੇ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ।

SIKHAN NOO SIKHI DAN, KES DAN, REHAT DAN, BIBEK DAN, VISAH DAN, BHAROSA DAN, DANAN SIR DAN NAAM DAN, SRI AMRITSAR JI DE DARSHAN ISHNAN, CHOWKIAN JHANDI BUNGE, JUGO JUG ATTAL, DHARAM KA JEKAR, BOLO JI ‘WAHEGURU.’

‘It is our request, O God, that Sikhs should have your grace to keep ‘Sikhi’, the hair, all the ‘Rehats’ (the commandments given by Guru Gobind Singh Ji; see Panj Piare, mentioned earlier), high intelligence, trustworthiness, and above all the supreme gift of remembering Your Name; they may be given the pleasure of visiting Amritsar. The chownki (see below), your flags and the ‘Bunge’ (see below) may always be there for your Sikhs, and let the ‘Dharam’ (virtues of the religion) prevail; everybody should say ‘Waheguru’.’

A little explanation may be needed regarding the visit to Amritsar. In the old days travelling was very difficult, but everybody had a desire to see the Golden Temple and the city of Amritsar. Only a few could do it; hence it was incorporated as one of the requests.

‘Chownki’ (singular; ‘chownkian’ is plural) is taken out in the Golden Temple five times every day. About twenty Sikhs go in two groups around the Golden Temple and Akal Takhat singing hymns from Guru Granth Sahib ji. ‘Jhanda’ is the saffron flag of Khalsa; ‘Bunge’ are small rooms built around the premises of the Golden Temple for the travelers to stay during the visit; ‘Jugo jug attal’ means ‘may stay forever.’

ਸਿਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਨੀਵਾਂ, ਮਤਉਚੀ, ਮਤ ਦਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਆਪ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ।
 ਹੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ, ਆਪਣੇ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਸਦਾ ਸਹਾਈ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਜੀਓ,
 ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਗੁਰਧਾਮਾਂ ਦੇ,
 ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਥ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਛੋੜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਖੁਲੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਦੀਦਾਰ
 ਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਸੰਬਾਲ ਦਾ ਦਾਨ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਬਖਸ਼ੋ। ਹੇ ਨਿਮਾਣਿਆਂ
 ਦੇ ਮਾਣ, ਨਿਤਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਤਾਣ, ਨਿਓਟਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਓਟ, ਸਚੇ ਪਿਤਾ
 ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ, ਆਪ ਦੇ ਹਜ਼ੂਰ..... ਦੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੈ ਜੀ।
 ਅਖਰ ਵਾਧਾ ਘਾਟਾ ਭੁਲ ਚੁਕੇ ਮਾਫ ਕਰਨੀ। ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਜ
 ਰਾਸ ਕਰਨੇ। ਸੇਈ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਮੇਲੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਿਲਿਆਂ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ
 ਚਿਤ ਆਵੇ।

**SIKHAN DA MAN NEEVAN, MAT
 UCHEE, MAT KA RAKHA AAP AKAL
 PURKH WAHEGURU. HAI AKAL
 PURKH PANTH DE SADA SAHAI DATAR
 JIO, SRI NANKANA SAHIB TE HORE
 GURDWARIAN GURDHAMAN DE, JINHAN
 TON PANTH NOO WISHORIA GIA HAI,
 KHULE DARSHAN DIDAR TE SEWA DA
 DAN KHALSA JI NOO BAKSHO. HAI
 NIMANIAN DE MAAN, NITANIAN DE TAN,
 NIOTIAN DI OT, SACHE PITA WAHEGURU
 AAP DE HAZOOR, * DI ARDAS HAI JI.
 BHUL CHUK MAAF KARNI, SARBATT DE
 KARAJ RAAS KARNE, SAE PIARE MAEL
 JINHAN MILYAN TERA NAAM CHIT AWAI.**

**‘Sikhs should have humble minds and high
 in intellect (thoughts); may God take care
 of the intellect and the honour of the Sikhs.
 Waheguru Ji, please give us the chance to visit
 and look after the Gurdwaras, like Nankana
 Sahib, from which we have been separated.
 You always take care of the honour of those
 who have no honour; You are the force of those
 who have no force and You are the support of
 those who have no support. Waheguru Ji, at
 this time at Your service...* (Here we mention
 the reason why this prayer is being done; see
 below), please pardon our mistakes, please**

**help everybody to accomplish their work (or
 mission), please help us meet those devotees
 who talk only about You.’**

There is a special request in this part. India was divided into India and Pakistan in 1947. Many of the Gurdwaras like Nankana Sahib (The birthplace of Guru Nanak) are in Pakistan. Sikhs always request to God for creation of a peaceful environment that Sikhs may be able to visit and look after these places without any restriction.

* In this portion of Ardas the main request is about the reason for the congregation gathering together, for example whether it is a marriage, an engagement, a birthday, the birth of a new baby, the death of a person, the taking or passing of an examination, the start of a new business, buying a new house, starting on a journey (including going into battle), or just giving thanks in a prayer at the end of a normal ‘Kirtan’ or ‘Path’ (the list is endless).

This portion can be as long as the individual priest wants or is used to. The requests can be more than one and may take several minutes. Generally they are regarding the welfare of the community and the whole of the world and can vary a lot depending on the place and the circumstances.

It is customary that during the recitation of Ardas one person touches the ‘Parshad’ (the sweet semolina pudding) and the ‘Langar’ (the food) with a small sword. This custom is intended to give a sacred touch to ‘Parshad’ and ‘Langar’.

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ, ਤੇਰੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ।

**NANAK NAM CHARDI KALA, TERE
 BHANE SARBATT DA BHALA.**

‘Nanak says, ‘Oh God, under Your Name let everybody prosper and everybody should have your Grace’.’

That is the best way to end a prayer. The prayer may be done for any purpose or request, it always ends in the same hymn.

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਿਹ।

WAHEGURU JI KA KHALSA WAHEGURU JI KI FATEH.

‘Khalsa belongs to God, the victory also belongs to God.’

ਬੋਲੇ ਸੋ ਨਿਹਾਲ, ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ।

BOLE SO NIHAL, SAT SRI AKAL.

‘He, who speaks God’s name, may have God’s grace. The truth is supreme and immortal.’

EPILOGUE

After completing this document, I sent it to various scholars and friends for their opinion and help in improving it. I am very pleased at the contributions that they made to make it more readable and understandable. I am very grateful to Dr. H. Sahni, who very kindly sent me the photo copies of a book, printed by the Punjabi University, Patiala, India, where the most recent meanings of Ardas are very different and are given below:

PRITHAM BHGAUTI SIMAR KE GURU NANAK LAIN DHIAE means that ‘first of all, think of the Great Eternal Power, which was meditated by Guru Nanak’.

PHIR ANGAD GUR TE AMARDAS, RAMDASAE HOIEN SAHAI means ‘then there are Guru Angad Dev, Guru Amar Das and Guru Ramdas who were helped by Him’.

ARJAN HARGOBIND NOO SIMRAU SRI HAR RAI means ‘Guru Arjan Dev, Guru Hargobind and Guru Har Rai meditated on Him’.

SRI HARKISHAN DHIAEY JIS DITHIAN SABH DUKH JAIE means ‘Guru Harkishan worshipped Him, Whose (God’s) sight makes all the agonies disappear’.

TEG BAHADAR SIMARIYE, GHAR NAO NIDH AWAI DHAI, SABH THAIN HOIN SAHAI means ‘Teg Bahadar prayed to Him, Who (God) gives you the key for all riches and He looked after him everywhere’.

DASWAIN PATSHAH SRI GURU GOBIND SINGH JI, SABH THAIN HOIN SAHAI means ‘Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Guru was looked after everywhere by Him’.

Most of the traditional preachers do not agree with this modern explanation but I think that these new meanings do come very close to the teaching of the Gurus, which is that they should not be worshipped as God. The Gurus were great teachers or messengers of God.

Dr. J.S. Randhawa

GURU GOBIND SINGH AND THE KHALSA

Khushwant Singh

In the summer of 1921 a strange phenomenon was witnessed in the Punjab. That year the Sikhs launched a passive resistance movement to take possession of one of their historic shrines called Guru Ka Bagh a few miles from Amritsar. Batches of passive resisters went to this shrine. They were mercilessly beaten by the police. Their arms and legs smashed; they were dragged by their long hair; many were hung upside down from branches of trees till they become senseless. Instead of being cowed down by these brutalities, the number of passive resisters increased steadily till 500 began to arrive every day at Guru-Ka-Bagh—amongst them many who had suffered beatings earlier and had been discharged from the hospital.

This "rare species of courage" as Gandhi ji and Rev. C. F. Andrews described it, 'was born of religious fervour' in its turn born of a legend widely accepted by the Sikhs. It was said that wherever five passive resisters assembled to say their prayers, Guru Gobind Singh appeared before them. He led them to Guru Ka Bagh. And he, not the passive resister, received the blows showered by the police. When these satyagrahis were produced in court and asked their names and addresses, they gave their names correctly. But of their parentage and address, the answer invariably was: "My father's name is Guru Gobind Singh; my mother, Mata Sahib Devan. My home is the Guru's town Anandpur." The Guru Ka Bagh satyagraha went on for some months till the Punjab's gaols were crammed. Ultimately it was the Police and the Government which gave in and agreed to Guru Ka Bagh being handed over to Sikhs. I have met many

of these passive resisters and with my own ears heard them tell of the darshan of the Guru and his ethereal form leading them to face the police. They swear they lost all fear and when they were tortured, they knew no pain.

Soon after Guru Ka Bagh yet another phenomenon was witnessed in the Punjab. The sacred pool surrounding the Hari Mandir in Amritsar was drained and cleaned. In this Kar Seva as it was known, millions of people took part. You can today meet hundreds of men and women who will swear that many a time while they were engaged in this Kar Seva the Guru's white hawk swooped down from the skies and settled on the gold pinnacle of the Harimandir—and then as dramatically vanished into the blue heaven.

Sceptics will undoubtedly have explanations for these phenomena. Let us concede that in an atmosphere of religious fervour, such experiences are possible. However, the point to bear in mind is that for the Sikhs these phenomena have been usually connected with Guru Gobind Singh, because he has been to them their father-figure, their supreme hero, the sustainer of faith, hope and courage, and their beau ideal—all in one.

What kind of man was this Guru Gobind Singh? By now you must be familiar with the main events of his life. I will not repeat them. I will only draw your attention to five points to help you judge the Guru's place in history. The choice of the number five is deliberate. Five has some kind of mystic significance in the Punjab—the land of the five rivers. The Guru himself subscribed to sanctity of the five:

"Panhon men nit bartat main hoon Panchmilan to Paeran Peer." "Wherever there are five there am I. Where five meet they are the holiest of the holy."

First, it should be borne in mind that he was only a child of nine when his father, the ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur was executed by the order of Emperor Aurangzeb. In any mortal, such an experience would result in a traumatic shock followed first by fear and then by hate and desire for revenge against the people who had perpetrated the crime. I have little doubt that many persons must have tried to fill young Gobind's mind with feelings of hatred and revenge against the Mughals. The Guru remained impervious to these influences. When he grew into manhood he announced his mission in life in the following words, "I came into the world charged with the duty to uphold the right in every place, to destroy sin and evil ... the only reason I took birth was to see that righteousness may flourish, that good may live and tyrants be torn out by their roots."

Secondly, it should be constantly before our minds, that the Guru never subscribed to the theory 'might is right.' Although he introduced the worship of arms in Sikh religious ritual and even described the sword, the spear and the musket as the 'Peers'—religious mentors of the Sikhs, this was entirely in the context of force as the righter of wrongs. He was fully aware of the fact that the teachings of the first five Gurus and the Granth Sahib were pacific in content. But should truth and goodness be allowed to suffer annihilation at the hands of the falsehood and evil? The Guru's answer was a categorical "No." In a Persian composition entitled the Zafarnama, the epistle of victory said to have been sent to Emperor Aurangzeb, he wrote:

Chu karazhama, hilatedarguzasht Halatast burdanbas hamsheerdast. "When all other

means have failed, it is righteous to draw the sword."

In this very context it is significant that although Guru Gobind Singh dictated the final version of the Granth Sahib, he did not include any of his own compositions exhorting people to rise in arms in the sacred text.

Thirdly, the Guru took care that anti-Muslim sentiment should not stain the crusade he was about to launch against the Mughals. "My sword strikes tyrants not men," he said. Amongst the earliest recruits in his army were Muslims. Although he fought the Mughals all his life—as indeed he did the Hindu Rajputs of the hills—he had both Muslims and Hindus fighting on his side shoulder to shoulder with his Sikhs. This followed naturally from his conviction that all men were of one caste—*manaskijat sab ek hi pachhanbo*—he exhorted. And that the mosque and the temple were the same; the call of the muezzin and the chanting of the Pandit were the same.

The non-communal tradition started by Guru Gobind Singh was continued into the time of Maharajah Ranjit Singh who was, as pointed out by Pandit Nehru in his "Discovery of India," one of the few genuinely secular rulers of our country. It was therefore, in the fitness of things that in the crowning success of Sikh arms—the flag that the Muslim general, Colonel Basswan, carried through the streets of Kabul bore the emblem of Guru Gobind; likewise the Dogra Hindu, General Zorawar Singh, planted this saffron banner bearing Guru Gobind's Chakra with Kirpans crossed beneath in the very heart of Tibet.

Guru Gobind Singh was able to raise his fight against Mughals into a struggle of the down trodden against oppression of the rich, into a demand for justice against tyranny of wrong

doers, in short, into a crusade, a veritable dharma yudha against the powers of evil. He forbade his soldiers from looting. He made them take solemn vows that they would never molest women of the enemy. He emulated the example of our ancient rishis and yogis and insisted that all Sikhs should wear their hair and beard unshorn—for they were not common soldiers but Sant Sipahis—Soldier-Saints.

Fourthly, what deserves your attention is the incredible sense of loyalty and sacrifice (that the Guru was able to arouse amongst his followers. Let me give you a few examples. You may have heard of the famous baptismal ceremony when five men willingly agreed to have their heads cut off. There are innumerable examples of similar sacrifice. As well-known as those first five Sikhs known as Panj Piyaras were another group of forty known as Chaley Muktey. Under great stress during the prolonged siege of Anandpur these forty men asked the Guru to let them go. After getting a deed of renunciation the Guru released them from their obligation. When these men returned to their homes their women folk taunted them for disloyalty to the Master. The men (including amongst them a woman, Mai Bhago) rejoined the Guru at Muktsar and fell fighting. The last request their leader, Mahan Singh, made to the Guru was to have the deed of renunciation torn before he closed his eyes forever. Yet another example was of an old woman who came to the Guru for help. She told him that her husband and two sons had been killed fighting. All that remained of her family was her youngest son who was dangerously ill. She begged the Guru's blessing to restore him to health—not to have someone to look after her in her old age but in order that this son too could attain martyrdom in the battlefield.

How was Guru Gobind able to fire his followers with this kind of reckless valour? Primarily

by setting an example himself. This is the fourth point for your consideration. He fought alongside his men. He never put his family before his followers. On the contrary at one of the engagements he allowed two of his sons to go to a certain death before he allowed any of his Panj Piyaras to do so. Within a few months he lost all four sons: two were killed fighting, the other two, aged nine and seven, were executed by the governor of Sirhind. His own mother died of grief. When his wife asked him in tears for her four sons, the Guru answered "What if four be dead; thousands live to continue the battle." It was by this kind of personal example that the Guru was able to train poor rustics who had handled nothing more lethal than a lathi, and flabby, potbellied, timid shopkeepers to become some of the greatest fighters India has ever known. He redeemed his pledge that he would train the sparrow to fight the hawk and teach one man to fight a legion. Pathans, Persians, Afghans and Bailuchis of the North West Frontier region who had for centuries invaded India, terrified, massacred and looted our people were beaten back into the home-lands by these new soldiers of Guru Gobind Singh. It has never been fully appreciated by our historians that these Punjabis set up a human barricade against the invaders and so made possible the rise of Maratha power in the Deccan.

Fifthly, and this is my final point, is the genuinely democratic spirit of this great Header of men. Guru Gobind Singh never claimed divinity for himself. He denounced those who tried to make him an incarnation of God. "I was ordained to establish a sect and lay down its rules," he wrote. "But whosoever regards me as Lord shall be damned and destroyed. I am—and of this let there be no doubt: I am but a slave of God, as other men are: a beholder of the wonders of creation." He took no credit for what he did: he attributed all achievements to the Khalsa—all

his victories, his power, his prestige, he said was due to the efforts of his followers. Although he was their Guru he made himself their disciple—apey Gur-chela. Whenever the congregation passed a resolution it acquired the sanctity of a gurumatta—an ordinance of the Guru binding even on the Guru himself.

Guru Gobind Singh was thus a rare combination of many qualities—a sophisticated aesthete composing poetry in many languages—Sanskrit, Parkrit, Persian and Punjabi; a handsome cavalier fond of chase and danger; a soldier who dedicated his life to fight tyranny; a leader who looked upon his followers as comrades and equals, a Guru who exhorted people to worship the god they love best but insisted that they look upon their fellow beings as equals; a man who sacrificed all he had—his family and his worldly possessions and ultimately himself for his ideals.

This ideal he stated in lines which have become the most quoted of his compositions:

O God, grant me this boon: Never should I turn away from good deeds; Nor, when fighting adversity, should I be afraid; But with a firm resolve, should I achieve victory; Over my heart should I have complete control. O Lord, that is what I crave of Thy Name. When finally time comes for me to rest, Let me die in the thick of these battles

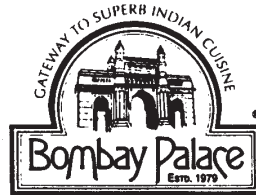
(Epilogue to Chandi Charitar) Guru Gobind Singh

(Trans. Preetam Singh)

Has the world produced many men as great as Guru Gobind Singh?

Khushwant Singh

★★★



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GURU NANAK AND THE ISLAMIC TRADITION

Fauja Singh

When Guru Nanak was born, the Muslims had been living in North and West Punjab for about five hundred years. During this long period large numbers of Hindus, particularly the residents of West Punjab, not always hailing from the lower ranks of the Hindu social hierarchy, had entered into the fold of Islam for some reason or another. Though in respect of its votaries's number it could not stand comparison with Hinduism, it was placed in a state of predominance on account of the backing of the State which it enjoyed over the centuries.

Islam had brought to India a concept of strict monotheism which not only affirmed that there is one God and none other but rejected the belief that there can be any incarnations or Avatars of the Supreme Being. The Islamic monotheism rejected even the installation of images of God as being contrary to the ideal belief in the unity of Godhead. The concept of monotheism was not totally absent in India and could be and has been traced back to the Rig Veda and the Upanishads. But the Hindu concept possessed such a great measure of elasticity that there was practically little differentiation discernible between monotheism and polytheism; rather one could say that monotheism in Hinduism was reduced to an abstraction whereas polytheism in Hinduism was the reality which actually mattered in the people's lives. Perhaps, the Hindu society, honey combed with *varans* and *jatis*, was not the congenial soil where strict monotheism with its egalitarian implications could sprout and flourish.

Unlike the Hindus again, the Muslims viewed God as the sole creator of all living and non-living things. According to them, nothing is

eternal or exists independently of Him. Similarly, He is the sole sustainer and the sole destroyer of all. He is transcendent and He is also here, there and everywhere, but Islam has nothing of the type of the Hindu belief in immanence. As such, though man is a wonderful and also the premier creation of God, the soul within him is not a spark of divinity as the holder of the Hindu belief of immanence would have us believe. The universe as created by God, according to Islam, is not limit-less but consists of seven upper and seven nether regions, the imperial throne of the Almighty being seated atop the uppermost region, called *Arsh-i-Barin*. The founder of Islam, Muhammad, was accepted as the special messenger of God; and Muslim Scripture, the Quran, was recognized as the Revealed Word of God. For the worship of God the votaries were enjoined to offer daily five forms of Nimaz (each at an appointed time), to observe fasts every year for the full month of Ramzan and to give in charity animal flesh (*kurbani*) and 10% of one's income (*zakat*). The human mind is conceived by Islam as an interplay of angelic and devilish forces. As such, the believers are exhorted to beware of the machinations of the Devil in them and to lead good and noble lives. Islam shows deep concern with the mode of living in this world. The actions of all human beings are held subject to divine judgement and they are told that they will reap reward (seat in Paradise) or punishment (seat in Hell) in accordance with the way they acquit themselves during their stay in the world. As the universe has a beginning, it must also have an end, and the end will come with the Day of Judgement or Reckoning called in Islamic terminology by the name, *Roz-i-Qiyamat*

or *Roz-i-Mahshar*. Another important principle of Islam is the equality of all human beings, which in fact is a necessary corollary from its doctrine of strict monotheism.

The Idea of Guru Nanak about the unity of Godhead, too, had Islamic emphasis. He recognized the One God alone and even regarded the ideas of God's incarnations and images as a negation of His oneness. Further, God was to him the Lord Almighty, the Creator, the Sustainer the Destroyer, the Judge, in short everything. But his total view of the Supreme Being was not identical with the Islamic concept of the same. Guru Nanak's God was both transcendent and immanent. He dwells in everything living and nonliving. Since man, animal and the universe were viewed as having been created by the Lord out of Himself, they were all believed to contain within them a spark of divinity, a belief not shared by Islam. The difference in approach was responsible for the differing views in the two cases regarding the ultimate destiny of Man-reunion with the Lord according to Guru Nanak and admission into Paradise according to Islam. Difference of outlook is also to be seen in regard to the root of evil. Whereas Islam attributes it to the Devil or Satan in man (the Primeval Seducer who caused the fall of Adam and Eve and since then has been representing the baser self of man), that Guru held *hauman* (egoism) as its primary cause, being the mother of the *Three Guras* (Satav, Rajas and Tamas) and of the Five Evils (lust, anger, greed, worldly affection and pride). The differing approaches were reflected in the respective views of Islam and Guru Nanak on the nature of worldly life. Both took a positive view of the matter and attached great importance to living in the midst of society without shirking the consequent responsibilities. Yet a great divergence marked the two view-points. Islam accepted the world as such and did not look upon it as a place to

run away from. If due attention was paid to the morality of conduct, the life on earth could be envisaged as an opportunity for elevation.

According to Guru Nanak, though the world was not a place to run away from, the element of *maya* (attachment) found in abundance in it was certainly something from which one must abstain. There were also a few other important points distinguishing the thinking of Guru Nanak from Islam. He was a believer in the law of Karma and transmigration of souls. Islam attaches great importance to the need of good deeds, but does not view it as a determinant of any cycle of birth and death. Guru Nanak recognized God and His creation both as Infinite, but Islam makes a distinction accepting God alone as such. Regarding the mode of worship Guru Nanak did not care for the observance of a formal religious discipline (which was very dear to Islam) as he did for the actual conduct based on the cultivation of such virtues as love, devotion, purity service etc. But both attached great value to collective worship, though the modes of this were not identical. Guru Nanak was very close to Islam when he emphasized that all people are equal in the eyes of God. On the whole, we can say that the approach of Guru Nanak was more spiritual than moral, whereas that of Islam was more moral than spiritual.

But no account of Islam can be considered complete without taking into consideration the thinking of the Muslim Sufis. Since the advent of the Muslim Turks in the beginning of the eleventh century, several famous Sufi Silsilas had come into being. Guru Nanak had meetings and discussions with many eminent Sufi leaders of his time and with some of them he had even intimate friendship. This fact has led certain writers to see in such of Guru Nanak's institutions as *sangat*, *pangat* and *kirtana* measure of influence of the Sufi *khanqahs*, particularly the Chishti one at Pakhattan. The

Sufis were great spiritualists. At their hands the spiritual side of Islam was immensely enriched. They accepted God as a transcendental as well as an immanent reality — a feature foreign to orthodox Islam. The creed of the Sufis laid down a path of spiritual progress marked by *shariat, tariqat, marafit and haqiat*. A parallel is sometimes drawn between these Sufi stages of spiritual development and Guru Nanak's five stages of *dharamkhand, giankhand, saramkhand, karamkhand, and sachkhand* given in the Japji.

But on close examination, it will be seen that the similarity between the two is only of a limited character. They both relate to the domain of spiritual development and thus a measure of similarity between them is inevitable, but on the whole the two conceptions are not identical and differ in so far as they spring from different assumptions. For instance, in the *khands* of Guru Nanak, there is nothing corresponding to the Sufi *muqarns* such as *shariat* (observance of the five fundamentals of Islam, namely *kalma, nimaz, roza, zakat* and *haj*), *tariqat* which is also related to *shariat, nasut* (sensuality) etc. From the *Janam-Sakhi accounts*

1. There is also another set of four stages recognised in Sufism. *nasut, jabrat, malkut* and *lahut*. The first stage, *nasut*, stands for sensuality and the last, *lahut* for realization. The other two are intermediate stages in the path of spiritual progress.
2. Guru Nanak it appears that he had respect for the high moral and spiritual character of the Sufis. They led married lives like ordinary people and yet were able to live piously. All this was in line with the thinking of the Guru who compared the ideal life to a lotus flower which while growing in water remains unaffected by

it. He, however, showed much greater sense of social commitment than was to be found in the Sufis.

While summing up, we may say that there is a considerable amount of misunderstanding about the influence of Islam on Guru Nanak. The view, lately made much of, that his vision was entirely Hindu and that there was no Islamic influence on him, fails to explain why it was absent when Islam had existed in India for the past several centuries and held a position of great power and prestige and when the Guru had personal meetings and discourses with so many Muslims and travelled so widely in Muslim countries. Another view, that Guru Nanak owed some of his beliefs to Islam and some to Hinduism, errs in the assumption that his thought had no real originality about it and was a collection of borrowings from different sources, mainly Hinduism and Islam, intelligently pieced together and intelligently presented in the easily understood language of the people, so that whatever newness it possessed was there on account of the new synthesis that was evolved out of the welding together of the diverse borrowed elements. If the former view is unhistorical, the latter view is too facile to be accepted in the case of a mystic and religious thinker of the calibre of Guru Nanak. At the same time, it would be incorrect to rule out entirely Hindu and Islamic influences on the Guru. If we study his works carefully, one thing which strikes us most is the divine inspiration underlying all his writings. His authority is neither the Hindu nor the Muslim scriptures, but the divine light enshrined deep within him. The chief source of knowledge for him was his own intuition and not anything of the world. Thus, the truth imparted by him was the truth as perceived by him, or as he often put it, revealed to him by God Himself.

But while disseminating that truth, he moved among people both Hindu and Muslim, read

their books closely, exchanged ideas with their leaders of thought and could not be unaware or insensitive to the conditions prevailing around him. It was in this way that Hindu, Muslim and several other influences worked on him. Islam, as he found it, was degraded like the contemporaneous Hinduism, and yet in both of them there were certain great ideas which appealed to him. Among these may be mentioned strict monotheism, egalitarianism, law of Karma and transmigration of souls.

The following extract from the Presidential Address of Professor M. Mujeeb, Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi, read at the Fourth Session of the Punjab History Conference, beautifully sums up the situation with regard to the independent nature of Guru Nanak's thought.

"I believe the first evidence this type gives being what it is, is a deep restlessness. Something

seems to it to be lacking in life without which all relationships, all efforts, all aims seem to be futile. This restlessness, this feeling of futility and emptiness can appear in a man or woman at any age; once it appears, some remedy has to be found. Invariably, this remedy takes the form of an inner awakening, an inner enlightenment. It may come by itself, as the result of the natural growth of the mystical religious faculties, like the bud bursting into flower; it may need or get some external stimulus. But its end is a form of self-realization, an intense awareness of a light, a power, a capacity for expansion from within. Nothing in this condition is reflected or borrowed. The revelation that came to Guru Nanak was not due to any external stimulus. It was as direct and immediate and as independent of history and social circumstances as the religious records of the Sikhs show it to be."

Fauja Singh

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*O God, grant me this boon;
Never should I turn away from good deeds;
Nor, when fighting adversity, should I be afraid;
But with a firm resolve, should I achieve victory;
Over my heart should I have complete control.
O Lord, that is what I crave of Thy Name.
When finally time comes for me to rest,
Let me die in the thick of these battles.*

(Epilogue to Chandi Charitar) Guru Gobind Singh

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THE JANAM SAKHIS OF GURU NANAK

W. H. McLeod

During the years following the death of Guru Nanak, and particularly during the seventeenth century, several traditional accounts of the life of Guru Nanak were compiled. These are *the janam-sakhis*. Although they are still widely read their popularity today is almost entirely limited to one particular *janam-sakhi* out of the several which are now available in print. It is still the *Bala* version which commands an almost total allegiance from those who read *janam-sakhis*. This is understandable, for the *Bala* collection of anecdotes is much longer and much more varied in its contents.

In terms of story-telling it has no rivals amongst the other *janam-sakhis* and this feature is a strong recommendation. It is, however, a pity that the other *janam-sakhis* are still so widely neglected, particularly as there are now four others available from book-sellers. All provide texts which are much older than the *Bala* version available today, and as a result all carry the reader further back towards the times of Guru Nanak. One of them must remain the preserve of serious students, for it is too much concerned with interminable doctrinal expositions for most readers. The remainder are, however, brief, interesting, and easily understood by anyone who can read Panjabi. They should not remain the preserve of those who study Panjabi literature in university colleges.

1. The *Puratan Janam-sakhi*, edited with brief introduction and notes by Bhai Vir Singh. Amritsar: Khalsa Samachar. Several editions (latest 1967).

This text is known to many generations of students, having been prescribed reading in Panjabi classes for several decades. It has also been extensively used by many of the authors who have written modern lives of the Guru. (The first volume of Macauliffe's *The Sikh Religion* is largely based upon this *janam-sakhi* and many later writers have followed his example in adhering closely to it.)

These modern lives are, however, a second-best. For vigor of narrative none can equal the original, and those who can read Panjabi will deny themselves a pleasure if they choose the later versions in preference.

The *Puratan Janam-sakhi* of Bhai Vir Singh consists primarily of the text of a famous manuscript discovered in the India Office Library by Trumpp in 1872. To this text Vir Singh made a number of additions from a similar manuscript which had been discovered at about the same time in the town of Hafizabad, and a few more from a third manuscript held by Khalsa College in Amritsar. (All such additions are clearly indicated.) Vir Singh added some explanatory notes and published the composite text under the title *Puratan Janam-sakhi* in 1926. Since then several reprints have been issued.

2. The *Adi Sakhian*, edited with introduction and notes by Professor Piar Singh. Patiala: published by the editor, 1969. Available from the Phulkian Press, Patiala.

This is a recent issue of a *janam-sakhi* which, in its earliest manuscript form, is dated 1701.

A manuscript bearing this date was noticed many years ago in Lahore by Dr Mohan Singh Dewana, and Dr Piar Singh has now discovered three more copies on the Indian side of the border. One of these he has used for his published edition of the *Adi Sakhis* text.

Like Vir Singh's text this *janam-sakhi* is both inexpensive to purchase and simple to read. Its lengthy introduction provides a useful description of the *janam-sakhi* literature. The editor is at present Head of the Translations Department at Panjabi University, Patiala.

3. *Puratan Janam-sakhi Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji ki*, edited with introduction and notes by Shamsher Singh Ashok. Amritsar: S.G.P.C.. 1969.

This is a conflation of the *janam-sakhis* used by Vir Singh and Piar Singh. The texts of two *Adi Sakhis* manuscripts and one *Puratan* manuscript have been combined to form a single narrative. No indication is given of the points at which the various *janam-sakhis* are being used.

4. *The Miharban Janam-sakhi*. Volume 1 edited by Kirpal Singh and Shamsher Singh Ashok; and volume 2 edited by Parkash Singh. Amritsar: Khalsa College, 1962 and 1969.

This lengthy work, most of it exegesis, is more a work for scholars than for general reading. It is, however, an important work and Khalsa College rendered a useful service in publishing an edition of the manuscript which it holds. Although Miharban stands within a heretical tradition (or one which is reputed to be heretical) the *janam-sakhi* which bears his name shows

few signs of mischievous misinterpretation — much fewer than the earliest *Bala* versions. In both volumes the text is preceded by a number of interesting essays.

Janam-sakhis in English translation

Only two complete translations of *janam-sakhis* have been published so far, although a third should be appearing shortly. The first to appear was a translation by Trumpp of the India Office Library manuscript used as a basis for Vir Singh's *Puratan Janam-sakhi*. Trumpp included it in the introduction to his book *The Adi Granth*, together with a translation of selections from the *Bala* version current during the middle of the nineteenth century. Published in 1877 the book is now very difficult to obtain. The loss is, however, slight. Trumpp's translations are stilted to the point of being almost unreadable.

The second English translation is a rendering of the eighteenth century *janam-sakhien* titled the *Mahima Prakash Varatak*. This appears in the April 1969 issue of the journal *The Panjab Past and Present* (a special quincenary issue). The same issue also contains an English translation of the portions of Bhai Gurdas's *Vars* 1 and 11 which deals with Guru Nanak and his disciples. (Copies of this issue will probably be exhausted within a few months and anyone desiring a copy should write immediately to the Manager, Punjabi University Press, Patiala.) The journal is a useful one and will well repay an annual subscription.

W. H. McLeod

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GURU NANAK'S COMPANIONS

Bhai Mardana

Dr. Harmanjit Kaur Sandhu



Bhai Mardana with his Rabab

Birth 1459 in Talwandi, death 1534 in Kartarpur (some scholars say that death was in Baghdad)

Bhai Mardana was born in Talwandi in 1459, ten years before the birth of Guru Nanak. His father was Badra and his mother was Lakhi. Badra was a minstrel and Mardana followed the profession of his father.

Though Mardana was ten years senior to Guru Nanak but he remained his close companion throughout his life. He was married and had three children, two sons and one daughter.

When Guru Nanak went to live with his sister, Bebe Nanki, in Sultanpur, in 1504, his father, Baba Kalu, sent Mardana to see if he (Guru

Nanak) had settled well in his job. Guru Nanak, of course was, doing his job earnestly and sincerely, but he carried it only for two years, until 1504, when he had a call from the Almighty to go to the four corners of the earth to spread the Divine message. Guru Nanak then resigned from the job and told his sister about the Divine call. Bebe Nanaki knew her brother's connection and closeness with the Almighty. She agreed after taking a promise from Guru Nanak, that whenever she would call him, he would immediately come to her. Guru Nanak happily agreed.

Guru Nanak, then made preparations to go on a long journey, into the un-known world, to preach God's message. The news of his challenging task spread like wild fire and his admirers started pouring in to congratulate him for this titanic task. Guru Nanak invited Mardana to accompany him. Mardana's daughter was of marriageable age and he wanted to fulfill that obligation before going with Guru Nanak. The obstacle, in marriage, was insufficient funds with Mardana to arrange the marriage. One of Guru Nanak's disciples, Bhai Bhagirath, offered to help Mardana, and Mardana was able to give away his daughter in marriage. He was then ready to accompany Guru Nanak on his travels.

Guru Nanak spent 14 years away from home, and made four journeys, covering about 13000 miles. The last journey started in 1517 and ended in 1521, after which Guru Nanak settled in Kartarpur with his family. Mardana, with his wife and sons also came there to live with his Master.

There are three sloaks in raga Bihagra, whose authorship is in dispute. Some scholars claim that all three sloaks were composed by Bhai Mardana, while others say, that all sloaks are of Guru Nanak. While, still, others say that, only one sloak was composed by Mardana and the other two by Guru Nanak. The sloaks are reproduced as follows:

Sloak 1

ਸਲੋਕੁ ਮਰਦਾਨਾ ੧ ॥

Sloak Mardana 1

ਕਲਿ ਕਲਵਾਲੀ ਕਾਮੁ ਮਦੁ ਮਨੁਆ ਪੀਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥

The Dark Age of Kaluga is the vessel, filled with the wine of sexual desire; the mind is the drunkard.

ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਕਟੋਰੀ ਮੋਹਿ ਭਰੀ ਪੀਲਾਵਾ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ॥

Anger is the cup, filled with emotional attachment, and egotism is the server.

ਮਜਲਸ ਕੂੜੇ ਲਬ ਕੀ ਪੀ ਪੀ ਹੋਇ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥

Drinking too much in the company of falsehood and greed, one is ruined.

ਕਰਣੀ ਲਾਹਣਿ ਸਤੁ ਗੁੜੁ ਸਚੁ ਸਰਾ ਕਰਿ ਸਾਰੁ ॥

So let good deeds be your distillery, and Truth your molasses; in this way, make the most excellent wine of Truth.

ਗੁਣ ਮੰਡੇ ਕਰਿ ਸੀਲੁ ਘਿਉ ਸਰਮੁ ਮਾਸੁ ਆਹਾਰੁ ॥

Make virtue your bread, good conduct the ghee, and modesty the meat to eat.

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਖਾਧੈ ਜਾਹਿ ਬਿਕਾਰ ॥੧॥

As Gurmukh, these are obtained, O Nanak; partaking of them, one's sins depart. ||1||

Sloaks 2 & 3

ਮਰਦਾਨਾ ੧ ॥

Mardana 1

ਕਾਇਆ ਲਾਹਣਿ ਆਪੁ ਮਦੁ ਮਜਲਸ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਧਾਤੁ ॥

The human body is the vat, self-conceit is the wine, and desire is the company of drinking buddies.

ਮਨਸਾ ਕਟੋਰੀ ਕੂੜਿ ਭਰੀ ਪੀਲਾਏ ਜਮਕਾਲੁ ॥

The cup of the mind's longing is overflowing with falsehood, and the Messenger of Death is the cup-bearer.

ਇਤੁ ਮਦਿ ਪੀਤੈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਖਟੀਅਹਿ ਬਿਕਾਰ ॥

Drinking in this wine, O Nanak, one takes on countless sins and corruptions.

ਗਿਆਨੁ ਗੁੜੁ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਮੰਡੇ ਭਉ ਮਾਸੁ ਆਹਾਰੁ ॥

So make spiritual wisdom your molasses, the Praise of God your bread, and the Fear of God the meat you eat.

ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹੁ ਭੋਜਨੁ ਸਚੁ ਹੈ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਆਧਾਰੁ ॥੨॥

O Nanak, this is the true food; let the True Name be your only Support. ||2||

ਕਾਂਯਾਂ ਲਾਹਣਿ ਆਪੁ ਮਦੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਧਾਰੁ ॥

If the human body is the vat, and self-realization is the wine, then a stream of Ambrosial Nectar is produced.

ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਿਉ ਮੇਲਾਪੁ ਹੋਇ ਲਿਵ ਕਟੋਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਭਰੀ ਪੀ ਪੀ ਕਟਹਿ ਬਿਕਾਰੁ ॥੩॥

Meeting with the Society of the Saints, the cup of the Lord's Love is filled with this Ambrosial Nectar; drinking it in, one's corruptions and sins are wiped away. ||3||

The three sloaks, whose authorship is in dispute have the following characteristics:

- a. The title of the first sloak is 'Sloak Mardana1', and the end count is 1
- b. The title of the second sloak is also 'Mardana', and the end count is 2.
- c. There is no title on the third sloak, and the end count is 3.
- d. The count 3 confirms that the total sloaks are three and belong to the present group of sloaks and possibly the author.
- e. The first 2 sloaks have the name 'Nanak' in their ending lines, but in the third sloak there is no name mentioned.
- f. In this Var (raga Bihagra) the count of other sloaks are as follows: Guru Nanak 2, Guru Amardas 33, Guru Ramdas 2, Guru Arjan 2, and Bhagat Kabir 1
- g. The views of the scholars to-date differ, the two completely opposite views are:
 - i. Dr SS Kohli – all three sloaks are of Bhai Mardana

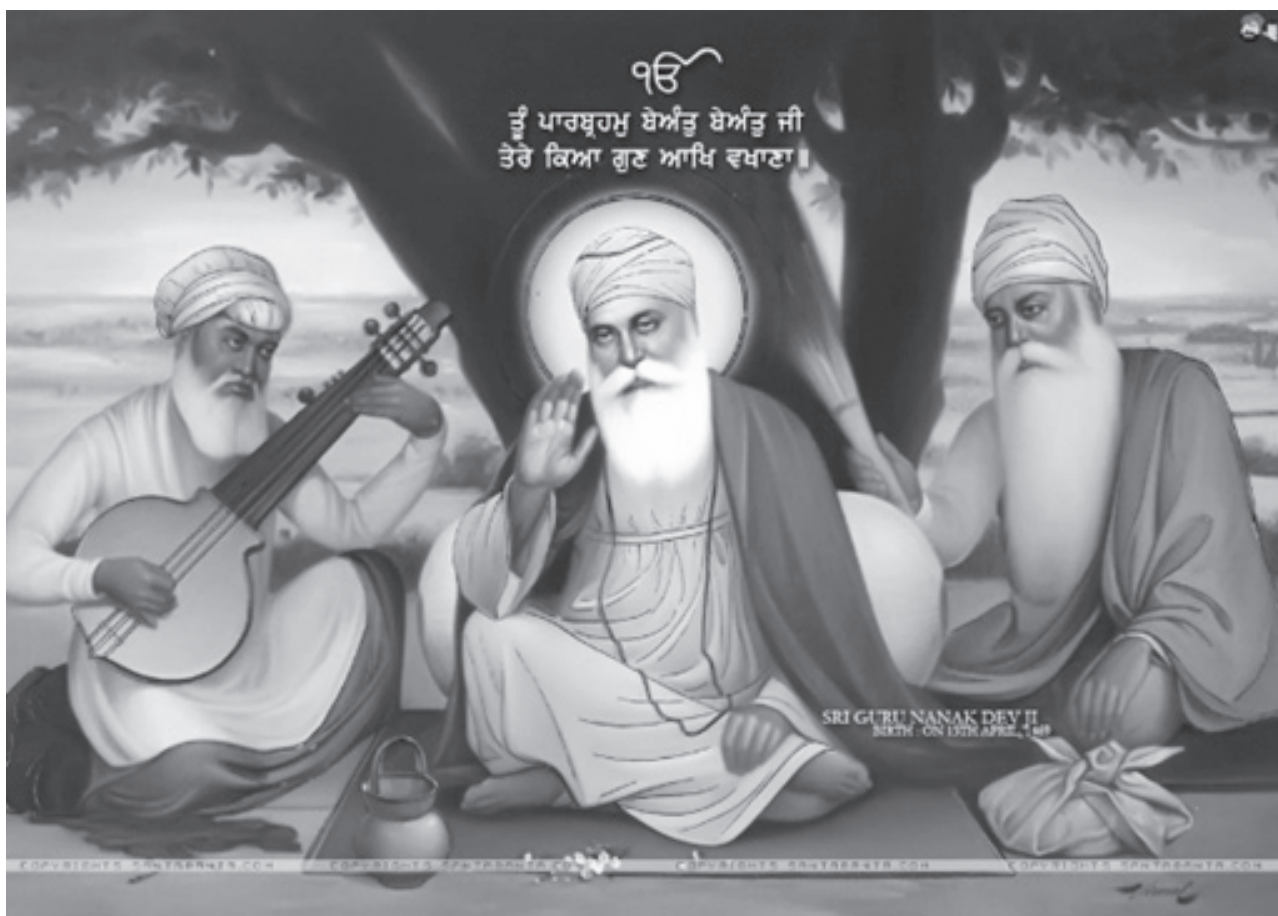
- ii. Dr Sahib Singh – all three sloaks are of Guru Nanak

Thus there is no final answer as to the authorship of the above sloaks.

Bhai Mardana's companionship with Guru Nanak was, surely, legendary. Fourteen years walk on foot, in all seasons, in rain and hailstorms, was really exemplary. Janam Sakhis have recorded many interesting episodes of Bhai Mardana's excitement to explore every village passed through in the journey and thus meeting both good and bad people, and Guru Nanak's coming to his rescue. Once Nur Shah, a magician turned him into a ram, and only Guru Nanak could transform him back into human form. At places, where only available eatable was bitter fruit, Guru Nanak's touch made it sweet for Mardana to eat. According to stories, Mardana too felt, often, hungry after great walks and rushed to every village for food.

When Babar attacked India, Guru Nanak and Mardana were in Saidpur. There was merciless massacre and thousands were killed and many hundred taken as prisoners. Guru Nanak and Bhai Mardana were also arrested. The Guru was given a load to carry on his head and a large stone grinder to toil corn. While Mardana was asked to lead a dogged horse holding its reins. Mir Khan, the Mughal commander, saw that the Guru's bundle was floating a few inches above his head and his grinder was moving on its own, while Guru Nanak was singing hymns in the praise of God. Mardana's horse was following him without the reins. Mir Khan got stunned and immediately reported the miracle to Babar, who issued orders of Guru Nanak and Mardana's immediate release and personally came to Guru Nanak to apologize. Some chronicles say that Babar, bowed and kissed Guru Nanak's feet.

BHAI BALA



[Year of birth 1466, year of death 1544, place of death Khadur Sahib]

Bhai Bala was born in Talvandi in 1466. He was 3 years older to Guru Nanak and 7 younger than Bhai Mardana . His father was Chander Bhan, a Sandhu by caste.

According to some historians, Bhai Bala was also Guru Nanak's close companion and joined him in Sultanpur and then, later, in his long journeys around the un-known world, along with Mardana. The photographs and paintings which we all have been shown, since our childhood show that both Bhai Mardana and Bhai Bala along with Guru Nanak. Where Bhai Mardana played the 'rabab' (the musical instrument), Bhai Bala did the 'chaur' (whisk) (hand-held fan, A kind of ceremonious fan used by Sikhs,

made from yak hair, which, these days is waved over the Guru Granth Sahib)

Though by tradition, we all know the name of Bhai Bala and from various paintings, we see his disposition but, unfortunately, his name is not traceable in most of the Janam Sakhis namely,

- Bhai Gurdas in his eleventh var, lists the names of all the known Sikhs up to that time but there is no mention of the name Bala.
- Bhai Mani Singh, in his Bhagat Ratnawali has also not mentioned Bhai Bala's name.

- In Puratan Janam Sakhis, there is no mention of Bhai Bala
- In Mehrban Janam Sakhi, there is no mention of Bhai Bala.
- Whatever Bhai Bala narrated to Guru Angad was recorded and was later called by the name of ‘Bale vali Janam Sakhi’. It has a complete record of Guru Nanak’s life and journeys. This Janam Sakhi has two important characteristics, amongst many, which make it different from other Janam Sakhis:
 - a. Guru Nanak’s immense love for his sister, and that
 - b. Guru Nanak was born on full moon night (Puranmashi) of the month of Kartik (November) exactly 15 days after Diwali, which fall on new-moon night (Masaya)

However, according to:

- Sarup Das Bhalla in Mahima Prakash (1776), Baba Budha escorted Bhai Bala to Guru Angad, who narrated to Guru Angad, all events and wonders, which he had witnessed en-route to various journeys of Guru Nanak. He said that he was Guru Nanak’s companion along with Bhai Mardana on all his journeys.
- Later, Bhai Santokh Singh in Suraj Prakash (1843) and, Giani Gyan Singh in Panth Prakash (1880) firmly established the existence of Bhai Bala.

Dr. Harmanjit Kaur Sandhu

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SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB AS A SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

(Brahma Vidya)

Prof Dalvinder Singh Grewal

Introduction

The sabd Guru, Sri Guru Granth Sahib is a store house of vidya (education) and gyan or knowledge; it is very extensive, varied and significant and we have the need of it in the present and the future. It's very basic purpose is to educate the masses in field of spirituality and worldliness. It gives us the transcendental knowledge; the knowledge about God and the ways to attain Him (Brahma Vidya) or Para Vidya. Being a religious scripture, it includes the theory of the science of spirituality. It also provides us the knowledge of worldly dharma Aparā Vidya; how to live in the world and attain Brahm Vidya.

Knowledge

The knowledge that comes through the senses is the branch of knowledge coming within the range of *Apara Vidya*. All the syllabus books based on western educations system form part of *Apara Vidya*; knowledge of the world. Apart from the *Apara Vidya*, or worldly knowledge at the level of thinking and writing, there is a subtler and higher type of knowledge which is gained at the supra-mental level. It is independent of the knowledge gained through the ordinary senses as it is intuitive and a direct experience of the soul. Hence it is called *Para Vidya*, or the Knowledge of the Beyond. *Para Vidya* is not being taught in the professional colleges. The scripture that provides the knowledge about the God comes

under *para vidya*. They form a wonderful record of the spiritual experiences of the rishis; prophets and saints of old, and inspire in us a longing to have similar experiences of our own. They also contain ethical truths of great value (*aparavidya*), which pave the way for an ethical life; and if followed scrupulously, they lay a solid foundation for a spiritual superstructure.

In all religions, *para vidya* is spoken of as the real *Gyan* or true knowledge. It is gained by the spirit or soul when it reflects back upon itself. It is an outcome of self-analysis by a regular process of inversion or looking within. It is a thing of actual experience and realization within one's own self, and gradually leads to self-knowledge and God-knowledge. All doubts and differences vanish when the light of self-knowledge dawns. True *Gyan* or knowledge lies in knowing and experiencing the Ultimate Reality, in the Light and Life of which we live, move about, and have our very being rooted into. With all our washings of the body we cannot keep it clean, but the elixir of *Gyan* purifies both the mind and the body. The *Gyan* destroys all fear and makes one see the Reality, and one gains Omniscience with the stilling of the mind. He alone wakes up into Reality who applies the *Gyan* to his eyes.

So there is a vast difference between *Apara* and *Para Vidya*. The former keeps on expanding as we proceed, but with no way out. The poet Tennyson describes it aptly:

*Yet all experience is an arch where through
Gleams that un-travelled world, whose margin
fades Forever and forever when I move.*

It is a kind of wilderness through which there is no way out. Even a person with all his wits about him is sure to be lost in its labyrinthine maze of the material world. Like a flogging horse, he may kill himself with sheer exhaustion, but cannot possibly get through. Such is the terrible path on which we move in this material world.

On the other hand, *Para Vidya* has boundless possibilities, unfolding new realms of celestial splendour as the pilgrim soul proceeds on the Path. It is a very pleasant journey, for the wayfarer has with him a sure companion, an unerring guide who knows the Path and its dangerous turns and twists. He takes him along in safety, shows him especially beautiful scenes and makes him acquainted with everything on the way. His companion has a radiantly smiling face and a divine dignity, and imparts to him directly that first-hand knowledge of the Beyond of which the pilgrim may have read in books. With all its traps, turns and slips; the Path moves through uncommon splendour and affords a sure way out to a haven of rest and repose. The journey's end is nothing but the Kingdom of God; the New Jerusalem or Holy City; *Sach Khand* or *Sat Lok* where peace and quiet reigns. Thus real *Gyan* or knowledge deals with Realized Truth.

In the Bhagavad Gita, we come across two terms: *Gyan* and *Vigyan*. The knowledge of *Paramatma* or God, actively operating in all living creatures that appear and disappear like so many bubbles, is called *Gyan*; and the realization that the God is the material and efficient cause of all that exists is known as *Vigyan*. A person possessed of *Gyan* or *Vigyan* then actually sees nothing but God in His creation and creation as established

in God; that is to say, the two as identical and not separate from each other—God in man and man in God—which is akin to the pantheistic view of religion (identification of God with the Universe).

We have need, great need, for knowledge on the intellectual level, and that we get from scriptures and discourses of Masters. *Gyan* or Enlightenment comes as a gift from God. We cannot practice spirituality unless we first know its theory: what it is, its technique, how it can be practised, obstacles in the way and how to overcome them, etc. We cannot therefore ignore the theory aspect of *Para Vidya*, for theory always precedes practice in every branch of knowledge. But after having learned the theory, we must put the theoretical knowledge into practice so as to make it our very own. Theory by itself cannot satisfy the innate craving of the spirit which must be fed on manna or the heavenly food — the Bread of Life to satiate her hunger and supplied with the Elixir of Life to quench her thirst. Theory and practice, therefore, are interdependent. But to achieve the goal, one has to work for it and this requires stilling the mind and intellect before anything else. After full comprehension of the theory, nothing remains but to gain practical experience of it at the level of the spirit, far above the level of the senses and sense organs. We have thus to separate the two by a process of self-analysis or transcending of the body consciousness, a practical demonstration of which the Guru (Master) gives in the laboratory of the body at the time of initiation.

***Para Vidya* in Sri Guru Granth Sahib**

Sri Guru Granth Sahib has very deep knowledge about *Brahm Vidya*. Important Questions about God, Universe, Creation, Nature, Man, Transmigration, Spirit etc., are answered in

Sri Guru Granth Sahib diligently. For example questions often asked about God are answered in the following paragraph

God: Only the God knows what He is (SGGS, p. 6:3) or only the person who can rise to His height can know Him (p. 5:10). A person, who says he knows Him, has no knowledge of Him because the person who comes to know of Him cannot describe Him (p. 2:9). God watches the entire universe, but none can see Him, hence the cause of confusion about His existence (p. 7:3). He is primal, pure, sans beginning, indestructible and of ventures all the ages through (p. 7:1). The Eternal Holy Truth, the Creator of the universe is invisible yet visible through His creation. He is free from fear and malice. He is Immortal and Ever-living (p. 1:1,2). He is self-created, self-existent. He created Himself and Himself assumed a Name. (p. 463:4) His names are uncountable. The beginning is a real wonder. Before beginning He dwelt in void (p. 940:11). From formless, the Lord assumed the Immaculate Form; from attribute-less-ness He became with attributes (p. 940:14). God's place, name and greatness are not fully known or described. No one can reach His place or measure His residence to know Him and describe Him. (p. 53:15) However, He is pervading all over and He has created a system for His entire creation. He is contained amongst all. Where ever you see, you will find Him (p. 944:12). Hence His abode is in the entire nature; entire universe; entire human beings. He made the Nature and got seated in it and beholds it with delight. (p. 463:4) He is both manifest and unmanifest. (p. 128:13, 862:6) He is unmanifest because He is invisible and unapproachable. He is manifest because He abides and can be seen in all the beings. He is Omnipresent; present everywhere and in each existence. (p. 1291:18, 1345:4)

The God is ageless; (p. 1) He is ever safe and sound (p. 4:11) and is Imperishable (p. 1026:9) He does not die (p. 9:18). He is ever living. He existed in the prime, beginning of the ages; exists even now and shall ever exist. (p. 1) He alone knows his state and extent and none accept Him can appraise His worth. He is un-perceivable, un-apprehensible and unapproachable. Thus none knows how much and how great His expanse is. (p. 9:10) By pondering over God or His existence man cannot have a conception of Him, even though one may ponder over millions of times (p. 1:5). No one is capable of appraising and narrating Him (p. 9:9). He Himself knows of His self. One can call Him the Greatest at the most (p. 5:4).

God created the entire nature and enlivened the entire universe (p. 24:7). He has fashioned the world in numerous diverse colours and kinds. (p. 6:14) having created His creation He is enjoying it as He pleases. Whenever and whatever He pleases He does that according to His Will as no one can order Him (p. 6:14-16). He enjoys the play through creating and destroying. He has set the system of creating and destroying to ensure that there is continuous development and change and there are no stoppages and breaks. The entire world is continuously moving forward. He destroys all obstructions and unpleasanties and gives a new form in an instant ((p. 1034:19). He has created the world with continuous change system (coming and going) (p. 1283:8). He Himself is manifested into three forms i.e., Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the protector and Mahesh, the destroyer to conduct His task of creation, colouration and destruction. (There are no different gods as such). By His order the bodies are created, the souls enter the being and reach greatness. By His command He makes the mortals high and low and obtains woe and weal. Some are awarded

the salvation through His order while others are ever made to wander in transmigration. All are subject to His command. No one can be out of the Divine order (p. 1:7, 8). Though the Lord has no form or colour and is free from darkness and worldliness yet He can be seen (464:5) and identified through Nature (p. 83:18). He is recognised and seen through the Name and His creation (p. 944:15) the nature where he abides (p. 464:5). Imbibing love for the Lord, the True One is seen pervading everywhere. By the true Guru's instructions, the Fear-free Lord is known and he blends man's soul with the Supreme (p. 464). To understand Lord's Order, one has to realise smallness of one self and have to forego his self-ego and pride (p. 1:10). For this one must have a guide (Guru). The True Guru only can guide him how to know, realise and reach Him. He is pervading in all and through the True Name He can be seen. The Name is the treasure of bliss that can be seen only with the help of a perfect Guru. (p. 1284:12)

Guru and Gyan

One cannot get the Light of *Brahm Gyan* (knowledge of God and His universe) without a Guru. One may try all means; he cannot get to the Lord. Without the Master, one cannot contact the Word nor find the Path, The Light of *gyan* is the true essence, for it leads Godward. Without the Master, one cannot have the Light of *gyan* or inner peace, Without the Word, the worldly-wise forfeit the human birth. The Guru alone can give the Gyan that shows the all-pervading Power of God. The Master gives the *Gyan* that dispels all darkness. A true Guru is met with the grace of God and one witness the Light within. The Guru-ward researches into the matter with knowledge and burns the ego (p. 946:3). Once one realizes that the God is everywhere; both

inside and outside; one starts loving the *Naam* of the God. (944:16)

Water stands in a pitcher; a pitcher without water is of no consequence, the mind is wedded to *Gyan* (knowledge), but True *Gyan* (Flaming Sound) never comes without a Guru. The *Naam* can be received only from the true guru. The yoga for the true Naam cannot be invented (946:14). The Guru is knowledge personified; and this knowledge he imparts to a rare *Gurmukh*, i.e., one who completely surrenders himself to the Guru. A True Guru can manifest that Light which is capable of granting *Mukti*. It is an inner science and one has to work for it under the guidance of a perfect Guru; no one has ever got it without him. The Light of True Knowledge is the greatest gift of a Master-soul. The Guru gives the greatest gift of *Gyan* by creating a craving for the Word (*Naam*). He links one with Truth (the Power of God), a treasure-house of supernatural powers that grow from more to more.

For obtaining the knowledge and meditating on the God, the sweet word of the Guru is needed (p. 162:3). The Guru gives the healing ointment of spiritual wisdom, and dispels the darkness of ignorance. The company of a saint is the company of the Truth and the congregation sings His glory, the scintillating *gyan* sheds lust within, dispelling all darkness born of ignorance. Those who are devoted to the True Guru are honoured and accepted in God's Court; the Light of *Gyan* dawns in them to whom He may grant it. By the Lord's Grace, a saint is met who enlightens the mind. (293:13,14)

Devotion to the Master creates love true and eternal, and the gift of *Gyan* gives knowledge of the three worlds. The true knowledge with the Guru is the Word which comes through practice of the *Sabd*. He alone achieves it; who accepts

and follows the instructions of the Guru, with all his heart and soul. To control one's mind from wandering one has to obtain God's Grace. The mind can be stilled through the grace of the Guru, the Master, and with *Gyan* he returns to his place of Origin i.e., The God. His glance of grace gives one, right understanding, and brings one to the crest jewel of *Gyan*. Inside the body is the *Gyan* of the Guru, that grants salvation with His glance of grace; he may grant it to whomever He may like and make him acceptable. Those with a writ of the Lord in their forehead do meet a true guru, and have all their doubt and distrust driven out by the blaze of *gyan*.

The *gyan* of the Guru is all ablaze, filling one with Light to the deepest depths of the soul. This knowledge then is self-luminous. When it comes, there dawns an everlasting Light in the initiate's soul. From then on, he walks always in God's kindled Light which accompanies him wherever he may be. This is true devotion and grants one full protection from all harm. If one wishes for a dip in the sacred pool of *Naam*, that pool is verily within you; a true pilgrimage for the soul is *Sabd* which is replete with *Gyan*. The Guru's sayings (*sabd*, *naam*, *sach*) bring light in this world; these enter into one's mind by the Grace of God or Guru (p. 67:10). By the word of the Guru we praise the God and our ego vanishes from inside (p. 37:15). We must obey the order of the Guru and sing the hymns relating to God (p. 918:5). We must accept that the word is our guru and we must submit our intellect to it as its followers (p. 943:11).

Guru Arjan also tells us that with the dawn of Guru's *Gyan* within; comes the advent of Heaven's Light both within and without, enveloping all; and the mind gets satiated and is freed from all illusions and delusions. One is thus led to the inexhaustible fountains of

the Elixir of Immortality, on drinking it one becomes desire free and has no fear of death; he gains immortality. By realizing Guru's word one gets into the true place; our ultimate destination (p. 46:8).

Gurmukh and Gyan

The follower of the Guru knows *Sabd*, and rests in the ambrosia of Lord's *Naam*. The Guru's *Gyan* is superbly high as it drives away the darkness of ignorance. The Guru applies the medicine of *Gyan* into follower's eyes and the light becomes effulgent within and the darkness vanishes. *Gyan* with the Guru is *Naam* and he makes one steady in it. One who is destined, gets it by devotion to the lotus feet of the Guru. Once we get to our perfect guru we shall get to the treasure of the word (p. 46:10).

Gyan and Meditation

One must practice *Gyan*, meditation and Harmony by absorption into *sabd* and be one with Him; the one Who is beyond all limitations, peerless and without fear. Knowledge and meditation on *Sach* (Truth) have a very deep meaning; no one knows of their inmost secret and greatness but we must hear and understand the *sabd* and meditate on the truth (p. 429:4).

Gyan and Enlightenment

The scriptures tell us that *Gyan* is characterized by the Light Principle. Guru Amar Das, speaking of *Gyan* describes it as "Eternal Light within," which serves as an altar for ceaseless devotion and grants one the full fruit of *Naam*: the Guru's *Gyan* brings forth eternal Light within, it keeps one absorbed in ceaseless devotion: the greatest gift of the all-pervading Word. As a result of the *Gyan* from the Guru one receives

Heaven's Light and all things get truly lighted (Knowledge of the entire matter is obtained).

Adorned with the kindly Light of God, the spirit becomes acceptable to the Lord. The wandering wits learn to live under control and delight in Truth, and one drinks the nectar of *Gyan* (the exhilarating vintage of *Naam*) and desires nothing else. Awakened into the Light of *Gyan*, Saint Kabir felt dyed in the colour of the Lord; the world over deluded; and mind metamorphosed by the all-pervading Power (God). *Gyan* is a supreme embellishment for the soul; blessed is the soul that loves Lord.

State of Enlightenment through *Gyan*

Guru Nanak, in *Jap ji*, Stanzas 35 and 36, while telling us at length of the Realm of Divine Knowledge (*Gyan Khand*) with countless gods, goddesses, and deities, beautifully sums up the description: Divine knowledge illumines in the realm of knowledge, while divine symphonies play unending music, and joy and bliss reign supreme. Heaven's Light always serves as an unailing friend in moments of dire distress, both without and within; and one walks steadily in it, in life and after.

In *Sukhmani*, Guru Arjan has devoted a full *ashtpadi*, a hymn in octave or eight stanzas, to this Light and the way it guides and leads the soul when it quits the body. This Light is there in the *Sukhmani*, but one cannot get access to it without the help of a Guru: The Light of *Gyan* is a powerful aid both within and without, Mind has to commune with it; it destroys all affliction and sorrow. The Light of Guru's *Gyan* is a peerless jewel that grants salvation. The God may give it to whomever He wishes to grant the honour of His Court. Once the Light of *Gyan* manifests within one's mind, one easily wins the gift of the Word.

Gyan's Advantage

With the manifestation of Light one becomes enlightened, the Light of *Gyan* has been implanted by the Guru; by drinking the ambrosia of the Word (*Naam*), the mind is fully at rest and devoid of fear. With the dawn of *Gyan*, there is light on every side. In God's boundless grace, He accepts even a filthy worm. (Bhagat Ravidas). With the practice of *Naam*, one is rid of all sorrow and pain, for it brings in supreme bliss. In scaling the spiritual heights, the pilgrim has actually been to the light beyond the stars, the moon and the sun. To hail the light of the moon and the sun within, as the soul rises into the astral world, is described in Sri Guru Granth Sahib as the Path of *Gyan* or True Knowledge.

Gyan Changes the Man

The wild elephant of the mind is controlled and domesticated by the mahout of a Guru, by means of the rod of Enlightenment. The Light of the Guru, variously called *Sabd*, *Naam* or *Dhun*, forms a link between the inner soul and the Outer soul; once this is firmly grasped, one can easily transcend to *Sachkhand*, the True Mansion of God.

One is thus a changed man. In Bible Saint Paul describes this state of a changed man: You have put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. The agency that regenerates or transforms our nature is the Holy Spirit. The experience which He must bring to us is called the New Birth, the Resurrection or the Second Advent. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; all things become new.

Jesus Christ, in unambiguous terms, warns us against this danger of losing the peerless gift from God and the Guru. Having once been

gifted with Enlightenment (or *Gyan* or Divine Knowledge and Experience), one must practice it from day to day so as to develop it and not lose the holy Light of Heaven by sheer neglect in the mighty swirl of the world.

In spite of fire in the core, how charmingly fragrant is the vegetation, and so with the boisterous waters of the great seas when confined within their bounds, the real sun and the real moon are both within the human body, and yet one rarely gets to know true *Gyan*; the very soul of all that exists.

***Gyan* and Salvation**

When one makes a vintage of *Gyan* and ferments it with meditation on the fire of His love and reverence; the *Sukhmani* bubbles over

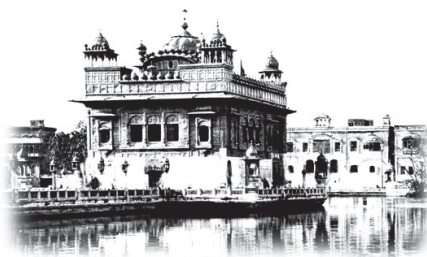
with the Elixir of Life, which one then can drink to his fill. When with spiritual discipline (*Simran* and *Dhyan*, constant remembrance and concentration) the mind gets stilled and is at rest, then enlightenment comes. Rare indeed are such souls in the world. With it comes perfect satisfaction. Mind is controlled and the soul awakens from the lethargic sleep of ages. All desires come to an end, and one gets absorbed in his own self, and is gifted with all-pervading prevision and trans-vision, and rises into cosmic awareness. All karmas are burned away. Death, the last enemy of mankind, loses its sting; the minions of death cannot come near such a *jivan-mukta* or liberated being. These benefits cannot be had by outer intellectual wrestling.

Prof Dalvinder Singh Grewal

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ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵਿਚਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ



We wish Sikh Courier International all the best in spreading Gurbani and teachings of Guru Granth Sahib worldwide

With Compliments from
RAJINDER SINGH BHASIN & FAMILY
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FAKIR SYED AZIZUDDIN

A Gentleman with High Moral Values

Bhupinder Singh Rai

Soon after his conquest of Lahore on 07 July 1799, Ranjit Singh installed himself in the fort and began holding regular durbars in the octagonal tower, the Mussumum Burj, under which, only a year ago, he had stood in his stirrups and hurled defiance at the Afghan, Shah Zaman. As sunflowers turn to the rising sun, people from all over the country began to flock to the court of the young Sukerchakia. Sons of chiefs came to join his army; scholars and doctors came for service; artisans and craftsmen came to obtain royal patronage; troops of courtesans came to seek personal favours.

Among the first and most notable to seek employment with Ranjit was the Bokari family. Even in his youth, Ranjit Singh had developed a sort of hypochondria and was always consulting physicians and trying out their prescriptions for his imaginary ailments. Among the first native doctors to attend on him at Lahore was Ghulam Mohiuddin, who had been summoned to treat an eye ailment. The doctor brought with him his elder son, Azizuddin, whom he was training in Yunani (Greek) medicine. Ranjit Singh was immediately attracted to the youth, whose refined manners and florid speech made a pleasant contrast to the rustic uncouthness of his Sikh courtiers. 'New blossoms are bursting on the tree of your fortunes,' said the young man, complimenting Ranjit Singh. When he was offered employment he accepted with more picturesque speech: 'On the tree of fidelity, the flowers of loyalty will only give place to the fruit of perfect devotion..... Precious are the pearls of truth when strung

on the bracelet of faithful actions. Happy is the sovereign in the sunshine of whose favour the flowers of uprightness blossom. Sweet is the fruit of righteous dealing, though the husk be unpalatable' – and so on. Azizuddin soon took his father's place as royal physician; then as chief confidant (closest friend and adviser) and later as Minister of Foreign Affairs. He became, as he described himself with undue modesty, 'merely a parrot of sweet sound'. He introduced two of his brothers, Nuruddin and Imamuddin, to Ranjit Singh's service.

Faqir Syed Azizuddin, (1780-1845), the eldest son of Hakim Ghulam Mohiuddin (a leading physician of Lahore), was a physician, diplomat and foreign minister in the Durbar of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He met Ranjit Singh in 1799 when he was summoned to treat the Maharaja for an eye ailment. Azizuddin or Fakir Azizuddin as he, being a Sufi, liked to be called, was an extremely able diplomat possessed of a cool head - a quality very rare amongst hot-headed Punjabis. He had a philosophic detachment to his job as adviser to Ranjit Singh. 'Council is like a dice; fate like the mark upon the board. It is within your hands and yet for all that it is not within your hand.' Azizuddin was of Sufi persuasion and consequently without any prejudice against other religions. When Ranjit Singh asked him which religion he thought was greater, Hindu or Muslim, Azizuddin replied tactfully: 'I am like a man floating in the midst of a mighty river; I turn my eyes towards the land but can distinguish no difference in either bank.'

The Brothers Fakir, were initially known by the name 'Bokhari', derived from the residence of an ancestor, Syed Jalaluddin, in Bokhara, from whom the family traces its origin. Syed Jalaluddin was a famous holy man who converted the still more famous Hulaku Khan to Islam, married one of his daughters and travelled with her to Punjab and settled down there. Halaku or Hulagu Khan (15 October 1218 – 08 February 1265), a Mongol ruler, was the grandson of Genghis Khan and brother of Ariq Boke, Mongke Khan, and Kublai Khan. But since the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh the name 'Bokhari' gave way to the title 'Fakir' for the family of Fakir Syed Azizuddin.

The story of how Azizuddin received the title of Fakir is narrated by Fakir Syed Waheeduddin, a descendant of Fakir Azizuddin in his book, *'The Real Ranjit Singh'* and makes interesting reading. Initially the brothers were called 'Shah Ji', as was and still is customary in the Punjab in addressing Syeds. Because of his piety, Ghulam Mohiuddin (Azizuddin's father) began to be addressed as Fakir. One day when the Maharaja was immensely pleased with Azizuddin, he said, "Shah Ji, I wish to give you some title which will stick to your family from generation to generation. Can you suggest one?" "Maharaja," replied Azizuddin, "If it is your pleasure to do so, then be gracious enough to grant me a title which will not sound too big if future generations of my family should become poor and will have an added grace if they should remain rich or become richer still." "What about Fakir?" asked the Maharaja. "Your father is already spoken of by that title." "There could be no better title than that for me and my family," assented Azizuddin. So the title was formally conferred, along with a gift of two valuable shawls of orange-brown (gerwa), the colour distinctive of ascetics. Loosely, 'Fakir', a word of Arabic derivation

would denote a mendicant. In the language of mysticism and religion, however, it has the opposite connotation: it means one who is content with what God gives him in the way of his material needs and strives only for spiritual riches.

During Maharaja Ranjit Singh's time his closest confidant was his Muslim foreign minister, Fakir Azizuddin. The Maharaja consulted him in all matters concerning the state and rarely undertook any decision without his consent. His younger brother Fakir Nuruddin had a whole host of duties. He was the Maharaja's home minister as well as the royal physician and custodian of the key to the royal treasury. He commanded Ranjit Singh's arsenal at the Lahore Fort. Apart from this, he was also responsible for commissioning arts all over India. As a result, the period of Sikh rule witnessed a flourishing of art. A third brother Fakir Imamuddin, on the other hand, was the custodian of the Gobindgarh fort in Amritsar, where Ranjit Singh kept most of the munitions of war. The three Fakirs were, without doubt, the Maharaja's most loyal men. Ranjit Singh was lucky to be served by men like Fakir Azizuddin and his two brothers. The Fakir Brothers and Raja Dina Nath remained loyal to the Lahore Durbar even after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Fakir Azizuddin held a unique place in the eyes of the Maharaja. It was a place of utmost esteem and confidence and Azizuddin never betrayed his trust and not ever did he let him down. It was due to his wise counsel, profound diplomatic skills, deep political knowledge and acumen that the Maharaja was able to maintain cordial relations with the Machiavellian, shrewd and astute British Government. These relations were on a friendly platform of equality and mutual respect for each other. He also proved very valuable and useful to Ranjit Singh in his dealings with

the Afghans. Azizuddin was a man of learning and not a soldier by profession. Nevertheless, so great was the Maharaja's confidence in his all-round ability and his fidelity that he entrusted several difficult and delicate military assignments to him. Books are full of the Fakir's inherent tact, his great skill in negotiation and his ardent loyalty to Ranjit Singh. Azizuddin has been described as 'the oracle of the Maharaja' and as 'his master's mouthpiece.' He was learned in Arabic as well as Persian and was 'the most eloquent man of his day' – 'as able with his pen as with his tongue.' He was one of the Maharaja's most polished and accomplished courtiers, with a very gentle and affable manner and with a very catholic outlook. Ranjit Singh had complete trust in him and rewarded him with *jagirs* and honours.

It was during Ranjit Singh's last days that the close and intimate relationship between him and Azizuddin reached its climax – a sad one though. In December 1848, a third stroke of paralysis in less than two years completely deprived the Maharaja of his power of speech. The only courtiers who could understand his sign language were Bhia Ram Singh and Fakir Azizuddin – particularly the latter whose complete and dedicated devotion to his sick master was greater than that shown by a son to his father.

Fakir Azizuddin, who led a Punjabi delegation to Lord William Bentinck at Simla in 1831, was asked by an officer of the governor general in which eye Ranjit Singh was blind. "The splendour of his face is such," replied the Fakir, "that I have never been able to look close enough to discover." Today a large part of the collection in the private Museum of the descendants of the Fakir Brothers named *The Fakir Khana Museum* at Lahore consists of gifts given to the Fakirs by Ranjit Singh. Fakir Syed

Waheeduddin a descendant of Fakir Azizuddin wrote a wonderful 280 page book 'The Real Ranjit Singh' in 1981. The book became very popular and was republished in January 2001 by Punjabi University Patiala. The descendants of the Fakir Brothers eulogize the great Maharaja to this day.

Many Europeans who met the Fakir have written favourably of him. Since Fakir Azizuddin, his brothers and their connection with Ranjit Singh is the *raison d'etre* of this article, it will not be out of place to give some excerpts about them from standard books on Ranjit Singh, which contain tributes to the quality of these men, as typical of the Maharaja's chief councilors and trusted servants.

Lt Colonel Steinbach who was in Ranjit's employ and saw more of him described Fakir Azizuddin as 'One of the most remarkable men at Ranjit's court' with knowledge of Persian and Arabic poetry and an interest in collecting old manuscripts. One of the most agreeable men when not talking for a direct object (his talk is never objectless), he is full of anecdotes and of quaint pithy sayings ...very able negotiator; insidious beyond measure and a complete master of the science of humbug.... a mouthpiece of the stupid Sikh Sardars. (*The Punjab*, pp. 97-100.)

Sir Lapel Griffin in his book '*Ranjit Singh*' writes: The most conspicuous figure in the eyes of foreigners visiting the court of the Maharaja was Fakir Azizuddin, his foreign minister..... He was celebrated as the most eloquent man of the day, and he was as able with his pen as he was with his tongue. The state papers drawn up by him are models of elegance and good taste, according to the Oriental standard. He was himself a ripe scholar in all branches of Eastern science, and was also a generous and discriminating patron of learning..... As a poet, Azizuddin may be allowed a high place.... He is now dead, but for

many years I enjoyed his intimate friendship and I have never in India met a man of more refined manners, or a greater flow of eloquence of the florid Persian order..... Nuruddin especially enjoyed a very general respect in the country, and, after the war of 1846, when Raja Lal Singh was deposed for treason, Nuruddin was appointed one of the Councils of Regency to carry on the administration until the majority of the infant Maharaja Dhulip Singh. The elder brother was ordinarily known at the court by the title of the Fakir Sahib; not that the style of Fakir which the family were proud enough to retain signified, as the word ordinarily implies, any vow of poverty, for the brothers were all wealthy. (*Ranjit Singh* - Sir Lapel Griffin)

WL M'Gregor in his book *'The History of the Sikhs'* quotes an official report submitted to the Governor-General of British India: This worthy man (Fakir Azizuddin) never ceases to watch over the interest of his master, who, in return, treats him with the most marked kindness and respect.... The Fukeer is of the most humane disposition, and he deems it cruel to deprive even the insect of life: though obliged to witness the death of animals while on hunting excursions with his master, he confesses that he never sees a hare start before the dogs without offering up his prayers for its escape..... These traits will show the mild and gentle disposition of this worthy man.

Professor Narendra Krishna Sinha in his book *'Ranjit Singh'* says: He (Azizuddin) styled himself as a fakir and adopted the dress of a fakir. This he regards as an armour in the court of Lahore, which was, in its later days, so full of intrigue..... His personal attachment to Ranjit Singh was very great..... With so much power in their hands, had these Muhammadan officers been so inclined they might have added one more party to the list of three that arose on the

death of Ranjit Singh. In addition to the Court, Dogra and Sandhanwalla parties there might have been a Muhammadan party resting on the support of the Fakir Brothers, the Muhammadan officers in charge of the artillery and the Muhammadan population of the Punjab. To the honesty of Azizuddin and his younger brothers there is no better testimony than this that the confidence Ranjit Singh reposed in them was never misused.

These excerpts speak volumes by implication about Ranjit Singh, both as a man and a ruler. It is not every king who is served or likes to be served by men of this character. Fakir Azizuddin was a God fearing man and a thorough gentleman. He was honest, dedicated, loyal and faithful and had very high moral values and ethics. He served Ranjit Singh for forty years and stayed in court after his death as adviser to Kharak Singh, Nao Nihal Singh and Sher Singh. He died on 03 December 1845.

Note It may be of interest to the reader to know a little about the present descendants of the Fakir Brothers. Here is an excerpt from one of the daily news-papers of Pakistan:

Pakistan unveiled a life-size sculpture of Maharaja Ranjit Singh on Thursday the 27 June 2019 on the eve of 180th death anniversary of the Sikh ruler, in Lahore. The statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh is installed outside the Sikh Gallery of the Lahore Fort. The life-size statue, shows Maharaja Ranjit Singh, riding his favourite Arabian horse Kahar Bahar (a very intelligent horse and Ranjit Singh's favourite), complete in Sikh attire, with a sword in hand. The horse was gifted to him by Dost Muhammad Khan, the founder of the Barazkai dynasty. The nine feet sculpture is finished in fiber cold bronze material and is matchless in its making when compared to other statues of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in this region.

The statue, one of its kind, took eight months to construct and was made under the supervision of **Faqir Khana Museum Director Faqir Saifuddin** (a descendent of Fakir Syed Azizuddin). Saifuddin called the unveiling “a proud moment” for him. He added that it was personally important because three members of his family were emissaries to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. **Fakir Khana Museum has also launched 180 limited edition bust sculptures of Maharajah Ranjit Singh** for art connoisseurs and those interested in the history of Punjab. Sikh Heritage Foundation, UK (which funded the project) Director

Bobby Singh Bansal, who commissioned the sculpture called it “history in making”, adding that they “are extremely happy to be a part of this historic moment”.

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Bhupinder Singh Rai



A photo of the Fakir Khana Museum bust sculpture of Maharajah Ranjit Singh

★★★

GURU ARJAN

An Ever shining Light in the deep Darkness

ਜਪੁਉ ਜਿਨ੍ ਅਰਜੁਨ ਦੇਵ ਗੁਰੂ ਫਿਰਿ ਸੰਕਟ ਜੋਨਿ ਗਰਭ ਨ ਆਯਉ ॥੬॥

Whoever meditates on Guru Arjun Dev, shall not have to pass through the painful womb of reincarnation ever again. ||6||

ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜੁਨ ਦੇਵ (ਜੀ) ਨੂੰ ਜਪਿਆ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਪਰਤ ਕੇ ਗਰਭ ਜੁਨ ਤੇ ਦੁੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਏ ਹਨ ।੬।

Dr Sukhbir Singh Kapoor

Basic Facts

Place of birth: Goindval

Date of birth: 15th April 1563

Parents: Guru Ramdas and Mata Bhani

Wife: Mata Ganga,

Date of marriage: 1579, (Guru Arjan's age at the time of marriage was 16 years)

Children: Only son – Hargobind (Guru) born in 1595 (16 years after the marriage of the Guru, when he was 32 years old)

Anointment as the 5th Guru: 1st September 1581, at Goindval. [*Guru Ramdas put 5 paisa and a coconut in front of Arjan and Baba Budha put the ceremonial tilak and declared young Arjan as the 5th Guru of the Sikhs. Soon after the Tilak ceremony, Guru Ramdas breathed his last.*]

Departure from the world: 30th May 1606, at that time the Guru Arjan was 43 years old.

Place of departure: Lahore. [*Birth place of his father Guru Ramdas; the Guru visited Lahore a few times during his tenure as the Guru, and got an oblong well (Baoli) dug there, in Dabbi Bazar, to counter the scarcity of water*]

Gurdwara Dera Sahib: The name of the Gurdwara to commemorate the martyrdom of Guru Arjan is called Dera Sahib and is situated at the banks of the river Ravi. In this river, the body of the Guru disappeared and was never found. [*It is believed that the bodies of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh had also miraculously disappeared after their worldly death*]

Initial difficulties faced by the Guru:

When after the demise of Guru Ramdas, Guru Arjan returned to Amritsar, he found the city circled by fierce resistance organised by his

older brother Prithia and his gang of misguided masands. They had blocked all ways to enter Amritsar and were forcefully collecting offerings from the devotees coming to meet the Guru, posing as Guru's representatives. They

will collect the contributions and send them to eat from the langar organised by Guru Arjan. These roguish activities adversely affected Guru's operations, and rations in the Guru's langar started drying fast. At this time of need, Bhai Gurdas, returned from Agra (where he was appointed for the missionary work, and was the head of masands in that area) and with the help of selected Sikhs, he took over the entry gates to Amritsar from the men of Prithia.

The Planned Work:

It is important to note that unlike Guru Nanak, who travelled most of the important parts of the then known world, Guru Angad, Guru Amardas and Guru Ramdas stayed all their lives either in the places of their birth, or places where they had met their mentor Guru or the new towns, which they had founded. However, Guru Arjan, to some extent, did break this convention and toured Majha and Doaba area of Punjab, to spread the message of Sikhism.

The following are the places and the years of Guru Arjan's domicile over his life time and the missionary tours he made to propagate Sikhism:

Places of Domicile:

1. Goindval – First 12 years of life. [1563 -1574] Guru Arjan was born here, and, later, moved with his father, Guru Ramdas, to Amritsar. Here, the Guru learned Gurbani from his father, mother and grandparents. May be, he also helped in the preparation of Goindval pothis (later called Mohan pothis).
2. Amritsar – Next 14 years of life [1574 -1588] First seven years, he stayed, here, serving his father, Guru Ramdas and learning and memorising Gurbani. Next seven years, as

Guru himself, he organised and completed the following

- ❖ The digging of the holy Srovar at Ramdaspur, which was started by Guru Ramdas.
- ❖ The srovar at Santokhsar, again started by his father.
- ❖ Refurbishing Guru Ke Mahal (Guru's residence, built by Guru Ramdas)
- ❖ Finalising the blue-prints and architect of God's house (Harimandir), which he was commanded by the Almighty to build (1588-1601). *The Guru asked Mian Mir, a famous Muslim Sufi Saint to lay its foundation stone. Baba Buddha was appointed to look after the construction work of the shrine. The tree under which Baba Budha would sit and control the work, still exists, and is just outside Darshni Deori. It is called Baba Buddha di Ber. A small Gurdwara is built at the site.*

Missionary Tours:

3. Tours of Majha and Doaba – [1588-1595/96/98/1600]. Next 8 to 10 years, the Guru went on a missionary tour to spread the Naam and instruct people to live a life of a true devotee.

The important places visited by the Guru include:

Khadur Sahib (place founded by Guru Angad),

Goindval Sahib (Place founded by Guru Amardas),

Sarhali, Bhaini, Khanpur and Taran Taran,

Gobindpur on Beas (Founded by the Guru himself)

Lahore (birth place of Guru Arjan's father, Guru Ramdas. Guru Arjan got dug, here, an oblong well (Baoli) in the Dabbi Bazar to combat the water scarcity of the area.

Dera Baba Nanak [*The specific place within the shrine complex is called Kirtan Asthan, a rectangular hall, which marks the site where Guru Arjan himself did kirtan when he visited the place to condole the death of Baba Dharam Das, a grandson of Guru Nanak (son of Lakhmi Chand)*].

Wadali (Chherta) – In 1598, the Guru was in Wadali, when, his son, Guru Hargobind was born.

4. **Goindval/Lahore**– 1599: Emperor Akbar came to meet the Guru in Goindval in 1599. The Emperor was in Batala on a peace mission and from there he came to Goindval, specially, to meet Guru Arjan. When the Emperor asked the Guru, for any royal favour, the Guru said that he does not need anything for himself but he wants some reduction of taxes on farmers due to fall in demand for their crop. The Emperor readily accepted the request and issued orders for 1/6 reduction in the revenue. After the departure of the Royal party, the Guru visited Lahore, the birthplace of his father.
5. **Amritsar** – next 6 years of life [1600 – 1605] the Guru was in Amritsar, giving finishing touches to Harimandir and compiling the Adi Granth
6. **Lahore** – [1606] The Guru was summoned here, by emperor Jehangir and was tortured to death (June 1606).

Founding Important Shrines and places:

Just before starting his missionary tours and during the excursion, the Guru founded

many important places and established new townships. These include the following:

1. The start of building Harimandir [God's House] [1588]. The foundation stone was laid by a Sufi Muslim Saint Mian Mir.
2. Taran Taran: Started (founded) in 1590, and completed in 1596
3. Kartarpur (Jallandur): Founded in 1593/94, A well was dug here called Gangasar to meet the water scarcity.
4. Chherta [founded 1598]
5. Baoli in Lahore [1599]
6. Ramsar in Amritsar [founded in 1600-1601]
7. Completion Harimandir [1600-1601].

During his missionary journey, the Guru attracted many disciples from both Muslim and Hindu religions. A few hill rajas including rajas of Kulu, Saket, Haripur and Chamba became his followers.

Earlier, for financing his dream projects, the Guru had asked his Sikhs to contribute 1/10th of their earnings called Daswand, towards Guru's funds. Masands were also briefed to collect appropriate funds and bring those to the Guru on Diwali and Vaisakhi, every year.

After returning from missionary tours, the Guru, stayed a little while in Amritsar and then went to Wadali, where his only son, Hargobind, was born on 19th June 1598. The Guru realised that people, here, in Wadali, were facing scarcity of water, he consulted his men and ordered them to dig a special well to run with six Persian wheels. The name of the place then became famous as Chherta Sahib.

Preparation of Adi Granth: (1601-1604): Place of compilation Ramsar

Guru Arjan now started collecting and arranging compositions so composed by the first four Gurus. He was planning to compile a comprehensive Granth for the Sikh nation. Most of the Bani of the first three Gurus, he had memorised by heart, while his stay in Goindval, and the Bani of Guru Ramdas and his own compositions were available to him in writing.

It took Guru Arjan 4 years to compile the Granth. It was initially called 'Pothis Sahib', later 'Adi Granth' and finally 'Guru Granth Sahib'.

The main sources of the collection and finalising Bani, however, were:

1. Guru Arjan himself [his learning of Gurbani until his anointment as the Guru].
2. Guru Arjan's visit to Baba Sri Chand at Barath and collecting Guru Nanak's hymns from him.
3. Guru Arjan's visit to Baba Mohan in Goindval and collecting Goindval Pothis from him.

[Baba Mohan, an uncle (Mama) of Guru Arjan had kept the pothis with him, and when Guru Ramdas was anointed as the 4th Guru he did not hand over these to him. The Pothis were prepared by Guru Amardas, during his life time (1570-1572), to preserve the bani of the first three Gurus. As a protocol these Pothis should have gone to Guru Ramdas, but Baba Mohan refused to part with them. The scribe of the pothis was Sahsaram, a great grandson of Guru Amardas.]

How many pothis were actually prepared is not known, some historians say four, but the two pothis handed over to Guru Arjan by Baba Mohan had very little bani in them. Those who

have seen the two pothis, say, that those pothis have only 2% of the total Bani. This leads to the conclusion that there would be many more pothis (even more than four) with Baba Mohan, who did not give them to Guru Arjan. But where those Pothis are, today? No one has the answer.

Anyway, we must understand that Guru Arjan was in Goindval for the first 12 years of his life, where the Bani of the first 3 Gurus was regularly recited and conversed. Again for next 6 years, he was at Amtitsar with his father, Guru Ramdas, who himself, must have mastered the Bani of first three Gurus, as he (Guru Ramdas) had lived with Guru Amardas for 22 years. Yet again, when the Pothis were being prepared, both Bhai Jetha (Guru Ramdas), and Arjan (Guru Arjan) were present in Goindval and, in every probability, must have been an aid to Sahsaram during the compilation of the Pothis. Thus both must have mastered the Bani of three Gurus, by heart.)

Some historians are of the opinion that Guru Ramdas had a complete set of Bani of all preceding Gurus (Guru Nanak, Guru Angad and Guru Amardas) from Guru Amardas himself, which he passed on to Guru Arjan along with his own hymns. Thus, Guru Arjan had compositions of all Gurus with him.

The chief scribe of the Granth was Bhai Gurdas. The Granth was duly completed in 1604. Guru Arjan then sent, one of his trusted devotee, Bhai Bano to Lahore, to get the Granth, properly bound, as a secured volume. En-route to Lahore Bhai Banno made a copy of the Granth for himself and added in there, a few unauthorised hymns. This volume was rejected by Guru Arjan, who called it, 'Khari Bir' (the forbidden copy).

The bound Granth was ceremoniously installed in Harimandir on 31st August 1604, and Baba Buddha was appointed as the first high priest thereof. The first Hukamnama read on that occasion was: (Suhī Mehla 5 page 783)

ਸੰਤਾ ਕੇ ਕਾਰਜਿ ਆਪਿ ਖਲੋਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਕੰਮੁ ਕਰਾਵਣਿ ਆਇਆ
ਰਾਮ ॥

The Master Himself has stood up to resolve the affairs of the Saints; He has come to complete their tasks.

ਹੇ ਭਾਈ! (ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਮੁੱਢ-ਕਦੀਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੁਭਾਉ ਹੈ
ਕਿ ਆਪਣੇ) ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਸਹਾਈ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ
ਹੈ, ਆਪਣੇ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਸਿਰੇ ਚੜ੍ਹਾਣ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਆਉਂਦਾ
ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ॥

For sometimes there was quiet all around, but later on a complaint, from zealous Hindus and Muslims, lodged with Emperor Akbar, regarding objectionable hymns in the Granth, the Guru was summoned to attend a hearing in Lahore. The Guru sent Bhai Gurdas and Baba Buddha to defend the case. On hearing both sides, Akbar did not find anything objectionable in the Granth rather offered 51 gold coins as offerings as a sign of respect and strongly reprimanded the plaintiffs. The original copy of the Granth as compiled by Guru Arjan and scripted by Bhai Gurdas is, at present, at Kartarpur (Jalandur) with the descendents of Dhirmal, a great grandson of Guru Arjan, and Banno Bir is in a Gurdwara, run by the descendents of Bhai Banno, at present, situated in Kanpur.

Emperor Akbar died on 17th October 1605 and the throne was contested between his son Jehangir and grandson Khusaru. Khusaru was arrested and put in prison in Agra. He, somehow, escaped from the prison and made for Punjab on the run to Kabul. Here he met Guru Arjan,

who was at TaranTaran at that time. Khusaru pleaded for some help. According to many historians, the Guru gave him a few thousand rupees for his journey to Kabul [many others do not accept the Guru giving any aid to Khusaru]. This act of Guru was regarded by his enemies as an act of treason. Earlier many other rivals of the Guru, including the following were trying their best to harm him and put an end to the Sikh movement. The main villains, however, are the following:

Elder brother Prithia – who was trying his utmost to harm the Guru, even contemplating his death.

Sulhi Khan – a Mughal officer of Batala, who wanted to get rid of the Guru to stop Muslim conversion to Sikhism, and

Chandu Shah – who wanted to take revenge from the Guru, for not accepting the offer of his daughter's marriage to the Guru's son, the young Hargobind.

On the combined petition of the above, especially highlighting the charge of treason, the Guru was summoned to Lahore and asked to pay a fine of two lakh rupees. The Sikhs of Lahore showed willingness to raise money and pay the fine, but the Guru politely refused, saying, that he has not committed any offence and is thus not legally responsible to pay. The emperor was annoyed with this answer and issued orders for the immediate arrest of the Guru. Later, he was offered an option to either convert to Islam and be a free man, or accept a painful death. The Guru chose death. The Royal orders were then issued to inflict upon the Guru most atrocious death and to confiscate his properties and detain all his family members. According to historians the orders to arrest Guru's family and confiscate his property were, however, not carried out.

The Guru was first chained to a post in an open place exposed to sun and boiling water was thrown on his body. Later, according to various historians, he was made to sit on a hot plate and then put in a cauldron of boiling water. The torture continued for 4-5 days. There were blisters all over his body. On the last day the Guru asked consent to bathe in the river Ravi. He was sent there with a strong escort, he dived into the waters and never came out. His body was taken to the house of God by angels.

In the Sikh history, it is believed that the bodies of Guru Nanak, Guru Arjan and Guru Gobind Singh were directly taken to the house of God, by angels, and were never found by the mourners or enemies after their worldly death.

Guru Arjan is Sikh nation's first martyr.

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★ ★ ★



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WHEN THE LIGHT IS DIMMED, AN INVITATION TO DARKNESS IS INEVITABLE

Dr. Harbans Lal, Ph.D.; D.Litt. (Hons).

I derived the title of my essay from a verse by Guru Nanak in SGGS on page 1412:

ਗਿਆਨ ਹੀਣਿ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਪੂਜਾ

When translated into English, the verse means “*restraining the Light of Truthful Wisdom inevitably leads to the Darkness of falsehood and Ignorance.*”

When applied to the everyday practices of religion, it warns that meaningless rituals would inevitably replace the authentic traditions of religion, or Dharam, as prescribed by the sages. In case of the Sikhs, when congregations are deprived of the direct exegeses of the verses by the Founders of the religion, as imbibed in the Guru Granth, the senseless rituals replace the right practices of the faith. Further, the members of the congregation will exhibit enthusiasm and show-off expressions of the ill-advised practices. They may take pride in un-Sikh like rituals, and even celebrate them.

I will include one example in this article later after I narrate the meanings of the darkness and the light as metaphors.

What is Darkness?

The darkness can mean many things. However, in the context of the present essay, I describe darkness as religious practices that form a social, moral, and spiritual atmosphere which begins to dictate everyday rituals. In the dark, prejudice

becomes more powerful than logic. As a result, the congregations are blindfolded so that the rational judgment is improbable. Guru Granth describes this darkness as,

ਨ ਸਬਦ ਬੂਝੈ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਬਾਣੀ ॥ ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਅੰਧੇ ਦੁਖਿ ਵਿਹਾਣੀ॥
SGGS p. 665

The blind, self-willed manmukh does not comprehend the SABD (teachings of the Guru); the follower of ill-conceived cultural mimetics becomes blind in the darkness of ignorance and lives the precious human life in mental as well as physical misery.

What is Light?

One will experience great difficulty in defining the metaphor of intellectual light using English vocabulary as this refers to the light that shines on the human mind. The definition I chose is what I understood from Guru Nanak’s verse as below.

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸਿਆ ਤਿਮਰ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਅੰਧੇਰ ਚਕਾਇਆ ॥੨॥

Says Nanak, orientation of human mind toward the spiritual wisdom from Guru enlightens the mind or the intellect so that the black darkness of ignorance is dispelled, rendering the recipient a Gurmukh, the wisdom oriented.

Guru Nanak used the metaphor of light to mean the knowledge which removes the darkness of ignorance from the human mind. The impacted

person is content and joyful. Without such knowledge, one remains in the dark, lost in falsehood, and lives a miserable life.

The definition of Light may further become clear from reference to an Islamic saying.

Prophet Muhammad used to make *dua* (prayer) thus: “Oh Allah place **light** in my heart and on my tongue **light** and my ears **light** and in my sight **light**, and above me **light**, and below me **light**, and to my right **light** and to my left **light**.

The Prophet further said: “If anyone travels on the road in search of knowledge, Allah will ease the way to Paradise for him. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge. The inhabitants of the heavens and the earth and even the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the knowledgeable man over the worshipers in Islam is like the superiority of the full moon over the rest of the planets. The scholars are the inheritors of prophets. The prophets didn’t leave behind wealth; they left behind knowledge, and whoever takes this knowledge takes a great fortune” (Abu Dawood, Ibn Majah, Tirmidhi).

Thus, to translate the metaphor of light into the natural language, one can only say that it is that knowledge which removes the darkness of ignorance from the human mind. It makes the impacted person content and joyful. Without such knowledge, one remains ignorant, lost in falsehood, and stay miserable in life.

Is Darkness Really on the Rise?

The answer is yes. Presently we are rapidly drifting into the darkness of ignorance religiously. Those blinded with ignorance are gradually taking over religious institutions

everywhere. They may brand anything they like as correct, and thwart criticism of anything. They discourage any reference to the Guru, and as a result, congregations are being rendered the slaves of un-Sikhi rituals. These rituals begin when we are born and continue to blind us to our last breath. Even the last rites and their periodic memorials are not spared.

Clergy Promoting Darkness

In Sikhism, the clergies quote “rehat” and verses not included in the Guru Granth to justify everything as right and they thwart condemnation of anything. Often, “rehat” does not support them, but they confuse the audience so they may not verify. Someone said it so beautifully with the admonition that the mores of social groups form “a moral and civil atmosphere through which everything [is] seen and the rational judgment is rendered impossible.” We then start operating in darkness, not even knowing that there is light out there.

Let me take an example from the religious routines periodically made further prevalent in the Sikh congregations.

After finishing the recitations and singing of verses from Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the congregation stands up for the two concluding prayers. The first one was composed by Guru Arjan for recitation by the whole congregation. It, mostly, expresses gratitude in humility to the Creator for the bounties given to everyone. It ends with seeking wisdom to be thankful.

This short prayer is followed by a long community prayer which is recited by only the leading clergy. Closer to the end of this prayer, before asking for the wellbeing of all, the clergy seeks Guru Granth’s kindness in sampling each item of food presented in a large plate to the Guru Granth. To the large plate is also added

either a metal glass containing drinking water or a plastic bottle of water recently opened for this occasion. The verse from the Guru Granth often recited at that time is:

ਅਨਿਕ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਭੋਜਨ ਬੁਹ ਕੀਏ ਬੁਹ ਬਿੰਜਨ ਮਿਸਟਾਏ ॥ ਕਰੀ ਪਾਕਸਾਲ ਸੋਚ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰਾ ਹੁਣਿ ਲਾਵਹ ਭੋਗ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਏ ॥ ੨॥
SGGS, ਪ. ੧੨੬੬.

The above verse is literarily translated to please the donors of the food items served in langar of that day as follows.

We have prepared various sorts of foods in multiple ways and included all kinds of sweet desserts. For that, I cleaned my kitchen pure and sacred. Now, O my Divine king, please sample my dishes thus prepared before they are distributed to the congregation.

The above translation is grossly erroneous and is promoted only to fool the donor into believing that the Guru Granth will sample or taste their cooked food. The real translation of the verse is well elaborated by Bhai Kahan Singh in Gurmat Martand and Professor Gurcharan Singh of the Gurmat Gian Missionary College in his recent book. The correct translation of whole hymn goes like this.

ਰਾਗੁ ਮਲਾਰ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ਚਉਪਦੇ ਘਰ ੧ ॥ ੧ੳ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

One virtual reality manifested in all creation realized by the Grace of The True Guru:

ਕਿਆ ਤੂੰ ਸੋਚਹਿ ਕਿਆ ਤੂੰ ਚਿਤਵਹਿ ਕਿਆ ਤੂੰ ਕਰਹਿ ਉਪਾਏ ॥

What are you so worried about? What are you thinking? What are you struggling to accomplish?

ਤਾ ਕਓ ਕਹੁਹ ਪਰਵਾਹ ਕਾਹੂ ਕੀ ਜਿਹ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਸਹਾਏ ॥੧॥

What may distress those who are ever protected by the Divine. ||1||

ਬਰਸੇ ਮੇਘ ਸਖੀ ਘਰਿ ਪਾਹਨ ਆਏ ॥

It is like the rain showering down from the clouds, O my friend companion, when my loving friend walked into my home (heart and mind) as a guest (divine wisdom).

ਮੋਹਿ ਦੀਨ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਨਿਧਿ ਠਾਕਰ ਨਵ ਨਿਧਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਸਮਾਏ ॥੧॥
ਰਹਾਓ ॥

I am meek, but my icon of worship is the Ocean of Mercy. I am captivated in the nine treasures of the Naam, the identity of the Creator. ||1||Pause to contemplate||

ਅਨਿਕ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਭੋਜਨ ਬੁਹ ਕੀਏ ਬੁਹ ਬਿੰਜਨ ਮਿਸਟਾਏ ॥ ਕਰੀ ਪਾਕਸਾਲ ਸੋਚ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰਾ ਹੁਣਿ ਲਾਵਹ ਭੋਗ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਏ ॥੨॥

In the kitchen of my heart, I have prepared all sorts of foods and sweet deserts in various ways, meaning I gathered various contemplations on a wide range of spiritual teachings and practiced pathways to salvation.

I have made the kitchen of my heart pure and sacred. Now, O my Divine, please guide me in experiencing many aspects of this spirituality. ||2||

ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਬਿਦਾਰੇ ਸਾਜਨ ਰਹਸੇ ਇਹਿ ਮੰਦਿਰ ਘਰ ਅਪਨਾਏ ॥

The villains have been destroyed, and my friends are delighted. This is Your Own Mansion and Temple.

ਜਉ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਲਾਲ ਰੰਗੀਓ ਆਇਆ ਤਉ ਮੈ ਸਭਿ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਏ ॥੩॥

When my Playful Beloved walked into my heart (household), then I found total peace. ||3||

ਸੰਤ ਸਭਾ ਓਟ ਗੁਰ ਪੂਰੇ ਧਰਿ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਲੇਖ ਲਿਖਾਏ ॥

In the Society of the Saints, I have the Support and Protection of the Perfect Guru; this is the pre-ordained destiny inscribed upon my forehead.

ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੰਤ ਰੰਗੀਲਾ ਪਾਇਆ ਫਿਰਿ ਦੁਖ ਨ ਲਾਗੈ
ਆਏ ॥੪॥੧॥

Humble Nanak has found his Playful Divine Husband. He shall never suffer in sorrow again. ॥4॥1॥

Purpose of Sikh Congregations

Conformity of behavior in society reflects conformity of thought and sentiment. In establishing the sangats or congregations, Guru Nanak institutionalized Vichaar, the act of thinking and contemplating, the exercise of the mind in any of its higher forms; reflection; cogitation. Vichaar as an exegesis of the verses

from the Guru Granth was made the salient feature of the programs and practices in the Sikh congregations. But it is no more practiced as such in roughly half of the gurdwaras in the West. In the gurdwaras where the exegesis is presented, it is often done by illiterate clergy without giving the benefit of anyone questioning the interpretations.

Thus, today the light is being dimmed and darkness being welcome. Let us not let this destructive practice go too far.

Dr. Harbans Lal

★ ★ ★

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*I will repeat God's name,
And all my affairs shall prosper.
I will not close mine eyes,
Or do any thing for show.
They who wear a religious garb,
Are deemed naught by the saints of God.
Understand this, all men, in their hearts,
That God is not obtained by hypocrisy.
Those who act for the sake of display,
Shall not obtain salvation in the next world;
And it is only for life their affairs prosper.
Kings on seeing their acting worship them;
But God is not to be found by mummery.
Yet everyone wanders about thus searching for Him
He who keeps his heart in subjection
Recognises the Supreme Being.
(Bachiter Natak) Guru Gobind Singh*

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TAAJUDIN DIARIES PART 3

Syed Prithpal Singh

Taajudin's Diary is an account of a Muslim author who accompanied Guru Nanak from Makkah to Baghdad, The Diary was discovered in Madina Library by Sant Syed Prithpal Singh ne' Mushtaq Hussain Shah (1902-1969). This has been Edited & Translated By: Inderjit Singh.

This book describes Guru Nanak's travel to far off countries that were the mainstay of Muslim culture and Islamic religion. Guru Nanak attached great importance to this mission of his. The present book describes Guru's journey to Middle Eastern countries and gives introductions to his visits to some other places. It details many dialogues that the Guru had with Muslim clergy and their followers

This book is essentially a diary of Guru Nanak's travels to the Islamic world by the Arab followers of the Guru. Syed Prithpal Singh deserves credits for recognizing its value and collecting from the Arabian sources. He is entirely responsible for the verification and its evidence.

This article is a continuation of last issue's article (part 2) by Syed Prithpal Singh

Blessing for Salima

Exalted indeed is the Guru's path and his shelter, but it's not easy; the Guru continuously tests those who choose to walk on his path.

One day, Salima sat in the congregation near Baba Nanak, and she found such peace that she went into a trance. The sun was setting, and the Baba told me [Taajudin], "Ask this child to go home."

I was surprised because never before had the Guru asked me to interrupt anybody sitting in deep meditation. I called out softly, and Salima woke up, startled. She opened her eyes and beheld the Guru, and the Guru commanded, "Child go home, and go promptly."

Before leaving, Salima touched Baba's feet. A kind glance from the Guru, the ocean of bliss, elevated her into perfect bliss, her soul filled with

light. She took ten steps toward her home then turned around to the Guru and said, "I believe that my husband has returned. I will bring him to you tomorrow."

The Baba said, "Child, remember to be patient and endure the powers Allah has just granted you. No matter what the circumstances, you must remain humble." Salima bowed and left.

Salima reached home, and there he was – her husband encircled by busybodies. The husband glared at Salima. Salima with utmost respect welcomed him home but realized that people had turned her husband against her. She asked him how he had been. The wound-up husband roared in rage, "I have been informed that in my absence you trampled on my respect and dignity."

Salima: "Dear Husband, what! I trampled on your dignity? No, no. It's the result of my

devotion and prayers that you are home safe and sound. Otherwise, you would have been executed in Egypt on the charges of murder.”

Husband was aghast: “Salima! Who told you about Egypt? I haven’t told a soul to avoid unnecessary worries.”

Salima: “I know that you came home from Egypt and dug out five hundred gold coins and gave them to Majid.”

Husband: “Yes, I came and returned immediately and quietly. I didn’t mention my Egyptian experience to anybody. For Allah’s sake, tell me how you know all these secrets?”

Salima: “I will tell you everything, but first you must eat something.”

Husband: “Dear Salima! I don’t understand how you know all this. Okay, please bring me some food, and then sit with me and tell me who told you all this.”

Salima: “Dear one! First tell me why did you have to appear in the Egyptian court?”

Husband: “I don’t know what to say other than that it was Allah’s will. My problems just appeared out of nothing. If a gentle soul had not come to my rescue and bailed me out, then I wouldn’t have been able to pay my debt to my nephew Majid, and I wouldn’t have seen you again.”

Salima smiled and said: “Who bailed you, and what happened?” Husband: “I had finished performing my morning namaz, just outside the Egyptian city, and set out with the caravan. We were passing by an orchard, and Bagra broke a branch from an apple tree and ate it. The orchard owner, an old man, came running out and was beside himself with anger. He hit the camel in the head with a stone, and Bagra fell dead.

Salima, you know Bagra. He was my favorite. He sired over fifty camels for us and has been in our family for a very long time. I lost my temper, watching my favourite camel killed. I grabbed the same stone and threw it on the old Egyptian man, and he died on the spot. I tried to run away with my camels but got caught. The old man’s family took me to the Egyptian Amir’s court and demanded death for me for causing death. I was scared; there isn’t a saint, a holy man or a prophet to whom I didn’t pray for help.” The ruler listened to the statement from the old man’s family, and turned towards me angrily saying, “Have you heard the charge against you?” I humbly responded, “Yes, your highness. But their old man had killed my favourite camel with a stone. I couldn’t tolerate his death and struck the old man with the same stone, and he died. Oh, Amir! This camel was priceless to me.” The ruler said, “Don’t you know the sharia justice? If they had killed your camel, you could have sued this family for damages in my court. I would have done justice to you. Now you will have to die for this murder. Do you have anything else to add?” “Salima! During these difficult moments, I couldn’t think of anything else and requested, ‘Your Highness, I don’t want to make any excuses, I bow before the sharia law. If you could please grant me a three-day reprieve, I have been holding some property in trust which belongs to orphans.

Only I know where it’s hidden. I will return this property and will hurry back in three days. I have no further requests’.” The ruler said, “If somebody is willing to be your guarantor, you can go for three days.” In the crowded court, people heard the Amir’s ruling, and all eyes turned towards me. The Amir asked again, “Do you know anybody here who can be your guarantor?” I looked at everybody intently.

In this foreign land and during this distress why would somebody stick out their neck for me? All of a sudden, I spotted a man dressed in white. He had a beautiful glowing face, and something in his eyes made me think that he was asking me to pick him. I surrendered my trust to Allah and pointed to that man and said, "This gentleman will be my guarantor." The ruler turned to the man and asked, "Will you post a bail for this murderer?" The man did not refuse. Instead, he rose up and confirmed, "I will take responsibility for him. If as promised, he doesn't return within three days, then execute me in his stead to avenge the murder." "I rode my fastest camel here and hurried back after returning the orphans' property to Majid. Salima, I was afraid that if you found out, you would try to talk me out of returning. Until I returned to Egypt, the kind face of my guarantor remained etched in my mind. The attraction of his sacred face kept motivating me to hurry back. I had vowed in my mind that I would not risk the life of such a kind soul. With Allah's grace, I reached there in the nick of time. The court was overflowing with people. Plaintiffs were already saying that I would never return. They told the ruler that my deadline had passed, and their murdered kin should be avenged by killing the guarantor. It was an unusual scene; the guarantor surprised everybody by calmly claiming that plaintiffs deserve their revenge and that he was ready to die. At that very moment, I got off my camel and walked into the court and wished Assalam Alaykum to the ruler.

The ruler praised me for returning on time, others in the court were also saying: Well done! Well done!" "Salima! Only Allah knows what went through the ruler's mind. He went quiet, and after thinking for a while, he said, "Because of your exemplary honesty and the

goodness of your guarantor, this Islamic court is acquitting you."

Salima (with a big smile): "Do you still remember the face of the kind man who became your guarantor?" Husband sighed and said, "Of course I remember, but I don't think we can find him. After my acquittal, I looked for him everywhere without success. I asked about him high and low, but nobody knew him. People kept telling me that they had seen him only twice, once when the bail was pledged and the second time when the bail was called. I think that the Prophet himself helped me."

Salima was smiling and remembering the day when the Guru had told her, "Child, your husband was sentenced to die, and he has been saved." Today she found out the details from her husband. Her eyes closed in gratitude, and she started whispering "Sat Kartar, Sat Kartar." Husband: "Salima! Are you well? What are you reciting?" Salima, smiling: "Would you be able to recognize him?" Husband (with a surprised look): "Him - the man who pulled me from the jaws of death. He is always in my memory; I will never forget his face." Salima: "You have finished eating, why don't you mind the camels, and Salima: "You have finished eating, why don't you mind the camels, and I will be back very shortly." Husband: "Where are you going?" Salima: "It's been too long since I beheld the Godly saints, I will be back promptly." Husband (angrily): "No you won't. Tell me who these people are? I heard they are Indians." Salima: "Yes, they are Indian. Why don't you also come with me?" Husband (raised his voice in anger): "You want me to go meet kafirs? It will never happen. I don't believe in anybody other than Allah and his sacred Prophet, the Prophet who will be my witness in the next world, the one who undoubtedly saved me in the Egyptian

court.” Salima (alarmed): “I see something moving in your pocket. Careful don’t put your hand in your pocket.” Husband: “Now, are you pretending to get secret messages and seeing through clothes too!” Husband, ignores his wife and sticks his hand in his pocket and screams when he is stung by a scorpion. Salima rushed and started sucking the venom out of her husband’s finger. The husband felt relief from pain, and exclaimed: “Do you know spells or have miracle powers?” Salima: “No miracles! I simply reflected on the Indian saint and sucked your finger. You felt better due to the mercy of the saint you don’t want me to see.” Husband: “All right! If you believe that the saint is of such a high spiritual state, then I will come with you to meet him.” It was late afternoon. The sun was giving its last rays to the world. While most people were returning home from their daily businesses, this blessed couple was setting out to meet the saint. Salima was repeating Kartar Kartar in her mind and was walking briskly, few steps ahead of her husband while smiling at the thought of her husband finally meeting the Baba. About fifty paces away from the Guru, the awestruck husband with his arms flailing started shouting, “Salima, it’s him! It’s him; truly it’s my guarantor from Egypt.” The next moment, the husband ran like a crazy man, placed his head on the feet of the Guru and was weeping uncontrollably. Salima followed her husband, bowed at the Guru’s feet and sat down quietly. The Guru affectionately blessed ‘Gulam Yahya’, the husband, and shared with him the wonders of the path of the Creator and started him contemplating on Kartar. Taajudin writes that after receiving the touch of the Guru’s feet, the blessed couple’s devotion knew no bounds. Every day, as soon as his family chores were done, Gulam Yahya used to rush to the Guru’s congregation. The devotion of the blessed

couple moved many in Kufa to follow the Guru. The group in town blinded by bigotry was equally motivated. They were intensifying their vitriol and were getting exceedingly entrenched in their opposition to the Guru. Finally, one day, people in the congregation informed the Guru that the head Qazi had issued a fatwa against the Guru, and some anxious devotees requested permission to teach the qazi a lesson. The Guru told them not to worry and continue contemplating on Kartar.

Salvation of Pasha Hali

Pasha Hali was the most senior Qazi in Kufa. One day, when he saw fewer than usual attendees in Jama Masjid for Friday’s prayer, he asked for the reason. People told the Qazi that Indian monks are staying in the cemetery outside the town, and many townspeople visit them daily. Whoever goes there, turns away from the faith; not only do they stop namaz, they even turn away from divine verses. They just lose themselves in meditation and ignore anybody who wants to talk sense to them; we don’t know what type of evil spell are they under. Hearing this, the Qazi issued a fatwa in his sermon and proclaimed “Indian monks are kafirs (non-believers). Whoever goes to visit them will also be deemed kafir and should be considered excommunicated from Islam.” When the Guru was informed of the fatwa, he listened patiently and smiled. The daily congregations continued, people used to gather in the last quarter of the night to enjoy the spiritual nectar and left for their daily work at the break of dawn. This night, Yakub Ibne Sahlab, one of the congregants stood up and announced, “Inal Hazerina Fa Pasha Hali Halaktun Fi Marje Khalizav Salashu Binjeneena Marga, Haza Muhajzatun, Haznabi FalaIla Nankun Hi Nat Muratdatun.” This meant: “Respected audience! Pasha is dying of

a stomach ailment. He has been writhing on his deathbed for three days. He insulted our Baba and is now facing the power of our prophet.” All agreed, crying, “فنعل اللى عاذهس ان خلا Laanata Allahu ala al khannas,” meaning, “may this devil be cursed by Allah the pure!” Baba asked everybody, including Mardana (Guru Nanak’s lifelong Indian companion who accompanied him on his Arabian journey), “Let us go and inquire of his [Pasha’s] health.” The congregation replied, “Why should we go when he is the one who passed a fatwa against us?” Nanak ji said: “قل خي ناسنا khuliqainsaniyun,” meaning, “A person’s responsibility is not to torment a tormentor, but to make him better.” Baba left for qazi’s house, while Mardana and I [Taajudin] followed. The Lord knocked at qazi’s door. Qazi’s young daughter about eleven years old came out and asked, “امف؟ همس ا FalaIsmahu” meaning, “What is your name?” At this time, Taajudin was with Nanak, and the Guru answered “ي همس الكانان Ismi Nanak” meaning, “My name is Nanak.” She went in to inform her father. As soon as he heard the name ‘Nanak’, the qazi flew into a rage and said, “The religious court has branded this man kafir, I will not meet him, tell him to leave my house.” The tender soul of the daughter was extremely impressed by the spiritual splendor of the Guru, but she had no choice but to deliver her father’s message. With utmost politeness, she said, “O Fakir, I do not wish to repeat the words used by my father. Please leave.” The Guru, the ocean of mercy, in a soothing voice said, “Child, please let your father know that I am here to inquire about his health, he should allow me to come in.” The daughter took the request to her father again. But even on the deathbed, the qazi was still raging under the spell of the demon of bigotry, and he again said no. Daughter came back and again requested the Guru to leave. The Guru

again lovingly said, “Child, this time deliver my message to your father that I have come to beg forgiveness for my blasphemy.” The qazi thought that Nanak wished to embrace Islam. He permitted entry and asked his daughter to spread his turban on the floor to welcome Nanak. The daughter did as her father wished, and said to the Guru, “O Saint, please come in - my father welcomes you.” Rather than stepping on it, the Guru gathered the turban as he walked towards the qazi. The Guru entered the room where the qazi lay near death. One glimpse of Nanak and the qazi’s soul felt peace. He tried to get up to kiss the Guru’s feet but couldn’t because his body was too weak. The Guru helped him up by putting his hands under the qazi’s arms and then hugged him. Guru’s touch broke the locks of ignorance on qazi’s soul. He saw a vision that the angels of death who were pushing him towards hell, were directed to take him to heaven because the vision of Nanak blessed his fortunate soul. From his embrace, the Guru gently lowered the qazi to his bed, and the qazi breathed his last breath.

Taajudin writes that the news of qazi Pasha Hali’s salvation spread across Kufa. Pasha’s kin and other citizens from the town, from all walks of life, came and fell at the Guru’s feet. For three months and a few days, the Guru’s heavenly congregation and singing of the Creator’s praises brought a flood of spiritual enlightenment in the town. The Guru’s daily sermons in Arabic blessed the citizens with the divine mysteries of Gurbani. On the last day, Salima and her husband Gulam Yahya rose and asked the Guru with folded hands, “The congregation will not be able to bear your separation. Where and how will we ever see you again?” The Guru offered them a book of Japuji Sahib and said, “You shall see me in this book. In this place of congregation, infinite Gurbani has flown. This

place shall be your shelter. Maintain this place, and it shall lead you to salvation.” The blessed couple, Salima and Yahya, built a wonderful memorial here, and it's known as Wali Hind. The Japuji Sahib book can be viewed here. To this day, roughly fifteen percent of the people in this town keep their hair long and worship at Wali Hind. Many of these people are descendants of the grandfather of Prophet Muhammad Sahib.

Blessing of Karoon Hamid

At the break of dawn, the Guru left Kufa and walked along the river Dajla. The restless citizens of Kufa had gathered on a plateau. Salima was thinking of the soil at the banks of Dajla which had the good fortune to touch the Guru's feet. She started murmuring “Soil, you are blessed! You are blessed!” and went into deep meditation.”

The Guru crossed the Dajla delta and reached a town named ‘Kai Kai’, the capital of Karoon Hamid, an Egyptian Khalifa. The Guru sat outside the royal citadel with Mardana and started singing in Arabic. The singing of Gurbani attracted people like light attracts moths, and they started appearing in droves.

Pir Jalal, an educated man, who was the spiritual guide of Karoon Hamid, heard about Guru Nanak and came to see him. He was pleased to hear Gurbani, and bowed before the Guru and requested, “Your Eminence! The local Khalifa is my follower. He is cruel, greedy and miserly and torments his subjects. He does not listen to anyone; I too am sick of him. Please, if you would be kind enough, set him on the right path.” The Guru replied, “Oh saint, I came here because of your follower, Allah will be merciful.” The Pir bowed again at the Guru's feet and said, “Oh saint, this infidel has built forty treasuries by sucking his subjects' blood.

He still is not content. He would sell a coffin just to add some extra money to his treasure.” The Guru repeated Nirankar (the formless God), Nirankar and went into meditation. The congregation grew especially after people saw Khalifa's mentor Pir Jalal in daily attendance. Many souls found contentment in the daily flow of Gurbani. Pir Jalal was convinced that Allah himself had appeared in his wondrous splendor to shower mercy. One day, Pir Jalal found an opportune moment in Khalifa's court and said to him. “Your Highness, an Indian saint named Nanak Shah has come to your city. I have heard that the mighty in Makkah, Medina, and Kufa have bowed to him. He is a holy saint.” Karoon Hamid was pleased to hear the praises of Nanak and said to Pir Jalal, “Oh Pir, why don't you take me, your follower, to meet this holy saint.” The Pir, who was already hoping for this outcome wasted no time and took Karoon Hamid to the Guru. It was late afternoon, and the king was surprised to see a large crowd of his citizens gathered around the Guru. With the utmost respect, the king bowed before the Guru and sat down by him. Karoon: “Your Eminence! It's my great fortune that I can behold you. Please grace me with your mercy so that even a lowly being like me could get salvation.” The Guru took out a small needle from his bag and gave it to the king and said, “Take very good care of this.” Karoon: “Your Eminence! What is it?” Guru: “I entrust this needle as a loan to you. Please guard it for me.” Karoon: “Where should I keep it?” Guru: “Don't worry, keep it in one of your forty treasures.” Karoon: “Your Eminence! I am not safekeeping any loans in my treasures. Is it worth going through the trouble for a small item like this?” Guru: “Everything is a loan. Hands, feet, skin and bones, hair. Everything is somebody else's a loan to you. Nothing is yours; you will have to account for everything.” Karoon: “Whose loans are my hand and feet?”

Guru: "The one who gave you birth in this world." Karoon: "Allah is the one who gave me birth in this world." Guru: "You are right.

This body belongs to Allah. He is going to ask an account from every part of your body." Karoon: "What do I have to account for my hands?" Guru: "Good deeds." Karoon: "And feet?" Guru: "Steps taken for welfare." Karoon: "I have to account even for my hair?" Guru: "Yes, hair too. You must account for the loan of hair also." Karoon: "Your Eminence! When would I have to return your loan?" Guru: "Not to worry, I am in no hurry." Karoon: "It would help, if you gave me some idea, I would get the treasurer to make a note." Guru: "I will get it back from you in the afterlife." Karoon (startled): "What! That doesn't make sense. Oh, saint! Nothing goes with you in the afterlife." Guru: "You are absolutely correct. When the time comes, everybody has to go empty-handed." Karoon: "Then how would this needle go with me?" Guru: "I didn't say that the needle will go with you. I just said, please return it to me in the afterlife." Karoon: "Your Eminence! It's beyond me. I can't return this needle to you in the afterlife." Guru: "Hamid! If you can't handle a small needle, how will you return these forty treasures in the after-life? You will be asked to account for every penny." Karoon: "Ahm! Return? You mean...!" Guru: "Without a doubt, you will have to return everything." Karoon broke down and fell at the Guru's feet crying. In front of the crowd, he said, "Your Eminence! Please help me. Tell me how can I be saved?" The Guru's arrow had met its mark. Karoon had realized that he had been extremely cruel to his subjects and started begging the Guru for forgiveness. The Guru consoled the king and said, "Hamid! Do not worry. Human beings come to this world to recognize the true purpose of their time

here. So seek the true purpose." Karoon, with tears flowing from his eyes and with folded hands said, "Lord! Tell me what should I do now? Please forgive my offenses. Please do whatever is necessary and tell me that I can be salvaged." The Guru, the ocean of mercy, said, "O King, your subjects are dying of hunger, they are destitute and suffering. Distribute your treasures to your hungry and needy subjects. This is the way to your salvation." Karoon had seen the light. He complied and distributed his wealth among his subjects. The kingdom became prosperous and turned to gratitude. Karoon Hamid had discovered the truth and became blissful. Pir Jalal, who was extremely grateful, was appointed by the Guru to spread piety and the Lord's word. On the south side of Kai Kai, outside the town, there is a platform built by the Furat Canal. This platform is known as a memorial of 'Nanak Wali Hind'. Karoon's needle is kept at this memorial for the faithful to behold

The town of Kufa, Iraq is over a thousand miles from the modern day Egyptian border. One may question, how Salima's husband could have gone back and forth this distance on a camel in three days. During the time of Guru Nanak's visit (1510 AD), Mamluks ruled Egypt (Mamluks were defeated by the Ottoman Empire in 1517). The last Mamluk Sultan of Egypt (1501 to 1517) controlled most of the Middle East which included Syria and portions of Iraq. The rest of Iraq (including Kufa) was under the Persian dynasty of Safavid. With Mamluk Sultan at the center, Mamluk Emirs held power in smaller regions. It is possible that during Nanak's visit, one of these Mamluk emirates was within three days of travel from Kufa [18].

Syed Prithpal Singh





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Middlesex HA2 8LL (U.K.)
Telephone: 020 8864 9228
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Year of publication / book list

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