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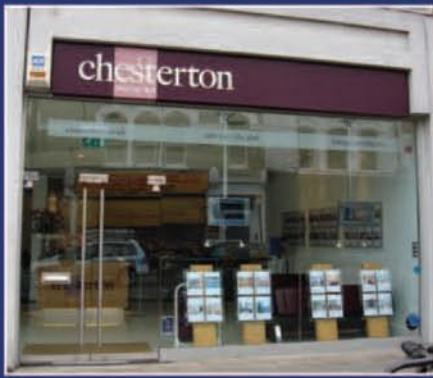
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Editorial

The Sikh Homeland

The Sikh religious moment started with the birth of Guru Nanak and he himself laid down the foundation of Sikh homeland by founding Kartarpur Sahib at the banks of river Ravi. After him most of the Sikh Gurus founded a new town, widening the area of the Sikh native land e.g., Guru Angad- Khadur Sahib, Guru Amardas-Goindval Sahib, Guru Ramdas -Amritsar Sahib, Guru Arjan-Taran Taran Sahib, Guru Hargobind-Kiratpur Sahib and Guru Tegh Bahadur-Anandpur Sahib.

Later in the Sikh history, the roots of the Sikh religious moment were strengthened by the martyrdom of Guru Arjan in Lahore, Guru Tegh Bahadur in Delhi and all member of the family of Guru Gobind Singh in Chamkaur, Sirhind and Nanded. They all put their blood in the roots of the Sikh nation to reinforce the moment.

The setting up of small towns by the Sikh Gurus to spread the message of Waheguru was not without opposition. The local landlords, the priests of the local Hindu temples, the native heads of the 'deras' and Mullahs of the local mosque were all against the establishment of the new places, as they feared that their congregation will drift away to pray at the places set by the Sikh Gurus.

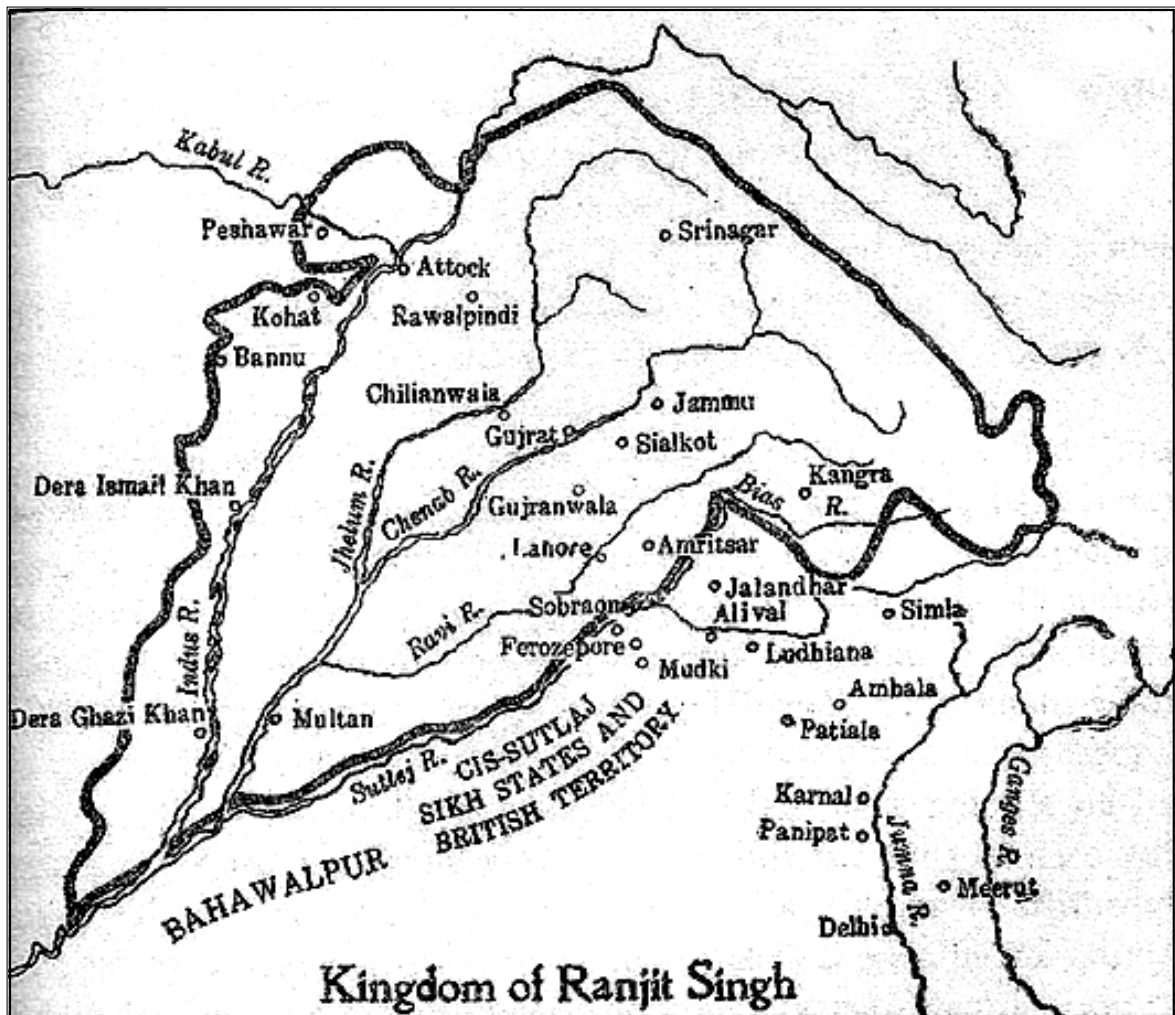
Guru Gobind Singh, just before his death appointed Banda Bahadur to go to Punjab and advised him to: to punish the guilty and cruel rulers and to put a stop to the cruelty and atrocities of the Mughals.

Banda marched to Punjab with all his might and punished all miscreants on his way. He fell upon villages after villages and razed many places to ground, including Sirhind killing Wazir Khan and all others who had done injustice to the locals. The executioners of young sons of Guru Gobind Singh were also killed.

After punishing the cruel he consolidated his power and established the Khalsa rule in Punjab. Later, Sikh Misls (1772-1799) and Ranjit Singh (1799-1839) ruled Punjab and spread its area from Sutluj to Afghanistan. The erstwhile Punjab included today's Kashmir, Himachal and Haryana. That was the true Sikh Homeland, with its secular and worldly policies. All religions were given equal respect. The poverty was eradicated and everyone living in the Sikh Homeland was guaranteed a decent living.

The British ruled India until 1947 and officially withdrew ending their rule on 14/15 August 1947 leaving India in an absolute anarchy. Muslims took over the land of west Punjab and East Bengal and named this union as Pakistan. Hindus remained the master of the rest of India and the Sikhs got nothing in the bargain though Punjab belonged to them whose lands they had cultivated for centuries and where laid their historic shrines.

The most intriguing question is, why only Punjab had to be divided and half given to Muslims and half to Hindus, why not the second half to the Sikhs? Why other Muslim populated states, like UP, Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra were not divided?



The Sikh Homeland of our dreams

History is evident that Sikhs could have taken their share of Punjab either by separately negotiating with the British or by force, but did not do it for the Hindu political stalwarts of the time win over Sikh leadership by false promises. If we turn the pages of history we will find that Pt Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel had assured Sikhs, again and again, that East Punjab will belong to the Sikhs and they will be living there with all honour and glory with their Hindu brethren, if they let Punjab be integral part of India. Sikhs were shown the federal picture of USA, where states have almost full powers and enact their own laws. The time has shown that it did not happen in India and was a shameful betrayal.

To add salt to the wounds, the Indian constitution, which was promulgated in 1950, the Sikhs were made a segment of Hindu religion and the great Punjab of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was torn into pieces. Whatever was left in East Punjab for the Sikhs was further mercilessly divided and parts given to Haryana and Himachal, and Punjab was reduced, in the area, equal to a matchbox.

If Sikhs cry for Homeland, it is for reason that they have been brutally stripped from their honour by deceit and treachery.

CRUSADER OF HUMANISM – SHRI GURU GOBIND SINGH JI

Nanak Singh Nishter

1. Preface

At the outset I would like to congratulate Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar ji and the Department of Tourism, Bihar to commemorate the three hundred and fiftieth birth anniversary of the 10th Guru Nanak that is the 10th Guru Shri Gobind Singh Ji in a befitting manner.

Guru Sahib was the ninth successor of Shri Guru Nanak Sahib who initiated the Movement of Humanism in defense of the common masses of India to counter the untold oppression by the rulers and the religious leaders of all religions. Earlier than him several other saints and rebels stood against such tyranny, but their voice ended with their lives. In view of this incomplete history, Shri Guru Nanak Sahib had to consolidate and continue his MISSION till it is finally achieved and continued eternally. Hence the Ten Gurus have jointly supervised and lead this movement from 1469 to 1708 (two hundred and thirty nine years) as ONE PERSON, irrespective of the fact that they left their physical body after their life span was over, their MISSION continued. If you deeply study their teachings and workings, you would not be able to find even a hair line difference between their ideologies. It is absolutely ignorance to say that the 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji has deviated from the original path and introduced militant element in the movement.

I would like to take you to five thousand years history of the most important, but damn neglected, ignored and tarnished image of our ancient civilization within the parameters of righteousness projected and established by Lord

Krishna in Bhagvad Gita. Fighting for righteous cause was an established duty as Dharma of the Shatrias, even the Brahmin teacher like Drona Charya had fought and confronted in the battlefield of Maha Bharat. Whatever the reasons be, subsequently Jainism and Buddhism cropped up a new philosophy as “Ahimsa Parmo Dharma”, it means non-violence is the top most Dharma, and the concept of Dharma is altogether changed. This policy has changed the fortune and history and converted the people of this country into cowards enslaving people of our Great Nation as sheep and the people in authority turned as shepherds and butchers. This ideology had snatched from their hands weapons and the will and means to resist the oppression. As a result apart from repeatedly plundered the once called “Golden bird”, our thousands of girls were frequently lifted from their motherland and sold in the world market for sexual and domestic purposes.

The common masses were badly oppressed by the invaders, rulers and religious exploiters. There was no hope for their honorable survival. At such a critical period, Shri Guru Nanak Sahib came to the rescue and revived the original Dharma of the land, cultivated the tendency to fight back the oppression. He gave clarion call on page 142 of Shri Guru Granth Sahib:

Je jivaiky path lathi jayie, sab haram jetho kich khaye.

It means, “After self respect is snatched away, whatever you eat is sinful”. He initiated a movement to revive life in the dead souls. His foresight made him arrange his mission to be



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continued for 239 years under the generation of his successors till the entire Nation is awakened and be continuously motivated eternally by the present Guru "Shri Guru Granth Sahib".

To present my view, I would like to take you to the place Sri Nagar of Gadhwal district in present Uttara Khand State, where Maratha Sant Shri Samrath Ram Dass Ji met and had a discussion, for clarifying about the marshal mission of the 6th Guru Shri Guru Har Gobind Sahib.

The meeting, corroborated in a 1793 Marathi source, *Ramdas Swami's Bakhar*, by Hanumant Swami, probably took place in the early 1630s during Sant Samrath Ram Dass Ji's pilgrimage and Guru Hargobind ji's travels. It is said that as they met, Guru Sahib had just returned from a hunting excursion.

"I had heard that you occupied the Gaddi of Guru Nanak", said Sant ji and continued "Guru Nanak was a Tyagi Sadhu - a saint who had renounced the world. You are wearing arms and keeping an army and horses. You allow yourself to be addressed as Sachcha Patshah, the True King. What sort of a Sadhu are you?"

Guru Sahib replied, "baatan faquiri, zahir amiri, shastar garib ki rakhya, jarwan ki bhakhiya, Baba Nanak sansar nahi tyagya, Maya tyagi thi." It means, "Internally a hermit, and externally a prince. Arms mean protection to the poor and destruction of the tyrant. Baba Nanak had not renounced the world but had renounced Maya, i.e. self and ego.

These words of Shri Guru Hargobind sahib found a ready response in Sant Samrath Ram Dass Ji who, as quoted in *Pothi Panjak Sakhian*, spontaneously said, "This appeals to my mind - ***Yeh hamare man bhavti hai***"

This meeting between the two saints has brought the change in the thoughts of Sant Samrath Ram Dass Ji. This is crystal clear from the fact how this Sant has moulded his disciple Shiva Ji to

become Chtarpati Shiva ji Maharaj to establish a state of "Hindvi Swaraj" in the south. And the Sikhs of the Guru Sahib Banda Singh Bahadar and Maharaja Ranjit Singh smashed the mighty Moghals, and under their nose established "Sarkar Khalsa" in and around Punjab. This is a result of revolt of struggle for holding self respect against the centuries old policy of surrendering to the mighty tyrants.

2. Valour & Nonviolence

After Lodhi's the Moghal period started and Guru's Period existed for 239 years between 1469 and 1708 concurrently. During this long period, due to the Monotheist beliefs and many commonalities between Islam and Sikhism, there were close friendly relations. But sometimes there were unwarranted conflicts considering this movement as a threat to their power and authority, misguided by the Hindu Rajas who also considered Sikhism as a great challenge to their beliefs and rituals.

During the period of Emperor Jehangir, to gain the support of Muslim fundamentalists and courtiers, he targeted the 5th Guru Shri Guru Arjan Sahib. Other reason was that most of the Hindus who embraced Islam for various reasons were turning towards Sikhism which holds the same values and was an indigenous alternative communicating in their own spoken language and culture. Guru Sahib was tortured by Jehangir for six days till he attained martyrdom in Lahore. Beyond all reasonable doubts it was for gaining support of religious heads and to cover up for his straying activities from hard core Islam.

By deceit, the Emperor Jehangir housed Shri Guru Har Gobind Sahib for about two years between 1611 and 1613 in Gwalior Fort, Madhya Pradesh. Due to intervention of Hazrat Mian Mir, some other well-wishers and mainly the reports of his own intelligence, Emperor Jehangir reconciled and revived relations with

Guru Sahib following the footsteps of his predecessors.

It is not out of the place to mention that the 6th Guru Sahib was the grandfather of the 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji and father of the 9th Guru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadar ji. During the period of Shah Jahan in the years 1628, 1630, 1631 and 1634, the Governors of Punjab fought four battles with Shri Guru Hargobind Sahib, and lost. His newly married 13 years old son Tyag Mal showed extraordinary valour in these battles. In recognition of his performance he was renamed as Tegh Bahadar (Brave sword wielder).

You cannot find any parallel of having two contradictory qualities of Valour & Nonviolence as found in Shri Guru Tegh Bahadar ji. **Emperor Aurangzeb was not having any grudge with the Sikh movement. But after capturing the throne, he became a threat to the “Freedom of Faith for the Hindus and non-Sunni Muslims.** When approached for protection by the victims, Guru Sahib sent a word with them, if Guru Sahib embraces Islam, we all become Muslims. Guru Sahib preferred this nonviolent way to confront, the hundreds of years of tyranny and foreign rule. He himself sought to offer his head **“to protect the freedom of faith for all Indian citizens”**, that is why he is popular as “Hind ki Chader” that is cover of Hindustan not to be confused as “Hinduvon ki chader”. His sacrificing the head in turn produced thousands of disciples who voluntarily sacrifice their heads to protect the helpless and oppressed people and confronted with the mighty rulers during all ages.

3. Approach for Solution of Conflicts

I don't want to enter into any controversy, on the presumptions of any religion that after their revelation The God **ceased** to work thereafter. But my intention is to project the philosophy of Sikhism which does not believe this theory. Sikhism believes that God is the doer of all deeds

and nobody can do anything on his own accord. Shri Guru Nanak Sahib says on page 722 of Shri Guru Granth Sahib

Jaisi meh aavaye Khasam ki bnai, taisda kari gyan vey Lalo.

It means, “Whatever the knowledge God confers upon me, I utter those words O Lalo!” Bhai Lalo was a low caste carpenter in whose hut Guru Sahib was staying while visiting the village Emanabad, Punjab. Since thousands of years Indian society is caste-ridden, and the low caste people were ill-treated worst than the animals. But as a matter of policy Guru Sahib used to always stay with the poor and low caste people, who with honest labour, procure livelihood for their families. On page 15 Guru Sahib says:

Neechan ander neech jath, neechi hoon ati neech. Nanak thin ke sang saath, wadiyaan siv kiya rees. Jithe neech smaliyon, thitai nadir Teri bakhshish.

It means, “Nanak will be found among the lowliest of the low people. What he has to do with the high and mighty? Where the lowliest people are looked after, there showers the Grace of God.”

4. Concept of Arms in Sikhism

There is an anecdote, once a priest was preaching saying that Jesus has asked, if any person slaps you on one cheek, offer him the other cheek. On listening this one young man from the audience rose and approached the priest and slapped him, upon this the priest offered him the other cheek and got the another slap. Now it was the turn of priest, he started beating the young man, when asked the reason the priest said, the Jesus has told him what to do after getting the second slap. Such is the position of the Sikhs; they were peaceful and sacrificing all the time. When all means failed, Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji declared on page 1390 of Shri Dasam Granth Sahib:

ਬ ਲਾਚਾਰਗੀ ਦਰਮਿਆਂ ਆਮਦਮ॥ ਬ ਤਦਬੀਰ ਤੀਰੋ ਤੁਫੰਗ ਆਮਦਮ॥ ਚੂੰ ਕਾਰ ਅਜ਼ ਹਮਹ, ਹੀਲਤੇ ਦਰ ਗੁਜ਼ਸ਼ਤ॥ ਹਲਾਲ ਅਸਤੁ, ਬੁਰਦਨ ਬ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੋਰ ਦਸਤ॥

Ba lachargi darmiyan aamdām. Ba tadbeer theero thufhang amdām. Choon kaar us hama, heelat-e-dargushist. Halal ast burthan ba shamsheer dast.

This means, “When all means have failed, I have to hold the weapons. It is rightful and valid to hold and use the sword”.

It is not out of place to mention that use of weapon for protection of the oppressed and righteousness is not a new concept in Sikhism. You may witness the images of all Gods and goddesses of Hindu Faith holding weapons in their hands, except Goddess Saraswathi and Goddess Laxmi, as they are the Goddesses of knowledge and wealth respectively. The famous Hindi poet Tulsidas has gone to the extent in his couplet saying that, “Tulsi will bow his head only before that Ram who holds bow and arrow in his hand”.

Tulsi sees than nivaay, jaan dhanush baan boye hath.

Islam means peace; its founder Hazrat Mohammad sahib, all the Imams and Caliphs held and used swords for upholding peace. When Hazrat Mohammad sahib left for heavenly abode, there were nine swords hanging in his room, but there was no oil to light a lamp. His wife Bi Bi Aiysha had to sell his one shield to buy the oil. Then this warrior prophet was an emperor of vast lands of Arabia and fought 80 battles, but individually lived so simple and ordinary life like a pauper.

You may witness the image of “Goddess of Justice” erected all over the world, with set of scales in one hand and holding Sword in another hand, which indicates the necessity and philosophy of justice is based on punishment, and sword has been admitted as a symbol for

peaceful delivery of justice. Any weapon in the hands of law abiding citizen or the forces responsible for maintaining the security is a guarantee of protection for a common man and betterment of the society.

In the stream of Sikhism, the founder Shri Guru Nanak Sahib Ji has made the masses courageous and bold enough to protest against the oppression by eliminating the fear of death. The 2nd Guru Shri Guru Angad Sahib Ji boosted their physical prowess. The 6th Guru Shri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji gave the weapons in their hands, when they had become confident to fearlessly hold it. The 10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji made weapons essential for the Sikhs as an article of faith. Thus the Sikh and the Kirpan (Sword) have become inseparable from each other. It has proved to be a rare and beautiful combination of Bhagti and Shakti i.e., devotion and defense of spiritual and temporal values. This preparation took shape in 239 years during the life span of Ten Gurus, to make their Sikh a sovereign fearless person to face each and every challenge of all ages. In the Constitution of India, Section 25-b, Sikhs have been permitted to carry a Kirpan (irrespective of size). All over the world, Kirpan has been admitted as an article of faith for the Sikhs.

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

5. God, Prophets and People of Love

The 1st founder Shri Guru Nanak Sahib says in Pouri 4 of “Jap” on page 2 of Shri Guru Granth Sahib that

Saacha Sahib Saach Naye, Bhakhia bhavo apaar.

It means, “True is the Master, True is His name, His language is infinite love.”

He further says on page 1412:

Jav tav prem khelan ka chavo, sir dhar tali gali mori aavo.

It means, “If you want to play the game of love, come and enter into my path by keeping your head in the palm.” (A proverb – be ready to sacrifice your head).

10th Guru Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji says of page 14 of Shri Dasam Granth Sahib:

Saach kahooun sunn leho sabhai, jin prem kiyon tin he Prabhu payo.

It means, “I am saying the truth listen everyone, whoever loves Creator and its Creation will attain God”.

This concept of love does not confine in Scriptures, even in the battle fields Sikhs showed their commitment to this concept. For example, I will take you to 1704 amidst the furious battlefield of Anandpur Sahib, Punjab, to show how the Sikhs treated enemy soldiers fighting against them. The Hindu kings and Moghal emperor Aurangzeb in a joint military expedition against Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji, had a siege of his Fort.

One Kanhaiya Singh was assigned the task of quenching the thirst of the wounded fellow soldiers in the battlefield. He did this service with love and affection without any discrimination between the Guru ji's Soldiers and the enemy soldiers. His act of compassion stirred up stern criticism amongst his fellow Sikhs. They complained to Guru Sahib, pointing out that Kanhaiya Singh was serving water resuscitating the fallen enemy soldiers, by which they got recovered and recharged, to start fighting again.

They were especially annoyed because the enemy had surrounded the fort and stopped all their water and food supplies, and here was Kanhaiya Singh sharing with them what little water they had. They had tried to stop him many a time, but he would not pay any heed. Guru Sahib summoned him and asked about the complaint.

Kanhaiya Singh replied *"Yes, Guru ji, what they say is true. I could not distinguish between friend and foe on the battlefield. I only saw human beings, as taught by you to treat all God's people as the same"*.

Guru Sahib was very much pleased and said he had understood correctly the deep message of our teachings, he saw only the light of the Creator which shined forth from every soul. Guru Sahib embraced him and blessed with the title of Bhai (Brother—the highest title conferred by the Gurus). And said they all have to strive to learn lesson from him. Guru Sahib gave him medical Balm, *"From now on, you also put this balm on the wounds of all who need it"* and said *"Let him carry on with his mission. Many more will follow in his footsteps in the years to come and keep this tradition alive to serve the humanity"*.

6. Edith Louisa Cavell

We can observe a quite contrary event in the so-called modern world, **Edith Louisa Cavell (1865-1915). She is remembered for tending to and saving the soldiers from both sides without any bias. She was court-martialled, declared guilty of treason and sentenced to death because of her Marvelous Humane Service even to enemy soldiers in the hospital. She was executed by a German Firing Squad on 12 Oct 1915.**

During World War I, **One Naik Surat Singh of India found himself in a hospital amongst German and British Soldiers and was being**

nursed by a smiling nurse, Edith **Louisa** Cavell. She extended love and immense dedication to nurse British, German and Indian soldiers equally without any distinction. Naik Surat Singh was impressed and asked her as to how she tended each one of them without any bias?

She replied with a smile “I see injured Britishers, Germans and Indians as only Injured HUMANS. During our training in Nursing, we were taught about Bhai Kanahaiyya Singh (1648–1718) and his supreme service. He is widely respected as an icon of Service to Humanity in European Nursing Curriculum”.

In this way, Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji has proved to be the only Crusader of Humanity who showed the way to serve even the enemy soldiers amongst the battlefield. After two centuries, his great Humane Gesture has shown way for the non-effected people to establish “RED CROSS MOVEMENT” for serving the millions of neglected fighting soldiers, injured and struggling between life and death.

7. Uniting the Mankind through Interfaith Scripture

For uniting the mankind through one Scripture, its first founder Sri Guru Nanak Sahib started collecting the works for compilation of an Interfaith Scripture by demolishing the geographical and lingual barriers from the nook and corner of Indian sub-continent and developed the concept of “**Indian Nationalism**”. This process of collection for the text took 135 years from 1469 till it was compiled in 1604 by the 5th Guru Sri Guru Arjan Sahib. Its first compilation work took five years, and named “Sri Aad Granth Sahib” i.e., Book of First Primal Person (one of the qualitative names of God), who existed from the beginning of the world. In the year 1705, the 10th Guru Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji added few hymns of the 9th Guru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadar

ji and completed it. “Sri” and “Sahib” are the prefix and suffix for respect. A structure was constructed for placing this Scripture by giving a Hindu name “Har Mandir”. Its foundation stone was laid down by a renowned Muslim Sufi Saint of Qadiry Order Hazrat Mir Mohammad Khan popularly known as Hazrat Mian Mir on December 28, 1588. Now it is popularly known as Golden Temple, at Amritsar.

It contains 1430 pages of large size and a multi-religious mosaic. It consists upon the teachings of 36 contributors, spread over 500 years from Hazrat Baba Sheikh Farid ji (1175-1265) to Sri Guru Tegh Bahadar ji (1621-1675). Its contents are not imaginary product of mind nor coined in the forests, mountains leaving behind the masses to suffer the agony of life, but are the revelations of God through these pious souls. These are the results of interaction with the masses, dealing with their day to day problems to face the situations, practical experiences and experiments carried over in the Human Laboratories.

The beauty of this Scripture is, it does not advocate any religion but preaches for practicing different religions and faiths. Among its 36 contributors, 6 are Sikh Gurus, 1 Sikh, 2 deemed to be untouchables, 7 Muslims and remaining 20 are from different sects of Hinduism, preaching their own faith in their own language and style. For a common man, all religions seems to be different and some time contradictory to each other. But this Scripture is a living proof of the Unity of mankind projecting similarities of religions, in spite of fact that there seems to be the diversities in faiths and rituals.

In this most progressive and civilized era, without the fear of any contradiction, it can be said that no one especially untouchables can find any entry or equal treatment in the places of worship of other religions. But since four hundred years, the Sikhs are bowing their

heads in obeisance to this Scripture as their living Guru and treat all its Hindu, Muslim and untouchable contributors as their mentors at par with their Gurus.

The marvelous beauty of this Scripture is that from a single source preaches the true worship of God while living together professing different religions. All of them advocate how to lead a spiritual and temporal life, living and performing one's family duties and at the same time, how to attain salvation or assimilate into the Ultimate Creator. Even today, the process of interfaith dialogue started four centuries back in a single volume continues to facilitate mankind and will be there for all times to come.

It is the foresight and vision of Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji to continue eternally his "**Crusade of Humanism**" that he bestowed succession in the year 1708 to this Scripture a Digest of

Inter-Religious Faiths of India. The Movement of Humanism which was initiated by the first Guru Sahib was given the final shape and ordained that there shall be no Guru in person except Sri Guru Granth Sahib. It is placed in every Gurdwara i.e., the Sikh Temple at a high pedestal and the congregation recites its hymns as prayers.

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

(Paper presented at the "International Sikh Conclave September 2016", at Patna organized by the Tourism Department and Government of Bihar on 22-24 September 2016)

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DOES LANGUAGE IMPACT THE TRANSMISSION OF WISDOM FROM THE SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

Dr Harbans Lal

Introduction

The light of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) is sought by over 300 million spiritual seekers worldwide. With this rapidly expanding urge and need, there is a concern that haunts us. It is about providing easy access to the Guru's wisdom to a rapidly evolving global village.

Many linguists and educational researchers have established that the language of a culture, or mother tongue of an individual, is essential to impart any ideology or educational material.

Expanding Need

In the past, the ideas of the SGGS have been communicated to 100 million Punjabi speaking people in the world. But if we continue to use only Punjabi, the Sikh ideology and the essential knowledge of the Guru's Wisdom will not be communicated effectively to 500 million Urdu speaking people, a billion of each Hindi, Spanish, or Chinese speaking people, or twice as many English-speaking people in the West.

It does not matter, whether this audience is of Indian origin or others. It will not serve its purpose unless the knowledge is imparted in a local language – the language people learn from their surroundings, and not have to go to a Gurdwara school to learn it.

Information, Knowledge, and Language

There is a difference between information and knowledge. Information can be easily translated

and transmitted in any language and is stored as well as propagated in any language. Knowledge, on the other hand, cannot be imparted effectively in a language other than the mother tongue.

Mother tongue is a language, which is acquired without requiring formal instructions in a school or from a tutor. It is learned from continued communication with the family members living at home, particularly the mother. We are losing Punjabi as the mother tongue day by day even in the areas where it has dominated for centuries. Further, Punjabi is not the mother tongue of the most of the world.

The Guru Granth In The Future World

The children of the future world would not know the relevance of the SGGS in their life unless they learn it through language, which can effectively impart the required knowledge to them. And, that the knowledge is imparted in the newly acquired mother tongues of their parents and siblings.

At present, English is the most spoken language and the language of 75% printed material in the world.

If you do not believe me, then tell me how many of you can understand the advantage of Macintosh over Windows in any language other than in English. Why are all technologists even in Hindi speaking India, Urdu speaking Pakistan, or Hebrew speaking Israel making all software in English, why not in Hindi, Punjabi, or Hebrew? You know the answer.

We Sikhs take a lot of pride in the universality of the message of the Gurus meaning that our Guru revealed their message for the benefit of all peoples and all communities. Our clerics and our leaders miss no opportunity to emphasize this distinction of our Guru's message. Similarly, we speak of our Gurdwaras and other congregational institutions open to everyone in the global village.

But we fail to realize that by trussing Sikh beliefs and practices far too tightly with Punjabi language, ethnicity, and lifestyle, we commit the sin of utterly refusing to share our religion with the rest of the world.

Disfranchising Children And Failing To Share

Failing to share our heritage with others is far too evident in our religious practices. Traditionally we limit our congregational services and prayers only to the language of our ancestors, and in doing so we virtually close doors to others. We even make it harder for our life partners to connect to our faith if they happened to be born outside Punjab.

Similarly, we disfranchise even our children and the young Sikhs growing up in the West from having full access to the Guru's teachings.

It is not difficult to see a parallel with the days of racial discrimination in America. When the white population wanted to disfranchise a black people from their birth right to vote, they used the hurdle of literacy in a language that the black community had difficulty to be proficient in.

The Founders Differed

Strict adherence to any one language of a predominant religion was not the case at the time of our Gurus. Guru Nanak and his successors travelled to all reachable lands to spread the Word; they unreservedly used whatever language would get their message across. They defied tradition set by Brahmins and Mullahs, who insisted on Sanskrit and Arabic to teach theology; in contrast, the gurus used the spoken language of the people as a medium of their mission. I do not recall reading anywhere that when Guru Nanak visited many lands that he ever required his audience to learn Punjabi or he taught Punjabi to anyone.



Guru Amar Das rebuked a delegation of religious scholars who came to persuade him to use the language of the religious elite, Sanskrit, to impart his message.

According to Bhai Santokh Singh [4], Guru Amar Das told the visitors a metaphor to make his point. He said, “God’s theology is like water to a thirsty person. Divine knowledge in Sanskrit or Arabic is like water in a deep well; it takes the effort to draw it and then irrigate crops of only those who own the land and the means. Guru’s teachings must be in a language that serves like a cloudburst which turns the crops of everyone and in every field green; it reaches mountains and valleys alike, birds and mammals alike, animals and human alike, poor and rich alike.” (English translation from original Punjabi by the author.)

Guru Amar Das’s response was like a famous biblical parabola where Jesus said that when you light a lamp; place it on a higher pedestal so that the light can reach everyone. Requiring especially made coloured glasses to see the light will contradict the essence of this parabola.

Guru Granth Language

There are some Punjabi compositions in the SGGS, but mostly they are written in many other languages of India as well as Middle Eastern and South Eastern countries. There are over 22 languages used to compose the hymns in the Guru Granth [3].

Guru Gobind Singh mostly used Braj Bhasha (the language of Bihar), Persian and Arabic, but not any Punjabi in his compositions or in his daily teaching. The Sikh rulers similarly used Persian to conduct their day-to-day business. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, only two centuries ago, used Persian and so did Banda Bahadur, a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh. He issued coins of the Sikh kingdom with Persian inscriptions.

The language of the SGGS, the Eternal Guru of the Sikhs, is so different from modern Punjabi that most Punjabi speaking people of today do not understand much of it. I have difficulty myself in understanding the Punjabi text that is currently being used by Sikh scholars in India to explain the doctrines in the SGGS.



No wonder that their Punjabi books find only negligible circulation in North America or Europe. Even in India, they are not read as is evident from a meagre number of prints that are made of books on Sikhism published in Punjabi.

History is a witness, that if the Gurus were here in North America today, they would depart from the past and use English to communicate. They would use a language in which more than three fourth of all the printed material is produced.

Today Most Communication is in English

Most of the progressive elements in every religion now use English to communicate. The cyberspace technology as the medium of future communication began to require that we speak the cyberspace language or be eclipsed from the wired communities.

Our youth outside India exclusively use only English language to conduct their daily lives both at home and at work. It will be wise not to resist the trend for the propagation of our religion among this generation.

Erosion of Sikh Identities is Warning

I personally visited many places in North America where Sikh identities were entirely wiped out of existence by the third or fourth generation. It was primarily because their immigrant parents would not convey their religious inheritance to their children in the language of their adopted country. That left only the rituals or ceremonies of their faith for the children to relate to and those lost their meaningless appeal within a generation. You may not have to go far to see this trend continuing even today.

In many old communities of North America today, the only thing children recall to a visitor is the memory of their grandparents being Sikhs,

the term that they can often not even pronounce correctly. These children usually preserve, besides photographs, one or two of their parents' "prayer books" as the museum pieces in their homes.

It breaks my heart when I visit homes of this generation. But all I can do is to show some love towards them and promise to relate their message to our first-generation Sikh community here.

Many of them do ask me if I can send them some Sikh literature in English.

Some Hope

I am pleased to see that Sikh congregations in Pakistan use Shahmukhi script and Urdu language to publish the Sikh literature. In Sind and North West Pakistan, over 3 million Sikhs who are popularly known as Nanak Panahi use Sindhi. The newly converted Caucasian Sikhs in North America use English and Spanish as a medium in their Gurdwaras. Their outfits in China and Brazil similarly speak of the Guru Granth teachings in their own languages.

Only a very tiny but gradually growing population of Sikh children of Punjabi parents in North America is getting bold enough to break from the tradition and improvise the religious liturgy in English. The efforts of the youth groups promoted by Charhdi Kala in Northern California is one example. There are sprouting several cyber groups in the West to impact the Guru Granth knowledge in English.

Conclusion

For the conclusion, I would like to quote Dr. Indermohan Singh of the Charhdi-Kala Foundation. He recently wrote, "There are very good reasons for Sikhs of Punjabi origin to want to preserve their language and culture. There is also no question that for those who can

understand it, Gurbani in its original languages is much more beautiful and meaningful. It is tough to capture the beauty and poetry of the original in a translation. But I believe we should be very clear about the differences between the religious versus cultural and linguistic issues. And we should make an effort to share the Guru's Word using every language and medium that is effective and available." [2].

Let us join the progressive civil societies of today and communicate the universal messages of the Guru Granth in the languages of the civil societies of today and tomorrow. And, that language today is English.

Note

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for an earlier version of this publication at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238764513>

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EUTHANASIA AND SIKHISM

Dr. Kala Singh

Euthanasia, medically assisted dying is legal in many countries. More and more people are requesting doctors to assist them to die peacefully. At the same time questions are being asked if religion allows it. I'll discuss this issue in perspective of Sikhism through teachings of the Guru in Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS).

People requesting euthanasia must be at least 18 years of age and capable of making decisions with respect to their health; have a grievous and irremediable medical condition; are in an advanced state of irreversible decline in capability; that illness, disease or disability or that state of decline causes them enduring physical or psychological suffering that is intolerable to them and that cannot be relieved under conditions that they consider acceptable; and their natural death has become reasonably foreseeable, taking into account all of their medical circumstances, without a prognosis necessarily having been made as to the specific length of time, that they have remaining. Details of these conditions vary from country to country.

I'll start my discussion with creation of universe. In SGGS Guru says:

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Keethaa Pasaao Eaeko Kavaao ||

You created the vast expanse of the Universe with One Word!

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□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ (SGGS 7)

*Raathee Ruthee Thhithee Vaar || Pavan Paanee
Aganee Paathaal || This Vich Dhharathee
Thhaap Rakhee Dharam Saal ||*

Nights, days, weeks and seasons; Wind, water, fire and the nether regions; In the midst of these, Lord established the earth as a home for Dharma.

What is Dharma. Guru says:

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(SGGS 1)

*Kiv Sachiaaraa Hoeai Kiv Koorrai Thuttai
Paal||*

How can I become truthful? And how can the veil of illusion be torn away?

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*Hukam Rajaaee Chalanaa Naanak Likhiaa
Naal||I||*

O Nanak, it is written that I shall obey Lord's Command, the Cosmic Law.

Dharma teaches how to live a perfect life according to Lord's Cosmic Law (Hukam).

Hukam is like law of a country. For example, Canadian law says to drive vehicle on the left side of road. If people obey this law they can reach their destination without any problem and will have a peaceful drive. If they chose to disobey the law, they can cause accident and harm themselves and others on the road. So Dharma is the Cosmic Law of the Lord on earth. If we obey them we will live our time on this earth peacefully. If we chose to disobey we will be miserable and cause misery to others around us.

Bhana is knowledge of the law and Raza is obeying the law. In Canada, the law (Hukam) is to drive vehicle on the left side of road. Knowledge of the law is Bhana. Hukam and

else happens. Because one did not get what one wished, one get into pain, sorrow, depression and that is spiritual, moral death. For example, one wished to be physically fit. For that one goes to fitness centre every day, live active life, and control diet, blood sugar and cholesterol. See family doctor regularly. In spite of all this, one get irremediable illness and suffering with uncontrollable pain. If one had prepared oneself for this situation and understood Lord's Cosmic Law, that this body which is made of five elements will decay one day, one will be able to tolerate it happily. If one had not prepared oneself and is not obeying the Cosmic Law, one will be in pain and asking for assistance in dying to get out of this situation.

Next question is why do we feel miserable from grievous and irremediable medical condition?

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Vin Thudhh Hor J Manganaa Sir Dhukhaa Kai Dhukh || Dhaehi Naam Santhokheaaa Outharai Man Kee Bhukh ||

To ask for any other than You, Lord, is the most miserable of miseries. Please bless me with knowledge and understanding of Your Cosmic Law, and be contented; may the hunger of my mind be satisfied.

The hunger of my mind as in above example is to remain healthy. There is nothing wrong in hoping and trying to get it. In case one gets illness one should not feel miserable that one could not fulfil hunger of mind to be healthy, but be contented and satisfied with one's condition.

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Chinthaa Thaa Kee Keejeeai Jo Anehonee Hoe || Eihu Maarag Sansaar Ko Naanak Thhir Nehee Koe

We should only worry, when something unexpected happens. Nanak says; nothing is stable or permanent in this world.

We should worry about unexpected. Getting irremediable illness is expected, so why to worry. Nothing in this world is unexpected.

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 □□□□□□□□□□ (SGGS 440)

Saaajan Maerae Preethamahu Thum Seh Kee Bhagath Karaeho ||

O my beloved friend, dedicate yourself to the devotional worship of your Husband Lord.

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Gur Saevahu Sadhaa Aapanaa Naam Padhaarathh Laeho ||

Constantly listen and obey Guru's teachings

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Bhagath Karahu Thum Sehai Kaeree Jo Seh Piaarae Bhaaveae ||

Dedicate yourself to the worship of your Husband Lord

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Aapanaa Bhaanaa Thum Karahu Thaa Fir Seh Khusee N Aaveae ||

If you walk in accordance with your own will, then you will not get happiness.

I get irremediable illness according to Lord's Cosmic Law which is Lord's will. Guru's teachings are that one should be happy, contented and satisfied in all circumstances. If, one doesn't accept it and act according to one's will, one will be unhappy and miserable. Asking for assistance in dying is not according to Lord's will and for that one will not get Lord's blessing.

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(SGGS 400)

Jab Lag Hukam N Boojhathaa Thab Hee Lo Dhukheea ||

As long as one does not understand the Command of God's Will, one remains miserable.

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Gur Mil Hukam Pashhaaniaa Thab Hee Thae Sukheea ||3||

Meeting with the Guru, one comes to recognize God's Will, the Cosmic Law and then, becomes happy.

Then one is happy even in illness because now, one understands that this is also God's will and one can't change it.

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(SGGS 394)

Thaeraa Keeaa Meethaa Laagai || Har Naam Padhaarathh Naanak Maangai ||2||42||93||

Your actions seem so sweet to me. Nanak begs for the treasure of the knowledge of Lord's Cosmic Law.

Why do we feel happiness and unhappiness?

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□□□□□□□□□□ (SGGS 915)

Sookh Dhookh Eis Man Kee Birathhaa Thum Hee Aagai Saaranaa ||6||

Pleasure and pain, is state of mind, I place before You, Lord.

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□□□□□□□□□□□□ (SGGS 57)

Sukh Dhukh Sam Kar Jaaneeahi Sabadh Bhaedh Sukh Hoe ||5||

Those who understand Lord's Cosmic Law, see pain and pleasure as one and the same and find peace.

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Sookh Dhookh Jan Sam Dhrisattaethaa || Naanak Paap Punn Nehee Laepaa ||6||

Changing attitude, one is happy in pain also. Nanak, is not affected by sin or virtue. ||6||

It is our state of mind that we feel pain or pleasure from a situation. We can change our attitude and feel pleasure even in irremediable illness.

In conclusion everyone who takes birth will die one day. This body, made of five elements have to decay and get illnesses. Everything happens according to the Cosmic Law (Hukam). If one obeys the Cosmic Law (Raza), one will be happy. If one disobeys Lord's Cosmic Law and act according to own wish one will be unhappy. Irremediable illness is according to Lord's Cosmic Law. One will be happy in the illness if one accepts it as Lord's will. Pain and pleasure is our state of mind. As a poor person can be happy if contented and a rich person unhappy and miserable even with all the riches if not contented. In the same way one can be happy even in the presence of irremediable sufferings as brave Sikhs felt pleasure when they were tortured and sacrificed their lives by boiling in a pot of boiling water, got themselves cut to pieces from each joint of the body; got their scalp removed; were tied and rotated on the wheels and broken into pieces; cut by saws and flayed alive. Euthanasia is not in accordance with teachings of the Guru in Sikhism. One should accept irremediable illness as Lord's will (Hukam) and accept (Raza) the pain and suffering while taking available medical help.

Dr. Kala Singh,
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Guru and Naam

THE GURU AND NAAM

Devinder Singh Sekhon Phd

THE GURU: A large number of people do not understand the real meaning of the Guru and consider the dera wallahs who dress in some special ways to give the false impression of holy men, and who are self-proclaimed gurus as the real Gurus. They call themselves “Sants” (saints) or even gurus. Real Sants or Saadhs are defined in Guru Granth Sahib as those holy men who have realized Waheguru (God). Such great souls have all their sensual pleasures under control and are unaffected by worldly attractions. Listen to the following holy Shabads about Sants and Saadhs as defined in Guru Granth Sahib.

Sloak M:5 (319): Jinha saas giraas na vissray Hur Naama mun munt. Dhunn se sayee Nanaka pooran soye sant.

Meaning: Those (holy men) who do not forget Waheguru and remember His Naam with each breath and every bite (of food) are really Great, oh Nanak! They are the perfect Saints.

Gauri kee Vaar, Pauri M:5 (319). Jithaiy baisan Saadh Jun so thaan suhanda. Oye savin sumrath aapna binsaiy subh manda. Patit udhaaran Parbrahm Sant Baid kuhanda. Bhagat vuchhal tera birrd hai yug yug vertunda. Nanak jaachaiy ek Naam mun tun bhavunda.

Meaning: Hey folks! The place where Sants or Saadhs (holy men) settle down (and spread Waheguru’s Message) becomes beautiful (holy). They always serve the all-powerful Waheguru as a result of which all the bad things disappear. The Sants (and the Vedas too) teach us that Waheguru salvages even the highly disgraced people. They also tell us that to love

His devotees is Waheguru’s everlasting nature and is an eternal truth. (Guru) Nanak wishes only Waheguru’s Naam which He loves with His mind and body.

Goand M:5 (863-64): Jaa kaiy sung ehu mun nirmal. Jaa kaiy sung Hur Hur simran. Jaa kaiy sung kilbikh hoye naas. Jaa kaiy sung ridaiy pergaas. 1. Se santan Hur kay mayray meet. Keval naam gaayeeye jaa kaiy neet. Pause.

Meaning: Hey folks! Waheguru’s Sants (holy men) who sing Waheguru’s praise all the time are my best friends. Pause. In the company of the Sants, one recites Waheguru’s Naam as a result of which the mind is purified. One’s heart is enlightened in the company of the Sants and all the sins are destroyed.

Assa M:5 (392): Aath pehr nicket kur jaanaiy. Prubh kaa keeya meettha maanaiy. Ek Naam Santan adhaar. Hoye ruhay subh kee pug chhaar. 1. Sant reht suno mayray bhaayee. Uvaa kee mehama kathun naa jaayee. Pause.

Meaning: What can I say in praise of the living of the Sants, oh my friends! It is impossible for me to sing their complete praise. Pause. They always believe that Waheguru is near them and whatever happens to them, they always accept it as Waheguru’s sweet will. Waheguru’s Naam is the only support of the Sants, and they have absolutely no ego or conceit.

Sloak Kabir Ji (1373): Kabir seva kau duye bhulay ek Sant ek Ram. Ram ju daata mookt kau Sant japaavaaiy Naam.

Meaning: Kabir (Ji) professes that only two entities deserve to be served – the Sants and God. God is the only power which can rid you of all the evils, and the Sants motivate you to recite God's Naam.

Sloak Kabir Ji (1374): Kabir jaa ghur Saadh na seviye Hur kee seva naahe. Tay ghur merhut saarkhay bhoot busaiy tin maahe.

Meaning: Hey Kabir! The households where the Saadhs (holy men) are not welcome and therefore God is not served, are like graveyards where only ghosts (evil spirits) reside.

Sorith M:5 (610): Tun Santan kaa dhun Santan kaa mun Santan kaa keeya. Sant persaad Hur Naam dhiyaya serb kussal tub theeya. 1. Santan bin uver na daata beeya. Jo jo sern puraiy Saadhu kee so paargraami keeya.

Meaning: Hey friends! I have dedicated my body, my wealth, and my mind to the Sants because it the Sants who made me worship Waheguru's Naam as a result of which I am happy with all aspects of my life. There is none other like the Sants who can connect you with Waheguru's Naam. Whoever took refuge of the Saadhs was able to swim across the ocean of life (desires and sensual pleasures).

Ramkali M:5 (898): Jaani Sant kee mitrayee. Ker kirpa deeno Hur Naama poorab sanjog milayee. Pause. Gur kaiy churn chit laaga. Dhun dhun sanjog subhaaga. Saadh kee such tehl kmaanee. Tubb hoye mun soodh praanee.

Meaning: The friendship with the Sants is simply great! They very kindly connect you with Waheguru's Naam; but you befriend them only because of the good deeds you had done in the previous lives. Now my mind is fully connected to the feet of the Guru (His Shabad). I am very lucky and am thankful for the great connection (with the Guru). Service to the Sadh

is immortal (never fails to produce good results) and it cleanses your mind, oh man!

As is clear from the above holy Shabads, the Sants and Saadhs are two different names for the true devotees of Waheguru and they enlighten the people by disseminating the word of God. You may have noticed that in the last two Shabads, Sant, Saadh and Guru have been used interchangeably which means the Guru is also a Sant or a Saadh. **But watch out, the self-proclaimed sants and saadhs or dera wallahs are nowhere near the real Sants or Saadhs.** They are completely possessed by Maya and have no spirituality in them. Many of them are rapists and amass wealth by immoral ways. They have some hired agents who promote them as gurus, and provide them security.

THE REAL GURU

You may still not be clear about the real definition of the Guru. The real Guru is simply the Divine Knowledge. When that knowledge is housed in a holy man, He becomes the real Guru. In the form of a human being, the real Guru is a special messenger of God who is always connected to Waheguru and has the same noble qualities as Waheguru (or God) Himself. In other words, the Perfect Guru (SatGuru) is a manifestation of God. The following holy Shabads testify to this statement.

Assa Di Vaar, M:1, Paurri (466): Bin Satgur kinaiy na paayo bin Satgur kinaiy na paaya. Satgur vich Aap rukhiyon ker pergut aakh sunaya. Satgur miliyain sada mookat hai jin vichoun moh chukaaya.

Meaning: Nobody has ever realized Waheguru without the blessings of SatGuru. **Waheguru has placed Himself in Satguru** and had made this very clear through the Divine Message. Satguru rids the individual who takes His refuge

of all worldly attachments and thus removes all the shackles of Maya.

Malhar Ki Vaar, M:1, Paurri (1279): Tu Sucha Suchiaar jin Such vertaaya. Gur meh Aap smoye Shabad vertaaya. Suchay hee putiyaaye Such(i) smaaya.

Meaning: You are eternal and the source of Justice and Truthfulness, oh Waheguru! Only Justice and Truth prevail in Your Realm. You have placed Yourself in the Guru and have spread the Divine Word through Him (the Guru), oh Waheguru! Whoever has been convinced of Your existence and dedicates himself to You, is absorbed in You (becomes a part of You).

Goand M:5 (864): Guru Guru Gur ker mun mor. Guru bina mein naheen hor. Gur kee take ruhho din raat. Ja kee koye na maytay daat. Gur Permasereiko jaan. Jo tis bhaavaay so pervaan. 1. Pause.

Meaning: Recite Guru's Naam, oh my mind. The Guru is my only support. Seek Guru's shelter day and night, oh my mind! Nobody can destroy Guru's gift to you. Treat Guru as Waheguru's manifestation and accept His will gladly. Pause

Savuyye Sri Mookhvaak M:5 (1387): Bulliyo charaag undhiyar mein sabh kul oodhri ikk Naam Dharam. Pergut sugal Hur bhavan mein jun Nanak Gur Parbraham.

Meaning: Oh lucky people! Waheguru's manifestation, Guru Nanak (Sahib), has enlightened the whole world just like a bright lamp in the dark. Following His Divine Teachings and reciting Waheguru's Naam, the world has swam across the ocean of Maya (has been salvaged).

Divine Knowledge or the Shabad of the Guru is another manifestation of Waheguru. So, basically Guru is the Divine Knowledge.

In human form, the real Guru is completely unaffected by worldly attractions, is impartial, bears no enmity with anyone, treats all human beings as equal, spreads Waheguru's Word indiscriminately and is always ready to sacrifice His/Her life for the cause of humanity.

When the Divine Knowledge was present in Guru Nanak Sahib, He was the Guru, and when He transferred the Divine Knowledge to Guru Angad Sahib, the latter became the Guru, and the practice continued till Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the Tenth and the last Guru. Now the divine Knowledge is contained in Guru Granth Sahib, so for the Sikhs, Guru Granth Sahib is the Eternal Guru. There are quite a few Shabads that certify that holy Gurbani (praise of Waheguru) to be the Guru. A few are discussed below.

Sloak M:3 (514): Wahu wahu baani Such hai Gurmukh luddhi bhaal. Wahu wahu Shabday oochraiy wahu wahu hirdaiy naal. Wahu kertiyaan Hur paaya sehjay Gurmukh Bhaal. Se vudbhaagi Nanaka Hur Hur ridaiy samhaal.

Meaning: Guru's Shabad (Baani or Gurbani) is Great! is Great!! because it is a manifestation of Waheguru and is in praise of Waheguru. The holy Baani has been uncovered (produced or written) by the Guru while being one with Waheguru. Waheguru's praise is sung by reciting Gurbani with full concentration. By taking Guru's refuge, a Sikh can realize Waheguru by singing His praise with a full control on mind. Oh Nanak! Those are lucky people who keep Waheguru in their minds.

Sarang M:5 (1226): Pothi Permasur kaa thaan. Saadh sung gaavhay goon Gobind pooran Braham giyan. Pause.

Meaning: The holy book containing the Divine Knowledge (Guru Granth Sahib) is the house of Waheguru. If one sings Waheguru's praise

in Guru's company, He will acquire complete knowledge of Waheguru (will be one with Waheguru).

Sloak M:4 (1423-4): Satguru vich Amrit Naam hai Amrit kuhhaiy kuhaaye. Gurmati Naam nirmalo nirmal Naam dhiyaaye. **Amrit baani tutt haigurmukh vussaaiy mun aaye.**

Meaning: Satguru harbours the Amrit (life-sustaining) Naam of Waheguru. He recites Waheguru's Naam Himself and makes others do the same. If someone recites Waheguru's clean (pious) Naam by taking Guru's advice, he becomes clean himself. Amrit Gurbani is the manifestation of the origin of everything (Waheguru) and if someone recites Gurbani taking Guru's refuge, his heart becomes Waheguru's residence.

Nut M:4, Ashatpadi (982): Baani Guru Guru hai baani, vich baani Amrit saaray. Gur baani kuhhaiy sevak jun maanay pertukh Guru nistaaray.

Meaning: Gurbani and the Guru are one and the same, and all the life-sustaining ingredients are present in it. If a devotee follows Guru's Word (Gurbani), he is visibly salvaged by the Guru.

Using these holy Shabads, I hope the definition of the Perfect Guru has become clear to you.

NAAM

Most of us are not clear about the **Naam**, and believe that Naam is something that is given to them by the Guru. But, unfortunately, these innocent people believe that some dera wallah saadh is a real Guru who will "give" them the Naam and also will fulfill all their wishes. With these false hopes, these ignorant people are willing to offer money, a part of their property or even their honour to have their dreams come true. We badly wish that such people realize the

truth as soon as possible so that they do not lose their hard earned money and their honour, and take shelter of Guru Granth Sahib which is the **REAL GURU**.

The word "Naam" has been used to carry a few different meanings in Guru Granth Sahib. In simple terms, it means the name of something including Waheguru. It also means Waheguru Himself, and it also means the process of realizing (connecting to) Waheguru. Let us ponder on some holy Shabads in which the word "Naam" has been used to in its most common form, i.e. the name of some object.

NAAM AS A NAME

Jap Ji, Paurri 19: Asunkh naanv (names) asunkh thanv. Agumm agumm asunkh loe. Asunkh kuhhay sir bhaar hoye.

Meaning: Waheguru has countless names and countless places where He is present (He is omnipresent). There are countless worlds one beyond the other. Putting any number on Waheguru's Creation makes you a sinner.

Basant M:1 (1168): Nanak vechaara kiya kuhaiy. Sabh lok slaah eiksaiy. Sir Nanak lokaan paanv hai. **Balihaari jaaoun jaytay teray naanv hai.**

Meaning: What can the poor Nanak say (about the qualities or vastness of Waheguru)! Everybody praises the same unique Waheguru. (Guru) Nanak puts His forehead on the feet of those (shows deep respect) who sing Your praise by using Your countless names, oh Waheguru!

Assa Ki Vaar, M:1, Paurri (465): Naaoun tera Nirankar hai naaye luyyeyaan nerk na jaayeeye. Jeeo pind sabh tis da day khaajaiy aakh gvaayeeye.

Meaning: Your name is Nirankar (formless), oh Waheguru! Whoever recites Your Naam does not go to hell. (But rather than being truly thankful

to You) the man simply does a lip service by saying that the body and the life are Your gifts and so are the countless varieties of food items, and simply wastes his life away, oh Waheguru!

NOTE: Almost sixty different names of Waheguru have been used in Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Sahiban downplayed the importance of the Hindu gods, but because they were so popular among the masses, Guru Sahiban continued to use their names to glorify Waheguru or God. Some of the most popular names used for Waheguru include Ram, Hur (or Hurrey), Mohan, Kartar, Gobind, Prabhu, Permatma, Akal, Such (Truth or everlasting), Nirankar, Onkaar, Ekonkar, Shah, Krishan, Madhav, Keshav, Madhusoodan, Narayan, Vasudev, Damodar, Sarangpaan, Nath, Beethul, Thakur, Allah, Rahim, Niranjan and many more. However, **no female name has been used for Waheguru.** On the other hand, Maya has been given only female names.

NAAM AS SIGN OF FAME, STATUS OR POPULARITY

NOTE: Some words in the same Shabad may carry different meanings.

As all of us know that the word “Naam or name” is also used for fame or status in the society in the common usage of the language. There are some holy Shabads in Guru Granth Sahib in which “Naam or Naoun” has been used in exactly the same sense. Please pay attention to the following holy Shabads:

Jap Ji, Pauri 7: Jay joog chaaray aarja hore dasooni hoye. Navaan khundaan vich jaaniye naal chullaiy sabh koye. **Chunga naaoun (naam) rukhaaye kay jus keerat jugg laye.** Jay Tis nuder na aavyee ta vaat na poochhaiy kay.

Meaning: If someone lives for eons (very, very long period of time), and even ten times of that;

and the individual earns a good name and wins praise to the extent that he is known all over the world; but if he is not recognized by Waheguru (because he did not do any noble deed), nobody cares a bit about him in the next world.

Parbhati M:1 (1327): Naaye teray terna Naaye putt pooj. Naaoun tera gehna mutt muksood. **Naaye teray naaoun munnaiy sabh koye.** Vin naavaiy putt kabhoon na hoye.

Meaning: It is through worshipping You (reciting your name) that a man earns respect and becomes worthy himself of being worshipped. The recitation of Your Naam is the real ornament (which beautifies one’s mind and wisdom) which is the real objective of life. It is because of the recitation of Your Naam that an individual is well known and earns everybody’s respect. Nobody ever earns real respect (in Waheguru’s Court) without reciting Your Naam.

Assa M:5 (383): Toodh aagaiy ardaas hamaari jeeo pind sabh tera. Kuhou Nanak sabh teri vadiyaayee koyee naoun na jaanaiy mera.

Meaning: Oh Waheguru! I can pray only to You who has given me this body and life. It is all Your benevolence that (I am well known among the people) otherwise nobody even knew my name.

NAAM AS WAHEGURU HIMSELF OR HIS PRAISE

At many places in Guru Granth Sahib, the word “NAAM” has been used to signify Waheguru (or GOD) Himself. Consider the following holy Shabads.

Gaurri Cheti M:1 (55): Uver punch hum eik junaa kiyou raakhoun ghur baar munaa. Maarhe lootay neet neet kis aagaiy kuree pookaar munaa. 1. **Sri Ram Naama oocher munaa.** Aagaiy jum dul bikhum ghunaa. Pause.

Meaning: A big and tough army of the angel of death is awaiting you after death, oh my mind! Therefore, recite Waheguru's **Naam** to fend them and pray as follows: How should I protect my good qualities from the five demons (lust, rage, greed, affection or possessiveness, and selfishness) oh my Waheguru! These demons attack me and rob me (of noble qualities) all the time. Who should I pray to, oh my mind!

Sukhmani Sahib (284): Naam kay dhaaray suglay jant. **Naam** kay dhaaray khund brahmund. **Naam** kay dhaaray aagas pataal. **Naam** kay dhaaray suggal aakaar.

Meaning: The only support of all living beings is the Naam (Waheguru). All the galaxies and their parts are supported by Naam and so are the sky and the underworld. Naam (Waheguru) supports all bodies.

M:4 (1317): Gurmukh unter shaant hai mun tun **Naam** smaaye. **Naam** chitvaiy Naamo purrhay Naam ruhay liv laaye. Naam padaruth paayeeye chinta guyee bilaaye. Satgur miliyain Naam oopjaiy trishna bhokh sabh jaaye. Nanak Naamay ruttiyan Naamo pullaiy paaye.

Meaning: A devotee who takes Guru's refuge enjoys internal peace because Naam (Waheguru) begins to reside in his body and mind. He thinks of Naam, recites Naam and is absorbed in Naam. Once, the precious Naam takes residence in his mind, all the worries and discomforts are dispelled. Taking refuge of the Guru, naam begins to take roots in devotees mind, and his appetite for all wants is lost. If you are imbued in Naam, you earn it, oh Nanak!

Gauri M:5 (211): Jee re ohla **Naam** ka. Uver je kern kraavno tin mein bhuou hai Jaam ka. 1. Pause. Uver juttan nuheen paayeeye. Vudday bhaag Hur dhiyaaye.

Meaning: Your only support is Naam, oh my mind! All other rituals or so called religious deeds do not remove the threat of the angel of death. Pause. No other effort connects you to Waheguru. But, only a few lucky ones recite the Naam.

NAAM AS THE PROCESS TO BE ONE WITH WAHEGURU

Naam has also been used as a process whereby a devotee gets rid of his evil qualities and acquires noble qualities by internalizing Waheguru through the recitation of His Naam and by doing good deeds. Listen to the following holy Shabads.

Suhi M:1 (728): Bhaanda dhoye bais dhoop devhou taoau doodhaiy kou jaavhou. Doodh kerm phoon soorut smaayan hoye niraas jamavhou. 1. **Japhou ta eikou Naama. Uver niafal kaama. Pause.** 1.1.

Meaning: Just like a wise lady who first washes the container in which she will collect the milk from the cow (or buffalo), dries it in the sun (to kill any germs) and then milks the cow before she adds culture to make yogurt, a devotee follows similar steps to get Waheguru yogurt. (Here Guru Sahib has used yogurt as a metaphor for Waheguru). The devotee does noble deeds which serve as milk (to make yogurt), his full concentration to remember Waheguru acts like the culture and his total disregard for worldly attractions serves as the right conditions (temp etc.) to convert milk into yogurt. My friends! The only worthwhile deed to realize Waheguru is to recite His Naam all the time. All other rituals are useless

Parbhaati M:1 (1332): Santaan kee rain Saadh jun sangat Hur keerat ter taari. Kuhha kuraiy bapura jum derpaiy Gurmukh ridaiy Muraari. 1. **Jul jaao jeevan**

Naam bina. Hur jup(I) jaap jupoun jupmaali Gurmukh aavaiy saad muna.

Meaning: Without the Naam (remembering Waheguru) the life is like a burning hell. Taking Guru's refuge, worship of Waheguru through recitation of His Naam is my rosary whereby my mind is in a state of ecstasy.

Assa M:5 (394): Aisee istri ikk Ram oopayee. Oon sabh jug khaaya hum Gur raakhay mayre bhaayee. Pause. Paaye thugauli sabh jug johiyaa. Barahma Bishan Mahadeo mohiyaa. **Gurmukh Naam(i) lugay se sohiyaa.**

Meaning: Waheguru has created such a woman (Maya) who has robbed the whole world, oh my friends! But, I have been saved by my Guru. Maya has enchanted the whole world so much so that even the so considered great gods – Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva – have been trapped in her net. On the other hand, the individuals who worship Waheguru by taking refuge of the Guru are honoured (in Waheguru's Court).

Dhanasari M:5 (672): Vudday vudday raajan ur bhooman ta kee trishan na boojhee. Luput ruhhay maya rung maatay lochun kuchhoo na soojhee. Hur Hur Naam apaar amola Amrit eik nidhaana. Sookh sehj anand Santan kaij Nanak Gur tay jaana.

Meaning: (Without worshipping Waheguru) even the big rulers and land lords are devoid of satisfaction and their wants are never met completely. They are completely engrossed in Maya and cannot think higher even when they have some wisdom. But, I have found from my Guru that Waheguru's invaluable and eternal Naam (worshipping and internalizing Him) is the treasure of life-sustaining riches which satisfies everyone. Waheguru's Sants (holy men) enjoy bliss and complete internal peace.

Bilawal ki Vaar, Paurri, 3, M:4 (850): Sabh vudiyaan Hur Naam vich Hur gurmukh dhiyaaye. J(i) vust mungeeye saayee paayeeye **jay Naam chit laayeeye.** Guhj gull jee kee keechaay Satguru pass ta serb sookh paayeeye.

Meaning: If one remembers Waheguru's Naam with the blessings of the Guru, he begets all honours. If one concentrates on Waheguru's Naam with devotion, he can get any of his desire fulfilled. If you confide in the Guru (with full respect), you get all the comforts you want.

Assa Naam Deo Ji (485): Mun mayro guj, jehba meri kaati mup mup kaatoun jum kee faasi. 1. Kuhaa kurro jaati keh kurro paati. Ram ko **Naam** jupoun din raati. Pause. 3.

Meaning: I (recite God's Naam with my tongue) as a result of which my tongue is acting like a scissors; I (have stitched my mind with God) so my mind is acting like a measuring tape. With my tongue as scissors and my mind as measuring tape, I am cutting the noose of the angel of death. Because I am reciting God's Naam day and night, my low caste and my low clan cannot come in my way (to cut the noose).

In all these holy Shabads, Naam clearly implies the whole process of worshipping Waheguru.

NAAM GIVING

There are some holy Shabads in Guru Granth Sahib about the Guru giving Waheguru's Naam to His Sikhs. A few Shabads also seem to mean that the Guru literally gives the Naam in Sikh's ears. Pay attention to the following holy Shabads:

Sidh Goasht, (941): Pooray Gur tay Naam paaya jaye. Joag Jugat Such ruhhaij smaaye.

Meaning: Waheguru's Naam can be realized only through the Perfect Guru. This is the only way to stay connected to Waheguru.

Sukhmani Sahib, Ashatpadi 18 (286): Satguru Sikh kee kuray pritpal. Sayvuk kaou Gur suda dyal. **Satgur Sikh kaou naam dhun dayye.** Gur ka Sikh vudbhagi hay.

Meaning: Satguru nourishes His Sikhs and He is always kind to them. Satguru gives the wealth of Naam to His Sikhs. Guru's Sikhs are very lucky.

Maru Solhe M:3 (1046): Suchaiy Shabad suchee putt hoyee. Bin Naavay mookut na paavaai koyee. **Bin Satgur ko Naauon na paaye** Prabh aisee bunat bnaayee hay.

Meaning: A man earns the True honour only through (the recitation) of the Evergreen Shabad of the Guru. No one can find salvation without realizing Waheguru's Naam. Waheguru has created such a system that nobody can realize His Naam without taking Guru's refuge.

Kalyan M:4 (1320): Ja kaou raakh layye mera suami ta kaou mookut dayye pai kaanaiy. Ta kuou koyee upperr na saakaiy ja kee bhagat mera Prabh maanaiy.2.5.

Meaning: Whomever Waheguru protects, that individual has all his worldly bonds cut very carefully, and finds salvation. Nobody can even go near Waheguru's devotee whose devotion has been approved by Waheguru.

Parbhati M: 4 (1335): Humray Jugjeevan Hur praan. Hur ootam rid unter bhaayo Gur munt deeyo Hur kaan. Pause. 1.

Meaning: The Satguru has given Waheguru's Naam in my ear (with great intensity) to recite repeatedly so that His sacred Naam has been deeply entrenched in my memory. Now the life of the whole world, Waheguru, has become my life as well.

When Guru Granth Sahib says that the Satguru **gives the Naam**, it means two things:

(1) Only Satguru's Word (Shabad) is approved by Waheguru for His worship because Satguru's mind is Waheguru's residence, and Waheguru Himself makes the Guru utter the Divine Word.

(2) Satguru helps the Sikh to cleanse his mind with His Shabad and replaces his worldly desires with Waheguru's Naam whereby the worldly attractions do not affect the Sikh.

This is what is meant by the "Guru giving the Naam".

Also, as is clear from the last two holy Shabads quoted above, **to give the Naam in the ear means the Sikh pays full attention to Guru's advice.**

We use this common expression in our everyday life quite often: Turn your ear to me. As all of know it means, pay full attention. No Guru Sahib ever gave some secret Naam to a Sikh in private. Waheguru's Naam is no secret and is given to all the Sikhs publically.

MISGUIDANCE OF INNOCENT PEOPLE BY DERA WALLAHS

However, some unscrupulous self-proclaimed gurus have purposely misinterpreted the holy Shabads and misguide some ignorant people to believe that the guru must say some secret words in his disciple's ear for the Sikh to recite. This is totally against the Principles of Gurmat. What kind of good deed is that which is not made public? Sikhs have to watch out for such fake saints and follow only the Teachings of Guru Granth Sahib.

Devinder Singh Sekhon Phd

THE INTERNAL SIKH REHAT MATYADA (Code of Conduct)

By Harmanjeet Kaur Sandhu, Ph.D MBA

The Sikh Rehat Maryada is the code of conduct and conventions for Sikhism, approved by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) in 1945. Since then it has gone through a few minor changes, though Sikh diaspora has been asking for its overall change.

The present Rehat Maryada is based upon 5 Rehat Maryadas prepared during the times of Guru Gobind Singh by five of his devotees, as follows:

Bhai Nanad Lal
Bhai Chaupa Singh
Bhai Prehlad Singh
Bhai Daya Singh, and
Bhai Desa Singh

For a Sikh, rehat is fixed for both external appearance and internal change. Many hundred years, before the Sikh Rehat Nama was first written during Guru Gobind Singh Ji's period (1666-1708) and later codified by the SGPC in 1945, Guru Ramdas, the fourth Guru of the Sikhs (1534-1581) had written Internal Rehat for a Sikh in one of his Sloaks included in the Var Gauri, by Guru Arjan. It is recorded on page 305 of the present versions of Guru Granth Sahib.

Var Gauri Mehla 4
Sloak Mehla 4, preceding pauri 11, page 305

THE INTERNAL REHAT OF A SIKH

mÚ 4]
Mehla 4

ਗੁਰਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਅਖਾਏ ਸੁ ਭਲਕੇ ਉਠਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ
ਧਿਆਵੈ ॥ ਉਦਮੁ ਕਰੇ ਭਲਕੇ ਪਰਭਾਤੀ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਕਰੇ

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਰਿ ਨਾਵੈ ॥ ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਪੁ ਜਾਪੈ ਸਭਿ
ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਪਾਪ ਦੋਖ ਲਹਿ ਜਾਵੈ ॥ ਫਿਰਿ ਚੜੈ

ਦਿਵਸੁ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਗਾਵੈ ਬਹਦਿਆ ਉਠਦਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ
॥ ਜੋ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਏ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ

ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੈ ॥ ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਦਇਆਲੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੇਰਾ
ਸੁਆਮੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਸੁਣਾਵੈ ॥

ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਪੂੜਿ ਮੰਗੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਆਪਿ ਜਪੈ
ਅਵਰਹ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਾਵੈ ॥ ੨ ॥

Gurmukhi, transliteration and meaning:

ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਅਖਾਏ ਸੁ ਭਲਕੇ ਉਠਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ
ਧਿਆਵੈ ॥

*gur sathigur kaa jo sikh akhaaeae s bhalakae
outh har naam dhiaavai |*

One who calls himself a Sikh of the Guru, the Satguru, shall rise in the early hours of the morning and meditate on the Master's Name.

ਉਦਮੁ ਕਰੇ ਭਲਕੇ ਪਰਭਾਤੀ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਕਰੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਰਿ
ਨਾਵੈ ॥

*oudham karae bhalakae parabhaathee eisanaan
karae anmrith sar naavai |*

Upon arising early in the morning, he is to bathe, and cleanse himself in the pool of nectar.

ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਪੁ ਜਾਪੈ ਸਭਿ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਪਾਪ ਦੋਖ
ਲਹਿ ਜਾਵੈ ॥

*oupadhaes guroo har har jap jaapai sabh
kilavikh paap dhokh lehi jaavai |*

Following the Instructions of the Guru, he is to recite the Name of the Master, and all sins, misdeeds and negativity shall be erased.

ਫਿਰਿ ਚੜੈ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਗਾਵੈ ਬਹਦਿਆ ਉਠਦਿਆ ਹਰਿ
ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ ॥

*fir charrai dhivas gurabaanee gaavai behadhiaa
outhadhiaa har naam dhiaavai |*

Then, at the rising of the sun, he is to sing Gurbani; whether sitting down or standing up, he is to meditate on the Master's Name.

ਜੋ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਏ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ
ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੈ ॥

*jo saas giraas dhiaaeae maeraa har har so
gurasikh guroo man bhaavai |*

One who meditates on my Master, with every breath and every bite of food - that Gursikh becomes pleasing to the mind of the Guru.

ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਦਇਆਲੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ
ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਸੁਣਾਵੈ ॥

*jis no dhaeiaal hovai maeraa suaamee this
gurasikh guroo oupadhaes sunaavai |*

That person, to whom my Master is kind and compassionate - upon that Gursikh, the Guru's teachings are bestowed.

ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਪੂੜਿ ਮੰਗੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਆਪਿ ਜਪੈ
ਅਵਰਹ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਾਵੈ ॥੨॥

*jan naanak dhoorr mangai this gurasikh kee jo
aap japai avareh naam japaavai |2|*

Servant Nanak begs for the dust of the feet of that Gursikh, who himself recites the Naam, and inspires others to recite it. ||2||

The summary of the instructions is as follows:

1. The Gursikhs will rise in the early morning.
2. They will take bathe, and cleanse themselves in the pure water.
3. Then, they will render morning prayers. This will erase their sins, misdeeds and negativity.
4. Following prayers, at the rising of the sun, while working for a livelihood, they will hum Gurbani within their mind. For meditation and prayers, the posture of the body is not important. One who meditates on God's name, with every breath and every morsel of food that Gursikh becomes pleasing to God.
5. All those upon whom the Master is kind and compassionate all happiness will fall into their lap.
6. They will always remain humble and put on their forehead the dust of the feet of those Gursikhs, who themselves recite the Naam, and inspire others to recite it || 2 ||

Harmanjeet Kaur Sandhu
Ph.D MBA

THE BRIDGE OF PEACE

[The Baba Nanak International Peace Bridge: Sri Nankana Sahib Foundation (USA)]

Dr Sukhbir Singh Kapoor, D. Litt Ph.D.

A. Below is a painting of Kartarpur Bridge. The road and railroad bridge connecting the two holy shrines was constructed by the British Government, around 1927 AD.



B. Below is the scene of the Bridge after it was destroyed by Indian army in 1971 during Indo Pak war.



The original rail and foot bridge was built by the British in 1927 and later destroyed by Indian army in 1971 in war with Pakistan. Indian Government never bothered to reconstruct it after its destruction. Until today, it has put down all proposals put forward for its reconstruction.

The assessed cost of reconstruction of the bridge was estimated, many years ago, to be about Rs 200 crores. The World Bank, also at once stage had agreed to give a loan of up to 15 million dollars if guaranteed by both Indian and Pakistani governments. The cost of reconstruction, in present values, must be many times more. However, in a recent announcement, the SGPC has offered to foot the total bill of the reconstruction.

Distance between two Gurdwaras by bridge is only 2 km (1.25 miles)

The desired connection of the two holy shrines is shown in the following map:

A Study of the two Gurdwaras and their importance for the Sikhs

History of Gurdwara Dera Baba Nanak

Gurdwara Dera Baba Nanak is located in Gurdaspur District, 45 km west of Gurdaspur city and 55 km from Amritsar. It is about 1 km





A view of Gurdwara Dera Baba Nanak

[The original name of the Dera Baba Nanak (village) was Pakho-Ke-Randhawa. It is the village where Guru Nanak's in-laws lived. Guru Nanak came here, after his first missionary journey in 1515, to meet his family. He meditated here on the panels of a well. The complex has 4 revered monuments: Sacred Well, Thara Sahib, Kirtan Asthan and Chola Sahib.]

from the Indo-Pakistan border and on the east bank of River Ravi. To its west is located the town of Kartarpur (Ravi) which is located in Pakistan. Both places are holy to the Sikhs and were once connected with a bridge which had both a rail track and a foot pathway.

The Dera Baba Nanak, was the home town of the parents of Mata Sulakhni. When Guru Nanak left for his first missionary journey, his family came here to live with her parents

Lala Mulraj, the father of Mata Sulakhni, worked as a Patwari (a revenue official) in the village, then called, Pakho-Ke-Randhawa. A well named after Baba Ajita Randhawa existed at this place, which at present is in the form of a Baoli.

Guru Nanak visited this place in 1515 to meet his family after his first missionary tour. He selected the edge of a Ajita Randhawa well to meditate.

Later in history, the Bedis, descendants of Guru Nanak, converted the village into a new town and named it Dera Baba Nanak.. During his reign, Maharaja Ranjit Singh provided a copper

gilded throne to the Central Gurdwara, and got its canopy covered with marble. The shrine is in the centre of the town which comprises four separate important monuments.

Firstly, the well which originally belonged to Bhai Ajitta Randhava still exists and is reverently called 'Sarji Sahib'. Pilgrims take its water home in the belief that it possesses healing properties.

The second memorial is the "Kirtan Asthan", a rectangular hall, which marks the site where

Guru Arjan recited Kirtan when visiting Dera Baba Nanak for condolence on the death of Baba Dharam Das, a grandson of Guru Nanak (son of Lakhmi Das). In the centre of the hall, there is *Prakash* of Guru Granth Sahib.

The third memorial is the central shrine, called Thara **sahib**. This marks the platform (thara), on which Guru Nanak sat when he first came to Ajitta's well and the place where, later, Baba Sri Chand buried his father's ashes. The Guru Granth Sahib is seated here in a small square pavilion. The pavilion is covered with gold-plated metal sheets with some of the hymns of Guru Nanak embossed on them.

Lastly, Chola Sahib. It is connected with a relic, a chola (a cloak), believed to be presented to Guru Nanak by a Muslim devotee at Baghdad. The chola, bearing some Quranic verses and Arabic numerals, was procured from Baghdad by Baba Kabali Mall, who was the eight generation of **Baba** Lakhmi Dass and a direct descendent of Guru Nanak. It was brought to Dera Baba Nanak on 1st March 1828. After

the Gurdwara movement the control of the Gurdwara passed to SGPC, but Chola, remained with the Bedi family. It is now displayed in a glass case in a private house, about 50 metres from the Gurdwara, attended in rotation by three Bedi families living there.

Pilgrims come to this holy town in large numbers. The town was made the headquarters of newly created tehsil of Dera Baba Nanak. It is a historical town and has many lanes and houses that have been preserved since the time of Guru Nanak. Also from this town pilgrims can see across the border into Pakistan and see the Gurudwara at Kartarpur.

When Guru Nanak departed for his heavenly abode in 1539, Hindus and Muslims disagreed on how to perform the last rites. The Hindus as per their tradition wanted to carry out a cremation while the Muslims wanted to carry out a burial. According to the Janam Sakhis, Guru covered his body with a white sheet and asked Muslim devotees to put flowers on the right hand side of the body and Hindu devotees on the left hand side of his body. He asked them to come next day, and check their flowers. Those who would find their flowers fresh and blossomed, their belief would be my faith. Next day, when both Muslim and Hindu devotees came, they found that the flowers

Religion-wise Population - Dera Baba Nanak Tehsil

Religion	Total		Male	Female
Hindu	15,159	(12.2%)	8,371	6,788
Muslim	433	(0.35%)	257	176
Christian	22,846	(18.38%)	11,961	10,885
Sikh	85,046	(68.42%)	44,647	40,399
Buddhist	26	(0.02%)	18	8
Jain	32	(0.03%)	13	19
Other Religion	28	(0.02%)	16	12
No Religion Specified	725	(0.58%)	379	346

The Guru lived here, in Kartarpur, a life of a householder, for 17/18 years, from 1522-1539. His parents, wife and sons also joined him over there in 1522. The Guru put on the clothes of a farmer and ploughed his fields. He also built an inn (Dharamsal, later called Gurdwara) and set timing for morning prayer (Jap, Asa di var) and evening prayer (Sodar). An adjoining room was built to be used as a dining hall to give free meals (langar) to the devotees..



A view of Gurdwara Karatarpur

The original Gurdwara (then called Dharamsal), in Kartarpur, was set up by Guru Nanak in and around 1522, when he came back from his fourth missionary journey. Later in history, when the original building of the gurdwara was washed away by flooding of Ravi, the then maharaja of Patiala Bhupinder Singh reconstructed the building which was renovated by the Pakistan government in 1995.

of both of them were fresh and blossomed, but when they lifted the sheet from the body, there was no body. The body had miraculously disappeared. The devotees then cut the sheet in the middle. The Hindus cremated their half and the Muslims buried their half. Later, in history, Baba Sri Chand, dug this place and took Guru Nanak's remains to Dera Baba Nanak.

The Kartarpur Gurdwara is located next to a small village named Kothay Pind (village) on the West bank of the Ravi river in Punjab, now in Pakistan. The land to build the village and Gurdwara (then called an inn) was donated by Duni Chand, the Governor of the area, during the Guru period.

It is also here that Bhai Lehna served the Guru for 13 years and was appointed the second Guru of the Sikhs.

The tradition of daily Kirtan and Guru ka Langar was started here, to spread the Guru's message of equality and harmony. The food for the langar was grown, prepared and served by

the sangat with members of Sangat taking turns as volunteers.

For centuries during and after the days of Guru Nanak, devotees routinely travelled both ways to pay homage to Gurdwaras in Kartarpur and Dera Baba Nanak.

Steps taken so far towards the building the Bridge

The steps taken and efforts made towards the rebuilding of the bridge can be read in the light of the following events/happenings:

After the destruction of the bridge in 1971, very few efforts have been made by the Indian Sikh religious institutions, including SGPC and DGPC to pressurise the Indian Government to approach Pakistani Government to rebuild the bridge. Though, Sikhs settled in foreign countries (USA, UK, Canada) have made intensive efforts to get the route reopened. *[Please, do not forget that even the movements of India's independence were also started in foreign countries, Gaddar*

Today, the population is predominantly Muslim and most of them speak Punjabi. The ethnic groups include Gurjars, Jats and Rajputs.

Kartarpur is located at 32°5'13"N 75°1'0"E. It is located in Narowal District, Punjab, Pakistan. It has an average elevation of 155 metres (511 feet).

Indian Prime Ministers visiting Pakistan

Jawaharlal Nehru – two visits: 25-27 July 1953, 19-23 September 1960

Rajiv Gandhi - two visits 29-31 December 1988, 16-17th July 1989 [This is after 1971, no talks were made about the Bridge]

Atal Bihari Bajpai - two visits 19-20 February 1999, 4-6th January 2004 [This is after 1971, perhaps there was a talk about the bridge, but there is no documentary proof]

Narinder Modi – one visit 25th December 2015 [After 1971, but there was no mention of the bridge and its restoration.]

Pakistan Prime Ministers visiting India

General Musharraf – 2001 [There was a mention of opening the bridge]

Nawaz Sharif – 2014 [There was no talk about the bridge]

party and formation INA are examples] From the information available in press, though Pakistan has repeatedly shown its willingness to open the dialogue, but the Indian Government has not cooperated.

The Efforts made, so far, in an attempt to open the Corridor are as follows:

- ❖ After the Indo-Pak war 1971, which was a 13 days war, (from 3 December 1971 to the fall of Dacca (Dhaka) on **16 December 1971**), Sri Nankana Sahib Foundation's (USA) supremo Sardar Ganga Singh went to Pakistan, with a delegation, and met the then President of Pakistan and put forward the proposal to rebuild the bridge.
- ❖ A National conference of the Pakistani Muslim religious scholars (Ulemas) was also organised, at the same period, in Lahore, to establish the Muslim-Sikh Unity (Itehad) organization in order to promote the issue further.
- ❖ In 1999, then Pakistan president Pervez Musharraf offered to allow Indian Sikhs to visit Kartarpur from Dera Baba Nanak without passport and visa. It remained only a promise and nothing came out of it.
- ❖ In November 2000, on the birthday of Guru Nanak, a proclamation was made in Lahore that the Government of Pakistan was ready to make collaboration on the corridor (the Bridge) project if there was a positive response from the Government of India. Indian Government did not respond.
- ❖ It is at about the same time, the then Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan on the opening of the Delhi-Lahore bus service. PMO sources revealed that he also talked about the corridor issue

with Pakistan Government. There is no documentary evidence of this talk.

- ❖ In 2001, All India Sikh Students' Federation President Kuldeep Singh Wadala founded 'Kartarpur Sahib-Ravi Darshan Abhalashashi Sanstha'. He made public appearances at many places and spoke about the reconstruction of the bridge and distributed free literature supporting the issue.
- ❖ In 2004, then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during a visit to Amritsar assured that he will work towards the construction of the passage.
- ❖ In 2008, then cabinet minister Pranab Mukherjee visited Dera Baba Nanak to ascertain the viability of the project.
- ❖ In 2010, the Punjab legislative assembly unanimously passed a resolution to ask the Union government to facilitate the construction of the corridor.
- ❖ In 2010, the US-based Institute of Multi Track Diplomacy prepared a feasibility report of 'Kartarpur Marg', submitting it to the Indian and Pakistani ambassadors in Washington DC. The report estimated the cost of construction at Rupees 106 crore for India and Rupees 16 crore for Pakistan. Nothing came out of it.
- ❖ At the same time, Mr. Harbhajan Singh of the World Bank Washington DC, advised a delegation to meet with the World Bank authorities in Pakistan. There, in response to the proposal of the Guru Nanak International Peace Bridge, it was told that the World Bank could advance a loan of up to 15 million dollars to build the International Peace Bridge. The condition, was that both Pakistan and India had to consent and apply for the loan together. Initial inquiries revealed that it would

not be possible to have Govt. of India to support the bridge on account of security concerns.

- ❖ In 2012, the SGPC approached Union Minister for External Affairs S.M. Krishna with the same request.
- ❖ In 2014, Sikh bodies exhorted Prime Minister Narendra Modi to bring it on the table with then Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif.
- ❖ In May 2017, a parliamentary standing committee ruled out construction of the corridor citing negative political climate between the two countries. The seven-MP committee headed by Shashi Tharoor, former minister of state for external affairs, said the time was not right for constructing the bridge.
- ❖ In March 2018, SGPC president Gobind Singh Longowal wrote to Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh to press for the construction of the corridor ahead of the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, next year.
- ❖ The Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee has demanded that the corridor be opened for at least a month during the anniversary so that Sikh devotees could pay obeisance at the Kartarpur Gurudwara.
- ❖ In the past, one Rajya Sabha MP from Gurdaspur, Sardar Partap Singh Bajwa, gave a unique solution to the problem. He said that uninhabited land in Gurdaspur may be swapped with Kartarpur land in Pakistan, if it is agreeable to both Governments. There was an existing example of such a swapping, after partition, where India swapped 12 villages near Sulemanki headworks in Punjab's Fazilka district with Pakistan for getting

back Hussainiwala, the site where Bhagat Singh was cremated.

- ❖ In August 2018, Navjot Singh Sidhu an Indian politician, television personality and former cricketer and who is currently serving as the Minister of Local Government, Tourism, Cultural Affairs, and Museums of the State of Punjab went to Pakistan to participate in the swearing-in ceremony of Imran Khan, as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan. There, he met Pakistan Army Chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa who told him that Islamabad would open a corridor to connect Gurudwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur with Gurudwara Dera Baba Nanak Sahib, and the Sangat will need no visa to visit the shrine. He further said that this will be a gesture in the celebrations of 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak which is in the Year 2019.
- ❖ Last week (September 2018), Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh met PM Modi to discuss Kartarpur corridor issue.
- ❖ Meanwhile, the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) has now, offered to construct (financial cost) the corridor on its own if both governments agree. "We don't want anyone to play politics on such a sensitive religious issue," says SGPC president Gobind Singh Longowal.
- ❖ It is the joint Ardas of the Sikh community that the bridge is completed before the 550th Prakash Divas of Guru Nanak and Sikhs are free to travel to the holy land.

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